



Teachers and school leaders:
How to create a profession that is
attractive, motivating and fulfilling?
A guide for career frameworks



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction	5
2. Context leading to National Frameworks for School Education Careers Project	5
3. Overview: Developing Frameworks for School Education Careers	6
3.1 Why is a framework for school education careers necessary?	6
3.2 What is a framework?	7
3.3 How a National Framework for School Education Careers can be developed?	10
4. Learning from the Country Case Studies	15
4.1 Introduction to the country case studies	15
4.2 Portugal: Country Case Study	16
4.3 Malta: Country Case Study	27
4.4 Greece: Country Case Study	36
4.5 Cyprus: Country Case Study	46
4.6 Romania: Country Case Study	56
4.7 Albania: Country Case Study	66
5. Common challenges and solutions in developing and implementing a National Career Framework for School Education	72
6. Recommendations - developing and implementing a National Career Framework for School Education	76

1. INTRODUCTION

The guidance and recommendations provided in this Guide result from the *Frameworks for School Education Careers Project [the Project]* implemented as a peer-learning project by the Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture (DG EAC) of the European Commission. The project involved representatives from Albania, Cyprus Greece, Malta, Portugal and Romania who explored how a coherent framework supporting school education careers can be developed and implemented in practice in their national education systems. The country representatives met regularly as a group online from April 2021 to October 2022 – working with an expert consultant and European Commission staff. The peer-learning approach enabled the representatives of each country to develop their own unique approaches, whilst sharing and exchanging views and ideas, learning from one another and working collaboratively to contribute to writing this guide.

This Guide sets out the context leading to *the Project* and then presents Case Studies from each country involved, outlining how the career frameworks relevant to their own national context were developed. The common challenges, solutions and recommendations presented in the final section of this Guide were co-written by the country representatives through reflection on their own experiences of designing, developing and implementing their national career frameworks and through peer exchange and learning across the countries.

2. CONTEXT LEADING TO NATIONAL FRAMEWORKS FOR SCHOOL EDUCATION CAREERS PROJECT

Education systems around the world, with few exceptions, continue to face the challenges of teacher shortages and finding ways to attract and retain teachers in the teaching profession. A key question that challenges policymakers is how to create a profession that is attractive, motivating and fulfilling for new and existing teachers and school leaders. National and European policy-makers are working together to identify ways to attract and retain teachers¹, with some positive results. However, it is a complex problem and addressing system needs alongside individual teacher's professional learning needs and career ambitions remains challenging.

For these reasons, the European Commission's **ET 2020 Working Group on Schools (2018-2020)**, involving representatives from European education ministries and stakeholder organisations focused on ***teacher and school leader careers***. The Working Group members sought to understand more about

¹ European Commission, (2020) Supporting teacher and school leader careers: A policy guide. Available at <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/6e4c89eb-7a0b-11ea-b75f-01aa75ed71a1/language-en/format-PDF/source-278261266>

what teachers want from their careers as they enter the teaching profession, and how their aims, motivations, abilities and ambitions may change during their career. The Working Group provided a forum for exchange and discussion about how to address the challenges of teacher shortages in school education systems and ways of attracting, recruiting and retaining teachers. The concept of a coherent framework supporting school education careers was developed during their discussions. This work led to the publication of, ***A framework for teacher and school leader careers: a policy guide*** (European Commission, 2020)².

This work echoes the concern for the European Education Area to focus on better supporting teachers and school leaders in their career, recognised in the Council Conclusions on *European teachers and trainers for the future* (June 2020). The Member States were invited to “*explore possibilities for diversifying careers of teachers and trainers and developing national career frameworks*”³. The Council Conclusions invited the European Commission to complement existing national efforts by exploring possibilities for the development of guidance that would be based on evidence of practice, taking into account the diversity in system structures and building on the work of the ET2020 Working Group on Schools. In response, the European Commission initiated the peer-learning *Project* to develop European guidance for the development of national career frameworks for school education careers.⁴

3. OVERVIEW: DEVELOPING FRAMEWORKS FOR TEACHER AND SCHOOL LEADER CAREERS

Before introducing the work undertaken by those involved in *the Project*, this section of the Guide provides an overview of the concept of career frameworks for teacher and school leader careers developed by the ET 2020 Working Group on Schools (2018 – 2020). The core messages are summarised as they stimulated initial thinking about how to design and implement National Frameworks for School Education Careers in the six countries participating in *the Project*.

3.1 Why is a framework for school education careers necessary?

It is recognised that there are many factors that may hinder potential recruitment of teachers and influence those who enter the teaching profession but then decide to drop-out. One prominent issue that has been identified is that school education careers are often understood as flat or one-dimensional and lacking in opportunities to progress or engage in different roles in education. In response, the concept of frameworks for school education careers are about developing a coherent

² European Commission, (2020) Supporting teacher and school leader careers: A policy guide. Available at <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/6e4c89eb-7a0b-11ea-b75f-01aa75ed71a1/language-en/format-PDF/source-278261266>

³ Council conclusions on European teachers and trainers for the future (2020/C 193/04), C 193/17.

⁴ COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS on achieving the European Education Area by 2025. Brussels, 30.9.2020 COM (2020) 625 final. p.19.

approach to supporting teachers' and school leaders' careers and recognising and supporting diverse career paths.

Many countries already have in place competence frameworks or sets of standards which set out the competences expected or required of teachers entering the profession at the start of their career, after an induction period and for their continuous professional development. However, fewer countries have developed coherent frameworks to support teachers' progression in their career. Frameworks that are in place often set out professional learning requirements concerning improving knowledge, skills and expertise for specific roles. In some cases, professional development frameworks may be linked to role status or salary scales, but do not identify opportunities for career progression explicitly. It remains important for teachers to continue developing their expertise throughout their career, to adapt teaching approaches to meet the learning needs of diverse learners in changing societies and stay up-to-date in their practice. However, to stay motivated, enthusiastic and committed to the teaching profession teachers also need opportunities that enable them to progress according to their individual motivations, abilities and career ambitions.

The emphasis on the development of frameworks for school education careers is about addressing the need to create an approach that is more transparent and coherent across the teaching profession continuum.

3.2 What is a career framework?

3.2.1 *Mapping and explaining the variety of roles possible in school education careers*

A framework that While the aim of professional development frameworks is likely to be about system, school and pupil learning improvement, career frameworks are about providing opportunities and pathways for career progression that recognise that a teacher's career is individual and dependent on for example, their own abilities, ambitions and personal commitments. Distinctions can be made between professional development and career development but they are linked. Some frameworks may already include both profession development and career steps but the latter may not be explicitly identified and transparent. Knowing there are opportunities to develop and progress their career may help teachers to remain motivated throughout their career.

Often much attention is given to identifying and addressing system and school needs, with less attention given to understanding the motivations, capabilities and ambitions of individual teachers. A career framework can be used to steer and guide a teacher's progression and to support an appropriate balance between system and school priorities and needs and individual teachers' professional learning needs and career ambitions. To create such a balance between system, school and individual teachers the needs of each have to be understood.

A school career framework should include opportunities for both professional learning and career progression, taking into account the motivations, abilities and ambitions of individual teachers and school and system needs.

3.2.2 Mapping and signposting possible pathways for school education careers

A career framework provides a structure which maps for requirements and expectations of different roles and signposts different pathways that can be taken during a teacher's career. Identifying, and describing different role possibilities (beyond teaching in a classroom context) and mapping visually different career pathways that can be taken, demonstrates that a teaching career is not flat with few career opportunities. While there are opportunities to move to school leader posts, if that is an individual teacher's ambition, showing there are other career pathways and opportunities that do not need to take traditional pathways can be attractive for those thinking about a career in teaching, but not sure of all the possibilities.

By mapping roles, functions and potential pathways, the visibility of career opportunities can be made clear for teachers and enable career choices and decisions to be better informed.

The figure shows a selection of different pathways in school education careers:

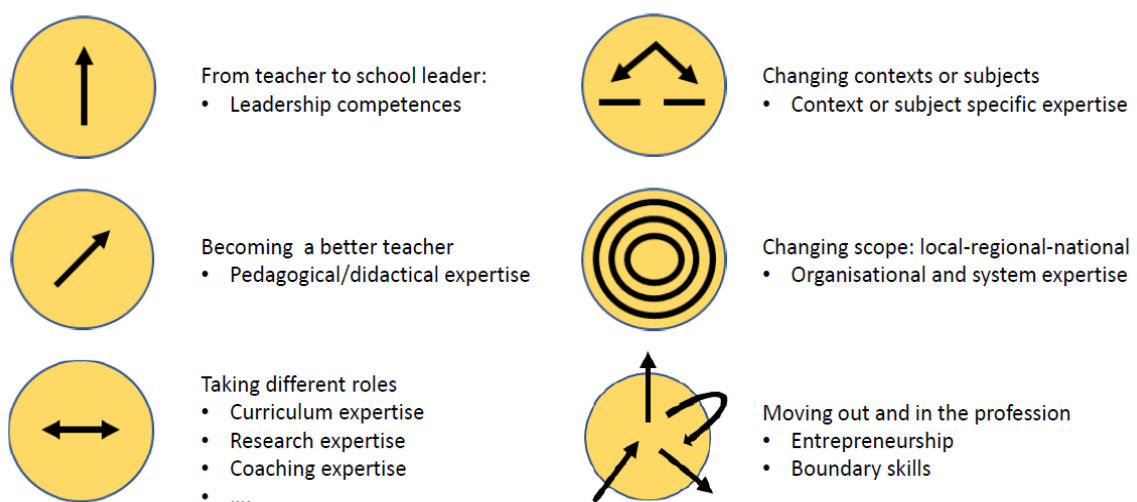


Figure 1: Six possible career paths⁵.(*Note that these paths are not exclusive and some may be experienced at the same time, or one after the other, by an individual.)

⁵ European Commission, (2020) Supporting teacher and school leader careers: A policy guide. p.23. Available at <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/6e4c89eb-7a0b-11ea-b75f-01aa75ed71a1/language-en/format-PDF/source-278261266>

Career paths can include one or more paths for example:



There can be roles that provide opportunities to **move sideways** out of the classroom within a teacher's own school to take up a different role, such as curriculum developer, mentor, assessment coordinator, pedagogical leader, data analysis expert. This can be for a short period (e.g., a school term or year) and then return to their teaching role or it can be a longer-term appointment to a specific in-school role. Signposting these role opportunities in a framework shows potential teacher candidates and teachers already in the teaching profession, the varied possibilities available within school education careers.



Opportunities can be provided to enable teachers to **change context**. This can be to a school in a different country, through one of the **European mobility programmes** to experience and develop new education perspectives or expertise. A move to a different context can also be within a teacher's own country, to another school to develop for example, specific subject expertise or new skills before returning to their own role.



A move could be made to a **different level of education** such as a local, regional or national education agency for a secondment (e.g., one school term or a whole school year) or for a permanent role depending on opportunities available and the motivation and capabilities of the individual. Teachers could be offered opportunities to work for specific periods within teacher education institutions to develop new expertise and to engage in knowledge exchange with teacher educators for example.



It could also be possible for a teacher to move out of school and into role outside of school education for a school term or a year. This could be into business, industry, entrepreneurial agencies, sustainable development organisation, 3rd sector organisation to gain new knowledge, skills and insights to enrich their teaching role on their return to school.

This more varied, dynamic view of a teachers' career with different pathways and roles identified may be more attractive for those considering starting a career in teaching, and for motivating and re-invigorating teachers to stay in the teaching profession. It is recognised, that according to the country context, priorities, regulations and needs, it may only be possible to offer a limited number of roles and pathways.



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Mapping and explaining different roles available and offering some variation in career pathways is a starting point and would show understanding that teachers as individuals have different career ambitions, motivations and strengths, and they can offer their expertise through various pathways within a school learning community and education system.

3.2.3 *A career framework as a reference point for monitoring and regulation*

A career framework can also serve as **a shared reference point** for monitoring and regulating purposes and to assist school leaders and other stakeholders **to guide and support a teacher's career progression**. However, a “framework is only effective when a shared vision and language is established among stakeholders and fruitful dialogue can take place in an atmosphere of trust”⁶. Dialogue between stakeholders is essential to create a framework that is recognised and understood by all, and to develop a sense of shared ownership in its development and implementation.

A shared language about role expectations and requirements and criteria for different career pathways can help to create coherence within and across national teacher policies and identify opportunities and actions for different stakeholders with the shared aim of strengthening and maintaining the attractiveness the profession.

It is acknowledged that dialogue and developing and agreeing a share language takes time, but it lays important foundations that are necessary for a National Career Framework to be recognised and valued by teachers, school leaders and all stakeholders who have a role in guiding, steering, monitoring and regulating school education careers.

3.3 **How a National Framework for School Education Careers can be developed?**

The career framework should identify, and respond to, the needs of the individual teacher across the career stages and the needs of the school and the education system. This involves consideration of a teacher's motivation (through for example, self-evaluation and dialogue), developing abilities or

⁶ European Commission, (2020) Supporting teacher and school leader careers: A policy guide. p.6. Available at <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/6e4c89eb-7a0b-11ea-b75f-01aa75ed71a1/language-en/format-PDF/source-278261266>

competences to enable career development (through profession learning) and providing a variety of opportunities for career progression, as well as supporting and enabling teachers to understand and navigate the career pathways available. **This involves both individual teacher responsibility for planning and engaging in career development and school and system support.**

Teachers' career development alongside their increased motivation and abilities, benefits the individual teacher and supports the development of the system. In this way a Framework for School Careers can benefit both individual teachers and the system.

A 'framework' may be understood, developed and used differently at national and local levels. Also, different education systems have to address a variety of challenges and identify solutions according to their own contexts.

A framework for school education careers, developed by the ET2020 Working Group on Schools, is suggested in the policy guide, *Supporting teacher and school leader careers*. It offers an '**Adaptable Template**⁷ (see **Figure 2 below**), which can be used by countries to consider and adapt in developing and creating their own National Framework for School Education Careers.

What happens next with policy guidance is the most important step in the aim to improve the quality of education. The *Project* enabled the six countries involved to explore possibilities for the development a national framework by discussing and reflecting on the European policy guide and the **Adaptable Template** during peer-learning workshops and meetings.

⁷ European Commission, (2020) Supporting teacher and school leader careers: A policy guide. p.29. Available at <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/6e4c89eb-7a0b-11ea-b75f-01aa75ed71a1/language-en/format-PDF/source-278261266>

3.3.1 Using the Adaptable Template to develop a National Framework for School Education Careers

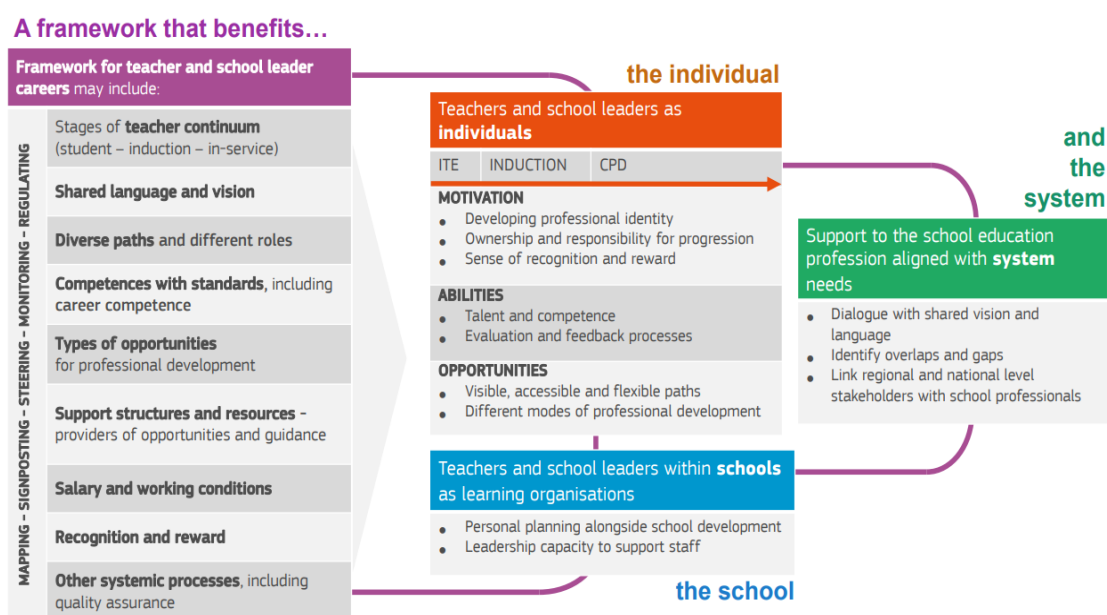


Figure 2 – an adaptable template for a framework for school education careers

The Adaptable Template depicts a range of components:

Using it as a stimulus for reflection, identify the components relevant to the context for inclusion in a national framework for school education careers.

- **The Purple column (see Figure 2)** – suggests different areas that could be the focus in a national framework to benefit teacher and school leader careers. The list of suggestions offers an opportunity to reflect on the area(s) that could be included in the development of a country-specific framework. The selection of areas to focus on is likely to be in line with country priorities, chosen in consideration of system and individual teacher career development.

For example, the focus may be on a particular stage of a teacher’s career or more than one stage (e.g., career pathways from induction into inservice). Roles and functions across the stages of the teaching continuum can be mapped and signposted, through visual representation and explanation to show possible opportunities. This can include diverse roles in and outside of school setting as relevant to the country context.

How specific roles or expertise levels are recognised within career development could be the focus of a country framework, e.g., some roles may be recognised through salaries and

renumeration or in other ways, such as time to engage in relevant professional learning or a undertake a secondment for a teacher's career progression.

Other systemic processes may be the focus. For example, how teacher appraisal or school-based evaluation processes could also support teachers' career development should be explained. For example, enabling a teacher to take responsibility to self-evaluate and identify areas for development as well as their strengths. This can give teachers ownership of the justification and evidence of their strengths and areas for development.

Competences and criteria can be identified in a transparent way if specific competences and abilities are needed for a certain role or function. This can clarify expectations and responsibilities and support processes of school-based evaluation, self-reflection, appraisal, and career-development discussion.

- **The orange column** – provides suggestions to consider - including how the framework benefits individual teachers' motivation, abilities and career opportunities. How progression can take place (e.g., through individual initiatives of teachers, their motivation and abilities) can be included and the possible range of pathways identified as well as the extent of diversity and local variation and autonomy for schools.

The types of opportunities available for professional learning contributing to career development could be mapped out in the framework, such as CPD opportunities, including peer learning and international mobility, job shadowing, mentoring, formal professional development provision (certified courses and qualifications, resources) and potentially secondments to gain new expertise.

Guidance can be developed about the support available for teachers and school leaders to pursue career opportunities, e.g., information about support structures and resources, such as career guidance offered by local, regional or national providers or other relevant stakeholders.

- **The blue column** – enables reflection on how the development of a framework that benefits teacher and school leader careers could also benefit the school.
- **The green column** – enables reflection on how the development of a framework that benefits teacher and school leader careers could also benefit the education system as a whole.

In the next section of this guide, Country Case Studies are presented. They provide examples of how each of the six countries (Albania, Cyprus, Greece; Malta, Portugal and Romania) involved in the *Project* used the [Adaptable Template](#) to create, develop and implement their Framework for School Education Careers, according to their own national priorities and aims.

While the work on the National Career Framework was undertaken by the individual country representatives and their colleagues, the opportunity to engage in extended peer-learning with the representatives from all six countries was an important element of the *Project*.

At the initial meetings the components included in the [Adaptable Template](#) were discussed in relation to each country's priorities. During regular workshops and meetings, the *Project* participants were able to share plans and explore ideas and challenges in-depth, receiving feedback from each other and the *Project* Expert at each stage of development. They were able to consider the aims and possible approaches to developing a framework for school education careers in their country – reflecting on what to include, why, how and when. From these discussions and their work during the *Project*, recommendations for consideration by others who wish to develop a national framework for school careers were identified (see Recommendation Section in this guide).

4. LEARNING FROM THE COUNTRY CASE STUDIES

4.1 INTRODUCTION TO THE COUNTRY CASE STUDIES

The Country Case Studies in this section are offered to enable other countries to reflect on how different approaches can be taken in the creation and development of a country's Frameworks for School Education Careers.

The focus of the case studies in **Portugal, Malta and Greece** was predominantly on **mapping, signposting and clarifying diverse roles and career pathways** and demonstrate the different approaches taken according to the priorities and needs of their country.

The Country Case Study in **Cyprus** focuses on the **balance and alignment of individual teacher learning needs and ambitions with school and system priorities**. Their Country Case Study describes the process of identification of the teachers' professional learning needs enabling the **Types of opportunities for professional development** to be tailored to teachers' needs and enabled relevant **Supporting structures and resources** to be developed at school and system levels linking professional and career development.

In Romania and Albania significant reforms in school and teacher education were underway and development of their National Framework for School Education Careers was embedded in the reform processes.

The **Romanian** Country Case Study describes the **system for supporting the professional development of teachers across their whole career**, facilitated through **learning communities** and large-scale training across the country for **mentoring for career-long development**.

The **Albanian** Country Case describes the teacher qualification scheme, which is being reviewed. As part of that process a National Career Framework is being developed and is embedded in the new teacher qualification scheme.

While each Country Case Study demonstrates an individual approach to their development of a National Framework for School Education Careers each follows a similar structure:

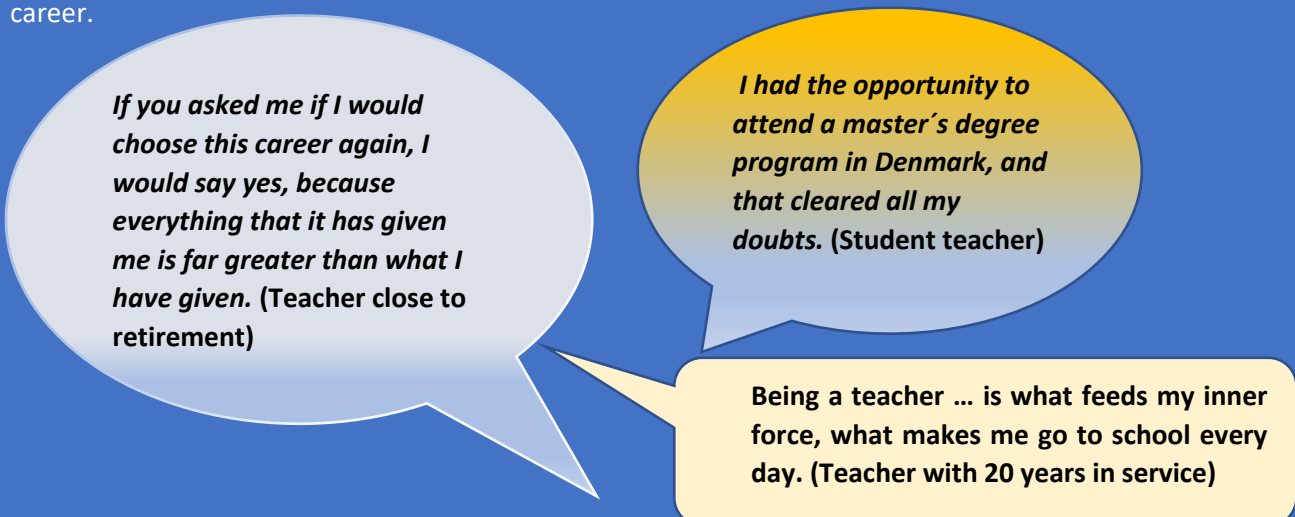
- **Overview of country project - including the background and aims of their country project**
- **Phase 1 – including the project design, setting up and laying the project foundations**
- **Phase 2 - including the development phase of project**
- **Phase 3 - project implementation**
- **Phase 4 – adapting, sustaining, embedding the National Career Framework and evaluation plan)**
- **Lessons learned – key messages**

4.2 COUNTRY CASE STUDY: PORTUGAL

The components identified in the Adaptable Template (e.g., career stages, paths, competences and standards, opportunities, salary and working conditions), already existed in Portugal, but are regulated by multiple separate pieces of legislation and articulated in inaccessible formats. This prevents teachers, school leaders and other stakeholders from having a transparent and coherent view of the teaching career structure and prospects.

The country project aimed to resolve this by developing an integrated and user-friendly guide of the Portuguese teaching profession. This resulted in the creation of a comprehensive digital *Teachers' Profession and Career Guide* (TPCG) to provide easily-accessible information and inform both teachers and potential teacher candidates of the possible roles, pathways and development opportunities available across a teaching career.

To promote and engage teachers in the Guide it is accompanied by a video presenting the inspiring testimony of a student-teacher and two teachers at different stages in their career. They share their motivation and the opportunities the teaching profession has given them to learn and develop their career.



If you asked me if I would choose this career again, I would say yes, because everything that it has given me is far greater than what I have given. (Teacher close to retirement)

I had the opportunity to attend a master's degree program in Denmark, and that cleared all my doubts. (Student teacher)

Being a teacher ... is what feeds my inner force, what makes me go to school every day. (Teacher with 20 years in service)

OVERVIEW OF COUNTRY PROJECT

The management of the teaching career in Portugal is essentially implemented according to the provisions established by the *Teaching Profession Career Code* (TPCC), with the first version approved in 1990. But over the last three decades the development of some of its components in further versions, have become more complex, regarding working conditions, recruitment, and progression, the legislation regulating the teaching profession increasingly dispersed. Issues concerning competences, professional development opportunities and support structures and resources, though dealt with, are also conveyed in separate legislation. This prevents teachers, school leaders and other stakeholders from obtaining a global view of the teaching career structure and prospects.

Given this context, rather than proposing new content and/or contributions to a renewed version of the existing TPCC, it was decided a coherent user-friendly guide of the Portuguese teaching profession

was needed, through which the whole body of legislation that regulates the teaching career could be presented. The main goal was:

- **To produce a comprehensive *Teachers' Profession and Career Guide* (TPCG) and an accompanying motivational video.**

As a result of a reflective process was undertaken, which involved various working groups being set up within the Directorate-General for School Administration. It was agreed that the *Teachers' Profession and Career Guide* (TPCG) could play an important role as a unified working tool to be used by teachers, school leaders, educational decision makers, as well as all future candidates interested in pursuing a career as teachers. Moreover, an integrative design of the *Guide* could present the structure of the teachers' career to emphasize its dynamic character and explain and clarify different paths for professional development and existing possibilities for teachers to develop new skills and expand their job profile beyond teaching activities (e.g., mentoring, curriculum and projects' development and coordination).

The attractiveness of the teaching profession and the retention of teachers already in the educational system are complex processes, conditioned by variables and factors as diverse as social recognition, self and organizational well-being, criteria and prerequisites for career progression or salary appreciation. It is recognised that the TPCG, cannot solve alone. However, it offers potential new candidates and qualified teachers a transparent perspective of the teaching career, revealing to all users the possibilities for professional development and career development that is achievable within the current teaching career framework.

The Portuguese team was particularly inspired by the [Adaptable Template](#) (see Figure 2 in Section 3 of this Guide) for a framework for school education careers which offers a clear mapping by showing how the components that frame school education careers and can be used to simultaneously interpret the principles that are behind different stakeholders' discourses, actions and policies, and to understand the bridges that can be established between different levels of the educational system.

Consequently, the Portuguese approach regarding both the project's development and its expected outcomes builds on the [Adaptable Template](#). It does so in the following ways:

- i) it implements an adaptable template that can be managed according to the roles and paths chosen by different kinds of users;
- ii) it operates and interconnects the various components that structure the teaching career, while concurrently considering its different stages of professional development (e.g., ITE, induction, permanent tenure);

- iii) it is envisaged as a work in progress, allowing for the constant mapping, steering and monitoring of the legislation that supports and governs the teaching career in Portugal.

As a result of the country project's development process, particularly both the collaborative work and the coordination of the tasks assigned to the various representatives of the different Directorate-General's departments, and the exchange of information and ideas that was promoted among the European *Project* participants, **the Portuguese team considers that its engagement in the peer-learning process also contributed to achieving the following secondary objectives:**

- To take advantage of suggestions from our peers, to improve our framework, namely by incorporating the elements that it does not currently address and are considered critical to any career frame.
- To explore how coherent frameworks supporting school education careers can be applied in practice in European education systems, to take a consistent approach to all forms of support for the development of the school education profession, at all levels (macro, meso and micro).
- To suggest the incorporation of what already exists and is scattered throughout the Portuguese legislation in force.
- To produce a tool that can be, at the same time, a resource for the different players in the education system and an instrument to promote the teaching career and its attractiveness.

PHASE 1: IDENTIFYING THE CHALLENGES TO BE ADDRESSED

The first version of the Portuguese *Teaching Profession Career Code* (TPCC) was approved after a long and intense negotiation that involved the central educational administration, six teachers' unions and many other stakeholders (e.g., a teachers' professional association and delegates from other ministries).

The process that guided the proposal of the TPCC in 1989 emerged in a context of profound political change, in government policy in general and education policies in particular. The modernization of the education sector was considered a national priority by the government. The Educational Reform that was subsequently carried out, supported by the Education Act approved (1986), the philosophy of which also determined a movement of change in the nature of the Education Administration by imposing the definition of a professional code and the structuring of the teaching career.

The envisaged transformation was not a simple formal political proposal, because it also uncovered socio-historical-professional roots that were consistent with a genuine request for change expressed by teachers nationwide. They were aware of the demands and importance of their role as drivers of the Reform and of the limitations and constraints of the working conditions which they wanted changed.

Until 1990 the teachers' career, regarding the teachers' level of education and qualifications, assumed an administrative model mainly based on salary progression linked to a certain length of service, not

requiring professional qualifications for all teachers. While welcoming teachers with either full or adequate qualifications, the teachers' career did not assume the nature of a professional code.

When the TPCC was negotiated, the teaching career was defined by three fundamental characteristics, influenced by teachers' status as civil servants: professionalization, seniority, and stability. In this way, the legal context that led to the definition of the teaching career became dependent on the general regime for the civil service in matters concerning teachers' status as civil servants, while being governed exclusively by the TPCC in matters regarding the professional performance of the teaching activity.

From the structural point of view, the TPCC assumes a teaching career which is shaped by the legal and administrative framework of the public service regime, while from a functional standpoint, it embodies requirements arising from the nature of the teaching activity. These requirements translate into the permanent need for training, the commitment to develop a coherent pedagogical practice in articulation with the principles stated by the Education Act and a knowledge of the school reality; as regards teachers' assessment the TPCC embodies the multiple perspective of their relationship with students, with the school/educational community and with the community in general.

At the same time, the TPCC recognises a professional career characterized by an increased demand for training for professional development and performance assessment, according to the professional code of ethics. But it also supposes both a summative approach of assessing effectiveness and efficiency, and a formative approach of stimulating the improvement of individual and institutional conduct.

Since its approval, the TPCC has undergone multiple amendments, the last of which took place in 2016. Although most of the changes have simplified the original text and made some important revisions regarding the career structure and the working conditions of teachers, none of them resulted in changing the two challenges explained above. This means the current TPCC still displays the coexistence and the use of standards that are to a certain extent contradictory.

The current TPCC addresses the following:

- i) a CPD system that enables access to pedagogical and scientific higher education and updating for all teachers with permanent tenure;
- ii) the conditions for accessing the teaching career, allowing entry into the profession for all those who hold, from the beginning, an academic and pedagogical qualification suitable for the teaching activity (usually a Master Degree);
- iii) the definition of a teaching career based on the right of all teachers to access professionalization and professional stability, namely the working conditions that allow full dedication to the public education system;
- iv) the assessment of the teacher's work and of their aptitude for the exercise of the teaching function; v) welfare, assistance and retirement;
- v) the definition of the teacher's duties and functions, at each stage of the teaching career.

Reflecting on the European [Adaptable Template](#), the list above shows the main components exist in the Portuguese TPCC's framework, but its implementation associated with a vast system of rules and

legal regulations, make **the whole teaching career framework difficult to grasp and decipher by its main beneficiaries.**

The country project team decided that the best way to fulfill their project's main aim would be to suggest a strategy that would allow for an integrated and articulated reading of the set of norms and regulations that govern the teaching career.

Throughout the development of the project the Portuguese team took account of the context described above.

This led to the proposal to conceive a *Teachers' Profession and Career Guide* (TPCG), which, on the one hand, builds from the Adaptable Template and, on the other hand, results in a tool that clarifies the teaching career, its various dimensions, stages and constraints by presenting them in an accessible user-friendly and straightforward format.

PHASE 2: DEVELOPING THE PORTUGUESE *TEACHERS' PROFESSION AND CAREER GUIDE*

The first stage of development of the *Teachers' Profession and Career Guide* (TPCG) involved the reflective reading and contents analysis of the TPCC, as well as of some complementary legislation, related to the processes of access and career progression, along with performance evaluation. It was imperative to check the regulations regarding teachers' CPD and the observation of teachers' practices (included in the norms concerning teachers' performance evaluation).

The **Adaptable Template** provided a helpful guide which made it possible to think systematically about the overall framework that governs the teaching career in Portugal. Mainly it helped the Portuguese team to identify the components around which the TPCG could be structured.

The Adaptable Template provided a clear vision of both the components to consider and the interrelations that could be established, in accordance with domains covered by national legislation (e.g., selection and recruitment, recognition of qualifications, ITE, induction, progression paths, performance evaluation).

During the second stage, the team designed a conceptual model (see Figure 3 below) TPCG below that shaped the structure and overall organization of the TPCG's contents, clarifying and ranking the components framing the teaching career, as well as their specific relationships.

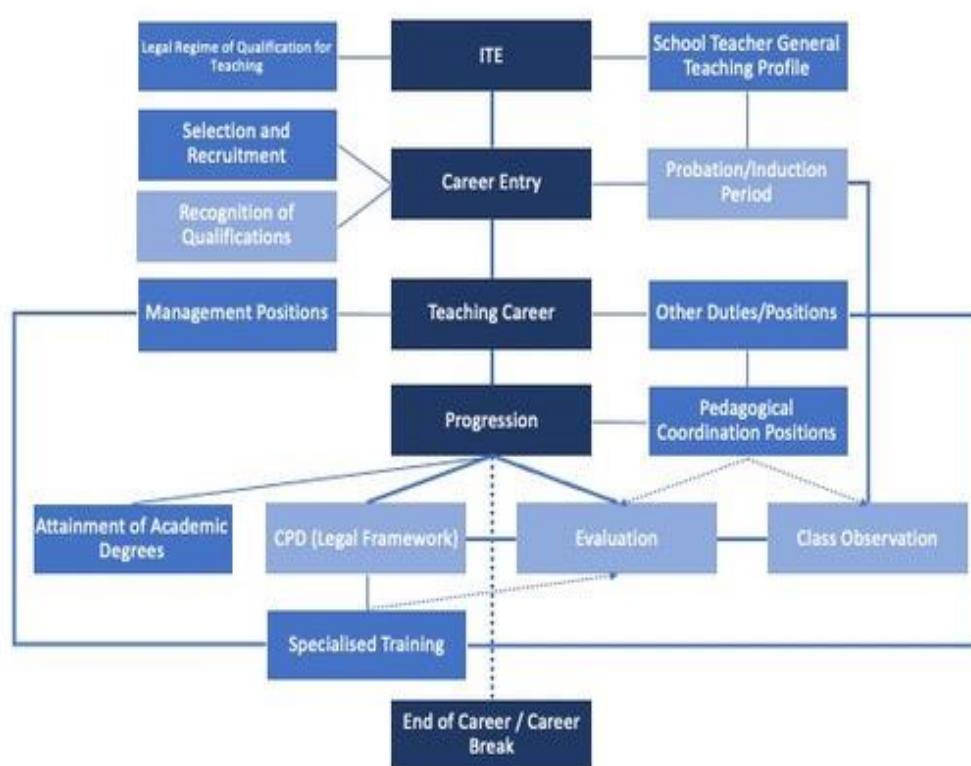


Figure 3: Framework for Teachers' Profession and Career Guide (TPCG)

Communicating progress and gaining approval is important throughout the development of TPCG.

The first draft of the TPCG framework was submitted for assessment and approval by the Directorate-General leaders, and the presented to the different Heads of Department. As a result of this first internal evaluation, the project's team refined its original proposal, mainly concerning the interpretation of the links between the different domains of the guide.

The third stage of development led to the definition and explanation of the specific content and/or topics to be addressed in each of the different components of the TPCG identified in Figure 3 above.

Given the complexity of the legal background and the intent to produce a user-friendly guide, the development of this task involved careful process of gathering and selecting information, which was only possible to accomplish with the participation of colleagues from different Directorate-General departments providing their expertise and specialization. Relevant working groups for the areas/components identified were invited to provide a critical analysis of the TPCG framework. This enabled further improvements and refinement of the initial model. It also enabled the involvement of a wider group of colleagues in the development of the Guide.

The main outcome from this stage of the project's development was the decision taken by the whole working group, regarding the:

- I. global design of the TPCG's framework;**
- II. detailed definition and explanation of the contents to be provided in each of the domains that compose the guide.**

These outcomes were possible through the collaborative work of various departments of the Directorate-General.

PHASE 3: PRODUCING THE ONLINE *TEACHERS' PROFESSION AND CAREER GUIDE*

Developing the Guide

The first stage of the project's implementation involved deciding on the most appropriate format to produce the TPCG. Due to the high costs involved in the production of a printed publication, it was decided that the guide would be published online, as a specific and independent webpage, though embedded in the official website of the Directorate-General. An option that was considered a wise choice.

- Firstly, because it would make the guide more accessible to a diverse audience, not limited to teachers, school leaders or technical staff.
- Secondly, because it would allow, with a minimum of management and maintenance costs, the contents of the guide to be permanently updated. Given the frequent amendments to the legal framework that govern the teaching career, the possibility of keeping the guide always up to date is an added value, both for the Directorate-General and for the users of the TPCG. In this regard, the team responsible for implementing the project assumes that the guide is and will continue to be a work in progress.

The second step of the implementation process led to the production of the first drafts of the contents to be introduced in the different components identified in Figure 3. A step that was critical not only to evaluate the clarity of the contents produced by the different working groups, but to guarantee the required standardization of the information that would be provided in the Guide.

A key factor to produce an overall balanced outcome: a guide that is accurate in terms of its contents while user-friendly in its character.

The final step of the implementation process was developed in close connection with the IT Department of the Directorate-General, whose technical staff was responsible for the design and testing of the TPCG's webpage, mainly concerning its fine-tuning and accessibility. They were in also in charge of placing the information provided by the different working groups in accordance with each of the components identified in the TPCG framework. Clicking on each box provides a user-friendly explanation of each component.

The in-built dynamics regarding the guide's use presumes that the framework will work not only as a feature that summarises its structure and contents, but also as a compendium that allows the user to capture either the main path of the teaching career or the connections between its different stages, or otherwise to go directly to the domain about which he/she looks for specific information.

Developing a motivational video to accompany the guide

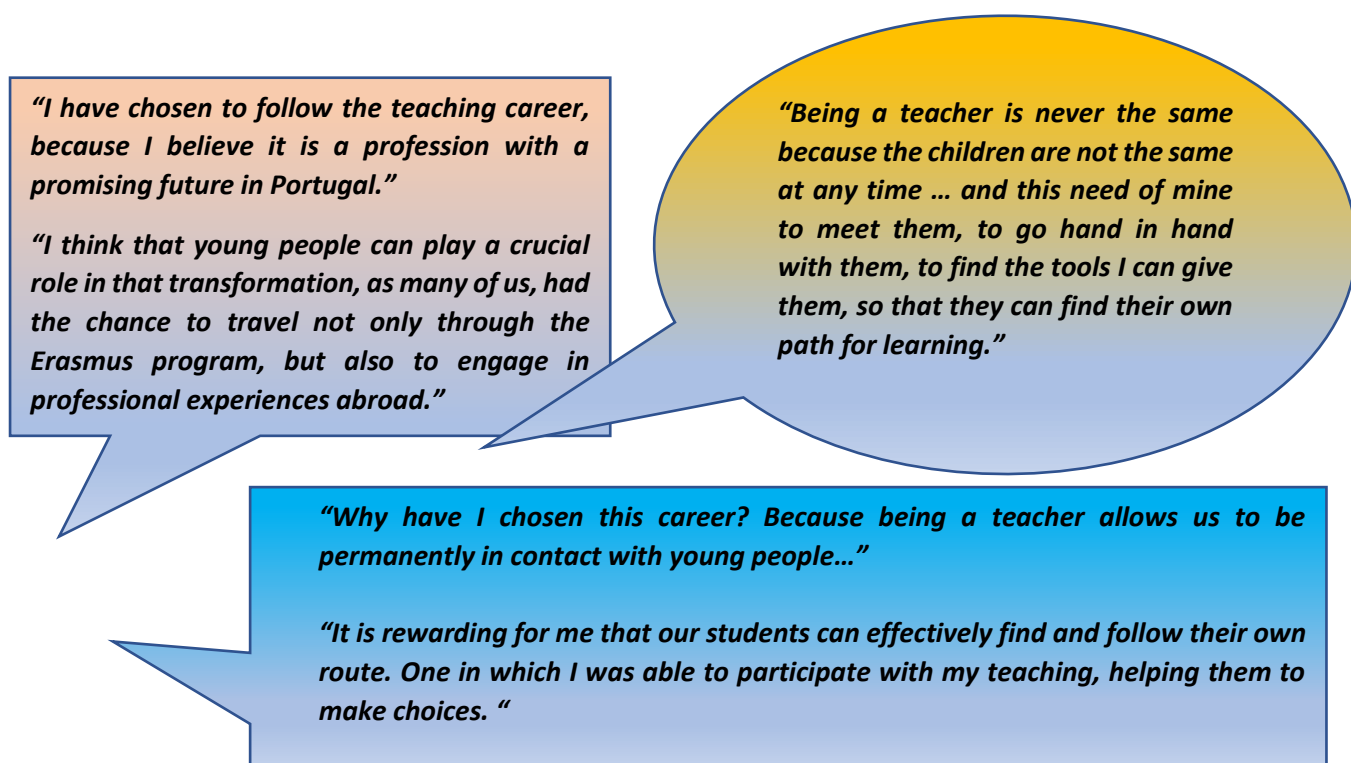
To encourage the use of the online TPCG, and make it more appealing and engaging, it was decided it would be introduced through a motivational video led by teachers at different stages of their career - a student-teacher enrolled in a ITE programme, and two teachers (e.g., 20 years in service and close to retirement). See video (with English sub-titles) at <https://youtu.be/SfY1xJ3CxG8>



In the video, the teachers share their testimonies. They talk about what motivated them to become teachers, their aspirations, the way they see their role as teachers, their views about the opportunities for personal and professional development that were offered to them all along the teaching career.

The participants were not given any type of script or guidance regarding the content of what they should say. The testimonies that were provided make public heartfelt standpoints regarding the social relevance of the teaching profession and how much being a teacher means to them and the experienced they had during their career.

Each teacher offered a powerful and motivational contribution for the video:



The video transcripts (selection of quotes above) enable the TPCG to be used as a means of public incentive for the teaching profession, in which real teachers, speaking as active members of the educational system, help to make the TPCG a useful tool to support any other policies and initiatives intended to promote the attractiveness of the teaching career.

PHASE 4: SENSE-MAKING, DISSEMINATION AND POLICY SHAPING ACTIONS

The final phase of the project will be dedicated to active dissemination and policy shaping actions. This phase involves activities regarding public communications and dissemination, as well as policy shaping and sustainability which take place not just in the final stage of production of the TPCG's webpage but will continue to assure its long-term update.

During the dissemination phase the coordination team will:

- i) complete the project's dissemination actions and events reaching out to the target groups and other stakeholders (e.g., student-teachers, school leaders, teacher trainers, in-service teachers, directors of School Training Centres, Teacher Associations, Higher Educations Institutions, Teacher Unions, and different bodies of the Ministry of Education);
- ii) coordinate the internal working groups to guarantee the exploitation and sustainability of the project's results.

In order to manage the long-term management of the project and ensure the cooperation between the Directorate-General working groups, the coordination team intends to promote the active participation of all teams throughout the project's follow-up, based on collective decision making on key elements of the project.

The development strategy implemented by the Portuguese country project team led to a deeper engagement of all the participants that actively contributed to the design of the Guide and to the production of its contents. The same occurred with the teachers invited to participate in an introductory video.

As a result, the final version of the Teachers' Profession and Career Guide is now assumed as a strategic tool for the entire Ministry of Education, and not as a mere conceptual exercise developed only by the Portuguese country project team that worked directly and closely with the European *Project's* coordinating team.

LESSONS LEARNED:

The biggest challenge that the Portuguese coordination team had to overcome had to do with the need to produce a *Teachers' Profession and Career Guide* which displays the balance between a legalistic discourse — that arises from the requirements and demands of the public administration — and the vision of developing a more user-friendly guide. Because the TPCG was not conceived to address and solve specific legal problems but designed to outline a tangible picture of what the teaching career is or can be for all those who might be interested in embracing a professional career as teachers.

Additionally, other important lessons were learned, and further challenges had to be addressed:

- The design of a straightforward methodology to ease the process of gathering dispersed and complex information, which also helped to find the right balance between the strictness of the legal text and an informative and attractive discourse for the non-expert user.
- The design of a TPCG that can also act as a marketing tool vis-à-vis the teaching career appeal.
- The recognition that the success of a project whose development requires the participation of groups with different expectations, perceptions and beliefs depends on the careful planning of both the implementation and follow-up processes.
- The possibility of rewriting, re-planning and reviewing the structure, layout and contents of the approved framework allows the permanent adjustment of the final product to the needs of the envisaged users.
- The need to overcome the hierarchical structure of the organization and the fact that its members are not used to collaborative and/or interdepartmental work (a fact that can be explained by the high degree of specialization of the tasks for which each department is accountable).
- The need to get support of a large working group not only requires good management skills from the coordinating team, but also demands for both the involvement and explicit commitment of the organisation leaders and heads of department.
- The challenge of managing the strain that develops throughout the negotiation process, given the need to balance the perspectives and/or standpoints that coexist in regarding the Portuguese TPCC. **This highlights the importance of regular communication and developing collaborative relationships.**

Key messages:

- **Each context has its own specificities and challenges that require to be addressed accordingly. However, the collaborative work, the joint reflection and the European peer-group learning, was very enriching.**
- **The contributions that arise from the different Country Case Studies can lead to the enhancement of the original European Adaptable Template, which should be disseminated to all Member-States.**

4.3 COUNTRY CASE STUDY: MALTA

The *National Frameworks for School Education Careers* project in Malta focuses on mapping the career progression of teachers, specifically outlining the different possible career pathways available.

These different career pathways are portrayed through the development of a **set of 10 interviews** with professionals who started their career in education as teachers and who moved on to other roles. In addition, scripts for **storyboards** were developed with the aim of producing 2 animated videos to provide a visual representation of the teachers' career pathways.

OVERVIEW OF COUNTRY PROJECT

Malta, like other European countries is strategically trying to overcome the challenge to attract more people into a career in teaching. The national framework developed during the project can help address this challenge since once new entrants gain the qualification to become a teacher, they would know that being an educator can lead to several other opportunities.

When Maltese educators start their careers, they may not always be aware of progression pathways and after a few years they may start to feel stuck in one role. Through this project, persons entering a career in education would have access to the pathways available throughout their professional lifetime. This may trigger a sense of ambition to continue to improve and progress and have ownership and responsibility of this progression. In this way the framework will support educators in developing their 'career competences' i.e., the capacity to be able to navigate and make decisions about their own career.

Improving the visibility and accessibility of opportunities may help to attract prospective educators and to retain and motivate current educators to stay in the profession.

The project was managed and coordinated by the Chief Executive Officer of the Institute for Education and the Education Officer (Career Guidance) at the National School Support Services in Malta. The Institute for Education (IfE) aims to promote high quality education for all educators in order to be at the forefront of professional development and to develop learning communities which intrinsically seek professional growth through courses grounded in research. The National School Support Services

(NSSS) continuously supports schools by providing a range of services and training. Career guidance is one such service. Hence the two professionals were well placed to understand the needs of the education community, both in terms of training requirements and the career competences which are required by educators.

The project was realised with the support of personnel from the Ministry for Education, Sport, Youth, Research and Innovation:

- the Permanent Secretary for Education who acknowledged the value of the project and supported its development;
- personnel from the Finance Department with whom the project coordinators had various meetings regarding the call for quotes from contractors required for the project;
- the HR/Recruitment Department within the Ministry for Education, Sport, Youth, Research and Innovation who provided the latest information which helped in the mapping of the career pathways for teachers;
- the 10 professionals who agreed to be interviewed for the project.

From outside the Ministry - the contractors selected to develop the identified interviews and animated videos had a very important role in the actualisation of the project.

PHASE 1: PROJECT DESIGN

A number of meetings were held between the Maltese project representatives in order to decide on the different ways of reaching the aims of the project. These meetings led to the development of an action plan which was then discussed with the Permanent Secretary for Education, who also helped to further develop the project, keeping in mind the local context and the challenges being faced within the education sector. These discussions resulted in the Ministry for Education acknowledging the important aims of the project and also allocating a small budget for its development.

Below is a figure depicting the components included in the Malta Career Framework adapted from the European template.

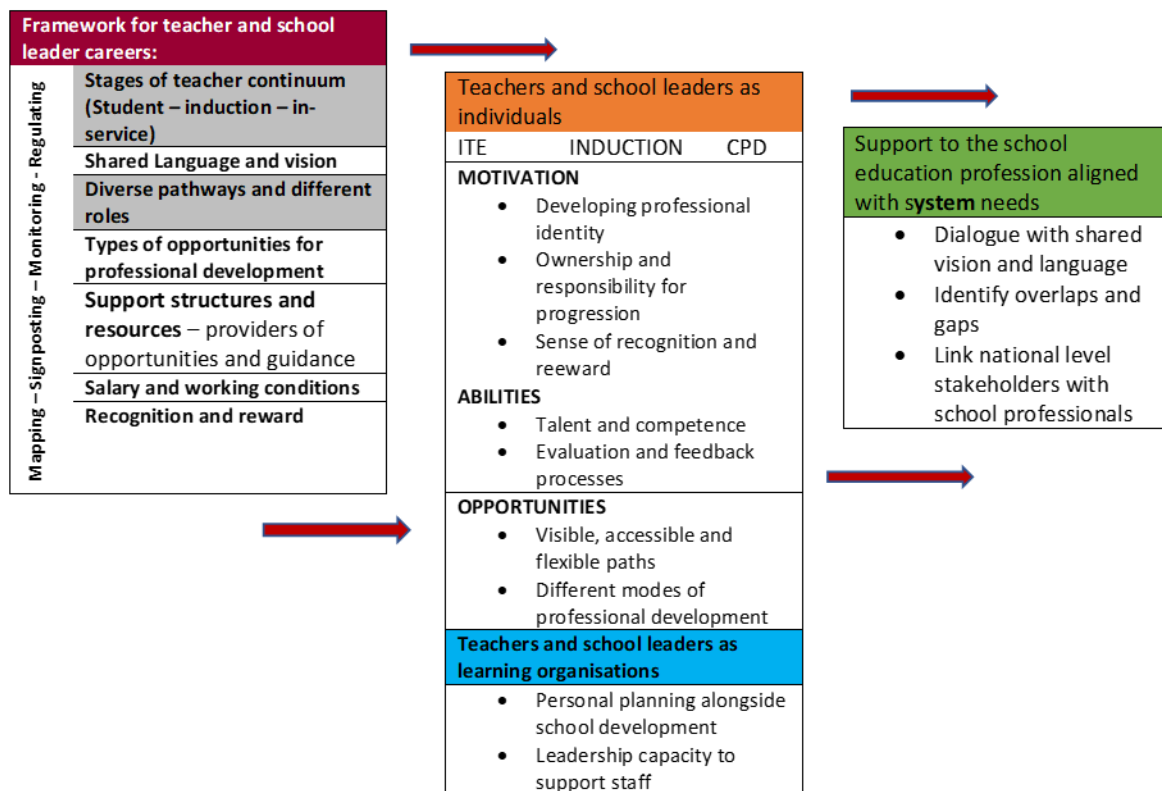


Figure 4: Elements included in the Maltese National Career Framework

PHASE 2: PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

This phase started with the two project co-ordinators conducting desk research in order to map out the different pathways that a teacher could embark on.

This involved going through the latest calls for role applications (within the education sector) and identifying the diverse pathways available, including the qualifications and years of experience required for the role and other eligibility requirements.

This process also involved going through the latest collective agreement, which legally binds the profession, to ensure that opportunities/progression pathways were officially in line with the agreement. A number of reports suggested during the European Commission peer-learning workshops for the *Project*⁸ were also consulted, to help the project co-ordinators gain a better

⁸ European Commission (2019). Supporting Teacher Careers: Developing an effective framework for teacher careers. ET2020 Working Group Schools Peer Learning Activity (Cyprus).
European Commission, (2020) Supporting teacher and school leader careers: A policy guide. Available at <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/6e4c89eb-7a0b-11ea-b75f-01aa75ed71a1/language-en/format-PDF/source-278261266>

understanding of the international debates on supporting career teacher and school leader career development

The first decision involved deciding on the best way to portray the different career pathways. This immediately required identification of the target audience.

The project target audience was prospective teachers who were interested in entering the profession and teachers who were serving in the profession but who could be attracted/made aware of other roles within education or even outside it.

To reach the diverse target audience, a simple, visual representation of the information was adopted.

Hence the project focused on the development **of interview narratives with professionals in different roles and scripts for 2 animated videos providing a visualisation of career pathways.**

Meetings were held with the Ministry Recruitment/HR personnel to ensure that the pathways outlined were correct and in line with the collective agreement on employment conditions.

Background information was also gathered about:

- the courses available for initial teacher training and the courses and qualifications required to progress or move laterally within the career
- the different opportunities that are available and the departments which absorb such careers
- the professionals that fill such careers.

The second step was developing 10 interview narratives which involved:

- Deciding on the 3 main questions for the interviews
- Portraying the teaching career as dynamic and one which opens up diverse opportunities and not 'flat' or one-dimensional with no or few opportunities for progression, but at the same time showing the reality of the current local situation.
- Selecting the appropriate professionals for the interviews in question – preference was given towards looking for role models who were also good speakers who would engage the audience
- Deciding on the length of the interview. It was decided that video narratives should not be longer than 180 seconds
- Contacting the interviewees and briefing them about the project

Despite the different opportunities available, due to teacher shortages, certain career opportunities were not being offered. It was therefore a dilemma as to whether we should promote all career pathways or leave out some pathways which at the time were not being offered, such as the posts of a guidance teacher, librarian, etc. It was finally decided through discussions with various education officials that despite this current situation, all career options should be portrayed.

Planning and development of storyboards for 2 animated videos was undertaken which involved:

- Deciding what roles to portray. It was decided that one storyboard would focus on the specific job roles within the education sector and give a personal narrative outlining how the individual progressed. The other storyboard was to give a general outline of all the career opportunities available for a teacher. The six types of career paths for teachers and school leaders outlined in Figure 1 in Section 3.2.2 above, provided a framework for the different career pathways outlined in the animated videos.
- Deciding on the language to be used. It was decided that simple, clear but at the same time engaging and formal language should be used.

- Deciding on the length for the animated videos. It was decided detailed and yet not too much, so as to keep the attention of the audience.
- Writing-up and finalising scripts for two storyboards for the animated video narratives, outlining the job pathways and progression opportunities. These were revised many times following verification with the HR Department.

Main Challenges in this phase:

Very detailed information was required for procurement purposes of identifying a contractor to film the interviews and create the animated videos. This involved the writing up of the technical specifications. No changes could be made once the quotation for the tasks was agreed which meant multiple meetings with officials involving:

- Writing-up of the specifications for the call for quote
- Issuing the call for the quote
- Evaluating and selecting the successful bidder
- Engaging in a lengthy process for procurement

PHASE 3: PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation phase requires commitment in order to achieve the aims of the project. It requires time since each output has to be evaluated and scrutinised.

Attention to the expected detail is necessary. The information presented and the way the implementation process is carried out needs to follow required procedures.

It is crucial that all those involved in the project are willing and motivated to contribute and this is achieved mainly if they understand the aim of the project, where it fits in the big picture and its benefits.

The 10 interviews:

All professionals accepted the invitation to be interviewed and the interview narratives were of high quality. The process involved:

- Confirming the availability of the 10 education professionals to be interviewed (a cross sectoral approach was taken to include **interviewees from the primary, secondary and post-secondary sectors**).

Diverse roles were selected:

- **a teacher/guidance teacher**
 - **an assistant head**
 - **a head of school**
 - **a head of college network**
 - **a career guidance teacher**
 - **a post-secondary school teacher/co-ordinator**
 - **a Head of Department**
 - **an Education Officer**
 - **an Assistant Director**
 - **a Director General.**
- Preparing questions for interviews which were to be 3 minutes long to ensure that the interviews would achieve the project aims of providing insight into a variety of roles in education and career pathways.

The questions the interviewees were asked were:

- Introduce yourself and explain your current role
 - What was the path you took to reach your current role?
 - What are your satisfactions?
- Checking the subtitles in English and Maltese and providing feedback for any editing, as required.
 - The 10 interview videos are available at:
https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1wiNSEX8D69A7yLD_reA4QMVTs-H-cqFJ

The development of the 2 animated videos:

The development of the animated videos proved to be more challenging than envisaged. This involved:

- Reviewing the work undertaken by the contractor to ensure the videos met the expected specifications, i.e., that the animated videos were of 3 minutes long in Maltese and included subtitles in English and Maltese with accurate translations.
- Reviewing the animated videos and identifying changes required to meet expectations. For example, changes to ensure the images address the appropriate age group, there is flow in the narrative, and the intended messages are portrayed.

Detailed feedback was given to the contractor to upgrade the final products. At this stage the project coordinators could not approve the samples provided as they did not sufficiently meet the aims of the project. **This demonstrates the need for continuous engagement with the service provider to ensure the quality of any planned outputs and that they meet the intended project aims.**

It was decided that this part of the project would be reframed. The 2 storyboards depicting career paths that were developed by the project coordinators will be utilised without the accompanying animated videos.

The planned implementation process will involve:

- Sharing the project outputs, (the 10 interview narratives and the 2 storyboards) with stakeholders in education and employment. This includes compulsory, post-secondary and tertiary institutions within the state and non-state sectors, the Education Ministry website and its social media platforms, the teacher unions and other entities who could use such resources.

PHASE 4: EVALUATION

Feedback will be sought and discussed with the relevant stakeholders about the 10 interviews and the 2 storyboards. Sustainability of the project depends on the impact this project will have on the local community.

The aim of the project coordinators is that the work conducted on developing this framework will be reviewed and taken forward in the future.

LESSONS LEARNED

This project required a good working relationship between the project coordinators to ensure that the work involved was shared. The importance of the planning phase, identifying the next steps and each step of the way in detail, cannot be emphasized enough. Moreover, emphasis needs to be put on the importance of allocating enough time for project implementation. This includes allowing time for challenges arising. Being realistic and clear in the aims of the project, always working in line with the timeframe available. The importance of stakeholder involvement, should not be underestimated. The project coordinators look forward to gathering stakeholder feedback on the outputs.

Peer learning with the representatives from the countries participating in the European Commission Project gave the project coordinators opportunities to listen to other country experiences about teachers' career pathways and acknowledge the complex nature of teacher career progression. This increased awareness of the challenges and strengths of each system. It also provided opportunities to compare the different career pathways and gain new perspectives on how to approach such the task.

The different frameworks suggested clearly showed that countries focused on different aspects of a framework – depending on the needs of the particular country. Some countries focused on teacher evaluation, others on signposting pathways, mentoring/guidance, links with school development, initial teacher/induction.

The role of countries and the *Project Expert*, taking the role of a 'critical friend' during our group discussions, was of utmost importance as this allowed us to reflect on our country project and at times even change direction.

4.4 COUNTRY CASE STUDY: GREECE

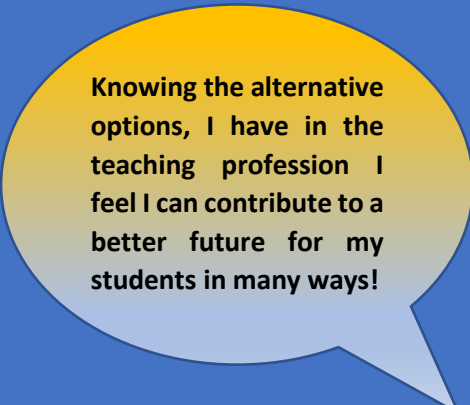
A National Career Framework is a way to attract and retain teachers in the teaching profession, demonstrating that a teaching career is not flat, and can provide career opportunities.

In Greece, due to the way students are accepted in the universities (through national exams) there is a number of students that “end up” in the teaching profession based on their exam results, without being aware of alternative paths in a teacher’s career. Moreover, there is a number of in-service teachers that only know of teaching at a particular educational level, based on their appointment in public education, without knowing that they could move to another educational level or alternative career paths.

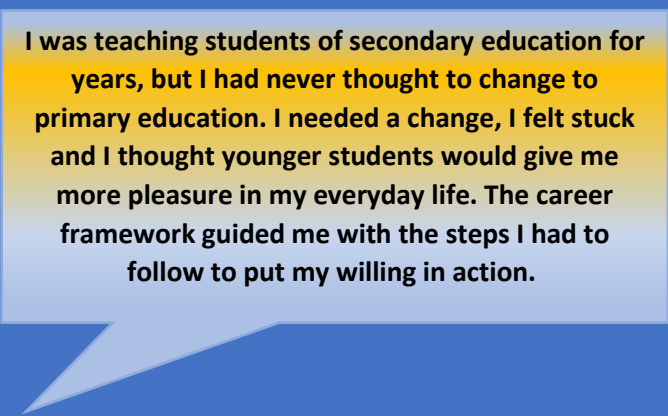
In addition, a General National Framework concerning teachers’ appraisal was developed recently, in 2020. Thus, for many years the main teachers’ motivation and/or reason to upskill or re-skill was their personal willing and ambition for progress. Teaching practice was considered as the main, and sometimes the only, duty, as alternative pathways for teachers’ professional development were mainly scattered information spread from mouth to mouth.

The National Career Framework in Greece was necessary to provide a “map” for teachers’ progression in their career, recognising and supporting diverse career paths beyond teaching, based on their individual motivations, abilities and career ambitions.

The framework contributed to the development of a coherent, consistent and transparent approach to existing forms of support for the development of the school education profession at individual, school and system level.



Knowing the alternative options, I have in the teaching profession I feel I can contribute to a better future for my students in many ways!



I was teaching students of secondary education for years, but I had never thought to change to primary education. I needed a change, I felt stuck and I thought younger students would give me more pleasure in my everyday life. The career framework guided me with the steps I had to follow to put my willing in action.

OVERVIEW OF YOUR COUNTRY PROJECT

The National Career Framework project in Greece focuses on (see Figure 5 below):

- **Diverse paths and different roles**
- **Support structures and resources** (providers of opportunities and guidance)
- **Other systemic processes** (including quality assurance)

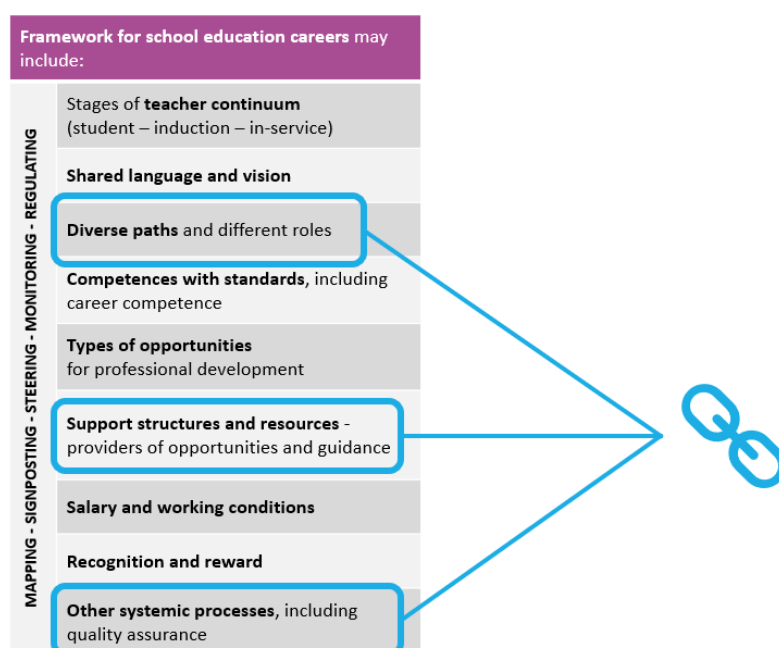


Figure 5: Elements included in the Greek National Career Framework

Recently, there was a [public consultation](#), during which legal aspects of a process (e.g., appraisal in education) were published online for a specific time period to enable the development of a dialogue and reach specific conclusions. The public consultation was accessible to all citizens in a national level, while contributors to the dialogue were usually people involved in the field (e.g., the educational community).

During this process, the main directions concerning appraisal have been defined by law and as a result:

- (a) the internal appraisal of school units is in a pilot phase (about 15.000 schools have been asked to prepare their reports based on the law - these reports mainly focus on indicators concerning buildings, facilities, school achievements etc., but part of the report also refers to the school teachers' appraisal)
- (b) teachers' self-evaluation has been designed at a national level (about 160.000 teachers) and is expected to be applied in the context of the internal school units' appraisal.

Based on the results of the initial appraisals: (a) school units are expected to adapt new administrative and instructional models (exemplary schools developed at a national level), and (b) teachers are expected to be supported/ guided concerning their option in the context of their professional career routes/ paths (e.g., administrative position) etc.

Aims of the Greek Project:

The aims that are described below are built on the triptych motivation-ability-opportunity and are expected to contribute to:

- make the teacher's profession more attractive for potential future and pre-service teachers
- encourage in-service teachers upskilling and reskilling instructional and other skills, relevant to the teacher's profession.

The aims of the National Career Framework project in Greece are summarized as follows for each target group (school graduates; Teachers; School Leaders and Teacher Educators):

School Graduates (students potentially interested in educational studies):

- Motivation for students to follow the teacher's profession (career decision)
- Awareness of professional paths and options for personal development
- Alternatives for future studies (e.g., MSc) based on the suggested professional paths

A National Career Framework would contribute to making the teacher's profession more attractive for School Graduates, as they need to be aware of the alternative paths in a career in education. A main challenge for this target group is they are unaware of the educational field and they have the impression that teachers only teach in a classroom. Providing appropriate information could alter this impression.

Teachers (pre-service and in-service):

- Strengthen teachers' professional identity - Realise teachers as professionals
- Develop specific professional skills, other than their teaching skills (administration, leadership, 21st century skills, emerging technologies etc.)
- Enhance teachers' recognition (in society)

- Motivate teachers to have ambitions concerning their professional development
- Allow rewards achievement (financial bonus, scholarships, management positions)
- Allow alternative paths during a teacher's career (not only optional but also necessary, i.e., in case of a health issue)
- Develop a framework of tangible goals/objectives
- Develop a new framework of opportunities for growth in the education system

A National Career Framework would contribute to retaining pre- and in-service teachers in the teaching profession, as they need to be aware of the alternative paths in their career, while they gain knowledge and experience. Among the challenges for this target group is not only the lack of awareness of the alternatives in the educational field, but also the personal need for professional development and change (upskilling – reskilling). This could be changed in part by providing the appropriate information.

School Leaders (Administration – School Principals):

- Share a common school vision with ambitious teachers
- Strengthen their schools' profiles (throughout their teachers' professional profiles)
- Motivate and attract teachers with strong professional profiles
- Encourage and develop best practices (not only teaching, but also administrative, etc.)
- Promote school communities (local and/or online)
- Build attractive schools for students based on their teachers' achievements and best practices

A National Career Framework would contribute to retaining teachers in the teaching profession, especially those with many years of experience. Among the challenges for this target group is not only the personal need for professional involvement and change (upskilling – reskilling), but also, the need to share this long experience and apply it in practice in directions other than teaching in a school unit (e.g., leading a school unit), which could be faced to a degree by providing the appropriate information.

Teachers Educators:

- Broaden the fields where teachers could be educated (school administration, developing best practices, running educational projects (European and/or local), strengthening 21st century skills, using emerging technologies in the school context etc.)
- Provide guidance on different professional paths
- Provide specialized Teacher Professional Development (TPD) programmes (collaboration with companies/ stakeholders, experts etc.).

A National Career Framework would contribute to retaining teachers in the teaching profession, especially those with many years of experience. Among the challenges for this target group is the need to share their long experience, work as mentors/ consultants and contribute to the evolvement of the teaching profession, which could be faced to a degree by providing the appropriate information.

Some of the target groups mentioned above could have a dual role, e.g., a school leader could also be a teacher educator and/or a teacher. As a result, all target groups have already been involved in the development of the National Framework, while they are expected to contribute with additional feedback during the next steps.

PHASE 1: PROJECT DESIGN, SETTING UP AND LAYING PROJECT FOUNDATIONS

The National Career Framework project in Greece also aims to involve all participants in the educational process; the official educational system as an entity, the teachers/ other educational staff and individuals (e.g., parents), the schools and educational communities in general and finally, the local authorities and stakeholders (see Figure 6 below). In this way, the aim is the alignment of individual, school and system needs.

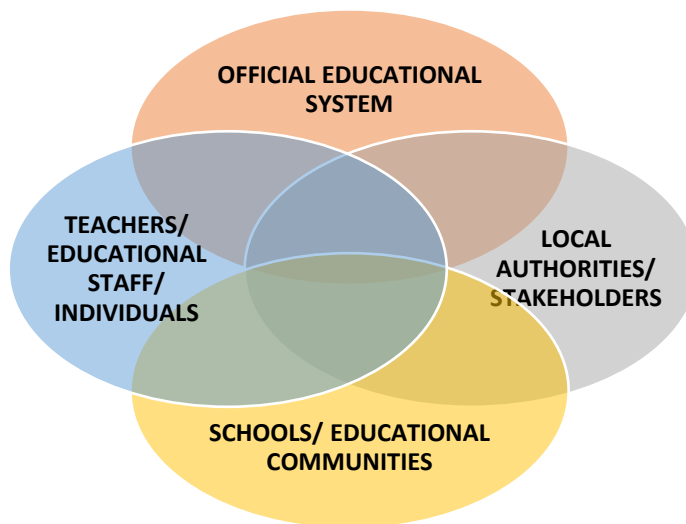


Figure 6: Involvement of all stakeholders in the education process

During phase 1 of the project, the following actions were completed:

Brainstorming

The aim of this action was to involve school leaders and/or staff interested in this topic – engaging in discussions on intentions, initial thoughts, expectations etc. Apart from the project team, teachers from different educational levels also attended the brainstorming sessions to understand the project’s purpose and contribute their experience and knowledge.

Designing

The designing phase was based on the European **Adaptable Template**, including **Diverse Paths and Different Roles, Support Structures and Resources** providing opportunities and guidance, as well as **Other Systemic Processes** including quality assurance.

Moreover, during this phase, suggested **Publicity Actions** were designed (some are in progress or intend to be repeated at different phases of the project), including:

- **EDUCATIONAL COMMUNITY**
 - Information Days in different phases of the project implementation
 - Teachers' Communities supported by Counselors
 - Press releases
 - Social Media pages of the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs and the Institute of Educational Policy
- **ACADEMIC COMMUNITY**
 - Intention to attend national conferences (target group: teachers) with posters and/or publications

The project team prepared the collection of data and information about existing structures, resources, career options etc. at local and European level, mainly through **a literature review** and **review of legislation documentation**. Relevant communications and contacts were discussed in order to reach the appropriate documentation (e.g., contact persons within the Ministry of Education and the Institute of Educational Policy).

Focus groups' preparation

Focus groups with representatives from all educational levels, as well as administrative/ educational and/or other structures were designed, to collect the appropriate information about the teachers' real experience in different professional paths.

A critical aspect of these focus groups is to include teachers from **all geographical parts of Greece**, including islands and the main country, as there may exist some differentiations depending on the location and its specific characteristics.

In order to reach the islands, the project team approached teachers from Rhodes Island (Dodekanisa, Greece), as well as Syros and Naxos islands (Kyklades, Greece), representing two of the biggest island complexes/ groups in Greece. The approach was achieved through the University of the Aegean (UoAegean), which is the only university with departments located in six different islands, since a

member of the project team was a Ph.D. candidate at the Department of Preschool Education Sciences and Educational Design with access to B.Sc. and M.Sc. students, pre- or in-service teachers in different schools at these islands.

Relevant questionnaires were distributed to students of the UoAegean to provide their input while there was an open call for the focus groups, encouraging teachers from the specific islands to attend, since their contribution would be of additional value for the final National framework.

During Phase 1 the fundamentals for the project's development were established, achieving a structured preparation and a clear description of the steps to follow during next phases.

PHASE 2: DEVELOPMENT PHASE OF PROJECT

The aim of this phase is to develop the guidelines for the National Career Framework, including descriptions and graphics concerning teachers' different professional paths and personal alternatives.

During this phase the following actions have been designed and implemented:

- Brainstorming and recording phase of the current structures and resources, as well as a literature review have been carried out.
- Local authorities and stakeholders have been approached for collaboration to create teacher communities (INE GESEE/ IME GESEVEE/ SEV/ Teachers' scientific associations, University of the Aegean, specifically the Educational Studies Unit, & the Institute of Entrepreneurship Development - iED etc.).
- Discussion and preparation of the draft version of a questionnaire has taken place, targeted to teachers, in order to receive initial feedback and frame the basis of the guidelines draft.
- Discussion and Preparation of an initial draft of the National Career Framework has been completed, including the professional paths that have emerged through the brainstorming, the literature review and the existing legislation.
- Implementation of the focus group (designed in phase 1) to collect additional information and experience concerning different professional paths for teachers in Greece have been carried out.

PHASE 3: PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

The aim of this phase is to integrate additional information collected from Phase 2, into the **guidelines for the National Career Framework**, including descriptions and graphics concerning teachers' different professional paths and personal alternatives.

Having structured the draft version of the National Career Framework, based on the questionnaire, the focus group and discussions among local authorities, stakeholders and others involved in the educational process, the next phase focuses on piloting of the paths that have been mapped so far.

During this phase the following actions have been designed:

- Discussion and Design of a teachers' workshop (train/inform a small group of teachers on the National Career Framework, so that they will be able to act as multipliers and distribute the framework).
- Receive Feedback on the National Career Framework and all the relevant aspects and integrate it into the final version.
- Prepare the final version of the National Career Framework – accompany the framework with a graphic illustration of the teachers' professional paths.

PHASE 4 – DISSEMINATION, EVALUATION AND LESSONS LEARNED

The aim of this phase is to finalise, disseminate and exploit the National Career Framework, developed, piloted and evaluated during the previous three Phases.

During this phase the following actions have been designed:

- Preparation for information days and/or press releases to reach the target groups.
- Adaptation of the National Career Framework into teachers' professional development programs offered by the Institute of Educational Policy, as well as other organisations/institutions involved, such as the University of the Aegean.
- Dissemination of the National Career Framework through organisations' websites, social media pages etc.
- Presentation of the National Career Framework during educational events, national conferences etc.

Event to disseminate information about the National Career Framework to Teachers (December 2022)



LESSONS LEARNED

- There is lack of professional culture in the educational community in Greece, teachers are mainly considered as students' instructors rather than professionals including administrators, consultants, trainers, European project contributors etc.
- There is lack of professional/ personal motivation, there are not specific motives or awards (financial, recognition through badges etc.) to encourage teachers to follow alternative career paths or widen their professional horizons.
- A mapping process is difficult to achieve through existing experience and scattered options that are mainly communicated from mouth to mouth among teachers.
- Teachers could be considered as a 'hard target group' to convince about something, but at the same time, they are also a 'hard working target group', willing to invest time when they feel safe with something.
- Organisations with occasional and seconded staff should keep a flow and inform the next working group and/or new members on how to proceed with the project.

4.5 COUNTRY CASE STUDY: CYPRUS

The Case Study in Cyprus, aimed to facilitate and improve the school self-evaluation procedures in Cypriot schools, through specific and related training of the school staff.

School self-evaluation is a process which helps schools to reflect on their practice and identify areas for action, to stimulate school improvement and improvement of educational practices and students' achievement. It is an opportunity for professional development for teachers and it focuses on their learning and career development, through reflective procedures.

In this way the project in Cyprus focused on creating a supportive national career framework for the development of school education aligning individual, school, and system level development.

The project began by inviting teachers and school leaders to share their development needs via a questionnaire. From the analysis of their responses, support structures, training programs and resources were developed. The training offered teachers opportunities for their professional development and the creation of a learning community. The projects also focused on the aspects of teachers' and school leaders' own development within schools as learning organizations, aiming to develop leadership capacity to support staff and promote personal career planning alongside school development. This meant, at the same time, the impact of school self-evaluation, offered support to the school education profession and aligned with school and system needs.

OVERVIEW OF THE COUNTRY PROJECT

A framework for careers in school education can start with defining the teacher profession as a profession which involves roles in developing and ensuring the quality of teaching and learning. School education systems can better support teacher and school leader careers, by creating a support system for their continuous professional development, linked to training opportunities (2020)¹.

In Cyprus, teachers have opportunities for professional learning through mandatory and optional seminars and workshops offered by the Ministry (Departments of Education or/and Pedagogical Institute), as well as stakeholder organizations and universities.

Taking into consideration the statements above along with the Cyprus Ministry of Education, Sport, and Youth's (MoESY) promotion and implementation of the New Proposal for Teachers' Evaluation System (January 2019), school evaluation is one of the main priorities

Aim of our national project

To facilitate and improve the school evaluation procedures in Cypriot schools, specific and related training of the school staff, is of vital importance. Consequently, the Ministry of Education defined as a priority for this project, supporting teachers' and school leaders' self-evaluation of their school to enable school improvement and development.

The aim of the project is the enhancement of teachers' readiness and efficacy to apply and conduct self-evaluation procedures.

Educational professionals involved in the project

Within this context, the Ministry of Education, through the Pedagogical Institute, (which is a Ministry department) decided to implement a needs assessment (via online questionnaires), to find out and understand teachers', deputy headteachers' and headteachers' readiness/efficacy in conducting/applying school self-evaluation process. Based on the results of the needs assessment process, a training program was designed, in which teachers/schools participated (190 teachers, deputy headteachers and headteachers). The focus was on enabling and enhancing school staff to develop the appropriate knowledge, skills and attitudes, to conduct an effective school self-evaluation.

Specific focus of our National Career Framework

The European Adaptive Template provided a framework which guided the development of our national project in Cyprus. In addition, the two key educational policy reform areas that the Cyprus Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth, has been working on were taken into consideration:

- a) the promotion and implementation of the New Proposal for Teachers' Evaluation System (January, 2019), which focuses on school self-evaluation and external evaluation
- b) the Unified Policy on Teachers' Professional Learning (August 2015; July 2017) which focuses on supporting within-school teachers' professional development.

According to these two policies, schools are responsible for designing and implementing their own self-evaluation, reflecting on their own context and making informed decisions regarding the improvement of students' and teachers' learning. School evaluation is one of the main priorities to be implemented in all schools and therefore, to facilitate and improve the school evaluation processes in Cypriot schools, specific and related training of the school staff, seemed to be of vital importance.

After studying and reflecting on the [Adaptable Template](#) and having in mind the context of Cyprus' educational system needs it was decided to focus on certain components of the framework relevant to our country context (see Figure 7 below).

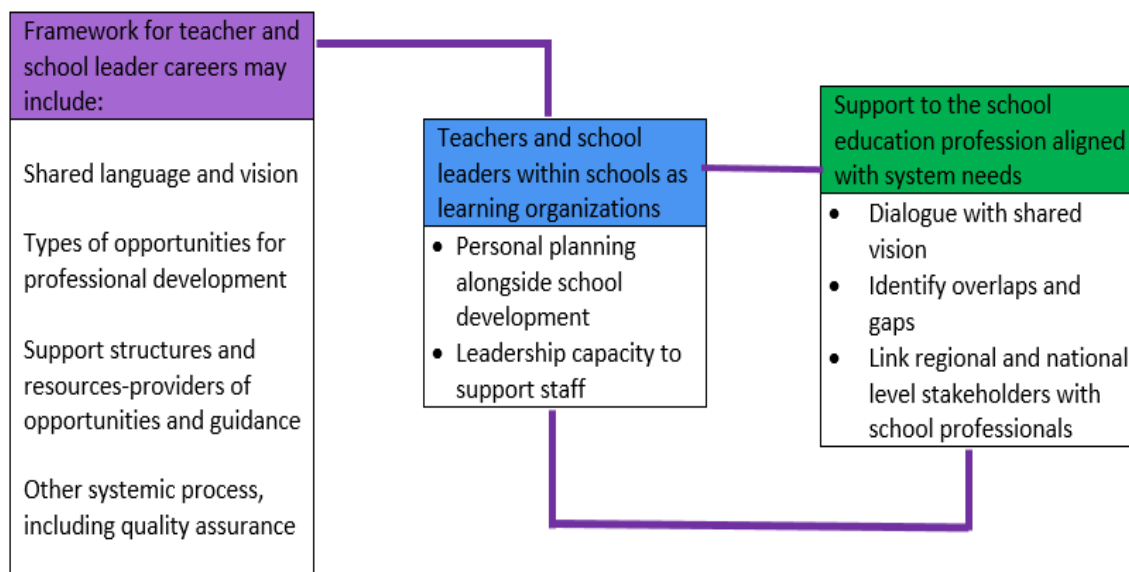


Figure 7: Elements included in our National Career Framework Project

Figure 7 illustrates how the framework for teachers and school leader careers, provided by the European Commission for consideration, was adapted to the specific needs of our country. More specifically, in our framework for teacher and school leader careers, we focused on developing a shared language and vision, for the implementation of school self-evaluation processes. The project also focused on teachers' and school leaders' own development within schools, promoting career personal planning alongside school development. This highlights the opportunity to align teacher, school and system development.

PHASE 1: PROJECT DESIGN, SETTING UP AND LAYING PROJECT FOUNDATIONS

As a priority, the project design included group work and active involvement of stakeholders throughout the different stages of the project, to promote with teachers the development of a shared language/understanding and inclusion and understanding of policy, research and practice views and ideas. A working group was set up within the Pedagogical Institute in collaboration with representatives from the Departments of Education of the Ministry of Education of Cyprus. The work of planning and implementation of actions was carried out by the working group, staffed by officials of the Pedagogical Institute.

The deliverables of the working group were shared with a Management Group, in which representatives of all the School Directorates of the Ministry of Education and the Pedagogical Institute participated. It is important to note that because of the centralized system of our Ministry, it was necessary to inform and get the necessary approvals from the Head of our Ministry at the different stages of the project. Through this process, we were able to secure higher involvement in the project from the policymakers.

Shared group work, active involvement of stakeholders, together with guidance from the Pedagogical Institute together with the Ministry of Education and approval of the Head of the Ministry laid the strong foundations of our project.

PHASE 2: DEVELOPMENT PHASE OF THE PROJECT

First, the need for a literature review was undertaken to provide a theoretical underpinning and to enable evidence-informed policy development. The literature review aimed to identify the importance, the aims, and the benefits of teacher engagement in school self-evaluation. The literature suggested that school self-evaluation is part of the quality assessment of a country's education system⁹ and aims to help schools develop through critical self-reflection¹⁰.

The main goal of school self-evaluation is the development of a framework for action, with the goal of improving educational practices and student achievement¹¹. In other words, self-evaluation is an interactive process through which teachers, school leaders and the school community itself explores its strengths, and weaknesses and plans its actions¹², to improve its function¹³. However, it is argued in the literature that the process of self-evaluation may not be very popular among school staff¹⁴. This may be because it is experienced as a political solution of school management and not as a collaborative process based on trust between individuals in a school¹⁵.

Through the literature review, the stages and the process of school self-evaluation emerged, as well as the dimensions that should be considered. It became apparent that school self-evaluation consists of two stages. The first stage, which is defined as diagnostic, aims at a brief evaluation of the educational project, to highlight its strengths and weaknesses. In the second stage, which is defined as exploratory, the objectives and schedule are developed with the work related to the investigation of selected indicators (students' and teachers' relationships, development and implementation of teaching practices, goal achievement, etc.). Then, at this second stage, the data collection follows, which requires the design of the appropriate tools (questionnaire, interview plan.). With the analysis and the interpretation of data, the results are recorded, and conclusions are drawn, identifying the practices that work effectively, as well as those that need improvement. Thus, the action plan is drawn up and a report is drafted, which describes the procedure followed, the conclusions and the improvement actions that were set as priorities¹⁶.

⁹ Saunders L., (1999). Who or what is school 'Self'-evaluation for? *School effectiveness and school improvement*, 10(4), 414-429

¹⁰ MacBeath J. (2005). *Schools must speak for themselves: The case for school self-evaluation*. Routledge.

¹¹ Sofou, E. (2014). "The self-assessment of the school unit. In: E. Katsarou & M. Liakopoulou (Ed.). "Issues of teaching and education in the multicultural school: 615-648 (in Greek)

¹² Kapachtsi, B. & Kakana, D.-M. (2013). School self-assessment: The reliability and validity of a conceptual construction of a measuring tool. In: *The Step of Social Sciences*, 16(61). (in Greek)

¹³ Schildkamp, K., & Visscher, A (2010) The utilization of a school self-evaluation instrument. *Educational Studies*, 36(4), 371-389

¹⁴ Meuret, D. & Morlaix, S. (2003). Conditions of Success of a School's Self-evaluation: Some lessons of a European Experience. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 14(1), 53-71.

¹⁵ Ozga, J. (2009). Governing education through data in England: from regulation to self-evaluation. *Journal of Education Policy*, 24(2), 149-162

¹⁶ Sofou, E. (2014). "The self-assessment of the school unit. In: E. Katsarou & M. Liakopoulou (Ed.). "Issues of teaching and education in the multicultural school: 615-648 (in Greek)

According to literature, as far as the participants of the self-evaluation process are concerned, teachers are at the heart of the process since they examine and evaluate their work¹⁷. In addition, students, parents, and other external participants who could serve as critical friends, such as school counsellors, researchers, academics etc., can be directly or indirectly involved in the whole process¹⁸. The importance of the role of a critical friend emerged as it can facilitate and activate the processes required for the development of the school, supporting the efforts made for change¹⁹.

A key element of exploratory stage (second stage) of self-evaluation is the procedure that follows the data analysis and during which actions are taken based on the conclusions drawn from the self-evaluation²⁰. It seems that there is a reluctance to use data from self-evaluation because few managers had the skills required for such a process²¹. Most of the schools do not use the results of the self-evaluation tools, because they are not able to translate the results into measures to develop the quality of education²².

This suggests the importance of developing strategies for educating and supporting schools to use these results²³, interpret them and take complementary measures to improve the functioning of the school²⁴ and to develop teacher ownership of self-evaluation. It is not at all easy for the schools to start to implement a systematic self-evaluation process within their familiar context²⁵.

Second, based on the review of literature, **an electronic questionnaire was designed**, for the development needs survey. The questionnaire was addressed to all members of the teaching staff of a school (teachers and school leaders). Its main objective was to find out about teachers', deputy headteachers' and headteachers' efficacy in engaging in self-evaluation processes. The questionnaire was expected to be completed based on the views of teachers, deputy headteachers and headteachers, regarding what the self-evaluation process.

¹⁷ Kyriakides, L., Campbell, R.J. & Christofidou, E (2002). Generating Criteria for Measuring Teacher Effectiveness Through a Self-Evaluation Approach: A Complementary Way of Measuring Teacher Effectiveness. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 13(3), 291-325.

¹⁸ Sofou, 2014

¹⁹ Mpiniari, L. (2012). Development of school unit self-assessment tools aimed at learning leadership. Portrait and profile. Doctoral thesis. University of Patras. (In Greek)

²⁰ Chapman, C & Sammons, P. (2013). *School self-evaluation for school improvement: what works and why?* Berkshire: CFBT Education Trust. 60 Queens Road, Reading, RG1 4BS, England.

²¹ Croxford, L., Grek, S & Shaik, F. J. (2009). Quality assurance and evaluation (QAE) in Scotland: promoting self-evaluation within and beyond the country. *Journal of Education Policy*, 24(2), 179-193.

²² Schildkamp, K., (2007). The utilization of a self-evaluation instrument for primary education. Enschede: Uniersiteit Twente, 186.

²³ Schildkamp, K., Visscher, A., Luyten, H. (2009.) The effects of the use of a school self-evaluation instrument. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 20(1), 69-88.

²⁴ Schildkamp, K., Vanhooft, J., Petegem, P., Visscher, A., (2012). The use of school self-evaluation results in the Netherlands and Flanders. *British Educational Research Journal*, 38(1), 112-152.

²⁵ Vanhooft, J. & Petegem P.V. (2011). Designing and evaluating the process of school self-evaluation. *Improving Schools*, 14(2), 200-212.

The main concern when designing the questionnaire was to include questions that cover all the areas that emerged from the literature review: the diagnostic stage of the self-evaluation process, the exploratory stage, the support that is needed, teachers' efficacy to carry out self-evaluation, the teachers' needs for professional learning and finally, the usefulness and benefits of the process.

A meeting was set up with the European *Project* Expert which was very useful and demonstrated the value of an external critical friend, dialogue, and peer-learning. Guidance was offered by the Expert on the questionnaire and the whole project.

Third, once the questionnaire was designed, it was piloted (June 2022) with a sample of teachers, deputy headteachers and headteachers, as part of our strategy to involve teachers from the beginning of the national project. The added value of piloting was ensuring the wording of the questions was clear and in developing questions to elicit the most useful and relevant responses to uncover teachers' and school leaders' learning needs.

Piloting was carried out with teachers serving in schools, as well as staff (qualified teachers), working at the Pedagogical Institute. The feedback from the pilot of the questionnaire, indicated the need to clarify and rephrase some questions. In general, the teachers said there was a misunderstanding about whether they should answer regarding what they believe should happen during a self-evaluation process of a school, or what is happening now. Consequently, a clarification was added to the text to be sent to schools accompanying the questionnaire. Moreover, some questions were re-worded, as it appeared that they needed either more clarification or simplified. The required changes demonstrated the importance of involving teachers from the beginning of the project and highlighted the need for a piloting stage.

PHASE 3: PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

Important aspects of the national project were that teachers' needs were at the forefront and stakeholders were involved. The understanding of individual teachers was one of our main priorities from the start and their views were combined with the findings from the literature review.

Mapping the learning needs was identified in the European Commission's policy guide²⁶ as one of the potential purposes of developing a National Career Framework for supporting teacher and school leader careers. This identification of training needs, through the questionnaire enabled the **Types of opportunities for professional development** (see Figure 8 below) needed to be defined and therefore we were then able to develop relevant **Supporting structures and resources** (i.e., the training program and the learning community).

²⁶ European Commission, (2020) Supporting teacher and school leader careers: A policy guide. p.27. Available at <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/6e4c89eb-7a0b-11ea-b75f-01aa75ed71a1/language-en/format-PDF/source-278261266>

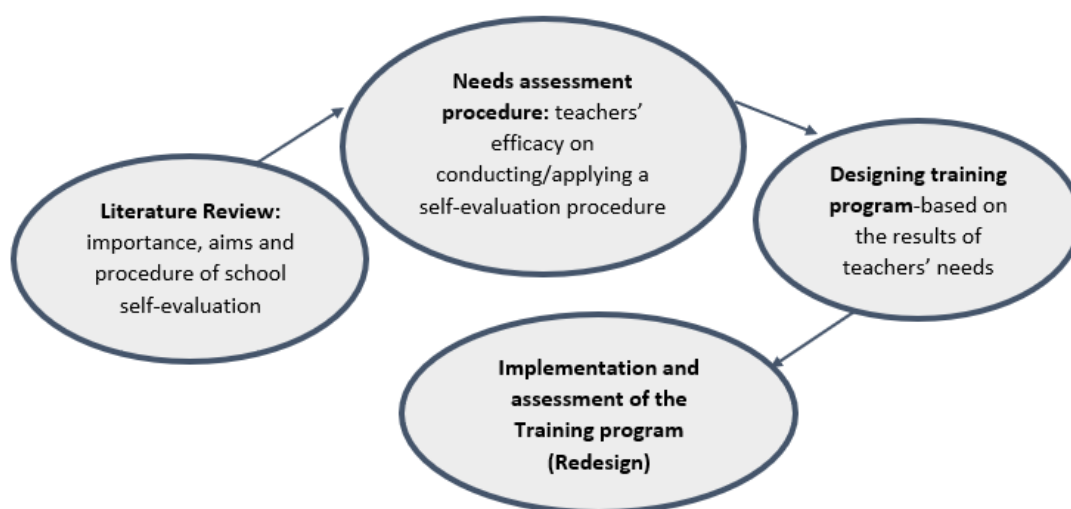


Figure 8: Development phase of the project

The needs assessment questionnaires were completed online, by 1058 teachers/deputy headteachers and headteachers of all levels in Cyprus, during September 2021. The investigation focused on understanding the readiness of teachers, deputy headteachers and headteachers to apply and conduct self-evaluation processes.

Enabling teachers to express their views about their learning needs was important, to design a relevant professional learning program suited to their needs.

Based on the results of the survey, the *“School Self-Evaluation Program”* was designed and implemented during the school year (February 2022-April 2022). The Program consisted of four training sessions (online meetings) on school self-evaluation. The sessions focused on both the theoretical and practical application of the whole process. The training was open to all schools of all levels and the schools who wished to participate, sent their application through an online platform. Therefore, the participants were 190 teachers/headteachers/deputy headteachers of all levels, from 91 schools.

The participating schools had the opportunity to learn about self-assessment processes, analyze case studies, study, and apply various practices and develop their action plan. During the first meeting, the self-assessment procedure was presented. More specifically, the methods of school self-evaluation were presented, as well as some helpful tools for school self-evaluation procedure. Action plan, interpretation and data analysis was also discussed among the participants. Then, during the second meeting, through studying case studies, participants discussed how an action plan could be developed. In the fourth and final session, time was devoted to visit classrooms for classroom observation among colleagues, to promote learning through peer dialogue, as a suggested action in the School Improvement Plan. Basic aspects of effective teaching and teaching monitoring tools were also discussed.

The diagram below clarifies the content of the courses.

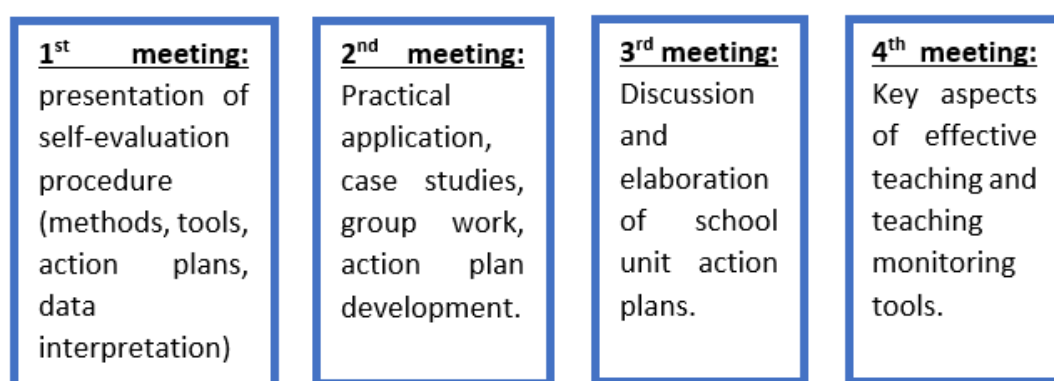
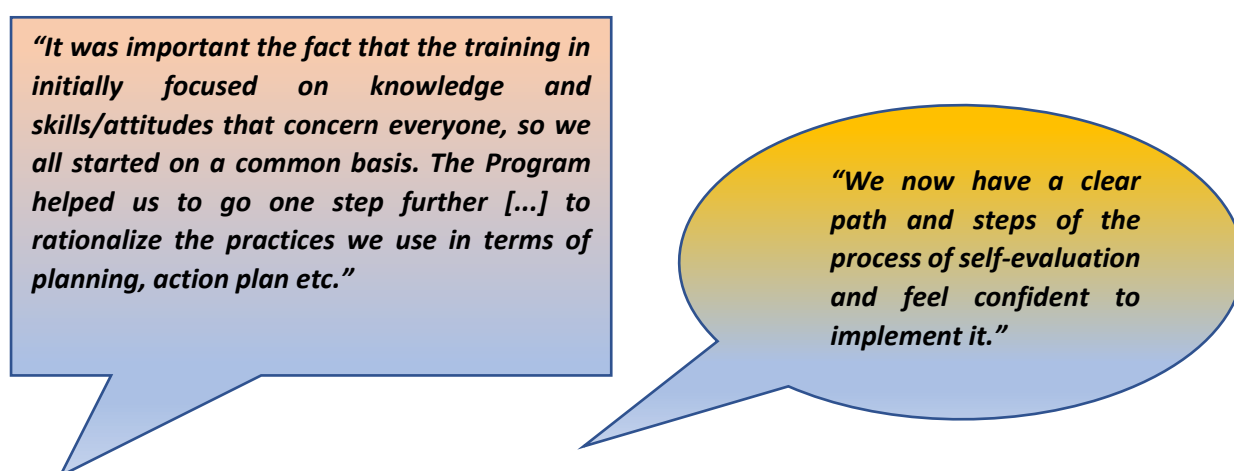


Diagram 1: Content of school self-evaluation training program

In conclusion, the involvement of teachers throughout the implementation of the project was central to its successful development. Teachers' voices were heard, through a) the development of the pilot survey tool and the actual survey tool on their training needs, b) their participation in the Training Program and c) their evaluation of the Training Program they attended. Involving teachers helped to develop a shared vision and align individual teacher and system needs, which are important for the development of the National Framework for School Education Careers.



PHASE 4: EVALUATING, ADAPTING; SUSTAINING; EMBEDDING THE PROJECT

As the opinion of participants (teachers, deputy headteachers, headteachers) was of utmost importance, all participants were involved in providing their evaluation at the end of each training session, and at the end of the whole training program through the completion of online questionnaires.

In addition to the above, a group interview (focus group) with a selection of participants was conducted as an additional form of evaluation and gathering of data.

In general, of the teachers who took part in the training program, the analysis of the evaluations showed that the vast majority, appeared to be very satisfied with the program. More specifically, they seem to be very satisfied with:

- the content and methodology of the program
- the clear presentation of the steps to be followed during the self-assessment process of their school unit
- the appropriate material provided during the meetings
- the opportunity for interaction within the program
- the connection between theory and practice
- the provided examples, which supported the theoretical background of the sessions and contributed to better understanding.
- the usefulness of the program for their professional development
- the results of the training program, as they now appear to know the steps they need to follow to conduct the self-assessment process and feel able to implement it effectively in their school unit.
- the instructor of the program
- the number of the training sessions of the program and the duration of each meeting to be very satisfactory.

They also believe that their specific training can affect their students and their learning outcomes. It is noteworthy that some of the participants have already implemented some of the suggested self-assessment processes in their school and informed their colleagues about the practices and procedures presented in the training program.

The participants in the program suggest that the program should be moved to the beginning of the school year, so that they can develop their action plan on school self-evaluation and receive support and feedback during the year, in their implementation effort. The participants also seemed to prefer the training to take place during non-working hours, as teachers do not have time to attend training sessions during school hours without being interrupted.

Based on the evaluation, **the training program has been redesigned** for the next school year. The results obtained from the evaluation of the program, make the need for change obvious, both in the form of the School Self-Evaluation Program, as well as in the time and duration of its implementation. Specifically, based on the evaluation results, it is proposed during the next school year to offer the training in the form of a network, only for Primary schools or/and High schools, so that in-depth training can be done. At the same time, at the end of the school year, a conference will be held, in which the schools will have the opportunity to present their work and progress.

The whole project supported our thinking regarding a National Career Framework for teachers and school leaders. Having a specific framework in mind, adapted to the specific needs of teachers and our country, helped us implement long-term goals, design effectively the whole process from the beginning, having in mind the main steps that we should follow.

LESSONS LEARNED: KEY MESSAGES

By completing this project, key messages emerged. Firstly, some stages proved to be important for implementing the teachers' training program. Specifically, the literature review was useful for developing the scientific background to structure the training, clarifying the self-assessment process and developing knowledge regarding important steps that should be taken into consideration. Moreover, it helped in the design of the questionnaire. The piloting of the survey tool was very important as the need to clarify and rephrase some questions emerged before the questionnaire took its final form.

The mapping of the teachers needs enabled the training program to be designed based on the real needs of teachers as they emerged from the survey tool was important. This increased the teachers' willingness to join the training program and made them feel that their voices are important.

Moreover, the need to develop learning communities within the program itself, and through participation with other countries in the European Commission Project as well, became obvious, as this provides the opportunity to share experiences and stimulate reflection.

As far as the content of our national project is concerned, the need for further training in the area of school self-evaluation emerged. Most of the participants would like to repeat the training next year. Time, support and feedback throughout the year are needed, to provide support during the implementation of self-assessment procedures.

Finally, considering the overall project, we can say that we have successfully adapted the framework to the specific needs of Cyprus, by focusing on selected aspects of the provided adaptable career framework developed through the European Commission. Our case study shows that elements of a National Career Framework identified and can be developed over time.

"It was a positive experience to have the opportunity to exchange ideas and see that there are common concerns"

"It was very pleasant, the fact that the training program was structured based on our needs..."

"Maybe if the training take place in smaller groups through workshops, (it will help) to build the right culture from the beginning of the year [...]"

"It is a good idea if a school which implemented the self-evaluation process could show its work."

4.6 COUNTRY CASE STUDY: ROMANIA

The Romanian Ministry of Education, through a systemic project, is rethinking the education and training for the teaching career; intervening in the development of the teaching career. This is happening at the level of initial training - through practical internships – by including more hours of practical training and at the level of continuous training, by creating learning communities and a flexible career development framework. These new developments are in line with current mechanisms and standards for the training and development of teaching competence, and with the recommendations and guidelines developed by the European Commission in the field of teaching career / teacher education and training.

Both the practical part of the initial training and the continuous training of teachers, as professional development, are provided and facilitated through learning communities, through the creation of Centres for Pedagogical Practice - school consortia that bring together, under the coordination of a specifically selected school, various types of educational units. The digital component of the teaching process is also very important in ensuring mentoring of the teaching career.

The systemic project involves the establishment of a Teaching Career Mentoring Institution, which will function as a self-regulatory body, based on the didactic standards (occupational and training), during both the initial phase at the start of the teaching career - the internship/induction stage - and, especially, the phase of career and professional development of teachers.

The Ministry of Education is involved in the project, along with 529 schools for pedagogical practice organized in 100 centres (consortiums), 11 Tutoring Centres (former Teacher Training Centres) which contribute to the development of teaching competence during the whole teaching career and 4 Universities, as training centres for the teaching career and resource centres. The 529 schools for pedagogical countries were selected after a call that was open for all schools in the 40 counties of the country, on the basis of the vulnerability areas map.

Approximately 28,000 teachers will be trained in the concept of mentorship for the teaching career.

OVERVIEW OF COUNTRY PROJECT

The specialists in the Ministry of Education analysed the 2018 Pisa results that ranked Romanian students very low in competences. Less than 50% of the Romanian pupils were able to use the knowledge learned at school in the daily life. At the same time, the 2018 TALIS results showed that Romanian teachers feel very confident in classroom and they were completely prepared for the teaching-learning process. The report also pointed out areas of in-service training that require more attention, such as developing advanced ICT skills, teaching in multicultural/multilingual settings and

teaching students with special needs. This discrepancy between the pupils' results versus the teachers' convictions, together with the long-time claim regarding need for better practical training, both for initial training in Universities and Pedagogical High-schools and for the novice teachers in schools where the first steps occur that lead to the paradigmatic change at the educational system level.

When the pandemic hit and in the beginning the schools were closed, there was a very strong need for answers regarding the way education could go on. The question was – “In what way, were the teachers prepared for online learning and blended-learning? These were the reasons that we had to think that the answer for a better future in education was to be prepared for anything, for face to face or virtual education, with well-prepared teachers for any of the circumstances - a mentoring model in the blended-learning context was developed.

The setting up of the Developing National Career Framework Project was also decided as a response to the recommendations of the OECD Romania Review of Evaluation and Assessment in Education (2017)²⁷, the COM recommendations regarding good teaching in schools in the community (Council Recommendation on promoting common values, inclusive education, and the European dimension of teaching, May 2018), the conclusions of the PISA²⁸ and the TALIS 2018 reports²⁹.

All these aspects are addressed through the new vision on continuous professional development implemented through the Ministry of Education strategic project.

PHASE 1: PROJECT DESIGN, SETTING UP AND LAYING PROJECT FOUNDATIONS

Before the implementation of the project, the contextual background was considered (the national context, the teaching career context, the teaching career education and training in the European Union and the teaching career challenges in Romania) specifically:

- Vision and strategic objectives (elaboration of a modern vision regarding the teaching career and the establishment of some strategic objectives leading to the shaping and structuring of a unitary national framework regarding formation and development throughout the teaching career)
- Designing a training system for the teaching career in Romania (interventions regarding regulation, financing, coordination, organizing and functioning, evaluation and certification)
- Identifying and regulating alternative routes of professionalization / development in the teaching career
- Creating and developing a reliable system of continuous training as professional development
- Adaptation to the teaching roles in changing the system of evaluation and examination of teachers

²⁷ OECD, 2017, Reviews of Evaluation and Assessment in Education, România

²⁸ OECD, 2021, PISA 21st Century Readers, Developing Literacy Skills in a Digital World, OECD Publishing, Paris.

²⁹ OECD, (2019), TALIS 2018 Results (Volume I): Teachers and School Leaders as Lifelong Learners, Rezultatele studiului TALIS 2018 (volumul I): cadrele didactice și directorii unităților de învățământ în calitate de cursanți pe tot parcursul vieții

- Setting priorities (public consultations, estimated costs, target groups, prioritisation, monitoring and evaluation).

The Figure below provides a visual representation:

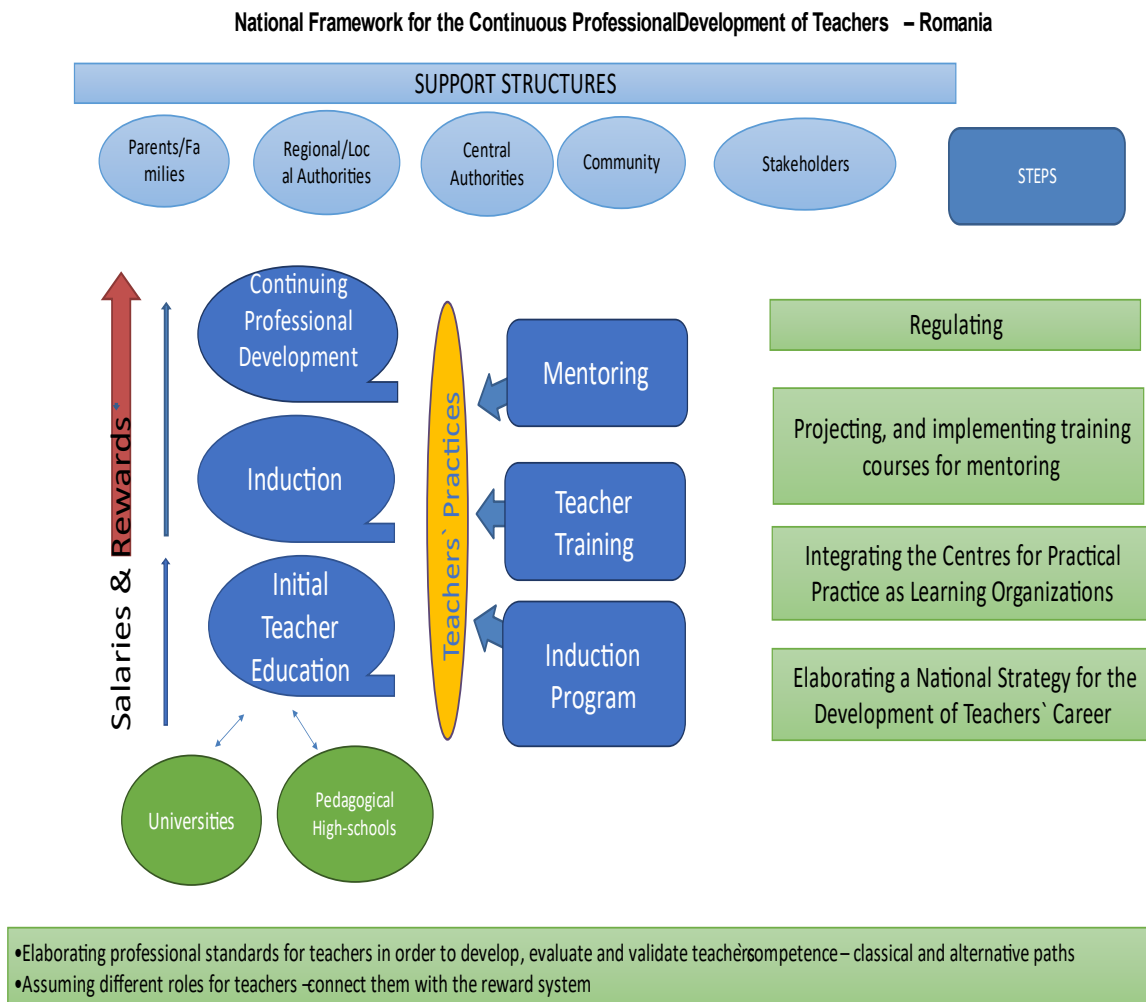


Figure 9: National Framework for the Continuous Professional Development of Teachers in Romania.

PHASE 2: DEVELOPMENT PHASE OF PROJECT

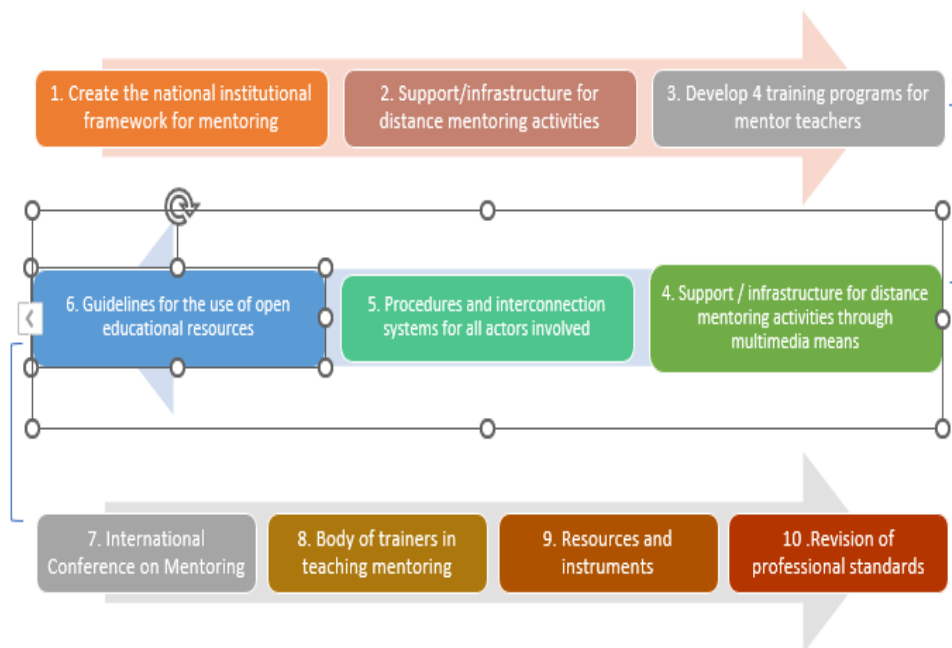


Figure 10: Development Steps in the Project Design

Step 1 of the project was to create the **national institutional framework for mentoring** (see **Figure 11: The Learning Community**) within the pre-university teaching career, until 2023. By establishing the **National Centre for Mentoring** in the teaching career, structured as a Learning



Figure 11: The Learning Community

Community network, consisting of **100 Centres for Pedagogical Practice** (100 consortiums involving a total of 529 schools of all levels and degrees of vulnerability that will function as centres where the pedagogical practice will take place), **11 Tutoring Centres** (former Teacher Training Centres) necessary for the formation and development of teaching competence during the whole teaching career, **4 Training Centres for the Teaching Career** - higher education institutions with continuous training powers.

Step 2 involves the development and implementation of the support/infrastructure for the development of distance teaching mentoring activities through multimedia means.

In Step 3 the four universities involved in the project (**Training Centres for the Teaching Career**) designed, accredited and began the implementation of **4 training programs** for mentor teachers, coordinators of pedagogical practice and / or continuous training, in mentoring system.

The four courses entailed:

- **Mentorship for the teaching career – training of trainers**
- **Mentorship for the pedagogical practice**
- **Mentorship for management/school leaders**
- **Mentorship for curriculum – approx.20,000 teachers trained**

Course 1 and 2 - 4000 trainees certified resulting in a community of trained mentors

Course 3 and 4 – 20,000 trainees certified in educational management and coaching for specific subjects, with topics such as inclusion, metacognition, media literacy. The development of new skills is in progress.

Step 4 involves the **development and implementation of the support / infrastructure for the distance development of teaching mentoring activities through multimedia means** as part of the European context of using modern learning methods.

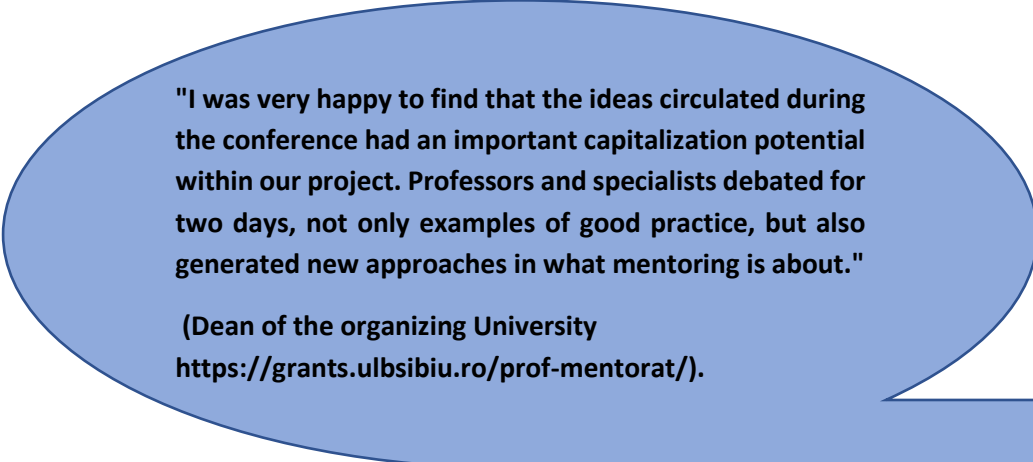
Step 5 involves creating **procedures and interconnection systems for all actors involved in the institutional mechanism of teaching career mentoring**. This involves creating the appropriate arrangement and provision of the spaces intended for teaching career mentoring activities (including blended-learning/online activities, including videoconferencing); also intended for continuous distance learning, pedagogical practice and evaluation of practical teaching activity - classroom teaching and assessment, including videoconferencing.

In **Step 6, Strategic/Methodological Guidelines** were developed for organizing and conducting teacher training programs for the use of open educational resources, including the development of teaching materials that support the implementation of the revised curriculum: 3 educational offers for students in high-school.

In **Step 7** an **International Conference on Mentoring in Teacher Education and Professional Training** was organized and held, aiming to provide a setting for a comprehensive discussion on mentorship for teacher education and training, sharing good practices and strategies in different countries and discussing the challenges in different national contexts.

More than 2000 teachers and education specialists from the country and abroad have participated in the **International Conference 'Mentoring in the teaching career'**, hosted by 'Lucian Blaga University' from Sibiu, during November 2021. The conference aimed to develop an integrative perspective on mentoring, disseminating and discussing examples of best practices and strategies from different countries.

There were 20 keynote speakers, teachers, professors and specialists from Romania, Italy, Spain, Denmark, Germany, United Kingdom, Canada (16 keynote speakers from abroad) who carried out their activity within the framework of the two plenary sessions, but also in the 21 workshops. They enabled discussion of valuable ideas that sparked lively debates even after the presentations.



"I was very happy to find that the ideas circulated during the conference had an important capitalization potential within our project. Professors and specialists debated for two days, not only examples of good practice, but also generated new approaches in what mentoring is about."

(Dean of the organizing University
<https://grants.ulbsibiu.ro/prof-mentorat/>).

Step 8 involved **developing a body of trainers in the field of teaching career mentoring**, approximately 7000 mentors, mainly operating in the centres for practical practice.

Step 9 involved **elaborating resources and instruments, including for teaching blended learning/online**.

Step 10 will involve the **revision of the professional standards for teachers**.

PHASE 3: PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

In the school year 2022-2023, in the centres of pedagogical practice the following types of educational interventions are being piloted:

- Teaching career models - professional development, development of life skills, including the development of digital skills,
- Curricular structures adapted to the blended-learning format in the teaching-learning-evaluation process.

Within these educational interventions the following interventions are being piloted:

- organising the institutional framework regarding mentoring in the teaching career;
- standardisation of activities and payment of mentor teachers;
- carrying out the activities regarding the mentoring and training in the teaching career;
- elaboration, put in practice and development of a mechanism regarding the system of accumulation of transferable professional credits by the teaching staff;
- making functional the collaborative model, at the level of the learning community, in the educational process;
- putting in practice the National Framework for Teaching Career training, developed in the perspective of European Education Area, EEA 2025, within the European *Project, Developing National Frameworks for School Education Careers*;
- monitoring the impact of applying the normative documents designed for piloting:
 - Framework methodology regarding the establishment and functioning of the body of mentor teachers in pre-university education;
 - Framework methodology regarding the quality assurance of the programs for the teachers' continuous professional development and for the accumulation of the transferable professional credits;
 - Framework Regulation on the organisation of pedagogical internships;
 - The National Strategy on Teaching Career;
 - Framework methodology for the continuous professional development of teachers in pre-university education.

Within the **Curriculum-type** educational interventions, the following are being piloted:

- **Monitoring the impact of the application of educational offers for students (curriculum programs decided by the school) including:**
 - Digital education and media skills: Responsible and ethical use of media content and resources and of digital applications; Creation and transmission of media contents; Critical and reflexive analysis of accessed, searched and stored information and contents in the media.
 - Inclusive education and the development of critical thinking - about Critical interpretation of information, facts and social attitudes from different contexts of school, community and professional life, through the use of specific acquisitions from the social field; The development of tools aimed at improving social relations between different people and groups in the community by using critical thinking strategies; Participation in projects/activities that involve responsibility in decision-making and contribute to personal and social development
 - Metacognitive strategies - about Critical interpretation of information, facts and social attitudes from different contexts of school, community and professional life, through the use of competences specific to the social field; The development of tools aimed at improving social relations between different people and groups in the community by using critical thinking strategies; Participation in projects/activities that involve responsibility in decision-making and contribute to personal and social development.

Mixed teams of teachers (from the university and pre-university system) will review/develop and validate the national compulsory school curriculum at high school level, in the context of adapting the teaching process and related processes (school inspection, continuing education) to the blended learning system. The levels developed includes the extension, diversification, specialisation and capitalisation of key competences in a variety of formal and non-formal learning contexts:

- **Elaboration, making operational and development of a mechanism for measuring the impact of teacher participation in the process of continuous professional development on students' learning outcomes, including national examinations and assessments**
- **Applying the participatory-collaborative model in the educational process for students, in blended-learning type learning and evaluation contexts.**

In the process of elaboration/revision of the national strategic framework for the professionalisation of teaching career in pre-university education, **questionnaires, thematic studies, strategic landmarks and other documents** resulting from the organisation and development of support activities of educational research are being used to review and optimise the mechanisms regarding the system of accumulation of transferable professional credits by the teaching staff.

PHASE 4: LESSONS LEARNED AND EVALUATION

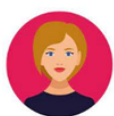
The first step in the *Project*, **creating the National Institutional Framework for the Mentoring of the Pre-university Teaching Career** required a series of energy and time-consuming actions, yet the opportunity that the *Project* offered was recognised by the senior leaders in the Ministry of Education, so the legislation changes were easily approved. The most difficult task was to comply with the old regulations that could not be changed with new ones.

Another difficult point, that led to postponement of some activities was the dissipated teams, between 4 universities, in different corners of the country and 11 teacher training centres, that were not always developing at the same pace and it was hard sometimes to coordinate the teams.

Recruiting the staff for the four mentoring courses provided a surprise, as the target was reached immediately the call was published - an encouraging sign for the positive pursuit of the project.

Three training courses (out of four) were the first important activities in the project to be evaluated.

The teachers were satisfied with the subjects proposed and with the trainers – the reason most of them gave was that they needed such a vision and a change in the teaching-learning process.



"I came to this course determined to learn how I can forward what I have learned in my years of experience in class" (Miruna, teacher of History).

"For the first time I thought that maybe I can become a counsellor or a vocational guide for those younger than me" (Ştefan, teacher of English).



" I would like to be able to ensure practical stages, also for university students in pedagogy and pedagogical high school students – I think I can do it now" (Gina, teacher of Physics).

"Empathy in the classroom derives also from position, gestures, attitude – I wish I knew this when I was a novice, these things came to me with experience, I didn't have the chance of having a mentor" (Ilona, primary school teacher).



As a follow-up of the training courses, **regional workshops for teachers** from application (pedagogical practice) schools will be organised, aiming to developing learning communities, as well as the dissemination of project results.

Monitoring of the use of **TEACH** and **SELFIE / SELFIE FOR TEACHERS** applications (<https://education.ec.europa.eu/selfie/selfie-for-teachers>) will begin in order to evaluate and optimise the way in which new technologies are used in the educational process;

At the end of the last training course – based on the Curriculum - the results of the training courses for mentoring will be disseminated at national level.

The general view from the trained teachers is that it is the creation of the Learning Community, where all interested actors are involved and peer learn – that will be central in responding to the rapid changes in societies, the pandemic, the Ukrainian war etc.

4.7 COUNTRY CASE STUDY: ALBANIA

OVERVIEW OF PROJECT

During the last two decades, there have been many legislative changes across all areas of teacher education in Albania. These significant legislative changes include changes to the teacher recruitment process, to initial teacher education, continuous professional development of teachers and school head and the teacher qualification process. Also, the current school leaders must be trained by the Centre for School Leadership to perform the role of school leader.

Aims of the National Career Framework Project:

Much has been achieved in changing and improving the teaching profession. The Ministry of Education and Sports of the Republic of Albania always seek to be coherent with its policies in the education system and aims to embed the development of national frameworks for school education careers to increase the promotion of the teaching profession within the change processes.

The framework may be used to map and signpost a teacher's career and to steer and guide progression. It may also be a common, shared reference for monitoring and regulation.

The aim of our project was also to become acquainted with the best practices of different countries in order to successfully implement this initiative.

PHASE 1: PROJECT DESIGN, SETTING UP AND LAYING PROJECT FOUNDATION

A National Education Strategy (NES) 2021 – 2026 has been approved and the Action Plan and budgeting has been prepared, along with fine-tuning of the overall strategy document. In the NES, it was emphasised that one of the main priorities is teachers. Specifically, "*Creating opportunities for quality teacher training and improving the career system that encourages them to develop higher levels of teaching skills*". Research shows that the quality of teaching is a determining factor for student achievement. Therefore, the Strategy pays attention to both initial teacher education and continuous professional development. Another important priority is the establishment of a career system for teachers, which align with the evaluation of performance in relation to meet the teacher's professional standards. This priority draws from European Commission Policy Guide, "Supporting teacher and school leader careers".³⁰

³⁰ European Commission, (2020) Supporting teacher and school leader careers: A policy guide. Available at <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/6e4c89eb-7a0b-11ea-b75f-01aa75ed71a1/language-en/format-PDF/source-278261266>.

Focus areas and key trends identified for development:

Teachers teaching approaches: School curricula covers a wide range of themes, and in the past years has focused more on competencies-based skills, even though there are still some challenges for teachers adapting their learning style from a more theoretical one to building competencies. Focus is still placed on learning by memory, while a focus on learning how to learn remains lacking. The aim is to continue to develop and implement strategies that enhance learning, critical thinking skills, building applied competencies in different situations of learning and engagement in community life.

School-based curricula: The school-based curricula need to be more focused on the demands of the labor market. What is being taught in schools needs to be more intentionally linked to what the strategic areas are for future employment - linking the skillsets developed in schools with the needs of the labor market. In addition, building soft skills among children and adolescents is another priority which needs more attention. Modules focusing on youth activities, professional development, and psychosocial development need to be more accessible for all children and adolescents in the pre-university education system.

Teachers' digital competencies: The COVID-19 pandemic revealed gaps in the digital competence of teachers at a time when teaching shifted to digital distance learning. The crisis pandemic showed that teachers had little to no experience in distant teaching and use of digital/ technology tools.

Professional promotion or qualification of teachers is mostly based on completion of years in teaching and their days continuous professional development per year as a prerequisite to enter the qualification process, as well as passing the qualification examination. Meanwhile, it is necessary to include in this process the practice of teachers in the teaching-learning process during their work with the students.

Teacher performance evaluation should include professional development needs and be based on teacher professional standards approved by the Ministry of Education and Sports (MES) and the results of their students' achievements.

During the drafting of the NES 2021-2026, MES organized many consultative meetings at the national level with interest groups as well as online consultation. During these meetings, one of the main challenges that received special attention was the training of teachers, their quality, performance, as well as **the connection of performance with the teachers' career system and their continuous training to ensure high quality teaching-learning, inclusive practice, and skills for life, work and sustainable development.**

PHASE 2: DEVELOPMENT PHASE OF PROJECT

The main challenge in developing the framework of this project, but closely related to an objective of the Albanian NES 2021-2026 is *Construction of a new system of promotion from the professional-qualification side based also on the evaluation of the teacher's performance in the school*. **This means that performance evaluation should be more focused on teaching practices, as well as providing reflective information for identifying professional development needs.**

In addition to checking school documentation, performance evaluation should also include classroom observation of the teacher, as well as checking the portfolio documenting teaching practices. For such a system to be functional, guidelines must be drawn up that are based on the teacher standards and contain instruments for evaluating different aspects of performance, which must be piloted in advance.

Also, it is important to build the capacities of evaluators and provide them with support from Quality Assurance Agency of Pre-university Education specialists. In developing this framework, currently the MES and Quality Assurance Agency of Pre-university Education (QAPUE) have started work, specifically:

- MES required QAPUE to start work related to the revision of the teacher qualification scheme.
- QAPUE set up a Working Group for the review of the process and scheme of teacher qualification.

During Phase 2 of the project, MES and QAPUE held meetings with interest groups to discuss recommendations for changing the qualification scheme and its connection with a teacher's career.

A work plan was developed regarding the organization of these meetings as well as public consultations. To develop the National Career Framework, the working group which was set up has the following tasks:

- to collect information on the scheme and organisation of the qualification process over the years in Albania
- to collect information on the scheme and organization of the qualification process in European countries
- to prepare a report related to the experiences of organizing the qualification process in European countries and beyond
- to evaluate the progress of the qualification process, of the implemented scheme and the effects produced by this process
- to organize consultative meetings with specialists of local educational units, school leaders and teachers

- to draw up the summary report and recommendations related to the improvement and changes of the teacher qualification process and scheme, identifying the legal acts that need to be changed.

See Figure 12 below which provides a visual representation of the Albanian National Career Framework for School Education Careers.

This includes: the aims of the framework, the qualifications required and the opportunities for career progression.

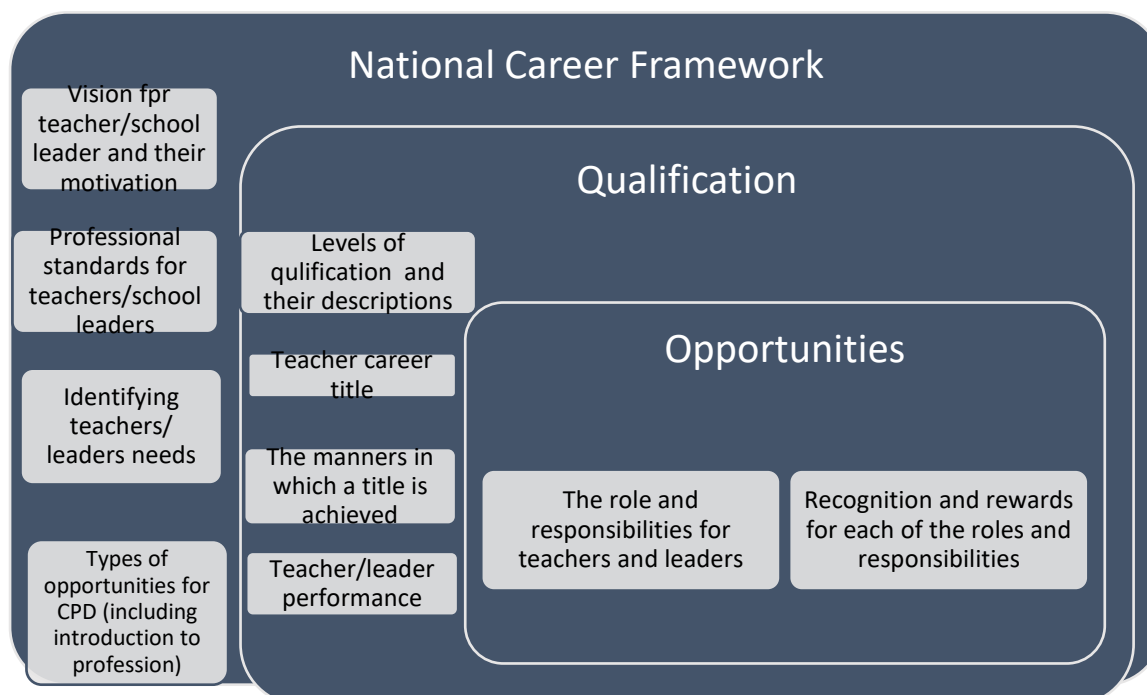


Figure 12: Albanian National Career Framework

PHASE 3: PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

In implementation of the Albania NES (2021 – 2026), the guidance provided in, *Supporting teacher and school leader careers: A policy guide*³¹ supported the start of the work related to the review of the teacher qualification scheme, as well as work of Quality Assurance Agency of Pre-university Education in reviewing the process of the teacher qualification scheme.

³¹ European Commission, (2020) Supporting teacher and school leader careers: A policy guide. Available at <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/6e4c89eb-7a0b-11ea-b75f-01aa75ed71a1/language-en/format-PDF/source-278261266>

The Working Group during the first phase of the Developing a National Framework Project a report was prepared which included the following:

- The qualification process, the challenges and experiences over the years, the changes that have occurred in the teacher qualification system and the career system over the years.
- The legal basis on which the qualification process is currently based and the way the teacher qualification system is built.
- Experiences of teacher qualification in European countries and beyond, some data related to the organisation of the teacher qualification process in other countries (comparative table for the way of organisation, time when it takes place, content, etc.).
- Summary of the comparative qualification results 2010-2022 and some conclusions on the quality performance of teachers in the qualification process.

The Working Group is in the process of preparing recommendations for changing the qualification scheme (recommendations for the way of organisation, for the content, for the development time, for categories, connection with the career system, etc.)

A full report is being written, which will also contain the final qualification scheme and its connection with a teacher's career. This scheme will be approved by MES.

PHASE 4: ADAPTING, EMBEDDING AND EVALUATING THE PROJECT

Depending on the qualification scheme that will be approved by MES, several steps will be taken as follows:

- ▶ The legal basis related to the process of qualification and approval of the career scheme will change.
- ▶ Guidelines will be drawn up to help teachers to implement this framework.
- ▶ Orientation programmes and materials will be designed to support teachers regarding the qualification process.
- ▶ The instruments for evaluating the teachers' performance based on the professional standards will be drawn up.
- ▶ Training will be held with teachers, school leaders, specialists of educational units, external evaluators.
- ▶ The process will be implemented in the period that will be approved by MES
- ▶ The evaluation of the process will be carried out and will be monitored
- ▶ The relevant reports will be drawn up.

LESSONS LEARNED

- The document *Supporting teacher and school leader careers – A Policy Guide* was very important and helpful in providing guidance in the building of a career system for teachers appropriate to the context in Albania.
- The construction of a sustainable qualification system and the connection with the career system is one of the main objectives of Albanian Education Strategy.
- European policies and European trends for the career of teachers and leaders supported the development of the National Career Framework.
- The project process brought together all stakeholders (politicians, experts in education, school leaders, teachers, faculties of education, non-governmental organizations, etc.) involved in supporting the careers of teachers and school leaders in pre-university education.
- **Discussion and learning of experiences through peer-learning with other countries participating in this project were particularly helpful and informative.**

5. COMMON CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS FOR DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING A NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR SCHOOL EDUCATION CAREERS: IDENTIFIED JOINTLY ACROSS COUNTRY CASE STUDIES

This section of the Guide was co-written by the country representatives and sets out **common challenges** faced in the creation and development of National Frameworks for School Education Careers. **Solutions are also offered that were already identified and put into place to address the challenges** that arose or potential solutions are proposed that arose during peer dialogue.

CHALLENGE: IDENTIFYING AND UNDERSTANDING THE STRUCTURES AND CONTENT OF A CAREER FRAMEWORK ACCORDING TO THE PRIORITIES OF THE COUNTRY.

❖ IDENTIFIED SOLUTIONS:

- **Reflect** on the elements of the **Adaptable Template** to support informed decisions about which components are relevant to the country context and are useful to include in the development of national frameworks. Identify the components that are the highest priorities nationally for teachers and school leaders, as well as school and national levels in relation to school education. Discuss potential components to be included in a national framework for school education career with policy colleagues and stakeholders in order to identify which components are most relevant to national priorities. **Discussions should keep in mind the purpose and aim of developing a national framework for school education careers in relation to attracting and retaining teachers.**
- Once the focus is identified information about current structures, roles and pathways should be collected as a first step in developing understanding. The information gathered should then be discussed widely to develop a shared understanding of what exists already but perhaps is not sufficiently transparent and identify what is missing and still needs to be identified and clarified.
- The project participants found discussion during the **peer-learning** particularly helpful. Part of the solution could be **to explore opportunities within European Programmes to engage in dialogue with peers in other countries.**

CHALLENGE: INVOLVING ALL RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR SCHOOL EDUCATION CAREERS.

❖ IDENTIFIED SOLUTIONS:

- Identifying all relevant stakeholders and engaging with them early in the development process, and involving them in all stages of the development of the career framework. This includes involving for example, policy-makers from all relevant Ministry of Education departments teachers, school leaders, teacher associations, unions, initial teacher educators, professional development providers etc.
- Processes involved could include: setting up working groups involving key people and relevant stakeholders; clarifying what engagement is about and why; ensuring roles and responsibilities are clear for everyone involved; building trust-based relationships through dialogue and clear and transparent processes; jointly developing processes to manage differences constructively; agreeing next steps and feasible timelines.
- The *Project* participants highlighted the importance of communicating with and involving colleagues in other relevant departments of their policy Directorates, and if necessary, in other relevant policy Directorates.
- The willingness of stakeholders (e.g., teachers, school leaders, teacher educators) to engage in the project is likely to increase if they believe actions are based on real needs/priorities/aspirations for career development.
- In some of the national projects stakeholder views about needs were gathered through questionnaire at the start of the project and combined with evidence-informed proposals (for example, from literature reviews, European Guidelines etc.). The responses were used as a starting point for discussion in stakeholder groups or as the basis to draft the career guidelines, pathways and/or relevant training courses.
- Give early considerations to how those not involved in the development processes will be able to discuss and understand any changes to be made, their purpose and their benefits.
- Creation of a space online for comments/doubts/suggestions
- Reflect on harmonisation of change measures and change processes with timing of activities for those who are impacted by the change, at an appropriate pace.

CHALLENGE: HOW TO PORTRAY DIFFERENT CAREER PATHWAYS.

❖ IDENTIFIED SOLUTIONS:

- Gather information from all the relevant sources about existing career pathways and about the possibilities of implementing new pathways, such as secondments, role or context swaps etc. This may require setting up a working group with relevant colleagues to share the tasks (liaising with different departments in the policy context including HR department; checking legislation etc.). Information can also be gathered through recording interviews with people in relevant roles to be included in the career pathways and from those who have experienced a variety of pathways. This can include engaging in a European Programme that enabled job shadowing in another country.
- Ensure the pathways that are portrayed are available and there is support and resources available for people to follow the career pathway
- Balance of visual representation and information about the pathway (e.g., online guide; video; animation etc.)
- Consider the language to be used (formal/informal)

CHALLENGE: ACHIEVING A BALANCE BETWEEN SUPPORTING INDIVIDUAL TEACHER PROFESSIONAL LEARNING NEEDS, MOTIVATIONS, CAREER AMBITIONS AND SCHOOL AND SYSTEM NEEDS/PRIORITIES.

❖ IDENTIFIED SOLUTIONS:

- Reflect on own country context and make informed decisions about how career frameworks can benefit priorities of the system of the country and support student learning, teacher learning and their career development.
- Keep a strong focus on the purpose of a framework for school education careers - to attract and retain teachers by better supporting career progression, clarifying roles and responsibilities available and showing that there is a range of career development possibilities and pathways.
- Professional learning for career development can be aligned with school and national priorities as long as the benefits for teachers are made clear. For example, training programmes provided for mentors, or digital coordinators etc. that offer new career development opportunities for teachers can be aligned with identified priorities to support teacher development in schools through mentoring processes or support the development of teachers' digital skills.

- Achieving a balance between school, system and teachers' priorities requires understanding of teachers' career development ambitions and motivations. This is best achieved by gathering views directly from them. This can be done via a questionnaire for general views about career needs. To understand a teacher's individual career aspirations, one-to-one dialogue is necessary in their own school, as teachers will have different ambitions and motivations for their career development.

CHALLENGE: CAREER FRAMEWORKS ARE NOT STATIC AND THEY NEED CONSTANT UPDATING.

❖ **IDENTIFIED SOLUTION:**

- Plan early in the project design how and who will be responsible for updating the national framework; any career guide developed; any video outlining career pathways, in coordination with the policy representatives of the various departments/stakeholders.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- **To improve the attractiveness of the teaching profession attention should be given to teachers' individual motivation and ambition for their career development.** This requires engaging with them to understand their career aspirations, providing support structures and career guidance and encouraging teacher ownership for career development.
- **The opportunity should be taken to better support career progression by embedding a framework for school education careers** when engaging in system change and/or developing policies relating to teachers and school leaders.
- **All relevant stakeholders (teachers, school leaders, career guidance officers, teaching unions etc.) should be involved** early in the planning and design of national career frameworks.
- **The commitment of policy actors and all stakeholders requires clarity about the purpose of the career framework, why it is necessary and the benefits.** This clarity needs to be achieved through dialogue, shared vision and the development of trust-based relationships between all involved.
- **The European Adaptable Template can be used to stimulate dialogue between stakeholders and used to identify and select components of a career framework relevant to the national context.**
- **In a national framework for school education careers, roles, functions and pathways across the stages of the teaching continuum as relevant to the country context should be mapped and signposted, through visual representation and explanation to show possible opportunities.** This can include diverse roles and pathways in and outside the school setting. The possibility of including opportunities to engage in exchanges/swaps with teachers in other European countries for a school term or year should be considered to support development of new knowledge and expertise; refresh skills; re-energise and motivate teachers.
- **A national framework for school careers that provides support structures and guidance for teacher career progression can be aligned with school and system priorities.** Existing professional development frameworks, national standards and qualifications can be linked to a national framework for school education careers. This can lead to one coherent framework for teacher professional development and career progression. Such a framework should make transparent how professional development and adding to expertise and qualifications also enable teachers to equip themselves for career progression.
- **Competences and criteria should be identified in a transparent way where specific competences and abilities are needed for a certain role or function.** This can clarify expectations and responsibilities and support processes of self-reflection, appraisal,

evaluation and career-development discussion. This is another way that teacher career development can align with other system processes, such as quality assurance processes at school or national levels.

- **How specific roles or expertise levels are recognised in a national framework should be clear**, e.g., roles may be recognised through salaries and remuneration or in other ways, such as time to engage in relevant professional learning for a teacher's career progression or support to engage in international exchanges for a period of time. The contractual status can also be clarified to indicate connection to a career step, e.g., whether it is a temporary role or a permanent position.
- **Different pathways to career progression and how they can be taken (e.g., through individual initiatives of teachers, open vacancies, selection processes, etc.) should be clarified and widely disseminated to ensure teacher candidates and teachers are informed and kept up to date with the possibilities available.** The possible extent of diversity and local variation and autonomy for schools should be transparent.
- **A variety of types of opportunities and support structures should be available for professional learning contributing to career development**, including peer learning and exchange, job shadowing, job swaps with teachers in other locations/countries, mentoring, formal professional development provision (certified courses and qualifications, resources) and online networks to enable communication and the sharing of good practice between teachers in schools, locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.
- **European programmes should be utilised for career development** to enable for example, peer learning exchange, job shadowing and job swaps for a school term or year with another teacher in another European country,
- **A shared language about role expectations and requirements and criteria for different career pathways should be developed to create coherence within and across national teacher policies and identify opportunities and actions for different stakeholders** with the shared aim of strengthening and maintaining the attractiveness of the profession.
- **A career framework should be accurate in terms of its contents while user-friendly in its character. Improving the visibility of roles, functions, pathways and accessibility of opportunities may help to attract prospective educators and to retain and motivate current educators to stay in the profession.**