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School Leadership as a driving force for equity and learning” Comparative perspective
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Executive Summary

This report is developed in the frame of the European Policy Network of School Leadership (EPNoSL) project’s fourth work package (WP) entitled “Knowledge Construction”. The objective of this WP is to provide policy with an evidence base on culturing and structuring School Leadership under the perspective of equity and learning.

WP4 is primarily focused on a set of 5 concerns/themes for research on major policy areas within EU educational systems: a) autonomy, b) accountability, c) distributed leadership, d) policy response and e) educating school leaders. In all five themes promoting learning and equity were considered as key educational goals. To critically address these themes, EPNoSL partners have conducted targeted empirical studies, which are considered as vital for supporting evidence-based policy design and implementation on school leadership. Research results from these studies will guide the implementation of WP5 (focusing on Sustainability and Scalability), and in particular, provide input for the finalisation of EPNoSL’s Briefing Notes, which are designed to provide policymakers with the tools and analysis to meet challenges and identify areas for policy attention to support and enhance school leadership for equity and learning.

The scope of the selected studies/themes is to support policy development by identifying spaces for tackling equity and learning challenges; by identifying policy initiatives that support an enabling school leadership environment; by identifying the effects of different forms of training; by identifying factors that impede upon effective policy implementation and by defining requirements for the preparation (and selection) of school leaders (and School Leadership).

The first section of the report presents the final recommendations to policy makers developed by the research teams participating in this work package. Policy recommendations are intended to support the pursue of three critical policy goals for the promotion of school leadership for equity and learning: a) the promotion of an enabling school leadership environment, b) the promotion of professional standards, evaluation and research on school leadership for equity and learning and c) school leadership capacity building for equity and learning. The policy recommendations are based on two basic preconditions for successfully advancing the policy agenda on school leadership:

- A comprehensive and coherent approach to policy development is critical. Policy decisions affecting school leadership in one area, such as, for example, reforms in the procedures and criteria for the selection of school leaders, or the introduction of new standards in the preparation of school leaders, can have multiple implications in others.

- There is no unique road to policy development on school leadership for equity and learning. There are different ways for EU Member States to address each of the policy goals and related policy action lines to achieve an advanced level of school leadership policy development. On this basis, EPNoSL’s future work will attempt to go beyond one-size-fits-all solutions to place-based solutions that are context-sensitive and take into account the existing state of school leadership policy development in each EU Member State as well as their specific needs, constraints, and potentials.

The subsequent five sections of the report (II to VI) are devoted to each one of the five research themes that was investigated by EPNoSL partners. In the second section, comprised of 2 chapters, the focus is placed on autonomy for equity and learning. Chapter 2 presents the synthesis research results, while the rest of the section outlines the country studies that were undertaken in Portugal, Latvia, Hungary and Estonia. Chapter 3 summarises the evidence concerning the way by which financial and operational autonomy are helping...
school leaders to develop teachers’ quality and students’ outcomes in those contexts, as well as how curriculum decisions are being centralised or decentralised to schools. Research results drawn from the studies conducted confirm the current presence of a divergent field of policy development on school autonomy in four European states. Results, also, highlight the heterogeneous elements of policies for the promotion of school autonomy in terms of specifying what kind of decision-making areas are covered by the introduction of the autonomy principle, for which purposes is autonomy granted, and on what should be the appropriate mechanisms (accountability systems, overarching framework, standards) through which school autonomy can be controlled or counterbalanced.

The third section, consisting of 5 chapters, discusses the role of accountability for the pursuit of equity and learning educational goals. Chapter 9 attempts a brief synthetic overview of the research results of the studies that were undertaken in Poland, Denmark, Flanders and Ireland. Chapter 5 presents the study conducted in Poland aiming to specify the accountability category in the context of the Polish educational system, in particular the analysis of a) the influence of accountability on the learning process and b) the influence of accountability on the process of providing equal opportunities, individualisation in schools. Chapter 6 summarises the discussions of the Danish school leadership network on diverse forms of accountability: where and how did they see signs of them in school’s everyday life and in the discourses about schools and education, and what did the occurrences mean for school leaders leader-ship: do they hinder or strengthen the work for equity and learning? In chapter 7, the Flemish research study offers a critical analysis of the position of accountability in the context of recent educational reforms in Flanders, Belgium. Chapter 8 attempts to trace the different forms of accountability that are currently in operation in the Irish educational system and the extent to which these are (a) influenced by neo-liberal ideology and (b) either by resistance to the neo-liberal order or by some other means striving to keep equity at the centre of the frame.

The fourth section, comprised of 6 chapters, presents the research results of the studies on distributed leadership for equity and learning. Chapter 9 attempts a brief synthetic overview of the five studies that were conducted in Lithuania, Germany, Finland, UK and Hungary. Chapter 10 presents a study on contemporary distributed leadership practice in Lower Saxony, Germany, aiming to produce results that will influence the ongoing revision of the CPD curriculum for school leaders. In chapter 11, the relationship between distributed leadership and social equity is discussed in the Finnish context through a mixed method study comprising of a) a review of how present studies depict distributed leadership in Finland, b) a synthesis of findings on distributed leadership in a national school leadership survey conducted for the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture, and c) a case study on how a Central Finland principal defines social justice leadership. Chapter 12 presents the Hungarian research report aiming to explore the relationship between forms of distributed leadership and equity and learning in two ways: a) by analysing existing data from this perspective and b) by exploring leadership practices in a pilot programme focusing on inclusion. In Chapter 13, the perception of Lithuanian head teachers towards distributed leadership is documented. The study argues that there is a connection between the head teacher of educational institution and the community members distributed leadership principles application in practice. Chapter 14 outlines the UK study that investigates distributed leadership and perceptions of whether and in what ways it promotes or otherwise social justice and democratic practices. The study examines this in the context of one case study (secondary) school where our main interest is to explore the meanings which participants make of aspects of leadership policy and practice with-in the school. Data generation draws from the following approaches: narrative enquiry, arts-based research, informal interviews, and respondent validation through a ‘data feedback’ seminar. Chapter 15 presents the findings of a research project undertaken by ESHA (European School Heads Association) and ETUCE (European Trade Union Committee for Education) aiming to determine to what extent distributed leadership is present in European schools and to identify and to describe variations in leadership practice. Analysing data emanating from a wide survey with the participation of
school leaders and teachers from eight EU countries/regions, the research maps a varied terrain in relation to the existing perceptions of teachers and leaders about what types of leadership styles are predominant in the European education systems. More so, the study shows that emerging distributive leadership roles and responsibilities seem to be much more confidently recognised by school leaders than by teachers. This disparity can be largely attributed to ‘the effect of position’ within the school and puts into question the concrete impact that distributed leadership practices can potentially have for enhancing equity and learning.

The fifth section, consisting of 4 chapters, engages with the notion of policy response for equity and learning. Chapter 16 draws on existing literature to synthesize the findings from three studies undertaken under the umbrella theme of policy response – for equity and learning. The studies were undertaken in the United Kingdom (Scotland), Sweden and France. Methodologically the studies in the United Kingdom (Scotland) and Sweden drew on tentative data arising from quantitative and qualitative empirical investigations, whereas the work in France is derived from a study of secondary source data. Chapter 17’s central claim is that head teachers’ acceptance of the Leadership Standards for Social Justice in Scotland is dependent upon the resonance between their beliefs about social justice and the managerial solutions to inequity proposed by the wider policy discourse in which these Standards are located. Chapter 18 investigates the question of the local implementation process of educational policies in the Swedish context. Is, in other words, the implementation of educational policies affected by the ideology in the local school district, the financial strength, local democratic processes and the context at the local level? Chapter 19 argues that a statist vision of leadership is shared by policy-makers, inspectors, and principals in the French context, while practices of leadership remain informal, more related to the character of the principal than to an established reflection on the skills required to lead a team to improve school performance.

The final sixth section, comprised of one chapter, takes issue with policies, measures and practices that structure the education of school leaders across EU educational systems. Chapter 20 offers a synthetic overview of the results of this work package, based on country briefs from 15 EU countries that were drafted by the EPNoSL partners, namely from Austria, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom. The studies/country briefs conducted by this working group show that across Europe there is a wide range of approaches to the education of school leaders: from no formal training at one end to very strictly regulated systems. In some countries school leadership education curricula tend to be very theoretical, while in others they focus on practical issues and tend to be oriented towards problem-solving methods (training). In addition, studies show that equity considerations do not seem to play a major role in the education of school heads, while the filling of school leadership vacancies across European educational systems has become increasingly difficult due to harder conditions in the school leader’s work situation. In this regard, a) balancing critical thinking (theory) with practical implications in school leadership education, b) integrating equity into education programmes for school leaders and c) enhancing transparency mechanisms in school leaders selection processes are proposed as desired policy recommendation.

Finally, the conclusion of this report attempts to draw concrete policy implications of the research results emanating from the five studies and identifies a series of critical policy challenges for the promotion of school leadership for equity and learning.
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Introduction

WP4 is primarily focused on a set of 5 concerns/themes for research on major policy areas within EU educational systems. To critically address these themes, EPNoSL partners have conducted targeted empirical studies, which are considered as vital for supporting evidence-based policy design and implementation on school leadership. Research results from these studies will guide the implementation of WP5 (focusing on Sustainability and Scalability), and in particular, provide input for the finalisation of EPNoSL’s Briefing Notes, designed to provide policymakers with the tools and analysis to meet challenges and identify areas for policy attention to support and enhance school leadership for equity and learning. All five research themes reflect long-standing (or emerging) policy areas where in most, if not all EU countries an on-going policy discourse is taking place during the past years. Along these lines, EPNoSL does not purport to treat these thematic areas as if they were unexplored territories, but attempts to build on existing research work and results (e.g. OECD 2008, Eurydice 2013, Johansson 2011). The main goal of these empirical studies is thus to supplement and expand the existing evidence base under the perspective of the comprehensiveness and coherence of school leadership policies and research results will be utilised for further networking activities amongst school leadership stakeholders and for informing the European policy agenda on school leadership.

The scope of the selected studies/themes is to support policy development by identifying spaces for tackling equity and learning challenges; by identifying policy initiatives that support an enabling school leadership environment; by identifying the effects of different forms of training; by identifying factors that impede upon effective policy implementation and by defining requirements for the preparation (and selection) of school leaders (and SL).

The research themes, outlined below, were respectively investigated by five working groups consisting of four to six EPNoSL partners. Each thematic group was formed as to ensure a multidisciplinary perspective and a mixture of different types of school leadership stakeholders, while it was coordinated by a partner who was an expert in the field. In all five themes promoting learning and equity were considered as key educational goals.

**WP4 themes and working groups**

- Working Group 1: Autonomy – for equity and learning (Coordinator Ana Paula Silva)
- Working Group 2: Accountability – for equity and learning (Coordinator Andrej Koren)
- Working Group 3: Distributed Leadership – for equity and learning (Coordinator Nora Revai)
- Working Group 4: Policy Response – for equity and learning (Coordinator Carl Bagley)
- Working Group 5: Educating School Leaders - for equity and learning (Coordinators Olof Johansson and Michael Schratz)

**Autonomy**

School autonomy in the EPNoSL Framework is a term used to indicate that schools and school-level actors have been given some room for manoeuvre to take their own decisions in managing schools and dealing with everyday teaching and learning challenges, and that constrains from the outside –and inside- are reduced to the necessary and legitimate frames, values and norms (Moos, 2013). Under this perspective, the main research questions that the EPNoSL studies addressed are: Does financial and operational autonomy help school leaders to develop teacher practice and student outcomes? Are curriculum decisions being centralized or decentralised to schools? How are school leaders educated to lead autonomously and manage finances, operations, staff and curriculum for better learning outcomes and equity?
Accountability

The EPNoSL framework distinguishes between two main dimensions to accountability: vertical and horizontal. Horizontal accountability tends to correspond to educational contexts where schools are granted high degrees of school autonomy. It reflects non-hierarchical relationships amongst stakeholders, while it tends to prioritize professional accountability and promotes the reciprocity of accountability amongst all the main social actors involved in educational activities, particularly the students and the local communities. Vertical accountability, in contrast, tends to correspond to top-down, hierarchical relations amongst educational stakeholders and to centralised educational systems. It tends to be regulation-based and centred around testing and the continuous evaluation of school performances (Koren, 2013, Hooge et. al., 2012). Along these lines, the report is based on the hypothesis that as educational systems enter into a global competition, they also enter into international comparisons of student outcomes (e.g.: PISA) and are subject to elaborated national accountability systems. Are these systems providing tools for school leaders so they can enhance teacher practice, student outcomes and equity? How are school leaders educated to make use of such tools?

Distributed leadership

Distributed leadership in the EPNoSL framework is defined as a culture that
- views leadership as emerging from ongoing flows of interactions across the organisation and its hierarchy, not simply the actions of the single leader or small leadership elite
- values leadership contributions from across the organisation and its hierarchy
- recognises that this view of leadership can be deployed in order to improve organisational effectiveness

accompanied by an institutional structure that
- spreads leadership opportunities beyond formal senior roles to enable different sources of expertise and perspectives to influence the organisation’s work, development and innovative changes
- facilitates flexible, collaborative working relationships across traditional boundaries and hierarchies
- tends towards the creation of flatter hierarchies.” (Woods and Woods, 2013 in UK Interim Report)

In this light, the main questions addressed, in this report, are: which forms of distributed leadership are helpful for furthering teacher practice and collaboration, for student learning and for greater equity? How are school leaders educated to establish and lead structures and cultures in distributed leadership formats?

Policy response

Policy response is conceived within the EPNoSL framework as an enactment process, where educational policy is never simply implemented but ‘interpreted’ and ‘translated’ in a context of time, space, and place. Such a standpoint on policy enactment is significant as it positions school leaders, teachers, governors, parents, and others engaged with educational reform as key actors in the policy process (Bagley and Ward, 2013). Under this perspective, the research studies were designed around the following questions: How do local school authorities (e.g.: municipalities or boards) and school leaders actively respond to policy decisions in systems, schools and classes? How are school leaders educated to translate external expectations into internal sense?

Educating school leaders

School leadership education/ training programs and activities are considered, in the EPNoSL framework as tools and practices that should aim at:
• developing school leaders’ capacity for critical reflection, substantiated by evidence, on the conditions and factors influencing teaching, learning, and equity in their local, school context.
• promoting a holistic approach of school leadership, incorporating the attainment of both equity and learning achievement goals in a balanced way.
• acknowledging the existing variety of perspectives, experiences, knowledge, values, ways of learning; in short, stimulate the recognition of difference (El Haj, 2007).
• targeting whole school leadership capacity building, focusing on democratic, collaborative and innovative school management and pedagogic leadership methods.

Along this understanding, the main questions informing the research case studies are the following: Are available leadership education programmes inclusive of different kinds of school and school leadership tasks and responsibilities? Are programmes for preservice, induction, newly-appointed and continuous professional development in place to support leadership for improved learning and greater equity?

**WP4 core concepts**

This report is developed in the frame of the European Policy Network of School Leadership (EPNoSL) project’s fourth work package (WP) entitled “Knowledge Construction”. The objective of this WP is “to provide policy with an evidence base on culturing and structuring School Leadership under the perspective of equity and learning”.

To meet this objective, the five working groups have attempted to deconstruct its stated goal:

1. EPNoSL will provide an evidence-base
2. to policy in Europe and its educational systems,
3. so that policymakers can get a better understanding of what supports and what impedes educational, organisational and governance cultures and structures,
4. that intends to - and is able to - further school leadership practices and reflections
5. with respect to leading schools so that equity and learning is optimised at all levels.
6. Working groups will attempt to achieve these aims by focusing on the following critical themes for school leadership policy development: autonomy, accountability, distributed leadership, policy response and education of school leaders.

On the basis of this approach, the report is structured around a series of core concepts and understandings that have been established by partners to guide the research case studies in the different thematic areas:

• **evidence-base**: the report reviews relevant, existing research in the participating educational systems and we shall conduct empirical research under the scope of comprehensiveness and coherence of policies and its implementation from a qualitative perspective utilizing methods such as focus group discussions, semi-structured interviews and questionnaires
• **policies**: research results address relevant stakeholders in school leadership policy and practice: Policy makers; school administrators and related professional association; experts and researchers; practitioners; academic institutions; teacher training institutions; and teacher education organizations.
• **cultures and structures**: school leadership is a set of complex practices and reflections embedded in social structures: societal and organisational contexts/frames – e.g.: legislation, regulations and financial tools; – and cultures/discourses – e.g.: community ‘common sense’, political statements.
• **school leadership practices and reflections**: conditions for leadership interactions and relations at all levels in schools; competences in practice and understandings/reflections hereof, e.g.: values and norms.

• **for equity and learning**: part of the core purposes of school leadership is considered in most European educational systems to be social justice and equity: to give all students equal and fair opportunities in life by giving them optimal conditions and encouragement for learning about themselves, relations to other people and communities.

• **autonomy; accountability; distributed leadership; policy response and education of school leaders** – are the research themes chosen for investigating the development of the European policy agendas on school leadership
  - on contexts for school leadership (the governance situation as seen in school leadership relations to policies and regulations: autonomy and accountability);
  - on forms of organisational leadership interactions, relations and collaboration (distributed leadership);
  - and on forms of leadership societal/community relations and education (policy response and training of competences).

**WP4 Research phase 1: Country reports**

All five working groups, during the first phase of the research, collected, reviewed and condensed existing knowledge/research material from participating countries/educational systems as to produce a context-specific overview of the current state of school leadership policy and practice and to identify the research questions and the type of empirical research that would be pursued in the second phase. Working groups aimed to articulate questions and develop research designs that would be context/educational system specific because structures and cultures, frames and policies differ from one educational system to the other across Europe. The country reports confirmed that educational systems in EU countries and regions have developed and implemented diverse forms and practices of accountability, autonomy, distributed leadership and of educating school leaders, as well as diverse policy response mechanisms for facing implementation challenges.

Although the influence of the educational agendas pronounced by international and transnational institutions and agencies (as for example, the OECD and the EU) can not be underestimated, it should be viewed and assessed at that conjuncture where it meets and interacts with local traditions, values and norms as well as with differing political and educational expectations. In this light, the analysis of the interactions amongst the different policy levels is a prerequisite for producing useful recommendations for local, national and European policy makers and practitioners.

To address this methodological challenge, working groups produced a shared research protocol for the work in Phase 1:

• **Working groups collected and summarized all relevant national material (that is material about the national situation) on the five themes. For allowing the possibility of comparative analysis and of understanding the complex interactions amongst different policy level, all national/regional reviews from all participating countries were deemed necessary.**

• **Relevant material were considered:**
  - Policies at all relevant levels (national, regional, local).
  - Regulations by different institutions.
  - Expressions (articles, books etc.) on discourses.
  - Studies/research.
• As working groups were expected to provide evidence-based results for facilitating policy decision-making, research results would need to be as robust as possible. Country reports were developed (to a large degree) along this requirement, but research teams were also called to design their empirical work with the purpose of to producing results that could be readily useable by policymakers.
• To achieve this impact, the common research protocols were guided by the following considerations:
  o Why? (Politically useful)
  o Who? (countries, agencies, individuals)
  o When? (timeline, deadlines)
  o What? (theme, subthemes, perspectives)
  o How? (study, meta study, comparisons)

WP4 Research phase 2: Empirical studies

On this methodological and knowledge basis, from spring to fall of 2013, national research teams participating in the five working groups conducted a number of small research projects in order to produce localised reports for tackling questions on the development and implementation of school leadership policies in EPNoSL member educational systems. The research protocols of the interviews, questionnaires and meta-analyses of existing studies/datasets were discussed amongst partners during spring 2013 and finalised during the EPNoSL Jyväskylä PLA event that was held in June 2013. The reports from these empirical studies, as well as the synthesis results for each research theme are presented in the sections II, III, IV, V and VI of this report.

Structure of the report

The report is organised in six parts. The first section of the report presents the final recommendations to policymakers agreed by all the five thematic groups participating in this work package. Policy recommendations are intended to support the pursuit of three critical policy goals for the promotion of school leadership for equity and learning: a) the promotion of an enabling school leadership environment, b) the promotion of professional standards, evaluation and research on school leadership for equity and learning and c) school leadership capacity building for equity and learning. Subsequently, one section is devoted to each one of the five research themes that was investigated by EPNoSL partners.

In the second section, comprised of 2 chapters, the focus is placed on autonomy for equity and learning. Chapter 2 presents the synthesis research results, while the rest of the section outlines the country studies that were undertaken in Portugal, Latvia, Hungary and Estonia. Chapter 3 summarises the evidence concerning the way by which financial and operational autonomy are helping school leaders to develop teachers’ quality and students’ outcomes in those contexts, as well as how curriculum decisions are being centralised or decentralised to schools. Research results drawn from the studies conducted confirm the current presence of a divergent field of policy development on school autonomy in four European states. Results, also, highlight the heterogeneous elements of policies for the promotion of school autonomy in terms of specifying what kind of decision-making areas are covered by the introduction of the autonomy principle, for which purposes is autonomy granted, and on what should be the appropriate mechanisms (accountability systems, overarching framework, standards) through which school autonomy can be controlled or counterbalanced.

The third section, consisting of 5 chapters, discusses the role of accountability for the pursuit of equity and learning educational goals. Chapter 9 attempts a brief synthetic overview of the research results of the studies that were undertaken in Poland, Denmark, Flanders and Ireland. Chapter 5 presents the study conducted in Poland aiming to specify the accountability category in the context of the Polish educational
system, in particular the analysis of a) the influence of accountability on the learning process and b) the influence of accountability on the process of providing equal opportunities, individualisation in schools. Chapter 6 summarises the discussions of the Danish school leadership network on diverse forms of accountability: where and how did they see signs of them in school’s everyday life and in the discourses about schools and education, and what did the occurrences mean for school leaders leader-ship: do they hinder or strengthen the work for equity and learning? In chapter 7, the Flemish research study offers a critical analysis of the position of accountability in the context of recent educational reforms in Flanders, Belgium. Chapter 8 attempts to trace the different forms of accountability that are currently in operation in the Irish educational system and the extent to which these are (a) influenced by neo-liberal ideology and (b) either by resistance to the neo-liberal order or by some other means striving to keep equity at the centre of the frame.

The fourth section, comprised of 6 chapters, presents the research results of the studies on distributed leadership for equity and learning. Chapter 9 attempts a brief synthetic overview of the five studies that were conducted in Lithuania, Germany, Finland, UK and Hungary. Chapter 10 presents a study on contemporary distributed leadership practice in Lower Saxony, Germany, aiming to produce results that will influence the ongoing revision of the CPD curriculum for school leaders. In chapter 11, the relationship between distributed leadership and social equity is discussed in the Finnish context through a mixed method study comprising of a) a review of how present studies depict distributed leadership in Finland, b) a synthesis of findings on distributed leadership in a national school leadership survey conducted for the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture, and c) a case study on how a Central Finland principal defines social justice leadership. Chapter 12 presents the Hungarian research report aiming to explore the relationship between forms of distributed leadership and equity and learning in two ways: a) by analysing existing data from this perspective and b) by exploring leadership practices in a pilot programme focusing on inclusion. In Chapter 13, the perception of Lithuanian head teachers towards distributed leadership is documented. The study argues that there is a connection between the head teacher of educational institution and the community members distributed leadership principles application in practice. Chapter 14 outlines the UK study that investigates distributed leadership and perceptions of whether and in what ways it promotes or otherwise social justice and democratic practices. The study examines this in the context of one case study (secondary) school where our main interest is to explore the meanings which participants make of aspects of leadership policy and practice within the school. Data generation draws from the following approaches: narrative enquiry, arts-based research, informal interviews, and respondent validation through a ‘data feedback’ seminar. Chapter 15 presents the findings of a research project undertaken by ESHA (European School Heads Association) and ETUCE (European Trade Union Committee for Education) aiming to determine to what extent distributed leadership is present in European schools and to identify and to describe variations in leadership practice. Analysing data emanating from a wide survey with the participation of school leaders and teachers from eight EU countries/regions, the research maps a varied terrain in relation to the existing perceptions of teachers and leaders about what types of leadership styles are predominant in the European education systems. More so, the study shows that emerging distributive leadership roles and responsibilities seem to be much more confidently recognised by school leaders than by teachers. This disparity can be largely attributed to ‘the effect of position’ within the school and puts into question the concrete impact that distributed leadership practices can potentially have for enhancing equity and learning.

The fifth section, consisting of 4 chapters, engages with the notion of policy response for equity and learning. Chapter 16 draws on existing literature to synthesize the findings from three studies undertaken under the umbrella theme of policy response – for equity and learning. The studies were undertaken in the United Kingdom (Scotland), Sweden and France. Methodologically the studies in the United Kingdom (Scotland) and Sweden drew on tentative data arising from quantitative and qualitative empirical investigations, whereas the work in France is derived from a study of secondary source data. Chapter 17’s central claim is that head teachers’ acceptance of the Leadership Standards for Social Justice in Scotland is
dependent upon the resonance between their beliefs about social justice and the managerial solutions to inequity proposed by the wider policy discourse in which these Standards are located. **Chapter 18** investigates the question of the local implementation process of educational policies in the Swedish context. Is, in other words, the implementation of educational policies affected by the ideology in the local school district, the financial strength, local democratic processes and the context at the local level? **Chapter 19** argues that a statist vision of leadership is shared by policy-makers, inspectors, and principals in the French context, while practices of leadership remain informal, more related to the character of the principal than to an established reflection on the skills required to lead a team to improve school performance.

The final **sixth section**, comprised of one chapter, takes issue with policies, measures and practices that structure the **education of school leaders** across EU educational systems. **Chapter 20** offers a synthetic overview of the results of this work package, based on country briefs from 15 EU countries that were drafted by the EPNoSL partners, namely from Austria, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom. The studies/country briefs conducted by this working group show that across Europe there is a wide range of approaches to the education of school leaders: from no formal training at one end to very strictly regulated systems. In some countries school leadership education curricula tend to be very theoretical, while in others they focus on practical issues and tend to be oriented towards problem-solving methods (training). In addition, studies show that equity considerations do not seem to play a major role in the education of school heads, while the filling of school leadership vacancies across European educational systems has become increasingly difficult due to harder conditions in the school leader’s work situation. In this regard, a) balancing critical thinking (theory) with practical implications in school leadership education, b) integrating equity into education programmes for school leaders and c) enhancing transparency mechanisms in school leaders selection processes are proposed as desired policy recommendation.

Finally, the conclusion of this report attempts to draw concrete policy implications of the research results emanating from the five studies and identifies a series of critical policy challenges for the promotion of school leadership for equity and learning.
PART I – EUROPEAN POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROMOTING SCHOOL LEADERSHIP FOR EQUITY AND LEARNING

1.1 Final policy recommendations

How school leadership is understood shapes the development and implementation of school leadership policies as well as how actors in the educational system, from school boards and principals to teachers, parents and students will engage in it. The EPNoSL project considers school leadership as a multi-faceted process of strategically using the unique skills and knowledge of teachers, pupils, and parents, toward achieving common educational goals. It is more about relationships rather than people or processes. Under the EPNoSL’s perspective, within the framework of educational goals, leadership is present at all levels of an organization, directed at serving the most important stakeholders, through inspiring others in the organization to take part in the management process. Likewise, management in leadership involves making the best use of human, material and financial resources available. School leadership therefore conveys dynamism and pro-activity and is not restricted to principals or school heads but also includes other leaders in education, such as members of a formal leadership team and other persons who contribute towards the aims of the school, even including student leadership.

This report specifically focuses upon school leadership from the perspective of equity and learning, which are accordingly considered as the most critical challenges leadership in European schools has to address effectively. The EPNoSL project builds, along these lines, upon the conceptual framework defined by the OECD report “No More Failures” which suggests that equity in education can be understood through two closely intertwined dimensions: fairness and inclusion (Field, Kuczera and Pont, 2007). Fairness implies ensuring that personal and social circumstances, such as gender, socio-economic status, cultural background or ethnic origin, should not be an obstacle to students to achieve to the best of their educational potential. Inclusion implies ensuring a basic minimum standard of education for all. The perspective of learning in school leadership does not only refer to students’ experiences in the school but also to professional learning experiences of the professionals involved in the arena of schooling. Since learning is not a visible process, it cannot be observed or measured. In this sense, learning is always about something we do not know (yet). Tests both on the micro level (classroom) and macro level (system, i.e., PISA) do not assess learning as such, but only its results. Therefore, student achievement results only show how students respond to certain test items and do not mirror a student’s capacity for learning. Learning is characterised by a high interconnectedness between cognitive, emotional and action processes and, as such, is a total human experience (Schratz, 2013).

School leadership from the perspective of equity: Typically, in educational leadership and management discourse it is policy makers or family/society factors that are cited as maintaining inequality, and staff in schools depicted as constrained by the context within which they work. However, this is a misleading assumption. Schools and school staff also play a part in creating, maintaining or increasing inequality. School leaders who attempt to shift school priorities and practices in fundamental ways usually encounter a modicum of support and a good deal of resistance from teachers and from parents. Teachers may argue, for example, that dismantling tracking jeopardises teaching their subject well, or any subject well. School leaders who enrol students who are seen by others as “problematic” risk parents’ reactions to avoid their
school. Flight from schools with a high percentage of immigrant students has been noted in different countries. Above all, school leaders sometimes face a belief that some children are not educable or only educable with great difficulty. The children of immigrant families or of minority ethnic groups are more likely to be seen as having special needs than are other groups, reflecting deeply embedded prejudices that link being perceived as different with being less able. In short, school leaders face unjust discriminatory convictions that underpin many teachers' and parents' judgements about what is right and possible in education. School leaders themselves are not immune from such beliefs or actions. Those who, for example, give entry preference to students with higher attainment, or who allocate the most inexperienced teachers to classes of those perceived as lower ability, are enacting inequality (Lumby, 2013).

School leadership from the perspective of learning: There is little research that indicates a direct relationship between school leaders’ behaviour and practices and students’ learning achievement or to teachers’ learning (see, for example, Coelli and Green, 2012). According to a much-cited review of the relevant literature by Leithwood et al. (2004) “mostly leaders contribute to student learning indirectly, through their influence on other people or features of their organizations”. As they argue, “leaders’ contributions to student learning, then, depend a great deal on their judicious choice of what parts of their organization to spend time and attention on” (ibid.). On their part, Branch, Hanushek and Rivkin (2009, p. 18) argue that “understanding the impact of principals on learning is a particularly difficult analytical problem. The non-random sorting of principals among schools and consequent difficulty separating the contributions of principals from the influences of peers and other school factors raise questions about the degree to which principals are responsible for differential outcomes”. As they put it, “... it is often quite difficult to distinguish cause and effect, as those anointed as great leaders may simply have been in the right place at the right time” (Branch, Hanushek and Rivkin, 2012, p. 1). In this light, it might be more productive to approach school leadership as a catalyst for unleashing the potential capacities that already exist in an educational organization.

The ultimate purpose of this report is to support the development of policies that enhance equity and learning with specific context dependent responses focusing on the relation between autonomy, quality of performance, and social justice in education; on the relation between systemic support and school leadership’s capacity to address change; on the effects of distributed leadership practices on learning and equity goals; on the rising demands for the establishment of accountability mechanisms and their influence on educational practices; on the relation between training provisions and the expression of school leadership; on the relation between the implementation of political decisions and the adequacy of school leaders preparation; as well as on requirements for the preparation and selection of school leaders. To that is firmly oriented towards the needs of policymakers, the report outlines a set of policy recommendations emanating from the research results of the studies that have been conducted.

The policy recommendations developed by the five working groups have been consolidated and then categorised on the basis of the EPNoSL framework which is further developed in the network’s forthcoming briefing notes and that identifies three policy goals as most critical to promote school leadership for equity and learning in all school systems across EU: (a) the promotion of an enabling school leadership environment, (b) the promotion of professional standards, evaluation and research on school leadership for equity and learning and (c) school leadership capacity building for equity and learning. The policy recommendations are based on two basic preconditions for successfully advancing the policy agenda on school leadership:

- A comprehensive and coherent approach to policy development is critical. Policy decisions affecting school leadership in one area, such as, for example, reforms in the procedures and criteria for the selection of school leaders, or the introduction of new standards in the preparation of school leaders, can have multiple implications in others.
- There is no unique road to policy development on school leadership for equity and learning. There are different ways for EU Member States to address each of the policy goals and related policy action lines to achieve an advanced level of school leadership policy development. On this basis, EPNoSL's future work will attempt to go beyond one-size-fits-all solutions to place-based solutions that are context-sensitive and take into account the existing state of school leadership policy development in each EU Member State as well as their specific needs, constraints, and potentials.

1.1.1 The promotion of an enabling school leadership environment

1) Policy on leadership for equity and learning should move to the centre of the political agenda.
2) Equity needs to be understood more broadly than just a focus on reducing differences in attainment. It should include cultural, participative and distributive justice as well as developmental justice.
3) The state or the local government should provide the resources that support socially vulnerable families in order to ensure equal access to the education.
4) Centrally prescribed managerial accountability initiatives should not overrule the professional and ethical logics, nor neglect or hinder political influences on the local level, like from parents.
5) Leadership should be distributed at all levels from national to regional and local level as well as all levels in school.
6) To support schools in the reinforcement of their margins of autonomy, the education of school leaders should be ensured.
7) Individual and collective accountability-stakes should be based on defensible, empirically based theories about what it is possible to accomplish on measured performance within a given period of time in a given context.
8) To involve school stakeholder individuals, organisations and networks in policy development on leadership for equity and learning.

1.1.2 The promotion of professional standards, evaluation and research on school leadership for equity and learning

1) Initiatives should be taken in order to improve the communication between school, parents and students in order to involve them in the school Boards, so they could become collaborative partners since the very early stages.
2) Stakes should be based on valid, reliable, and accurate information about student and school performance. No decision that has a major impact on student should be made on the basis of a single measure, nor should students be judged based on a single opportunity to demonstrate performance.
3) Accountability should not be limited in scope: by including only a few subjects - and methods: should not be limited to multiple choice test.
4) The effectiveness of policy on leadership for equity and learning should be monitored and evaluated.

1.1.3 School leadership capacity for equity and learning

1) School leaders should be encouraged to translate external accountabilities into comprehensive educational reflection and practice, because: at the end of the day schools must answer to the ethical accountabilities.
2) School leaders should be educated to provide pedagogical leadership in order to aim at preventing the scarcity of financial resources to affect teaching and learning work.
3) Continued professional training on leadership for equity and learning should be made obligatory for school leaders.
4) Leadership education should

   i) contain knowledge about leadership in multicultural and challenging environment.
   ii) contain implementation processes in relation to national policy on the local governing structures
   iii) contain effects on change processes in local schools in relation to the local governing structures
   iv) contain training in data collection to evaluate improvement and design progress
   v) build on a variety of diverse and innovative forms of developing leadership including: peer-
      learning, arts-based methods of reflection and inquiry
   vi) develop the leadership capabilities of everyone in the education system

1.2 Inputs from the EPNoSL Vilnius PLA

The policy recommendations of this report were discussed and consolidated during the EPNoSL Vilnius PLA event which took place on 25-27 November 2013. The event was the occasion to present the findings of the five working groups and more importantly to ask for input from the variety of school leadership stakeholders (including policy makers, administrators, school principals and head teachers, and teacher educators), researchers, representatives of professional associations, parents, students, and other stakeholders). On the basis of the synthesis, policy recommendations and questions for discussions in the Vilnius PLA ‘Programme and Book of Abstracts,’ and on short presentations of representatives from EPNoSL Working Groups, participants formed flexible discussions groups of 5-9 people in an ‘Interactive Learning Café’ setup. In five half hour sessions they discussed the questions related to the themes and wrote short statements on flip charts.

The statements and bullet points were compressed and combined into the following text. As all questions were discussed in more than one group, and as participants came from diverse backgrounds and cultures, one would not expect the end up with a coherent text. If it is in some ways coherent it may be due to shared understandings, and also due to the fact that only one person did the summing up.

1.2.1 WG1: Autonomy – for equity and learning

1. Can policy makers in your educational system enlarge the room for manoeuvre/the margins for autonomy for schools?

Some obstacles to enlarging the room for manoeuver were identified:
- There are different perspectives: high expectations – low trust from the top of the governance system. It is often difficult to identify who the policy makers are, and they seem to be ‘afraid’ of school autonomy, afraid to los power/authority.

Some actions were also identified:
- We should present results from autonomous procedures to policy makers and advertise good practice on student progress and effort.
- Autonomy is important in recruitment and in developing curriculum. Autonomy is about trust. Autonomy is not the same as independence, but is linked to responsibility
- Important to decide which decentralization and deregulation of some rules should be enlarged.
- Influence should occur through participation. Autonomy empowers and motivates. Trust is in the core of autonomy.

2. How can school leaders make room for manoeuvre for teachers and non-teaching staff in their school?
Some ideas were identified:

- Leadership education needs to start from teacher education. SL have to respect and trust teachers and be transparent in leadership.
- SL can start with identifying the room, already there. Distinguish between systemic and practical limitations. Teachers should earn the room by being professional. There needs to be time for dialogue.
- SL should motivate teachers to participate, bottom up practices can increase teachers’ interest. Teacher education doesn’t prepare for organizational leadership.
- Important to have leadership roles for teacher in schools.
- Decentralized systems put principals in charge.

1.2.2 WG2: Accountability – for equity and learning

1) How can policy makers contribute to developing accountability cultures, methods and procedures in order that accountability can further equity and learning?

A number of policy actions were identified:

- Sustainable funding of mechanisms that support equity need to be available. Open data-system, frameworks with participation of all stakeholders, including students and parents. Bottom-up accountability.
- Communication at all levels, also among SLs themselves.
- Policy makers need to combine equity issues with economical accountability.
- Produce toolkits, based on research.

2) How can school leaders be educated to further the use educational appropriate and sustainable accountabilities in their schools?

Ideas for SL education were produced:

- There should be distribution in all school leaderships with ownership of professional development and partnerships for quality (evidence based, internship, connection with teacher training, networking).
- Standards for SL need to be developed and so does training/education for SL.
- On the school level there is a need to find solutions to the problems arising from the overwhelming workload SLs find themselves in.
- Promote culture of evaluation and training on the job for evaluation.
- School self-evaluation and local evaluation of SL also need to be introduced.

1.2.3 WG3: Distributed Leadership – for equity and learning

1. How can opportunities to develop leadership capabilities of everyone in the school be increased? How can you influence this process?

Ideas for practical, in-school actions were identified:

- Need to develop a common language, and ethos of responsibility, and to find time so as to further communication.
- Schools need to develop a shared understanding and value of agency. Not all want to be a leader but everyone wants to develop.
- Schools should develop an understanding, where leadership is spread all over school: Leadership of oneself, in classroom, in school and in school board.
- Practical aspects on this development can be: Timetable adjusted to collaboration, teachers are leaders, communication matters, realistic expectations of school-progress, networks, analyses of situations

2. What could be the first steps to take to make leadership more distributed at the local and national level? How can you influence this process?

A statement of caution was produced:
- Very diverse situation from one system to the other

Actions and reflections were identified:
- Locally: cultural participation, creation of opportunities, training teachers and inclusion of board and community; build on belief and trust
- Nationally: 2-way consultations are needed, so is evidence based policy (based on research), and development of standards and governance training
- Generally: time for reflection, common understanding of perception, definition
- To get to know what is happening in schools with respect to equity and find out what the needs of SLs, who care for diversity, are

3. What could be the first steps in facilitating a broader understanding of social justice by school members and policy-makers? How can you influence this process?

Some reflections were produced:
- We need to raise awareness of the situation, which includes being aware of possible differences between talk and action.
- Need to listen to students, and think of students as educators
- Make use of social platforms and networks

1.2.4 WG4: Policy Response – for equity and learning,

1. How might we work more effectively within predominantly neo-liberal and managerial conceptions and solutions to inequality in education?

A pivotal analysis and a number of reflections were identified:
- Present structures seem to create more inequality, so there is an urgent need to have a change of paradigm, which could include: later tracking, positive financial discrimination, and early intervention

2. How might we create more inclusive stakeholder forms of policy development and implementation for leadership in equity and learning?

Groups identified some ideas:
- We need to establish common ground through change management involving all stakeholders, also parents – and building trust
- SL should include all stakeholders
- The state should be flexibility and show respect for parents; all stakeholders should value voluntary work.
- Money has to be available for time for preparation, sustainable financing
- Cooperation between teachers and schools and with institutions outside of schools should be developed.

3. How might we engender greater understanding and commitment to the issue of equity and learning amongst school leader

Reflections and ideas were produced in groups:
- It is pivotal to put equity and inclusion high on the political agenda, and provide support to schools,
- Both policy makers and schools need to develop a common understanding of cultural dimensions, communication, partnership and networking between schools with active involvement of parents, accountability also for equity
- How does cultural differences and equity mix?

1.2.5 WG5: Educating School Leaders - for equity and learning,

1) What should be EPNoSL first priority on recommendation for school leadership education?

Group members identified many ideas:
- The programs that develop a broader view – like societal level activities - and give students tools for evaluating their practice with a focus on equity and other values should be preferred.
- It is necessary to promote networking of peers and to involve diverse institutions and agencies.
- It is also necessary to share and disseminate good practice through creative examples, and to promote contextualized, critical and reflective thinking.
- SL education can be enhanced by thinking on schools as learning communities, by mentoring SL learners in decentralised leadership like leadership teams.
- SL education should acknowledge, that different principals need different education, so individual study programs should be produced.
- Encompass parents’ views: soft knowledge and skills, creation of transparency and communication in decision making and group processes/cultures

2) What can educational systems learn from other educational systems when it comes to SL education?

One group identified ideas and also concerns:
- We can build on ‘what works’, but should also remember to include ‘what does not work.’ We should not forget the values and norms are at the core of ‘good practices,’ thus it is important to analyze the country and local context. Opportunities may be: study visits, further dialogues and discussions, networking

Other groups also identified a number of ideas:
- Best practice, study visits, comparisons, translation of successful programs, invitations of external experts, networking, open distance learning, partnerships between schools, toolkit, include international internship in SL education.
- By creating openness for learning, common understanding, identifying commonalities and differences, peer learning activities, CPD coordinated by universities.

3) How can we make sure that SL are educated with a focus on equity and learning?
Reflections, concerns and ideas were identified:

- For SL to be competent of focusing on equity and learning (alongside all the administrative functions) policy makers need to make sure hire and educate the best candidates: Thus they need to consider how to produce adequate motivation: financial, clear description of responsibilities (with a focus on educational leadership), balanced situation of accountability and responsibility, good relations to local community, supporting structure (mentoring, teamwork, autonomy in decision-making, trust and time).

- Generally there is a need to develop common definitions and understandings of SL, equity and learning. And to involve more actors in schools in leadership education. Ethical issues arise in SL education and non-formal methods should be used.

- SL should learn to raise questions.
PART II – AUTONOMY FOR EQUITY AND LEARNING: EVIDENCE REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS

2. SYNTHESIS OF EVIDENCE-BASED REPORTS: AUTONOMY

School autonomy was conceived in the context of the research studies as a term indicating that schools and school-level actors have been given some room for manoeuvre to take their own decisions in managing schools and dealing with everyday teaching and learning challenges, and that constrains from the outside - and inside- are reduced to the necessary and legitimate frames, values and norms (Moos, 2013).

Indeed, the policy of school autonomy has been at the centre of educational reforms in some EU countries since the 1980s. Although its implementation by European governments has been characterized by stark differences (mainly in terms of the time frame, of the degrees and the scope of the autonomy granted, and of how school autonomy has been combined with the introduction of accountability systems and national or regional frameworks and standards), there is currently a growing consensus amongst research and policy that school autonomy is a critical factor for improving learning outcomes (Eurydice, 2007). This consensus tends to prioritize the role of school leaders in making important decisions in terms of everyday and long term school management (OECD, 2008).

Research results drawn from the studies conducted confirm the current presence of a divergent field of policy development on school autonomy in four European states. Results, also, highlight the heterogeneous elements of policies for the promotion of school autonomy in terms of specifying what kind of decision-making areas are covered by the introduction of the autonomy principle, for which purposes is autonomy granted, and on what should be the appropriate mechanisms (accountability systems, overarching framework, standards) through which school autonomy can be controlled or counterbalanced.

**Portugal:** According to Torres (2011), Portuguese schools seems to be autonomous to interpret educational policies and define their strategic mission within a *continuum* between two extremes, one advocating selective and meritocratic values, and another electing equality of access and success principles, as well as offering diversified formative options and promoting democratic processes. And she came to the conclusions that to further knowledge on Portuguese schools autonomy is necessary to carry out analyses focused on concrete actions taking place in schools, which we have done through a meta-analysis of master dissertations case studies (2011-2013).

That analysis has confirmed evidence presented in the Inspectorate Report on the External Evaluation of Schools (2011-2012) particularly regarding schools with “contracts of autonomy”, among which are those with the most meaningful evolution. Those schools stand out by monitoring and analysing systematically their results, and implementing improvement strategies. Among these strategies are different practices of pedagogical support and differentiation, such as groups of students of differentiated development, tutoring, pedagogical advisory, groups of level, recovering and accompanying plans; the adoption of active and experimental methodologies; and the reorganisation of practices of pedagogical coordination and curricular articulation, impacting on cooperative work among teachers. None of them have curricula, financial or staff recruitment autonomy. And one relevant evaluation indicator is the students’ marks on national exams. Relying on those evidence it seems that school autonomy really matters.
This may be the reason why the government currently in charge has been incrementing school autonomy, by including the TEIP (educational territories of priority intervention) schools’ projects within the scope of contracts of autonomy, by legislative order no. 20/2012, and by signing over 200 new autonomy contracts until December 2013, getting ¼ of Portuguese school units with those contracts.

**Latvia:** In Latvia the increment of schools’ autonomy started in 1990s. The Education Law (1998) ensures that every resident of Latvia has the opportunity to developing his/her “mental and physical potential, in order to become an independent and a fully developed individual, a member of the democratic State and society of Latvia”. In section 17 the local governments are assigned to have the obligation to ensure to children basic education, and to youths the opportunity to acquire secondary education. Local governments, in coordination with the Ministry of Education and Science (MES), are responsible for hiring and firing principals. They also distribute state funds, target grants, and other subsidies for salaries, transportation, and other necessities. The principal (who is employed by the founder) hires the teaching and non-teaching staff, manages the financial resources, and ensures compliance with various regulations. Each school organizes a School Board (izglītības iestādes padome) that may include the school director, teachers, local government representatives, parents (the majority), and students. The head of the board is elected from the pool of parents’ representatives. The school boards function is consultative in drafting the school’s development plan. It helps to organize school social life, manages donations, and deliberates on the use of these funds. The recent study on the Assessment of the Activities of the School Boards in the Schools and Preschools observed that a greater autonomy of the school leads to a greater authority of the School Boards, and parents demonstrate greater interest to take part in these Boards (Latvijas Vecāku kustība, 2012). As to financial autonomy, Latvia has full autonomy in the use of funds for these budget headings (Eurydice, 2007). By Law on Education (1998), schools in Latvia can receive additional financial resources through donations, providing supplementary services, and from unspecified “other incomes.” These provisions are the legal basis for soliciting parents’ contributions. The recent study on parents’ contributions to schools it was observed that doesn’t exist any formal mechanism for parents to hold teachers accountable for the proper use of their contributions. Still, the majority of parents (84%) trust that principals and teachers spend the money well. However, trust exists in cases involving small amounts of money. (Dedze, Strode, 2009). In Latvia schools are enjoying full autonomy in terms of seeking donations and letting of schools premises for out-of-hours activities, but no autonomy of taking loans (Eurydice, 2007). Since the academic year 2012/2013 the Ministry of Education and Science is planning to increase schools’ autonomy in organizing the study process. But it requires optimal planning of exams, changes in the legislative system and school curricula.

**Estonia:** The school system in Estonia is very similar to the one in Latvia, however some differences were revealed by recent research on school autonomy. The study was carried out to identify school head autonomy – 86 respondents to the electronic questionnaire and 5 interviews carried out to get better understanding of statistical results. The questionnaire was developed on 5-point Likert scale and descriptive statistics used for analyses, which revealed that Estonian school heads were actually very optimistic about their autonomy to lead the school. They declared that they are autonomous to make decisions related to educational, financial, personnel and leadership issues (the mean of different issues was from 4.3 – 4.6). It was considered that financial issues and also maintenance issues should be discussed with school owner. Heads stated that they (schools) are autonomous to develop school developmental plan (4.6), and those issues are acknowledged by the school workers (mainly teachers) – 4.1. Schools take into account to design their developmental plans results of different stakeholders’ satisfaction studies (4.3 – mainly students and parents involved).

New legislative acts starting January 2013 provide schools new frames to account teachers’ workload and to pay them salary. 20% of school salary budget is meant for the teachers’ performance bonuses (decided by
the school leadership team). The rising of school head autonomy is one of the key words in the educational developmental plan for 2014 – 2020 in Estonia.

As limitations to the school heads’ autonomy several issues were mentioned: lack of finances, school budget formation (head should negotiate it with the owner), changes of budgeting conditions (you have to change plans what have been done for a long term development), media (mostly scandals are published by media creating negative aura around the school), personal relations with school owner (could be changed after local elections).

**Hungary:** After 2010 the government took most of the schools under its centralized leadership. The reason was the general uncertainty in school, which was based on financial problems. The process, which was quite fast and rather bureaucratic at the moment, is a kind of transition from the previous system to the total centralized leadership (except the church or private maintained institutions). The research data was collected in the summer of 2013, through a series of interviews with focus groups (N=108). In the sample there were school leaders (73%), deputy manager or potential leader (22%), and representative of maintainers (5%).

There were 31 different elements among the answers, but four of them were the more common: (1) professional (creating curricula, pedagogical-program) autonomy: 85%; (2) labour rights (at the moment of the research this right did not belong to the SLs): 78%; (3) financial autonomy: 62%; (4) rights of creating personal (individual) face of the institution (this surprising response was a kind of answer for the reason of centralization): 56%.

In Hungary maintainers of schools are: (1) the government (77% of the institutions); (2) churches (9.5 %); (3) private schools - foundations (13.5 %), this data is previous to 2010. The research group wondered if different maintainers have different opinions about school autonomy. From the answers, it was figured out that there is a quite big difference among private and the other institutions. Private schools’ maintainers feel that they have wider autonomy. Church maintained institutions believe that their autonomy depends on the relationship of the SL and the maintainer. Their financial freedom is the smallest but on the other fields they have wider autonomy. Government maintained schools have the smallest autonomy. But they have quite big freedom in professional questions. At the same time they do not have any kind of financial autonomy. The operation of institution has become more centralized also.

In schools there are quite good core curricula, which are also centralized (some schools have different curricula because of special needs and with the right). There is about 10% freedom in the centralized core curricula which can be used freely by teachers (these are usually for selectable curriculum). Differentiated teaching methods, equal opportunities are totally based on the institutional autonomy.

The autonomy of the staff is based on law and well settled. Different parts of the institution and the teachers have quite wide autonomy. Based on the answers from the interviews we can say that it always depends on the attitude of the school management. Inner organization development is the result and the provision of teachers’ autonomy.
3. AUTONOMY FOR EQUITY AND LEARNING: THE CASES OF PORTUGAL, LATVIA, HUNGARY, ESTONIA

3.1 Introduction

Recent budget reductions have negatively impacted all the infrastructures that support the educational operations in a number of countries across Europe. In Portugal, for instance, teaching staff was reduced, the number of pupils per class, irrespectively of the schooling level, increased in size, and teachers’ work load goes up to 40 weekly hours. Curricular changes are being introduced top down without the involvement of the educational partners. Uncertainty and frustration invaded the profession and the schools’ climate. The lack of an alternative strategy for development within the country and within Europe constitutes a menace for the collective future and a challenging to the European Union, within which EPNoSL is inscribed.

Therefore, school autonomy is one of the themes selected for investigation during the ongoing period of development of EPNoSL. The concept of autonomy includes several aspects that are more or less interrelated. In Lejf Moos’s article *Diverse perspectives and hope on autonomy in school leadership*¹ autonomy is defined on three levels:

- On the state level it means: self-government, or the right of self-government.
- On the community or organizational level it means: self-governance.
- On an individual level it means: independence or freedom of the will or one’s actions.

In addition, Moos explains that autonomy is only interesting as a term if it indicates that an organisation, a school, or professional actors, teachers and school leaders, are given some room for manoeuvre and those constraints from the outside - and inside - are reduced to the necessary and legitimate frames, values and norms.

Hasso Kukelmelk² relates autonomy to decision-making processes that school leaders can take at the school level. Hasso refers to limited and large autonomy.

We can talk about **limited autonomy** when the state defines:

- school curricula and learning environment;
- school financing;
- physical environment of a school;
- rules about collaboration with families and other stakeholders.

In this case the school leader has limited power and limited responsibility so his role is limited mainly to administrative tasks.

**Large autonomy**, on the other hand, gives power to schools and school leaders so that they can:

- develop curricula and learning environment;
- plan its own financing;

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¹ [http://www.schoolleadership.eu/sites/default/files/diverse_perspectives_and_hopes_on_autonomy_in_school_leadership_5.pdf](http://www.schoolleadership.eu/sites/default/files/diverse_perspectives_and_hopes_on_autonomy_in_school_leadership_5.pdf)
• choose personnel;
• design their own development plans as the bases for improvement.

Large autonomy enables school leaders to perform the role of educational leaders with great responsibility.

Parallel with decentralisation Lejf Moos discusses re-centralisation. This means that the governance systems centralise curriculum and subject matters by prescribing more detailed standards and aims and at the same time introduce national testing test and international comparisons, based on such testing. Moos discusses another emerging phenomenon, i.e. the rise of private sector with freedom to manage staff and operations in schools.

Finally, Lejf Moos refers to several categories that he finds necessary to reflect upon, when determining what kind of autonomy of leadership is present and what opportunities for equity and learning we can see in each case. They are as follows:

1. Autonomy:

   • *Decentralisation* of decisions within the educational system from state to school, preferably with bureaucratic and management arguments
   • *Self-governance/privatisation*, with public-private and market place arguments, establishing single school executive boards, accountable to state

2. Governance:

   • *Market* mechanisms: choice, competition, top down leadership
   • *Bureaucratic* need for control and transparency

3. Power:

   • *Structural* power like budget and legislation
   • *Social technologies* (e.g.: test, benchmarks, protocols)
   • *Discursive* power through recommendations, comparisons, soft governance

4. Issues:

   • School *frames*: Budget, staff management, operations are distributed
   • School *content*: Aims and curriculum are centralised, national

5. Room for manoeuvre:

   • Actors *participating* directly in decision making
   • Actors *deliberating*, negotiating and thus participating in construction of premises for decision making

6. Responsibility for equity and learning:

   • *National* level, responsible for societal frames and aims, like social justice in access and effects of education
   • *Local* level, responsible for community frames and social justice
   • *School* level, responsible for treating everybody fairly, equitable and for education and teaching
Thus, autonomy is related to the level of centralisation and decentralisation in school systems, and it is related to decisions that can be taken at school level, to the level of prescribed curricula as well as to standards, tests and inspection. The level of autonomy defines school leaders’ roles and responsibilities to a great extent. It opens the question whether school leaders are general managers or pedagogical leaders and how much autonomy is left to them in times of accountability for learning outcomes. Another issue that also requires attention is what qualifications are needed for leaders working in educational contexts with different level of autonomy.

3.2 The emergence of school autonomy

Within the context of the financial crisis of the eighties, when democracy was being consolidated in Portugal, a programme for education reform and development was launched, based on three founding elements: (1) the publication of the first Education Basis law in 1986; (2) the creation of a high level task force to plan and implement the reform of the system; (3) and the launching of an Integrated Programme for the Educational Development in Portugal (PRODEP) grounded on three axes: democratisation, quality and modernisation of the Educational System. Simultaneously, a set of statistical indicators were produced and published systematically to allow the monitoring of the ongoing Reform and the observation of the effects of changes. Several teams of researchers from different national higher Education institutions were asked to do fieldwork and develop a set of case studies, thematic studies and cross analysis. All the studies followed the same basic criteria for analysis: democratisation, quality and modernisation. These criteria responded to the orientation of the implemented reforms and validated the aims of:

- Making the schools more inclusive, as necessary in an “in-equal” country;
- Creating the conditions for achievement for all;
- Educating and training as many new teachers, and retraining the in service ones to be able to receive the new coming generation of students for the first time in schools;
- Providing special measures to support learning and achievement.

Three decades later on, the international assessment studies on teaching, such as TIMMS and PIRLS, show the effects of those efforts in the progress of learning and the development of students’ competences as demonstrated in the annual report of the National Education Council (CNE, 2012).

In fact, the first diploma establishing the Portuguese school autonomy juridical status was issued in 1989 (Decree law no. 43/1989), 15 years after the 1974 April revolution. That was a hybrid product between the total centralism of the educational administration and the identification of the school management components to be implemented at school level, according to its characteristics and needs, namely in the cultural, pedagogical and administrative domains established by law.

In the specific field of the pedagogical autonomy, a list of areas for intervention are presented, which had been part of the usual initiatives and tacitly assumed as school competences, such as curricula management, educational programs and activities, learning evaluation, school facilities management, timetabling, having as a reference what already existed established by law. It should be mentioned the emphasis given to school finances management, opening, as an innovation, the possibility for schools to have their private budget, according to specific norms to be established by the Minister of Finances and the Minister of Education. In fact, it was a means to legitimate “clandestine” but consented practices in use in the most dynamic schools, that had progressively been granted explicit “margins of autonomy”, or “room for manoeuvre”, which they were able to expand, according to an old diploma from the sixties (the bill on pedagogical experiences),
though requiring the specific approval from the central services. Although the decree law no. 43/89 on school autonomy was issued it had never been regulated.

Thus, ten years later the new government of the time (1995-1999) assumed education as a priority. On defining the great strategic options for the Education program, “negotiation” and “participation of the different partners to share responsibilities”, in which scope an “Education Pact for the Future” produced in the Minister of Education headquarters, with the involvement of a large group of renown personalities. All of them agreed on the need to change policy making methods, so far usually based on a top-down model.

Ten compromises for action were proposed, one of them being “To turn the school into the privileged center for education policies”, and specified as a second point, the enactment of “autonomy contracts” between schools and the Ministry of Education (ME) “to support differentiated forms of school organization, both at educational and administration levels, in the respect of each institution and considering the specificity of each context” (Lopes, 2011, p. 100).

The decentralization and schools’ autonomy processes have taken specific characteristics that approach the policies in usage to the ones followed in many European countries, with the devolution of administration competences to regional and municipal levels, taking the form of transference or de-concentration of competences in the field of education from the center to the intermediate levels of the public administration.

### 3.3 Paving the way to “contractual” school autonomy

#### 3.3.1 The case of Portugal

In 1998, with the publication of the Decree-Law no. 115-A, known as the autonomy decree, a new political framework for the schools government was set in Portugal, which included, among others, the necessary requirements for the celebration of autonomy contracts, involving the Ministry of Education, each school or cluster of schools, the education municipal authorities and/or the regional education authorities, as well as other partners. Schools applications should include their proposal the purposes and the necessary means to launch each school educational project. The proposal had to be supported by a school self-evaluation report, and, on that basis, an improvement plan for the following years, which would be subject to a rigorous analysis.

To fight against school failure, early dropout, and the difficult working conditions for teachers, and students, some specific projects were launched in the nineties with the support of a specific strategic “Program for the Development of Education in Portugal” (PRODEP) supported by the “Operational Program Human Potential” (POHP), oriented for the promotion of education in general, but with special attention to the implementation of specific projects to foster school attendance and achievement and fight the early school dropout in urban deprived areas, and isolated rural zones. To respond to the needs, schools were granted special autonomy conditions and increased resources to work with kids and youngsters and to involve the local communities. It was the case of the first project to be launched (PIPSE) focused on promoting school achievement, and others that followed, such as the program PEPT – 2000 (Education for All till 2000), launched in 1991, or the program TEIP (Priority Areas for Education Intervention), launched in 1996 and nowadays in its third version.

All of them have been working under special contracted conditions, being autonomy the best resource. Careful planning, self-evaluation, frequent reporting, training and peer learning, together with frequent monitoring were in use as a means to gain self-awareness of the issues involved in the improvement of teaching and learning processes and to report to local and regional authorities.
3.3.2 The case of Latvia

Within the same time span, the increment of schools’ autonomy also started in Latvia. The Education Law (1998) ensures that every resident of Latvia has the opportunity to developing his/her “mental and physical potential, in order to become an independent and a fully developed individual, a member of the democratic State and society of Latvia”. In section 17 the local governments are assigned to have the obligation to ensure to children basic education, and to youths the opportunity to acquire secondary education.

Local governments, in coordination with the Ministry of Education and Science (MES), are responsible for hiring and firing principals. They also distribute state funds, target grants, and other subsidies for salaries, transportation, and other necessities. The principal (who is employed by the founder) hires the teaching and non-teaching staff, manages the financial resources, and ensures compliance with various regulations. Each school organizes a School Board (izglītības iestādes padome) that may include the school director, teachers, local government representatives, parents (the majority), and students. The head of the board is elected from the pool of parents’ representatives. The school boards function is consultative in drafting the school’s development plan. It helps to organize school social life, manages donations, and deliberates on the use of these funds.

3.4 Fostering school autonomy and accountability

3.4.1 The case of Portugal

In Portugal, autonomy contracts were to be viewed and presented as a process of explicit open negotiation, to be developed into three main steps: the setting of the problem, the delimiting of the issues, and the conditions to be negotiated.

The discussion of the autonomy issues and the respective requirements could become a process of fostering knowledge and professional development, namely for school leaders and administration officers, required to be able to identify and justify priorities in school improvement, and to be aware of the frontiers of negotiation. This way, autonomy came together with the issues of self-evaluation and accountability, which, by the time, were relatively new areas of work for schools and for the administration officers.

The celebration of the autonomy contracts on requiring a deep knowledge about each specific school to be rooted in a self-evaluation procedure previously to the external evaluation turned the former into a precondition for starting the so called negotiation phase. The accountability issues focused on autonomy and institutional evaluation were open for debate, constituting a new area to be ruled, and a new field for decision on the model to be chosen and tested, as well as on the agency to be involved.

In spite of schools evaluation being related to the autonomy policy and being addressed together in the same legal framework, the two processes were run separately, under the leadership of two different task forces.

In what concerns the schools evaluation, different public and private agencies, following different models, initiated external evaluation programs, including the Education Inspectorate, following the trends in use by other European Inspectorates, with the support of the Minister of Education Cabinet.

National elections brought a new government, and once again the political cycles brought the rotation of the governmental programs. A specific decree law ruling the schools’ evaluation (DL 31/2002) was issued, under
a new government, and the existing programs already in the field were interrupted. Nothing succeeded as an alternative to the work developed so far, except the annual publication of the schools ranking in the media.

After a five years break, a new governmental initiative in the area of schools evaluation as part of the schools autonomy program was launched. In the beginning of 2006 a task force was created to design the necessary political and technical framework, the instruments to be used in the field work, and the steps in its implementation.

For the trial of the designed tools, all schools were invited to voluntary apply and accept to be submitted to the piloting of the new schools’ external evaluation format, to be conducted by the task force members and a group of invited experts, on the condition of having already implemented a self-evaluation procedure, whose report, to be sent to the task force, became compulsory. From the 140 respondent schools, only 24 schools fitted into the stated conditions. The trial process was initiated in April, 2006. Its full implementation began from the following October on. The complexity of the process and its assumed “managerialist” character, may explain why just one school signed an autonomy contract in this period. But in 2007, 22 of them applied and signed an autonomy contract.

3.4.2 The case of Estonia

In the meantime, school leadership in Estonia has been considered as key element of educational system since early 2000s. Since that time every change in legislative acts was raising school autonomy (included school head autonomy). The slogan is that only autonomous schools can be responsible for the results and therefore it is important to trust the school (teachers) professionalism and school heads professionalism.

3.5 Deepening autonomy and decentralisation

3.5.1 The case of Portugal

By the end of the first decade of the 2000s, with the change of Government in Portugal, though under the same political force, the publication of the decree law no. 75/2008, recovered the autonomy issue, though conceived in different terms, associated to decentralization, as major dimensions in a new organization of Education, aiming at implementing “democracy, equal opportunities and fostering the improvement of the quality in the education public service”. For that purpose, a larger span of competences will be attributed to the director, referred to as “the structure of management and administration”, to reinforce the respective capacity of intervention, and on creating a regime of evaluation and accountability, to make clear that “to greater autonomy will correspond greater responsibility”. (DL 75/2008, Preamble)

In the sequence, the Autonomy issues were reviewed and “a new legal framework for the schools administration and management reinforces the directors’ competences and the involvement of families and local communities in the strategic school direction to ensure strong leaderships ... to strengthen autonomy and the intervention capacity of school leaders”.

The detailed description of the so called “instruments of autonomy”, as stated in article 9 of the decree Law 75/ 2008³, reinforces the prevalence of management operations over educational processes. The use of a

³ D.L. 75/2008, Article 9th, Autonomy tools
1 — The School Educational Project, the Internal Regulations,
The annual and pluriannual Plan of Activity and the Budget constitute the autonomy tools in the use of autonomy in all schools and clusters of schools,
technical discourse related to managerial activities, often turned the autonomy contracts negotiation into a bargaining procedure that many schools are not prepared for.

The requirement to present operational objectives and measurable goals as if in a model of management by objectives, constituted an additional difficulty for school heads, not used to this planning methodology. According to Lopes’s empirical study (2011), “the celebration of school autonomy contracts can be inscribed in the processes of the reconstruction of regulation modes of public action, within the emerging paradigm of the so called “Contractual State”, and the relevance of knowledge based governance apparatus”. It also evidence how the elaboration of the autonomy contract can be turned into an instrument for control and responsibility. (p. 97)

The schools high expectations brought to the presentation and discussion of their development project and the comparatively reduced gains got from the negotiation processes can explain some frustration and feelings of failure in the contractual approaches to autonomy.

3.5.2 The case of Hungary

School leadership in Hungary has had fundamental turning from 2010 which has been based on political changes. After the 1990s’ the responsibility of school maintaining was divided between the government and the school maintainers (in Hungary more than 90% local government or settlement). The system gave wide autonomy to the schools but it was only the surface as only the professional strategy (e.g. accomplishing curriculum, methods, and special pedagogical programmes). But the rest of it which are very important for school leadership was organised by the maintainers (e.g. choosing the School Leader, budget assignment, school services, operating tasks). The level of School Leaders autonomy was depended on the agreement with local government (school maintainers).

After 2010 the government took most of the schools under centralised leadership (under the government). The reason was the general uncertainty in school which was based on financial problems). The process, which was quite fast and rather bureaucratic at the moment, is a kind of transition from the previous system to the total centralized leadership (except the church or private maintained institutions). In Hungary maintainers belong to three groups: the government (77% of the institutions), churches (9.5 %), private schools - foundations (13.5 %). (Data is from the year before centralisation, since then we do not have data).

a) «The School Educational Project states the education orientation.
   • It expresses the education principles to be followed in the school or school cluster, to be in force for three years. It is elaborated and approved by the administration and management bodies, for a span of time of three years. It presents the principles, the values, in use and the targets and the strategies to be achieved.

b) «The Internal Regulation defines the functioning regime of each school concerning each body, orientation bodies and services, as well as the respective rights and duties of the school community members.

c) «The annual and pluriannual plans of activity define the objectives, the organizational formats and the programming of the activities and identify the necessary resources for their implementation.

d) «The budget is the document where all foreseen expenses and expected receipts are discriminated.

2 — The annual activity report, the management account and the self-evaluation report are to be presented as accountability tools. There are still tools of autonomy of schools and cluster of schools, for accountability purposes, the annual activities report, the management account and the self-evaluation report, being understood for this decree-law’s purposes as:

3 — The contract of autonomy

4 – The autonomy contract follows the self-evaluation and external evaluation procedures.
3.6 New evidence in 2012-2013

3.6.1. The case of Portugal

During the year 2012, the National Council of Education (CNE) elected Autonomy and Decentralisation as the topic to be addressed in its annual report, which has foreseen to give account of the State of Education in Portugal, because that “is a recurrent objective in political discourse, not always truly desired and rarely achieved” (CNE, 2012, p. 13). The Council was convinced that ‘the expansion of the access to education and the quality of the results have questioned the system’s centralised management with growing vehemence. The diversity of the educational offer, the specificity of each territory, of each population, of each institution, of each individual makes it necessary to go further in this matter and seek management of greater proximity.’ (Ibid.).

The Council aimed ‘to better understand the diversity of situations, some determinant factors of this variety and the role played, by the self-determination of populations and organisations, in turning problems into opportunities to improve learning results. Some questions would need further studies. Consequently, we launch a challenge to research institutions to a further understanding of those situations, which could contribute to improving the quality and equity of our education.’ (Ibid.)

The report is divided in two parts, in the first one, a reading of the information available on educational offer, access, support, resources and results of each level of education and qualification is made; on the second, it is sought to study the problematic of autonomy and decentralisation, electing some sectors where autonomy seems to be paving a way worthy of being furthered. At the end two kinds of recommendations, general and specific, are made.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General recommendations</th>
<th>Specific Recommendations</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The prosecution of educational policies is crucial for the strategic development of Education and Training and is not consistent with loose and individual modifications in the system’s structure;</td>
<td>1. Kindergarten, Basic and Secondary Education Promotion of equity in education:</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. An educational development plan that defines strategic areas, intervention priorities and measures to be developed is needed to consistently project a desired evolution and monitor its achievement.</td>
<td>a. Promotion of equity in education</td>
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<td>3. In times of crisis, Education and Science are guarantees of the future therefore it is crucial that Education and Training are seen as assuring the development of people and countries and as such they should not stop occupying the centre of public policies and being a priority of public investment, respecting the constitutional rule of free compulsory schooling.</td>
<td>b. Combating systematic delays in students’ schooling</td>
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<td>4. Overcoming the inequalities has to be a permanent objective because, in spite of the progresses achieved in terms of access and quality of education, equity problems persist in the system, a situation that the crisis the country endures may aggravate. (Inequalities regarding access; Inequalities regarding school success; Inequalities between generations; Inequalities between regions and municipalities; Inequalities between schools; Inequalities between sexes.)</td>
<td>c. Investing in transparency and comparability of learning results</td>
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<td>5. Better qualification of the Portuguese and the extension of</td>
<td>d. Fulfilment of the new compulsory school in conditions of equity and justice</td>
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<td>e. Open and coherent curricula, attentive to changes, built and revised in a participative way, respectful of the Regions’ and institutions autonomy</td>
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European Policy Network on School Leadership (EAC/42/2010)

compulsory schooling up to the 12th school year or the age of 18 are structural political options that correspond to investment in the collective capacity to properly school the new generations, at a time when knowledge constitutes, more and more, a distinctive factor of people, countries and economies.

6. The achievement of schools’ autonomy and the clarification of competencies of central administration, of municipalities and schools/clusters are indispensable factors in an increasing correlation between processes and results.

2. School and professional orientation
   a. A strategic function in qualification
   f. Schools autonomy and decentralisation

In fact, current research on schools autonomy evidence that, in spite of its limitations and ambiguities, autonomy contracts and the associated procedures have a value that relies in the fact of allowing shared decision making, against the traditional top down and unilateral decisions, based on imposition of non-discussed rules. The explicit negotiation process has constituted a political and organizational learning process for both parts. Notwithstanding, there are explicit indicators of the difficulties met in the implementation of these models of governance, which can be interpreted as being related to the actors and not with the process in itself.

Even if, scholars who had addressed school autonomy in Portugal believe, like Lima (besides other references in Torres et al., on press), that power is highly centralised at the level of the Ministry of Education, and schools have no power at all, just undertaking some “functional autonomy”, which in fact seems to have been enlarged within the “margins of autonomy”, sometimes subversively, depending on contextual factors, like school leaders’ profiles, as Barroso (1996) already stressed in the 90s.

In 2011-2012 schooling year the 20 schools with contracts of autonomy were submitted to a new external evaluation procedure. On comparing the results of the external evaluation in both cycles, it can be verified that their performance in the domains of “Education service delivery” and “Leadership and management” were predominantly rated as “very good”, while in the domain “Results” they were predominantly rated as “good”. Leadership and management is the domain getting the highest concentration of very good ratings. On comparing the ratings of schools under autonomy contracts with all the other schools evaluated in the same year, the percentage of very good ratings is systematically higher in schools under autonomy contracts.

In both evaluation periods all schools got ratings from “fair” to “very good”. But a positive evolution is noted: the weight of “fair” and “good” ratings decreased, while the percentage of “very good” ratings increased almost to the double (IGEC, 2013, pp.32-38). It can be concluded that “autonomy matters”.

CNE recommends the settlement of contracts of autonomy between schools/clusters of schools and the Ministry aiming at broadening the responsibility for educational processes and results. There must also be an unequivocal reinforcement of the concentration of pedagogical management activities in schools, as close as possible to students, allowing the application of singular educational projects. It is also crucial to stimulate the performance of intermediate pedagogical management structures with proper dimension and to promote their involvement in the main decisions of school/clusters of schools life.

It might be the reason why the government currently in charge included within the scope of autonomy contracts, by legislative order no. 20/2012, the projects of TEIP (Priority Areas for Education Intervention) schools, and signed with them 20 new contracts at the beginning of the schooling year 2012-2013. In fact, as reads in the national report State of Education 2012. Autonomy and Decentralization (CNE, 2013, p. 83) during 2010-2011, 11% of all students were benefiting from specific measures within those educational contexts. But is common knowledge that over 20% of Portuguese children are vulnerable, as a result of the
economic crisis. Taking measures to meet those children needs is indeed a priority of social and educational policies in Portugal.

Recently, Abrantes (2012) on analysing the current impact of the decree-law no. 75/2008 on school’s autonomy and decentralization, came to the conclusion that power has been transferred from the Ministry of Education to local authorities. Torres et. al. (on press) also point out the transference of power within schools from the hands of diverse actors to those of the director, along with the abolishment of former democratic processes. However, Torres (2011) admits that Portuguese schools seem to be autonomous to interpret educational policies and define their strategic mission within a continuum between two extremes, one advocating selective and meritocratic values, and another electing equality of access and success principles, as well as offering diversified formative options and promoting democratic processes. And she came to the conclusion that to further knowledge on Portuguese schools autonomy is necessary to carry out analyses focused on concrete actions taking place in schools, which we did through a meta-analysis of circa 30 master dissertations case studies produced between 2011 and 2013.

That meta-analysis has confirmed evidence presented in the Inspectorate Report on Schools External Evaluation 2011-2012 (IGEC, 2013, pp. 32-38) regarding schools with “autonomy contracts”, among which are those with the most meaningful evolution. Those schools stand out by monitoring and analysing systematically their results, and implementing improvement strategies. Among these strategies are different practices of pedagogical support and differentiation, such as groups of students of differentiated development, tutoring, pedagogical advisory, groups of level, recovering and accompanying plans; the adoption of active and experimental methodologies; and the reorganisation of practices of pedagogical coordination and curricular articulation, impacting on cooperative work among teachers. However, none of them had curricula, financial or staff recruitment autonomy. And, one of the evaluation indicators is the students’ marks on national exams.

Thus, the Ministry of Education is been signing new autonomy contracts with schools, aiming at getting over 200 signed until December 2013, reaching therefore ¼ of Portuguese school units. However, to support schools in the reinforcement of their margins of autonomy requires that knowledge be provided to schools on how to collect data to evaluate improvement and design progress; as well as continuous training of teachers and school leaders, namely on pedagogical leadership.

3.6.2 The case of Latvia

In Latvia, a recent study on the Assessment of the Activities of the School Boards in the Schools and Preschools observed that a greater autonomy of the school leads to a greater authority of the School Boards, and parents demonstrate greater interest to take part in these Boards (Latvijas Vecāku kustība, 2012).

As to financial autonomy, Latvia has full autonomy in the use of funds for these budget headings (Eurydice, 2007). By Law on Education (1998), schools in Latvia can receive additional financial resources through donations, providing supplementary services, and from unspecified “other incomes.” These provisions are the legal basis for soliciting parents’ contributions. The recent study on parents’ contributions to schools it was observed that doesn’t exist any formal mechanism for parents to hold teachers accountable for the proper use of their contributions. Still, the majority of parents (84%) trust that principals and teachers spend the money well. However, trust exists in cases involving small amounts of money (Dedze, Strode, 2009).

In Latvia schools are enjoying full autonomy in terms of seeking donations and letting of schools premises for out-of-hours activities, but no autonomy of taking loans (Eurydice, 2007). Since the academic year 2012/2013 the Ministry of Education and Science is planning to increase schools’ autonomy in organizing the
study process. But it requires optimal planning of exams, changes in the legislative system and school curricula.

As consequence of ongoing changes in Latvia, it is necessary in the near future to involve the Teacher Advisory Boards in the planning of the study process; to improve the communication between school, parents and students in order to involve them in the school Boards, so they could become collaborative partners since the very early stages (Latvijas Vecāku kustība, 2012); and to ensure equal access to the education the state or the local government should provide the resources that support socially vulnerable families with the following – textbooks, free meals, etc. (Dedze, Strode, 2009).

3.6.3 The case of Hungary

Research carried out by the Hungarian EPNoSL partner in the summer of 2013 provided data, through a series of interviews with focus groups (N=108). In the sample there were school leaders (73%), deputy manager or potential leader (22%), and representative of maintainers (5%).

There were 31 different elements among the answers pertaining to areas of school autonomy, but four of them were the more common: (1) professional (creating curricula, pedagogical-program) autonomy: 85%; (2) labour rights (at the moment of the research this right did not belong to the SLs): 78%; (3) financial autonomy: 62%; (4) rights of creating personal (individual) face of the institution (this surprising response was a kind of answer for the reason of centralization): 56%.

In Hungary maintainers of schools are: (1) the government (77% of the institutions); (2) churches (9.5 %); (3) private schools - foundations (13.5 %), this data is previous to 2010. The research group wondered if different maintainers have different opinions about school autonomy. From the answers, it was figured out that there is a quite big difference among private and the other institutions. Private schools’ maintainers feel that they have wider autonomy. Church maintained institutions believe that their autonomy depends on the relationship of the SL and the maintainer. Their financial freedom is the smallest but on the other fields they have wider autonomy. Government maintained schools have the smallest autonomy. But they have quite big freedom in professional questions. At the same time they do not have any kind of financial autonomy. The operation of institution has become more centralized also.

In schools there are quite good core curricula which are also centralized (some schools have different curricula because of special needs and with the right). There is about 10% freedom in the centralized core curricula which can be used freely by teachers (these are usually for selectable curriculum). Differentiated teaching methods, equal opportunities are totally based on the institutional autonomy. The autonomy of the staff is based on law and well settled. Different parts of the institution and the teachers have quite wide autonomy. Based on the answers from the interviews we can say that it always depends on the attitude of the school management. Inner organization development is the result and the provision of teachers’ autonomy.

Facing this scenario it is important in Hungary to preserve teachers’ autonomy in developing the curricula and to provide pedagogical leadership knowledge to schools managers for preventing the scarcity of financial resources to affect teaching and learning work.

3.6.4 The case of Estonia

The school system in Estonia is very similar to the one in Latvia, however some differences were revealed by recent research on school autonomy. The study was carried out to identify school head autonomy – 86
respondents to the electronic questionnaire and 5 interviews carried out to get better understanding of statistical results. Questionnaire was developed on 5-point Likert scale and descriptive statistics used for analyses, which revealed that Estonian school heads were actually very optimistic about their autonomy to lead the school. They declared that they are autonomous to make decisions related to educational, financial, personnel and leadership issues (the mean of different issues was from 4.3 – 4.6). It was considered that financial issues and also maintenance issues should be discussed with school owner. Heads stated that they (schools) are autonomous to develop school developmental plan (4.6), and those issues are acknowledged by the school workers (mainly teachers) – 4.1. Schools take into account to design their developmental plans results of different stakeholders’ satisfaction studies (4.3 – mainly students and parents involved).

New legislative acts starting January 2013 provide schools new frames to account teachers’ workload and to pay them salary. 20% of school salary budget is meant for the teachers’ performance bonuses (decided by the school leadership team). The rising of school head autonomy is one of the key words in the educational developmental plan for 2014 – 2020 in Estonia.

School educational autonomy has been addressed by the heads to the teachers. They declared that schools are educationally autonomous (4.7 - under the frames of national curriculum), but that is fulfilled by the teaching staff. Estonian teachers are autonomous to choose methods and plan teaching/learning activities according to the school curriculum that meets national curriculum frames. Schools are free to develop their own students assessment systems but it is obligatory to have in a school (if system is different from common one) a transmission table to the common system at the end of school stages (grades 3, 6, 9 and 12).

Heads declared that they are free to hire and fire personnel (4.9) and can decide teacher’s salary (4.3) under the frames of school budget. They also decide teachers’ participation in in-service training courses (4.2) and other events requiring staff involvement (4.1).

In the interview head stated that legislative acts should support the leadership not to regulate it. Another head added that through school head position organisation (school) development direction is guided and every political power is going to use it to influence the system. The third one declared that his decision making power and responsibility has always been very high and he considers last changes in legislation as rhetoric changes.

School heads stated that they like that there are not any more compulsory list of minimum staff members – heads can decide it themselves. They are free to develop their own working system for the local conditions. Some heads stated that it is useful to be elected to local municipality board to influence educational decisions made by municipality (usual owner of the school). Some heads declared that there are better options to take responsibility and use school autonomy in major settlements (towns) because there are better financial conditions and heads have more options to choose the personnel. The others added that in those major schools heads are staying far away from real educational processes and they become more like managers in any organisation spending working time mostly to administration and bureaucracy.

As limitations to the school heads’ autonomy several issues were mentioned: lack of finances, school budget formation (head should negotiate it with the owner), changes of budgeting conditions (you have to change plans what have been done for a long term development), media (mostly scandals are published by media creating negative aura around the school), personal relations with school owner (could be changed after local elections).
3.7 Final Remarks

The school heads towards the autonomy negotiation processes are related to their own perceptions of the role they play in the organisation, what is at stake in the discussion of their development plan or improvement proposal, and on how they understand the concept “autonomy” and the use to be made of it. In other words, their expected gains in the schools’ running and management of which they are responsible for.

The discussion on autonomy has to be related to the organisational characteristics of each school and to the necessary resources for its normal functioning. In this view, the nucleus of the bargaining is in the resources they have to gain. But autonomy cannot be set apart from the network of relationships connecting the actors in the organisational micro-policy, or be independent of their interests. In the construction of autonomy the nucleus of the process will be in the trust on the actors and rely in their action. In the negotiation of autonomy the head teacher cannot be independent of the modes of interaction with the negotiators, or agents of the administration and of their interpretation of the school leader as a person and as a role specified in the law. This is the context for experiencing that autonomy is not negotiated and received. It has to be learnt, even being good, strong and effective built through a complex process that certainly takes time among other resources.

And last but not the least, in the countries at stake in this report we can notice certain significant shifts in power. In Hungary, power has been taken back by the government; in Latvia, School Boards are becoming more and more powerful, which is different in Estonia, where School Heads are becoming more powerful; and in Portugal power has been handed over from central State to municipalities (Abrantes, 2013) and within schools has been centralised in School Heads (Torres et al. on press).
PART III - ACCOUNTABILITY FOR EQUITY AND LEARNING: EVIDENCE REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS

4. SYNTHESIS OF EVIDENCE-BASED REPORTS: ACCOUNTABILITY

Accountability can be defined as the management of diverse expectations generated within and outside the organisation. The different types of expectations relate to different logics, which emphasise societal concerns, political pressures, bureaucratic concerns, top-down management, responses to market dynamics, professional responsibility and ethical principles. In last decade transnational agencies foster accountability for outcomes focused on basic skills - those that are easily measurable. This raise question if it is possible to hold educators accountable for doing things they don’t how to do, and if it possible to solve the problem of increasing the performance of teachers and students in one classroom without also solving that problem in schools and school systems more generally?

4.1 Accountability and control

The question of accountability and/or control is a complex one. From one point of view, they seem to be exclusive in the sense that state control is replaced by a form of accountability. Accountability can be discussed in relation to market mechanisms and the state they claim that schools become more accountable when they become part of an educational market. From another point of view, schools are professional organizations and hence accountable to professional associations and organizations. They have a relatively high level of autonomy but it seems that their accountability is more related to specific groups of experts and not largely to publics and stakeholders. Yet, here the state also regulates, imposes and controls. There is always some state control although the means and the aims can be hidden and multiple. However, there is also some level of accountability to local elements, to stakeholders, and to the professional community. Therefore, we can understand the relationship between accountability and control as intertwined and dependent on the position between two extremes, decentralisation and centralisation (Koren 2007).

Accountability can be defined as the management of diverse expectations generated within and outside the organisation. These expectations differ according to direction, clarity and consequences and imply processes where the distribution of different functions, tasks and responsibilities are clearly defined. The expectations can sometimes be contradicting, and the degree of authority and control of key actors, such as school leaders, can differ. In order to differentiate between different types of expectations for our analysis, we build on (Koren 2006, Moos 2013) in a number of categories:

The first category is managerial expectations and the extent to which they have changed at the national and local levels, as interpreted in acts, regulations, policy documents, evaluation procedures, official standards and criteria for success and accountability practices. This can also be linked to increasing demands from the marketplace: competition between schools and schools’ financial situations. In short: Outcomes are being used as means for competition.

When the state holds control, the school system reflects a hierarchical structure. The governing bodies at all levels are held accountable for school achievement and performance. The state, the district, the school – the principal have the power to impose and control the aims, goals and implementation of the curriculum, and
of teacher performance. In democratic states the purpose of accountability is to maintain democratic control over public bureaucracies and to ensure that the will of people is carried out.

The second category relates to expectations of the public – of the local community and parents. In many cases local political and community expectations are more important than national political expectations. In short: Schools must seek legitimacy.

The third accountability category is professional expectations. In this model of accountability and control, teachers are autonomous professionals that are accountable for process rather than for results embodied in students’ performance. The model can be discussed as an alternative to a results-based model. There are many forms of this model in educational practice. Self accounting schools and others are based on the idea that teachers are accountable as professionals and less so to parents and customers. Codes of ethics and conduct become central - the ethical implications of collegial loyalty can be one view of teachers’ professionalism. The ethical code can also be seen in the light of constraining professionals against bureaucrats or as a form of administrative centralism and professional control. This category refers to how school leaders believe they best meet the needs of pupils, staff and the school organisation. Closely linked to this are possible changes in cultural and ethical considerations with respect to the needs of the children and adults affiliated to the schools, and school leaders’ understanding of the societal aims and purposes of education. In short: School live on professional experiences and expertise with a strong recollection of the main purpose.

The different types of expectations relate to different logics, which emphasise societal concerns, political pressures, bureaucratic concerns, top-down management, responses to market dynamics, professional responsibility and ethical principles. These logics can exist in combination or parallel to each other, and they can easily conflict. If we look at the relationships between the different categories, they are linked to different areas. For instance, responses to political, managerial and public accountability are more likely to be linked to external accountability dynamics, while professional expectations often relate to school internal processes. However, schools seem to vary in their configuration of the elements that comprise their internal processes, e.g. teachers’ sense of work responsibility, the collective expectations of staff, school leaders and parents, and the organisational rules, incentives and processes that encourage or compel external as well as internal accountability practices.

4.2 Education for equity

Traditionally we talk about equity in education in two different ways: The first it about ‘equality of opportunity.’ In this understanding access to education is essential and therefore it is understood that the state is responsible for providing opportunities for children and youngsters to participate in formal and non-formal education. Whether students and their parents choose to access education and whether they are successful, is not in the focus of educational politics. The second way is more concerned with equity in the results of education in ways of graduations or access to employment. From this perspective it is not enough being concerned with providing the same opportunity because children need different kinds of opportunities and support. Some of them need more support than other in order to succeed (Moos 2001). Although that in many countries some progress has been made, there are evidence to suggest that background, for example gender, deprivation or ethnicity, continue to make a real difference in attempting to improve pupil performance and, in particular, close the ‘attainment gap’ (Collarbone and West-Burnham 2008).

4.3 Accountability for outcomes
One very important player in the Global plays on education and school leadership is the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) because the agency produces a long series of annual and special reports and recommendations in order to enhance the ‘peer pressure.’ The borrowing of ideas, comparisons of frames and outcomes (like the PISA), best practice and advices.

In 2008 the OECD launched the ‘Improving School Leadership’ project and reports (Pont et al 2008). In the report is an image of the expectations towards the contemporary school leader, that is described in three categories: School autonomy, saying that educational decisions are being delegated or distributed from the state to schools in all OECD countries, leaving school leader to ‘Run small business.’ The second category is called ‘Accountability for outcomes,’ and it will be discussed in more details. The third category is ‘Learning-centred leadership’, that focuses on school leaders leading teachers and teaching (OECD Presentation).

In the second category, accountability is in the focus, and not accountability as such, but accountability for outcomes. Meant here is not outcomes as graduation or access to employment, but outcomes as results of evaluations and assessment. In focus is the data from tests etc. This discourse produces the image of the purpose of schooling. The purpose then is, what can be measured. I general accountability is understood as the responsibility for actions, decisions, processes and policies – and of course for outcomes.

It is clear, that the accountability, which OECD is focusing on, is the first: managerial and market place accountability for outcomes. The discourse, put forward by the OECD in this slide, is clearly in line with the PISA and other similar social technologies that is de-focusing on comprehensive ‘Bildung’ and focusing on basic skills. The agency also focuses on one kind only of outcomes – those that are easily measurable - and de-focusing on the broad range of competencies necessary for living and working in complex societies. One reason for this seems to be that only basic skills can be measured and only what can be measured, counts. The Global need for innovation and reflection is neglected and will over time have devastating consequences for nations, societies, cultures and human beings.

There are more dilemmas to be considered in accountability for outcomes. Elmore (2004) raises questions:

- Is it ethical to hold individuals, educators, accountable for doing things they don’t how to do and can’t be expected to do without considerable in their own knowledge and skill?
- Is it possible to solve the problem of increasing the performance of teachers and students in one classroom without also solving that problem in schools and school systems more generally? The problem is that schools, on average, are largely organisational fictions in the way they affect the actual work of teachers and students around content. That means that teachers work autonomously in classrooms.

In that light Elmore (2004) states:

- Individual and collective stakes should be based on defensible, empirically based theories about what it is possible to accomplish on measured performance within a given period of time.
- Stakes should be based on valid, reliable, and accurate information about student and school performance. No decision that has a major impact on student should be made on the basis of a single measure, nor should students be judged based on a single opportunity to demonstrate performance.
- Student should not be held accountable for learning content they have not been taught.
- Schools should be accountable for the value they add to student learning, not the effect of prior instructions; school systems should be accountable for the cumulative learning of students over their career in the system.
• The reciprocity of accountability and capacity – for each increment in performance I require of you, I have an equal and reciprocal responsibility to provide you with the capacity to produce that performance.
5. ACCOUNTABILITY IN THE POLISH SCHOOL SYSTEM: STUDY REPORT

5.1 Introduction

The below report contains the analysis and conclusions regarding the manner of understanding and implementing the accountability category in Polish schools. The studies which form a basis of this report were qualitative. They were conducted in the period from August to October 2013. At first, it should be emphasised that the study is exploratory and preliminary in nature. The project is an element of the broader study undertaking implemented as part of the European Policy Network on School Leadership, which is carried out in Poland by the Educational Research Institute.

The data presented below should be treated as preliminaries to multidimensional and elaborate subject matter of accountability in the Polish education system. We hope that the results of this analysis will serve to prepare a systematic and in-depth study of the accountability theme in the Polish school.

5.2 Aims of the study

The aim of the study was an attempt to specify the accountability category in the context of the Polish educational system, in particular the analysis of:

- The influence of accountability on the learning process.
- The influence of accountability on the process of providing equal opportunities, individualisation in schools.

5.3 Methodology, course of the study

5.3.1 Research questions

The following research questions were raised in the study:

- How the participants in the study understand the term accountability? What is the idea behind it?
- What accountability means in practice in the Polish school? How does it manifest itself?
- For what purpose is accountability implemented in the Polish education system?
- What is the effect of implementing accountability:
  - at the level of school (for a principal, teachers, students, parents);
  - at the local, commune level (for territorial government units, inhabitants);
  - at the regional level (e.g. for the regional education authorities, regional education institutions);
  - at the national level (for the whole education system, for the Ministry of Education, central institutions, public opinion)?
- Is there a relationship between accountability and the learning process? What this relationship consists in?
• Is the translation of the adopted accountability model(s) into the learning process visible at the particular levels (of school, city, region, country)?
• Is there a relationship between accountability and providing equal opportunities, individualisation, promoting equity? What this relationship consists in?
• Is the translation of the adopted accountability model(s) into the process of providing equal opportunities, individualisation, promoting equity visible at the particular levels (of school, city, region, country)?

5.3.2 Choice of research method and sample group

At the level of assumptions adopted as part of the European Policy Network on School Leadership (EPNoSL) it was considered that the research teams in each country will search for answers to the research questions through Individual In-depth Interviews (IDI) conducted with the representatives of the key groups of stakeholders in the area of leadership (central institutions responsible for accountability, universities training principals, territorial government, schools).

Six individual interviews with the following categories of interviewees were conducted as part of the studies in Poland:

• representative of the central institution of education system – the interviewee is a person responsible for implementation of the new systemic programme supervised by the ministry of education devoted to school leadership. This person previously worked as a school leader and for the regional education inspectorate (IDI 1).
• practitioner (principal of public school) – a person with more than 15 years of experience as a principal in several schools (lower secondary and general upper secondary school). Moreover, a person serving as deputy in the town in the east of Poland (IDI 2).
• representative of the Educational Inspectorate (regional institution of external supervision) – a person currently serving as evaluator, and previously worked as a controller in one of regional education inspectorates in the north of Poland. A member of boards selecting school principals. Previously worked as a teacher (IDI 3).
• local government employee – the head of education department in 80-thousand town in the south of Poland. A person with 10-year experience in the regional educational inspectorate, previously worked as a principal in a special school (IDI 4).
• representative of the voivodeship teacher in-service training institution – a person with more than 25 years of professional experience, educational counsellor, the author of guides for school principal and teachers, person involved in the modernisation of educational supervision and training of principals in this regard (IDI 5).
• scholar – the head of the educational unit at one of higher education institutions offering i.a. postgraduate studies for the management, the person involved in the new systemic programme of the ministry of education devoted to school leadership. The interviewee also has experience of working in school (IDI 6).

The choice of sample group was purposeful. The “position criterion” played a decisive role – the capturing of different perspectives of persons involved in different forms of accountability in education system was important.

At the request of some participants of the study, the interviews were anonymous. The script of an individual interview with the instructions related to the abovementioned research questions is included in Appendix 1.
The study was qualitative and the data collected from a small group of experts who are the representatives of several stakeholder categories in the area of school leadership does not claim a right to provide a full description or any kind of representativeness.

5.4 Analysis of the results

5.4.1 Understanding of the accountability category in the Polish school

The term accountability itself is a difficult category. A lot of authors indicate that it is not translatable into Polish. Its ambiguity and wide scope are the key challenges here.

Krzysztof Kruszewski stresses that: “One of the most fashionable terms in Anglo-Saxon education (and pedagogy) – accountability – corresponds to the combined meaning of two Polish terms, out of which the second one sounds horrible: odpowiedzialność (responsibility in English) and rozliczalność (accountability). School is authorised to manage independently certain part of its work, now these are mainly learning outcomes, but it must be accountable for the use of its independence. Accountability is often associated with transparency – work with the curtain raised: school must disclose all aspects of its work to school administration, parents, local community, public opinion” (Kruszewski 2006).

Henryk Mizerek after J. MacBeath and A. McGlynn emphasises that: “Accountability is something which requires: a) taking into account endeavours, aspirations and expectations of stakeholders in the course of implementing educational processes in school; b) informing them about what measures and methods of work are undertaken within the fulfilment of goals and tasks in school; c) collecting data enabling to discuss the quality of work of individual institutions as well as the whole education system at the regional and national level. The aim of this debate is to search for areas of improvement” (Mizerek 2012).

The relationship between the accountability/responsibility category is not unequivocal and in practice it may pose a huge challenge. In this context, Mizerek refers to the considerations of Eugenia Potulicka, who writes: “There is no doubt that the main issue related to the consideration of the quality of educational debates in the Western world is the issue of accountability. The principle of accountability is related with the term of responsibility. When people feel they are held accountable for, they unconsciously aim at the improvement of their functioning. However, when they feel that they are held accountable for in an unfair way, they try to face it formally, without an actual improvement of functioning (Potulicka 2003).

According to the understanding adopted at the European Policy Network on School Leadership (after OECD), accountability can be understood in relation to the following dimensions:

- bureaucratic and management accountability (manifested by using indicators), it includes also legal responsibility
- accountability oriented at the market (it is manifested by the focus on competences)
- public accountability (manifested by the focus on transparency of an institution/school, its purpose is the legitimacy of educational institution’s activities)
- professional accountability (manifested by the focus on knowledge, professional development, in the case of teachers it entails achieving the subsequent degrees of specialty, professional advancement)
- cultural and ethical accountability (in the case of teachers manifested by the focus on responsibility towards students, providing conditions for their versatile development)

As part of the interviews we attempted to specify how the participants understand this category and what shades of meaning it has. The statements emphasise the ambiguity of this term and its broad range. Accountability is both a developed system of control and accountability, which includes a lot of institutions
(in relation to education system – mainly regional educational inspectorates but also the Supreme Audit Office) and the scopes of competences assigned to particular institutions and people in the system (except for boards of education – to the ministry of education, territorial government units at all levels, a school principal). Accountability understood in this way has its legal basis, system of tools and procedures for its execution (evaluation, control, financial reporting system). Apart from accountability defined by law, perceived often as a formal obligation, accountability is also a certain attitude – of a broadly understood responsibility for educational process – being an effect but also contributing to the creation of organisational culture at the school level and at the level of the whole education system. In both cases the transparency of this process is important (openness of the process and the results of external evaluation, making the results of external examinations publicly available, access to all data from schools for local governments, continuously developed Education Information System etc.).

“Indeed, it is not easy to tell what accountability is really about, because on one hand the case seems to be obvious – we have different supervision institutions and this is necessary, no one questions that. But on the other hand, when I look at my colleagues, the majority of them try to avoid control and very often these are only bureaucratic games. If we manage to think not only in such way so as to avoid or deceive control, but that we are actually responsible for something, towards concrete people, this is much better way of thinking” (IDI 2).

“I would say it in this way. Everyone says that this is about the child’s good. Public officers say that this is about the child’s good and they tighten the screw of accountability of schools for outcomes. Teachers say that this is about the child’s good and complain about this accountability. A school principal, depending on whether he/she deals with accountability of a teacher himself/herself within internal supervision or he/she is accountable to the local government himself/herself, adopts the first or the second option” (IDI 4).

“For me the problem with all this accountability, or internal and external supervision to put it simply, is that people think that this is only a certain law which harasses them and disturbs their work. There is not enough reflection on the fact that teacher is a profession of public trust, and the attitude of responsibility is an immanent part of this profession and this is not only about the mission. Sometimes an argument is raised that Finland has good school system because it does not have educational inspectorates, among others. But it is forgotten that there is no external supervision because teachers are great, also because they are responsible and they don’t need an external supervisor. In our country the mentality is slightly different, unfortunately” (IDI 5).

The tension, presented in the above quotation, between accountability understood as external supervision system (carried out by the ministry, regional educational inspectorates, local government but also parents, public opinion) and the internalised attitude of responsibility for teaching and learning towards particular actors in the system – not only towards the external higher ranked bodies, but also towards all recipients of educational activities – students and parents, poses a great challenge for schools and their leaders.

5.4.2 What accountability means in practice in the Polish school?

In the context of the Polish education system, accountability is most frequently identified with different kinds of supervision (educational, financial).

In the light of law, in accordance with Art. 33 of the Education System Act (Journal of Laws No 56, item 458), educational supervision consists in: assessing the state and conditions of didactic, educational and caring activity of schools, institutions and teachers, analysing and assessing the effects of this activity, supporting the performance of this activity and inspiring teachers to educational, methodological and organisational innovations.
The Act defines in an operational manner what the “educational supervision” is. The supervision includes an element of control (comparing the stated condition with the assigned one and the evaluation resulting from it), and at the same time it is something more, it gives the supervisor competences enabling to influence the correct functioning of the subordinate units. The supervision is systemic, holistic, systematic and performed by institutions within this system.

In the legal construction of the Polish education system, the educational supervision combines the control and assessment role with the supporting role. In the first case, the educational supervision consists in the activity characteristic for administration control bodies which is related to the right and obligation to intervene in the activity of schools, indicating faults and applying adequate legal measures in case of finding them. In the second case, it is not about supervision in the literal meaning, but about, first, evaluating the work of schools and second, supporting schools in achieving high quality education.

To put it in simpler terms, within the educational supervision defined by law both categories included in the Anglo-Saxon meaning of accountability appear – both being accountable for (control) and responsibility (support). The tool – evaluation (both external and internal) is situated in between these two categories.

The participants of the study indicated also the direct relationship between supervision and accountability:

“There is a reason that some people are looking for the Polish roots of supervision in the acts of the National Education Commission at the end of the 18th century. It is important for the whole country, from the perspective of basic social principles, that the education system works well. The state must and wants to do this. The concept of supervision is quite clear and as a general rule at least I feel that there is no question about that. The problem is in the practical application of this supervision. The trend is that it is strongly directed into control, zero-one accounting. And it has been like that for a long time, it is not an idea of recent years. Although maybe apart from the formal, legal and financial accountability, there is more focus on accountability for outcomes.” (IDI1).

To put it simply, it may be stated that in the Polish context the institutionalised accountability is supervision. At the same time – similarly to the leadership category – accountability is difficult to translate into Polish not only because of linguistic reasons but also because this term is rooted in a different (Anglo-Saxon) culture. Different understanding and definition of leadership entail different definition of accountability:

“I am not a supporter of governing – people think that if I am a director in the municipal office, I govern, but I manage, maybe even sometimes lead. It is difficult for school principals to understand that at the level of school it is necessary to develop a sensible approach, and not wait for the authorities to create everything and impose. Because in practice we, even if sometimes it is necessary, we have limited competences for giving orders. And this is very good. And now there is a question whether a wise principal, and we have such people, will take responsibility for his/her school.” (IDI 4).

“As we talk about this responsibility or accountability, it of course necessary to say that it has different forms and shades. Because it is, starting at the school level, on one hand responsibility and accountability of a teacher for what happens in the classroom and those to whom he/she is responsible and who on the other hand make him/her accountable are parents, students and also a principal, other teachers. And a teacher very often tends to increase the significance of one of the parties and focus for example on the formal accountability by concentrating on completing the school register, or on accountability for results, as this can be measured easily and contributes to the assessment of his/her work by a principal and the assessment of the whole school e.g. by the local authorities. For me it is interesting how and to what extent in practice accountability of a teacher towards a student appears?
Or rather it boils down to accountability of a student towards a teacher (e.g. doing homework, behaviour during lessons)?” (IDI 6).

The above statement features an important issue – of accountability but also responsibility of a teacher towards a student. It means something else than accountability understood as supervision. In this case we rather talk about the context of professional, ethical and cultural responsibility of a teacher – in particular the responsibility for creating situations encouraging effective learning by every student. The boundary condition of the occurrence of so understood accountability is the teacher’s autonomy, but also creating educational situation in which students have/achieve autonomy.

The participants agreed that in the discussion on accountability the financial issue dominates. This situation is becoming more and more visible and socially perceived trend year by year. This is how an examined local official talks about it:

“Today I have data from the Education Information System and without any serious decisions and analyses I managed to reduce around 100 full time positions in the city – so far (...) with the more and more significant decline in population the teachers’ employment decreased by 5-10 full time positions a year. And it doesn’t mean that the office is bad, only that I have a serious threat that in November there won’t be enough money for salaries” (IDI 4).

The issue of accountability of school towards a territorial government unit is described in the following way by the principal:

“Schools have been important and will be even more important for the local authorities – in my town schools cover 50% of the commune’s budget. When I look at it as a principal, but also a deputy, there is certain trend that the authorities want to promote themselves by showing e.g. good results, finalists of school subject contests. At the same time, as far as finances are concerned, they want to have access to even monthly settlements – even small amounts, for training. The poviat authorities prepared a table for monthly settlements – even for cleaning products, and funds for training – we were supposed to report and wait for consent to every expense for training over PLN 150, so generally for everything. Before, we set the goals on the basis of our own diagnosis. So (...) how can we plan and do anything, if every training course needs to be consulted with the local government –we boycotted it and send them every documents – then finally the authorities let it go and determined the amount of PLN 500 which needs to be agreed with them. Generally, there used to be more freedom – maybe not total, but the majority of decisions were taken by me” (IDI 2).

At the same time, the interviewees indicated the possibilities of making accountability more effective in the area of finances. They proposed e.g. an educational voucher as a mechanism in which students by choosing a given school, feed its budget (according to the rule that “with a student comes educational subsidy” which is received by a school from the state budget. The value of the voucher takes into account the costs of operation of a given type of school and each year is valorised with an inflation rate.

“We need to create a foundation for the management – people, principals, who feel that even a small amount depends on them, act better, are more responsible and reasonable in making expenses. I am advocating the idea of educational voucher in our town. It seems to work well in other places. I think we will introduce it from the new year” (IDI 4).

Apart from finances, an important issue is accountability of schools for different kinds of outcomes. Results of external examinations are the basis of formal and informal rankings of schools, which translate into the level and nature of enrolment.
“(…) except for the Teacher’s Day or the beginning or end of the school year, it is examinations that attract any attention to education. Examinations mean a concrete place in rankings of schools, which translates into the interest of parents and students in a given school. Another issue is that authorities hold schools and principals accountable for outcomes” (IDI 6).

One of the mechanisms of executing accountability at the local level is preparation by territorial government units of an annual information on the state of fulfilment of educational tasks. It is an obligation imposed by the legislator on the executive authorities of all territorial government units in Poland within the amendment to the Education System Act of 2009. Territorial governments may choose the type, form and thematic scope of this document. Jan Herczyński underlines that “the requirement of annual informing the council of territorial government unit and local community about the state of fulfilment of educational tasks may become a strong incentive to a serious discussion on educational goals of the local government, on the incurred costs and achieved outcomes. This discussion requires that executive authorities of the local government share with all interested parties their experience in the education management and school leadership, their knowledge on what achievements and difficulties of local education are” (Herczyński 2011, 10). Thus, it is assumed that this is a mechanism which should strengthen transparency of local education policy and at the same time improve the quality and effectiveness of discussion on education in concrete places. From the perspective of our interviewees, providing to the commune council by the office information about the state of fulfilment of educational tasks broadens the scope of discussion about school education:

“In my city deputies are slowly getting used to the fact that information on education which we provide to them as the education department and the office as a whole is not only for outvoting or raising objections against it, but we have important information there on students outcomes, expenditure on schools and that on this basis, not on a political whim, the decisions should be made. After that we prepared a press conference with the president and discussions on education in our city with reference to the data from the Report” (IDI 4).

5.4.3 Relationship between accountability and the learning process

Answering the question about the relationship between accountability and the learning process, the interviewees indicated several dimensions:

- accountability for outcomes,
- organisation of the accountability process at the level of class, school, commune, region and country,
- sense of agency, autonomy, responsibility of a teacher,
- ethical and moral dimension of accountability.

All interviewees emphasise that apart from accountability of schools in the financial dimension (which is especially important from the point of view of the local government), formal and legal dimension (undertaken mainly by educational inspectorates), accountability for outcomes is a dominant form which accountability takes in connection with schools.

“To be honest, when I look at the approach of our local authorities, but also of the state government, above all they care about the money – to spend the least possible, save and it is understandable, especially with the insufficient educational subsidy. Another thing are outcomes – principals who I know are literally called on to the carpet immediately after the results of the Matura examination arrive and some of them are praised while others are reprimanded, and maybe it wouldn’t be so bad, except for
the fact that for many people it is difficult to understand that the raw result is not everything and cannot decide about the assessment of the school’s work” (IDI 5).

“In the past, there was not so much focus on accountability for outcomes. Now, as soon as the results of the Matura examination appear, the meeting with the local authorities is organised – it was, delicately speaking, not really developing. I have a school with the best result because I had good enrolment – hence the raw result showed well for me, but not truly – I enrolled children with 8,9 score in the stanine thus the 100% pass rate was normal. In other schools it was much more difficult to achieve such result” (IDI 2).

It corresponds to the results of the study “Education Management in Communes”, in which the representatives of 320 territorial government units indicated that the most important factor determining the quality of school are results of external examinations – 60% of the study participants indicated this factor (other important factors are individual achievements of students – school subject contests, competitions) and satisfaction of students and parents – approx. 40% (Jastrzębska 2011).

Thus, the significance of external examinations, introduced as a system in 2002, is confirmed by different studies and by different groups. At the same time, the ability to analyse the results and draw reasonable conclusions poses a challenge:

“I was raised in supervision, evaluation – I think that I can explain it to our principals. They were really surprised when last year we as the office e.g. did not pay that much attention to the raw results of the Matura examinations, but we focused on the Educational Value Added (EVA) or the interpretation of evaluation. I hope that if the office presents such perspective, something will be left at schools, not only the raw results without any reflection on what the reasons are and what should be done about it” (IDI 4).

Other interviewees indicated also that the approach of this kind – contextual analysis and referring to different sources, not only to the results of external examinations, taking into account such indicators as the Educational Value Added is becoming more widespread and this is a desired direction:

“In the school we apply different comparisons, analyses, studies. I can see this also in other schools. Even the deputies have started to discuss EVA (...). And what follows from this – in our city, the EVA analysis and discussion about the context have resulted in the change of school districts – it is a positive change, as it turned out that some children go to another school than their district is and it is not only because the streets are assigned wrongly.” (IDI 2)

As far as a sense of agency, responsibility of a teacher is concerned, it appears to be a key factor in the analysis of the relationships between the accountability and the learning process at the classroom level. It is also connected with the ethical and moral aspect of accountability:

“A teacher is a clue – maybe it can be an exaggeration for some people, but for me a teacher is a master, who can transfer the curriculum contents (this is what the state requires of him/her and what he/she is accountable for). The teacher’s attitude, values and finally the tools he/she disposes of and the supporting principal are important.” (IDI 4).

“It is difficult to expect accountability from the persons who think that they cannot do anything on their own and everything is decided by the ministry or local government or anyone else – for example parents who are trying to force something. Unfortunately, a lot of teachers are convinced that this is the case.
That how their work in the classroom looks like depends on what background and what kind of parents students have, and on the other hand – on the coursebook (…)" (IDI 1).

The interviewees indicated the assessment system as a key dimension of accountability at the classroom level. The assumptions of the internal assessment system created and adopted by every school should be that it is an adequate, considering the specificity of the students, tool of accountability. The autonomy of school in adopting its own internal assessment system should be highlighted:

“No matter how we look at it, the assessment is on one hand about students being held accountable for by a teacher, but on the other hand, it is a huge responsibility of both the teacher for this process and the student themselves. In practice, the assessment is an element of control and intimidation rather than of responsible feedback. Of course, it is not always like that. Schools adopt their own assessment systems, sometimes it works, but often it is only a way to evade the prohibition to grade students in the younger classes” (IDI 5).

As an opportunity to enhance the development aspect, creating shared responsibility of students and teachers for the learning process, the interviewees indicated the usefulness of the formative assessment:

“Maybe it is not so common, but more and more teachers apply the formative assessment methods. Even when I am at the evaluation visit in the school and I’m observing a lesson, I can see the difference when a teacher uses for example a method “what is worth paying attention to” – the method used in formative assessment consisting in the common determination of e.g. grading criteria by a teacher and students or e.g. the sticks system during asking questions, or students evaluate the course of a lesson by finishing sentences (e.g. during this lesson I have learnt..., ... was difficult for me...). These lessons really look differently. Students are more engaged and responsible for what is happening” (IDI 3).

5.4.4 Relationship between accountability and providing equal opportunities, individualisation, promoting equity in schools

The basic document defining the manner of operation of education system in Poland – the Education System Act of 7 September 1991 determines the issue of providing equal opportunities, individualisation of the educational process, promoting equity in the following way: “School shall ensure every student the conditions necessary for their proper development, prepare them to fulfil family and citizen obligations on the basis of solidarity, democracy, tolerance, equity and freedom values”.

Currently, monitoring, control, accountability and evaluation of the activities for providing equal opportunities, individualisation of the educational process, promoting equity in Polish schools are related to the Regulation of the Ministry of Education of 17 November 2010 on the principles of provision and organisation of psychological and pedagogical support and the requirement of the state towards schools and institutions introduced in 2009 which in accordance with the Regulation states the following: “activities for providing equal educational opportunities are being undertaken”. The fulfilment of the requirement is examined in the course of external evaluation.

The requirement related to providing equal educational opportunities is defined in the Regulation of the Ministry of Education of 7 October 2009 on educational supervision as a situation in which teachers diagnose the situation of students, students achieve educational success according to their abilities. Activities for increasing educational opportunities of students are being undertaken in school. Simultaneously, these activities take into account the individualisation of the educational process. In this meaning, the evaluation
of this requirement is an attempt to systematically analyse the fulfilment of the requirement to diagnose students and offer them individual support (among others defined in the Regulation of the Ministry of Education of 17 November 2010 on the principles of provision and organisation of psychological and pedagogical support) (Kasprzak 2012). After Krzysztof Konarzewski, the individualisation of education can be defined as: “the adjustment of didactic and educational influence to the individual features of the student in order to proximate their educational achievements to their individual maximum level” (Konarzewski 2012).

This requirement contains the strong normative assumption that school increases educational opportunities of students through individualisation of the educational process – thus, using the language of P. Bourdieu, the task of school with the requirement understood in this way is enabling to exceed the habitus limitations of students. The postulate of inclusive education and treating school education as one of the key mechanisms on the macro scale of limiting the social exclusion and increasing opportunities on the labour market (Federowicz, Sitek 2011) can be visible here. Furthermore, in the individual perspective, the requirement defined in this way contains the idea of education as the support of individual student development (Łuczyński 2011).

Answering the question about the relationship between accountability and the process of providing equal opportunities, individualisation of educational process, promoting equal opportunities in schools, the interviewees indicated several dimensions:

- difficulties in understanding and practical implementation of these postulates in school,
- challenges related to the implementation of the regulation on the psychological and pedagogical support, which imposes the obligation of individualisation on schools,
- contradictory interests, resulting from different values, interpretation of reality by different groups,
- significance of individual competences and the attitude of teachers and principals in this regard.

All interviewees indicated the difficulty in implementation of the postulate of providing equal opportunities, individualisation of the educational process, promoting equity in schools with the accountability model oriented mainly at control and achievement of excellent results of teaching:

“We conduct a lot of such inspections, also in this area, i.e. for example in relation to the psychological and pedagogical support. And I can say that – on paper everything is all right, teams are operating, diagnoses appear, if we measure them with the presence of documents, but as I see it, the individualisation is getting worse since psychologists and counsellors jobs have been reduced in the commune” (IDI 3).

“In one town that we cooperate with as a centre, the local authorities liquidated the job of a counsellor and psychologist because a court ruling appeared stating that they can be employed if a territorial government unit has money, so it was decided that they did not have funds and liquidated with one signature – and a principal with a counselling centre should provide psychological and pedagogical support” (IDI 5).

Even with a limited relationship between the external accountability oriented at holding accountable for, creating shared responsibility for the learning process at the school level becomes important and may contribute to the individualisation process:

“I rather don’t see this relationship between how the local authorities make us accountable and the way we work with better or poorer students, the authorities require from us, maybe not require but make it desirable to have finalists of school subject contests. The staroste can boast about it. We as a school have made a huge effort for several years to have finalists of different subject contests and here the role
of teamwork of teachers have appeared to be important, of thinking about new interest circles. It was also possible for several years for me to have an additional principal hour for each subject. Now there are no funds for that, but the expectations of the local authorities as regards the number of finalists of subject contests are rather increasing, not decreasing. But I would like to emphasise once again, the success resulted from the fact that the teachers started to work differently, their attitude was more responsible, with looking forward, maybe not everyone’s attitude, because I haven’t achieved success with everyone, for example there are no finalists in history, although the students come with good results in history from a lower secondary school”. (IDI 2)

The concept of providing equal opportunities, individualisation of the educational process, promoting equity in schools is often not understood properly and the implementation of the activities may pose a great challenge. Different types of accountability, executed by different entities, may sometimes be contradictory:

“There are a lot of paradoxes here, because we have different accountability, depending on who does it and how they interpret the law, as well as the results of different controls, measurements. Let’s take for example the recently quoted reports by the Supreme Audit Office (NIK) or the National Institute of Hygiene and Sanitary and Epidemiological Station (SANEPID) which are used in the discussion on the preparation of schools to receive six-year-olds. From the point of view of the Ministry of Education, schools are prepared because SANEPID assessed them positively, but the criteria concerned such issues as the presence of running water and not of the rooms adequate for working with little children. Furthermore, the report by NIK, which showed that a lot of schools are not prepared for working with little children, is undermined by the ministry due to the fact that a low number of schools were subject to examination. And thus, how does it influence the issue of individualisation? The parents association which is against the reform emphasises that schools are not prepared, there is no chance for individual approach. The question arises how it will be possible, in such conditions, to fulfil such ambitious goals as individual support or providing equal opportunities if six- and seven year olds are going to take the same examination in the future. Where is the responsibility of the school, where of the Ministry of Education and the parent?” (IDI 5).

The above quotation shows how certain understanding of accountability is used by different entities depending on the adopted by them values, interpretation of reality, particular interests, etc. Another interviewee presents this challenge from his own perspective:

“One more example in relation to not only the individualisation of working with the student but also the individual responsibility of the teacher for educational processes. Some time ago, the chair of the educational committee required from me to provide the name of the teacher, the number of students in his/her class and average performance assigned to the teacher – it was a big interference. I referred to the personal data protection and managed not to do this but I was called to the office many times. They explained to me that it is about teachers to work better with the class and individual students. Has a similar situation occurred in other schools? They started with me because my school was the best in the poviat, so when I refused, other principals also did not prepare the summaries” (IDI 2).

The individualisation of the educational process involves not only the fulfilment of formal requirements of the regulation on the psychological and pedagogical support i.e. the preparation and documentation of the diagnoses of students and the creation of teams in this regard, but above all, diversification and individualisation of methods of working with individual students in the classroom (according to the diagnosed features of the student.) In practice, this is a huge challenge:

“The principal, teachers – when they hear the word individualisation – they focus on showing that they have all relevant documents. And in this regard, i.e. documentation, it is probably not so bad, and when
there are inspections, they rather do not reveal any significant inconsistencies. It is worse when we look at how the teacher practically works in the classroom with children showing different competencies and abilities. I actually can’t see any change in the style of work of teachers, even if they have very well prepared diagnoses.” (IDI 1).

At the level of territorial government units, providing equal opportunities is contained in the Reports on the state of fulfilment of educational tasks. In practice, it often involves including in the reports the number of students covered by the financial aid (scholarships, maintenance allowances) and the number of students covered by meal sponsoring and transport:

“Our authorities as part of gathering data to the annual Report on the state of education in poviat requested us to collect all data on students using any kind of support. These data are also partially gathered by the Education Information System. It’s difficult to say whether it resulted in anything besides fulfilling another reporting obligation by the school” (IDI 2).

In general, the interviewees see the limited relationship between accountability and providing equal opportunities, individualisation, promoting equity in schools. As a certain activity in this regard, they indicate the bottom-up (at the level of an individual teacher, subject teams, class groups) implementation of internal evaluation:

“Generally speaking, internal evaluation in different schools is in different shape (...) However, I encounter schools, teachers who look carefully into their own work, also in the area of individualisation. So then there is a chance that if it comes at the level of an individual teacher, he/she can see the value of evaluating his/her work because he/she has a very differentiated group and wants to work better with them. There is a great chance that it makes sense and as a result of these studies he/she will do something better, in another way” (IDI 6).

Strengthening internal responsibility by conducting own studies (evaluation) is one of the directions of enhancing the positive influence of accountability on the broadly understood educational process and providing equal opportunities and individualisation at the level of school and individual class. The interviewees indicated also formative assessment, mentioned earlier as regards the analysis of the influence of accountability on learning, as a valuable solution:

“Formative assessment is one of such promising sings. Of course, there are plenty problems with it, discussions what for, why, teachers focus on individual methods, tools but even when they introduce any elements of formative assessment, they naturally start to individualise working with a group. What is more, this approach is based on involving all students in the group to the most possible extent. Therefore, it entails the influence on providing equal opportunities for less active, poorly performing students” (IDI 5).

5.5 Conclusions

The trend of strengthening the role of accountability is increasing in the majority of education systems (Fullan 2012). Fullan on the example of the USA and Australia shows how the focus on accountability leads to the situation when the basic drivers in the system become standards, assessment, rewards and penalties.

This trend can be also observed in Poland. Accountability is an important but ambiguous category in the educational reality in Poland. The challenge posed by the tension between autonomy and accountability faced by the majority of education systems has its own Polish specificity.
From the point of view of the interviewees, the focus is rather on thinking in the category of accountability than responsibility. An important factor strengthening the trends towards accountability is the current financial crisis, the decline in population, influencing the decisions related to the reorganisation of the school network in Poland and reducing full-time teaching jobs.

The authors of the Report on the State of Education 2012 emphasise that “The liquidation of schools in many areas is a very difficult solution, and although in general statistics the dissolution of one school is invisible, locally this change is significant. Controversies related to the dissolution of schools are often connected with the necessity of transporting little children to the distant places as well as the fact that schools in local communities serve not only educational purpose but also the cultural one – they gather the inhabitants around it” (Kłobuszewska et al 2013).

The focus on accountability (especially in the area of learning outcomes and finances) is visible mainly at the line of local authorities (body which runs the school) and the school (principal). One of the interviewees talks about it in the following way: “When I started my work as a principal 15 years ago, responsibility was more visible then. The local authorities left more freedom and we used it. And now accountability prevails – and not only accountability for results but also for the working hours of the principal in detail – I need to describe every hour, especially when I am on a delegation or training.” (IDI 2)

The interviewees suggested that the so called educational voucher could be a possible and effective mechanism in the case of limited funds, with the simultaneous leaving at least certain part of autonomy in making financial decisions to the school by the body running the school.

The interviewees underline that a top-down, centralised model of accountability dominates. The bottom-up approach of creating principles and strategies of responsibility (e.g. of a teacher towards students or parents) is either sporadic or it does not occur at all. In the light of the collected material, it can be said that the well described and catalogued area of external obligations and scopes of competences and responsibilities exists, whereas the functioning of a universal organisational culture based on the professional responsibility – of teachers for the situation in the classroom, of principals for educational processes in school, of local authorities for the quality of education, going beyond the financial responsibility and results of external examinations. Furthermore, a major challenge, indicated by our interviewees is that the educational law and solutions related to it i.a. accountability (e.g. educational supervision) are formed at the central level (Ministry of Education), while the expenses related to the implementation of solutions are incurred locally (territorial government units). Thus, someone else makes decisions about what should be done and another one about what funds should be spent on it.

Different accountability models (especially at the level principal-teachers, school-running body) prove to be effective (influence the learning process) in the case of clearly defined roles and competences of particular people and institutions. It is also important to define strategic goals which are discussed together, and form shared consensus (e.g. in the case of an individual school, when the entire teaching staff sets the criteria of the evaluation of the teacher’s work by the principal or when in the relationship between the local government and school principals all parties adopt and accept e.g. the rules of rewarding, scope and form of control). The approach in which accountability mechanisms are applied to strengthen the competences of persons covered by – for example teachers and principals – also proves to be useful (an example can be internal and external training of the members of the teaching staff, organisation of conferences, workshops for principals by local educational authorities). The interviewees suggest that forms of teamwork can be especially useful (training of the entire teaching staff, not only sending individual teachers for training).
Such approach can be referred to the conclusions of Michael Fullan quoted in the beginning of the chapter, who states that: “it may seem strange, but accountability is not the best way to awaken responsibility (...) it should be stated clearly that the problem does not lay in the presence of standards and assessment, but in the attitude towards them that reinforces their position (visible in philosophy or theory of performance) and their domination (when they are in excess, they crush the system)” (Fullan 2012, 12). In the further part of the analysis Fullan juxtaposes the focus on accountability and responsibility with building capabilities and teamwork (of teachers and students).

From the perspective of the activities in the Polish school, the choice of these positive drivers, which are mentioned by Fullan (building capabilities and teamwork), and at the same time strengthening internal responsibility, takes place through conducting own studies (internal evaluation) and application of formative assessment in the work with students in the classroom. These are the directions of enhancing the positive influence of accountability on the broadly understood educational process and providing equal opportunities and individualisation at the level of school and individual class from the perspective of our interviewees.

At the school level, the interviewees suggested that an important element influencing the quality of education is the significance of autonomous and flexible management of funds by schools themselves (principal) so that it is possible to dispose of adequate funds in a flexible way in relation to the real needs connected with the educational process in (e.g. to send teachers to training course, buy necessary educational aids). The interviewees indicated the educational voucher model as an example of organisational solution enabling increased autonomy and adequacy in the area of spending funds. In general, for all interviewees it is rather more important to maintain institutional flexibility at every level than the execution of top-down, rigid rules (e.g. the greater scope of flexibility of regional educational inspectorates in deciding what range of schools and in accordance with what requirements they should be subject to evaluation, how to organise inspections of schools by territorial government units, finally, what the internal supervision conducted by the principal should look like).
6. DENMARK: SCHOOL LEADERSHIP EDUCATION AND ACCOUNTABILITIES

EPNoSL Danish Network, meeting August 21st, 2013

The meeting of nine members of the network was organised around two items: ‘Educating Danish School Leaders’ and ‘Accountability for equity and learning.’

6.1 Accountability for equity and learning: Accountability

A short introduction was given to an accountability typology, developed of (Moos, 2003):

- **Market-logic**: schools are seen as services, where service providers deliver educational products to consumers. Core concepts are consumers’ choice, competition and efficiency
- **Managerial logic**: There is a focus on planning, control, standards, top-down management and transparency
- **Public logic**: The governance of schools takes place through political processes involving policy makers, parents, students and professionals
- **Professional logic**: Schools are managed and led according to professional, educational standards and professional ethics
- **Ethical logic**: Schools are held responsible for the comprehensive and overarching upbringing, the education to democratic citizens (Moos, 2010).

The five categories can be compressed into three:

The first is: Have the national and local administrative, managerial expectations changed – as interpreted in act, regulations and official discourses and also in official standards and criteria for success and criteria for accountability? And closely linked to this: Have the demands from the marketplace changed – as interpreted in the competition situation and the financial situation?

The second category is: Are the political and local community with parents’ expectation the same as five years ago? In our case stories the local political and community expectations are more important than the national political expectations.

And the third accountability category is: Do professionals interpret how they best meet the needs of learners and of learning organisation, and their own needs, in the same way as they did five years ago? And closely linked to this: Are the cultural-ethical ways of looking at the needs of the children and adult in the schools, of students’ education and of their relations to the bigger community understood in the same way as they were at the first visits. Here we are looking at themes like ‘in loci parenti’, care, ‘Democratic Bildung’ (Moos, 2008) and ‘education for social justice’ (McKenzie et al., 2008) and themes like participation and critique, equity and care. The basis for those discussions is the cultural, ethical aspects of teachers’ and principals’ practice, the ‘internalized and socially encouraged value systems’ (Firestone & Shipps, 2005, page 88; Moos, Skedsmo, Höög, Olofsson, & Johnson, 2011).
6.2 Accountability for equity and learning: - for equity and learning

EPNoSL added the sub-heading to all our themes in June of 2012 in order to give the work in the network a distinct educational direction, a social and educational direction. We did so because we found that educating school leaders should have a direction in line with the general educational direction: Educating school leaders should take into account that they are leading an institution with the main aim of up-bringing and educating children and young people.

The Danish network was encouraged to describe and discuss diverse forms of accountability: Where and how did they see signs of them in school’s everyday life and in the discourses about schools and education, and what did the occurrences mean for school leaders leadership: do they hinder or strengthen the work for equity and learning?

B 1. There are signs of increasing central, managerial and market-logic governance that is overruling the professional and ethical logics.
B 2. Sometimes the aims of equity and learning are argued from a managerial point of view, but they are implemented in ways that make it difficult for schools to act appropriately, because accountability procedures take resources and room for manoeuvre from the educational practice
B 3. Sometimes managerial accountability initiatives neglect or hinders political influences on the local level, like from parents
B 4. Contemporary governance and the current school reform make school leaders accountable for student outcomes, test results, in a managerial manner that can be obstructing good education and leadership because it is very limited in scope: includes only a few subjects - and methods: they are preferably multiple choice test
B 5. Translation of external accountabilities requires school leaders to be able to translate accountabilities into comprehensive educational reflection and practice, because: at the end of the day schools must answer to the ethical accountabilities.
7. ACCOUNTABILITY – FOR EQUITY AND LEARNING IN FLANDERS (BELGIUM)

7.1 Legislation and governance: The Flemish educational context

Since 1989 there are three tiers of government in Belgium: the federal state, the regions and the communities. They each have their own powers and their own legislative and executive bodies. Education is under the control of the Communities. The Flemish Community controls education matters in Flanders.

The Constitution of Belgium stipulates “freedom of education” which guarantees the right to establish schools autonomously. At the same time, students can choose any school they want and be supported by public funding. Central to the Belgian education legislation is the Belgian Constitution which guarantees 'freedom of education' (art. 24). This is a two-sided freedom: a) the active freedom for every natural person or legal person to organise education and to set up institutions to that end, and b) the freedom of choice of school for pupils and their parents.

- **The right of establishment**, i.e. the freedom of private persons, as well as authorities, to found schools and provide education, both in form and in content. The autonomy derived from this principle also includes the right, within the prevailing rules, to confer legally valid proofs of study and to issue study certificates ratifying those studies.
- **The right of orientation**, which implies that schools can be founded on the basis of either certain denominational (Catholic, Jewish, Protestant and Islamic schools) or non-denominational philosophies, or certain pedagogical or educational ideologies (the so-called small education providers such as Steiner, Freinet or experience-based education).
- **The right of organisation**, or the organising bodies' and school boards' right to decide on the organisation and running of schools without interference from the government; this implies a.o. laying down the registration policy and applying disciplinary rules, the choice of staff in view of achieving their own educational objectives, the promulgation of school regulations. In other words, the decisive power of the school boards (organising body) and school management may not be curtailed in a clearly unreasonable or unequal manner. The Constitution prohibits all preventive measures. However, these may not be confused with regulatory measures. For instance, the government is allowed to lay down rules in a decree about admission policies and the right to refusal.

A characteristic feature of education in Flanders is that schools and their school boards are grouped into **education networks**. Education policy is an interaction between the ministry, the education networks and the local schools. Flanders comprises three education networks: community education, subsidised public-sector education and subsidised private education.

- **Community education**
  Organized by the ‘Flemish Community Education (GO!)’, a public institution under the authority of the Flemish Community. The constitution specifies that this education network must comply with special regulations regarding neutrality. The structure of this public institution comprises three levels: the central level, the medial level or the level of the school groups, and the local level of the school. Each school group is governed by a general assembly, a board of governors, a board of school leaders and a general director. The school groups are the organizing bodies for the schools, boarding schools and the pupil support and advisory centre that belong to the school group. The general
assembly approves the budget, the accounts and the appointment of the general director of the school group. The board of governors is responsible for general policy, education policy, staffing policy and material and financial policy at the school group level.

**Subsidised public-sector education**

Education which is organized by the provinces, towns/cities, and municipalities. These local authorities, which act as school boards, have full autonomy in their local policy-making, provided they keep within the bounds of the legally-defined framework.

- **Subsidised private education**

  Within this network, education is organized on private initiative, by a private individual or a private organization. The school board is often a not-for-profit organization. Every school board within the subsidised private education network has full autonomy in the implementation of policy in its schools within the legally-defined framework. The subsidised private education network is made up mainly of Catholic schools, a small amount of denominational Protestant schools and some non-denominational and independent schools (mainly Steiner schools and Freinet schools).

**School boards** within each Network enjoy far-reaching autonomy. They devise their own curricula, regulations, educational methods, and personnel policies. There is a strong sense of autonomy and identity within the different Networks, school boards and individual schools. The multiplicity of institutional layers and decision-making levels make educational management at the system level very complex. The Flemish government interferes only minimally in educational matters. It sets final attainment levels for students, but there are no standardised tests, nor systematic evaluations of school leadership. Therefore, there are already quite strong existing traditional networks of cooperation while at the same time schools function in a framework of competition rather than collaboration.

### 7.2 Structure of education in Flanders

**Structure of the national education system**

- **Early childhood education and care (for which the Ministry of Education is not responsible)**
- **Primary education**
- **Secondary-general education**
- **Early childhood education and care (for which the Ministry of Education is responsible)**
- **Secondary vocational education**
- **Post-secondary non-tertiary education**
- **Tertiary education (full-time)**
- **Compulsory full-time education**
- **Additional year**
- **Study abroad**
- **Compulsory part-time education**
- **Combined school and workplace courses**
- **Compulsory work experience + its duration**

**Elementary education**, principally from the age of 2.5 to 12, encompasses nursery education (2.5 - 6 years) and primary education (6 - 12 years).

**Secondary education** (age 12 up to 18) encompasses a first stage which focuses on a common core curriculum, but the options that are offered already reflect the branches of education between which pupils have to choose when they move up to the second stage: general secondary education (GSE), vocational secondary education (VSE), arts secondary education (ASE) and technical secondary education (TSE).
Compulsory education ends at the age of 18. The compulsory education requirement can also be satisfied by following home schooling.

**Higher education** includes initial teacher training, higher vocational education (HBO5, associate degree) and courses organized by university colleges and universities (bachelor, master and doctoral programmes).

**Permanent training** is very diverse, including adult education (AE) and part-time arts education (PAE), as well as professional training (VDAB), entrepreneurial training (SYNTRA Flanders), agricultural training and non-formal socio-cultural adult work (SCAW).

At the elementary and secondary educational levels, as well as mainstream education there is also **special education** for children who temporarily or permanently need special assistance. This may be because of a physical or mental disability, because of serious behavioural or emotional problems or because of severe learning difficulties.

### 7.2.1 The Flemish communities of schools

Communities of schools are collaborative partnerships between schools from the same geographical area, created in 1999 for secondary education and in 2006 for primary education. Schools can form these communities voluntarily and receive some funding by way of additional staff or other resources. The “competences” of communities of schools are defined by decree: communities can be created to consult about matters such as course offer, pupil guidance, personnel, and infrastructure.

The objective of the communities of schools was to make schools work in collaboration by sharing resources, to rationalise supply of courses and to promote cost savings across schools. The added value of school communities includes administrative increases of scale, more efficient use and distribution of human and financial resources, better harmonisation of study programme provision, and improved student guidance. Overall, it was hoped that working together would also help raise the quality of schools. The Flemish authorities incentivised the creation of communities of schools by allocating additional staffing points to them. The schools of a community must consult and decide collectively on the use of this additional funding: they may equally distribute the resources among themselves, allocate more resources to disadvantaged schools, and/or use some of the resources to appoint a community-level co-ordinating director.

There are now 115 communities of schools in secondary education, covering more than 95% of schools in Flanders, with an average of 6 to 12 schools belonging to a community. There are 360 in primary education, covering 97% of schools. Most schools have joined up to create these communities because there have been large incentives for them in terms of resources. However, it appears that these communities of schools have followed very uneven paths of development. Some have taken the concept far: they have created a post for a full-time coordinating director of the community, they have agreed on a common process for selection of students, negotiated common working conditions for teachers and created curricula for students with special education needs. Other communities have not used the approach and there is no evidence of changes of structures, roles or responsibilities of schools and their leadership.

**Difficulties in bridging the old and new structures**

Over the past years, the new structure of communities of schools seems to have had a marginal impact on the institutional landscape of secondary schools. The strong power and autonomy of the Education Networks has not been significantly altered, as communities of schools remain affiliated to their respective Network. The government aimed that the creation of communities of schools would induce mergers of school Boards so that eventually all schools in one community would belong to the same Board. Whilst some mergers have taken place, this process of rationalisation seems to be slow and uneven. In a way, the
creation of communities of schools has added an additional layer of bureaucracy without abolishing any of the old layers. At the same time, however, the intervention has induced a degree of localisation/regionalisation of responsibility from the Networks and Boards to the school community level.

Moving slowly from competition towards cooperation
The financing scheme of schooling in Flanders is based on parental choice. The government provides funding for schools based on the number of students enrolled. As funding follows the student, the system favors schools that can attract and retain students. Traditionally, schools have thus competed for students and resources. The practice of communities of schools was set to go beyond the tradition of school competition to make schools work together. As schools are allocated resources collectively, school leaders are compelled to get together regularly and consult on the use of these resources. In some cases cooperation stays limited to this very aspect of resource distribution. In many schools, however, the externally imposed cooperation on resource matters has had a spill-over effect: communities of schools provided a structure and platform for knowledge sharing and collective action among school leaders and teachers.

Communities of schools can respond to equity challenges
Flemish PISA results stand out in two ways. Flanders’ main PISA scores are among the highest of all participating countries, but the region also has one the highest performance differences between the strongest and the weakest students. One of the factors leading to inequality seems to be the secondary education system which streams students into three types of schools: academic, vocational and technical. Children with lower SES are overrepresented in vocational and technical schools, and there is an image of lower quality attached to these schools. As student outcomes are not measured in a standardized way, there is no evidence about the effectiveness of school communities in terms of improved learning outcomes. It seems that communities of schools do not as yet have any tangible impact on teaching and learning though they can provide a framework to improving equity, as they allow for improved student guidance.

Using communities of schools to improve school leadership
The Flemish authorities do not intervene to strengthen systemic leadership at the community level. There are no centrally organised support structures for principals, no monitoring and evaluation of leadership, and no dissemination of best practices. However, we observe that in successful communities systemic leadership evolves locally: school leaders have made use of the community structure to establish mechanisms for peer support, school leaders of successful schools share best practices with more disadvantaged schools, and the coordinating-director of the community takes on a coaching and mentoring function to provide guidance for principals. There are some good practices of communities of schools where shared leadership evolved as each principal of the community specialised in a certain field such as personnel, pedagogy, or infrastructure. The quality of shared leadership at the community level seems to depend on local factors, especially on the involvement of committed individuals at the school, community, or Board levels.

Finally, it is important to note that the Flemish communities of schools fit well with the OECD school leadership for systemic improvement focus. The definition of school leaders guiding the overall OECD activity suggests that effective school leadership may not reside exclusively in formal positions but instead be distributed across a range of individuals in the school. Principals, managers, academic leaders, department chairs, and teachers can contribute as leaders to the goal of learning-centred schooling. The precise distribution of these leadership contributions can vary and can depend on factors such as governance and management structure, levels of autonomy and accountability, school size and complexity, and levels of student performance. Principals can act as leaders of schools as learning organizations which in addition can benefit and contribute to positive learning environments and communities.

7.2.2 The near future
Government aims at strengthening the communities of schools by reforming them into School groups on a larger scale and resorting underneath one school board. By September 2017 these school groups can organise themselves when they contain at least schools for primary and/or secondary education on a scale of minimum of 2,000 pupils. The wanted scale goes up to 6,000 pupils. Incentives (financial as well as other) will be given at these school groups.

In the light of the responsibility of schools to provide quality education and the increasing importance dedicated to schools’ policy-making capacities in order to ensure educational quality, the school principal has become a key person in the framework of quality assurance and school improvement. The schools’ policy-making capacities depend largely on the extent to which school principals are able to establish an open communication and shared leadership, their responsiveness towards internal and external goals, their efforts to stimulate the reflective capacity of the staff members etc. A well-functioning system of evaluation and coaching of school principals is therefore indispensable for every school in the Flemish Community.

It is important to point out that the governing bodies in both elementary and in secondary education are responsible for determining the responsibilities of the school principal. The autonomy of the governing body fits in with the principle of Freedom of education. It is only within community education that the school principal’s responsibilities are pre-determined.

The appraisal system for teachers is also valid for evaluation of school principals. The main features of the appraisal cycle are enumerated below:

- Evaluation in cycles of maximum four years;
- Individualised job descriptions, adapted to local expectations;
- Appraisal discussions;
- Evaluation discussion and evaluation report including the ‘positive’ or ‘unsatisfactory’ conclusion;
- Appeal procedure in Chamber of the Board of Appeals.

The appraisal system for school principals differs in only one way from the system for teachers, namely that there is only one evaluator instead of two. The evaluator is a representative of the school’s governing body.

The recruitment process of school principals may differ in practice from the recruitment of teachers:

- A recent trend is that external consultancy agencies are involved in the process of recruitment of principals. More and more schools’ governing bodies think the role of the school principal is so crucial that professional support in screening candidates is required.
- The School Advisory Services support governing bodies in the preparation of the recruitment process for a new school principal. Depending on the umbrella organization the involved School Advisory Service may or may not be part of the selection committee.

School Advisory Services in Flanders indicate that schools face increasing challenges in the recruitment of school principals. According to the School Advisory Services, the perceived work load for school principal, the high amount of tasks for the school principal (with increasingly more organizational and administrative tasks, leaving little space for pedagogical improvement) and the absence of a middle management structure in nursery and primary schools are due to the decreasing number of candidates for vacancies of school principals. These problems are confirmed by the teacher’s unions and the organization for school principals.
7.3 Quality Assurance

7.3.1 External quality control

In elementary education, secondary education, Adult Education and part-time artistic education external quality control is based on the full inspection of the institutions concerned.

With the new Quality decree of 8 May 2009, the educational inspectorate switched from integral to differentiated assessments: it assesses schools, academies and centres on the basis of the institutional profile, previous assessment reports and so on. The institutional profile consists of centrally collected data about the institutions. On the basis of this profile and of a one-day site visit, the educational inspectorate gauges the quality of the institution. Via interpretation and deliberation, the inspectors determine an assessment focus in the conclusion to the preliminary evaluation: which learning area, course of study or other aspect will they examine in detail during the actual assessment? The inspectors decide on the focus in direct proportion to the perceived strengths and weaknesses of the school.

An assessment is carried out by an assessment team consisting of at least two inspectors, plus one or more external experts. During the assessment, the inspectorate checks that the educational regulations are being adhered to and that the educational institution is systematically investigating and monitoring its own quality. The inspectorate also examines any roles that the institution has assigned to the schools community, the schools group or the consortium to which it belongs.

If the inspectorate discovers shortcomings during an assessment, it considers whether or not the institution is able to rectify them on its own and without external support.

Every institution should be assessed at least once every ten years. For the determination of the frequency and intensity of assessment, the inspectorate takes as its basis the institutional profile, previous assessment reports, and so on. The inspectorate may also, in the event of serious complaints about an institution, conduct an assessment at the request of the Flemish government.

The monitoring of the hygiene, safety and fitness for use of buildings and premises, as prescribed in the regulations, can be conducted separately from the assessment. The educational inspectorate may opt to conduct such monitoring at the same time as the assessment.

In its judgement, the inspectorate never pronounces on the role of the institution’s management, or about individual staff members.

The inspectorate has no authority to monitor how a pedagogical or agogic project is fleshed out or to check the pedagogical, agogic or artistic guidance methods used. Neither does it have any powers to inspect philosophy-of-life courses.

7.3.2 Internal evaluation in elementary and secondary education

Internationally, there is a growing trend in schools in favour of critical self-examination and a more systematic appraisal of the achievement of goals set by the schools themselves. The performance of self-evaluations has also become an important aspect of quality monitoring within Flemish education in recent years. Self-evaluation looks at whether the elementary or secondary school is meeting the goals that it has formulated on the basis of its pedagogical project. By contrast, the primary concern in an assessment by the educational inspectorate is whether the school is satisfying the minimum expectations that society has with respect to schools. Until recently, the vast majority of self-evaluations were initiated by the schools.
themselves, without any compulsion on the part of the government, which mainly played a stimulatory role in this regard.

The Decree concerning equal educational opportunities I (GOK-I) (B.S. 14/09/02) grants, for the first time, the status of statutory expectation to self-evaluations of schools. Elementary and secondary schools which can bank on GOK resources are expected to carry out a self-evaluation of the policy implemented during the lifetime of the Equal Educational Opportunities Policy. However, it is part of the school’s autonomy how they will concretely interpret this self-evaluation.

Since the decree on the quality of education (09-05-2009), educational institutions have had the task of conducting a qualitative policy independently. However, this independent policy must take account of the policy context defined by the government in the regulations. Moreover, every institution should systematically evaluate its own quality. The institution may decide for itself how to do this.

For their internal quality assurance, schools may make use of numerous tools that have been developed with a view to the performance of self-evaluation in elementary and secondary education. The diversity of self-evaluation tools is due to differences with regard to educational level, the aspects to be covered by self-evaluation, the methods employed, the functions of self-evaluation, the support received by schools and so on. Schools thus determine for themselves how to shape their internal quality assurance, how to proceed with it and what tools to use in doing so.

7.4 Education of School Leaders

There is no comprehensive statutory description of the post of school leader in Flanders. A brief description of the post of school leader is given in the Flemish rules and regulations which state that the school leader is in charge of the school under the supervision of the school board and that he/she must be at one of the sites for at least the whole time pupils are at school, unless he/she has a justified reason for being absent.

Within schools of the subsidised public-sector education and subsidised private education the school boards are responsible for determining the responsibilities of the school leader. It is only within community education that the school leader’s responsibilities and powers are laid down by law (Special decree of 14 July 1998 regarding community education). These powers are:

- overall and educational organization of the school
- the school’s work plan
- drawing up school regulations
- determining the areas of competence of the staff
- drawing up the job descriptions of the staff
- support and assessment of staff
- formulating proposals for permanent appointments for staff
- temporary appointment of staff for the schools
- implementing reform projects
- determining the teaching staff’s in-service training needs
- order and discipline measures for the pupils
- applying the entry requirements in education for continuing education
- organizing extra-curricular activities within and outside the school
- implementing the school budget as approved by the school group
- external relations of the school
- maintenance work and guardianship of the school infrastructure and implementation of minor infrastructure work.
7.4.1 Competences of School Leaders

**Community education**
The selection procedure for a school leader is laid down by decree. The board of governors of the school group to which the school belongs gives notice at least once a year of the positions it has published as vacant, following consultation with the heads of the institutions and the management of the school community. This includes a description of the way in which applications have to be submitted. The board of governors of the school group decides whether to accept a candidate for the probationary period. Candidates must fulfil the following conditions:

- He/she must have applied by registered mail to the board of governors of the school group in the form and within the time stated in the call for candidates.
- He/she must have the required qualification or ‘satisfactory’ rating. A teacher’s qualification is always required and further qualifications vary according to the education level. (for leading a primary school a bachelor degree and for leading a secondary school a master degree).
- He/she may not have received an ‘unsatisfactory’ rating at the last evaluation or assessment.
- He/she must fulfil the general recruitment conditions (e.g. comply with the provisions of the language laws, be of irreproachable conduct).
- He/she must have the competencies required for the post. These competencies are laid down by the community education board. They are assessed in a test organized under the responsibility of this board.

**Subsidised public-sector education and subsidised private education**
In subsidised education a decree lays down regulations for the selection of a school leader. A school board can allocate a position in a selected post or promotion that has become vacant because of an appointment. In order to be permanently appointed in a selected post or promotion, the staff member must fulfil the following conditions:

- He/she must have the required qualification or ‘satisfactory’ rating (same as in community education).
- He/she may not have received an ‘unsatisfactory’ rating in his/her last evaluation.
- He/she must fulfil the general conditions of recruitment.

7.5 Training for school leaders

7.5.1 Community education

School leadership training is only obligatory in community education. This training consists of two years of pre-service training. A training certificate is awarded on completion of the training. This certificate comprises a strengths and weaknesses analysis drawn up by the mentors who observed and supported the candidate during his/her training. The certificate also states the education level or education type (school leader in elementary education, school leader in secondary education, head of an adult education centre, school leader in part-time art education or school leader in special education) for which the candidate received training. This training certificate does give the candidate access to all posts of school leader provided he/she also has the necessary basic qualifications required for those posts.
7.5.2 Subsidised public-sector education and subsidised private education

There are few training programmes for candidate school leaders in Flanders. The training programmes that support newly-appointed school leaders, however, are more numerous among the different co-ordinating bodies of the education networks.

7.5.3 Recent policy in Flanders on training

There is a significant recent trend in Flanders towards training and professional development for school leaders. But our freedom of education means that the government is rather reluctant to take many initiatives in this respect.

The current Flemish minister of Education and Training states in his declaration of policy for the period 2009-2014 that school boards and school leaders must carry a vision on quality in education and must be able to connect this to leadership and professionalization.

Community education and the not-for-profit organizations of the various co-ordinating bodies within subsidised and subsidised education receive funding from the Flemish Community to run in-service training programmes specifically related to their own educational project.

Every year the Flemish Government publishes priority themes for in-service training. In-service training organizations can submit proposals for projects on a specific theme. These proposals are then assessed for relevance and quality. The approved projects are funded and evaluated by the Flemish Community. These in-service training projects are free for the staff member. In the past, school leadership was a priority theme.

Recently the government started with a training fund for school leaders to strengthen their professional competencies. The school leader will then be entitled, throughout his entire career, to 1,500 € to cover the costs of such training. More in-service training funding is also provided so that a school leader can spend 80 to 100 € a year on in-service training.

We have no national standard towards required competences for school leaders.

It is important to point out here that the school boards are responsible for determining the responsibilities of the school leader. They select and appoint the school leader and are responsible for his/her further career development. The autonomy of the school boards fits in with the concept of freedom of education.

However each staff member at a school has to have a job description (instated by law) which is used to evaluate the member. This job description also comprise a competency profile, with a description of skills such as teaching skills and knowledge of child developmental psychology, and other competences such as involvement in the school, aptitude for working with children, team player, etc.

In the past the Ministry of Education and Training has made models of job descriptions available for schools. These models are merely examples, however, and school boards are under no obligation to adopt them. The function of school leader is described in the models as the translation of the school’s educational project into specific concrete objectives and on the basis of these, to organize, co-ordinate and adapt the school’s activities with the aim of realizing the intended results. The education networks have also made available models of job descriptions for their schools.
7.6 Results from research

Please find below a (limited) selection of articles of Flemish researchers on the topic of leadership and accountability. We also add the abstracts of these articles. Despite some articles seem to focus on teachers, the issue of accountability for principals is also raised in the articles.


Based on a secondary analysis of studies on Flemish primary schools, the article argues that the metaphor of the **gatekeeper**, on the threshold between the outside-school and the inside-school world, is a powerful frame to capture some of the particular complexities of principals’ emotional experience of themselves and their working conditions. More in particular, the image allows for a more refined and in-depth understanding of the emotional and relational aspects in the position and role of the principal. Apart from depicting the working conditions of leadership in terms of the gatekeeper-image, the authors contend that the inevitable normative character of education contributes to a sense of vulnerability and emotionality in leadership. Two themes appeared to be prominent in principals’ experience of their gatekeeper’s position: first, being caught in a web of conflicting loyalties and second, the struggle between loneliness and belonging. Underneath these themes—it is argued—lies the issue of the principal’s professional self in the particular school.


During the last two decades teachers in many countries have found themselves facing new demands and changes. In his ‘intensification thesis’ Apple made a powerful attempt to conceptualize and explain these changes: the growing economic and management oriented perspective on education leads to intensification of teachers’ work, implying deskilling and deprofessionalization. This article argues for three refinements of this ‘intensification thesis’. First, the experience of intensification is not only induced by changes at the macro level, but there appear to be multiple sources for intensification. Secondly, the intensification impact does not operate in a linear and automatic way, but is mediated. Finally, the impact of intensification turns out to be different among different teachers. Thus, we argue for an alternative form of professionalization (as an answer to the growing intensification of teachers’ work) through the acknowledgement of teachers’ specific knowledge base as well as the need to develop it (even if this implies more work). Teachers’ professional development therefore needs to go hand in hand with efforts to ‘buffer’ the threat of intensification.


During the last two decades teachers in many countries have found themselves facing new demands and changes. In his ‘intensification thesis’ Apple, (1986). made a powerful attempt to conceptualize and explain these changes: the growing economic oriented perspective on education leads to an intensification of teachers’ work. This paper, which reports on qualititative–interpretative case studies in Flemish (Belgian) primary schools, contributes to a more refined understanding of teachers’ working conditions. Using ‘experience of intensification’ as a central concept, the authors call for a refined understanding of the complex interplay of teachers’ professional selves, the cultural and structural working conditions in the school and the different “calls for change” they have to deal with. Based on multiple case studies, the authors demonstrate that the experience of intensification is mediated through processes of interpretation
and sense-making that are influenced by the organizational working conditions as well as teachers’ sense of professional identity.


This study analyses leadership practices in four Flemish school clusters (voluntary collaborations between either primary or secondary schools of the same region). The theoretical framework combines distributed leadership and micropolitical theory. Distributed leadership theory focuses on leadership practices in organizations (school clusters) as resulting from the interaction between actors (principals) and the situation or context. This way, the theory allows to analyze the interplay of both acting agents (in interaction) and structural elements, and helps to reveal how leadership practices result from it. Micropolitical theory -with its central claim that organization members’ actions (and sense-making) are largely driven by their interest-is a valuable addition to the framework, because it sheds light on the interests of principals within the particular context in which they operate. Combining distributed leadership and micropolitical theory therefore allowed to investigate the collaborative leadership practices in school clusters. Based on an analysis of four case studies of school clusters, the researchers conclude that principals interactions at the level of the school cluster are influenced by both school interests (relating to the school organization) and individual professional interests (relating to the individual principals). Balancing these different school and individual interests shapes principals' (micropolitical) actions and helps to explain how leadership practices at the upper-school level take place. Cultural-ideological interests (particularly safeguarding the identity of the school) appear to be of crucial importance. When these interests are threatened, principals will almost certainly withdraw from the upper-school organization.


This inquiry, by means of the case study method, explored how principals’ conceptions about their role as school leader contribute to a better understanding of their leadership behavior and how this is related to school climate. The results indicated that differences of how principals conceive their leadership role are related, indirectly through their leadership practices (i.e., initiating structure and supportive leadership), to the school climate (unity in vision, collegial relations, collaboration, innovativeness). We distinguished three types of school leader profiles: (1) the “people-minded profile” with a strong emphasis on educational leadership and the mentoring role as a school leader and with the necessary skills to implement a shared vision; (2) the “administrative-minded profile” with the focus on administration and the coordinating leadership role, lacking a vision and feeling unable to develop a vision; and (3) the “moderate-minded profile” with an emphasis on educational leadership but having difficulty to involve all teachers in the school’s vision. Drawing on three prototypical cases we discuss in depth that these types of principals work under different school climate conditions.


In this study the relationship between school leadership and teachers’ organizational commitment is examined by taking into account a distributed leadership perspective. The relation between teachers’ organizational commitment and contextual variables of teachers’ perceptions of the quality and the source of the supportive and supervisory leadership function, participative decision making, and cooperation within the leadership team are examined. A survey was set up involving 1,522 teachers from 46 large secondary schools in Flanders (Belgium). Because the data in the present study have an inherent hierarchical structure,
that is, teachers are nested into schools, hierarchical linear modeling techniques are applied. The analyses reveal that 9% of the variance in teachers’ organizational commitment is attributable to differences between schools. Teachers’ organizational commitment is mainly related to quality of the supportive leadership, cooperation within the leadership team, and participative decision making. Who performed the supportive leadership function plays only a marginally significant positive role. The quality of the supervisory leadership function and the role of the leadership team members in this function were not significantly related to teachers’ organizational commitment. **Conclusions:** The implications of the findings are that to promote teachers’ organizational commitment teachers should feel supported by their leadership team and that this leadership team should be characterized by group cohesion, role clarity, and goal orientedness. Recommendations for further research are provided.


Providing effective feedback through teacher evaluation is a complex task for the school leader. Many authors state that teacher evaluation does not contribute to teachers’ professional learning. Few studies focus on the specific leadership variables that contribute to effective teacher evaluation. This study explores the importance of transformational and instructional leadership for the feedback utility and teachers’ professional learning. The results of regression and path analyses showed that leadership directly influences the feedback utility and indirectly influences teachers’ professional learning. This study demonstrates the importance of school leadership for effective teacher evaluation and highlights its usefulness for teachers’ professional learning.
8. ACCOUNTABILITY FOR EQUITY? THE IRISH QUESTION

8.1 Introduction
In line with the protocol developed for this work package this paper will examine patterns of accountability in the Republic of Ireland (ROI) from the perspective of the two broad dimensions of accountability specified. Accountability for the process and outcomes of education are very useful when applied to the idea of equity in education because the distinction between the two interrelated dimensions maps onto the well established idea in the discourse of equity of opportunity/participation and the more challenging, radical notion of equity in and equality of outcome (Baker, 2009). This framework can be used to hold systems to account not only for the quality of what goes on in schools, the outcome of which can have significant negative implications for some social groups, but for the outcome of education on subsequent life chances. It will also be necessary to ensure that two other aspects of accountability are kept in mind throughout this discussion – accountable (and responsible) for what and accountable and (responsible) to whom. In an era where schools are sometimes expected to be all things to all people it is important to keep in mind where the boundaries may/should be drawn. The additional typology outlined by Moos (Moos 2013) will be used later in the paper as the broad structure to facilitate an outline the types of accountability that frame the education system in Ireland.

- Managerial and bureaucratic accountability
- Market-oriented accountability
- Public accountability
- Professional accountability
- Cultural-ethical accountability

This typology, to some degree, corresponds to an existing framework used to examine the key social contexts and systems – economic, political, cultural and affective (Baker et al, 2009; Riddile et al. 2011) within which patterns of equality and inequality are shaped and reproduced. It is important that the idea of accountability for equity attempts to integrate or hold together the discourses of both accountability and equity so that the manner in which one impacts the other can be examined and understood fully. Placing the two together into a broad heading alone will not facilitate a thorough analysis. Whatever accountability meant in the past, within the neo-liberal perspective the manner in which accountability has evolved creates serious challenges for the achievement of equity. It could be, and frequently is, argued that these new forms of accountability are a significant factor in the failure to move closer towards more equitable outcomes; ‘neoliberalism starkly increases inequality’ (Spence, 2013, p.141). It is important to recognise the origin of current range of accountability measures. The fact that they are derived from neo-capitalist/neo-liberal forms of governmentality (Ball et al 2012, Ball, 2012a; Ball 2012b, Barnett, 2008, Wacquant, 2009) where the broader inequalities in society have been widened and deepened means that working with these two unhappy bedfellows will require a considerable nuanced analysis if we are to find patterns of policy and practices where equity outcomes are identifiable. We have now had neo-liberal derived accountability models, to varying degrees, in most systems for well over 20 years. This provides a reasonable evidential base upon which to judge the outcome of this perspective on issues related to equity. The legacy of this period within the field of education is the subject of considerable critical analysis – the high stakes nature of much of the public face of accountability has been shown to have a negative impact on the nature of educational provision in schools. Research from the UK by Alexander (2009) on what has been describe as the laboratory of neo liberal educational reforms (Ball 2013) is a damning indictment of the direction many of the current models of accountability are leading education systems. Much research and critical comment points to a significantly negative impact on equity focused outcomes. Other research based on the impact of
No Child Left Behind (NCLB) in the US is equally highly critical of how these reform movements impact quality (Labaree, 2010; Spence, 2013). The notable exception here are the Scandinavian countries, where educational reforms have led to a reduction of social inequalities, mostly because they have been accompanied by wider programs of social democratic reforms (Erikson and Jonsson, 1996 in Lanelli, 2011). By and large education related practices, some directly related to education and others more broadly focused and to varying degrees enabled by the neo liberal way, reconfirm how educational reform and current accountability systems are not addressing the persistence of inequitable patterns of outcomes in education. What has happened in many countries is that the expansion of education has only postponed the point of selection. The levels of institutional and curriculum differentiation within education systems is often linked to patterns of school choice particularly among the middle classes and is facilitated by many of the neo liberal derived practices (Devine, 2004). This has resulted in an increasing number of people from lower social classes who stay on in education concentrated in less prestigious institutions, studying for less prestigious, sometimes sub-degree level programmes which in turn may affect their ability to gain prestigious and well-paid jobs. It has been found that social stratification reproduces itself not only through vertical differentiation (between levels) but also through horizontal differentiation (between types) of educational outcomes (Lucas, 2001; Lanelli, 2011). In addition to this, and also enabled by the neo-liberal free market ideology, the persistence of social class inequalities demonstrates that the labour market does not work on a purely meritocratic basis. Although employers use educational qualifications to screen potential applicants for jobs ‘research has also found that the effect of social class origin on individuals’ labour market outcomes is still strong and only partly mediated by education. This means that children of middle-class families are more likely to achieve higher occupational outcomes than children of working-class families, irrespective of their educational qualifications. They have other resources (such as social networks) at their disposal that advantage them in the job competition (Lanelli, 2011, p. 252). There are traces of neo-liberal type ideas and policies identifiable within the Irish system. Many of the more extreme practices of high stakes accountability evident in the UK or the US are either not present or in the early stages of development in Ireland. What can be seen are recognisable shifts in the discourse that are clearly laying down the foundations for a much more neoliberal response to reform in the education system in the future.

In order to examine the current models of accountability in Irish education it is necessary to explore to some degree some of the historical legacy and cultural specifics that have framed Irish education. These factors have created a particular national context that has mediated the broader transnational developments of neoliberal models of accountability. As is the case in all countries, when ideas transfer into the national framework, the outcomes differ and it is important to recognise this if we are to understand the dynamics involved in how neo-liberalism has impacted education systems (Lynch et al, 2012). By doing this it will be possible to trace the different forms of accountability in operation and the extent to which these are (a). influenced by neo-liberal ideology and (b) either by resistance to the neo-liberal order or by some other means striving to keep equity at the centre of the frame.

8.2 Public sector reform in Ireland

Within the broader public sector in Ireland in the 1990s new public management type reforms were the first visible sign that change was afoot. It was not that reform was not needed – in fact stagnation within the public service in terms of work practices and an inward looking, conservative perspective prevailed. Piecemeal reform and transformation appeared not to be working too well (see (Garvin, 2004, Allen, 2007, O Sullivan, 2006; Lynch 2012) other factors also contributed to creating ‘a fertile ground in which to breed neo-liberal policies’ in certain sectors (Lynch, 2012, p. 10). The size of neo liberal project, its strength as an approach to reform may well have been what was needed in order to wake the sleeping giant that to varying extents was the Irish Public Service. The strategic management initiative (SMI) was developed by the government in 1994. This coupled with a joint strategy publication by the secretaries general of the various
government departments Delivering Better Government (1996) indicated very clearly that the public service management was strongly committed to significant neo-liberal type reforms. Both these documents were key factors in the enactment of the Public Services Management Act (1997) which provided the legislative basis for reform across the public sector. The development and implementation of a system of performance management -Performance Management Development System (PMDS) – was a highly significant game changer in terms of reshaping the discourse and providing a mechanism for some form of reward and sanction identified as one of the contributors to public service stagnation.

Since the early 1990s the neo-liberal models of accountability have become well established in most of the Irish public service and it could be argued that many of the outcomes in terms of broad organisation reform were welcome and necessary. However, because new managerialism and the associated new forms of accountability were not just about changing work-practices but also about changing values in how organisations relate to workers, customers, the state and the general public good (Clarke, 2000), it is not surprising that once the ideas began to infiltrate thinking in relation to educational practice that the resistance was more pronounced. The focus on outputs, performance indicators, key deliverables dominated by the idea of choice and the free market, where market principles become the primary vehicle of problem solving did not sit comfortably with the education sector in Ireland. The teacher trade union sector provided a robust and successful resistance to the many of the more controversial forms of accountability impacted (Lynch, 2012). This situation prevailed until recently when the economic downturn changed the trade union/ state dynamic. Currently austerity measures have seen the relationship between unions and the state move to a more contentious, pay and conditions basis.

A seminal account of new managerialism in Irish education published in 2012 (Lynch et al 2012) claims that because Ireland operates within the Anglo-American zone of influence for reasons of history, culture, language, colonization and trade. It is not surprising therefore that it also displays many of the features of its powerful neo-liberal neighbours in terms of its social, health and education policies’ (Lynch et al 2012 p.5). She goes on to say that ‘despite all the changes occurring through the endorsement of neo-liberal principles at management levels, evidence from schools suggest that not much may have changed at the classroom level’ (ibid. p. 15). However, evidence on the ground would suggest that this assessment might have been slightly dated at the time of writing (2010). While direct evidence was not fully visible until 2007 when the Ministry succeeded in publishing all school evaluation reports on the Ministry website small changes were evident as far back as 1992 when ‘control’, ‘accountability’ and ‘quality assurance’ were strongly evident in the consultative green paper on education (Government of Ireland, 1992). ‘‘Transparency’ and ‘evaluation’ were added in the White Paper 1995 (Education, 1995), with ‘accountability, to evaluate effectiveness’ named as one of the five educational principles (Gléeson & Donnabháin, 2009, p. 31). ‘Transparency’ and ‘accountability’ are also central to the 1998 Education Act echoing the corporate language of the earlier national policy documents (Government of Ireland, 1998)’ (Dooley, 2013). The introduction into the Irish inspection system of four point rating scale for schools developed by the Standing International Conference of Inspectorates (SICI) as a way of classifying school during school inspections and the setting up of the high level School Improvement Working Group to follow up on failing schools identified on the four point scale during inspections was further evidence of raising the stakes of accountability. However, it was the very public fall from grace in the PISA 2009 results that provided the most significant platform to date for an accelerated approach to forms/models of accountability that previously would have been unthinkable- now we had solid proof that our system was flawed. What followed was the enforcement of a back to basic type literacy and numeracy strategy (Department of Education 2011); the introduction of mandatory standardised testing, the reporting of outcomes of standardised testing to parents and school management, the introduction of curricular reforms at junior cycle to better correspond to the type of competences tests in PISA and other international comparative testing regimes. We are in danger of becoming transparent but empty, recognisable to ourselves – ‘I am other to myself precisely at the place where I expect to be myself’ (Butler, 2004, p. 15 in Ball, 2013, p. 91). In terms of becoming visible to ourselves the recent (2013)
introduction of School Self Evaluation (Department of Education 2012), the parameters of which are centrally controlled by the ministry, is a type of process where schools can make a spectacle of themselves using the same technologies of surveillance that were previous used by eternal evaluators. We are now approaching at a point where the commodification of knowledge and learning, together with demands in the language of efficiency, productivity and competition that has been visible in the policy agenda for many years (Deborah et al., 2008; Lynch, 2006; Lynch et al, 2012; Sugrue, 2006) is now impacting practice and is becoming more visible in schools and classrooms making it more difficult to maintain a focus on the border, more holistic aspects of schooling (Dooley, 2013).

8.3 Accountability in Irish education

This section deals with the different ways in which the Irish education is held accountable for what goes non in schools. The five headings outlined by Moos 2013 are used to structure this discussion. The fundamental need of the education system to be accountable to the students, parents, the community and broader society is assumed rather than focus directly on this at present this paper will explore the systems and structures that are in place to ensure that this fundamental form of accountability is happening.

8.3.1 Managerial and bureaucratic accountability

At a broad level the Irish education system has a clear hierarchy of governance; ministry, patron, board of management (governors), principal and teachers. This, however, should not obviate the highly complex nuances that exist in the system. It is beyond the scope of this article to deal with the full complexities of the systems that are in place for managerial and bureaucratic models of accountability. This discussion will confine itself to the broad patterns of practice in this area.

The system is highly centralized – the Ministry of Education i.e. the Department of Education and Skills (DES) is responsible for providing for the education of the children in the state. As a department it is accountable to the Ministry of Finance for the budget that is allocated to it. In times of austerity, high spending departments like education are the subject of continuous scrutiny in terms of identifying potential cuts and consequently ensuring value for money is key to how the Department functions. The Comptroller and Auditor General keeps a watchful eye on all government departments and the DES is the subject of a number of value for money audits and reports. The inspectorate in the DES is the main body responsible for ensuring quality assurance in schools and in many ways functions as the visible manifestation of the Ministry’s accountability requirement in schools. While this may seem clear it is necessary to explore how the church and state relate to each other in relation to the governance of schools. The majority of schools at primary level (90%) and a significant percentage of second level schools are under the control of the Church (mainly the Catholic Church). The Constitution of Ireland comprises many Catholic principles and under this model of Catholic social theory, parents were given the right and responsibility to educate their children.

*The State acknowledges that the primary and natural educator of the child is the Family and guarantees to respect the inalienable right and duty of parents to provide, according to their means, for the religious and moral, intellectual, physical and social education of their children (Government of Ireland, 1937, Article 42.1).*

The role of the State is thus framed as being subordinate to that of the parents and confined ‘to provide for free primary education’ and ‘to intervene where parents neglect their rights and obligations’. The marginalisation of the State’s role in education in this way resulted in a practice where the State provided financial support for the schools while the Church, acting on behalf of the people, attended to all the other aspects of the running of the State schools (Walsh, 2009). The system was set up in this way and to a significant degree this structure prevails. The DES pays for the teachers’ salaries, most of the buildings and
the upkeep of the schools while the patron (usually the local bishop) is in charge of the day-to-day running of the school. The Board of Management (Governors) manages the school on behalf of the patron and is accountable to the patron and the Minister. The Board must uphold the characteristic spirit (ethos) of the school and is accountable to the patron for so doing. The principal is responsible for the day-to-day management of the school, including providing guidance and direction to the teachers and other staff of the school and is accountable to the Board for that management. Because the patron devolves responsibility for most of the day-to-day activity in the school to the Board of management and because this board are always voluntary what happens in practice is that the running of the school is left in the hands of the principal. Because of this the principal is a key player in how policy and forms of accountability are meditated within the school. It is necessary, therefore, to focus to a limited extent on the nature of school leadership in Ireland. As already established, at a systems level, within the public service, neo liberal derived policies have taken a firm hold. This is clearly evident in the language used by ministry on the website, in communications, circulars, templates etc. Many of the rudiments of new public management do not sit well with school leadership in the Irish context. This issue of identity through performance criteria (Lumby) has not impacted this sector. The number of small schools at primary and also to a lesser extent at second level find little scope for the type of leadership practice advocated by organization such as the OECD (Deborah et al 2008; Mac Ruairc 2010). To a large extent Irish schools are dominated by person centred models of school leadership (Fielding 1999; 2012) based on mutual trust and organic, authentic models of locally based accountability related very specifically to the core task of education often in its broadest sense. It is not without its problems, underperformance of teachers, some poor levels of attainment, poor leadership in some schools etc. All of these issues are well understood but solutions have not been forthcoming to any satisfactory level and any effort to deal with these issues becomes fraught with difficulty. In this regard also the power of the teacher unions in mediating the pace and content of reform related to these issues cannot be underestimated. The unions at both primary and second level between them are one of the most powerful group in the Irish trade union movement with significant political influence at negotiations etc. and are viewed as ‘strongly resistant to new managerial norms and values and [were] powerful enough to resist many of the key demands in ways that were not true in other countries’ (Lynch et al, 2012, p. 16).

The role that religious ethos plays in ensuring that the broader Christian values relating to equity are always part of the discourse. There are some contradictions here between the values espoused by the churches and actual practice on the ground. The public fee paying school system in Ireland, widely regarded as a significant contributor to asymmetrical patterns of educational mediated privileges between different social class groups, are all under the governance and private ownership of the churches (both Catholic and Church of Ireland). Notwithstanding this (it is a historical legacy that requires a separate consideration) it can be argued that while the influence of the church remains the basic ideals of equality and equity will continue to be included in discourse and policy if not realised in practice.

8.3.2 Market-oriented accountability

The forms of market-oriented accountability in Ireland are very limited. There has been a persistent refusal on the part of the Ministry to produce league tables of schools or to publish publically the results of standardised testing. What has happened in its absence is the publication of an annual media-generated league table of the outcomes of second level schools based on the number of entrants to higher education institutions. This information is accessible through a freedom on information request. There is a widespread recognition that these tables are not accurate and are not accounting for the full picture but increasingly there are providing more nuanced information. Initially they published the ranking of schools generally but now they provide information on a district-by-district basis so that parents can compare local schools. The other main form of visible reporting on schools has been the publication of all school reports on the DES website. Initially this created a huge level of interest. Ten times more than normal traffic crashed the site repeatedly (Sugrue, 2006) This has abated somewhat but sometimes schools use excerpts from inspection
reports as part of their own promotional literature and some local papers publish the strengths and recommendations identified in the reports.

There is a much more covert system of market orientated accountability in operation in Ireland. Social networks largely mediate this where information about the quality of schools and the quality of individual teachers and principals get into the public domain very effectively. While active among all social groups, the manner in which it is used in a concerted way to benefit certain social groups is more evident among middle class parents. Clearly identifiable patterns of concerted cultivation (Lareau, 2003) of certain types of educational experiences for children are well established.

8.4 Public accountability

There are a number of forms that this dimension of accountability takes in the Irish system and there are formal structures in places to hold schools and the broader education system to account to each of these organisations for their particular remit. Broadly these will be divided into three groups for the purpose of this paper and I will briefly refer to the role played by each in terms of accountability and in so far as is possible to how equity is dealt with in each.

- The Department of Education and Skills
  - Inspectorate
  - The State Examination Commission
- Other public bodies (National)
  - Government Departments (e.g. Health, office of the minister for children)
  - The Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI)
  - The Education Research Centre (ERC)
  - The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA)
  - The National council for Special Education (NCSE)
  - The Equality Authority
- International organisations
  - OECD/IEA

8.4.1 The Inspectorate and the State Exams Commission

Schools are responsible to the state for the quality of the education system. This is not to say that the churches are not interested in quality it is rather to acknowledge that the evaluation and monitoring of the quality of education falls almost entirely to he state and specifically to the inspectorate in the DES. One of the high level goals of the inspectorate ‘to improve the standard and quality of education and promote best practice in classrooms, schools, colleges and other centres for education. (Department of Education and Skills Strategy Statement 2009). In support of this, the inspectorate engage in a number of different forms of evaluation all of which are detailed on the ministry website (www.education.ie/inspectorate). Inspectors typically engage in whole school evaluation, evaluation of probationary teachers at primary level, curricular/programme evaluation as well as initiating in 2013 a new initiative relating to School Self Evaluation as a vehicle, at least in the short term of ensuring the implementation of the Literacy and Numeracy strategy (DES, 2011). The latter developments are as close as the Irish system has come to a neoliberal type of accountability model. The bears all of the imprint of the newer order of high-stakes accountability, increased, mandatory testing, setting of SMART targets, making visible the outcomes of school review and testing. The impact that these developments will have on the system remains to be seen. The increasing public visibility of the outcomes of schooling, without full consideration of the context is becoming a factor for Irish schools. This may become increasingly problematic for a system where there are
already well established patterns of ‘chosen and unchosen’ schools, as well as very homogenous socio-economic patterns in terms of housing resulting in a systems of schooling particularly in urban areas that stratify along social class lines.

All second level schools are held accountable for the work they do through a system of state examinations after three years in secondary school and at the end of secondary school usually after completing six years. The Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate and well established in Irish education since its inception. Originally managed by the inspectorate it is now under the control of the State Examinations Commission set up in 2003 (www.sec.ie). Entry in almost all forms of higher education depends on the outcome of the Leaving Certificate. A system of points allocation for each grade received by students operates with the maximum number of points set at 600 i.e. A1 in 6 subjects. With the large increase in participation in higher education by all social groups but by higher social groups in particular this point’s race has become very controversial. Research strongly points to a wash back effect from the examinations process on teaching and learning in schools (Smyth et al, 2011). It is claimed that, as it is currently structured, is leads to rote learning, highly strategic planning in relation to subject choices, topics covered and significant levels of instrumentalism among students. It does little to contribute to equitable outcomes for working class students in particular. Those who can afford to pay can access fully private, additional tuition for children putting them in prime position to maximise their points. Despite its well documented faults a recent review found that by and large it was fair (Hyland, 2011), at least when viewed from the flawed perspective of meritocracy. The claim to fairness may have some validity. Attempts to change it have been found to be equally detrimental to lower social groups – the introduction of the Health Professions Admission Test-Ireland (HPAT) as a additional assessment for students who would like to pursue medicine as a career has revealed that crash courses (sometimes more than one) costing a lot of money are accessed by students who can afford it. Once again, this type of practice, has a negative impact on those who do not have access to this level of resources. At the moment consideration is been given to a number of alternatives and amendments in order to decrease the negative impact the exam is having on patterns of student engagement and more equitable outcomes for those underrepresented in higher education

8.4.2 National public bodies

Schools are held accountable by a number of other Government Departments and national bodies. Recent scandals in relation to child abuse in the Church and state institutions dealing with children have fundamentally changed the context within which children are now educated. Child protection is at the core of school policy and the boards of management, principals, teachers and all other school staff now work within the child protection guidelines. All staff who have any involvement with schools and students have to have garda clearance as child abuse cases have been successful taken again swimming coaches, football coaches and other who had free access to children, sometimes through the schools, in the past. This is an aspect of accountability that is taken very seriously by schools and one where it is unlikely to find schools below par.

The Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) (www.esri.ie) and the Education Research Centre (ERC) (www.erc.ie) and the Higher Education Research Community conduct research on schools regularly. Both the ESRI and the ERC have a formal role in carrying out research and in this regard they are often commissioned by the state to engage specially commissioned research. The ERC administers PISA, PIRLS and TIMMS as well as national assessments of reading and mathematics. While the ESRI sometimes do more broadly focused studies on early school leaving, students’ engagement with education and the impact of disadvantage on attainment and educational outcomes. The work of the ERC calls schools to account in a broad sense for the overall attainment particularly in reading and mathematics. They point out the anomalies that exist between different social class groups but often this analysis is positioned within a quantitative functionalist
perspective. The ESRI and some research from higher educational institutions often produce highly critical reports from an equity perspective with clear implications for policy changes.

The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) develops and revises curricula at primary and post primary and while schools are not directly accountable to this organisation the research carried out by the NCCA on curriculum implementation indirectly provides a mechanism that hold school responsible for how they teach and assess the curriculum (www.ncca.ie). The National Council for Special Education (NCSE) was set up to improve the delivery of education services to persons with special educational needs arising from disabilities with particular emphasis on children. The Council was first established as an independent statutory body by order of the Minister for Education and Science in December 2003 (www.ncse.ie). This is one area in relation to equity that has seen a lot of change in the past twenty years. A significant number of legislative developments including Student Support Act 2011; Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004; Residential Institutions Redress Act 2002; Education (Welfare) Act 2000; Education Act 1998 have changed the nature of schools' responsibility to students who have special educational needs.

Finally the Equality Authority holds all organisations in the state to account for any discrimination in employment, vocational training, advertising, collective agreements, the provision of goods and services and other opportunities to which the public generally have access on nine distinct grounds under the Employment Equality Act, 1998 and the Equal Status Act, 2000. The grounds are gender; civil status; family status; age; disability; race; sexual orientation; religious belief; and membership of the Traveller Community. Discrimination is described in the Act as the treatment of a person in a less favourable way than another person is, has been or would be treated on any of the above grounds (www.equality.ie). A number of successful cases have been taken by students and parents in relation to some aspect of schooling, usually in relation to a refusal on the part of the school to enrol a student. The authority also engage in proactive research and policy development all relation to equality and human rights on issues such as homophobic bullying, stereotyping, gender discrimination, social justice issues etc. They all engage at times in research in relation to the level of compliance among schools with the both the spirit and the letter of the law (Equality Authority, 2010).

In summary, it is clear that a focus on equity remains very active in the education discourse in Ireland. Many of the structures in place in relation to accountability have a very strong mandate to seek to hold schools accountable for issues relating to equity. This is a positive situation but it is vital to recognise that despite this degree of focus on this core issue the outcomes of schooling are extremely unequal and there are very clearly established patterns of reproduction of these types of outcomes. In better economic times increased funding into school was having a positive impact on students’ experience of schooling. The improvements in resources during the rise through to the decline of the Celtic Tiger era was very laudable. This was however matched by a regressive patterns more broadly in society where the relative gap between rich and poor widened considerably during the same period with the result that the gap was the worst in Europe and second only to the gap identified in the US. The recent economic decline has some negative consequences for schools in disadvantaged areas but efforts are been made to protect additional funding in so far as is possible. The worsening employment situation and general economic situation does little to help the engagement of students with the idea school as an employment pathway when jobs are so hard to come by. The biggest concern however relates to how schools emerge from these tough economic times and the recent neo-liberal type reforms outlined above.

8.4.3 International organisations

The impact of international organisations on the Irish system has been interesting in the historical context. The early activity of the Irish State (1920’s) was bounded by an ideological allegiance to a rural way of life and delimited, and arguably sustained to a large degree, by Catholic dogma and values. Economic policy was
characterised by a stringent policy of economic protectionism and the avoidance of any foreign influence (Breen et al., 1990; Garvin, 2000). The Church control of schools would have contributed to this overall ‘conservative consensus’ (Walsh, 2009) in the overall approach to government. This practice continued until 1958, a year considered to herald the birth of the modern Irish economy (Breen et al., 1990; Walsh, 2009). At this time, there was a clear realisation that the economic protectionist model that had been in existence since the foundation of the State was not working and that it would be necessary for Ireland to modernise its economic structures and practices (Garvin, 2000). There was a growing realisation that a quality education system focused on the needs of a modern economy and directed towards providing a skilled and up-to-date workforce was central to the achievement of this outcome. It became necessary for the State to take a much greater interest in the education system (Walsh, 2009; O’Sullivan, 2005; Garvin, 2000). Pressure to increase State activity is attributable to many sources, most importantly the OECD Investment in Education Report published in 1966. This report provided the international imperative to the State to take action. A number of developments that signalled a much higher level of the State as a central player in the field of education followed the publication of this report. The introduction of free second-level education, a series of amalgamations of small schools and the State-led review of the curriculum were all developments that stemmed from this report. Since that time Ireland has participated in a number of OECD led reports and reviews and it also has been the subject of a number of country reports of different aspects of the system.

We are like many other countries held to account for aspects of our education system by the OECD. It is now the international testing systems that have the most impact on our system. PIRLS (Progress in International Reading Literacy Study) and TIMSS (Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study) are projects of the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA). They are designed to assess the reading, mathematics and science achievement of Fourth class pupils. TIMSS was first conducted in 1995 while PIRLS first took place in 2001. In 2011 Ireland took part in PIRLS for the first time and in TIMMS for the first time since 1995. In both of these test Ireland scored significantly higher than international averages. (Eivers and Clerkin, 2012). However it was the ‘international spectacle’ that is PISA (Simola, 2005) that has resulted in a significant neo-liberal type backlash. Ireland had been doing very well in PISA until 2009 when the ranking dropped from 17th form a rank of 5th when reading was first tested in 2009. The impact of this has been significant and has been discussed previously in this paper.

8.4.4 Professional accountability

It could be argued that this aspect of accountability was always strong among Irish teachers. The idea of a teacher as a professional is a key element in teacher identity (Devine et all, 2013, Sugrue 2009; Sugrue et al 2011). Teachers have always appreciated the level of autonomy they had with respect to content choice, methodology and assessment. In the past there was an element of Lortie’s egg carton about it but more recently a range of collaborative enhancing initiatives have been introduced into schools. This is contributed to a much more vibrant collaborative culture around issue related to teaching and learning. Teachers by an large also view the extra curricular and co-curricular work they do as a core element of their professional role and identity. Many teachers give of their free time to work with students in the areas of sport, music, drama and a whole range of other activities many of which would not be possible, particularly in poorer areas, without this commitment from teachers. Notwithstanding this, the requirement on teachers to up skill and to engage in continuous professional development has never been a feature of the Irish system. Most teachers engaged in some form of further training but the compulsory element has not been there. By and large CPD choices were motivated by individual interest and or a sense of professional identity (Sugrue 2006; 2012). CPD activities ranged from day-long workshops to short courses to masters and sometimes doctoral level qualifications. The lack of a compulsory element no doubt meant that some teachers did not engage in any professional development (a very small minority I would argue). The establishment of the Teaching Council in 2006 as the regulator of the teaching profession and to promote professional standards in teaching is addressing this issue. Previously the teacher unions straddled the trade union professional organization roles. Now it is the Council that act in the interests of the public good while upholding and
enhancing the reputation and status of the teaching profession through fair and transparent regulation. While not always viewed positively within the teaching profession, the council is beginning to make inroads into articulating a career development pathway for teachers from Initial teacher education, through induction, to the requirement for evidenced CPD. A brief quotation for its website indicates the neoliberal type language and the overall shift in focus that will shape the professional in the future.

‘As outlined in its Strategic Plan (2012-2014) – A New Era of Professionalism:
We admit teachers to the profession through registration.
We set standards for teacher education at all stages of the teaching career.
We establish standards of professional competence and conduct.
We investigate complaints made against registered teachers.
We are committed to providing high standards of service in accordance with the Quality Customer Service initiatives approved by Government. The Customer Service Charter and the Feedback and Complaints procedures follow the principles of good customer service and complaints procedures as set out by the Office of the Ombudsman’s Guide to Good Public Administration’

8.4.5 Cultural-ethical accountability:

The issue of cultural and ethical responsibility is closely linked to the previous idea of professional accountability. This value base would be well embedded in the Irish education system. Teaching remains a high status occupation and competition for entry into colleges of education and university graduate programmes is very high. A number of austerity-derived measures recently introduced may well alter this situation. The remove of all promoted posts in schools with the exception of the principal, the removal of allowances for masters and other graduate qualifications as well as pay cuts, cuts to allowances, and insecurity in relation to employment e have eroded a number of improvements that had built up over the years. The impact is not evident yet but a decrease in the number of applicants for teaching in this year’s cohort of potential students may well be a sign of things to come. There is also the view that teachers act ethically, in the interest of their students and with a sense of responsibility to the broader society to which they feel accountable. By and large this is the case. While support for this perspective is evident (Sugrue 2006; Devine et al 2012) anecdotally there is also some evidence of a darker side within the profession. Practices exist and are reproduced that have build up over the years that do not serve all students equally. Either through pragmatic decision-making or a particular value base there is evidence that not all is as it should be – the number of case for discrimination taken against schools to the Equality Authority is indicative of some negative practices. It is here that robust professional development of teachers and school leaders is vital in order to ensure that this sector is subjected to ongoing critique and examination to ensure that developments and changes are taking schools in the direction of a more equitable experience and outcome for all students.
PART IV - DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP FOR EQUITY AND LEARNING: EVIDENCE REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS

9. SYNTHESIS OF EVIDENCE-BASED REPORTS: DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP

This synthesis of findings concerning distributed leadership (DL) is based on the interim reports produced by members of the group consisting of Lithuania, Germany, Finland, UK and Hungary.

9.1 Studies by members of the group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Aim – to investigate:</th>
<th>Research participants</th>
<th>Method</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lithuania</td>
<td>senior leaders’ perception of DL and what it means for their schools</td>
<td>mostly senior leaders and some middle leaders</td>
<td>online survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>deputy leaders’ perception of DL practice in Lower Saxony</td>
<td>mostly deputy school heads</td>
<td>online survey (based on Nordic q/aire, Finland)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>the presentation and perceptions of DL and the structures of schools in relation to DL</td>
<td>principals (respondents to the national survey)</td>
<td>meta-analysis and survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>DL, social justice and democratic practices, in the context of the UK national review of research into DL</td>
<td>senior, middle leaders, teachers, support staff, students</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>the relationship between forms of distributed leadership and equity and learning</td>
<td>SDA: principals CS: principals, middle leaders, programme leader</td>
<td>secondary data analysis (SDA), case study (CS) – pilot programme</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9.2 Working definition of Distributed Leadership adopted by the group

Distributed leadership was defined as

“a culture that
- views leadership as emerging from ongoing flows of interactions across the organisation and its hierarchy, not simply the actions of the single leader or small leadership elite
- values leadership contributions from across the organisation and its hierarchy
- recognises that this view of leadership can be deployed in order to improve organisational effectiveness
accompanying by an institutional structure that
- spreads leadership opportunities beyond formal senior roles to enable different sources of expertise and perspectives to influence the organisation’s work, development and innovative changes
- facilitates flexible, collaborative working relationships across traditional boundaries and hierarchies
- tends towards the creation of flatter hierarchies.” (Woods and Woods, 2013 in UK Interim Report)
9.3 Synthesis of findings

1. Complexity

The research affirms the complexity of DL which is noted in much of the literature. The reasons for this complexity include:

- diversity of definitions and perceptions of DL (UK, HU, LT, FI, DE)
- diversity of practices and forms of DL (UK, LT)
- the fact that DL changes and develops over time (UK, HU)
- the influence on DL of contextual factors internal and external to the school (UK, HU, DE, FI), e.g. staff attitudes, group dynamics, stage of staff or students / legislation, national educational policies
- the fact that there are multiple dimensions to DL that may be distributed to different degrees (e.g. authority, opportunities to innovate, etc.) (UK)
- the diversity of leadership roles within schools. (UK)

2. Influence on learning

Perceptions that DL can have a positive influence on learning were found amongst senior leaders (LT), but evidence of actual influence is harder to establish. Evidence was found in one of the studies that factors associated with DL can enhance student learning (HU), which is in line with emerging evidence from studies in the research literature on leadership (UK).

3. Social justice

Establishing the influence of DL on social justice is very challenging, given that both concepts are complex. One of the studies found that motivated and empowered teachers working in a DL environment did have a positive impact on equity (developmental social justice), but not in all contexts (HU). Social justice needs to be understood more broadly than just a focus on reducing differences in attainment, so should include cultural, participative and distributive justice as well as developmental justice (UK). The effects of DL on social justice are experienced in different ways by school members across the organisation. In one case study school studied in depth, whilst experience was mostly positive, there were instances where practice was experienced as negative (UK).

4. Distributed Leadership at different levels within and beyond the school

Some of the findings were related to the different levels of education within and beyond the school, in which leadership can be distributed. We have found that besides the school level, there are benefits in leadership being distributed within the levels of the school district, education system, etc. (FI). Some of the research data suggested that if the same patterns are present at all levels (e.g. within the school: for the whole staff, in the classroom; beyond the school: at the level of e.g. central educational programmes) – that is, DL characterises each of these levels – then the impact of DL in bringing about change is greater. (HU)

These findings resonate with research literature that highlights the importance of cohesive culture as a factor associated with positive effects of DL. (UK) If sharing goals, values and trust in an organisational or group culture is a factor conducive to DL, DL can also strengthen the consistency of values in turn. (HU)
5. Implications for professional development and support

Two of the studies (FI, UK) emphasise the importance of providing leadership development for all actors in the education system, including being part of the pre- and in-service training of teachers.

6. Methodology

Common or comparable research approaches are a challenge because of the complexity of defining DL (UK, FI, LT, DE, HU).

In quantitative research, the effects of distributed leadership can only be described through a highly detailed model. (HU)

In qualitative research, there is a considerable scope to extend methods of researching DL to include more arts-based methods, which can offer insights and understandings that cognitive methods alone are less able to generate. (UK)
10. DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP – FOR EQUITY AND LEARNING: THE CASE OF GERMANY

10.1 Distributed Leadership in Germany

Distributed Leadership (DL) as a notion and concept is rather slowly becoming a part of educational terminology and discussion in Germany. To date there has been no research on DL in Germany, not to mention on a possible relatedness between DL and equity and learning.

In the school legislation of the 16 federal states mainly the position of the school head is defined, generally listing tasks and responsibilities in some detail. This is often not the case or optional for middle management positions and more distributed leadership structures.

Some states – Bavaria, Saxonia, Thuringia – have a rather formal approach and build upon clearly hierarchical structures, allowing heads to delegate tasks. In some schools, as documented by Chott/Bodensteiner (2011)\(^4\), even the two senior staff, school head and deputy, do not achieve to form a leadership team: Their 2010 survey shows that 6% of the deputies are not at all and 23% rarely involved in decision-making. 10% of the interviewed deputies report frequent differences of opinion that in 10% of the cases do not lead to a solution. Only 15% report regular meetings between head and deputy.

On the other side school legislation in Berlin, Brandenburg, Lower Saxony, Northrhine-Westfalia provides the option of an extended leadership team or a collegial/cooperative form of school leadership. In Lower Saxony schools can apply for permission from the school authority to install a Kollegiale Schulleitung which is a leadership team consisting of the school head, the permanent deputy, heads of department and similar staff, and up to three teachers as additional members. These schools generally have detailed business allocation plans and a set of key objectives to foster quality development and effectiveness of the organization.

In between these poles there are states that allow the delegation of tasks by the school head. Annotations to the school legislation of Baden-Württemberg describe the role of the school head as follows: the head is given an abundance of tasks that can be fulfilled by one person only in small schools. Hence the head, as a general rule, has to rely on the delegation of tasks and functions to his deputy, heads of department and comparable staff or teachers who in return will be entitled to an allowance in form of a reduction of their teaching duties. Responsibilities can be shared to a certain extent but the overall responsibility rests with the school head.

Only one school law, the legislation of the state of Saarland, mentions equity in the context of duties allocated to the school head. The head is only expected to intervene in teaching when the equity of chances does not exist.

All states provide the teachers’ conference and the wider school conference, which comprises parents and students with far-reaching powers, e.g. Hamburg: the school conference is the highest consultation and decision-making body of a self-management school. The conference fosters cooperation between students, parents, teachers and other staff of the school. The school conference discusses all important matters concerning the school, particularly the school programme as well as target and performance agreements.

and takes decisions within the framework of the state school legislation. The students’ council, the parents’ council and the teachers’ conference may submit recommendations.

10.2 The research project of the Lower Saxony State Institute for Quality Development in Schools

10.2.1. The scope of the research

The study focuses on contemporary DL practice in Lower Saxony. Results will influence the ongoing revision of the CPD curriculum for school leaders.

10.2.2. Methodology

Following up discussions in the DL working group at the EPNoSL PLA in Finland, NLQ adapted a questionnaire to fit the Lower Saxony educational framework on the basis of the questionnaire that was developed by the Institute of Educational Leadership at the University of Jyväskylä. (Appendix 1)

The questionnaire was refined in cooperation with the Department of Education and Psychology – Further Education and Educational Management of Freie Universität Berlin.

Target groups of the survey were deputy school heads and heads of departments who have participated in NLQ leadership training programmes over the last three years.

Data analysis was carried out by the NLQ department for evaluation which disposes of the required software tools.

10.3 Outcomes

212 out of 408 addressees at different types of schools in Lower Saxony completed the online questionnaire in August 2013.

The gender distribution shows almost equality: 52% female, 48% male. The size of the schools varies between <360 – mostly primary schools – (38%) and >800 (28%). 94% held the position of a deputy school head.

Most deputies have been in office between one and six years (chart 1), whereby the medium is 4.6 with a standard deviation of 3.8.

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5 NLQ has been offering CPD programmes for deputy school heads and heads of department. They are now reflecting the programme concerning the need for a distribution of leadership responsibilities and tasks. With growing school autonomy roles are changing to meet the challenges of school development.

The training programme focuses on communicative skills which enable participants to translate external expectations into quality processes. Their role changes from teacher to middle leader. Equity is specifically addressed in the context of gender mainstreaming as a meta-category of the curriculum. In this spirit, middle leaders are trained to act gender-sensitive in their schools and communicate adequately.
Chart 1 shows the number of years of professional experience as a deputy school head and the frequency distribution (vertical).

In 58% of the schools the allocation of tasks is specified in a business plan. Support teachers / guidance counsellors and social workers are not available in a too high number of schools with probable consequences for equity and learning (chart 2 & 3).

Chart 2: availability of support teachers to schools. The vertical axis displays the number of schools.
Chart 3: availability of social workers to schools. The vertical axis displays the number of schools.

About 70 schools out of the sample of 212 do not have a support teacher the other schools dispose of one to three support teachers. Most of these support teachers are not full time counsellors but have only a reduction of their normal teaching time.

10.3.1 Significant correlations

The correlation chart (see appendix 3) reveals several significant correlations:

- The number of meetings with the school head grows with the level of resources for cooperative leadership/management structures.
Chart 4: item 2.27 (cooperative leadership structures) in correlation to item 3.85 (number of discussions with the school head per semester)

- A positive attitude of the deputy school head to Distributed Leadership leads to extended and more frequent interlocutions with teachers.

Chart 5: item 3.69 (importance of DL) in correlation to item 3.82 (number of interlocutions with teachers per semester)

The following two charts compare attitudes and expectations: a) what do the participants in the survey expect their school heads to ensure or provide, b) what do they anticipate that the school head expects from them as middle management, and c) what expectations of their colleagues do they anticipate in the areas of Pedagogical Leadership and Distributed Leadership.
Pedagogical Leadership

Although there is a high recognition of the importance of pedagogical leadership more than 20 percent consider it to be unimportant for themselves and other teachers. While 93 percent expect Pedagogical Leadership from the school head a considerable lower percentage of 76 take it as a responsibility for themselves.

![Pedagogical Leadership Chart]

Chart 6: Expectations towards the school head (item 3.25), importance for the deputy (item 3.39) and expectations of colleagues (item 3.53)

Distributed Leadership

Again, expectations towards the school head are very high. He/she is obviously seen as the person to provide DL structures. 16 percent of the deputies consider DL as unimportant and they think that about 30 percent of the teachers are not interested in Distributed Leadership. The figures reveal a certain paradox on the tension between obedience to authority and the expectation to distribute leadership in a top-down-process and democratic bottom-up developments.
10.4 Discussion of the NLQ survey on Distributed Leadership at the national EPNoSL conference in Berlin, September 2013

First results of the survey were presented and discussed at the national EPNoSL conference in Berlin. The participants of the workshop were school heads and representatives from ministries and training institutions. There was a consensus that good communication structures between the different actors and groups in a school are a necessary pre-requisite for building Distributed Leadership. It is equally important for ensuring quality teaching and good learning outcomes for all pupils irrespective of their socio-economic backgrounds.

10.5 Further analysis and interpretation

Further analysis and interpretation of the empirical data will be carried out together with researchers from the Free University of Berlin (Department of Further Education and Educational Management) and from DIPF (German Institute for International Pedagogical Research, Berlin). The findings will be presented at the national DVLfB conference (German Association of Teacher Trainers) in June 2014.
11. DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP AND SOCIAL JUSTICE: THE CASE OF FINLAND

This report is part of the European Policy Network on School Leadership work on distributed leadership and social equity. The report is based on the research design prepared together with an EPNoSL work group including besides Finland Germany, Hungary, Lithuania and United Kingdom.

This report attempts to describe distributed leadership and social equity in Finland.

11.1 Methodology

The EPNoSL study on distributed leadership and social equity in Finland is a mixed method study comprising:

- a review of how present studies depict distributed leadership in Finland.
- a synthesis of findings on distributed leadership in a national school leadership survey conducted for the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture
- a case study on how a Central Finland principal defines social justice leadership

The review is based on four main sources. Two of the sources are meta-analyses. The first meta-analysis is on research on principalship in Finland by Risku and Kanervio (2011) for the Swedish Academy and the second one on changing school management by Alava, Halttunen and Risku (2012) for the Finnish National Board of Education. The third source is an international survey school leader’s work and continuing education by Taipale (2012) and the fourth one a survey by Valtari and Lähdeniemi (2012) on the challenges of leadership work in local provisions of education and schools. Both surveys were conducted for the Finnish National Board of Education.

The meta-analysis by Risku et al. (2011) examined both doctoral and regular studies on principals published in Finland during 2000 – 2010. The meta-analysis could locate 28 doctoral theses that could be categorized as examining principals and 20 regular studies that at least partly dealt with principalship. Most regular studies were not scientific. The meta-analysis by Alava et al. (2012) used the data for the meta-analysis by Risku et al. (2011) as its foundation, and combined it with other research from both Finland and other countries as well as with the theory development that had been conducted at the Institute of Educational Leadership.

The national survey on school leadership is a study conducted by Risku, Kanervio and Pulkkinen (2014) for the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture. In addition, the study is part of the national research programme the Institute of Educational Leadership at the University of Jyväskylä is conducting for the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture, and part of the Nordic research programme on educational leadership. The study will be published in 2014, so here merely preliminary results can be presented briefly. The findings presented are confined to the internal structures of schools, thus trying to describe the structures of Finnish schools in relation to distributed leadership.

The third study is a case study conducted in the International Social Leadership Development Network (ISLDN) by Risku (2012). The ISLDN is a network connecting the University Council of Educational Administration (UCEA), USA, and the British Educational Leadership, Management and Administration Society (BELMAS) in the research on social justice school leadership. In the case study a central Finland was interviewed trying to find the answers to the following four questions.
1. How do social justice leaders make sense of ‘social justice’?
2. What do social justice leaders do?
3. What factors help and hinder the work of social justice leaders?
4. How did social justice leaders learn to become social justice leaders?

11.2 Main findings

On the basis of the review described in section Methodology, one can conclude that during the last two decades the Finnish society has changed in radical ways. The change of the society has required the governance of the society to change in radical ways as well. The previous statist system-oriented and highly centralized administration has been replaced by a system-level reformation of the relationship between the state and local actors. The change has been on one hand abrupt, but can on the other hand also be seen as a result of a chain of changes.

In the reformation of the relationship between the state and local actors, both responsibilities and power have been delegated from the state to local actors in a significant manner. The revision of the 1995 Constitution gave municipalities constitutional autonomy how to organize their operations. In addition, the 1995 Constitution obligated municipalities to conduct the tasks legislation imposes on them. Furthermore, the state has through several acts made municipalities the main providers of public services. This particularly applies to education.

The autonomy of the municipalities together with the large variation of the sizes of municipalities and their provisions of education and schools has resulted in big variation in the organizations of municipalities, provisions of education and schools as well. As Ryynänen (2004) states there is no one right organization any longer, but different operational environments require different kind of organizations.

Whatever the structure of organization of the municipality, it seems that the decentralization process has loaded superintendents and principals with a lot of managerial responsibility and work in line with the New Public Management way of thinking. The expanded manager’s role has affected superintendents’ and principals’ work in dramatic ways, because they lack the necessary managerial personnel due to the fact that most Finnish municipalities, provisions of education and schools are very small.

Several domestic (Alava, Halttunen & Risku, 2012; Risku & Kanervio, 2012) and international (Pont, Nusche & Moorman, 2009) studies indicate that Finnish superintendents have been solving their workloads by delegating their tasks to principals, and principals on their behalf their tasks to teachers and other personnel. This may not be the most desired reason for distributing leadership, but for Finland it seems to have provided a practical solution to manage schools when more management has been shifted to schools.

Another solution, which most likely is more due to demographic changes and economic pressures, for solving the scarcity of human resources for management in Finland seems to be the abolishment of schools and merging them into larger units. A larger unit may have better opportunities to have more people involved in management. Larger units also seem to offer better opportunities to distribute leadership and develop the forms of distributed leadership. Larger units also appear to create new kind of tasks for principals as distributing leadership seems to in general as well. The change from one-leader-model into the distributed leadership model requires new kind of skills from principals and personnel.

Besides providing schools with more people to tackle the management of schools, distributed leadership in Finland also seems to have provided schools with more human resources to meet the expectations of what all today’s schools should be able to offer their clients. Schools are no longer institutions that merely
disseminate information but multi-professional service centres that provide their clients comprehensively with what they need. So, distributed leadership in the Finnish setting is also having more expertise in meeting the expectations for schools.

Finally, it seems that education systems, provisions of education and schools have to learn to work in new ways to meet the requirements of the changing operational environment. This sets new perspectives for pedagogical leadership which besides involving students’ learning must also involve the learning of the whole school as an organization. In order to succeed in that, leadership has to be distributed so that all the actors in the school, provision of education and education system can participate in the learning both as learners and leaders of learning processes.

Organizations cannot change, if not all their members learn. Also, organizations will not change efficiently and into efficient organizations, if not all the expertise there is in the organizations is not at use. That is why all the actors in an organization must have both opportunity and responsibility to participate in the learning process of the organization as leaders of the process in their own expertise. Having leadership in the organization creates involvement and participation, which in part creates empowerment and communality. Also in this way distributed leadership is closely connected with social justice.

For the learning of educational organizations an approach similar to the systemic thinking was created on the basis of the meta-analysis. The approach is called broad pedagogical leadership and it comprises a network of interaction and development processes which the superior uses to influence and develop school members’ attitudes, behaviours and actions. A principal’s broad pedagogical leadership looks as presented in Figure 1.

![Figure 1. A principal’s broad pedagogical leadership.](image)

Broad pedagogical leadership consists of direct, indirect and interactive pedagogical leadership. The key aspect of a principal’s direct pedagogical leadership is the direct guidance and support for teachers’ knowledge and learning. The indirect pedagogical leadership refers to the principal leading of school’s key
development processes, which indirectly guide and support knowledge and learning of teachers and the whole school organisation. Pedagogical leadership also has to be interactive so that the resources at the different school levels are efficiently used to lead the learning of the school organisation. Thus the members of the school organisation form a community of learners, in which also the principal is a learner like everyone else.

Broad pedagogical leadership cannot be implemented through traditional management-oriented leadership. It requires distributed leadership that regards leadership as resource comprising various actors’ expertise, ownership and responsibility. The principal’s broad pedagogical leadership work is to guide and support this distributed leadership resource. Guidance and support should focus both on each individual and on ensuring that the distributed leadership resource forms an integrated whole. Dialogue and mentoring become essential leadership tools.

Distributed leadership increases the power and responsibility of all members in the school community. When leading the distributed leadership resource consisting of teachers, the principal must enable and lead teachers’ powers and responsibilities concerning among others the school’s operational culture, curriculum, learning materials, finance, human resources, in-service training, evaluation and practices. Concerning pupils and students, the principal on the other hand has to enable and lead the genuine participation of pupils and students in school decision-making. Similar thinking can be extended to apply also to parents, policy-makers and other external stakeholders.

The preliminary findings of the study by Risku, Kanervio and Pulkkinen (2014) confirm the scarce resources Finnish schools seem to have both concerning management and multi-professional personnel. The survey by Valtari and Lähdetniemi (2012) support the need to develop leadership in the direction of distributed leadership. Returning to the study by Risku et al. (2014), one can claim that most Finnish schools that have enough staff to construct teams seem to be distributing leadership through teams. Preliminary findings may also indicate that distributed leadership is not at the moment enacted in an efficient way through teams. Several studies (for example PISA-surveys) have shown that Finnish teachers have a lot of power in school-level decision-making. There are also several statutes that obligate schools to proactively give both students and their parents a voice and the opportunity to participate in school-level decision-making.

On the basis of many work groups and trainings one can claim that the concepts of democratic, distributed, empowering, participative, shared etc. leadership are challenged today in Finland. It seems that leadership in an organization should be regarded as resource and how that resource is used holistically and systematically should be given a new name.

The case study on social justice leadership by Risku (2012) finds school to exist for the student, and social justice leadership to provide the student with the elements to construct a good life. For those purposes, school should generate safety, trust and shared vision so that it is pleasant to come to school. The right and obligation to be educated have to be seen as fundamental elements of society. According to the interviewed principal, social justice leadership has to prioritize the student’s interest. Principals should lead so that the whole school understands the priority and acts accordingly. Autonomy and open discussion are important, but only inside the social justice framework. The equality providing structures of the education system as well as the legislation and curriculum can be seen as the most essential supports, and lacking visions or understanding the value of education together with the tight economy as the main obstacles. In social justice leadership work one’s own personality, dialogue and mentoring as well as many-sided in-service education can be seen as the most important elements for the principal.
11.3 Emerging implications for leadership development and policy on school leadership

On the basis of the main findings so far, the following implications can be presented.

1. School leadership has to be developed in the direction of distributed leadership.
2. Besides in the school level, leadership should be distributed also in the level of the provision of education and the education system.
3. Distributed leadership should include the notion of seeing leadership as resource which exists and has to be used in all levels.
4. Distributed leadership must contain the perception of the need of various levels to interact closely with each other in leadership.
5. Schools are and will be very different from each other. School leadership must be developed so that it serves the different situations in the best possible way.
6. Leadership has to be taught from the perspective of distributive leadership to all actors in the education system, provision of education and school.
7. In the school level it is essential to include training in leadership in the pre- and in-service of principals and teachers.
8. Schools will need a lot of support to develop themselves as organizations of distributed leadership.
9. Pedagogical leadership must be included in pre- and in-service training of principals and teachers.
10. Pedagogical leadership has to be understood as the leadership for leading the learning of the individual members of the school community as well as the leadership for leading the learning of the school as an organization.
12. DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP AND SOCIAL JUSTICE: THE CASE OF HUNGARY

12.1 Introduction

12.1.1 Background

In the framework of the second phase of the European Policy Network on School Leadership five countries, including Hungary, has engaged in conducting research on distributed leadership (DL), more specifically, on how forms of DL support equity and learning. As a first stage of this research a national review was written aiming to give a short state of the art on distributed leadership in the Hungarian school leadership practice. The review outlined the legal framework related to sharing leadership, the formal frames that characterise leadership practice in Hungary and developed on certain aspects of a distributed leadership culture such as team work, the co-operation of the teaching staff and decision-making in schools. Finally, it proposed some questions for the further investigation of distributed leadership in practice.

The second stage of the research intended to further explore the relation of forms of distributed leadership and equity and learning in two ways: by analysing existing data from this perspective, and by studying leadership practices in a pilot programme focusing on inclusion.

12.1.2 Rationale

The national review on the leadership structures and cultures revealed that the existing legal and formal frames of sharing leadership make a good basis for creating distributed leadership cultures and structures in Hungary: school principals have the space to form teams flexibly and assign leading roles to teachers, teachers on the other hand, have considerable strength in making decisions concerning learning and teaching. It further showed that some characteristics of school cultures (positive atmosphere, co-operation between teachers are among the most important features of a good school according to principals) suggest that a distributed leadership philosophy wouldn’t be far away from principals’ attitudes. Furthermore some factors show that there would be a strong need for and potential of real distributed leadership: to protect teachers from burning out and increase their motivation, to further facilitate professional collaboration between the teaching staff, to better exploit the potentials of existing roles (e.g. heads of classes) in order to increase the quality of learning for all.

In Hungary there has been no research conducted to examine distributed leadership in particular, nor is this term much used in educational literature. Studies display very little about the nature of distributed leadership, at the same time DL in Hungary is an issue that is gaining increasingly more importance. It would thus be important to look for good practice cases, and to reveal its relationship with the quality of learning and equity.

In the light of the above a research study was designed to investigate what features of distributed leadership contribute to increasing equity and the quality of learning and teaching. The investigation used both quantitative and qualitative methods. The former was based on linking two databases and carrying out data analysis, while the latter involved a case study.
12.2 Secondary data analysis on distributed leadership and equity

12.2.1 Methodology

Data sources

As part of this report our aim was to provide evidence about the connection between distributed leadership and equity outcomes. We had the chance to use different data sources that were collected on broad samples. We used the National Assessment of Basic Competencies – an assessment carried out annually with a full sample – and the School Survey that is organised every three years on a sample of about 2000 schools.

National assessment of basic competencies

National Assessment of Basic Competences is the main measurement tool of the Hungarian educational system’s monitoring. It focuses on two basic competencies: mathematical and reading literacy, and each and every student takes part at the 6th, 8th and 10th grade of the schools.

Data are collected through two tests (mathematics and reading) and two background questionnaires: one for the school and one for the family. School questionnaires do not provide data about leadership practices but the test results and the family background index⁶ computed from the family questionnaires were key elements of our secondary data analysis.

School survey

The School Survey is conducted every three years by the Hungarian Institute for Educational Research and Development. The 2005 survey focused on school effectiveness, in particular on the school’s inner world: on leadership and organisation. It was carried out with a representative sample of about 1200 schools. Data providers were school leaders only.

The two databases use the same school ID, so the data on learning, family background and on leadership can be matched. The merged database contains 833-977 cases depending on the combination of indicators we used in our analysis. The data of National Assessment of Basic Competences are from year 2005, however for certain calculations regarding the development tendencies results of the 2008 Assessment were used as well.

12.2.2 The model

Our model aims to describe the link between school leaders’ attitudes (to leading and to equity) and equity as an outcome. It is a multilevel integrated model of school dynamics that integrates school level characteristics only. The only indicator representing out-of-school actors is the Pedagogical Added Value, the variable describing equity outcomes. This variable is calculated on the basis of the family background index and the performance at the National Assessment of Basic Competences.⁷

First version

The first version of our model is based on pedagogical and leadership models, and represents the following ideas:

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⁶ Similar to the PISA ESCS (economic, social and cultural status) index.
⁷ This indicator will be described below together with the other indicators.
• The existence of equity aims and the quality of the learning environment are partly independent. A school can have very high quality teaching without the aim of supporting equity; however a school cannot provide equity without a high quality learning environment.
• Teachers’ empowerment and motivation have both a direct and an indirect effect on the quality of the learning environment. They have a direct effect as both of these leadership techniques imply quicker and more adaptive problem solving, moreover empowerment connotes training as well. They exert an indirect effect through their influence on attitudes.
• Leader’s personal attitudes might have a direct impact on institutional equity aims.

Figure 1: First version of the model

Lack of data

Since the respondents of the School Survey were only school principals, we do not have much data on the classroom level (teaching methodology) or the shared aims or attitudes of the schools’ staff.

In the following we will summarise the available indicators that we decided to use to describe the elements of our model. In Figure 2 the colour of the model’s elements indicates the amount of variables available to describe the given phenomenon.

Questions used as indicators for specific elements of our model

Leaders’ equity attitudes
Statement: My satisfaction with my school’s teachers depends on the extent to which they are able to teach in a differential and adaptive way.
Answer: listing 10 reasons of satisfaction (i.e. this sentence and 9 others) in order of importance.
Statement: My satisfaction with my school’s teachers depends on whether they pay close attention to the students’ individual problems.
Answer: listing 10 reasons of satisfaction (i.e. this sentence and 9 others) in order of importance.
Generated variable: higher value means higher commitment for equity.
Equity as an institutional aim
Statement: The aim of our school is to help the underprivileged students’ social inclusion.
Answer: listing 11 aims (i.e. this sentence and 10 others) in order of importance.
Statement: The aim of our school is to be attractive for children with as high a social background as it is possible.
Answer: listing 11 aims (i.e. this sentence and 10 others) in order of importance.
Generated variable: higher value means higher commitment for equity.

Distribution of leadership
Question: Please describe the participation of the following groups in decision making in the given areas:
a) assigning classes to teachers, b) choosing a curriculum, c) choosing school books, d) evaluating teachers, e) evaluating students, f) handling parental complaints, g) handling students’ major behavioural problems, h) quality management.
Answer: 1) school head, 2) deputy head, 3) the full teaching staff, 4) head of the team of teachers teaching the same subject, 5) head of class, 6) some of the teachers, 7) someone is responsible for this specific task.

Teachers’ Empowerment
Question: Did at least one member of your school’s teaching staff take part in the following activities?
a) pedagogical experiment, b) mentoring novice teachers, c) regular cooperation between teachers teaching the same class in educational matters, d) curriculum development, e) developing teaching staff, f) development of teaching materials or tools, writing course books, g) professional project.
Answer: Yes / No
Statement: My satisfaction with my school’s teachers depends on whether they are able to renew themselves in a professional sense.
Answer: listing 10 reasons of satisfaction (i.e. this sentence and 9 others) in order of importance.
Statement: My satisfaction with my school’s teachers depends on whether they are likely to undertake additional tasks.
Answer: listing 10 reasons of satisfaction (i.e. this sentence and 9 others) in order of importance.
Statement: My satisfaction with my school’s teachers depends on whether they are able to manage complicated situations.
Answer: listing 10 reasons of satisfaction (i.e. this sentence and 9 others) in order of importance.
Generated variable: higher value means more co-workers in the decision-making and the school head’s need for this.

Teachers’ motivation
Question: Which of the following elements do you use for the teachers’ professional evaluation?
a) students’ evaluation of teachers and satisfaction with them, b) parents’ satisfaction with teachers, c) peer evaluation, d) class visits, e) professional work carried out by the teacher out of the school.
Answer: Elements used as part of teachers’ evaluation were ticked.
Generated variable: higher value means more sophisticated form of teachers’ evaluation.

Teachers’ attitudes and knowledge
Since our data source was built on the responses of school heads, we did not have any indicators for teachers’ knowledge and attitudes.

Quality of learning environment
For the same reason as in the case of teachers’ attitude and knowledge we had limited data on the quality of the learning environment. The two aspects for which we had indicators available were grouping

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8 We used this sentence as a negative indicator of equity aims.
9 We have calculated an aggregated variable that shows how many actors are involved in the decisions in the school.
practices (heterogeneity – homogeneity) and methodology (whether the school as a whole uses democratic and equity-supporting methods or not).
Generated variable: the sum of the two variables below.

Grouping practices

Question: Do you use the following forms for teaching in your school? a) integrating skill-development group, b) integrated education of children with special educational needs, c) after-school tutoring for a group of underperforming students, d) school class for talent management, e) school class for underperforming children.

Answer: Elements used in the school were ticked.

Question: How do you organise learning in your classes? Which of the following forms do you use? a) working in the same class with student of different ages, b) creating a group for students with the same performance level, c) exempt a student from visiting a class.

Answers: 1) We do not use it at all. 2) We use it in some cases. 3) We use it in several cases.

Generated variable: higher value means more heterogeneous grouping.

Methodology

Question: How do you organise learning in your classes? Which of the following forms do you use? a) teaching integrated subjects, b) teaching in epochs\textsuperscript{10}, c) out of school activities are integrated in the teaching process, d) project methods.

Answers: 1) We do not use it at all. 2) We use it in some cases. 3) We use it in several cases.

Generated variable: higher value means using more methods considered to be appropriate for the aim of equity.

Equity outcomes

Our only equity indicator was the so called Pedagogical Added Value (PAV), calculated from the results of National Assessment for Basic Competencies. PAV is the product of a linear regression analysis, in which the dependent variable is the test result and the independent variable is the socio-economic status. In our case the line given by linear regression analysis shows which average scores the students should reach according to their family background. PAV is the residual assigned to a point (in our case a school is a point). Residual is the vertical distance between a point and the regression line.

In practice this means that the better a school manages to “compensate” the socio-economic background (student achievement depends less on their family background), the higher its PAV is.

Generated variable: higher value means higher level of equity outcomes.

\textsuperscript{10} Teaching in epochs in pedagogy means that some themes (e.g. belonging to chemistry, physics and biology) are treated (taught) in one longer period or block (e.g. 1-2 weeks).
The only phenomenon that cannot be described with the given data at all is Teachers’ attitudes and knowledge, so we had to leave it out of the quantitative data analysis. Nevertheless, we will keep indicating it in our figure as it plays an important role in the school level processes. In our data analysis the only thing we were able to verify was whether there was any correlation between the two elements influencing and influenced by this phenomenon. We must note the huge restrictions of this statistical workaround: these calculations will only show us how significantly other factors determine teachers’ attitudes and knowledge, and through that, if equity is a main element of institutional aims.

12.2.3 Results of data analysis
Distributed leadership and learning outcomes

Surprisingly, there is a strong link between the extent to which leadership is distributed and the learning outcomes. Schools with higher level of leadership distribution have a higher added value (PAV) at the age of 16.\textsuperscript{11} The same correlation cannot be verified for the other two age groups.

Since there is no scientific explanation for a direct link between distributed leadership and students’ learning outcomes, the question of our analysis is whether this correlation can be unfolded through our model.

The role of institutional aims

Considering the fact that data about institutional aims were collected by asking the school principals to describe them, it is not easy to separate the leader’s aims from the institutional ones. We decided to interpret the school leaders’ answers about their criteria of satisfaction as an indicator for their attitudes and to use the answers about the school’s aims as variables for the institutional characteristics. Leaders of the investigated sample have a strong impact on the institutional aims: they influence it by the ratio of 11,6%. (That is, the leaders’ attitudes determine the institutional aims by 11,6%, other factors account for the other 88,4%).

There is a significant correlation between the institutional equity aims and the quality of learning environment. The correlation however, is negative in both cases\textsuperscript{12}: the higher the value of the institution’s equity aims is, the more they use non-integrative grouping practices and the less they use methods considered as appropriate to increase equity. Thus the impact of the organisational aims are the opposite of what we had expected. A possible explanation for this result will be offered after analysing the whole model. Nevertheless, the effect of institutional aims on the quality of learning environment is strong: they influence it by 15%.

\textsuperscript{11} r= .128; p= <0,001
\textsuperscript{12} Grouping practices: r= -.121 p< .000; Methodology: r= -.098; p=.018
Behaviour of highly motivated and empowered teachers

In our conception of distributed leadership, we assumed that teachers’ motivation and empowerment are strongly connected to the phenomenon of DL (Country report, p.3). Our data analysis seems to underpin this assumption: both motivation and empowerment are in strong correlation with the distribution of leadership. It needs further investigation however to decide whether empowerment and motivation are causes of DL or are inherent elements of the distribution of leadership. This question could be answered by extensive analyses of literature, longitudinal analyses and case studies.

Teachers’ empowerment has different influences on the different components of the learning environment. The correlation between empowerment and grouping is strong and negative\(^\text{13}\), while there is significant and positive correlation between empowerment and methodology\(^\text{14}\).

Teachers’ motivation has a similar correlation pattern with regards to grouping, that is, a strong negative correlation, whereas there was no correlation found in the case of methodology.

The partial lack of connection in case of methodology can be explained by the low quality of our methodology indicators. The fact that the data sources are school principals encourages a critical reading of the results, this area of our model needs further research and investigation. We suggest as a potential hypothesis for future research that it is easier or quicker to implement new classroom level methods than to renew the school’s grouping practices, as it is more an organisational behaviour than the teachers’ choice.

A deep interpretation of the statistical results concerning the negative correlation between empowerment or motivation and grouping practices would require further investigation. Here we suggest that a potential reason for this correlation is that highly empowered teachers working in a motivating environment use more techniques in order to decrease the differences between students’ achievement, however, the techniques most widely known and used in the Hungarian education system are mostly segregated, that is, they are based on more homogeneous groups.

The role of pedagogical culture

Analysing the connection between the quality of the learning environment and equity outcomes, we see the opposite of what we had expected again. The schools with selective (or segregative) grouping practices have a higher level of pedagogical added value in the cases where correlation is found.\(^\text{15}\) The fact that correlation can be found only in the case of grouping practices, draws the attention to the low quality and quantity of indicators for other elements and characteristics of the learning environment.

The pattern found in the case of students at the age of 16 is equally true for schools with high and low test results; or for schools with developing or deteriorating test results.\(^\text{16}\)

Our first interpretation emphasises the role of pedagogical culture. In a selective pedagogical culture like the Hungarian,\(^\text{17}\) empowered and motivated teachers who want to raise the level of equity in their school only

\(^{13}\) \(r=,179; p=<0,001\)

\(^{14}\) \(r=,228; p<0,018\)

\(^{15}\) Grouping practices and added value (mathematics, age 16): \(r= -,213; p< ,001\)

Grouping practices and added value (reading, age 16): \(r= -,239; p< ,001\)

\(^{16}\) Counted for the period of 2004-2008.

\(^{17}\) Compared to other PISA countries, in Hungary the variance of students’ social background is extremely high between schools and extremely low within schools. Besides, the level of reading performance is mostly explained by schools’ and not by students’ social background. (PISA 2010, 85-93)
have access to selective practices. The adequacy of these practices is limited but it exists: teachers will be partly successful. As they see that they are more successful than those who do not endeavour to achieve equity, they will conclude that their choices were right and adequate. This might be the mechanism that leads to recognising inadequate choices as adequate, and that strengthens counterproductive practices. From a cultural perspective we can say that the selective environment of the Hungarian school system stimulates and rewards selective practices at the school level. They simply fit the culture in which they are better embedded.

It would seem logical that teachers’ attitudes and knowledge (the factor we do not have indicators for in this analysis) have a direct influence on methodology and grouping practices, since the quality of the learning environment is (to some extent) a matter of the teachers’ choices. The low level of correlation between empowerment and institutional aims and between motivation and institutional aims however, mean that there must be other and much stronger factors determining teachers’ knowledge and attitudes. This result suggests that our model needs to be corrected or completed. If we complete it with a direct link between the teachers’ attitudes and knowledge and the quality of learning environment then we have to find the main factors that have an influence on attitudes and knowledge (e.g. pre-service and in-service training, peer-mentoring and team working, co-operation with the schools environment, professional self-development). This is the point where we could compensate the impact of the in-practice (or in-culture) experience of teachers and could widen their knowledge to a more equitable methodology.

To sum up, the distribution of leadership, motivation and empowerment seem to lead to a more determined, more enthusiastic work of teachers, who however, seem to waste their energy in a sense: they are successful enough to consider their selective practices as adequate and sustain them, being unaware that it is mostly these strategies themselves that impede the increase of the level of equity. If we consider that a cultural change of the above phenomenon constitutes a paradigm shift (Kuhn 1984), then we must recognise that facilitating such a shift means two things. Firstly, helping the teachers “look out of their box” and recognise that some of their practices are inappropriate, and secondly helping them to find more adequate ways in their pedagogical work.

12.2.4 Summary

The model we used to describe a school level dynamics of distributed leadership and equity seems to work well, further data is needed however, to explore the role of teachers’ attitude and knowledge with regards to the impact of and on classroom methodology. A new direct link, which we did not assume at the phase of model design, is needed between the teachers’ attitudes and knowledge and the quality of learning environment.

The main result of our data analysis is the recognition of the importance of teachers’ knowledge, attitudes and the culture their work is embedded in. The distribution of leadership has power, as we have seen, but this power cannot fulfil its aims without the holistic development of the school that includes each and every element of our model and all other elements and influences that we did not identify yet.

Research and development proposals

The unexpected dynamics around selective practices stimulate further investigation in this topic: we need to understand how these inadequate choices work and how could these strong beliefs of the Hungarian schools be changed. We assume that a paradigm shift is needed to lead Hungarian teachers towards a pedagogical culture which is more adequate to increase the level of equity, this shift would most certainly require time and effort.
Further research is needed to investigate the following questions:

- Is the Pedagogical Added Value Index a good indicator for equity?
- PAV shows the achieved level of mathematics and reading competency compared to the achievement expected according to the students’ family background. It does not show however, how students will perform in real life. In order to strengthen this indicator in its role we have to compare it against real life characteristics like life skills, success in the world of work or in further education.
- Does the classroom methodology have the same effect on equity?
- Seeing the difference between the effect of methodology and grouping, we might say that it is student-centred practices and not selective ones that lead to a higher level of equity. The indicators behind methodology are unsatisfactory in our data analysis, so we need to find the way to collect high quality data about this area in order to test this hypothesis.
- Do the teachers’ knowledge and attitudes determine the institutional grouping practices? And if they do is it through the institutional aims?
- Earlier we interpreted the results of our analysis in a way that teachers’ knowledge and attitudes might have an asymmetric effect on the quality of the learning environment. They might have a slower and weaker influence on organisational characteristics like the aim and the school-level grouping practices, but they do have quicker and stronger effects on the classroom level characteristics. If it is so then the distribution of leadership means ‘fastening up’ this effect besides mobilising energy.
- How does the distribution of leadership impact on the development of the organisation?
- Our analysis is based on the snapshot of a set of schools. Longitudinal investigations and case studies would be needed in order to understand how changing leadership practices can lead to a higher level of equity in schools.

12.3 Case study – The Springboard Programme

12.3.1 Research design

Objective

The object of the case study was a national pilot programme called Springboard (Dobbantó), which took place in 2008-2011 and which was targeted at young people between 15-25 who have fallen behind in education and have so far been unable to complete secondary school or obtain a vocational qualification due to learning and behavioural difficulties. (Dobbantó, 2011) The programme aimed to provide an opportunity for these young people and lead them back to the world of education or the world of work and help them find a successful individual pathway by offering them “an additional year of education to understand and overcome their earlier failures at school, in learning or in their personal lives, and to find the best way to move on, i.e. to return to the school system or to enter vocational training or the world of work.” (Springboard, 2012)

The reasons for choosing this particular programme can be summarised as follows:

- the programme focused on personalised learning and increasing equity was among the main raisons d’être of the programme;
- the leadership team had a key role in the implementation of the programme (e.g. professional consultancy for leaders was an important and successful element)
teachers had an extended role
  o teachers room for initiatives was greater than in the usual school context
  o teachers worked in small teams in a unique way
  o teachers got professional support from a mentor

various actors were involved (e.g. from the world of work);
its documentation is very rich;
  o the final publication contains rich details on the whole process of implementation, the lessons learnt, etc.
  o a detailed external evaluation was carried out on the programme, which contains relevant information from a distributed leadership perspective
  o a continuous internal monitoring was also carried out, which provides information on teachers’ needs and attitudes during the programme.

The case study will attempt to answer the following questions:
What particular leadership practices characterised the implementation of the programme in the participating schools?
What characterised the co-operation between
  o the staff involved in the programme (programme staff)?
  o the programme staff and the school leadership team?
  o the programme staff and other staff members?
What roles did the various actors involved play in the change process?
What is the perceived impact of leadership as a distributed phenomenon on
the realisation of the broad objectives of the programme?
  o teachers dealing with the Springboard class facilitate the learning of all students in an effective way
  o teachers work effectively with diversity
  o change these students’ attitude to learning
  o decrease the number of early school leavers
the institutionalisation of the programme?

Methodology

As the concept and phenomenon of distributed leadership has not yet been researched in Hungary, using different approaches to gain a first picture allows incorporating the advantages and strengths of both qualitative and quantitative methods. The national review on DL used as one of its major sources the studies written on the basis of the school survey carried out in 2005 and 2009, and concluded that some of the survey questions are relevant distributed leadership indicators, which suggest that “existing leadership structures and cultures are open to adopt a distributed leadership approach in terms of conditions, needs, attitudes”. The data analysis will proceed on examining the interrelations of these indicators and link them to others connected to equity and learning, while the case study will provide an insight into the impact of leadership practices, and the conclusions drawn on forms of leadership in a programme focusing on equity and learning.

The research on the Springboard Programme consisted of two phases: document analysis and interviews.

1. Document analysis

As mentioned above the programme has a rich documentation involving various perspectives, document types and media such as books, articles, evaluation and monitoring documents, videos, TV programmes, social network pages, etc. The following will be used for the purposes of the present research:
Final publication of the programme (Bognár, 2011)
External evaluation on the programme by Qualitas T&G (Baráth et al, 2011)
Monitoring reports on the programme by Tárki-Tudok Knowledge Management and Educational Research Centre (Sinka, Juhász, 2011)
Documentary on the Springboard Programme “Every young person does things” http://vimeo.com/45627459

2. Interviews

The document analysis was followed by structured interviews with

- the programme leader
- 3 school principals and 3 team leaders in 3 schools where the programme had a long term impact on the institution.

The interview questions were determined on the basis of the document analysis with the objective of answering the research questions listed above.

The main criteria for the selection of schools for the interview was that the programme was successfully implemented in as much as it somehow continued after the official end of the project, and some elements of the springboard pedagogy became institutionalised (methods and approach adapted in other classes, used by other teachers). Three schools were selected:

School 1: A multifunctional institution in the south of Hungary. The school leader whom we interviewed is the principal of the vocational school. The Springboard team leader is a mathematics teacher. The school launched Springboard classes until the academic year 2013/2014, some of the springboard features were extended to other classes (e.g. classroom furnishing, modules, pair-teaching etc.)

School 2: A multifunctional institution in south-east Hungary. The school leader interviewed is the head of all sub-institutions and the principal of the secondary grammar and vocational school. The Springboard team leader is a head of unit. The school launched several Springboard classes until the academic year 2013/2014, some of the springboard features were extended to other classes (e.g. equipment, modules, methods, team work etc.)

School 3: A vocational school in the capital city of Hungary. We interviewed the school principal and the Springboard team leader, who is the head of the mental health unit. The school launched several Springboard classes until the academic year 2013/2014, some of the springboard features were extended to other classes (e.g. classroom furnishing, modules, etc.)

When analysing the data we must be aware of the limitations of the methods used, most importantly the limited number and target group of interviews. In order to gain a fuller picture of leadership as a distributed phenomenon it would be advisable to extend the group of people interviewed to teachers, students and potentially parents. At the programme level interviews with the members of the support staff and of the expert team could also contribute to a deeper analysis. Furthermore, a wider selection of schools including those where the programme was not successful could equally make the results more valid. This research did not however have the scope and resources for wider data collection.

Structure of the case study

The content of the chapters and the questions which they examine are as follows:
Second section – *Overview of the Springboard Programme* – summarises the objectives, activities, scope, target group and the key principles of the programme.

Third section – *Distributed leadership at the programme level* – describes leadership practices in the programme office, thus giving an insight in the broad context of the programme conception and implementation.

Fourth section – *Distributed leadership at the schools* – presents the analysis of the data (programme documentation, interviews) structured in two main sections:

- leadership practices,
- support and development for better leadership.

Fifth section – *Leading for Learning: the impact of leadership practices on student learning* – explores how various forms of leadership impacted on the teachers and the school culture and how they contributed to equity and learning.

Sixth section – *Conclusion* – sums up what the case study shows about the relationship of distributed leadership and equity and learning.

### 12.3.2 Overview of the Springboard Programme

Springboard Programme was a national pilot programme which was commissioned by the state secretariat responsible for education (now within the Ministry of Human Resources) in 2007. The Public Foundation for the Equal Opportunities of Persons with Disabilities (FSZK) was provided 850 million HUF from the central budget to conceive and implement the programme between January 2008 and November 2011. It was the 2007 amendment of the Public Education Act, which constituted the legal basis for the programme stating that

> “the authorities responsible for education at the county level are required to designate vocational schools to offer personalised development programmes for 15-24-year old students who have been so far unable to complete secondary school or obtain a vocational qualification due to learning and behavioural difficulties that are not of organic origin. The designated schools may organise small sized preparatory classes for such young people (i.e. offer an additional “ninth” year of schooling before entry into a mainstream vocational school programme), where everybody can progress at their own pace.”

(Dobbantó, 2012, p. 6)

The Springboard Programme extended the target group to all those young people, who failed during their school career (did not obtain any qualification or left school before their compulsory education) and who had little chances in the labour market and set the objective to lead them back to education or the world of work. The scope of the programme was to develop a one-year curriculum and teaching materials suitable for the individual development of 14-24 year old young people with learning difficulties, and to prepare and support the teachers and leaders of those vocational schools that joined the programme. (Bognár, 2011)

Springboard Programme (SP) was conceived as a global systemic development, “not a linear process, but a multilevel, systemic intervention” (Bognár, 2011, p.41.). In the framework of SP the following elements were changed with regards to a “traditional” teaching and learning environment:
• physical learning environment: cosier and friendlier classrooms with tea corner or kitchen, sofas, movable desks, various equipment to support both formal and informal learning opportunities; learning environment was extended to external sites

• organisational frames of learning: fewer students (max. 16) and fewer teachers (4-5) per class, co-teaching (2 teachers with the class at the same time) where possible, flexible daily routines suiting students’ needs

• content of learning: around 3 main themes: support of the individual development of each and every student (self-image, self-confidence, etc.), development of competencies needed for further learning (esp. communication, social and learning competencies), development of competencies needed for further employment, career-building

• methods of learning organisation: forms of co-operative learning, project work, individual learning, etc.

• pedagogical paradigm: student-centred pedagogy focusing on individual development and personalised learning; individual development plans (IDP) were developed for each student involving the parents if possible to define and regularly review objectives, tasks and responsibilities. (Bognár, 2011, p.33-34)

In the following we would like to highlight some of the key principles of implementation that have to be taken into account when analysing the programme from the point of view of distributed leadership for equity and learning.

Firstly, the programme defined itself as an “action research”, that is, it endeavoured to keep its own framework flexible enough to be able to react to needs arising during the implementation of the programme, to be able to take into account the results of continuous monitoring, external evaluation and the feedback of schools in order to find the most effective ways to realise its objectives (Bognár, 2011).

Secondly, the programme recognised that in order to successfully support the individual development of pupils and young people, schools must also be supported in implementing the programme in their individual ways and in finding the methods, content and environment that are the most suitable for them. Furthermore the programme recognised that most teachers would need to adopt a completely new approach to teaching and that inducing a paradigm shift is extremely difficult and requires a very strong support system.

Thus, the programme was conceived in a way that it acknowledged the extent of challenges its implementation would involve, it was based on trust and provided support for all actors in the programme. As the programme leader emphasised in the research interview Springboard was about giving the same importance to students’ needs (everything had to be changed that could have reminded them of their previous failures) and teachers’ needs (support them in using the new learning environment safely). (Bognár, Springboard for Lion, 2013)

12.3.3 Distributed leadership at the programme level

The influence of school leaders on the quality of teaching and learning has now been widely recognised. Correspondingly, in an educational programme we have to recognise the influence of the leadership of the programme on the quality of its implementation in the participating schools. For this reason before going down to the school level we will firstly examine the leadership characteristics and approaches at the programme level and explore the following questions:
• What particular leadership practices characterised the implementation of the programme at the programme management level?
• In what ways can they influence and relate to the leadership in participating schools and what impact they may have on the successful realisation of the programme?

Let us first describe shortly the structure of the programme office\textsuperscript{18}. The Springboard programme leader (SPL) conceived the programme, she was responsible globally for its implementation. Her work was supported by a small core group: a financial colleague, a colleague responsible for communication and a half-time worker responsible for organising events. The programme was however realised by a team of 30 experts recruited by the programme leader, who were working in 5 working groups (WGs) of 6 people each. Each working group had a meeting every two weeks and there was a leaders’ meeting once a fortnight as well. (For more details about the structure of the programme office see Bognár, 2011, p 13.)

In the following we are going to list evidence for the distribution of leadership and indicators that might have hindered the realisation of leadership as a fully distributed phenomenon in the programme management. This evidence is based on both the final publication of the programme (Bognár, 2011) and the interview made with the programme leader.

\textbf{Indicators conducive to DL}

1. Self-reflection and reflexivity

The SP leader defined the programme as an action research, and attributed great emphasis to reflection and self-reflection and to keeping the framework open and flexible. Self-reflection was deeply present in both the final publication and the personal interview with the SPL. The final publication was co-authored by several of the experts (both team leaders and members of teams), all of whom engaged in deep critical reflections as to their work and the strengths and weaknesses of the programme.

A context (working environment) in which self-reflection and reflectivity is encouraged and nurtured indicates that the programme leadership was characterised by an open attitude to embrace initiatives coming from colleagues or the schools themselves. Several examples underpin this assumption, let us mention two of them: the form of the Individual Development Plan (IDP) of students went through an important change and was largely simplified – an initiative taken by the teachers. At the beginning of the programme school leaders expressed their need to have support on legal issues connected to the programme, to respond to this need the programme staff established a “help-desk”.

2. Selection of staff based on expertise

The SPL selected the 30 experts herself. The main selection criteria for the SP experts were expertise and experience in the field, and strong commitment to the goals and values of the programme. The SPL first selected the team leaders and then discussed with them who the team members could be. As a result of the selection a team of 30 experts was gathered that consisted of strong personalities (“buffalos” as the SPL refers to them in the interview), with robust professional convictions, many of them with significant leadership experience and aptitude.

With the above selection criteria and procedure the SPL seemed to have been a way to ensure that the work would be based on common core values and common goals, and that expertise would prevail in the

\textsuperscript{18} By programme office we mean all the personnel involved in the central implementation of the programme “above” the school level.
distribution of the different tasks (programme aspects), whereas collective leadership also seemed to have been encoded in this team by the personalities and professional attitudes of the members.

3. Strong steering with collective leadership

A strong steering characterised the leadership of the programme office: the SPL conceived the values, goals and the broad implementation steps, structured the expert team in the WGs, etc. Her role was to steer the process through which the group of experts worked out the details of implementation. One example of the expression of such strong steering is the way the leader handled the tension caused by the desire of experts to visit schools and be in closer contact with them:

“At the beginning there was a strong resistance because they all wanted to go to the schools. I said incredibly strictly that no, it is only mentors and coaches who go to schools, otherwise teachers will go mad to hear 30 different views.”

On the other hand, leadership was perceived as a collective phenomenon by the SPL, an evidence of which is the fact that throughout the interview she spoke about the whole programme in first person plural “we”. When asked about who made a particular initiative, she replied:

“I wouldn’t be able to tell. It was brought up at a leaders’ meeting, we were working together and I’m not able to relate it to one person. It was a team, it just came up.”

Thus clearly the leader was not the only one initiating new ideas, nor can ideas be linked to one or two persons, leadership was practiced by the team of leaders. The interview revealed that team leaders and members of the team participated in defining their own tasks, they distributed the tasks and responsibilities among themselves, and renegotiated certain aspects of implementation, when they considered it necessary, which is another evidence for distributed leadership. Concerning how the tasks and responsibilities were defined, the programme leader said “It is really the common wisdom of these 30 people...”.

4. Trust and empowerment

The interview reflects that mutual trust characterised the work of the programme team. When asked about her attitude towards the maturation process of the expert group, the programme leader said

“I was observing it from outside, I enjoyed it. It was very difficult for me that I couldn’t go inside, because they are working and it’s not my role. Especially with the school improvement WG, as this is my personal expertise”.

This short description of attitude suggests several things at the same time. On the one hand there is an internal tension caused by a strong desire to participate in or see the actual work of the working groups but being prevented by the own conception of her leadership role. That is, the leader had a clear idea of her role as a leader, which did not include getting involved in the work of the WGs. It also indicates that the working groups were empowered and trusted by the leader, this is what made it possible for her to stay outside and for the groups to work independently.

5. Leadership role of schools in the programme implementation

The leadership role of the participating schools was recognised and nurtured by the programme. Schools were encouraged to implement the programme in a way that best suits their own needs, resources, etc. and were supported in this process. For this reason the requirements of implementation were not rigidly
prescribed, instead so called Springboard buoys were defined along which schools could move ahead at their own pace. The following buoys were set:

- individual learning pathway
- teamwork
- career building
- pupil support
- school’s co-operation with the mentor and the coach
- involvement of the whole school
- finding, taking and keeping early school leavers
- school improvement programme
- (More information on the buoys can be found in Bognár, 2011)

Programme level changes were often initiated by teachers or school leaders (see the example on changing the IDP on page 115), regional meetings gave the opportunity for schools to share their experience and influence the implementation of the programme in other schools.

Factors impeding DL

1. Rigid team structure

The structure of the expert group was rather rigid, the 5 WGs were fixed from the beginning, no horizontal or ad-hoc groups were formed by experts belonging to separate WGs until the very final stage of implementation. The SP leader pointed out that the WGs were working very much separately for a long time. “Only near the end did they realise that they are strong together” – said the SP leader. When they did however, they created themselves the opportunity of working together by initiating the publication of methodological booklets. Members of different WGs led the process of writing and editing these booklets together.

2. Selection of staff

Paradoxically one of the factors that constituted an impediment for the programme leadership to become distributed is the same as one that also greatly contributed to it. The fact that the selected experts were “buffalos”, that is, they were very strong and independent personalities,

“it was long and difficult to establish one common vision that we could all represent, even today probably they see the programme from their own perspective” – explained the SP leader.

The interview revealed that the experts all had their personal “little thingy” to realise and it took about 2 years for the expert group to “shake together”. Too strong and too distinct personal objectives and people working very independently from one another seemed to have encumbered fluid co-operation.

3. Jealousy

Tensions between the various WGs existed for some time: it was most of all the school improvement WG that induced jealousy because they were the ones closer to participating schools by training and being continuously in touch with the mentors and coaches. Jealousy may cause discomfort and may delay the development of a strong group cohesion, the lack of which might make it more difficult to realise a distributed leadership approach.
The above list can only be interpreted in the light of what the people involved perceived. It is therefore essential to note that the indicators listed as impediments for DL were perceived as negative, problematic or ones causing difficulties by the programme leader. She consciously worked on soothing these tensions and difficulties both by proposing solutions herself and by nurturing initiatives of others. She perceived “balancing” as the most difficult in her leadership role

“knowing that they are buffalos... let everything come in and at the same time that they accept each other. Make them realise that we can do it together and that the others’ knowledge is just as necessary as theirs”.

We must also note that the extent to which leadership is distributed is not only determined by the personal characteristics, competencies and aptitudes of the (top) formal leader, it is an equation of several variables. (Day et al., 2009) Establishing a distributed leadership culture takes time, depends on the partners the leader works with (e.g. their personal professional background), the maturity of the group of staff as a team (e.g. which group dynamics stage they are in), etc. The Springboard programme staff is an example in which the leader consciously worked for distributing leadership, however the forms of distribution varied throughout the programme implementation and its extent seemed to increase towards the end.

Summary of the analysis

To sum up, let us quote the SP leader, as her perception of the nature of the programme leadership is reflected in how she defines distributed leadership:

“I think it [distributed leadership] is the way the SP team worked, that is, when I think of my internal colleagues, they had a huge autonomy, I had no idea of a lot of things, but they knew how to do things. [...] In the functioning of working groups... they brought ideas, it came from within... We designed the project together, everyone was the expert of their own field.”

When judging whether or to what extent leadership is distributed the perception of the actors involved is just as important as the factual indicators that an outsider can observe. As the present research did not have the resources to interview team leaders and members of the team, the validity of the above description remains limited.

The programme office constituted the broad context in which the Springboard programme was set: it was the cradle of the programme’s implementation. It would thus be tempting to draw conclusions on the impact the nature of the programme leadership had on the successful realisation of the programme. Measuring or even estimating the extent of the impact is however very difficult. Nevertheless, let us highlight some of the leadership characteristics that seem to have contributed to the success of the whole programme.

- The fact that continuous reflection and self-reflection was at the heart of leadership most probably helped to design and form the programme flexibly and to support schools in developing their individual ways of implementing the programme.
- The distributed nature of leadership facilitates that different expertise is fully exploited, and that the various elements of the programme (teaching modules, school improvement, institutionalisation, etc.) are developed in the highest quality.
- The fact that the leadership role of participating schools was recognised and nurtured, most likely helped schools (school leaders, teachers and students) in identifying themselves with the programme values and goals and facilitated that the programme is really tailor-made to the schools – teachers and students.
12.3.4 Distributed leadership at the schools

The ultimate objective of the Springboard programme pointed far beyond reintegrating those 400 students into education or the world of work, it was to induce a paradigm shift in the teaching and learning taking place in schools. It endeavoured to support schools in becoming more inclusive, to increase equity and the quality of learning for all. The programme recognised that both school leaders and teachers are key actors in realising that broad and long term objective, and paid particular attention to their support and development.

Teachers being the key actors in pedagogical processes and the engines of high quality learning were regarded as active and creative participants and not simply the executors of the programme, they were expected to reflect on their professional activities and to change them if necessary in order to achieve the objectives. Furthermore they were expected to evaluate the programme elements developed centrally by the Springboard programme office and enrich them with their own innovations. (Bognár, 2011) Teachers’ effective co-operation was equally considered as crucial, the school improvement strategy of the programme highlighted that “the co-ordinated community of the teachers teaching the class is capable of co-operation and effective pedagogical work”. (Springboard School Improvement Strategy in Bognár, 2011, p.68)

In this section we will explore:

- What particular leadership practices and attitudes characterised the implementation of the programme in the participating schools?
- What characterised the co-operation between teachers? What was new and unique in the teamwork?
- What supported the schools in the change process?

When describing leadership practices in SP we have to keep in mind that there were 15 participating schools and of course just as many leadership styles. The present analysis is partly based on the final publication of the programme, the monitoring and evaluation reports, partly the interviews we made in 3 schools with the school principal and the SP leader.

Leadership practices

In the following we will attempt to capture some of the characteristics of leadership in the Springboard programme.

Professional collaboration

Team work as conceived at the programme level

Establishing a team of teachers with an appointed team leader was one of buoys determined by the SP and thus an essential element of the programme implementation. This specific form of distribution of resources constituted a new form of co-operation between the teachers, but also a new position for the team leader.

As the programme viewed the Springboard teams:

“The team is a professional group, the members of which think and act together for a case considered important by every member. At the same time it is a small organisation which needs maintenance and development. It is more than the sum of persons – it is a new quality.” (Bognár, 2011, p.167)
Clearly defined competences and responsibilities are seen as key elements to the effective functioning of teams:

“In order for the teams to co-operate and to learn from each other it was important that everyone in the group has their own role – together with the appropriate competence and responsibility. The cooperation of the team of teachers was particularly important in the usage of the Springboard modules and in creating the individual learning pathways.” (Bognár, 2011, p.70)

Despite the quite clear concept of teamwork described in the programme (4-5 teachers, one team leader, tasks detailed, etc.) teams were rather different regarding their composition in the schools, yet the nature of teamwork seems to be similar in those schools where the programme was successful.

Team work in practice

School leaders and team leaders highlighted as a new feature of the Springboard team (with regards to the traditional professional teams of e.g. subject teachers) the possibility to focus on professional issues, to speak about pupils, to share difficulties, ideas and experience, to be able to create. Team experience is summarised in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School 1</th>
<th>Composition</th>
<th>Team experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 members (incl. the leader) special education teacher, VET profession teacher, teacher of humanities, science teacher</td>
<td>Two main changes occurred in the composition of the team due to external reasons. The team reacted flexibly to these changes. School principal 1: “The key to success lies in the flexibility of the team, which is prepared for adapting to new situations, to change”. They invested a lot of energy in making the teachers start talking about good things, about their success and not only about problems and failures – explained the school principal. “Teachers opened up towards each other and learnt a lot from each other. They realised lots of things they hadn’t been aware of about their colleagues.” School Principal 1. The school principal was very much involved in the team, was present at most team meetings and sometimes took on the role of the team leader. “At every team meeting issues were brought up about how the students received the tasks in our lessons, what they achieved. So we talked through the whole working process.” Team Leader 1. Teamwork was extended to the whole organisation, they began to organise other tasks, projects in teams as well.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School 2</th>
<th>Composition</th>
<th>Team experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 10-12 members the largest team in the whole programme with very different personalities but all having the same view of the SP | Some changes occurred in the team’s composition. Team opened up more and more as other teachers wanted to join in. The team meeting was officially built in the teachers’ timetable. They opted for a large team on the basis of previous experience: it was tiring for a teacher to be with the same group of students all the time, but they kept to having longer time slots with one teacher (not just one lesson). They find that the large team works very well. “As there were fewer children [in SP classes – researcher’s note] they [the teachers] saw the kids better. And they could create here
Everyone told about their successes, there was a high-level collaboration. At the team meetings they said everything: strengths, etc. They had a common approach and supported each other. Here colleagues were doing professional work….” School Leader 2

The school head gave large autonomy to the team and its leader, high trust and support characterise their relationship. At the same time the school head showed interest in their work, visited lessons, sometimes participated in team meetings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School 3</th>
<th>5 members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 teachers teaching most modules, 3 who were not in the team but taught the Springboard class (IT, sports, language)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Two teachers left during the programme. The team leader said that small number of teachers in a class has its advantages (friendly, nearly familiar atmosphere) and disadvantages (difficult and problematic for the students who were very much attached to them).

Changes constituted a challenge for the team leader inasmuch as it meant dealing in a different way with the different members: new members required more support, old ones sometimes lost their dynamism described the team leader.

Tacit roles emerged within the team: someone was a “caressing souls” type, someone else more of a rule-keeping type of person, who structured things, etc.

While subject teams in our school have meetings every 2 or 3 weeks or once a month, life was about nothing else but meetings in our team. We were here [in a separate office placed next to SP classrooms – researcher’s note] in a pile, we lived here, and didn’t even have to organise meetings […] We discussed what was going on with the children, what happened if they were there or not, […] their parents, etc. It really was a daily thing, where everyone knew about everything.” Team Leader 3

They also had “official” team meetings to which they invited the school principal. According to the team leader the school principal was very satisfied with the team, supported them in everything.

“I was in daily contact with the team. […] I visited lessons, participated in team meetings. I had a very good relationship not only with the SP colleagues but with the students as well” – explained the school principal.

“Ideas came as we sat down, […] we were throwing everything in and at the end we created something truly exemplary I think” – described the principal with regards to team work.

### School heads and the teams

The final publication of the SP distinguishes 6 different types of relationship between the school principal and the SP team:

- **Involving**: the school principal worked as a member in the team, engaged in the everyday work of the team and in the pedagogical work, and in certain cases also accomplished the tasks of the team leader.
- **Empowering**: the team worked with a high degree of autonomy due to the competences of the team leader, the school principal let the team leader lead and manage the whole SP as they trusted their
know-how, experience and knowledge. These teams became advisors to the school leadership to some extent. Typically the programme was extended to more teachers, more classes in these institutions.

- **Steering**: the strong personality and engagement of the school principal led the team. The team leader worked under the direct steering of the principal, while the principal was not a member of the team. At the same time the team members accepted and in certain cases even needed the presence of the principal. A high level of acceptance of the principal characterised these institutions, which originated from his/her aptitude and not position.

- **Co-operative**: The leadership of the school and the team co-operated as partners, the team was involved in planning, as well as in the decision-making related to the Springboard programme. This kind of team functioning gave a high level of autonomy and freedom in the pedagogical work, and set clear expectations towards the partners at the same time.

- **Dependency**: A clear subordination characterised the work of the team in a traditional hierarchic system. In these cases the basis of leading was the principal’s position, which in most cases meant a serving role for the team. Typically there was high fluctuation in these teams.

- **Neglecting**: The principal did not participate in any way in the work of the team, in some cases did not even keep a minimal contact with the team. In its most extreme form, the conflict between the team and the principal manifested in the principal working against the team, or the team getting strong against the principal.” (Bognár, 2011, p. 138.)

In all three schools studied school heads gave evidence of being open towards teachers and students. School principal 1 was open to the initiatives of both teachers and students, and was very much involved in the team. In School 2 the leader’s attitude was largely of the “empowering” type, while in school 3 it is more difficult to determine a prevailing attitude, it was a mixture of co-operative and empowering and seems to have become somewhat more involving with time. The interviews suggest that several of the above types can characterise the principal’s attitude at the same time, moreover that it can change with time.

**Pair teaching**

Pair teaching (or co-teaching), that is, two teachers present in the classroom with the students, constituted a particular form of professional collaboration, which was appreciated by many of the Springboard teachers and in some schools was extended beyond the SP.

“Pair-teaching worked very well. At the beginning all teachers feared that someone else is coming to my lesson and will see what I’m doing there, it seemed a bit unpleasant. But when we agreed on who does which part of the lesson or when one of us was stuck with some technical problem, there was the other as a support. Or when we had a problem with a student the other teacher sat down with him/her, reassured them or led them out or gave them another exercise [...] this was very good” Team Leader 1

“Springboard teachers realised that it [pair teaching] was a good thing. Those who taught both in the AJP [Arany János Programme: another national educational programme – researcher’s note] and in Springboard asked to extend it to the AJP. They were the ‘first swallows’, then other colleagues teaching in those classes also realised how good it is when there is the special education teacher with them” Team Leader 2

**Strong steering**

When defining their leader’s role in SP 2 of the 3 principals emphasised steering. School Principal 1 when getting involved in the Springboard team’s work, in some cases took the lead from the team leader to direct/steer the work:
“I clearly had to intervene as a leader. At the beginning I didn’t really want to, but then I saw I had to pay attention to the direction. Sometimes if I had let them go ahead totally freely they would have diverged from the original objectives. [...] I then had the role to ask, to give feedback, to lead them back in the direction we wanted to head in.” School Principal 1

This kind of intervention was not without internal tension though:

“I chose to lead them back, which was very ungrateful sometimes because I seemed somewhat anti-democratic, but it was necessary.” School Principal 1

The “anti-democratic” leadership was perceived by the team leader in this school as follows:

“Leadership here is very democratic, so our principal supported the programme to the greatest extent...” Team Leader 1

Another principal expressed the importance of giving direction as follows:

“In which direction we should go – that’s my business. Creating the conditions as well. It’s me who sees the barriers, so I can say that ‘you can go this way, don’t go that way’, but the how they get there is their business” School Principal 2

One of the team leaders also articulated that giving directions was her role:

“My primary goal was that we head towards the same goal.” Team Leader 2

**Teachers’ empowerment**

The Springboard programme sought to strengthen the role of teachers in the change process by empowering them to be active participants of this process: explicitly expecting them to facilitate the change of the learning environment, to change their own approaches and practice (and even teaching and learning paradigm), imposing new ways of collaboration on them in the form of team work. In the following we will describe the nature and effects of teachers’ empowerment and team work.

There is a great deal of evidence in the documentation of the programme, which show that teachers – having been given the competence and support – became pivotal players of the change process.

“With a programme standing behind them they [teachers] gained support and justification in the teaching staff. [...] The Springboard inspires them to test, to experiment with new things.

*School leaders reported that – after the initial difficulties and having overcome the resistance towards the new – the programme clearly developed the participating teachers. It deployed their creativity and their capacity to innovate.” (Bognár, 2011, p. 68)

According to school leaders the programme developed teachers’ skills to innovate and their creativity, however – as the final publication points out – the “professional environment” plays a crucial role in that:

“It gained evidence that teachers – if they are enabled – are able to reflect on their own roles in a modern way and are able to change their teaching methods. They become indeed key actors of the pedagogical process, but they can only live up to this role at a high standard if they are surrounded by a
professional environment which sets challenges but which is at the same time supportive.” (Bognár, 2011, p. 79)

The programme documentation cites various examples for how teachers used the materials developed centrally in their individual and creative ways adapting them to their and their students’ needs. It is also underlined that those teachers and those schools became the most successful in achieving the programme objective, that is, in reintegrating their students in education or work, who were capable of modifying the materials, applying them in a creative way to suit their needs. (Bognár, 2011)

When asked about the impact of their leadership practices, in particular the effect of trust and empowerment a school leader pointed out that the main benefit was that the teachers (team leaders) felt ownership over the task (programme).

“I learnt in management theory that these leaders who emerge from the crowd, they shouldn’t be patted back in, and then I’m the most intelligent and I know everything, but we have to create the opportunity” School Principal 2

“I got a maximal support from Mr. X [school principal]. What was the best in this support was that I got total freedom from him. Obviously I discussed things with him, but I wasn’t limited in what I could and couldn’t do” Team leader 2

Values, attitudes, social relations

Risk-taking and openness to change

All three school heads interviewed demonstrated that they were willing to take risks, either they initiated changes with uncertain effects or supported such initiations or simply expressed „philosophically” that risk-taking was part of their practice. An example for this latter is school head 3, who said „I’m escaping forward”, meaning that he goes willingly in the unknown to solve problems or meet challenges.

Sometimes the school head and the team leader did not share such willingness, in school 3 for example:

“We already had remedial training¹⁹ and we were suffering from it. I didn’t really understand why it wasn’t working, when we invested so much energy in it, and we had the money as well, but it wasn’t successful. I really despaired when I once entered a classroom and some furniture were broken, the sofa cut... meanwhile on the third floor Springboard was launched, and there nothing was broken or cut, it was working fine. I started to think why that could be?” School head 3

This school head then decided to move the other remedial classes, which were placed previously on the ground floor to the third floor next to the Springboard classes. The SP team leader reacted with resistance to this initiative:

“Well, I was scratching my head and said, no it’s not gonna work, they [students in remedial classes] can’t behave themselves. They really couldn’t actually. I said they would destroy everything here. [...] He [the school head] said ‘Let’s try it’, we did and it worked. They were moved up here, got fewer teachers, so they had to adapt to fewer teachers and they changed completely and became like our Springboard students.” Team leader 3

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¹⁹ A one year programme for low attaining students (e.g. with learning difficulties, special needs etc.), which aims at developing students’ competences so that they then can continue learning in normal classes.
It seems that here the school head encouraged openness to change and risk-taking by role modelling. The same school head when asked about how he selected the team leader for this position explained:

“...that we can work together, that she/he isn’t closed. Because here a great deal of openness was needed. And there are people who are scared of everything and cannot open up, but here the other leaders around me, they are all like me, that they don’t content themselves with what we have, but try to add something, they have ideas…” School Principal 3

Another example from School 2:

“There were some [initiatives] that were my idea, and they immediately “jumped onto them” and said ‘great, let’s do it’ but there were others to which they resisted. For example I put a TV set on the corridor so that we use it as an information board. [...] And they [the teachers] said it would be stolen for sure. Then I said let’s try it. And thanks God it’s still there.” School Principal 1

The school leader then explained how the functions of this screen developed following both teachers’ and students’ initiatives.

Commitment

The second monitoring report underlined that the team’s situation was particularly difficult in those schools where the school head’s commitment to the programme was low. (Sinka, Juhász, 2010) The interview with the programme leader revealed that in those schools where the school head was not committed to the programme, Springboard was considered “just another programme for disadvantaged pupils”, it had no continuation and no elements were sustained.

School heads’ and team leaders’ commitment to the programme and its values was reflected in what they highlighted as their main objective as a leader:

“I wanted it to work in a way that colleagues can pay more attention to each other, support each other and that this gets transmitted to the children. [...] I wanted that they [colleagues] learn to better tolerate individual problems [of students]” School Principal 1

“To decrease the number of drop-outs, to help and support disadvantaged learners” School Principal 2

“I felt it [Springboard] my own from the beginning [...] To change the other classes as well following the Springboard model and make them successful” School Principal 3

“To support the four colleagues in their work, that they can support me as well, so to create a good mutual relationship. And if we support each other then it’s certain that the development of learners will also be successful, their reintegration in education, their preparation for life.” Team Leader 1

“To help children in a way that they all find their place and they can continue there, where they won’t fail” Team Leader 2

“That the whole thing works from students’, parents’ and teachers’ perspective... Convince colleagues that they really pay individual attention to each child, convince students to stay” Team Leader 3
The commitment of school heads was measured in the external evaluation of the programme, which explored how the different actors (school heads themselves, team leaders, teachers, educoaches) perceived this commitment. Commitment was measured along three dimensions: strong desire to keep membership (staying in Springboard); strong belief, identification with the objectives; willingness to make efforts for the organisation. All groups perceived the school leader’s commitment high, the teachers the highest. Apart from the three dimensions mentioned above, they also emphasised the school leader’s pride about participating in the programme. (Baráth et al, 2011)

Respect and recognition

It seemed to be a crucial factor in the success of the programme that the school head respects the teachers and team leader as a person and recognises their expertise. It was a common characteristic of all three successful schools selected for interviews, demonstrated also by the following extracts:

“Individual work has its beauty and responsibility”, “Why would I know it better? She [the team leader] has the qualifications, she likes doing that, that’s why she is also doing special education studies” School Principal 2

“When you choose a leader, you look at how that person works, who you can count on, who has the potential to realise this programme” School Principal 3 about selecting the team leader

At the same time the documentation (monitoring report, final publication) and the interview with the programme leader all show that a lack of respect and recognition was a serious impediment to the success of the programme.

“...the school leader did not support the team in any way. The person-centred approach was very far from the school culture. They couldn’t and didn’t want to accept the Springboard. There was one person [the team leader] in a staff of 100 teachers, whose personality was totally suitable but she wasn’t a leader type of person, and didn’t get any formal power either, and the whole thing got marginalised” SPL – about a school where there was no continuation of the programme and where no elements of SP was integrated in the school’s pedagogical work.

Trust

We can observe that in two of the three schools selected for interviews high trust characterised the relationship of the school principal and the ST leader, whereas in one school the principal was very much involved in the team (see Involving type above), and in some cases took on the role of team leader during team meetings strongly steering the work of the team. This extent of involvement does not necessarily reflect trust, however the principal was accepted by the team and the team leader, who seemed to accept these changing roles or at least expressed no explicit resistance to it. Below we will list some interview extracts which are examples of relational patterns in the schools.

Describing his relationship to the staff:

“Direct, informal and friendly. My leadership style is not based on fear. ...My door is open, teachers can come with their private personal problems and if they come with their professional problems – even better.” School Principal 2

Some of the statements of the same principal show a strong cross-hierarchical approach:
“It is her [the team leader] who was leading me not me leading her” School Principal 2

Extract from School Leader 1, whose attitude was more of the “Involving” type:

“I really think that without the approval or the support of the school leader this wouldn’t have worked. If I don’t breathe down their neck, I mean by regularly asking ‘Is it ok? Have you done that?’... I always expressed that I wanted to know if there was a problem, if there is no money for something, then how we do it. And I think this gave them security, and in a way they felt I kept an eye on them” School Leader 1

It must be emphasised though that what may seem a strong control here was perceived as a strong support by the team and its leader.

The openness of teams

The space of the Springboard teams within the teaching staff of schools and its scope generated debate within the staff of the programme office, in particular the school improvement working group: should this team focus its energy on its own integrity, and on increasing its internal cohesion or should it rather be open towards the teaching staff of the school and possibly not get isolated? The writers conclude that both strategy may lead to the successful integration and institutionalisation of the programme in the school, however school heads and team leaders were not conscious about choosing this or that strategy. (Bognár, 2011, p. 148) The question also arises whether this really constitutes a choice to make or whether the space and scope of a team change with time and according to the stage of implementation: in the initial phase focusing mostly on their own functioning and in a later phase opening up more and more to the external environment.

This assumption seems to be underpinned by the collected data. In some schools the Springboard team was quite open: e.g. it grew as other teachers wanted to join in, in some cases non-Springboard teachers became interested in the programme and spontaneously visited lessons or asked Springboard teachers to share their experience, knowledge.

The three schools selected for the interview used various ways of giving more visibility to the programme within the school, opening it up for other teachers and for other students. In some of them the principal considered it important from the beginning to regularly report on the programme in staff meetings, in others it’s the Springboard teachers who started to talk about what they did to other teachers, who then became interested. In yet other schools it was jealousy that showed the necessity of giving more visibility to the programme: non SP teachers were jealous of SP teachers because they had much smaller classes, better classrooms, etc.

In School 2 the Springboard classroom was in the building of the dormitory, the SP team leader when asked about what she would do differently if she was to do the programme again said:

“I would ask for a classroom in the main building. They [students] were separated this way and they didn’t often come to the main building. For those who continued their studies at our school after the Springboard, the main building was totally new. ... So that they are more involved in the school life.”
Team Leader 2

“In the first semester it [Springboard] was somehow out of the scope of the organisation, because we only taught in those classes. I didn’t teach any other classes and the others [team members] only in a minimal number of lessons. It may have seemed a bit cliquish, we spent a lot of time together due to
pair teaching, the team meetings and we didn’t involve the others [other teachers in the school]. It may be our fault. But from the second semester we merged completely in the organisation, and we tried to involve another 4-5 colleagues in the Springboard approach” Team Leader 1

Support and development for better leadership

Capacity building is a factor associated with positive effects of distributed leadership (Woods, 2013), developing people is necessary to effectively distribute leadership in a school. (Day et al, 2009) The final publication of the Springboard programme underlines that “… the function of leadership is to involve and empower colleagues of the institution and stakeholders so that they are able to realise the mission” (Bognár, 2011, p.26). The programme provided various forms of support for all participating actors: school heads, team leaders and teachers, which are summarised in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Form, description</th>
<th>Target group</th>
<th>Effect on leadership practices, on teaching and learning</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| Collective | Training and workshops:  
• a 2 day training per year for school heads on a theme determined by their needs;  
• 2-3 meetings per year on specific operational topics  | SP School heads                   | School heads and team leaders emphasised in the interviews that one of the main strengths of the SP was that it was well prepared: before the schools actually launched the Springboard class, a year was dedicated for their preparation, which included training and workshops for SLs. |
|          | Internal workshops: in some schools SP teachers organised internal workshops to share what they learned in Springboard | all teaching staff (of some schools) | Internal workshops in some schools became an effective means of spreading the Springboard pedagogy in the whole school and thus ensuring the programme’s sustainability. |
|          | Mentoring: Originally the mentors were assigned to schools to foster the change process, to facilitate bringing about a paradigm shift. They were supposed to plan and follow the developmental process of the team and of the individual teachers. In practice some mentors however exceeded their mentoring role and provided e.g. methodological training for the teachers, and fulfilled the role of an educational expert. | originally: teachers of SP teams in practice: in some schools the whole teaching staff | The ambiguous role of mentors was viewed critically by the programme staff, which emphasised that in a future similar programme this multifunctionality of the mentor must be avoided. On the other hand a team leader explained that the mentor played an important part in the institutionalisation of the programme by presenting the SP to the whole teaching staff |
| Individual | Coaching: So called educoaches, who came from the world of business and who were School heads | Educoaches observed improvement in the following skills of leaders:  
• conflict management  
• communication |

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| Peer | Regional meetings: held twice a year at 3-3 venues, hosted by a school, with the participation of other Springboard schools (school heads, Springboard teams) from the region | School heads, team leaders, SP teachers | Regional meetings were recognised as the most successful forms of support by school heads and teachers, allowing a real horizontal learning possibility. „A continuous liaison between participating institutions can constitute an opportunity for consulting and learning from each other, which can strengthen leadership competencies” (Bognár, 2011. p.74) All school heads interviewed highlighted as one of the most rewarding things in their |
| Mentor | Mentoring: Mentors supported the team leaders’ work by individual consultancy. In some schools they also provided individual consultancy possibilities to teachers of the team. | Team leaders, SP teachers, students | Team Leader 2 said mentoring didn’t change her leadership style but it did influence how she turned to her colleagues. She also emphasised that individual mentoring with team members reinforced colleagues, gave them new dynamism. Team Leader 3 said it was the methodological, professional support of the mentor they valued (see in collective mentoring) rather than the individual support she got as a team leader. Team Leader 1 said their mentor just reinforced them in what they were doing, but formulated no constructive criticism. Each student had a mentor teacher, who supported his/her learning individually, with whom they had the possibility to discuss their personal problems, difficulties, successes, etc. |

specially trained in the framework of SP to coach school heads |

- time management
- self-representation
- undertaking and carrying out decisions pertaining to change in the personnel. (Baráth et al, 2010) “Some leaders used coaching consciously to provide an opportunity for their co-leaders to improve their leadership.” (Bognár, 2011, p.132) Two of the school leaders (1 and 2) interviewed claimed that the coach had a very important support function and helped them a lot in improving as a leader. School leader 3 said coaching did not have any added value for him, it didn’t work as a form of support. The final publication and the SPL formulated criticism with regards to coaching in SP. In particular it seemed that school heads would have needed more a legal expert’s support at the beginning and a coach perhaps in a later stage.
leadership role in SP was when they could share what they were doing during regional meetings.

Informal meetings: between some schools
School heads, team leaders, teachers
Some of the schools still have a close collaboration on various professional issues 2 years after the end of the programme. Peer learning started during the SP contributed to a system thinking of some of the school principals.

Table 2: Forms of support in the Springboard Programme

Based on the Springboard final publication (Bognár, 2011), the monitoring reports (Sinka, Juhász, 2009, 2010, 2011) and the interviews.

It would be difficult to measure the impact of these forms of support separately, however their combined effect on the development of school leaders was monitored and measured along various dimensions and with diverse tools. With regards to the competences and attitudes of school leaders the SP evaluation report highlights that the most significant improvement was observed in those areas which were the most crucial for the implementation of the programme: motivating others, entrepreneurship and the capacity for self-development. (Baráth et al, 2011.)

External evaluation (Baráth et al, 2011) gave quantitative evidence for school leaders’ improvement in vision-making and with regards to their attitude to change. Regarding this latter the measurement tool examined how much those actions appear in the schools’ practice which are necessary for the successful implementation of change along 6 dimensions: self-evaluation, planning, involvement, development, co-ordination/organisation of work and leadership. Two of these dimensions: involvement and leadership were described by statements closely connected with DL. The data revealed that the perception of the various actors (team leaders, teachers) differ, moreover it changes with time. In particular, team leaders’ perceived a decrease in the extent of some factors of the distribution of leadership, while teachers perceived an increasing tendency related to the same factors.

Summary of the analysis

What we can see from the programme documentation is that although distributed leadership as such (explicitly) does not appear neither among the areas of training, development and support, nor in the evaluation and monitoring reports, there are various indicators referring to a quite strong distributed leadership approach. Shared responsibility is highlighted as a key feature for the successful institutionalisation of the programme, and is mentioned as a potential solution for the unbalanced workload of colleagues. Reflections on the results of the Springboard programme emphasise that those schools where the competence and the corresponding responsibilities were clearly communicated and transparent for all participating teachers could serve as a model. (Bognár, 2011)

Most of the factors we highlighted above can be matched to one of the structural indicators of distributed leadership proposed by Philip Woods:

1. “distribution of internal institutional resources and responsibilities, which may involve formal forums where responsibility is shared (committees and formal teams) but also equally as important spontaneous or improvised groupings;
2. cultural ideas and values, which encourage openness, risk-taking, mutual respect, etc;
3. social relations with certain properties, such as patterns of interaction, which cross formal hierarchies, and high-trust relationships.” (Woods et al., 2004).

Professional collaboration: team work, pair teaching can be seen as forms of distribution of internal resources and responsibilities (1); empowerment, commitment and the openness of teams relate to the cultural ideas and values (2); while trust, respect and recognition to social relations (3). Strong steering on the other hand seems to be a necessary concomitant of the distribution of leadership.

12.3.5 Leading for Learning: the impact of leadership practices on student learning

In this chapter we will summarise what the objective of the programme was: the expected impact of the programme on schools, teachers and on student learning, what the actual (real) impact was and attempt to explore the factors that are conducive to making an impact. The questions we will examine are the following:

- What has the biggest impact on teachers attitudes and practice so that they can support individual pathways? (Why do they desire to support students’ individual learning and equity?)

- What is the perceived impact of leadership as a distributed phenomenon on
  a) the realisation of the broad objectives of the programme?
  b) the institutionalisation of the programme?

Expected impact – the objectives

As mentioned earlier, the specific objective of the programme was to help and reintegrate pupils and young people who had previously failed during their school career and who could not find their places neither in education nor in the world of work. In order to do so the programme envisaged to change everything that could have reminded students of their previous failures:

1. the physical environment of learning,
2. the organisation of learning,
3. the content of learning,
4. the instruction methods and
5. the pedagogical approach of teachers.

This latter was a broader objective that required a change of the pedagogical paradigm of teachers. When examining the impact of leadership practices on the programme implementation and most importantly on student learning, it is crucial to take note of the extent to which it is difficult to change a pedagogical paradigm or a pedagogical culture. This is beautifully captured in the introduction of the final publication of the Springboard programme:

“The at least 11,000 hours of lessons that constitute one’s personal experience with education result in a deeply rooted mental model, which is further strengthened by higher education, which treats individuals mostly in a uniform way, assessed and evaluated by tests. In order to endue the person-centred pedagogy that we promoted, 16-17 years of interiorised personal experience had to be overwritten so that teachers can move securely in the complex learning environment based on the Springboard pedagogy.” (Bognár, 2011, p.18)
Real impact – the results

Let us shortly summarise what we learnt from the documents and interviews about whether and to what extent the above objectives were met. During the two academic years in which Springboard classes were run in the framework of the programme 450 students enrolled in these classes and there were 7 drop outs altogether (2%).

The programme leader reported that the 5 intended levels of change (listed above) followed each other in an increasing order of difficulty, that is, the first one (changing the physical environment) was the easiest to realise and the last far the most difficult. The final publication, the monitoring and evaluation reports as well as the personal interview with the programme leader reveal that all schools managed to change the first three. There were fewer schools where a more fundamental change was realised in the instruction methods and where teachers became perfectly conscious about using a wide range of methods and about selecting them according to students’ learning needs. As for changing the pedagogical approach of teachers to a considerable extent 3 years were not enough, this change only happened in few cases.

“Individual conversations with learners, individual contracts with them was part of the Springboard philosophy, but it didn’t fit in our school’s system. So we didn’t manage to do everything because we had to adapt to the school’s internal rules.” Team Leader 3

Nevertheless, in most participating schools, the Springboard programme did have an impact on teachers, the school culture, school leadership, which indirectly increased student learning. In the three schools selected for the interviews the following changes occurred:

1) Teachers
   • started to use new forms of professional collaboration: teamwork, peer-learning (School 1, 3 – new, School 2 less new)
   • started to use new forms of instruction, improved their methodology
   • became more conscious of focusing on and supporting students’ individual learning
   • improved in self-reflection

2) School culture (values, convictions, beliefs, preconditions → paradigm)
   • new practices became valued and entered the set of convictions: teachers’ empowerment, professional collaboration, student centred approach
   • some of these new practices became integrated in the professional culture (e.g. teamwork extended to other tasks, programmes, projects)

3) School leadership
   • school leaders improved in motivating others, entrepreneurship and the capacity for self-development

One of the main philosophical, educational starting point of the Springboard programme was to support individual learning pathways, to facilitate personalised learning. This was present not only related to students but also at the institutional or programme level.

Key factors conducive to change

We would like to highlight some indicators of distributed leadership which seemed to play a particularly important role in bringing about change and thus in supporting the learning of each and every student.
1. Leader’s attitudes (values and commitment)

Although the writers conclude that the success of the programme in a school does not ensue from the prevalence of one or the other leadership attitude, both the description of Chapter 4.1 and the interview with the programme leader suggest that some of these attitudes foster the institutionalisation of the programme (facilitate that innovations spread across the whole school) to a greater extent while others make it more difficult or prevent it completely. The final publication underlines that in those institutions which decided to continue the programme after the project (that is after the project funding was over) the leader’s attitude, their engagement and commitment was guaranteed.

“It was confirmed that if change is brought about even if in a single class, it can endure change in the pedagogical work of the whole school with the appropriate support from the school leader. With this experience we can claim that the Springboard programme could work in every secondary school, if we manage to find the teachers that are committed to solving the problem of early school leavers and the school leaders who support them.” (Bognár 2011, p. 80)

At the programme level (programme leader and programme office’s staff) we saw a high level of commitment towards the values of the programme (in particular, learner centred approach, equity).

2. Professional collaboration

Frost points out that “Where the school can develop the internal conditions that allow teachers to enter into collaborative relationships for development and professional learning, the impact is likely to be substantial” (Frost, 2011) Our case study seems to underpin this statement: according to the school heads and the team leaders the most significant change and – related to this – the most sustainable element of Dobbantó is personalised learning and teamwork. (Sinka, Juhász, 2011) Teamwork was stated to be an element of organisational learning, which had an impact on the organisational culture as well. (Bognár, 2011) Different forms of peer-learning (within and between schools) were equally viewed as important for professional development both for teachers and for school leaders. Professional support and collaboration was present at several levels (between teachers, between school principals, between schools and the programme office, with coaches and mentors, and was also encouraged between students etc.)

3. Empowerment and trust

The data suggest that the empowerment of the team leader and of the teachers, trust in colleagues, students and other partners (parents) had a motivating and positive effect on successfully introducing new approaches and bringing about change. A strong empowerment and trust characterised the programme leadership, which gave a high level of autonomy to the expert team, and which valued the initiatives of schools.

When looking at the Springboard programme in the three selected schools from a little further away and then we “zoom in”, we discover that very similar characteristics appear at all levels of the programme as in a fractal\(^20\).

\(^{20}\) Fractals are typically self-similar patterns, where self-similar means they are "the same from near as from far" (Wikipedia, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fractal)
Supporting individual learning pathways of students was the main means of achieving the programme objective, correspondingly the programme recognised and encouraged the individual ways of implementation of schools. A strong and personalised support was given to students who all had a mentor teacher and received various forms of support. Similarly teachers, team leaders and school heads were provided a wide range of support, collective, peer as well as individual (personalised). The mentors and coaches themselves also received support in various ways (training, supervision, etc). The distribution of leadership itself appeared at all levels: at the programme level within the programme office staff, recognising and valuing the leadership role of schools in realising the programme, which in turn (in successful schools) recognised and valued the leadership role of teachers, who – by e.g. planning and monitoring the Individual Development Plans together with the pupils and the parents – recognised and valued the student (and in some cases parent) leadership. We suggest that this fractal structure multiplied the impact of the above mentioned factors and contributed to the success of the programme. In those cases where the fractal structure was “broken” the programme made less impact, change occurred to a lesser extent or the programme was not successful at all.

The construction of fractals follow an iterative pattern: the same construction step is iterated at lower and lower levels. When one experiences positive and supporting patterns (leadership forms, values, support) one may be more likely to reproduce these patterns at his/her own level. For example, if one – as a member of a team or as a participant of a programme – is respected in their unique, individual ways, he/she is more likely to show the same respect in a context where he/she is the leader. This however does not always happen: e.g. in SP there were school heads who were not committed to the programme’s values, who did not use forms of support they received, who did not respect their teachers capacity or value teacher or student leadership. In order that the pattern is reiterated it seems that some core values must be common already from the start. If core values are shared then their consistency is strengthened by a self-similar pattern of distributed leadership in turn.
12.3.6 Conclusion

On the whole the case study shows that it is difficult – if not impossible – to characterise distributed leadership by specific indicators – e.g. the same indicator (the selection of staff based on high expertise) can foster distributed leadership but can have negative effects on it at the same time. Distributed leadership can also be seen as a process, which changes with time, with the maturity of the group of partners as a team (team of teachers, group of students, etc.), with the experience of the leader. Several of its structural indicators (common values, trust, group cohesion) take time to realise, the extent of distributed leadership also depends on the different stages of group dynamics.

We have seen that school leaders’ attitudes and involvement in the programme and especially in the Springboard team varied, various leadership practices were applied with different forms and different degree of DL. The results of the case study suggest that in those schools where leadership was supportive, encouraged or fostered the emergence of various initiatives, the changes spread better in the institution, more teachers got involved and thus the potential of raising the overall quality of teaching and learning was higher. On the other hand, school leaders who were not committed to the programme values and/or whose attitude was e.g. neglecting, bringing about change was more difficult, or was prevented completely.

We must note that in the Springboard programme certain forms of DL were “imposed” on schools by the programme: professional collaboration in teams with a team leader and regular (weekly) team meetings and pair teaching. This way of working was perceived as new in several schools and contributed to a considerable extent to the change process, the professional development of teachers, and thus indirectly to enhancing student learning. The “imposed” elements inspired schools and facilitated the use of some forms of DL. In general, forms of collaborative relationships (teamwork, peer-learning) seemed to have been crucial in the success of the programme. Furthermore the variety of professional support at all levels played an important role in realising the objectives and in fostering a change of mindset.

Looking at the programme at different levels – programme level, school level, team level – revealed that a fractal structure (following a self-similar pattern, that is, the same pattern is present at all levels) of DL factors – e.g. empowerment, professional collaboration – multiplies the impact of these factors in bringing about change. In those schools where the programme was sustained, where teachers did adopt a learner centred approach, where several elements of the programme (e.g. teamwork, learning content, etc.) were integrated in the school’s pedagogical culture, we find very similar leadership patterns at the different levels, whereas in schools where this structure was “broken” – e.g. at the school leader’s level – the impact was considerably less.

As mentioned in the description of the methodology further data would need to be collected using a wider range of research methods to draw more precise conclusions, e.g. further research would be required to gain a deeper insight into the ways student leadership was perceived, encouraged and developed. It would furthermore be interesting to explore more deeply the conditions to create and the consequences and impact of having self-similar DL patterns in different levels of the educational system (local, national).
13. THE HEAD TEACHERS OF EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN LITHUANIA ABOUT DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP

13.1 Research goals

The distributed leadership research group at the LEU Institute of Professional Competence participating in European Policy Network on School Leadership conducted a research in autumn 2013.

Majority of schools in Lithuania are municipality/or state schools and have a status of public enterprise. The head teachers are mostly employed in the Municipality administration and have a status of civic servant. Teachers are employed by head teachers in the schools and have a status of service providers.

The goal was to discover about distribution of leadership in the educational institutions, and find the answers to the following questions:

- Are the head teachers and community members of Lithuanian educational institutions familiar with the distributed leadership ideas; do they implement these ideas in the environment of an educational institution?
- How is the leadership shared in the environment of an educational institution?
- How does the distributed leadership practice fit into the framework of an educational institution values (equity, honesty, community involvement)?
- What is the impact of distributed leadership on the results of an educational institution activities and the development of culture within an educational institution?
- What are the needs for distributed leadership learning/teaching?

13.2 Research method and respondents

The e-research system http://apklausa.lt was used to conduct the research.

The e-questionnaire http://r.apklausa.lt/f/pasidalintoji-lyderyste-ba5k5ym/recipients/283cac673d contains 10 open and closed questions (English version, see appendix No.4).

52 respondents answered (336 reviewed) the e-questionnaire in a period of 4 work days/and 6 calendar days. E-questionnaire stays active.

Most of the respondents were from the cities - Vilnius, Kaunas, Šiauliai and Klaipėda.

50% of the respondents were head teachers, 23.1% were vice head teachers, 7.7% were Unit heads, other - 13.5%.
Table 1. Respondent occupations: 1. Head teacher; 2. Vice head teacher; 3. School council chairperson; 4. Unit head; 5. Other; 6. Occupation not indicated.

According to the school types the respondents were distributed as follows: primary school employees - 7.7%; basic school - 36.5%; pro-gymnasium - 9.6%; gymnasium - 17.3%; secondary school - 7.7%; vocational school - 9.6%.


90.4% of the respondents confirmed they would like to know more about the distributed leadership and the European Policy Network on School Leadership.

13.3 Distributed leadership practice in Lithuanian schools

The respondents believe that 51.9% of them know about the distributed leadership, 32.7% have insufficient knowledge about it and 13.5% are not aware of it.
Table 3. The respondents aware of the distributed leadership: 1. Yes; 2. Not enough; 3. No.

13.3.1. Ways of sharing leadership in educational institutions in Lithuania

The answers of respondents revealed several significant ways of sharing leadership, which enhance the expression of distributed leadership in an organization. This is as follows:

   a) The support and enhancement of the teachers’, other community members’ initiatives; singling out the leaders in the community and supporting their actions;

   “We try not to suppress the initiatives, to support them and not deny the authorship of the initiatives”; Staff of the structural units offer solutions to problems for the head of the structural unit. Heads of structural units together with the school management discuss the possible problem solutions; head of the institution performs analysis and makes the final decision”; “Not only the fields of activity are distributed in the institution, but also the responsibility for their own area. Before the final decision is made the problem goes through all levels of the institution. Informal leaders are carefully observed, they are given the obligations and responsibilities. The opportunities of the new leaders are noticed in this way. Nevertheless, people have great fear of initiative”; “Teamwork culture is prominent at school. Teachers - leaders have their own followers. We seek the balance between formal and informal leadership”; “New teachers are involved into the groups according to their interests and abilities, their competencies and motivation”; “We follow the principles of competence, cooperation and tolerance”; “There are teachers - leaders who supervise certain school groups and committees”; “I always highlight that the head teacher is not the only possible leader. I accept the leadership of school committee chairperson and student committee chairperson with pleasure. I support the project managers. Everyone can be a leader in some field if s/he has the necessary competence”; “People usually become leaders in a natural way; when a person is active and encourages others to participate in the field, followers appear. Sometimes the leadership is imposed by voting, when the group members decide who is the best person for leadership; in other times leader is the head teacher or appointed person by her/him”; “Different school life activities have their own leaders: the person who has a lot of strengths in the field naturally becomes the leader. There is not a single leader in school, one “engine”; there is a possibility for anyone to be a leader, only wish is necessary; sometimes there is a situation when those who do not want to be leaders need just a small push to get involved and experience the joy of this activity”; “I lead the class. I help the head teacher by minuting the meetings, compiling the list of teachers. I run parent meetings, by communicating with them I help parents to get involved into the school community activities; “Employees’ ideas are discussed and implemented if possible. Tasks and various activities are delegated.
Different teachers become leaders sometimes, as it depends on the task delegated”;
“There are teachers - leaders at school. They are recognized and their work within the gymnasium and beyond is encouraged. Teachers - leaders are active, successful and acknowledged; they promote changes in the community. School management support teachers’ leadership, encourage innovative activities (positive external school evaluation report in 2012)”;
“The distribution of functions dominates. Self-expression and professional development are encouraged. Efforts are being made to avoid dominance of one person over others.”

b) Communication, cooperation, learning, trust, strengthening a culture of responsibility in the organization;

“We cooperate, learn from each other and share experiences with the city’s and country’s educators; it is important for us to improve students’ performance. We plan our activities together”;
“Teachers are assigned the tasks and functions according to their abilities. Teachers are responsible for reaching the goals set”;
“Shared leadership is a term fixed in the school performance document. The effective school leadership team was built, responsibilities and actions were shared. Teachers - leaders organize team meetings, share experiences”;
“We cooperate by raising initiatives and implementing them in our own way; we are involved in this creative process together. We look for information and the examples of experiences on the Internet”;
“We participate at the conferences and seminars. We also involve school autonomy”;
“We use teamwork principles. To perform different tasks teams are formed, which are supervised by their leaders. We make decisions together”;
“There are different work groups in the gymnasium: evaluation and self-evaluation. Teachers themselves supervise these groups”; “We distribute the functions among ourselves based on common agreement.”
“There are head teacher’s and 4 assistant teams in our school. Nevertheless, there are work groups supervised by the teachers (not only a certain subject methodical groups) and other specialists (non-administrative representatives). There is a group supervised by a teacher and the members are administration representatives”;
“There is a teacher from “Time for the Leaders” group 2; groups perform different activities. Groups with leaders arrange different events.”
“The functional distribution of occupations is ready. Activities in work groups are organized; community groups are involved and supervise those groups. Training takes place in school and outside of school. Cooperation culture is being developed, etc.”;
“All pro-gymnasium employees recognize the benefits of cooperation and sharing of ideas. We take up support roles, encourage experienced and young professionals to cooperate. When shared leadership is present, staff are the team members and are actively involved in the changes”.

c) Highlighting the common goals in the education institution;

“The school recognizes that leadership for the sake of common school goals is a virtue. There are good conditions for teachers to learn and share experience, autonomy in initiating activities and the choice of instruments is encouraged”;
“The director, deputy director for education, methodological group leaders and the school board perform major work in preparing various projects, preliminary work (especially document drafting), while anticipating inspections”;
“At present we are studying the principles of distributed leadership and trying to implement it. The project “Creative Partnerships” aids us a lot. New leaders are emerging. They are going to organize a club to share experience and become the ambassadors of different activities. We are going to treat the students - leaders in a similar way”.
“Employee performance effect is increased in several ways: rendering of a uniform curriculum, student’s education as active participant in the educational process; active participation in methodological activities, committees and various working groups”; “They do their job well and honestly. Obey the school’s overall policy, to communicate and cooperate for the well-being of the whole school. Evaluate their superiors and colleagues”.

d) Proper information distribution in an educational institution;

“We share information in both ways: vertically and horizontally. The information is accessible to all members of the community”;

e) Community members are involved into the management of an educational institution; the autonomy institutions are present;

“Trade-union and parent representatives are involved in the management process”; “The autonomy institutions work actively. All the main school development steps are projected and different activities performed in active teams. To ensure the quality of educational process educational consultations are used (colleague to colleague), etc.”;

“Most of the school autonomy institutions (School Council, Student Council, methodical groups) are supervised by teachers, not the school administration. Teachers take up the initiative to organize school events from the idea to its full implementation. They also participate in school work groups and committees not formally, but look for the essence, discuss, offer specific solutions and take the responsibility for their implementation”;

“Educators are involved into the planning, event organizing, project preparation and implementation, etc. The functions are delegated and they are trusted”;

“The leadership based on trust, responsibility, communication and cooperation is present at all levels: among colleagues, students, leadership in a lesson, etc.”;

“The head master involves the team into the process of creating a vision. The team organizes meetings with different educational process participants (parents, teachers, students, staff). It is important for the team members to know what the expectations are i.e. the goal of each stage should be clearly formulated. The responsibility and accountability are developed in seeking the main goal”;

“According to the offers and choice of community”;

“Collegiality in decision making process. Triangulation method for assessing performance. The precedence of project work over the hierarchical organization of the activities”;

“I try to involve the community members. I notice the qualified and the competent as well as encourage them to take on the leadership”;

“We deal with the questions openly, arguments help us improve, in the face of difficulties we boldly ask questions. We listen to every opinion and try to find a mutually acceptable solution; our compliance with agreements is mutual. Not only students and teachers actively participate in the education process, but parents as well. We organize celebrations, discussions, work together; all of us care about our school”.

13.3.2. The harmony of leadership sharing ways and values of an educational institution (equity, honesty, community involvement, etc.)

44 % of the respondents in the research believe that the ways of leadership sharing are in harmony with the values of the educational institution. Nevertheless, other respondents in the research have some doubt regarding this issue.
Table 4. Part of the respondents believe that the ways of leadership sharing are in harmony with the values of the educational institution (equity, honesty, community involvement, etc.) 1. “Yes”-44.2%; “Not enough”-38.5%; “No”-7.7%; “No answer”-7.7%.

The respondents helped to single out the ways of sharing leadership, which are in greatest harmony with the values of the educational institution (equity, honesty, community involvement, etc.). The ways are as follows:

a) Collegiality of decision making, equality, transparency, project work takes precedence over a hierarchical organization of activities, responsibility at work;

“We consult with all interested parties when the whole school issues are discussed. Our aim is that both parents and students take personal responsibility. Relationships are based upon principles of trust and involvement of all members of the community. We appreciate and encourage them to be responsible and fair”;
“Responsibility, trust, change implementation; avoidance of one person domination”;
“I encourage community members to express their views. I inform in advance about the future activities and changes. I give the right of initiative and responsibility of a free choice to the members of the community and make room for them to have more influence on the ongoing processes. The ideas offered by staff and students are discussed, supported and tested throughout. Publicity and information helps staff to know about the processes in the institution”;
“Equal partnership among administration, colleagues, students and their parents. Attention to each opinion and effort to accept it”.

b) The involvement, openness, respect to the opinion of others, respect for and not competition with other person, sharing among the community members;

“I try to involve community members”; “We deal with the questions openly, arguments help us improve, in the face of difficulties we boldly ask questions. We listen to every opinion and try to find a mutually acceptable solution; our compliance with agreements is mutual. Not only students and teachers actively participate in the education process, but parents as well. We organize celebrations, discussions, work together; all of us care about our school”;
“The enhancement of leadership at all levels. Leader’s ability to identify the fields for development. Selection of decisions and their effectiveness. Cooperation culture”;
All staff - educators and not educators - are involved into the informal activities. Participation in the decision making process. We try to hear every opinion. The collective agreement is being adjusted”;
“It is sought that additional activities in the pro-gymnasium would be appointed according to the delegation principles, when the staff member agrees to get involved; we look for the most favourable possible action performance options. It is more difficult to implement or comply with the principle of community involvement, as only part of the staff initiate leadership;
“The agreement is reached in cooperation and discussion; the good practice spreading through open workshops, conferences, etc. Leaders have the opportunity for self-expression and collaboration during such events. However, altruism is an important feature”;
“Acknowledgement of a person, activity, encouragement to get involved into new activities”;
“The Character development programme is being realized in the school for 10 years now. The school has common values acknowledged by all community members”;
“The staff are encouraged to express their opinions, which are analyzed afterwards. The staff are informed in advance about the future activities and changes. The ideas offered by staff are analyzed and taken into account during activities”;
“Community involvement into the planning processes, openness in dealing with such questions as salaries, education, finance allocation. Community members can access all the information and offer solutions to any questions”;
“Effort to find the best solution for the whole community. Non-competitive seeking of common goals, knowledge and experience sharing, support to one another.”

13.3.3. Education institution community’s awareness of distributed leadership

53.8% of the respondents believe that the education institution community knows that distributed leadership is characteristic not only to the school administration; 28.8% said they know “Not enough”, “No” - 13.5%; others did not reply to the question.

Table 5. The understanding of educational institution community that leadership is characteristic not only to the school administration: 1. “Yes”; 2. “Not enough”; 3. “No”.

Head teachers of educational institutions believe that community members are aware of the distributed leadership:

a) From the current practice and relationships in the workplace;

“They know that their initiatives will be supported and they will not be pushed away from the implementation”;

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“They just know the colleagues who have features of good leaders. They are offered certain positions”; 
“The organization of activities in school as they take part in various management processes in an organization”; 
“From experience, as they lead activities themselves and assume responsibility for the results”; 
“We discuss it. All of us have a common goal to improve the learning achievements of students and raise their willingness to go to school”; 
“They are not afraid to express their opinion; when dissatisfaction or misunderstandings arise they try to clarify the situation, discuss it in groups”; 
“Quite often the leader is not the administration representative, this is also stressed at our meetings”; 
“They can perfectly handle the offered activities; there are people who can unite the community, create work groups”; 
“During the so-called wide audit (assessment and self-assessment), teachers assess the leadership (level 3-4)”; “Community members are also assigned certain functions”; 
“Discussed at the meetings”; 
“Students and their parents are actively involved into the school activities. We organize joint discussions, provide information. Students, parents and teachers work in joint teams”; 
“Any idea from the staff is discussed; teachers perform the assignments with great responsibility; they can always express their own opinion”; 
“The most active and inquisitive members of the community know about it. We believe so, because they assume additional responsibilities, they also can lead and organize the activities of the team”; 
“They are involved in the preparation, discussing the adoption of important documents; the groups prepare projects and present them to the community. They share their experience with school leaders, consult with them”; 
“School activities are usually presented not by the administration at school community gatherings. The role of school management is not overstated during school events; it is clear for the community members that there is quite a number of initiative, proactive, responsive, professional staff at school”; 
“Most of the community members can take up leadership in case of emergency, they are not afraid of responsibility, open to new things and ideas, learn constantly”; 
“The school head demonstrates by his own example trust, shared responsibility and gives opportunities for other staff. Accordingly, such practice is applied among the students through a variety of activities, deliberately designed situations to help reveal the best features in the widest possible range of students”; 
“The staff has opportunities to increase their influence. There is a lot of publicity and information, therefore, staff knows about the situation in other departments”; 
“Some teachers already are leaders and need no encouragement from management. Teachers encourage leadership in the class, cooperate with different business companies”; 
“The staff initiates work groups taking responsibility for organizing certain activities”; 
“Community members often come with their own ideas and initiatives, because they know that their ideas will be accepted. Currently, our gymnasium is involved in the project "Time for the Leaders 2". During the meetings, the gymnasium project creative team has briefed about leadership, emphasized that everyone can become a leader and invited other community members to join. Gymnasium project creative team regularly meets to discuss the activities and present their ideas to gymnasium management”; 
“The community initiates the autonomy foundation and development. For instance, work council, tutor mobile group. Community members (students, teachers) encourage the development of formal and informal activities”; 
“Separate school community members manage long-term projects on their own and involve 10-12 more teachers, enabling the school community to reach the goals set. School administration only partly participate in these activities; most of the organizational issues are solved by the teachers - leaders”; 
“We had a methodological workshop on leadership. We listened to a colourful presentation with leadership examples coupled with lifelike practices. However, not all members of the community heard it, etc. The strategic goal of the gymnasium is the promotion of leadership. Therefore, we take small steps
through different activities towards the goal”;

b) From learning activities:

“Individual teachers are self-involved into methodological, educational development of materials, publication, publicity programs or projects presented to the school, district, the country's educators. Individual teachers, pedagogical staff are involved in personal training, elaborating specific competences; then they share this experience with other school teachers. The information about these events is published in the Education Center training plans”;

“We often discuss this issue. During the meetings the importance of leadership in student development is highlighted. We encourage the staff to learn and take part in self-development”;

“The staff learn from one another. They share their ideas, surveys. The staff is oriented towards learning in cooperation with internal and external nets. There is a space for the shared leadership in the pro-gymnasium. Leaders assume responsibility to connect the staff members, generate trust, reflection, etc.”;

“Teachers are involved in reading literature on leadership topics.”

“From the qualification development trainings”;

“They share their experiences on leadership development culture in school in conferences around the country. For the school self-evaluation of performance we use the Common Assessment Framework methodology. The first indicator, which we analyze is leadership in school”;

“Our school participates in the project “Time for the Leaders 2”. We are aware of the theoretical aspects. We constantly touch upon leadership subject according to the abilities and competences of the teachers to perform the activity”;

“We talk about leadership in public and media”.

13.3.4. The possible influence of distributed leadership on the results and culture development of educational institution

According to the majority of the respondents the successful implementation of shared leadership at school would positively influence the results and culture development of an educational institution.

“It would definitely change. There would be more understanding among the colleagues. Administration, teachers and students would equally participate in the school management”;

“The result would be better because of the greater activeness and responsibility”;

“I believe that implementation of shared leadership would change the school activity results. It is important for he staff member to influence the school activities and be heard”;

“Yes. Only the participation of every school community member in the setting and achieving school activity goals can lead to positive results. The shared leadership encourages to take responsibility and create”;

“It would change. People always try harder when they implement their own ideas”;

“Yes. Everybody would feel necessary and responsible, as the personal input influences the overall results of the institution”;

“I believe we implement the shared leadership in our school, so I can clearly see the positive influence on the results of school activities”;

“I believe yes, because everyone would be more responsible. The more you share, the work is more productive, of higher quality and easier performed. Everybody feels acknowledged”;

“Everyone would work towards the same direction”;

“We believe it would change”;

“I believe that leadership depends on the personal responsibility. Leader is not the order giver, but the
person who can inspire the others with his ideas”;
“We have it in our school and it influences the quality of our work. One of the goals of school development for 2013-2014 is to encourage leadership in all groups of the school community”;
“It would change teachers’ attitude towards their job, more initiatives would arise. School would be more attractive”;
“The results of gymnasium activity are getting better, because group members feel responsibility for the common activities and their results”;
“It would change for the better as all the members should participate in the community”; “I believe it would be better. It is important for everyone to understand that they matter. More initiative and creativity”;
“We believe we have started implementing it already: we have better results, because we work hand in hand”;
“I believe it would be much better. The community members would have more opportunities to learn from the others in their common work; they could realize their ideas by taking up responsibility”;
“We believe we have implemented the shared leadership in our institution. The involvement of all community members and sharing responsibility would enable us to reach even better results”; “Maybe teachers would be more active”;
“I believe it would change; the professional development would be better, stronger personal involvement of the community members, sharing responsibilities would influence the teaching and learning”;
“The activities’ and education results would be higher. The responsibility would be greater, which would influence students’ learning and results. There would be more activities”;
“All the community members would feel greater responsibility. There would be greater trust and understanding of different environments; knowledge would deepen; the generation of future leaders would be trained”;
“Of course. The more examples of shared leadership or leaders in the community, the greater activity diversity as belief would encourage us to go further. Leader must cooperate to have followers. He must be able to share responsibility and the activities. A certain charisma is necessary and the ideal will spread. Nevertheless, the community needs to be motivated, therefore the leader has to find motivational tools. If there are more leaders, there will be more methods used and decisions made. Leaders are creative, energetic and charismatic”;
“Active, gifted, ambitious people take initiative (if management does not interfere) without the theoretic knowledge about shared leadership. Their aim is to make their school pleasant for both: students and staff. If we work and learn with love, the result is undoubtedly changing”;
“I believe it is implemented and influences the school activities”; “The results would be better if more people are involved and overtake the responsibility for different activities”;
“Definitely. The educational institutions would be strong and ready for competition; they would develop other leaders in their environment, facilitation would take place”;
“I believe things would change as for the present we have “authoritarian” management “;
“I believe in that. When sharing the responsibility it is very important to show that the activity the staff member is responsible for also gives personal benefits (this is more motivating). If you know how to share leadership, this comes naturally; a new culture is developed in the organisation, there are more positive emotions. It is possible to build other things on this basis then, the ones that influence people’s thinking and future results”;
“If leadership would be shared 100% successfully, this would influence the activity success in the pro-
gymnasium. Overall changes influence teamwork conception, practice and culture. The management segment as well as teachers and other staff should change their personal expectations into institution change expectations, then the results would change”;
“I believe this would change. The staff members’ unwillingness would disappear (“would you pay for additional work”). It would be easier to find supportive, gifted people who would take up the leader’s
responsibility”;
“Unambiguously yes. Common work has more advantages than separate work. There would be new ideas and greater opportunities to realize them. The responsibility for the institution would grow”;
“It would change. Taking up responsibility and initiative in every field of activity encourages development”;
“Yes. The shared leadership in school would encourage to see a leader in everyone. It would depend on the work done and would involve not only educators, but also the other staff, students and their parents”;
“I have noticed that part of the community members are quite motivated; their motivation is connected with self-expression and professional development. I would like that the majority of community members would take up initiative more often and would form informal problem solving groups. I have also noticed that unwillingness to take up initiative is connected with underdeveloped cooperation culture”;
“Yes, it would change. Every community member would be responsible in the activities for himself/herself and the others. The community would become a team where everyone can manifest himself/herself”;
“We believe, as the community members get to know one another better, understand the notion of the shared leadership, we could evaluate the staff more properly and encourage them to take up responsibility in performing activities; they could do it in high quality and would feel satisfaction and acknowledgement”.

Part of the respondents doubted regarding the importance of distributed leadership influence on the results of and culture change in educational institution:

“Maybe it would change. I need more information on the issue and, of course, not only on the management level”;
“Maybe, I really do not know”;
“It is difficult to find people who would give their free time for the side work, most of the people are in a hurry and do not want to do anything that is for free. Most of them think that this work is for administration staff”;
“The results would change if separate leaders would be remunerated for their ideas and implementation”.

13.4. Summary and conclusions

1. The research has helped to identify the head teachers of educational institutions who are interested in theoretical and practical aspects of distributed leadership. The respondents’ answers indicate that there is a connection between the head teacher of educational institution and the community members distributed leadership principles application in practice. Members of the community receive information on the distributed leadership in practice and from relationships in the workplace as well as taking part in the training.

2. The research has shown the following distributed leadership ways in an educational institution in practice:
   a) The support and enhancement of teachers and other community members’ initiatives; developing leaders in the community and the consent for them to act;
   b) The enhancement of communication, cooperation, learning, trust, responsibility and culture in the institution;
   c) The highlighting of common goals in the educational institution;
   d) Proper spread of information in the educational institution;
   e) Community members are involved in the management of the educational institution; autonomy institutions are present.
3. The ways that help to combine the distributed leadership practice with the values of educational institution (equity, honesty, community involvement, etc.) were found during this research. The ways are as follows:
   a) The collegiality in decision making, equality, transparency, project work precedence over a hierarchical organization of activities, responsibility and honesty at work;
   b) Community members’ involvement into the activities, openness, paying attention to each opinion, respect for the person, sharing the best practice.

4. The research has helped to reveal, as the respondents have noticed in practice, the positive influence of distributed leadership to the development of educational institution: the results of activities and the culture of institution. Only a small part of the respondents were in doubt regarding the importance of distributed leadership to the results of activities and the culture development of educational institution.

5. The research has also identified a great necessity for the trainings on the distributed leadership. 90,4 % of the respondents would like to know more about distributed leadership and the European Policy Network on School Leadership.

6. The results of this research show the guidelines for the new researches to be made.

14.1. Rationale, aims and research questions

The concept of distributed leadership has come to have increasing influence in the last decade or so, attracting much scholarly exploration and research (Gronn 2002, 2009, MacBeath et al., 2004a/b, Raelin 2011, Woods 2013, Woods et al 2004), generating diverse definitions and understandings (Bolden 2011, Bennett et al 2003). The theoretical perspective taken for the purposes of this study is that leadership is emergent and that it arises through complex, interactive processes and is not the preserve of senior roles designated with leadership authority. The basic claim of this perspective is that it offers a more valid analytical lens by which to understand actual leadership practice.

The UK review of distributed leadership and social justice (Woods and Roberts 2013) provides a foundation for the case study reported in this report. The review makes five points:

- Firstly, the most important and radical understanding of DL is the view that leadership is emergent - the theoretical perspective just alluded to.
- Secondly, applied DL (see the fourth point below) is often, typically, combined with hierarchically distributed leadership authority, though the steepness of hierarchy and the extent of centralised leadership power varies between organisational settings. It is important to recognise that DL takes different forms and is shaped by context, and these variables influence any effects of DL on learning.
- Thirdly, there is considerable scope to extend methods of researching DL to include more arts-based methods. The latter can offer insights and understanding that cognitive methods are less able to generate.
- Fourthly, a working definition of applied DL, which represents the understanding of DL that tends to be followed or advocated in much contemporary policy, can be expressed as follows: a culture that
  - views leadership as emerging from ongoing flows of interactions across the organisation and its hierarchy, not simply the actions of the single leader or small leadership elite
  - values leadership contributions from across the organisation and its hierarchy
  - recognises that this view of leadership can be deployed in order to improve organisational effectiveness

accompanied by an institutional structure that
  - spreads leadership opportunities beyond formal senior roles to enable different sources of expertise and perspectives to influence the organisation’s work, development and innovative changes
  - facilitates flexible, collaborative working relationships across traditional boundaries and hierarchies
  - tends towards the creation of flatter hierarchies.

(Woods and Woods 2013b)
- Fifthly, it is important to deepen DL as the above definition itself leaves a need to provide content to the kind of values and learning that guide the practice of DL. Research is needed that investigates what forms of DL can help in promoting social justice in broader senses than closing gaps in attainment, including issues concerning participative and cultural social justice. Work on examining DL from a democratic perspective, using a degrees of democracy framework based on holistic democracy, offers a way of researching the possibilities and practice of deepening distributed leadership (Woods 2013a, Woods and Woods 2013, forthcoming). The review showed the connections between social justice and holistic democracy (Figure 1).

**Figure 1: Social justice and holistic democracy**  
(This figure is in development.)

The aim of the research study is to investigate distributed leadership and perceptions of whether and in what ways it promotes or otherwise social justice and democratic practices. The study explores this in the context of one case study (secondary) school. Recognising the distributed nature of leadership does not necessarily mean that social justice will be promoted or that leadership practices will be more democratic. Instead, the need to comply with nationally-ordained policies can restrict distributed leadership practice and confine professional autonomy. To the extent that distributed leadership is assimilated into marketising and performative policy agendas (Hall 2012), its social justice perspective is narrowed. Indeed, distributed leadership (Woods 2005, 2011, Woods and Woods 2013b). The dotted line connecting distributive justice to the latter dimensions indicates the importance of recognising distributive inequalities and the need to tackle these in aspiring to holistic democracy as a model to deepen distributed leadership.

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21 The Figure shows the four aspects of social justice and indicates where the links occur with the four dimensions of holistic democracy. It shows that holistic democracy understands developmental justice to be about creating opportunities for holistic growth that gives meaning and promotes well-being, and that power sharing and transforming dialogue encompass aspects of participative and cultural justice (Woods 2005, 2011, Woods and Woods 2013b). The dotted line connecting distributive justice to the latter dimensions indicates the importance of recognising distributive inequalities and the need to tackle these in aspiring to holistic democracy as a model to deepen distributed leadership.
leadership has also been found, in some circumstances, to generate or widen power disparities (for example, Scribner and Bradley-Levine 2010).

It has been argued that distributed leadership is capable of being developed and applied so that it is more holistic and democratic, addressing issues of purpose and power and making explicit the fuller conception of the person that should ground leadership and learning, based in a model of holistic democracy (Woods 2011, Woods and Woods 2012, 2013a/b). We intend in this research study to explore the ways in which holistic democracy can push further the boundaries of distributed leadership.

The following sub-questions arise from our research aim:

- What meaning do participants ascribe to the concepts of (a) distributed leadership and (b) social justice?
- What influences this meaning-making?
- To what extent do participants perceive distributed leadership to be a feature of the school’s leadership philosophy and practices?
- What is the perceived impact of leadership as a distributed phenomenon on (a) policy and practice which support justice and democratic practices, and (b) development of successful learners, as defined in the school’s curriculum policy?
- To what extent is there evidence of deepening distributed leadership in ways that are characteristic of the model of holistic democracy?
- What factors, including government policy, support or hinder distributed leadership in the school?

14.2 Research design

14.2.1 Methodological stance

The methodological stance underpinning this research is neither to see the phenomenon under study as objectively given and capable of being positivistically revealed, nor as entirely subjective and reducible to individualistic interpretations (by participants and researchers). Rather, we drew upon a blend of methods in order to overcome the potentially unhelpful dualism of traditional objectivity and subjectivity (Anderson 2004, Parry and Boyle 2009, Rhodes and Pullen 2009). Through this approach we sought to provide participants with various opportunities to deepen their understanding of their world (Barone and Eisner, 2012) together with a stimulus for discussion with us as researchers.

We sought to undertake a case study of the research school. This choice was based not merely on the convenience of a presentational device but on the alignment of the philosophical grounding of case studies and that of our research. We are interested in learning about individuals’ conceptions of leadership in their school through the use of an inductive, intuitive approach to analysing and interpreting the data gathered, as a balance to more overtly positivist analytical approaches (Anderson, 2004). We were therefore influenced by the efficacy of cases studies in promoting deep learning about a particular case (Stake, 1995) whilst simultaneously supporting the development of a broader theoretical perspective (Cohen et al., 2007).

Given our wider research interest in democracy and democratic practices, we were concerned to find a collaborative research strategy which would allow participants a degree of agency. A research process which involved the capacity to tell stories through words and images appeared to fulfil this to some degree (Bruner, 1991, Barone and Eisner, 2012). Narrative and image-based research approaches are naturally collaborative, both having the capacity to break down barriers between researcher and researched
(Clandinin et al., 2009, Gourlay, 2009). Indeed, Gale and Wyatt (2006) point to the emancipatory nature of the conflation of researcher and researched in such approaches for both participants. In addition, we also shared our analysis of the data through a seminar [still to take place at the time of writing] in which participants were invited to comment on our developing understanding, in the hope that this would support us in continuing to foreground participants’ voices.

We discuss below each of the dimensions of our approach to data generation: narrative enquiry, image-based research, informal interviews, and the ‘data feedback’ seminar.

14.2.2 Narrative enquiry

We used narrative enquiry as a data-generation approach from which to develop the case study. We believed narratives would support us in understanding the sense which individuals make of leadership policy and practice within their school, providing us with ‘a window into people’s beliefs and experiences’ (Bell, 2002:209), whilst allowing the potential for theorising (Silverman, 1998). Narratives can be told on a grand scale; they can narrate the history of countries or societies. However, we sought to adopt a ‘small stories’ approach which sensitisers researchers to the value of diverse stories that arise in different settings and times and may emerge through and be characterised by ‘fleeting, contingent, fragmented and multiple selves’ (Georgakopoulou 2006: 4). Story’s ability to honour different realities (Bruner, 1991, Polkinghorne, 1988) and to raise new questions and new inquiries rather than to provide evidence of fixed truths (Clandinin and Connolly, 2000) recommended it to us as a research methodology.

14.2.3 Image-based research

Narratives do not necessarily have to be written. Many different kinds of symbols can tell a story, with visual texts also having narrative potential. Given that views on leadership can become entrenched and indiscriminate within an organisation, we wished to use a research method which had the potential to reveal and disrupt set ways of thinking. Arts-based research seems to offer this potential, whilst also affording us the opportunity to make sense of diverse views (Eisner, 1995).

Pure arts-based research can be defined as the actual making of artistic expressions as a primary way of understanding experience (McNiff, 2008, in Knowles and Cole, 2008). As visual methodologies formed only part of our research strategy, it is more accurate to describe this research as drawing on arts-based approaches. The focus of such approaches is on exploration, allowing both participants and researchers to discover ways forward through deepening understandings of their world (Barone and Eisner, 2012, Leitch, 2006).

We were interested in exploring the meaning which participants made of the leadership within their school. In attempting to convey such meanings there are often points where words fail (Frosh, 2002, cited in Leitch, 2006), where it is difficult to express the most profound understandings in propositional form. Images give participants the opportunity to explore the subtleties of their experience in creative, non-linear ways (Loads, 2009, Spouse, 2000, Leitch, 2006, Black, 2002). A new dimension to the use of images in research comes through Eisner’s (1993) suggestion that art is not simply an alternative way of representing knowledge, rather a way of releasing different forms of understanding. Weber and Mitchell (1996) build on this, underlining the efficacy of images in uncovering hidden or unconscious aspects of experience, whilst for Gourlay (2009), the use of imagery has the additional benefit of allowing not only the release but the expression of complex experiences in a non-threatening way. Critical arts-based research aims to bring to the surface social inequities and injustices embedded in the status quo (Bagley and Castro-Salazar 2012).
Such potential was key to research which is underpinned by principles of democracy and freedom of expression.

Within the wider sphere of arts-based research we were particularly interested in the use of collage. There were two main reasons for this choice. Firstly, we wished to free participants from the challenge of drawing, which often evokes previous success or failure in artistic representation as a school student. Instead, we wished to use an arts-based approach to free up thoughts and feelings and to allow these to be made manifest in a tangible way which did not rely on perceived artistic ability. Secondly, we believed that the development of a representation of leadership would help participants to more fully understand the practice of leadership as it manifested itself in their school (Dormer, 1997). Thus collage offered participants the potential to try things out, to move pieces around and thus to create a new way of expressing either original thoughts or new ways of seeing, stimulated through the making process itself (Gauntlett, 2011).

14.2.4 Informal interviews

We had a dual imperative in gathering our research data: to support the agency of our participants in constructing their own authentic narratives and to ensure that we collected data which effectively illuminates our research questions. We were aware that, in order to understand participants’ stories, we needed to ask them to explore their collages with us. The need for a flexible, unstructured approach to eliciting this commentary was paramount. The format and roles implicit in traditional interviews did not fit our aims. Rather than a one-way information channel, effectively controlled by the interviewer, we wanted to create more of an opportunity for dialogue. The informal conversational interview (Patton, 2002), otherwise termed the unstructured interview (Fontana and Frey, 2003), was a useful method for developing a collaborative, non-hierarchical research process.

14.2.5 Data feedback seminar

The purpose of the data feedback seminar is to ensure that we are capturing the particular in a recognisable way, portraying the essence of leadership within the school so that others can relate to it. The event will be interactive and is intended to test and refine the trustworthiness of the case study and to enrich findings through shared reflection with participants. Generalisability will thus be facilitated through the presentation of a recognisable insight, albeit located in the particularity of one case (Simons 2009). Research participants’ comments made during the seminar will be used as data to refine the draft into a final case study.

14.2.6 Data generation

A team approach was taken to facilitating collage creation, the explanation by the participants of the meanings of their creation and the conduct of the informal interviews. We worked together during the two days that data generation took place. We see this as an important feature of the research method. For example, it was practically helpful in organising groups of participants and enabling successive participants’ groups to follow on from each other; it enabled tasks to be shared during the day in response to how the collage creation and discussion evolved; it allowed one of the team to take the lead (e.g. in informal interviews) at certain times whilst the other listened and attended to the equipment (e.g. recorders, collage materials) used; it facilitated both researchers sharing the experience of collage creation, accompanying discussions by participants, informal interviews and other interactions, enabling them both to be fully immersed in the data which was valuable for later analytical discussion and triangulation from two researcher perspectives.
The data generation took place in a school building in the school grounds, separate from the main building, on 18th and 19th September 2013.

Our aim was to involve participants from four groups within the school: teaching staff; non-teaching staff; senior leaders; and students (aged between 11 and 19). This was achieved. The numbers of participants are shown in the table, which also shows the groups that they were in when creating and explaining about their collage.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>number of participants</th>
<th>group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>teaching staff</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>non-teaching staff</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>senior leaders</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>students</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In summary, this was the process followed:

- Participants came in their respective group (as in the above table) at an appointed time: groups A, B and C on Day 1, groups D, E and F on day 2. An hour was allowed for the following:
  - Each group was given a briefing to explain the purpose of the research and what they were being asked to do.
  - All the participants in the group were invited to create individually a collage which illustrates their sense of leadership policy and practice within the school.
  - After all the collages were completed, each participant shared with the researchers and the rest of the group their explanation of their own collage - explaining what different aspects of the collage meant or symbolised. There was usually some discussion, and often light-hearted banter, between participants during and after the collage creation.

- Paired staff interviews (with two staff) were conducted at different times during the two days, after the staff had undertaken their collage creation in their groups. Paired interviewees were drawn from the same group. Interviews were guided by the following questions:
  - To what extent do you feel distributed leadership is a feature of the school’s leadership philosophy and practices?
  - How do you define social justice in a school context?
  - To what extent do you feel distributed leadership in the school
    - supports social justice (If so, how?)
    - is democratic? (If so, how?)
  - What factors in the school’s external environment (including government policy) support or hinder distributed leadership in the school?
• Creation of the collages was video’d and audio recorded. Discussion following collage creation in the staff groups was audio recorded. In the student groups, students’ explanation of their collages was audio recorded whilst their collage was simultaneously video’d. Paired interviews were audio recorded.

• A seminar is to be held [yet to be arranged] to which all research participants will be invited to discuss the draft case study.

14.3 Background of case study school

The case study school, which we have given the fictitious name of Heathvale, is one of five secondary schools which serve the inhabitants of a town of approximately 38,000 residents, situated in the East of England. The school is an 11-19 co-educational Academy, a publicly-funded independent school, with 1,400 students on roll. In May 2010, the school was judged by Ofsted, the government department which inspects schools in England, to be a good school.

The strategic intent of Heathvale School is to provide outstanding educational opportunities for all and to be a great school. GCSE examination results, the public examinations taken by students at age 16, have improved steadily year-on-year. In 2012 this achievement was recognised by Ofsted and the Department for Education which awarded the school the Top 100 most improved schools award.

The majority of students in Heathvale School stay into the Sixth Form, to study post-16. They study predominantly A-Level subjects with the intention to apply for a university place. In 2013, all students passed their A-Levels with 56% of students achieving A*-B grades (34% A/A*).

The school seeks to support students not only in attaining strong academic qualifications but also in becoming well-rounded individuals with a sense of responsibility and a willingness to contribute to both the economy and society in general. This is partially achieved, according to details on the school’s website, through a finely distributed leadership culture.

This leadership culture has been strategically developed over time. Members of the school community share a common moral imperative, that is, to do the best for their students. Grounded in this imperative, a vision for the school has been developed in consultation with the whole school community. This shared view of the direction for the school allows for the confident distribution of leadership.

Such distribution is similarly supported by the development of whole-school capacity for leadership through the promotion of a non-positional teacher leadership approach to school improvement. All teachers are seen to have the potential to be agents of change in the school and to create shared knowledge about practice. Students are also increasingly involved in exercising leadership.

14.4 Process of data analysis

In the process of analysis we aimed to combine two approaches: analytical processes that involve methodical procedures which identify patterns and codes and break up the data into pieces for labelling, collation, comparison and so on, as well as empathetic understanding - that is, creative reflection on data which encourages affective understanding, i.e. non-cognitive awareness which gives a ‘feel’ for the data, participants, experiences, culture, organisation and leadership. In addition, we are using images in our presentation of what we have learned. Images are often used in research as secondary to text, in an illustrative role (Prosser, 1998). In this report, our intention is that images are used instead as a conveyer of
meaning, as an alternative way of presenting participants’ understandings.

The attempt to combine analytical processes and empathetic understanding, and to attend to the images as images, is reflected in the way in which we have proceeded with the analysis. For example, in addition to engaging with the exploration of individual stories by listening to the accounts of each collage given by its maker, we took up the possibility of reading across collages to get the essence of the experience they were collectively representing (Butler-Kisber, 2008).

Our initial activity of analysis as a team involved a number of deliberate steps: In order to understand what we were learning from the images we spread all of the collages out on the floor and talked about them. Such a dialogic approach to making meaning is not much discussed in the literature yet remains a legitimate, three-dimensional approach to gaining understanding of artistic forms (Bresler, 2006). We looked across all the images (staff and students) and made selections of collages that appeared to suggest the shapes or ideas - such as different structures - and noted the use of materials, shapes, colours and so on. We then arranged the images into groups and considered what, if any, patterns suggested themselves within the groups.

Viewing the images and comparing them across the groups raised the question of the significance of differing shapes that featured in some collages - for example, pyramid/hierarchy shapes; the headteacher as a crown; the headteacher as a figure on their own at the top; barriers of various kinds; a network shape (contrasting with the hierarchy shape); layers designed into the collage; images that suggest ‘holding’; ‘scary’ images like jagged edges; leadership as an ‘arising’ phenomenon; images of distribution such as ideas coming down a waterfall, water, ideas rising up; and showing groups within and groups outside leadership. Viewing the images also raised the question of what significance there might be in choices of materials - for example in selecting feathers to represent certain things.

Looking at the images of the collages in their groups led to certain impressions. For example, some appeared more lively and vibrant than others. The collages of Groups B, C and D stood out as more active, vibrant and colourful as compared with Groups A and F, whilst Group E showed a mixture. We noted that the collages of Group F particularly were less vibrant and more representational, and wondered if that might be related to their being done at the end of the day. The collages were divided and arranged on the floor according to gender. We found no discernible pattern of difference between them related to gender. The results of this and further analysis of the images is discussed in the following section.

The team analysis activity was followed by each researcher taking one set of participants’ data (one taking the staff, one the students) and using a template to construct a commentary on each collage and its associated explanation and interview. The latter process involved - in relation to each collage - viewing videos, listening to the audio tapes, selecting quotes from the explanations and interviews that illuminate the participant’s meaning and description, and making researcher notes on possible concepts and themes that helped to begin the interpretation. Notes of the analysis were structured under the headings of:

- description (of the image and its meanings)
- leadership
- social justice
- contextual factors

In practice there was much overlap between the analytical notes under ‘description’ and ‘leadership’.

Summaries of the commentary on each collage and its associated explanation and interview, as well as a photo of each collage, are given in Appendix 5.
14.5 Interpretative account

In this section we give an interpretative account of the perceptions of leadership in Heathvale School, based on our analysis and drawing on the data summarised in Appendix 5. The first part discusses perceptions and meanings of distributed leadership in the school. This opens with a discussion of the images in the collages (Stories of leadership…) in order to put to the fore meanings conveyed through these non-propositional, non-verbal forms of expression, followed by an analytical discussion identifying themes and concepts to help in understanding the perceptions and meanings (Analytical discussion).

The second part discusses perceptions of distributed leadership and social justice.

14.5.1 Perceptions and meanings of distributed leadership in Heathvale School

STORIES OF LEADERSHIP…

Narratives do not necessarily have to be written. Many types of symbol can tell a story. In this research, teachers, support staff and students were asked to produce collages which represented their perceptions of leadership in their school. They then used these images, shown together above, as a stimulus to individual commentaries on their collage and to a group discussion. In this sub-section, we acknowledge the importance of the visual images created by our participants by focusing on the choice and placing of symbols and the meaning participants attributed to these. Symbols which resonate across a number of collages are used here to group the collages. This allows for a discussion of the attribution of multiple and complex meanings to the images and provides us with a fascinating ‘window into people’s beliefs and experiences’ (Bell, 2002: 209).

We are developing, as one of the outputs of this study, a video presenting an analysis of the collages. The version as it stands at the time of writing, which is in development, is available with this report (see Appendix 6). The interpretation is based on the researchers’ impressions of the images and should therefore be viewed alongside this report in which the participants’ own explanation of meanings are given.
Stories of hierarchy

We begin with images which tell stories of hierarchies. Such stories do not dominate the collages but are strongly represented, particularly in collages created by students.

Hierarchical images are often presented in a triangular shape, described by the creator of the middle collage as ‘a pyramid of power’ (B3). Power emanates from the top of the pyramid, marked by an image representing the headteacher, and slowly diminishes from this point down.

Even though there is an unequal distribution of power, creators of these collages did not indicate that this was a source of dissatisfaction.

“The students are the sequins, they are our shining stars” (B3)

There is a differing portrayal of individuals in images which tell a story of hierarchy. Students are variously represented as sequins, as beads and as pawns on a chessboard. Adults in the pyramid are represented by numerous differing shapes and materials. The nature of these shapes and materials was not commented on by the collage creators who were generally more interested in their positioning. The linkages between different groups of people was of central interest to collage creators.

Stories of holarchy

Holarchic images also feature strongly in the collages. By this we mean images that constitute a more rounded appearance or give the impression of a network, rather than a hierarchy. In these collages, leadership is seen as distributed throughout the school in a more organic manner, rather than wholly through the exercise of power gained through positional roles.

The shape of holarchic images tends to be more circular and fluid than in those images which represent a hierarchical view of leadership. Despite this, there is a structure to the holarchic images.

The creator of the collage at the top left below talked of a spiral which moved from the outside community inwards through the students and then to the teachers. Difference is valued in this holarchical view of leadership.
The collage again illustrates a circular holarchic shape. The majority of staff and students in the school are clustered in the central portion of the image where they can exercise leadership to different degrees within the school.

"As a school we survive and grow because everyone is different" (A3)

The collage on the bottom right above focuses on the inter-connectedness of staff within the school. The straws are used as symbols of connectivity and are prominent in the collage design.

The patterns of interaction between hierarchical and holarchic collages is more complex than this clear, linear division suggests however. There are often elements of hierarchy exhibited in the holarchic images and vice versa. Supportive structures are a key feature of holarchic images, whilst hierarchies nevertheless have room for individual expressions of leadership within a clear pattern of roles and responsibilities evidenced in multiple distributed systems. It is perhaps the dominant impression given by leadership policy and practices within the school which has been illustrated in the collages rather than the suggestion that views of these practices are wholly oppositional.

‘Holding’ images

‘Holding’ images - that is, images which indicate a degree of protection - are an interesting feature of some of the holarchic collages.

The purple paper at the base of this collage has been used to symbolise a ‘blanket cover of protection’ (C2). The collage creator uses this symbol to emphasise the ‘protective underlay to the whole school – its physical and metaphysical structure’ (C2).

The image of the red net at the bottom of this collage surrounds the students in the school. This net is held by the teachers who support the student body and give them opportunities to ‘contribute towards leadership’ (D4).
Images of barriers

Images of barriers feature in a number of collages. Materials used to represent these barriers vary and include brightly coloured paper, black paper and coloured straws.

The meaning attributed to barriers is significant.

In the top left collage, the orange and black barriers are indicators not of barriers to leadership activity but to the school community’s understanding of what those in leadership positions do on a day to day basis.

The blue barrier of straws in the bottom left collage represents a ‘wall’ which sometimes exists between students and those in authority.

“They don’t actually listen to us. We have a Student Council but I don’t feel they listen to us” (A3)

On some occasions, however, apparent barriers in fact have a very different meaning to the collage creator. The top right collage appears to have a network of straws which work together as strong barriers to leadership activity. The collage creator in fact has used these long straws to indicate not barriers but teams of people who work together harmoniously. Similarly, the apparent barriers in the bottom left collage in fact indicate the strong backbone of the headteacher behind a way of working as a school which has solid features of shared leadership.

Images of leadership flow

The fluidity represented by water chosen by some collage creators symbolises a different facet of the leadership practice within the school. In contrast to the barrier images, images of water have been used to symbolise the free movement of leadership opportunities in the school.
The collage at the bottom right represents a ‘leadership waterfall and there is a pool which goes round and round and keeps the journey from having an idea about leadership through whatever process’ (C3). A lack of barriers is emphasised by this participant, with the image of question marks outside of the box indicating an openness to novel ideas.

The collage at the top left similarly symbolises flow. However, the imagery has been used for a different purpose here. Here the collage creator sees herself as the big green fish in a pool of protective water, provided by the senior leaders in the school. However, the dark shape in the lower left hand corner of this collage symbolises the more uncomfortable aspects of this generally contented picture, situations where the collage creator feels that she has not been respectfully treated and issues which challenge the general direction of flow have needed to be addressed.

Stories of layers of leadership

In some collages, layers of leadership are immediately apparent. The metaphor of layers can be differently applied however, as exemplified below.

The creator of this collage designed the central section to be three-dimensional, with the more visible leadership activities being ‘backed up by’ those in less visible leadership roles behind them. Different materials are used to symbolise the various populations in the school community.

The creator of this collage used layers to show the fluidity of power in the school. He sees leadership as having little structure; he believes this is due to the particular nature of his role in the school. This perceived lack of structure is symbolised by the ‘chaotic’ nature of the collage.

The representation of individual and group identities

“If you want to lead there are opportunities here to being in the box”
The creators of the collages chose some provocative symbols to represent the identity of particular groups or individuals within their school.

Representations of the headteacher

Many students began their commentary on their collage with an explanation of their representation of the school’s headteacher.

The headteacher is represented by a number of students as a star and by another as a crown, showing his position as

... the king of the school (E1).

This power positioning is underlined in the image of the star placed on a blue cup which raises the headteacher over the rest of the school to a position where he could ‘look out over the school’ (F1).

These symbols are positioned at the top of each collage, suggesting the headteacher’s position of power. The commentaries confirm the use of this power for good however.

The image of the headteacher as protector is emphasised here. In collages produced by staff the image of the headteacher is generally not differentiated from other members of the leadership team although one teacher represented him as a star.

Representations of students

A range of symbols were used by participants to represent students. The choice of materials is particularly interesting in these representations.
Students are often represented as a mass to demonstrate their dominant school. However, their uniqueness is underlined by the choice of materials to represent individual students within this student body.

Materials vary from coloured straws to wooden discs to shiny, sparkly beads and sequins. The choice of these materials is relevant and sometimes evocative of the moral imperative which underlines teaching for the participant. One collage creator, for example, chose to represent students as wooden discs because ‘they can be shaped’ (A3). For another, his choice of wooden ‘tokens’ was tokenism he sees as underlying the practice of involving students within the school (A2). For another, the representation of students recognises their position as ‘our shining stars’ (B3).

**Stories of emerging identities**

For some participants, the ability to indicate a developmental, emerging student identity was important.

In this example, the collage creator has used the image of a watch to indicate the passing of time. The changing nature of the individual student is then symbolised by different materials from left to right across the collage. The yellow and orange sticks above the young student symbolise strong external leadership by others, with the peg suggesting that friends can sometimes ‘peg you back. That’s the opposite of leadership’ (E2). Feathers represent a move towards individual, self-leadership which is based on imagination rather than being wholly rules-bound.

**ANALYTICAL DISCUSSION**

An important way of understanding how participants expressed their perceptions of leadership is through a concept that we came to call **multiple distributions**. In looking at the collages, it was important to understand what organisational or leadership characteristic the shape of the images was representing. For example, one of the participants (a senior leader - A1) who created a holarchic shape explained that he was expressing through this his vision of the spread of leadership agency and initiative: at the same time, he affirmed in his commentary that he recognised that ultimate authority and accountability were not dispersed through the school. A positive view that opportunities were available to exercise initiative and lead change was apparent amongst the senior leaders (A1-4) and the teaching staff and middle leaders (C1-6). A middle leader (C5) for example considered that there was a great deal of support for middle leaders to lead change, as long this is aligned with the goals affirmed by the headteacher. Other participants (support staff B1 and B4, teacher C2 and senior leader A4), as they explained about leadership in the school, highlighted the importance of respect being given to all - respect for the person, for their active contribution...
and for their potential to develop further. Respect therefore appeared to be another characteristic related to leadership that could be distributed widely or not, and which individuals could experience in variable ways at different times and with different people. One of the support staff (B4) said that ‘I feel people are respected, I feel very respected in the school’, but also gave an example of being shocked when a senior member of staff did not see her as a member of the team.

Robinson (2008) has distinguished between the distribution of tasks and the distribution of influence. The distributions that participants in Heathvale School referred to are summarised in Figure 3. Emphasis was given not so much to distribution of tasks, but rather to the availability of opportunities to take initiatives and exercise leadership that brings about changes in the school (influence and initiative). The emphasis given to respect by some participants suggested that we should explicitly recognise the significance of the distribution of respect (which links with the importance of trust and other relational factors identified in the research literature). Participants distinguished between these factors and the distribution of authority and accountability which were more centralised in the school. An example of a small measure of distribution of authority is the process for choosing a staff governor, who is elected by the staff. This process was referred to by middle leader C3.

Figure 3: Multiple distributions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>organisational/leadership features that may be more or less distributed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>influence and initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>respect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>accountability</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The picture that emerges from the participants in this case study is one in which it is understood that the school values a pro-active agency amongst all staff and students (i.e. distributed influence and initiative). A Group D student gives expression to this ‘opportunity culture’: ‘The more you engage, the more you tend to enjoy because you are more open to opportunities and if you are not open to opportunities how do you know if it is going to be a good one?’ amongst staff, one of the features highlighted was the number and value of teacher-led development projects. A middle leader (C3) for example explained that there are many such projects in the school, and that these are part of a culture that encourages thinking creatively and collaboratively. C3 said that ‘you feel valued, that you can express something’, and explained about his collage, which featured a waterfall (of ideas), a pool and balloon rides: ‘if you have an idea or want to take on a leadership role, in my view at [this school] you go through a process, whether that’s speaking to people, line manager etc, then you come into the pool and then when you’ve got an idea and it’s talked through then you jump onto the ballon ride and it can go, but you collaborate with others, so you’re not on your own’. There is consequently a diversity of leadership activities, many of which are not defined or implied by a person’s role or job title. Whilst some or many may be new opportunities, a distributed leadership culture is likely also to encourage identification of existing activities as ones that involve leadership. One of the senior leaders (A4) was concerned to emphasise that some staff who have what might be seen as quite minor roles in fact have an important leadership role. She gave as an example a support staff member who
leads on making sure the school has got provisions in and making sure there is tea and coffee available in the morning and who, even though she is a very low paid member of staff, ‘in her own way she’s a leader’. From a student perspective, D3 was of the view that individual students have the potential to exercise leadership, without the benefit of a leadership position or role, and D4 believed that teachers help students ‘contribute towards leadership’.

Equally, students were more likely to show a hierarchical image of leadership, as noted in the discussion above on the collage images. Student D1 for example viewed leadership in the school as essentially hierarchical, showing the seat of power centrally located and using power as a key organising principle in their collage. The head teacher was often represented as a dominant figure - for example student E1 as ‘the king of the school’, who also represented the teachers shields and swords, showing that they ‘have power over the students’.

A teacher (C4) put it this way: day-to-day leadership is very distributed, but this takes place within a more centralised ‘overt leadership’ which provides the purpose for the school and is set by the senior leadership. The latter point draws attention to the importance of the clear structure and shared vision within which distribution takes place. The importance for effective distributed leadership of a cohesive culture and co-ordination and planning, and of firm framing for democratic practice, are given prominence in the research literature (Woods and Woods 2013b, Woods 2005), as noted in the UK National Review (Woods and Roberts 2013). The kinds of factors found to be significant include shared goals and values, trust and the co-ordination and planning of roles, expectations and ways of working collaboratively (Day et al 2009, Leithwood et al 2006, Louis et al 2010: 61). One of the senior leaders (A2) encapsulated his view of the school’s leadership, when he explained that senior leaders set direction and make some decisions - but went on to say that by and large ‘we’ (senior leaders) have conversations with middle leaders in which they tell us what they have done rather than ask what they can do. Another senior leader (A1) explained that ‘we have clear structures’ but freedom within those, and that they have taken time to develop the corporate vision and to bring everyone ‘on board’ to agree with it. A member of the support staff (B4) takes the view that teamwork is a feature of the school, and that ‘there are different levels of teamwork’, but also acknowledges that there ‘has to be people in charge, there has to be people who ultimately make those decisions’. Staff are encouraged to bring ideas forward, but as a middle leader (C3) put it, these in the end need to align with the school’s vision and its strategic intent and objective. The school’s staff structure was described, by A1, as being both fluid and as having demarcated roles (as between senior and middle leadership for example). As one middle leader put it (C6), there is structure and hierarchy, but these are also flexible and changeable according to need, and this is a ‘real strength’.

Examples of structural supports for leadership and initiatives, and the sharing of these, were apparent in participants’ discussions. Particularly noteworthy was the opportunity to undertake teacher-led development projects which were mentioned by several staff. Another is the learning forums for sharing findings with the whole school, highlighted by middle leader C5.

A further feature of the school which provides a ‘firm framing’ is the security and protective feel of the culture. This was mentioned by a teacher (C2) who showed in her collage a ‘blanket cover of protection’ for the whole school which is ‘holding us together’, a middle leader (C6) who talked of the school feeling a safe and secure place within which leadership could be expressed, as well as a member of the support staff (B1) who liked the feeling of protection. These perceptions point to the significance of a sense of belonging and self-esteem in a community, which is part of the ‘holistic well-being’ that makes up a broad kind of democratic community (Woods 2011). There are other aspects to holistic well-being, however, which include independent-mindedness. The middle leader (C6) who praised the safe and secure feeling also wondered if at the same time the school was too insular and inward-looking, suggesting it might be helpful to reflect critically on the nature of belonging and protection that many see as characterising the school.
The distributed leadership culture in the school was associated by several participants with learning - both **students' learning and staff development**. For example, a senior leader (A2) emphasised how the clear intent of the school was crucial for understanding the distributed leadership culture. The intent is to be an excellent school creating opportunities and improved outcomes for all students, which he felt had been discussed with staff and all had agreed to. A2 explained that educational opportunities were not only about achieving the performance targets laid down by central government and inspected on by the national inspection agency (Ofsted), but important too was a broader view of learning that included school trips and other extra-curricular activities. Internal school targets generated by middle leaders, for achieving the latter kind of opportunities, was one way of ensuring that such opportunities had a priority. Teachers (C3 and C4) considered that enabling students to exercise leadership in the classroom (e.g. by leading teaching and giving feedback on teaching) supported the students’ learning.

Staff generally considered that opportunities to develop were available and supported by the school. For example, a middle leader (C3) explained that the school has a talent management programme through which the senior leadership support staff that are seen as having potential in certain areas to develop; but also that it is open to any member of staff to seek support initiate a teacher-led development project or some other form of development - and that includes both full-time and part-time staff, as well as support staff. For their part, support staff (B2, B3, B4) felt supported by the school in their professional development, including B2 who joined the school as an apprentice and is now benefiting from courses that the school supports him in attending.

Some comments alluded to the issue of the **capacity of staff** in relation to distributed leadership. A senior leader (A1), as noted above, felt that they had taken time to develop the corporate vision and that the bulk of the staff were ‘signed up’ for the journey ‘from good to great’, which is the school’s aim. He explained that creating a distributed culture takes time, as capacity has to be built up first, and consequently there had been a focus on recruitment and retention. Having a stable senior leadership team over time was also an important factor in developing a distributed leadership culture, according to A1. A middle leader (C6) emphasised that ‘you have to have the right people’ to lead and that, if the ‘wrong people’ were involved with teacher-led development projects for example, these would fail.

From the discussion to this point, it is possible to suggest that:

- distributed leadership is felt to be real within the school, and is meaningful in a positive sense for many of the staff
- the idea of multiple distributions helps us to understand the nature of leadership as a distributed phenomenon in the school
- opportunities to exercise ‘influence and initiative’ are felt to be distributed, as well as ‘respect’, whilst ‘authority’ and ‘accountability’ are not seen as being distributed in the same wide sense
- the dominant view of distributed leadership is therefore one that sees it as the exercise of pro-active agency, creating and taking initiatives to lead change and innovation
- cohesive culture, trust, co-ordination and planning, and capacity (factors identified in the research literature on distributed leadership) are seen as important factors for the effective working of distributed leadership in the school
- specific features of these factors include a sense of shared vision and clear purpose, the feeling of support and protection, the long-term approach taken to developing a DL culture, and structural opportunities such as teacher-led development projects and learning forums.

**14.5.2 Distributed leadership and social justice**
The creation of the collages and the discussions around them showed some of the differences and problems that were also associated with leadership in the school. Some participants felt that, despite the distribution of leadership, there are significant buffers and divides - between the senior leadership team and other staff for example. This was not necessarily seen as negative. As noted in the previous section, there was a view that the senior leadership need to set the direction, with staff having a say in the means to achieving that. Support staff (B1 and B2) recognised the reality of an organisational division between the senior leadership and others in the school. B1 felt that they are ‘not a clique’ but ‘there’s a club’ (description suggested by B2) - they are a ‘team of people, they all know each other, they all have meetings together, so they’re going to stick together’.

In line with the encouragement of opportunities to exercise initiative and leadership, there is a tendency to see social justice in terms of availability of opportunities.

Turning first to participative justice (Figure 1, Section 1), there were strong positive expressions of distributed opportunity. A middle leader (C5) for example considered that there is social justice in the school in that anybody who wants to lead on anything has the opportunity to suggest it and talk it through with somebody. C5 felt that everybody in the faculty has a voice, though whether they take that opportunity is another matter. Another teacher (C2) explained that as a part-time teacher she contributed to meetings and events fully and feels she has a voice. There were expressions too that students too were strongly involved. A middle leader (C3) gave a figure for the student participation in leadership. In his Year Group, over 183 students took part in leadership out of 240, whether on student council or though other activities. One of the student groups (Group D) felt that all students had the opportunity to lead in school, though not all - because of lack of confidence or an unwillingness to commit to the responsibilities of leadership - would take these opportunities. This group also felt that students’ voices are heard within the school, and that being given a voice and having their views heard had a positive impact on both personal development and on the enjoyment of education.

Critical questioning, recognising deficiencies in the actual spread of leadership activity was evident. A student (E4) questioned the legitimacy and authenticity of the leadership roles offered to students and which only a minority of students held: ‘They just made them up. They are trying to give people roles and stuff but they don’t really have any substance’. The view of a senior leader (A2) was that leadership opportunities and impact are strong for the senior leadership team and middle leaders, weaker for teachers, and weakest for students and support staff. A teacher (C1) pointed to some of the variables that affect actual participation and voice, which include - to use a concept from research literature - access to social capital. Asked about social justice, C1 reflected that they think there is a culture of DL in the school on a number of different levels, through lots of different groups and teams: some, however, are better placed to know the right channels through which to get those ideas to come to fruition. For example, C1 explained, some staff because of the nature of their post may have more opportunities to speak with members of the senior leadership team which makes important decisions. It may also be that everybody is not aware of the opportunities for leadership. Some may not want to be involved in leadership. The same observation on variable access to influence and opportunities emerged from the discussion by Group D students. The view was expressed in that discussion that the more access a person has to the senior leadership team, the more power they have as that person will have more chance of being listened to. The ability to gain attention is seen as key as this enables students to obtain access to the leadership team, and such ability is seen to be gained through age and maturity. Student E6 conceptualised leadership as voice and access – whether someone has the right to talk and who they have access to in order to be heard.

22 Little appears in the data that relates to distributive justice (Figure 1). Discussion here is therefore concentrated mainly on the other aspects of social justice, with reference being made within the discussion to social capital as an aspect of distributive justice.
These reflections on differences are highlighting one aspect of distributive justice - namely, variable access to the resource of social capital - which can lead to inequalities in participation (and perhaps respect (cultural justice) and learning (developmental justice) too).

Teacher C1 also spoke about student leadership. He explained that the aim is to grow a culture of student leadership but that it tends to be only certain students who are involved in that leadership: it tends to be those who are already confident, have status in the school and who are perhaps the academic ones. According to student E2, students’ peers are an important influence on taking leadership opportunities and the rate at which a student develops their level self-leadership. Maturing over time is an important factor in E2’s view, moving towards self-leadership at Sixth Form level where the student becomes more able to make choices in line with their own values and beliefs. A member of the support staff (B3) explained that the students are deliberately outside the pyramid in her collage because that is a pyramid of leadership, though she recognises that students do have an influence and have leadership positions - but in her view this is not the same as being inside the pyramid. Student D4 considered that more needed to be done: ‘I think we need to work together as a community to get a whole leadership system throughout the school’.

In a number of the student collages across the student groups, the point was made that there are some students who do not want to become involved in leadership opportunities. This may suggest a greater reluctance towards leadership amongst students than staff. A more fundamental question is whether unwillingness (by students or staff) should be seen necessarily as a problem to be solved. A distributed leadership culture will tend to expect school members (staff and students) to be, or to develop towards being, leaders. In other words, it advocates a certain identity as a leader engaged in pro-active agency (albeit in diverse ways). This may not be appropriate for all. There is a balance to be struck between appropriate autonomy (the rights and needs of the individual) and collective expectations (which seek to expand opportunity, agency and learning through a certain set of values and ways of working). Getting this balance right involves posing critical questions to do with different aspects of social justice, the answers to which may not all point in the same direction. These different aspects include democratic principles and rights to be involved or to choose not to be involved (participative justice), the importance of respect (cultural justice), and the imperative to give everyone opportunities to develop their full capabilities (developmental justice).

A member of the support staff (B4) expressed the view, ‘I do believe I have a voice. I do believe that I can voice things that I feel particularly concerned about. There are people I can go to. I wouldn’t say that I feel particularly heard... I don’t think everything’s heard and taken on board. But that possibly is the right of the leadership’, since the senior leadership have the power and access to a lot more information. Senior leaders A1 and A2 considered that support staff were not involved in exercising voice and leadership as much as they could be. A2 felt that there was a huge potential, but that the support staff work according to tighter rules and so had less freedom to innovate. In the discussion between A1 and A2, a complex picture emerges of both progress and restrictions in distributed leadership. A1 recognises the impact of a graduate teaching force on the problem of involving support staff: at the same time the staff in the canteen set their own objectives and have been told that their role - providing good meals - is important for learning. According to A2, they feel hugely empowered. This is part of an approach in which the performance management scheme in the school is not applied in a uniform way but tailors or personalises objectives for particular posts. A1 acknowledges that some support staff just want to come into school, do their job and return home. For A2, innovation and getting support to feel they can innovate are the important things. A1 adds that respect also is the thing and expresses the view that the school is very good at being non-hierarchical - using first names and giving respect - and in picking up non-respect. This leads us into the issue of cultural justice.
Cultural justice (Figure 1, Section 1) links with cohesive culture and trust, factors which encourage feelings of respect. Strong expressions of feeling valued and being respected have been acknowledged in the previous sub-section on perceptions of leadership, and the experience of belonging that contributes to feelings of holistic well-being. Nevertheless, respect is not necessarily equally experienced or practiced. A student (D2) explained that the size of the spaces between teams and individuals in her collage indicated the levels of respect shown to different groups within the school, and that these vary in terms of progress ‘up’ the school: ‘Teachers have a lot and sixth formers have quite a lot and compared to the other years - it’s just way more’. Examples of lack of respect and hurt were given during some of the staff’s discussions about their collages. A member of the support staff (B1), who was keen to say that she felt valued and protected, also described more problematic experiences. She felt that she tended to be positioned by others in a way that made assumptions that she would not be the kind of person interested in developing; but there is ‘more to me’ and ‘I feel I’m constantly fighting against it all the time’. B1 explained that there had been a couple of situations where ‘I’ve had remarks’, so there was a part of her that wanted to represent hurt as well positive feelings in the collage. Another support staff member (B3) felt she was at the bottom of the ‘pyramid of power’ as she described it in her collage, suggesting some negative issues. B3 explained that the rules meant that she was not in senior support staff meetings. Equally, she considered that the school had been transformed under the current head teacher, that more people were involved in leadership and that she felt involved in the leadership ‘in my own little world’ where she managed one of the school-wide schemes. A2 (senior leader) considered that support staff see themselves as ‘second class citizens’, a situation that he did not like.

Developmental justice (see Figure 1, Section 1) refers to equality in relation to development of personal growth and capabilities. It is therefore concerned with student learning and staff development. In the previous sub-section on perceptions of leadership, it was explained that several participants positively associated DL with student learning and that staff generally considered that opportunities to develop were available and supported by the school. The middle leader (C5) who, as noted above, felt that everybody in the faculty has a voice, also considered that everybody in the faculty has opportunities to develop and learn, and that included students. C5 felt that the school has been successful in raising student aspirations. Another middle leader (C6) considered that the school was aware of most disadvantaged, but wondered if there may be a problem in giving sufficient attention to the ‘hidden child’, the ‘middling child’, the ‘introverted child’ - ‘I don’t know that DL does anything to address that’. A similar concern about the ‘middling child’ was raised by A3 (a senior leader).

Participants were asked if they felt the distributed leadership approach in Heathvale School was democratic. Responses were various. Some said that it was ‘to a point’, ‘partly’ or that the answer was ‘yes and no’ (A1, senior leader; B3 and B4, support staff; C3, C5 middle leaders). Democracy in this context was not associated with voting on decisions. Teachers C1 and C2 said so explicitly, though it was recognised that there are some matters on which staff do vote (C1), often relatively minor but also including electing the staff governor (middle leader C3). Consultation and being heard were themes associated with democracy and that it was felt were part of the leadership of the school. A1 (senior leader) explained that they consult whenever possible, and others such as C1 (teacher) and C6 (middle leader) affirmed that there was consultation. Being listened to was emphasised by C4 (teacher) and C5 (middle leader). C5, echoing the recognition above of the importance of structure, firm framing and multiple distributions, felt that, leadership is ‘partly’ democratic ‘but not always completely. But then it can’t always be… because in the end the head and the governors are responsible for the school, so there has to be him making the final decision, and he will listen to our reasons, he will listen to what we want to do, and if it is reasonable and acceptable and we can argue our case enough and he can see the value of it, then he will take on board our views’.

Group E students in their discussion were interested in the notion of a school as a democracy. Generally they felt that it was not a true democracy but that there were routes to get their voices heard and that these
voices are ‘counted’ as important. Not all students would agree with this. Student F1 for example felt that ‘They don’t actually listen to us. We have a Student Council but I don’t feel that they listen to us’. In Group F students’ discussion it appeared that students in the main feel that they do have a voice, in that there are systems which allow them to put their views forward, but that there is a problem arising from a lack of understanding of the reasons for decisions made at higher levels and then fed back to students.

Democracy as opportunity to exercise leadership - the pro-active agency and chance to exercise initiative referred to in the previous sub-section - was a connection that several participants made. A member of the support staff (B4) felt that leadership was generally democratic, but that some people do not like change and prefer sticking to how things have always been done. This view associates democracy with openness to change, innovation and improvement. The middle leader, C3, spoke about opportunities to lead being open to all in response to the question about leadership being democratic, as did C2 (teacher). The response of senior leader, A3, was that leadership in the school is democratic because it is meritocratic.

From the discussion in this section on social justice, it is possible to suggest that:

- distribution of opportunities is a pronounced feature of the school leadership culture: there were strong positive expressions affirming the distribution of opportunities to create and take initiatives to lead change and to have a say, with examples of leadership and development opportunities in all groups within the school - senior leaders, middle leaders, teachers, support staff and students
- distributed leadership, nevertheless, does not necessarily involve all equally: views expressed suggest it is strongest amongst senior and middle leaders and weakest amongst support staff and students
- exercising ‘influence and initiative’ and experience of respect varies according to individual and structural variables: these include a person’s motivations, interests, how they are responded to by individuals, a person’s networks within the school, students’ peer group influences, maturity towards self-leadership, perceptions of status, and so on
- the scope of exercising ‘influence and initiative’ tends to be restricted to the means of achieving given ends, rather than including opportunities to consider questions of the school’s educational purpose and goals
- distributed leadership is generally seen as to a degree democratic, in so far as it enables staff and students to be consulted, have a say (about means if not ends) and exercise opportunities for leadership.

14.6 Conclusions

Participants in the case study put forward the images and meanings of leadership in Heathvale School that they most wanted to communicate. They were not asked to attempt to produce a comprehensive ‘picture’ of leadership in the school. They chose to highlight a certain aspect or aspects of leadership important in their minds and their feelings as they created their collage. Some, especially students, featured a hierarchical image, thus emphasising the location of power and authority at senior levels. Others featured more holarchic images which tend to be more circular and fluid. Hierarchical and holarchic depictions are not necessarily mutually exclusive perspectives of leadership practice in the school. They each bring to the fore different elements, as explained in the discussion of ‘Stories of leadership…’ in Section 5. They perhaps constitute plural framings of leadership practice, each expressing aspects of leadership that operate simultaneously and interchangeably in the flow of practice. The holarchic aspect of leadership appears to be the most prominent in the staff discourse around leadership. This is the aspect that encourages and facilitates pro-active agency - valuing initiative, enterprise and innovation as well as collaboratively working with others in doing this. This is a more fluid organisational environment than bureaucratic hierarchy. The
metaphors of ‘water’ and ‘flow’ therefore strike a chord, which one of the participants expressed through an image of a waterfall cascading down into a pool whirling with ideas.

The plurality of leadership and its distributive character is articulated conceptually in the idea of multiple distributions. This attempts to convey an important understanding of those within the school’s DL culture that some aspects are distributed more or differently than others. The idea of multiple distributions leads us into some of the limitations and difficulties of DL. Differences in opportunity and experience are not necessarily distributed fairly or in ways that best benefit the learning of all.

To conclude this report we draw on some of what we have learnt from this case study to formulate five requirements which we suggest it would be helpful for policy-makers wanting to develop school leadership to reflect upon.

- Firstly, advancing the quality of school leadership requires developing the leadership capabilities of everyone in the school - both those who are in designated leadership positions and those (such as many teachers, support staff and students) who are not.
- Secondly, developing the leadership capabilities of all requires the development of school cultures and structures that provide the social, professional and institutional support necessary to create environments that facilitate individual initiative and collaborative working and learning.
- Thirdly, the development and sustaining of such school cultures and structures requires long-term investment by schools and by the governments and other agencies that support schools.
- Fourthly, distributed leadership requires respect for both autonomy (individual views, professionalism, creativity and needs) and authority (school purpose, goals, values and structures), which means school members helping to shape schools’ educational purposes, values, etc. as well as working within these.
- Fifthly, helping distributed leadership to be fair and of benefit to the learning of all requires it to be guided by a broad concept of social justice that encourages schools to ask critical questions about involvement (participative justice), respect (cultural justice), learning (developmental justice) and resources (distributive justice).
15. DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP IN PRACTICE: A DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP IN EUROPEAN SCHOOLS

15.1 Introduction

Until the beginning of the twentieth century hierarchical, formal, leadership roles were dominant and allocated to few within an organization. Because of greater globalisation, the open internet, changes in the economic climate and societal changes we see that the work environment is shifting from efficiency, targets, control and formalised accountability structures towards greater autonomy and the recognition and empowerment of professionals as craftsmen. Where this is happening the sharing of responsibilities and knowledge throughout the organization alongside increased networking such activity transcends traditional borders. The dynamics in the wider educational landscape forces the redefinition and reorganisation of leadership in this context. Within the school environment, these forces aren’t lagging behind: the environment has changed drastically in a few years and still does. Leadership activities have to change in line with these developments. Increasingly, for systems to be effective, leadership needs to be not for the few, but for the many – for all children and not just some in a school. This is the basic assumption of distributed leadership and the main focus for this empirical research.

This research project was commissioned by the European Policy Network of School Leaders (EPNoSL) and undertaken by ESHA (European School Heads Association) and ETUCE (European Trade Union Committee for Education). The research focused on distributed leadership in schools. It began in May 2013 and ended in September 2013. The aim of the study was to collect data at the European level in order to determine to what extent distributed leadership is present in schools and to identify and describe variations in leadership practice. Factors include those related to school life such as the financial context of the economic recession, the extent of influence of schools in their community, the type of education and national variations are explored together with the respondent’s position in the school. The study sought to address the following four main questions:

1. To what extent is leadership distributed in the schools?
2. What are the variations in the perceived extent of distributed leadership between subgroups of respondents based upon personal features?
3. What are the variations in perceived extent of distributed leadership between subgroups based upon school-related features?
4. How do the external factors relate to the perceived extent of distributed leadership?

This report describes the results of this descriptive research.

In the next section the research questions will be determined and earlier research findings will be presented and related to the questions. In the third section we will explain how this research study is conducted, followed by the research findings themselves. In the last section some conclusions are drawn by answering the main questions outlined above.
15.2 Research questions and theory

Distributed leadership is a concept on which a lot has been written over the past decade. ESHA has written a position paper (2013) in which they formulate their vision and define this concept. ETUCE has also enunciated distributed leadership in its policy paper on school leadership (2012). Their views on this concept are the starting point for the further definition within this research. In this chapter we will formulate the main and sub-questions to this research, followed by a review of some earlier empirical and theoretical findings about distributed leadership. Next, the concept of distributed leadership is defined and evaluated in seven dimensions.

15.2.1 Research questions and definition of distributed leadership

Four main questions can be formulated with each main question consisting of several sub-questions:

1. To what extent is leadership distributed in the European schools?
   a. To what extent is leadership distributed according to school leaders and teachers?
   b. How do teachers perceive the behaviour of their school leader?
   c. How do school leaders perceive the behaviour of their professionals?

2. What are the variations in the perceived extent of distributed leadership between subgroups of respondents based upon personal features?
   In this question three grouping variables are tested: position, gender and seniority.
   a. Do the grouping variables differ in terms of their means on the distributed leadership scale variables (of question 1) and what are the differences?
   b. Which of the grouping variables significantly explain possible differences? Are there main or interaction effects between these features that explain the differences?

3. What are the variations in perceived extent of distributed leadership between subgroups based upon school related features?
   In this question seven grouping variables are tested: type of employment, school size, clusters of European countries, type of education, class room responsibilities for school leaders, educational structures and whether the education is free.
   a. Do the grouping variables differ in terms of their means on the distributed leadership scale variables, when controlling for seniority, gender and position?
   b. Which of the school related features significantly explain possible differences? Are there main or interaction effects between these features that explain the differences?

4. How do the external factors relate to the perceived extent of distributed leadership?
   a. What is the impact of the financial crisis on leadership practice? Is the crisis a possible predictor for a more or less distributive leadership practice?
b. What is the impact of the extent of perceived influence of schools on their own policy development? Is this factor a possible predictor for a more or less distributive leadership practice?

The first question has a descriptive character. By asking school leaders and teachers at the European level about the leadership in their organizations we wanted to investigate how widespread this form of leadership is. In the past 15 years this new vision on leadership is developed, alongside system leadership. Whereas system leadership is about leadership that transcends the organization, distributed leadership deals with sharing responsibilities within the organization. But to what extent has this form become the reality in schools? Can leadership practice in schools, on average, be interpreted as distributive or is the overall and more traditional form the adage to ‘follow the leader’?

Regarding the second and third question, we wanted to identify whether there were differences between subgroups. One of the features is the formal position in the school. Are there differences between the perception of school leaders and teachers? Also, the effects of seniority and gender were examined. Regarding the third question, possible differences related to school features were investigated. In the latter, analysis accounted for the personal features (position, seniority and gender) as covariates to control for their influence to clarify the effects of position. In the second and third question comparisons are the point of focus.

Finally, the fourth question focuses on more environmental (outside the organizational context) as possible predictors of distributed leadership. Is there a relationship between the economic climate and political interference and the extent of distributed leadership in schools? Does the perception of more or less negative consequences of the financial crisis or of more or less influence on their own policy development, predict the extent of distribution of leadership in schools? Could these factors outside the organization be obstructive (or even stimulating)? Although we cannot ascertain that relations found in this research are causal or predictive, by statistically testing these relationships we can give indications for it. For empirical evidence of causal relations further longitudinal research is necessary.

15.2.2 A distributive perspective on leadership

Leadership and the criteria for effective leadership have changed over the years. It comes as no surprise, as the environment - in which leadership roles find their expression - has evolved and become more dynamic than ever. As Gronn (2002) formulated ten years ago, “schools now operate in complex, data-rich task environments as never before” (p. 18).23 21st century schooling necessitates a shift away from vertical, policy driven change to lateral, capacity building change. School leaders must still have sufficient knowledge of facilities, personnel, and finance management but effective leaders today must also foster learning environments where students and professionals in the school are encouraged to share knowledge, build trust and promote a sense of shared responsibility.

23 One of the initial and frequently cited theoretical conceptualisations of distributed leadership was developed by Gronn.
Challenges in school leadership

In 2012 ETUCE (European Trade Union Committee for Education) conducted a survey in eleven European countries to map out the school leadership situation. They investigated emerging issues, developments, school leadership policy and good practices to give insights for improving school leadership. ETUCE describes the different challenges the school leader faces. Examples of these challenges are the heavy workload among school leaders, vaguely defined and delimited responsibilities, low attractiveness of the profession and a decreasing number of (potential) school leaders (due to nearing retirement and a lack of qualified candidates who apply for school leadership positions) (ETUCE, 2012, p.6). Higher expectations of schools (because of external pressure of policy makers and society) as well as changes in the nature of the work of school leaders can be accounted for these and more leadership challenges.

Distributed leadership: a step towards system leadership

The need for distribution of leadership within the school is not only a pragmatic issue of proportionally dividing the school leaders workload, it has the positive impact on the self-efficacy of teachers and other staff members by encouraging them to show leadership based on their expertise and by supporting collaborative work cultures (Day et al., 2009; OECD, 2012). This in turn is one of the most important conditions for a culture of improvement being at the heart of the school.

The OECD’s comparative review of school leadership (2012) shows that an important role for school leaders is to enlarge the scope of their leadership beyond the school. This so-called ‘system leadership’ implies strengthening collaboration from networks and sharing resources across communities. To establish this larger system-level of leadership, leadership at the school itself must be more distributed.

Distributed leadership differs from more managerial types of leadership, where ‘control’, efficiency and hierarchical fixed structures are dominant (Elmore, 2000; NCSL, 2004). Although some organizational functions in the school require control (e.g. finance), school improvement is a process that cannot be controlled fully, since most of the knowledge required for improvement must inevitably reside in the people who deliver instruction, not in the people who manage them (Elmore, 2000). It is known that more hierarchical and managerial kinds of leadership are often limited to a small proportion of formal leaders, a proportion that seldom grows larger than about one quarter or one third of the total population of classrooms, schools, or systems (Elmore, 2000). Pre-eminently in schools, there is no way to improve the quality of education in the school without widely distributing the responsibility for leadership among roles in the organization.

Everyone involved

Distribution of leadership in the school does not only apply to the professionals in the school, but stretches across several other groups and individuals. In line with the definition of the European Policy Network on School Leadership the term "school Leadership" refers to the process of strategically using the unique skills and knowledge of teachers, pupils, and parents, toward achieving common educational goals.

24 Based on background research: OECD (2009), Creating Effective Teaching and Learning Environments, First Results from TALIS http://www.oecd.org/document/54/0,3746,en_2649_39263231_42980662_1_1_1_1,00.htm
25 EPNoSL: www.schoolleadership.eu
Distributed leadership is primarily concerned with mobilizing leadership at all levels, not just relying on leadership from the top. The emphasis is upon leadership as interaction and practice rather than relying upon the actions associated those in formal leadership role or responsibilities. The interdependence of the individual and the environment means that human activity is distributed in the interactive web of actors, artefacts and the situation (Spillane, 2006).

Distributed leadership implies some degree of shared expertise and some degree of difference in the level and kind of expertise among individuals. According to Elmore (2000; 2004), guidance and direction need to be given by the school leader, following the contours of expertise in an organization, to make a coherent whole. “It is the glue of a common task or goal—improvement of teaching and learning—and a common frame of values for how to approach that task that keeps distributed leadership from becoming another version of loose coupling” (Elmore, 2000, p. 15).

Reciprocal responsibility and accountability
Involvement combines with responsibility and accountability. Distributed leadership does not mean that no one besides the school leaders is responsible for the overall performance of the organization. All individuals are responsible and accountable for their contributions to the collective result (Elmore, 2000). The formal authority of school leaders must have a complementary responsibility in creating a common culture of expectations, enhancing the talents, competences and knowledge of the professionals in the organization and establishing a coherent whole from the diverse qualities of its’ staff members.

To be effective, school leaders need to understand how individuals vary, how the particular knowledge and skill of one person can be made to complement that of another, and how the competences of some can be shared with others (Elmore, 2000; 2004). Learning grows out of these differences in expertise rather than differences in formal authority and is both an individual and a social activity. Thus, all responsibility and accountability relationships are necessarily reciprocal (Elmore, 2000; 2004).

Policy usually states the aspect of accountability in which a person with formal authority requires another to do something he or she might not otherwise do except in the presence of such a requirement. Distributed leadership makes the reciprocal nature of these accountability relationships explicit.

Ways to distributed leadership
Top down approach
A number of studies, summarized by Bennett et al. (2003) suggested that an important starting point towards the development of distributed leadership may be found in a ‘top down’ initiative from a strong leadership model where senior and formal leaders demonstrate significant influence on the school’s culture. Distributed leadership, then, seems to contradict with strong senior leadership, but there is no necessary contradiction. Many staff do not wish to be given leadership roles or to have to take on responsibility beyond their own class teaching (NCSL, 2004). To distribute leadership a strong leader is required to provide guidance and direction, to make people feel confident (Elmore, 2000; NCSL, 2004). Formal leaders need to avoid overly controlling behaviour and actively encourage and value innovative ideas from all members of the school. This means providing time, space and opportunities and knowing when to step back to enable staff members to contribute and participate in decision making and to establish concerted action.
Guidance is about weaving together people, materials and organizational structures in a common cause (Obadara, 2013).

Distributed leadership does not mean that everybody leads, but that everybody has the potential to lead at some time. The degree to which informal leaders are involved in the process of distributed leadership may vary. A ‘top down’ initiative may acknowledge and incorporate the existing informal power of leadership relationships into more formal leadership structures in ways seen as appropriate by the senior staff who are creating the distributive structure or culture.

In 2004 NCSL published a full report of their study on the distributed leadership practice in schools. They found six forms which distributed leadership can take without being prescriptive in terms of good or bad; effective forms will depend upon the specific context. Their taxonomy of distribution consists of: formal, pragmatic, strategic, incremental, opportunistic and cultural distribution. In the first four forms the top down initiative is more often the starting point. In the formal distribution pre-designated roles and job descriptions are leading where responsibility is delegated when necessary. In the pragmatic form distribution is temporary and ad hoc teams are constructed when external pressure forces a reaction. The distinguishing feature of strategic distribution is goal orientation and not, as with pragmatic distribution, about problem solving. Individuals as team players contribute to new appointments. Incremental distribution is more focused on professional development, by giving more responsibility to professionals in the school and where as people prove their ability to exercise leadership they are given more opportunity to lead. “When there is mutual confidence and a flow of innovative ideas, leadership becomes fluid” (NCSL, 2004, p. 40).

**Bottom up approach**

The initiative can also come from ‘the bottom’ instead of top down. A ‘bottom up’ initiative is more likely to derive from individuals or groups within the organisation who already are seen by colleagues as having a leadership role or when there is a lack of strong leadership (Bennett et al., 2003). According to NCSL (2004), opportunistic and cultural distribution can be characterized as more ‘bottom up’ forms of distribution. In opportunistic distribution, leadership is taken rather than given or planned (NCSL, 2004). The success of such a bottom up initiative may depend upon an attempt to bring into line formal and informal leaders within the organisation. Cultural distribution is a form of distribution where leadership is not formally nor explicitly delegated, but a reflection of the entire school culture. This type of leadership is more intuitive, organic and spontaneous and is expressed in activities rather than in roles (NCSL, 2004).

**Five aspects of distributed leadership**

The sources of initiative cannot be marked out precisely in practice. In 2004 the Hay Group Education (UK) developed a continuum consisting of five aspects of distributed leadership. Their sliding scale shows accents in initiatives and scope of decision making as follows:

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26 Concertive action, according to Gronn (2002), can be interpreted in three ways: spontaneous collaboration, intuitive working relations that emerge over time and are dependent on trust and institutionalised or regulated practices. Gronn regards distribution as a form of holistic and conjoint agency where actors influence and are influenced within a framework of authority.
- **Instruct** – where initiatives and ideas come only from leaders at or near the top of a hierarchical organisational structure;

- **Consult** – where staff have the opportunity for input but decisions are still made at a distance from them by others near or at the top;

- **Delegate** – where staff take initiative and make decisions within predetermined boundaries of responsibility and accountability;

- **Facilitate** – where staff at all levels are able to initiate and champion ideas;

- **Neglect** – where staff are forced to take initiative and responsibility due to a lack of direction at the top.

Hargreaves and Fink (2006) also developed a continuum, configured as a thermometer. The facilitate point of the Hay Group continuum is split out by them in three forms of distributed leadership, namely guided distribution, emergent distribution and assertive distribution.

In contrast to other classifications, as mentioned earlier, this configuration implies a prescriptive one (Hargreaves and Fink, 2006; in Youngs, 2008, p.5).27

**Formal and fluid leadership structures**

Distributed leadership may be given form through formal positions and structures, like committees and working groups. But it also can be expressed in some kind of fluid leadership exercised through informal roles and actions, based upon expertise rather than position. This fluid leadership will only be possible within an open climate, based on trust and mutual support and with strong shared common goals and values, which becomes an integral part of the internal organisational social and cultural context. Moreover, such a climate implies a blurring of the distinction between ‘leaders’ and ‘followers’. It may therefore have to co-exist with any formal accountability structure that has been created within the organisation (Bennett et al., 2003).

**The impact of distributed leadership**

Gradually the distributive perspective on leadership disseminates in different countries to become a general practice. Some OECD countries, and in particular Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden, have more of a

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27 See also: [http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/leadership/pdfs/hargreaves.pdf](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/leadership/pdfs/hargreaves.pdf)
history of teamwork and co-operation among their teaching staff, especially in primary schools. Others, such as Ireland, are shifting to encourage such practice in which this responsibility of school leaders is increasingly important and recognized (OECD, 2012).

In 2009 a large study was conducted in England in conjunction with NCSL to explore the relationship between school leadership and pupil learning outcomes (Day et al., 2009). The data showed that one of the most powerful dimensions of effective school leadership was the establishment of a clear sense of long term vision and direction for the school, which also heavily influenced the actions of the school leaders and of others in the school. The vision was shared widely and supported by all staff. Engaging staff in the decision making and evaluation of the school’s development were noteworthy. School leaders encouraged staff members to be leaders in their own classrooms and to take informed decisions to extend their teaching approaches. Those who were in leadership roles were held accountable for the tasks they undertook.

Typical values and beliefs in the schools were trust and high expectations and a ‘can do’ culture. Also, the school leaders intentionally redesigned organizational structures and redefined and distributed more widely leadership and responsibilities to enlarge engagement and ownership in order to improve the student’s learning. The ways of restructuring, role shifting and changes in responsibilities varied from school to school, but had a consistent pattern across schools. There was a change from vertical to horizontally structured schools. Responsibilities of management and staff members were clearly outlined and allocated on the basis of ability with recognition of people’s qualities and organizational needs.

Developments in leadership also included pupils, who were provided opportunities to participate in decision making and given responsibilities such as leading projects. This was highly motivating for the pupils and had a positive impact on their learning. In 2006 research findings on collaborative learning showed that when students work collaboratively during learning, there is a positive influence on academic achievement. It should however be noted that individual learning has its own important value; collaborative and individual learning complement each other (OECD, 2010).

As distributive leadership goes hand in hand with learning organisations, both are impelled by the dynamics in the environment (see also NCSL, 2004, p. 16). It is important for all professionals in the school to feel free to experiment and have the courage to make mistakes and to learn from them. In the above mentioned study (Day et al., 2009) participating school leaders provided an infrastructure where it was safe to try things out, to innovate with new ways of working. Staff responded to this opportunity positively. It affected the way they saw themselves as professionals and improved their sense of self-efficacy. This, in turn, had a positive impact on the way they interacted with pupils and other staff members in the schools.

In 2010 a descriptive survey design was used to investigate relationships between distributed leadership and sustainable school improvement. Significant relationships were found between distributed leadership and

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29 The study utilised two sets of questionnaire “Distributed Leadership Questionnaire (DLQ)” and “Sustainable School Improvement Questionnaire (SSIQ)”. A sample of 200 public secondary schools out of a total of 595 schools in Lagos State was drawn for the study using proportionate stratified random sampling technique.
school goal achievement, teachers’ professional development, instructional programme management, effective teaching and learning and the promotion of school climate (culture) (Obadara, 2013).

**Influence to make decisions**

Elmore (2004) highlights that effective leadership cannot be imposed through artificial constructs developed by outside policy-makers, but must begin from the inside focused on the teaching and learning processes in the school. School leaders can make a difference in school and student performance if they are granted the autonomy to make important decisions and especially when these decisions include promoting teamwork among teachers, building networks of schools, monitoring teachers, setting strategic direction and developing school plans and goals and engaging staff members, influencing teacher recruitment and matched with the school’s needs.

**Conclusion**

The key concepts of distributed leadership can be grouped around four categories:

1. **Distributed leadership practice:**
   Distributed leadership is about leadership activities and decision making exceeding the formal positions. It is expressed in cooperation, sharing expertise and knowledge, initiating, responsibility and accountability.

2. **Roles and tasks of the formal school leader and staff:**
   a. The formal school leader: the responsibility of the school leader is to provide guidance and direction, acknowledge abilities, encourage professionals to share knowledge, to make decisions and to show initiative. These tasks and related responsibilities are necessary to strengthen the engagement and empowerment of the professionals.
   b. Staff: professionals have a reciprocal responsibility to substantiate this by showing initiative and actively participate and contribute and take their responsibility.

3. **Cultural and formal school features:**
   An open climate, trust, learning organization, respect, high standards, common values and a shared vision. Although cultural distribution seems to be the advanced model of distributed leadership, formal structures are not the opposite of distributed leadership because they could be helpful in distributing leadership. On the other hand, if formal structures suppress decision-making and responsibilities throughout the school then widespread leadership opportunity is obstructed.

4. **Autonomy as a necessary condition:**
   To make distributed leadership possible in schools, sufficient influence and a sufficient amount of autonomy is necessary in order that people can make their own policy choices. This can be seen as an important condition of distributed leadership practice.

**15.2.3 Research model and variables**

In this research the definition of distributed leadership as described in the position paper of ESHA was the starting point.
“Under Distributed Leadership, everyone is responsible and accountable for leadership within his or her area. Good ideas come from throughout the organisation, and many people will cooperate in creating change. Distributed Leadership is an environment where everyone feels free to develop, initiate and share new ideas.” (Position paper Distributive Leadership, ESHA, 2013, p.1).

ETUCE also takes “a broad view of school leadership, encompassing, not only the head or principal of the learning institution, but also other individuals with leadership roles such as deputy principals, departmental/subject heads, senior teachers and other individuals entrusted with leadership responsibilities. ETUCE believes in distributed leadership, shared or collaborative leadership involving teachers and the whole pedagogical community. Through such collaborative leadership, school principals can work with the whole pedagogical community to develop a shared vision for the school, to set the school goals and to work systematically towards their fulfilment.” (ETUCE, 2012, p.2)

Seven dimensions of distributed leadership

Based on the position paper and the literature review, seven dominant factors of distributed leadership were selected for a closer look at within this research:

1. **School structure**: the formal school structure provides everyone with the opportunity to participate in decision making; there is agreement about leadership roles; informal leadership and professional development are facilitated.

2. **Strategic vision**: a shared vision with common values for all, where ownership by both staff and pupils is found important and creating a learning organisation is one of the school goals.

3. **Values and beliefs**: underlying values typical for the culture of schools are mutual respect, confidence and high expectations. In such schools mistakes aren’t punished, but are seen as a learning opportunity.

4. **Collaboration and cooperation**: in schools it is self-evident for staff to work collaboratively in order to improve school results, achieve the collective ambition and to solve problems. Knowledge is shared with one another.

5. **Decision making**: professionals in the school have sufficient space to make their own decisions related to the content and organization of their work. There is confidence in professionals to make informed decisions and everyone is involved with decisions about the school’s ambition and expectations.

6. **Responsibility and accountability**: professionals are kept and feel accountable for their performance. In these schools it is common to give feedback to one another to help colleagues and improve the school with professionals expressing their opinion regardless of their formal position.

7. **Initiative**: based upon their level of expertise everyone is expected to contribute their own ideas and come up with initiatives.

Additionally, two sets of questions concerning the specific behaviour of the school leader and of staff in the school were withdrawn. These items included key features such as empowering, supporting, enabling behaviour of the school leader and participating, demonstrating responsibilities, helping one another by the staff members.

Research model

In the research model as presented below, the four main questions are incorporated. The middle of the model shows the chosen seven dimensions of distributed leadership. This block refers to the first sub-
question (Question 1a). Sub-questions 1b and 1c are shown next to it in the block ‘perceived behaviour of professionals in the school, consisting of two variables. Besides describing mean scores on these variables, the relationships will be examined.

**Research model**

![Research model Distributed Leadership](image)

At the bottom of the model two blocks concerning the second and third main questions are shown. First a closer look at the differences in answers is based upon the position, gender and seniority of the respondent (Questions 2a, 2b).

Then, we examined the variations based on school related features. These variables were controlled for the personal features of the respondent (covariates) (Questions 3a, 3b). By making subgroups within these features variations in the extent of distributed leadership will be analyzed.

To the left of the model the consequences of the financial crisis and the perceived influence on school policy are mentioned with the assumption in this model that there is a single directional relationship between these factors and distributed leadership (Questions 4a, 4b).

**15.3 Method**

In this chapter we will describe how this study was conducted. The study can be characterized as a descriptive research. A survey was carried out to collect large scale data. In the following paragraphs we will pay attention to the instrument, the sample and response, the procedures and the method of analysis.
15.3.1 Instrument

For this study a web based questionnaire was developed consisting of four sections:

- Background questions about the respondent, e.g. seniority, formal position
- Questions about the school context and school features, e.g. the extent of perceived influence on policy and curriculum, the financial consequences of the economic crisis, school size, how teachers are employed
- Questions based on the operational definition of distributed leadership consisting of seven dimensions
- Questions answered by teachers about how they perceive their school leader regarding their behaviour to enable and encourage distributed leadership and questions answered by school leaders about how they perceive their teachers regarding the organizational behaviour which enables distributed leadership.

The questionnaire consisted of 20 close-ended questions (divided over 87 items), for the greater part with statements about distributed leadership (on a interval measurement level). Respondents were asked to denote to what extent they agreed with the statements (see appendix 1 for the whole questionnaire). Some answers in the questionnaire were half open-ended, e.g. when respondents had another position in school than school leader or teacher, they answered ‘other position’ and had the option to amplify their answer. Also, respondents could answer most of the questions with ‘Non applicable’ when none of the answers applied to their situation. Both types of answers are not represented in this chapter but in the separate Tables Report along with the relative frequencies on all questions.

15.3.2 Sample & Response

15 000 ESHA members (mainly school leaders) were invited to fill out the questionnaire. At the same time the questionnaire was distributed to 132 ETUCE national member organisations, which represent teachers and school leaders, who further distributed it to their members. In all, 1534 respondents filled out the questionnaire partially; 1088 respondents filled out the questionnaire completely. For the data-analysis the respondents that completed at least the questions with the seven dimensions, were taken into account (in total, 1093 respondents).

76% of the respondents were school leaders, 14% were teachers and 11% have another position in the school, e.g. board member. Most respondents filled out the English version of the questionnaire (73%), followed by the French version (13%). Most people work in the north-west of Europe (e.g. England, the Netherlands, Scotland, France and Sweden). 49% of those surveyed are male, 51% female. More than 80% work either in the primary or secondary sector.

A relatively small amount of responses from teachers was taken note of (n=148), compared to the number of school leaders. Little response has come from more Eastern parts of Europe (e.g. no one from Azerbaijan, Romania, Russia, Czech Republic et cetera). Also a few respondents work in Early Childhood (2%) or Higher education (3%). For the data-analysis this means that some values of variables had to be clustered to make more reliable statements.
In conclusion, a response rate of more than 1000 respondents makes it – in general - possible to make statements with a reliability of 95% and a accuracy of 5%. Yet, these statements cover the whole group, but the differences between groups based on specific features are most probably significant: the response from specific subgroups (such as certain countries and sectors) weighed heavily in the overall findings. The findings of the extent of distributed leadership in Europe in this research need to be interpreted, considering the impact of dominant features of the response on the results.

A lot more school leaders than teachers filled out the questionnaire. Also, there were just eight countries with a response rate of 50 or higher. These countries (England, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Scotland, Sweden and Spain) mainly influence the findings in this research. As a consequence, in the presentation of the results (chapter three) the answers of school leaders and teachers will be described separately and, additionally, the results of the eight countries.

15.3.3 Procedure & time scale

In May 2013 the questionnaire was developed by Ton Duif, Chris Harrison, Nicole van Dartel (ESHA) and Dennis Sinyolo (ETUCE).

The English questionnaire was then translated by the translators of ESHA and ETUCE in five additional languages:

- Italian;
- German;
- Spanish;
- Russian;
- French.

Invitations and reminders were sent by ESHA and ETUCE during the field work. On the 18th of June the members of ESHA and ETUCE were contacted by E-mail and invited to fill out the questionnaire. A general web link was included.

A reminder was sent three times to the population during this period to increase the response rate. Attributed to summer holidays the response rate remained – as expected – moderate. We realized it would have been more valuable to conduct this research in another period, but restrictions were made to the research period.

The survey was closed on the 9th of September. The data were exported to SPSS, a statistical software program.

15.3.4 Method of analysis

In SPSS the data were first cleaned and then analyzed. Invalid cases (answers) were deleted, back ground variables on a ratio level were recoded into new variables with classes/groups to compare subgroups. In appendix 2 the classifications of these new variables are presented. Some types of education were merged,
because of a low response rate. For seniority and school size a classification based on quartiles and based on a normal distribution were made. Concerning the participating countries in the response a double classification was made: a geographical classification (North, South, East, West) and an education organizational classification:  

- Single structure: education is provided in a continuous way from the beginning to the end of compulsory schooling, with no transition between primary and lower secondary education, and with general education provided in common for all pupils.
- Common core: after completion of primary education (ISCED 1), all students follow the same common core curriculum at lower secondary level (ISCED 2).
- Differentiated structure: after primary education, either at the beginning or some time during lower secondary education, students are enrolled in distinct educational pathways or specific types of schooling.

For regression analysis some variables measured on a nominal level were recoded into dummy-variables (values 0/1).

A Principal Components Analysis (PCA) with a Varimax rotation was executed to explore underlying components in a group of variables. The reliability of the variables of distributed leadership, of the perceived behaviour by the professionals and of the perceived influence on school policy was tested. Provided a Cronbach’s alpha of 0.70 or higher, scale variables were constructed, presenting the dimensions of distributed leadership. In table 1 the scale variables and related alpha-scores are presented.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct label</th>
<th>Cronbach’s alpha</th>
<th>Number of items</th>
<th>Items removed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Influence</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School structure</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic vision</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Values and beliefs</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration and cooperation</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision making</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility and accountability</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiatives *</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distributed Leadership total</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perception teachers of school leader</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perception school leader of professionals</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*construct not reliable, items are analyzed separately.

To answer the research questions, several statistical analyses were executed. To examine relationships and variations between variables in order to answer the research questions the following tests were executed:
- Chi Square test;
- General Linear Model/ UNI-ANCOVA’s to determine main and interaction effects;

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Independent T-tests and ONEWAY-ANOVA’s with post hoc comparisons (Bonferroni) to determine mean scores and mean differences;
Correlation test (Pearson product-Moment) to investigate linear relationships;
Linear Regression Analysis (Hierarchical) to examine causal relationships.

In all tests a significant level of $p \leq 0.05$ was applied and indicated with an asterisk *. Only significant mean differences with a minimum mean difference of 0.3 are described in this report. Furthermore, limit values were applied by the researcher to the mean scores:

- Critical/ negative zone: $\leq 2.9$
- Neutral zone: $3.0-3.5$
- Positive zone: $\geq 3.5$

15.4 Findings

More than 1000 people filled out the questionnaire. The differences in opinion between school leaders and teachers are sometimes striking. On average, teachers are more critical about the leadership practice and the financial consequences of the economic crisis. Because of these substantial differences, the findings of both groups will be presented separately in this chapter. Results of the countries with a sufficient number of respondents are described separately.

We will start with a look at the general findings (15.4.1). In 15.4.2 the comparisons between subgroups based upon personal and school related features are described. Finally, in 15.4.3, the relationships between several variables will be mentioned with significant results indicated with an asterisk.

15.4.1 General findings

Firstly, we will start with a look at the perceived consequences of the financial crisis and the influence on school policy. Then we will discuss the results of the issues related to the content of distributed leadership. In this section we will also describe the results of the countries where the condition of a minimum of 50 respondents is met. These countries are: England, Scotland, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Spain and France.

Financial crisis

More than 75% of all respondents experienced a reduction of the school budget since the start of the financial crisis in 2008-9: 34% a drastic reduction, 44% a slight reduction. It is noteworthy that among these respondents, a drastic reduction is mentioned more often by teachers than by school leaders. In just 5% of the cases an increase in the school budget is mentioned and 17% say the budget has remained the same.
Respondents were asked which consequences emerged in the case of reduction of the school budget. In the figure below, these consequences are presented.

![Figure 3: Consequences of financial crisis, relative frequencies school leaders and teachers](image)

Significantly, the reduction of school supplies and services is most frequently mentioned as a consequence. It is significant that more teachers than school leaders reported that teachers have been laid off, staff salaries have been cut and school supplies and services have been reduced. In all, many schools have had to manage with a smaller budget.

In looking at the various countries: Spain, Scotland and the Netherlands recorded more than 90% mentioning a reduction of the school budget since the financial crisis. In Norway the consequences seem to be on a smaller scale.

Reduction of school services and supplies and teachers being laid off are in various countries also most frequently mentioned. In Sweden and Scotland, the laying off of support staff is more often mentioned than the laying off of teachers. A clear distinction in consequences compared to the other countries, is seen in Spain, where 96% of the respondents indicate a lowering of staff salaries. 67% of the respondents in Italy mention a reduction of the school budget and 90% within this group say that staff salaries have been cut.
Table 2: Reduction school budget (relative frequencies) and most frequently mentioned consequence of financial crisis, countries (n=927)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>% reduction (% drastic)</th>
<th>Top 2 most frequently mentioned consequences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>England (n=82)</td>
<td>70 (17%)</td>
<td>51% services and supplies reduced,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>21% support staff have been laid off</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France (n=115)</td>
<td>69 (16%)</td>
<td>49% services and supplies reduced,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>36% teachers have been laid off</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Netherlands (n=269)</td>
<td>91 (42%)</td>
<td>71% services and supplies reduced,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>65% teachers have been laid off</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy (n=59)</td>
<td>67 (33%)</td>
<td>90% services and supplies reduced,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>53% staff salaries have been cut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway (n=109)</td>
<td>33 (3%)</td>
<td>30% services and supplies,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>17% teachers have been laid off</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland (n=118)</td>
<td>92 (51%)</td>
<td>88% services and supplies,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>47% support staff have been laid off</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden (n=99)</td>
<td>64 (10%)</td>
<td>51% services and supplies reduced,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>50% support staff have been laid off</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain (n=76)</td>
<td>96 (53%)</td>
<td>96% staff salaries have been cut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>75% teachers have been laid off</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Influence on school policy

Another question was the amount of influence on school policy. In the table below, the mean scores of school leaders and teachers are presented.

Both school leaders and teachers experience a limited influence on the curriculum content. Regarding curriculum delivery this view is much less critical; school leaders are even significantly more positive about the extent of influence on this topic. Furthermore, little influence is experienced concerning the school budget by both respondent groups. On the other hand, a relatively great deal of influence is mentioned regarding the organizational structure and strategic development planning by both school leaders and teachers. Additionally, a sufficient amount is perceived in professional development by the school leaders, but not by the teachers (significant mean difference). On average, both school leaders and teachers take a neutral position about the amount of influence: in general, neither very little influence, nor a great deal of influence is perceived.
Table 3: Influence, mean scores school leaders and teachers (n=961)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>School leader</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum Content</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum Delivery *</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The school budget (Financial)</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HR Policy (e.g. employment conditions, recruitment, selection)</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational structure</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic development planning</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional development *</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influence (scale variable)</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Significant at 0.05 level

In the figure below, the mean scores of influence on the various items are visible. England has the highest mean score on the overall scale variable of influence (4.0); France (2.6) and Spain (2.8) the lowest.

Respondents from England feel, on average, on all topics an equal (and great deal) amount of influence. Noteworthy, France does not perceive much influence on the curriculum content, neither does Norway. Regarding the school budget, most countries perceive a relatively limited influence. France, Italy, Scotland and Spain experience little influence on HR policy, compared to the other countries. Except for Spain and France, a great deal of influence seems to be perceived on professional development.

Figure 4: Influence, mean scores countries (n=912)

Differences per subscale distributed leadership

School structure
There seems to be little agreement about the school structure providing distributed leadership activities. Teachers are much more negative than school leaders are (significant mean difference). This applies particularly to the opportunities to participate in decision making and the mobilization of informal leadership at multiple levels in the school. Teachers seem to experience a more limited freedom to make decisions.

**Table 4: School structure, mean scores school leaders and teachers (n=969)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>School leader</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hierarchically decided tasks and responsibilities</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formally agreed leadership roles *</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision making by professionals within predetermined boundaries of responsibility and accountability *</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formally provided opportunities to participate in decision making by the school structure *</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal leadership at all levels facilitated by the school structure *</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular consultation meeting *</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By the school supported professional development *</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School structure (scale variable) *</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Significant at 0.05 level

Of all further examined countries, only France and Italy adopt a neutral position; the other countries are positive about the school structure.

**Strategic vision**

One of the frequently mentioned important factors of distributed leadership in literature is a shared vision in the school. A clear distinction can be noticed between school leaders and teachers: school leaders score on every item very high, whereas teachers scores are more neutral. Although teachers are not negative, it could be questioned whether teachers need more sharing than school leaders presume.

**Table 5: Strategic vision, mean scores (n=973)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>School leader</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shared vision *</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common values for all *</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff take ownership *</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students take ownership *</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning organisation as one of the school goals *</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic vision (scale variable) *</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Significant at 0.05 level

All countries have a high (3.5+) mean score on this subscale.

**Values and beliefs**

The same tendency can be seen on values and beliefs. All items differ significantly between school leaders and teachers. Noteworthy here, is the critical opinion of teachers on the acceptation of mistakes. The in literature mentioned ‘can do’ culture, freedom to experiment – which goes hand in hand with making mistakes – is not a dominant cultural feature according to many teachers.
Table 6: Values and beliefs, mean scores (n=973)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>School leader</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mistakes as a learning opportunity *</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confidence in each other’s abilities *</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mutual respect *</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High standards for professionals *</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Values and beliefs (scale variable) *</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Significant at 0.05 level

France, Italy and Spain have a ‘neutral’ score. The other countries have a higher mean score.

Collaboration and cooperation

The sub scale collaboration and cooperation deals with sharing, helping and giving feedback in order to achieve the collective ambition. Again, school leaders perceive this significantly more positive than teachers. Both teachers and school leaders believe that professionals in the school work collaboratively to deliver school results and to help one another. Time is, especially according to teachers, a critical aspect.

Table 7: Collaboration and cooperation, mean scores (n=972)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>School leader</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Working collaboratively to deliver school results *</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expressing opinions on a regularly basis *</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharing knowledge and experiences with one another *</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping one another to solve problems *</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sufficient time to collaborate *</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperation to achieve the collective ambition *</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration and cooperation (scale variable) *</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Significant at 0.05 level

Only France, Italy and Spain have a ‘neutral’ score. The other countries have a higher mean score.

Decision making

The sub scale decision making consists of one negatively formulated item. To interpret all items in the same direction (2.9 or less is negative, 3.5 or higher is positive) this item is recoded (reverse). Overall, school leaders as well as teachers, perceive this scale positively: there are opportunities for professionals in the school to make decisions in their work. However, it does not appear to be common practice, according to teachers, that everyone is involved in the decision making process and both respondent groups believe that eventually most decisions still come from the top. It looks as though decision making is possible but limited to the work itself and professionals regard this as sufficient.

Table 8: Decision making, mean scores (n=969)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>School leader</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity to make decisions related to the content of my work *</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity to make decisions in how to organise work *</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity to make decisions regarding professional development *</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Opportunity to make decisions on a sufficient range of aspects in work * | 4.1 | 3.5
---|---|---
It’s common that everyone is involved with decision making * | 3.7 | 2.5
Decision making from the top * (1) | 2.5 | 2.1
Decision making (scale variable) * | 4.2 | 3.5

* Significant at 0.05 level
(1) for a one-direction interpretation (the higher the mean score, the more positive the meaning), this item is recoded.

All countries have a mean score of 3.5 of higher.

**Responsibility and accountability**

School leaders as well as teachers are positive about their responsibilities and accountabilities. But the perception of school leaders is significantly more positive. A critical aspect is perceived by the teachers regarding the encouragement: teachers seem to experience relatively little encouragement to express their opinion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>School leader</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Being accountable to superior</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kept accountable</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt responsibility</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking responsibility without asking *</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharing collected responsibilities for each other’s behaviour *</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouragement to express opinion regardless of formal status *</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility and accountability (scale variable) *</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Significant at 0.05 level

All countries have a mean score of 3.5 of higher.
Initiative

A significant difference is found between school leaders and teachers: school leaders are, again, more positive about the opportunities and space for the professionals to take the initiative than teachers. But, in all, school leaders are not strongly positive (neutral zone). Teachers, on the other hand, are more critical. A striking difference is the necessity to take the initiative due to a lack of direction. As we have seen earlier in the literature review, guidance and direction is an important task of the school leader. School leaders, on average, do not think there is a lack of direction in their school. Teachers, however, believe that there is (somewhat) lack of direction. This low score within the group of teachers could not be explained by school related features or respondent features in this research. Also, it does not correlate with other sub scales of distributed leadership. So, it cannot be explained by specific dimensions of distributed leadership used in this research.

Table 10: Initiative, mean scores (n=962)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initiative</th>
<th>School leader</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Initiatives and ideas mainly from the top * (1)</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sufficient amount of freedom to contribute own ideas to improve the work *</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Necessity to take the initiative and responsibility due to a lack of direction and lead * (1)</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment all tasks based upon the level of expertise *</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Significant at 0.05 level
(1) for a one-direction interpretation (the higher the mean score, the more positive the meaning), this item is recoded.

The amount of freedom to contribute their own ideas seems to be the expectation in almost all countries and is reported as relatively high, whereas initiatives from the top have got a low score in several countries. England, France, Italy and Spain score as critical on the amount of initiatives from the top (mean scores ≤ 2.9). Sweden has a high mean score. A striking result is the critical score in the Netherlands regarding the necessity to take the initiative due to a lack of direction (mean score= 2.9).
Perception behaviour school leader and teachers

Teachers were asked to give their opinion about the school leader’s behaviour. Nine statements were submitted. In general terms, teachers are not very positive and neither very negative. Nevertheless, a few critical aspects should be noticed: the provision of information, incentives to self-reflection, support in decision making and the provision of advice and guidance regarding their own development.

Table 11: Perception school leader’s behaviour by teachers, mean scores (n=147)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The school leader at our school....</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>enables me to make meaningful contributions to the school</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>encourages me to share my expertise with my colleagues</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>welcomes me to take the initiative</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>formally acknowledges my teaching abilities</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>brings me into contact with information that helps me to create new ideas</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stimulates me to reflect on my work in order to improve</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>has high expectations regarding my professional standards</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>supports me to make my own decisions in my work</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>empowers me by giving advice and guidance on my own development</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Perception behaviour of school leader (scale variable)</strong></td>
<td><strong>3.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No results of the various countries could be given because of a low number of teachers.

Also, school leaders were asked to give their opinion on the behaviour of the professionals in the school with another set of statements being submitted to them. In the table below, these statements are presented. The finding that, once more, school leaders are more positive, is noteworthy.

Table 12: Perception professional’s behaviour by school leaders, mean scores (n=820)
The professionals at our school....

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavior</th>
<th>School leader</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>are engaged in and committed to participating in school leadership roles</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>actively participate in decision making</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>actively show initiative related to school improvement</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>demonstrate their responsibilities in their work</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>help one another by sharing knowledge</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Perception behaviour of professionals (scale variable) 3.8

Regarding the eight countries all of them score positive, except for France (mean score 3.2). This means that in most countries, according to the school leaders, the professionals show positive behaviour (in terms of expressing distributional behaviour in the school).

Overall scales Distributed Leadership and perception behaviour school leader and teachers

School leaders and teachers appear to differ in their perception on many aspects of distributed leadership. In the figure below, the differences of all (sub)scales and the items related to the initiative are shown. School leaders believe significantly stronger than teachers that the leadership practice is distributive (resp. mean scores 3.9; 3.2) and also perceive a stronger distributive behaviour among their professionals at the school (3.8). Teachers, on the other hand, are moderate when it comes to the behaviour of the school leader (3.0).

![Figure 6: Differences between school leaders and teachers in the perceived distributed leadership practice](image)

In the figure below three subgroups are presented. The calculated mean scores on the distributed leadership scale are clustered in three sections: a ‘negative cluster’ with a low mean score (2.5), a ‘neutral cluster’ with a moderate mean score (3.2) and a ‘positive cluster’ with a high mean score (4.0). More than 80% of the school leaders belongs to the positive cluster and 39% within the group of teachers. The three clusters are more or less equally divided within the group of teachers, as visualized in figure 7: 29% of the teachers belong to the critical group and 33% score neutral. Whereas within the group of school leaders only 3% scores critical and 10% neutral.
Figure 7: Groups perception Distributed Leadership classified in low, moderate and high mean scores, school leaders and teachers, relative frequencies

Not a single country scores critical on the overall scale. England and Scotland distinguish themselves by their high mean scores (4.0+). Only France and Italy are questioning on the extent of distributed leadership in the schools.

Figure 8: Distributed Leadership, overall scale, countries, mean scores (n=902)
15.4.2 Between subjects comparisons

First, the results of the comparisons based on personal features of the respondents are described. Next, the comparisons based on school related features are presented.

Comparisons based on personal features of the respondent

As we have seen earlier, there is a very strong and significant difference between teachers and school leaders. Position in the school point out to have a significant effect on Distributed Leadership perception ($\delta=0.000$). Gender interacts with this factor, within the group of school leaders ($\delta=0.021$): women school leaders appear to perceive the leadership practice as a little more distributed than men do (figure 9). Gender alone does not make a significant difference.

![Graph showing differences between male and female school leaders and teachers of the perceived distributed leadership practice, mean score (significant at 0.05 level).]

There is also a main effect from seniority on the perception of distributed leadership ($\delta=0.023$). In other words, people who work relatively short in the school (0-2.5 years) are more ‘negative’ about the extent of distribution of leadership than people who work longer in the school, particularly the professionals who work approximately 10 to 30 years.
Comparisons based on school related features

It is interesting to gain insight in the factors that contribute to the perception of distributed leadership. The results of the analyses of the following school related features will be shown: country groups, educational structures, type of employment, type of education, school size, class room responsibilities of the school leader and costs of education for children. Earlier we have found that some personal features of the respondent are of influence on this perception. When controlled for these influences, what are the effects of some school related features on the perception of the leadership practice?

Geographical parts of Europe

There are significant variations between different parts of Europe in the perception of distributed leadership: the northern part of Europe perceives the leadership practice as more distributed than other parts in Europe, especially compared to the south (Ϭ=0.000). This also applies to the perception of school leader about the behaviour of their professionals in the school. Concerning teachers’ perceived behaviour of their school leader, there are no significant differences found.

In the figure below, the mean scores are shown divided in subgroups of respondents working in different parts of Europe (see appendix 2 for information on the grouping of the countries).

![Figure 10: Mean scores distributed leadership by geographical parts of Europe, without covariates (significant at 0.05 level) (n=1050)]

Deepening analyses on the Distributed leadership scale

So, the geographical classification of countries has a strong effect, but there is also a strong interaction effect with the educational structure in these parts of Europe (Ϭ=0.000). In all types of educational structures (single structure, common core and differentiated structure\(^{31}\)) the northern part of Europe scores a higher perception of distributed leadership, but in the western regions, schools with a common core structure gave a much lower score on the distributed leadership scale than schools with a differentiated structure in that region. Looking at educational structure only (all regional groups together), the mean differences are small (less than 0.2).

Sector

\(^{31}\) For a definition see section 3.4 Method of Analysis, page 22.
A higher education level (type of education) goes hand in hand with a less perceived extent of distributed leadership ($r=-0.36$). This is shown in the table below.

![Figure 11: Mean scores distributed leadership by type of education, without covariates (significant at 0.05 level) (n=978)](image)

The early childhood and primary schools (4.0-4.2) score higher than secondary or vocational types of schools (3.6-3.7) and higher education (3.4), but in the same way three (relatively small) interaction effects occur which influence this effect: type of education interacts with the educational structure in Europe, the geographical classification of Europe and with the type of employment.

Looking within the secondary sector, schools with a common core structure score significantly lower than schools with other educational structures in this sector (respectively common core: 3.6; single structure: 3.9 and differentiated structure: 4.0; $\sigma=0.000$). We have seen earlier that relatively many common core schools score lower in the west. It is not surprising that a significant lower score arises within the secondary sector in the west of Europe ($\sigma=0.002$).

Another interaction effect was found with type of employment: again, within the secondary sector. Secondary schools with teachers who are employed by the government perceive the leadership practice to be much less distributive than schools where teachers are employed by the school board (respectively by the government 3.5; by the school board 3.9; $\sigma=0.000$). The type of employment and the educational structure relate with each other: schools following a common core structure have significantly more teachers employed by the government.

There was also a small interaction effect with class room responsibilities on perceived distributed leadership: school leaders with class room responsibilities in the early childhood and primary schools score somewhat lower on distributed leadership than school leaders without this responsibility in this sector. However, the difference is very small, about 0.2 ($\sigma=0.035$).

**School size**

The larger the school, the lower the score on the distributed leadership scale. Small schools (less than 14 teachers) score on average 4.0 on the distributed leadership scale, whereas larger schools (100 or more teachers) have a mean score of 3.6; this also is the case with small schools in terms of number of children (180 or less children) versus school with 1050 children or more. But the correlation between size and the perception of distributed leadership is (although significant) rather weak and has no significant predictive value. An explanation for this could be the influence of the type of education: in primary schools and in early
childhood the organizations are much smaller than in secondary or higher education. The school size covariates with the type of education. When controlled for sector, the main effect of school size disappears.

15.4.3 Analyses of types of relationships

In this section, two issues will be further analysed. First, the correlations between all subscales will be described. Next, more causal types of relationships will be discussed.

Correlations between subscales and items distributed leadership

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Correlations between subscales and items distributed leadership

In table 13 the correlations between each subscale/ item and the overall scale are shown in the first column. In the second and third column the correlations of the subscales/ items with the perceived behaviour in the school are presented. There are very strong and significant relationships between all factors, except for two items about the initiative. The item about the initiative from the top is significant but has a weak negative relation with the perceived behaviour. This means that to a limited extent more initiatives from the top relates to less distributive behaviour. The same tendency but even weaker can be mentioned about the lack of direction and lead.

Table 13: Correlations between (sub) scales and items of distributed leadership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subscale/ item</th>
<th>Scale Distributed Leadership</th>
<th>Perception by teachers</th>
<th>Perception by school leader</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subscales</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Overall) Scale Distributed leadership</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.76**</td>
<td>0.78**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School structure</td>
<td>0.85**</td>
<td>0.63**</td>
<td>0.57**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vision</td>
<td>0.86**</td>
<td>0.56**</td>
<td>0.68**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Values and beliefs</td>
<td>0.87**</td>
<td>0.63**</td>
<td>0.72**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td>0.88**</td>
<td>0.68**</td>
<td>0.74**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision making</td>
<td>0.68**</td>
<td>0.45**</td>
<td>0.44**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>0.82**</td>
<td>0.58**</td>
<td>0.58**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Items Initiative</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiatives and ideas mainly come from the leaders at the top</td>
<td>-0.30**</td>
<td>-0.17*</td>
<td>-0.25**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is sufficient amount of freedom to contribute your own ideas to improve the work</td>
<td>0.66**</td>
<td>0.62**</td>
<td>0.43**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professionals have to take the initiative and responsibility due to a lack of direction and lead</td>
<td>-0.25**</td>
<td>-0.08</td>
<td>-0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All tasks are assigned to the professionals based upon the level of expertise</td>
<td>0.41**</td>
<td>0.55**</td>
<td>0.28**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
Looking at the relationships between the different factors, nearly all subscales and items relate significantly with the perception by the teachers as well as the school leaders.

The perception by teachers of the school leader’s behaviour has a very strong significant relationship with the perceived distributed leadership practice in the school (r=0.76). Within the group of teachers at subscale-level the strongest relationships are found with the ‘school structure’ (r=0.63) and ‘collaboration’ (r=0.68). Concerning the perception by the school leaders we can see that there is also a very strong relationship (r=0.78). Within this group the strongest relationships are present with ‘values’, ‘collaboration’ and ‘vision’. So, in both groups ‘collaboration’ is the most related subscale, for the school leaders more ‘soft’ factors relate strongly to the perceived behaviour of professionals by the school leader, whereas for the teachers a more ‘hard’ factor seems to relate the strongest with their perception of the behaviour.

The predictive value of the financial crisis and the amount of policy influence

To determine whether the consequences of the financial crisis and the perceived influence on school policy are possible predictors of the extent of distributed leadership, a regression analysis was executed. In the analyses it became clear that respondent’s features as position and gender influenced the outcomes. Also concerning the school related features effects were found. To investigate if financial crisis and influence by itself predict the leadership extent, a hierarchical regression analysis was chosen with three blocks. The perceived influence does have a significant (predictive) contribution. However, the consequences of the crisis were not significant. The explained variance in the regression model is about 46% (adjusted R²= 0.458). In table 14 the separate contributions of each factor is presented.

A moderate strong relationship was found between influence and distributed leadership (r=0.38). Adding all the other factors the predictive value of influence decreases (β=0.22). But the contribution of influence remains significant. The more influence professionals (especially school leaders) have, the more leadership seems to be distributive. Besides influence, early childhood and primary schools contribute, too. Personal features that influence the outcome in terms of a higher distributed leadership are the position of the school leader and within this subgroup are females. When selecting only the eight countries, the overall view stays the same, although the beta-weights are a bit higher (with an adjusted R²= 0.494).
### Table 14: Standardized Beta weights hierarchical regression analysis factors (independent variables) with distributed leadership scale (dependent variable) (n=686)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Std. β</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Block 1</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position (1=school leader)</td>
<td>0.438 **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender (1=male)</td>
<td>-0.087 **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seniority</td>
<td>0.045</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Block 2</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of teachers</td>
<td>0.091</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of children/students</td>
<td>-0.105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary education (=1,0)</td>
<td>-0.084</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early childhood and primary schools (=1,0)</td>
<td>0.161 **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of Employment (1,0= by the government)</td>
<td>-0.072 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Block 3</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budget Financial crisis</td>
<td>-0.166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extent of influence school policies</td>
<td>0.222 **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction variable Financial crisis/ extent of influence</td>
<td>0.238</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* significant at 0.05 level
** significant at 0.01 level

## 15.5 Conclusions and limitations of the study

In this section the four research questions will be answered. These answers cannot be interpreted as hard facts. A survey measures a perception. Also, there have been some limitations in this study. In § 5.2 these limitations will be discussed. However, the findings of the survey give some relevant indications about the presence of distributed leadership in schools and reveal a striking variety of perceptions.

### 15.5.1 Conclusions

1. **To what extent is leadership distributed in the schools?**

The leadership practice in schools can be regarded as distributive in more than 75% of the cases. Around 8% score low on distributed leadership and 13% of the respondents have a moderate mean score. There are big differences between school leaders and teachers.

Among teachers the number of critical, neutral and positive respondents regarding the perception of distributed leadership are almost equally divided over the total group of teachers. Within the group of school leaders 87% perceive the leadership practice as distributive (only 3% do not).

Looking at all dimensions of distributed leadership in this research, the teachers score significantly more negative than school leaders on several aspects.

Critical factors according to the teachers concentrate upon the following aspects:
• formally provided opportunities to participate in decision making;
• by the school structure facilitating informal leadership at all levels;
• the acceptation of mistakes; mistakes being seen as learning opportunities;
• time to collaborate;
• involving everyone in decision making;
• encouragement to express opinions;
• initiative from the top;
• direction and lead from the top;
• tasks based upon expertise;
• behavioural aspects of the school leader: bringing professionals into contact with information to help create new ideas, stimulating to reflect, supporting decision making and empowering by giving advice and guidance.

Teachers are relatively positive on the following aspects:
• there are formally agreed leadership roles;
• decision making is possible within predetermined boundaries;
• professionals work collaboratively together to deliver results;
• professionals help one another to solve problems;
• a sufficient amount of freedom is felt in decision making; this freedom is mainly focused on the content and organization of their work;
• professionals are, feel and are kept accountable.

School leaders on the other hand are highly positive on every dimension of distributed leadership, except for initiative. One critical aspect can be mentioned within the group of school leaders: decisions eventually are mainly made from the top.

Very high scores (mean scores ≥ 4.0) given by the school leaders on dimensions of distributed leadership are: school structure, vision, values and beliefs, decision making and responsibilities and accountabilities. School leaders are also very positive of the behaviour of the professionals.

Specific behaviour of the school leader – perceived by the teachers – relates positively to the dimensions of distributed leadership. Within the group of teachers, especially school structure and collaboration in the school have a very strong relationship with the school leader’s behaviour. Within the group of school leaders, besides collaboration, values and vision also have a strong relationship with the perception of the professional’s behaviour in the schools.

In all, there seems to be a reasonable extent of distributive leadership. Yet for many schools this leadership is still categorised into predetermined boundaries and not involving and mobilizing everyone. Formal structures seem to be more dominant than fluid structures. Furthermore, leadership activities seems to be retained or restricted to the professional’s own specific work. The formal leader appears to make the ultimate decisions on school related issues. Professionals could be given more guidance and direction instead, to empower them. Related to the literature, many school leaders still incline to control and impose restrictions to the amount of involvement. In line with the continuum developed by the Hay Group it looks as though distributed leadership is focused on ‘consult’ and ‘delegate’. In terms of reciprocal responsibilities,
as Elmore described, teachers can be facilitated and encouraged much more to create new ideas, to take the initiative and to make decisions. This requires a further development of the school as a learning organization and manifesting trust in the expertise of professionals to undertake their leadership role.

There are differences between the eight further examined countries. England, Scotland, Norway and Sweden score on average higher on distributed leadership than other countries, especially compared to France, Italy and Spain. This result is in line with the study of NCSL, conducted in 2004. Concerning the Netherlands the mean score lies between the highest and the lowest score. Initiative is a critical topic, particularly in England, France, Italy and Spain; Sweden, on the other hand, has a relatively high score.

2. What are the variations in the perceived extent of distributed leadership between subgroups of respondents based upon personal features?

The differences in perception depend highly on the position in the school: in other words, position alone has an effect on the perception (main effect). Other features of the respondent could explain these differences as well. In this research gender and seniority were analyzed. Gender interacts with the position in the school: female leaders perceive the leadership practice as more distributive than male leaders. Additionally, seniority seems to have an influence on the perception of all groups independently of position or gender: people who work approximately a few months to 2,5 years in the school are significantly more critical than people who work longer in the organization, especially compared with those professionals with a seniority of 10 to 30 years. However, this main effect is not nearly as strong as the overall position in the school.

The effect of position raises questions about the leadership in practice. Our expectation was that there is a difference, because of the differences in respective tasks. On the other hand, we can then ask ourselves how true is leadership distributed when it is mainly perceived as distributive by school leaders? Doesn’t distribution itself imply that everyone experiences this type of leadership because it involves all professionals in the school?

A survey with a larger number of teachers is recommended to confirm and further investigate the rationale of these differences. Also in depth interviews could give more insight into the various perceptions.

3. What are the variations in the perceived extent of distributed leadership between subgroups based upon school related features?

To answer this question seven grouping variables were tested: type of employment, educational structure, school size, type of education, geographical clusters of countries in Europe, whether the school leader has classroom responsibilities and whether the education is free for children or not.

In conclusion we found that a small group of factors causes a significant effect with several small interaction effects. In conclusion:

Schools,

- in early childhood and the primary sector (especially the latter),
- in the northern part of Europe (dominated by England, Scotland, Sweden, Norway)

perceive a more distributive leadership practice than schools......
• in the secondary sector (moderated by a common core structure and employment of teachers by the government),

• in the south-west of Europe (moderated by a common core structure).

The impression existed that school size also affects the extent of distributed leadership, but this factor correlates highly with the educational sector. After controlling for this, the effect of school size disappears. Furthermore, there are no significant main or interaction effects found on distributed leadership whether education is free or not.

4. How do the external factors relate to the perceived extent of distributed leadership?

Answering this question implies a statement of causality. Yet, we cannot ascertain that relations found in this research are causal or predictive; by statistically testing the relations we can give indications for it. For empirical evidence of causal relations longitudinal research is necessary. Hypotheses can be formulated to test in longitudinal research. The aim was to figure out whether the financial crisis and the amount of influence on school policy influence the leadership practice.

About 75% of the respondents give notice of a slight or drastic reduction of the school budget since the financial crisis. Approximately one third mention a drastic reduction. Spain, the Netherlands and Scotland experience the most drastic reduction. Reduction of school budget is reflected in multiple aspects. The far most frequently mentioned aspect is the reduction of school supplies and services. The consequences of the financial crisis, however, do not significantly ‘predict’ the extent of distributed leadership, nor does this factor interact with the felt influence on school policy.

Regarding the influence on school policy, school leaders experience a relatively great deal of influence on the curriculum delivery, the organizational structure, strategic development planning and the professional development. Little influence is perceived on the curriculum content and the school budget. Comparing the countries, England perceives relatively much more influence on the policy topics than France and Spain do. As Elmore (2004) described, schools need to have sufficient autonomy to establish a distributive leadership practice. A moderate strong relationship is found between influence and distributed leadership. But, adding all school related features, the height of the predictive value decreases, though still significant. Influence seems, to a limited extent, to ‘predict’ the distributive leadership practice.

15.5.2 Limitations

Several limitations should be taken note of regarding the interpretation and importance of the findings in this research.

The survey took place in a period of summer holidays for many schools. This factor reduced the potential (and desired) response rate. Although more than a thousand respondents is relatively high taking this unfortunate period into account, this response rate forced to cluster the respondents on several variables into subgroups in order to gain a sufficient number of respondents on each value and to execute analyses for reliable statements. This meant a loss of information on a more detailed level.
So maintaining all the original variables was not an option, since analyzing multiple factors together would lead to a decrease of the number of respondents for each value. For instance, countries were grouped, realizing that there are most likely relevant differences between these countries. In short, is it possible to generalize the findings of this research to all European countries? No, it is not. To give some insight in the presence of distributed leadership in countries, a limited number of countries are further examined, provided there was a response rate of 50 or higher.

Despite the necessary merging of countries a step forward is made, which needs to be confirmed or adjusted in follow up research. With the greatest of care, choices are made to confine the extent of loss of information and still have sufficient number of respondents in each subgroup.
PART V - POLICY RESPONSE FOR EQUITY AND LEARNING: EVIDENCE REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS

16. SYNTHESIS OF EVIDENCE-BASED REPORTS: POLICY RESPONSE

This briefing paper draws on existing literature to synthesize the findings from three studies undertaken under the umbrella theme of policy response – for equity and learning. The studies were undertaken in the United Kingdom (Scotland), Sweden and France. Methodologically the studies in the United Kingdom (Scotland) and Sweden drew on tentative data arising from quantitative and qualitative empirical investigations, whereas the work in France is derived from a study of secondary source data.

In order to engage with the notion of policy response (for equity and learning) it is first important to understand the broader notion of what is taken to be meant by policy. In this regard policy is taken here to be both an attempt to solve problems and an attempt to persuade social actors such as school leaders to subscribe to particular beliefs that delineate action. Policy however is not merely the output of a political system, but a process that brings certain principles or ideas into practice (Ham & Hill, 1993). Thus the concept of policy is directly entangled with public and social issues, and what issues (such as equity and learning) the state chooses to prioritise and which issues it decides to neglect in different contexts of practice.

Significantly, in a world of global policy exchange so a particular discursive and generic international policy response to education can be identified - albeit in different ways and degrees of emphasis - within the national contexts of the countries covered in this briefing paper. In particular, the national policy response is framed by neo-liberal policies associated with marketisation, managerialism and performativity and the increasing alignment of education policy with economic policy imperatives (Ball, 2008). Crucially, as signalled in the UK (Scotland) study, it is this ideology that largely conditions interaction with new ideas, articulating ‘ways of thinking about what we do, what we value and what our purposes are’ (Ball, 2008, pp. 42-43). It is however critically important to acknowledge that policy on equity and learning from its point of political conception to that of its school-based enactment, is mediated by a host of factors at each stage of the policy process. Thus policy response in the UK (Scotland), Sweden and France can be described as highly contextualised, complex and fragmented. In essence, there are no universal ‘truths’ about policy response, the journey from principle to practice - even if discursively framed in a neo-liberal way - is a contested one which involves institutions and individuals in a process of ‘creative social action’ (Ball, 1998, p. 270).

For example, policy ideas are formulated, interpreted and acted upon differently within different nation states as each nation or each region within a nation thinks and acts within its history, national ideology, and its own political sense of what is right (Whitty, 1995). This is particularly marked in the case of France in which its history and culture are very powerful centralised top-down influences on policy and practice. The space thus afforded to school leaders (as primarily administrators) to facilitate school-based change on issues such as equity and learning, significantly curtailed. Indeed, in all three countries it is clear that policies are to be interpreted and implemented by institutions and individuals - such as schools and school leaders - who have had no or extremely little, hand in their drafting or planning (Braun et al, 2010)

Equally, the structure of political institutions and the changing nature of the political culture, ideology and resultant policy flow - as evidenced in Sweden - affects the way in which policy is introduced and played out; the entire process of policy development and implementation taking place in a wider political context that is
subject to political change, multi-faceted, and in a state of flux. This flux creates uncertainty and instability in the policy flow which in turn impacts upon the ability and opportunity for school leaders to engage with equity and learning. Moreover, schools and school leaders – such as those in the UK (Scotland) study - are operating in a complex environment in which they are likely to be required to respond to multiplicity of policy demands and expectations simultaneously (Braun et al, 2010). Consequently, in such a climate school leaders - such as those in the UK (Scotland) study – are found to prioritise their responses to certain policies over others. As such, school leaders not only in the UK (Scotland) but also Sweden who have greater school-based autonomy than their counterparts in France, are potentially in a strong position to alter, shape, craft and carry forward policy (including that on equity and social justice) that meets with their approval and to reject that which does not.

At a school-based level - as evidenced in the research from the UK (Scotland) - the policy enactment process reveals the ways in which policy is never simply implemented but ‘interpreted’ and ‘translated’ in a context of time, space, and place. The premise underpinning this is that ‘policies do not normally tell you what to do, they create circumstances in which the range of options available in deciding what to do are narrowed or changed, or particular goals or outcomes are set’ (Ball 1994, p.19). Such a standpoint on policy enactment is significant as it positions head teachers, teachers, governors, parents, and others engaged with educational reform as ‘key actors, rather than merely as subjects in the policy process’ (Braun et al., 2010; 549). In this regard the findings from the UK (Scotland) whilst limited suggest institutions such as schools possess considerable ability to resist or alter policies to fit their own dynamics or to maintain the status quo and to avoid change in response to external demands (Levin and Riffel, 1997). Perhaps such a viewpoint might equally apply to Sweden, while such possibilities in a more centralist system such as France are not so clear cut. Nevertheless, as Darling-Hammond (1990) observes:

.......[we need] to understand that top-down policies can “constrain but not construct” practice; that local leadership and motivations for change are critical to policy success; that local ideas and circumstances always vary (therefore local agencies must adapt policies rather than adopting them); and that teachers' and administrators' opportunities for continual learning, experimentation, and decision making during implementation determine whether policies will come alive in schools or fade away when the money or enforcement pressures end. (Darling-Hammond 1990, p. 341)
17. LEADERSHIP STANDARDS FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE IN THE UK (SCOTLAND): A BRIEF EMPIRICAL ENQUIRY

17.1 Introduction


> Whatever the origins and implementations of educational policies, in the final analysis their success or failure depends on the expertise and commitment of individual teachers in schools and other educational institutions across the country.

(*Humes, 2003, p. 84*)

Working on the assumption that Humes’ analysis is correct, and that the success or failure of policy depends upon the commitment of individual teachers, we designed our empirical enquiry to discover how school leaders are interpreting and implementing the Leadership Standards for Social Justice in Scotland, as set out in the report, *Standards for Leadership and Management* (GTCS, 2012). In particular we sought to explore the theory that head teachers’ views on social justice are likely to reflect neoliberal ideology (Ward *et al.*, 2013a), and that head teachers’ acceptance of the Leadership Standards for Social Justice in Scotland is dependent upon the resonance between their beliefs about social justice and the managerial solutions to inequity proposed by the wider policy discourse in which these Standards are located (ibid). In order to explore these issues, we employed two methods: (i) an online survey of head teachers of nursery, primary and secondary schools in Scotland (ii) follow-up telephone interviews with head teachers who took part in the online survey. In this paper we provide an account of our methodology and findings, and offer a discussion of the implications of our study.

17.2 Methodology

In 2013 the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) and its academic partners in the EPNoSL UK group commissioned a small-scale survey to gain the views of Scottish head teachers on an element of the newly published Standards in Scotland, authored by the GTCS. The element focused on the place of values in the Standards. In June 2013, head teachers in every Scottish Local Education Authority (circa 2,500) were invited via email to take part in an online survey, which asked heads to respond to statements taken from *The Standards for Leadership and Management: supporting leadership and management development* (GTCS, 2012). The survey employed a Likert-type response format and also contained free response boxes. In total, a somewhat disappointing and surprisingly low number of only 63 (less than 3%) of head teachers from nursery, primary and secondary schools across Scotland chose to complete the online survey. Five of these head teachers (one nursery; three primary; one secondary) volunteered to take part in a follow-up telephone interview (of approximately 30 minutes duration) in September 2013. The purpose of the interviews was to enable these respondents to expand upon comments made in the free response boxes of the online survey.

The extremely low response rate to the questionnaire renders any quantitative analysis of the findings unfeasible. The qualitative self-selective sample is also low and so while the authors attempt to identify
certain themes, they need to be viewed cautiously with this methodological caveat in mind. (Note: This low response rate may in part be symptomatic of a general lack of awareness on the part of the head teachers of the Leadership Standards for Social Justice in Scotland: although the policy was published in December 2012, a number of Local Education Authorities (LEAs) did not officially launch the Standards until September 2013).

In the following section the authors’ draw on the qualitative findings from the free response boxes in the survey and the interviews to identify some extremely tentative findings.

### 17.3 Findings

- **It is difficult to engage with the Standards**

There was difficulty in engaging with the Standards for some head teachers, who flag up the opacity and wordiness of the policy document. For example:

> I find some of the wording hard going and laborious. When I have shared the wording with my staff, many comment that they seem distant from my post and what it means in the context of my job. Some have said they find the new standards hard to get into due to the complexity of the wording and the extent of the Standards.

*(Online survey)*

Some of these statements, though earnest and aspirational, are too long to be impactful. The statement about the implied aspect of professionalism is not specific enough, and makes no demand on staff. It should be more direct.

*(Online survey)*

- **The Standards add to workload pressure**

A number of head teachers claim that they are facing enormous time constraints that make them unable to engage with the plethora of educational initiatives and studies. As a result, they must prioritise engagement with policy that meets specific demands, which may or may not include the Standards for Leadership. For example:

> Although I may be in agreement with [the Standards], fulfilling them is a different matter with so much ‘stuff’ being thrown at us, it appears that individuals expect us as management to take on all of the ideas that are around at the same time. *(Online survey)*

> The workload is such at the moment that very few people are in a position or have the capacity to take on anything beyond what is perceived to be core business. If it’s not something that is perceived as something that is going to make a difference to what you are doing in your establishment tomorrow, then there’s probably a pretty fair chance that it’s going to be allowed to slip by until such a time that it is actually slapped into your face, “You’re going to have to do this by, whenever”. *(Telephone interview)*

- **The Standards reduce workload pressure**
Interestingly, while some head teachers cite workload pressure as a reason not to engage with the Standards, others claim that the Standards provide school leaders with a tool for self-evaluation and professional development, and thereby enhance their efficiency. For example:

[The Standards] are a launch pad for professional dialogue. They are also a coaching tool. They let us see where we are right now with regard to this standard, and where we want to be...Our school is in a cluster of one secondary and ten primaries, and we are trying to share best practice. How can we work collaboratively as a cluster to improve practice? The Standards are a driver for that: “What would this look like?” “What should we agree is our cluster improvement plan?” The Standards help with that. (Telephone interview)

[The Standards] are helping me with my need to keep up with educational development and management. (Telephone interview)

- The Standards are already being met

There was general feeling amongst head teachers that in one way or another they are already meeting the standards in their existing leadership practice. For instance, while some head teachers feel that the Standards are an unnecessary reiteration of existing practice, others welcome the codification of leadership as a means to consolidate existing practice:

I am already doing these things. I do not consider they have important implications for developing my leadership practice, despite recognising that it is important that I refer to them when reflecting. (Online survey)

I would say part 3.4 ‘Build and sustain partnerships with colleagues, learners, parents and other stakeholders to meet the identified needs of all learners’ – I would say that I am already doing that, but the standards do help you to know that you are doing it right. (Telephone interview)

- The Standards may be too prescriptive

Another view expressed by head teachers was the concern that the Standards will be used too prescriptively by some school leaders, who will not seek to go beyond the Standards, and that standardisation may make the concept leadership too rigid. For example:

It’s important to have some standardisation, to have professional standards and consistency, but this can become limiting – “I will go this far and no further”. It’s important to be clear about how [the Standards] are to be used, so that they do not limit practice.

(Telephone interview)

It is individual values that drive you to do things, and the Standards try to instil an identity. Are we in danger of becoming ice cubes rather than snowflakes?

(Telephone interview)

- The Standards are perceived to be an example of top-down policy

For certain head teachers there was a perception of insufficient dialogue taking place between policy makers and implementers. For example:
We are not really encouraged to question local or national policy decisions. When we are consulted our views do not always seem to be taken onboard. (Online survey)

Your job [as a head teacher] is to implement change, not to suggest we look at how change should be. Look at the Curriculum for Excellence, where it says that the first stated change should be teacher driven. A friend of mine spoke to the HMIE [Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Education], who told him that the HMIE would make it their job to ensure that the Curriculum for Excellence was implemented from the bottom up – which is ironic… [The Standards] are a mechanism for implementation – the tools are not there to feed up to policy makers. So, leadership is defined from outside. Who makes the Standards? Who is deciding that? Is it someone in Holyrood [the Scottish Parliament]? If they are not asking the heads, who are they asking? (Telephone interview)

- The rationale for the Standards is identified as managerial, rather than emancipatory

In the online survey, participants were invited to complete a free response box detailing ‘anything different or innovative that you are or may be doing in your leadership practice in response to the standards on social justice’. The responses included forming active partnerships with local groups, e.g. Fair Trade; enrolling on a free EdX Harvard course on social justice; supporting the development of a Learning Council; helping disenfranchised parents and young people access services to which they are entitled; implementing a buddy system and mentoring system in school, and updating the school’s Global Citizenship policy and programme of study. This finding indicates that head teachers are able to identify examples of initiatives that support social justice, and we might note in particular that the Standards appear to have prompted a deeper engagement with the concept of social justice (through the EdX Harvard course) and the desire to work with the local community to address disenfranchisement. However, when asked to identify the rationale of the Standards, participants do not mention social justice. Instead, they describe managerial concerns, such as the need to coordinate policy and ensure consistency of provision. For example:

*I think the purpose of the Standards is to enable us to realise that we need professional standards – a whole network of standards.* (Telephone interview)

*We need to have standards – we have a National Curriculum – how could anyone know that we are doing things right, if there weren’t standards to measure yourself against?* (Telephone interview)

*The purpose of the Standards is to ensure consistency of leadership across all establishments, and to ensure there is a degree of quality assurance and clarity of expectation. Before there was a lack of clarity, there was the HMI expectation of end point delivery, but not enough information of how to sustain the journey to get there.* (Telephone interview)

### 17.4 Discussion

Before commencing the discussion the authors wish to reiterate that the findings can be no more than cautious indications given the nature of the dataset, but nevertheless as such they resonate with findings from elsewhere about the extent to which fundamental issues such as social justice in education have been subsumed beneath a tide of neoliberal managerialism.

The OECD (2007) report makes it clear that Scottish education is still, as elsewhere, deeply inequitable. The aim of our empirical enquiry was to discover how school leaders are interpreting and implementing the
Leadership Standards for Social Justice in Scotland, as set out in the report, Standards for Leadership and Management (GTCS, 2012). Two questions in particular interest us: (i) Do head teachers’ views on social justice reflect neoliberal ideology? (ii) Do head teachers’ beliefs about social justice resonate with the managerial solutions to inequity proposed by the wider policy discourse in which these Standards are located? Our interest in these questions is prompted by recognition of Harvey’s (2009) theory of embedding, which suggests that policy on school leadership and social justice is accepted by implementers only if it appeals to their existing instincts and desires, and Humes’ (2003) claim that the success or failure of policy depends upon the commitment of individual teachers. Our findings indicate that head teachers’ views on social justice do reflect the dominant neoliberal standpoint, and that they are broadly compliant with managerial solutions to inequity and receptive to the Leadership Standards, discussed below.

The participants in our study did not display evidence of resistance to the neoliberal concept of social justice, defined’ as a private matter that requires behavioural management, rather than a public matter that requires economic intervention’ (Ward et al, 2013a, p. 7). One head teacher identified the ideological underpinning of the Standards, but did not advocate their rejection, stating:

They have a role; you have to have standards in the real world, even if there’s a neoliberal political agenda driving the whole thing, standards as a principle I’m not against. They have a role. (Telephone interview)

Interestingly, and perhaps even surprisingly, no head teacher challenged the assumption that it is possible to address social justice through school leadership strategies, or that it is reasonable to expect head teachers to “manage” social justice in the free market society. Overall, the school leaders in our study appeared to endorse, or at least accept, what Jones et al (2008, p.22) describe as the new public management system of central regulation and decentralised operational management: when asked what they believe is the purpose of the Standards, head teachers identified their utility as a means to support operational management, rather than a means to support equity. In some instances the head teachers provided a tautological account of the value of the Standards, claiming that the Standards are important because it is important to have standards. This finding arguably reflects the consensus that has coalesced around the idea that all social problems have a bureaucratic solution, and that consistency of response is assured through standardisation; something identified as problematic by Max Weber (1969) more than a century ago.

More recently, of course, the preoccupation with management in Scottish education has been cultivated through policy documents such as Quality and Equity of Schooling in Scotland (OECD, 2007), and Teaching Scotland’s Future (Donaldson, 2011), which argue respectively that the educational underperformance of poor children may be improved through school management, and that equity is linked to school leadership. Interestingly, a number of participants cited the consistency between the Standards and other policy documents on school management as evidence of their validity, and seemed to place a high value on the consistency and practicability of the Standards, rather than on any novel ability they may confer in terms of addressing inequity. Indeed, one participant speculated that if the Standards did not appear relevant to ‘core business’, they would in all likelihood be disregarded. It seems, then, that social justice must be identified as a part of sound management in order for policy on social justice to be accorded operational significance: cut adrift from the discourse of managerialism, the concept of social justice, even in its neoliberal guise, cannot be readily assimilated by teachers, who have been conditioned to think of good practice almost exclusively in terms of performativity (Ball & Olmedo, 2013).

Ball (2012) highlights the global dominance of managerialism in educational thinking, and that policy provides ‘a vocabulary for thinking about practice’ that is erasing from memory earlier ‘vocabularies of possibility’, (Ball et al, 2011, p. 622), including economic redistribution as a solution to inequity. However, 90% of those limited number (n = 63) of head teachers who did respond to the survey claim that they were
already meeting the Standards for Social Justice prior to their launch, and identify numerous activities to enhance social justice in their schools (see point 7, above), which suggests that the Standards are a bureaucratic structure that has been superimposed on a pre-existing, organic engagement with social justice. In qualitative terms however our study provides no evidence to support this conjecture. For example, when asked in interview ‘Could you take one particular standard and talk about how that has influenced you?’ participants discussed managerial issues such as school clusters, staff roles and responsibilities, and strategies to disseminate ideas about good practice. The participants’ preoccupation with managerialism made it difficult to ascertain the thinking behind such things as ‘Consulting children and involving them more’ and ‘Leading in support for inclusion for all children’ which they had listed as social justice activities in the free response box of the online survey. This finding is consistent with the findings of our earlier EPNoSL report, *Scoping paper on school leadership and equity* (Ward et al, 2013b). Here, we revealed how social justice is presented as a nebulous concept in the literature, and that equity is ‘positioned under the market model as “equality of opportunity” in terms of access to education and the global standardisation of education (measured through such things as PISA)’ (Ward *et al*, 2013b, pp. 6-7). Having identified strategies to improve the performance of their school through self-reflection, staff development and the co-ordination of practice—which under managerialism are the guarantors of equity—head teachers in our study did not feel the need to elaborate on how such policy ensures that economically and socially deprived pupils have the same life chances as more privileged pupils. Indeed, perhaps it would be unreasonable to expect them to do so: in our *Scoping Paper on Leadership and Equity* (Ward *et al*, 2013a) we argue that it is unfair to expect educators to take responsibility for issues that reside beyond their expertise or control. One head teacher in our study had, in fact, enrolled on the EdX Harvard course on social justice in order to develop his knowledge of this issue, but was unable to complete the course because such intensive engagement with the concept of equity was not compatible with his workload.

Managerialism places a bureaucratic strain on school leaders that minimises space for critical reflection and obliges them to implement policy that is not fully interrogated. In our study, the lack of clarity over social justice (beyond its technical “solution”) was accompanied by a cloudy understanding of who had devised the Leadership Standards for Social Justice, and why. Although head teachers in our survey expressed agreement with the statement, ‘Professionalism also implies the need to ask critical questions of educational policies and practices’ (GTC, 2012, p. 6), they expressed the belief that, in the words of one respondent, the ‘cultural tools are not there to feed up to policy makers’. The current use of steering groups for policy formation means that most teachers are not directly consulted about the definition of leadership or social justice, and thus while head teachers’ professional identity is bound up with the need to ask questions about policy, they are not sure who, if anyone, is listening to them.

This finding is consistent with Couldry’s (2010) cynicism about democracy in neoliberal societies such as the UK. According to Couldry (2010, p. 64), neoliberalism has abandoned, as unnecessary, the vision of democracy as a form of social organisation in which decision makers’ legitimacy is measured by the degree to which it takes account of its subjects’ ‘particular voices’. Couldry states:

*For me to feel that a group of which I am a member speaks for me, I must be able to recognize my inputs in what the group says and does: if I do not, I must have satisfactory opportunities to correct that mismatch...Democratic politics are based on the possibility of such acts of recognition of the individual voice in collective voice.*

(Couldry, 2010, p. 101)

If head teachers cannot recognise their individual voice in the collective voice of education policy, then Couldry’s theory suggests that they will feel, at best, superficially engaged with policy on leadership for social justice, and at worst, alienated from it entirely. In their account of how neoliberal governmentalities shape subjectivity, Ball and Olmedo (2013, p. 90) paint a disheartening picture of contemporary education, in which teachers and school leaders are valued for ‘their productivity alone’, and their ‘value as a person is
eradicated’. If head teachers are only valued for their compliance with Leadership Standards for Social Justice, rather than valued as sentient beings with insights into social justice that they may wish to develop and share with others, then we might question the use of the term ‘leadership’. Our study reveals how the lay perception of a leader as a charismatic figure who influences people by ‘providing purpose, direction, and motivation’ (Ellyson et al., 2012, p. 8), and to whom others surrender their will in exchange for success under her authority (Weber, 1969) is at odds with the managerial vision of the leader as someone who complies with directives issued by external agencies, and is valued according to the efficiency and efficacy of her compliance. These managerial directives are, according to Weber (1969) objective, calculable and without regard to persons: in short, managerialism does not respect the reflective or maverick or his/her spontaneous action. If head teachers are not consulted over the development of Leadership Standards, then the mechanism of distributed leadership (see Ward et al., 2013b) becomes a mechanism for school leaders to “manage” compliance with externally imposed aims.

Our findings about head teachers’ views on policy consultation were not, however, entirely bleak. An example of the kind of consultation praised by head teachers in our study is the work being done on the development of a Virtual College for Leadership, which came about in response to Graham Donaldson’s report (2011). Led by Margery McMahon (2013), the scoping team has been engaging with a range of stakeholders, including teachers and school leaders, and has held five regional events across Scotland. In addition, practitioners and school leaders are invited to share their views on the work of the steering group via McMahon’s blog. As a result of this dynamic consultation, it is likely that the virtual college will reflect educators’ professional values and beliefs, rather than promote top-down policy on school leadership.

Clearly, findings based on such a limited dataset must be treated with a high degree of caution, but we would like – against the backdrop of the evidence of inequity in the Scottish education system identified by the OECD (2007) - to conclude with a final possibility for critical reflection. Namely, that the Standards, while intended to guide and support head teachers into acting in ways described in the document, might to some extent be having quite a different effect. For example, if head teachers claim to be already working in accordance with the Standards, and are unable to provide clear evidence of such work, the Standards may be validating a self-belief that they are enacting social justice without stimulating any change in activity. If this is indeed the case then the Standards far from being an effective instrument in addressing inequality in education, could in practice be embedding non-activity further.
18. THE SWEDISH POLICY STREAM FOR THE SCHOOL SECTOR

This memo is based on discussions stemming from the Swedish research project ‘National Policy meets Local Implementation Structures’. The focus will be on how Swedish Governments and the Parliament, Riksdagen, have increased the policy stream from 1989/90 with the purpose to develop the school system. During 1991-1994 there was a majority in the Parliament for the right wing parties, followed by a majority for the left wing parties 1994 - 2006 and then back to a majority for the right wing parties from 2006 and onwards.

In the early 1990s, the policy focus was on introducing a new control system for Swedish schools. The local organizers of the school, the municipalities, were given greater responsibility for school development and to enhance quality. At the same time the possibilities to choose between schools in the municipality as well as the opportunity to start independent schools were introduced. All this coincided with the country undergoing an economic crisis, which created tensions between both central and local governments as well as between teachers, principals, superintendents and school boards in municipalities. The decentralization as a part of governance of schools was questioned and when the economic situation improved the national level regained the initiatives mostly through economical governance. From 2006, when the conservative alliance government regained power the educational reforms have underlined the importance of improving the quality in terms of academic outcomes. Policy decisions have aimed at, for example revised teacher education, national principal training program, curricula and a new school law/education act and a stronger position for the National School Inspectorate. The policy stream has in Sweden, like in most western countries, grown into a river rapid of new accountability measures for improved school results.

The challenges for superintendents and principals in this policy stream have been to navigate between increased demands for accountability and improvement of student outcomes. The policy stream signals to the schools how the structure should be set up and the challenge for superintendents and principals is to create a school culture that supports the policy that laws and regulations set up for the schools. The Education Act of 2010 puts increased responsibility on the principal for the school organization, teachers, pupil’s results etc. It also changes the role of the superintendent. Many of them are already balancing and sometimes struggling between governing through different control systems and support functions in the municipality.

A key issue is how civil service reforms, paired with educational reforms, have affected school governance and the administrative design of the school sector. Are the municipalities’ political and administrative structures substantially affected by modernization trends and an increased policy stream in relation to educational policy?

In addition, there is strong support for the idea that, when it comes to the practical and rational aspects of leadership, administrative theory has been overemphasized both in research and education. There has been an unwillingness to discuss and analyze the non-rational, political, ideological, moral, and ethical aspects of leadership. Thus, it has become more commonplace for superintendents and principals to work in situations in which value conflicts are regular occurrences and seemingly obvious values are no longer so obvious – the ideological base may have changed. The school’s long-range goals, determined through democratic principles, do not always coincide with the goals that various interests groups have for the school. This difference in opinion as to what is desirable in various policies, educational formats and results, is something that leaders can only face with arguments anchored on a foundation of democratic values and a strong educational tradition. Consequently, superintendents as well as principals must be able to formulate and explain their decisions about educational questions based on the school’s value system and the curriculum to policy makers.
Learning about the New Policy

A new assignment for the School leader To be able understand, explain and defend and implement the new policy.

Figure 1: School leadership in relation to the new policy.

School leaders learn to find their voice. The learning and understanding of new policies becomes very central for the school leader and so are also the understanding of the different school cultures and structures that are present in the school district in every municipality. Some implementation theories are based on a rational democratic model in which political intentions from the government are accepted by the parliament and later the parliament decision is understood by national Swedish agencies and the 290 school districts and more than 8000 schools in the country.

In the present Swedish political system the Government and Parliament have a majority that can be described as right wing liberal/conservative; while more than half of the school districts on the other end can be described as left wing socialistic or social democratic. Do municipal politicians with a socialistic ideology want to understand the whole meaning of a conservative decision? The focus on Government decision is to get school improvement and similar policy in the whole country. But the challenge is when the decision comes to the local level. Can the local level by not wanting to understand the decisions, delay the implementation process? Or can the local implementation process be affected by the ideology in the local school district, the financial strength, local democratic processes and the context at the local level.

The empirical results from the superintendents’ survey are a bit dubious when it comes to whether or not national reform has the intended effect in their school district. This hesitation is based on the fact that if the political ideology of the national center is different from the one at the local level, misunderstandings and an unwillingness to implement a reform can occur due to all those challenges mention above. The political majority in the school district has the power not to fully support national policies they do not like and the effect is that the implementation process might take much longer than if the political ideology were the same at national and local levels.

One hypothesis that should be tested is weather the last 5-7 years increased policy stream has had any effect on school results. Our research is still in a preliminary phase but so far results show that no significant differences in the way principals say they respond to policy can be found. Differences in student grades and pass between municipalities (controlled for SES) seem to relate mostly to factors concerning the school structure and economy of municipalities.
19. BETWEEN CIVIL SERVICE AND REPUBLICAN ETHICS: THE STATIST VISION OF LEADERSHIP AMONG FRENCH PRINCIPALS

The notion of leadership does not exist in the mind of the majority of researchers, policy-makers and practitioners in France. The more usual conception is related to the administration and steering of schools. The principal is considered as an administrator more than a manager, as a representative of the State more than a member of a local community, a civil servant more than an entrepreneur. This definition can be explained by historical, institutional and cultural reasons which are exposed in this chapter. The Republican vision, shared by a great number of educators, and the weight of the State are also two major features of the attribution of roles and responsibilities to the French principal.

Compared to other educative systems, the organization of the French school system remains strongly linked to the comprehensive school. The attachment to the democratization and the reduction of inequalities through instruction are a major component of policies supporting the guidance and career of students on behalf social justice. This democratic horizon is submitted to disputes in the public space as well as the values which have to be promoted in schools. The issue of learning of students and school improvement are not at the core of the school management because the principal manages more structures and rules than contents and individuals due to the maintenance of a post-bureaucratic regime.

So a statist vision of leadership is shared by policy-makers, inspectors, and principals while practices of leadership remain informal, more related to the character of the principal than to an established reflection on the skills required to lead a team to improve school performance. Even the role of “pedagogue” officially devoted to principals is firmly framed by official regulations which limit her/his power and autonomy.

19.1 The French school system and current challenges

Since 2005, an accountability policy has been implemented in the French education system but it remains largely bureaucratic, centralized and top-down, without much focus on bottom-up processes, school improvement, and leadership which could increase student achievement. A law of finances, acted in 2001, changed the governance of schools and imposed objectives and indicators of performance defined with the parliament to control public expenditures. This policy of indicators and benchmarks did not have yet much impact on school management even if the inspectorate has implemented audits. No regime of sanctions and rewards are linked to these audits and there are no incentives for schools to improve their outcomes. The prescriptions of inspectors do not impact on principals and teachers who daily maintain a sort of professional bureaucracy in which each one avoids to penetrate the territory of others.

So, schools are divided between the administration (the principal and his/her team), the pastoral care (in charge of discipline and of the control of attendance), and teachers who benefit from a pedagogical freedom guaranteed by the legislation (the Code of Education). These teachers are accountable only to their inspector through few and far individual visits. Teachers are assessed from their classroom practices and their expertise in a unique school subject: only a few of them work in teams or in ambitious projects. Their statutes of civil servant strongly protect them against parents and their hierarchy, except for a serious fault but it has to be proved. One of the important challenges is to make teachers better work together outside the classroom to develop capacity building and school improvement needed to raise the student outcomes.

For this, a change in assessment practices appears as a first necessity. Inspectors are practicing more control than assessment, because of their lack of training, even if audits are progressively becoming more
comprehensive. Teachers are attached to traditional modes of marking. They do not really know the technology of testing and they have no habits about formative assessment. Among French educators, assessment is understood as a discretionary judgment on their work and as an unbearable intrusion in the sphere of their professional autonomy. Otherwise, it is viewed as an instrument of hierarchical power and professionals do not consider much the notion of “feedback”. However, in front of some difficulties met by the inspectors to lead their audits or external evaluations, the idea of self-evaluation of schools is progressing in the mind of policy-makers.

Consequently, the General Inspectorate has recently published a report requiring the development and the reinforcement of internal and external evaluations to improve school performance. What is at stake is to develop an accountability system more focused on teaching and learning in schools. But a traditional conception of the instruction, through the transmission of knowledge, linked to a strong interest of policy makers towards pupils’ guidance and career, instead of learning paths, slows down the development of some types of assessment focused on the improvement of student outcomes and their cognitive skills. Furthermore, the conception of “skills” is severely criticized by educators and trade unions who consider it as an intrusion of the business in the public service of education.

However, some changes can be observed in the implementation of innovative and experimental programs which met a frankly success nearby practitioners because they release initiatives and creativity. It is a voluntary policy led by the ministry during the last years to give some margins of pedagogical autonomy for schools constrained otherwise by a standardizing legislation which imposes the same standards in the management of curriculum and teaching hours (on behalf the equality of treatment between students). According to the article 34 of the Education Act of 2005, schools can now use this range of hours to derogate from the national system and to conceive “experiments” (e.g. pedagogical innovations but the word “experiment” is used in the Act and praised by policy-makers to control local initiatives) focused on the raise of student achievement, under the strict control of State Local Authorities.

Teaching teams seized this opportunity to begin a collective work in schools and to build educative and cultural projects allowing a new share of knowledge and practices between peers. This diversification and pedagogical creativity concern only a minority of schools but, supported by Local Centers of R&D and Innovation (Centres Académiques de Recherche, Développement et Innovation), they have been able to produce tools and outcomes disseminated at regional and national levels. However, these initiatives remain weakly coordinated at local level, despite the support of the ministry, and they are very dependent from the good will of hierarchical authorities while their contents and quality are variable from one school to another. It is a real challenge to promote a culture of school improvement among executives and principals, as among teachers, who do not dare to take risks because they fear to be misjudged by their colleagues and hierarchy.

So, the corporatism remains powerful among executives, principals and inspectors. According to a bureaucratic order, it contributes to slow down the school modernization and the implementation of New Public Management even if it is already active in the other sectors of administration. For historical, structural, and ideological reasons the French education system meets difficulties to challenge its teaching and learning practices, and to develop a collective intelligence in schools. Training is traditional and focused on school subjects and it does not take into account the principles of Continuous Professional Development. France is behind some other countries for the development of ICTs while it lacks of leadership functions to support schools according to a strategic vision.
19.2 The role of principal in relation to current national policy

The French principal has a very limited autonomy and his/her work is strongly constrained by the hierarchy and national standards in curricula, teaching, and time schedules in schools. If schools have a quite relative juridical autonomy, they cannot change their level of resources according to student outcomes or to an external demand. Some policy makers even consider that schools have an autonomy allowed by the laws of decentralization at the beginning of the 80s but not principals who are submitted to a hierarchical control as a representative of the State. Because of the decentralization, each principal depends also on independent local authorities, distinct from the State, which take in charge school buildings, the equipment and ICTs but these authorities do not intervene in the curricula and in the recruitment of staff except for maintenance.

Since 1985, the legislation through different decrees and regulations affirmed the place of the school development plan through a contract established between the state local authority and the school. According to official statements, each school has to use its allocated means to provide a provision adjusted to the diversity of students. Circulars describe the role of the school development plan and remind the autonomy at the disposal of the principal to organize pedagogical and educative activities. New devices were created to valorize this autonomy: interlinks between primary and secondary schools; hours devoted to the support and help of failure students; Itinerary of Discovery, artistic and cultural projects; certificate of skills in ICTs at the junior school level; individualized support during the first year of high school; development of Personal Framed Works during the last year of high school; civic, juridical and social education, artistic workshops, etc. But these new modes of organization did not succeed in the reduction of inequality gaps between students and they did not contribute to a sustainable change of teaching practices.

The authority allowed to the principal by official regulations is not sufficient to affirm his/her pedagogical role while a sort of divide remains between the local and the national levels. The French education system is characterized by a two-level hierarchical system (general inspectorate/regional inspectorate) coupled with a pedagogical hierarchy along three top-down lines of inspection from the ministry to the bottom: finances, administration, and pedagogy. This organization is reproduced inside each school. Even if the school can manage its physical allocation of classrooms and groups of students and also its time schedules according to a “Global Allocation of Hours” (on an administrative basis), principals have no real pedagogical and educative autonomy: it is framed by regional and national decision-making in terms of structures and contents of teaching while the supervision of teaching is delegated to inspectors. Beyond this institutional framework, a school development plan does not guarantee a deep reflection and a real approach of school improvement. Some school projects remain very formal, more attached to the respect of norms and procedures than to the quality of teamwork.

According to official regulations, the principal’s responsibility relates to the administration and the application of the law (Mamou, 2006; Lefebvre, Mallet, Vandevoorde, 2010). S/he has an administrative power on the staff and, because of her/his position of authority, s/he is accountable for it actions. S/he looks after the physical security of the staff and goods. S/he has to enforce school rules and to make sure that students fulfil their duties (attendance, respect of people, etc.) and rights (in terms of expression, association, meeting and publication). These responsibilities are extended to the presidency of different boards (Council of Administration for the vote of the budget and the school development plan, Permanent Commission to talk about the school projects, Council of Discipline for disruptive students, Committee of Hygiene and Security).

In this context, is the French principal an administrator or a pedagogue? Most of principals are former teachers and it makes a difference with some other managers in public services. The statute of the secondary school allows to principals a pedagogical role through the school autonomy: they can act to organize classrooms and student groups, time schedules, some facultative teaching options (Fort,
Reverchon-Billot, 2006). Similarly, the official framework of the principal’s skills defines the whole series of activities and skills required to lead the pedagogical and educative policy in the school. But, in fact, the management of the principal is more focused on structuring the teaching conditions than on regulating teaching practices and contents. His/ her responsibility takes place in a division of labour between the administration, the pastoral care (the educative side) and teachers in their classroom (the pedagogical side). So, principals have to build day to day their legitimacy nearby teachers, parents and students if they want to intervene on pedagogical and educative issues.

However, the creation of the « pedagogical council » by the Education Act of 2005 helps them. According to official instructions, they have to regularly gather one class teacher for each degree, at least one teacher by school subject, and the year head (pastoral care) to coordinate different actions in the areas of teaching, marking and evaluation. This council, with only a consultative role, has to prepare the pedagogical part of the school development plan and it is considered as a place to reflect on the implementation of new pedagogical devices. It has been created to improve the transversal coordination of teachers, to facilitate interdisciplinary relationships, to manage more effectively the careers of students, to harmonize rules and methods of assessment. Some schools have used the pedagogical council as a lever to lead experiments and innovations. However, the role of the principal is essential to build an agreement on common principles and to bring perspectives about change among teams. It is not easy because the pedagogical council does not replace other more strategic councils in the mind of teachers and trade unions (particularly the council of administration). Furthermore, is does not challenge the pedagogical freedom of teachers and the role of inspectors in school subjects. So it is often difficult for most principals to make this council an effective instrument for the school project and school improvement.

19.3 The selected research and methods

This section collects research findings about changes in the role of principals linked to the transformations of the French education system and policies during the last ten years. It explores the research literature and also the professional one, which is an important part of the culture and training of principals. The field of research on management and leadership does not exist in France: principals, policy-makers and researchers by a majority are hostile to managerial ideas and they are quite unaware or ignorant about the private sector. For them, the management has a neoliberal and Anglo-Saxon connotation, which appears at the opposite of their ethics and values of the public service. So, it is not surprising to find major criticism from the writings on management in education while the notion of leadership remains largely unknown. The idea of “chief” in the French word “chef d’établissement” (literally “chief of the school”) is more considered under the angle of authority and commandment, as in the army, than under the vision of sharing responsibilities or taking some initiatives, which would inspire followers. For most of principals, rules and rationality have to overcome opinion and subjectivity in the leading of people.

From the analysis of on-line publications and references from the website of the Ecole Supérieure de l’Education Nationale (the equivalent of the National College for School Leadership in the UK), it has been possible to get a mapping of studies and topics related to the work and role of principals in the secondary education (there are no principals at the primary level). These contents are defined by the general training scheme at the college according to the ministry’s objectives and current policies (ICTs, education priority areas, reforms related to the act of finances, security of schools). There are lot of reminds of official instructions, regulations and circulars. The administrative and juridical issues are a main component of the training of principals. The word “steering” is often preferred to those of “management”. The steering of human resources and evaluation are two major components while another part is devoted to deontology, ethics, and administrative/juridical/moral responsibilities. Contents on teaching are more limited in depth and relate mainly to school partnerships and the basic skills framework (“socle commun” in French).
Furthermore, since several years, the training has been enriched by contents related to the international comparison of other education systems. Training sessions are delivered by executives (high-rank civil servants, the General Inspectorate, experienced inspectors and principals) even if academics are regularly invited for lectures on current issues.

The data bank FRANCIS and Google Scholar was used to compile books and papers published and to sort research findings according to different topics. These data show that there is not much French research literature on principals, management and leadership, except a few works by isolated researchers. The contribution of French-speaking countries (Belgium, Switzerland, and Canada) is a major part of this literature. The analysis has been completed by the exploitation of papers from the professional journal Administration & Education which compiles contributions from researchers and reflexive practitioners about the challenges and changes of administration and management in the French education system. This journal is an essential place of exchanges for executives in education who meet regularly through annual meetings and regional events. The association which has changed recently its name (it became the Association of Actors of Education after been named Association of Administrators of Education since its creations) is managed by the General Inspectorate and high-rank civil servants. It is a place of debate but also of training on current educational issues for inspectors and principals, in relation to the research area. Other publications are linked to activist associations, like “Education& Devenir” which gathers “pedagogues” and “progressive” principals, or trade unions, like the SNPDEN (Syndicat National Des Personnels de Direction de l’Education Nationale), the main trade union who is a real counter-power in the French education system, particularly through its participation to the management of careers of principals in joint commissions including representatives of the State.

19.4 The French research about principals’ role, work and leadership

In France, the status of civil servants and the role of the State in the governance of education system give an important weight to the school administration based on the respect of laws and regulations. Furthermore, the attachment of French principals and inspectors to the values of the Republic explains why a lot of books and papers are written on ethical issues, deontology and responsibility. Civism and equality of opportunities are the main references in the imaginary of principals as in their professional culture. Most of the literature is not specialized on education issues but more generally on public services and principles of New Public Management. The literature is more written by professionals and policy-makers than by researchers while the area of research appears relatively limited, except on issues about professionalization and professional identities of principals or about their conditions of work in schools. Trade unionism is also a major component of this professional culture, and professional associations have an important role in the dissemination of research findings on topics more related to the trends of education policies than to school management itself. However, according to the development of accountability, an emergent literature is disseminated on evaluation, school improvement, and leadership even if it remains very marginal.

In the French educational research, principals are mainly studied by sociologists according to a critical stance towards management. They emphasize the prescriptive dimension of the work, its break up in a multiplicity of tasks, and the pressure induced by contradictory requirements (Barrère, 2008). This research, which aims to describe the authentic work of principals, against theories of management, is well symbolized by Anne Barrère’s book “Les managers de la République” (2013) (tr. The Managers of the Republic). The title by itself shows how the management appears, for French researchers, far from the values of the French Republican school system and its centralized and bureaucratic tradition. But, instead of criticizing bureaucracy, these sociologists prefer to analyze the situations of work daily faced by principals and the way they are subjectively building up the picture of their work. Beyond the description of their careers, two chapters explore the administrative work experienced by principals as intrusive and unskilled. Anne Barrère argues
about the importance of their relational work through the organization of meetings and the settlement of conflicts while decision-making remains rather invisible. The latter is difficult to maintain because principals have to face urgencies, to be available, open and reactive to the requirements and complains of teachers. The principal is described as an administrator who has to negotiate with some bureaucratic rules to adjust its organization and to fit its internal and external environment, particularly in maintaining the level of enrolments and the reputation of the school. Even if s/he focuses her/his efforts on the relationships with teachers, the principal is challenged by a latent conflict and the maintenance of a professional autonomy of teachers which impede her/him to achieve its pedagogical and educative roles. So each principal feels lonely in front of contradictory requirements, increasing responsibilities, and the lack of recognition by the hierarchy.

This view is confirmed by the research of Agnès Pelage who, like Anne Barrère, has developed field studies of schools and interviews to describe the heterogeneous work, the multiplicity of tasks performed by principals and the diversity of their professional identities (Pelage, 2008). Inspired by the theoretical framework of the French sociology of work, she also produced evidence about the numerous challenges faced by principals in making teachers working together or in trying to bring up a “culture of evaluation” inside schools. Principals seek to transform teaching practices and they use indicators but their action is refused by teachers who prefer to work by peers according to their affinities (Barrère, 2009). The control of the hierarchy does not allow principals to be autonomous, innovative or entrepreneurial. Through these sociological findings, the analysis of prescriptions is used to show the difference with an authentic work and to develop criticism against the blind vision of management or leadership theories which dissimulate conflicts and powers inside schools.

The French research literature area on the topic of “educational management” is quite poor. One of its well-known representative is Alain Bouvier, professor of educational sciences and former superintendent, who promoted early the theory of the learning organization. Through many examples, his book titled “Management et projet des établissements scolaires (1994) (Management and School development plan) provides to principals a set of concepts and tools useful to lead a project and to implement a school development plan. The book is based on the current theories of the sociology of organizations. Alain Bouvier makes explicit the method to follow by principals and explains how to anticipate changes and unexpected consequences, resistances, in building several scenarios to increase the reactivity of the school to its environment. For him, the school development plan is a mean to work collectively, to remove barriers inside schools, to get out from segmented activities through cooperation and the share of common aims. According to his view, the project of the school must be based on three poles (education and pedagogy, administration and the global policy of the school) and four dimensions (utopia, shared values, collective will and short-term empowering objectives). The principal needs to elaborate a diagnostic to emphasize strengths and weaknesses in using statistics and data but also through an ethnographic approach describing the internal culture of the school and its values. This analytical framework is today shared and accepted by the majority of practitioners and it structures their vision as leaders.

However, there is properly no academic literature on school leadership (Langanay, 2009; Grandjean Luthi, 2010; Normand, 2010). One of the first books on the topic will be edited by Jean-Louis Derouet and Romuald Normand, two professors of sociology, the former at the French Institute of Education (Ecole Normale Supérieure, Lyon) and the latter at the University of Strasbourg (2013, Forthcoming)32. It is issued from various contributions during the first conference on school leadership organized in 2012 with the support of

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the European Network on School Leadership, the French Ministry of Education and the Ecole Supérieure de l’Éducation Nationale. The objective is to disseminate the existing knowledge in this field and to reinforce the links between heterogeneous professional worlds from policy-making to practice. The book questions the traditional divide between administration and management and the position of principals and teachers inside schools. The contributions describe the transformations induced by school leadership and its role in the modernization of school systems observed in other countries. The last part analyzed the new skills required from principals to act as leaders and the professional development required to overcome some old features of the French bureaucratic administration to lead school improvement and change.

In contrast to these academic findings, some multiple papers, often written by professionals and policymakers, can be found in the professional literature. In one the issues published by Les Cahiers Pédagogiques (1997), a journal devoted to educators interested by school change and innovation, several authors (general inspectors, former superintendents, policy-makers, practitioners) shared their views about leading school. Their writings represent a sort of “official discourse” for the profession while they are largely resumed and commented in training sessions. In this special issue, Jean-Pierre Obin, general inspector, resumes a topic he has largely disseminated in his books and professional circles: the idea of “steering schools according to values” which emphasizes the ethical dimension (against the technical one) of the school administration according to a republican conception shared by many educators in France. This argument is used to justify the necessity of a cooperation and solidarity inside schools against the negative trend of individualism and trade unionism among teachers. In many professional publications, trade unions are often accused to be corporatist and not sufficiently devoted to students and families. In this publication, Jean-Paul Delahaye, former general inspector and currently head of the Department of Schools at the ministry, argues that the autonomy of schools has to be supported by its pedagogical council, the development of team work, and a new sense of initiatives and responsibility among teachers, but with respect to the hierarchy, official guidelines and republican principles (Delahaye, 2010). So it is not a managerial autonomy which is advocated here but an autonomy framed by the State. Christian Forrestier, former superintendent and influential policy-maker, explains that the pedagogical autonomy of schools must be a true space of freedom built on the force of conviction more than on constraint: the principal has to share with his/her staff the decisions taken by the ministry and by the state local authority and to distribute accordingly different roles and responsibilities among teachers. The same idea is resumed by Claude Pair, former superintendent and author with other colleagues of a famous report on the “respiration of the education system” in which he was defending a framed autonomy and responsibility for schools and the implementation of evaluation (Pair & others, 1998). However, these policy-makers do not write on leadership and they do not precise the way the principal has to act in context. This professional literature remains mainly rhetorical and normative without designing standards or guidelines for principals. This is the main power of the ministry to provide the required frameworks and to change the definition of skills and statutes. Beside these policy-makers, practitioners describe their experiences in schools or they write about redundant issues as evaluation, the conduct of the diagnostic in schools, or they write about redundant issues as evaluation, the conduct of the diagnostic in schools, the challenges of training, the implementation of the school development plan, the animation of the pedagogical council, the regulation of team work. Some academics bring an outlook from their research rarely related to issues of administration and management. In this special issue published by Les Cahiers Pédagogiques, the professional identities of principals and the struggle against school failure are the main debated topics apart from the conditions of their work. The issues of inequality and curriculum are also recurrent in this type of publications.

This share of papers between policy-makers, practitioners and academics is also one of the characteristics of the professional journal and association Administration & Education. It occupies a particular position in the educative landscape while it works as a forum regularly gathering practitioners through meetings and conferences. The professional association is led by the inspectorate and policy-makers. However, in the...
journal, there are only a few issues devoted directly to management. The journal is dealing with different topics related to current debates in education (for example, inclusion, ICTs, the role parents, guidance, the new Act of Finances) and it regularly resumes the proceedings of the association’s conferences.

The “Blue Series”, edited by the Centre National de Documentation Pédagogique (a national editor and center of resources for the ministry of education) is also a reference for principals and it is used for training and the preparation of concours (tests taken by principals to be recruited as civil servants after leaving the teaching profession). It is directed towards practitioners and it is written by professionals, experts and academics close the world of practice. The best seller book is presenting all the aspects of the job through different areas (administration, law, pedagogy) and it resumes the whole official texts and guidelines for the profession. The recent book of Alain Bouvier is also an important reference. Titled “From the project to the contract of objectives” (2009), it takes into account the recent changes in the legislation and the implementation of the new system of accountability. The book resumes different models and authors from the theory of organizations but it also demonstrates the value of the school development plan to “act local and to think global”, to develop a collective work, to give a common identity to the school and to communicate with its environment. It explains that the school development plan does not exist without taking into account different steps: diagnostic, search of means, formalization, steering, regulation and evaluation. Alain Bouvier comments some different methods (creation of a steering group, audit, etc.) and gives numerous examples from real situations. The book devotes a chapter to focus on the link between evaluation and the steering of the school, which is particularly at stake with the new legislation. It proposes to build some tools to evaluate the school performance and to collect data through different indicators. An importance place is also devoted to the management of human resources and the creation of a school community, which is a current issue in the debate among policy-makers. Alain Bouvier advocates the development of participative management able to increase the responsibilities of educators within schools but he does not use the word “leadership”. He explains that the implementation of a school development plan has to be concerted, explained, negotiated and contracted with the members of the educative community and the State local authority.

Other books have been published in the series, like those of Yves Grellier, a former regional inspector, who is specialized on the work of the deputy-principal (Grellier, 2012). He argues that the deputy-principal lacks of recognition and visibility, comparatively to the principal, because of his internal role and its distance from local authorities and bodies of inspection. Yves Grellier has also led a “Blue sub-series” titled “principal”. He has written a more recent book on the new responsibilities of the principal (Grellier, 1998, 2011). In his two books, he resumes the sociological theories of the organization to provide a critical analysis of the resistance to change and of some contradictions faced by the principal in a post-bureaucratic context. In this sub-series, Alain Bouvier has provided a small book on the cognitive management of schools inspired by the current theories of knowledge management (Bouvier, 2011). The other books are related to guidance, the implementation of the basic skills framework. Romuald Normand, with two principals, has written a special issue on the responsibilities of the principal in search of legitimacy and has introduced the problematic of school leadership at the end (Bastrenta, Normand, Nousis, 2013). Beyond this official “Blue series”, some textbooks are published by other authors to describe and comment the main functions and missions of principals (Woycikowska, 2003; Castincaud, Fouque, Klepal, 2004; Leblond, Moracchini, 2010), their entering in the profession (Woycikowska, 2005), the new Management of Human Resources (Berthier, 2006), the pedagogical role of the principal (Pointereau, Saint Do, 2010).

33 Here are the last topics related to administration and management with their dates of publication (the journal is publishing 3 or 4 issues each year): (2013) La GRH de proximité (the close management of human resources), (2012) L’École et les réseaux (school and its networks) ; 2010 Piloter le premier degré (steering the first primary sector of education); (2010) Equipe de direction, équipe enseignante (leading team, teaching team);
Outside the educative sphere, Alain Bouvier has developed a series titled “Profession Cadres” (tr. Profession Executives) with the objectives of promoting new reflections on the implementation of New Public Management in different areas of the French national and local public administration: education, health, justice, etc. The series aims to disseminate case studies and soft analytical thoughts towards middle-rank executives interested by the transformation of the State, the decentralization and changes in their professional context. This series is supported by The Ecole Supérieure de l’Education Nationale (National College for School Leadership), the Ecole National d’Administration (National College of Administration which recruits and trains all the high-rank civil servants), and it is edited by the Centre National de Documentation Pédagogique. The first book of the series was devoted to educational issues (the implementation of the new system of accountability in the education system and its consequences) but the scope of the series is larger. Olivier Bachelard and Romuald Normand (2013) have recently coordinated a book on leadership for the series while this notion remains unknown by public servants. It is the first time in the French professional literature related to education that the issue of leadership is explored with so many contributors coming from different areas of public policies: policy makers, academics, and practitioners. The objective of the book is to make a general review of leadership practices in different public administrations (ministries, local authorities), areas (education, health, welfare, justice, etc.) and public companies. It is also a general reflection on the way leadership can contribute to the modernization of the public administration and services.

The last type of publications explores the juridical issues related to the responsibility of principals in the administration of risks (discipline, violence, insecurity) in a context where they have to enforce legislation as representatives of the State and civil servants (MEN, 2001; Picquenot, 2004; Legrand, 2006). More and more principals are confronted to trials and they cannot only be secured by their position as administrator. That is why the professional literature has recently developed a lot of thinking about ethics and deontology (Obin, 1996; Simon, 2012). According to official rules, principal have to maintain the sense of hierarchy and make other civil servants in the school respectful of the law. They are also responsible for the actions taken by the staff and they are more and more confronted to trials in administrative and penal courts because parents are contesting their decisions in guidance, provision of teaching, and results in exams. This plethora of circular and official recommendations regulating the action of principals is an important feature of the Republican school system and it proves the importance of the State and legislation in the administration of schools. An abundant literature is devoted to the prevention of violence and the maintenance of security (Debarbieux, 2008), but also on ethical rules and the sense of authority required by principals to cope with adverse reactions from the local community (Obin, 2003).

34 Here are the titles of the book already published (complete references at the end of the chapter) : Le pilotage par les résultats. Un défi pour demain (Steering by results : a challenge for tomorrow); Autonomie et responsabilité des cadres publics. Une mutation managériale (autonomy and responsibility of public executives. A managerial mutation, évaluation des politiques publiques. Le développement d’une nouvelle culture (Evaluation of public policies : the development of a new culture); Le management par le sens. Au service du bien public (the management by the sense : serving the public good); Ecole de la qualité. Une chance pour le management public (the school of quality : a chance for the public management); Le développement professionnel des cadres. Apprentissages et gestion des connaissances (the professional development of executives. Learning and management of knowledge), La déontologie des cadres publics. Pour un service responsable (the deontology of public executives. For a responsible service); L’imagination managériale des cadres publics. Un talent à cultiver (the managerial imagination of public executives : a talent to cultivate); E-gouvernance. Pour une nouvelle administration numérique (E-governance. For a new digital administration).

35 BACHELARD Olivier, NORMAND Romuald, Le leadership au service du Nouveau Management Public. Favoriser l’émergence de compétences collectives, CNDP, ESEN, 2013. (Leadership to serve New Public Management. How to enhance capacity building),
19.5 Some reasons about the difficulty for research on school leadership to emerge in France

As it had been argued in this chapter, the field of research on school leadership in France is just emerging. The area of studies on management in education is not yet structured. Some attempts were made by the past to develop a science of school administration inspired from the French speaking Canada’s experience (Derouet 2005; Dutercq, 2000; Dutercq, 2002). But the impossibility to structure this field of research, and also the difficulty to penetrate some particularly endogenous professional groups, dismantled the ephemeral relationships between researchers and policy-makers. The French educational research is however not prepared to be a research for education. Its important disciplinary features explain why history and philosophy are so appreciated by educators, particularly when they valorize the republican imaginary attached to the principle of equality of opportunities. The role of academic disciplines and their powerful representatives impacts on the conditions of teaching while didactics are influent in educational sciences and nearby bodies of inspection. A strong interest is expressed to instruction and its contents rather to learning conditions and school improvement. There are no developed conceptions of school improvement even if some sociologists have published a few papers on it.

In other ways, relationships between the ministry and research do not help to develop applied works on management and leadership issues. The Ecole Supérieure de l’Education Nationale maintains a monopoly of the training of executives and the contents are not really open to academic investigation but more designed according to ideological convictions and current political trends. The General Inspectorate’s reports are more influent in the decision making and thinking of executives than the findings of researchers in education. The segmentation between research and practice is dubious because of a lack of sufficient mediations but also because of a conception of training which remains far from Continuous Professional Development. The lack of evaluation of actions and the weakness of cooperation in schools do not give the possibility of being supported by research and getting feedback for teaching teams. Discourses and actions are juxtaposed, from the top to the bottom, without a true design of reforms and their implementations. Too often, an official rhetoric overcomes some pragmatism and analysis of situations.

The conception of authority and power, in regards to the power of the State and its institutionalized bodies, valorize hierarchical and top-down relationships instead of more informal and transversal ones. The respect of the law and rules impede the establishment of authentic relationships and a climate of trust in schools. The school institution itself, which is based on a logic of representation and expression of interests through different representatives, legitimizes a certain formalism which undermines the quality of relationships and the expression of authentic voices. Conflicts of power and competencies are numerous in the administration while the analysis of practices remains a quite formal and disembodied exercise. Each one fears the judgment of others, the loss of fame and reputation.

The lack of a real local community, the rejection of parents outside schools while the school republican system maintains a distance from private interests to remain neutral, is also an important factor to explain the difficulties of implementing a new share of roles and responsibilities. Tensions between independent local authorities and the State in the administration of schools and education policies have also to be considered. Independent local authorities, after they had invested in buildings and equipment, would like to take more responsibilities in the educative governance while the State is resolute to maintain its prerogatives on behalf the defense and maintenance of a national public service. So decentralization has it pro and cons as it is illustrated by the current debate on the future of guidance services.

The lack of interest for issues of leadership can be also explained by some moral and ideological motives. The management is perceived as an Anglo-Saxon deviance contrary to the values of the Republic because it valorizes the market and the private against the State, its neutrality and its historical struggle against
inequalities. On the other side, the notion of leadership evokes the subjectivity and opinion of individuals related to a person they would have to follow. If the hierarchical commandment is accepted, the image of the leader is less welcome. The idea of “chief” overcomes those of “entrepreneurship” while the “sense of initiatives” is considered as a risky adventure which can generate disorder and threat the stability of the institution. So there is in fact a sort of patrimonial and conservative aspect through the way relations are built and structured between people. It comes probably from the legacy of the Ancient Regime and from the transposition of the rules of nobility transposed within republican institutions despite the French Revolution.

The democratic conception of schools can also be questioned. Because of the importance of the representation of interests oriented towards the State and the civic good, schools are not considered as a space of discussion and deliberation determining the future of the educative community. It is through the national community of citizens, and through its elected representatives and rulers, that solutions are expected to improve schools and to make them more equitable. Competition is accepted only according to a meritocratic vision and to equality of treatment securing the public and national features of the education system. This indifference to social, ethnic and cultural differences impedes a diversification of schools which would probably be otherwise a source of innovation and creativity. But the republican imaginary does not allow the development of such localism. Moreover, if the educative State seeks for effectiveness and performance, it is also more bureaucratic in the implementation of its accountability system which appears more as a control than the possibility for the educative community to take ownership of its vision and future. This political conception of the French school system has some consequences in the way the position of principals is perceived: a mediator searching for a compromise between several principles of justice more than a leader taking initiatives and showing the path to follow. This position could evolve in the future according to a new step of decentralization and a new foundation of the teaching profession giving more place to intermediary functions in schools. But, until now, as it is illustrated by the current dispute about the assessment of teachers by principals, a project finally abandoned by the ministry under the pressure of different internal lobbies, the status quo is maintained.

19.6 Conclusion

This mapping of the French research on leadership demonstrates the extent of the work to be achieved in the study of the roles and responsibilities of principals, comparatively to other countries more committed in the modernization of their education system. Is it a French lag or a cultural exception? Some signs of evolution in public services indicate that New Public Management is progressively implemented and it changes the modes of organization and structuration of professions. The sector of public health, for example, has moved quite far through important reforms, compared to the area of education. Furthermore, policy-makers are more and more persuaded that the local level, and particularly the school level in a decentralized context, is the key to improve the governance and the performance of the education system. France is searching for its Third Way: not between the State and the Market, but between the State and local democracy. The Scandinavian countries, and particularly Finland, serve as examples according to different aspirations to change. To maintain the Republican legacy, to modernize the public service of education, to face globalization and the increasing comparison of education systems: these are the main challenges to face by the ministry of education for the next years. The place of principals will be decisive in this modernization but no one is able to see how it will be configured in the next future. But, after the implementation of an accountability policy, professions should be at the centre of reforms worked out by French policy-makers.
PART VI - EDUCATING SCHOOL LEADERS FOR EQUITY AND LEARNING

20. SYNTHESIS OF EVIDENCE-BASED REPORTS: EDUCATING SCHOOL LEADERS

20.1 Introduction

This chapter takes issue with policies, measures and practices that structure the education of school leaders across EU educational systems. The particular question addressed is how can education programs for school leaders contribute to the improvement of equity and learning in the education system. The analysis is based on desktop research conducted by EPNoSL partners in 15 countries/regions. The EPNoSL working group on educating school leaders was designed to act as the pilot for initiating the thematic research studies, which were developed in the context of work package 4. All partners involved were asked to draft country briefs on the state of school leaders’ education in their respective country/region, focusing particularly on two questions: a) do available leadership education programmes include all school forms and all school leadership tasks and responsibilities? and b) are programmes for pre-service, induction, newly-appointed and continuous professional development in place?. 15 country briefs were thus produced, namely from Austria, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom, and were then presented at the Jyväskylä PLA event and hereafter, included in a previous deliverable of the project on “Critical Factors in the discourse on School Leadership from the perspective of equity and learning” (Kollias 2013).

On the basis of these reports, further desktop research was conducted for updating the research evidence collected, for contextualising the results in the light of the global policy developments in the filed of school leadership education and training, for providing a useful synthesis of these studies, but also for making use of the evidence collected for identifying critical policy challenges and outlining policy recommendations for the design of school leadership education programmes and CPD activities that promote equity and learning. The studies/country briefs conducted by this working group show that across Europe there is a wide range of approaches to the education of school leaders: from no formal training at one end to very strictly regulated systems. In some countries school leadership education curricula tend to be very theoretical, while in others they focus on practical issues and tend to be oriented towards problem-solving methods (training). In addition, studies show that equity considerations do not seem to play a major role in the education of school heads, while the filling of school leadership vacancies across European educational systems has become increasingly difficult due to harder conditions in the school leader’s work situation. In this regard, a) balancing critical thinking (theory) with practical implications in school leadership education, b) integrating equity into education programmes for school leaders and c) enhancing transparency mechanisms in school leaders selection processes are proposed as desired policy recommendations.

To begin, the European community as well as other countries around the globe has witnessed massive social, economic, and political changes that have stimulated policymakers and citizens to more closely examine the goals and purposes of their educational systems as they address daunting challenges brought about by these changes early in the 21st century. Such forces as globalization, increased economic competition among
nations, increased migration, social networking and advances in technology, dramatic political changes in Eastern Europe at the end of the 20th century, international comparisons using measures of student attainments, PISA, for example, and increased demands for good student outcomes and for accountability have intensified the work of educational professionals, especially school principals. These demands have led to careful analyses of the leadership roles, responsibilities, relationships, and work of school principals related to their effectiveness in meeting the challenges through the quality of education provided in their schools.

Unlike in Australia, Canada, England and the United States where scholarship on school principals is well established in universities, education agencies, and research centers, the research efforts described in our discussions indicate that in some countries the scholars are in the early stages of defining and setting a coordinated agenda for examining principals’ work. There is great potential in European and EPNoSL scholars sharing their research on principals, notwithstanding important differences in educational structures, cultures, histories, and local contexts.

When it comes to research on Principals we identify major themes that cut across the collected summaries of research on principals in different national studies, cultures and contexts. Our purpose here is to highlight common trends and to indicate where research findings suggest that scholars have shared interests and thus might collaborate in cross-national research projects in the coming decade to influence policy about the success of schools and successful school leadership.

In the 1990s education reforms rippled across various countries coupled with the devolution of authority to local municipalities and schools. Another major shift accompanying these reforms was in the training and ongoing professional development of school principals which moved from national agencies to local development centers at universities and to municipal governments. Coupled with changes in national education agency policies were increased calls for accountability for measurable student learning outcomes in the context of demanding educational environments. All of these demands are precipitated by increasingly diverse student cohorts, rising social conflicts in schools and communities, curricular changes requiring the use of new technologies, and demands for new knowledge and skills for the 21st century citizens. Together they have intensified the work of school principals and raised questions about the continuing effectiveness of traditional educational systems. In general, job descriptions for principals had been ill-defined and not clearly described in legislation or policy documents. Given the historic lack of research on the work of principals, as well as the qualities, strategies and skills all principals need to take on responsibilities for the array of education challenges, it is not surprising that principals themselves as well as policy makers and researchers found the lack of clarity and research evidence disturbing.

As a result, greater emphasis on the role of principals in meeting these demands stimulated growth of research on school principals and at the same time the policy demands on principals increased. First, there is no consensus among researchers on just what the concept of instructional leadership means. In the descriptive studies of principals’ work, most school leaders have experience as teachers and bring their pedagogical experiences and expertise with them to the job. Another reason that the concept of instructional leadership has only limited traction in the research and in principals’ work is anchored in powerful norms of professional autonomy of teachers and principals. Principals believe that it is the teachers’ responsibility to exercise pedagogical expertise to create appropriate conditions for learning for all students to succeed in their classrooms. Notwithstanding principals’ efforts to enhance educational quality and learning outcomes in their schools, strong norms of professional autonomy inhibit principals from supervisory practices that intrude on classroom instructional decision-making and practices.

The working group has found similar tendencies in our small studies of some of the EPNoSL countries principal training programs. There are obvious contextual differences in terms of leadership such as the
extent of autonomy school leaders have within the educational system, their appointment and selection criteria, while less immediately obvious cultural differences make it even less likely that one could simply import findings from one context to the other without at least some adaptation.

The studies/country briefs conducted by this working group show that across Europe there is a wide range of approaches to the education of school leaders: from no formal training at one end to very strictly regulated systems. In some countries school leadership education curricula tend to be very theoretical, while in others they focus on practical issues and tend to be oriented towards problem-solving methods (training). In this regard, the balancing of critical thinking (theory) with practical implications is proposed as a desired policy recommendation.

In addition, studies show that equity considerations do not seem to play a major role in the education of school heads, but still this does not necessarily imply that school leaders can not have a strong influence on equity issues at the school level. Along these lines, integrating equity into education programmes for SLs is as a desired policy recommendation, but not only as a curricular content but as a policy and praxis issue of social responsibility.

A final conclusion that can be drawn from the studies is that filling school leadership vacancies has become increasingly difficult due to harder conditions in the school leader’s work situation (high stake inspections, burdening administration, quality of life decisions). Attracting leaders and succession planning for school leadership becomes thus a policy issue (how to incentivise and bring people into the profession). In some EU countries, however, the selection process is still by favour than by merit (nepotism, networks, party politics, church). Selecting the “right” person for the job needed (e.g. turnaround schools) demands thus for new recruiting and selection processes, while “failing heads” and exit strategies need to become a topic of immediate policy consideration.

20.2 Flagship initiatives for the education of school leaders

Research teams attempted, first, to identify initiatives by EU governments/regions regarding school leaders’ education that have the potential to energize the whole school leadership community in the country.

One such example is offered by the initiative that established the Leadership Academy in Austria, a non-compulsory innovative training scheme that since 2004 has managed to engage thousands of school leaders across the country. In Sweden, the initiative that boosted school leaders’ engagement in professional development was the establishment of the new National School Leadership Training Programme in 2009. This programme is compulsory for newly appointed school heads but it is also open to experienced ones. The data show that by May 2013 about 5,700 principals and deputy principals were enrolled and of these about 1,900 had successfully complete the programme. This is approximately 60% of all 8,000 principals and deputy principals in schools in Sweden (EPNoSL, 2013).

20.2.1 The Leadership Academy in Austria

The Leadership Academy (LA) in Austria, established in 2004, offers a good example of leadership training programme, blended with knowledge sharing activities, which brings together, under a common leadership capacity building framework, school heads, middle management staff, members of school inspectorates and central government staff. The mix of professionals from various levels in the management of the school system that work in learning groups is considered the key to professional development and to reforming the whole school system in Austria. The programme is not compulsory. The concept was that it should be so interesting and challenging that everyone would think that “this is something that I have to participate”. This
approach has worked very well so far because of positive word of mouth. The LA operates on the basis of some principles. The basic one is “take people out of the school system hierarchy and put them together in a more dynamic setting where each participant leaves behind the perspective of his/her formal position in the hierarchy”. This is considered as key to mutual understanding. Another principle is “work in large groups, do not just train individuals”. This is aimed to help participants develop a sense of community that share a common purpose, to change the whole system.36

20.2.2 The National School Leadership Training Programme in Sweden

In Sweden, for example, the Swedish National Agency for Education, on behalf of the Ministry of Education, commissioned six universities in 2009 to run a new National School Leadership Training Programme. This programme is based on a set of goals-standards, corresponding to what the Agency defines as the head teacher’s tasks, roles, and responsibilities, that are organised in three broad knowledge areas: a) legislation on schools and the role of exercising the functions of an authority, b) management by goals and objectives, and c) school leadership (see Skolverket, 2009). The programme lasts 3 years and includes 36 meeting days. It is offered for free, but the participants’ organizations pay housing costs, travel, study materials etc. For head teachers appointed after March 2010 it is compulsory to complete this programme within four years (school heads are not required to have a teaching degree, although teaching is the most common background of head teachers). The participants are expected to use 20% of their time studying. Head teachers and deputy head teachers appointed prior to 2010 are not required completing it but they can also enrol. New cohorts enter the programme twice annually; in May 2013 about 5.700 principals and deputy principals were enrolled and of these about 1.900 had successfully complete the programme. This is approximately 60% of all 8.000 principals and deputy principals in schools in Sweden (EPNoSL, 2013).

20.3 The school leaders’ system of initial education and training

In some education systems in EU, national or regional governments have already established a mandatory qualification for school heads (to be obtained prior or after their appointment on top of the teaching qualification, which is the case in most EU countries) as a means to control and promote their quality. However, there is great variability in the duration, goals, level, type of provider and organisation of the programmes leading to the mandated qualifications (Eurydice, 2013a). In 3 EU countries, Malta, Sweden and Austria, the compulsory education/training for prospective school heads is provided by universities or training centres through study programmes where the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) is implemented (MT=60 ECTS, SE=30 ECTS, and AT=12 ECTS). In 13 other EU countries/regions there are compulsory initial training programmes for prospective or newly appointed school heads, ranging from 1 week (in Romania) up to 14 months (in a Spain’s autonomous community)37. Recently, Greece also mandated a qualification for aspiring school heads on “administrative competence”, obtained after successful participation in a programme offered by the National School of Public Administration and Local Government, which includes 96 hours of “theoretical” training and 80 hours of “practical” training. In most of the countries with a mandatory national professional qualification for school heads, this should be obtained prior to appointment (with the exception of SK, CZ, SE, AT, and FR).

36 For more about the LA see EPNoSL interview with Prof. Michael Schratz, one of the Academic Directors of LA, at http://www.schoolleadership.eu/portal/resource/interview-prof-michael-schratz
37BE=120h, BE=150h, CZ=100h, DE=100h, EE=240h, ES=40h-14 months, FR=1 year, IT=3-4 months, PL=210 hours, PT=250h, RO=1 week, SL=144 hours, SK=160 hours.
On the other side, in several countries/regions in EU there is no mandatory national professional qualification for school heads that should be obtained before or after their appointment (BEFL, BG, DK, IE, CY, LV, LT, LU, HU, NL, FI and HR) (Eurydice, 2013a). In England (UK) from 2012 the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) is no longer considered a compulsory requirement for head teachers in the maintained school sector. In Estonia, for example, the Tartu and the Tallinn University offer only special courses but no dedicated programmes of study to prospective and servicing school leaders. In Lithuania, school management and leadership courses are offered by universities in the context of various Masters-level programmes which are not dedicated to school leadership. In other countries were there are ample opportunities for participation in formal high quality programmes of studies for school leaders, offered for example by universities at a Masters level, the establishment of a mandatory qualification for current or aspiring school heads should be carefully examined as a policy option. This is because the establishment of a mandatory qualification for school leaders, obtained after successful participation in a low demanding training programme, is likely to affect negatively the demand for more the more challenging and better quality postgraduate-level programmes currently on offer by universities.

20.3.1 Curricula and CPD activities on school leadership for equity and learning

School leadership forms an applied field that combines theoretical and practical knowledge from a diverse set of academic disciplines, while it intends to intervene in multiple educational environments. Among other things, this diversity and multiplicity accounts for the lack of consensus on defining a core knowledge base for school leadership, even in cases where national standards have been implemented (Jenlink, 2009).

Currently in most EU countries school leaders have little opportunities to participate in pre-service, induction and in-service training programmes and other capacity building activities that are specifically aimed to enhance their knowledge and skills on how to deal with everyday challenges related to equity and learning, and, even more importantly, how to plan and implement strategies at school and local level that would target inequalities in access, opportunities, and learning outcomes. Repeatedly, research has found that those who lead training programmes feel that they do not have the time or skills or sometimes the necessity to address such issues explicitly as a priority in leader preparation programmes and that leaders themselves see the issues as taken-for-granted, and not demanding specific attention. Leaders and those who prepare them should genuinely wish to equip themselves with the knowledge and skills that would allow them to tackle inequalities head on and to withstand the resistance they are likely to encounter in their school community (Lumby, 2013).

Working for promoting equity and learning demands that school leaders enter into ongoing negotiations about educational practice in specific local contexts, in dialogue with all school stakeholders, such as teachers, students and community members. In this respect, the real world application of school leadership practices that promote equity and learning can be supported by applicable knowledge of methods and techniques designed to face these challenges. The relatively neglected dimension of equity in school leadership education/training programmes and CPD activities, makes it important to (re)design curricula and activities that integrate methods and techniques for promoting fairness and inclusion in school practice.

Initiatives targeting to train school leaders on how to deal with equity issues in schools

In Slovenia, a project was carried out in 2006 at the National School for Leadership in Education aiming at reducing occurrence of violation of human rights in schools. The purpose of the project was to train school heads and teachers in systematically monitoring and implementing children’s rights in order to reduce the number of instances of violation of these in schools. The following objectives were stated: better knowledge and awareness of children’s rights by the professional staff in education; training of a number of school
heads, deputy school heads and teachers; development of case studies on which professional staff would be trained in preventing and recognizing violation and in acting appropriately; and publicity. Based on the project results, the National School for Leadership in Education developed new teaching contents for school heads in the area of children’s rights and active citizenship.

In Sweden three examples of special training for principals so that they become more capable to handle ethical matters better are described below. The first example dates about ten years back in time. The Principal Training Centres at the universities were asked by the National Agency for Schools to plan and do courses in relation to the basic democratic values in the curriculum. These courses were given over a period of four years and the purpose was that this subject focus should be integrated into the regular principal training programs. The next example of special training courses were training of principals on how different value systems, beliefs and perceptions can create different dilemmas for school leaders and educators in relation to how honor-related problems are interpreted and handled in school. The third example is related to old phenomena that have changed in character. Sweden during the last 50 years always had immigrant children in its schools. The number has lately increased a lot and the administration and the political leadership has also identified a new growing group of immigrant children that are of school age and they are coming without their parents. Again, the Principal Training Centres were asked to provide training to principals on how to deal with this new situation.

In the United Kingdom (England) as a result of the emphasis by the school inspection body Ofsted on the progress of those pupils identified as potentially belonging to vulnerable groups, one of the training programmes offered by the trade union ‘National Association of Head Teachers’ NAHT (2013) is entitled Leading on Learning for Vulnerable Groups - Changes, Challenges and a Chance to do Better. The course identifies the main issues and assists participants, through presentations, question and answer sessions, and small group discussions, to consider how a school might become more effective in meeting the needs of all its pupils, and especially those from vulnerable groups38. The availability of such training throughout the UK, whilst commendable, is voluntary and does rely upon individual senior leaders identifying a need and deciding to enrol.

In Austria, in 2012/13 the National Center for Learning Schools (CLS) was established to coordinate efforts and continue development of the “Neue Mittelschule” (NMS), a new school form which suspends tracking in compulsory lower secondary schools. Equity is a central topic of CLS’s national network meetings and qualification programmes. A new teacher leadership role introduced with the reform, the so-called Lerndesigners, was established in order to function as teacher leaders and change agents. Lerndesigners are offered a 2-year qualification programme (12 ECTS) focused on equity and achievement. It is organized in the context of a joint MA programme between CLS and Pädagogische Hochschulen (Teacher Education institutes at regional level). Finally, all NMS school heads have to attend to at least one national learning atelier or symposium per year with their Lerndesigners. In the current school year, the influence of social background and academic language competence were the main focus of all national events for the NMS.

20.3.2 Incentives for participation in initial education/training and CPD for school leaders

Currently, in many EU countries school heads are not entitled to a salary allowance explicitly linked to extra formal qualifications obtained (Belgium’s French and German Community systems, the Czech Republic, Germany, Spain, France, Italy, Cyprus, Latvia, Luxemburg, Austria, Portugal, Slovakia, and the United Kingdom). In Belgium, the Czech Republic, Germany, France, Cyprus, Italy, Latvia, Luxemburg, Austria, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Scotland and Croatia school heads that participate in non-formal continuing professional activities are not entitled to an allowance.

38 See more at: http://www.naht.org.uk/welcome/naht-events/courses-list/keeping-on-top-of-the-send-agenda/
Financial incentives to school heads in order to obtain formal education qualifications

According to the Eurydice (2013c) report of school heads’ salaries, some EU countries offer financial incentives to school heads to obtain formal education qualifications (bachelors, masters or doctoral degrees obtained on top of those formally required to become a head teacher). In Malta, Poland, Slovenia, Romania, and Croatia there is a fixed allowance depending on the level of qualification obtained. In Hungary, head teachers can get an increase in their salary, provided that their extra qualification is related to at least 10% of their compulsory teaching hours. In Greece the highest additional formal qualification obtained leads to faster upgrading in the teachers’ grade/pay scale. In some of the above countries, due to budgetary constraints, these allowances were lowered but still exist.

In some other countries there exists a similar allowance, but those who now get or plan to get extra formal qualifications are no more entitled to it. This for example is the case of the Flemish system in Belgium, where there is a fixed extra monthly allowance depending on the level of qualification obtained; however, school heads who obtain(ed) their extra qualifications later than 2010 are no more entitled to this allowance. In Ireland there also exists an allowance depending on the qualification; however, since 2012 newly appointed teachers (and hence future head teachers) are not entitled to such an allowance.

In Finland and Denmark salary allowances to school heads for school heads who obtain extra formal education qualifications are not centrally defined and depend on local level agreements.

Financial incentives to school heads in order to participate in continuing professional development (cpd) activities

A small number of EU countries have centrally defined salary allowances for school heads who undertake further CPD activities (i.e. non-formal education activities) (Eurydice, 2013c). In Bulgaria there is a fixed monthly allowance; in Estonia head teachers receive a fixed extra salary supplement provided that they have participated in a specified number of CPD activities within a period of six years; in Hungary head teachers who have completed a specified number of hours in further CPD activities within a period of seven years can progress in their wage scale by one year; in Malta school heads receive a fixed allowance for the three two-hour compulsory professional development sessions held after school hours during each school year.

In Denmark and Finland salary allowances to school heads for further CPD activities are not centrally defined and depend on local level agreements. Finally, in the United Kingdom (England & Wales and Northern Ireland) school governing bodies may decide to award school heads additional payment for continuing professional development undertaken outside the school day.

20.4 Policy challenges and recommendations

On the basis of the analysis of the evidence collected, the working group has identified a set of policy challenges and has tried to outline brief policy recommendations for making the education of school leaders more conducive to the promotion of learning and equity educational goals.

Upgrading the school leaders’ system of initial education and training

The establishment of a compulsory qualification for school heads in those countries that currently do not require one, can be a policy lever to raise the overall quality of school leaders. This is particularly the case with countries where currently there is scarcity of formal education/training programmes dedicated to the
preparation of school leaders. On the other side, the establishment of a mandatory qualification obtained after participation in demanding programmes of study, may discourage many talented professionals from pursuing a career as school head for various reasons (heavy workload, no opportunity for obtaining a leave for studies, family obligations etc). This could also be the case with mandated qualifications which can only be obtained through programmes that are offered for a high fee that should be paid by the learners. In such circumstances a mandated qualification can increase vacancies in headship posts in schools. Therefore, the policy choice between mandated and non-mandated qualification programmes for the preparation of school leaders should be considered alongside a framework of incentives.

Some important policy questions when considering mandating a qualification programme for current and aspiring school heads and other members of formal school management teams are the following:

a) **Target learners**
   - Should all serving school heads obtain a mandated qualification or just the newly appointed?
   - Should the qualification become a requirement for school heads or also for a wider range of staff in schools that belongs to the formal leadership team (for example deputy heads, heads of departments, coordinators of curriculum areas, members of school boards etc)?

b) **Providers’ and programmes’ accreditation/quality assurance**
   - Which institutions are going to provide the qualification programme? Should it be a single institution under the direct supervision of the Ministry of Education or independent providers? Should providers be exclusively traditional formal education providers, such as universities/teacher training institutions, or should also other non-formal education providers such as training centres, professional associations or NGO’s be allowed to become providers?
   - What will be the system of accreditation of programmes and providers? What institution(s) is going to be the accreditation/quality assurance agency (independent or government controlled)?
   - Should all school leadership programmes be aligned to a common national/regional standards framework or providers can develop/adopt different school leadership standards upon which to build their programmes?

c) **Curricula**
   - Should different providers be able to develop and offer their own (accredited) curricula or all providers should have to offer a common curriculum? In case of a single national/regional curriculum, which institution(s) should take the responsibility of developing it, by following what kind of processes?

d) **Costs**
   - What are the costs involved in setting up and running the education/training programmes leading to the mandated qualification?
   - What are the costs involved in accrediting programmes and providers and implementing quality assurance for their services?
   - What finance mechanisms should be established? (Should such programmes be offered for free or learners or should learners also pay?)

**Curricula and CPD activities on school leadership for equity and learning**

The working group found that equity considerations do not seem to play a major role in the education of school heads and concluded that the integration of equity in school leaders education and training programmes is a critical policy challenge. As a set of general principles, along these lines, policy makers are
advised to consider encouraging the development of school leadership education/ training and CPD programs and activities that:

- Aim to develop school leaders' capacity for critical reflection, substantiated by evidence, on the conditions and factors influencing teaching, learning, and equity in their local, school context.
- Promote a holistic approach of school leadership, incorporating the attainment of both equity and learning achievement goals in a balanced way.
- Acknowledge the existing variety of perspectives, experiences, knowledge, values, ways of learning; in short, stimulate the recognition of difference (El Haj, 2007).
- Target whole school leadership capacity building, focusing on democratic, collaborative and innovative school management and pedagogic leadership methods.

In terms of their overall organizational rationale, school leadership educational and training programs and CPD activities should accordingly be designed to fulfill the following criteria:

- Close relevance to the concrete challenges of leading schools in local contexts (Hess and Kelly, 2007; Levine, 2005).
- Promotion of a practice-oriented curricular sequence and of instructional coherence (Gaetane et al., 2008).
- Adoption of an international perspective on school leadership education and training that emphasizes the practical benefits of international networking and that challenges ethnocentric and cultural biases (Lumby et al., 2009).

Policy makers are thus advised to support the incorporation of methods and techniques in the curricula of school leaders’ education and training programmes as well as in CPD activities such as the following:

- Activities that stimulate the development of self-reflection and respect for difference. Examples include: cross-cultural interviews (where participants engage in a one-on-one encounter with an individual who is different from them in ethnicity/race/religion/sexual orientation); diversity panels (where participants engage in a sharing of their educational experiences, and participate in informal question and answer sessions); activist action plans (where participants identify issues that can trigger conflicts, i.e. unequal distribution of material/social resources or differing values, beliefs, and cultural expressions, and then develop practical, doable strategies for avoiding them and/or resolving them (Brown, 2004).
- Activities that enhance a data-wise, localized, practice-oriented approaches for dealing with equity challenges. The most relevant example, here, is the method of equity audits that can be applicable at school or school-cluster level. Equity audits include the collection of relevant data to equity issues, their analysis, the group discussion on possible solutions, the adoption and implementation of proposed solutions, and the monitoring and evaluation of these solutions. School leaders should be educated in organizing and acting as the facilitators of these audits; during all the steps of the process, where all relevant stakeholders should be invited to participate and share their views (Skrla, 2004).

Incentives for school leaders for participating in education programmes

On the basis of the working group’s research results, policy makers are invited to consider the establishment of a coherent, varied and flexible set of explicit incentives for current and prospective school leaders for participating in leadership study programmes and undertaking CPD activities for equity and learning. A comprehensive incentives’ framework can combine direct monetary incentives (such as salary increases or additional allowances paid within the same occupational grade), career advancement/retaining incentives (promotion to a higher occupational grade, retaining the same occupational grade), and time compensation (paid leave, time off). Furthermore, policy making should consider similar incentives for participation in
informal CPD activities, provided that they have established mechanisms for the recognition (and hence valuing) of such kind of activities.

**Selection, career and succession of school leaders**

On the basis of the evidence collected by the working group, policy makers are called to focus on promoting processes of selection, career development and replacement of school leaders that facilitate the transition of future school leaders to these emerging roles. The current state of the recruitment and development of school leaders varies widely across Europe and in this context it is not viable to provide a uniform, one size fits all model (Kikis-Papadakis and Villalba, 2012).

The challenge for policy makers is to design and support innovative, transparent mechanisms for selecting school leaders, design attractive career development opportunities, and establish replacement procedures that ensure a balance between school continuity and change. Policy actions should focus on ensuring that:

a) Specialized leadership training as well as relevant skills and competences outweigh other criteria in the recruitment of school leaders.

b) School leaders’ career paths become more mobile, allowing principals to move between schools as well as between leadership and teaching and other related careers.

c) There are established transparent and impartial procedures in the selection of school leaders.

d) The procedures for the replacement of school leaders include succession planning (proactively encouraging other staff - particularly within the same school- to develop leadership skills), as well as a process of consultation with school stakeholders as to strike a balance between continuity and change in relation to the existing school culture and mission.
CONCLUSION: SCHOOL LEADERSHIP POLICY DEVELOPMENT

Data collection and analysis has been widely recognised as a crucial factor for improving the quality of education (Kikis-Papadakis and Villalba, 2012). For school leadership policy, in particular, OECD has emphasised the need for a “data-wise school leadership”, calling school leaders to develop skills in “interpreting test results and using data as a central tool to plan and design appropriate strategies for improvement” (OECD, 2008, p. 52). Along these lines, research projects developed by the EPNoSL working groups and this report have tried to contribute to the development of an evidence-base that can be directly useful for improving school leadership practices along five thematic axes: autonomy, accountability, distributed leadership, policy response, and educating school leaders.

The research results presented here, however, cannot be taken as sufficient to fully account for the complexities and particularities permeating school leadership policy and practice across European education systems. Moreover, the contingency and unpredictability involved between policy design and implementation need to be better understood in order to ensure that the intended outcomes are indeed realised. Therefore, research evidence that would inform formative and summative evaluation of specific policy initiatives is of outmost importance. In particular, this report has concluded that school leadership policy development for the promotion of equity and learning would benefit from further research on the following topics:

- There is little research on the effects of the implementation of school reforms that have taken place the last 10 years, particularly on the effect of school accountability mechanisms and their impact on schools in areas with challenging socio-economic and cultural issues (e.g. high unemployment, violence, racial tensions etc) (Johansson and Höög, 2013).
- Further research is needed in order to identify how and under what conditions different types and levels of school autonomy enhance school leaders’ capacity to effectively address issues of equity and learning.
- Further research is needed on the manner in which leadership functions may have negative or positive consequences by highlighting the impact of some practices, at local school level, which contribute to patterns of exclusion/inclusion and unfairness/fairness in individual schools. In this way particular aspects of practice can be overtly challenged by scholarship in order to deliver a better outcome for all students.
- Another area of research has to do with the extent to which training programs address issues of equity and learning and the effectiveness of such programmes in actual school leaders’ practice (Johansson and Höög, 2013).

Autonomy for equity and learning

School autonomy has been defined, in the context of this report, as a term indicating that schools and school-level actors have been given some room for maneuver to take their own decisions in managing schools and dealing with everyday teaching and learning challenges, and that constrains from the outside - and inside - are reduced to the necessary and legitimate frames, values and norms. Under this perspective, and based on the research results emanating from the studies conducted, EPNoSL has identified the following policy challenges regarding school autonomy:

- Policies for the promotion of school autonomy should specify in what decision-making areas school autonomy should be widened (or even narrowed down), for which purposes is autonomy granted,
and what should be the appropriate mechanisms (accountability systems, overarching frameworks, standards) through which school autonomy can be controlled or counterbalanced.

- Policies that grant more autonomy to schools and in parallel promote an over-regulated, bureaucratic and stifling accountability system can be detrimental to the room for maneuver that school leaders actually have to promote equity and learning in schools. This is because school leaders may be required to spend more and more time reporting to educational authorities higher up in the hierarchy or performing administrative tasks than organising instruction and school life as a whole in order to promote equity and learning.

- Policies on school autonomy across European education systems have not sufficiently integrated priorities for tackling inequities in educational practice on the ground. School autonomy becomes a critical policy action for equity goals, as decreasing educational inequities within and amongst schools requires a vast array of initiatives that redress the entire range of discriminatory and exclusionary practices that are produced and re-produced within the school environment.

- Among the implications of policies that widen school autonomy is that the work of school leaders becomes more demanding and complex. The widening of the distribution of school leadership tasks and responsibilities is one important option that can help school leaders to deal more effectively with an increased workload. Routine administrative tasks can be transferred to non-teaching support staff in order to leave school leaders with more time to deal with issues that are closely related to learning and equity.

- The pace with which reforms that grand more autonomy to schools are introduced, is a critical factor in their implementation. Particularly in education systems with a long tradition of centralisation in decision making and relatively low school autonomy, changes in the governance of schools should be introduced in a gradual manner so that schools become more capable to cope with their new tasks and responsibilities.

Accountability for equity and learning

The policy debate around appropriate accountability mechanisms has not been settled in Europe, with many divergent approaches currently in operation in EU countries/regions (OECD, 2012a). As this report has shown, this debate is governed by various, often implicit, logics, such as the:

- **Market logic**: schools are seen as services, where service providers deliver educational goods to consumers. Core concepts are consumers’ choice, competition and efficiency.
- **Managerial logic**: There is a focus on planning, control, standards, top-down management and transparency.
- **Public logic**: The governance of schools takes place through political processes involving policy makers, parents, students and professionals.
- **Professional logic**: Schools are managed and led according to professional, educational standards and professional ethics.
- **Ethical logic**: Schools are held responsible for the comprehensive and overarching upbringing, the education to democratic citizens.

All these divergent logics of accountability have important implications on school leaders’ roles and responsibilities, as well as on school leadership policy development. Furthermore, the impact of accountability systems adopting assumptions following one or a combination of the above logics on the
wider school leadership environment is certainly interdependent with the degrees of school autonomy, the extent to which school leadership is distributed, and the extent to which a democratic culture is embedded in the school system.

The policy implementation of school accountability models needs, in this regard, to take into account these different dimensions. A major challenge for policy design is to ensure that the accountability mechanisms that are established do not undermine the goal of empowering school leadership. Accordingly, this report has identified the following challenges for the development of policies on school accountability:

- As vertical and horizontal dimensions co-exist in all accountability systems that can be observed across Europe, the challenge for policy becomes to decide upon and implement the right mixture of accountability between the two dimensions. What an effective mixture can be surely depends on the particular educational context. Policy solutions should take into account that while governments are responsible for the overall quality of education and therefore they need to steer and control schools, schools are responsible for the quality of education provided to the children of specific local communities and families and therefore they have also to ensure that the legitimacy of their decisions and practices, their fairness, inclusiveness and quality, are also recognised and valued by the local communities they serve.
- Accountability mechanisms should be better integrated with educational policies on equity. The over-reliance of existing accountability practices on school performance outcomes can limit the scope of policies promoting equity in education. School performance accountability is relatively oblivious to the evaluation of other educational aims such as socialisation, inclusion, recognition and valuing of diversity and difference, and personal development, which are critical to the establishment of a more equitable school environment.
- The operation of enabling and efficient accountability practices across the education system requires supportive policy measures (e.g. provision of adequate training, open access to data) that promote evidence-based school leadership practices.

**Distributed leadership for equity and learning**

This report has argued that distributed leadership should not be treated as an end in itself because it cannot automatically lead to organizational improvement across the educational system. Addressing equity and learning challenges benefits from forms of distributed leadership that promote participation and the extension and deepening of democratic processes within and beyond the school environment.

Based on this argument, the report has suggested five requirements, which it would be helpful for policymakers to reflect upon for developing distributed school leadership practices:

- Advancing the quality of school leadership requires developing the leadership capabilities of everyone in the school - both those who are in designated leadership positions and those (such as many teachers, support staff and students) who are not.
- Developing the leadership capabilities of all requires the development of school cultures and structures that provide the social, professional and institutional support necessary to create environments that facilitate individual initiative and collaborative working and learning.
- The development and sustaining of such school cultures and structures requires long-term investment by schools and by the governments and other agencies that support schools.
- Distributed leadership requires respect for both autonomy (individual views, professionalism, creativity and needs) and authority (school purpose, goals, values and structures), which means school members helping to shape schools’ educational purpose, values, etc. as well as working within these.
• Helping distributed leadership to be fair and of benefit to the learning of all requires it to be guided by a broad concept of social justice that encourages schools to ask critical questions about involvement (participative justice), respect (cultural justice), learning (developmental justice) and resources (distributive justice).

The research studies on distributed leadership conducted in the context of this work package have concluded that this is a critical policy area for the promotion of a school leadership agenda which, has, however been approached and implemented in differing ways in the European education context. In this regard, the report has drawn the following policy challenges for promoting distributing leadership for the attainment of learning and equity educational goals:

**Deepening distributed leadership** for attaining both equity and learning goals should become part of a wider policy strategy based on the notion that participative and democratic decision-making can be more effective in identifying and meeting the local needs of disadvantaged groups of students as well as empowering staff and students in becoming active in the everyday operation of their school.

**Mainstreaming distributed leadership**: it should be integrated into all areas of school leadership policy. Emphasis should be given in harmonising existing and future capacity-building education and training programs with a culture of distributed school leadership.

Factors such as education and school culture, existing degrees of autonomy and forms of accountability, school size, are critical in designing the implementation of distributed leadership models. The precise forms of distributed leadership that may be conducive to an enabling school leadership environment for equity and learning can vary since they heavily depend on context.

**Policy response**

The research has dealt with factors that are considered as critical in school leadership policy implementation. From a wider perspective, policy implementation unfolds through complex processes and interactions deeply embedded in long-standing traditions, ideological and political antagonisms, habitual modes of thinking and acting, and established power relations. Among these, the report has placed of particular importance in policy implementation are the following:

• History and culture are very powerful influences on policy and practice. Each nation or each region within a nation thinks and acts within its history, national ideology, and its own political sense of what is right. Policy ideas are formulated, interpreted and acted upon differently within different nation states.
• Social class, language, religion, ethnicity, the structure of political institutions and the nature of political culture affect the way in which policy is played out.
• Policy decisions are by their very nature highly political and may be shaped not least by the requirements of staying in office - governments are as much about staying in office and getting elected as achieving particular policy goals.
• Policies may be shaped and crafted not on the basis of any evidence-based research but simply on the beliefs and commitments of policy-makers and their advisers.
• Policy-making may be substantially shaped by symbolic considerations that may have little to do with the real effects of policies. For example, political talk and action might be intended to shape and then respond to politically created issues and problems as much as to any real practical concerns. Equally, political spectacle might be used to hide policies and actions that might have material advantages for some groups over others.
• Policy reforms may be crafted simply to focus on the politically salient; in other words what can be done instead of what might really make a difference.
• Policies that evolve from the political process are quite often unclear and ambiguous, containing divergent meanings, contradictions and structured omissions. Moreover, they are to be interpreted and implemented often by institutions and individuals - such as schools and teachers - who have had no hand in their drafting or planning.

• The entire process of policy development and implementation takes place in a wider political context that is constantly changing, multi-faceted, and in a constant state of flux.

• Institutions such as schools possess considerable ability to resist or alter policies to fit their own dynamics or to maintain the status quo and to avoid change in response to external demands. Moreover, schools are operating in a complex environment in which they are likely to be required to respond to multiplicity of policy demands and expectations simultaneously. Thus the nature of institutional interaction with policy at the local level is critical in determining policy response and framing its implementation.

• Policies are transformed by those who have to turn them into practice. Key actors within institutions such as head teachers and teachers within schools have the capacity – even with nationally prescribed policy initiatives – to alter, shape and craft policy texts in accordance with their own professional and personal values, beliefs, understandings and goals.

**Educating school leaders**

The research studies have emphasized the critical importance of establishing and/or upgrading school leaders education as a policy action that can address learning and equity challenges. At the same time, the current deficiencies of school leadership education/training programs across European education systems, such as the marginalisation of equity considerations and the relative absence of hands on practical school leadership training, make it essential to consider policy intervention that:

• Aim to develop school leaders' capacity for critical reflection, substantiated by evidence, on the conditions and factors influencing teaching, learning, and equity in their local, school context.

• Promote a holistic approach of school leadership, incorporating the attainment of both equity and learning achievement goals in a balanced way.

• Acknowledge the existing variety of perspectives, experiences, knowledge, values, ways of learning; in short, stimulate the recognition of difference.

• Target whole school leadership capacity building, focusing on democratic, collaborative and innovative school management and pedagogic leadership methods.

A great challenge for policy development is to design and support innovative, transparent mechanisms for selecting school leaders, design attractive career development opportunities, and establish replacement procedures that ensure a balance between school continuity and change. Policy design, along these lines, should focus on ensuring that:

• Specialized leadership training as well as relevant skills and competences outweigh other criteria in the recruitment of school leaders.

• School leaders’ career paths become more mobile, allowing principals to move between schools as well as between leadership and teaching and other related careers.

• There are established transparent and impartial procedures in the selection of school leaders.

• The procedures for the replacement of school leaders include succession planning (proactively encouraging other staff - particularly within the same school- to develop leadership skills), as well as a process of consultation with school stakeholders as to strike a balance between continuity and change in relation to the existing school culture and mission.
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Autonomy for equity and learning


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**Educating School Leaders for equity and learning**


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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Script of the individual in-depth interview with stakeholders in the AREA of school leadership in Poland

Participants
Five IDI with the representatives of:
- institution of education system,
- scholars, researchers,
- practitioner (principal),
- Educational Inspectorate
- local authorities

Such sampling of the interviewees enables to maintain diversity of perspectives (different actors) and captures the diversity by the scale (principals – local level [of school]), an employee of the regional educational inspectorates (regional level), representatives of the Ministry of Education, Education Development Centre, higher education institution (national level)

Duration
1 – 1.5 h

Place
Agreed with the respondent

Additional information
The interviewees receive the description of the activities of EPNoSL prior to the interview

Aim
Introduction, presenting the aims of the study. Presentation of the activities within EPNoSL

Activities
- Welcoming, presentation of the aims of the meeting, highlighting that the context for us is being a leader in the Polish education system, with the focus on school (not only formal and legal accountability but also creating learning culture):
  - Gathering the opinions on accountability in the context of the learning process and providing equal opportunities, promoting equity in the Polish school
- Information about recording and explaining the aim of the recording, ensuring that the recording will be used only for the research purposes.
- Understanding of the term accountability in the Polish school.
- Let us talk first about the term itself – accountability, a lot of authors claim that it is untranslatable into Polish (Kruszewski, Mizerek). However, two meanings are indicated – accountability/responsibility
  - Do you understand this term? What is the idea behind it? Towards whom and for what? Why? What is included in this except for formal and legal accountability? The context of leadership is important here (of being a leader, not only a manager and civil servant).
- Note – we gather associations of the interviewee and classify them together. If they have not appeared, we indicate the following categories (according to the understanding adopted in EPNoSL, after OECD):
  - Accountability in the Polish school.
  - What accountability means in practice in the Polish school? How does it manifest itself? For what purpose is accountability implemented? What follows from this?
Note, depending on the category of the interviewee, we ask:

- At the level of school (for a principal, teachers, students, parents). Please give examples.
- At the local, commune level (for territorial government units, inhabitants). Please give examples.
- At the regional level (e.g. for the regional educational inspectorates). Please give examples.
- At the national level (for the whole education system, for the Ministry of Education, central institutions, public opinion)? Please give examples.

Accountability in the institution of the interviewee:

- What does accountability consist in your institution – towards whom and for what are you held accountable? How does it look in practice?
- Who is accountable towards your institution? Who do you control? How does it look in practice?
- Which levels mentioned earlier are covered by this?

Gathering the opinions on the relationship between accountability and the learning process:

- Do you see the relationship between accountability and the learning process? What this relationship consists in?
- Just a moment ago we discussed accountability at different levels (of school, city, region, country). Is the translation of the adopted accountability model into the learning process visible at the particular level:

Note, depending on the category of the interviewee, we ask:

- of school (the style of work of a principal, teachers, the style of work of students, the attitude of parents towards school). Please give examples.
- of the style of education management in the commune? Please give examples.
- at the regional level (how the schools look like in the particular voivodeships). Please give examples.
- for the whole education system (what are the directions of educational policy, what curricula are implemented, what the educational law is like)? Please give examples.

The influence of the accountability on the learning process:

- To sum up – what are the positive and negative effects of the above mentioned accountability on the learning process? Can we discuss some concrete examples?
- What are the challenges for education system in order to make full use of accountability for the learning process of students?
- What are the challenges for school in order to make full use of accountability for the learning process of students?
- For the bodies running schools?
- For the educational supervision institutions?
- For other institutions of education system?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gathering the opinions on the relationship between accountability and providing equal opportunities, individualisation, promoting equity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Do you see the relationship between accountability and providing equal opportunities, individualisation, promoting equity? What this relationship consists in?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Just a moment ago we discussed accountability at different levels (of school, city, region, country). Is the translation of the adopted accountability model into providing equal opportunities, individualisation, promoting equity visible:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• from the perspective of school (the style of work of a principal, teachers, the style of work of students, the attitude of parents towards school).</td>
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<tr>
<td>• at the local perspective?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• at the regional perspective (how the schools look like in the particular voivodeships)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• for the whole country (what are the directions of educational policy, what curricula are implemented, what the educational law is like)?</td>
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</table>

The influence of accountability on the activities aimed at providing equal educational opportunities

| • To sum up – what are the positive and negative effects of the above mentioned accountability on the activities aimed at providing equal opportunities, individualisation, promoting equity? Please give examples. |
| • What are the challenges for education system in order to make full use of accountability for the activities aimed at equity? |
| • What are the challenges for school in order to make full use of accountability for the activities aimed at equity? |
| • For the bodies running schools? |
| • For the educational supervision institutions? |
| • For other institutions of education system? |

Conclusion of the meeting

Thanking
Appendix 2: Questionnaire from the German case study on distributed leadership

1. Personal details

1.1 Sex:
- male
- female

1.2 Age:
- 30+
- 40+
- 50+
- 60+

1.3 What kind of qualification did you receive for your leadership position?
- NLQ qualification
- Master degree
- Other

1.4 Specify other:

1.5 Are you currently working as a deputy?
- Yes
- No

1.6 How many years of experience in total do you have as a teacher?

1.7 How many years of experience in total do you have as a deputy?

2. Organisation

2.1 In which school form do you work?
- Grundschule (primary)
- Hauptschule
- Realschule
- Oberschule
- Gymnasium (Grammar)
- Förderschule (special needs)
- Haupt-/Realschule
- Gesamtschule (Comprehensive)
- Other

2.3 How many teachers work at your school?
- 361-540
- 541-800
- >800
2.4 Are your tasks as a deputy being described as part of internal regulations?

☐ Yes
☐ No

How many of the following support units exist at your school?

2.5 Deputy
2.6 Cartaker / Facility management
2.7 Administrative officer / School secretary (full time)
2.8 Administrative officer / School secretary (part time)
2.9 Professional IT-support
2.10 Advisors (teachers)
2.11 Social workers
2.12 Grade teams
2.13 Subject teams
2.14 Project groups
2.15 Steering committee

How much support do you get from your school head concerning

2.16 – quality development? (none / little / some / a lot)
2.17 – improving learning outcomes? (none / little / some / a lot)
2.18 Does your school have a cooperative leadership team? No Yes
2.19 Is your school organized by subject- and grade teams? No Yes
2.20 Do the teams have a team leader? No Yes
2.21 Do the teams have their own budget? No Yes
2.22 Does your steering committee mainly consist of team leaders and similar function owners?

How do you estimate the given resources for the following areas?

2.23 substitute teachers (not sufficient / rather not sufficient / rather sufficient / sufficient)
2.24 CPD offers for teachers
2.25 student care, subsistence, transport
2.26 health and safety measures, health management
2.27 cooperative leadership structures

3. Distributed Leadership and expectations

How important are the following competencies for school heads?

3.1 strategic leadership (vision, mission, school programme etc.) (not important / rather / ...)
3.2 pedagogical leadership
3.3 human resources management
3.4 communication and cooperation

How high do you estimate the extent of your involvement in decision-makings of the following?

3.5 school head
3.6 steering committee
3.7 pedagogical leaders
3.8 team leaders
3.9 student government
3.10 parents representatives
How high do you estimate the extent of your accountability in the following areas?
3.11 steering
3.12 evaluation
3.13 human resources management
3.14 resources

How do you estimate your cooperation with the following groups?
3.15 school head
3.16 steering committee
3.17 didactic coordinators
3.18 team leaders
3.19 teachers
3.20 student representation
3.21 parents representatives

How important is it for you that the school head ensures the following?
3.22 smooth processes
3.23 strategic development
3.24 allocation of necessary resources
3.25 pedagogical leadership
3.26 working finance management
3.27 human resources management
3.28 adequate infrastructure and resources for the school
3.29 organisation of stand-in replacements (substitute teachers)
3.30 cooperation with the school authority (provider / body)
3.31 internal evaluation
3.32 distribution of leadership
3.33 effective qualifications
3.34 sufficient support in legal and administrative matters
3.35 care for a good working atmosphere

How important is it for your school head that YOU ensure the following?
3.36 smooth processes
3.37 strategic development
3.38 allocation of necessary resources
3.39 pedagogical leadership
3.40 working finance management
3.41 human resources management
3.42 adequate infrastructure
3.43 organisation of stand-in replacements (substitute teachers)
3.44 cooperation with the school authority (provider / body)
3.45 internal evaluation
3.46 distributed leadership
3.47 effective qualifications
3.48 sufficient support in legal and administrative matters
3.49 care for a good working atmosphere

What are the expectations of your colleagues that YOU ensure the following?
3.50 smooth processes
3.51 strategic development
3.52 allocation of necessary resources
3.53 pedagogical leadership
3.54 working finance management
3.55 human resources management
3.56 adequate infrastructure
3.57 organisation of stand-in replacements (substitute teachers)
3.58 cooperation with the school authority (provider / body)
3.59 internal evaluation
3.60 distributed leadership
3.61 effective qualifications
3.62 sufficient support in legal and administrative matters
3.63 care for a good working atmosphere

How much do you agree with the following statements?
3.64 For my leadership tasks, pedagogical leadership is essential.
3.65 For me distributed leadership is important.
3.66 The teachers at my school have a positive attitude towards distributed leadership.
3.67 At my school teachers can take on management tasks.
3.68 I see myself as a learner at my school.
3.69 To me distributed leadership is more important than to the teachers at my school.
3.70 The teachers at my school do not accept the school head as pedagogical leader.

How happy are you with the following conditions for your deputy tasks?
3.71 autonomy in decision-making
3.72 opportunity to shape things
3.73 opportunity to give instructions

Which of the following factors influence your motivation to remain as a deputy?
3.74 sufficient teaching resources
3.75 sufficient administrative resources
3.76 opportunity for distributed leadership

Indicate the number of sessions per term in which you participate:
3.77 general teachers assembly
3.78 steering committee
3.79 school board
3.80 school leadership team meetings
3.81 subject conferences
3.82 interlocution with teachers
3.83 lesson observations
3.84 student council meetings
3.85 discussions with school head
3.86 discussions with parents
3.87 regional school head meetings

How many hours per week do you need for the following activities?
3.88 smooth processes
3.89 strategic development
3.90 allocation of necessary resources
3.91 pedagogical leadership
3.92 creation of working plans
3.93 adequate infrastructure
3.94 organisation of stand-in replacements (substitute teachers)
3.95 internal evaluation of school activities
3.96 distributed leadership
3.97 effective qualifications
3.98 sufficient support in administrative matters
3.99 care for a good working atmosphere
3.100 immediate issues of the day
3.101 mails and correspondence

**How do you estimate the importance of the following aspects of your deputy tasks?**

3.102 involvement of parents in decision-making
3.103 development of school autonomy
3.104 distributed leadership
3.105 pedagogical leadership in school

3.106 Do you personally strive for taking the position of a school head?
Appendix 3: Correlations from the German case study on distributed leadership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cooperative leadership structures</th>
<th>Steering group</th>
<th>School board</th>
<th>School leadership team meeting</th>
<th>Teachers’ subject meeting</th>
<th>Annual performance review</th>
<th>Class consultation</th>
<th>Meeting with school head</th>
<th>School development</th>
<th>Pedagogical leadership</th>
<th>DL</th>
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<tr>
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Appendix 4: Questionnaire from Lithuanian case study on distributed leadership

1. Do you know about distributed leadership?
   a) Yes
   b) Not enough
   c) No

2. How do you share leadership in your educational institution?
   Please write 3-5 sentences

3. In your opinion, the leadership is shared in the ways that suit the values of educational institution (equity, honesty, community involvement, etc.)?
   e) Yes
   f) Not enough
   g) No

4. If yes, what are the ways?
   Please write 3-5 sentences

5. In your opinion, are the educational institution community members aware that leadership is characteristic not only to the school administration?
   a) Yes
   b) Not enough
   c) No

6. If yes, how do you know that community members are aware of this?
   Please write 3-5 sentences

7. In your opinion, would the results of educational institution activities change if distributed leadership would be implemented?
   Please write 3-5 sentences

8. What is your occupation in the educational institution?
   a) Head teacher
   b) Vice head teacher
   c) Council chairperson
   d) Head of an Unit
   e) Other

9. What is the type of the educational institution?
   1. Pre-school
   2. Primary school
   3. Basic school
   4. Pro-gymnasium
   5. Gymnasium
6. Secondary school  
7. Youth school  
8. Vocational school  
9. Other  

10. Would you like to know more about the project and distributed leadership?  
   Yes  
   No
Appendix 5: Collages and summer accounts of discussions and interviews from the UK case study on distributed leadership

Staff

Below are notes based on the discussions, interviews and each staff participant’s explanation of their collage.

Analysis of Group A

Group A consisted of four senior leaders.

A1

Description and leadership. The shape of the collage by A1, a senior leader, is holarchic. A1’s main emphasis could be interpreted as dissolving distinctions and boundaries: he does not want to show distinctions between teaching/support staff, middle/senior leaders. A1 also emphasises the vision that stands above the leadership and gives direction to all.

The collage comprises a balloon standing vertically above scattered small pieces on the sheet. The randomly sorted pieces that were ‘chucked onto the paper’ - they are people in the school. A1 didn’t distinguish between teaching and support staff. He explained that he randomly sorted them, and then the straws represent there being lots of links between these people. There’s a formal structure but it’s quite informal too. People network. The relevance of intellectual and social capital is mentioned. Most of our staff, A1 explains, are pretty well networked and cohesive. There are a few ‘dinosaurs’, but not many. They annoy us, A1 explains. Deliberately, no distinction is made between middle and senior leaders. A minority are dysfunctional, and these are shown as being on their sides. We have capacity to deal with them, A1 explains. Each of us gets on, but we have clear demarked roles. Fluid and separate. The balloon represents the corporate vision. They have taken time on this. A1 explains that he thinks that the bulk of our staff know where we are going, being signed up to this ‘good to great journey’.

A1 says you can distribute leadership but not accountability. It is good to see ‘risks’ being taken, but if anything went pear-shaped it would quickly come back to you (the head). ‘We have clear structures but within that freedom’ A1 refers also to the best schools having very tight structures (clear systems) but within that everyone’s free to explore. Creating distributed leadership culture takes time. Got to build capacity first. So focus on recruitment and retention. A1 elaborates on this in the paired interview, including stable senior leadership team.
Asked about distributed leadership being democratic, A1 says Yes and no. Some think we have the final say. Time is an issue. Consult when possible. A2, in the paired interview with A1, says we’re a lot more political - have informal conversations, don’t claim we’re consulting when we’re not.

**Social justice.** We walk around a lot and have let go, but others in the active roles ‘may see it differently.’ A1 recognises impact of graduate teaching force on problem of involving support staff (in response to A2’s comments below). At the same time, the ladies in the canteen set their own objectives. They have been told that what they do is important for learning. A2, in the paired interview with A1, agrees and says they feel hugely empowered. A1 acknowledges some want to come in and go home. A2 responds that innovation is the great thing. Getting them to feel they can innovate. A1 says respect is the thing. I think we are very good at being non-hierarchical - using 1st names, giving respect, and non-respect is picked up.

**Contextual factors.** A problem for schools in special measures - unlike Heathvale School - is that they are always into quick fixes. They don’t have the time to refine things. Our imperative, explains A1, is more than just what Ofsted [the national inspectorate] says.

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**Description and leadership.** The shape of the collage by A2, a senior leader, is holarchic. In summary, A2’s view is that leadership opportunities and impact are strong for the senior leadership team and middle leaders, weaker for teachers, and weakest for students and support staff. Nevertheless there is a strong bond (a bridge) between the senior leadership team and teaching/support staff, and overall the structure should be seen as quite flat.

The collage is flat, representing for A2 quite a flat structure across the school. ‘These things here’ represent the students. The tokens represent tokenism, says A2. The paper is the school. The red underneath represents teachers in school; but A2 says he doesn’t know how impactful the teachers’ leadership is. Some teachers do leadership in the community - that’s the bit over the edge in the collage.

‘Blue is middle leaders, and they have biggest impact’. They are ‘hugely empowered’. Middle leadership have opportunities to really lead across the school - I think we’ve worked quite hard to make that happen, A2 explains - again some in the community. A2 confirmed this in paired interview: the ‘shift started 3 years ago, to shift leadership to the middle. Goes back to Prussian general in 18th century, aiming to create leaders who can respond to what’s in front of them but in line with the same intent across leaders. This is from the business literature. Get away from organisational friction. Distribute leadership so that they can work out how to get to the same intent. Reviewed it recently. Getting embedded. We’re going to have to get used to letting go.’ A2 emphasised the latter point.

The senior leadership team is hugely important. Sets direction. Great clarity. The senior leadership team is shown as shiny and bright - small group. Senior leaders set direction and make some decisions, but by and large we have conversations with middle leaders in which they tell us what they’ve done rather than ask us what they can do. Later A2 (responding to A3) says we rely on middle leaders to disperse the message. We believe if they’re to be empowered to do the job, they also need to deliver the message. But it’s not always delivered in the way it should be - we must enable them to be clearer, more precise and confident in the message.
The school governors are represented - but as an afterthought, as A2 doesn’t think they offer a great deal of leadership: governors are ‘thin’ and not particularly impactful.

Here is our support staff: if you unfolded this it would be huge but it is deliberately folded. Tried to measure it very much into a square because I think they live by very tight rules, and I don’t think they have the freedoms we have over here.

There’s a bridge here that is quite strong, A2 explains - it is difficult, A2 says to represent - I think there is one whole team. The bridge represents that there isn’t separation between senior leadership and support staff and teaching staff. I think there’s a really strong bond there - hard to represent that. Don’t have spread of impact that they could have. A2 explains that he believes leadership is quite a flat structure, not massively hierarchical, though it may be in some people’s eyes. A2 explained in discussion that middle leadership, and then finding the tokens to represent tokenism of leadership for many, were the first things that developed in doing the collage.

A2 emphasises towards the end of the discussion the importance of aligning to intent, not to structures. How you get there is not so important. A2 talks about the school’s intent in the paired interview. How they talk about this, the words they use, are important. Not just about what Ofsted want. Eg it’s about creating opportunities for all students, and creating an opportunity doesn’t mean it will happen. ‘Intent is to be excellent school, outstanding, opportunities for all, improve student outcomes, improve teacher input, economy and efficiency. All discussed with staff and agreed to. Enables people to be clear about what they do. Have set metrics for seeing how far the school has reached these, built up from middle leaders who say what they think the targets should be. Eg targets for trips, extra curricular - middle leaders wanted 100% target, for sake of equal opportunities. Ground-up metrics, aggregating targets upwards.’

Students enact leadership with teachers in lessons, but that’s a small minority.

Social justice. To a certain extent I saw student representations almost as tokens, A2 explains, because sometimes I think it’s tokenism leadership - it’s not actually embedded in any way shape or form, it’s not really explained to them about why they are a leader or what leadership represents and how they can impact upon that.

Asked about distributed leadership and social justice: A2 says distributed leadership does help social justice because all staff have the intent. I think where it doesn’t is with support staff. The school has based support staff’s performance objectives on their jobs, not made them uniform with teaching staff. So they have personalised things for support staff, but the school could do more - e.g. support staff ask to do things. I think they see themselves as 2nd class citizens, A2 explains. It’s about respect. I don’t like that they feel like that. ‘Need to involve them in staff days etc. some just want to do job and go home. Problem involving them. They see themselves as 2nd class citizens. But right to be involved and follow good idea is for everyone.’

Contextual factors. Asked about the impact of policies external to the school, A2 says, and A1 agrees but has to go, ‘We ignore a lot of it. Leadership distributed to us as an academy, so we take this and pass this down the system. On EBacc chose not to follow this for all students. Make it available on grounds of choice for those who want it. Accepted by the community. You’ve given us the freedom, we’ll take it. Integrity in what we do. A2 says other schools much more bureaucratic and hierarchical.
Description and leadership. Collage A3 is also that of a senior leader. Its shape is holarchic. In summary, A3 was concerned to recognise that there is structure but did not want to represent this vertically; and he took the view that there was a buffer between the senior leadership team and the rest, and more could be done to explain what it was doing. A further notable theme was that of ‘jewels’ in the ‘dinosaurs’ and some students - that is, the importance of recognising potential. Uniformity of vision is more apparent amongst middle leaders than teachers, according to A3.

A3 explains that he didn’t want to do vertical but still there is a structure. He didn’t want to show a vertical hierarchy. I don’t see the school as a vertical hierarchy at all, A3 explains - I wanted to go outward like that, but still retaining a sense of structure. Outside is community. Then the students we serve, shown as blocks of wood showing that they can be shaped. Then working inwards into the senior leadership team and middle leaders and teachers. Some dinosaurs, but A3 has a jewel in these because they can still have something to contribute. With regard to the senior leadership team, there is still a buffer between it and teachers. The senior leadership team could do more to explain. A3 says you also have in students the ‘diamonds in the rough’.

There is space in the collage - A3 wanted to get over the point overall that whilst there is hierarchy, there is also communication to go on and through. Then in the middle A3 didn’t differentiate between teachers, senior leadership, support staff. That’s the senior leadership there. The vision is shared with middle leaders and they in turn... They’re not all shapes and sizes - there is more regularity of vision in those middle leaders. The teachers are all shapes & sizes - one dinosaur, and that says more about me, says A3. That dinosaur has a jewel in it. They can still contribute. There's lots of jewels there. As a school we survive and grow because everyone’s different, and that has an impact on students.

Whilst it is a circle, there is a little bit of a buffer zone between the senior leadership team and the teachers. There could be work to be done on the senior leadership team explaining its reasoning to teachers. I think middle leaders understand it. Middle leaders could share more about why these decisions have been made so we can get more out of these jewels.

The sparkly stuff everywhere is the community which can’t have a set pattern. School is messy. Can cause tension when community uses school resources.

Asked about distributed leadership being democratic, A3 responds that from staff perspective, it is meritocratic. Regarding students, there is a requirement for some positions for applications. For some students, we will say you should just do this.

Social justice. This doesn't come up according to A3 - no issues with race and gender - ‘it’s a meritocracy. For some staff maybe, because they haven’t caught the vision, issues arise - e.g. access to car park which is an issue for some, e.g. when the car park is being used by the community. Asked about social justice for students, A3 says that they will push some students with poor economic backgrounds to be in leadership positions. The issue is to balance that with more advantaged. There is always a quiet middle. Are we being just with them? There will be hidden gems in them.

Contextual factors. Asked about the impact of policies external to the school, A3 says he leaves the headteacher to filter what’s relevant. A4 agrees. A3 says there is respect for the headteacher regarding this.
A4 cites pay policy. A3 says there is a lot of work by the senior leadership team to protect staff. Having been on the senior leadership team he appreciates their work.

Description and leadership. The shape of the collage by A4, also a senior leader, is hierarchical. In summary, A4 sees the structure as hierarchical, with decisions clearly coming from the senior leadership team at the top, though she also gives examples of leadership agency lower down the hierarchy.

These are the governors, A4 explains - dinosaurs, not all of them - the governors a bit detached. We tell them and they go along with it. This is the senior leadership team and they are at the top. The senior leadership team is shown as separate in the collage because this is where the decisions come out, though the rest of the staff are informed in a very good way. It is still the senior leadership team that are making those decisions feeding down to middle leaders. A4 didn't differentiate support staff and didn't include students. The different colours (of the paper) are irrelevant.

A4 makes the point that some who have what they see as quite a minor role in fact have an important leadership role. She gives an example of a member of the support staff - actually, explains A4, she leads on making sure we've got provisions in, making sure there's tea and coffee available in the morning: even though she's a very low paid member of staff, 'in her own way she's a leader'.

Social justice. A4 responds by saying that all have access to professional development - professional development opportunities have been extended to support staff. The well-being 'suggestion box' provides an opportunity for staff to provide solutions with the problems they raise. A4 also says that the senior leadership team respects all.

Analysis of Group B

Group B comprised four members of the support staff.

Description and leadership. B1 explains the Big fish is me as this is about how I feel about it. I feel that I’m very protected as a member of staff with the senior leadership team (SLT). Probably because of my personality. But, B1 explains, there's a lot more to me. So I feel like I’m constantly having to battle with that, because I’m having to prove all the time. Same with most of the people up here. This is like a chamber - I feel I’m closed in. So the collage shows I’m protected, seen in a nice way, it's all sunny, fluffy, but there's this
little area that I’m really not happy with, couldn’t make it darker, and that’s happened in last couple of months. I was trying to get something to represent not being taken seriously, but couldn’t quite find it. There’s been a couple of situations where I’ve had remarks. The incidents have been addressed, B1 explains. There’s also part of me that wanted to represent hurt as well. As long as they’re doing something about the situation, that’s all you can ask. I like it perfect… B1 says in any job today, so much more is expected of you. I think without giving the politician’s answer, there’s always good and bad. I personally see a lot more good in relation my job, ‘I feel like I’m looked after, personally. I think I’m probably that sort of person that people feel that they can look after.’ Very happy with this. The majority of SLT show me a great deal of respect. Re SLT if you show respect to them and you’re doing the best you can, they know… You have to earn respect. I do respect them. On the whole we’re pretty happy here. I think personally they’re not a clique, but.. [pause].

(B2 interjects, there’s a club) Yes. They’re team of people, they all know each other, they all have meetings together, so they’re going to stick together. They are open to ideas but I don’t think anyone could be in the club. B1 explains how she’s made progress in her job, extending what she does. There’s this gap, if they think you’re here in the pyramid [low down] they think you’re far less intelligent and you’ve got less...It depends on the individuals. They’re not all like that [having assumptions about those lower in pyramid]. Can’t praise head enough. He’s always grateful for what you do.

Social justice. As far as SLT is concerned, B1 says, they forget they’re people and we’re people and we’re all the same, may be get paid more or whatever. As long as you’ve got respect for people and they have for you. B1 knows of a different school in special measures which has a poor SLT. At Heathvale, the structure and everything is about right. I like what I’m doing but I feel like I’m worth more. I do feel they realise that. I feel valued, I do feel valued. Asked if the leadership is democratic, B1 says we understand that it cannot be, we go with that. We’re support staff and play big role. But there are some who don’t go with that and put a spanner in the works. The majority are happy, but you get small group of moaners.They don’t appreciate what they have in this school.

Contextual factors. Don’t hear about external policy. Only occasionally.

Description and leadership. C B2 says his collage is not structured like B3’s at all. This is SLT and then the rest move around. People move up and down according to his job. He gets around as a technician. Depends on who B2 is catering to. For me, says B2, there’s only a few set people who have influence; other than that everyone else doesn’t really know what I do. I just fix their problems and that’s it. (Others in the group praise him for his work.) There’s no structure in it amongst the great mass. B2 explains that he did the collage from his point of view, rather than from how the structure of the school is laid out. B3’s is more accurate, says B2 - more like the theoretical way it should be. But life isn’t like that. People at the top are like shadows.

Social justice. B2 says I think that DL does aid social justice. He came as an apprentice, now they’re bringing in a new apprentice, and and he’s going on courses the school’s paid for. ‘They’ve obviously seen I’m willing to work hard’. Regarding voice, B2 explains that he works in tight team and line manager will take things up and say things. Other people in the school don’t have same experience. See himself as lucky. In his view all the students have the same chance but depends on the teacher and the student. Asked if the leadership is democratic, B2 says it is not democratic, it’s tyrannical. It’s half and half - the club at the top meet and that’s done. but you couldn’t really run it in a different way, you can’t have it democratic for a whole school.
**Contextual factors.** The information is there if we want it, but it doesn’t apply to us.

**Description and leadership.** B3 describes the collage as a ‘pyramid of power’. At the top are the governors. Then we have the head. Then the three pieces just below are the deputy heads, one slightly larger than the other because ‘I believe’ they have more influence on the school. The assistant heads; then the teachers including senior teachers; then ‘we have the perception of senior support staff’, then ‘we have the support staff at the bottom’; and the sequins around are the students. They are sequins because there’s lots of them. B3 explains that the students (the sequins) are deliberately outside the pyramid because that is a pyramid of leadership, though she recognises that students do have an influence. B3 acknowledges that students do have leadership positions when this is suggested, but it’s not the same as inside the pyramid. ‘And to be honest with you, I don’t know who they [students in leadership positions] are.’ They don’t have power. B3 (and others in the group) view the head teacher as having a lot of power. Asked about connections between people, B3 explains that the connections are up and down. The governors are at the top because they have ultimate control by law. B3 says ‘I’m here, I feel down here’ in the pyramid. B3 also believes that the school been transformed since new head. She been here long time, over 14 years. Sees more people involved in leadership. Student intake gone up. Although at the bottom of the pyramid, B3 feels more involved in leadership ‘in my own little world’ because she manages a whole school scheme. Senior support staff meet, but not support staff who don’t line manage. B3 liaises with teachers a lot. I was encouraged to do this through a teacher-led development project.

**Social justice.** B3 feels that through the teacher-led development project she has been given an equal chance to develop and learn, and hopes the research she has carried out is taken on board. Her research been included on the school website. Asked if the leadership is democratic, B3 says to a point. Don’t think we’d be here if we weren’t happy.

**Description and leadership.** B4 explains that there is an ivory tower. There is a perception of an ivory tower. The headteacher is the ‘shining star’ at the top; because, B4 says, he is a star. The SLT is portrayed as stars. What they do, what they try to do is no mean feat. However, this is a little bit of a barrier - a fence - and sometimes I sit on it. The ‘feathers represent a little bit of fluffiness every now and again because I think there are inconsistencies’. Not necessarily a lot of consistency across the board. Not a bad thing because everybody’s meant to be different. The fish underneath are the students. Then there are pockets of information that aren’t necessarily available to everybody. But that’s not a bad thing, it’s not represented as
something that’s negative - which is why I’ve got a big yellow balloon. It’s meant to show it’s all a teamwork effort - but ‘there are different levels of teamwork’, and we’re all here as little cogs in a big wheel. ‘There has to be people in charge, there has to be people who ultimately make those decisions.’ There always has to be some kind of structure. This is the net I sometimes get caught in - some decisions I don’t necessarily agree with, because the other part of my role is as a parent with children at the school. Sometimes caught (in the net) between rock and hard place. Nothing serious or bad. The students are represented as fish because they’re all swimming around and because of the inconsistencies sometimes; I think sometimes they’re a little bit ‘lost in the water’. Should have shown some in the opposite direction because there are some students who are swimming against the tide and need support in different ways. Recently a senior leader said to me that I’m not part of a team - he actually said that out loud and I was quite shocked by that. I believe I’m part of a small team, but I’m part of a bigger team as well. B4 says ‘I do believe I have a voice. I do believe that I can voice things that I feel particularly concerned about. There are people I can go to. I wouldn’t say that I feel particularly heard... I don’t think everything’s heard and taken on board. But that possibly is the right of the leadership’ - they’ve got power and access to a lot more information that I’ve got. B4 talks about performance management: It’s an appraisal system. I look at it with my line manager. Because B4 work for different people, she contacts all of them for feedback on her strengths and weaknesses, and considers if she agree with them. She feels in charge because B4 knows she can say to them, what do you think I’ve done good this year, what do you think I’m bad at. I’ve made sure that I’ve done work on things I need to work at - no-one else has done it for me. You revisit it, monitor, to check you’ve achieved targets. Everyone in school is part of performance management system. You set the targets in discussion with your line manager - the areas you want to do better at.

B4 says that ‘they do give a lot of responsibility to the children, to encourage their leadership, to encourage them to lead other students and I think that is a very good that [the school] is very good at.’

Social justice. B4 agrees with B3 regarding social justice. B4 sees a spectrum of students in her role from the very difficult to the very nice. There is a massive group of students inbetween who do what they’re meant to do every day. B4 has signed up to an OU course and has been supported in that in the sense of being encouraged and asked how’s it going. School is good at having that chance to develop. Performance management is a very good process compared with appraisal B4 has experienced in other companies. It’s very much ‘a process you’re in charge of’. ‘I feel people are respected, I feel very respected in the school’.

B4 believes school gives students’ access to opportunities to develop and learn, encouraging all. B4 has children in the school. Her child has a great education and experience of education here. Asked if the leadership is democratic, B4 agrees with B3 that it is to a point. B4 says she would say that there are some people set in their ways. (B3 agrees.) B4 goes on: whilst it is generally democratic, some people just don’t like change. Not necessarily hierarchical, just more of a case this is how it’s been done so this is how we are going to do it, rather than a case of could we change it to make it better.

Contextual factors. B4 says she doesn’t think it [external policy] helps at all. And also I think we’re screened from that by the leadership. education shouldn’t be government led. You can’t keep changing things. It’s hard on young people. There’s enough pressure already. I think it makes SLT slightly wary of making long term decisions. All about struggle for power.
Analysis of Group C

Group C comprises 6 teachers and middle leaders.

Description and leadership. C1, a teacher, explains about a student leadership group, from across the school. Initially about observing teachers and giving feedback, the last couple of years it has extended to teachers and students working together. It’s evolving. Re collage, started off with hierarchy in mind, but changed his mind. Had instead different bits, overlapping. C1 wanted to show there is structure outside there student leadership group structure outside of it. Not rigid, It does change. The plane, car and dinosaur are about the different speed that things happen - thinking about leadership initiatives. At every level there are things that are happening, but some things make more impact more quickly. Eg a teacher-led development projects comes in, makes impact then goes. Then the car - slower moving - from middle leadership, students, the top - the student leadership group might be like that. The dinosaur, - these are leadership ideas that are stuck. Eg student leadership has grown enormously but there are still significant leaders at certain points that perhaps are resistant slightly to amount of student leadership. C1 thinks there is a culture of DL in the school on a number of different levels - lots of different groups. Some have more of a platform or knowing the right channels through which to get those ideas to come to fruition; and perhaps everybody isn’t aware of opportunities for leadership. C1 encourage students to be leaders of their own learning in the classroom.

Social justice. C1 agrees with C4 - in a sense if DL is working effectively and it’s more than just a label, which I think it is certainly here, then it should lead to greater social justice. We are trying to grow a culture but it’s only certain students who are going to be involved in that leadership. It tends to be who are already confident, have status in the school who are perhaps academic ones. C1 worries that it’s students that represent a certain type of student. In a way it’s a microcosm of the staff as well - some don’t want to get involved. C1 did a teacher-led development project on student leadership in classroom. Shared it with others. That’s the thing with structures, C1 explains. You have to foster the right classroom. Some may be nervous about it. Asked if the leadership is democratic, C1 says this is an interesting question. Listening to what the majority want doesn’t necessarily come about. Following C4, C1 says another example of vote was on Monday morning meetings. But how important are these in the grand scheme of things? We don’t have a vote on, say, a couple of lessons from English to going to technology, says C4. Yes says C1. Perhaps there could be greater scope. C1 says it is important to have a response to concerns or ideas that are put forward. You feel involved if you’re told enough to have some understanding of reasons for something. The situation differs between faculties. Some give everyone a chance to say what they would like regarding timetabling - you can’t all get what you want, but you can have the chance to express a view.

Contextual factors. C1 says we’re shielded from this.
Description and leadership. C2, a teacher, explained she was attracted to purple - a ‘blanket cover of protection’. There’s a protective underlay to the whole school - to its physical and metaphysical structure. Navajo feathers represent the chiefs if you like, but they’re also down here and the straws are interconnecting, so there’s movement between and transparency often, mostly - if I have a problem with someone I go and speak to somebody, explains C2. I’m quite open. Twinkly beads and sequins represents students, teachers, everybody, we’re all interconnected. This is probably B1 here - she makes the coffee - if she’s not in school, everyone notices - no cover for her if she’s not here - she’s a real hub. The layers of netting are the layers of leadership - either students or line managers. Straws show there’s cross-over and interconnecting. If you have an idea, as C3 says, or want a ‘chiefy feather’ for a bit, then you can - for example, my teacher-led development project was taken on board - ‘you feel valued, that you can express something’ Although chiefs are up here, there are ‘opportunities for chiefs in all directions’. ‘Twinkly iridescent archway’ - C2 explains she would have liked it larger but couldn’t - ‘it’s adding to the comfort of the metaphysical holding us together’. We’ve got the ‘archway of seniority and all the rest of it, the structure that can’t disappear in terms of just practicalities, but we are able to access it I think in different ways.’ The film project is an example - the students were in control. The ‘physical’ protection is the physical protection of the building; the ‘metaphysical’ is if I have a problem I can go and talk to [name] about it. I know it’s there - it’s an emotional holding. A lot of things have happened recently. We’ll talk to each other as a staff. They’ll hold you. (Others agree.) C3 gives example of non-transparency in advertising a post. But this has been dealt with. Overall C2 and C3 agree school is transparent.

Social justice. Asked if the leadership is democratic, C2 says it’s not a voting thing but it means that it (the chance to take the initiative) is available if you want it. I do feel that I am respected. As a part-time teacher, I contribute to meetings and events fully. I feel I have a voice, and there are professional development opportunities. The assistant head is very good at promoting that. C2 did teacher-led development project last year and ended leading a staff workshop on it, with at least three ideas things taken up by SLT. The student voice is very strong, School Council. Whether students take up opportunities to lead is another matter. I love the Head Boy & Girl system. - it gives them opportunity to develop.

Contextual factors. C2 does not agree with lot of educational policy coming out. Asked directly if DL is constrained by policy external to the school, both C2 & C3 firmly say no. I think the only thing I find frustrating, explains C2, are the target levels in the lower school, KS3. Sometimes they suddenly change. Gives example, but not sure of this is policy issue.
Description and leadership. C3, a middle leader, explains that the collage shows a leadership waterfall and at the bottom there is a pool which goes round and round, and anyone can take the journey from having an idea about leadership and then going through the process. The straws represent their different heights and levels, the tallest one being the SLT, governors, moving on to middle managers; smaller ones may be students. Basically, ‘if you have an idea or want to take on a leadership role, in my view at [this school] you go through a process, whether that’s speaking to people, line manager etc, then you come into the pool and then when you’ve got an idea and it’s talked through then you jump onto the balloon ride and it can go, but you collaborate with others, so you’re not on your own.’ That’s why there is more than one person in the basket. The box represents that you very much think ‘in the box’ but the question marks are outside, so you are asked to step outside box. There are so many teacher-led development projects here, explains C3 - thinking creatively and collaboratively. If you want to lead, there are opportunities here, and you’re not restricted to being the box. The balloon ride represents projects. The pool is the swirl of ideas. The different lengths of straws represent that, wherever they start from (however high), they all end up in the pool. There is structure, we know that, but this collage is not looking at the [authority] structure. C3 says there is a huge difference between student leadership now and 7 yrs ago. We set a target: 25% or 30% of students to be involved in leadership - being sports leaders etc. - 350 or so students. We hit that target. The target is in School Development Plan, and every Year Group has a target. C3 thinks DL happens as a matter of course.

Social justice. C3 believes that everyone has a voice, to put across things to their line manager and other staff. Having being heard, it has to be aligned to the establishment vision. We have staff with great ideas but that might not always align with our vision, our strategic intent and objective. Maybe staff who don’t feel they have voice or being listened to, feel this because their idea is not taken on board. C3 believes the School Council is getting to the ‘nitty gritty’, not just length of girls’ skirts. Students led questioning in a job interview for deputy head, led by the Chair of School Council. You see it in the classroom too, from ‘gifted & talented’ students to students with statements. C3 thinks that DL helps student learning across all students. Students in his group delivered a lesson, and fed back their experience (it was maths) - they said they didn’t understand previously the amount of preparation by the teacher, the marking - so maybe they will give more respect in the lessons in future.

Asked if the leadership is democratic, C3 says that he thinks in any organisation you’re going to get an element of democratic opportunity but there’s also going to be the ‘guided side’. He gives the example of the school’s talent management programme where SLT will see something in someone and they will develop it. But if you want to do a teacher-led development project or something, it’s open to all, including support staff, full-time and part-time staff. Some things like the staff governor are democratically elected. We have balance between SLT and democratic side - people taking initiative to do something. Some want to move faster than others.

Contextual factors. C3 believes that ‘Most policies are not user-friendly when they’re created’. The leadership here are very good at sifting out what they need to know and going through it and sifting out want we need to know.’ Then we as MLs can distribute what people below need to know. Asked directly if DL is constrained by policy external to the school, both C2 & C3 firmly say no.
Description and leadership. C4, a teacher, explains that the balloon represents a hot air balloon, where we are going. The head teacher and SLT articulate this fairly clearly, in terms of expectations, aspirations. Arrows going up to the balloon represent ideas, driving forces, to achieve what we’re aiming for. Some arrows will go straight up, one leads to a question mark - not sure where it will go; some to a medal; some go up and fall back. Then we have groups of staff, students about how we’re going to get there. This one represents our Faculty - we talk things round and round. C4 suggests there are different types of group:

1. This one a Faculty or groups of students with a clear path of where they want to go.
2. Then there are groups with one strong person in them and the group follows them.
3. Feathers represent groups of people who have ideas but they don’t go anywhere, a bit fluffy, with broken line of communication.

So there are varied experiences of leadership, according to C4. It differs where you are in the school, e.g. faculties differ. C4 goes on to say that there are two aspects of leadership. There’s overt leadership. SLT, head - speaking to the staff etc. This is done in a way that avoids any confusion. Then there’s the day-to-day leadership which C4 feels is very distributed. Overt is centralised, all singing from the same hymn sheet.

Social justice. Asked if the leadership is democratic, there is a pause. How we going to define democratic? Not the House of Commons democratic, because we don’t choose our leaders, says C4. It links back to the headteacher and senior leaders - they give a very clear message, they give a message of being prepared to listen and in my experience they all will listen - the head teacher is happy to be e-mailed, or bumped into and spare 5 minutes. I can’t expect everything I ask for to be granted, explains C4, but I do expect to be listened to and I have been. We did vote on the staff levy - the headteacher decided we should. Another example of vote was on Monday morning meetings, C1 adds.

C4 believes that DL does help social justice. He can’t think of a case where you’d say no to that. Is it happening here? I think it is. As governor we tend to hear the gripes and groans rather than I’m having a lovely time. But it does make me think what’s going on in other faculties I’m not a part of. Is good DL going on there or not? I can only speak from my faculty. Reflecting on his earlier statement on DL being good for social justice, C4 says that if you have DL at the cost of clear leadership and direction, an abdication of authority, then you could have great social injustice.

C4 did a project recently on student leadership in the classroom, students teaching rest of the group. It worked well and has encouraged another teacher to try it.

Contextual factors. C4 explains that the headteacher makes sure they don’t get distracted so isn’t sure he can say much on that, but says ‘I can’t think of anything I’ve read about where I’ve thought that’s going to help how we run the school internally.’
**Description and leadership.** C5, a middle leader, found a triangle and that represents the headteacher coming down. Feathers represent the ‘softly, softly that I think happens in the school’. We discuss things and we think it’s ‘quite a shared leadership’ from my point view. The ‘straws represent the strong backbone behind it’. ‘If we discuss things and it’s not quite what [the head] wants, somehow we end up doing what [the head] wants.’ We do have say in how what happens, C5 explains. People are shown as dots because everybody has a say at the school, whether it’s the children, staff, middle leaders, governors, the headteacher. So that’s why I put the different layers to show the different layers in the school. Governors are shown behind because sometimes we don’t know what they do, I’m sure they do lots and make decisions. We operate with the headteacher. C5 says as far as my leadership is concerned, I think they are very willing for middle managers to lead, and cos they are very willing, the more you lead and show yourself to be leading, the more support you get and the less autocratic it becomes. C5 agrees with C6 about teacher-led development projects being empowering - the Learning Forums we have give us the opportunity for sharing with whole school. People choose their own topic, regarding their classroom practice. C5 agrees that DL is part of the philosophy and practice of the school - ‘It’s distributed but not the point where [the head] would let it go off to the wrong way’.

We’ve taken over the monitoring. Three years ago it was SLT saying they were going to come in and monitor our lessons; sometimes happens, but now they’re coming in to visit not monitor.

**Social justice.** C5 says ‘There is social justice in that anybody that wants to lead on anything has the opportunity to suggest it’ and talk it through with somebody. Students are given the opportunity and can be part of the School Council. There is social justice to some extent in that respect. I’m not sure there can be complete social justice and equality across, says C5, because there’s always some who might benefit doing leadership that shy away and don’t want to do anything. I would say there is social justice across the faculty. Everybody in the faculty has a voice and the opportunity to develop and learn - whether they take it is another matter. Students also. The school has got better at respect since I’ve been here, says C5. And students are more willing to aim higher; there used to be a culture where it was bad to be a ‘boff’.

Asked if the leadership is democratic, C5 says ‘partly, but not always completely. But then it can’t always be’. ‘Because in the end the head and the governors are responsible for the school, so there has to be him making the final decision, and he will listen to our reasons, he will listen to what we want to do, and if it is reasonable and acceptable and we can argue our case enough and he can see the value of it, then he will take on board our views’.

**Contextual factors.** C5 says the SLT have been very good at shielding us from all the ideas and announcements that the previous and present governments have imposed. Over the last 3 years we have had the same focus, and ‘that focus has been determined by the school’. It’s along the same lines as government wants. Ofsted want us to be outstanding, we actually want to be a great school - doing it by looking at our lesson planning, delivery, marking, assessment for learning - all building on each other.
C6, a middle leader, explained that they struggled massively with the collage. They would have been happier painting. At the top it’s flat - for me it’s not so much like a pyramid - more like the step pyramid of Saqqara - it’s a flatter, distributed leadership. What lies beneath are the four school Houses. They do overlap. Huge progress but not fully integrated. Don’t know what the straws are - perhaps middle leaders - they shouldn’t be here, but should be flatter on the ground. Whilst middle leaders are important C6 doesn’t feel there is oneupmanship. People do aspire to leadership, he feels. The fact that it’s encased, I think it’s the kind of the security of it - a safe place. I wonder if in terms of leadership sometimes we are quite insular. (Other says we’ve got better at going out.) It’s a big world out. C6 wonders if students are aware of world issues. Leadership is at all levels. Leadership is an attitude, a behaviour rather than a role & a title. Teacher-led development projects have a massive impact on that in terms of empowering teachers, not just younger teachers. Don’t need to have that title and role to lead. C6 agrees that DL is part of the philosophy and practice of the school. Yes, wholeheartedly. - across all levels from students, teachers, to anyone, They are actively encouraged. Have to have right people to lead. With teacher-led development projects, if you had the wrong people leading that, it would fail. Have structure and hierarchy, but it is flexible and changeable - according to need - that’s a ‘real strength’.

Social justice. C6 says that you can find examples where this is not the case, but this is not necessarily typical. Asked if DL helps students and staff to develop and learn, there is a pause. It certainly doesn’t hinder it, says C6. Great question. All can’t be equal. There may be opportunities, but backgrounds are different. We are aware of most disadvantaged (C5 interjects - may be it’s the middling ones that require...). Maybe in education we have a problem with the hidden child - the middling child, the introverted child. I don’t know that DL does anything to address that. I don’t think it’s on our radar. C6 is interested in the respect aspect. In any organisation it will be said that of course everyone is respected - whether it feels everyone is respected is another matter. C6 cites the school sports day, just yesterday - very inclusive, showing respect from students to other students.

Asked if the leadership is democratic, C6 says there is a process of consultation. Decisions may be not to everyone’s liking or expected outcome, but there is consultation. Decisions are not down to one person, but are SLT’s. Staff generally talk about not what the headteacher is doing but SLT. (C5 agrees. We have some strong deputies.)

You have an agenda and everyone aligned to it, so you’re not surprised by what’s happening. There is transparency. You must have this to have sustainable DL.

Contextual factors. C6 says SLT protect us; we do our job & they’ll do theirs. SLT get middle leaders to pass on information.
Students

Analysis of Group D

Group D consisted of five students, two from Year 12, two from Year 10 and one from Year 9. These students are members of a student group who observe lessons in order to work alongside them to develop learning and teaching. A summary account from the individual participants’ commentaries on their collages is given below. Students went on to discuss the issue of distributed leadership and social justice more generally in a group. An analysis of the group discussion follows the individual commentaries.

Individual student commentaries

D1

Description and leadership

This image shows a network of power. The view of leadership in the school is essentially hierarchical, with the seat of power centrally located however. Power is used as an important organising principle in the collage as a whole.

D1 – The yellow sticks represent the amount of power they have towards the leadership.

The headteacher is pictured at the centre of the collage, indicating that he has the most power, demonstrated through his power to make decisions.

Power is also equated to being listened to however – the more access you have to the senior leadership team, the more power you have as you have more chance of being listened to. Students are seen to gain access to the leadership team though this ability to gain attention. Such ability is seen to be gained through age and maturity and through the development of ideas which would help the school to develop.

Social justice

In contrast to the other students in this group, this student begins her description at the bottom of the collage, with the ‘general students’. These students are not seen to have much power. However, this appears not to be attributable to any unjust systems but to the students’ willingness themselves to participate and to become agential.
D1- They don’t really participate enough to be able to make a difference.

D2

Description and leadership

This collage appears to have a network of strong barriers which could be seen as constraints to distributed leadership activity. However, the commentary on the collage provided by the student who made it shows that some of the supposed barriers are in fact teams, represented by long straws to show their harmonious working. The hierarchical nature of leadership suggested by the patterns of the collage is confirmed by the student however. This hierarchy is characterised in terms of height – the higher up you are in the picture, the greater your leadership role in the school. The headteacher is shown at the top, supported by his senior leadership team. This is a common feature of this group of students’ collages. Other teachers have clearly understood ‘places’ in the hierarchy. There is a strong emphasis in this collage on positional leadership then, which extends to students – the Head Boy and Girl and members of the Student Council are mentioned as having specific leadership roles.

Social justice

Only those with specific leadership roles are represented in the collage. There is no indication that appointment to such roles is restricted, although an absence of discussion of ways in which the mass of the population of the school are enabled to exercise leadership is interesting. The size of the spaces between teams and individuals in this collage are indicative of the levels of respect shown to different groups within the school. This is seen to vary in terms of progress ‘up’ the school.

D2 – Teachers have a lot and sixth formers have quite a lot and compared to the other years it’s just way more.

D3
Description and leadership

This student overtly points to the hierarchical nature of this collage:

D3 – *Mine is essentially a hierarchy.*

Leadership is again linked strongly to both voice and participation:

D3 – *Then there are the senior teachers are listened to more and participate more in leadership.*

D3 - *The ordinary teachers vary a bit depending on how much they participate.*

Parents are mentioned by this student as having leadership capacity, again dependent on the degree to which they choose to engage with the school. Students generally vary in the amount of ‘power’ they have. To some degree this is associated with year groups and age but there are also individual students who seek to lead the development of their school.

Social justice

Despite naming his collage a hierarchy, this student does acknowledge that individual students do have the potential to exercise leadership, without the benefit of a leadership position or role.

Description and leadership

This collage appears to represent a much more holarchical view of leadership within the school. The majority of students are represented by the smaller straws in the central frame of the collage, with the longer straws representing those who participate more in activities and thus contribute more to the leadership of the school. Such leadership is generally linked to role. The linking of participation and leadership is again noteworthy. The image of the red net, surrounding the members of the school, represents the teachers who help students ‘contribute towards leadership’. Thus student leadership is seen to be overtly reliant on teachers opening up leadership opportunities for them.

Social justice

The torch at the centre of the collage represents a push towards democratic leadership.

D4 – *I think we need to work together as a community to get a whole leadership system throughout the school.*
Description and leadership

At first glance this image appears holarchic. However, the student’s explanation of the collage surfaces the hierarchies which are apparent in their view of leadership within their school. The balloons in the collage represent the house system which is made up of four houses, named Red, Yellow, Blue and Green. They are in the corners as they are directive of much of the leadership activity in the school from the students’ point of view.

D5: A lot of our leadership is based around the house system.

Echoing student D1, the placing of the material representing staff and students in this collage is described in hierarchical terms. It is interesting to note the focus on space – the headteacher is not only positioned at the top of the collage but is described by the student as ‘over everyone’. However, the student also demonstrates an understanding of the multiple distributions of leadership. Students who have classroom responsibilities are mentioned as an example of the reach of leadership opportunities within the school.

The choice of material to represent various leaders is interesting. The headteacher is represented as a dinosaur, not because he is backward-looking but because he is:

D5: ..courageous and strong, like a Tyrannosaurus Rex.

Social justice

This collage appears to support an inclusive view of leadership activity within the school, despite its focus on the positional nature of leadership.

Group discussion

The group discussion began with a reflection on the extent to which opportunities to contribute and take initiative are spread throughout the school. This focused particularly on the role of students in observing lessons and feeding back to teachers. Students apply for this role. Students felt that this initiative allowed the individuals involved in it – both students and teachers – to develop closer leadership relationships within the school. This was particularly important as students and teachers are working together to improve learning and teaching in the school. The student observation initiative was seen as unusual in terms of who was leading the development process. Teachers invite students into their classroom, so in this way set the agenda, yet students are enabled to comment on how best to support learning. The challenges which students are enabled to pose in such a situation are seen as valuable, offering a different perspective on learning, and unusual in terms of a shifting power balance.
Students perceive themselves to be offered multiple opportunities through this lesson observation programme. These are both personal in nature, for example, developing a skill set which will be impressive on a CV, but also collegial, in that students are given the opportunity to influence learning in their school. Students thus see themselves as leading the development of learning in their school.

Students moved on to discuss how social justice and equity is shown in schools, that is, whether everyone in school has an equal opportunity to develop and learn in school. The students felt that all students had the opportunity to lead in school. Some students felt that not all students would take these opportunities however. People who are less confident may well not take up opportunities or people who may not wish to commit to the responsibilities of leadership. The effort involved in taking responsibility is off-putting for those who wish to simply get through school with the minimum personal input. Such students may well not be interested in contributing to school improvement.

The experience of school would be different if more leadership opportunities were taken up, students feel. The students in Group D felt that students’ voices are heard within the school. They felt being given a voice and having their views heard had a positive impact on both personal development and on the enjoyment of education.

Group D student, speaking in the group discussion:

*The more you engage, the more you tend to enjoy because you are more open to opportunities and if you are not open to opportunities how do you know if it is going to be a good one?*

The issue that leadership opportunities are taken up by the most confident is challenging. Students are clear that the Leadership Team make every effort to hear the voices of all in formal meetings such as the School Council. However, although opportunities are in theory open to all, in practice students’ current sense of self-belief tends to mitigate against some taking up leadership opportunities offered.

Students were aware of the impact of government on the school in terms of issues of changes to examination syllabi and timing of re-sits.

**Analysis of Group E**

Group E consisted of six students, all from Year 12. A summary account from the individual participants’ commentaries on their collages is given below. Students went on to discuss the issue of distributed leadership and social justice more generally in a group. An analysis of the group discussion follows the individual commentaries.

*Individual student commentaries*
Description and leadership

This is a hierarchical image representing a chessboard, with the pawns at the bottom indicating the mass of students within the school. The castle pieces represent students with more positional power such as sports leaders, head boy and girl and prefects. The teachers are represented by the shields and swords, showing that they ‘have power over the students’. The deputy headteachers, heads of year and heads of faculty are then represented above the teachers. The orange and black barriers demonstrate the lack of full knowledge by students as to what those in these leadership positions do. The straws in the collage are used to highlight the hierarchical nature of the leadership patterns within the school, as perceived by this student. The headteacher is represented by the crown, showing his position as:

E1 - the king of the school.

Social justice

There was no indication by this student that anyone was unhappy with their place in this hierarchy.

Description and leadership

This collage represents a linear timeline of students’ development in terms of leadership through their school career. Leadership begins as the prerogative of others, with teachers leading student learning, and then develops through more opportunities for self-leadership as the student moves up the school. The influence of friends can be inimical to this freedom for self-development at times however.

E2 - Your friends can peg you back. That is the opposite of leadership.

Peers are therefore seen as more important than school structures in determining the level of development through self-leadership in the middle stages of the students’ school career.

The choice of colour and material is particularly important in this collage. For example, the straight yellow and orange sticks above the second stick man are termed as ‘hostile colours’. The student explains this further:
E2 – “It’s not aggressive but … you are being led in a way … you don’t choose, you just do what you are told. They are straight so you can go on the right path.” The choice of feather to represent the next stage of student leadership has been chosen to represent the ‘choice and flair’ of individual choice rather than the comparative mindlessness of following rules set by others.

Social justice

This student sees the focus of leadership as changing as a student moves through the years of schooling. At first focused on the leadership of learning, with teachers in a clear position of power, the emphasis changes to self-leadership not only of learning but also of thinking and ways of being at Sixth Form level. Students also have more choice of ‘who leads you’ at this stage of their development. These opportunities for self-actualisation and identity development are seen as offered to all.

Time is seen as very important in this collage, where it is used as a metaphor for the development of maturity. Students in the lower years are seen to be more open to the influence of others, whereas as time moves on they are more likely to make choices which are more in line with their own values and beliefs.

This collage is bounded by a thin but important line. This line indicates that the school is an entity, that is has a wholeness to it, despite being made up of individual groups. Within this vision of the school, leadership is represented as generally hierarchical. Thus the headteacher is represented by the yellow star at the top of the collage, with those who ‘help the headteacher’ represented by the descending triangle containing individuals, each with designated leadership roles. Student leaders are represented by the individual beads within circles at the bottom of the collage. However, the student making this collage is unsure of the exact nature of the leadership structures here, hence the question marks. Others with less visible leadership roles are represented by the red beads in the circles nearer the top of the collage. The extent of their contribution to the working of the school, although acknowledged as important, also remains unclear.

E3 – “These are like people who work within the schools like cleaners and maybe without them this (pointing to the central triangle) wouldn’t be able to function. That is why it is a question mark as to where they fit along that scale, it is kind of unknown, because they need them in order to be able to do their job. They also need teachers as well.”

Social justice

The idea that everyone has their place in the leadership pattern of the school is strong here. This is not to suggest however that one role is more valuable than others. Despite the hierarchical visual imagery, the
students’ verbal explanation in fact alludes to the importance of all in terms of the effective working of the school.
Description and leadership

The student making this collage imagined leadership within the school as represented by two triangles. The top triangle represents a hierarchy of leaders within the school, leading down to the second triangle, dominated by the yellow balloon, which represents the body of students who do not have overt leadership roles. These are seen as the majority of students in the school.

There is relevance to the type of materials chosen to represent different manifestations of leadership within the school. The feathers represent the nature of students’ understanding of the role of senior leaders. The more solid, straight piece of plastic which cuts across the centre of the collage represents the teachers and the solidity of the students’ understanding of the teacher role. The authority emanating from the senior leaders in the school is represented by the cascading ribbon which demonstrates that:

E4 – even though we don’t know what they do they still reign over us.

Social justice

The legitimacy and authenticity of the leadership roles offered to students are questioned by this student.

E4 – They just made them up. They are trying to give people roles and stuff but they don’t really have any substance.

Leadership is seen as legitimised not by named role but by valued action.

Description and leadership

This student chose to focus on the perspective of a new student to the school, having moved to Heathvale School to undertake her Sixth Form studies. This collage divides into two large groups of students, with a small number of students with specific leadership positions being positioned outside of the main groups. The
role of leadership in this collage is articulated as predominantly to provide support for students having difficulties.

E5 – If you are not really doing well or you have any problems, obviously you have the Head Boy and Head Girl but also you can count on everyone in Sixth Form or in school – it’s not just the leadership team but the whole school basically.

Leadership in terms of support is therefore seen as the responsibility of all, regardless of formal leadership position.

**Social justice**

This collage suggests the ‘holding’ role of leadership in the school. Anyone with a problem or issue has the opportunity to be equally supported by the leadership structures and those with leadership positions in the school. However, it is clear that, as human beings and regardless of the designation of formal leadership positions, it is the responsibility of all within the school to support members of their community who are new to the community or experiencing difficulty.

**Description and leadership**

Leadership here is initially conceptualised as voice and access – whether someone has the right to talk and who they access in order to be heard. The body of students is represented by the coloured straws and beads at the right of the collage, with those students with named leadership roles such as year council members represented by the wooden discs to their right. These students have some access to the headteacher of the school, demonstrated by the arrows. This metaphor is also used for teacher access to the headteacher, although the question mark indicates the uncertainty of this access.

The central portion of the collage is three-dimensional, with the heads of year being the most visible leadership role, backed up by the teachers behind them. The students are represented here also, as behind the teachers, as their voice is filtered through them.

The deputy headteachers are represented by jagged lines to represent that younger students often see them as ‘scary’. The head boy and head girl are represented separately and these, together with the deputy headteachers, have a bridge which enables them to talk directly to the headteacher. All leadership within the school is seen as ultimately passing through the headteacher. The governors have the closest links to the headteacher, being represented by the red and orange circles above him.

However, this view is mediated by a consideration of the position of the students as the ‘backbone of the school’ and as potential change agents.

E6 – At the end of the day you can’t have the school without students. Even though they don’t run the school they do play a big part in what goes on and how to change it.
Social justice

All students and teachers are seen as having a legitimate voice within the school. However, to be heard requires going through a number of mediators who will carry your opinion up the hierarchy. Direct access to the headteacher is seen as limited. However, students are still regarded as the most important people in the school in terms of their role as giving legitimacy to the purpose of the school and their role in both evaluating and changing current practice.

Group discussion

The group discussion began with a discussion of the reality of the leadership roles of students within the school. Some students question if leadership responsibilities have been created for students in order to give them the feeling of being involved without any real delegation of power from adults to young people.

A difference was made between students as having legitimate leadership roles with the power to take decisions as opposed to a representational role. Some students in the discussion group saw students as empowered as leaders whilst others saw their role as limited to representing the views of others. This might require advocacy - for example, the head boy and head girl may seek to persuade the governors of the effectiveness of the Sixth Form in terms of student learning. However, such activity was viewed as qualitatively different to leading change.

Students feel that the degree to which they are heard depends on the position of the person listening. Teachers are seen as responsive to students’ suggestions regarding teaching methodology for example. Those in positions of higher responsibility are seen to have ‘more people to please’ so individuals are less likely to be listened to.

Students see a clear connection between leadership structures and their learning. Teachers are seen as teaching students not only about their subject but nurturing them as a person, supporting students to develop the capabilities of self-leadership which they would use as more mature students later in their school careers but also in wider life. Such self-leadership abilities could also develop into the ability to lead others for some. However, not all students saw student leadership as overtly linked to learning. Some viewed student leadership as more focused on influencing issues to do with the school as a community and students’ happiness in school.

Students were interested in the notion of a school as a democracy. Elections are held for certain positions in the school but some students doubted the integrity of this process. Generally they felt that it was not a true democracy but that there were routes to get their voices heard and that these voices are ‘counted’ as important.

With regard to social justice and equity, students felt that all students within the school initially have an equal chance to learn. Teachers go out of their way to support students with special needs. However, students could ‘ruin this for themselves’ through poor behaviour or lack of effort which would inevitably mean that teachers would be less disposed to support these students in an equal way.

Students generally did not feel the pressure of Government policy on educational policy within the school. An exception was Core futures, an additional subject introduced in Year 11 due to OfSTED requirements. Students saw this as influencing individual students who felt the pressure to give time to a subject they did not value.
Student leadership opportunities were seen to develop as students moved through the school. Student confidence was seen to develop as students moved through the school and thus to enhance the potential for student leadership. The house system was not seen as particularly effective in creating loyalty to a school organization.

Students see their headteacher as a very effective leader in terms of changing the way in which people think, both in and about the school.

Analysis of Group F

Group F consisted of four students, two from Year 7 and two from Year 10. A summary account from the individual participants’ commentaries on their collages is given below. Students went on to discuss the issue of distributed leadership and social justice more generally in a group. An analysis of the group discussion follows the individual commentaries.

Individual student commentaries

Description and leadership

This collage shows a headteacher who is large and looks out over the whole school. He is supported by two deputies. The student has indicated a ‘bit of a block’ by the line of blue straws. This is suggesting the difficulty the student sees between students giving suggestions and the action which is then taken by teachers or others in formal positions of leadership.

F1 – They don’t actually listen to us. We have a Student Council but I don’t feel that they listen to us. We have been asking for short skirts ... I don’t even know why .... if they fully explained why then maybe I would understand.

There are ways through the wall, yet these do not seem effective. This student comments on the ability of students to attempt to break down this wall. However, such attempts are seen as unsuccessful.

F1 – Every time we attack the wall it doesn’t really do anything.

Students and teachers are shown grouped together in subject areas at the bottom of the collage.

Social justice

The issue of ‘being heard’ is clearly raised by this student. The procedures by which students’ views are passed on within the school are transparent and understood. However, the perceived lack of information about reasons for decisions is difficult for some students to understand.
**F2**

**Description and leadership**

This collage presents a hierarchical view of leadership within the school. The students are represented at the bottom of the collage followed by the teachers, the heads of year and heads of faculty. The deputy heads and headteacher follow. The arrows going both ways indicate the multi-way communication systems within the school.

**F3**

**Description and leadership**

The house system is the most dominant feature of this collage. This student saw the leadership within the school as being centered on this system. The shape in the middle of the collage is the beginning of a representation of the school badge.

**F4**

**Description and leadership**
This collage shows a section of leadership within the school. It shows the competition between houses. Students have leadership responsibilities within the houses. The sports leaders were focused on by this student. These leaders have a responsibility for organizing student teams.

**Group discussion**

Student leadership was described by students in this group initially through formal leadership roles such as form representatives and sports representatives. The house system is seen as dividing the school into a system of organised competition which both supports students in engaging in individual learning and shores up the community spirit of the school.

Leadership in lessons is generally seen to be provided by the teacher. There are exceptions to this however, as when teachers invite students to lead a part of the lesson. Interactive lessons are also seen as offering students the opportunity to lead their own learning, rather than relying solely on teacher input.

In terms of social justice and equity issues, some students feel that all students in their school have an equal chance to learn. The setting system within subjects is seen as offering support for students at appropriate levels for individuals. For others, poor student behaviour in some classes provides a distraction which means that others in the class are denied an equal chance to learn. This is seen as being dealt with but in the meantime student learning time is lost.

The issue of having a voice and being heard, begun in the discussion of the individual collages, was elaborated on in this more general discussion. Students in the main feel that they do have a voice, in that there are systems which allow them to put their views forward. However, a lack of understanding of the reasons for decisions made at higher levels and then fed back to students is an issue. To some degree this appears to be a function of a lack of clarity over where decisions are taken. Students felt that schools can be democratic – form representatives are elected in a democratic way, for example.

Students in this group felt that changes at government level did impact on them personally. They feel that there is rising pressure on students to get things right in terms of examinations. There was a general sense of uncertainty in the Year 10 students as they feel that there have been so many changes in education policy that not everyone has a sound grasp of what is required of them.
Appendix 6: ‘Stories of Leadership...’ video in development from the UK case study on distributed leadership

We are developing, as one of the outputs of this study, a video presenting an analysis of the collages. The version as it stands at the time of writing, which is in development, is available as an appendix to this report at the EPNoSL portal’s internal collaborative space.

Please note that there is no soundtrack to the video at present.

The interpretation in the video is based on the researchers’ impressions of the images and should therefore be viewed alongside this report in which the participants’ own explanation of meanings are given.
## Appendix 7: Measurement instrument and recorded variables: ESHA-ETUCE study on distributed leadership

### Measurement Instrument Distributed Leadership [English version]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable label</th>
<th>Values</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Choose your language</td>
<td>English, German, French, Spanish, Italian, Russian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is your (formal) function?</td>
<td>School leader, Teacher, Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is your gender?</td>
<td>Male, Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In what type of education do you work?</td>
<td>Early Childhood Education, Primary, Secondary (lower or upper secondary), Vocational, Higher education, Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In what country or federal state do you work?</td>
<td>Albania, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech, Republic, Denmark, England, Estonia, Finland, France Georgia, Germany, in which federal state?, Greece, Iceland, Hungary, Ireland (not UK), Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Malta, Moldova, Montenegro, Netherlands, Northern Ireland, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Scotland, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, Other, in which country?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How many teachers are there in your school?</td>
<td>....</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How many children/ students go to the school?</td>
<td>....</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the school leader have classroom responsibilities?</td>
<td>Yes- No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How long do you work at this school?</td>
<td>.....years/ .....months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variable label</td>
<td>Values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Is education free in your school?</strong></td>
<td>Yes, for all children&lt;br&gt;Yes, for most of the children&lt;br&gt;Yes, for some children&lt;br&gt;No&lt;br&gt;N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Since the advent of the financial crisis in 2008, the school budget has.....</strong></td>
<td>been drastically reduced&lt;br&gt;been slightly reduced&lt;br&gt;remained the same&lt;br&gt;increased&lt;br&gt;N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>If the school budget has been cut, which of the following have been affected? Choose up to three</strong></td>
<td>Teachers have been laid off&lt;br&gt;Support staff have been laid off&lt;br&gt;Staff salaries have been cut&lt;br&gt;School supplies and services have been reduced&lt;br&gt;Other&lt;br&gt;N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>To what extent does your school organization have influence on the following aspects?</strong></td>
<td>No influence&lt;br&gt;Little influence&lt;br&gt;Reasonable influence&lt;br&gt;A great deal of influence&lt;br&gt;Full influence&lt;br&gt;N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Curriculum content</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Curriculum delivery</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. The school budget (financial)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. HR policy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Organizational structure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Strategic development planning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Professional development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. Other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>How are teachers employed?</strong></td>
<td>By the government&lt;br&gt;By the school board&lt;br&gt;Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>School structure</strong>&lt;br&gt;To what extent do you agree with the following statements about your school?**</td>
<td>Strongly disagree&lt;br&gt;Disagree&lt;br&gt;Neutral&lt;br&gt;Agree&lt;br&gt;Strongly agree&lt;br&gt;N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Tasks and responsibilities are hierarchically decided by the professionals in our school</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. At our school there are formally agreed leadership roles</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Professionals make decisions within predetermined boundaries of responsibility and accountability</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. The school structure formally provides everyone with opportunities to participate in decision making</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. The formal structure in our organization facilitates informal leadership at all levels in the organization</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. At our school we have regular consultation meetings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variable label</td>
<td>Values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vision</td>
<td>To what extent do you agree with the following statements about your school?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. At our school we have a shared Vision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. At our school we have common values for all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c. Staff take ownership of their own tasks and activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>d. Students take ownership of their own tasks and activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>e. Strategic development as a learning organisation is one of our school goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Values and beliefs</td>
<td>To what extent do you agree with the following statements about your school?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. Mistakes are seen as a learning opportunity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. Colleagues have confidence in each other’s abilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c. There is mutual respect among the professionals in our school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>d. At our school we set high standards for professionals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration and cooperation</td>
<td>To what extent do you agree with the following statements about your school?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. We work collaboratively to deliver school results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. We express our opinions on a regularly basis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c. We share our knowledge and experiences with one another</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>d. We help one another to solve problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>e. We are provided sufficient time to collaborate with our colleagues on work related issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f. In our organization we cooperate with each other to achieve the collective ambition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision making</td>
<td>To what extent do you agree with the following statements about your school?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. I can make my own decisions related to the content of my work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. I can make my own decisions in how to organise my work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c. I can make my own decisions regarding my professional development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>d. I can make my own decisions on a sufficient range of aspects in my work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>e. In our organisation it’s common that everyone is involved with decision making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f. Although the professionals in our organization have the opportunity for input, the decisions are still made from the leaders at the top</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variable label</td>
<td>Values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Responsibility and accountability</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To what extent do you agree with the following statements about your school?</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. I am accountable to my superior for my performance</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. I am kept accountable</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. I feel responsible for my performance</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. We can take responsibility without asking</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. We share collected responsibilities for each other’s behaviour</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. All staff are encouraged to express their opinion regardless of their formal status)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Initiatives</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To what extent do you agree with the following statements about your school?</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Initiatives and ideas mainly come from the leaders at the top</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. There is sufficient amount of freedom to contribute your own ideas to improve the work</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Professionals have to take the initiative and responsibility due to a lack of direction and lead</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. All tasks are assigned to the professionals based upon the level of expertise</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The school leader at our school............</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. ..... enables me to make meaningful contributions to the school</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. ..... encourages me to share my expertise with my colleagues</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. ..... welcomes me to take the initiative</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. ..... formally acknowledges my teaching abilities</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. ..... brings me into contact with information that helps me to create new ideas</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. ..... stimulates me to reflect on my work in order to improve</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. ..... has high expectations regarding my professional standards</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. ..... supports me to make my own decisions in my work</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. ..... empowers me by giving advice and guidance on my own development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The professionals at our school.............</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. ..... are engaged in and committed to participating in school leadership roles</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. ..... actively participate in decision making</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. ..... actively show initiative related to school improvement</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. ..... demonstrate their responsibilities in their work</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. ..... help one another by sharing knowledge</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
</tr>
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</table>
### Recoded variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Seniority</th>
<th>Labels based on normal distribution</th>
<th>Labels ranked in quartiles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>± 0 - 2,5 years</td>
<td>± 0 - 4 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>± 2,5 - 10 years</td>
<td>± 4 - 10 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>± 10 - 30 years</td>
<td>± 10 - 23 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>± 30 - 58 years</td>
<td>± 23 - 58 years</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of education</th>
<th>Labels</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Early Childhood and Education &amp; Primary education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Secondary (lower or upper secondary)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Vocational &amp; Higher education</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School size: number of teachers</th>
<th>Labels based on normal distribution</th>
<th>Labels ranked in quartiles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1-14</td>
<td>0 - 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>15-37</td>
<td>20-37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>38-99</td>
<td>38-70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>100-2000</td>
<td>71-5,000</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School size: number of children</th>
<th>Labels based on normal curve</th>
<th>Labels ranked in quartiles</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1-180</td>
<td>0 t/m 232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>181-437</td>
<td>235 t/m 437</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>438-1050</td>
<td>440 t/m 756</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1051-30000</td>
<td>760 t/m 62,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Countries</td>
<td>Educational Structure</td>
<td>Geographical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albania</td>
<td>East</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armenia</td>
<td>East</td>
<td>Common core</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>West</td>
<td>Differentiated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Azerbaijan</td>
<td>East</td>
<td>Common core</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belarus</td>
<td>East</td>
<td>Common core</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>West</td>
<td>Common core</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bosnia Herzegovina</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
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</tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
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<tr>
<td>England</td>
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<td>Estonia</td>
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<td>Finland</td>
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<td>France</td>
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<td>Georgia</td>
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<td>Hungary</td>
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<td>Single structure</td>
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<td>Iceland</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ireland (not UK)</td>
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<td>Italy</td>
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<td>Luxembourg</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Moldova</td>
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<td>Montenegro</td>
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<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
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<td>Northern Ireland</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
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</table>