

## **Analysis of LeLeNet interviews and selected examples of a good practice**

### **1. Introduction**

This analysis is referred to as Intellectual Output 2 of the project Leading Learning by Networking (LeLeNET). You can find more about the project at <https://lelenet.net/>.

It serves as a basis for the questionnaire focused on the educational needs of head teachers in the partner countries as well as for a draft state of arts regarding school/teacher networking.

The document consists of a brief description of methodology, the results of the analysis, suggestions for the content of the training modules, and the summary which also comprises the situation related to networking in the partner countries.

### **2. Methodology**

The aim of collecting data by the use of interviews with head teachers from basic schools (ISCED1 + 2) is to provide the basis for the questionnaire and inform the contents of the training modules. Although our intention was to focus on networking in the field of inclusive education, we did not want to limit the respondents to it. Therefore this specific topic cannot be identified by respondents in all partner countries.

With the help of the head teachers involved in the project (five in each country except ES), we collected examples of good practice in the field of school/teachers networking. They are added as the Appendices to this document.

In February and March 2018 interviews with head teachers in 5 countries were conducted. The results, presented in this document, will serve as a basis for the questionnaire. They will also initiate the consultative process to inform co-creation of the training modules.

All together 14 group or individual interviews with 29 head teachers were conducted in February and March 2018. See Table 1. A semi-structured interview protocol was used and field notes were taken. Participants answered open-ended questions.

The criteria for selection was a certain level of experiences with leading networks. We agreed that individual or group interviews could be conducted. SE, BE and SI conducted group interviews, while CZ and UK individual ones. Both options were possible because of the explanatory nature of this research. The interviews took place in the beginning of 2018.

Group interviews lasted between 45 and 1 hour 45 minutes, but partners do not report about the length of individual interviews.

We used the pre-agreed interview schedule with the following topics:

- linking networking with teaching and learning;
- topics for networking;
- teachers' motivation for networking;
- the role of head teacher in networking;
- the benefits of networking;
- head teachers' strategies for supporting and sustaining networks;
- limits, challenges and head teachers' needs.

The analysis follows the interview schedule. The terms “networking” and “collaboration” were used almost synonymously by respondents, therefore we decided to use “networking” as a general overarching term in this analysis.

Table 1: Summary of methodology used

Country	No. of interviews	Type of interview	No. of HT	Selection	Schools	Duration	
SI	2	Group	3 + 2	experienced headteachers participating in different programmes offered by the National School for Leadership in Education (eg. Headship Development, Mentoring Newly appointed Headteachers)	Primary schools with pupils 6-15 years	45' each	Fields notes Recording
SE	1	Group	5	headteachers participating in a state-commissioned in-service university training course (7,5 ECT) for experienced headteachers. The course deals mainly with school improvement and instructional leadership	primary and/or lower secondary municipality schools with pupils aged 6-16 years.	105'	Fields notes Recording
UK	5	Individual	5	headteachers and strategic leaders of networks, executive director of a network of schools.			
CZ	5	individual	5	headteachers, were selected by a uniform methodology.	Basic schools	60' each	Recording notes
BE	1	group	9	headteachers participating in an in-service training course (3 year course) for starting headteachers. These headteachers were all in year 3. The course mainly focuses on school improvement, school policy and leadership	primary Catholic schools with pupils aged 6-12 years	60'	Field notes

				capacity			
--	--	--	--	----------	--	--	--

#### 4. Participants

Participants are presented according to the data available in the reports.

Table 2: Participants

<i>fictitious name of headteacher*</i>	<i>Size of the city (no. of inhabitants)</i>	<i>Size of the school (no. of pupils)</i>	<i>Length of the practice of the head teacher in years</i>
SI1 (female)	1.000	99	6
SI2 (female)	3.000	350	5
SI3 (female)	1.546	113	5
SI4 (female)	23.000	412	22
SI5 (female)	3.150	284	14
SE1 (female)	150.000	248	10
SE 2 (male)	220.000	320	6,5
SE 3 (female)	900.000	700	14
SE4 (female)	23.000	300	7,5
SE5 (male)	220.000	650	6
UK1 (female)	548.750	4.400	6
UK2 (female)	275.000	200	5
UK3 (male)	316.750	700	4
UK4 (male)	316.750	480	5
UK5 (male)	810.000	600	5
CZ1 (male)	1.000.000	680	15
CZ2 (male)	400.000	360	16
CZ3 (male)	11.000	450	8
CZ4 (male)	36.000	150	5
CZ5 (female)	2.000	550	20
BE1 (female)	77.000	90	3
BE2 (male)	77.000	130	3
BE3 (female)	77.000	80	3
BE4 (female)	77.000	100	3
BE5 (male)	77.000	90	3
BE6 (male)	77.000	120	3
BE7 (female)	77.000	80	4
BE8 (female)	77.000	75	3
BE9 (male)	77.000	90	3
<i>Summary:</i>			
<i>Min:</i>	<i>1.000</i>	<i>75</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Max:</i>	<i>1.000.000</i>	<i>700 (4.400 centre)</i>	<i>22</i>
<i>Average:</i>	<i>205.308</i>	<i>445</i>	<i>7,3</i>
<i>Female</i>	<i>16</i>		
<i>Male:</i>	<i>13</i>		

#### 5. The results of the analysis

##### 5.1. Linking networking with teaching and learning

Strong links between networks and teaching and learning are evident from all reports. In 3 of 5 reports these links can be found in the next section in which topics for networking are identified. BE partners report that networking has not been a common practice in their schools yet while SE partners claim that “networking within school is by far the most common form of networking.”

CZ and SI partners provided a more extended analysis in this section. CZ found 3 broad categories that illustrate the links between networking and teaching/learning: networks aimed at developing specific competencies of pupils, networking aimed at development of curriculum and methodology teachers’ work, and networking supporting learning culture of schools and work of school leaders. In CZ4 for example, teachers design and implement workshops for pupils and their parents. They *“meet at trainings and they have agreed that they could organise something like this because of the opinion that children do not have awareness of crafts.”* They also report about *“networks of teachers for science subjects and humanities”* (CZ5) and about sharing experiences among partner schools where *“teachers share experience, they attend lessons of other teachers to find out how to work with materials”* (CZ1). School leaders work in relatively stable networks in which they share experiences and provide consultations as *“schools have similar problems so they provide mutual inspiration to each other”* (CZ1).

SI head teachers refer to the importance of feedback among teachers for professional learning: *“It is very important that teachers get feedback about where they are but also approval of their practice. Critical judgement leads to improvement of their work”* (SI1). Similarly to CZ, SI head teachers point to the importance of subject groups and to their *“cross-school cooperation”* (SI5). SI4 linked networking with quality of teaching: *“You can develop your practice most effectively if you can learn from each other.”*

We can conclude that the interviewed head teachers are very much inclined to networking among teachers within and also among schools as they realise its potential for professional development.

## 5.2. Topics for networking

Partners report about a variety of topics. They can be very specific, such as multicultural topics (CZ), developing digital literacy (SI), networking aimed to support school specialization (SE, UK, CZ), or rather general, such as networking to enhance professional learning (UK) therefore it was rather difficult to make a fully meaningful intersection (categorization).

We identified the following categories:

- ***development of special pupils’ competences***, i.e. crafts (CZ), use of technology in learning and teaching (UK, SI), adapting teaching methods to all pupils’ needs (SE),

programmes to strengthen pupils' responsibility for their own learning (SI), and others;

- **development of curriculum and teaching methods**, i.e. improvement of formative and summative assessment (SE), development of mastery in maths (UK), "complete reconstruction of inadequately organized teaching" – block teaching (CZ), developing new teaching courses (BE), developing programmes for gifted pupils (SI), and others;
- **school leadership development** which is explicitly mentioned by SI, UK and SE partners and implicitly by CZ and BE partners;
- **supporting school specialization** reported by CZ, UK and SE partners.

In some cases the aims and benefits of networking are mentioned in this section, such as "great benefits in terms of professional development and joint learning" (UK3) or, "very effective cooperation and a lot of mutual learning" (SI4). Several other topics were identified but most of them are related to specific context-based projects.

### 5.3. Teachers' motivation for networking

Head teachers responses to questions about teachers' motivation for networking indicate different motives for networking while very little is said about challenges in this area. SE partners report that "heads have to work harder to motivate some of their teachers in lower secondary (grade 7-9)" and BE partners state that "it is not easy to motivate teachers to join PLN."

With reference to the theoretical framework, we could identify factors of autonomous as well as of controlled motivation. The categories are presented according to this distinction.

#### Factors of controlled motivation

- **growing need for co-operation in education**, i.e. new trends in school policy, political and developmental trends, such as requirement of inclusive education (CZ), new trends in school policy (UK), "as a response to the growing external influence on schools: of parents or Ministry" (SI);
- **social pressure**: "as more and more of the schools are being pulled in [to some of the powerful networks] all of the time" (UK), a similar issue is reported by CZ partner;
- **self-protection** to meet certain external requirements (UK) or to protect the school against closing down (CZ): "The impulse was threat to teachers, the school became a sinking boat and it had to get mobilized (CZ4)";
- **financial motives** in the case of UK and CZ.

#### Factors of autonomous motivation

- **improvement at school and personal level** is reported by all partners: in most cases it can be understood as it has been initiated by intrinsic motivators, such as developing better opportunities for children (UK4), developing stronger professional relationships among teachers (SI), or building self-regulated networks to develop the curriculum for certain groups of pupils (SE);
- **sharing and developing teaching practice and thus building new knowledge** in professional dialogue (UK), for “changing generations of children” (SI3), “by visiting each other classrooms” (SE1);
- **teachers’ self-actualization leading to higher professional confidence** by developing new skills, by “being aware that they are not alone in the problems” (SI5), by being aware that “collaboration is the only way forward and the core of leadership group” (UK1), or by being inspiration for other teachers in and outside their schools (CZ).

#### 5.4. The role of head teachers in networking

The overall finding in this section is that the head teacher should be **primarily the instructional leader**, i.e. taking up the role of expert in the subject of the network, asking the right questions, offering suggestions related to the content, giving feedback related to the content. Very often respondents refer to head teachers’ role as motivator as well as facilitator of networking in the school and among schools. “One cannot expect the networking will happen in a self-explanatory way” (SI2).

The answers are clustered under four categories:

- **initiator** by proposing projects, starting the process, having a clear vision about learning in the school, “bringing good examples to school” (CZ2);
- **motivator**: in the case of UK, this type of role is related to coaching culture, in CZ and SI head teacher as a role model is emphasized;
- **facilitator**, i. e. creating the right conditions and structures both when it comes to networks on external or internal level (SE, CZ, SI), “getting teachers’ to feel ownership and be confident in their shared capacity to improve” (UK1);
- **controller** (by monitoring), such as being a member of monitoring committee (UK), reporting at meetings, seeing reports (CZ), “constantly being there and evaluating progress” (SI3).

Additionally, SI5 understands her role as “a connector among different school initiatives”, BE partner add the role of communicator in terms of communicating “of what is the goal of the networking and how this is aligned to the ‘bigger picture’”. UK partners point to the relational nature of networking.

#### 5.5. Benefits from networking

Respondents revealed several benefits related to networking. They seem to be very similar with some nuances in the answers.

The key benefit for school as a whole is enhancing and/or developing learning school culture: “Networking of teachers within schools has a strong impact on school climate (it strengthens relationships among teachers as well as relationships between the teachers and school leaders) and this shapes the culture of a learning school” (CZ); networking with the purpose to improve and develop learning” (SE).

Most benefits listed in the reports can be included into two clusters, namely benefits for teachers and benefits for pupils.

#### Benefits for teachers

- **developing professional practice**, such as methodology of work (CZ), “improving quality of teaching by developing appropriate teaching methods” (SI3), developing formative assessment (SE);
- **sharing knowledge and skills**, i.e. “how to pass on their knowledge and skills while passing on experience and sharing their knowledge in a network of colleagues” (CZ), common problem solving (SI);
- **developing common professional language** “when it comes to lesson plans, instructions to the students or teacher interpretation of documents” (SE); “what counts for one teacher also counts for another teacher” (BE);
- **acting beyond the classroom walls**: “leaving the classroom – teachers visiting colleagues” (SE), “developing creativity by networking among schools” (SI).

#### Benefits for students

The listed benefits are closely related to benefits for teachers especially to development of their professional practice with a more indirect impact on students:

- **experiencing new teaching approaches**, such as collaborative learning (SI), assessment for learning (SE), adjustments for age (UK), better alignment of teaching methods to assessment (BE);
- **more motivated teachers – more motivated pupils** (“Intrinsic motivation is important for both”) – SI1;
- **using external resources** (experts) for the benefit of pupils, i.e. in inclusive education (SE, CZ), specific projects (SI).

CZ partners emphasised personal pupils’ personal development, such as tolerance to other cultures, realising priorities in career orientation and establishing better relationships among

themselves and with teachers. SE partners point even to improved results in languages. Additionally, benefits for school management, parents and community are mentioned in CZ report.

#### 5.6. Head teachers' strategies for supporting and sustaining networking

It was difficult to distinguish between the role of teachers in networking and their role in supporting and sustaining networking. In fact, "creating conditions for networking" is the common denominator under this heading. At a more specific level, the following categories have been found:

- **fostering school culture for networking** by "sense making and sense giving" (SE), "internal climate of school and school culture for the success of networking" (CZ), "fostering a culture of mutual professional respect" (UK), "being there and encourage" (SI);
- **being a role model** by participating in networks (SE), "being there" (SI), "acting as a role model" (BE);
- **initiating networks**, such as "initiating peer observations" (SI), "building a team at school" (CZ);
- **sustaining networks** by monitoring and evaluation (SI), aligning the vision (BE), "systemic quality work" (SE3) and "support during a long period" (SE5).

Human resource management with the focus on staff development was also mentioned in the reports as a general condition for networking.

#### 5.7. Limits, challenges and the needs of head teachers

Limits and challenges are related to preconditions for networking. It is interesting that head teachers' networks are seen as a precondition for successful networking in schools although no specific question was posed to the respondents.

The following categories were identified:

- **building the culture of collaboration**, i.e.: BE and SI partners stated that "teachers are not used to co-construct knowledge" while UK partners pointed to the "need to work on a relationship based on mutual respect";
- **head teachers' knowledge** in this area is explicitly mentioned by CZ, SI and SE partners; it seems that networking among head teachers could be one of the significant sources of knowledge and experience, also leadership style seems very significant for networking (SE, SI, CZ, BE);
- **resources**, i.e. lack of time and space caused by teachers' overload and/or number of different projects;



- **teachers' motivation** related factors such as to lack of trust among teachers (SI), percentage of teachers on short term contracts (SE), understanding the importance and benefits of collaboration (SI, UK, BE), unpleasant past experiences (CZ), etc.
- **policy support** including financial resources (CZ), or “building infrastructure to make sure that they secure in their own school as well as being able to support schools in their alliance (UK1)”.

## 6. Summary

The overview of reports describing the situation related to school networking indicates that networking within and among schools is a relatively common feature and a growing trend in all partner countries. It seems that the complexity of challenges and changes is seen as contributing to this development. It is also evident that networking is understood as an important strategy to promote school development and a leading principle for teachers and schools to learn from each other. In some cases (CZ, SE) collaboration among schools and/or with external agencies is explicitly worded in official documents.

School networks as described by partners, have been often initiated by external agencies as a response to current challenges. Pupils' results are one of those. SE partners, for example, refer to declining result on PISA, and UK partners to “measured performance (Examination and SATS results and OFSted inspection).” BE partners also report about external pressures for closer collaboration among schools, such as a requirement for developing a number of transversal competencies among pupils and students which will require more cross-curricular and project-based work. Similarly, CZ partners state that “networking and mutual support are ways in which Czech schools can react to the requirement for inclusive education.” In SI school networks have become “ever more popular by educational politicians” in the case of initiating changes and/or large-scale reforms in different areas.

Different projects are seen as the most common triggers for networking, such as Networked Learning Communities (UK), ESF and other EU-funded projects (CZ), or Networks of Learning Schools (SI). There is also strong evidence about school-based projects focused on school improvement by networking in all partner countries. They have been developed as a response to different challenges schools are facing. Inclusive education has been mentioned by CZ and SE partners. In SI networks have been employed also in the case of initiating and piloting large-scale reforms, such as modernization of vocational education, curricular and organisational reform of basic education, setting and implementing national school quality system.

Different actors initiate and support networks in the partner countries at the national level, such as: National Agency for Education (SE), National College for School Leadership (UK),

National School for Leadership in Education and National Education Institute (SI), Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (CZ). In the case of specific initiatives, other agencies and/or organisations are mentioned by CZ and UK partners. BE partners do not report about specific recent support.

For the purpose of this analysis 14 group or individual semi-structured interviews with 29 head teachers were conducted in 5 countries. The results of the interview analysis indicate that head teachers are very much inclined to networking among teachers within and also among schools as they realise its potential for professional development. They report a variety of networking topics, such as development of curriculum and teaching methods, development of pupils' competencies, development of school leadership etc. Teachers, according to interviews' responses are autonomously as well as controlled motivated for networking. Head teachers therefore have to be motivators as well as facilitators of networking within and between schools using different strategies, such as fostering school culture for networking, being a role model, initiating and sustaining networks. Being aware of the potential of teacher networking for their professional development as well as school improvement head teachers report several challenges and needs they are facing in their practice related mainly to establishing preconditions for teachers networking. Interestingly one of them seems to be head teachers networking while they also state that there is still no sufficient level of collaboration culture in schools, head teachers feel they have a lack of knowledge in terms of networking and networking topics, there is a lack of resources, teachers' motivation as well as policy support.

## **7. Suggestions for the content of the training modules**

The analysis of the interviews indicate that the following topics may be included in the training modules:

- the nature and benefits of networks for improving teaching and learning;
- (organisational) conditions for effective networking;
- head teachers' role in initiating, developing and sustaining networks;
- motivation for networking at head teachers' and teachers' level;
- building and fostering the culture of networking (related to the previous items).

## Appendices: Examples of good practice of networking in partner countries

### Appendix 1: Belgium

#### **A learning community for school leaders**

Working with learning communities for school leaders is part of a broader school development program 'Shared Educational and trAnsformational Leadership by means of Learning communities (SEALL)', which is implemented in a growing number of schools which are part of the school group 'Stedelijk Lyceum Antwerpen (City College Antwerp)'. More information can be obtained from project leader prof.dr. Wouter Schelfhout.

##### **A. Global intention of the professional development project**

###### **General goals**

- Avoiding the professional development model "transfer of knowledge". Instead: knowledge and ideas should be applied in a specific manner (and adapted to individual school needs and capacity); need for try out in daily practice.
- Transcending professional development merely related to rather delineated goals (ex. class visit, performance appraisal,...). Also focusing on school- and quality development and getting grip on the whole of factors, with attention for shared educational and transformational leadership.
- Reflecting on the possibilities provided by different forms of teacher learning communities to work on school development and the support of the school leader herein.

###### **Pursued professional development model: interaction between**

###### **1. Team learning in a learning community**

With following characteristics:

- Inspired by
  - frameworks
  - Examples from colleagues from their own school contexts
- Social motivation, stimulation, converting inspiring frameworks into policy action.
- Put policy action into practice
- Giving feedback, in group, with due attention for:
  - Learning process
  - Support (customized to different levels of development in schools)
  - Practice deprivatization

###### **2. Further individual follow-up by the pedagogical advisors involved, helping to convert general theoretical frameworks into concrete policy action.**

As part of this process, where necessary:

- Helping in the thinking process
- Start up
- Support ( possibly by coaches )

##### **B. Content and course of the learning community for school leaders**

###### **Session 1: Framework concerning shared educational and transformational leadership by means of learning communities (SEALL)**

1. **Getting acquainted and overview of course content**
2. **Introduction and quality framework, a challenging and inspiring framework and starting point**
3. **Introduction into school development plan and global self-evaluation**
4. **Reference framework: need for different forms of quality assurance and – development**
5. **Global self-evaluation, complemented with action**
6. **Choosing themes to work on in groups**
7. **Arrangements for upcoming session**
  - Working in smaller groups
  - Always in the school of one of the participants
  - Assignment

### **Interim assignment between session 1 and 2**

- Start the self-evaluation, linked to quality reference framework for the chosen theme
- Decide which topic of quality framework will be used for reflection
- Illustrate with existing materials or forms of approach, already tested by the school

### **Session 2: SEALL by different forms of learning communities**

1. **Framework: ‘shared leadership, and subject groups as learning communities’**
2. **Examples from practice**
3. **Start up ‘Working with an SDP’**

Possible lay-out and content of a school development plan (SDP), including practice examples by the participants (if possible).:

- General self evaluation
- Concrete project plans regarding quality development
- Brainstorming

Discuss the ‘quality questions’ from the quality audit framework, linked to chosen themes, and review:

- In which way these insights can be used to implement policy into the class room?
- How can this be elaborated and organized?
- How can we overcome hindering factors at the level of the individual and the school?

Adapted to the school, further processing of these ideas.

- Conclusion and engagement
- Create action plans in ‘SDP’ as preparation for session 3
- Think of illustrating ‘stories’ and practical examples

### **Session 3: Discussing practical examples + discussing approach**

1. Practical example provided by a school
  - Illustration and discussion
  - Tour in school and classes
2. Practical example brought by the learning community coach
  - About the chosen theme, e.g. evaluation policy, care policy,
  - Discussing project plans about evaluation ( approach related to vision development – approach related to teacher departments as learning communities)
3. Discussing engagements for next session.

- Start with developing concrete, school specific project plans (or self-chosen template) about themes, using forms of learning communities.
- School leaders must point out which challenges they confront and what questions about learning they still have.

#### **Between session 3 and 4: process coaches support individual principals at elaboration of approach**

1. Assignment 'elaborate policy-based-actions, adapted to the school context'
  - Some schools have already initiated initiatives and want to support further execution => important to examine this further and find solutions for challenges/problems
  - Some principals have not started => reflect on possible approach
  - Together with a process-coach who is well familiar with the school
2. Organizing the following session
  - Check which of the participants are ready and willing to introduce projects to the group as part of session 4
  - Not everyone is obligated to take part in the next sessions: commitment is necessary
  - School leaders which are not ready can further elaborate this for a next session

#### **Session 4: Concrete design questions, to be discussed in group**

1. **Introducing the project plan per school**
  - Work around concrete existing or new projects in school, using learning communities
  - At least 2 principals, maximum 4 per session
  - Discussing challenges/questions in group. Giving feedback on concrete forms of approach with due attention for:
    - Learning process in learning communities
    - Support (adapted to various levels of development in schools): elaborate concrete forms of approach
    - Practice deprivatization
2. **Follow-up**

Per project plan a brief reflection on further individual succession by the involved pedagogical advisor => where needed: design of the approach, start up, support ( by training process coaches)

#### **Session 5 and further: Concrete design questions, to be discussed in group**

- Same approach as session 4
- Alternated with specific moments of input on chosen themes

#### **Last session: presentation**

- Each principal, within the same format, presents the elaborated approach
- Sharing experiences, challenges and questions
- Further feedback on applying the SEALL-model (cfr. session 1)

## Appendix 2: Czech Republic

### Methodological sheets for foreign pupil education at school P: example of an internal teacher network supporting inclusive education

#### *Topic and aim of the network*

The topic of the internal network at school P is quality improvement in the education of foreign pupils and support for teachers across the school in this field.

#### *Motivation (starting points)*

Attended by 680 pupils, school P is a big school in a large city. Among these pupils there are 40 foreigners (Ukrainian, Slovak, Vietnamese, Russian, French, Polish, Croatian, Jordanian, Romanian, British and Syrian) and approximately 20 more Vietnamese pupils with Czech citizenship from families in which Czech is not spoken so that they have bigger or smaller problems using the language. Limited knowledge of Czech is manifested during the learning process in all subjects. When working with these pupils, so far teachers had to rely on themselves and their own intuition and experience. They used available support measures (teacher assistants, alternative ways of testing, extra time allowed for task solution, adapted evaluation of results, and so on). There was no methodological manual available in order to make their work easier.

The number of foreign pupils in this school is rising as the Czech Republic also opens its borders to European as well as non-European countries, therefore the subject matter of foreign pupils is increasingly appearing in discussions at teacher meetings and there is need to create at least a basic framework to facilitate their education.

#### *Teachers/schools involved and the role of the headteacher*

With the support from a European project within the operational programme *Prague — a pole of growth*, the leaders of the school established a group of teachers whose aims were to create a methodological aid for teachers of foreign pupils and create functional support for pupils with different mother tongue. The following members of the group were involved:

- a school psychologist
- a special educator (project guarantor)
- two teachers (authors of the methodological material)
- four assistants for foreign pupils (4th and 5th year students at a faculty of education)
- the deputy headteacher
- the assistant of the headteacher
- teachers in the school club/library

The setup of the team was planned during the preparation of the project. Its members held regular monthly meetings during the whole project, i.e. two years. The members of the team played rôles that were clearly defined. The project was guaranteed by the special educator, who was responsible for the professional part of the project, report writing, observance of the deadlines, etc. The administrative and economic part of the project was managed by the assistant of the headteacher. The two teachers in charge of the professional part of the methodological manual were supported by practical experience of the assistants, the school

psychologist and the special educator. All of these members of the group co-wrote the manual and verified the recommendations in practice. Teachers working in the school club, library and study centre were in charge of supportive leisure activities meant to integrate pupils with different mother tongue. They helped them to prepare for lessons and gave them recommendations for reading in Czech.

An important role within the network was played by the deputy headteacher, who looked at the project from the viewpoint of school leadership and created conditions for teamwork. The role of school leaders can be described in three stages:

- Stage one: together with teachers, school leaders identified the need for pupils with different mother tongue to be supported by teachers; they discussed the options of this support with the members of the school counselling centre (school psychologist, special educator), then initiated and, in fact, wrote the project, looked for suitable financial resources and composed the starting setup of the team.
- Stage two: once accepted the project, school leaders maintained contact with the team (through the deputy headteacher mainly), created conditions for project implementation and saw to the administration support, hire of personnel (student assistants) and the dissemination of information about the work of the team to other teachers and people outside the school.
- Stage three: when finalizing the methodological manual, school leaders planned to sustain and develop the outcome of the project, monitored the use of the methodological manual inside the school, created conditions for its further development and made it possible to disseminate the outcome elsewhere (by means of the web site of the school).

### *Benefits*

The outcome of the cooperation is a methodological textbook for work with foreign pupils. It contains methodological sheets describing various activities for children with different mother tongue, designed to support social integration in a new setting and facilitate the learning process (working sheets, didactic aids, diagnostic material, games, suggestions for social activities, and so on). It is a methodology used by teachers, assistants and special educators. It is available in Czech at

<http://www.zskunratice.cz/ucitele/projekt-opppr/metodika-integrace-zaku-s-odlisnym-materskym-jazykem-omj-10895>

[http://www.zskunratice.cz/files/items/10895/files/metodika\\_integrace\\_zaku\\_s\\_omj\\_2018-02-16\\_final.pdf](http://www.zskunratice.cz/files/items/10895/files/metodika_integrace_zaku_s_omj_2018-02-16_final.pdf)

The manual is now in pilot use in classrooms where needed. It is continuously updated according to remarks made by teachers and assistants. Due to the short period of use, the impact on pupils has not yet been evaluated, but the material is alive and the network of cooperating teachers keeps existing, collecting experience with the manual and developing it.

The outcome of the project is meaningful for both pupils and teachers. Teachers started reflecting on the problems of foreign pupils from a wider perspective and accepted a wide range of potential support. The coordination between teachers and assistants, as well as between teachers and school counsellors, has been enhanced. Various school leaders' supervising activities such as methodological support from the deputy headteacher to assistants have been developing since.

The school succeeded in gathering a group of motivated university students who became assistants supported by the school psychologist, special educator and deputy headteacher. Also, these assistants collaborated intensely with class teachers who had pupils with different mother tongue in their classes. Therefore, the project was also important for these students, who became a prospective potential for the school.

Applicable in wider contexts beyond this school, the methodological manual is freely available. The whole team has had a good experience and people in the school have convinced themselves that their expertise could be successfully offered to other schools in this and other forms.

### *Limits*

Each new project and work in a network of teachers has its risks. When intensely working on this project, heavy workload was perceived by both the members of the school counselling centre and teacher assistants and class teachers, who had to cooperate closely.

Difficulties arise when a working and intensely cooperating network loses one of its members. During this project, one of the assistants finished her studies and left the city, so it was necessary to redistribute her work among the remaining assistants. This was one of difficult situations.

Another risk, rather unforeseeable, is the attitude of parents. Thanks to enhanced public awareness and education of parents (the school is a regular school in a location inhabited by middle and higher class families, not a socially excluded place) they can understand and support the processes taking place in the school. They perceive the improved individual support their children with different mother tongue receive. They are satisfied with it and, rather paradoxically, leave more care and responsibility up to the school. So it became a challenge for the school to maintain the cooperation with the parents of pupils with different mother tongue.



## Appendix 3: Slovenia

### **Primary school (PS) Dobje**

#### **Description of the school**

Primary school Dobje and its pre-school unit is a smaller modern equipped public institution in the region of Savinja. The staff, who is professionally qualified, educates pupils for living. 175 children attend the school and the pre-school, 36 teaching staff work there, and the entire staff numbers 47 people. The head teacher is assisted by a deputy with 30 % share of employment at this position.

#### **The use of ICT at PS Dobje**

In line with syllabi and life-long 21st century competences we use ICT in all grades and in all subjects. Practically, it means that pupils work two hours per week on computer or tablet (Innovative pedagogics 1:1). We have a computer and an interactive board in each classroom. So teachers as well as pupils are skilful users of technology. Technology is reasonably included in the contents, we introduce modern teaching methods while we are most proud of the inclusion of formative assessment in the cloud (we use 365 Cloud because of the free access to services due to the contract between the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport and Microsoft). Pupils use digital notebooks for formative assessment in order to self-assess and self-evaluate their progress, while at the same time teachers have access to and an overview of pupils' work. The model was developed together Institute of Education through the projects EU-folio and ATS 2020. We have been constantly monitored by coordinators from the Institute of Education. We have also participated in the project Introducing e-contents where teachers were introducing the use of e-textbooks under the mentoring of the counsellors from the Institute of Education through observing lessons.

Due to effective cooperation with the Institute of Education and due to our innovative teaching approaches we were awarded Blaž Kumerdej Award in February 2016. In November 2015 we were recognised as Microsoft Innovative School for meaningful and didactically exemplary teaching strategies. Within two years 16 teachers have been recognised as Microsoft innovative teachers. This title does not mean that teachers use ICT randomly (it has to be mentioned that we have licence for Windows for all computers so every pupils can use Word, Power Point, Excel, One Note) but that they know and estimate how to motivate pupils for using ICT, how to develop their creativity and independence, how to teach them critical thinking, solving problems, taking decisions, asses risk, particularly by taking the »reverse role« to develop responsibility for their work and promote their talents. Such approach does not put teachers in the centre as the only source of knowledge, there are few whole-class lessons, and pupils are motivated and take responsibility for their own learning,

consequently. These approaches result in the fact that learning has been a value in our school for the past few years and that is also evident at the state level. For the last four years 10 to 20 percent of our pupils have been awarded gold recognitions awards at different contests and more than 50 percent the silver ones. It proves us that we are doing well and that we have succeeded in teaching our pupils how they should plan their learning, set goals, set criteria, identify strengths, collect evidence and evaluate knowledge. ICT is of great help to us in all our activities.

Teachers regularly present their work at national and international conferences. Every year lesson observations for head teachers are organised in agreement with the Institute of Education. This year we have been selected as a case of good practice within the project Partnership for Changes.

### **Phases in the introduction of C 365**

At the end of 2013 our ICT specialist, one teacher and the head teacher were informed about a project offering the possibility to use Cloud 365 (C 365) in regular lessons, projects, interpersonal communication among the staff, sharing documents...

We formed a larger team of teachers (ICT specialist, four teachers and the head teachers) who identifies what we were doing and where we would like to go. Already in 2012 we agreed on our vision, namely: »We are an open and innovative school where creativity and knowledge for living are being developed«. During the self-evaluation process we have also written that »knowledge must become our value«. We share our common goals, namely that we would like our pupils to:

- be motivated;
- develop creativity;
- think critically;
- identify, present and develop their talents;
- develop independence;
- be able to solve problems;
- take decisions;
- estimate risk;
- be responsible for their own knowledge.

We set the following priorities:

- to train all staff to be able to work with C 365;
- at least one third of the teaching staff should identify possibilities to use C 365 in their teaching and pilot it;
- teachers using C 365 in their teaching should report about it and demonstrate their practice to other teachers at staff meetings.

Phases:

1. The ICT specialist and the head teacher arranged formalities for obtaining the licences.
2. The ICT specialist ensured appropriate speed of data transmission as we do not have the possibility of digital optical connection so all the work in C 365 must be carried out on-line.
3. The ICT specialist provided C 365 account for all staff.
4. At the end of 2013 the expert team presented their work in C 365 at collective training for all staff. The staff received their user names and passwords; they signed in the new environment and had a quick look at it during the training.
5. All teaching staff got the task to get familiar with this new e-environment in holiday time, and to think about how to use especially OneNote digital notebook in their lessons as the support to paper notebooks.
6. Before the beginning of the school year we agreed who would pilot C 365 (some teachers on their own initiative, some due to their work on the project ATS 2020). We formed an extended team for pilot implementation of digital notebook in their lessons.
7. C 365 will also be used for sharing documents (joint development of the annual plan, reports at the end of the school year, invitation letters, etc.).
8. In September 2013 all pupils received user names and passwords for C 365, parents were informed during our common parents' meeting and later also at class parents' meeting. The 1st grade class tutor had a special meeting with parents to introduce them into C 365.

### **Course of activities**

According to the annual plan, the broader team unedified the topics that would be appropriate for the digital notebook. The head teacher assists teachers during the first lessons (signing-in the pupils in C365, getting familiar with C 365). No special problems were identified by pupils.

Some informal groups appeared in the staff room. They discussed and investigated the possibilities of using C 365 and what could be used with pupils in the classroom. First digital notebooks were developed. Pupils were very motivated for learning. After the school year 2014/15 six teachers used digital notebooks regularly. All knowledge and experience were shared among other teachers and a lot of self-learning was carried out by teachers.

The extended team realised that digital notebooks were appropriate particularly for formative assessment. The cases of good practice of the digital notebook as support to formative assessment were presented during the final staff meeting by four teachers.

In 2015/16 we set the goal that every teacher should implement at least one part of the syllabus by the use of C 365 as support to formative assessment. Thus all staff was included in the use of C 365. During this school year we started to inform wider public about our work and positive results with the use of C 365 through demonstration of good practice. We invited teachers and head teachers from other schools to observe lessons. After the discussion with the head teacher they could decide who will open his/her classroom door to the wider public. Eight teachers took this opportunity which means one third of all our teaching staff.

In 2016/17 we started with short learning walks among our teachers. The aim was also to encourage other teachers, who had not used C 365 before that, to use it in their classrooms.

Informal discussions about the use of C 365 took place in the staff room. We found that we became a learning community by the means of the use of C 365 and during informal meetings. Our learning community is characterised by:

- team learning, building a shared vision, system thinking;
- continuous learning, encouraging innovativeness, linking technology and learning, changing teams;
- connected and simultaneous collaborating during all processes, responsiveness and adjustment of all elements, independent on each other.
- 

We have developed an open way of teaching which means that pupils:

- are capable of self-motivation;
- can search for information by the use of different technologies;
- play the key role in the learning process.

### **The role of the head teacher**

The head teacher initiated changes and piloted them in practice. She supported all innovations, changes; she encouraged the teaching staff for their professional development and investigation of their practice. She supported coordinators, monitored and evaluated all the phases in the process. She observed lessons in order to evaluate the progress and consulted them when needed. She understood the pupils' needs and informed the parents about changes.

## **Benefits of participation in the introduction of C 365**

### **Teachers:**

- do self-learning;
- collaborate;
- act as a learning community;
- are motivated for work;
- introduce changes in teaching;
- put pupils in the centre of the learning process;
- introduce formative assessment;
- present good practice of using C 365 at international conferences;
- build on their self-image;
- build on their own practice.

### **Pupils:**

- are motivated for learning;
- even lower achievers are successful in using ICT;
- achieve excellent results at international competitions;
- use ICT independently (have become more demanding users of modern technology);
- can set criteria and goals;
- self-assess their knowledge.

### **Head teacher**

We developed a connective team of teaching staff who:

- do not hesitate to introduce changes in their practice;
- is able to develop good practice;
- can follow trends in teaching;
- can present their work to wider public.

Picture 1: An example of digital notebook as support to formative assessment:

## **Appendix 4: Sweden**

**A school working very systematically to integrate the pupils from classes with students of special needs (in Swedish “grundsärskolan”) with the rest of the school.**

The concrete example given was a teacher co-operation when teaching about World War 2 in History. The aim is to develop inclusive education both from a more structural level (changing rooms and practical arrangements) to pedagogical and learning level.

**Involved teachers/schools and role of the head**

Co-operation between “grundsärskolan” (students of special needs) year 1 and secondary school year 9. The teachers working in the secondary school made the lesson plans, all students in year 1 and year 9 were involved.

The role of the head teacher is to enhance the goals, put them in the forefront and to make it possible through structures and other conditions. Scheduled time for co-operation between teachers. The overall aim is to increase teachers' competences and gain more knowledge about pupils with special needs.

Activities are evaluated regularly.

**Motivation (starting points)**

The co-operation between the different school forms started five years ago. The starting points for this example are

- A shared definition of inclusive education
- Learning areas for both staff and pupils
- HT showing the importance of developing the inclusive education
- Pupils of “grundsärskolan” are included as much as possible with secondary school
- More co-operation between teachers
- All staff are participating

**Benefits**

The school now has a shared definition of inclusive education. The pupils from the special needs comprehensive school are more socially included and are participating more socially and actively than before.

Focus on the pedagogical part of the inclusive education.

**Experience – limits, challenges**

The obstacles for inclusive education is not the pupils. It's more about how teachers and head teacher think about inclusive education, what's possible, the culture of the school.

**Follow up (sustainability)**

This example of good practice is a part of a five year long project on inclusive education. To make it sustainable the school has had scheduled time in their quality work during a year focusing on inclusive education.

Maybe later we can add some proves (photos, documents, outputs) .

## **Appendix 5: United Kingdom**

**UK1 A school company (Consortium)**



The Consortium is a network of 13 primary schools within a County in the UK. The collaboration began as a 'Teaching School Alliance' funded directly by the UK government. In order to be funded in this way there had to be a lead school that had an 'outstanding' rating from 'Ofsted' (Office for Standards in Education) and meet various criteria to receive the funding. Unfortunately after a fairly short time the lead school lost its status as it received a 'good' rating from Ofsted.

As a result of this difficult situation the Consortium was set up as a not-for-profit limited company. It has formal structures around financial management, a directorship and that sort of thing. The Consortium strategic agenda is driven by school leaders not external agendas. The company is owned by the 13 schools with the risk of running the company shared across the headteachers of the schools. The schools are led by head teachers that can really see that collaboration is the only way forward and are the core leadership group. The Consortium also has buy-in (of professional learning and other services) from more than three quarters of the schools across the County, approximately 150 schools. "They want to work with us because we will continue to meet needs, be affordable and represent local school needs but draw on practice from all over the country " (UK1) they (headteachers are so committed, altruistic. They want to help all the schools and do not take any profit from the business.

Our programmes are much more affordable for schools and the benefit for the 13 schools within the Consortium is that they get to direct, actually influence what we do. They know their issues in their school are common to others. If you are one of the Consortium schools then you get your seat round the table to say I really think we need to look at this as a theme or I really don't think this part of what we do is working. Consequently with this local strategic overview the offer appeals to many across the whole of a County. The company led by 13 schools support a wider group of schools across the county and have an impact on 30,000 pupils. The decision-making group is a "flat structure where we do not have one school with the lead and I think that's how we've been able to sustain" (UK1) the collaboration. The Consortium leads lots of different networks for different subject areas, different groups of staff that bring groups of schools together, maths subject leaders or early years leaders or SENCOs or whoever to work around developing their practice so that there is those sort of subject specific support group for teachers in the area. Smaller groups then work on themes that they have identified as important in their setting.

"That is why the Consortium is in such a fantastic position because it's led by headteacher's and the way that it works most effectively for us is that the agenda is led by headteacher's. It is very current, it's very relevant, it's very representative of a lot of primary schools across the County and the key needs and the things people want to look at and know more about. However the programme of development is not managed by those schools, it's managed by me and my team. We haven't got a

day job in school, we are not distracted by the everyday workload and *have a degree of independence.*" (UK1)

The groups have an understanding of local needs and represent a very large, specific geographical area. They have clear protocols and ways of working which emit from the history with the Local Education Authority they are given a small amount of money by the local authority, "which will probably reduce to zero very, very, soon." (Uk1). They support each other and so they identify with the schools that are more vulnerable and the other schools support those schools and they set up peer networks for new headteachers. They do audits around where they've have strengths and where there are development areas, and they do CPD together, they do moderation together, they do whatever they decide they need to do together.

### **UK2 Triad Case Study**

Collaboration within school has been developed in a non-threatening, non-judgemental style (no OFSTED grading) so that the focus for assessing strengths and areas for development are formative rather than summative." (UK2)

### **UK3 - Development of mastery in Maths**

HT and AHT responsible for Maths involved 12 teachers.

The concept, practice and application through the TLA sequence of 'mastery' is well established. Progress rates for pupils are high. Progress rates are high and the proportion making expected and/or better than expected progress is good.

### **UK5 - Talk for writing being piloted informally in one class**

Observed (through invite "come and see what the children can do" - shared with English co-ordinator- staff meeting led by ICT and co-ordinator; added to SDP; evaluated. Collaboration across schools in planning for and delivering e-safety. Meeting audited resources; shared planning focussed on one themed day; delivery; evaluation alongside pupils, parents and teachers. Challenge was release of staff.