Teacher Education and Training in the Western Balkans

Report on: CROATIA
The Western Balkans Platform on Education and Training was launched on 7 March 2012. It is the latest EU initiative for enhanced policy dialogue and regional cooperation in the Western Balkans. Its objectives are to help to prepare better our partners in this region for their eventual participation in the EU’s policy cooperation framework, the Open Method of Coordination, to enhance their participation in EU programmes and to assist their reform efforts in the area of education and training. The Platform is also an opportunity for discussing issues of common interest among the participants, of sharing good practice and for identifying priorities and needs for further support.

One of the highest priorities identified by the Ministries of Education last year was the training of teachers, and EU support was requested on this topic. In response to this, the EU commissioned a study to map the situation of how teachers are educated and trained in that part of Europe, as comprehensive information on the subject is scarce. The objectives of this study were to look at the key policies, programmes, qualifications systems, quality assurance mechanisms, induction and mentoring programmes, continuing professional development and other aspects of teacher education and training in each country, but also to compare them across the region.

The results of this study are provided in individual country reports and a synthesis report comparing the strengths, weaknesses and good practices in the region. These reports will feed the policy dialogue of the Western Balkans Platform on Education and Training and will hopefully contribute to the on-going national reforms. The main results of the study will be presented, and experiences shared, in a regional seminar organised by the European Commission, under the Western Balkans Platform, in Ohrid in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, on 19-20 November 2013.

Teachers are among the most influential people in each individual’s life. We can all remember those who inspired us, pushed us and guided us. The importance of a teacher’s work cannot be overstated. It is directly linked to the quality of basic education provision, the development of key competences and it also impacts the quality of education at higher levels. That is why I am very pleased that the EU could contribute with this study to the policy dialogue on teacher education and training in the Western Balkans.

Brussels, 10 September 2013

Jan TRUSZCZYŃSKI
Director-General of
Education and Culture
European Commission
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<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assessment</strong></td>
<td>The sum of methods and processes used to evaluate the attainments (knowledge, know-how and/or competences) of an individual, and typically leading to certification.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Classroom Practice</strong></td>
<td>The practical, school-based elements of any course of initial teacher education (ITE), lasting typically not more than a few weeks. It also includes teacher tasks undertaken outside the classroom, such as collaboration with colleagues or communication with parents. It is supervised by a school teacher, with periodic assessment by teachers at the training institution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Competences</strong></td>
<td>The set of learning outcomes: what a teacher knows, understands and is able to perform.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Continuing professional development</strong></td>
<td>In-service ('on-the-job') activities that develop skills, knowledge, expertise and other characteristics as a teacher provided in a formal or informal way, beyond the basic training initially required to carry out the job. In certain cases, they may lead to further qualifications. The term is used interchangeably with ‘in-service training’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Induction</strong></td>
<td>A phase at the early stage of teacher’s career during which novice teachers, having completed the formal programme of initial teacher education, receive structured guidance and support (e.g. from mentors). During induction, new entrants carry out some or all the tasks incumbent on experienced teachers, and they are remunerated for their work. It normally lasts at least several months.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ISCED levels</strong></td>
<td>International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) is an instrument for compiling statistics on education internationally. It distinguishes between six levels of education: pre-primary education (ISCED level 0), primary education (ISCED level 1), lower secondary education (ISCED level 2), upper secondary education (ISCED level 3), post-secondary non-tertiary level of education (ISCED level 4), tertiary-type A education (ISCED level 5A), tertiary-type B education (ISCED level 5B), advanced Research Qualifications (ISCED level 6).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning outcomes</strong></td>
<td>A statement of what a learner knows understands and is able to do on completion of a learning process. The learning outcome approach emphasises the results of learning rather than focusing on inputs such as length of study.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Initial teacher education</strong></td>
<td>A pre-service training provided to student teachers before they have undertaken any teaching, eventually leading to a qualification to teach. It usually takes place in institutions of higher education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Probation period</strong></td>
<td>Temporary appointment in the form of a trial period, normally followed by permanent employment, of which conditions may vary. It can last between several months up to several years under varying conditions (depending on working regulations) and may be subject to a final assessment and is normally followed by permanent employment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Professional training</strong></td>
<td>Training that provides prospective teachers with both the theoretical and practical skills needed to be a teacher. In addition to courses in psychology and teaching methods and methodology, it includes in-class placements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Professional standards</strong></td>
<td>A statement of the professional knowledge, skills and competences required of the teacher at each career stage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Qualification</strong></td>
<td>A formal confirmation (e.g. certificate, diploma, degree) that an individual has achieved learning outcomes up to given standards; and/or the requirements for an individual to enter, or progress within an occupation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teacher</strong></td>
<td>A person who is acknowledged as having the status of a teacher (or equivalent) according to the legislation and practice of a given country.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teacher Education Institution</strong></td>
<td>Any institution responsible for the overall delivery of a programme of ITE and the conferring of an ITE qualification.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Skill</strong></td>
<td>Practiced/learnt efficiency in the performance of a specific (simple or complex) activity or a specific task.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Standard</strong></td>
<td>A minimum level, depth and breadth of what is to be learnt. It provides the basis for final assessment, planning and implementation of teaching and training actions. Learning outcomes used in curricula can be considered as standards.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Definitions applied by the European Commission, international organisations, or scholarly research.*
### List of abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ASHE/AZVO</td>
<td>Agency for Science and Higher Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AVETAE/ASOO</td>
<td>Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEEES/NCVVO</td>
<td>Centre for External Evaluation of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CROQF</td>
<td>Croatian Qualifications Framework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPD</td>
<td>Continuing professional development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ETTA/AZOO</td>
<td>Education and Teacher Training Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ETF</td>
<td>European Training Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EQF</td>
<td>European Qualifications Framework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HEIs</td>
<td>Higher education institutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HNOS</td>
<td>Croatian National Educational Standard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICT</td>
<td>Information and communication technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPA</td>
<td>Instrument for Pre-accession assistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITE</td>
<td>Initial teacher education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCEEES/NCVVO</td>
<td>The National Centre for External Evaluation of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-governmental organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSCE</td>
<td>Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PISA</td>
<td>Programme for International Student Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEECEL</td>
<td>South East European Centre for Entrepreneurial Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nation Development Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations Children’s Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VET</td>
<td>Vocational education and training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WB</td>
<td>World Bank</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Primary and secondary education: an overview

This section provides a brief overview of the organisational and institutional aspects of the education system with a special focus on primary and secondary education. It defines the role of primary and secondary schooling, the role of primary and secondary school teachers, and lists the key school education indicators in this area. It is complemented by a graphic presentation of the current structure of the education system in Croatia presented in Annex 1.

1.1 Current structure of the education system

The education system in the Republic of Croatia consists of:

- **Preschool education (ages 6 months – 6)**:  
  - Compulsory primary education (ages 6 – 15):  
    - Lower level – class based education (ages 7 – 10, grades I – IV)  
- **Secondary education (ages 15 – 19):**  
  - General (or specialised) high schools (gymnasiums/grammar schools) that last 4 years  
  - Vocational schools, which last from 1 to 5 years  
  - Art schools (4 years)  
  - Adult secondary education (lower and upper level).
- **Higher education**:  
  - First cycle: Bachelor study programmes (3-4 years, 180-240 ECTS)  
  - Second cycle: Master's study programmes (1-2 years, 60-120 ECTS)  
  - Third cycle: Doctorate study programmes (3 years, 180 ECTS).
- **Vocational education:** Bachelor (2-4 years, 180 ECTS) and specialised level (1-2 years, 120 ECTS).

For a graphic presentation of the education system please see Annex 1.

1.2 Organisation of primary and secondary education system

Primary education in Croatia consists of two cycles: the first encompasses the first four years of primary school (taught by a class teacher); the second encompasses the second four years of schooling (taught by different subject teachers). The second cycle of primary schooling is also regarded as the lower secondary level.

The third cycle of education relates to the first and the second year of secondary vocational and artistic schools, and in general secondary schools (gimnazije / grammar schools) to all 4 years of study. Students can obtain the lowest vocational qualification already after 2 years of secondary education at the age of 16/17.

Students from grammar schools and 4 year vocational secondary schools complete secondary education by passing a general final exam, the State Matura, which is carried out by the National Centre for External Evaluation of Education (NCEE/NCVVO) in cooperation with the National Bureau of State Matura Examinations (NBZ). The examination is held annually in May.

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2. The Law on Education in Primary and Secondary Schools, NN 87/08.
with schools.\textsuperscript{4} There are no unified Matura examinations for 3 and 2 year vocational secondary education.

Table 1.1 Organisation of education system – at a glance summary table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Years/Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age of pupils starting primary education</td>
<td>6/7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of years of primary education</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age of pupils starting lower secondary education</td>
<td>11\textsuperscript{*}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of years of lower secondary education</td>
<td>4\textsuperscript{*}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of years of upper secondary education</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of years of obligatory schooling</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{*}According to the ISCED levels.

1.3 The role of primary and secondary education

The main aims of education are described in Article 4 of the Law on Education in Primary and Secondary Schools.\textsuperscript{5} These include:

- Assuring a systematic method of teaching students, encouraging and enhancing their intellectual, physical, esthetical, social, moral and spiritual development in accordance to their capabilities and interests;
- developing students’ awareness of their national identity, preservation of historical and cultural heritage and national identity;
- rearing and educating students in accordance to the general cultural and civilisation values, human rights and rights of the child, empowering them to live in a multicultural world, to respect diversity and tolerance, to actively and responsibly participate in the democratic development of society;
- assuring the acquisition of general and specialised competences by students, train them for life and work in a changeable social and cultural context, according to the demands of the market, contemporary information and communication technologies and scientific discoveries and achievements;
- preparing students for lifelong learning.

The educational values, aims, competences, and principles are also specified in the Strategy for the Construction and Development of the National Curriculum for Pre-school Education, General Compulsory and Secondary School Education (2007) and in the National Curriculum for Pre-school Education, General Compulsory and Secondary School Education, adopted in 2008.\textsuperscript{6} The values, which received particular attention in the National Curriculum, are knowledge, solidarity, identity and responsibility.\textsuperscript{7}

Finally, the role of education is also defined in the plans and curricula adopted by primary and secondary schools.

1.4 The role of primary and secondary school teachers

The role of teachers is to ensure conditions and support for learning of all students, assuring that students achieve learning outcomes as prescribed by the strategic documents, the Croatian National Educational Standard (HNOS) and the National Curriculum.

\textsuperscript{4}The Law on Education in Primary and Secondary Schools, NN 87/08, Article 82.
\textsuperscript{5}Ibid, Article 4.
\textsuperscript{6}National Curriculum Framework, p.16.
\textsuperscript{7}National Curriculum Framework, p.22.
The Rulebook on Advancement of Teachers in Primary and Secondary Education\(^8\), which outlines the assessment elements to measure the success of teacher’s work, indicates that it is expected from teachers to:

- apply didactic creativity in teaching;
- implement contemporary teaching methods and knowledge sources;
- achieve results in the rearing of students;
- achieve results in enabling students for independent and lifelong learning;
- be aware of human rights and environmental issues;
- cooperate with other teachers, parents, and school environment.

1.5 **Key trends in numbers in primary and secondary education**

Based on the statistical data obtained through the website of the Croatian Bureau for Statistics\(^9\) and from the website of the World Bank database (March 2013), the following trends in school education can be observed:

- Public spending on education has increased between 2007 and 2009, but there is a lack of information for the other years which does not allow for a comprehensive and clear analysis of the trends of the governmental investment in education.

- Whereas the number of students in primary schools has been continuously falling since 2005, due to the low birth rate in Croatia, the number of teachers in primary education has been steadily rising and the teacher/student ratio has been lowered. The overall enrolment rates have decreased.

- The number of students in secondary education has decreased as well due to the lower birth rate, with the exception of 2011 where the number of students has again risen. The actual enrolment rates in secondary education have risen and fallen again, and the number of secondary schools has grown as a result of reforms in secondary education and the introduction of new school profiles. The number of teachers in secondary education has also increased, which lowered the student/teacher ratio in secondary education.

- The percentage of female teachers, both in primary and secondary education, has risen.

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\(^8\)Article 5, Rulebook on advancement of teachers in primary and secondary education, NN 89/95, 148/99 and 20/05.

\(^9\)www.dzs.hr
### Table 1.2 Key statistics on primary and secondary education*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year Description</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public expenditure on education as % of GDP</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4.02</td>
<td>4.30</td>
<td>4.33</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public expenditure on education as % of government expenditure</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupils in primary education</td>
<td>387 952</td>
<td>382 441</td>
<td>376 100</td>
<td>369 698</td>
<td>361 052</td>
<td>351 345</td>
<td>342 028</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupils in secondary education</td>
<td>189 661</td>
<td>187 977</td>
<td>184 183</td>
<td>181 878</td>
<td>180 582</td>
<td>180 158</td>
<td>183 807</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers in primary education</td>
<td>30 131</td>
<td>30 450</td>
<td>30 877</td>
<td>31 621</td>
<td>32 083</td>
<td>32 213</td>
<td>32 394</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers in secondary education</td>
<td>21 835</td>
<td>22 573</td>
<td>22 975</td>
<td>23 772</td>
<td>24 004</td>
<td>24 223</td>
<td>24 737</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupil-teacher ratio in primary education</td>
<td>17.53</td>
<td>17.06</td>
<td>16.69</td>
<td>16.03</td>
<td>14.78</td>
<td>14.26</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupil-teacher ratio in secondary education</td>
<td>10.14</td>
<td>9.54</td>
<td>9.29</td>
<td>9.09</td>
<td>8.33</td>
<td>8.15</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School enrolment in primary schools (% net)</td>
<td>90.49</td>
<td>90.14</td>
<td>89.83</td>
<td>89.21</td>
<td>87.49</td>
<td>86.82</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School enrolment in secondary schools (% net)</td>
<td>87.94</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>89.43</td>
<td>92.11</td>
<td>91.03</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of female teachers in primary schools</td>
<td>90.12</td>
<td>90.39</td>
<td>91.11</td>
<td>91.35</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>92.47</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of female teachers in secondary schools</td>
<td>66.87</td>
<td>67.31</td>
<td>67.93</td>
<td>68.65</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>68.93</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary school completion rate, total (% of relevant age group)</td>
<td>95.24</td>
<td>96.37</td>
<td>101.07</td>
<td>98.33</td>
<td>95.06</td>
<td>93.11</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth literacy rate*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>99.65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Missing data could not be found on relevant national and international websites and have not been provided by the Ministry.


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10 The total number of pupils enrolled at primary level in public and private schools and the total number of pupils enrolled at secondary level in public and private schools.

2 Government policy in the area of teacher education

It is the aim of this section to outline the main legislative and institutional framework, national policies, reforms and strategies addressing primary and secondary education as well as school teacher education on initial and in-service level. The section ends with a list of envisaged future developments in these areas.

2.1 Legislative framework

The main legal acts and regulations addressing primary and secondary teacher education include:

- The Law on Education in Primary and Secondary Schools\(^\text{12}\) regulates primary and secondary education in public institutions and specifically the status of workers of educational institutions (e.g. teachers), conditions for employment, the basis of continuing professional development (CPD), promotion and licensing, management of the institutions, evaluation and self-evaluation, financing of the institutions, inspection and other relevant functions.

- The Law on Scientific Activity and Higher Education\(^\text{13}\) regulates, inter alia, the organisation of the initial education of teachers and basic articles on quality-assurance processes in relation to the initial education of teachers.

- The State Pedagogical Standards for Elementary School Education\(^\text{14}\) define the minimum infrastructural, financial and personnel conditions for the implementation and development of primary education, including general rules for teachers' professional development.

- The State Pedagogical Standard for Secondary School Education\(^\text{15}\) outlines the universal conditions for quality secondary education and provides the basis for financing secondary education.

- The Strategy for the Construction and Development of the National Curriculum for Pre-school Education, General Compulsory and Secondary School Education\(^\text{16}\) contains propositions of guidelines and ways to improve education in the Croatian social context, as well as the propositions on how to ensure a quality education system.

- The Rulebook on advancement of teachers in primary and secondary education\(^\text{17}\) outlines the procedures and conditions for the promotion of teachers as mentors and advisors.

- The Law on Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education\(^\text{18}\) outlines the procedures of quality assurance and quality enhancement, accreditation, thematic


\(^{17}\)Rulebook on advancement of teachers in primary and secondary education, NN 89/95, 148/99 and 20/05, http://www.asoo.hr/UserDocsImages/dodatkap%20u%20dokumente/Pravlilnik%20o%20napredovanju%20u%20C4%8Ditelja%20nastavnika%20osnovnom%20srednjem%20%5Akolstvu.pdf
evaluation and audit of institutions of higher education and science, and the status and competences of the Agency for Science and Higher Education and other bodies responsible for quality assurance.

- The Law on Croatian Qualifications Framework\textsuperscript{19}, adopted in February 2013, establishes the qualifications framework which is compatible with the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and the Qualifications Framework of the European Higher Education Area (QF-EHEA). The Law also establishes the National Council on the Development of Human Potential as the main actor responsible for the Croatian Qualifications Framework (CROQF).

- The Law on Education Inspection\textsuperscript{20} regulates the organisation of school inspections and the competences of inspectors.

- The Law on education in the language and script of national minorities\textsuperscript{21}, adopted in 2000, based on the constitutional rights in the Republic of Croatia, regulates all levels of education in national minorities’ languages. Education can also be bilingual or exclusively in the languages of the national minorities.

The legal framework is in place but the general perception, as informed by stakeholders, is that a considerable number of rulebooks are needed in order to assure full implementation of the existing legal and strategic provisions. The main areas requiring further legal regulation are: the induction and licensing programmes, career advancement of teachers, continuing professional development of school principals, and most importantly, development and adoption of national teacher competences.

2.2 Institutional framework

The Ministry of Science, Education and Sport, national agencies and centres, and local authorities, are the main institutions responsible for primary and secondary school teacher education in Croatia.

a) At national level:

- The Ministry of Science, Education and Sports (hereafter referred to as the Ministry):
  - adopts the National Curriculum;
  - adopts the experimental programmes, which introduce and evaluate new education content, methodologies and equipment;
  - prescribes the conditions, methods, financing criteria and timetable of vježbaonica (classroom practice) on the proposal of higher education institutions, which provide initial teacher education;
  - prescribes methods of evaluation and grading of students, as well as the content, conditions, procedure of the secondary school final examination (State Matura) and defending the final work;
  - adopts a yearly plan of the implementation of external evaluation of education institutions, on the proposal of the Council for National Curriculum;
  - nominates the Council for National Curriculum;
  - prescribes obligatory qualifications and competences for teachers;
  - prescribes the programme and methodology of induction period for novice teachers, monitoring of their work, content, conditions and procedure of professional examinations;
  - approves programmes of CPD and prescribes their methodology and procedure;


\textsuperscript{20}The Law on Education Inspection, NN 61/11 and 16/12, http://www.zakon.hr/z/474/zakon-o-prosvjetnoj-inspekciji

\textsuperscript{21}The Law on Education in Language and Script of National Minorities, NN 51/00 and 56/00, http://www.zakon.hr/z/318/
prescribes the programme, procedure and ways of acquiring and renewing licences for teachers;

gives approval for the nomination of school principals;

supervises and controls financial management of education institutions.  

The Education and Teacher Training Agency (ETTA/AZOO):

- provides expertise and advice in education;
- participates in monitoring, advancement and development of education in pre-school, compulsory primary and secondary education, adult education, education of Croatian citizens abroad and education of foreign citizens in Croatia;
- participates in the development and implementation of the National Curriculum;
- provides expert support and provides guidelines for schools, their principals, teachers, expert associates (education workers);
- organises and implements the CPD of education workers, unless differently prescribed by other regulations;
- implements expert examinations for education workers, under special regulations;
- implements promotion procedures for education workers, under special regulations;
- gives expert opinion on programmes in pre-school education, primary education and general secondary education (grammar schools), general education programmes in vocational secondary schools, programmes in adult education, except otherwise prescribed by other regulations;
- monitors the development and implementation of the Croatian National Education Standard as part of the National Curriculum;
- implements pedagogical–expert supervision;
- participates in organisation and implementation of students' competitions;
- participates in the development and monitoring of national programmes;
- carries out information-documentation and publishing activities;
- delivers other duties in accordance with the law and bylaws of the Minister of education.

The National Centre for External Evaluation of Education (NCEE/NClVVO):  

- plans strategies and assessment methodology and external evaluation in education;
- implements research in the field of education evaluation and external evaluation;
- develops tests, and any other exam materials;
- develops and publishes working textbooks and guidelines for exam preparation;
- organises and implements all exams based on national standards, including the secondary school final exam (State Matura);
- distributes examination certificates;
- cooperates with international certificate centres and organisations;
- organises implementation of international examinations and internal comparative analyses in education;
- implements external evaluation in primary and secondary schools and other institutions who deal with professional education and training;
- analyses and publishes examination and external evaluation results;
- provides suggestions to the Ministry for continuous quality enhancement of education;
- advises schools in their self-evaluation processes and development based on results of standardised tests;
- organises seminars for teachers in the field of grading and evaluation of students;
- organises seminars for external partners of the Centre in the process of preparation and implementation of examinations (external evaluators and authors of examination questions);

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The Law on Education in Primary and Secondary Schools, NN 87/08, Articles 26, 29, 41, 72, 82, 88, 89, 105, 108, 115, 117, 127, 139, 150.

[22] www.azoo.hr
[23] www.ncvvo.hr

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develops and maintains the information system, prints and publishes documents and publications in the field of external evaluation.25

- The Agency for Science and Higher Education (ASHE/AZVO)26:
  - implements the initial accreditation procedure, reaccreditation procedure, thematic evaluation procedure, external independent periodic evaluation of internal quality assurance systems (audit);
  - gathers and analyses data on the science and higher education system (e.g. on science and higher education resources and their adequacy to the social needs, on the quality and efficiency of science and higher education, on the development tendencies of science and higher education systems);
  - implements the procedure of recognition of foreign higher-education degrees;
  - provides information on enrolment conditions in higher education in the Republic of Croatia and gathers data on the fulfilment of conditions of enrolment of students;
  - coordinates and encourages cooperation and membership of international associations which deal with quality assurance;
  - encourages the development of research and knowledge on quality assurance of science and higher education in the Republic of Croatia and implements systematic educational activities at national level, and especially the education of members of expert bodies in the external quality assurance procedures and quality enhancement.

- The Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education (AVETAE/ASOO)27 is responsible for planning, development, organisation, implementation, monitoring and advancement of the vocational and adult education systems, definition of roles of teachers in a learning outcomes orientated system and the establishment of a quality assurance system in vocational and adult education.

b) At regional and county level:

- Municipal authorities are mainly responsible for certain financing issues and approving and assisting employment procedures in schools.28

- At the county level (županije), the Education and Teacher Training Agency (ETTA/AZOO) organises county councils, responsible for the dissemination of information and the implementation of CPD.29

Overall, the institutional setting in Croatia is well developed, establishing clear responsibilities for each institution. The decentralised character of CPD at county level is a good example of the provision of clear links between the local and national level of activity. Additional cooperation should be encouraged in the field of quality assurance, taking into account further indicators for the quality of education.

2.3 National reforms addressing primary and secondary schooling

The conceptual and structural reorganisation of the primary and secondary education systems undertaken in Croatia in recent years is discussed below. Reforms that address school teachers in particular are presented in Section 2.4.

a) Education sector development plans

In 2005, the Government of the Republic of Croatia adopted the Education Sector Development Plan 2005-201030 as a strategic document with specific priority to ensure fundamental changes and further enhancement of education quality in Croatia. The planned priorities were:

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25 The Law on founding of the National Centre for External Evaluation of Education, NN 151/04.
26 www.azvo.hr
27 www.asoo.hr
28 The Law on Education in Primary and Secondary Schools, NN 87/08.
29 Stakeholder consultations (interview, ETTA/AZOO), Zagreb, 11.03.2013.
30 Draft comment, June 2013.
- improvement of teaching and learning in schools, development of knowledge and skills by training of teachers and improvement of their social and financial status;
- improvement of working conditions in schools and upgrading of school equipment;
- development of lifelong learning, according to the market needs;
- increase in the use of information and communications technology;
- strengthening the role of schools in the prevention of socially unacceptable behaviour;
- encouragement of varied means of support to students in their learning and extracurricular activities and creation of schools as learning communities;
- improvement of the management of educational institutions and introduction of monitoring and external evaluation;
- rationalisation and decentralisation of the education system;
- increasing direct support to regional development;
- increasing the participation of parents, local community and other partners in the improvement of the educational system;
- innovation in the approach to educational processes and harmonisation with the EU programmes on all levels;
- linkage between higher education and research;
- strengthening of national and cultural values and belonging to the European culture.

The strategy aimed to improve the quality and effectiveness of education; to improve management and efficiency of the education system; and to promote education for social cohesion and economic growth and development (reforms announced in the strategy which are further described in the subsequent sections). In terms of teacher education, the Plan focused especially on in-service teacher training, since there was a demand for qualified teachers in the areas of mathematics, physics, chemistry and foreign languages.  

The strongest outcome of the Plan has been the adoption of new legislative and institutional frameworks (see Sections 2.1 and 2.2). The main state actors responsible for the implementation of this strategy have been transformed from institutes to agencies and new bodies have been established (e.g. ETTA/AZOO, AVETAE/ASOO, ASHE/AZVO, CEEE/NCVV).

A new Strategy on Education, Science and Technology until 2020 is currently being prepared by the Ministry (expected to be finalised in October 2013). While a large number of stakeholders have been engaged in the preparation of this document, the non-governmental sector has reported that the criteria for involvement have not been transparent and that, so far, there is little public information on the progress of the Strategy.

The main innovation when developing the new strategy has been a new approach – the thematic topic division within working groups into pre-tertiary education, tertiary education, lifelong learning and infrastructure. This is the first time that the pre-tertiary education sector has been perceived integrally instead of being divided into pre-school, primary and secondary education. It is envisaged that the monitoring of the implementation of the new Strategy will be carried out by the Education Council of the Parliament of the Republic of Croatia. It has also been recommended by the consulted stakeholders that the new draft Strategy is presented to the public for wider consultations.

b) Curriculum reform

In 2005-2006, the Ministry of Science, Education and Sport carried out a reform project, known as the Croatian National Educational Standard (HNOS). The aim of this initiative was to sensitisise teachers to the envisaged changes in approach to education and learning, to carry out systematic training and development, to change teaching plans and programmes and to modernise textbooks. The Standard was an introduction to the development of the National Curriculum.

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32 Stakeholder consultations (questionnaire, Youth Network of Croatia), 03.04.2013
One of the goals of the reform has been to change the role of teachers to become organisers of the educational process and not only the main source of knowledge.\textsuperscript{33} However, some interviewees have noticed that HNOS has achieved little effect within the schools themselves and that further initiatives and encouragement of implementation need to be strengthened.\textsuperscript{34}

In 2007, the Strategy for the Construction and Development of the National Curriculum for Pre-school Education, General Compulsory and Secondary School Education was adopted.\textsuperscript{35} Accordingly, the National Curriculum for Pre-school Education, General Compulsory and Secondary School Education\textsuperscript{36} was adopted in 2011, marking the transition from teacher-centred learning to the competences-based education system and learning outcomes. The key competences defined in the document include: communication in mother tongue, foreign languages, competences in maths, natural sciences and technology, digital competences, learning to learn, social and citizenship competences, entrepreneurship, cultural awareness and expression. The framework also introduced different teaching methods, such as research-based learning, student-centred learning, project-based learning, multimedia, individualised approach to students, interdisciplinary approach and problem-based learning and group work. At the moment, however, as most interviewees noted, it is difficult to assess the full scope of the results and it might be a recommendation to undertake a comprehensive evaluation exercise.

c) External evaluation of education\textsuperscript{37}

The external evaluation, introduced by NCEEE/NCVVO (the Centre) in both primary and secondary schools, is based on standardised tests which are implemented by the Centre in order to evaluate knowledge, skills and competences of students.

The Centre started the self-evaluation processes of secondary schools in 2006 and then continued with vocational schools. In 2007, it also founded and developed a network of associates who can help schools in their self-evaluation processes. The associates are supported by the Centre through regular meetings and coordination of their meetings with the schools. In addition to the national examination results and accompanying questionnaires, schools have undertaken SWOT analyses and prepared school development plans. Schools themselves can choose if they wish to participate in the self-evaluation independently, with the Centre or with the support of the network associate.

The Law on Education in Primary and Secondary Schools from 2008 introduced the obligation for schools to use the results of the national exams and other indicators towards the aim of self-evaluation and continuous quality enhancement of schools.

In line with the Article 82 of the above-mentioned law, the State Matura for secondary schools has been introduced for students in general/grammar schools of secondary education.\textsuperscript{38} With support of the World Bank, 250 teachers responsible for test development were trained in 2010 and training was also provided for teachers who served as test evaluators in mother tongue, mathematics and foreign languages as well as in each of the elective subjects.\textsuperscript{39} The first cohort of graduates who have passed the State Matura was enrolled at HEIs in 2010/2011 academic year.


\textsuperscript{34}Stakeholder consultations (interview, the Union of Science and Higher Education), 21.03.2013.


\textsuperscript{38}Secondary education in vocational and art schools, which lasts for at least 4 years, is finalised by a preparation and presentation of a final exercise/paper. However, if students wish so, they can also participate in the State Matura.

\textsuperscript{39}World Bank (2012), Croatia, op.cit.
d) Introduction of the Bologna Process in higher education and the Croatian Qualifications Framework

Croatia joined the Bologna Process in 2001 and in 2005 all study programmes have been harmonised with the Law on Scientific Activity and Higher Education adopted in 2003. The quality-assurance mechanisms were implemented in higher education institutions in 2009 through the Law on Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education. These changes introduced integrated study programmes at the teacher faculties (for primary school class teachers) and consecutive model for teachers at other faculties (for subject teachers in primary and secondary schools).

The most recent development has been the introduction of the Croatian Qualifications Framework (CROQF) in 2013. The placement of qualifications at respective levels allows the comparison and linking of different qualifications, linked to the European Qualifications Framework and the levels of the Qualifications framework of the European Higher Education Area. The CROQF also enables the development of recognition and validation of non-formal and informal learning, along with the compulsory introduction of quality-assurance systems and clear quality assessment procedures. In addition to the qualifications standards, the CROQF also introduces occupational standards containing clearly defined competences required for particular occupations.

The introduction of CROQF reinforces the need for the shift from content-centred to student-centred learning and to a learning-outcomes based model. It therefore requires a methodological shift in teaching and new teaching skills, as well as significant changes in teachers’ approach to the preparation and development of plans and curricula. The possession and appliance of these skills are still not in full operation, particularly at the level of initial teacher education. As the CROQF was introduced only recently, an appropriate time-frame is needed to evaluate its effects on the ground.

e) Establishing the Centre for Educational Research and Development

A significant development in the field of research and education policy has been the foundation of the Centre for Research and Development of Education in 2001 in Zagreb, the first larger scale policy-oriented research programme on education.\(^{40}\) The Centre has provided continuous support to the development of education policies and helped to create a network of education experts.

2.4 National reforms, policies, and programmes on teacher education

The main national reforms, policies, and programmes on teacher education introduced in recent years in Croatia include:

- Introduction of obligatory higher education qualifications for teachers in 2008 (except in special cases prescribed by the law as explained in Section 6.1),\(^ {41}\) upgraded from vocational college to the university level, and the possibility of acquiring a Ph.D. opened to primary teachers.

- Introduction of obligatory continuing professional development (CPD) of teachers and teacher licensing in 2008\(^ {42}\); however the licensing procedure is not yet in place, partially due to delays in establishing a system of reliable data collection on teacher attendance in in-service training.\(^ {43}\)

- Creation of ETTA/AZOO, AVETA/ASOO and NCEEE/NCCVO (see Section 2.2), which are responsible for assuring frequent teacher training, including training in self-evaluation.

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\(^{40}\)http://www.iro.hr/userdocs/File/ACCESS/tfarnell_ISR-CERD_Dresden.pdf

\(^{41}\)The Law on Education in Primary and Secondary Schools, NN 87/08, Article 105.

\(^{42}\)The Law on Education in Primary and Secondary Schools, NN 87/08, Article 115.

\(^{43}\)World Bank (2012), Croatia…, op.cit.
Development and adoption by ETTA/AZZO in 2009 of a Strategy for Continuous Professional Development of Teachers 2009-2013 aimed at transforming the practice of in-service teacher training and introducing an accreditation system for teacher training programmes, and two-year cycles as a basis for the organisation of training events.44

Modernisation of curricula at HEIs, also those responsible for organising initial teacher education (ITE), by adopting the new Law on Scientific Activity and Higher Education in 2003, which introduced the Bologna process into the Croatian Higher Education.45

Even though the importance of the teaching profession has been recognised by the official government documents and in state policy, its status has been declining over the past years. From 2001 to 2006, average teachers’ salaries have been significantly diminished (from 3.28% to 1.70% of GDP).46 The net monthly salary of primary school teachers is approximately 550-600 Euros, and the salary during the induction phase is the same as the minimal prescribed income.47

2.5 Forecast of policy needs in the field of teacher education

According to the research findings based on desk research and stakeholder consultations, the following needs were identified in the field of teacher education and training:

- Preparation of further measures and full implementation of the licensing system for teachers, with particular attention to the quality assurance in the licensing system.48
- Preparation of a new rulebook on the promotion to the qualification of a teacher mentor and teacher counsellor (ongoing since 2009) to update the current one with the latest reform developments. Implementing and developing rulebooks following the National Curriculum.
- Providing incentives and increasing the number of teachers participating in continuing professional development (CPD) to encompass all teachers and not only the most motivated representatives of the profession.
- Offering enriched teacher training within CPD programmes to better reflect the teachers’ needs and diversifying the teaching and learning methods used in CPD programmes. Also, offering more CPD programmes in parts of the country other than Zagreb to improve attendance of teachers from other regions.
- Assuring progress in CPD of teachers in the fields of didactics and methodology; work with students with special needs, and the use of ICT, i.e., areas that appear as the weakest fields of teacher competences, also in providing further support for teachers in acquiring entrepreneurship competences, competences to work in inclusive classes and institutions, intercultural competences, teaching inter-subject topics, such as individual development of students, ecology, health and learning to learn.
- Making CPD obligatory for all teachers and providing it through the system of periodic licensing, regulated by the Ministry as prescribed by the Law.

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44World Bank (2012), Croatia…, op.cit.
48Stakeholder consultations (questionnaire, the Association of Croatian secondary schools’ principals), 20.02.2013. The Law on Education in Primary and Secondary Schools, NN 87/08 demands further bylaws and regulations so the licensing system could be implemented.
Retraining of teachers who will not be able to find employment (as teachers) due to the rationalisation of the number of teachers in the country, following the demographic trend (see Section 1.5).

Investing in capacity-building for teacher education research at the institutional level (within and outside of universities) for the development of education research and policy in the country.\textsuperscript{39}

Addressing the problem of teacher shortage in the fields of natural sciences (mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology) and foreign languages.

Providing incentives to increase the attractiveness of the teaching profession and recruit teachers for schools in poor and less inhabited areas of Croatia.

Developing national teacher competences to assure the national level quality of all teachers.\textsuperscript{39}

Approval for the Centre for Research and Development of Education of the Institute for Social Research in Zagreb and the Faculty of Political Sciences of the University of Zagreb to start a new specialisation (graduate degree) in Education Policy, which should further contribute to the promotion of education science disciplines and a larger number of interdisciplinary education experts in the country.

Preparation and adoption of a new national curriculum following the adoption of the new Strategy 2020 to introduce the envisaged educational reforms.

Developing school principals’ positions as professional managerial posts to assure better management of schools and improving principals’ competences.

Solving the problem of schools working in two shifts (as already recognised in the Education Sector Development Plan 2005-2010), which overburdens teachers and limits their time for professional development.

3 Organisation of initial teacher education (ITE)

The following section reflects on organisation of primary and secondary school teacher education at initial level. It first looks at the key institutions providing the initial teacher education and methods of financing it. Then, it describes how initial teacher education is approached in Croatia, with a special focus on admission procedures, education programmes, curricula, and assessment methods.

3.1 Providers and financing of ITE

Institutions providing teacher education include higher education institutions (HEIs) and student vježbaonice (classroom practices). Vježbaonice are not the institutions providing teacher education per se but partners to HEIs in the provision of initial teacher education. They provide space for practical work for students in initial teacher education. The conditions, work methods, financing criteria and schedule of vježbaonice are prescribed by the Minister based on a proposal from HEIs that offer teacher education programmes.\textsuperscript{51}

As for HEIs offering teacher education, there are seven universities offering teacher education programmes provided either through special faculties or through special programmes within different faculties. These include: the University of Zagreb, Rijeka, Osijek, Split, Pula, Zadar and Dubrovnik.


\textsuperscript{50}Strategy for the National Curriculum, p.29.

\textsuperscript{51}The Law on Primary and Secondary Schools, Article 41.
Initial teacher education is financed by the state budget through the Ministry of Science, Education and Sport, which supports all public higher education institutions that train future teachers.

3.2 Admission procedures

In order to be enrolled to HEIs, students must pass the final secondary school examination - State Matura. Since 2010, applications to higher education institutions have been implemented through the National Information System (NISpVU). The ranking of applicants is based on the secondary school final assessment results and the results of State Matura, student's personal achievements and - in special cases - on additional skills.

There are no additional criteria for enrolment at teacher faculties, either in terms of psychological characteristics or suitability for working with children/youth.

It has been noted during the stakeholder consultations that the lack of current prestige in the teaching profession impacts the number and the quality of students applying for teacher education programmes.

3.3 Education programmes

ITE is organised at teacher faculties for lower primary education (for class teachers in the first four grades of primary school – first cycle) and at different faculties for subject teachers for lower secondary education (subject teachers teaching in the last four grades of primary school – second cycle) and for secondary school teachers. Teachers of the second cycle of primary schools and secondary education receive initial training at the faculties of philology, philosophy, natural sciences, technical faculties, art faculties and sport faculties. There is no difference between ITE for second cycle primary school teachers and secondary school teachers.

Teachers, both at teacher faculties and other faculties, need to obtain Master's degrees. Education programmes at teacher faculties are integrated (one five-year cycle), while the programmes at other faculties for subject teachers are consecutive – the teaching component comes after obtaining a Bachelor degree within the Master's cycle.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cycle</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Length</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Integrated</td>
<td>Integrated cycle for class teachers</td>
<td>5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(lower primary school)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Bachelor's degree</td>
<td>3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>Master's degree</td>
<td>2 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.4 Curricula and teacher education standards

Teacher education curricula are created by HEIs. Despite the adoption of CROQF, there are no national standards for teacher education and thus no guarantees to achieve equal quality for novice teachers throughout the country. Programmes for teacher education are not harmonised and it has been pointed out by some stakeholders that there are significant differences between programmes provided by different HEIs. An example of the curricula for a programme of teacher education (class teachers) of the University of Rijeka can be found in the Annex 2.

As the HEIs’ programmes differ, the number of hours dedicated to classroom practice varies between institutions. Stakeholders contacted throughout this study pointed out that the number of hours devoted to classroom practice at schools is very limited in ITE and usually

52 Stakeholder consultations (interviews, the Union of Science and Higher Education, the Centre for Research and Development of Education of the Institute for Social Research in Zagreb), 21.03.2013, 11.03.2013.
constitutes from 7% to 12% of the overall study programme. Mentors from partner schools are responsible for monitoring this small amount of practice.53

Table 3.2  Teaching competences54

| Knowledge and understanding | ■ Understanding and critical thinking on education processes and interdependence of different segment of the education system. |
|                           | ■ Understanding and respect of all stakeholders in the education process. |
|                           | ■ Understanding and ability to participate in the development of school and pedagogic pluralism. |
|                           | ■ Language and communication skills. |
|                           | ■ Basic scientific and theoretical knowledge of primary education (linguistic-communication, social-humanistic, mathematic-science, information-communication, physical and health, arts). |

| Skills and abilities | ■ Capability for quality oral and written communication in Croatian and a foreign language for the needs of personal and professional development (especially for reading literature in the area of professional expertise). |
|                     | ■ Use of research methodologies in the field of education. |
|                     | ■ Analysis and evaluation of one’s own work, education processes and learning. |
|                     | ■ Efficient management of classes in a multicultural environment. |
|                     | ■ Efficient use of computers in education. |

| Attitudes and values | ■ Awareness on the need for encouragement of holistic student development, acknowledging their characteristics, skills and interests and the right to be different. |
|                     | ■ Acting in the accordance with the ethical principles of the profession and the best interest of the student. |
|                     | ■ Strong identification with the teaching profession and other colleagues. |

Source: Stakeholder consultations (interview, Teacher Faculty at the University of Zagreb).

3.5  Assessment methods

Teacher student assessment methods are defined for each subject. Assessment includes different continuous assessment methods such as attendance, active participation during lectures, submitting papers, the evaluation of classroom practice, and other exercises. The number of points a student can obtain through continuous assessment methods can be up to 70, and for the final examination (written or oral) up to 30 points can be obtained.55 The actual percentage attributed to evaluating the classroom practice within continuous assessment methods differs between HEIs.

4  Support for new teachers

The following section is devoted to the provision of personal and professional support (‘induction’) for new teachers. When there are no systematic and/or national induction programmes, current practices to help novice teachers at the beginning of their career are discussed.

Following university education, new teachers are employed as novice (new) teachers and start their one-year induction programme. The details of this procedure are determined by the Minister in charge of education.56

The induction programme begins after the employment contract. As soon as a novice teacher starts to work, the school that has employed her or him is responsible for:

54As there are no teaching competences established at the national level, the list of competences in Table 3.2 is an example provided by the Teacher Faculty from the University of Zagreb.
55An example from a study programme of the Teacher Faculty of the University of Rijeka.
56The Law on Education in Primary and Secondary Schools, Article 108.
nominating the commission for the induction programme that consists of the school principal, new teacher's mentor and expert advisor;

- informing the Education and Teacher Training Agency about the beginning of the induction programme;
- developing the induction programme;
- assigning and providing continuous expert, pedagogical, didactic and other help for a novice teacher;
- monitoring and evaluating the advancement of the new teacher in the induction programme.

Teachers who have the same subject/profile as novice teachers are appointed as teacher mentors. If a mentor cannot be nominated within the school where a novice teacher has started an induction programme, she or he should be nominated from another school. A novice teacher is obliged to attend mentors’ classes (at least 30 hours during an induction programme) and mentors are obliged to attend new teacher’s classes (at least 10 hours). The school principal and the expert advisor are obliged to introduce a novice teacher to other duties within teaching profession (legislative acts, pedagogic documentation, cooperation with parents and other colleagues).

After one year of induction, novice teachers apply for the professional (state) examination, which is organised by ET TA/AZOO (and AVETAE in case of vocational teachers), according to the Rulebook on the professional examination of teachers and professional advisors in primary and secondary education. If new teachers have more than one-year of professional experience in the field in which they have obtained a graduate degree (other than a teacher degree), they have two years to obtain pedagogic competences at an HEI; they also have to pass the professional examination.57

Despite these developments, it has been pointed out by some stakeholders that the criteria for professional examination are not clearly set and almost all novice teachers pass. Another serious concern is that the induction plans and programmes are developed by mentors and therefore they can differ significantly. Appointing a mentor from another school is yet another challenge that may impede proper implementation of the induction programme. Mentors and novice teachers who are not from the same institution can face difficulties with meetings on a regular basis, and in the following of each other’s work. Therefore, the degree of success and quality of the induction programme largely relies on the individual initiative and interest of a mentor.

5 Continuing professional development of teachers (CPD)

Section 5 describes how continuing professional development (CPD) of teachers is approached in Croatia. It looks at the CPD providers and financing of in-service teacher training and identifies programmes, practices, and activities for teachers’ professional development. It also reflects on knowledge, skills, and attitudes (values) required from experienced teachers.

5.1 Providers and financing of CPD

CPD of teachers is provided by ET TA/AZOO, county councils organised by ET TA/AZOO, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and faculties that provide initial teacher education at the state-funded universities in Croatia. It can be organised at state, regional and county levels.

The CPD of teachers in state (public) schools is financed from the state budget. It can also be financed by HEIs and with international support. According to some estimates, the annual funds devoted to CPD are not sufficient and cover even less than 10% of teachers’ needs in this area.58 As stated by some interviewees, the economic crisis had a negative impact on

57 The Law on Education in Primary and Secondary Schools, Article 110.
58 Stakeholder consultations (questionnaire, the Association of Croatian Secondary Schools’ Principals), 20.02.2013.
the level of funds dedicated to CPD; consequently, they have lowered in the last couple of years by over 30%. In addition, teacher salaries were decreased by 8% in 2008 due to the economic slowdown and a number of negotiations have taken place between the government and the trade unions in order to stop further cuts in education.

5.2 Organisation of in-service teacher training

Teachers have the right and obligation to participate in CPD through programmes approved by the Ministry. CPD includes both individual and organised training and development in the respective fields of pedagogy, didactics, educational psychology, methodology, ICT, counselling, management, educational policies, and other fields relevant for efficient and high-quality performance of education activities in schools.

CPD programmes are organised by the competent institutions, such as HEIs, institutes, associations, agencies, and schools. They are implemented by 104 advisors from ETTA/AZOO (and AVETAE for vocational teachers) from Zagreb and regional offices in Rijeka, Osijek and Split. Every advisor is an expert for a certain subject or field and is responsible for organising CPD for 800-1,200 teachers across the country. At the county level, an important role is given to distinguished education professionals who are county coordinators for teacher training. There are 1602 county coordinators for teacher training and their work is financed from the state budget.

Teachers apply for CPD programmes through an electronic application system (www.ettaedu.eu). Novice teachers are considered as an especially important target group because they are being prepared for the professional state examination and the successful start of their career. All CPD activities for teachers are planned on non-working days, i.e. during spring, winter and summer breaks.

Topics of the CPD activities of the Agency (ETTA/AZOO) are connected to the basic fields, strategy and skills development or topics of national relevance. Lecturers are experts from higher education institutions or other institutions that deal with education, principals and professional advisors from schools, or experienced teachers who are promoted to mentors and advisors. At the county level, lecturers and successful teachers from the local community can act as experts.

Types of CPD activities vary and they are adjusted to the level of training, target group and number of participants. If there is a large number of participants, mostly a combination of plenary lectures and work in small groups with workshop methods are organised. For small groups, methodologies are more interdisciplinary, modular, project-based, through video conferences, experiential learning, active participation and individual work in accordance with new technologies, symposia, different lectures, seminars, workshops, discussions, supervision groups, websites and forums.

Teachers are also involved in education communities which encourage professional development by providing possibilities for discussion, reading and sharing of professional experiences. These groups are included in the network of learning communities which is led by NCEEE/NCVVO.

The professional knowledge expected from teachers can be perceived as the ‘demands’ for the advancement of teachers, as prescribed in the Rulebook for the advancement of

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59. Ibid.
60. Stakeholder consultations (interview, the Union of Science and Higher Education), 21.03.2013.
61. The Law on Education in Primary and Secondary Schools, Article 115.
62. Stakeholder consultations (questionnaire, ETTA/AZOO), Zagreb, 11.03.2013.
63. Stakeholder consultations (questionnaire, AZOO), 11.03.2013.
teachers. The achievements that are evaluated to assess the expertise and quality of teachers’ work are limited to success in the work with students, engagement in extracurricular professional activities, and participation in CPD.

Yet, there is little impact assessment of CPD in the classroom and the overall assessment of real CPD needs of teachers is lacking. The CPD programmes provided are more in line with the centralised education policy decisions than with actual teacher needs. School principals also lack additional support in the decision-making process on in-service training needs in their schools. While they require further training in providing regular formative feedback to teachers on their performance, teachers should also be encouraged to assess their own learning needs. Without proper evaluation, impact and needs assessment, the effectiveness of CPD of teachers in Croatia will remain low.

It should also be mentioned that there are no consequences if teachers do not attend CPD programmes. The estimate is that approximately only one third of teachers participate in CPD programmes. A lack of appropriate funding has been pointed out as one of the potential reasons for limited engagement in this type of activity. Decisions on financing of CPD of teachers in respective schools are taken by school principals.

6 Teacher qualifications and quality assurance

This section provides information on the qualifications (and diplomas, licences, certificates, occupational grades) required to become a primary and secondary school teacher. It also explores the issue of the quality assurance mechanism and identifies which key stakeholders are involved in the quality assurance process in teacher education.

6.1 Qualification system for primary and secondary school teachers

The level of primary and secondary teacher education required to be employed at schools is defined by the Minister in charge of education and specified in the Law on Education in Primary and Secondary Schools (2008):

- At primary schools, class teachers (teachers providing education in the first 4 years of primary school) should be holders of a Master’s degree from teacher training faculties.
- At primary schools, subject teachers (teachers providing education in the last 4 years of primary school and in secondary schools, specialised for a specific subject) should be:


66For example, method creativity in teaching; implementation of innovative methods in teaching and the use of contemporary knowledge sources; achieved results in the educational work with students; achieved educational results of students and their capacity for independent learning and lifelong learning; promotion of human rights and environmental issues; cooperation with other teachers, parents and representatives of the civil society who are directly involved in the advancement of the social environment of the school.

67For example, implementation of experimental classes for professional conferences at the county level or wider; giving lectures at professional conferences; leading of professional conferences; preparation of thematic exhibitions open for public; preparation of public cultural events in the school; preparation of school competitions; leading of different school clubs for the students; mentorship (both to new teacher teachers and students); publication of scientific articles; participation in the implementation of research in education; participation in the development of educational plan and programmes; textbook evaluation; translation of textbooks or multimedia educational software; writing a textbook or creating a multimedia educational software; publication of research in the respective field of the teacher; participation as a researcher in a research project which contributes to the development of Croatian education.

68Rulebook on advancement of teachers in primary and secondary education, Article 4.

69Stakeholder consultations (interview, the Centre for Research and Development of Education of the Institute for Social Research in Zagreb), 11.03.2013.

70Stakeholder consultations (interview, the Association of Croatian Secondary School Principals), 20.02.2013.
○ Holders of a Master's degree from other faculties, where they studied at departments for teacher education of respective subjects (i.e. faculty of mathematics, department for education of mathematics); or

○ Bachelor level graduates from academic and vocational institutions if no master-level degree graduates responded to the call. In case of the latter, graduates should have at least 180 ECTS and additional necessary pedagogical, psychological, didactic, and methodological education worth 60 ECTS (called pedagogic competences).

- At secondary schools, only Master's level graduates with pedagogic competences can become subject teachers.

### Table 6.1 Minimum qualifications required to teach in primary and secondary schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>I cycle (or other)</th>
<th>II cycle (or other)</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Primary school teaching qualifications</strong></td>
<td>Bachelor level degree for subject teachers if no Master's level degree graduates responded to the call (see above)</td>
<td>Master's level degree from teacher faculty</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Secondary school teaching qualifications</strong></td>
<td>Master's level degree of any faculty within the teacher programme</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teachers can advance their career in three levels and acquire the corresponding titles of a regular level teacher, teacher mentor, and teacher advisor. Teachers are promoted as mentors and advisors every five years and they can be re-elected. Teachers can request a procedure for the promotion to the advisor position no sooner than five years after being elected as a mentor.

After successfully passing their professional examination (see Section 4), teachers receive their first licence. The licence is a public document which demonstrates the appropriate level of general and professional competences of teachers. It will be teacher's right and duty to renew the licence every five years. Currently, the licensing procedure is not in place and further details of the licensing procedure will be prescribed by the Ministry.

Within the promotion system, as described above, teachers’ salary can be upgraded by 7% and 12%.

It should be also mentioned, that in line with Article 106 of the Law on Education in Primary and Secondary Schools, teachers cannot be persons who have been convicted (in specified cases) or who are currently undergoing a process in response to a lawsuit for a number of specified charges.

### 6.2 Quality assurance mechanisms

The only quality assurance mechanism for teachers’ competences, apart from success in professional examination required to obtain a licence, is the system of promotion (see Section 6.1).

In CPD programmes, evaluation mechanisms include discussion, suggestions for future work and an evaluation questionnaire. Participants evaluate the quality of the lecturer and usefulness and contemporaneity of the topic. The real impact of the CPD on the quality of the education process, its impact in the classroom and on the learning outcomes can be

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71 Rulebook on Advancement of Teachers in Primary and Secondary Education, NN 89/95, 148/99 and 20/05; The Law on Education in Primary and Secondary Schools, NN 87/08, Article 116.

72 Rulebook on Advancement of Teachers in Primary and Secondary Education, Article 21 and 22.

73 Stakeholder consultations (questionnaire, the Association of Croatian Secondary Schools Principals), 20.02.2013.
seen only through the evaluation of teachers’ work, as part of the promotion procedures or special expert and pedagogical monitoring (see Section 5.2).

The Education and Teacher Training Agency (ETTA/AZOO) is responsible for the accreditation of CPD programmes; any organisation/institution organising the CPD programme is responsible for the organisation of quality-assurance mechanisms mostly through questionnaires. Participants (teachers) of the CPD programmes give feedback on the attended programmes through questionnaire returns. Yet, the questionnaires do not provide sufficient feedback that would allow comprehensive assessment of these programmes.

In the area of ITE, the Agency for Science and Higher Education (ASHE/AZVO) is responsible for the external evaluation of the initial teacher education providers. HEIs and their internal quality units are responsible for the internal quality assurance mechanisms of institutions. Students participate in the internal and external quality assurance mechanisms through questionnaire returns.

Finally, PISA results for Croatia have been continuously showing under average results of Croatian students but there was no sufficient public discussion on this issue and no concerted efforts focused on identifying the main causes behind the results. One of the reasons raised in the media and by the stakeholders consulted during this study is the low-level of education, which is inadequately focused on learning outcomes and competences.

7 Innovations in teacher education

The subsequent part addresses the issue of innovations in teacher education, such as inclusion of novel topics in teacher education programmes, ICT-related teaching and learning, new ways of doing old things that worked well and proved to be effective. Important strategies/reforms that prioritise the adoption of new teaching/professional development models and the development of practical ICT-related skills are also included. At the end of the section, opportunities and limitations for managing the change process in the teacher education programme are identified.

7.1 Innovative practices and developments

The key innovations in teacher education in Croatia identified throughout this study refer mainly to the activities of the South East European Centre for Entrepreneurial Learning (SEECEL), the implementation of the inclusive education model, and the introduction of civic education in a number of schools.

With initial funding from the Croat government, the South East European Centre for Entrepreneurial Learning (SEECEL) launched its activities in January 2009 with organisational support of the Croatian Chamber of Economy. In addition to the financing allocated within the national budget, the bulk of the financial support for the SEECEL is assured by the European Commission within the framework of the Multi-beneficiary envelope of the IPA Programme. Gathering 8 countries to co-operate in the area of entrepreneurial learning, SEECEL supports: the development of the entrepreneurship as a key competence (ISCED 2 level); promotion of entrepreneurship at the third level education (ISCED 5/6 level) within non-business disciplines; enterprise-driven training needs analysis; and dissemination and promotion of good policy and good practice. Through its activities, the project can provide a sound basis for entrepreneurial learning and the development of entrepreneurial

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74 For instance, NGOs are involved in the CPD quality assurance process only if they are organisers of the programme.

75 www.pisa.hr


77 Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo (this designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence); the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, and Turkey.
teacher competences; however, the data concerning its impact in this field are not yet available.

A number of schools in Croatia have implemented innovative models of inclusive education (e.g. primary school Ljudevit Gaj from Osijek; primary school Fran Krsto Frankopan from Zagreb; the first primary school from Vrbovac) following the OECD standards for inclusive education. After obtaining the OECD certificates for inclusive education in 2007, these schools function as experiential schools and serve as good practice examples. By applying innovative methods in teaching and learning they implement the principles of inclusive education and pay additional attention to children with special needs, and thus enhance the overall inclusion of all school children. Yet, there are no evaluations available to verify whether there has been a spill-over effect of this initiative and whether other schools followed the examples of the OECD-certified schools.

Also civic education can be considered as an innovation in the Croatian education system. In line with the Resolution of Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, the subject of civic education is being introduced in schools for 2 experimental years (12 schools will have implemented the curricula of civic education in schools in 2012/2013 and 2013/2014). With the support of the Croatian Youth Network, the Centre for Peace Studies and GONG, two 3-day training sessions on civic education curriculum have been organised for 40 teachers from primary and secondary schools. After the training, continuous support through mentoring has been provided for a year to the same schools and teachers. Within the project, 40 students (future teachers) have also been trained from teacher faculties and departments from Petrinja, Osijek, Slavonski Brod and Gospić and have conducted a research on civic education in 6 schools, including participation in the development of the curricula for civic education. The initiative has been initiated through an EU-funded project under the IPA and implemented by the Croatian Youth Network.

In general, teachers exchange innovative practice examples during their CPD programmes at the county level. Some schools also organise peer learning for teachers through exchange visits. An internet website (http://ucitelji.hr) and a digital magazine Pogled kroz prozor (‘A view from the window’) also provide opportunities for the dissemination of information on good practices.

7.2 The use of ICT

CPD in the field of digital competences of all education workers has been widely promoted by the Education and Teacher Training Agency (ETTA/AZOO), and considerable training opportunities on ICT skills have been offered though CPD programmes for primary and secondary teachers. A special emphasis was also put on certifying school staff for the European Computer Driving Licence as a part of the Education Sector Development Plan 2005-2010 (supported by the World Bank). For instance, in the period 2005-2010 approximately 21 500 teachers have received ICT training, out of which 500 are certified ECDL Mentors.

However, despite these initiatives, a substantial lack of ICT literacy among teachers has been reported by some stakeholders. A shortage of technical staff and instructional designers has been listed as an obstacle for the introduction of ICT in teacher education. In addition, where new ICT equipment was introduced into the classrooms, such as in the CARNet and Samsung Electronics Adriatic project, supported by the Ministry of Education,

80Stakeholder consultations (questionnaire, Youth Network of Croatia), 03.04.2013.
81Stakeholder consultations (questionnaire, the Association of Croatian Secondary Schools’ Principals), 20.02.2013.
82Stakeholder consultations (questionnaire, primary school), 04.03.2013.
83World Bank (2012), Croatia…, op.cit.
84Stakeholder consultations (interview, teacher education provider), 11.03.2013.
Science and Sport\footnote{http://www.slobodnadalmacija.hr/Split-%C5%BEupanija/tabid/76/articleType/ArticleView/articleId/220324/Default.aspx (accessed on 01/09/2013)}, it is not clear to what extent it is used in the teaching and learning process.

### 7.3 The opportunities and limitations of introducing innovations in the teacher education system

The main opportunities and limitations of introducing innovations in the teacher education system are listed in Table 7.1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunities</th>
<th>Limitations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adoption of the Croatian Qualifications Framework, which should enhance the modernised approach to education.</td>
<td>Resistance towards introducing student-centred learning system, due to the increased workload and demand for adaptation to new teaching methods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding provided by international organisations and institutions.</td>
<td>Limited financial resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction of thematic topic divisions within working groups at pre-tertiary and tertiary education.</td>
<td>Insufficient involvement of teachers and other stakeholders in the reform processes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest and progress in competence-based education.</td>
<td>Limited flexibility of the education system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of Entrepreneurial Education.</td>
<td>Lack of rulebooks to ensure full implementation of the legal and strategic provision.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities created through the new agencies (ETTA/AZOO, AVETAE/ASOO, ASHE/AZVO, CEEE/NCVV).</td>
<td>Lack of a ‘fully developed’ quality-assurance systems at all levels.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textit{Source:} Analysis based on stakeholder consultations (interviews and questionnaire answers) and desk research.

### 8 Partnerships and interaction with external actors

Section 8 explores whether partnerships between schools and teacher education institutions are promoted and implemented in order to encourage schools to play an active and central role in developing teaching methods, improving the quality of teaching and extending the knowledge about teaching and learning. The role of private and non-governmental sector actors in the area of teacher education is also reflected as well as the influence of international experts.

#### 8.1 Partnerships between schools and teacher education institutions

The main example of an institutionalised partnership between schools and teacher education institutions concerns the organisation of classroom practice for teacher students (see Section 3.4). The ETTA/AZOO has also established partnerships with all teacher education institutions, which enables the hiring of lecturers from the HEIs for CPD seminars and their participation in the commissions for state professional examinations.

Partnership between primary and secondary schools is achieved mostly through associations - the Association of Croatian Primary School Principals and the Association of Croatian Secondary School Principals.\footnote{Stakeholder consultations (questionnaire, the Association of the Croatian Secondary School Principals), 20.02.2013.} They organise common expert seminars and conferences (e.g. in Dubrovnik in 2011), implement common projects and carry out
enrolment in secondary schools (enrolment procedures demand cooperation between primary and secondary schools).

In general, however, teacher education institutions and schools in Croatia (and in the whole Western Balkan region) remain disconnected.\(^{87}\)

8.2 The role of the business sector in teacher education

The National Framework Curriculum states that schools' cooperation with parents and local communities should be promoted.\(^{88}\) As matters currently stand, the situation concerning a comprehensive and holistic approach to education - including strong partnerships between different stakeholders, including business sector - is yet to be developed.

Nevertheless, some schools cooperate with the employment bureau\(^{89}\) to receive timely information and adjust the professional orientation of their students to the current and upcoming trends on the labour market.\(^{90}\) The business sector is also involved in teacher education through special projects and providing internships for students, usually from vocational secondary schools. In general, cooperation between the business sector and general education (both secondary and primary schools) lags behind vocational education and more attention should be dedicated to developing this partnership. Despite the progress in education and training for entrepreneurship (see Section 7.1 on SEECEL), there is still little awareness among the business community of the good returns that can be obtained from developing a closer relationship with the education sector.

8.3 The role of NGOs and external support in teacher education

A number of NGOs in Croatia is involved in the area of teacher education and the third sector is often cited as one of the success examples of cooperation between schools, HEIs, and wider community.

For instance, the Forum for the Freedom of Education is an NGO active in Croatia since 1992, which gathers teachers, education experts, parents, and students (both in HEIs and in schools) with the aim of quality enhancement of education.\(^{91}\) One of its main projects is Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking, developed in cooperation with the international association International Reading Association, aimed at skills development for critical thinking and independent learning. The 2-year project on ‘Leaders for local community’, in turn, which started in 2012, is strengthening youth and educational system capacity in the field of democratisation, human rights, minorities’ integration and non-violent conflict resolution. Implemented in partnership with the Vukovar-Sirmium County and the Network of Education Policy Centres, and supported financially by the European Union, the initiative envisages CPD for 25 teachers to participate in 6-month training in the field of civic education and development of educational plans and programmes and teacher leadership among its key activities. As the project started only in 2012, its effects are yet to be seen.

A further example of NGO involvement in teacher education is the Korak po korak\(^{92}\) (Step by Step) organisation, active in Croatia since 2000, which is a member of the International Step by Step Association. The main aim of the organisation is to promote quality education through continuous professional development and training of teachers, professional associates and principals of schools with special attention to the importance of partnership between schools and parents. Korak po korak has been participating in education reforms and successfully representing teachers and the European standards of education.

\(^{87}\)Pantić et al, 2011 in CEPJS, Pantić, p.77.

\(^{88}\)National Framework Curriculum, p.23.

\(^{89}\)Employment bureau is the state institution dealing with data gathering and analyses of the labour market.

\(^{90}\)Law on Primary and Secondary Schools, Article 57.

\(^{91}\)http://www.fso.hr/

\(^{92}\)http://www.korakpokorak.hr/
Also the role of international institutions has been crucial for the reform processes in education in Croatia, strengthening regional co-operation, as well as further encouragement of the developments in teacher education. However, while a number of externally supported projects have been implemented in the last decade, some concerns have been expressed in relation to the follow-up activities and their sustainability. Based on stakeholders’ opinions, there are no stable structures that would allow further development and dissemination of project results and thus the new skills and knowledge gained during projects is often lost once they are over.

Some examples of projects aimed at regional co-operation include:

- Enhancing Professional Development of Education Practitioners and Teaching/Learning Practices in SEE countries (funded by the Open Society Institute Education Support Programme, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and UNESCO);
- Tuning Teacher Education Curricula in the Western Balkans (funded by the Balkan Trust for Democracy and the Central European Initiative);
- Regional Tuning – Towards the European Higher Education Area (funded by Balkan Trust for Democracy, the Central European Initiative and the Fund for an Open Society in Serbia) in which Croatian experts have been participating.

Other examples of external support are presented in Table 8.1 below.

### Table 8.1 Examples of external support for teacher education and training

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Area of support provided</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>European Union</td>
<td>A vast number of EU-funded projects under the Tempus programme have been implemented in Croatia and on the regional Western Balkan level. 36 Joint European Projects approved to Croatia include: Curriculum Development (24 projects), Institutional Building (5 projects) and University Management (7 projects). Along with Joint European Projects, the Tempus programme supports Structural and Complementary Measures and Individual Mobility Grants for groups and individuals in the HE sector. Since 2001, 4 Structural and Complementary Measures projects and 48 Individual Mobility Grants have been awarded to applicants from Croatian HE institutions. For instance, a Tempus project on ‘Improvement of Teaching Quality in South East Europe’ has been implemented with the aim of introducing new teaching and learning methods, especially in maths and science, at teacher training institutions and primary schools. Also the ‘Learning for Europe’ Tempus project included a teacher education component. The overall goal of the project is to achieve greater compatibility in the area of teacher education in Europe to support mobility, diploma recognition, and intercultural education. As part of the project on ‘Modernising Teacher Education in a European Perspective’, in turn, a conference which gathered education ministers from Serbia, Bosnia, and Croatia have been organised in Zagreb in 2013 to encourage regional cooperation and mobility. Through IPA IV Development of Human Potential, EU supported project for inclusion in the education system of minority groups through the Ministry of education, science and sport; and through its priority 3 – Advancement of human capital and employability, IPA funding supported further development of CROQF; further development of adult education and quality enhancement and efficiency of institutions responsible for education and training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSCE</td>
<td>Funded by OSCE, the regional project on Advancing Teacher Professionalism for Inclusive, Quality and Relevant Education – ATEPIE, is implemented in cooperation with the Education Support Program of the Open Society Foundations (ESP/OSF) which the Centre for Education Policy has been implementing since September 2011. Within this project and through regional dialogue and international cooperation, teachers have an opportunity to exchange experiences and share knowledge. The main goal of the project is to formulate national qualification frameworks for teachers in the Western Balkan countries which can</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

act as guidelines for further changes in educational practices and the reform of the educational system. Their elaboration entails engagement of decision makers in the field of education, teachers’ educators, researchers and teachers themselves. Special attention is given to the voice of parents and pupils, especially those from marginalised and vulnerable groups, in order to assure a truly inclusive and anti-discriminatory approach. Besides developing national qualification frameworks, the project strives to empower teachers within the related project ‘International Teacher Leadership’. The project also provides support to young researchers of South Eastern Europe and disseminates policy recommendations, proposals and education research results to relevant stakeholders in the region.

World Bank
Through the Education Sector Development Project (2005-2010), (see Section 2.3), implemented by the Ministry, the Education and Teacher Training Agency, the Vocational Education and Training Agency, and the National Centre for the External Evaluation of Education, the World Bank supported overall improvements in teaching and learning in Croatian schools. One of the project priorities was the creation of learning schools though professional development of teachers, school principals and professional staff and workshops and conferences were often organised jointly by the Ministry and the Bank on this topic. The establishment of a system through which teacher training could be monitored, under the responsibility of ETTA/AZOO, was one of the main shortcomings reported at the end of project.94

9
Key strengths, challenges and perspectives

The final section summarises the key strengths, weaknesses, and challenges faced by the national authorities and educational institutions in the area of teacher education. This is followed by considerations regarding the need for further policy action within the country reviewed as well as at the Western Balkan and EU level.

9.1 Current strengths and weaknesses of teacher education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Area of support provided</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>World Bank</td>
<td>Through the Education Sector Development Project (2005-2010), (see Section 2.3), implemented by the Ministry, the Education and Teacher Training Agency, the Vocational Education and Training Agency, and the National Centre for the External Evaluation of Education, the World Bank supported overall improvements in teaching and learning in Croatian schools. One of the project priorities was the creation of learning schools though professional development of teachers, school principals and professional staff and workshops and conferences were often organised jointly by the Ministry and the Bank on this topic. The establishment of a system through which teacher training could be monitored, under the responsibility of ETTA/AZOO, was one of the main shortcomings reported at the end of project.94</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| ITE | ■ Integrated curriculum for class teachers in primary schools that helps to assure the equal quality of education throughout the country.  
■ Obligatory Master’s degree for teachers. | ■ Lack of harmonisation between ITE programmes.  
■ Inadequate time devoted to classroom practice activities in ITE programmes. |
| CPD | ■ The system of decentralised coordination of CPD through the county coordinators, liaising between ETTA/AZOO and schools. | ■ Lack of strong quality-assurance mechanisms for CPD of teachers (e.g. no qualitative assessment of CPD, lack of impact assessment).  
■ Low numbers of teachers participating in CPD and limited offer of CPD programmes.  
■ No incentives to participate in CPD and peer-learning and school-based learning as part of in-service training.  
■ Schools working in two-shifts which overburdens teachers and limits their time for CPD.  
■ Lack of specialised education for school principals. |

94World Bank (2012), Croatia..., op.cit.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Probation/Induction</strong></td>
<td>■ Evidence of some induction programmes, with mentoring, in place.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>■ Weak mentorship system in the induction programmes, including geographical</td>
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<td></td>
<td>distance between the mentors and the novice teachers in some cases which</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>prevents their regular meetings.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>■ Lack of harmonisation between induction programmes throughout the country.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>QA and evaluation</strong></td>
<td>■ The external evaluation, introduced by NCEE/NCVVO in both in primary and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>secondary schools.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>■ The system of promotion is the only evaluation of teacher's competences</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>other than the professional examination.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>■ Unclear criteria for professional examination and licensing of teachers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Legislation and policy</strong></td>
<td>■ Good legislative framework providing a basis for further regulation of</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>teacher education.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>■ The introduction of CROQF reinforcing student-centred learning and providing</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a basis for the development of national teacher competences.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>■ Development of a new Strategy on Education, Science and Technology until</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2020 with a number of stakeholders engaged and a holistic approach to</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>pre-tertiary education.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>■ Adoption of the National Curriculum for Pre-school Education, General</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Compulsory and Secondary School Education marking the transition from</td>
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<td></td>
<td>teacher-centred learning to the competences-based education system and</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>learning outcomes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Institutions</strong></td>
<td>■ Good institutional framework providing expert policy development in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>education and teacher education reform.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cooperation</strong></td>
<td>■ Activity of classroom practice schools (vježbaonice) that enhances the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>cooperation between schools and teacher education providers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>■ Strong involvement of NGOs in CPD contributing to the variety of CPD</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>themes and stakeholders' cooperation in teacher education reform.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Resources</strong></td>
<td>■ Limited cooperation between teacher education institutions, schools, and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>other stakeholders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>■ Limited stakeholders' involvement in the development of reform processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and limited transparency of procedures guiding the policy preparations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attitudes/Perceptions</strong></td>
<td>■ Teaching profession perceived as a stable employment in the context of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>current economic crisis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>■ Low salaries and weak position of the profession in the society discourage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>students with the best results from enrolling to ITE.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Analysis based on stakeholder consultations (interviews and questionnaire answers) and desk research.*

### 9.2 The need for further policy action

According to the desk research findings and stakeholder consultations, the following needs were identified in the field of teacher education:
Policy areas where further policy action at the national level is required:

- Further development of legislation on national teacher competences, the advancement of teachers and licensing, and the implementation of the curricular reform in primary and secondary education and of the National Qualifications Framework, especially the Ministry’s rulebooks. The finalisation of the legal and institutional framework would encourage the implementation of the already set reform provisions.

- Starting the process of teacher licensing, by adopting required rulebooks for the legal framework that exists. The licensing system should further encourage teachers to participate in CPD programmes and develop skills for their own needs assessment.

- Introduction of induction programmes for all novice teachers in their first few years in the profession and enhancement of existing induction programmes, allowing their harmonisation throughout the country for guaranteeing the same quality teachers.

- Accreditation and quality-assurance procedures of CPD programmes, as well as their diversification more in accordance with the real teachers’ needs and the introduction of more innovative methods in their implementation for the development of competence based teaching and learning.

- Further development of research in education, especially in education policy and didactics/pedagogy.

- Reform of recruitment procedures and provision of further financial and non-financial incentives for ameliorating the status of teacher profession which would attract the best students into the field.

Policy areas where cooperation at the Western Balkan level would be beneficial

- Exchange of experiences in the reform processes in teacher education and harmonisation of efforts with the European trends in the conceptual development of competence development, school-based activities, induction and assessment methods.

- Common research and implementation projects in curriculum tuning and enhancement of mobility programmes to assist the overall development of the education in the region, including the coordination of programmes for teacher competences and CPD programmes for teachers and teacher licensing.

- Sharing strategies and quality criteria for the professional development of educators and administrators which would help the development of the respective strategies in each of the countries in the region.

Policy areas where EU cooperation may be useful/sought:

- Funding of new projects to support Croatian reform initiatives as national funding is limited at the moment, due to the economic crisis.

- Good practice and experiences exchange (across as many EU countries as possible) in all fields of education reform to further bring the Croatian education reform practices to the European standards.

- Further organisation of study visits to corresponding European schools (primary schools of the same/similar profile) for exchange of experiences concerning student-centred learning; innovative teaching methods; CPD; and school management. Such organisation should also include teacher education providers.
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**Interviews**

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Department of Pedagogy, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Split (11/03/2013)

Education and Teacher Training Agency (AZOO) (11/03/2013)

Faculty of Teacher Education at the University of Zagreb (12/03/2013)

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Union of Science and Higher Education (21/03/2013)

**Questionnaires**

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Croatian Association of Primary School Principals (phone interview, 20/03/2013)

Croatian Association of Secondary School Principals (20/02/2013)

Croatian Youth Network of Croatia (03/04/2013)

Education and Teacher Training Agency (AZOO) (14/02/2013)

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of the University of Osijek (03/04/2013)

Faculty of Teacher Education at the University of Zagreb (05/03/2013)

University of Zadar (16/02/2013)
Annex 1  Structure of education system in Croatia

Source: http://www.see-educoop.net/education_in/pdf/edu_sys-cro-enl-t01.pdf
## Annex 2 Example of Teacher Faculty plan and programme

University of Rijeka – Integrated Teacher Faculty plan and programme

Duration: 10 semesters

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