



Beginning teachers: a challenge for educational systems

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Education is at the forefront of international discussions aimed at building resources to improve countries' economic performances and combat inequalities. Despite this, many countries have noted that teaching professions appear to be seen as unattractive, and are striving to devise ways to counteracting this.

In this context, training and supporting novice teachers would seem to be a vital driver of teachers' professionalism and effectiveness. All countries seek both to increase basic training levels and ensure that teachers get backing from wider support services, which are set out in competency-based systems of references: mastering disciplinary and ethical knowledge, being able to ensure all pupils make progress despite their diversity, working in teams within the institution, building capacity to innovate, assessing competency-based learning, making use of ICT, and so on.

The 2011 Yearbook addresses this issue by asking its various members to discuss how they believe the issue is dealt with in their countries. The Yearbook includes the reforms under way, the experiences with training or support mechanisms for novice teachers, teacher profiles, etc.

Is it possible to teach 'key competencies' to teachers? Is it a priority to develop appropriate mental frameworks? How should disciplinary knowledge and pedagogic knowledge be connected? What urgent choices are novice teachers expected to make? What dilemmas are they faced with? Do trainers need to be provided with resources for handling the main professional controversies, or should "best practice" guidelines be disseminated? Who are the various partners who should be involved (local schools, universities, central government or local government authorities, professional bodies, etc.) and what should be their respective roles? What challenges are education systems faced with depending on their path dependency? What sort of continuous training tools should be put in place? How should existing training and support tools be assessed?

These are these very challenging issues that authors seek to answer from their own points of view and institutional positions, contributing to a stimulating and crucial debate.