ATTACHMENT 1

LEAD-IN: ANALYSIS OF NEEDS, CHALLENGES, WEAKNESSES AND STRENGTHS FOR TRAINING SESSIONS

part of

IMPACT REPORT

LEAD-IN

Leadership Empowerment and Development for Inclusive Education in Europe

AUTHORS

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Her work focuses on questions such as: how can teachers collaborate on citizenship education? How do you deal with controversial topics in the classroom? How can school leaders ensure an inclusive school policy? How do we prepare (future) teachers to recognize (unconscious) biases and act inclusively?

DESIGN AND LAYOUT

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DISCLAIMER

We tried to categorize these needs, challenges, weaknesses and strengths commonly and specifically for each country. In addition, we distinguished all topics between more general ones (e.g. regarding school leadership) and inclusion focused topics. Of course, there is an overlap between those two and the division is not always very strict. However, this might help to select material and topics for the training.

Legend

- inclusion focus
- general focus

1. COMMON NEEDS IN ALL LEAD-IN COUNTRIES REGARDING TRAINING

1.1. *WHAT?* CONTENT OF THE TRAINING

1.1.1. Leadership and Management Skills: Decision-making processes and participatory culture teachers

- Handling teacher evaluations, managing teams, and addressing internal resistance (Belgium, Bulgaria, Austria, Poland).
- Motivating staff and promoting shared leadership approaches.

1.1.2. Inclusion and Diversity

- Training to address diverse student backgrounds and needs, including language barriers and socioeconomic disparities (all countries).
- Building cultural competencies and addressing sensitive topics like LGBTQIA+ or religion (Belgium, Austria, Poland).
- Inclusion-focused policies for both teachers and students, such as interreligious dialogue and support for immigrant students.

1.1.3. Parental Involvement, Bridging With The Parents

- Developing strategies for engaging parents effectively, especially in challenging situations (Belgium, Bulgaria, Austria, Poland)

1.1.4. Data-Driven Leadership

- Using data to measure impact, assess inclusion efforts, and inform decision-making (Belgium, Poland).

1.1.5. Conflict Resolution and Communication:

- Training on resolving conflicts between staff, students, and parents, and fostering trust (Belgium, Bulgaria, Poland).

1.1.6. Teacher Support and Development:

- Coaching novice teachers and supporting career-switchers or untrained teachers (Belgium, Austria, Poland).
- Encouraging professional development while addressing burnout or resistance (Poland).

1.1.7. Handling Diversity in Classrooms:

- Differentiation and adapting teaching methods for mixed-ability classrooms (Austria, Poland).
- Managing classroom behavior and addressing challenges like

bullying or inappropriate interactions (Belgium, Poland).

1.2. *HOW?* IN WHAT FORM SHOULD THE TRAINING BE?

1.2.1. Experience different school settings: visits
1.2.2. Workshops
1.2.3. Real case-based training
1.2.4. Good practice sharing
1.2.5. Balance between theory and practice
1.2.6. Network opportunities
1.2.7. Job shadowing
1.2.8. Register for what you are interested in
1.2.9. Time to specifically work on your school (policy)

2. COUNTRY-SPECIFIC NEEDS AND WEAKNESSES

2.1. BELGIUM

2.1.1. *What?* Content

- Helicopter view on the school (4)
  - Data literacy about inclusion and language (3)
  - Impact measurements at schools
  - Focus on long-term vision of the school and align three things: (1) what teachers say, (2) what official documents indicate, (3) and what students express
- Teacher evaluations
- How to lead and manage the induction of novices through mentor coaching
- Shared leadership
- Challenges from the teacher shortage, influx of career-switchers; for training in classroom management techniques
- Change management
- "a boom in immigrant student populations and related issues like drug use and physical altercations." --> *assumptions?*
- Mismatch teachers and students: 'realistic and applicable approach',
- Training to engaging with Parents and build bridges
- Handling sensitive topics (in relation with parents)
- Collaboration between religious teachers (interreligious dialogue both among teachers and students?)

2.1.2. *How?* Form

- Clear from the start and communicated well in advance
- Individual follow-up after professionalization
- Experience different school settings: visits
- Workshops
- Discussions e.g. fishbowl method
- Case-based training
- Balance between theory and scientific literature and practical application
- Network opportunities

2.1.3. *Weaknesses*

- Aim to have a participative culture but few team meetings

- Maintaining teacher wellbeing/ preventing burnout
- Evaluation policy of students
- Data management in the school
- Language competences students, not overdoing things for students
- Few girls in the school, challenge to discuss LGBTQIA+ and homosexuality
- Transportation possibilities impact the level of diversity in schools
- Few diversity in teacher team
- addressing conflicting views among teachers regarding issues like the headscarf policy. Teachers in the first degree often have a strict, black-and-white perspective, insisting that students remove their headscarves in the hallways, while many second- and third-degree teachers are more accepting, even during excursions. These disagreements can create tensions, and teachers wearing headscarves, particularly those teaching religion, often feel unsafe due to remarks from colleagues.
- In some cases, this is mirrored in reverse, with teachers facing disrespect based on their sexual orientation.
- more tools and guidance to ensure effective integration and appropriate approaches for ex-OKAN students
- Student Behavior and Attitudes: some student interactions can be harsh, with inappropriate or sexually charged remarks
- bringing the team along on the journey/ internal resistance. For instance, she noticed during discussion that half of the staff still support practices like 'Zwarte Piet', highlighting the need for cultural awareness and change.

2.2. BULGARIA

2.2.1. *What?* Content

- Team management
- Communication skills
- Identify strengths and weaknesses of teachers
- Motivate team and make decisions
- Value development (?)
- Parent involvement (Working with parents and responding to a crisis or delicate situation)

2.2.2. *How?* Form

- Balance theory practice, seminars
- Practical workshops eg role playing

- Real case studies
- Good practices
- Networking

2.2.3. *Weaknesses*

- reating sense of belonging in the school team
- Involve school team in policy and vision
- Support of other institutions
- Absenteeism
- Inclusion for parent – teachers
- Non-teaching staff as not inclusive?
- Communication towards students is inappropriate
- Support for special needs students

2.3. AUSTRIA

2.3.1. *What?* Content

- Understand sociogram of the school
- HR management
- Motivation
- Adopting ideas of other countries

2.3.2. *How?* Form

- Workshops
- Job shadowing
- Register for what you are interested in
- Online: limited time
- Network meetings
- Time to specifically work on your school (policy)

2.3.3. *Weaknesses*

- Few middle management positions and pedagogical support
- No in practice job shadowing period for school leaders
- Hiring procedures in context of staff shortage
- Teachers who are less committed (generational issue?
- School leader communication
- Parent contact and involvement
- Diverse backgrounds: students with few schooling and other with good educational background
- No experienced teachers regarding special needs students
- Mismatch students between home and school
- Need for more 'supervision of teachers, need for school psychologists and care workers

- Needs for actions for children and human rights in the school and integrate this consciously into lessons
- Addressing challenges of a diverse school and not only its positive aspects

2.4. POLAND

2.4.1. *What?* Content

- Management skills:
- Time management
- wellbeing and stress management:
- Fundraising: gain more knowledge about project writing and grant applications.
- effective communication
- decision-making processes
- Data analysis to assess inclusion efforts and make evidence-based decisions and upgrade the exam results. - data drive leadership
- Collaborating with External Stakeholders
- Conflict resolution skills for fostering trust with staff, students, and families.
- Coaching staff to implement inclusive practices
- Cultural Competencies

2.4.2. *How?* Form

- Workshops
- Study visits
- Online meetings and on site

2.4.3. *Weaknesses*

- Decision-making processes / participative culture (?)
- Limited resources and lack of modern educational tools
- -lack of a stable internet connection
- -traditional teaching methods
- -lack of IT coordinator.
- Interdisciplinarity, i.e. functioning in teams and working in teams, but not just the subject teams, just working also in interdisciplinary teams
- infrastructure ready to refurnish
- low educational (final exam) results
- teacher involvement always comes from the same teachers, the rest is passive
- Not all teachers are engaged
- Aging staff

- Burn-out of teachers
- Working on teachers professional development in general, going beyond their feeling of being an expert and training is not ‘directed against them’
- How to receive extra funding
- Lack of commitment of some teachers and difficulties in involving parents (especially conflict situations)
- Parental involvement
- Teachers not listening to students
- different ability classrooms
- High heterogeneity in classes: differentiation and adapting teaching methods
- Low socio-economic status of families
- Inclusion: investing in special classes, invest in sports lessons, ensuring gifted students in school, bilingual departments
- Creating a welcoming space in school for all
- Difficulty engaging some families who face language or socioeconomic barriers.

3. ANALYSIS OF STRENGTHS FOR TRAINING SESSIONS

3.1. BELGIUM

- participative leadership, teacher participation and communication, creating school policy and strategy together, everyone is aligned and ambassador, policy open to different perceptions
- open door and trust, openness and showing vulnerability as principal, supporting and listening to staff, care for teachers
- teacher collaboration time on Friday afternoon, made possible by changing class hours
- feedback in the team, co-teaching, peer learning reviews
- principal clearly communicates decisions + their reasons, clear vision (on inclusion) and direction
- feedback is seen as positive, growth opportunity, strengthening the school
- maximizing available hours
- open teacher team, welcoming for new teachers, warm team
- directors from the schools in the school community work together on pedagogical decisions
- working on clear roles and responsibilities in the team, procedures to increase efficiency, guidelines and structured framework for teaching and consistency, clarity and transparency of procedures
- focus school mission on teaching and achieving learning goals, structured lessons, measurable outcomes, data driven (e.g. attendance)
- coaching and professional development for teachers (effective classroom practices)
- high expectations for teachers and students
- created extra positions to make sure when staff member leaves, no knowledge or perspective is lost
- diversity in the teacher team: openness to discuss diversity and different thought patterns
- helping teachers to get the right qualifications
- principal lobbies for budget
- teaching techniques used by the uncommon schools network
- Initiatives to involve parents, parents are invited to the school, intensive communication, collaboration, information sessions

- Early enrollment/ early readiness: preventive strategies, e.g. proactively talking with Roma parents of 2Y olds to subscribe
- Support of parents in poverty (books, laptops, mails, solidarity fund, no physical visits needed)
- close follow-up of students, homework assistance in place, systemic remediation, extensive support outside regular classes, care teachers to support class teachers
- supporting students, positive and student-centered approach, caring for and listening to/understanding students
- warmth but also clear rules, strict school wide regulations, structure
- network in the community, with external parties as support system, collaboration with experts (e.g. on NT2, language coaches, pilot program on HRM)
- focus on language, making sure everyone understands communications
- clear language policy
- activities to expose students to new experiences, such as trips
- good attendance/ academic performance, despite disadvantaged student population
- highlighting diversity as a priority, e.g. on pedagogical day

3.2. BULGARIA

- Positive school environment, importance of principal informal style/ communication to get teachers on board, strong school community, empowering teachers
- Principal knows/is sensitive to needs of students and teachers, open door, stepping in when teachers face problems with authority, direct interaction with students
- Principal shows determination and persistence, attentive to own wellbeing
- Sharing between teachers, involvement of teachers, open communication, handling disputes between teachers, team connection and teamwork, making change happen as a community
- Principal collaborates with teachers, shows willingness to learn/develop himself (leader = an example for teachers), collaborative decision making, is supportive, knows strengths and weaknesses of the team -> distributing tasks based on strengths
- Motivating teachers, boosting their self-confidence
- Vision for the school, principal showing the way and providing direction

- In case of problem, team comes together to support the colleague or student, constant team communication about students
- Good contact with municipality and network with other schools
- Surveys for students, parents, teachers
- Communicate with parents, students and teachers, build community and common cause
- Emphasis on student belonging
- Empowering students, good principal-student relationship and direct communication, school parliament meetings
- Knowing the needs of the children + compliance with school policies
- Each class teacher visits the student's home at least 4-5 times a year
- Caring for students, their well-being, mental health, food, welfare activities
- Not forgetting about gifted students, students with exceptional talents
- Building a school community for the students
- Additional language support, good care team
- Calm classes, no tension between students despite diversity, new students are accepted
- Building leadership skills of students (e.g. student parliament, voting game)
- All students can express themselves, get the same opportunities, one community despite diversity
- Relationship with parents, school is part of the community, parent council (e.g. organises Christmas market), parent involvement in projects (e.g. building playground)
- Little dropout, conviction of teachers to leave no one behind
- “Talent schools”: We provide opportunities for students with sanctions, special educational needs (SEN), and exceptional talents to join the "Talent School" – we integrate them there. When we include students with sanctions or SEN in such a group, they change. Creativity helps to change students.
- We take an individualized approach to every case, whatever happens – we immediately organize meetings with parents and teachers to find a solution
- interactive lessons, using ICT technologies, flipped classrooms, and tools like Mentimeter
- principal very committed to making dual education work, finding and visiting the workplaces

3.3. AUSTRIA

- participative/shared leadership
- finding ways to build middle management
- open door as principal, focus on teachers' wellbeing
- campus conferences: staff can build network
- strategic, well-thought decisions, after hearing all parties, involving people, but principal has to dare to make final decisions
- providing predictability
- making sure everyone feels equally responsible for students
- cluster family like structure, teacher teachers work together closely
- recruitment and selection of teachers is important. a taster day is organized
- Selection of teachers: walking through the school during the job interview and close observation
- Novices get time to settle in and can choose where to take responsibility
- colourful and strong team, self-organised, open to new teachers, colourful, open school, everyone wants to give children the best
- parental involvement: parents café, many parent-teacher talks, workshops for parents
- importance of enrollment, talking to all parents as principal
- Individual, needs-orientated support for children and colleagues, focus on relationships
- children are challenged and encouraged
- certain things are consistently demanded
- We let the children present the values of their own culture, which must be mutually appreciated. In the school's mission statement, respectful interaction with each other is very important, with cultures, religions, languages
- try to utilise and contribute as many resources and languages and talents and everything we have from the children, parents, teachers and recreational educators
- activities to expose students to new experiences, such as trips, projects, sports, music ("we try to offer a wide range of subjects, cooperations, courses, and a view outside the box"), afternoon programs to make up for disadvantages
- integration classes
- we have decoupled the subject of political education from history
- network in the community (e.g. with recreation)

- cooperation with university for funding and professional development and coaching for teachers
- initiatives for violence prevention (e.g. police workshop), integration ambassador "safe together" best practice with police officers with a migration background
- English as a working language
- Very mixed and diverse staff ‘nobody can accuse any teacher of being racist. Because she has a more colourful mix in the staff room than in the classroom’, staff speaks all children's languages except for Bulgarian.

3.4. POLAND

- Inclusive leadership, based on dialogue and conversation with teachers, parents and students
- committed teachers, teamwork, clear distribution of responsibilities, cohesive team
- Teachers are well qualified and keen to improve their qualifications. Teachers undertake additional study to better cope with challenges.
- shared leadership, co-responsibility and freedom for teachers, teacher involvement in decision making, promoting grassroots initiatives, focus on critical thinking methods in teacher meetings, supporting staff
- principal provides direction, creates positive atmosphere
- focus on equity
- support of the governing body
- when new initiatives: first pilot projects, which are discussed with students and parents and staff
- no middle management -> formal principal is informal coach for new principal
- team meeting one morning a week
- The school has various projects, including collaborations with local institutions
- modern equipment, well-equipped
- Highly qualified teachers
- parent involvement: active Parents' Council presidium, parents involved in several projects, building relationships with parents and knowing the parents as a principal
- author’s class, sports, English teaching
- tailored programs to bridge learning needs, individualisation of work, emphasis on individualising work with pupils, closeness to pupils

- caring for their needs, knowing every child and their environment, creating sense of belonging with students, respect/support/making them feel valued
- meeting social and emotional needs of disadvantaged students, well-organised psychological support, fostering resilience, empowering students
- from traditional assessment to feedback
- Variety of work: The school organizes many events, such as festivals and nativity plays, which are very popular.
- Sensory therapy rooms, light room

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