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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1. Cluster Key Competences – Curriculum reform and Peer Learning**

This report takes stock of the work of the Cluster 'Key Competences and Curriculum reform', established within the 'Education and Training 2010 work programme'<sup>1</sup>. Its remit is to assist Member States with the implementation of the Recommendation on Key Competences for lifelong learning, adopted in December 2006<sup>2</sup>.

The Cluster has undertaken three Peer Learning Activities (PLAs) in Belgium (Flanders), Hungary and Greece, and a number of meetings in Brussels have taken place to plan and evaluate these activities. The focus of these three PLAs has been on the implementation of key competences and in particular the cross-curricular or transversal key competences (learning to learn, social and civic, initiative taking and entrepreneurship, cultural awareness and expression). Member States' experts have looked into the policies and measures in national contexts that are needed to enable schools and other learning organisations to support the development of key competences among young people. While the focus has mainly been on school policies, all PLAs have looked at them in the context of the lifelong learning strategy of the country. This report gives an overview of the PLAs undertaken in three countries, and presents the conclusions and recommendations deriving from these PLAs that are common to all and thus transferable. Moreover, the report gives examples on how the host countries are applying these principles within their specific contexts.

### **1.2. Why work on key competences?**

The background to the work on key competences both at the national and European level is the development of the knowledge-based society which is raising demand for key competences in the personal, social and professional spheres.

In the context of globalisation and the need for competitiveness, there is a serious concern in most of the European countries about the social cohesion and well-being of all individuals. There is a need to enhance active and democratic citizenship which requires that people are informed and concerned about their society and be active in it. Democracy can and should be learned – and learning it should start already at early stages of education and training in order to ensure its functioning in a society.

The knowledge, skills and aptitudes of the European workforce are a major factor in the European Union's innovation, productivity and competitiveness. The rapid pace of change and the continuous development of new technologies mean that Europeans must not only keep their specific job-related skills up-to-date, but also possess the generic competences that will enable them to manage change. People's competences also contribute to their motivation and job-satisfaction, thereby affecting the quality of their work and life – thereby bringing added value for the whole organisation of labour and production.

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<sup>1</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/et\\_2010\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/et_2010_en.html)

<sup>2</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/objectives\\_en.html#basic](http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/objectives_en.html#basic)

Innovation and creativity are seen as essential for Europe's economy and social model. In recent years, the scope of the concepts of creativity and innovation has broadened: the production of knowledge and innovation is no longer in the hands of the few, but a collaborative process of creation, utilisation and evaluation of knowledge. It is a process that requires a full participation of all involved. For this reason the traditional hierarchies are increasingly replaced by teams and collaborative work in which each member should have 'the big picture', motivation and skills to contribute and communicate.

The ways in which people access information and services continue to change. People of all ages need new competences to critically master a whole new digital world, not only by acquiring technical skills, but also by gaining a deeper understanding of the opportunities, challenges and even ethical, legal and societal questions arising from the introduction of new technologies.

The above mentioned developments and trends make it clear that *lifelong learning has become a necessity for all citizens*. People need to develop their personal, social and job-related competences throughout their lives. The foundations for lifelong learning are laid during initial education and training which has to provide all citizens with the key competences that prepare them for a life in a modern world and set them on the path to lifetime learning. As to the systems, this means integrating the provision seamlessly both from the lifelong (from cradle to grave) and life-wide point of view (formal, non-formal and informal learning).

It is against this back-drop that the Council and the European Parliament adopted, at the end of 2006, a Recommendation that introduces a European Framework for Key Competences for Lifelong Learning. The Framework identifies and defines, for the first time at the European level, the key competences that citizens require for their personal fulfilment, social inclusion, active citizenship and employability in a knowledge-based society. The Member States' initial education and training systems should support the development of these competences for all young people, and their adult education and training provision should give real opportunities to all adults to learn, update and maintain their competences throughout their lives.

The Recommendation introduces a package of eight key competences that includes not only the 'traditional' competences such as communication in the mother tongue, communication in foreign languages, mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology, and digital competence, but also the more transversal ones such as learning to learn, social and civic competences, sense of initiative and entrepreneurship, and cultural awareness and expression. Many of the key competences overlap and interlock. Many themes are applied throughout the Framework: critical thinking, creativity, initiative taking, problem solving, risk assessment, decision taking and managing feelings constructively play a major role in all eight key competences.

The PLAs organised by the Cluster Key 'Competences – Curriculum Reform' in 2007 have primarily focussed on the first part of the Recommendation that calls for 'ensuring the development of key competences by all young people during their initial education and training', but peer learning has also covered the essential reforms of VET and adult education that are in line with the overall lifelong strategy. Therefore, the following sections look at the lifelong learning strategies with a *specific reference to key competences in school curricula and the issues related to the implementation of key competences within school education*.

### 1.3. Three Peer Learning Activities – an overview<sup>3</sup>

The first PLA undertaken by the cluster took place in **Belgium, Flanders**. It focussed in particular on the support of the competence 'Learning to Learn'. Education in Flanders is characterised by the autonomy of school networks and a clear set of cross-curricular objectives that schools should 'strive for'. Inspection in Flanders has changed its role in recent years: it aims at supporting schools in their development process by identifying strengths and needs for improvement. Reports are published, but without comparisons with other schools. The Flanders PLA also gave an insight to initial teacher education. In order to promote competence-based approaches at schools, one needs to start with new approaches in initial teacher education. Students need to '*re-learn*' *how to learn* in order to take responsibility for their personal and professional development. This, in turn, requires activities and approaches that make students reflect, plan, work in projects and evaluate their own progress. The school visit in Flanders also highlighted the importance of the ethos of the school, and how the role of leadership can affect the way teachers perceive their role. A strong focus on learning, making students responsible and aware of their learning process, joint activities across the whole school community, the possibility for teachers to try new approaches and evaluate them together in order to improve, were features of the school that visitors observed.

The Flanders PLA highlighted the importance of policy consistency: curriculum development and its implementation are supported by a systematic use of research and evaluation and teachers' in-service training which are all geared in the same direction. Moreover, in terms of managing change, the PLA noted that Flanders has found a 'common language' (all actors at all levels sharing the 'why' and 'how' teaching and learning should change in order to respond to the needs of the knowledge society).

In **Hungary**, the PLA focussed on the *consistency* and comprehensiveness of policy measures taken with regard to curriculum development, teachers' initial education, leadership development and material production. Hungary, too, is a decentralised country with some 2,100 local authorities responsible for education and training. In Hungary the paradigm change is expressed in the National Development Plan and the Lifelong Learning Strategy. The policy goals are accompanied by the development of measurable indicators. The curriculum has undergone reforms in 2003 and 2006, and is now built on a competence-based approach.

The PLA members learned that there is indeed a strong need to look at education in the context of employment, social policies, and in the context of globalised economies that call for an enhanced knowledge-base and competences that help people to adapt. This paradigm change has influenced not only the curricula, but also teacher education (initial and in-service), leadership, materials production and assessment. As in all European countries, the challenge lies in the implementation of this 'policy intention' – which in particular in decentralised countries requires long-standing and consistent strategies for change, with enough time and resources.

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<sup>3</sup> There is a detailed report on each Peer Learning Activity, on the basis of which this synthesis has been drafted. The Cluster also contributed to a PLA on Adult Literacy in Ireland in January 2008 as it closely linked to the work of the Cluster. This PLA is reported separately.

In addition to the comprehensiveness of the reform, the PLA in Hungary confirms the conclusion made in the Flanders context about the importance of educating future teachers in the way that they themselves are expected to teach their students in the future (the Hungarian teacher training system had been reformed already in 1997). Their personality and professional development can be supported if methods are changed from lectures to project work, cooperative learning and combining theory with practice from the outset of the training.

The **Greek PLA** looked at the role of the learning material in the context of the paradigm change from 'teaching' to learning, and, as in the two other PLAs, on the different elements (compulsory education, VET and adult education reforms) in the lifelong strategy of the country. The Greek system is rather centralised, but a number of developments towards de-centralisation are underway. In Greece, **the Pedagogical Institute**<sup>4</sup> and the relevant Agencies of the Ministry of Education have a strong role in guiding the system. Their central role allows for a thorough approach in producing learning material, systematizing and coordinating its dissemination, achieving a fine tuning with the rest of the reform components and determinants (within a context of cohesion and consistency) and supporting teachers and schools. The reform of textbooks and other learning material is part of a broader administrative reform, which is largely supported by EU funds. The new textbooks are used as a vehicle for change: they contain a lot of exercises that help students to integrate their knowledge, make associations between subjects, become aware of their learning process (through projects, self-evaluation etc.) and help both students and teachers to 'think out of the box' and look beyond textbooks for learning. All key stakeholders are involved in the production, which helps to ensure that a sound scientific basis of the material is translated into practical and workable application that meets the development needs of the learner.

The reform of the Greek VET reflects a competence-based approach, too. In addition to job-related skills, it has also a strong emphasis on the development of key competences students will need in the world of work, as well as on ethical, personal and social development, and citizenship. Through tutoring and guidance, and treating students 'as colleagues' and serious learners they will enter working life as confident and motivated lifelong learners. Additionally, the area of secondary technical and vocational education was recently reorganized with the creation of *Vocational Lyceums (EPA.L)* and *Vocational Educational and Training Schools (EPA.S)*. The new structure, together with the new curriculum (focusing on Competence development), gives equal opportunities to the students of Vocational Lyceums for entry not only to Higher Technological Institutes (T.E.I.) but also to the Universities (A.E.I.).

The change of the name of 'Greek Secretariat General for Adult Education' to 'Secretariat General for Lifelong Learning' illustrates well the new approach to provision for adults. A Framework of competences is being developed, which corresponds to the EU Framework of key competences. Given the geography of the country, local centres are supported by distance-learning opportunities, and in order to make learning more effective, Second Chance, *Adult Education Centres*, and Parent Schools have been established. The learning needs of the growing number of immigrants are addressed by an enhanced provision for the teaching of the Greek language.

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.pi-schools.gr/>

## **2. THE CURRENT STATUS OF KEY COMPETENCES IN MEMBER STATES' LIFELONG LEARNING STRATEGIES WITH REFERENCE TO SCHOOL CURRICULA: A CHANGE OF PARADIGM**

At the Member State level, there is substantial activity in creating lifelong learning strategies that build on the development of key competences, and on combining better non-formal and informal learning with the formal provision. Much emphasis has been put on the consistency and comprehensiveness of provision – both from a systemic view and from a learners' perspective.

Similarly, the initial education curricula reflect a shift of focus from imparting knowledge to developing transferable competences that equip young people for adult life and further learning. In more concrete terms, this paradigm shift implies a growing emphasis on competences that include knowledge, skills and attitudes and that together give students a solid basis for further learning.

The Cluster has undertaken two mapping exercises (from 2004 and 2007) on how national policy agendas for lifelong learning and school curricula recognise key competences. Either implicitly or explicitly key competences are included in most important documents guiding school education, as the following *examples* suggest (See Annex 1 for full details):

- In Hungary, the key competence-based approach dominates all areas of school policies: the revised curriculum, teacher education (initial and in-service), assessment system as well as material production.
- In Austria the lower-secondary curriculum comprises three areas: subject related competences, social competences and self-competences. The pre-vocational curriculum reflects the shared responsibility between subjects and cross-curricular objectives, and recently defined standards include elements such as critical thinking, self-regulated learning and co-operative learning.
- In Bulgaria, Hungary and Spain, the legislation regulating school education curricula (and lifelong learning) include key competences. In addition, the Hungarian Lifelong Learning Strategy builds largely on key competences and the links between employment and social developments. In Spain, for instance, the key competences have been incorporated into compulsory education curricula. Moreover, one of the innovations of the new Law regulating school education is the incorporation of a diagnostic assessment of students' basic competences.
- In Cyprus, mother tongue, foreign languages, maths and science and ICT are promoted through subjects. In addition to that, the Ministry of Education and Culture sets specific objectives for cross-curricular competences for each school year.
- In the Czech Republic, the curriculum defines six key competences with a strong focus on learning to learn, social and communication skills which are further defined as skills to be developed within and outside subjects. Moreover, schools are requested to draft their own programmes, in which key competences and the implementation of cross-curricular competences are planned.

- In Greece, the curriculum reflects the paradigm shift towards lifelong learning and includes key competences described for each level with a strong emphasis on the cross-curricular competences.
- The Croatian 2005 national standards that guide schools have a strong emphasis on the development of creativity, problem-solving and other cross-curricular qualities of pupils.
- In Lithuania, a Strategy for renewing the content of general education stresses the need to develop e.g. citizenship, entrepreneurship and digital competences, and a current project develops key competences for basic education.
- In the UK (England), the government has a Key Skills Framework that is primarily accessed by young people. It describes competences such as problem solving, communication, application of number, ICT, working with others, and improving one's own learning as key skills. The English School National Curriculum includes Personal, Social and Health curriculum integrated in it. Similarly, the Early Learning Goals summarise what each child should know, understand and be able to do. In Scotland, A Lifelong Skills Strategy sets out ambitions for skills from cradle to grave and the National Qualifications Framework recognises five core skills: communication, numeracy, ICT, problem solving and working with others. In Northern Ireland, the current focus is on standards on literacy and numeracy.

Similarly, Member States' reports within the Education and Training 2010 work programme indicate that predominant themes of the reforms as regards school education in MS include *the need to create more positive attitudes towards learning, pay more attention to emotional and social aspects of learning and to move to a competence-based approach that values learners as well as their prior experience and knowledge.*

Taken together, these priorities reflect also a paradigm shift towards a more holistic learning that would pave way for lifelong learning.

### **3. WHAT IS THE CHALLENGE OF KEY COMPETENCES FOR SCHOOL EDUCATION?**

The above described developments and trends suggest that there is a strong political will to ensure key competences for all citizens, and that in the most important national policy documents this *intention* is clearly stated.

For several years there has been a strong demand for helping young people to *integrate* their knowledge learned within subjects, to help associate knowledge and to be able to use the knowledge they have acquired<sup>5</sup>. All learners should comprehend the meaning and significance of things they learn and to make informed judgements about them<sup>6</sup>. The competence-based approach in teaching and learning aims to achieve this.

A successful implementation of a curricula based on key competences is not in contradiction with subjects that can allow for a development of in-depth knowledge of a

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<sup>5</sup> CIDREE 1998: Across the Great Divides. Report of the CIDREE Collaborative Project on Cross-Curricular Themes

<sup>6</sup> European Commission 1995: White Paper 'Teaching and Learning, Towards a Learning Society'

certain discipline and target the acquisition of specific skills. However, if the focus is on the development of a full range of key competences for lifelong learning, subject knowledge should be seen rather *as a first step that alone is not sufficient to fully respond to the needs of a learner in a modern society*. The challenge is thus the systematic use of subject matter and the specific skills related to subjects as essential elements of the development of key competences. This requires all teachers, irrespective their subject specialisation, to be aware of and responsible for, developing the key competences of their students in the whole school context.

The experience from PLAs in Flanders, Hungary and Greece shows that 'an ideal' learning environment for key competences should have (at least) the following features:

- The development of competences is based on active and experimental learning, where learners' individual development and personalised learning is supported. This implies more individualised approaches to learning that build on learners preferred learning styles and processes, and improve students' motivation for lifelong learning.
- Teaching and learning with subjects and cross-curricular elements are well *coordinated* and *teachers collaborate* effectively. Teachers and students have time and space for cooperation. Each member of a school community has a clear understanding of how the development of key competences can be supported *within subjects, and/or several subjects, and which ones require a completely new and different organisation within schools*. It also requires *pupil assessment* to follow that logic<sup>7</sup>.
- This, in turn, calls for leadership that builds on a common vision of school development, and a shared/ distributed approach that encourages teachers to work in teams rather than only alone. Obviously, this approach would require support and recognition of teachers' professional development that is closely connected to school development.

The PLAs also suggest it is essential to give a **high status** to key competences as their development **involves several traditional subjects or a whole school approach**. Some elements fit easier into traditional subjects while others call for fully coordinated approach.

- For example, the experience in Flanders shows that some elements of "Learning to Learn" (those directly linked to individuals' learning strategies) can effectively be dealt with within subjects and by subject teachers, provided that teachers' initial and in-service training is of quality, and that there is a strong focus on learning at school. Similarly, as the Greek reform of learning material shows, individual teachers' pedagogical methods can be improved through textbook exercises that contain meta-cognitive elements.
- Another example is the provision of cross-curricular competences integrated in mathematics teaching in Austria. Students are given tasks to reflect on and solve in pairs or small groups. By discussing and arguing about possible solutions they develop social and communication skills as well as a deeper understanding about

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<sup>7</sup> The PLAs have highlighted the importance of pupil assessment as an integral part of learning; looking into this issue will be one of the future priorities of the Cluster.

mathematical facts rather than simply learning them by heart. Presenting their group results to the other students promotes their respective competences. Finally they get feed-back through a test that further helps them in developing self-evaluation competence and thus supports their autonomous learning.

- However, some crucial elements of Learning to Learn, such as the ability and willingness to search for opportunities for learning and using guidance, require a whole school approach and collaboration with services outside school. Moreover, key competences such as social and civic, entrepreneurship and cultural competences call for even more organised collaboration between teachers and members of the whole school community, involving parents and local community.
- The same was observed in Hungary and Greece: both countries are undertaking efforts to change the learning practice, by improving the pedagogical skills of teachers, encouraging them to collaborate and focussing on competence-development rather than pure knowledge.

#### **4. HOW TO SUPPORT SCHOOLS TO MOVE TOWARDS A COMPETENCE-BASED APPROACH? CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Recommendation on key competences for lifelong learning calls for Member States, first of all, to ensure that all young people can develop the key competences they need for lifelong learning during their initial education and training. As the work of the cluster confirms, key competences do indeed have a high status in Member States' lifelong learning strategies. Similarly, they are either explicitly or implicitly in European school curricula; but their implementation requires a major change in teaching practice.

The previous section showed, however, that combining the competence-based approach with the traditional organisation of learning in schools poses a challenge that needs to be addressed.

What policy measures, therefore, should be taken in terms of policy and governance, to support schools to ensure that they can deal with the requirements the key competences pose?

The following section presents the conclusions drawn by the PLA and Cluster participants from the Peer Learning Activities. Each statement is followed by a short description of how this particular aspect is applied in the host countries. It also identifies the measures that are needed to effectively implement these policies at the school level.

It has to be noted that the three countries visited, Belgium (Flanders), Hungary and Greece share the challenges but are all different in many respects. However, there are commonalities in their approaches that can be used as a starting point in any context, such as principles of effective policy making that may help reflecting policies in any country.

##### **4.1. Policy level**

*A strong correlation with the Lisbon agenda is a potential source of strength, not only in terms of the funding of reforms, but also by providing common frameworks and*

*references such as the one of Key Competences, and opportunities to share experiences through peer learning.*

- Both in Hungary and Greece, the National Development Plans build on the cooperation at European level within the Lisbon process, its agenda for employment and competitiveness, social cohesion and sustainable development. The trans-national cooperation provided by the Lisbon Agenda (the Open Method of Coordination) provides Member States both with a framework for development, and pragmatic opportunities to learn from each other's practice. Structural Funds have played an important role in implementing national policies – in some cases up to 75% of the Greek and Hungarian reforms, for instance.

*Reforms need to be theoretically well grounded, evidence-based, and pragmatic. A holistic vision is needed including the whole lifelong learning provision. A systemic approach requires that all elements, such as curricula, teacher education (initial and in-service) and professional development, pupil assessment, etc. are addressed.*

- In Flanders, the Curriculum Division of the Department of Education provides the Government with scientifically founded advice. Evaluation at the system level is carried out through periodic sample surveys, like the one in 2004. The results are published, after which all stakeholders (teachers, school heads, pedagogical advisers, publishers, curriculum developers and policy makers) are invited to a conference to discuss the results and how the emerging issues should be addressed. On the basis of the conference discussion, educational experts present recommendations to all stakeholders. In addition to these periodic surveys, the School Inspectorate and the Pedagogical Advisory Service for schools and teachers, hold regular meetings to exchange experiences and propose actions to help schools that are in the need of improving their performance.
- The Hungarian 'from research into action' approach has been to revise not only the curriculum, but also teacher training and learning material production in parallel. Also the leadership training has been renewed, and more attention has been paid to the role of pupil assessment in supporting the development of competences.
- In Greece, the learning material reform is part of the fundamental paradigm change towards true lifelong learning that encompasses both lifelong and life-wide aspects. The production of learning material is a thorough process that involves researchers, pedagogues and practitioners. It is also supported by a network of pedagogical advisors. Furthermore, the Greek Pedagogical Institute plays a key role in the whole process including development and (even more important) Quality Assurance of material on the basis of research and evidence. In fact, wide support is provided by the two established pillars of the quality assurance mechanism, the Centre for Educational Research and the Pedagogical Institute, whereas there is provision for the evaluation of all participants in the educational process.

*Communication and change management are crucial factors in the successful implementation of reforms. Responding to the need for competences in a knowledge-*

*based society is a matter that involves all actors of the society; therefore, all stakeholders at all levels should be involved.*

- Change needs to be driven both by top-down initiatives – from national authorities, with a clear overall vision of the needs of society and the possibilities in relation to the education system – and by bottom-up initiatives, based on needs analyses and expressing the needs and the experience of the users of the system (learners and teachers, but also parents, employers and the wider local community). Moreover, it is vital that all involved understand the need for a change.
- Both the Hungarian and the Greek approaches to developing key competences stressed the importance of this dual approach. A view was expressed at the Hungary PLA that there was still a ‘huge hidden knowledge’ amongst these important key actors (teachers themselves) who are not effectively involved in the policy making process. A detailed strategy for ensuring this needs to be in place – since many studies have shown that *real systematic change will only happen if teachers are convinced of both the need for a change – and the possibility of achieving it.*
- One interesting example of a bottom-up and top-down initiative is the so called ‘*Proeftuinen*’ in Flanders. Schools can apply for an innovative project, which they want to try out over three school years. The plan has to meet certain criteria. During the third year the project is evaluated by the inspectorate with a view to possible mainstreaming in the educational system. The concrete support consists of assistance by the department for education and training, and the Pedagogical Services who will support the selected schools. The outcomes of these experiments can even lead to an adaptation of some parts of the legislation.
- Moreover, Flanders provides three magazines that are distributed for free to core groups involved in educational change. ‘*Klasse*’ for teachers, ‘*Maks*’ for pupils, and ‘*Klasse*’ for parents’ include not only articles about actual educational issues and interviews from stakeholders of all kinds, but also information concerning learning materials, excursions, study days, conferences etc.
- It is important to examine the pre-conditions (and indeed the school level conditions) which allow for successful practice to flourish, and have structures and tools for analysing the results in order to inform policy and help mainstreaming innovation. In Greece, for instance, dissemination is done via a website and local pedagogical advisors; in Hungary, networks of schools both create innovative new practice and support each school to implement it. Networks, in particular, may help getting a ‘critical mass’ that is needed for a successful change.
- In Flanders, one of the main observations the group made was that all actors from the highest policymaking level to schools and teacher educators ‘*spoke the same language*’: they all shared an understanding of their strengths and the issues to be addressed. This suggests the need for a reform and the way it will be undertaken was well communicated. The same was observed in Hungary and Greece: key actors such as teacher educators and teachers in school, advisors, experts, and policy - as well as decision makers were observed to ‘be on the same wavelength’.
- As for managing change, all three countries illustrated *a systematic approach to change* with an intention to support schools with new pedagogical material, advice to teachers, and a growing understanding of the needs to develop leadership in schools.

Hungary, for instance has established background institutions and agencies<sup>8</sup> to provide for services to schools in all these areas. In Flanders, with its decentralised system, the inspectorate is harnessed to help schools to evaluate their own situation and set goals for improvement. In Greece, the paradigm change goes throughout the lifelong learning structures, from primary to adult education.

#### 4.2. From policy to school practice

*In order to support the political intentions on schools as part of lifelong learning strategies, key competences should have an appropriate status in curricula and syllabi.*

- In all host countries (Flanders, Hungary and Greece) there is a strong vision of the need to promote the competence-based approach both within 'traditional' subjects and in the overall school development.
- In Flanders, the key competences are included both in subjects and the cross-curricular themes. The subject-related final objectives of basic education (i.e. Dutch, foreign languages, mathematics, geography, natural sciences, technology ...) are required to be achieved by pupils. The cross-curricular final objectives, organised in themes, are to be *strived for* by means of several subjects or pedagogical projects. They are the responsibility of the whole school, not just one or two teachers. The schools have, therefore, a legal obligation to organise the learning of cross-curricular objectives, and the inspectorate controls this effort by an instrument the school can use for self-evaluation. These cross-curricular goals contain most of the essential elements of key competences such as learning to learn, social skills, citizenship, expressive – creative education, ICT, technical-technological education and they complement the more specific objectives attached to subjects.
- In Hungary, the National Core Curriculum, which is the highest level document regulating teaching and learning, defines the development tasks of students for a set of grades (e.g. 1 to 4) with learning outcomes that are not (only) linked to subjects. Between the national and local curricula there is a supporting system that comprises e.g. educational packages and learning materials. The support system provides schools with pedagogical tools, and helps them to transform the curriculum to a local level.
- The recent curriculum reform in Greece introduced the idea of key competences e.g. in 'macro-concepts' that create links between subjects, as well as the concept of 'Flexible Zone' that requires schools to devote time to cross-curricular work such as learning in teams, projects and events. The 'Flexible Zone' interacts with the new cross-thematic curriculum '**Cross - Curricular Single Framework for Studies Programme**' (D.E.P.P.S.)<sup>9</sup> that introduces the cross - curricular approach to knowledge and competence- building.

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<sup>8</sup> <http://www.educatio.hu>; <http://www.ofi.hu>

<sup>9</sup> [http://www.pi-schools.gr/programs/depps/index\\_eng.php](http://www.pi-schools.gr/programs/depps/index_eng.php)

*Teachers need to be trained and supported as agents of change, through targeted continuing professional development, to support appropriate paradigm shifts in relation to the implementation of key competences<sup>10</sup>.*

- The PLAs in Flanders and Hungary demonstrated well the fact that if teacher students continue to study their profession in a traditional way, there is little hope that they eventually will practice new pedagogical methodologies and competence-based approach in their future jobs. Therefore, in all three countries visited, there are a number of interesting examples of addressing this issue and a growing trend to require teacher students to take full responsibility for their development, introduce experimental learning, projects and team learning etc. that are to shape teacher students' understanding of what learning is about.
- However, in all countries it was recognised that there is a need to pay more attention to the induction phase of new teachers: first months and years are crucial with a view to adapting to school communities while bringing there new ideas and practices. Mentoring, partnerships with school and teacher education institutions, and the ways school leadership is organised play a major role in using new teachers as agents for change.

*School Inspectorates – with their changed role - can effectively support schools and teachers to develop*

- The changing role of the inspectorate towards individualised support for each school community was also illustrated in Flanders. One of the purposes of the inspection is to help schools to develop: to identify their strengths and areas for improvement. It takes into account the characteristics of the intake area and seeks to identify the added value school is producing. Although inspection reports are published, they deal with the school in question without comparison with others.
- In Greece, and Hungary, already some 25 years ago, inspection was transformed into a support given by Pedagogical Advisors- experts. Advisors, with their knowledge of local circumstances, give advice and feedback to schools and teachers and play an important role in linking the national policy with school practice.

*Leadership has a strong effect on the learning culture of schools*

The quality of leadership was seen crucial in all three PLAs for progressing towards a competence-based approach. The idea of 'distributed leadership', where responsibilities and resources are transparently allocated, is gaining ground in many countries, and indeed seen as the way of empowering teachers to work in teams, focus on learning and thus affecting positively the learning culture of the school.

- In Flanders, the visited school illustrated how the commitment of the school head can encourage teachers to work together with students in order to ensure their learning; try new things, evaluate them, and use results as source for improvement. The

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<sup>10</sup> See also: Commission Communication: Improving the Quality of Teacher Education. COM(2007) 392 final.

development of a *shared vision* on the role and tasks of the school, openness and the adaptation of pedagogies and materials to the particular needs of learners seem to characterize this kind of leadership.

- In Hungary, as in many other countries, a programme for leadership training has been established. It focuses on the crucial questions such as changing the paradigm of learning, identification of features of leadership that have an effect of school development etc.
- In Greece, there is a growing emphasis on school directors- leaders' training, too. The Pedagogical Institute, and for instance the National School of Public Administration have enhanced their provision for school leaders- directors, aiming at strengthening their role in school development and daily practice improvement.

*The quality of learning material is crucial in supporting pedagogical approaches that focus on the development of key competences.*

The production of teaching material constitutes first of all an important market in each country. The quality of textbooks and learning material in relation to a changing concept of learning is an issue in all Cluster countries: if curriculum is based on competence development, how does the learning material reflect this paradigm? On one hand, teachers are requested to understand the *core of the curriculum* and think 'out of the box' of their specialisation area. On the other hand, textbooks can assume a broader role than only introducing knowledge: they can include elements and exercises that help students to 'get a bigger picture', learn how to learn and guide learners (and indeed teachers) to other sources of information and tools, such as digital media.

The following questions therefore arise with a view to the development of key competences:

- what kind of learning material (and textbooks) support the cross-curricular dimension of learning, in particular the learning to learn, problem-solving skills and attitudes in general?
- to what extent do (or should) teachers follow textbooks as a substitute for the curriculum and how are teachers trained to use new material? Is there an over-reliance on textbooks at the expense of other available sources for learning?
- what quality assurance (and with what criteria) and update mechanisms exist?

Flanders, Hungary and indeed Greece are aware of the fact that textbooks and teaching material should be of quality and reflect all aspects of curriculum evenly, both the subject related content and the development of cross-curricular element of key competences.

- In Hungary, a Department in the Ministry of Education provides a registry of accredited material, not only for textbooks, but also supporting material and online support<sup>11</sup>. The key question is to get researchers, publishers and practitioners closer in

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<sup>11</sup> See also Kojanitz László: Learning centred quality assessment. [www.tankonyvkatato.hu](http://www.tankonyvkatato.hu)

order to ensure that new pedagogical principles are translated into the language of textbooks. In Hungary, the competence-based approach is supported by the development of educational packages that include the development of transversal competences in addition to subject knowledge. They are provided to schools for free by a specialised agency. In addition, Hungary supports schools by producing additional material that is based on themes involving several subject areas and effectively integrate learning.<sup>12</sup>

- The recent reform of textbooks in Greece identifies similar challenges. It has a strong focus on the development of meta-cognitive skills and introduces, inter alia, macro-concepts spanning different subjects, self-assessment items, as well as exercises that require collaborative learning. The Pedagogical Institute and the relevant Agencies of the Ministry of Education which is responsible for learning material production involves researchers, publishers and practitioners from the outset in the process and guides it in a thorough way.
- For textbooks and other learning material, there is a free market in Flanders: schools and teachers are free to choose from the lists of publishers. To help maintain the quality and correspondence with curriculum revisions, the Ministry of Education invites publishers together with teachers, researchers and other actors to introduce the changes that should be reflected in learning material. Moreover, Flanders has recently made an agreement with publishers of learning material to exchange information in a formal and structured way. This means that curriculum innovations will rapidly be present in textbooks and other learning material. The above mentioned '*Klasse*' for teachers, '*Maks*' for pupils, and '*Klasse*' for parents' contain also targeted information on new learning material and opportunities for learning.
- The quality criteria for the approval of textbooks in Austria cover (in addition to content related criteria) the extent to which autonomous work and participation, preparing young people to working life and citizenship and democracy and equality issues are dealt with. In Croatia, a recent Textbook Standard prescribes the quality standard for textbooks and licences for publishers. In Cyprus, a series of textbooks which have been published in Greece, were also adopted with a view to enhance the development of key competences. Lithuania uses individual experts for the evaluation of textbooks that are eventually approbated by national boards of experts. In Irish Junior and Senior cycles, textbooks are not prescribed, but the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment provides teachers with detailed bibliographies and suggested resources for each subject area. In all countries, traditional learning materials are increasingly supported by digital products: CD-ROMs, DVDs and Internet-based material that can positively add to the development of key competences.

## 5. FUTURE WORK OF THE CLUSTER

The PLAs have given a valuable insight into policy measures that are needed for ensuring the implementation of the Recommendation on key competences. However,

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<sup>12</sup> Link: <http://www.educatio.hu>; <http://www.ofi.hu>; <http://www.tankonyvkatato.hu>

while schools are readier to change, the main obstacle seems to be the **assessment of competences** and the dominance of factual knowledge in exams and national tests at lower-secondary and upper secondary levels in particular. Many countries are currently focussing on learning outcomes and thus developing **standards or indicators** for e.g. reading, maths, languages (AT, BG, HU, HR, CY, LT), and reforming **pupil assessment** systems (e.g. Czech R, and Spain) and all cluster countries are keen to learn from other countries how to measure *the skills and attitudinal components of competences*, and the links between assessment and *learning to learn* ('*formative assessment*').

Many countries (e.g. IE, UK, AT, HU, BG, EL in particular) have also expressed their interest in examining successful approaches for **improving literacy at all stages of lifelong learning**. They are conscious of the number of factors influencing PISA results (reading culture, role of early learning, family support, migrant backgrounds etc.) and are eager to learn how school policies have tackled this issue in the context of overall lifelong learning frameworks.

References:

- (1) CIDREE: Across the Great Divides. CIDREE 1998.
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- (4) Improving the Quality of Teacher Education. Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament. COM(2007) 392 final.
- (5) RECOMMENDATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 18 December 2006 on key competences for lifelong learning. (2006/962/EC) L 394/10 Official Journal of the European Union 30.12.2006  
[http://ec.europa.eu/education/com392\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/education/com392_en.pdf)
- (6) White Paper Teaching and learning: towards the learning society. European Commission 1997.

## 6. ANNEXES

### 6.1. List of Members of the Cluster Key Competences – Curriculum Reform and participation in Peer Learning Activities

Participation in the work of the Cluster Key Competences-Curriculum Reform and in Peer Learning Activities (2007)							
country	name		institution	Cluster member	PLA Flanders	PLA Hungary	PLA Greece
AT	Erich	SVECNİK	Federal Institute for Educational Research, Innovation and Development of the Austrian School System, Dept. Evaluation and School Research, Graz	x		x	x
AT	Josef	LUCYSHYN	Bundesinstitut für Bildungsforschung, innovation and entwicklung des bildungswesens Techno-Z, Techno 12		x	x	
BE fl	Chris	VAN WOENSEL	Ministry of Education and Training of the Flemish Community, Curriculum Division	x	x		
BG	Neda	KRISTANOVA	Center for Control and Assessment of the Quality in Education	x	x	x	x
CY	Andreas	TSIAKKIROS	Ministry of Education and Culture	x	x	x	x

CZ	Jaroslav	FALTYN	Vyzkumny Ustav Pedagogicky V Praze	x	x	x	x
ES	Rosario	SANCHEZ NUNEZ-ARENAS	Ministerio de Educacion y Ciencia Instituto de Evaluacion	x	x	x	x
ES	Josep	CERVELLO COLLAZOS	Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Facultad de Educación			x	
ES	Enrique	ROCA COBO	Ministerio de Educacion y Ciencia Instituto de Evaluacion	x			
GR	Nikos	PAPADAKIS	University of Crete, Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs, Directorate of EU Affairs	x	x	x	x
HR	Sanja	UREK	Education and Teacher Training Agency - Head of the teacher training department			x	
HR	Nevenka	LONČARIĆ-JELAČIĆ	Institute of Education of Republic of Croatia	x	x	x	x
HU	Maria	BOGNAR	National Public Education Institute		x		
HU	Vilmos	VASS, Dr	University Pannonia Teacher Training Centre, Veszprém.	x	x	x	
HU	Laszlo	KOJANITZ	Institute of Textbook Research				x
HU	Anita	KREMO	Ministry of Education		x	x	
HU	Aniko	ORBAN	Ministry of Education and Culture				x

IE	Mary	KETT	Department of Education and Science	x			x
LT	Raimonda	JARIENE	Education of Development Centre	x	x		x
LT	Saule	VINGELIENE	Education of Development Centre			x	
LT	Loreta	STATAUKIENE	Organization: Educational Development Center			x	
LU	Edmée	BESCH	Ministère de l'Education Nationale et de la Formation professionnelle		x		
UK	Desiree	LOPEZ	National Research and Development Centre for Adult Literacy and Numeracy, Institute of Education, London				x
UK	Ursula	HOWARD	National Research and Development Centre for Adult Literacy and Numeracy, Institute of Education, London	x			
UK	Helen	CASEY	National Research and Development Centre for Adult Literacy and Numeracy, Institute of Education, London	x		x	
	Evelyn	VIERTEL	ETF	x	x		
	Birgitte	BIRKVAD	ETUCE	x		x	





## 6.2. Annex 2: National Key Competences in National Frameworks

<i>Country</i>	<i>Present situation</i>	<i>Strategies in place/ Developments in progress</i>	<i>Challenges still to be addressed</i>
<b>AT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ In lower secondary education (“Lehrplan 99”, ISCED 2) the curriculum comprises three areas: subject-related competencies, social competencies and self-competencies. The latter two place emphasis on self-esteem, responsibility, initiative-taking etc. i.e. real-life situations</li> <li>▪ Curricula reflect the shared responsibility of all subjects for developing cross-curricular objectives</li> <li>▪ “Schlüsselqualifikationen” in pre-vocational education to stress across-the-board skills such as flexibility, accuracy, personal development; stress on students’ autonomy in upper secondary education.</li> <li>▪ Higher general upper secondary (Gymnasium, ISCED 3) curriculum reformed: one third of the teaching time decided at the school level, syllabuses based on competencies rather than knowledge. Student’s autonomy stressed in order to prepare them for tertiary education requirements; Foreign languages and ICT dominate adult education provision</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Standards developed and piloted for reading, maths, first foreign language, with an emphasis on cross-curricular competencies such as critical thinking, self-regulated learning etc</li> <li>▪ Schools are encouraged, but not obliged, to formulate their own school program on the basis of the national curriculum;</li> <li>▪ In vocational upper secondary education, a quality initiative including educational standards and evaluation has been launched (<a href="http://www.qibb.at/en/home/info.html">http://www.qibb.at/en/home/info.html</a>)</li> <li>▪ Provision of full-time care in schools</li> <li>▪ Initial and in-service training of teachers re-organised in University Colleges of Teacher Education (Pädagogische Hochschulen) starting their work in fall 2007</li> <li>▪ New regulation for the maximum number of students per class in lower secondary – reduction from 31 to 25 in force from fall 2007</li> <li>▪ Initiative for learning democracy in schools (<a href="http://www.politik-lernen.at">http://www.politik-lernen.at</a>)</li> <li>▪ Pilot projects on new ways of integrated pre-school and primary education have been started</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ More programmes are needed for basic skills for adults with literacy and numeracy difficulties; the development of broader competencies are to be evaluated since adult education is not regulated by federal curricula</li> <li>▪ Subject-based teaching and the traditional distribution of working hours is still seen as a challenge in dealing with cross-curricular objectives</li> <li>▪ Models of comprehensive schools and a possible change of the whole system of lower secondary education including evaluation under development</li> <li>▪ How to deal with the large variation in terms of (key) competences between migrants/lower SES and higher SES.</li> </ul>

	(www.erwachsenenbildung.at)		
<b>Country</b>	<b>Present situation</b>	<b>Strategies in place/ Developments in progress</b>	<b>Challenges still to be addressed</b>
<b>BE</b> <b>(Flanders)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A decree on language learning in Kindergarten and primary education is accepted by the Flemish Parliament</li> <li>▪ Modularisation of adult basic education and second chance is done</li> <li>▪ Cross-curricular final objectives for ICT for mainstream elementary education and for the 1st stage of secondary education were designed (for the 2nd and 3rd stage subject related ICT final objectives already existed), and developmental objectives for ICT for special education. Investments in ICT were increased and an integrated ICT policy plan has been presented.</li> <li>▪ In 2007 a strategic ‘health policy’ action plan is implemented. It is mainly aimed at a balanced diet and more exercise. For this purpose a health coordinator was appointed in 2006 at the Flemish Educational Council (Vlaamse Onderwijsraad VLOR). The initiative is supported by the Ministers for Education, Health, Sport and Agriculture and involves a variety of agencies.</li> </ul>	<p>The following curriculum reforms are ongoing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ less, more transparent and more concrete final objectives in primary and secondary education based on an evaluation of the current final objectives</li> <li>▪ more attention and more transparency for (Dutch and foreign) language skills and competencies supporting schools in reaching the existing final objectives about citizenship</li> <li>▪ integrating ICT-competencies in regular final objectives</li> <li>▪ Cross-curricular final objectives (learning to learn, social skills, citizenship education, health education, environment education, expressive-creative education and technical-technological objectives) are defined and applied at different levels of education. They are under revision and</li> <li>▪ Final objectives modern languages compulsory education (7 – 18 years) are revised They are linked to the European Framework for learning and teaching modern languages;</li> <li>▪ The final objectives science in the first grade secondary education (pupils 12 – 14) are being revised in order to match them better with the competence ‘ science literacy’</li> <li>▪ The Action plan for Science Information and Innovation (policy and actions to promote STI). The action plan is issued and financed by the Flemish Government. It started in 1994 and is ongoing since then. The action plan is the</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Cross-curricular final objectives will be implemented in 2009</li> <li>▪ The new final objectives modern languages will be implemented in 2009.</li> <li>▪ Two foreign languages will be compulsory in technical education, one foreign language in vocational education in 2009</li> <li>▪ The final objectives science in the first grade secondary education (pupils 12 – 14) will be implemented in 2009</li> <li>▪ On the basis of the framework developed by TOS 21 the final objectives technology are being revised for primary education and 1st grade secondary education</li> </ul>

		<p>instrument for implementing policy aimed to promote science, technology and innovation to the broader public. The policy is outlined in the (yearly) policy letter which covers the whole policy with respect to STI. In the action plan the policy is described in more detail and the actions to be undertaken are described as well. The current reference period (2005-2010) is a period a consolidation, where the best activities (including materials developed – see also TOS21-project) and actors will be prolonged and where a better co-ordination and structuring of the activities will be organised by way of the establishment of a network of actors (supported by an electronic tool).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ TOS21 (Technology at school for the 21st century) Partners involved: Department of Education – Curriculum Division and Science Division of the Ministry of Flanders. It was initiated on January, 1 2005. The project is both the continuation of two previous (but linked) projects, namely <a href="http://insight.eun.org">http://insight.eun.org</a> © Copyright European Schoolnet 2005 2 In this project a framework for technology education for pupils from three till 18 years is developed</li> </ul>	
<b>BG</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Law on the Level of Schooling, General Educational Minimum and Syllabus and State Educational Requirements explicitly state the spheres of knowledge, skills and competencies that are to be acquired and curriculum define the expected educational results at the end each educational level (Primary – 4th Grade, Lower Secondary – 8th Grade and Secondary Level- 12th Grade) and, translating them into teaching content according to</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Making education up-to-date aims at meeting the requirements of educational standards and measuring their acquisition. At the beginning of 2006 the Ministry of Education and Science (MES) of Bulgaria developed National Pre-education and School Education Development Programme (2006-2015). It defines equal access to education and high-quality and efficiency of education as main educational objectives and outlines specific measures to achieve them. Among these measures are development of effective internal (in-school) and standardized national external assessment system; revision of</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Difficulties in overcoming teachers’ stereotypes as well as developing new teachers’ competences, for they often still teach and assess from a knowledge-based point of view. That is why an emphasis is laid on teachers’ qualification in employing interactive teaching methods and learning through ICT.</li> <li>• The main difficulties are breaking down the competences standards into representative observable skills which can be assessed.</li> <li>• Among the main challenges to both teachers and students remains the formation and application of skills to solve problems, not reproduce knowledge, as well as to learn and find information.</li> <li>• Lack of effective national system to monitor the quality of educational provision, to recognize and certify students’ achievements in core subjects and key competences and to measure how far educational standards have been achieved;</li> <li>▪ Revision of educational knowledge and competence standards in specific subjects</li> </ul>

	<p>subjects. Subjects are integrated in “<i>cultural-educational fields</i>” – <i>Bulgarian language, foreign language, mathematics and computer science, natural sciences, humanities and civic education, arts, physical education and sport.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Study course contents new educational syllabi for each subject and grade have been worked out on two levels – for core curriculum and core curriculum option, defining the parameters of the educational process (objectives, expected results, number of classes, structure and range of study course contents).</li> <li>• Alongside the acquisition of specific for each subject knowledge and skills in every one of them are integrated <i>key groups of skills</i>, acquired as <i>language literacy, mathematical literacy, tackling information, communicative skills, critical thinking, problem solving and learning strategies.</i></li> <li>• Establishment of National Assessment Centre</li> <li>• Standardized tests for external assessment of students’ competences at the end of primary and lower secondary school are developed.</li> <li>• Standardized tests are used in external assessment of students’ foreign language competences in listening, reading and writing at the end of their eighth grade of intensive foreign language studies in both language and</li> </ul>	<p>the curricula to no longer on knowledge and skills alone but on key competences acquired; introduction of a differentiated system of teacher’s payment bound up with the quality of teaching and the students’ achievements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• From 2005/6 school year information technologies studies were introduced in primary school; computer study course in all upper secondary school subjects were developed, as well as complementary primary school study modules.</li> <li>• External assessment at the end of grade 4 (end of primary school) in four subjects: Bulgarian language, Maths, Man and Nature and Man and Society, measuring language skills, competence in Maths, civic competence and basic competence in science;</li> <li>• Pilot mature exams have been carried at the end of 12th Grade in 15 subjects; this year the first mature exams for all students are in course;</li> <li>• The introduction of new study course contents is accompanied by a change of pedagogical approach. The teacher stimulates and regulates the process of knowledge acquisition, directing students’ activities to attaining means and methods of independent intellectual and practical experience. The priorities of both teachers and students are changed – from reproductive and instructive to creative and research activities. Emphasis is laid on student’s active participation.</li> <li>• Key concepts in active learning are: independent learning, learning in action; learning through experience, problem solving based learning, learning through partnership and cooperation.</li> <li>• Life Long Learning Strategy is being developed, emphasizing the formation of students’ learning to learn skills and their independent study skills. The need to evaluate and certify the skills acquired in non-formal education, including adult literacy courses, is recognized.</li> </ul>	<p>and ensuring sustainable modern knowledge-based curricula, which entails the acquisition of knowledge, skills and competences that can be transferred to real-life situations;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ further development of standards for learning to learn and entrepreneurship</li> <li>▪ Programmes are needed for basic skills for adults with literacy and numeracy difficulties; the development of broader competencies are to be evaluated since adult education is not regulated by national curricula</li> </ul>
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	vocational schools		
<b>Country</b>	<b>Present situation</b>	<b>Strategies in place/ Developments in progress</b>	<b>Challenges still to be addressed</b>
<b>CY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At the moment there is no framework in place.</li> <li>• However, in all phases of education, some of the key competences (1-4) are promoted and implemented through special subjects of the curriculum (Greek Language, foreign languages, Mathematics, Science and Technology and Information Technology).</li> <li>• The rest of the key competences are promoted through an interdisciplinary approach and through the special objectives that are set by the Ministry of Education and Culture each school year.</li> </ul> <p>The Adult Education Centres as well as the State Institutes for Further Education are offering a variety of programmes which aim at the improvement of knowledge and skills and the promotion of Life Long Learning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Since last year the Ministry of Education and Culture has introduced a new series of textbooks and learning materials which have been produced in Greece. The philosophy of this reform is based on the interdisciplinary approach and the key competences are promoted via a cross-curricular perspective.</li> <li>• In September 2007, the Minister of Education and Culture has presented the Ministry's strategic plan for education. One of the plan's strategic aims is changes in the ten-year compulsory education within the framework of a common base of knowledge, skills and attitudes which are very similar to the ones the recommendation on key competences proposes. Out of the plan's 66 pages, 30 pages are devoted to the detailed analysis of each competence. An intensive dialogue on the specific plan with all stakeholders took place and now the Ministry has to take the political decisions so that the process for the implementation of the measures will start.</li> <li>• One of the major developments in progress concerns ICT Education. Teachers of all disciplines are trained for the use of ICT in order to be able to use student-focused competence-based approaches to teaching. Also, a pilot project for an internet based school (Learning Management System) is being implemented, in which 7 upper secondary schools are participating. Depending on the outcomes of the project the participation of schools will be increased.</li> </ul> <p>In Secondary Technical and Vocational Education an evaluation of the curricula and organization is</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In 2005, the Government of the Republic of Cyprus has launched an ambitious educational reform programme, inviting dialogue among all interested parties, with a view to turn into reality the vision of a better and more modern educational system that would meet future needs and challenges.</li> <li>• This initiative was announced at a special gathering of representatives of all parties involved by the President of the Republic following a lengthy report by a group of seven academics relating to governance and administration, restructuring of educational levels from kindergarten to university and the content of education in the future.</li> <li>• Through the ongoing dialogue that the Ministry of Education and Culture has established, the aim is to reform the educational system so as to become more attractive to students covering the area of key competences as well in a more systematic and coherent way. Our goal is the introduction of new curricula and modern teaching methods, the smooth transition from the kindergarten to the primary school and from the primary school to the gymnasium as well as the upgrade of the content of education.</li> </ul>

		in progress, funded by the European Social Fund. The study has shown that the strategies that will lead to the further development of Secondary Technical and Vocational Education are the decrease of the material taught, the decentralization of the system and closer co-operation with industry.	
<b>Country</b>	<b>Present situation</b>	<b>Strategies in place/ Developments in progress</b>	<b>Challenges still to be addressed</b>
<b>CZ</b>	<p><b>Basic education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key competences are defined in national curriculum - National Education Programme for Basic Education (NEPBE)</li> <li>• There are six key competences which should be developed during the basic education: learning to learn, problem-solving, communication, social and personal, working and civic.</li> <li>• Each of six competences is more closely described in NEPBE (there are created concrete skills leading to development of each competence)</li> <li>• Key competences go across the whole curriculum – they’ve to be developed in each subject and in out-of-school activities as well</li> <li>• NEPBE suggests activities which should be reached by each pupil according to his personal abilities at the end of Primary school</li> <li>• Research Institute of Education came out with handbook Key competences in primary education. It describes concrete skills which should be reached by children in the end of 1.stage (the end of 5th class) and 2.stage (the end of 9th class), several</li> </ul>	<p><b>Basic education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aim of the education in school and out-of-school activities should be development of key competences of pupils.</li> <li>• School should give each pupil opportunity to develop each key competence as much as he can and help him with his integration to another study, work and personal life.</li> <li>• Systematically support teachers in ability to enrich the education with current trends in education and with developing pupil’s key competences individually.</li> </ul> <p><b>Gymnasium</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Currently the main issue is to help teachers with materials and tools which can be useful with work concerning key competences. Methodical materials are targeted mainly at: specification of key competences: teachers sometimes can’t imagine what does it mean to have competence “learn to learn”, so there’s methodology handbook coming up concerning key competences which will describe each competence and show how to work with them during planning the lessons</li> <li>• examples of good experiences: in several schools there’s investigation of examples of good experiences with integration and evaluation of key competences to lessons.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Basic education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To audit the way of work with key competences in particular school and methodically support teachers to launch school education programs:</li> <li>• describe good methods to develop key competences of pupils directly in the lessons</li> <li>• make up the tools for evaluating the development rate concerning key competences of pupils</li> <li>• make up the criteria for evaluation of pupil’s key competences (evaluating of development of each pupil)</li> <li>• verify the methods of development of key competences in each school</li> <li>• verify criteria for evaluation as well as tools for evaluating the development rate for finding out the level of pupil’s key competences in each school</li> <li>• Get acquainted with the main strategies concerning work with key competences in preschool, primary and secondary education in other countries of EU</li> <li>• Use the results of long-time research and cooperation with other countries of EU to improve the national curriculum of basic education.</li> <li>• Discussion of material and methods concerning key competences and tools for their evaluation (<b>with other countries of EU?</b>)</li> </ul> <p><b>Gymnasium</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The most difficult problem seems to be the evaluation of key competences and that’s why the biggest challenge is searching for examples of good experience with key competences and the creation of new tools of evaluation. In Czech Republic the new project solving this issue is coming up and it’s supported by European Social Found as well.</li> <li>• Preliminary examinations which should be more targeted to testing the skills in the future.</li> <li>• Output evaluation (used when pupil changes the schools) which should be based on evaluation of key competences.</li> </ul>

	<p>examples of activities which can be immediately used in lessons and special educational units belonging to each competence which in detail shows how can be competence developed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Primary schools set up school educational programs with educational strategies (e.g. methods, forms of education) which should lead to development of children’s key competences. Those methods are made at:</li> <li>• School level – school sets up that kind of strategies (e.g. methods, forms) which should be supported by all teachers in the school</li> <li>• Subject level – school sets that kind of strategies (e.g. methods, forms) which will be used by teachers of each subject.</li> <li>• Teacher level – each teacher chooses his own methods which should lead to competences in each subject or out-of-school activities.</li> </ul> <p><b>Gymnasium</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key competences are defined in national curriculum - National Education Programme for Gymnasium (NEPG) as the combination of knowledge, skills, abilities, values and attitudes appropriate to the context, which are important for the pupils’ personal development, his involvement in society and his future work. Selection of those competences comes out from their importance for the education on</li> </ul>		
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	<p>the Gymnasium. There are six competences in secondary education: learning to learn, problem-solving, communication, social and personal, civic, sense of entrepreneurship.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Level of key competences as described in NEPG is the target that should be reached by all pupils according to their abilities, during the Gymnasium. Teachers should evaluate the rate of evolvement of pupils' key competences according to their personal abilities and skills and pupils should realize that evolvement of key competences is lifelong process.</li> <li>• School describes in its own School educational program methods which lead to (targeted) evolvement of pupils' key competences. Those methods are called educational strategies and they're used in lesson as well as in out-of-school activities. Teachers plan those strategies on both school level (basic strategies used in the whole school) and subject level (specific strategies used in each subject).</li> </ul>		
<b>Country</b>	<b>Present situation</b>	<b>Strategies in place/Developments in progress</b>	<b>Challenges still to be addressed</b>
<b>ES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This course the implantation of the new law is going to take place. The courses 1st and 2nd of Primary Education and 1st and 3rd of Compulsory Secondary Education are going to come into force with the inclusion of the Key Competencies established in the Education Organic Law (LOE).</li> <li>• In Spain Key Competences have been</li> </ul>	<p>The new curriculum with the introduction of the Key Competencies. Within the framework of the proposal made by the European Union eight Key Competences can be identified in the curriculum:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.Linguistic communication competence.</li> <li>2.Mathematical competence.</li> <li>3.Knowledge and interaction with the physical world.</li> <li>4.Information treatment and digital competence.</li> <li>5.Social and civic competence.</li> <li>6.Cultural and artistic competence.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carrying out successfully the implementation of the new education system.</li> <li>• Developing new keys in the curricula which connect key competences with the different dimensions of the diverse areas.</li> <li>• Generalizing the culture of working key competences in the classroom.</li> <li>• Training teachers to work key competences in the classroom.</li> </ul> <p>Two decrees have been published last December which will help to face the challenge of initial teacher training. In these decrees the Ministry of Education and Science gives basic guidance so that universities develop their study programs according to the Bologna process for Primary, Secondary and Upper Secondary</p>

	<p>incorporated in compulsory education curricula (ISCED 1 and 2) and they are developed throughout all the courses of these educational levels with a cross-curricular treatment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This inclusion of Key Competences in the law has several purposes: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Firstly, the law tries to integrate both formal learning, which are incorporated in the different areas or subjects, and non-formal ones. In this way, Key Competences are a part of compulsory education curricula with the objectives, contents and assessment criteria of each area or subject.</li> <li>2. In the second place, the inclusion of Key Competences in the law allows all the students to integrate their learning, connect it with different kinds of contents and use it in an effective way, when needed in diverse situations and contexts, to be able to reach their personal attainment, exercise active citizenship and join adult life in a successful way.</li> <li>3. Finally, Key Competences will enable to orientate teaching methods allowing to identify contents and assessment criteria, which have an essential character. In a general way, they will enable also to inspire to take decisions regarding teaching and learning processes.</li> </ol> </li> <li>Students will move up to the next stage or cycle as long as they have acquired the basic competences corresponding to their level of maturity.</li> </ul>	<p>7. Learning to learn competence. 8. Autonomy and personal initiative.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>These eight Key Competences are present in primary and secondary curricula. Each one is described thoroughly with its purpose and the basic level a student must reach when finishing each educational level.</li> <li>The implementation of new evaluation processes: General Diagnostic Evaluation at the State level and School Diagnostic Evaluation conducted by the Autonomous Regions.</li> <li>One of the innovations of the Law is the incorporation of a diagnostic assessment of students' basic competences. The Education Organic Law (LOE) establishes Key Competences as a reference to promote from the first cycle to the second one in Primary Education and to graduate at the end of the compulsory Secondary Education. This assessment will be of a formative nature and will provide information about the situation of the students, the teaching institution and the education system itself, encouraging the adoption of relevant measures to overcome possible shortcomings.</li> <li>In accordance with the regulations of the Education Administrations, schools will be able to organise remedial programmes on basic competences for those students who, by virtue of the report, require these in order to continue benefiting from secondary education.</li> <li>During this stage special emphasis will be placed on the acquisition and development of basic competences, correct oral and written expression and the use of mathematics. In order to encourage reading habits, some time will be dedicated to this in the teaching of all subjects.</li> <li>The decision about whether a student advances to the next year and regarding the awarding of the qualification at the end of the secondary stage will</li> </ul>	<p>initial teacher training. These teachers will get an official master's decree which qualify them to teach.</p> <p>The aims of these master's decree are oriented to the competences that future teachers must acquire to be able to teach their future students in terms of Key Competences.</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If a student has not achieved the basic competences, he or she can remain another year in the same cycle. This measure can only be adopted once during primary education and there must be a specific reinforcement or remedial plan for the basic competences.</li> <li>• In order to guarantee continuity in students' education, each student will be given a report of his or her learning, the targets reached and the basic competences acquired, according to regulations of the Education Administrations.</li> </ul>	<p>be a joint decision made by all the teachers of the respective student, bearing in mind the basic competences and objectives achieved.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction of the first foreign language in the 1st year of Primary Education.</li> <li>• Cost-free in the second cycle of Pre- primary education (3 to 6 years old) and increase in the number of vacancies offered.</li> </ul>	
<i>Country</i>	<i>Present situation</i>	<i>Strategies in place/ Developments in progress</i>	<i>Challenges still to be addressed</i>
<b>GR</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Policy level:</b> Emphasis is laid on the implementation of a national strategy towards the modernization of the school curricula (in order to address learning outcomes and the attainment of key competences, within a cross-curricular perspective to learning). This is part of a major reform of the whole education system.</li> <li>• <b>Implementation level:</b> KCs are now integrated in every level and developed in any phase of the educational system, especially due to the new Cross - Curricular Crosscurricular Single Framework for Studies Program (D.E.P.P.S), introducing the cross-curricular approach to knowledge and KCs' development over the whole primary and secondary (both lower &amp; upper) education. ¶In the framework</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Policy Level:</b> Greece promotes LLL both as a process and as an approach- rationale that integrates all levels of E&amp;T. In fact it aims at interrelating life- long to life- wide learning, and thus it is in alignment with both the strategy for developing the key-competences for all across the whole E &amp; T system and the basic national strategy against unemployment In this respect the Greek LLL strategy allows, among others, the continuous updating of skills, competences and knowledge.</li> <li>• <b>Implementation level:</b> Within the context of a major education reform towards the adoption and implementation of a comprehensive LLL strategy and the change of the learning habitus, an actual paradigm shift regarding education curricula and objectives is actualised via policy initiatives such as the gradual modularization of training curricula (aiming at the active combination between procedural and factual knowledge) or the promotion of cross-curricular objectives within the</li> </ul>	<p><b>The major challenge at all levels (policy, implementation and evaluation) is to keep on reforming the educational system, within the context of the new comprehensive and coherent LLL strategy, towards the actual adoption of a cross-curricular perspective in education, not only in the “formal” educational system but in every level and aspect of E &amp; T system. The more decentralised the system becomes, the more transversal initiatives can be implemented and the more chances for a constant development of KCs by every learner can be provided.</b></p>

	<p>of [D.E.P.P.S.], the innovative action “Flexible Zone” for Pre-Primary, Primary and Lower Secondary School has been introduced, aiming exclusively at the further development of KCs. ¶</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ¶New textbooks and learning material, produced during the last 3 years, are in alignment with the major aim of KCs’ development and the new curricula.</li> <li>• <b>As regards Adult education and VET:</b> New types of schools were established, aiming at the enhancement of vocational education and the strengthening of its links to employment. Within this context, the new types of Vocational Schools were set up, whose operational framework and studies curricula emphasize on the link among the KCs (mainly developed), the learning outcomes and the labour market needs. Under the Law 3475/2006, the area of secondary technical education was reshaped with the creation of Vocational Lyceums (EPAL) and Vocational Educational and Training Schools (EPAS). This reform, put into place during the past 2 years, tend to enhance an LLL strategy and expand the KCs development all across the E &amp; T system (covering all levels, namely pre-school, primary, secondary, tertiary, adult, continuing) and all E&amp;T systems (formal, non-formal).</li> <li>• Within the context of the national LLL strategy and the subsequent</li> </ul>	<p>National Curriculum and the subsequent reform of the school textbooks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Evaluation Level:</b> The critical stake, concerning evaluation is the actual combination between QA procedures at every E &amp; T level- phase and evidence based policy making.</li> <li>• This combination has already been embedded within the national LLL strategy and inevitably affects the domain of KCs development.</li> <li>• <b>Within the Operational Programme for Education and Initial Vocational Training (EPEAEK)</b> a host of coordinated actions, measures and institutional structures have been set up and consolidated to secure the continuous qualitative assessment of the new updated education programmes and curricula. All pertinent actions are interwoven with the LLL national strategy priorities (including the one of a competence- based cross-curricular perspective to learning process) and are embedded in a holistic approach to further education and training. Regarding evaluation, emphasis has been laid on the consolidation of indicators and systems of continuous evaluation of outcomes and the enhancement of inter-disciplinarity.</li> </ul>	
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	<p>policy towards the establishment of new LLL providers, the Ministry of Education keeps has founded 56 Centres of Adult Education (KEE) all over Greece (13 new KEE were founded during the first 8 months of 2006)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The emphasis on the validation of non formal and informal learning (via the setting up of relevant methods and institutions) is a fairly new development aiming at the constant development of KCs within the whole LLL context.</li> <li>• c) ¶Evaluation level: KCs' evaluation is institutionally related to the evaluation of both the structures and levels, where they are developed and teachers and trainers' evaluation. More specifically:</li> <li>• In regard to secondary education, Law 2986/2002 still constitutes the basic legal platform for evaluation and QA. Wide support is provided for by the two established pillars of the quality assurance mechanism, i.e., the Centre for Educational Research and the Pedagogical Institute, whereas there is provision for the evaluation of all participants in the educational process. Evaluation in education is related to the assessment and enhancement of quality of teaching. The latter, especially within the context of the new curricula and textbooks (emphasizing in the Key Competences), presupposes the continuous education of teachers, which falls under the jurisdiction of the Organization for Teacher Training</li> </ul>		
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	<p>/OEPEK.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regarding the rest of the LLL domains (namely VET, informal and non formal learning), the National Centre for Accreditation (EKEPIS) has planned and already applies an integrated accreditation system, which is the key tool towards improving the quality and attractiveness of vocational education &amp; training and of adult education.</li> </ul>		
<b>Country</b>	<b>Present situation</b>	<b>Strategies in place/developments in progress</b>	<b>Challenges still to be addressed</b>
<b>HR</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Early Years</b> In recent years important steps have been taken towards reaching the development goals defined in the Development Plan: to increase enrolment in preschool programmes from the current 43% to 60% and the number of children covered by regular kindergarten programmes (in the year prior to enrolling in primary school) from the current 96% to 98%</li> <li>From the school year 2005/2006 until the beginning of 2007, 268 programmes for early foreign language acquisition for preschool children were approved, and over 40% of children from 4 to 6 years of age learn one foreign language as a part of their regular kindergarten programme.</li> <li><b>Primary</b> At the beginning of 2004, the Ministry commenced work on developing and improving the quality of primary education by sizing down</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Changes to the system in the period between 2004 and 2007 have been directed towards committed creating of a long-term development strategy for the education and science system, with the basic goal of accomplishing a knowledge-based economy and society. To that end, a series of specific activities and measures have been initiated and, for the most part, realized on all the levels of the education, science and technology sectors and on including Croatia in international development trends.</li> <li>The implementation of the Croatian National Educational Standard in primary schools, preparation for the implementation of the State Matura (national graduation examination) in secondary schools, drafting of the National Programme of Measures for the Implementation of Compulsory secondary Education (at least to the point of receiving basic qualifications), implementation of the Bologna</li> <li>Process at universities, external evaluation of education, enhancement of the adult education system, harmonization of science and technology with the European standards, establishment of new</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Soon has to be completed the National Pedagogical Standard for Preschool Education, which will set the standards to be observed by kindergartens and other legal entities that provide programmes for the children of preschool age.</li> <li>The Council for the National Preschool, Primary and Secondary Education Curricula was founded on 11 September 2006 by the Minister's Decision. The task of the Council is to create the competence based National Curriculum Framework, a national document for preschool, primary and secondary school education that stipulates educational competences, knowledge, skills and values.</li> <li>New national curricula are to be drafted for preschool, primary and secondary education, together with all other necessary documents and ordinances. The Council prepared a Strategy Proposal for the drafting of the national curricula for preschool, primary and secondary education. The Strategy Proposal, unanimously approved by the Council members, was presented to the Croatian public on 4 April 2007.</li> <li>Croatia has taken up drafting of the Croatian Qualification Framework (CQF), comparable to the expected European qualification framework, which is to offer clear overview of qualifications attained in Croatia, described using measurable indicators of education outcomes and general</li> <li>and specific competences, skills and knowledge. The completion of the CQF is a national priority since its quality and use will have immediate effect on successful implementation of the Copenhagen and the Bologna processes, as well as on successful development of the lifelong learning system in Croatia.</li> </ul>

	<p>the education contents within the existing curricula.</p> <p>New Croatian National Educational Standard (CNES) developed in 2005 has become during the 2007 part of the everyday life of pupils, teachers, principles and parents.</p> <p><b>Objectives of CNES:</b> • unburdening pupils by reducing the amount of encyclopaedic content teaching-based rather than lecturing based lessons • pupil-oriented teaching introducing pupils to research-based learning • acquiring competence and skills • developing problem-solving and decision-making skills • encouraging an entrepreneurial spirit • setting the base for lifelong learning • increasing the socialization role of school • improving the cooperation between schools and local communities • more creativity in the process, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As a preparation for the full implementation of CNES Curriculum in the academic year 2006/2007, the employed in all other Croatian primary schools (25,573 employees) completed the first stage of professional training. Since the beginning of the academic year 2005/2006, all primary school pupils have one foreign language in the programme, and over 60% of pupils get a second foreign language in the fourth grade.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Secondary</b> Croatian Government announced in June 2006 the implementation of</li> </ul>	<p>agencies and bodies for carrying out development goals and for adopting and making amendments and supplements to the legislative framework, all demonstrate the strategy and comprehensiveness of the changes to the education and science system.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The strategy for creating a Croatian knowledge-based society is contained in two documents – the Education Sector Development Plan 2005 – 2010 and the Science and the Science and Technology Policy of the Republic of Croatia 2006 – 2010, adopted by the Government. On the basis of these documents, as well as numerous domestic and European recommendations changes have been initiated in the entire education system.</li> <li>• Since the project for extending compulsory secondary education is one of the most demanding and most important projects for Croatia, this Government, through a number of measures, such as ensuring free textbooks, free transport and housing in student dormitories, as well as material and human resources necessary for its implementation, has offered a model, the funds and mechanisms that would make secondary education accessible to everyone. By extending compulsory secondary education, the state obliges itself to provide for student’s education until the end of secondary school, that is, at least up to the point of receiving first qualifications i.e. occupation, that enables the student to attain professional competence and the technical basis for further education. In this way the slogans “education for all”, “secondary school for all”, “qualifications for all”, and “a future for all” can truly become Croatian reality.</li> </ul>	
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	<p>compulsory secondary school education in order to advance the rights and quality of life of the individual, as well as to ensure the advancement of society as a whole.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>External Evaluation</b> of Education is provided by the National Centre for External Evaluation of Education, founded 2004. Centre is preparing the tests, organizing and carrying out the national exams and the State Matura, as well as scientific research in the field of education, assessment and external evaluation of the knowledge, skills and competencies of members of the system. This is the first time that a system of external evaluation of education has been implemented in the Republic of Croatia.</li> </ul>		
<i>Country</i>	<i>Present situation</i>	<i>Strategies in place/developments in progress</i>	<i>Challenges still to be addressed</i>
<b>HU</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The national core curriculum (NCC) was revised in 2006-2007. The key competences included in the Recommendation had not been word by word copied into NCC. However, the wording was adopted to Hungarian terms used in pedagogy and curricula. Therefore, all the EU eight key competences occur in NCC issues by the Government. The NCC applies to all schools. The key competences are integrated both into the general objectives of the NCC and into the 10 Cultural Domains.</li> <li>▪ In order to extend competence development, the Act on Public Education declares compulsory the strengthening of pedagogical</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The school level implementation of the revised NCC is in process, all schools have to revise their own programmes and integrate the curricular requirements of competence development in their programmes until 31st December 2007..</li> <li>▪ The development of the national system of measurement and assessment which supports competence development of pupils in the 4th, 6th, 8th, 10th grades along an up-to-date framework in the field literacy and numeracy is in progress.</li> <li>▪ The development of tools for the measurement of competences will be accelerated within the implementation of the national Development Plan II.</li> <li>▪ A revision of the compulsory in-service training system of teachers will be started. In the course of this revision, teachers' competences that are needed to reinforce developments that take place</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Within the NDP II, the secondary school final examination will be revised by 2014, and it is our task to improve its competence-based aspects.</li> <li>▪ Professional exams subjects, and the system of professional exams will be adjusted to the principles of the Key Competences recommendation by the end of 2009.</li> <li>▪ The assessment of pedagogical development achieved in the classroom and preparations for using up-to date teaching methods will start within the NDP</li> <li>▪ For encouraging the development of ICT skills and the digital competence, a significant improvement of school infrastructure will begin, reinforcing the use of digital technologies in schools and extending measurement methods applied during the development of pupils.</li> </ul>

	<p>practises for the development of pupils' competences in the 5-6 grades, the increase of timeframe for the reinforcing literacy and numeracy and the development of teachers' competences.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ For the implementation of competence-based education and assessment, several hundred teachers participate in various accredited in-service teacher training courses.</li> <li>▪ Within the framework of the National Development Plan I, educational packages aiming at competence development have been developed, and at the moment, a broad number of schools are involved in the programme.</li> <li>▪ a legal framework is published on the regulation of the development of textbooks and educational materials and tools supporting competence-based education.</li> <li>▪ Competences needed for teachers have been identified and integrated into the requirements of initial teacher training..</li> </ul>	<p>within the classroom will be identified. The main aim is to establish an in-service teacher training system which focuses on these processes. .</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Within the National Development Plan II, we support measures both at the regional school level and in central developments that disseminate methodologies for the development of competence that are required by the labour market and in the EU recommendation We gather, improve and disseminate good practices.</li> </ul>	
<b>Country</b>	<b>Present situation</b>	<b>Strategies in place/developments in progress</b>	<b>Challenges still to be addressed</b>
<b>IE</b>	<p><b>Early Years Education</b></p> <p>Early Years Education Policy Unit: co-located with the Office of the Minister for Children and the Department of Education and Science. Early Years: refers to the period from birth to six years.</p>	<p><b>Early Years Education:</b></p> <p>Development of a national framework for Early Learning, linked to Primary School Curriculum, is nearing completion. The framework is structured around key themes, with a series of learning goals set out for each.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The themes are Well-being, Belonging and Integrating, Communicating and Exploring and</li> </ul>	<p><b>Early Years Education:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>A key challenge</b> will be to promote and implement the framework in the context of the disparate range of providers involved in the sector. The framework is aimed at providers in nurseries and crèches, pre-schools, infant classes in primary schools, and parents in the home.</li> </ul> <p><b>Primary education:</b></p>

	<p><b>Primary education:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Primary education caters for the period from 6-12 years, although most 5 year olds and about half of the country's 4 year olds attend primary school</li> <li>▪ The curriculum is divided into 7 broad areas:- Language – (Irish and English/Mathematics)/Social and Environmental and Scientific Education (including History, Geography and Science)/Arts Education/Physical Education/Religious Education</li> <li>▪ Key competences are not identified explicitly. However, the curriculum sets out a set of learning objectives for each subject across 4 class groupings which span provision in primary schools</li> <li>▪ In Post primary school, key cross curricular skills are not explicitly named in the syllabi as yet. The syllabus for each subject sets out the knowledge, skills and attitudes which are required for the subject and the learning objectives for each unit/strand within the subject.</li> <li>▪ Junior cycle (lower second level) The main objective for the junior cycle at second level is that students shall complete a broad, balanced and coherent course of study in curricular areas relevant to their own personal development to allow</li> </ul>	<p>Thinking, Equality and diversity. The framework will be ready for publication early in 2008. ref <a href="http://www.ncca.ie">www.ncca.ie</a></p> <p><b>Primary education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A fully revised primary curriculum was introduced in 1999. Its implementation on a phased basis was completed in 2007.</li> <li>▪ Key concerns are the importance of literacy and numeracy to personal fulfilment, and responding to changing needs in the areas of science and technology, social, personal and health education and citizenship.</li> <li>▪ A re-balancing of curricula at junior cycle is currently under way, to address issues of overload and overlap.</li> </ul> <p><b>Research:</b> A longitudinal study is under way which tracks the experience and achievement of the same group of some 900 students in 12 case study schools, as they move from primary through the second level system.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A programme of reform is under way which is designed to embed key skills across the curriculum, to strengthen practical project and portfolio assessment, to reward active learning approaches and to provide for a spread of assessment points. The six key skills identified are: Learning to Learn, Information Processing, Personal effectiveness, Communication, Critical Thinking, and Working with Others.</li> <li>▪ Mathematics at both junior and senior cycle is being reformed with a strong focus on context and applications and problem solving. Reform in senior cycle Science is also planned</li> </ul> <p><b>National Framework of Qualifications:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>A review of the implementation of the primary curriculum</b> is being undertaken in phases. Phase 1 covered Maths, English and Visual Arts and the results, which were broadly successful, were published in 2005 (<a href="http://www.education.ie">www.education.ie</a>). A second phase review is now under way covering Irish, Science and Social Personal and Health Education. It will be due for publication in mid 2008. There is also a pilot in modern languages in selected schools.</li> </ul> <p><b>Key challenges are:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ to address educational disadvantage and improve progression rates to completion of senior cycle. Literacy and numeracy skills are being given key priority in that context</li> <li>▪ to promote and reward active learning methodologies and move away from didactic approaches, particularly through how subjects are assessed in the national examinations</li> <li>▪ to strengthen Maths, Physical Science</li> <li>▪ to promote language learning</li> <li>▪ to promote enterprise</li> <li>▪ to promote active citizenship</li> </ul> <p><b>Adult Education</b></p> <p>Key challenges include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Further roll out of new procedures to needed to support acquisition of qualifications by learners.</li> <li>▪ Development and validation of more programmes at Levels 1 and 2</li> <li>▪ Development of procedures for recognition of non-formal and informal learning.</li> </ul>
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	<p>them to achieve a level of competence which will enable them to proceed to senior cycle.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ There are 25 subjects to choose from. In practice, students choose at least seven examination subjects, and many choose up to 10 or 11 in order to sample them at the early stages of junior cycle.</li> <li>▪ Senior Cycle Upper Second level . Students normally choose 7 subjects from a range of 36.</li> </ul>	<p>provides for a single coherent award system for all levels of education and training in the State. The Framework comprises 10 levels and standards of knowledge, skill and competence have been set out in generic ranges for each level. Standards define the generic learning outcomes to be achieved by learners seeking to gain awards.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Development of teaching and learning infrastructure for adult literacy and basic skills: through National Framework of Qualifications. Accreditation for qualifications at Levels 1-3 up to lower secondary education) based on portfolio approach. Roll out of new qualifications at Levels 1 and 2 is now underway (first 3 programmes validated in September 2007)</li> <li>▪ Development of Curriculum Framework for Adult Basic Education by National Adult Literacy Agency</li> </ul>	
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<i>Country</i>	<i>Present situation</i>	<i>Strategies in place/developments in progress</i>	<i>Country</i>
<b>LT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Pre-primary competency-based education curriculum</b> has been prepared and implemented. The following competencies are developed: social, health care, cognition, communication, and artistic. Pre-primary teachers have been trained to implement this curriculum.</li> <li>▪ <b>Current primary, basic and secondary education curricula</b> focus on the importance of competencies (personal, social, cognition, and cultural) and general skills (critical thinking, problem solving, collaboration, etc.), however, subject syllabi and school student achievements are academic knowledge oriented.</li> <li>▪ <b>The Strategy for the Renewal of the Content of General Education for 2006-2012</b> has been prepared. The following content priorities are set: orientation of the content of education to the development of the key personal competencies, in particular, ability to learn,</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The EU SF project for the enhancement of competencies in applying innovative methodology and ICT for primary school teachers and teachers in special education is being implemented.</li> <li>▪ Another EU SF project “The increase of the possibilities for the choice of the direction of education for 14-19 year old students” is being implemented. A model for organising educational process in schools is being created and tested which later could enable to increase choice. Nine elective syllabi have been developed and tested on the national level focusing on the development of practical skills. Recommendations for individualisation and differentiation have been prepared. Curricula for the development of students’ entrepreneurship competencies and practical activity skills are being created</li> <li>▪ The project “<b>Learning schools network</b>” is being implemented whereby school team problem solving, team work, learning to learn and reflection skills are being developed.</li> <li>▪ <b>The project “The development of key competencies of basic education students (forms 5-8)” is under preparation.</b> It is planned to prepare methodological material for</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To improve teachers’ qualifications in the area of student competency development, individualisation and differentiation of education, assessment for learning, planning of educational process, and reflection.</li> <li>▪ To ensure compatibility between the aims of education and assessment: to increase the importance of assessment during the educational process and to achieve that part of the final assessment in the basic and secondary education curricula would include students’ project work..</li> </ul>

	<p>citizenship, entrepreneurship, and digital literacy; ensuring compatibility between the aims of education and assessment, individualisation and differentiation of education; increase of the possibilities for the choice of the direction of education for 14-19 year old students; and teacher training.</p> <p><b>Further and Adult Education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Part-time and full-time programmes with a focus on adults with literacy difficulties, early school leavers, social welfare recipients and those with less than upper secondary education.</li> <li>In adult education: literacy and numeracy programmes are the top priority. Development of adult literacy and basic skills programmes is part of National Development Plan (2007-13)</li> </ul>	<p>developing communication in the native language and learning to learn competencies in 5-6 form students and science and learning to learn competencies in 7-8 form students on the basis of the experience of the schools participating in the project; to train consultants and prepare recommendations for the preparation of educational material adopted to develop such competencies; and to create a tool for assessment of the learning to learn competency.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The project of development of adult education institutions for modern competencies acquisition in regions is being implemented. Adults and their teachers will have possibility to develop their foreign language, ICT, entrepreneurship competencies.</li> </ul>	
<b>Country</b>	<b>Present situation</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Present situation</b>
<b>UK (England)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In England, the National Curriculum for Schools sets out a statutory entitlement to learning for all pupils from ages 5 to 16 in maintained schools.</li> <li>The English School National Curriculum has five compulsory subjects for pupils. These cover the EU competences of Literacy and Language (English) Numeracy Mathematics) and ICT, Science and Technological Culture (Design and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proposals in the English Schools White Paper Higher Standards, Better Schools for All (2005) aim to create major change in personalising the learning of every child, particularly those who have fallen behind in mathematics and English.</li> <li>Significant curriculum reform has taken place at all levels, including greater personalisation for 11-14 year olds, the introduction of Diplomas at secondary level from 2007, the reform of A-Levels, and the development of “functional skills” in English, Maths and ICT, which will be at the heart of all qualifications.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attainment at all levels of the education system continues to be strongly correlated with socio-economic status.</li> <li>Even as levels of skills and qualifications rise for the majority of children and adults, a minority are showing no improvement, meaning that educationally they are slipping further behind the majority.</li> <li>The government has confirmed plans to raise the school leaving age to 18 in England by 2013.</li> </ul>

	<p>Technology compulsory up to age 14). Social skills are included in the Personal, Social and Health curriculum but this is not a compulsory core subject and entrepreneurship is to some extent integrated across the curriculum.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The UK government has a Key Skills framework, that is primarily accessed by young people, which comprises six discrete skills: communication, application of number, ICT, working with others, improving own learning and performance and problem solving.</li> <li>▪ At pre-primary level, the Foundation Stage Profile is used to summarise the achievements of children towards the Early Learning Goals (ELGs). It summarises what each child knows, understands and can do, and is based on a teacher's day-to-day observations during normal classroom activities.</li> <li>▪ England's Skills for Life agenda aims to improve the literacy, numeracy and language skills of adults.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Skills for Life agenda has exceeded its target of 1.5 million new adult qualifications between 2001 and 2007, and is on track for its goal of 2.25 million by 2010.</li> </ul>	
<b>UK</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The school curriculum in Scotland is non-statutory.</li> <li>▪ Ministers established a Review Group in November 2003 to look at</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Since 2004 the Government has worked towards achieving the Curriculum for Excellence to help children and young people to develop their capacities as successful learners, confident</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ There is still a significant link between disadvantage and underachievement and too many young people are leaving school without the skills and capacities to carry them into successful employment, education or training.</li> </ul>

<b>(Scotland)</b>	<p>the curriculum from ages 3 to 18 aiming to identify the purposes and principles of school education in order to reform the curriculum.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ In the later stages of secondary school education (S3-S6), the National Qualifications framework recognises five core skills (communication, numeracy, information technology, problem-solving and working with others).</li> <li>▪ The Scottish Executive is integrating enterprise in education across the curriculum.</li> <li>▪ The Scottish Government is committed to parity of esteem for vocational and academic learning and providing all young people with the opportunity to experience vocational and academic learning.</li> </ul>	<p>individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors. We are also reviewing the qualifications framework, to ensure that it supports the full implementation of Curriculum for Excellence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ In September 2007 the Scottish Government launched Skills for Scotland: A Lifelong Skills Strategy which set out their ambitions for skills, in a lifelong learning context, from cradle to the grave. The strategy covers early years provision, schools, further and higher education, work-related learning and informal learning opportunities, as well as looking at information, advice and guidance and funding systems.</li> </ul>	
<b>UK (N. Ireland)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ In Northern Ireland a new School Improvement Policy, 'Every School a Good School' is being developed. The overall aim of this policy is to ensure that every child will leave compulsory education with the appropriate standards of literacy and numeracy.</li> <li>▪ A revised Literacy and Numeracy Strategy is also under development. This strategy will enable young people to develop their literacy and numeracy skills and improve attainment levels in order that they reach their full potential.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The new School Improvement Policy and revised Literacy and Numeracy Strategy will issue for consultation in the coming months and will be implemented during 2008.</li> </ul>	
<b>UK (Wales)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ No data provided</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪</li> </ul>	

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