



Task Force Fostering &
Building Human Capital
of the Regional Cooperation Council

ERI SEE
EDUCATION REFORM INITIATIVE
OF SOUTH EASTERN EUROPE

Conclusions of the Teacher Training Cluster of Knowledge 2nd Meeting

19 September, 2013

Podgorica, Montenegro

1. Regional context and initiation of the Teacher Training Cluster of Knowledge

The kick-off meeting for the initiation of this new regional Cluster of Knowledge was successfully organized in February 2013 in Podgorica, Montenegro by the Montenegrin Vocational Education and Training Centre in cooperation with the TFBHC and ERI SEE.

This meeting gathered the participants from Austria, Albania, Kosovo[☐], Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, and Serbia, who are dealing with the questions of Teacher Training in their professional life.

Numerous issues were raised and discussed, and it was evident that this topic draws a huge amount of attention in the whole of the region. After the report from the kick-off conference was sent to all the participants, it was agreed that the next conference would deal with Development of teacher professionalism in communities of practice. So, the 2nd meeting was scheduled for September in Montenegro.

2. The Teacher Training Cluster of Knowledge 2nd Meeting

The 2nd meeting of regional Cluster of Knowledge was successfully organized in September 2013 in Podgorica, Montenegro by the Montenegrin Vocational Education and Training Centre in cooperation with the TFBHC and ERI SEE.

This meeting gathered the participants from Austria, Croatia, Kosovo[★], Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, and Serbia, who are dealing with the questions of Teacher Training in their professional life. The participants at the meeting were of quite diverse background - there were policy makers, research community, representatives from the state institutions as well as the representatives from universities.

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The meeting has been a further step in the already initiated peer learning process within the Teacher Training Cluster of knowledge established in February 2013. The meeting has focused on Development of teacher professionalism in communities of practice, as one of the topics identified by the country representatives at the previous Cluster event. It has allowed regional stakeholders to outline the current state of play in their countries in the field of Development of teacher professionalism in communities of practice, and to discuss and identify challenges on the cross national level. Based on the discussion, the participants had an opportunity to discuss possible joint, regional solutions and to identify next steps within this new Cluster of Knowledge. (The Agenda of the meeting is in Annex 1. The list of participants is in Annex 2. Presentations are available at [ERI SEE web page](#)).

The presentations and discussions that were highly constructive and interactive reveal a truth that is valid for all the countries in the region, and that is lack of school climate facilitating collaborative learning and teachers and educators learning from one another. Is it a matter of 'old habits die hard', or schools have not started creating industrial environment for teachers cooperation remains to be answered.

What goes without saying is that school climate has huge impact on teacher education and retention. School climate can be defined in terms of a learning community and it is correctly argued that induction of new teachers, to be effective, must be induction into a healthy school climate. Teacher education programs are sometimes criticized because of the high attrition rate among beginning teachers. The common placement of new teachers in the most challenging settings with little support predictably propels high attrition. Preparing school leaders, who understand the critical role of a school climate that promotes collaboration and learning communities, and teachers who understand the importance of such a climate, has implications for teacher education.

State departments of education have a responsibility to provide leadership for schools to understand the principles and characteristics of effective school climate in terms of teachers collaboration.

Furthermore, neither educational leaders nor teachers are systemically learning from one another about common barriers, solutions and best practices linked to school daily issues and improvement efforts.

3. Proposal on topics to be tackled within the Teacher Training Cluster of Knowledge

The countries gathered at the cluster meeting identified the following topics to be tackled within the Teacher Training Cluster of Knowledge:

- What do teachers want? – Do we ever ask them?
- Survey on the current state in COPs in the region
- Creating school climate enabling collaborative teachers learning
- Leadership focused on teachers and students teaching and learning
- School management as a first – line support to teachers
- Role of different stakeholders in school – based systems
- How can a state help establish well-performing QPD systems? (who is in charge of supervising this system – principal, psychologist).
- Do we really help by overloading schools and school staff with numerous tasks?
- How to motivate teachers to participate in QPD?
- How to use teachers associations in QPD?
- Instructional leadership that facilitates school-based QPD
- Induction Phase – facilitating teachers’ practical experience in the field of clinical teaching and career induction phase with the possibility of working on methods for reflexion of practical experiences and working on establishment of communities of practice.
- How to support and network teachers – development of the regional list of priority area in which teachers need to be supported and establishment of sustainable ways of teachers’ networking
- Evaluation of the impact of teacher trainings – how to evaluate impact of teacher training in classroom and everyday school life
- Training needs analyses in in-service teacher training in SEE region

4. Conclusions and further steps

It is concluded that it is teachers who are the most important single factor in all the writings and talks on education. If so, they need to be given all the support and help that we can. They need to be given a wide range of opportunities for their continuing professional development, as well as a healthy and learning-friendly climate in schools where they teach and learn. In that sense, the CoK activities should contribute to strengthening of teachers’ profession in SEE countries as well as to support bridging gaps between teacher education policies and practice.

Also, it is concluded that cooperation with the Evidence Based Policy Making in Education Cluster of Knowledge, led by Serbia, would be good opportunity to reach synergy effect. In addition to that, and if possible, conduction of a baseline study in this field would be desirable.

Annex 1

Agenda

10:00 – 10:30	Meeting opening and welcomes by: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Vesna Vučurović, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Education and Sports, Montenegro• Jasminka Čekić Marković, Centre for Education Policy/ERI SEE Interim Agency• Duško Rajković, Director, Centre for Vocational Education, Montenegro
10:30 – 11:30	Introductory Speeches <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Anton Dobart, TFBHC <i>Questions and Discussions</i>• Margareta Nikolovska – ETF <i>Questions and Discussions</i>
11:30 – 12:00	Coffee Break
12:00 – 13:15	Regional Input: Development of Teacher Professionalism through Communities of Practice <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Montenegro – Elvira Hadžibegović Bujanja, Forum MNE – Introducing a new publication School-based in-service teacher training in Montenegro: A Handbook for policy makers and practitioners• Croatia – Boris Vampula, Education and Teacher Training Agency• Kosovo* – Luan Sahitaj, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology• Macedonia, Robert Gjorgiev – VET Centre <i>Questions and Discussions</i>
13:15 – 14:15	Lunch
14:15 – 15:15	Regional Input: Development of Teacher Professionalism through Communities of Practice <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Montenegro – Snežana Grbović, Bureau for Education• Romania - Eugenia Popescu, Ministry of Education• Serbia - Marija Crnojević, EU Project 'Support to Human Capital Development and Research' <i>Questions and Discussions</i>
15:15 – 15:45	Coffee Break
15:45 – 17:00	Discussion: Future activities within the CoK – presentation, proposal and discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Moderation: Rajko Kosović, VET Centre Montenegro
20:00	Departure of participants

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Annex 2 – List of Participants

Name and Surname	Country	Institution
Boris Vampula	Croatia	Education and Teacher Training Agency
Ingrid Jurela-Jarak	Croatia	Ministry of Science, Education and Sports
Maragreta Nikolovska	Italy	ETF
Abdurrahman Simnica	Kosovo*	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
Luan Sahitaj	Kosovo*	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
Antoaneta Šmit-Tanevska	Macedonia	Bureau for Development of Education
Robert Gjorgiev	Macedonia	VET Centre
Duško Rajković	Montenegro	Centre for Vocational Education
Rajko Kosović	Montenegro	Centre for Vocational Education
Ivana Vučinić	Montenegro	Centre for Vocational Education
Goran Blagojević	Montenegro	Centre for Vocational Education
Jadranka Radunović	Montenegro	Centre for Vocational Education
Vjera Mitrović Radošević	Montenegro	Centre for Vocational Education
Vesna Vučurović	Montenegro	Ministry of Education and Sports
Marko Vukašinović	Montenegro	Ministry of Education and Sports
Zorica Minić	Montenegro	Examination Centre
Elvira Hadžibegović Bujanja	Montenegro	Forum MNE (NGO)
Željko Korać	Montenegro	Bureau for Education Services
Anita Marić	Montenegro	Bureau for Education Services
Snežana Grba	Montenegro	Bureau for Education Services
Patricia Reid	Montenegro	Project MNE/011
Eugenia Popescu	Romania	Ministry of Education
Anton Dobart	Austria	TFBHC
Marija Soronda	Austria	TFBHC
Jasminka Čekić Marković	Serbia	Centre for Education Policy/ERI SEE Interim Agency
Nevena Adžić	Serbia	Centre for Education Policy/ERI SEE Interim Agency
Ivana Živadinović	Serbia	Centre for Education Policy/ERI SEE Interim Agency
Marija Crnojević	Serbia	Elementary School