EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP IN POLICY

Challenges and Implementation within Europe

EDITED BY
ÁGÚST HJÖRTUR INGÞÓRSSON,
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Educational Leadership in Policy

"This is an important book that makes a magnificent contribution to the field of education policy and leadership. It is an intellectual tour de force that is a must read for anyone interested in the education policy discourse across Europe. It is a contemporary, critical, and cutting-edge book that showcases a wealth of leadership expertise and knowledge."

—Professor Alma Harris, *University of Bath, UK*

"This book represents perhaps the first step taken to 'unpack' the diversity of educational leadership and management in Europe. The emerging acceptance of educational leadership as situated in particular national contexts demands that we give greater attention to documenting, analyzing and synthesizing this diversity. This volume begins to fill in a key blank spot in global scholarship by placing the spotlight on Europe in educational leadership."

—Dr. Philip Hallinger, *Mahidol University, Thailand*

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Jurica Pavičić · Dijana Vican
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Within Europe

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An Introduction: Challenges of School Leadership Policies in the North-Western and South-Eastern Regions of Europe

Ágúst Hjörtur Ingþórsson, Nikša Alfirević, Jurica Pavičić and Dijana Vican

1 Introduction

It is always a challenge to write a new book on management and leadership, since these belong to some of the most discussed topics of the last few decades. However, in the context of managing educational institutions, there are still a few gaps waiting to be bridged. These gaps are especially visible in small European countries, which might have limitations in developing comprehensive, national educational policy frameworks. Often, public policies can be strongly influenced by political processes, as well as by the economic, social and technological realities, constraining the creative and innovative development of educational leaders.

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In addition, such limitations can also be exacerbated with numerous battles with straw man arguments, started by not always wholly competent stakeholders.

The motive for this book was to provide inspiration and good practices, by bringing together perspectives on educational policies and practices related to school leadership development from two significantly different European regions—the 'north-west' (represented by Nordic and Baltic countries), versus the 'south-east' (represented by West Balkan countries). We believe that these perspectives matter and add to a growing European literature on education policy where the emphasis is on the specific national context. Benchmarks and good practices are not only to be found in larger countries or drawn from international organisations like the OECD and the EU. On the contrary, smaller countries offer many success stories and valuable lessons and we hope that the reader will find some here.

The first part of the book presents some of the challenges of policy theory in the context of educational leadership. The aim is to compare the contemporary international agenda of educational leadership, advanced by international organisations (often referred to as 'neo-liberal') with the critical scholarship of educational leadership and the way policies are 'enacted' by different stakeholders at the school level. In this way, readers are offered a more comprehensive overview of the policy trajectories and actors.

Vlašić and Alfirević open the discussion in Chapter 2 with the challenges faced by the still powerful traditional paradigms of education that emphasise schools as teaching organisations. They critically review the market orientation of the education system and the 'managerialist'

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approach to education leadership mainstreamed by international organisations. They advocate ambidexterity as an ideal, where teaching and short-term goals are balanced by learning and long-term development. This applies at the level of the teacher, the school manager, and the national policy maker.

In Chapter 3, Kosor, Perović and Golem offer a reflection on the role of international benchmarking in shaping education policy. They look at Estonia and Slovenia as two cases where benchmarking has played a role, and emphasise various precarious issues that need to be taken into account in benchmarking. They show the negative relationship between pupil-teacher ratio and the average PISA score and the positive relationship between the share of government spending per student and the PISA score.

Žiljak continues the discussion on internationalisation in Chapter 4 and analyses the possibilities of the comparative analysis of education policies in relation to school leadership between countries. He offers four models for comparison, with an emphasis on autonomy and accountability. Comparative analysis needs to be sensitive to the national context, in particular when smaller states are compared, as they are under the stronger influence of international policy actors than larger countries.

In Chapter 5, Alfirević, Relja and Popović provide a meta-analysis of the selection and education of school principals. In the European context, they identify three types of countries with regard to the roles of school principals: Nordic countries; post-socialist societies; and countries with a tradition of strong control at the national level. They conclude that while there are many good examples, the education of school principals is still fragmented in Europe which does not equip them with the necessary leadership skills to improve pupil achievements. Full professionalisation of the job will require transnational networks of school principals supported by further research informed by both the local context and the international perspective.

The second part of the book addresses the challenges of policy inclusiveness in relation to education and democracy, education and information and communication technology, and students with special education needs.

In Chapter 6, Brčić Kuljiš and Gutović analyse the democratic context of educational leadership and management. In their view, democratic school management and leadership should include both education for democracy and democratic education. They discuss the expectations placed on the education system to teach civic values and to prepare students for an inclusive multicultural world. At the same time, they argue that participatory management improves the quality of managerial outcomes and educational effectiveness by involving stakeholders in the decision-making processes within the school.

Information technology and educational leadership are the subject of Chapter 7 where Praničević, Spremić and Jaković look at the role of school leaders vs. national educational policies. They discuss the contribution of ICT in making school management more effective and more decentralised, leading to more interactive and flexible student-centred teaching. For school managers, ICT has potential long-term value but it needs to be integrated into the organisation model and serve to develop more inclusive education.

School principals and educational policies inclusive of students with disabilities and special needs are the topic of Chapter 8. Najev Čačija, Bilač and Džingalašević offer comparative research of education inclusiveness in Croatia, Portugal and Italy at three levels: the national level of education policy, the institutional school level, and the micro level of the inclusive classroom. They show that while national policies have been harmonised, good legislative frameworks do not automatically translate into inclusive education. They conclude that the institutional level is key to the development of inclusive practices and requires both autonomy for the schools and responsible school management and leadership.

The third part presents views on the challenges of policy implementation from authors from six different European countries in two very different regions: Estonia, Iceland and Lithuania from the northern part, and Croatia, Slovenia and Montenegro from the south-eastern part.

Chapter 9 offers a comparative review of empirical and policy studies on the role of school leaders in developing schools and teachers in Croatia, Latvia and Estonia. Vican argues that school leaders play a crucial role in implementing education policy reform. She links changes in

the role of school principals with improved educational output as measured by international surveys like PISA, where Estonia is clearly a good example. The most important factors are professionalisation through formalised job requirements and significant autonomy and expanded responsibilities for teaching and learning, as well as school culture, management and supervision.

In Chapter 10, Ingþórsson looks at the implementation over two decades of three specific policy initiatives relevant for educational leadership and management in Iceland: decentralisation through transfer from the state to the municipal level; the marketisation of education; and shortening the study time at upper-secondary level. He concludes that the role of stakeholder involvement and the acceptance of public policy and the national context as manifested in social values are crucial explanatory factors in implementation research.

The Lithuanian educational policy for school leadership is discussed in Chapter 11 by Dukynaitė, Ališauskas, Pilkienė and Alonderienė. They explain the challenges faced by Lithuania and the policy priorities and strategies developed in response. Through an initiative called 'Time for Leaders', the importance of school leadership is highlighted and is seen as a key element in implementing an overall government strategy for the next decade. This case study adds to the discussion in the book on the importance of context for implementing educational policy.

Vocational education and recent legal changes in Estonia are the topic of Chapter 12. As Estonia is increasingly seen as a 'success' story in education terms, it is instructive to look at the role school management is playing in this context. Under the Estonian system the school managers are very autonomous and the author of this chapter, Laasi, offers a case study of one school to elicit the management challenges and opportunities for principals in the new context. The case shows how fundamental changes in the attitudes of school employees and in the traditional ways of organising student and teacher work can be achieved.

In Chapter 13, Koren and Brejc discuss from a Slovenian perspective the role and impact of transnational agencies on global trends in educational leadership and on national educational policies. This view sees leadership as a tool for making international trends work in

school practice. It also challenges transnational knowledge transfer in educational leadership in the case of the professional development of Slovenian principals.

In Chapter 14, Vican, Alfirević and Pavičić ask whether the Croatian policy and experience in developing educational leadership and management is still in progress, or whether it is a failed experiment. Their answer is mixed; some progress has been made but the authors offer specific recommendations to both policy makers and school leaders on how to further develop the professionalisation of school managers. The authors conclude that national experiences of small European countries should be viewed within their specific education landscapes, and this chapter therefore offers further argument for the importance of context when researching or planning the implementation of education policy.

The final national perspective on educational management and leadership comes from Montenegro. In Chapter 15, Melović offers a SWOT analysis of both the primary and secondary education system in Montenegro and then discusses the role of principals in that system. The analysis confirms the importance of school leadership in implementing education reforms and Melović offers a few best practices of educational institutes in Montenegro.

The concluding Chapter 16 is a short epilogue where the editors summarise the main tends evident from the research presented, and offer some suggestions for further research and international comparisons that would be useful in the European context in which this book was developed.

There should be a happy ending for every such story. Principals and other actors appointed to make decisions have to act, instead of drowning in a sea of indifference and conformism. They are the right persons for taking the chances available in the educational environment, as well as for giving them to other stakeholders. It takes courage and wisdom to do that properly.

In short, principals, as well as policy actors, could and should use the best available practices. Simultaneously, they are expected to participate in the dissemination of potentially useful lessons learned at their institutions, which should become valuable benchmarks for their peers, as well as for peers-to-be. We hope this volume will be helpful in achieving

such an objective. This would not have been possible without the financial assistance of the Ministry of Science and Education of the Republic of Croatia, which generously supported both the Croatian Scientific Centre of Excellence for School Effectiveness and Management (SCE-SEM), as well as its research project 'Comparative research of educational management and leadership and supporting educational policies in small European countries'. We would also be grateful to receive readers' comments and suggestions so as to improve future edition(s) of this volume and related research.

Part I

Challenges of Policy Theory and Context

2

Educational Institutions and Policies at the Crossroads of 'Liberal' and 'Critical' Theory Influences

Goran Vlašić and Nikša Alfirević

1   Introduction: Reaching Beyond the Traditional Paradigms of Education

The schooling system has the potential to redefine the future; it can push countries forward and (re-)refine their social and economic wellbeing. Governments should ensure that their education system is attuned to deliver the future. Such a system should not prepare students for jobs—but develop their thinking and character, which is universally applicable across contexts. The system should not only push for standardisation and the attainment of minimum requirements, but should also push for excellence.

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This is not always the case with a traditional education system which often sees schools as teaching institutions (see Sawyer 2008). Schools are thus perceived as places where students are taught certain predefined content, generally certified by a relevant policy authority. As such, they are seen as unquestionable repositories of knowledge, which is to be imparted to students. Education systems were developed to aid in the aggregation and development of knowledge in a context where the sharing of factual knowledge was limited by the medium. The goal of such systems was to facilitate the transmission of knowledge and tools (e.g. literacy) from generation to generation in order to accumulate knowledge. Even today, given the technological advances, education systems focus on the efficiency of knowledge transmission. This can be observed in: (a) the development of transmission media, as new technologies are available to enhance the efficiency of knowledge transfer (although sometimes with possible detrimental impacts); and (b) the development of pedagogy aiming at understanding different learning preferences by students in order to individualise learning experiences in line with students' innate learning approaches (see Ossiannilsson et al. 2016). Enhancing the efficiency of knowledge dissemination has removed attention from discussions on the content of the knowledge which is being disseminated.

Such a perspective on the schooling system leads us to perceive schools as having a two-step process. First, schools focus on efficiently teaching students a certain knowledge domain (generally structured into a subject area). After the process of teaching, schools are empowered to evaluate and certify the extent to which students have acquired (the ability to replicate and/or apply) the presented knowledge (generally evaluated by a grade). Such a process has inherently several important limitations.

Regarding **teaching**, challenges arise from the content and process perspectives:

- Any factual **content** is easily and instantaneously accessible to students via diverse devices. Therefore, teaching factual content reduces the teacher to a repetitive medium of information students could have found elsewhere. Therefore, teaching content should not focus

on the facts themselves but on non-obvious linkages between facts across diverse knowledge domains. This requires much greater effort from teachers and continuous interactions between teachers specialised in diverse knowledge domains.

- The teaching **process** should be much less about learning the 'truths' and much more about discovering the principles. Therefore, teachers should increasingly be taking the role of facilitators of learning rather than teachers of content. They are no longer required to know and disseminate factual details (which can be more efficiently acquired elsewhere), but to facilitate students' exploration of the underlying principles behind the observed phenomena. Students can instantaneously access virtually all information, but the key value is derived from seeing beneath the observable facts—which requires guidance to enable students to interpret and critically evaluate the diverse opinions they are exposed to through available technologies. The key to such a process is not learning the facts, but developing an exploration mindset and the necessary processes for structured critical thinking. In such a context, the key challenges arise not from access to information but from: (a) the motivation to seek out information; and (b) the ability to search, evaluate and integrate available information into meaningful understandings.

Regarding **evaluation**, challenges arise from the following:

- **Objectivity challenge**. Since the results of evaluation entitle students to certain social rewards, for all the right reasons, evaluation is developed as an objective evaluation of an individual's attainment of a specified 'satisfactory level' of knowledge/skills (see OECD 2008, p. 214). As a result, evaluation focuses on evaluating increasingly narrow knowledge/skills content in order to make evaluation comparable and defensible across students. Therefore, the current trend in evaluation leads to limiting variance in students' responses.
- **Recall challenge**. Currently, evaluation focuses on students' ability to reproduce/apply presented knowledge, and not their ability to challenge it. As a result, students are not incentivised to explore topics but rather to memorise content in a question-answer format.

Examinations treat questions and answers as indisputable facts where answers are exact, exhaustive and exclusive. Exams generally evaluate the extent to which students are able to reproduce/apply the presented knowledge (i.e. their memory) rather than their thorough understanding of topics/problems. Such an approach might result in stimulating students to adhere to authority and refrain from questioning, instead of developing their critical thinking. A notable example of exams aiming to evaluate more than students' recall is the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) aimed at evaluating students' higher-level cognitive capabilities. 'PISA doesn't measure memorisable facts, but rather how students apply theory and thinking in answering questions' (Heim 2016).

- **Stress challenge**. The current system of exams overemphasises students' performance (focusing on memory) at a given point in time. Therefore, the students' record (and thus their future prospects) depends on their performance in certain exams which test their most basic cognitive abilities, and do not allow for their higher cognitive abilities to shine.
- **(In)Completeness challenge**. To help students deal with the amount of content they need to memorise and reproduce in exams, examinations are generally divided to test one subject area at a time. This pushes students to treat each subject component as an independent knowledge area, thus limiting students' ability to integrate ideas and develop deeper understanding of topics. Although some exams provide an overall examination across subject areas, such exams are generally multiple-choice and are subject to the mentioned recall challenge.

Such challenges, in terms of content delivery and student evaluation, arise from misconceptions about the role of schools as institutions, where predefined content is to be delivered by teachers and adopted by students (i.e. misconceptions of schools as teaching organisations). Such a system can be seen to be appropriate for contexts where information availability is limited—but in today's world information availability is virtually infinite; the value is not in acquiring information, but rather in the ability to evaluate and integrate it. Teachers cannot be considered as

'passive' disseminators of content and 'administrative' evaluators of students' knowledge. Such a role can easily be substituted by technology, delivering and evaluating knowledge.

The teacher's role is evolving into a mentorship/coaching role, in which they guide and challenge students' mindsets as they learn about phenomena. In order to stimulate students' higher-order cognitive functions, schools should: (a) challenge students with a demanding curriculum; (b) provide students with skilled coaching focusing on their talents; (c) provide opportunities for students to pursue their interests; and (d) ensure intense interactions between students and expert teachers who are able to challenge them and push students' boundaries (Noonan 2013).

In this chapter, the *drivers and paths of educational innovation* will be discussed by taking into account both the 'liberal' theories/policies, focusing on the needs of the economy/industry and other social challenges, perceived in the positivistic manner, as well as the 'critical' ones, focusing on the structure and influence of social power on education and its outcomes (Gunter 2001).

2   Schools, Markets and Risks of Market-Oriented Education

From the activities perspective, market orientation is defined as 'the organization-wide generation of market intelligence pertaining to current and future customer needs, dissemination of the intelligence across departments, and organization-wide responsiveness to it' (Kohli and Jaworski 1990). From the behavioural perspective, the dimensions of the market orientation construct include: customer orientation (sufficient understanding of one's target to be able to create superior value for the customer continuously); competitor orientation (understanding the strengths and weaknesses, as well as the capabilities and strategies of both the key current and the key potential competitors); and inter-functional coordination (the coordinated utilisation of organisation-wide resources in creating superior value for target customers) (Narver and Slater 1990). Whichever perspective is considered, market orientation implies understanding and responding to customer needs.

The introduction of market orientation in schools inherently carries an important risk. Schools cannot merely respond to market demands. If one considers the 'market role' of schools, this can be summarised as an agent that develops individuals for the job market to ensure that individuals are able to find employment opportunities, and employers are able to find an adequate workforce. However, employers generally demand a workforce with applied knowledge which can be quickly integrated into the company's processes and deliver returns. Generally, employers identify roles and look for potential employees to fulfil those roles. Employers do not carry the burden of the potential risk arising from the possibility that the existing capabilities of the labour force become obsolete. They only receive the benefits of the short-term suitability of labour to perform a predefined role. The full risk is borne by individuals (i.e. employees) and society (e.g. via unemployment benefits). If schools neglected their role to ensure the prerequisites for long-term social and economic wellbeing, their programmes would be highly applied (rather than conceptual/theoretical) and would change often to reflect market demand for specific capabilities. One cannot expect an average employer or an average parent/student to be able to evaluate and commit to long-term social benefits rather than short-term self-serving interests.

A similar challenge has been identified in companies, which can be blinded by their customers, as the latter cannot conceptualise ideas beyond their current realm of experience. Organisations that rely highly on customer inputs tend to experience customer myopia (Christensen and Bower 1996) leading them to focus on short-term, applied, low-risk, incremental improvements. In such a context, market orientation can actually hinder organisational performance in the long run (Zhou et al. 2005). To respond to the criticism that market orientation leads only to incremental innovation, Narver et al. (2004) differentiated between responsive market orientation, which responds to expressed customer needs, and proactive market orientation, which addresses latent customer needs. Such a distinction implies that organisations should not be blinded by obvious customer needs, but should rather proactively identify future needs that customers are not yet aware of, thus enabling organisations to drive radical changes.

Markets for knowledge imply the existence of market mechanisms that are able to achieve equilibrium between knowledge demand (e.g. employers expecting a certain level of knowledge/skill/character for a defined wage) and supply (e.g. students delivering a certain level of knowledge/skill/character and expecting a defined wage in return). Such mechanisms tend to lead markets often to overvalue short-term results in contrast to long-term ones and focus on the individual player's utility rather than social welfare (see Cameron and Quinn 2011). In addition, they tend to overvalue knowledge and skill over character, thus disregarding the value of schools in the upbringing of new generations (see Small 2013). Therefore, markets will often incentivise the education system to provide students with 'applied knowledge' and develop the kind of workforce currently required, as such students are more likely to immediately deliver value to employers.

However, the schooling system implies longer-term investments in individuals and in equipping individuals with knowledge and capabilities, not only for immediate employment, but for lifelong benefits. Moreover, it should serve society's long-term interests by developing individuals that can create new value in the long run. Therefore, the schooling system should see beyond the current market for knowledge and develop individuals who are able not only to perform well in the present, but who can also challenge the present and create the future. Although markets overvalue applied knowledge and skills, schooling should ensure that students not only learn what to do and how to do it best, but also to understand why certain things are done (i.e. understand the underlying principles).

Students should discover abstract understandings, which enable them to understand, retain, and generalise knowledge to a broader range of contexts (OECD 2008). Schooling should challenge students to develop deep conceptual understanding of complex concepts, enhance their ability to critically evaluate perspectives, and strengthen their ability to apply logical thinking in novel contexts (see OECD 2008). By developing abstract thinking and conceptual understanding of underlying principles, students can better critically evaluate information and phenomena, thus enabling them to challenge the very foundations of our realities and to innovate.

In order to be able to go beyond teaching toward the ability to develop and challenge students, teachers must continuously learn and advance their knowledge and thinking. However, such aspirations cannot be left to an individual teacher's ambitions, but must be addressed at the organisational level—implying the *transformation of schools from 'teaching organisations'* (facing the above-mentioned challenges and limitations) *into 'learning organisations'* which motivate and support learning and development by both students and teachers (see Senge 1990). Importantly, such a transformation is (or should be) within the authority of the educational leader (see Hopkins et al. 1997; Stoll 2009).

3   Schools and Innovation: Structuring Schools for Ambidexterity

As is the case of any organisation, schools cannot disregard their current 'short-term' role in favour of their longer-term potentials, but neither can they disregard their potentials in favour of short-term results. As Levinthal and March (1993) have identified regarding the 'myopia of learning', organisations and individuals naturally tend to focus on and overinvest in short-term, within-domain learning. However, learning organisations should not disregard the importance of investing resources in the exploration of novel knowledge and the realisation of potential (Levinthal and March 1993).

Therefore, as proposed by March (1991), an organisation needs to be **ambidextrous**, i.e. able to combine exploration with explorations, achieving a balance between the short and the long term, stability and organisational change, current effectiveness and adapting to radically new environments (Raisch and Birkinshaw 2008). **School ambidexterity** could be interpreted in terms of providing the students with a balanced set of applicable skills and knowledge, as required by mature markets and technology, simultaneously with more abstract, higher-order knowledge and skills significant for new markets and entrepreneurial ventures (cf. Tushman 2014, p. 34). On the other hand, ambidexterity also implies the twofold orientation of the pedagogy

applied, as well as the school organisation and leadership, in terms of being embedded into the current social realities and preparing for those of the future.

Instead of trying to apply the generic principles of organisational ambidexterity from the profit sector (see, e.g., Tushman 2014), it is more useful to refer to the practical tools developed by 'liberal' policy actors, such as the OECD '7+3' framework for innovative learning environments (ILEs). These are generalised from selected worldwide case studies, describing the 'best practices' of educational innovation (OECD 2013, pp. 201–215). An ILE consists of three domains of innovation: the pedagogical core (including the school staff, resources, learners, content, as well as its pedagogical and organisational processes); learning leadership; and partnership with external organisations (OECD 2017). The seven principles to be applied are related to the evidence-based ILE design, as advocated by the OECD (Dumont et al. 2010):

- recognising the central role of learners in the process;
- utilising group work and social dynamics in the learning process;
- using and appreciating the learners' motives and emotions;
- being aware of the prior knowledge and other individual learners' differences;
- avoiding overload with learning activities;
- employing coherent evaluation and formative feedback;
- correlating the educational content across disciplines, as well as with the contemporary economic and social challenges.

The ILEs of ambidextrous schools, including the related pedagogical and organisational processes, should be working both for the current educational needs of students and the social stakeholders of education, as well as for the future needs of society and the economy. Ambidextrous schools should stimulate both students and teachers to balance short-term and long-term goals, thus maximising the benefits for society. Graduates of such schools would be likely to contribute the most to the current 'knowledge economy', but would also be the most likely to challenge and deliver innovation that could drive prosperity in the future.

This approach sees school leaders as evolving beyond their administrative role to become innovative leaders, establishing ambidextrous schools. Since successful individuals tend to vividly remember the influence their teachers/schools had on them, principals, in their innovator role, should motivate teachers not only to perform their jobs, but also to nurture the future. School leadership should have an active role in setting up schools for ambidexterity—schools in which teachers and students (but also the whole community) simultaneously deliver expected short-term outcomes, but at the same time maximising each individual's potentials.

4   The Critical Studies' Approach to Educational Innovation

Critical studies question the functionalist stance of 'liberal' theories, which seem to take for granted the social role of the education system, serving the needs of (re)producing entrenched roles and structures. The traditional industrial system might be replaced by the 'knowledge economy' and the changing educational landscape could provide the delusion of a wider social transformation, but the critical theory voices firmly assert that social power matters, as does the social structure. As summarised by Gunter (2001, pp. 18–19), the functionalist view of educational effectiveness, as the ultimate leadership objective, cannot be separated from the market-oriented view of education, perceived as a product, to be formulated according to customer needs, produced and delivered in the most efficient way. Under such circumstances, stakeholders of the education system are entitled to ask for the innovative and entrepreneurial behaviour of school leaders, so as to maximise return on the money invested in the system. On the other hand, if the values of democracy and equality are to be placed at the heart of the school, perceived as a learning organisation, its essence will be to train for a life of liberty and service to the community and society. Leadership of such an organisation is a shared experience, serving the needs of pedagogy, instead of a tangible set of employers' requirements for a future workforce. The 'critical' view could be deeply embedded

into the humanistic education of many educational practitioners, leading to the 'ideological' dismissal of attempts to market the school and its curricula (Oplatka et al. 2002).

Nevertheless, the 'managerialist' approach to leading schools, according to market orientation principles, has become a part of mainstream educational practice (Oplatka and Hemsley-Brown 2007) and policy, as evidenced by the use of 'correct' teaching and evaluation practices, the social performances of external inspections and the obligatory compliance of teachers and other staff (Ball 2006, pp. 96–114). All of this leads to policy and leadership 'performativity', arising from Lyotard's (1984) seminal work, but defined in educational terms of '(…) a technology, a culture and a mode of regulation that employs judgements, comparisons and displays as means of incentive, control, attrition and change—based on rewards and sanctions (both material and symbolic)' (Ball 2006, p. 144). It is all in the eye of the (powerful) beholder, setting the stage for the emergence of the 'correct' tools and activities, the display of the 'high quality' and conformity with external 'knowledge targets'. Once inside a system ruled by 'performativity', one has to play according to the tune. This form of fatalism, fuelled both by the positivistic perceptions of how reality works (or should work), as well as by the postmodern stance, which might refuse any meaningful generalisations (Freire 1998, pp. 26–27), can only lead to 'cynical compliance' (Ball 2000, p. 17).

In such a context, educational innovation is no more than another policy, which gets translated/implemented/enacted by teachers and principals, in a complex school environment (Ball et al. 2011), within the limits set by the overall 'performativity' of the system and different aspects of interpersonal relations and 'micro-organisational politics' among the actors in individual schools (Ball 1987). School and principal ambidexterity could be nothing more than a myth, transferred into educational practice and leadership from literature, focusing on marketing and management of the profit sector. For example, if a school's innovativeness is to be an important measure of the school's performance, who is to define the indicators of innovation and staff/principal innovative behaviour? While a pragmatic answer could be easily found in the profit sector, it may not be easy to define how to proceed with such a policy in educational settings.

An OECD report conveniently defines educational innovation by referring to new tools and technologies, practices and organisational arrangements (OECD 2016), which does not depart radically from the OECD definition of economic innovation, as incorporating new products and production processes, marketing and organisational/managerial practices (Mortensen and Bloch 2005). This hints at the increasingly 'copy-paste' approach, as used by international organisations seeking to transfer the solutions of the profit sector to other social fields, including education. It also employs the assumptions of globalisation, the generalisability of social circumstances and the transferability of educational practices (cf. OECD 2015, pp. 37–52). The measurement of innovation is also conceptualised along the lines of inputs (educational resources and methods/practices) and the outcomes of the educational process (OECD 2014), which follows closely the metaphor of a production process. The very concept of managerialism, used as both an inspiration, as well as a policy technology, is devoid of an analysis of social power and embeddedness.

Consequently, there is an ample space for 'performativity' to settle at all levels of the educational system: from individual educators and educational leaders 'performing' the desirable behaviours and 'fabricating' the targeted outcomes, to all the educational institutions and systems, concentrating on satisfying state regulation and delivering an 'intellectual spectacle' (Ball 2000). Educational innovation should be much more than a mere spectacle for powerful stakeholders, but 'performative' social and educational practices make it hard to tell.

5   Instead of a Conclusion: Innovation— In Whose Name (and for Whose Sake)?

Innovation should not be practised as another form of 'performativity'. This could be done at the macro-level, where the state authorities could use their influence over the important stakeholders as new a means of 'reregulating' and controlling the allegedly decentralised educational system (Tan 2008). The same logic of the 'performativity' vs. creativity

conflict can be found at the micro-level, for which trust in individual professionalism is recommended as a potential solution (Burnard and White 2008). However, in an age of 'normalisation', as implied by Foucault's (1995) thesis of external rules and norms, as replacing brute force, innovation can be applied to (and for the sake of) different stakeholders. As discussed by Perryman (2006) in the case of external evaluations (school inspections), the 'performativity'/normalisation principles can be (and actually are) applied in a panoptic way, as all aspects of an education institution become aligned with the externally enforced standards and the constant sense of the evaluators' watchful gaze. If this happens with educational innovation, as the 'best practices' become copied from the profit sector and prescribed by (inter)national organisations, regulators, and benchmarks, it could be difficult to reach the ideal of developing ambidextrous leaders and schools.

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3

The Role of International Benchmarking in Shaping Educational Policy in Small European Countries

Maja Mihaljević Kosor, Lena Malešević Perović and Silvia Golem

1   Introduction

One of the main objectives of educational policy is to improve educational outcomes. Numerous studies have found positive effects of education on economic growth, productivity and social cohesion. However, secondary education is different from the familiar for-profit enterprise setting, as it includes multiple stakeholders, multiple objectives and multiple outputs. This makes the investigation of educational production a complex issue.

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There are many stakeholders interested in the performance of the country's education system. International benchmarking and cross-country comparisons can help in understanding whether the education system adequately prepares students for life in the global economy.

In general terms, benchmarking is an efficiency tool used in evaluating the performance of one organisation compared to other organisations against an absolute or relative standard (Cowper and Samuels 1997). For the purpose of this analysis, a benchmark may be defined as the observed performance of a schooling system to which other schooling systems can compare themselves, while benchmarking is the process of comparing schooling systems, including their inputs, policies, outputs and outcomes.

The OECD has recently been developing a conceptual framework for benchmarking the performance of higher education (HE) in which it stated the following goal of benchmarking: to enable comparisons across agreed dimensions of performance of higher education systems; to identify each country's strengths and weaknesses; to provide a foundation for peer learning; and, finally, to offer a basis for developing strategies for improvements in the performance of HE systems (OECD 2017a, p. 55). We argue that this goal is also applicable to secondary education benchmarking and that most of the framework developed by the OECD is valid. However there are differences between these two levels of education. Some of these differences, which may be of interest for benchmarking, are presented here. As Adnett and Coates (2003) remark, secondary schooling is characterised by heterogeneous local markets that may compete, collude or cooperate with one another, while HE is frequently more linked to a national market, and collusion and cooperation are more difficult and less likely. There is higher geographical mobility of students in an HE system, whilst students in secondary schooling mostly attend their local schools. Moreover, in HE the problem of non-completion and undue time taken to complete seem to be more pronounced than in secondary schooling. Furthermore, the variations in aggregate market size are pronounced in HE, which is not the case for secondary education. Both the secondary and HE systems use customer-input technology and this implies that in both sectors

output depends on the quality of the students recruited. Hence in both sectors there is the problem of estimating what contribution to output is made by the educational provider and what through enrolling the 'right' students. Consistent with the previous characteristic of secondary schooling, this signalling is mostly performed in the local market while for higher education institutions (HEIs) the national market is mostly relevant, given the greater geographical mobility of tertiary sector graduates. Some national markets in HE are also linked to highly competitive admissions at some HEIs, hence students need to obtain a good score in the entrance examination and have good overall high-school grades. Whilst stratification by previous academic attainment is relatively strong for some HEIs, it is less so in secondary schooling. These differences suggest that great care needs to be taken in interpreting the available empirical evidence obtained for HE and extending its conclusions to the secondary schooling sector.

Before we proceed to investigate international benchmarking, several key terms and concepts need to be clarified in the context of education. The role of education indicators will also be briefly examined. This is the focus of the next section.

2   Key Concepts in Benchmarking Education Quality

Educational policy usually emphasises two objectives: efficiency and equity. A system is said to be efficient if output is maximised for the given utilisation of inputs, or if a given output is obtained with minimum input. Outputs of an education system are usually achievement scores, completion rates, employment probabilities, etc. Inputs relate to material and non-material resources in education, such as the number of teachers, teacher salaries, teacher ability, the number of textbooks and their cost, etc. A more detailed analysis of efficiency concepts and their measurement and use in education is beyond the scope of this chapter but can be found in Hanushek and Lockheed (1994). Educational efficiency is often confused with effectiveness and sometimes the two terms

are used interchangeably. However, educational effectiveness is whether or not a specific set of educational resources has a positive effect on student performance and, if so, how large this effect is. Hence, efficiency is about 'doing the things right', while effectiveness is about 'doing the right things' (Drucker 1967).

Educational effectiveness research originated in the 1960s with the publication of the Coleman Report (1966) which found that only a small proportion of the variations in student achievement can be attributed to the schools themselves. This Report gave rise to a number of studies trying to verify that schools do make a difference. Assessing the success of schools and rating their teaching and operating efficiency started rather recently in the European Union. However, benchmarking education quality has been high on the agenda of the European Commission. This led to an upsurge of interest in education indicators which provide a basis for monitoring the quality of education. Two publications are of special interest to policy makers and other stakeholders in education. These are *Education at a glance* by the OECD and *Key data* by Eurydice. As Sheerens and Hendriks (2003) note, *Education at a glance* has a design that is built on the input, process, output and context of education, while *Key data* is dedicated more to descriptions of the education systems. A number of interviewed stakeholders across EU countries acknowledge that they use *Education at a glance* more often than *Key data* although they find the former publication difficult and complex (Sheerens and Hendriks 2003). Some progress has been made in linking different publications. An example is the Education and Skills Cooperation Agreement signed by the European Commission and the OECD. Both organisations identified international surveys as the main areas of common interest and they jointly published the results of the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) in 2013. PISA is one of the most comprehensive studies on educational outcomes which evaluates the equity, efficiency and quality of education systems in over 70 countries. This study provides the most widely available data for comparing the performance of countries in secondary education. Much smaller in scope is the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMMS) which provides data for students in primary education (4th and 8th grade).

The most recent strategic framework presented by the European Commission in Education and Training 2020 specifies eight benchmarks. Only one of these benchmarks is related to secondary education and states that the share of low-achieving 15-year-olds in reading, mathematics and science should be less than 15% by 2020. It might be argued that this is a fairly general requirement and does not take into consideration country specific data. For the purpose of this chapter we will use more indicators for the analysis of secondary education in selected countries.

3   The Educational Performance of Small European Countries

The focus of this section is to provide a comparative review in terms of educational performance of selected small European countries. Given data availability, the authors analyse PISA results and combine them with country specific data. These are aggregate national results that are well suited for international comparisons and policy debates. We discuss the differences in educational outcomes for this sample of countries, analyse performance over time and identify the strongest examples, i.e. countries that have shown rapid improvement in educational outcomes over recent years. An additional objective of our research is to further assess and evaluate these best-practice examples and to present an outline of an educational policy aimed at improving educational outcomes.

We next analyse PISA 2012 and PISA 2015 scores for science for a group of selected small European countries, which are divided into two main groups: north-west (Nordic and Baltic: Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania and Norway) countries and south-east (west Balkan: Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia) countries. In general, the north-west group achieved somewhat better results, although Slovenia and Croatia from the south-east group accomplished comparable scores. The rest of the Balkan countries are notably lagging behind. Similar conclusions arise if we look at maths and reading scores (unreported but available upon request).

This is not surprising given that countries with better PISA scores are also those with higher GDP per capita, i.e. more developed countries (Fig. 1).

Individually, Estonia was the best performer in maths and science and second best (after Finland) in reading. For this reason we use Estonia as a case study and analyse it in more detail below. Small Balkan countries are at the other end of the spectrum, with Montenegro and Macedonia performing the worst across all three areas of basic skills. These results should, however, be compared to some international benchmark, as well as in combination with other indicators in order to draw conclusions. For this reason we firstly compare these results with the OECD and EU28 average.

The first issue that arises is that both OECD and EU28 average scores decreased between 2012 and 2015, and so did individual country results for the majority of countries. The EU28 average in science
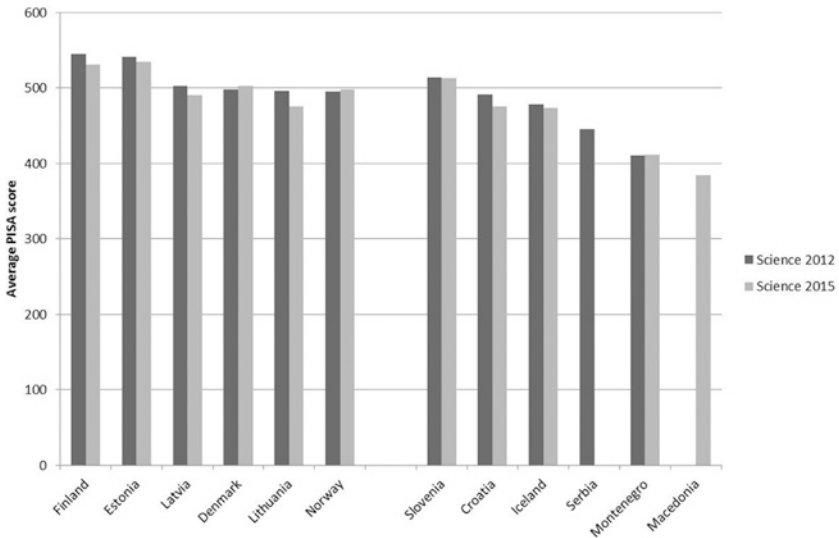
Fig. 1 PISA scores in science in 2012 and 2015 in selected countries. *Notes* Countries are ordered by high to low scores in science for both groups of countries. Scores for Macedonia for 2012 and Serbia for 2015 do not exist (*Source* Authors, based on OECD data [www.oecd.org/pisa/data/; https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/pisa/idepisa/])

dropped from 499 in 2012 to 489 in 2015. In OECD countries this decrease was from 501 to 493. Similarly, the EU28 experienced a decrease in maths scores from 491 to 489, while the OECD average dropped from 494 to 490. Finally, in reading, the average scores fell from 491 to 487, and from 496 to 493 in the EU28 and OECD, respectively. In general, in 2012 and 2015 Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Croatia, Montenegro, Macedonia and Serbia were below the OECD average, while Estonia, Denmark, Finland, Slovenia and Norway were above in all three areas of basic skills.

A longer time series (back to 2000) reveals that no general conclusions can be drawn regarding this group of rather heterogeneous countries. Estonia, Norway, Latvia, Montenegro and Serbia achieved, on average, an increase in their scores in all three categories. Finland, Iceland and Macedonia, on the other hand, experienced a decrease in their scores. Other countries in our sample had diverse results where the scores increased except for maths in Denmark and Lithuania, as well as science in Slovenia, Croatia and Lithuania. Estonia, from the northwest group, obviously took over the first position from Finland, whereas Slovenia is a clear leader among the south-east group—for this reason we also use Slovenia as a case study.

We next take a closer look by examining the average PISA score in our group of small European countries in maths, science and reading for both years, 2012 and 2015, against the following variables: pupil-teacher ratio, percentage of government expenditure per student in secondary schools, percentage of expenditure on secondary education, number of pupils, number of teachers in secondary schools, and teacher salaries. This will allow us to observe whether and which government funded factors make a difference in influencing PISA scores. This is very important, especially in the light of increasingly restricted government budgets, where these limited resources should be used to achieve the best possible educational outcomes.

The relationship between the average PISA score and the pupil-teacher ratio is negative. In other words, a higher number of pupils per teacher is associated with lower PISA scores. This finding is not surprising given that larger classes can be perceived as more troublesome and not allowing teachers to focus on the individual needs of students.

However, these results should be interpreted with caution since individual country results are quite dispersed around the trend line, thus suggesting the relatively low significance of the findings and the existence of substantial variation in outcomes that seems not to be captured by differences in the pupil-teacher ratio. When the sample is split according to geographical position, in the north-west group of countries this relationship turns positive, although still with low statistical significance, whereas in the south-east group it is negative. Moreover, if we remove Serbia and Macedonia from the sample (which appear in the sample for only one year each), the trend line becomes practically horizontal, thus suggesting that the pupil-teacher ratio does not have a significant impact on PISA scores. Additionally, it should be emphasised that pupil-teacher ratios do not vary much within our group of countries, with the average being 9 pupils per teacher.

The relationship between the share of government spending per (secondary school) student in GDP and PISA scores is found to be positive. Similarly, the share of spending on secondary education in overall government spending on education and PISA scores is also positively correlated. This, again, is in line with expectations given that we would assume that countries that spend (i.e. invest) more in education achieve better scores. However, in both cases Serbia again seems to be an outlier. Once we remove it from our sample, it becomes obvious that there is no significant relationship between government expenditures and PISA scores. This is true for the group as a whole, as well as for two sub-groups: the north-west and south-east. It might be the case that this relationship becomes virtually non-existent above a certain level of expenditures.

Finally, when PISA scores in the whole sample are shown against the number of pupils, the results suggest a slightly negative relationship. However, in the Nordic and Baltic sample this relationship is distinctly positive, while in the sample of the Balkan countries it is negative. A positive relationship suggests that with an increase in the number of pupils, PISA scores also increase in the north-west group of countries. On the other hand, it appears that with an increase in the number of pupils in the Balkans, the PISA scores decline. When PISA scores are shown against the number of teachers, the relationship is decidedly negative. This is in line with expectations, as it suggests that the smaller number of teachers in a country results in worse PISA scores, as these

teachers cannot devote themselves sufficiently to pupils. One of the reasons might be low teacher salaries which make them less motivated and make the teaching profession undesirable. We therefore also look at the relationship between the average PISA score and the average (secondary) teacher salary in those countries for which data were available. A positive trend can be observed, although it should again be stressed that the results are spread rather widely around the trend line.

Overall, our results indicate that to achieve maximum efficiency in allocating (limited) government expenditures, the best strategy would be to invest in teachers, as teacher salaries are shown to be one of the key inputs that play a role in affecting the output, i.e. educational outcomes. Finally, the conclusions of the OECD (2010) suggest that, for industrial countries, the quality of human resources is key for better educational outcomes. Insofar as investing in teachers is such that it increases their quality, this finding is compatible with our findings.

4   Case Studies

For this section we selected two countries from each group: Estonia from the Nordic and Baltic group of countries and Slovenia from the west Balkan group. These countries were found to be good examples either in student performance or in the reforms made in the education sector. More details on their performance are presented below.

4.1   Case Study—Estonia

Estonia, a small Eastern European country, has one of the strongest education systems among all OECD countries. In the EU and OECD areas, the rate of educational attainment at the secondary level in Estonia is among the highest and it has above-average results in PISA—for science, mathematics and reading (OECD 2016). At the same time, Estonia is one of the poorest OECD countries with per capita GDP significantly below the OECD average.

According to Santiago et al. (2016), in the early 1990s the country's school system was decentralised. Much of the Estonian National

Curriculum 1996 was directly inspired by the Finnish National Curriculum. School principals are granted considerable autonomy, among other things, to make decisions about school finances, education priorities and development plans for the school. At least once every three years schools must conduct self-evaluations. A national education plan, the Estonian Lifelong Learning Strategy 2020, adopted in 2014, sees learning as a lifestyle and emphasises the importance of competent and highly motivated teachers and school principals, calls for the alignment of lifelong learning opportunities with labour market needs, and aims to guarantee lifelong learning opportunities for everyone, including through digital platforms. Lifelong learning in Estonia begins with general education, divided into preschool, basic, and upper-secondary education. On completing general secondary education, students can continue their studies at a higher educational institution or can pursue vocational education.

However, despite the fact that the Estonian school system is a high-performing one and has accomplished significant achievements, Santiago et al. (2016) note that a significant proportion of young adults do not have a professional or vocational qualification. Further, these authors believe that educational policy makers should take into consideration that the (under)performance of students in Russian language schools, in spite of some recent improvements, may be the result of the students' socio-economic background.

4.2   Case Study—Slovenia

Slovenia is not only one of the richest countries in Central Europe, but it is also a country with one of the highest levels of income equality in the OECD. Moreover, Slovenia is a country with comparatively high levels of personal security, a relatively unspoiled natural environment and high educational attainment (OECD 2017b).

According to the European Commission (2017), the basic skills of Slovenian 15-year-olds are, overall, high and improving. Namely, they are performing well in all three fields tested in the PISA survey: science, mathematics and reading. In particular, Slovenia has achieved one of the EU's steepest reductions in the proportion of low achievers

in reading since 2009. Around 94% of 25–34-year-olds have completed at least upper-secondary education—a figure higher than almost all OECD countries. An important development in the Slovenian education system is the full introduction of foreign language learning earlier in primary education. The percentage of young adults in Slovenia with tertiary education rose from 25% in 2005 to 41% in 2015, exceeding the EU 2020 target of 40% (OECD 2017b). Despite the fact that Slovenia is among the 10 EU countries that spend the most on education, Slovenian teachers' statutory salaries are below the EU-22 average in all education sectors and at all points in their career (European Commission 2017).

Slovenia is making a significant effort to modernise its higher education system—the current reforms mainly aim to link funding with performance, increase completion rates, encourage internationalisation and strengthen quality assurance. In this light, the revision of the Higher Education Act in November 2016 introduced performance-based funding of higher education institutions (European Commission 2017).

Slovenia is also working hard to modernise vocational education and training (VET) and to promote adult learning. The proportion of upper-secondary students in VET slightly increased in 2015 and amounts to 67.5%, which is well above the EU average of 47.3%. However, the employment rate of recent VET graduates in 2016, at 72.3%, was slightly below the EU average of 75%. In this respect, as part of a Ministry of Education initiative, a programme to improve the professional competences of teachers was launched in 2016. In addition, to engage employers further and help young people make the transition to working life, Slovenia reintroduced apprenticeships (European Commission 2017).

5   Conclusion

In general, benchmarking is applied in both public and private sectors of the economy (Johnston et al. 2012). As previously noted, benchmarking in secondary education has been used predominantly at the school level and is often linked to some form of governmental

regulation of schooling. The latter may take several forms (adapted from Adnett and Davies 2002). Government may provide specific details on the curriculum or make a requirement that only licensed teachers may be employed, whilst determining the requirements to obtain that licence. In order to improve monitoring of schooling outputs, governments may also require the development and publication of performance indicators that enable comparisons between schools.

Through government-formulated benchmarks, the education system of a country may become more transparent. Furthermore, international comparisons between education systems in different European countries can help in the sharing and raising of knowledge on how efficient education systems should be designed. To allow these comparisons, PISA scores have been used. The previous sections of this chapter have highlighted the differences among countries in achieving PISA scores, particularly between Estonia and Slovenia.

Benchmarking may be seen as a device to improve efficiency in the education system. However, this will depend on the 'quality' of these benchmarks. This, of course, depends on how well measured and chosen the performance indicators and benchmarks are and whether their dysfunctional effects have been accounted for. This is linked to debates over the equity-efficiency trade-off where it is often pointed out that the pursuit of greater equity usually leads to a decrease in efficiency, and vice-versa. In education as well, the pursuit of greater efficiency may lead to equity concerns. Bradley et al. (2001) point out how the goal of increasing efficiency in UK secondary schools may result in some form of stratification of students and schools, i.e. students from poorer families becoming gradually more concentrated in schools with the weakest performance; further on, the resources get allocated to other, better-performing schools. Another concern lies also in the performance indicators used in the education sector and published in 'league tables'. As Adnett et al. (2002) caution, 'league table' results are based on unadjusted pupil attainment and do not capture objectively the educational value added. Hence, there are some dysfunctional effects in the education sector, i.e. schools trying to improve their position in the league tables by 'cream-skimming' or grade inflation (Johnes 2004).

These issues need to be taken into account in benchmarking. In terms of benchmarking, incorporating national information with international publications of indicators is viewed as good practice, and in this way the PISA study serves as a good example.

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4

Educational Policies for School Leadership in Europe: A Comparative Review

Tihomir Žiljak

1   Introduction: Comparison of Education Policies

The motto of the European Union is 'United in diversity'. Is there any better incentive for comparative analysis? Common education goals present an important part of EU development plans: they are going to be formulated and implemented while different national solutions are maintained. The key question is how those solutions will function within schools. Therefore, the motivating question in this matter is how different national policies in the EU solve the issue of school leadership. Is it possible to get an answer to this question by applying policy analysis? Before dealing with this question, it is necessary to see what the purpose of comparing education policies is, which elements are being compared and what the results of these findings are.

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As an important sector policy, education policy is commonly a subject for comparative analysis. It is among the several policies analysed by Heidenheimer, Heclo and Adams in their book on comparative public policies, who write about the four types of choice applicable to each policy area. These are, firstly, choices of scope 'where lines shall be drawn between public and private responsibilities' (Heidenheimer et al. 1990, p. 46). Focus is placed on actors, who can be either state or private (non-state) actors. The second type refers to the choice of policy instruments: the central question is whether governance is centralised or decentralised. The third type includes choices about distribution, where the key question is to what extent education policy allows social mobility and educational opportunity. The final type relates to choices about restraints and innovations, as well as the question 'how to continue, terminate or adopt policies' (Heidenheimer et al. 1990, p. 17).

In her influential study on the implementation of education policy, Honig (2006) particularly analyses changes in policy design, and compares the period from 1965 to 1990 with the period from 1990 to the beginning of the 2000s. In doing so, goals, targets (which present key actors) and tools are compared (Honig 2006, p. 11).

In their famous study on public policies in the six most developed industrial states (USA, Japan, France, Germany, UK, Italy) and the EU, Adolino and Blake also analyse education policy. They ask three questions, and attempt to observe similarities and differences of education policies on the basis of these questions. The questions are: '1. Who will be educated? 2. What will that education entail? 3. Who will control the education system?' (Adolino and Blake 2011, p. 322).

Publications that deal with the analysis of education processes and systems within the framework of globalisation, Europeanisation[1] and internationalisation[2] regularly include a comparative analysis of education policies. They can refer to comparisons of national policies, common attributes on the continent (Europeanisation), or to differences between more (richer) or less (poorer) developed states, or within less developed states (Hanushek 2013; Sahlberg 2016). In either case, the comparison of the education process always includes the context of national and regional politics, the economic framework within which it is being implemented and all the institutional dimensions (including

layers of policies, cultures, values and the temporal dimension). A neo-institutional theoretical framework allows exactly this type of comparative analysis (Wiseman et al. 2013, p. 34).

The process by which new states enter the EU is of particular importance, as it is connected with their transition processes. New member states have experienced similar transition phases, along with important international influences, and yet the changes have not been identical in all cases (Mitter 2003; Birzea 2008). Influences can be a part of the process of conditionality, and even more commonly of the logic of appropriateness (Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier 2004). Policy transfer is at work here, as can be seen in both the comparison and transfer of the dual system from Bavaria into Croatia (Žiljak 2013), and educational systems from Finland to Estonia (Toots 2009). Silova (2009) claims that the only common characteristic of reforms in Eastern Europe is the narration ('buzz words', 'brand naming'), but that understandings of that narrative differ. Wodak and Fairclough conclude that the same narration can be understood differently because EU policies can be placed in different contexts, which would imply a recontextualisation of European documents. This is why understanding also differs from state to state (Wodak and Fairclough 2010, p. 33).

It can be concluded that goals, actors and instruments are key elements which should be compared in education policies. All of this can be placed within a broader context of welfare regime, economic development, the process of internationalisation (Martens et al. 2014), Europeanisation (Lawn and Grek 2012) or globalisation (Dale and Robertson 2007). The temporal dimension should also not be neglected since a window of opportunity or a critical juncture (Žiljak 2013) can be found in it.

2   Comparison of Instruments, Actors and Goals

2.1   Instruments

In some ways, nearly all the previously listed publications dealing with comparative policy analysis compare the instruments used in policies. Instruments used to conduct education policies can be analysed

in different ways. In their classic work, McDonnell and Elmore define instruments as mandates (rules formulated by legal acts), inducements (financing), capacity-building (competence strengthening) and system-changing (McDonnell and Elmore 1987).

Later typologies and taxonomies include a broader spectrum of activities. Hannaway and Woodroffe list three types of instrument. In the first, they place particular emphasis on market regulation, which can be used to improve education. The second group is based on accountability and instruments based on incentives. The third group refers to greater investment and capacity increase (Hannaway and Woodroffe 2003).

Mok analyses the transition from classic state governance towards a model of public governance. In public governance, greater importance is given to the influence of the market and civil society, alongside that of the state (Mok 2005, p. 297). Mixed instruments appear in such conditions, where an increasing role is given to non-state actors.

Jakobi analyses the instruments of public governance, which are used by international organisations in educational activities. The focus here differs: discursive dissemination, standard-setting, financial means, coordinative activities, technical assistance (Jakobi 2009, p. 36).

While comparing instruments in a paper dealing with Croatian public policies within the framework of changes in South-East Europe, Žiljak and Baketa (2018) use the modified classic taxonomy of McDonnel and Elmore. Financing is embodied in a single instrument of incentives and other forms of support to education. Discursive dissemination and action by spreading information are added to the taxonomy. In policy implementation, instruments rarely appear in pure forms; they are either combined or multi-layered.

2.2   Actors

The second commonly analysed element in education policy is the actors. In most comparative analyses of education policy, the division of state and non-state actors is essential. Key issues relate to how the state administers the processes of education: does it leave it to the market or build some type of model of partnership between state and non-state actors? In models of public governance, where the strict separation of

state and non-state actors disappears, it is difficult to determine a clear border between the processes governed just by the state from those in which non-state actors participate (Borzel and Risse 2010). Important forms of cooperation between state and non-state actors include various types of public policy networks. In his analysis of education policies, Ball demonstrates how the previously mentioned networks are crucial for organising and influencing education processes (Ball 2012).

Actors can be grouped by level of activity. The basic level of education policy is a school and a class (Berkhout and Wielemans 1999). This is the final point of policy implementation where all the choices regarding the goals, instruments and actors of education policies interact. School teachers are crucial actors in education policy. They can propose new solutions, reinterpret or adjust existing solutions to existing circumstances, or resist or co-create them. In their classic typology, Croll et al. (1994) classify teachers according to their roles in implementing a certain education policy. They categorise them as partners (teachers who use their autonomy in policy implementation), implementers (have no influence in creating policies), opponents (resist policy implementation) and creators of policies in practice (participate in creating policies).

The implementation methods of education policies depend on school leadership. Rigby presents the logics used by principals in their work. 'Ubiquitous prevailing logic' is a broad and flexible approach without clear, previously established goals. This is a typical logic of incremental action. 'Entrepreneurial logic' focuses on management through innovation and private sector mechanisms. This implies attempts to increase the achievements of students, measured by standardised test scores. 'Social justice logic' is focused on the experiences and outcome inequalities of marginalised groups. This logic should prevent the reproduction of inequality in a society (Rigby 2013, p. 9).

The status characteristics and formal role of actors, therefore, are not the only important factors in this process; their perceptions of a certain problem and the kind of values they introduce into their actions are also of importance. This is discussed by Ball, Maguire, Braun and Hoskins in an analysis where the problem of meaning is the key issue. They categorise actors according to how they act and interpret education policy problems, goals and possible solutions to narrators,

outsiders, transactors, enthusiasts, translators, critics and receivers (Ball et al. 2011, p. 626). These roles are not necessarily associated with the functions or formal positions of actors within an organisation. In the process of policy implementation, a key role is given to head teachers as narrators when they are filtering and selectively defining goals and tasks. An essential part of this is explaining policy goals, decision making and publishing what must, what can, and what cannot be done. Bearers of institutional politics also play a key role in composing meaning and are crucial to the discursive articulation of policy (Ball et al. 2011, p. 627).

2.3   Goals

Goals present the key dimension of education policies, specifying what their implementation aims to achieve. Education policy is both a product and a process, in which goals are continuously re-contextualised (Bell and Stevenson 2006, p. 17). Public policy goals are (formal) statements regarding desirable future outcomes and the means of resolving certain issues. According to their content, goals can differ dramatically regarding the social group that benefits the most from the desired outcome. Apple claims that this is one of the key issues within education policy: who will benefit the most from a certain education policy (Apple 2000)?

The goals of education policy are neither static nor permanent, thereby requiring ongoing research to analyse changes over the course of time, as well as changes in goals, instruments and actors. Education policy is often presented as a developmental process with a number of phases that are upgraded (Zajda 2002; Ertl 2006) and can be compared to one another. An example of such analysis is found in the four types ('four ways') of education policy provided by Hargreaves and Shirley, which they use to describe the development of education policies after World War II (Hargraves and Shirley 2009).

2.3.1 Normative Power of International Organisations

International organisations can have a significant influence on the goals of education policies, the normative power of these organisations being

a major contributory factor here. Jakobi demonstrates this through discursive dissemination (2009) and it is also implied by the influences of the results of the Programme for International Student Assessment [PISA] research (Sjøberg 2016). In this sense, through the process of Europeanisation, the EU tries to influence the education policies of national states by using the open method of coordination, relying on policy learning and soft law mechanisms. Manner defines normative power as '…a form of power that is ideational rather than material or physical. As a normative form of power, the emphasis is on the ability to use normative justification rather than the ability to use material incentives or physical force' (Manner 2011, p. 230). Therefore, the power of international organisations (UNESCO, the OECD and the EU) in the field of education is the greatest in the area of spreading ideas, composing propositions and influencing goals. The policies of European states are most commonly implemented within the process of Europeanisation (Alexiadou 2007) but the processes of internationalisation and influences of global, international organisations are also important.

The European Union

Even though the EU does not have a unified education policy, its normative power is considerable (Klatt 2014). Common goals exist, and certain instruments are used to coordinate policies (Žiljak 2005). General education was not considered as part of the key interests of the European Union until the 1990s, and was neglected, even though vocational training was of interest (due to the qualification and mobility of workers). Education was mentioned for the first time in the 1992 Maastricht treaty. Since 2000, when the Lisbon Process began, education has become one of the main incentives in development, competitiveness and facing global challenges. However, the key tools of managing education policies still remain in the hands of national authorities.

School leadership should help to achieve the basic EU goals, influencing schools to participate in creating essential economic and social goals—competitiveness, inclusion, social sensitivity and innovation

within an inter-connected and unified European educational space. Leadership should ensure the balance of effectiveness, equity and efficiency. The main focus of school leadership should be placed on ensuring quality learning, curriculum, pedagogical issues and staff performance, motivation and development (European Commission 2016a, b).

School autonomy is an imperative that gives greater freedom, but also requires greater responsibility of school leadership (Eurydice 2007) 'Raised at the outset to the level of an objective or even basic principle of school management and policy – institutions should be autonomous to guarantee teaching freedom, to strengthen local school democracy…' (Eurydice 2007, p. 45). School autonomy should ensure greater freedom for schools and teachers so that the quality of education may be improved.

UNESCO

UNESCO is focused on global challenges, particularly in developing countries and countries with weak education systems. It therefore promotes education as one of the basic rights that should be available to all. By using new ideas, standards, data distribution and international cooperation, UNESCO aims to provide everyone with the opportunity of acquiring the education they need (UNESCO 2015). The basic power of UNESCO lies in spreading and negotiating ideas, as well as its normative power and the normative instruments it uses to promote the right to education (Power 2015, p. 19). Cooperation between UNESCO, the OECD and the World Bank is important, creating an international structure essential for the definition of educational goals. This partnership is trying to maintain balance between guaranteeing the right to education and more economistic approaches to education policy.

Circumstances of this type bring about changes to goals in relation to school leadership. After 2000, the discussion was re-directed from 'what' (people, structures, functions and roles) and school management to 'how' (practices and functions), the role of leadership in teaching and learning (Vaillant 2015, p. 3). The policy level should enable an autonomous space in which the best decisions can be made for the students. In such circumstances, the aim is to create policy instruments that will allow

school leaders to combine their professional pedagogical knowledge with management competences (UNESCO 2016).

All the previously listed aspects of school leadership policies have to be integrated into national education policies, particularly into the policy components referring to teachers and quality of education. Successful school leadership demands school autonomy and a systematic approach to managing education systems, which gives schools more room and monitoring tools at a decentralised level (UNESCO 2016).

OECD

The OECD is focused on the economic development of member states, making the economic implications and consequences of education the centre of interest (Jakobi 2009, p. 75). In doing so, the OECD most commonly uses information, comparative analyses, statistical and thematic reviews. PISA surveys, analyses, research and so on enable cognitive/normative governance. The OECD certainly has a normative influence on national policies (Sjøberg 2016, p. 110); the influence of recommendations is particularly great in small and peripheral states (Rinne et al. 2004, p. 476).

The OECD emphasises that capabilities and competences enable social and economic welfare. In order to achieve basic educational goals, it is important to include a broader circle of school and non-school actors in order to achieve greater efficacy in the leadership process (distributed leadership). It is important to harmonise leadership with the economic and political context within which the school operates (Pont et al. 2008). The issue of accountability is important for the efficacy and efficiency of education policies, as is the transition from the logic of resources to the logic of outcome, for which accountability has to be assured (Akkari and Lauwerie 2015, p. 150).

It is also important to include various actors from schools (particularly teachers) in professional learning communities. The participation of teachers incites their active contribution to management, enables usage of feedback with the purpose of adapting procedures and guaranteeing sustainable management (OECD 2016, pp. 33, 38).

The international organisations described above do not have identical goals, target groups or instruments of action, but they are connected by cooperation and common initiatives (Ball 2008, p. 34). They do, of course, share some common points. Common goals with regard to school leadership can be listed: economic success and sustainability (visible in both the OECD and the EU); respect for human rights and social inclusion (more emphasised by UNESCO); actors: abandoning the state monopoly in managing schools, strengthening the partner role, local community and teachers (particularly within the context of multi-level and multi-actor governance); instruments: emphasising the autonomy of school.

3   Models

Due to their transparency and clarity, education systems and policies can be presented as ideal-type models. According to Howlett (2014), ideal-types can be perceived as a form of policy design '…that is, as ideal configurations of sets of policy elements which can reasonably be expected, if adapted to meet the parameters of specific contextual setting, to deliver a specific outcome' (Howlett 2014, p. 193). This means that key variables and parameters need to be selected, based on which a model can be composed.

Differences in school management are most clearly presented in the modified four ideal-type models for education governance (Table 1). They were published by the OECD in 2003, but have later been used in the analyses presented in the influential handbook on public policies edited by Guy Peters and Jon Pierre (Marton 2006), in Gunter's analysis of the relationship between the state and education policy (Gunter 2011, p. 164) and in the analyses of the European Commission (2016a, p. 5). These models include basic elements of governance in the policy process that regulates possibilities and forms of leadership.

In the first model, called the 'competitive market model', a school is regarded as an entrepreneur conducting business on the market, and has autonomy from the government. The school competes for its students

Table 1 Ideal-type models of school governance

Model	Parameters				
	Leadership role	Key actors	Instruments	Key goals	Accountability
Competitive market	Entrepreneur	Schools, consumers/clients	Market regulation	Commercial success	Contractual/performance indicators
School empowerment	Coordinator	Schools, partners organisation	Organisation/partnership	Quality of school curriculum providing	Responsive/interpersonal
Local empowerment	Networker	Local authorities, networks	Organisation/networking	Local development	Responsive/local stakeholders
Quality control	Production manager	State bureaucracy	Authority (funding, controlling)	Quality of delivery	Contractual/hierarchical

Sources OECD (2003), Mulford (2005), Marton (2006), Žiljak (2014)

and financing in a competitive area with other near-by schools. The individual client takes the role of product buyer.

In the second model, called 'school empowerment', the focus is placed on the school itself, and enhancing its educational role. The assumption is that the school has the freedom and ability to make choices, while ideas are developed with the help of partnerships and by including the community. The 'school empowerment' model implies devolved autonomy, since the school is dependent on the entire system regarding its decisions.

'Local empowerment' is the third model, and it emphasises decentralisation and the transfer of power to the local authority. The school is a part of a local educational system, meaning that consultative autonomy is operative.

The fourth model is called 'quality control' and it suggests that government aims for control of both school processes and products. Essential items include bureaucratic procedures of rules and requirements. The state assures financial means and controls the processes.

Autonomy and accountability are the key distinctive characteristics of the four models. In these models, autonomy is perceived as a choice between contractual and responsive accountability. Contractual accountability refers to fulfilling the expectations of a certain audience by giving them standards and outcomes. Responsive accountability is based on decision making by teachers, while bearing in mind the wishes of the relevant participants. It is clear that the consumerist view of accountability appears in the competitive market model, as it is analogous to commercial behaviour. The school empowerment and local education models emphasise responsive accountability through responsibility to stakeholders. In the local empowerment model, the school is accountable to external actors, as well as the local community (e.g. community forum). Responsibility towards the professional community (including school professionals) also appears in the school empowerment model. The quality control model similarly presents a contractual type of responsibility, which can be characterised as hierarchical, since the higher level of power decides on definitions within a contract (Marton 2006, p. 236; Mulford 2005, p. 290).

All of these models need to be placed within the context of internationalisation and Europeanisation that spreads with the help of international organisations. Their normative power influences the national actors that filter these ideas and transfer them to schools.

4   Conclusion

A comparison of education policies referring to school leadership should take general comparative policy research and basic elements of education policy as a starting point. This means that goals, instruments and actors are being compared. The analysis includes global, regional and national contexts and dominant discourses in which these policies are being implemented. Particular attention is given to the normative power of international organisations and the national filtering of their recommendations. Based on these assumptions, the OECD ideal-type governance for school and systems management has been included here. It allows for the comparative analysis of national policies in the EU, referring to school leadership, while including various national political and economic contexts, various understandings of documents, as well as including instruments and actors. These policies are particularly significant for smaller states that are under the greater influence of strong, international policy actors. Policy analysis, therefore, may play a significant role with its tools in this process.

Notes

1. Processes of (a) construction (b) diffusion and (c) institutionalisation of formal and informal rules, procedures, policy paradigms, styles, 'ways of doing things' and shared beliefs and norms which are first defined and consolidated in the making of EU decisions and then incorporated in the logic of domestic discourse, identities, political structures and public policies' (Radaelli 2003, p. 30).
2. Martens, Knodel and Windzio describe internationalisation in education as follows: 'New contexts, procedures and arenas of governance [which emerge] that, beside the established actors involved, shape education policy' (Martens et al. 2014, p. 1).

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5

Selection and Education of School Principals: A Comparative Overview of Policies

Toni Popović, Nikša Alfirević and Renata Relja

1   Introduction

The importance of school principals in pupil achievements has been shown in research studies that explored the reasons why pupils in some schools study more than in others (Gamoran 2007, p. 1971; Colombo 2013; Vican et al. 2016; European Commission 2017). School principals can promote the climate of a 'learning organisation', giving teachers different opportunities for professional development, encouraging openness and dialogue concerning teaching, while simultaneously inviting parent

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involvement in school activities and developing partnership with the community, in addition to harmonising the goals with the local requirements. Higher expectations of pupils, with their positive perception of school operations, lead to the more committed participation of pupils in school activities and higher academic achievements (Mulford 2003).

Without joint reflection and continuous improvement in the quality of teaching and learning, schools foster mediocrity (Burton et al. 2011, p. 29). Striving to encourage excellence, education authorities grant schools an increasing amount of freedom in the preparation of the curriculum, hiring staff, providing finance and other operational features, in addition to spreading responsibility and creating a competitive climate among schools for pupils, school staff and resources based on the results achieved in tests both at the national and international level (Stoll and Temperley 2009; Popović 2017, p. 322). The increasing responsibility of school principals for school results, a large number of obligations and the widespread opinion about the insufficient social reputation of this occupation have decreased teachers' interest in assuming the role of school principal. This applies globally, irrespective of the economic development of individual countries (Mulford 2003; Stoll and Temperley 2009).

An important factor concerning the falling interest in the job of school principal, which is linked with what has previously been mentioned, is also the insufficient quality of preparation of candidates for assuming the role of school principal. In some countries, school principals attend compulsory formal education programmes (e.g. in the United States and most EU member states), whereas in other countries they are prepared through the apprenticeship model (Mexico, Tanzania, Australia, to name a few countries) or primarily through work after their appointment (e.g. India and Brazil) (Onguko et al. 2012; Ärlestig et al. 2016). In countries like England, where there is a wide range of high-quality formal and informal education programmes for school principals, research studies have shown a higher interest among teachers for the position of school principal, as well as the higher confidence of school principals related to their obligations (Huber et al. 2008, p. 120). At the same time, higher confidence positively correlates with the desired school results (Ivanov 2016).

Research on school principals in the international context is important for the effective forming of their education before and after their appointment to this function, as well as for the creation of policies to ensure the sustainability of education programmes (establishing standards for the occupation of school principal and the subsequent harmonisation of education programmes, the compulsory licensing of school principals based on the completed education, programme financing, etc.) (Nelson and Slater 2013; Clarke and Wildy 2013; Sadovnik and Coughlan 2016). The studies conducted thus far have largely considered the experiences of English speaking countries (e.g. the *International Study of Principal Preparation*—ISPP; the OECD *Improving School Leadership Project*; *School Leadership Study: Developing Successful Principals*, Stanford University). These experiences, and the experiences of countries that have not been involved in the research studies in question, are analysed through a comparative approach. Consolidating the results, we strive to provide guidelines for effective education as a segment of the systematic professionalisation of school principals, which also includes a higher level of control of school principals over professional standards through their networks, organisations and initiatives, as well as for popularising and improving the reputation of the profession (Macdonald 2007; Stoll and Temperley 2009; Darling-Hammond et al. 2010; Vican et al. 2016).

2 Selection, Roles and Education of School Principals in International Context

As in most countries in the world, school principals in Europe are selected from teachers, with the requirement of, most frequently, between three and five years of work experience. Table 1 shows the obligation of the formal education of school principals in many European countries. Furthermore, most primary school principals pointed out that they spend a substantial amount of time or specific periods of time on professional development through informal education programmes (Eurydice 2013). Nevertheless, in 2017 the European Commission released alarming information about the problems faced

Table 1 Education for school principals in Europe

	Compulsory education (formal programmes)	Professional development of primary school principals (informal)		
		A little time/no time at all	A specific period of time	A lot of time
Austria	Yes	8.2	47.6	44.1
Belgium De	Yes	–	–	–
Belgium Fr	Yes	–	–	–
Belgium Nl	No	2.2	63.8	34
Bulgaria	No	–	–	–
Cyprus	No	–	–	–
Czech Republic	Yes	7	50.7	42.3
Denmark	No	6.8	76	17.2
England	Yes	9.7	73.1	17.2
Estonia	Yes	–	–	–
Finland	Yes	9.2	68.1	22.7
France	Yes	–	–	–
Croatia	No	0.3	29.3	70.4
Ireland	No	7.7	76.4	15.9
Iceland	Yes	–	–	–
Italy	Yes	–	–	–
Liechtenstein	Yes	–	–	–
Latvia	No	–	–	–
Lithuania	No	3.6	52.8	43.6
Luxembourg	No	–	–	–
Hungary	No	0.5	64.6	34.9
Malta	Yes	5	68.9	26.1
Holland	No	7	70	23
Norway	No	10.5	65.3	24.2
Germany	Yes	18	64.9	17.1
Poland	Yes	2	44.3	53.7
Portugal	Yes	37.5	56.1	6.4
Romania	Yes	3.7	27.5	68.8
Slovakia	Yes	5	49.1	45.8
Slovenia	Yes	6.5	20.6	72.9
Spain	Yes	12.8	54.4	32.8
Sweden	Yes	12.1	71.4	16.4
Turkey	Yes	–	–	–

Source Eurydice (2013)

by every fifth pupil in the development of their reading skills, as well as the skills required in mathematics and the natural sciences. Facing these challenges, the requirement for more effective school leadership

and management was emphasised, as was the need for support to be provided for teachers concerning teaching excellence (European Commission 2017, pp. 2–3). Given the importance of education, as well as the high expenditure on public education (around 5% of GDP), the European Union intends to report on the effectiveness of expenditures in education, to devise political guidelines on investment in the lifelong learning of (non)teaching staff in schools, and provide concrete development programmes both for school principals and teachers through online courses and mentoring networks (EACEA 2012, p. 87; European Commission 2017).

In the European context, one can distinguish three types of countries in accordance with the roles of school principals and the challenges in their professional education: the Nordic countries; the post-socialist societies; and countries with strong control of schools at the national level (Ärlestig et al. 2016). Irrespective of the differences in expectations of school principals, they all agree on the importance of their professionalisation, the decentralisation of schools and the establishment of a system of responsibilities.

In the Nordic countries (e.g. Iceland, Denmark and Finland), the decentralisation of schools is emphasised in budget management (Moos 2016; Hansen 2016; Risku and Pulkinnen 2016). Schools are starting to introduce different types of programmes and services in order, through education, to protect the general public from the risks of unemployment and social exclusion (Esping-Andersen 1990). There is an expressed need for higher quality education for school principals. This also applies in the case of Finland, where pupils achieve satisfactory results in the PISA tests. Risku and Pulkinnen (2016) stress the fragmentation of education programmes for school principals and insufficient harmonisation with practice. The situation is particularly alarming in Norway where, due to poor results achieved by schools, compulsory education programmes for school principals are being increasingly advocated, based on the recommendations of international research studies. It is also suggested that schools be penalised for below-average results (Møller 2016).

The need for a higher level of authority of school principals can be identified in the post-socialist societies of Eastern and South-Eastern

Europe. For example in Poland, school principals are not authorised to independently manage the budget in any sense; they are not allowed to leave the school premises during working hours without previously informing the supervisory authorities; and they do not make decisions concerning staff recruitment. Irrespective of the fact that formal education programmes for school principals are compulsory, and primary school principals normally claim to be spending a substantial amount of time attending informal education programmes (see Table 1), the importance of defining professional standards related to school principal knowledge, skills and competences is emphasised. Education programmes need to be (re)defined in accordance with the national professional standards so that school principals can be granted the status of a profession and in order to increase both the level of their authority and their responsibilities in school leadership and management (Madalińska-Michalak 2016). Education for the post of school principal and for licensing are compulsory in some other post-socialist countries as well, such as Romania, the Czech Republic, Slovenia and Albania (see Table 1). However, the fact that they have not been harmonised with the demands of modern school leadership and management is frequently highlighted (Vican et al. 2016, p. 89). Consequently, estimates provided by school principals where they claim to spend a substantial amount of time attending informal education activities appear not to help significantly in their professional development (see Table 1).

The context of the post-socialist countries presents further challenges, since research studies conducted in Croatia, Serbia and Albania show a lack of interest among teachers in school leadership (Baranović et al. 2006; Terek et al. 2015; Nathanailli 2015). Such passivity is due to reliance on the hierarchical organisational structure of school and power of the central education authorities, which is a feature of schools that dates back to socialist times when pupils were being prepared for safe jobs in a centrally planned economy. At that time, there was no requirement for flexible organisations focused on improving results. One of the consequences of such passivity and the inherited centralised education system is insufficient training of both school principals and teachers for shared leadership in schools. It is important to highlight that some of

the post-socialist countries achieve below-average results in PISA tests (OECD 2018, p. 7).

Austria, Germany and France are typical examples of countries with traditionally strong control of schools at the central political level. These countries share specific similarities with the post-socialist societies concerning education and the role of school principals. Notwithstanding that formal education for principals is compulsory in all of them (see Table 1), programmes have not been harmonised with local requirements, there is insufficient focus on connecting theory and practice, the issue of teamwork is neglected, etc. The insufficient attention given to the professional development of school principals is understandable, since in these countries school principals have hardly any autonomy in the harmonisation of the curriculum, in budget management, in the recruitment and dismissal of staff, and in exerting influence on the staff's work, as a result of respecting the tradition of pedagogical freedom. Due to the centralisation of schools, there is no system of rewards and punishments for schools depending on the success achieved. Consequently, schools have little incentive to improve their results (Mulford 2003; Huber 2016; Normand 2016; Schratz 2016).

England has probably achieved the best results concerning the professionalisation of school principals, both at the European and at the global level. Back in 1997, *The National Standards for Headteachers* were established, which define the roles of school principals, such as the formulation of the school vision, leadership of teaching and instruction, administrative management, professional development of staff, cooperative work and the provision of mechanisms of responsibility. The same year saw the establishment of the National College for School Leadership (later the National College for Teaching and Leadership), which had implemented over twenty education programmes and research projects by the end of 2015, in addition to launching strategic initiatives for the professionalisation of school leadership (Cowie and Crawford 2007; Huber et al. 2008; Day et al. 2016, p. 249). The professional standards for school principals were revised occasionally, while in 2015 the Department for Education introduced the new *National Standards of Excellence for Headteachers* whose revision and compliance

with stakeholders' needs will be discussed by 2020. It was emphasised that these standards should serve as a framework for the selection, appointment, work assessment and professional development of principals. Given the needs of their schools and local contexts, principals should use standards in assessing their own work and the strategic development of their schools. It is important to foster the establishment of partnerships with other schools, as well as with the public and private sectors, for the purpose of disseminating good practices, with entrepreneurial and innovative actions in raising the quality of leadership, teaching and learning (Department for Education 2015).

In April 2018, the National College for Teaching and Learning was closed. Its activities have been taken over by the Department for Education and its Teaching Regulation Agency. These two bodies are in charge of the lifelong learning of school principals and other school staff (Department for Education 2018). The lifelong learning process is of crucial importance given the decentralisation and privatisation of education and the increasing responsibility that employees have. School operations are subject to inspection by Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education), whose results are intended to determine whether, for example, schools will be granted a higher level of freedom concerning the promotion of innovations in teaching and instruction, or if they will be placed under greater surveillance due to poor performance, with the possibility of the cancellation of contracts with school principals and other (non)teaching staff (Day and Amstrong 2016, p. 246). Although most schools in England are public, the number of free schools is continuously increasing. They may be founded by parents, school principals, teachers, businesses, associations and other natural and legal persons. They may hire staff at their own discretion and they have considerable freedom in curriculum formulation (while they provide quality knowledge in the English language, mathematics and the natural sciences). They are a continuation of the programme of the foundation of academies, of which over 3,500 have been launched during the last fifteen years. As opposed to free schools that need to be newly opened, academies are established through the conversion of low-performing schools. The conversion of schools into academies is a recommendation of central education authorities to all the schools in England.

In conjunction with the spread of free schools, this encourages the permanent improvement of school quality through a higher level of freedom and responsibility in their operations.

In the United States, professional standards for school principals were introduced a year earlier than in England in the document *Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium: Standards for School Leaders* (ISLLC). Discussions about the quality of school leadership that resulted from this document arise from the unpreparedness of the education system for the improvement of the academic achievements of marginalised groups (the poor, pupils with difficulties and Hispanic-Americans, among others), the loss of confidence in public schools and pressures concerning the privatisation of schools, as well as increasingly severe competition among schools for financial resources allocated based on the success achieved (Bredeson 2016, p. 292). Irrespective of the fact that over forty countries adopted ISLLC standards back in 2005, the level of their implementation in school principal education is uncertain. Formal programmes show substantial differences according to their structure, content and duration. There are currently no systematic research studies about their effectiveness in school principal preparation at the federal level. In any case, the issue of the professionalisation of school principals has been more frequently addressed since the mid 1990s, as before that time teachers used to be appointed to do this job based on their work experience in school and in accordance with the seniority principle (Bredeson 2016, p. 293).

A large number of countries with different socio-economic backgrounds use an apprenticeship model rather than compulsory education programmes. Here, future school principals acquire knowledge through practice at school, advancing in leadership positions with the assistance of mentors until they become school principals. This model is widespread in Canada, simultaneously with formal education programmes, which are compulsory in five of thirteen provinces and territories (Pollock and Hauseman 2016, p. 221). Irrespective of the different models of school principal education in Canada, the fact that their effectiveness is questionable has been increasingly pointed out. School principals do not consider the apprenticeship programme appropriate, due to the fact that it largely depends on coincidences—the abilities

and the level of interest of the mentor and the learning opportunities at school, among others (Webber et al. 2014).

Professional standards for school principals have also been introduced in Australia, as a certification programme where attendance is not compulsory. School principals stress that the apprenticeship programme is insufficient for high-quality preparation due to the spread of the trends of the American and British education systems in the Australian context, such as the privatisation of schools, penalties for poor performance, online publication, etc. (Gurr and Drysdale 2015, 2016). The introduction of compulsory education can be crucial for the sustainability of candidate applications for the position of school principal by boosting the candidate's self-confidence. Recently conducted research on a sample at the national level shows that only 1.4% out of 15,000 teachers intend to become principals, due to the complexity of the job for whose performance there is currently no effective preparation (Clarke et al. 2011; McKenzie et al. 2014).

In African countries, schools are faced with a wide range of challenges, such as poverty and ignorance of the community, armed violence, poor hygiene, the spread of HIV/AIDS, child labour, to name just a few. Moreover, schools are faced with a shortage of appropriate material and technological and human resources. School principals in Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda and the South African Republic indicate a need for high-quality (in)formal education in order to address the previously mentioned challenges. Apprenticeship and other forms of learning at work are considered a supplement to formal programmes, which requires the improved education of mentors to enable them to perform their role, and higher quality planning of learning in the workplace (Onguko et al. 2012; Webber et al. 2014; Beckmann and Bipath 2016).

Effective formal education for the job of school principal has not been identified in other parts of the world that we have studied either. It is a priority in India while efforts are being made to improve the quality of education for 264 million pupils. The development of their potential protects them from poverty, disease and exploitation at work, while simultaneously creating the prerequisites for the development of India as a knowledge society, which would additionally strengthen its economy as one of the fastest growing in the world (Saravanabhavan et al. 2016).

A specific preparation programme for the role of school principal has not been introduced in Mexico and Brazil either. In these countries, school principals are also prepared for their role through work experience following their appointment, which has proven to be insufficient for effective school leadership and management (García-Garduno and Martínez-Martínez 2013; Mariano et al. 2016).

3   What Makes School Principal Education Successful?

The general conclusion of the International Study of Principal Preparation, conducted since the beginning of this millennium among fourteen countries on all the inhabited continents, shows the great importance of adapting education programmes to the local context (Nelson and Slater 2013). With few exceptions, such as that in England, the education programmes shown in a comparative overview in this chapter most frequently do not meet user requirements.

Clarke and Wildy (2013, p. 35) believe that principal education needs to focus on four key constructs: place, people, system and self. Concerning *place*, school principals must be acquainted with the culture, history, demography, socio-economic status and both the needs and the potential of the local community. They should be contextually literate, due to the impact of the environment on school operations, which its development strategies need to be adapted to. The development of flexible organisations and participative leadership styles creates the need to be acquainted with *people* or with the cooperation model, teamwork and the strengthening of confidence (Woods 2013). School principals also need to be acquainted with the *education system*, with corresponding policy measures, in order to act in accordance with the guidelines and legal requirements. Finally, they need to be acquainted with their *self*, i.e. their values and emotional states, linking them with successful leadership (Clarke and Wildy 2013).

A requirement to develop an education programme based on professional standards has been highlighted under the ISPP project, the School Leadership Study and the OECD Improving School Leadership

project. School principals also need to participate in the formation of these elements of their professional development, given their daily experience with challenges faced in practice. Furthermore, they need to feel as active stakeholders in the reforms in order to be supported at the school micro-level. Some countries have established professional standards, which is evident from this comparative overview, while others have considered doing so. Standards also need to be adapted to the requirements of place and time and they need to include the knowledge, skills and competences which can be crucial for school principals in a specific context (Davis et al. 2005; Huber et al. 2008; Weber and Sherman 2008; Stoll and Temperley 2009).

Research studies suggest that school principal education needs to be continuous. Formal programmes intended to teach key elements for survival and sustainability in this position (administration, budgeting, evaluating and leading teachers, to name a few) are more appropriate for candidates for school principal and newly appointed school principals. Specific content and the content that needs to be adapted in accordance with the requirements can be learnt through informal education. It needs to be planned coherently, enabling a robust and sustainable model of school leadership and it should not under any circumstances consist of rare and isolated activities (Darling-Hammond et al. 2010, p. 182).

There are both advantages and disadvantages to formal and informal school principal education. The disadvantages need to be minimised in order to provide successful preparation for school principals. Formal education leads to coherent and deep knowledge about leadership and management, provides an impartial perspective given the academic freedom at the universities that most frequently implement such programmes, and provides qualifications that are imperative for career advancement. On the other hand, formal programmes are frequently criticised for providing abstract and outdated content that does not meet user requirements, and for insufficiently connecting theory and practice (Scott and Scott 2013, pp. 53–54). Such shortcomings are confirmed by the comparative overview of school principal education provided in this chapter. Informal programmes can be interesting and focused on specific problems and practices, while providing a wide range of learning methods in accordance with the needs and the

potential of the users (online learning, seminars, conferences, projects, coaching, internship, action learning, etc.) (Relja and Popović 2016, p. 226). Such programmes are frequently criticised for their ad hoc features, superficiality, incoherence and biased attitudes arising from the expression of a specific perspective adopted by the organisers (professional organisations, ministries, trade unions, and sometimes faculties, etc.) (Scott and Scott 2013, pp. 55–56).

Mentoring is an effective method of connecting theory and practice. It can be integrated both in formal and informal education. As a segment of formal programmes, it needs to be intentional, i.e. based on the free selection of mentors who are recognisable and reputable leaders, prepared to learn, and committed to mentoring. Candidates for the position of principal need to gradually develop autonomy and self-confidence through mentoring. This learning method also allows for valuable acquaintances to be made if the mentor promotes the candidate and introduces him or her to different professional networks. This provides additional benefits for the professionalisation of school principals by strengthening cooperation among them and in the process of developing professional organisations (Mulford 2003).

4 Guidelines for the Systematic Professionalisation of School Principals

The job of school principal cannot currently be considered a profession from the sociological aspect, due to the fact that professions include specialised knowledge/expertise, education for the acquisition of expertise, autonomy in work and self-regulation through professional organisations, high social status and developed professional ethics/rules of behaviour intended to preserve professional integrity (Šporer 1990; Abercrombie et al. 2006; Carter 2007). Irrespective of the fact that the last three decades have seen an increasingly deeper insight into the challenges faced by school principals, as well as an increase in the effectiveness of principal education programmes, the job of school principal still remains primarily a function assumed by experienced teachers. Clearly defined standards about what school principals need to know

and compulsory formal education programmes for this job are essential for it to gain professional status (Vican 2016, p. 26). Further research from the international perspective is highly necessary for expertise to be based on best practice solutions (Nóvoa 2010).

Concerning the previously mentioned professional elements, school principals can be considered a semi-profession at best. In different countries, this implies the development of individual elements of the profession, but not all of them (Šporer 1990, p. 16). In addition to education programmes and the development of expertise, systematic professionalisation of principals includes the development of professional networks and organisations that monitor professional standards. It has been pointed out within the OECD Improving School Leadership Project that professional organisations can participate as partners in the implementation of education programmes, offer verified mentors and participate in the selection of candidates for the position of school principal, which requires training in the assessment of knowledge, skills and competences (Stoll and Temperley 2009, p. 25). The inclusion of professional organisations can improve the quality of formal education by offering courses focused on practice, in addition to theoretical courses provided by universities.

Politics needs to promote the foundation of school principal networks and organisations that can currently function over huge distances, developing as (supra)national groups through (a)synchronous communication and a full online or blended approach, among others (Jaeger Čaldarović 2002). Networks need to cooperate in search of external opinions, creativity and innovations (Scott and Scott 2013).

Different career development opportunities through professional networks inherently popularise the profession (mentoring, consulting, lectures, etc.). Popularisation and increasing the social status of the profession are also affected by harmonising base pay rates with the responsibility and success achieved at work. There may also be some potential in introducing managers who are primarily allocated the task of addressing the financial and administrative aspects of school operations, while school principals focus on pedagogical leadership for the purpose of improving pupil achievements, which is the fundamental goal and an indicator of educational success (Stoll and Temperley 2009, p. 35).

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Part II

Challenges of Policy Inclusiveness

6

Inclusive Educational Policy and the Democratic Context of Educational Leadership and Management

Marita Brčić Kuljiš and Tea Gutović

1   Introduction: Democracy and Education

Schools as educational institutions represent one of the key structures in contemporary society and as such have a large number of interested stakeholders that would like to influence its actions, and control, supervise and affect the school system (Dewey 2001). The approach to education depends on politics, especially the politics of the society for which people are being educated. If there is a democratic society, or at least an aspiration to one, then education as an element of social structure should be democratic. This connection between democracy and education has already been recognised. The link can be explained by the

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simple perspective according to which those who rule cannot be successful if those who elect them and who are supposed to obey them are not educated. Dewey points out that 'democratic society repudiates the principle of external authority, it must find a substitute in voluntary disposition and interest; these can be created only by education' (2001, p. 91).

Democracy and education are closely linked for several reasons, the most important certainly being the need of democratic society for an educated, well-informed citizen with prominent human capital. The vision of educational institutions in democratic governance must include the hopes, wishes and expectations of all members of the community, and, as such, must support the efforts of all stakeholders (Duignan 2007). This approach is quite common for democratic societies based on the idea of transparency and inclusiveness. According to Amy Gutmann (1999), democratic education and democracy in general should not be understood as the simple application of certain democratic methods used in decision making. Democratic education should be perceived as an ideal in which an individual at the end of the educational path emerges as a person with all the knowledge, skills and competences necessary for active participation in the society in which he or she lives (Gutmann 1999).

When discussing the relationship between democracy and the education system, it is necessary to distinguish between education for democracy and democratic education. Education for democracy consists of theoretical teaching about democracy and democratic values, and democratic education consists of practising democracy in education processes. In democratic education, democracy is considered the goal as well as the means of education. As noted by Ayers and Ayers (2011), democratic education is to a lesser extent directed towards the transfer of facts and dates and more towards transmitting the paradigm of tolerance, openness, and accessibility. Backman and Trafford (2006) stress that elements such as promoting and encouraging students' responsibility through alternative disciplinary measures, reducing conflicts due to the reduction of authoritarian methods and environments, enhancing the methods of testing and learning, and encouraging competitiveness and entrepreneurship among students contribute to the creation and promotion of a democratic environment in schools which means creating conditions for democratic education and education for democracy.

All this corresponds to the sociological understanding of modern education and the labour market, as one of the purposes of education highlights the design of entrepreneurial culture that makes the individual competitive on the global market and capable of adapting to numerous accelerated economic and social changes (Brown et al. 2008).

School systems in the United States promote the idea that public education systems are in the service of preparing students for participation in democratic processes. The California State Ministry of Education states that education should provide an understanding of civic obligation, including voting, considerations about civic activity, volunteering and performing public services, serving in the military or in an alternative service (Glaeser et al. 2007). On that note, Holmes (1979) sums up the goals of school systems around the world. In Sweden, political goals are often equal to educational goals: 'School work is organized to develop democracy in school, and thus in society as a whole'. In the case of the education system in Costa Rica, 'the Constitution states that the general objective of education is good citizens, a democratic way of life and human solidarity'. The 'educational system that creates educated, democratic and patriotic citizens is the goal of the Indonesian government' (Holmes 1982, cited in Glaeser et al. 2007, p. 82). The Danish Act on the Folkeskole (1995, p. 1) declares that 'the school shall prepare pupils for active participation, joint responsibility, rights and duties in a society based on freedom and democracy'. This aim presents the foundation for structuring a local democratic curriculum in schools. In other words, Danish children must learn what democracy and democratic attitudes are, and, more importantly, teaching and schooling must be based on some form of initiation that has the same characteristics of democratic societies. Such a practice has been implemented to such an extent that active participation, joint responsibility, sharing duties, intellectual freedom and equality must be practised within the school as part of the concept of democracy (Schou 2001). Education is one of the key, and, in most cases, the most important predictors of social behaviour and action, based on behaviours such as going to the polls, engaging in community work, and achieving successful personal interactions and trust (Helliwell and Putnam 2007, cited in Glaeser et al. 2007).

According to the Croatian Act on Education in Primary and Secondary Schools (2017), the goals of education and training in school institutions include: 'educating students in accordance with the general cultural and civic values, human rights and children's rights; enabling them to live in a multicultural world; to respect diversity and tolerance, and actively and responsibly participate in the democratic development of society'. However, according to *The Research on Political Literacy Among Final Grade Students in Croatia*, the level of political and civic literacy is not in line with what might be expected in a democratic culture. The seniors show limited political knowledge in terms of fundamental political concepts, knowledge of constitutional and political organisation, and their political information is inadequately demonstrated. The conclusions of the report state: 'Integrally, these data point to the need for the systematic introduction of civic education and education of the youth aimed at ensuring a more successful adoption of relevant political and human-legal knowledge, skills and values, and it is essential that these learning processes take place in the democratic atmosphere of the school' (Bagić and Gvozdanović 2015, pp. 51–53). In an attempt to provide education for democracy and democratic education, the process of introducing civic education as a teaching subject has been initiated in Croatian schools.

The implementation of education for democracy, and even more democratic education, is largely related to and depends on governance models in educational institutions. School management and leadership can be regulated in a variety of ways, depending on the legislation of a particular country, the degree of decentralisation and the degree of democratisation of society. However, the crucial point in school management is that it is itself, directly or indirectly, an educational process. It is therefore clear that democratic approaches to school management can and should be advocated in democratic societies. According to John Dewey, we are never educated directly, but always through the use of environmental resources, whether we allow the environment to do its job or we shape the environment for a particular purpose. Schools continue to be typical institutions that shape the mental and moral disposition of their members through a defined environment (Dewey 2001).

Scientific and expert research until the 1960s considered school leadership and management largely from the perspective of the principal as the main and sole school manager who, along with pedagogical decisions, also makes business ones about the overall school business. However, the current state of education points to the emergence of new, participatory, democratic forms of leadership and management of school institutions, involving various decision makers (stakeholders) in multiple decision-making processes (Camburn et al. 2003). This is exactly what democracy as the rule of the majority advocates, whether in its representative form or in a participatory form. Democratic education, argues Gutmann (1999), is complementary to negotiating-participatory (deliberative) democracy, a democracy based on the idea of reciprocity between free and equal individuals and, consequently, democratic governance in school institutions.

2   School Management and Leadership in Education Systems

'The way the education system is governed is important for society' (Showunmi 2013, p. 83). Contemporary times pose great challenges for the principal. Expectations from the school system have increased due to technological advances, more frequent migration and unprecedented globalisation. Schools need to adapt to these phenomena and prepare young people for the challenges that the future holds. Therefore, the principal is no longer expected to be just a good manager, but also to have leadership skills that include willingness to change and adapt the education system to society's needs. All this entails the greater responsibility of educational authorities and educational policy in directing the behaviour of the principal. The behaviour and decisions they make can be expressed through: *technical* or *economic* functions, where the school builds individuals based on the needs of the economy and society; *social* functions, when the school helps students develop the necessary competences and develop personality traits; and ultimately *political* functions that are linked to the development of the values, knowledge, skills

and competences of active citizenship through education for democracy (Cheong Cheng 1996, cited in Alfirević et al. 2010).

Tony Bush (2003, 2008) was one of the most respected authors to systematise different models of leadership and management in education. The concepts of leadership and management primarily began to develop in the trade and industry sectors, while in the field of education they came quite a bit later. The introduction of leadership and management concepts in education systems and schools is closely related to changes in educational paradigms as well as in the processes of decentralisation, democratisation and the development of social pluralism. 'Highly centralized systems tend to be bureaucratic and to allow little discretion to schools and local communities. Decentralized systems devolve significant powers to subordinate levels' (Bush 2008, p. 4). Given the specificities of the education system, leadership and management concepts need to be adapted and consist of approaches that are different from those in other areas. Bush says the fundamental reason for this is the educational aspect of the work. In the education system, leadership and management should be based precisely on the educational aspects of work as the key goals for achieving successful education and training. The practices of education management for the above-mentioned reasons are very specific and almost impossible to take over from other social spheres (Bush 2003).

Defining the concept of leadership and management is quite complex. In trying to define leadership, Bush draws on Yukl and states that the basic mark of leadership is precisely 'a social influence process whereby intentional influence is exerted by one person (or group) over other people (or groups)' (Yukl 2002, cited in Bush 2003, p. 5). Leadership can be defined as an 'influence', but such a definition is criticised for its neutrality that does not explain or recommend goals and actions that necessarily fall within the responsibility of leadership (Bush 2008). Educational leadership is also defined as a function whose task is to ensure voluntary participation in achieving organisational goals in the educational environment (Vican et al. 2016). However, the key aspect of educational leadership concerns the visions or long-term plans of the educational institution and the promotion of values advocated in a given system. 'It is evident that the articulation of a clear vision has

the potential to develop schools but the empirical evidence of its effectiveness remains mixed. Wider concern relates to whether school leaders are able to develop a *specific* vision for their schools, given government influence on many aspects of curriculum and management' (Bush 2008, p. 3).

While leadership is defined more through innovation, vision and the idea of human potential (motivation of people, communication), management is more related to the system's functionality, and all that concerns the material resources (funding), supervision, staffing and efficiency. We can therefore assume that management provides the (technical) conditions for achieving the goals set by the leadership. In the education system, leadership and management complementarity is essential since excessive management can hinder or discourage the vision crucial to the education system. Successful management implies a clear link between goals, strategies and concrete actions. An adequate and successful school manager (principal) should strike a balance between school needs and community needs in setting goals and the ways of achieving them. By addressing only the demands of external stakeholders, the wider community, the principal risks losing the educational purpose of the school and failure in achieving the educational goals (Bush 2003).

In the context of the education system Bush (2003, pp. 30–33) identifies six models of management: formal, collegial, political, subjective, ambiguity, and cultural. Further, Bush identifies complementary models of leadership: managerial, participative, transformational, interpersonal, transactional, post-modern, contingency, moral and instructional. It should be noted that the more recent versions of Bush's typology (Bush and Middlewood 2013) include additional leadership models, for example a distributed and emotional model of leadership, but exclude, for instance, an interpersonal model of leadership and do not even consider management models (Buchberger 2016). These changes in school leadership and management patterns are the result of changes in school systems, but also in society in general. Given that there is more and more talk of the child being the focus of the education system and about the need to involve the wider community in the decision-making process, the management model by which the principal is the key figure in the

school system of decision making is slowly being replaced. Education in the twenty-first century requires a departure from vertical, political change into a lateral change of capacities. School leaders need to continue to have sufficient knowledge of facilities, staff, and finance management, but effective leaders today also need to encourage learning environments where school students and teachers are stimulated to exchange knowledge, build trust and promote a sense of shared responsibility (Duif et al. 2013).

Strategic thinking about the type of leadership and management that educational institutions should have cannot happen in social isolation. Principals and all those involved in leadership and management functions are obliged to listen to the needs of society and to adapt, as far as possible, the educational institutions to these needs. Education is and should be socially conditioned. Spillane and his colleagues (2001) compare principals with ship captains who sail their ship on a rough and unpredictable sea. In accordance with the above metaphor, the principal needs, as does the ship captain, to use, identify, distribute, coordinate, and utilise all the social, material and cultural resources that can improve educational institutions (Spillane et al. 2001, cited in Duke and Salmonowicz 2010). In practice, all of this means that both schools and faculties require visionary leadership and advancement, but developed in established institutional and legislative frameworks led by an effective manager (Bush 2003).

3   Distributed Educational Leadership as a Democratic School Leadership and Management Model

As previously mentioned, there are different models of leadership and management of school systems. In the rest of this paper, we will focus primarily on the distributed model of leadership. The main reason lies in the fact that, according to our understanding, distributed leadership has all the necessary features required for the realisation of democratic education and education for democracy.

As mentioned, the distributed model of leadership has only emerged as a concept recently, but it has become the most desirable model of leadership in the twenty-first century (Bush 2013). This model has emerged due to society's need for further enhancing educational management models and adapting them to the more complex and more demanding needs of society. Contemporary society is the reason for the expansion and intensification of the roles and tasks of a school leader and manager (principal), including curriculum decisions, various assessments, resource management, and cooperation with external stakeholders. With the growth of these demands, education systems have been forced to adapt to new leadership and management systems (Pont et al. 2008). Furthermore, the 2009 and 2012 PISA Studies point out that distributed school leadership is one of the key factors for successful schools (OECD 2010, 2013). The success of such schools is also a consequence of the features possessed by the schools advocating distributive leadership, such as openness, trust, organisation of learning, respect, high standards, common values and a common vision (Duif et al. 2013).

Distributed leadership is associated with concepts such as delegated leadership, scattered leadership, shared leadership, co-leadership, democratic leadership, and teacher's leadership (Bennett et al. 2003, cited in Buchberger 2016). It can also be perceived as collective decision making through the allocation of responsibility (Bush 2003). In its specific forms, distributed leadership involves different structures, forms of work, goals, ethical premises and values. Each manifestation of its form is different and adaptable to the context in which it operates (Bennet et al. 2003). It should be stressed that some authors, such as Bolden (2011) and Jones (2014), reject the idea that distributed leadership is actually democratic leadership, and as an argument they focus on the lack of evidence that decision making in such a driven educational system is brought by democratic means.

Distributed leadership in educational institutions shares a key feature usually attributed to democracy and democratic governance, which is a decentralised momentum in the governance process. Seven characteristics and features are linked to the idea of distributive school leadership, making this a leadership style complementary to democratic leadership

(Duif et al. 2013). The first characteristic relates to the school structure, which should provide everyone with an equal opportunity to participate in decision-making processes. A common vision should be found that includes shared values. As mentioned previously, it is the leader, or in the case of a school, the principal, who is in charge of defining and expanding the vision. The foundation of beliefs and attitudes in a school should be the values of trust, tolerance and high expectations, where mistakes are not punished but are considered as opportunities to learn and improve (Duif et al. 2013). Cooperation is advocated in such a school, and individuals have the right to make decisions about this themselves. Responsibility, professionalism, initiative and entrepreneurship are expected.

This type of leadership, with all its features, raises the question of the current practices of the principal's management position given that previously decisions were most often made independently. Distributive leadership, as stated by Gronn (2002), implies the participation of various stakeholders in school leadership and management processes. The aforementioned leadership vision assumes the equal involvement and cooperation of stakeholders based on dialogue where everyone has the same right to participate, but where the required expertise and experience are also taken into account (Harris 2004). This type of leadership is also known as a participatory leadership model, and it involves different stakeholders. There are visible elements of democratic school management based on human rights, the empowerment and participation of students, staff and other stakeholders in making important decisions at school (Backman and Trafford 2006). All this means that decisions concerning the leadership of an educational institution are no longer made by an independent principal, but that all interested parties have to come to a common decision. Respect for democratic principles is assumed, where, for example, all interested parties have the right to vote, and the principle of equality is respected. Such interested parties include the administration, teachers, staff members, parents, family, community members, leading local employers and elected representatives of government (members of the school board and of city councils, and state representatives), organisations, associations, professional associations, teacher associations, and cultural institutions. This means that all those

who have a personal, professional, social or financial interest or purpose can be included in the decision-making process. The reasons for their interest may vary depending on whether they are experts, professionals, parents, or whether they hold political, cultural, market or religious interests (Brčić Kuljiš and Lunić 2016).

A leadership model advocating such a broad spectrum of participants promotes generally accepted social values, trust, cooperation, care, respect, open communication, sharing information and power, and encourages all members to participate in decision-making processes (Kovač et al. 2014). Such an approach also promotes the idea of trust that is crucial in a democratic society and is based on cooperation, communication and involvement. Of course, distributed leadership does not mean that everyone is leading and managing the school at a given moment, but that everyone is involved and has the potential to lead it in the future. The share of involvement of other stakeholders in this type of leadership and in the decision-making process varies greatly (Duif et al. 2013). The distributed leadership model that is complementary to democratic leadership does not question or should not question the authority or function of the principal. Therefore, Gronn (2002) speaks of so-called hybrid management that equally includes elements of distributed school leadership and elements of individual school management. The principal is the chosen school representative, the first among equals, but the one who has full responsibility for all activities and decisions in the school. He or she is the so-called leader who offers a vision, encourages cooperation, and creates a positive environment and atmosphere. He or she takes care of the active stakeholders, but also of those with certain competences, so they can be assigned certain tasks assuming they are the best at accomplishing them. Distributive leadership therefore makes the principal a leader, not just a manager.

Distributed leadership within a school, with a pragmatic form of division of labour, has a very positive impact on increasing the efficiency of the school's employees. With an open opportunity to participate in the decision-making process, teachers and other employees feel more motivated to perform their tasks but also to cooperate with others (Day et al. 2009; Schleicher 2012). This form of leadership and collaborative culture is nurtured as the key to the development and advancement

of democratic schools (Duif et al. 2013). The need for intensifying knowledge and practices about the phenomenon of distributive school leadership has been strongly emphasised by relevant international organisations over the last few years. The activities of the OECD are possibly the most significant since they have the strongest impact on the creation of national policies. For example, the OECD's initiative *Improving School Leadership* aims to establish successful international practices of school leadership by emphasising distributed leadership as a priority of education policy around the world (Pont et al. 2008, cited in Kovač et al. 2014).

4   Conclusion: Distributed Educational Leadership for a Democratic Society

Educational policy should follow social policy, and both policies should be as complementary as possible. Democratic society demands democratic education and education for democracy. Democracy is not just a form of leadership and government, but is a wider concept of lifestyle that implies sharing experience and knowledge. Individuals share interests and awareness of the impact of their actions on others in their immediate surroundings by participating in the decision-making process. Such awareness, Dewey points out, reduces class, race, and national barriers, and similar boundaries that limit the individual's comprehension of the importance of their actions (Dewey 2001). At the end of the twentieth century, schools such as Dewey's Lab School and Brookline's 'School within a School' were prominent schools that promoted democracy and democratic education, advocating education standards that respect and advocate democratic values. They advocated the democratisation of schools to an extent that enables the proactive participation of interested stakeholders who respect and recognise democratic values (Gutmann 1999).

The need for intensifying knowledge and practices about the phenomenon of distributive school leadership has been strongly emphasised by relevant international organisations over the last few years.

The activities of the OECD are possibly the most significant since they have the strongest impact on the creation of national policies (Kovač et al. 2014). The fundamental issue of the prominent relationship between democracy and education is actually how much leadership is compatible with how much democracy (Kann 1979). This question, when it comes to education systems, relates to the relationship between a student and a teacher. Teacher autonomy is in constant conflict with democratic education, especially when considering the extent to which it can be left to the student to shape the form and content of his or her education due to the lack of necessary competences that the teacher might have (Gutmann 1999).

Finally, it is important to emphasise that the issue of authority should not be a problem in developing democracy in school leadership and management. Besides, the democratisation of leadership and management will not solve all the problems and ensure the prosperity of the school (Gutmann 1999). However, it is necessary to distinguish between democratic relations within the classroom, during classes, and democratic relations where decisions are made about the organisation and functioning of the school. The participatory approach to leadership and management promotes the development of self-confidence in all school stakeholders, encourages their mutual cooperation and ultimately creates a safe and convenient environment for the development of individuals with the competences, knowledge and skills for competent participation in contemporary society.

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7

Technology and Educational Leadership: The Role of Leaders vs. National Education Policies

Daniela Garbin Praničević, Mario Spremić and Božidar Jaković

1   Introduction

The use of ICT in education has notably redesigned core processes such as learning, teaching and institutional leadership. Accordingly, numerous ICT solutions have appeared with huge potential to transform (i) the education environment from 'teacher-centred' to 'student-centred' (Harasim 2000; Mankel 2006); and (ii) the work of institutional leaders, referring mainly to the effectiveness of institutional management and leadership (Shah 2014). Moreover, there is a common perception of a positive relationship between the appropriate application of ICT

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(i.e. the implementation of ICT in educational processes and associated educational and managerial practices) with different aspects of institutional effectiveness (Alfirević and Petković 2017).

In this context, more attention has been paid to different aspects of ICT integration in education, such as: ICT integration in education management; ICT infrastructure planning and procurement; ICT use in the teaching and learning process; educating teachers to use digital technologies; developing digital competencies as well as the ICT culture of all stakeholders in education.

Technological developments have led to changes in the organisation of work, thus the required competences are changing as well. It is, moreover, supposed that institutional managers must face the fact that their environment is changing rapidly (Guthrie et al. 2008). They also need to consider a range of ICT-enabled options for long-term governance and provide various smart solutions for current educational problems (Yemini et al. 2015). There is certainly no single approach to implementing ICT in educational institutions.

Meanwhile, to become recognised at each educational level, the application of ICT in education ought to be considered an integrative part of national education strategy and education policies (Śliwowski and Grodecka 2013), although some individual attempts at ICT implementation in particular educational institutions may also contribute.

In any case, ICT implementation in educational institutions, its proper use and understanding generally raise the level of the digital maturity of the institution that, by extension, corresponds with higher quality in its core processes (Tapia et al. 2007).

To cope with the permanent challenge to be digitally mature, responsible personnel from the educational institution are expected to understand and support different aspects of education systems and associated efforts to respond to up-to-date digital trends. The consequent transposition of educational organisation from isolated 'islands of application' to advanced levels of ICT use (Avidov-Unger and Eshet-Alkalai 2011) is already being identified by one of the many frameworks adopted with the intention of assessing the digital maturity of educational institutions (Đurek et al. 2017). Accordingly, this chapter considers the

application of ICT in education and its related contributions to (i) educational leadership; and (ii) teaching/learning processes.

2   The Effective Use of ICT in Education

In the last few decades, information and communication technology (ICT) has come to have a key role for business success and sustainability in an increasing number of companies and institutions (Prasad et al. 2012; Soriano and Huarng 2013; Lunardi et al. 2014; Susa et al. 2017). The progress in ICT and digital technologies has also had a significant impact on the individual, changing our way of life, society and economy (Ceyhan 2008; Martin et al. 2011). ICT can influence the competitiveness of organisations in two ways: supporting operational efficiency (ICT as the main infrastructure for current business); and enabling differentiation through business model innovation and process change (Spremić 2012). While earlier, ICT was geared to automating clerical and repetitive tasks, in today's highly competitive business environment, the effective and innovative use of information technology (ICT) has the potential to transform businesses and add value (Weill and Ross 2004; Peppard and Ward 2004). The innovative use of ICT and the notion of digital technologies drive the development of new business models in all industries and sectors, affecting disruptive change both at the organisational and individual level. Extensive research has produced evidence of how ICT and digital technologies have disrupted different industries. Diamond et al. (2017) argued for the need for a digital reinvention in banking and finance; Fonstad and Mocker (2016) explained how ICT and digital technologies affect mobility services and manufacturing; Wang (2008) stressed the importance of the use of ICT in education.

The emerging role of ICT and digital technologies has enabled the more effective institutional management of universities and other educational institutions (supporting the efficiency of current operations), and has also fostered major changes in learning models and pedagogy, shifting from a 'teacher-centred' approach to more interactive and flexible 'student-centred' teaching (enabling differentiation through process innovation).

There are many ways to use ICT and digital technologies effectively in education to support the efficiency of current operations. Students can bring their own mobile devices (BYOD) making every classroom a computer lab classroom. Further, they can use many different online learning platforms, such as Google Classroom or Moodle, in order to access a wide range of interactive educational materials. Computer software that uses multimedia can provide challenging and authentic content to engage the student in the learning process. Google Hangouts is a very useful tool for allowing remote groups of people to communicate and collaborate. With beacons, devices that enable context-aware mobile engagement by transmitting signals to smartphones or similar devices based on location and other variables, such as the time of day and the application, students can now navigate university facilities and automatically check in at events, while schools can automatically collect attendance figures.

Other issues might be related to the lack of a systemic approach to ICT implementation, the lack of administrative and technical support, insufficient ICT skill levels among teachers and inadequate ICT budgets. Administrative support is critical to the successful integration of ICT into educational processes, which requires a transformation process in which teachers must re-examine their existing learning practices. Teacher training for using new innovative digital technologies should be a continuous process in every educational institution (Sife et al. 2007).

On the other hand, much research has stressed the importance of the implementation of ICT in classrooms having a global perspective regarding quality, relevance and innovation. Talebian et al. (2014) conclude that the use of ICT is the symbol of a new era in education, because it enriches current educational models, enables the 'classroom without walls' and provides new teaching methods, shifting from 'teacher-centred' to 'student-centred' pedagogy. Duta and Martinez-Rivera (2015) explain the importance of ICT as a tool for collaborative learning and conclude that ICT and novel digital technologies allow students to take control of learning, reflect on practice and establish a framework that allows them to cope with new learning situations successfully. Hubackova and Klimova (2014) argue the

need to integrate ICT into lifelong education, while Oliver (2002) explains the role of ICT as an agent of change for education, having a strong impact on what, how, when and where students learn.

Students enrolled in online programmes expect a higher level of flexibility and the possibility of organising their studies according to their needs. Moreover, in the online environment, they also expect an individual approach, and highly committed and communicative teachers. The emerging educational paradigm includes platforms for technology-based training, enabling self-directed, independent, flexible and interactive learning. ICT enables and supports all the major characteristics of 'student-centred' teaching as follows:

- Interactive style of teaching (ICT tools enable interactive sessions)—teachers can use Google Apps for interactive knowledge sharing with their students.
- Active student participation in the class—using Google Forms Quizzes, teachers can quickly gather data about what students know, like, or need.
- Making the course relevant to students' future careers—using up-to-date ICT applications and equipment, students will be prepared to use it in their future careers.
- Knowing your students—teachers can use Augmented Reality within the classroom to see general information about every student attending their classes.
- A shift of some levels of responsibility to students—students often present their findings to other students using new ICT.
- Faculty availability to students—teachers can offer real time consultation hours using Skype, social networks or IM mobile apps like WhatsApp, Viber, etc.

3   E-leadership in Educational Institutions

New ICT-enhanced learning environments offer several advantages: they provide greater coverage, allow flexibility, expand academic offerings and enrich the educational experience, which must

meet established quality standards (UNESCO 2009; Bichsel 2013). Education institutions should incorporate ICT and digital technologies in the learning process and address any needs thereby arising. In light of this, some maturity models have been developed following the proposals of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). The main goal of EHEA was to improve the international competitiveness and attractiveness of study programmes and to ensure the mobility and employability of European students (European Consortium for Accreditation 2012). The main characteristics of the EHEA model include: easily understandable and comparable degrees; undergraduate (minimum of three years) and graduate study programmes; a system of credits; student mobility; comparable criteria and methodologies in quality assurance; a European dimension in higher education, particularly with regard to curricular development; inter-institutional cooperation; mobility schemes and integrated study programmes, training and research.

Rigorous and prestigious international accreditation systems for higher education (HE), such as EQUIS and EPAS (provided by the European Foundation for Management Development—EFMD), AACSB (provided by the Association of Advanced Collegiate Standards in Business) or AMBA favour 'student-centred' learning and foster the inclusion of new ICT-induced educational models. Moreover, EFMD has recently developed an international accreditation scheme for the evaluation of online courses called EOCCS (EFMD Online Course Certification System 2018). EOCCS is an international quality benchmark for courses in which digital technology is applied to teaching and learning. The EOCCS standards are grouped into four chapters covering different areas: (1) the institutional context—the institution should have a defined and coherent strategy for online courses, which relates to its overall learning strategy; (2) course composition; (3) course delivery & operations—assessment methods in the online environment; (4) quality assurance processes—what quality assurance processes are in place to achieve intended learning outcomes (ILOs).

3.1 The Digital Maturity of Educational Institutions

Due to the growing trend of ICT integration into different processes, including the educational process, the concept of digital maturity is becoming more recognised over time. The digital maturity of educational institutions is based on a generic notion of an ever increasing level of integration of the use of ICTs in both key segments of education, namely: (i) organisational processes; and (ii) strategic management (Alfirević and Petković 2017). According to Begičević Ređep and Balaban (2017), the level of digital maturity of an educational institution is determined by the level of ICT integration in educational processes and the level of a systematic approach to ICT use in educational management and processes. They further suggest that the level of digital maturity of an educational institution depends on the digital maturity levels of numerous areas or dimensions of that institution, as identified by specific digital maturity frameworks (Đurek et al. 2017). By applying complex methodologies, the digital maturity frameworks not only identify particular areas/dimensions, they also specify areas and elements in which the level of digital maturity should be raised. In general, digital maturity frameworks have emerged from the need for leadership, guidance, and vision in ICT use, with reference to ICT leadership, ICT in teaching and learning, the development of digital competencies, ICT culture and ICT infrastructure, which in the long term contribute to and improve the quality of education for students, but are also sustainable for the institutions.

Therefore, the integration of ICT into the processes of the educational institution has become more and more frequently scrutinised by different dimensions (areas) appropriate for the assessment of the digital maturity of these institutions. These dimensions are complementary and interconnected, not mutually exclusive, as described by particular indicators. In that context, research studies (Wastiau et al. 2013; Begičević Ređep and Balaban 2017) are mainly focused on dimensions such as: (i) school strategy and leadership (referring to the degree of integration of ICT in learning, teaching and school management as well as to

policies about ICT use in named activities); (ii) ICT-based activities in both the learning and teaching processes; (iii) teachers' and students' confidence in their digital competence enabling them to be more productive in learning and teaching; (iv) teachers' and students' access to ICT and ICT-based activities which connect them with other related stakeholders and thus enable them to share experience and onward learning; and (v) the institutions' ICT infrastructure as the underlying factor in any digital practice.

The revised example of the aforementioned areas is specified in Begičević Ređep and Balaban's (2017) study based on the EU's European Framework for Digitally Competent Educational Organisations (DigComp) framework with five identified areas/dimensions referring to different aspects of ICT integration in education. Each area/dimension is described with associated indicators as given in Table 1.

Within the domain of educational practice, the institutional management side is expected to consider each dimension seriously, to recommend improvements to the indicators, and to provide the resources to realise them. Consequently, raising the current level of digital maturity should become an aim for any long-term institutional strategy.

Besides the above noted Framework, it is evident that a quite respectable set of Digital Maturity Frameworks is being used in practice. In this area, one study (Đurek et al. 2017) has categorised 15 developed digital maturity frameworks. Each of them is identified (Table 2) by the dimension set of the educational institution's digital competence and additionally distinguished by quantitative and qualitative indicators, by application within the institutions and by approved best practices.

Extended consideration of the above suggests that applying any dispositional digital maturity framework in the educational context contributes significantly to educational management responsibilities in: (i) estimating the current level of maturity; (ii) specifying areas and elements in which the level of digital maturity should be raised; (iii) identifying all areas requiring improvement, and making relevant recommendations.

Table 1   Digital maturity framework (area and indicators)

Area/Dimension	Indicators
Planning, management and leadership	Vision, strategic guidelines and ICT integration goals; school development plan and programme aspects of ICT; ICT integration management in learning and teaching; ICT integration management in school management; management of data collected through information systems; regulated access to ICT resources; ICT application in teaching students with disabilities
ICT in learning and teaching	Awareness, planning, application; digital content; student evaluation; student experience; special educational needs
Digital competence development	Awareness and participation; planning; purposeful professional development; self-confidence in the application of ICT; digital competence of students; special educational needs; informal learning
ICT culture	Access to ICT resources for staff and students; online presence; communication, information and reporting; ethical rules for using the internet (netiquette); copyright and intellectual property; projects
ICT infrastructure	Planning and procurement; network infrastructure
	ICT equipment at school; ICT equipment staff; software tools at school; technical support; equipment maintenance; central storage location for digital documents; information system security and licence controlling

Source According to Begičević Ređep and Balaban (2017)

3.2   Technology and Educational Leadership in National Education Systems: Examples of Good Practice

Many countries (World Bank Reports 2018) have made significant efforts to implement ICT in their education systems at the national level and, consequently, have raised quality in areas such as planning and management, learning and teaching processes, digital competence development, ICT culture and ICT infrastructure. In this context, different ICT projects

Table 2 Digital maturity framework specifications

Digital maturity framework	Area	Approaches		Application level			Best practice
		Qualitative	Quantitative	Elementary school	High school	HEI	
Ae-MoYS (2011)	5	x	x	x	x		EU
DigCompOrg (2015)	5	x	x	x	x	x	Globally
eLearning Roadmap (2009)	5	x		x	x		Ireland
eLEMER (2010)	4	x	x	x	x		Hungary
ePOBMM (2013)	7	x				x	EU
FCMM (2010)	5	x		x	x		EU
HEInnovative (2013)	7	x				x	Globally
JISC (2010)	6	x	x			x	EU
LIKA (2013)	4	x		x	x		Sweden
Microsoft IF & SRT (2009)	16	x	x	x	x		Globally
NACCE SRF (2005)	6	x	x	x	x		United Kingdom
OPEKA (2012)	7	x	x	x	x		Finland
Scale CCR (2012)	8	x		x	x		Europe
School mentor (2014)	6	x	x	x	x		Norway
Venstress (2008)	20	x		x	x		Netherlands

Source According to Đurek et al. (2017)

mainly focused on two-side digitalisation have already been realised, or are still in progress, in numerous education systems as follows: (i) management process digitalisation, providing higher management efficiency, transparency and availability of data due to the compatibility of computing systems with central data systems, which accordingly enable the transparent supervision of institutional management by all stakeholders; (ii) teaching process digitalisation, presenting the educational aspect and referring to all forms of the use of technology in teaching (equipment supply, development of digital educational content, wireless internet at school, and education and support for teachers within the process of implementing online learning). The aim of such projects is to harmonise the implementation of both ICT infrastructure and service-oriented outputs with considerations of the maturity of national education systems, including the leadership dimension. Some related good practices are as follows.

3.2.1 Croatia: e-Schools (e-škole) Project

The e-Schools pilot project has been realised in Croatia as part of the wider e-Schools programme implemented through several ICT implementation projects in a particular school system (e-škole 2017). According to official data, the programme consists of a pilot project, whose implementation started in 2015 and will last until the end of 2018, and a second phase, whose implementation is planned for the period 2019–2022, and which will be based on the results of the pilot project. The overall goal of the e-School programme is to strengthen the capacity of elementary and secondary education systems to train participants (students) for the labour market, further education and lifelong learning. The purpose of the pilot project is to establish a system for the development of digitally mature schools through the piloting and evaluation of ICT use in educational and management processes in 10% of schools in Croatia. The Project supports the National Education, Science and Technology Strategy which is also considered to be the main foundation for the realisation of the contemporary education system in terms of ensuring quality in education regarding all the above discussed dimensions.

Additionally, within the e-Schools project, educational institution principals were offered a self-assessment tool, to identify and benchmark

the digital maturity of their school. Since the project is based on ICT application in schools through the computerisation of both management and teaching processes, the following are specified as project target groups: teachers/trainers and associates, school managers and administrative staff. The e-Schools project anticipates a shift to digital content where teachers 'play' a key role in the 'student centred' teaching process.

3.2.2 Slovenia: e-education (e-šolstvo) Project

The e-education (e-šolstvo / Slovensko Izobrževalno omrežje 2008) project that has been developed and implemented in Slovenia has produced complete digital content for the curriculum intended for elementary and secondary schools, which has been further prepared and offered throughout the education system and also as an open educational resource under the Creative Commons licence option. The e-education project emerged as a consolidation of two already active projects. The first is the e-competent teacher project, focused on the preparation and implementation of seminars from the offline catalogue in the form of e-learning services, the coordination of providers for e-material, providing competitions for the collection of small e-materials, and the involvement of new colleagues ready to gain new knowledge and approaches in teaching, learning and managing the school. The second is the e-support project, which has enabled educational institutions to acquire their own consultant with solutions to assist them to (i) oversee the situation in the field for which ICT is being prepared, and (ii) prepare a plan for providing guidance for educational institution management, didactic support for teachers, and technical assistance. The e-education project covers all the strategic segments relevant for the consideration and upgrading of the digital maturity of the educational institution.

3.2.3 Iceland: Net-University Project

Iceland's net-university project (Rennie et al. 2011) is based on the idea of an Icelandic university network as a relevant example of ICT use in an education system that offers different educational opportunities but

also contributes to the elimination of economic and social inequalities among students, regions and countries. The Project was founded with the intention of making university education more accessible to the public, including adults, inhabitants of rural areas and students by encouraging them to undertake self-directed learning. Accordingly, the objective of the Project is also to create a platform for cooperation between universities in Iceland and abroad, as well as a platform for continuing education in rural areas to develop university-level courses related to vocational educational needs based on the design and development of new study programmes. Since universities, research institutions, and higher education learning centres are distributed around Iceland, and the majority of students are located in the capital city, the need to develop networked solutions for the delivery of education has become of strategic importance for Icelandic society. This project has filled that void, and has also provided guidelines for the Ministry of Education and Culture's policy development regarding collaboration between university and upper-secondary school stakeholders in Iceland.

Finally, it can be seen that the above presented government-supported projects aimed at the complex digitalisation of schools actually testify to the valuable attempts to implement the 'top down' organisational, technological and educational concepts of ICT in educational and management processes in educational institutions. Their contribution is twofold: (i) they present a reliable starting point for further national strategy development focusing on the implementation of a digitally mature education system; and (ii) once recognised at the national level, the idea of digital maturity will more easily be implemented in local communities, and will accordingly generate the opposite 'bottom-up' effect, which will reflect positively on the digital maturity of the education system as whole.

4   Critical Notes on ICT Implementation in Education

The implementation of ICT in education has begun globally, and many ICT related benefits, as elaborated above, have been recognised. Nevertheless, it seems that the social impact of both devices and

process technologies are, in specific situations, more important than the purely technical problems that the technologies are supposed to solve (Osborne and Hennessy 2003; Rodrigues 2009; Arkorful and Abaidoo 2014; Talebian et al. 2014). Considered hypothetically, the effects of ICT development may variously be benign or not, and may reveal some moral and ethical consequences that still remain insufficiently debated.

This implies that critical notes of educational technology do not actually denounce ICT alone, but also humans and their well-intentioned activities in both online and offline environments. In this context, critical notes of educational technology are concerned that the way in which this technology is challenging existing systems of formal teaching (Rodrigues 2009), providing opportunities for social groups to share reliable information (Talebian et al. 2014), and interacting with other social or political movements has an impact on education (Osborne and Hennessy 2003; Arkorful and Abaidoo 2014).

It is commonly known that it is crucial for ICT to provide feedback to ensure a good learning experience. ICT potential is, without doubt, its great facilitator, if used by dedicated and professional individuals. Accordingly, it has long been evident (Moore and Kearsley 1996) that students benefit significantly from comments received from (human) tutors who are ready to provide objective feedback and grades. Specifically, this means that, although the development of ICT has recently been directed towards artificial intelligence, ICT solutions alone will certainly not yet be able to completely replace the immediate and complex relationship of human tutors providing human feedback, supported by technology. Moreover, understanding, feelings and multifunctional thinking, including acquired knowledge, natural and acquired reflexes, and emotional excitements, which are expressed as complex information, are still characteristic to humans. This is elaborated by Allen et al. (1996, p. 227) in a study which claims that, over time, mature human beings have developed thousands of 'automaticities' which are critical to success in complex environments.

Consequently, ICT will probably never be able to replace the immediate and complex relationship of people involved in educational institutions, in both operational and strategic processes. At the same time, the role of ICT, which has emerged from the wide spectrum of

its support of educational processes, is irreversible. By extension, this implies that ICT in education is highly valuable as an integrative part of its organisation model, but in the service of the stakeholders, not in control of them. In such interactions, ICT becomes a valuable tool in providing a stimulus for the leaders and managers, teachers, trainers and associates, as well as administrative staff of an educational institution to think in smarter ways about their work. Moreover, it enables a qualitative shift from moving control of the classroom back to human beings (Nunan 1983) as core owners of each process.

Another 'deviation from the ideal' that requires critical voices may arise from inherited systems in which certain bad practice has been supported by individuals or groups with particular interests (Davis 2004), or by self-interested professional lobbies (Nunan 1983). Certainly, to contribute optimally to all stakeholders, the implementation of ICT in educational systems should be divorced from any particular interests or intentions.

5   Conclusion

The intention of this chapter was to stress the importance of technology in education contributing to: (i) educational leadership, by enabling more effective management of institutions, decentralising education policy, decision-making, handling of dynamic situations and effective communication; and (ii) teaching/learning processes, by shifting from a 'teacher-centred' approach to more interactive and flexible 'student-centred' teaching. We have analysed frameworks for assessing digital maturity in higher education and explained in greater detail some examples of good practice. In the context of educational leadership and teaching/learning processes, we have argued that ICT is a valuable long-term partner, not an instant replacement for human involvement. Finally, we have discussed some critical notes of educational technology, specifically of how technology is challenging existing systems of formal teaching, how it provides opportunities for groups to collaborate, learn and interact, and reached the conclusion that ICT in education should be, as stressed above, an integrative part of the organisational model, welcomed if it serves the processes of education, but distrusted if it assumes a dominant position.

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8

Benchmarking Education Policies and Practices of Inclusive Education: Comparative Empirical Research—The Case of Croatia, Italy and Portugal

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1   Introduction

Inclusive education implies the process of ensuring high-quality education for all, irrespective of differences. The development of inclusive education is a crucial component of bringing to life an inclusive society in which schools and human resources play a vital role. Global education policies have been focusing on inclusive education for over 30 years. Following the UNESCO (1994, p. 8) statement that reads 'mainstream schools with an inclusive orientation are the most effective means for the achievement of education for all', inclusive education has become one of priorities for national education policies.

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Based on international legal documents and initiatives (the UN Conventions on the Rights of the Child 1989; UNESCO 2000, 2008, 2009; and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2006), individual countries have created national education policies, as well as legislative and legal frameworks, intended to ensure the rights of all children to education in mainstream schools.

Ensuring a legal framework is the first step in the development of inclusive education. There remains a need for more vigorous implementation, the removal of obstacles, and the provision of high-quality education for all. This especially relates to the achievements of students with special educational needs (SEN).[1] The policy at the EU level implies the inclusion of students with SEN into mainstream schools, based on the concept of exercising the human right to education. Although there are 15 million children with SEN in the EU (European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education, Country Data 2010), the implementation of inclusive education has thus far not yet been achieved at the expected level.

Topping (2012) pointed out that inclusion needs to imply more than merely a physical presence of students with SEN in mainstream schools, as it would need to empower those students to successfully access the curriculum. Consequently, it is important to ensure support, individualised and differentiated teaching approaches or instruction (Mittler 2006), as well as school management and leadership focused on inclusive education (Devecchi and Nevin 2010; Shevlin and Rose 2017). Analysing, monitoring and the comparative research of inclusive education (Armstrong et al. 2009; Alquraini and Gut 2012; Watkins et al. 2014; Watkins and Ebersold 2016) are significant for the further development of inclusive policies and practices in Europe. Therefore, the objective of this chapter is to suggest a conceptual framework for its benchmarking.

2   Inclusive Education—Implementation Challenges

Against the backdrop of EU inclusion education policy, identification of both the obstacles and challenges in its implementation is imperative. Some of the most important challenges can be found in discrepancies

in the terminology related to educational inclusion used in different EU member states, as well as in varying legislative frameworks across Europe. This affects the understanding of the relevant concepts and makes it more difficult to comparatively analyse inclusive education. In addition, some countries have not been able to ensure the full and actual implementation of inclusion, which exists at a declarative level only. The management and leadership of schools are considered to be yet another challenge to the actual implementation of inclusion, as principals play an important role in the implementation of inclusive education (Shevlin and Rose 2017). *Investment in human resources,* primarily in principals and teachers, by providing effective professional training programmes and opportunities for high-quality professional development, constitutes one of the prerequisites of inclusive education. Teachers and principals require additional resources and support, which should be provided by school districts and local communities (Meijer 2001; Ainscow 2005).

Inclusive education should reach all the way to the classroom. Teacher attitudes, preparedness and the competences required for facing differences in the classroom are considered as critical success factors of inclusion in the classroom (Jordan et al. 2009; Meijer et al. 2003; Mittler 2006; Topping 2012). Teachers should develop relevant pedagogical approaches, methods and materials for the implementation of inclusion (Meijer et al. 2003), but, they should primarily serve as informal leaders within the school community (York Barr et al. 2005).

3   Research Methodology

The benchmarking of inclusive education in Croatia, Portugal and Italy was based on the model by Kyriazopoulou and Weber (2009), which defines the indicators of inclusive education at three levels. These are: the *macro* level (the legislative framework for the implementation of inclusion, investment in the professional development of teachers and principals); the *mezzo* level (the school or the management and leadership of the inclusion-oriented school); and the *micro* level

(the classroom and teacher or teacher attitudes, understanding of inclusion, implementation and ensuring support).

The research was conducted during 2017 by using the focus group method with education stakeholders in three small European countries: Portugal, Italy and Croatia. Two focus group discussions were held in each group with an average length of three hours. The discussions with participants addressing the issue of inclusive education lasted fifteen hours.

The topics of inclusive education addressed during the focus group discussions were divided into several areas, addressing identical topics and using identical questions for all the groups (Kitzinger 1994), where the participants were free to expand on the topics in terms of their own insights and/or experiences of inclusive education (Clifford et al. 2016, p. 146). The criterion for participation in the focus group discussions was experience in teaching children with SEN at a school that had adopted an inclusive approach to education (formally or informally). Furthermore, the groups in Croatia and in Italy included the participation of principals, external experts and relevant representatives of state administration. All the participants showed a high level of motivation for work in inclusive education and were previously professionally acquainted and/or had cooperated in the field of inclusive education. The discussion primarily focused on the interaction of the participants and an exchange of opinions in order to more easily identify differences in attitudes and experiences (Kitzinger 1994).

Since inclusive education is a complex topic that includes a large number of areas and variables (Powell and Single 1996), the focus group method was used to collect qualitative data on inclusive education, focusing on the critical benchmarking policy aspects at the three selected levels of comparison (Kyriazopoulou and Weber 2009). The critical benchmarking policy aspects were grouped as follows:

Macro level:

– Legislative framework.
– Professional development of teachers and principals (Pivik et al. 2002; Akalin and Sucuoglu 2015).

Mezzo level:

– School management and leadership in inclusive education (Saraph et al. 1989; Ainscow and Sandill 2010; Leithwood and Riehl 2003; Soodak 2003; Polat 2011; Ingram 1997).
– Support/co-operation amongst key stakeholders and competent bodies (Ainscow et al. 2000; Di Paola and Walther Thomas 2003; Polat 2011).

Micro level:

– Positive inclusive experiences (Sindik 2013; Subotić and Anđić 2016; Fejgin et al. 2005; Ainscow 2005; Winter and O'Raw 2010).
– Teacher attitudes towards inclusive education (Avramidis et al. 2000; Fakolade et al. 2017).
– Differentiated instruction (Slee 2011; Mitchell 2007).
– The social aspect of differentiated instruction (Arnesen and Lundahl 2006; Harris et al. 2009; Martínez et al. 2001).

Table 1 presents the framework based on the previously described model by Kyriazopoulou and Weber (2009), including the indicators for each of the policy aspects.

4 Research Results

4.1 Macro (National) Level

CROATIA—The Constitution of the Republic of Croatia guarantees the right to education for all under equal conditions and in accordance with their capabilities. The Ordinance on Primary and Secondary Education of Students with Developmental Difficulties (Official Gazette, 24/2015) defines different types of difficulties, based on which students are provided with a specific form of education, an adequate programme, and relevant assistance. Croatia has a formal legislative

Table 1 Framework for determining the level of implementation of inclusive education

Macro level (national education policy)	
Legislative framework	• Ensuring education in mainstream school for all, irrespective of the differences • Enabling the effective implementation of inclusive education (defining and planning of actions, responsibility, monitoring and control, support)
Investment in education	• Investment in professional training programmes and professional development (quality of programmes and content) • Provision of support in practice by ensuring different profiles of teachers (tutor, specialist, etc.)
Mezzo level (inclusive school)	
Pupil inclusion index	• The number of segregated students in relation to the total number of students
School management and leadership	• Implementation of inclusion • Monitoring and evaluation • Resources • Support • School climate • Cooperation with stakeholders • School leadership style
Innovation	• Encouragement of innovative approaches to teaching • Provision of support to innovative models of inclusive education
Micro level (inclusive classroom)	
Teacher attitudes	• Towards inclusive education • Towards students with SEN • Towards professional qualifications
Level of understanding of inclusion	• Formal or real implementation, through the evaluation of methods and modes of work • In the implementation of inclusive education in classrooms
Level of support	• For teaching in inclusive classrooms
Self-assessment of teacher competences	
Classroom climate	• For the implementation of inclusion

Source Authors

framework, with somewhat outdated terminology and an inadequate understanding of the concept of inclusion. Legal norms are defined very broadly, lacking concrete measures and activities, as is the responsibility for implementation. This has been confirmed by the focus-group participants, who warned about the formalistic approach to inclusion and a lack of focus on implementation. During their initial education, teachers are insufficiently trained for inclusive education, and this is also the case at the level of continuous professional training programmes for teachers and other stakeholders. Since there is very limited organised exchange of experience, there is a sense of being all alone in the practice of inclusive education. Nevertheless, sharing professional experience on their own initiative in inclusive education has helped some teachers to change their practice and has contributed to their professional development.

In conclusion, notwithstanding that Croatia has a regulated legislative framework intended to define the right of all to education, there is no systematic implementation of inclusive education. Greater focus on this issue and investment in effective and targeted professional training programmes for teachers are an imperative, as is the reorganisation of work in schools by profiling specialised teachers and actual support that should be provided for the implementation of inclusive education.

PORTUGAL—Decree Law No. 35/90, 319/91[2] prescribes the inclusion of all students with SEN in the mainstream education system. Since 1997, Portuguese law has been using the term inclusion, and the legislative framework provides comprehensive guidelines for implementation and defines the actions intended to remove obstacles and promote the development of quality (Decree-Law 20/2006, 3/2008). Mainstream schools are provided with support from the national network of ICT Resource Centres for Special Education and from the Resource Centres for Inclusion (RCIs), which were previously special schools for students with SEN. With professional training programmes, teachers can enrol in one- or two-year tuition programmes and specialisations. Teachers at all education levels are eligible to apply for additional professional training in order to expand their knowledge and skills. Many do apply, since initial teacher training does not provide all the competences required for the implementation of inclusive

education. The focus-group participants pointed out the importance of different types of professional training programmes, the direct exchange of experiences related to classroom practice, as well as professional support provided by experienced colleagues or mentors. They were simultaneously aware of their changes in attitudes, as well as the sense of personal professional achievement and the need for them to be paired with formal development opportunities.

In conclusion, Portugal has a solid legislative framework defining actions for the removal of obstacles and the development of high-quality education. There is also a quality support network in place. Professional training programmes are well-organised, with opportunities for specialisation, professional development, and training.

ITALY—The Italian Constitution guarantees the right to education for all and points to the obligation of the state to remove obstacles intended to limit the freedom and equality of citizens. Irrespective of the fact that educational integration commenced in the 1970s, the law dating back to the 1990s (Framework Law on Assistance, Social Inclusion and the Rights of Persons with Disabilities [104/92]) is considered the backbone of the education of students with SEN in Italy. But implementation extends beyond the letter of the law, encompassing educational strategies, organisation and goals, including learning by example, communication and socialisation. In Italy, as well as in the other analysed countries, the attendance of professional training programmes is an obligation of school staff. The focus-group participants were satisfied with the enacted legislative framework and, even more so, with the support provided by experts, both internal and external. The available formal professional training programmes and lectures are relatively satisfactory, yet the quality is not uniform, which leads to reliance on informal learning.

In Italy, there is a tendency for all children, irrespective of differences, to be included in mainstream schools and the state is obligated to remove obstacles to inclusion. The law enables the implementation of inclusive education, although a significant part is played by informal learning and exchange of experiences which seems to have an impact on the quality of the system.

4.2   Mezzo (School) Level

CROATIA—According to data released by the Croatian Bureau of Statistics (2015), the number of students included in mainstream primary schools during the academic year 2014/2015 stood at 321,310, whereas the number of those included in primary schools for children with developmental difficulties reached 1,688, i.e. as much as 0.52% of the entire student population were segregated. This is in line with the findings of the UNICEF Office for Croatia (Bouillet 2014, p. 8): '… there are many obstacles to achieving social inclusion of children with developmental difficulties, whilst many children unjustifiably spend the most important period of their lives placed in institutions.…'

The focus-group participants pointed out that negative teacher attitudes towards children with SEN are still present in schools, partly due to the stereotypical view of the need for such students to be placed in specialised institutions. Another reason can be found in the teachers' perception of not being sufficiently professionally competent for teaching children with SEN. Teachers are also concerned about the absence of professional support and leadership provided by principals and other education leaders. Some examples include: insufficient recognition of and lack of credit given to individuals who actually implement inclusion; an insufficiently expressed inclusive orientation of the school; and leadership that does not provide motivation for inclusion. Information exchange is inconsistent, which proves to be alarming and demotivating. Cooperation with stakeholders in the educational process, primarily parents, was highlighted as another problem. Innovative methods of inclusion depend exclusively on individual initiative and on the support provided by the leaders of an individual school. These methods most frequently imply more work and preparation, and there is no general or unreserved support for such work. Excuses for the lack of support can usually be found in the formal plans and objectives of the school, which regularly do not include the inclusive dimension of education.

In sum, Croatia currently records a discrepancy between the existing laws on inclusive education and the number of children segregated in special schools due to the lack of systematic school leadership and

support, as well as inadequate access to information and the lack of innovation and cooperation with parents.

PORTUGAL—According to the European Commission report (European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education, Country Data 2010), only 0.2% of Portuguese students are segregated. One of the most important reasons for such success can be found in the availability of resources, as a large number of special schools have been assuming the role of resource centres since 2008, as well as providing support and developing quality in inclusive education. A professional development model is also in place, leading to the qualification of Special Education Teacher.

In addition, comprehensive changes are being implemented in the organisation of education and in school practice. The role of school leadership is emphasised, as awareness of the importance of inclusion depends on the amount of information exchanged with the school leadership. Planning inclusive education activities is frequently based on individual teacher reports, without an integrated approach and strategic focus. Nevertheless, all the planned processes and activities are regularly evaluated and innovative methods in the implementation of inclusion are accepted if they can be placed within the framework of existing laws. Cooperation is an important factor in improving the quality of inclusive education, which especially concerns cooperation with the local community, relevant bodies and parents. All students with developmental difficulties have tutors selected from among the existing teachers, usually by school principals. All teachers and tutors cooperate and communicate with parents, teachers and other school stakeholders, even on the formal level, by providing written reports. Nevertheless, there are differences in inclusive practices, primarily between small (most frequently rural) and large (urban) environments.

Portugal is assessed as a small country with an advanced level of inclusive education, supporting both innovative approaches and cooperation with key school stakeholders interested in inclusion.

ITALY—According to the European Commission report (European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education, Country Data 2010), only 0.01% of Italian students with special needs attend special schools. Besides the medical care system, schools are also involved in

the early identification of difficulties. There is an obligation for schools to define pedagogical and didactic measures required for a personalised programme of education. Schools need to remove all obstacles and offer all programmes (including the use of information and communications technologies) in a manner appropriate to the requirements of all students. At the school level, the principal and teaching staff have responsibility to ensure the quality of inclusive education, including the preparation of a formal annual plan which is evaluated at the end of the academic year. Schools constantly need to monitor and assess the effectiveness of inclusion.

A critical success factor is recognised in specialised resources, especially the decentralised, multi-disciplinary network of support centres. This support also includes those responsible for school management.

Italy, as a country with the lowest percentage of students segregated in special schools, shows significant potential for the development of inclusion in schools. This is evident in the level of inclusion awareness, which is regarded as self-evident, as well as in the organisation of expert support for school staff. Planning, monitoring and evaluation practices confirm that Italy belongs to the group of European countries with the most advanced level of inclusive education.

4.3 Micro Level—Implementation of Inclusive Education in the Classroom

CROATIA—The Croatian focus-group participants have a high level of general support for inclusion in education, although they interpret inclusion as an additional burden on individual teachers. Teachers do not consider themselves sufficiently trained and are uncertain about the support provided by their schools. They unanimously agree that inclusion at the lower levels of the education system becomes pointless, since the inclusion of students with SEN is frequently not continued at higher levels of education. It is clear that teachers cope with professional challenges and obligations in different ways. Furthermore, different types of difficulties faced by students were emphasised, as was the insufficient number of expert associates, teaching assistants and the obstacles

encountered in most schools. According to the participants, all of the above represents a huge burden for the implementation of inclusive education in their classrooms.

In conclusion, there is declarative support for inclusion in Croatia, without any actual commitment to implementation. Positive experiences, as well as the positive attitudes of a proportion of teachers toward inclusion, were recorded. Unfortunately, personalised instruction and social support depend on the competences and attitudes of individuals.

PORTUGAL—According to the focus-group participants, inclusion is a topic that is not particularly discussed in Portugal, as it is 'an absolutely common occurrence in schools'. Cooperation among individuals in student and teacher groups, as well as between teachers and students, is widely held to be the purpose of inclusion. Negative attitudes towards students with developmental difficulties are unacceptable and are disapproved of. Value-based attitudes are followed by specialised knowledge, obtained from specialised training, relating, for example, to the preparation of differentiated curricula. The curricula focus on achieving the full potential of children, and not only at a declarative level. In order to successfully implement inclusion, a long-term positive relationship between teachers and students needs to be ensured. This relationship becomes particularly important when students transition to another educational level, which, unfortunately, does not always happen in practice.

In sum, a very high number of students with SEN included in mainstream schools can be linked to the high level of understanding of inclusive education. Teachers feel competent in preparing differentiated curricula, while the organisation of work is characterised by flexibility, which is extremely important for the effective implementation of inclusive education.

ITALY—In Italian classrooms, most teachers believe that students with SEN belong to mainstream schools. In addition to positive attitudes toward inclusion, formal planning is recognised as a considerable contribution to a positive environment for children.

The education system acknowledges the role of specialised teachers, providing support at the classroom level, while teachers at all levels and

school leaders are provided with specialised professional training in inclusive education.

These success factors, singled out by the focus-group participants, contribute to a positive school climate, and point to key stakeholders assuming joint responsibilities for inclusive educational practices. Teachers are trained in differentiated instruction in the literal sense of the word, which further leads to the conclusion that the positive experiences of inclusion in Italy are more frequently the rule than the exception.

5   Conclusion

With reference to the framework for the comparison of inclusive education policies and practices (Table 1), this chapter has presented differences in the implementation of inclusive education in three small European countries. Although the legislative frameworks have been formally harmonised, substantial differences have been identified in the dimensions of their implementation. In addition, the countries vary in terms of the availability and quality of the professional training and development of teachers and principals, as well as in ensuring specialised resources and support. Managerial activities/school leadership and the level of innovation can also be linked to successful inclusive education, as indicated by the number of segregated students. It is also important to point out that regulations at the macro level (legislative framework) do not necessarily imply the successful implementation of inclusive education in practice, as evidenced by the comparison of the implementing frameworks in the three analysed countries. Positive practical experiences in developing inclusion are not sufficiently drawn upon to improve education practices, which is especially the case in Croatia.

The popular belief that the micro level (the inclusive classroom) is decisive for inclusive education is not confirmed by our results which show that the mezzo level (the inclusive school) is the accelerator for the development of inclusive practices, based on already harmonised national policies.

Notes

1. Concerning the discrepancy in terminology linked with students with special educational needs in the EU member states, the term special educational needs (SEN students) is used in this chapter to refer to all the groups of students with special educational needs, in accordance with the laws of the EU member states.
2. An overview of laws related to inclusive education is available at https://www.european-agency.org/sites/default/files/Portugal%20Analysis_CPRA.pdf.

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Part III

Challenges of Policy Implementation in Small European Countries

9

Inside the School: A Comparative Review of Empirical and Policy Studies on the Role of School Leaders in Developing Schools and Teachers

Dijana Vican

1   Introduction

Leadership and management of educational institutions is an issue that, in the context of reform processes implemented in the field of education in the countries of South-East and Eastern Europe, has been the centre of attention of education scientists or education policies for only around fifteen years. Prior to that, leadership and management of educational institutions was considered a secondary, rather than primary, segment of research interest. Hence, it is not surprising that the body of knowledge on school leadership and management and school principals in Central and Eastern Europe has not been fully developed. Interesting research on school principals conducted in these European regions over the past ten to fifteen years (e.g. Brundrett et al. 2006; Sentočnik and Rupar 2009) has primarily been empirical and has significantly contributed to national educational systems. Hence, it is important to

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highlight the research conducted on the quality of educational systems or school quality (Ammermüller et al. 2005), as well as the related conceptual and methodological approaches to the issue of leadership and management.

Consideration of the issue of school leadership and management, as well as the function and the role of the principal, requires an examination of a broad range of factors and their relationships, which makes involvement in school leadership and management yet more complex. If these relationships are considered in the context of an educational institution, without reference to the perspective from which the educational objectives of the institution are derived, such as the social, economic and humanistic aspects of the national contexts, one is frequently left with more new questions than final answers. Given the complexity of intensive social and political changes in South-East and Eastern Europe, as well as the drives for the reform of education and related public systems, achieving quality in education requires that national social context(s), educational/pedagogical practices and school effectiveness principles be considered.

Small transition countries frequently apply benchmarking with developed countries in order to accelerate meeting the objectives of promoting and improving their own systems. Similarly, education policies adopted by small transition countries are more inclined to accept recommendations given by institutional authorities, such as the recommendations of the bodies of the European Commission. In this chapter, rather than focusing on the 'old' EU member states, we focus on a comparison between Croatia and two small EU countries, Estonia and Latvia, as well as on identifying those reform ventures due to which Estonia has soared to reach the category of systems whose educational effectiveness is visible in the results of PISA testing (Programme for International Student Assessment) conducted in 2015, which has placed it at the forefront of all the EU member states (OECD 2015). Moreover, Estonia has exceeded its own results and advanced from 11th position occupied in 2012 to first position in 2015 (Butrymowicz 2016).

The specific objective of this chapter is to provide an overview of the basic similarities and differences amongst the social and educational contexts of the three small countries, which we assume, due to

their being part of the European continent, show an equal striving for the quality improvement of their own education systems at the level of education policies and practices, even though they achieve significantly different results. A comparison was performed between Croatia, which geographically belongs to the Mediterranean region, and Estonia and Latvia as Baltic countries. The chapter focuses on school leadership and management, primarily in the context of the reform initiatives of education policies for the improvement of education systems in a competitive European environment. The analysis is based on actual data and the education policy documents, as well as on the previous comparative research of the three social contexts.

An incentive for the consideration of school principals as the central topic of this paper was provided by a research study coordinated by Ärlestig et al. (2016), especially its second part that addresses the issue of European countries undergoing fast transition into democratic societies, the two Baltic countries of Estonia (Bluma and Daiktere 2016) and Latvia (Kukemelk and Ginter 2016). The starting points for the mentioned authors' considerations were the political changes, the social configuration, the laws, as well as the expectations of the countries themselves over the past fifteen years. Following a content analysis of references to the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, a basis was provided for a comparison and consideration of school leadership and management in the Republic of Croatia.

2 Similarities in the Education Systems, Reform Processes and in the Leadership and Management of Educational Institutions in Croatia, Estonia and Latvia

According to the total area and population, Croatia, Estonia and Latvia rank as small European countries.[1] The three countries have a relatively homogeneous population structure, although in Estonia and Latvia the Russian ethnic minority accounts for around one quarter of the population.[2] The three countries are members of the European Union: Estonia

and Latvia since 2004 and Croatia since 2013. These countries commenced social reforms and democratisation processes in the 1990s, following their exit from communism and a totalitarian and authoritarian society, while more intense educational reforms were launched only in 2000.

The common features of the three systems include the financing of public schools from the state budget, as well as the existence of schools for ethnic minorities (in Estonia and Latvia for the Russian ethnic minority, as well as schools for other ethnic minorities; in Croatia schools for the Serbian and Italian ethnic minorities, as well as schools for other ethnic minorities). The founders of educational institutions at the pre-tertiary level are local or regional government. The founder of primary schools in Croatian towns is the town (local) government, whereas secondary schools are founded by the counties (regional government). School maintenance costs in the three countries are financed by the state by ensuring decentralised resources, or by reimbursement from the state budget.

The three countries face a significant decline in the birthrate, and such demographic changes directly lead to a decrease in the number of students and to difficulties in sustaining schools in rural areas.

Teachers and pedagogues in these countries do not have high social status. The basic characteristics of teachers in schools are provided in comparative key data on EU countries (Eurydice 2013) showing broad similarities. For example, in the three countries, teachers generally complete their initial education with a university degree and they are granted a free professional training programme. The provision of qualified teachers in small towns and rural areas is yet another problem of the three countries. Most teachers at the pre-tertiary level in the three countries are between 45 and 60 years of age. Teacher salaries in the three countries are lower compared with most teacher salaries in economically developed EU member states. If we compare pedagogical standards, there are evident similarities in the student-teacher ratio, which does not exceed 17 students per teacher. The three countries have retained both classroom instruction and subject instruction (classroom instruction is performed by one teacher at the primary level, whereas subject instruction is performed after primary education).

3 Differences in Education Systems, Reform Processes and the Leadership and Management of Educational Institutions in Croatia, Estonia and Latvia

A content analysis of the characteristics of the Estonian (Bluma and Daiktere 2016, pp. 136–160) and the Latvian education system (Kukemelk and Ginter 2016, pp. 125–135), an examination of other recent sources, and identification of the characteristics of the education systems have revealed significant qualitative differences between Estonia, Latvia and Croatia.

The biggest difference between these countries is the historical fact that Croatia gained its independence in 1991 through the Homeland War, its internal sovereignty only in 1998, and has managed to successfully tackle the consequences typical of post-war periods. From its independence to EU accession, which all occurred within a relatively short period, Croatia had to deal with a broad range of social and economic processes that arose with the new social and political values of democracy. This is inseparable from a vast array of other social and cultural values, such as human rights, children's rights, intercultural processes and the transformation of the collective frame of mind into individual consciousness, among other things. All these changes needed to be made by those who until 1991 had lived in Croatia in entirely different social and political authoritarian contexts. Estonia and Latvia left the USSR through its peaceful dissolution. Consequently, they were able to launch reform initiatives without any major obstacles, striving to implement the democratisation of society and adapt to the market economy.

Notwithstanding the demands for change, which are frequently confusing and turbulent, Croatian citizens show a high level of trust in education and in the education system, as opposed to the trust in other institutions which continuously declined from 1997 to 2008, such as in the judiciary, trade unions or parliament (Nikodem and Črpić 2014). Through the parallel creation of a democratic political culture, the democratisation of education is implicit.

After 2000, Croatia developed an education infrastructure and, in addition to the traditional Croatian Education and Teacher Training Agency, it founded new institutions to provide infrastructural support for the systematic development of education at all levels, such as: the Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education, the National Centre for External Evaluation of Education, the Agency for Science and Higher Education, and the Agency for Mobility and European Union Programmes. Research potential in the field of education is partly concentrated into institutes and partly into scientific departments at universities or other formations, amongst which it is important also to mention the Croatian Centre of Scientific Excellence in School Effectiveness and Management Research (see Alfirević et al. 2016).

The chapter will try to provide answers to the following questions, distinguishing amongst the reform processes and management of educational institutions:

- What qualitative reform shifts have been made by education policies in these three countries and what changes have occurred in schools?
- What characteristics can be identified as qualitative shifts and can be considered as role models?

In the field of preschool education, Estonia has ensured kindergarten attendance for 95% of preschool children, Latvia for 90% and Croatia for less than 80% of preschool children.

The length of compulsory education (primary and lower secondary education) in Estonia and Latvia is nine years, whereas in Croatia it is eight years (primary school). Students start school before they reach the age of seven (Eurydice 2017).

Laws have frequently been amended in Croatia, primarily those concerning primary and secondary education. Problems that appear after the enactment of laws concern the passing of a large number of ordinances pursuant to the laws. Excessive prescription from the top down or from education policy can be identified in the Croatian system. In fact, irrespective of the expressed need to increase the autonomy of direct lead entities of educational work at school

(MZOS 2014)—freedom of teaching of classroom instruction teachers, subject instruction teachers, expert associates and principals—the system is currently still overburdened by a large number of regulations that are difficult to keep abreast of. The same applies to monitoring and measuring effectiveness.

Before 2000, there were 32 sectors in Croatia as fields of human activity that it had inherited from the former social system. The reduction of the number of sectors to a total of 14 resulted from contemporary social, economic and cultural changes, as well as market relations. Nevertheless, the sectors were not reflected logically inside schools, so an incoherent methodology of vocational education reform impeded the faster improvement of secondary education reform. The founders have obviously not been able to keep abreast of the sectoral changes and so the reform processes are primarily focused on subject-oriented vocational curricula.

Irrespective of the legislative amendments in Croatia and harmonisation with EU regulations, inconsistencies in the logical relationships among laws can be identified. Hence, the Croatian Qualification Framework Act was enacted only in 2013, when the reform of the National Classification of Occupations was launched. It would have been logical for that process to have ensued from the arrangement of sectors and sector profiles. Hence, reform processes in Croatia are frequently performed using the method of 'connecting the dots'.

If the effectiveness of education policy is considered, one cannot fail to notice that Estonia took a fundamental step forward in the reform of upper secondary education, whose management it took over from the founder (the local government) through legislation and it restructured it into an appropriate, rational and effective network of vocational schools. Concerning the level of education policy and practices, it appears that Estonia has centralised that part of the system which the labour market depends on, while simultaneously decentralising the position of school principals, delegating to them new responsibility—responsibility to the market rather than bureaucratic responsibility (cf. Pavičić et al. 2016, p. 44). As opposed to Estonia, Croatia and Latvia have not defined the segments and levels of decentralisation. Further, there are problems in understanding and defining the notions

of decentralisation and autonomy in Croatian education policy both at the national and local level, which interferes with and slows down the efforts of those who are supposed to implement them in practice.

Estonia has been more successful in facing the problem of a large number of small schools in rural areas through integration and school mergers and even closing some down. In contrast to Estonia, Croatia has been striving towards the sustainability of small towns and the islands and has thus continued to promote small schools, meeting the interests of the founders and the local government. An attempt to implement an e-education system by introducing an information and communications infrastructure into a school located on an island has not been systematically monitored in order to show its actual effects.

Estonia and Latvia have standardised teacher competences at the national level, as opposed to Croatia, which is still considering the qualification standards of teachers, primarily vocational school teachers. Prior to the 1990s, classes in Croatian schools comprised over 30 students. The demographic picture with low birthrates in the three countries has resulted in a decrease in the number of students and hence currently the student-teacher ratio is considerably lower in Croatian secondary schools (10 students), the same as in Latvia (Eurydice 2013), which is actually the ideal pedagogical standard. However, this did not result in an improvement in student achievement. As opposed to Croatia and Latvia, the number of students in Estonian classrooms is higher due to school mergers. This makes it not only more rational, but also more appropriate for student development from the aspects of pedagogy and socialisation.

Through the main objective of its education policy focused on creating equal opportunities for instruction and learning, Estonia has overcome both social and cultural differences amongst students, reducing inequality to the minimum, which is considered a significant role model even for the US (Butrymowicz 2016). The specific way for the Croatian system to address the issue of inequality in education is to resort to external incentives in tackling social differences through, for instance, scholarships for students of low social status. Estonia has taken another route, by creating equal opportunities for instruction and learning both at school and outside school, whereby no students ever feel discriminated in any segment.

In 2008 the Croatian parliament passed the National Pedagogical Standards for Preschool, Primary and Secondary Education.[3] The intention was to contribute to creating equal educational opportunities for children and young people—ranging from the internal organisation, staff potential, the information and communications infrastructure, increasing the effectiveness of inclusive education, and reducing the number of students in homeroom classes in which children with SEN are enrolled, to name a few aims. Systematic monitoring of implementation indicators is lagging behind for obvious reasons.

4   School Principals: A Relevant Factor in the Quality of School and Educational Effectiveness

Following an overview of the compared characteristics of three small European transition countries—Croatia, Estonia and Latvia—which emerged from communist rule at the beginning of the 1990s and which show a wide range of similarities, it can be stated that Estonia is currently the country with a positive initiative in education policies. The country has recorded an evident upward shift primarily concerning student achievement, as well as regarding the link between education and the labour market. This upward shift would not have occurred without a relationship having been established between the education policy perspective and the practical perspective, which converts education policy ideas into reality, with specific reference to schools. In this context, three crucial breakthrough points in Estonian education policy can be identified. Firstly, defining the national curriculum for all students with the autonomy both of teachers and school work; secondly, the centralisation of secondary education, while taking into account the connection with the labour market; and, thirdly, the creation of equal opportunities of instruction and learning for all students. All these developments would not have been possible without the more emphasised role and autonomy of school principals within the education system.

Croatia has only just started abandoning traditional practices. Such practices imply that the school principal has a functional role linked with unlimited mandates and that responsibility is shared with the school board. In addition, Croatia has only just started focusing on the issue of the professionalism of school principals. Estonia, on the other hand, has already taken this step. It realised the importance of professional school principals involved in school leadership and management who are not dependent on limited mandates, while school boards have been allocated a consulting role. School principals of primary and secondary schools in Estonia need to hold a Master's degree in the field of education and need to have acquired competences in leadership and management. They are developed by a special course for principals, prescribed at the national level. The school principal is a professional who signs a permanent employment contract that grants considerably more power than previously used to be the case. In Latvia, the greatest influence on the selection of the principal is borne by the founders. School leadership and management has not been professionalised. A specific feature of Latvia is that 24% of school principals are about to retire (Bluma and Daiktere 2016). In the Croatian education system, school principals are teachers with experience of working at school, while the school boards are in charge of decision making.

The responsibility of Estonian school principals has been extended through the expansion of opportunities for their direct influence on school processes. The school principal is the person responsible for the processes of teaching and learning, as well as student achievement, school development, school culture, teacher supervision, financial management, the creation of a successful image of the school and the promotion of the school. In Estonia, the school principal has the opportunity to grant financial rewards both to teachers involved in classroom instruction and to those involved in subject instruction, while state support comprises a 20% increase in the school budget (Kukemelk and Ginter 2016). Moreover, the school principal in Estonia is obligated to keep abreast of the processes of change and to connect with all the key stakeholders at both local and national levels.

Although social homogenisation in transition countries is a factor that disrupts change, during a relatively brief period of democratisation,

Estonia has managed to achieve a high level of social cohesion, while both the Croatian and the Latvian system are currently still addressing this problem. Over an almost equal period of democratisation, Estonians have managed to lower the pressure exerted by the amount and the pace of social changes. The achieved success in influencing the wider community, primarily the parents and families, in sharing the responsibility for the students' success is also impressive.

Finally, small transition countries did not have the tradition of the external evaluation of education prior to the democratic processes, nor did they participate in international research studies. The three countries under review are currently participating not only in PISA testing, but also in international research, such as TIMSS (Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study) and PIRLS (Progress in International Reading Literacy Study). School principals and teachers have been under pressure due to the fact that the role of the school from the aspect of educational practices in the school has been publicly presented as a problem. Education policy has identified positive interpretations of international research findings, primarily those showing that school principals exert direct influence on the creation of a positive school climate and on the creation of a school culture that directly affects the motivation of both teachers and students (OECD 2016). Education policies or schools that ignore their own results become isolated, retaining the undesirable status quo. Estonia has managed to implement the results of education research in its schools, which still needs to be achieved in Croatia and Latvia.

The question arises about what Croatian school principals need to do to improve school and overall educational effectiveness? Following this overview, one of the first tasks for which school principals need to be trained or which they at least need to become aware of is sensitivity to problems related to student achievement and, simultaneously, sensitivity to the continuous social changes. Sensitivity to problems is a prerequisite for research on learning and teaching strategies. Irrespective of the fact that school principals support professional training programmes for teachers and other staff, which are financed by the state, teaching strategies and styles are certainly enhanced by teachers and their personal knowledge. One assumes, from the pedagogical aspect, that it

would be more effective for teachers to be involved in improving practices based on their own action research conducted at the school in which they work. Consequently, the role of school principals extends to an examination of the influences that play a role in improving student achievement together with teachers who achieve the expected learning outcomes and the prescribed syllabus or vocational curriculum. The contemporary curriculum paradigm, focused on learning outcomes, requires self-evaluation as an integral part of the educational process. The school principal needs to insist on more frequent self-evaluation as part of the permanent and more comprehensive monitoring of both the teaching and the learning processes in their own school, so that everyone at school is able to clearly identify and explain what actually needs to be improved in these processes.

The Estonian experience clearly shows that teachers do not perceive supervision by the school principal as strict control in the sense of a relationship between a superior and a subordinate, but rather as jointly provided encouragement to students to achieve better learning results. This shows students that everyone in the school cares equally about their success and lets them know that help is readily available as soon as they are faced with any problems.

While teachers in Croatian schools still focus on the content of their subjects, principals of Estonian schools have been able to emphasise flexibility to a higher degree. The principals engaging in collaborative leadership (Spillane et al. 2010) are also able to connect and achieve reciprocity in the relationships with teachers, leaders of subject areas, etc., aiming to reach shared objectives. One cannot claim that the Estonian success has been due to the implementation of these specific practices. It can be assumed that the significance of school autonomy in Estonian education lies in the fact that the school principal encourages all the stakeholders to reach the same goal—students feeling good and satisfied in the personal efforts required by the studies. According to Bush and Middlewood (2005), student satisfaction depends on teacher motivation and their satisfaction at work, which requires special efforts of the principal, as they need to take into account individual factors that affect the motivation of all the school staff, as well as teacher groups and social factors inside the school, organisational factors concerning

teacher workload, their requirements for professional development and advancement and, eventually, cultural factors amongst which the sense of justice is the most important. The same applies to the ethical dimension, as the moral traits of the school principal are identified from that perspective (MacBeath 2013), as are the mission and values of the school as an educational institution.

5   Instead of a Conclusion

In this chapter, the fundamental characteristics of three small European countries—Croatia, Estonia and Latvia—from the aspect of geography, politics and sociology have been reviewed. As marked by rapid transformation into democratic and competitive societies, and their specific national contexts, the countries' similarities and differences have been analysed, with special emphasis on leadership and management in schools and on the role of the principal in reform processes in the education system. In addition to a wide range of similarities, differences have also been highlighted in the pace of change and in effectiveness concerning educational efficacy and school efficiency.

Crucial steps in reform in the Estonian experience have been identified through a comparative approach and these include the restructuring of higher secondary education, primarily vocational education, and reform of the leadership and management system, as well as the greater autonomy given to schools and the delegation of a higher level of responsibility to both teachers and school principals.

The professionalisation of school principals in Estonia and the standardisation of the teaching profession in both Estonia and Latvia are examples of sound practices that Croatia is only just starting to focus on.

The demographic picture in both Estonia and Latvia has been showing slight improvements, yet a continuous decline in birthrates since the 1990s has resulted in a drop in the number of students. As opposed to Croatia and Latvia, Estonia opted for integration and school mergers. It is important to point out as a particular breakthrough the equal

opportunities of teaching and learning achieved by Estonia by maximally reducing the social and cultural differences amongst students.

Social cohesion is a significant factor as well, especially in the contexts of social equality and minority rights. Estonia can be singled out as a benchmark, since it has succeeded in reducing the pressures imposed by the extent and pace of social change. In addition, Estonian political culture and success in winning over the wider community are also impressive, primarily in cooperation with students' parents and families.

The innovated role of the school principal has resulted from the positive initiative of education policy, an evident upward trend in student achievements and connecting the education system to the labour market. Due to the fact that their autonomy has been guaranteed by law, school principals in Estonia are persons responsible for the teaching and learning processes, student achievements, school development, school culture, teacher supervision, financial management, the creation of a successful school image and the promotion of the school. Moreover, school principals in Estonia have the chance to provide financial incentives to teachers involved in classroom instruction and those involved in subject instruction.

Advances in the professionalisation of school principal activities have resulted in the fact that school principals need to meet the contemporary social challenges and cannot continue to serve as employees of the state. They need to simultaneously accept challenges arising from economic and globalisation changes, scientific research and information and communication technologies.

Notes

1. Estonia covers an area of 45,200 km² and has a population of 1.3 million; Latvia has a total area of 64,600 km² and 1.9 million inhabitants, as opposed to Croatia with 56,500 km² and 4.2 million inhabitants (Source: EU Member Countries in Brief [https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/countries/member-countries_hr]).
2. Estonians are a majority ethnic group with a share of 69% compared with 25% members of the Russian ethnic minority and 6% members of other ethnic groups; Latvians/Letonians are a majority ethnic group,

accounting for 62% of the population in relation to 27% of the Russian ethnic group and 11% members of other ethnic minorities (https://www.stat.ee/34278); Croats are a majority ethnic group with a share of 90.3%, compared with 4.3% members of the Serbian ethnic group and 5.4% of members of other minorities (https://www.dzs.hr/Hrv_Eng/publication/2012/SI-1469.pdf).

3. These standards refer to technical and organisational opportunities and benchmarks for the performance of educational activities.

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10

Icelandic Policy and Experience in Developing Educational Management: Voices from the North-West of Europe

Ágúst Hjörtur Ingþórsson

1 The Context of Education Policy Developments in Iceland

Iceland has developed quite rapidly since it gained full independence from Denmark in 1944. While still among the smallest fully functioning nation states, it has evolved from an underdeveloped, backward country with a population of 125,000 to a prosperous modern and dynamic society with a population of 350,000. It has two administrative levels of government: the state and municipal authorities. The number of municipalities has been reduced in several successive reorganisations from nearly 250 at their peak to 72 as of 2018. With fewer municipalities have come more responsibilities, particularly from 1987 onwards, where a number of important responsibilities have been transferred from the state to municipal level.

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Iceland joined the European Economic Area in 1994, along with several other EFTA countries. This secured access to the internal EU market—a key for an exporting country—but also meant harmonisation with a large part of the regulatory framework that governs the EU. This has opened up the country for immigration that was limited before that period—with first and second-generation immigrants growing from 2% in 1996 to 12% of the population in 2017 (Statistics Iceland 2018).

Employment participation has been very high in Iceland for a long time—stable at 88% for men and increasing from 74 to 79% for women in the period 1991–2016. At the same time, unemployment levels have generally been low, reaching 5–9% only for 5 years in the last 25 years (2009–2014, immediately following the financial crisis). The employment situation also explains why immigration has been considerable.

From 1991 until 2009, the Icelandic Independence Party led a government coalition, providing the longest period of political stability since 1944. It is a right-of-centre liberal party which has advocated free market approaches, liberalisation and limiting the overall size of the government budget, while maintaining strong social services. This period saw significant privatisation, liberalisation of the financial markets and a lowering of taxes. The Independence Party has been the largest political party in all parliamentary elections since 1944—with the exception of 2009, the elections following the financial crisis. The holder of the post of Minister of Education, Science and Culture from 1991–2009 came from the Independence Party—and then again from 2013–2017 and has therefore been in a unique position to significantly influence the implementation of education policy over a sustained period of time.

2   The Icelandic Education System

In size, the Icelandic education system is one of the smallest in Europe. In 2017 there were a total of 469 schools and universities: 254 preschools for children up to 6 years old; 170 compulsory schools for children 6–16; 38 upper-secondary schools for those 16 years and older, and 7 universities.[1] In addition, there are nearly 100 art schools, mostly in music, that are officially recognised. In total, these schools had 105,000 registered students. The overall picture of how these numbers have evolved is shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Population, number of students and staff at different education levels

Year	Population	Total students	Ratio	Preschool			Primary			Upper secondary			University		
				Students	Staff	Ratio	Students	Staff	Ratio	Students	Staff	Ratio	Students	Staff	Ratio
1998	272,381	86,722	3.1	15,105	2780	5.4	42,421	4045	10.5	20,734			8462		
1999	275,712	88,246	3.1	14,764	2871	5.1	43,030	4196	10.3	20,785	1479	14.1	9667	1621	6.0
2000	279,049	89,018	3.1	14,574	2985	4.9	43,644	4229	10.3	20,674	1565	13.2	10,126	1662	6.1
2001	283,361	92,428	3.1	15,578	3279	4.8	44,103	4491	9.8	21,262	1589	13.4	11,485	1679	6.8
2002	286,575	96,240	3.0	16,282	3578	4.6	44,695	4697	9.5	21,916	1647	13.3	13,347	1809	7.4
2003	288,471	98,861	2.9	16,685	3811	4.4	44,809	4743	9.4	22,467	1645	13.7	14,900	1835	8.1
2004	290,570	99,961	2.9	16,755	3872	4.3	44,511	4725	9.4	23,316	1707	13.7	15,379	2007	7.7
2005	293,577	101,171	2.9	16,864	3935	4.3	44,336	4841	9.2	24,129	1808	13.3	15,842	2135	7.4
2006	299,891	102,288	2.9	17,216	4201	4.1	43,875	4969	8.8	25,349	1880	13.5	15,848	2198	7.2
2007	307,672	104,218	3.0	17,561	4368	4.0	43,841	4999	8.8	26,158	1923	13.6	16,658	2298	7.2
2008	315,459	105,483	3.0	18,278	4761	3.8	43,511	5101	8.5	26,750	1918	13.9	16,944	2339	7.2
2009	319,368	107,045	3.0	18,716	4847	3.9	42,929	4978	8.6	27,333	1926	14.2	18,067	2285	7.9
2010	317,630	106,504	3.0	18,961	4770	4.0	42,539	4886	8.7	26,158	1853	14.1	18,846	2255	8.4
2011	318,452	107,889	3.0	19,159	4798	4.0	42,365	4743	8.9	27,209	1915	14.2	19,156	2147	8.9
2012	319,575	107,482	3.0	19,615	4947	4.0	42,320	4784	8.8	26,420			19,127		
2013	321,857	107,904	3.0	19,713	5099	3.9	42,734	4779	8.9	25,567			19,890		
2014	325,671	107,009	3.0	19,938	5289	3.8	43,136	4812	9.0	25,006			18,929		
2015	329,100	105,659	3.1	19,362	5258	3.7	43,760	4876	9.0	23,947			18,590		
2016	332,529	105,136	3.2	19,090	5190	3.7	44,527	4893	9.1	23,408			18,111		

Source Statistics Iceland (2018)[2]

During this 20 year period, the Icelandic population grew by 22%. Preschool enrolments increased by 26%, which represents a larger share of each cohort with the vast majority of 2-years-old being enrolled. Compulsory school students increased only by 5%, reflecting both growth in the birth rate and immigration. The upper-secondary level grew quite significantly up until 2011 (35% compared to 1998) and has since shrunk but is still 13% higher than in 1998. The most significant growth has been at university level where the student population has more than doubled.[3]

OECD data confirm that not only enrolments but also the overall education attainment level has risen significantly in the last twenty years. In 2016, 43% of 25–34-year-olds held a tertiary degree, up from 35% in 2005; the share of people with upper-secondary education remained stable at the same time at 37%; consequently, the share of a growing population with only compulsory education dropped from 29% in 2005 to 20% in 2016 (OECD 2017).

While much has been achieved, there are still important shortcomings in terms of performance and output of the education system. Recent PISA results have been a disappointment and have in particular prompted action to improve the reading levels; drop-out at the upper-secondary level continues to be very significant, and still too few students enrol in vocational education and training. More recently, the education of immigrants has been of concern, and Iceland will face a significant teacher shortage within a decade if concrete action is not taken soon.[4]

3   Major Policy Initiatives

The significant increase in the education level of the nation is a result of policies proposed in the early 1990s and then implemented in varying degrees over the following 25 years. As regards the management of the system, the overall policy development 'during the last few decades has emphasised decentralisation and the empowerment of schools' (Hansen 2013, p. 49). Three policies have been selected for the purpose of this study, as they are particularly relevant to the management aspect of the education system:

1. Transfer of responsibility for compulsory schools from state to municipalities that formally took place in 1996;
2. Shortening the time to complete general study at the upper-secondary level which was a policy objective through the period, but was changed formally from 4 to 3 years only in 2015;
3. Promotion of privatisation and market-based solutions in operations at all school levels, which has been on the political agenda throughout the period.

The central elements of the first two policies where already articulated in 1991 in an implementation plan developed by the Ministry of Education (1991). Following elections and a new government in 1991, a new minister set up a working group to come up with a proposal for a new education policy. It produced 30 proposals, including both the transfer of compulsory schools to municipalities and the shortening of the study time at the upper-secondary level. These two policy documents (MESC 1991 and MESC 1994) serve as a primary source of policy intention in this study.

The third policy—privatisation and market approaches—can consistently be found in the resolutions of the political party to which the ministers of education belonged for most of the period from 1991–2017.[5]

All these policies and their implementation can be analysed with the conceptual framework developed by John W. Kingdon (2003), who argued that for change in public policy to happen, three streams must converge: the problem, the solution and the political will.

4   Transfer of Compulsory Schools from State to Municipalities

The most radical change in public policy authorised by legislation in 1995 was the transfer of the compulsory school system in Iceland from the state to municipal level. The fact that there were too many and administratively too weak municipalities had already been generally identified as a policy problem in Iceland. The solution was to reduce their number and strengthen them by transferring additional resources and responsibilities—as a part of which education was a

major undertaking. Specifically for the education field, the problem of too much centralisation and the logical solution of decentralisation had already been identified by an OECD review that underpinned the policy with certain external legitimacy (MESC/OECD 1987, p. 37).

The political will that accepted the problem and embraced the solution was the political ideology championed by the leading party in the coalition government of the time that advocated privatisation where possible, a market-based management approach, decentralisation and more autonomy and responsibility at the institutional level. Here, political continuity is important, and with the same ideology in place for a sustained period of time, it was possible to implement quite extensive government reforms in the 1990s.[6]

Responsibility for compulsory schools was formally transferred to the municipal level in 1996, and in the following years the main emphasis was placed on achieving the operational objectives of the laws. This included increasing the length of the study time in three ways: compulsory education for six year olds became mandatory, and study time was extended during the week and in the number of teaching days per year. These changes required 'single-session' school days which was a significant undertaking as many schools had at that time double-sessions, meaning that some children went to school for morning sessions and others for the afternoon. This in turn required investments in new or in extended buildings and the reorganisation of school operations.

The most extensive study published at the compulsory school level in Iceland was conducted from 2009 to 2013 and published in 2014. The objective of the project called 'Teaching and learning in Icelandic compulsory schools' was 'to provide an overview of school practices at the beginning of the 21st century, focusing on the trend towards individualised learning' (Óskarsdóttir 2014, p. 353). It offers relevant research findings on policy implementation.

On teaching and learning, the study found that '[s]chool practices were shaped by attitudes which were generally consistent with the policies of the education authorities. … Staff were generally satisfied with governance and morale at work; professional leadership was characterised by encouragement to teachers regarding improvements, but employees did call for increased pedagogical leadership' (ibid., p. 354). On the consistency between school practices and policymaking,

the study found that '[v]arious aspects of the external framework of schools were in many respects consistent with statutory law, the policies of the municipalities selected and predictions [of the study]' (ibid., 354).

The conclusion that compulsory schools developed roughly in line with the policy laid out in the 1995 legislation and that the transfer to the municipal level was relatively successful is also supported by earlier research (Hansen et al. 2002, 2004) and by interviews conducted for this study.

5   Shortening the Study Time at Upper-Secondary Level

General study time at the Icelandic upper-secondary level has formally been four years for decades and students therefore enter university a year older than in other Nordic countries. In addition, drop-out rates are very high but the system has always accepted drop-outs back into the system again, so the average age of people completing the upper-secondary school level has traditionally been very high. This was identified by the OECD as a policy problem in 1987 and is still identified as such by the government (see MESC 2014).

The policy solution proposed was to formally shorten study time for general education at the upper-secondary level from four to three years. First mentioned as an explicit policy objective in the 1991 agenda (MESC 1991), it appeared again in the 1994 policy document (MESC 1994) and has been part of the political agenda of all education ministers since then.

The legislative changes both in 1995 and 2008 were meant to increase efficiency and flexibility that in turn would result in more students graduating sooner from the upper-secondary level. Increased study time at both compulsory and secondary levels—which was implemented in the late 1990s and early 2000s—was expected to reduce overall study time and increase the number of students graduating in a timely manner. The 2008 legislation does not specify study time—this was done only in the curricula regulation published in 2011. A few schools started adapting their programmes at that time, but in 2014 the Minister of Education decided unilaterally that all schools should start

to offer three-year general programmes, and the following year many did. It will be fully implemented in 2018 when all upper-secondary schools offer a three-year general study line.

The available data for studying the implementation of the policy of shortening study time is the share of students that complete upper-secondary school four years after they first register. The figure has slowly increased from 38.9% in 1995 to 55.2% in 2016 (Statistics Iceland and Ministry of Finance 2018, p. 297). The first year that three-year general study programmes were widely available was 2015, so a four-year time-frame is still the appropriate measurement. Fifty-five percent is not a very high achievement. In the most recent five-year fiscal plan, the government has set a target for this figure to rise to 62% of students graduating after four years of study by 2023. There are no targets set for the share of students completing after three years of study. This indicates that the government realises that the system cannot yet deliver a three-year general study programmes. Considering that the three-year objective for study at the upper-secondary level was set as a policy objective 25 years ago, it seems clear that implementation has progressed very slowly.

6   Privatisation and Alternatives to Public Schools

The third and final policy is not as explicit and concrete as the other two, but is more akin to an underlying ideology that can, however, be very pervasive. The policy to have more private and independently run schools was to achieve the objective to increase 'variety and competition in the education system' (MESC 1996, p. 11). This is based on the views that: variety is good from the perspective of the individual, who will have different options to choose from; non-public ownership and independent management will be more effective and offer better value for public money; and competition will force public schools to do better and thus improve the overall quality of the education system.

With this as political guidance for more than 20 years, one would predict that over this time the share of private and other non-public schools in the education market would grow. Table 2 presents the best

Table 2 Students attending public and non-public schools 1998–2016

Year	Pre-primary			Compulsory school			Upper secondary			University			Overall		
	Public Number	Non-public Number	Share (%)	Public Number	Non-public Number	Share (%)	Public Number	Non-public Number	Share (%)	Public Number	Non-public Number	Share (%)	Public Number	Non-public Number	Share (%)
1998	14,310	795	5.3	41,894	527	1.2	16,258	3240	16.6	7310	1390	16.0	79,772	5952	6.9
1999	13,962	799	5.4	42,481	549	1.3	16,266	3317	16.9	8327	1592	16.1	81,036	6257	7.2
2000	13,733	841	5.8	43,079	565	1.3	15,983	3369	17.4	8674	1817	17.3	81,469	6592	7.5
2001	14,436	1142	7.3	43,574	529	1.2	16,285	3672	18.4	9649	2298	19.2	83,944	7641	8.3
2002	15,016	1267	7.8	44,242	453	1.0	17,278	3423	16.5	11,196	2607	18.9	87,732	7750	8.1
2003	15,175	1510	9.1	44,357	452	1.0	17,665	3724	17.4	12,442	2915	19.0	89,639	8601	8.8
2004	15,263	1492	8.9	44,081	430	1.0	18,295	3779	17.1	12,748	3224	20.2	90,387	8925	9.0
2005	15,322	1542	9.1	43,864	472	1.1	18,699	4060	17.8	12,918	3733	22.4	90,803	9807	9.7
2006	15,385	1831	10.6	43,303	572	1.3	19,426	4513	18.9	12,780	3921	23.5	90,894	10,837	10.7
2007	15,386	2175	12.4	43,177	664	1.5	22,559	6540	22.5	13,304	3547	21.0	94,426	12,926	12.0
2008	15,912	2366	12.9	42,845	666	1.5	23,206	6882	22.9	13,493	3672	21.4	95,456	13,586	12.5
2009	16,123	2593	13.9	42,227	702	1.6	23,203	7254	23.8	14,686	3594	19.7	96,239	14,143	12.8
2010	16,263	2698	14.2	41,780	759	1.8	21,696	6422	22.8	15,558	3567	18.7	95,297	13,446	12.4
2011	16,570	2589	13.5	41,442	923	2.2	22,542	6899	23.4	15,939	3416	17.6	96,493	13,827	12.5
2012	16,697	2918	14.9	41,263	1057	2.5	22,182	6542	22.8	15,629	3561	18.6	95,771	14,078	12.8
2013	16,912	2801	14.2	41,685	1049	2.5	21,120	6661	24.0	16,035	3982	19.9	95,752	14,493	13.1
2014	17,121	2817	14.1	42,002	1134	2.6	20,845	6425	23.6	14,933	4230	22.1	94,901	14,606	13.3
2015	16,712	2650	13.7	42,688	1072	2.4									
2016	15,951	3139	16.4	43,418	1109	2.5									

Source Statistic Iceland (2018)[7]

available approximation to measure the market share of public and non-public schools for each school level from 1998 to 2014/2016.

The data clearly show that there has been an increase in the market share of non-public schools over this period, but that big differences exist between levels where compulsory schools stand out. Overall, the share has roughly doubled from 6.9% in 1998 to 13.3% in 2014. The policy has therefore been at least partly successful in increasing the share of non-public schools. An analysis of the non-public schools that are operating, however, shows that there are almost no traditional private companies that operate schools on the Icelandic education market and therefore very little privatisation has happened.

There are four significant initiatives that represent a large part of the market share of non-public schools and all of them are not-for-profit entities. At the upper-secondary and university level, there are three interconnected institutes, owned by industry stakeholders like the Federation of Industries and the Chamber of Commerce that account for the lion's share of non-public schools.[8] At lower levels, there is one significant privately owned company that operates 15 preschools and four compulsory schools on the basis of contracts with ten municipalities. It is by far the largest private education provider with around 40% of the non-public share for these two levels. While technically a for-profit company, it is based on a certain education philosophy developed by its founder.[9]

All independently operated schools receive public funding from the respective municipality in the case of pre-primary or compulsory schools and by the state government for upper-secondary and university levels. At all school levels, funding per student is comparable to what the public schools receive. In some cases, they charge higher registration fees than public schools, but only for the University of Reykjavík could this be considered to be a substantial amount.

What can be deduced from this analysis is that the Icelandic school system is still primarily public, both in terms of funding and management, and privatisation is very limited. The policy to introduce variety and some competition has been partially achieved at all levels except at the compulsory level.

7   Implications for School Management

The three education policies discussed here all have significant consequences for school management. At the compulsory level, there are extensive studies to rely on, most notably a longitudinal study carried out in 1991, 2001 and 2006 by Hansen and associates (see Hansen 2016, pp. 42–44) that sheds light on the transfer of compulsory schools to municipalities in 1996 and the new working environment for principals. The study found that the 'majority of principals were very positive towards their new environment. … 80% said they had more influence on the operation and management of schools than in the previous state-run system … and 60% said that had more professional independence in the new system' (Hansen 2016, p. 43). The studies also found that principals in compulsory schools were concerned about spending too much time on managerial tasks at the expense of pedagogical tasks.

More recent studies have looked more closely at this divide between administrative management and providing instructional leadership, which is a recurring issue in many studies. For example, Hansen and Lárusdóttir (2013) found that most principals provide very limited direct guidance to teachers but are more focused on providing the right conditions for the personal developments of staff. They express clearly that instructional leadership is on their agenda and they would like to devote more time to it.

At the pre-primary and upper-secondary level there are no large-scale studies available that focus specifically on how school managers have adapted to their changing roles in the last two decades. Changes in the legal framework both in the 1990s and early 2000s strengthened the role of headmaster at the upper-secondary level. They are hired by and answer directly to the Minister of Education. In legal terms they have the same status as any director of a public institute: responsibility for finances, staffing, and organisation. The 2008 legislation for upper-secondary schools then provided for even more responsibilities regarding the development of the school curriculum and for the school environment. The focus has been on management as opposed to leadership, and

the difficult fiscal environment arising from the financial crisis has reinforced the role of the headmaster as chief administrator.

Despite the lack of research, there are four general observations that can be offered:

- First, that there are no formal requirements to become a principal or headmaster in Iceland, except that you have to be a certified teacher at the appropriate level. There have not been any plans to stipulate formal additional requirements and there are no plans to set up a certification process for school managers.
- Second, despite the lack of formal requirements, all advertisements for school management positions in the last few years have listed school management, public management or other supplementary education as desirable. Based on interview data, it can safely be claimed that, as a main rule, recruited candidates have some additional formal education, in most cases in school management or related fields.
- Thirdly, the majority of acting principals and headmasters at the pre-primary, compulsory and upper-secondary level today have additional qualifications. Teacher colleges started to offer a special programme called 'management of education institutions' in 1988, first as a diploma, then as a one-year programme, and from 2008 as a full two-year Master's degree. A study of that programme showed that by 2011 more than 300 school managers had benefited from this programme (Jóhannsson 2011). That number has significantly increased since then. At the upper-secondary level, many headmasters and assistant headmasters have also completed a Master of Public Administration that has been offered since around 2000 in a format that makes completion possible alongside full-time work. In short, one can claim that there has been a significant development of competence in the Icelandic education system in the last 20 years. This has mostly been a bottom-up development, supported by higher education institutions that have offered programmes catering to the needs of active teachers who seek opportunities to advance their career to management level.

- The fourth and final observation on school management is that despite the intention and ambition of the 2008 legislation, school levels are still very compartmentalised. One manifestation of this is the fact that there are three separate unions for teachers of the different levels and three unions for principals/managers; in other words, there are six unions with different interests and agendas. Another manifestation is that there is very little mobility between the school levels; this applies both to teachers and principals, This study has found only a few examples of people who have been school managers at different school levels.

8   Discussion

What explains the significant variance in the degree of success in implementing the education policies discussed here? The three policies that were put forward at the same time have enjoyed long-term political back-up and have faced the same external challenges. A review of the available research and the supplementary interviews strongly suggest that stakeholder acceptance and social factors that are external to the policy weigh more heavily in explaining the success or failure of the implementation of education policy than political or organisational factors internal to the policy.

The analysis of the transfer of responsibilities to municipalities suggests that the acceptance of stakeholders who actually implemented the transfer at the municipal and institutional level has been crucial to success. Municipalities have been willing—and in the case of larger ones—quite eager to take on this new task and have been supported by school managers who have welcomed decentralisation. There was some reluctance from teachers and smaller municipalities, but overall there has been support at the street level from those who needed to implement the policy change—to paraphrase important early work in policy implementation studies (Lipsky 1980).

An analysis of the difficulties to move from the policy proposal to shorten upper-secondary school by one year to a formally adopted policy suggests non-acceptance by stakeholders and even direct resistance

as a strong explanatory factor. In particular, well-organised teachers who objected, given that the overall number of students would decrease, were able for a long time to prevent this from becoming a formal policy.

Then there are practical aspects that explain the delay once a policy is approved: in the wake of the 2008 legislation, new curricula were to be developed—but this took three years to finish. This entailed upper-secondary schools rewriting all school curricula and having them approved. At the same time, the government was dealing with the aftermath of the financial crisis of 2008 and had to show great fiscal restraint. This meant that budgets for upper-secondary schools did not allow for the extra work that was entailed in the new curricula, and the shortening of study time was postponed—effectively until 2014.

There are also specific socioeconomic factors to consider. Iceland has traditionally had very low unemployment and a high participation of young people in the labour market. It has been relatively easy for young people to find jobs[10] and it has been socially acceptable for young people to take some time off school to work and then return to their studies. The system has also had an 'open school policy'; both upper-secondary schools and universities readily accept returning students. The credit system at the upper-secondary level allows students to pursue less than full-time studies—and part-time study with part-time work is very common and explains to a significant degree the long time it takes on average to complete studies at the upper-secondary level.[11]

Finally, interview data and an analysis of public discussions reveal strong underlying social values that may explain why privatisation in particular has not made much headway in the last 25 years. Education is seen as a public good that should be accessible to all and as such should be publicly funded. This means that people are not generally prepared to privately pay much for education, which may explain the limited market opportunities for private initiatives in this field. At the same time, it is not widely accepted for public money to form the basis of private profit and thus there is little tolerance of potential profitability in the education sector. Thus, the evidence shows a very limited shift towards more privatisation and market approaches in education. The primary reason is that this probably does not rhyme with social values. This does not appear to be limited to Iceland, as extensive recent Nordic

research has concluded that '[m]arket-based and privatization policy reforms in education do not support the social, regional, and institutional equality that is central to the Nordic model' (JustEd 2018).

9   Conclusion

The main finding of this study is that stakeholder acceptance is crucial for any major educational policy to be successfully implemented. This means that it must also be in synchronisation with the underlying values of society. At the same time, the institutional level is crucial, as change happens one school at a time. Not many policy fields are as complex as education when it comes to the diversity of the stakeholders involved. To align the interests and aspirations of government and municipalities, institutions and their managers, teachers, students, and parents is very complex, and increasingly so (Honig 2006). For policy makers and school managers in Iceland, the next two decades may prove at least as challenging as the last two and certainly more complex, bearing in mind the emerging multicultural education environment with more demand for inclusive education and an environment that needs to adapt to pervasive and permeating technologies. The research carried out in Iceland suggests that school managers feel forced by the environment to be more like administrators than they would like to be. This indicates that they sense that more leadership is required from them to face these challenges. Future research will show to what extent they are successful in taking on an expanding education leadership role.

Notes

1. For a comprehensive overview of the Icelandic education system, see the Eurydice database. For a recent detailed explosé of the education system that addresses recent policy developments, see European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education (2017).
2. The statistics refer to the school year and are only available in a comparable format from 1998 onwards. Staff data include all staff members

and are not available for all years. For the number of staff at university level, Full Time Equivalent is used rather than staff numbers as there are many part-time employees whereas in most cases employees at other education levels are full time.

3. The data for the upper-secondary and university level are not fully comparable to the lower levels, because they count enrolments, which include part-time students at both levels. They also contain double registrations at the upper-secondary level. The numbers would be roughly 20% lower if available in FTEs.

4. See the White Book produced by the Ministry of Education (MESC 2014) for an analysis of the position of the Icelandic education system in an international context; also a recent OECD (2016) Education policy outlook on Iceland.

5. There are numerous examples where this is explicitly articulated: one example is from the Minister of Education at the beginning of a new parliamentary term, where he sets out his agenda for the term (MESC 1996) [author's translation]: 'The transfer of primary schools to municipalities, increased use of information technology and increased demands on decentralisation at the upper-secondary level provide grounds for further experimenting with the private operations of schools at the primary, secondary and university level. It is recommended to continue providing public funding to private upper-secondary schools, providing that there are formal contracts for their operation. The municipalities decide on funding for primary schools. With more privately operated schools, variety and competition in the education system can be increased' (MESC 1996, p. 11). Another example, from the most recent available political resolution of the same party [author's translation]: 'Diverse management forms, innovation and less centralisation are important elements in improving the quality of the education system' (Independent Party 2018).

6. See Kristmundsson (2003) for an extensive discussion on how new public management was implemented in that period.

7. Statistics Iceland provides data for public and independent schools at the pre-primary and compulsory level. For pre-primary, the data for FTE are used rather than the number of registered children, as this provides a better measure of the market share. For upper-secondary schools and universities, Statistics Iceland provides data for each school but does not classify them into public and non-public. This classification and data accumulation were done by the author. For upper-secondary schools, students who are enrolled in more than one school are counted twice (and therefore the total number is higher than in Table 1)—this

double counting is estimated by Statistics Iceland to be around 8%. Due to a lack of official classification, all 30 music schools at the upper-secondary level are treated as non-public, although municipalities are de facto operators in some instances. This may exaggerate somewhat the market share of non-public schools at the upper-secondary level.

8. These are: (1) the University of Reykjavik (which had 3200 students in 2014 or 75% of the non-public schools at university level), which is operated as a limited liability company but owned by the Icelandic Chamber of Commerce, the Federation of Icelandic Industries and the Confederation of Icelandic Enterprise; (2) The Technical College of Reykjavík, offering both vocational and specialised programmes at the upper-secondary school level, had about 2500 students in 2014 or close to 40%. It is owned by the Federation of Icelandic Industries, Fisheries Iceland, the Federation of Energy and Utility Companies in Iceland, and the Reykjavik Craftsmen Guild; (3) The Commercial College of Iceland at the upper-secondary level is owned by the Icelandic Chamber of Commerce. With 1800 students, it has close to 30% of the non-public market share.

9. For further information on Hjallastefna, see www-en.hjalli.is/.

10. Youth employment is a good indicator of how much pressure there is on young people to finish upper-secondary (and university) education. It has been relatively low during the last 20 years in comparison to European figures, in the range of 6–8% for most of the period, except in 2009 when it rose to 16% and remained above 10% for four years (Statistics Iceland).

11. There are no large studies available on the extent of work by students at upper-secondary school, but a recent Eurostudent VI survey (Hauschildt et al. 2018) finds that Icelandic university students have the longest working week of all the participating countries when hours of study and work are combined. As many as 88% of the 2000 Icelandic respondents said they had working experience prior to entering university, and 27% had taken time between the upper-secondary level and university to work. Many also report taking breaks during their university education for financial and family-related reasons. Overall, the survey supports the claim that Icelandic students are active both in education and work. This is further supported by the so-called 'NEET' indicator that measures 18–25-year-olds who are neither in employment, education nor training, thereby capturing the rate of inactivity. According to this indicator, Icelandic youth are consistently very active compared to the European average (Eurostat; see also the discussion in Grunfelder 2018, pp. 80–83).

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Lithuanian Education Policy for School Leadership

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1   Introduction

The National Education Strategy of Lithuania 2013–2022 states that education is a foundation for the future. While planning to increase the level of investment in education to 6% of GDP by 2022, the county faces two main demographic challenges: mass emigration from the

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country (working age population and families), which challenges the school network, and the low birth rate. This affects the efficiency of educational funding. The other important challenge, considering the above-mentioned conditions, is the management of teachers. Current teaching staff and principals are aging, and the current situation regarding teacher employability is not attractive to young talented professionals, as there are few vacancies, and new recruits are likely to receive the minimum salary (one of the lowest in Europe, according to the OECD). This also has an impact on teaching quality.

This chapter aims to provide information about and an analysis of changes in Lithuanian education policy regarding educational leadership, including school leadership.

The chapter is structured as follows. First, macro level challenges are presented, together with their impact on the education system of Lithuania. Next, Lithuanian education policy priorities and strategic aims that address the challenges are described. Finally, the national approach to school leadership is illustrated by a case study of the 'Time for Leaders' project.

2   Macro Level Challenges and Their Impact on the Education System

'The goal of the school today is not to impose a certain worldview, but to open the mind of every student to the diversity of the world and to encourage each one to act according to their conscience and to find unifying threads among those fields of consciousness' (Lukšienė 2014, p. 85). These words from the initiator of contemporary educational reform in Lithuania, Dr. habil. Meilė Lukšienė, spoken at a conference in 1990, demonstrate the philosophy of building a contemporary personality for the young man/woman. The school itself has to be different—free and innovative—for this task. 'First of all, the school shall be not an object administrated by somebody from outside, but a subject or player with its own personality, traditions, pace' (Lukšienė 1993, pp. 102–112). Neither should the task for the teacher be uniform:

'the teacher must have thus much of teaching delicacy at school as to be able to deliver a different opinion equally impartially' (Lukšienė 1994, p. 4).

After Lithuania regained its independence from the Soviet Union in 1990, educational reform moved forward mostly on the track described above. Teachers and schools were given greater freedom to create, improvise and experiment. The provision already laid down in the General Concept of Education in Lithuania, approved in 1992, stated that 'the result, and not the educational process, is centrally controlled' (General Concept 1992). Teachers were permitted to choose educational methods for themselves. They were even encouraged to develop individual educational programmes in line with centrally set curricular content objectives and outcomes. Schools were allowed to choose their own methods of attaining the desired outcomes. The system of educational, non-controlling supervision was being developed at that time (Ugdomasis inspektavimas 1997). Special foundations, like the Open Society Foundation's 'Education for Lithuania's Future', the Education Development Centre, and the Education Exchanges Support Foundation, were established, where schools were eligible for funding for their school improvement projects.

These were the years of bursting initiatives and exploring the possibilities granted by democracy and freedom. However, over the years, the social mindset started to change. With the rapid changes in Lithuania's society in general, and its education system in particular, some teachers, school heads and leaders of local education communities felt a yearning for stability, clarity, direction and explicitness. They became tired of being creators and started to feel the lack of centrally supplied methods, and even instructions on how and when to act. At the same time, the central level of education system governance also assumed greater regulation of the details of educational activities. Thus, the creative space shrank, and less creative activity is now observed in education. Life at school has become more stable, and, ipso facto, more dull. Although a certain proportion of more active stakeholders in education view regulation as a problem and see the restrictions it imposes, the remaining members of the education community have got into a rut and stick to
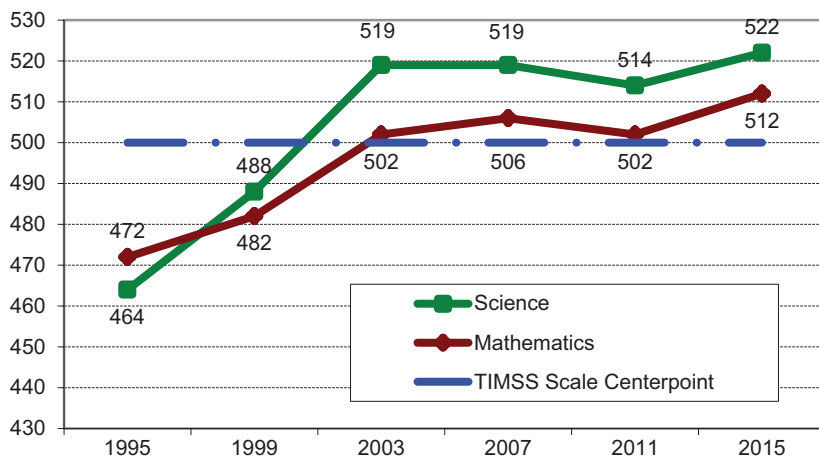
Fig. 1 Stabilisation of TIMSS outcomes following a rapid increase (*Source* Authors, based on IEA TIMSS, 2015)

observing the rules. The situation has had a negative effect on learning outcomes: a period in which the greatest global growth attained in learning outcomes announced by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) (namely, +42–47 points between 1995 and 2007) was followed by a period of stagnating outcomes (+3–10 between 2003 and 2015) identified by TIMSS (Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study) (Fig. 1).

No wonder that public confidence in education dropped from 70.5% in May 2004 to 40.6% in June 2011 (Fig. 2).

Lithuania's situation in general was getting worse. After a rather long-lasting economic upturn, Lithuania, like many other countries around the world, experienced an economic crisis. Over the period of a year and a half, the GDP per capita indicator dropped from EUR 2733.30 in the 3rd quarter of 2008 to EUR 2029.50 in the 1st quarter of 2010 (Portal of official statistics, Lithuania 2018 GDP growth).

The unemployment rate rose from 3.8% in the 3rd quarter of 2007 to 18.2% in the 1st quarter of 2010, with a particular rise among young

Annual mean of public confidence in education
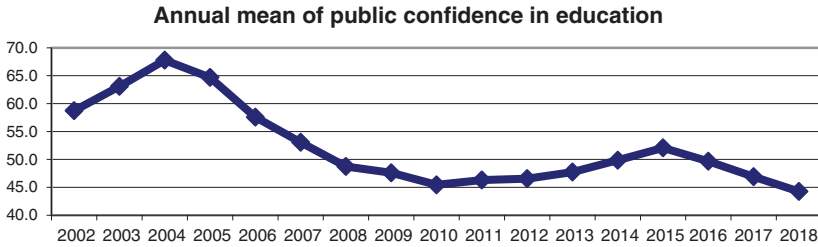
Fig. 2 Proportion of population having confidence in education, percent (*Source* Authors, based on VILMORUS, June 2002–February 2018)

Table 1 Educational indicators (prepared by authors, starting position = 100%)

Indicator	Before	After	Now
Year	2008	2010	2015
TIMSS mathematics (2003–2011–2015)	100	100	102
TIMSS science (2003–2011–2015)	100	99	101
Public confidence in education (2004–2010–2015)	100	67	77
GDP per capita	100	89	126
Unemployment in age group 25–29	100	341	161
Emigrants	100	323	173
Income per capita (lowest quintile)	100	81	125
Public expenditure on education	100	94	129

Source Portal of official statistics https://osp.stat.gov.lt/, 2018

people, from 5.3% in the 4th quarter of 2007 to 27.8% in the 1st quarter of 2010 in the 25 to 29 age group. The flow of emigrants intensified: rising from 25,750 residents in 2008 to 83,157 in 2010. A quintile of the poorest population, whose lot had started to improve (their monthly income increased 2.29 times between 2005 and 2009), fell back into the grip of poverty (27.8%). Budgetary allocations for education, which had been experiencing rapid annual increases before the slow-down, stopped growing and even shrank, while private investment in education was in general as negligible as usual. Consequently, the worsening social, economic and cultural context in the country presaged no bright prospects for educational success (Table 1).

3   Policy Priorities and Strategic Aims to Address Significant Challenges

In such a post-crisis situation, a different attitude and new ideas were desperately needed, not only in the area of education but also life in general in Lithuania. The significance of political leadership started to be reiterated more and more often in the process of restructuring strategic governance in Lithuania. In 2012, the Lithuanian Parliament (Seimas) adopted the National Progress Strategy 'Lithuania 2030', in which the ideas of smart society, smart governance and smart economy were put forward; in general, the individual was placed at the heart of all the developments and changes, the importance of which had been highlighted by Meilė Lukšienė, the initiator of educational reform, many years before. In the aforesaid Strategy, smart society is regarded as demonstrating solidarity, energy and learning. People should be proactive; they should unlock their leadership potential, be able to rally and consolidate people, learn how to improve and make improvements.

There has been common awareness that 'education can successfully achieve its goals only when its development surpasses the development of society in general' since the development process of the General Concept of Education in Lithuania (General Concept 1992). Consequently, it is no wonder that the ideas provided by the National Progress Strategy were adopted in the National Education Strategy 2013–2022. At first sight, the new Strategy represents little advance on the previous one (Fig. 3). The most clear-cut difference is the shift in priorities, while the principle that the ultimate goal is given the foremost priority is observed. The former Strategy included expectations that general governance problems in education would be rapidly settled, and the reform of the education system would be completed by restructuring it into a common educational space, and that only then would quality in education become the main focus of attention. At present, Lithuania lives in a context in which the predominant common perception is that the quality of education does not satisfy a modern society's needs. In essence, all the objectives of the

National Education Strategy 2003				
1. An efficient and sustainable education system is developed based on responsible governance, targeted funding and rational use of resources	2. A continuing education system is developed, ensuring accessible and socially equitable lifelong learning		3. Guaranteed quality in education that meets the needs of an individual living in the conditions of an open civil society and market economy and the general needs of the current global society	
Governance	Infrastructure	Assistance	Curricular content	Personnel

Personnel	Governance	Accessibility	Quality
To make Lithuania's education a sustainable foundation for the improvement of public wellbeing, for a dynamic and independent individual, who creates his/her personal, Lithuania's and the global future with personal responsibility and demonstrated solidarity			
National Education Strategy 2013			

Fig. 3 Sustainability of the former and current education strategies (*Source* Ričardas Ališauskas)

new Strategy are targeted at education quality, though each of them in a different way.

The findings of numerous studies (Hattie 2012, pp. 14, 22) which reveal that quality in education depends on the teacher are taken into account here. The teacher's personality is, therefore, of great significance: a priority is the 'establishment of an educational community, where professional teachers and lecturers are reflective, constantly developing

and work in a highly effectively manner' (National Education Strategy 2014). Activities to achieve this objective are to be more competitive on the job market while seeking the attention and involvement of more gifted young persons with the aim of attracting them to choose a career in education. Plans are being devised to increase the demand for and attractiveness of higher education studies, where educators are prepared and formed. Methods will include employing the most renowned Lithuanian lecturers, inviting academics from abroad and turning these studies into universal, liberal arts-based studies designed to build society, culture and education. Plans also include the development of new and improved qualifications, in particular practical improvements (long-term traineeships, student exchange programmes, repeated studies at university, etc.). The aim is to raise the status of the teaching profession and strengthen confidence in education (by setting more stringent moral and personal requirements, disseminating positive educational practice success stories, intensifying the dialogue between professionals in education and members of society, and similar means).

On the basis of John Hattie (2012, pp. 174–175), and the evidence of research studies carried out by other scholars, the next important factor in education quality is the school head and, in general, school management and leadership. Therefore, a corresponding second objective is set: 'to introduce an education quality culture based on data analysis and self-evaluation to ensure coherence between the leadership of municipal authorities, social partners and school heads' (National Education Strategy 2014). The aim is to rally school communities and direct them to the expedient and purposeful attainment of measurable higher quality performance. To attain this objective, training in leadership is intensified, the search for independent solutions in cooperation with social partners is encouraged, and financial support for projects regarding school quality improvement is planned. At the same time, the monitoring of performance results is being improved, and supervision of learning outcomes, involvement and relations at school for better accountability is being upgraded.

In spite of great achievements in the accessibility of education in Lithuania, a number of problems still persist for certain categories of

students (in rural areas, among boys and adult males with special educational needs and other social groups). Therefore, a third objective is set:

> to provide school children, students and young people with the most favourable opportunities to unlock their individual abilities, meet their special educational and study needs and provide effective educational and psychological assistance to pupils failing at school by ensuring the accessibility of education and equal opportunities, strengthening to the maximum the educational inclusion of children and young people. (National Education Strategy 2014)

It is also planned to address these challenges by means of ensuring quality in the first place, *videlicet*, the improvement of relationships in schools, the learning environment, an individualised approach and other qualitative factors. Plans have also been made to address problems with the direct accessibility of schooling, in particular in the fields of preschool and special education.

Finally, the direction taken in line with the fourth objective addresses issues of ensuring quality in education and executing direct or indirect orders in the public interest: 'while ensuring the effectiveness of the education system, to create a system of incentives and equal conditions for lifelong learning based on effective assistance in identifying oneself and choosing a path in the world of activity; to align personal choice with national planning' (National Education Strategy 2014). Besides the key competences that are developed within the scope of the third objective, efforts are being made to help an individual choose a career path and enrich it with the professional knowledge required for active work on the labour market and in individual business by providing the possibility to pursue continuous lifelong development.

However, these direct objectives do not reveal the entire construct of the Strategy (Fig. 4). In order to understand the latter, the Strategy should be viewed in the context of the National Progress Strategy 'Lithuania 2030'. This Strategy includes the following ideas:
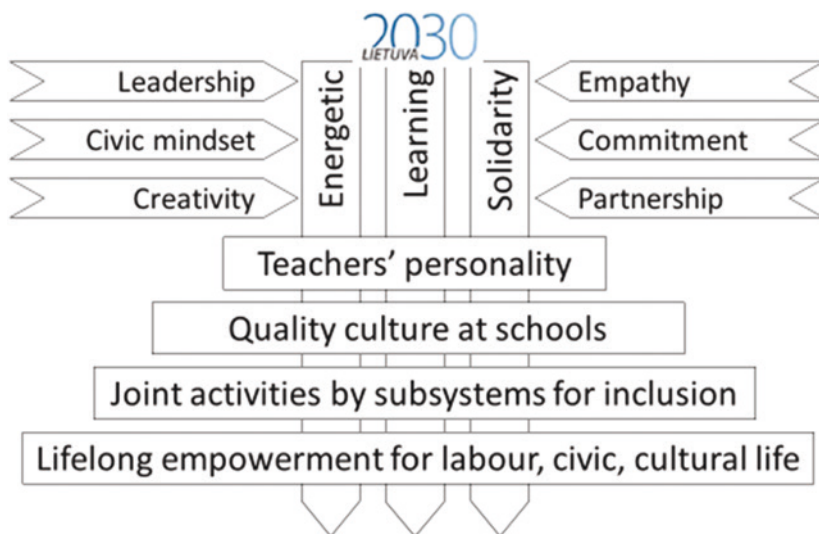
Fig. 4 Conception of the National Education Strategy (*Source* Ričardas Ališauskas)

to implement the vision of a smart society we need to pool our efforts and to implement major changes in the development of society: an energetic civil society (independent, healthy, confident, creative and proactive); … a society with solidarity (consolidated, dignified, responsible for a common fate, brought together by the idea of 'Global Lithuania'); … a learning society (modern and dynamic, ready for future challenges and able to perform in a ever changing world).

The National Education Strategy has adopted the following task of educating society: 'to consolidate the education community and all the people of Lithuania (solidarity) for purposeful education (learning) with a view to attaining individual and national success (energetic attribute)' (Valstybinė švietimo 2013–2020 metų strategija, 2014). The aforesaid three components represent the axes that intersect in the Strategy. Actually, they are reflected in the vision of the Education Strategy:

every child, young person or adult in Lithuania is striving for, and can quite easily find, where to learn; the national education system is

comprised of public, municipal and independent educational establishments that are constantly improving, cooperating and maintaining cooperation with their partners, the personnel of which are highly respected members of society, who are involved in a continuous discussion on the development of national education, the success of the Lithuanian state and its people, as well as the development of its culture and economy, taking into account sustainable urban and rural development. (National Education Strategy 2014)

The success of this Strategy will depend on the extent to which these three components are inherent in the implementation of each objective: learning and energetic teachers with a sense of solidarity; learning and energetic schools with a sense of solidarity; education subsystems that are learning from one another and acting in solidarity and with energy; a continuously improving and learning education system, which meets public expectations with solidarity and which enables all people to act successfully in the area of culture, community and the economy.

This Strategy represents more than a formal set of objectives to foster leadership (see the 2nd objective above): once the idea of an energetic and learning society with a sense of solidarity—i.e. a smart society—has been adopted, it cannot be structured differently. Leadership grows in importance in each of the objectives: it is a quality that should be an inherent attribute of teachers, schools, subsystems and the entire education system.

An active, inviting and consolidating mode of leadership has never before been something strange in Lithuania. The very outset of reform was marked by the leadership demonstrated by its initiator, Meilė Lukšienė (Ališauskas and Dukynaitė 2017). An active group of citizens, invited and coordinated by the outstanding educator, not only outlined the desired future of education, but the majority of that team went on to be active participants in subsequent reform activities. The history of the reform witnessed active community movements, such as the movement of Lithuanian gymnasiums, the Association of Socially Responsible Schools and the Network of Quality-Seeking Schools. The Project on School Improvement, funded by a World Bank loan, was implemented in the 2002–2006 period, and had a considerable impact

on the processes of reform. The quality management system development component, which involved the assistance of professionals from Harvard University, several British universities and Her Majesty's Royal Inspectorate of Education, had the strongest impact in terms of management. The Project paved the way for activities aimed at fostering leadership that are being carried out in the current phase of the reform. A profound understanding that a set objective does not serve as a guarantee for greater leadership was reached. In order to strengthen leadership, we must invite and involve the greatest possible number of members of the education community, and prepare and empower them to be proactive, involving and enabling more people. It was not by accident that the National Education Strategy identified the key to success after the implementation of the Project on School Improvement: relying on the joint efforts of gifted and professional, spiritually rich and leadership-minded teachers, with the school and the education community acting as a whole in a rational way and with a sense of solidarity, to involve the Lithuanian population in active learning and to empower them to be successful in their personal life.

4   A National Approach to School Leadership: The Case Study of 'Time for Leaders'

Addressing the challenges and seeking to implement the strategic decisions taken, the national initiative 'Time for Leaders' was approved by a decree of the Minister of Education and Science for the period 2008–2013. It was a constituent part of the ongoing 'Project on School Improvement plus', and implemented the broader goals of the Programme—to encourage the independence of schools and to develop leadership in education. ES structural assistance was used to fund this project, to a total of EUR 5.7 million.

Based on the insights and input of D. Fink, A. Hargreaves, L. Stoll, S. Blandford, and C. Jackson, as well as other leading experts in the international field of educational leadership, and the authors of this study, the 'Time for Leaders' project aimed to develop an infrastructure which

would be supportive of leadership throughout the educational system of Lithuania. It was designed for leadership development in educational communities of all levels—national, municipal and individual schools. The main emphasis was placed on leadership for learning, the higher quality of learning and aspects of lifelong learning.

The project was planned in two stages. The aim of the first was to create and develop the conceptual frameworks and tools for the 15 components of 'Time for Leaders', which were later grouped into 5 main fields: consultancy for schools, a virtual platform, school development modelling, development of managerial and leadership competences (Master's degree and non-degree programmes) and longitudinal research on the leadership index in schools. The policy context and legal basis for increasing school independence was also analysed. All the fields were interconnected, based on the same principles and focused on the same aim. Project leaders called upon devoted and professional partners from universities, the Scholl development centre, and consultancy agencies, building a strong team of more than 70 experts—practitioners, policy makers and academicians—who all worked together.

At the end of first stage, 2011, the planned outcomes had been reached in the form of leadership models for schools, frameworks and the contents of the competences development programmes, etc. Further work on 'Time for Leaders' went on from 2011 to 2015, aiming to pilot the stage I outcomes in 15 municipalities. The activities included training of consultants, with 75 students enrolled on the Educational Leadership Master's studies programme, 235 participants in non-degree studies, and the active application and creation of unique leadership models in the municipalities involved. Both the outcomes and the achievements of stage II were reached and recognised by the social stakeholders involved, and reflected in a book *Time for leaders-2. A chance to participate in change* (Pranckūnienė et al. 2015). The authors claim: 'Educational leadership development is a process involving all systems … We hold to the principle that the changes in national education policy can be both initiated and implemented successfully only in collaboration with municipalities and schools. It should be confined neither to the offices of the Ministry, nor to classrooms and schools'. Thus, 'Time

for Leaders-2' has initiated broad dialogue and discussion in the form of public consultations and leadership forums; it has implemented consultancy, degree and non-degree programmes, a virtual platform and library for competence development; it has studied current policy and prepared professional advice for necessary changes to the legal foundations; and it has involved the international dissemination of results (e.g. presentations at conferences and longitudinal research. The impact on the agents involved (municipalities, consultants, policy makers, principals and teachers) has been positive. Examples include reports of increased participative decision making in municipalities, career changes for teachers, increased use of consulting services, etc. The European Social Fund Agency recognised the efficiency of the project management. Lessons learned included the need to search for further professional inspiration, to continuously adjust the frameworks created and, most importantly, to build on the results achieved to ensure sustainability.

As momentum for the further implementation of the goals of 'Time for Leaders' was accelerating and confidence was growing, the Ministry decided to use a further EUR 5.3 million of ES structural assistance for 2017–2020.

The third stage is now underway, and continues the project's main aim—to strengthen the supportive infrastructure for leadership in Lithuania's education system, empowering national, municipal and school level communities to focus on success in learning outcomes for students. It reinforces the continuous renewal and higher culture of learning.

Conceptually, the third stage of the project is built on the theory of professional capital, developed by A. Hargreaves and M. Fullan (2012). It defines professional capital as a function of three other capitals: human capital (the quality of individual educators), social capital (interactions and relationships among staff), and decision capital (effective use of the two above) (Hargreaves and Fullan [2012]). Based on the above, the aims of 'Time for Leaders-3' are:

- to develop the decision capital of educational communities through leadership infrastructure improvement projects in municipalities. As piloting in 15 municipalities was successful at the previous stage, the third stage involves the remaining 45 municipalities, divided among

the regions of Lithuania (Southern, Western and Eastern). The time assigned for the creation and implementation of each municipality's change project is 22 months.

- human capital is built through an integrative approach at all levels of leadership competence development. The Educational Leadership Master's programme is offered as part of this, with plans for 210 in the degree programme and 600 participants in the non-degree programme, as well as non-degree training for Lithuanians living abroad, and non-education system employees (450 participants).
- social capital is increased by creating a professional sharing network. This includes possibilities for networked learning, knowledge sharing and cooperation, as well as mutual help and support both locally and internationally. The virtual platform www.lyderiulaikas.smm.lt is maintained for this purpose, project alumni networks are strengthened, forums on the most important ongoing changes in the education system are organised, and pre-existing and international networks are expanded.

5   Conclusions

Is leadership the issue? Yes, the *smart society* envisioned in 'Lithuania 2030' as an energetic and learning society with a sense of solidarity raises a demand for leadership. Ongoing educational reform, switching from strong centralisation towards empowered school leadership, calls more strongly for leadership. As educational policy and leadership are socially embedded (see Chapter 2 in this volume), leadership is understood as an inherent attribute of teachers, schools, subsystems and the entire education system in a continuous process of change. Various instruments are used in the country with the aim of strengthening school leadership, the most important being 'Project on School Improvement plus'. It involves actors at different levels, and has started producing positive results, such as the strengthening of the infrastructure for educational leadership in the 'Time for Leaders' project. This unique project is a success story of practice which should be shared with other small countries.

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12

Hierarchical Challenges in Education: A Competitive Arena for Daring Principals—The Case of Tallinna Majanduskool

Triin Laasi

1 The Legal Regulation of Vocational Education and the Training System in Estonia

The vocational education system in Estonia is regulated by the Vocational Educational Institutions Act. Article 1 of the Act provides the basis for the right to provide instruction, management, organisation of studies, state-commissioned education and financing, the rights and obligations of members of schools, and state supervision over the activities of schools (Vocational Educational Institutions Act 2013).

The uniform requirements for vocational training are regulated by the Vocational Education Standard which sets out the requirements in § 1 for curricula and studies, the principles for amending the curricula and for the recognition of prior learning and professional experience, the learning outcomes of vocational training, key competences, and the

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link with the Estonian Qualification Framework (Vocational Education Standard 2013).

According to the Professions Act (2008) § 4, the qualification framework classifies professional and educational levels on the basis of criteria related to acquired knowledge, skills, responsibility and autonomy, and is divided into eight levels where level 1 is the lowest and level 8 is the highest.

Professional standards that serve as the benchmarks of vocational education are positioned between levels two and five in the qualification framework. Level 5, vocational training, also known as specialised vocational training, was established in Estonia during the 2013/2014 academic year. There was no equivalent level of vocational training available previously (Ministry of Education 2017).

Formal vocational training is provided based on the curricula, which are divided between national and school curricula. National curricula form the blueprints for providing upper-secondary vocational training and are drafted in cooperation with social partners based on professional standards and vocational education standards. School curricula are compiled for every individual vocation or profession that can be acquired at a vocational school and are compiled based on vocational education standards. If no vocational standards exist, the schools must apply for recognition of the curricula by social partners and prove it through a recommendation letter. School curricula also specify the form of studies. In Estonia, studies in a vocational school are conducted in the form of full-time study or distance learning (independent work by a student forms more than half of the study load) (ibid.).

Vocational education in Estonia is financed through the system of state-commissioned education. According to the Vocational Educational Institutions Act § 44, student training places are ensured for those who wish to pursue vocational training based on the needs of the labour market, on the strategic development plans of the state and the development plans for different fields, studies and forecasts, the capacity of schools, and the preferences of the persons who wish to study (Vocational Educational Institutions Act 2013).

The Ministry of Education and Research compiles annually the state-commissioned education request for formal vocational education,

which is to ensure that vacancies are available for students wishing to enrol in vocational educational institutions. The state-commissioned education request is compiled by factoring in the needs of the labour market, national strategic and subject-centric development plans, projections and studies pertaining to particular fields, as well as the schools' capacities and students' individual preferences. An analysis of social and economic needs is carried out prior to formulating the state-commissioned education request for vocational training (Republic of Estonia, Ministry of Education and Research 2017).

Vocational training is organised by vocational educational institutions. They are divided based on the ownership status into state, municipal and private institutions and professional higher education institutions, and serve the purpose of fostering knowledge, skills and attitudes, occupational know-how and the social readiness required for working, participating in social life and in the lifelong learning process (ibid.).

The responsibility for performing the tasks lies with the school administration, which consists of four units: the owner of the school, the head of the school/the principal, the council, and the advisory board. Chapter 4 of the Vocational Educational Institutions Act (2013) regulates the management of schools. According to the Act, the schools are managed by heads of school who bear liability within the limits of their competence for the general state, teaching and education, development activities, and for the legitimate and purposeful use of the financial resources of the school. The principal has the right to enter into contracts of employment with the employees of the school, approve the budget of the school and dispose of the budget funds of the school within the limits of authorisations granted by law and by the statutes of the school. The principal is responsible for reporting to the school council, the advisory body, and the owner of the school concerning overall administration and management (Vocational Educational Institutions Act 2013).

The school council as the highest collegial decision-making body of the school consists of the principal and his/her deputies, heads of structural units, representatives of students, and representatives of employees. By law, the council discusses issues related to teaching and

the organisation of the economic activities of the school, make proposals to the owner of the school for amending the statutes of the school, and coordinates the draft development plan of the school. The council approves the strategic and organisational documents of the school, including the annual report of the school, the budget and procurement plan and the internal assessment report. The council also approves the curricula of the school and the rules and the schedule for the organisation of studies for each academic year (ibid.).

The advisory board is a body of advisors connecting the school and the community and whose function is to advise the school and the owner of the school on planning the development and organisation of teaching and economic activities. By law, the advisory body makes proposals to the principal and the council on issues related to the directions of development, activities, assets, budget, management, and amendments to the statutes of the school. It also provides an assessment of the cooperation of the school with state authorities, local governments and enterprises upon the achievement of the objectives established in the school's development programme (ibid.).

Although the school administration consists of several units and the process of decision making is collegial on many issues, the main responsibility for school management still lies personally with principals, whose preparedness for management tasks and professional competences are crucial for the successful functioning of a school.

2   Qualification Requirements for Principals in the Vocational Education System

Article 39 of the Vocational Educational Institutions Act (2013) prescribes that the qualification requirements for a principal are a Master's level degree or a qualification corresponding thereto, management competence/experience, and educational competence.

Compared to the previous legal regulation, there are no longer requirements for a certain length of management and pedagogical experience in the current law. Considering the complexity of functions of modern vocational schools in Estonia, the managerial competence of

principals is highly valued. Pedagogical competence is also required and necessary for the principal to assess the compliance of the teaching and education staff with the qualification requirements.

According to the Education Policy Outlook within the framework set by the central government, the administration of Estonian schools is highly decentralised and schools in Estonia have a level of autonomy above the OECD average. Principals are in charge of administrative and pedagogical leadership activities, manage their school's financial activities, sign staff employment contracts, establish teachers' salaries, and organise job interviews for vacant teaching posts. Compared to their peers in other OECD countries, Estonian school leaders engage less in pedagogical leadership (OECD 2016).

Compared to general education institutions, vocational schools' principals tend to engage even less directly in pedagogical leadership, because vocational schools are more multifunctional and, besides providing education and training activities, provide different services and sell products. They also take care of the practice infrastructure.

Considering that in the Estonian education system schools are very autonomous, principals also have great autonomy concerning school administration. Principals used to be personally fully responsible for management decisions, but considering the complexity of the functions of modern vocational education centres and the high expectations of schools from social partners, the degree of personal responsibility of principals in decision-making processes has decreased since 2013 and is balanced with more collegial management through the work of the school council. It can be said that, on one hand, principals are still personally responsible for the management of the school, but there is more collegial and shared decision making now which, on the other hand, demands from school leaders good cooperation and team-leading skills.

Since the expectations of school principals, both in terms of leadership and pedagogical skills, are increasing, discussions on the competence model for Estonian school leaders was initiated by the Ministry of Education in 2012. In 2015, the initial competence model was renewed, bearing in mind the perspective of 2025. The ideology behind the concept of a modern school leader is that the principal mainly serves as a school innovator who understands the developments in society,

foresees the future expectations of schools, and knows how to support each learner in maximising their potential. The competence model focuses on five key competences, which are seen as the most relevant for the successful professional activity of modern school leaders. These five future competences are innovation management, team management, capacity to support each learner's development, result-oriented performance, and excellence in presenting success stories (Foundation Innove 2016).

The ideology behind the competence model is closely related to development guidelines for the vocational education system and the strategic goals set for the system by different policies.

3   Strategic Goals and Development Guidelines for the Vocational Education System and Connections with Other Policy Guidelines, Including the Recent Policy Initiatives Targeting the Popularisation of Vocational Education in the Context of the Concept of Lifelong Learning

The vocational education system in Estonia has been the subject of fundamental reforms for more than two decades. Organising vocational education and training in line with the rapid changes in the labour market and responding to the needs and expectations of all relevant social partners, including learners, have been and still are challenges at all levels of governance of education (state, region, school).

The Lifelong Learning Strategy is the most important strategic document in Estonia in the field of education based on which the government makes its decisions for the funding and development of education programmes. Since the educational system of the country should be viewed as a whole in the context of lifelong learning, the strategy also has a holistic approach that covers all levels and types of education. The general goal of the strategy is to provide all people in Estonia with learning opportunities that are tailored to their needs and capabilities

throughout their whole lifespan, in order to maximise their opportunities for dignified self-actualisation within society and in their work. In order to achieve the general goal, five aims have been defined in the strategy to respond to the most critical development needs and challenges of the Estonian education system. The first and the most fundamental challenge for the whole system is a change in the approach to learning to support each learner's individual and social development, the acquisition of learning skills, creativity and entrepreneurship. The strategy also aims to focus on competent and motivated teachers and school leadership; matching lifelong learning opportunities with the needs of the labour market; using modern digital technologies for learning and teaching effectively and efficiently; and finally creating equal opportunities for increasing participation in lifelong learning (Republic of Estonia, Ministry of Education and Research 2014).

The goals set in the strategy match largely the challenges for the Estonian education system defined in the OECD review, which also emphasises that although school leaders in Estonia play a crucial role for schools, there is limited professional development to support them for their new responsibilities. The review also points out that Estonia has one of the highest upper-secondary education attainment rates among OECD countries and, at the same time, Estonia's enrolment rates in vocational education and training are low and below the OECD average, both at secondary and upper-secondary education levels (OECD 2016).

The Lifelong Learning Strategy also highlights the need to increase the share of learners continuing their studies in the vocational system, to raise the quality of vocational studies, to involve more widely social partners in school management and in the organisation of practical learning, to improve the financing of vocational schools, and to review the principles of distributing state-commissioned education among schools. The goal set for 2020 for the division of students between vocational and general secondary education is 35/65, but based on the last five years' trend only 26–28% of basic school graduates prefer vocational education, and others continue their studies in general secondary education (Republic of Estonia, Ministry of Education and Research 2014).

Besides educational policy, other policies consider vocational education as an important measure to relieve socio-economic problems, and view vocational schools as strategic cooperation partners.

The National Reform Programme 'Estonia 2020' (2017) considers increasing the participation rate in lifelong learning activities among adults, reducing the share of adults without any professional education or vocational training, improving the quality of the educational system and adapting it to demographic changes as state-level priorities that need to be addressed by policy makers.

The Estonia's Regional Development Strategy for 2014–2020 (2014), whose vision is to ensure the essential benefits of a good quality of life (employment, services, various activity opportunities) in all regions, considers regional vocational schools as important actors in promoting a region-specific economy and creating the necessary preconditions through the provision of education and training programmes in the fields most relevant for regional development and economic growth.

In addition, the Welfare Development Plan 2016–2023 (2016) prioritises high employment, a high-quality working life, and greater social inclusion. According to the strategy, the shortage of a qualified workforce is considered a factor that hinders economic growth the most. Employees' knowledge, skills, and experiences are not in line with the needs of employers and, too often, the acquired qualifications are outdated.

Considering all the expectations of social partners and the policy guidelines related to the qualifications of the labour force and the need to raise and update the skill profile of people of all ages at state, regional and local levels, vocational schools have clearly a very important role to play in making the Estonian economy competitive and in improving the quality of life and cohesion in society.

In order to understand the changes in the legal and policy level regulations taking place in the Estonian vocational education system during the last 5 years (2013–2018) from the perspective of a school administration, the case of Tallinn School of Economics has been chosen to illustrate how external changes can serve as an opportunity for daring principals to initiate innovation activities and implement developments necessary for competitiveness in the education market.

4   The Case of Tallinn School of Economics

There are several reasons for choosing Tallinn School of Economics as an example for understanding the challenges and opportunities deriving from the changes in the legal regulation and policy guidelines from the perspective of management decisions. The school has undergone both institutional changes in terms of legal status and administration, and changes in management culture and operational strategy.

Tallinn School of Economics is a state-owned vocational education institution that has the right to provide education and training in the specialisation field of business, administration and law. From 1999 to 2013, the school provided both applied higher education and level 4 vocational education programmes, and the proportions between applied higher and vocational education were 60/40. In 2013 the Minister of Education and Research signed a decree which obliged the school to close all higher education curricula by 2015 and re-profile all existing curricula into the qualification level 5 study programmes during the period 2013–2015. The school was faced with several challenges during this period of active curricula development: motivating teachers to re-profile themselves from the position of lecturers into teachers and to collaborate in reorganising all study programmes; testing and developing the methodology provided by the state to compile level 5 school curricula and to popularise level 5 vocational education for potential learners who needed to be identified.

In order to deal with the challenges mentioned, the school administration established a bonus system for teachers actively involved in curricula development and maintained the terms of the work contract, including working hours for teachers and salaries, which in the context of vocational education were rather generous. In terms of piloting the methodology for curricula development, the school chose the role of constructive partner of the ministry in order to modify the regulation/methodology for curricula development based on actual experience and to improve it for future needs. In popularising level 5 studies for potential learners, the school defined a clear target group for level 5 education. Since the entrance level for level 5 studies is the same as for higher

education—completed secondary education—it was difficult to promote the benefits of specialised vocational training for secondary education graduates because they no longer raised their educational level after graduation. Instead of competing with universities for traditional students, Tallinn School of Economics decided to target learners who wished to obtain new vocational skills or to re-skill themselves and for whom raising the education level was not a priority. The school administration decided to focus on adult learners and designed the majority of the school curricula to fit the needs of working adults who combine learning with work and family life.

As a result of the management decisions made by the school administration, the school managed to reorganise all curricula on time, and also to develop new curricula and maintain the number of state-commissioned education places. In this way, the school administration proved to the owner of the school its capacity to adopt changes, manage innovation and position itself as a constructively minded proactive partner of the Ministry of Education and Research. At the system level, it can be said that the school played an important role in rooting level 5 studies into the Estonian vocational education system.

Besides the institutional changes derived from external factors, internal changes also took place in this period at Tallinn School of Economics. After a 26-year period of stable administration, the principal changed and a new school leader started in 2016. The personal and professional profile and understanding of modern school leadership of the new school principal was different from the management style of the previous decades, so many changes in the management structure and work administration took place.

The first decision of the new principal was to change the administration by establishing a new management structure, hiring new people for key positions and changing the management principles. The selection and recruitment of new administration members is the responsibility of the principal, which gives the school leader the freedom to build a team based on his/her management principles and preferences. Hiring competent people and building a strong team of professionals for school management is one of the biggest challenges for principals that will influence their further professional performance. In Tallinn

School of Economics, the new administration was composed of specialists with a background in both the public and private sectors who were selected with a focus on their previous management skills. Another important consideration for the new principal was building a team willing to innovate and go along with the new ideas and non-traditional approaches which was one of the main reasons for making the changes in the administration in the first place.

In order to improve the quality of studies, students, as the main stakeholders, were more widely involved in the feedback, evaluation and improvement processes. Students are now obliged to evaluate every single subject/teacher based on the criteria most relevant in the context of quality assurance and the guidelines defined for teaching. Their feedback is carefully considered and its importance for school improvement is reflected.

The role of each employee in the organisation's development was revised and re-defined. The school principal established a work planning and monitoring system, where the work assignments and working hours of each employee are agreed and, on a monthly basis, are reviewed by the administration members. Since the school as an organisation is a sum of its members and their contributions, the school administration decided to involve employees in different strategic development activities which were first mapped and then introduced to employees for them to choose at least three activities based on their professional profile to which they could make contributions.

In order to respond to the changes in society and in the economy and act in line with the changes in the education paradigm, the school annually reviews, updates and renews all the curricula. The school administration has decided to follow the changes in the labour market and if the demand for some study programme changes, it is replaced with a new curriculum. Since there are no national curricula available for level 5 studies, all new curricula are compiled in the school based on occupational standards or, in their absence, based on the training needs which have to be proven in close cooperation with employers. In the case of Tallinn School of Economics, only half of the curricula has an occupational standard as a regulated basis for curricula development, and all others are developed in very close cooperation with employers and other relevant social partners.

Changing the approach to learning is a great challenge for the whole Estonian education system. At Tallinn School of Economics, the changed ideology for teaching and learning is a necessity because of the new profile of learners and the form of studies. Instead of teacher-centred teaching, adult learners expect student-centred learning with dialogue, bringing the learners' prior knowledge and experience into the discussions, with an appreciation of their limited time for studying. The concept of reverse teaching/flipped classroom allows teachers to share responsibility with learners by providing structures for independent learning and to use contact hours for seminars and other active learning methods. In the 2017/2018 academic year, teachers were asked to compile individual learning assignments using digital technologies for the purpose of making learning more efficient, and the campaign of making new learning materials was paid extra by the school. Now there is a virtual assignments' shelf with tasks for independent learning, which can be used in different contexts. A working group of teachers was also established to develop and pilot new methods (audio and video lectures, e-books, educational games, etc.) that suit the organisation of studies and the profile of learners, and help to enrich studies by making learning more efficient.

Having competent and motivated teachers is another goal for the education system. The employment model of Tallinn School of Economics is unique in the Estonian school system—there are fewer than 20 permanent contract based teachers and approximately 200 part-time contract based teaching specialists employed. This guarantees that the teaching is always up-to-date, since there are both real cases from the field and strong academic bases covered in the pedagogical process. There is a strict policy about student feedback for teachers, which is compulsory and provides the school administration with information about the quality of studies and the possible need for improvement. Tallinn School of Economics is also one of the few schools in Estonia with a complex performance-related pay system, which takes into consideration feedback from students and the development activities that the teachers have participated in.

Having annual collaboration with more than 1,000 internship companies, maximising the potential and resources of the advisory board

members and involving real practitioners from the field into teaching serves the goal of keeping the studies up-to-date with the real needs of the labour market and involving social partners more widely in school administration and in the organisation of practical tuition. It also provides the school with the necessary input to match lifelong learning opportunities with the needs of the labour market. The curricula are modified annually, and feedback is collected from internship companies, which serves as an input for developments. The fact that more than 80% of the alumni are occupied in the field of their studies is remarkable feedback for the school.

The whole concept of Tallinn School of Economics supports the idea of increasing participation in lifelong learning. Understanding the profile of an adult learner, respecting their limitations for learning, trusting their motivation and involving them as demanding partners who are willing to contribute to the improvement process of the school are strategic choices of Tallinn School of Economics. The school has gradually changed the form and organisation of studies to meet the learners' needs and is open six days a week from 8.30 am to 8.30 pm. This shift is not so much to the benefit of the teaching staff, and it is sometimes a challenge to find teaching staff, but understanding the concept of the school helps to rationalise these non-traditional working hours. On the other hand, for the practitioners from the field, this kind of organisation of studies suits them.

In order to communicate all the improvements and the renewed content of the school to potential learners, relevant stakeholders and the wider community, the new principal initiated the development of a new visual identity for the school. This sensitive process was developed and coordinated with all the members of the school, including the alumni and social partners and a national media campaign was organised. Video clips about the school and the fields of competence were shown on TV and on social media for the purpose not only of promoting learning opportunities, but also sending a message to the community (students, alumni, teachers and partners) about the school—Tallinn School of Economics is a well-known and highly recognised school in Estonia and being part of it is a matter of pride.

5   Conclusion

Changes in education regulation both in legislation and/or at the policy level can be very challenging to adopt and implement, because they may require rather fundamental changes in the attitudes of school employees and in the traditional/habitual ways of organising studies and the administration of work. Understanding the need for change and the capacity to introduce innovation and implement it with the involvement of the whole organisation are certainly challenges for school leaders.

In order to prepare today's and tomorrow's school principals for these tasks, the professionalism of school leaders is very important and needs to be focused on by the school owner. Besides the qualification requirements set by law, the skills and competences described in the Competence Model for Estonian School Leaders should also be carefully considered in the recruitment process, but also used while supporting the professional development of the current school leaders. Considering the autonomy and professional freedom of principals in Estonia, it can be said that the position of school leader includes great opportunities for the self-actualisation of modern leaders, but should also be given more priority in society, considering the strategic role of vocational education and the performance of schools for achieving goals defined by different policies.

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13

Educational Leadership: A Small Country's Response to Globalisation—The Slovenian Case

Andrej Koren and Mateja Brejc

1 The Impact of Globalisation on Leadership and Education

1.1 School Systems and Leadership Tend to Be Similar

An awareness of the importance of school leadership in education systems is common in most countries nowadays. It has come into political and professional focus over the last twenty years. This is one of the impacts of expanding globalisation, where marketplace logic is spreading through numerous channels, for instance transnational agencies

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such as the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the European Union (EU), and the restructuring of government and governance in terms of decentralisation, autonomy and site-based management.

Due to globalisation, new relationships and new coalitions and liaisons between countries have been formed. Some of them are ad hoc and others more formal. Most of them have been established first and foremost to promote economic cooperation. The World Bank, the OECD, and the EU are just a few of these powerful players.

In the field of education policies, the OECD and EU Commission are interested in international collaboration and 'inspiration'. However, neither agency has any direct influence over the school systems of their member countries and thus over the recruitment of headteachers, or their preparation and professional development. Since they do not use direct forms of power, such as regulations, they have developed the so-called 'soft forms of governance' within what seem to be very general trends. The EU has developed the 'open method of coordination' (Lange and Alexiadou 2007) and the OECD a method of 'peer pressure' (Schuller 2006). An important common feature is reflexivity: member states and institutions should inspire each other through 'peer reviews' and policy learning, such as best practices. The research and recommendation of best (next) practice is also beginning to prevail as a trend in leadership.

The OECD and EU have an impact on education policies through studies, reports, committees, recommendations, funding streams and programmes, etc. The main influence of the OECD is in setting the agenda by conducting international studies (comparisons) such as PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) and TIMSS (Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study). Member countries can also ask for OECD help and support if their government wants to establish new priorities in the national educational agenda, but lacks the strength to do so itself. The agency has developed a comprehensive team framework for reviewing the state of affairs in member states. The team's report often forms the basis for political action in individual states (Pont et al. 2008).

1.2 The Establishment and Capacity Building of Slovenian Governmental Educational Institutions to Match International Trends

Education, including school leadership discourses and practices, is influenced by globalisation through transnational agencies and through the homogenised influences of national and local authorities. Slovenia is a member of both the OECD and the EU, and therefore takes part in many activities and studies, and follows and uses several recommendations, guidelines and ESF (European Social Fund) projects to develop and implement current trends in the national context. To mention just two examples, Slovenia took part in the OECD studies 'Improving school leadership' (Pont et al. 2008) and 'Review on evaluation and assessment frameworks for improving schools outcomes' (Brejc et al. 2011). Slovenian experts and institutions are actively involved in professional associations in the field of school leadership and quality, such as the International Congress of School Effectiveness and Improvement (ICSEI), the European Network for Improving Research and Development in Educational Leadership and Management (ENIRDELM), and run or are involved in international projects, to develop different aspects of school leadership collaboratively.

In 1995 the National School for Leadership in Education (NSLE), was established. The newly appointed staff were recruited from a group of 15 students, most of whom were headteachers enrolled at that time on the Management in Education Master's Study Programme at Manchester Metropolitan University, UK. After gaining their degree, eight of them found employment at the NSLE and became the professional core of the new institution. At the same time, they continued their studies at doctoral level at Manchester Metropolitan University and the Ontario Institute for Education, Canada.

In the light of soft influence, it was important that the NSLE succeeded in setting up international cooperation, which later enabled Slovenia to become a member of transnational agencies and especially professional international associations in educational leadership, so that the flow of ideas did not remain unidirectional. Between 2000 and

2010, the NSLE also played the role of mediator or knowledge transferor in the training and development of headteachers in countries outside the OECD and EU. It provided intensive training of trainers for headteachers in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. It was an educative experience of both the advantages and limitations of international knowledge transfer.

The NSLE tries to maintain a noticeable role in international trends, although active collaboration and professional input have proved to be a challenge. It is necessary to publish a certain amount of work at the national level, in the national language and, above all, in the national context: publishing in English, which enables the flow of information in both directions and brings wider recognition, can create additional work written solely for the purpose of being published abroad. This can, in some cases, distract focus from national activities and, as a rule, requires that the national context be explained over and over again. Without this constant 'evidencing', few editors are ready to publish texts from non-English-speaking countries, particularly small ones. One solution is co-authoring with established English-speaking experts, with the 'ethnic' author sooner or later assuming a secondary role.

The NSLE is, in a way, constantly balancing its efforts between monitoring and implementing international trends, national studies and the practice of training headteachers—between areas which are difficult to maintain equally. This effort is further complicated by the constant struggle to gain recognition within the national context in terms of academic validity, competition among theories or universities, as well as education policies where professional arguments often fail to prevail and many decisions are rather politically motivated (Koren 2012). The same probably holds true in all countries, but it is presumably more pronounced in a small country where there are fewer experts in the field of leadership in education.

In any case, international collaboration in school leadership research is a prerequisite for professionals being able to look into local discourses and practices. It is a key component of continuous capacity building (Brejc 2014). An international perspective basically makes experts more aware of what to look for, and more clear about what is found. Professionals, when presenting their findings and arguments in

publications or at conferences, form international and shared discourses. Without this capacity, knowledge transfer into national contexts cannot be realised.

If they are to survive, national institutions must not only work professionally, but also fight constantly to assert themselves at both national and international levels, maintaining their professionalism, especially during the formation of new governments.

But even by adopting this approach to work, it is hard to maintain the capacity and 'common beliefs indoctrination' of the staff, to ensure the mode of cooperation with headteachers and schools, and to keep in touch with global developments.

2　The Dilemmas of Transnational Knowledge Transfer in Educational Leadership

Following trends encourages member states to be aware of and prioritise educational leadership and the role and importance of the headteacher. Building on various comparisons and recommendations, soft influence, and policy borrowing, school leadership in different countries is therefore becoming increasingly similar.

From this perspective, international research collaboration is an important precondition for attaining transparency in all local discussions and practice: the international dimension makes us better aware of what to look for. Without such shared understandings, the transfer of theories and research between various countries would prove impossible.

While education may display some global characteristics, at the same time every national education system seeks to preserve its values and identity (Koren 2006). In this context, Halpin and Troyna (1995) focus mostly on peculiarities in education, calling them 'policy borrowing' and 'knowledge transfer'. Their impact is strong, despite all the limitations and dangers that come with the simplification imposed by such comparisons (Stronach 2009).

Attempts to transfer innovations in such complex areas as education and educational leadership may be more complex than foreseen in planning processes (Fidler 2000). The complexity of such intercultural

transfers of education policy, institutional arrangements, knowledge, and practice may not be fully comprehended (Bauman 1998). Issues of what can be transferred because of divergent institutional and cultural contexts and practices may complicate what many may assume is a simple, straightforward process.

Educational policy should, therefore, never depend simply on the professional expertise of comparisons, for even professionalism may succumb to the illusion of expertise, shared language and the like. Numerous authors have argued that the practice of using common terminology can create an illusion of shared understanding regardless of the context. Significant differences may, however, be uncovered by a more precise analysis. The same terminology can hardly be used to describe different activities in different countries (Koren 2006).

Knowledge transfer, therefore, is not a simple, straightforward process or even an instance of 'buying' a package of policies. Because of the above-mentioned considerations, knowledge transfer can raise many obstacles and problems, even if it is in some way perceived as 'international knowledge'.

Only some of the issues deeply embedded in the tradition of the 'model' country can be transferred. The peculiarities relating to one particular country may reduce the possibility of effective transfer to another tradition, context or organisation.

Evidence may be used selectively by those who take decisions in the school system and those who oppose any changes. It is always possible to find a country which can serve as a supportive argument for their standpoints.

One can never be certain what stage of changes the country you imitate has reached—it may be just about to abandon the existing policy or practice (Koren 2006).

These processes tend to be associated with the notion of 'developed' and 'undeveloped' countries. The idea of a direct line transfer may be limited in that each nation has developed a culture and numerous sub-cultures over long periods of time which make it different from even its closest neighbours (Appadurai 1990; Smith 1990).

In terms of policy borrowing, therefore, one country may borrow elements of policy and institutional practices from another which may

turn out to be incongruent with its own cultural traditions and context, and which may produce results which diverge from those expected from the donor culture's experiences (Koren 2006; Coulby and Jones 1996).

These limitations highlight the need for international research projects to have some degree of shared understanding of their subjects when studying school management if they are to be able to understand and communicate their observations.

2.1 Knowledge Transfer in Leadership in Education—The Slovenian Case

Slovenia has gained significant experience of knowledge transfer in the field of leadership in education; there has been a long process of interaction between 'foreign' knowledge and the Slovenian context. The transfer has mainly been implemented through NSLE staff as 'mediators' able to transfer experiences and knowledge into the national context of education and leadership.

This experience has shown that consideration must be given to more than adapting transferred knowledge to national, and national leadership, contexts.

Theories, or rather their applicability at the operational level, need to be tested; national mediators (NSLE) exist in the space between theory and its implementation, its life in school practice.

The national institution for the preparation and professional development of headteachers tests not only its own approaches and knowledge, but also to a great extent international paradigms and models. These, especially in a period when leadership paradigms, effectiveness and improvement face limitations, cannot be formed definitively; they are still emerging and developing. Moreover, schools (and the NSLE) cannot wait and hope for a perfect paradigm to appear.

When brought into contact with practice, academic dilemmas seem distant and unimportant—practice itself has already solved many dilemmas, and the principles it has adopted are neither overly demanding nor idealistic, while at the same time everything that is recognised by practitioners as useful for their work has been preserved.

The process of basing theories and paradigms on transnational trends tends to be so standard, and so smooth, that critical factors may easily be missed. Even research and literature often follow on, asserting the importance and success of particular paradigms which should be implemented and followed without empirical evidence. This problematises knowledge transfer not only in the light of the transnational context, but raises questions over the validity and usefulness of theories and paradigms in the approach to leadership.

The Slovenian experience shows that, in fact, schools and headteachers themselves prove to be the best testers of transferred knowledge—in light of both the national context and the theory-practice gap. In their schools and leadership, only those solutions that are based on theories but at the same time take into account the reality of practice and feasibility can take hold, determining the extent of change which can be followed through within their capacity. In relation to this, it has been shown that schools do not implement theories and trends in their entirety, but rather as approximations, differing from theories to a lesser or greater extent. We could argue that this is not only a matter of knowledge transfer between different national systems, but also a question of the transfer of theories and paradigms into the reality of school practice. Just as nation states need to contextualise their international knowledge, so schools must contextualise the paradigms and theories they adopt within school policies (Koren 2012).

3   The Role of School Leaders in Implementing Transnational Trends

3.1   Why Leadership?

The focus of national policies on school leadership is connected with international research that points out a significant (in)direct correlation between leadership and overall school improvement in terms of student achievement (Southworth 2011; Day et al. 2011; Robinson 2011).

Studies and reviews within the professional literature deal with the role and importance of headteachers for the success of a school system

and the individual school, and all of them credit headteachers with an important role in school success and influence on student achievement. In this regard, they have pointed out a significant correlation between leadership and overall school improvement (DuFour and Marzano 2011; Hattie 2009).

However, in spite of extensive international research on leadership, the amount of information available is still small, so a certain degree of caution is necessary. Other reasons for caution include the considerably different starting points of research, and the significant differences in the research itself. Indeed, research proving a direct correlation between leadership and the improvement of student achievement is rare (Bruggencate et al. 2012; Scheerens 2012). DuFour and Marzano (2011) point out that among the eight factors influencing improvement in student achievement, headteachers take seventh place.

Headteachers not only have influence through leadership, but also play an important role with regard to other factors. They can have a direct individual influence on student achievement, but are also the force behind other factors influencing the schools' level of education and the competence of teachers (Sergiovanni 2001).

The importance of school leadership tasks connects headteachers with the realisation of transnational policy trends in schools: leadership involves setting and negotiating directions, explaining and—when it comes to outcomes (standards, inspections and tests, national priorities)—finding ways to achieve them.

4   Leadership as a Tool for Making International Trends Work

According to research on the roles of school leaders, national policy makers expect that a headteacher can and will translate external expectations and policy influences into professional explanations and direction for their school.

Leaders and schools do not work in a vacuum: schools are built on relations with the wider world, which means that school leaders are responsible for bringing external expectations into the school and

implementing them by cultivating acceptance, through adjusting and adapting them to the self-understanding of the school. There are many legitimate and legal expectations from stakeholders outside and inside schools that create, limit and direct their work (Koren and Moos 2012).

Many of these expectations contradict each other, and many external expectations, demands and structures can seem strange and meaningless to professional cultures. This puts the school leader in a position where she/he needs to interpret, translate and mediate these external demands in order to facilitate explanation and the creation of a shared direction within the school.

They have to interpret demands and signals from the wider world and choose the means by which they will respond to them. It is a major challenge for school leadership to interpret signals and make them into narratives (Weick 2001). It gives the headteacher a crucial role in harmonising external demands with the school's priorities, values and culture.

They should develop their schools according to the general aims and directions as described in the 'organisational ideas' (Røvik 2007). Røvik stresses the difficulty of implementing ideas within organisations in effective ways which will form their practices and thinking. He argues, therefore, that new ideas need to be understood and accepted by the organisation, leaders and teachers in order to have an effect on practice and thinking. It is the headteachers' role to translate and fit ideas into the mental models of their staff. They receive information and demands from outside while also knowing the organisation, its culture and the professionals in it. They are better positioned than anybody else to translate, reformulate and negotiate the direction of what needs to be done so that it makes sense to teachers.

To enable headteachers to translate external demands in their schools, policy makers need to lead education policies and change according to the capacity and context of headteachers and schools. The study on limited visibility (Koren 2002) shows that, at any level, at any position in society, people have limited visibility, and this research similarly succumbs to this limitation. In the school system, teachers see the classroom and relate all questions to it. Their focus is the curriculum, while headteachers are focused on operational matters, and the minister on processes in the whole system.
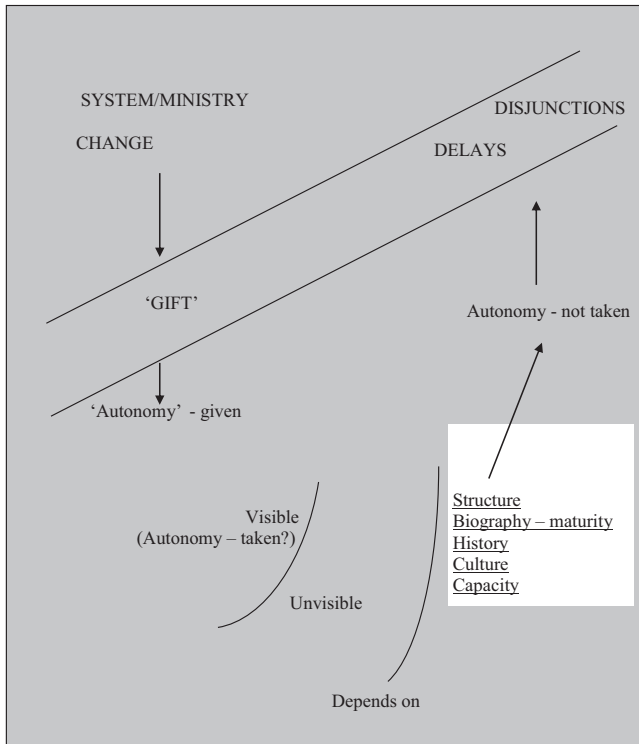
Fig. 1 Translating outside expectation and visibility (*Source* Koren [2002])

If new and changing policies are not adapted to the practice and capacity of schools, they will not be 'seen' inside them. Successful changes depend on maturity, knowledge and experiences in schools. The schools will 'take' from what is given to them by the centre the things that are visible to them (Fig. 1).

4.1 External Demands Place Severe Pressure on Headteachers

Slovenian experience and evaluations in the preparation and professional development of headteachers show that external demands place severe pressure on school leaders, who can easily fall for the siren song

calling them to involve their school in any new national trend, project, and training. If they are taken on too willingly, they can overload head-teachers and their staff, and if they are not contextualised with their school culture, priorities and values, they can disorient and disrupt their activities and efforts.

The situation becomes even more difficult if the government implements the trends and recommendations of the transnational agencies through national priorities in the same, unsustainable and non-systematic way. Unsustainable national priorities and transnational knowledge transfer have a significant impact on school systems and schools, and are unproductive in terms of efficiency and quality of the education system and schools.

Constantly applauding the leader's role and importance in some way strengthens the 'heroic position' (Bush 2003) that comes with their formal power, and allows fewer chances for distributed leadership and professional relationships with their teacher colleagues.

Data collected by evaluation show that headteachers—particularly in the early stages of their headship—are too overloaded with activities in their schools to cope with external demands. They are overburdened with routine assignments whose sole aim is the uninterrupted operation of the school. The lack of time appears to be due not only to insufficient knowledge in individual areas, inexperience and the wide spectrum of work, but also to the fact that headteachers often do not recognise the scope of their school's activities, and therefore get lost in individual leadership fields and insignificant details (Koren and Logaj 2007). They therefore need and seek external help and support. If external institutions are not aware of that fact, they can, instead of supporting head-teachers, overload them even more—for instance by involving them unselectively in different projects and activities.

High expectations of the headteachers' role and the impact they have on student achievement foster their preparation and professional development at the national level. Transnational recommendations promote personal and non-directive methods like action learning, mentoring and coaching over more practical and generic ones, such as facilitation, teaching and training (West-Burnham and Koren 2014).

These methods should therefore have a greater impact on their professionalism, but they can also 'take' headteachers out of schools: being involved in activities outside your own school can be attractive, with its concomitant feeling of less accountability.

We started this chapter with a subheading 'School systems and leadership tend to be similar'. One of the premises or facts about education systems, schools and school leaders is their need for autonomy, which is constantly shaped and influenced by global trends and local demands. So at the end we raise some questions: What is the real impact of globalisation on educational leadership and what impact does that have on the quality of schools? Can policy borrowing and knowledge transfer standardise the way headteachers lead their schools? Is that rather a trap that we should emphasise and be significantly more aware of than we currently are?

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14

Croatian Policy and Experience in Developing Educational Leadership and Management: Work in Progress, or a Failed Experiment?

Dijana Vican, Nikša Alfirević and Jurica Pavičić

1 Developing Professional Principals: A Review of Theory and Common Practice

The fundamental standards of principals' professional behaviour were established in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century and concern the quality of education in terms of organising and leading the work of educational institutions so as to achieve positive relationships

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among all stakeholders in the educational system. These should be translated both into students' academic and social achievements (Grogan and Andrews 2002), which define the principals' role, generally referred to as instructional leadership (see, e.g., Hallinger and Murphy 1987; Hallinger 2005). The majority of influential international organisations, such as the OECD, promote the notion of school leaders as autonomous professionals, whose actions lead to student learning and other objectives, determined by educational policy. In their discussion of school autonomy in Europe, Coghlan and Desurmont (2007) acknowledged that this is not a European tradition, but rather positive progression, influenced by global developments. According to Sugrue (2015, p. 28), such a concept of autonomy is inseparably linked to neo-liberal public policies and the New Public Management movement, since it looks at students (and their parents) in terms of 'customers' and makes sure that their needs are addressed by adequately trained managers (i.e. school principals). The logic of traditional public service is replaced by the individualised responsibility of principals, assessed by managerial evaluation, developed on the basis of comparable procedures from the private sector.

The role of school leaders in attaining educational objectives is described as pivotal (see, e.g., Eberts and Stone 1988; Hallinger et al. 1996; O'Donnell and White 2005; Kaplan et al. 2005; etc.), although the jury is still out on the hard evidence on the relationship between student performance and the quality of school leadership (Hallinger and Heck 1996; Witziers et al. 2003; Nettles and Herrington 2007). Leithwood et al. (2017) describe a mechanism, consisting of four paths (rational, emotional, organisational and family), which leadership practice uses to influence student learning and its outcomes. The four paths are sets of mediating variables to be used by school leaders to influence experience at school and in the classroom and, hopefully, leading to the desired student actions and the achievement of the educational objectives. Nonetheless, the actions of individual leaders could theoretically be somewhat exaggerated, since leadership is contextualised by complex socio-economic factors. In this context, even fundamental tenets, such as school and leader autonomy, can be subjected to critical (re) interpretation (Verger and Curran 2014). The described role of school

leadership has been depicted by Vican et al. (2016a, p. 71), who turn to Oplatka (2008), as well as Hallinger and Chen (2015), to describe the broad use of the leadership term, which seems to swallow up all other dimensions of the administering/managing of schools, and even becomes a synonym for the entire field.

Given this, it is rather odd that historical research almost ignores the development of school leadership and focuses instead on school governance systems (e.g. school districts in the United States), as suggested by Kafka (2009). She traces the development of contemporary principalship in the 'principal teacher' position (in the Anglo-Saxon context) of the 1800s, with personal decision-making powers and professional independence, as well as accountability, as clear signs of the profession:

> The notion that principals were independent was essential. Principals were able to lead their schools, and to gain authority through doing so, in part because they were granted independence and autonomy by their superintendents. Although in later years many urban districts hired assistant or associate superintendents to more closely supervise local schools, bureaucratic expansion had already brought principals a degree of independence, and a position of leadership, that they were unwilling to relinquish. Thus assistant superintendents became general supervisors but principals remained head of their schools. (Kafka 2009, p. 322)

Although there have been pendulum swings in the periods with varying degrees of principals' autonomy in relation to educational policy (e.g. school districts and their superintendents in the United States; see Grogan and Andrews 2002), the modern school environment seems to treat principals as 'superheroes'.

Accounts from qualitative research, performed in the conducted Croatian project, related to the definition of national standards of the principals' profession and training, sometimes resorted to metaphors of a 'Superman' or 'Superwoman' who was expected to solve all complex problems in the school environment and take responsibility even for those aspects of school operations regulated at the level of policy (Vican et al. 2016c). Such a finding resonates with Goodwin et al. (2005), who argue that stakeholders' expectations and different forms

of responsibility are accumulated until the personal capacity of principals is worn out. The same authors advise that principals of the future will need to address complex educational and social trends, by developing additional professional autonomy and capacity, although the whole notion of 'superprincipals' might be an illusion. This has been suggested by Chirichello (2010), who sees principals as devoting themselves too much to operational activities, instead of to leadership, and suggests that principalship is to be restructured at the systemic level.

It remains to be seen if principals can save the day, by taking over instructional and transformational leadership duties, as suggested by Hallinger (1992). The entry point is, certainly, related to the recruitment and selection of the principal, as well as to the availability of high-quality candidates. Although disputed (Roza 2003), shortages of principals have been mentioned in literature (DiPaola and Tschannen-Moran 2003; Collins 2006; Fink and Brayman 2006; Walker and Kwan 2009) as relevant factors in the educational leadership landscape. Difficulties in attracting candidates have been specifically linked to the increasing responsibilities of leadership (Whitaker 2003), which leaves limited policy options and amplifies the need to focus on the preparation of the principal and on development procedures. Educational policy should be formulated in such a manner that even 'less than ideal' candidates are able to fill principal positions (if motivated to do so) and perform successfully, provided that adequate training and support are provided.

It all starts with the requirements for entry into educational leadership, which vary significantly—from educational systems, setting only general legal requirements (such as possessing a higher education degree, teaching licence and/or several years of educational practice), to 'centralised' government standards, to competing recommendations, developed by professional associations and other policy stakeholders. In addition, there is a diverging level of centralisation, where selection can be entirely decentralised to the school level (e.g. in the US, or the UK), or directed by the federal states (as in Germany), or the central government, with Singapore being the prime example (Huber and Hiltmann 2010).

In the early 2000s, as described by Bush and Jackson (2002), the United States was one of the rare countries which required school leaders to be formally trained and certified. Professional standards were defined by stakeholder associations such as the National Policy Board for Educational Administration (NPBEA).[1] In the 1990s, in association with policy makers at different levels, they defined the core professional standards, usually referred to as the ISLLC (Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium) standards.[2] These were updated in 2008, and then again in 2015, when they were renamed the National Educational Leadership Preparation (NELP) standards. Currently, a new proposal at the national level is being developed by NPBEA. The generic importance of national standards for developing school leadership, which should be applicable regardless of the institutional environment and the context, was acknowledged in the late 1990s by Bush (1998).

In the United States, a well-defined institutional infrastructure and a large number of educational leadership professionals make it easy to sustain the momentum for principal development at college/university level. The majority of these programmes typically provide an option for study toward a master's degree in educational administration, and are geared toward licensed educational professionals. The tradition of principal preparation programmes is a rich one and it would take a whole volume to give a historical overview. Nevertheless, the general direction of development can be described in methodological terms as moving away from a traditional, theory/classroom-based approach, to incorporating a wealth of practical experiences (internships, job shadowing, professional practice) and, finally, toward a model of reflective inquiry and practice, requiring new and existing leaders to learn by critically reflecting on educational practice (Kelly and Shaw 2008). In terms of managerial philosophy, implied by the leadership development/preparation programmes, Murphy (1998), the author of the ISLLC standards (along with N. Shipman), is probably one of the best qualified authors to describe the historical changes of paradigms in the United States:

- *Ideological paradigm* (lasting throughout the nineteenth century), with the first university programme in educational administration,

being founded at the University of Michigan, based on the ideas of educational positivism and direct supervision of teaching staff;

- *Prescriptive paradigm* (spanning the first half of the twentieth century), influenced by the advances of managerialism and managerial careers in the commercial and state sectors, following practitioners' prescriptions, drawn from the general *zeitgeist* of business and public management (such as 'scientific management', the human resources movement, etc. (cf. Vican et al. 2016a);
- *Scientific paradigm* (1947–1985), with the nascent discipline and profession of educational management (administration) being shaped by associations of practising principals,[3] university professors/researchers of the discipline, as well as academic journals, which both shaped and supported the new field (Vican et al. 2016a, pp. 68–70);
- *Dialectic paradigm* (as recognised by Murphy, lasting from 1986 onwards), could be described in terms of a critical or even 'postmodern' approach to traditional principal training and preparation programmes, with leadership taking a pivotal role in researching and teaching educational administration/management (cf. Vican et al. 2016b).

The complex influences of educational leadership preparation programmes (for an overview, see, e.g., LaMagdeleine et al. 2009; Tripses 2016) and the described professional (occupational) standards were the basis for the development of educational standards and academic curricula (LaMagdeleine et al. 2009). In the United States, they can also be developed and performed at the levels of school district and states (Kelly and Shaw 2008). European experience is usually based on 'centralised' national programmes, rooted in the experience of academic, master-level programmes in educational management. This was the case in England, which had a rich tradition of educational master's programmes, accompanied by state-funded, single management courses in the 1980s, followed by 'educational MBAs' and newly instituted national training programmes in the 1990s (Brundrett 2001).

The signature UK experience in educational leadership development has been the National College for School Leadership (NCSL), inaugurated by the Blair government in 2000. It took over the existing programmes for school leadership and developed new ones, targeting

leaders with different levels of experience and responsibility (Riley and Mumford 2007). The most important of these has been the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH), which is described by Bush (2013) as a professional qualification (instead of an academic degree). Currently, there is a mix of options available to aspiring and existing principals in different countries, with 'pluralistic' training systems usually offering both professional and academic (typically at master's level) qualifications, while countries with 'centralised' approaches choose a single, nationally prescribed path. NCSL was later transformed into a UK executive agency, the National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTS),[4] responsible for teacher preparation and certification, as well. At the time of writing this chapter, the programmes, initially offered by NCSL/NCTS, based on national qualifications, are being offered by a range of licensed education providers (universities and school partnerships),[5] while the NCSL/NCTS on-line platform and learning materials[6] remain freely available to the public.

The United Kingdom, thus, moves toward a pluralistic model of principal training, achieving consistency across programmes by referring to national standard(s). On the other hand, Bush (2009) identifies France, Singapore and South Africa as benchmarks for the strictly regulated provision of principal preparation/training and licensing. Similar programmes have been developed in several small European countries, such as Slovenia, which created a central national institution for school leadership (Šola za ravnatelje/National School for Leadership in Education),[7] largely following the early NCSL blueprint. It is a centralised institution, providing both education and licensing, as opposed to the Anglo-Saxon model, since US principal licensing is defined at the state level, although heavily influenced by a nationally recommended test on school leadership[8] and a national framework for the accreditation of education providers, offering relevant training and degree programmes.[9] The UK seems to have been influenced by changes in government and philosophy, for example making NPQH principal certification obligatory, and then reverting to an optional status (Bush 2013).

Regardless of all the described changes, there seem to be some common core elements in principal training/preparation. Although there are differences in scope and in the targeted population, the majority of

training programmes can be grouped (Bush and Jackson 2002) either at the introductory level (for aspiring/newly appointed principals), or at the middle/advanced level (aimed at practising principals). Although the actual programmes and approaches are shaped by divergent national environments, common elements can be found in their positioning at the postgraduate academic level (in the case of academic programmes, leading to a degree), an internationally comparable core curriculum, as well as in the emphasis on mentoring/tutoring, linkages with educational practice and, at least to some extent, the application of e-learning.

Another generic approach has been developed by the OECD (Pont et al. 2008a), building upon the results of the PISA international benchmarking of student performance[10] and best practices from different national contexts (Pont et al. 2008b). The OECD recommendations on policy development have been described in terms of 'managerialism' and 'one size fits all' (Mac Ruairc 2010), notwithstanding the inclusion and analysis of best practices at the national level. Ruairc's paper is based on a critical methodology, emphasising the need for a more inclusive analysis. The OECD policy advice is considered to be based solely on the logic of education as an input for economic development, as well as favouring the decentralised model of education, which tries to link school leadership with student performance and the individual responsibility of the school leader(s).

Support for principals includes other managerial tools, especially career development and remuneration, which often lag behind the responsibilities and career options available in the private sector. These topics are addressed by the discussed OECD reports,[11] as well as by a more recent edited volume, produced by the same organisation (Schleicher 2012).

In view of global developments, the role of the principal in South-East European (SEE) countries still remains unclear, since only a limited local knowledge base is available (Vican et al. 2016a). However, it can safely be assumed that the most significant challenge to the transformation of the traditional role of principals can be found in the political environment and in cultural tendencies. These have been described by Oplatka (2004), based on a comprehensive literature review.

He describes the role of school principals, outside advanced market societies, as marginal and leaning toward the role of a traditional public administrator, instead of an educational, let alone instructional, leader. Their role involves administrative duties, even the maintenance of property, and fundraising, due to the limited funds available from the public budget(s). In addition, these principals frequently use an autocratic and bureaucratic approach to problem solving and managing human resources.

Principals of educational institutions, viewed as the mere transmission of educational policy to the local level, rather than as independent professionals, are inherently convenient for an anachronistic educational policy. Nevertheless, their low skills and motivation impede the implementation of standards and reforms required by the drive for higher accountability (Leithwood 2001) and other global developments promoting the agenda of educational standards and reform (Volante 2012). It has also been argued that school leadership, autonomy and accountability patterns matter when it comes to student outcomes, as measured by international benchmarking initiatives, such as the OECD's PISA (OECD 2016). All this evidence creates a compelling argument for the further analysis of individual national context(s) and public policies in small European countries, as related to the role and development of principals in the educational landscape. Croatia, as a small country and the newest member of the European Union (at the time of writing this chapter), provides an interesting example, as it has witnessed both the (mis)adventures of educational policy, as well as successful bottom-up initiatives in the field.

2 The Effects of Croatian Educational Policy on Principals and the School: Empirical Evidence

There is a lack of research in the field of developing professional standards, as well as in creating training, licensing and support mechanisms for educational leadership in Croatia. Some additional empirical studies

are devoted to the assessment of educational management and leadership, although the empirical evidence is typically limited and contradictory. Some of the available studies are available in Croatian only and have not been previously presented to a wider public.

The positive influence of the existing mechanisms on principals' performance in educational management and marketing has been empirically confirmed by Alfirević et al. (2011), who also analysed the patterns of educational management and leadership. Their findings are related to the prevalence of traditional managerial patterns in a sample of Croatian primary school principals, who were classified into five groups. Only 11.8% of the sample were described as 'progressive' managerial practices, while 27.3% balanced traditionalist and contemporary practices, with special importance attributed to practical tools, which were believed to contribute to performance (Alfirević et al. 2016). The same study concluded that the use of the policy tools available to principals seems to be associated with their belonging to high-performing clusters. This confirms the somewhat limited success of the existing principal training system (described in the case of secondary school principals, in a Croatian volume by Đaković 2012), although a more comprehensive empirical analysis is not available.

There are also limited empirical findings related to educational leadership in Croatia, as well as in the entire South-East European region. Peko et al. (2009) discussed the quality of educational leadership in the schools of eastern Croatia. They surveyed teaching and professional staff, whose perceptions on educational leadership were assessed. The authors reported average/neutral results (in a range from 3.27 to 3.75 for different leadership items, measured on a Likert scale with five levels), with slightly higher results related to fostering teachers' professional development and supporting the school image. An index of perceived organisational effectiveness was used in this study, as well. This is an 8-item measure, theoretically ranging from 1 to 5, with four dimensions being assessed by respondents: quantity and quality of education, its efficiency, adaptability, and flexibility (Clarke 1996). On this scale, educational staff perceived the organisational effectiveness of their schools to be slightly better than average (3.26). The same applies to the school climate (with a grade of 3.26), while job satisfaction had the highest

mean value of 4.10 (with both constructs measured on five-point scales). Considering the results reported in other studies, this could be attributed to the intrinsic motivation of staff.

In their study of the perceived leadership potential of principals in Croatia and Serbia, Andevski et al. (2012) found that, on a scale with a maximum score of 180, Croatian educational staff achieved a mean of 131.54, which was significantly higher than for educators in Serbia (129.03). They also associated personal characteristics with educational leadership scores and determined some national differences in this relationship. Unfortunately, this study did not analyse any contextual factors and has not attempted to put the results in the context of policy.

Kovač et al. (2014) produced a conceptual analysis of distributed leadership in the Croatian school system, based on OECD data, hinting at low autonomy and low teacher participation in educational leadership as the fundamental obstacles to further development toward contemporary educational standards. These conclusions are supported by empirical results, discussed by Kovač and Buchberger (2014), who chose to discuss the cooperation of three stakeholder groups (teachers, university professors in the field of education, and principals and policy actors) in the Croatian educational system with schools. Policy actors and university professors in the field of education had the lowest cooperation scores, while parents and especially principals and teachers proved to be very inclined toward cooperation. Low scores were ascribed to the stakeholders' satisfaction with the level of cooperation in the Croatian educational system (in a range from 2.62 to 3.95 for the entire sample, consisting of those who both engage and those who do not engage in cooperation: in a range from 3.21 to 3.96 for those who actually do cooperate). Nevertheless, no one seems to be satisfied with the cooperation of higher education institutions engaged in teacher training with schools and teachers (with mean scores of 2.17 for principals and policy actors; 2.18 for teachers; 2.79 for university professors, on a standard Likert scale with five levels). Even worse results are achieved in the analysis of perceived cooperation between educational policy actors and schools (1.60 for teachers; 1.73 for policy actors; 1.80 for university professors). A qualitative analysis of the respondents' answers seems to confirm the quantity and quality of

cooperation among schools, institutions from local communities and some policy actors. Different forms of extracurricular activities, projects and other innovative forms of learning are taking place, while cooperation and coordination among schools, academic and policy actors seem to be inadequate. Teachers and other school staff perceive that limited benefits are achieved by cooperating with academic actors, who might even be considered as standing in the way of the operational processes of schools. Policy is perceived as being based on a top-down approach, without the adequate involvement, or empowerment, of teachers and schools.

Reić Ercegovac et al. (2016) refer to Croatian principals' skills in communication and cooperation with school stakeholders, arguing that the public perception of school effectiveness depends on the quality of stakeholder management (Odhiambo and Hii 2012). Their study, based on a survey of primary school principals, also demonstrates that cooperation with other schools and the local community is well developed, as is the principals' orientation toward the major stakeholders, including teachers, students and their parents. Still, statistical analysis suggests that the principals have a lower orientation toward external stakeholders than toward internal ones, especially when considering activities related to internal communication and conflict resolution.

Kovač et al. (2014) analysed the perception of the three stakeholder groups, mentioned in the previously described study, concerning the characteristics of the Croatian educational system and reform(s), the teaching profession and teaching staff involvement in educational management and educational policy. A gloomy picture emerged, with the teachers' and principals' assessment of the educational system, policy and reform(s) being scored (on average) in a range from 1.28 to 2.60 (for teachers) and 1.29 to 2.57 (for university professors), on a standard, five-level Likert scale. It is also interesting that principals' and policy makers' mean scores were only somewhat higher (in a range from 1.35 to 2.73 for different items). Based on a qualitative analysis of the respondents' accounts, the authors of the study concluded that isolated good practices actually exist, although based on individual efforts, without an adequate systemic approach, or support. Access to state-supported education and a wide range of subjects of study have been

perceived as strengths of the Croatian educational system, while the high student workload, outdated curricula and an orientation toward the memorisation of facts, as well as the 'inflation' of unrealistically high grades and the insensitivity of educational policy to regional characteristics were cited as fundamental weaknesses. The teaching profession has been depicted as unattractive, with somewhat higher grades assigned to the academic programmes in the training of teachers (with mean grades on different survey items ranging from 1.47 to 2.61 for teachers; from 1.62 to 2.79 for university professors; from 1.86 to 2.61 for principals and policy actors). Somewhat higher mean grades were assigned by teachers (ranging from 2.88 to 3.14) regarding their involvement in and influence on educational management and policy, although a qualitative analysis of their comments revealed an opinion that there was an unsystematic approach of the political elites to education and its reform, based primarily on 'copy-and-paste' policy advice received from EU and other global actors.

3   The (Mis)Adventures of Croatian Educational Policy in Developing Educational Management and Leadership

The empirical evidence suggests that the Croatian educational leadership landscape lacks both systematic policy making and policy implementation. Many examples of good practice and individual and institutional initiatives and projects have been developed, but they do not seem to connect into a wider policy landscape. This might be the most significant reason for all the actors to feel overwhelmed or even disillusioned by the attempts to create successful and sustainable changes at the systemic level. On the other hand, empirical results related to cooperation suggest that the effectiveness of educational activities, as well as leadership, is quite satisfactory at the classroom and school levels.

This general narrative is evidence-based, i.e. derived from the empirical research presented in the previous sub-section, which is of ultimate

importance in an educational landscape, burdened by political influence and the low autonomy of schools and principals, as confirmed by OECD results (e.g. Schleicher 2012, pp. 15–16). Unfortunately, Croatian public discourse often reacts to the perceived role of political elites in the policy process with irrational demands for 'depoliticisation'. But what is public policy without politics in its purest form, i.e. without public discussion and interactions among the policy actors, shaping the whole process? This question is addressed by Žiljak (2009), who warns that public policy should be a matter of thoughtful effort, instead of an ideological uproar, regardless of its direction and intended objectives.

The narrative can be further developed by looking into the specific case of developing national standards for educational leadership and formal principal training. National strategy documents and frameworks adequately recognise the position of a principal in terms of an autonomous profession (Varga et al. 2016). Nevertheless, defining the licensing requirements seems to have been continuously postponed since 2005, which could be interpreted from multiple perspectives—due to the lack of political will to grant autonomy to schools and educational leaders, the inadequate motivation of the majority of actors or even of all actors for systemic change, etc. As none of these arguments can be directly associated with empirical evidence, they will not be further elaborated, but will rather be left for future research.

The sub-narrative on principals in the Croatian educational system could be constructed in the context described by Ärlestig et al. (2016) in terms of 'former East European countries with a fast transition to democratic societies', but that would group Croatia along with Estonia and Latvia, as well as Poland. These countries, included in a more or less arbitrarily constructed group, in a volume covering twenty-four cases of educational leadership, obviously have specific national characteristics, which prevent direct comparisons with the SEE region. With each small European country, possessing both a rich educational and cultural background, but being 'pushed' to conform to different global agenda(s), the policy choices seem to be shrinking and deviating from nationally preferred solutions.

The (mis)adventures of policy choices have been described by Alfirević et al. (2011), who construct the following timeline:

- Croatia inherited a framework for training and development of educational staff, including principals, from socialist times, but transformed it rather successfully, as reported by isolated empirical research. The system is based on a series of workshops and conferences, organised by the Croatian Education and Teacher Training Agency, stretching through the academic year and loosely customised according to the experiences of principals. This creates several versions of unofficial training curricula, partly described by Đaković (2012) in the case of secondary education.

- In the 1990s, some initial attempts were made to develop professional standards and licensing procedures for educational leadership, but they were abandoned after a very short trial. They were re-visited in the 'Europeanisation' era (taking place, roughly, from 2001 to 2005), which included more or less successful attempts to adopt European standards and practices in the Croatian drive to join the EU. Harmonising Croatian educational policy (as well as other public policies) with European standards included the effective end of direct state control over the policy process, with the introduction of EU-styled regulatory agencies. Other dimensions of the 'Europeanisation' process included the indirect influence of educational and institutional patterns, found in key EU countries, which were (and still are) readily supported by ample financing from EU funds, as well as thinking patterns, introduced by EU experts participating in EU-financed projects. Institutional implementation of the changes, envisioned in the early 2000s, took place successfully from 2005 to 2010, which required legal changes, the introduction of external evaluation in Croatian secondary education, the transformation of higher education according to the Bologna Accord, participation in the OECD PISA project, etc. Although the process has been riddled with multiple inconsistencies and departures from the initial designs (Žiljak 2013),[12] it created an educational infrastructure comparable to those of other EU member states.

- The 'revisiting' of educational leadership policy started in 2005, led by the former Croatian Ministry of Science, Education and Sports (MSES; at the time of writing this chapter, this ministry is being re-structured into the Ministry of Science and Education), which

formed a committee with the task of developing a training and licensing proposal. The latest proposal of the committee is still available on-line,[13] but has not been implemented.

- In 2007, several attempts were made by global policy actors to create awareness of educational leadership in Croatian policy public, which is not surprising, given that in 2008 the OECD published results of its international leadership study. An account of these events was compiled by Alfirević et al. (2011, p. 1151), who single out the World Bank workshop *Principals' Training and School Management in Croatia: Enhancing Quality and Relevance* (June 2007) and an international project involving the Dutch educational leadership institute Nederlandse School voor Onderwijsmanagement and the Croatian Education and Teacher Training Agency (2007–2009). The context was shaped by the previous experience of the Dutch consultants with educational leadership development across the SEE region (Karstanje and Webber 2008). The project resulted in the proposal of a modular training programme and initial training materials, available on the Education and Teacher Training Agency website.[14] Another group of researchers and consultants, involving some of this chapter's authors, created alternative training materials (Alfirević et al. 2010) and launched an initiative for evidence-based principal training and development, which resulted in the creation of a small research organisation focusing on the role of educational management in school effectiveness.[15]

With policy being a dynamic field, the issue of professional and educational standards in educational leadership has recently emerged as a hot topic. These standards are to be harmonised with the Croatian Qualification Framework (CQF), under development since 2008, as part of the EU's policy initiative to develop transparency of qualifications, as well as to promote mobility and lifelong learning, based on standardised learning outcomes/competences (Žiljak 2007).[16] One of the authors of this chapter has headed a project supported by the European Social Fund (ESF) for the development of principal occupational standards, hosted at the University of Zadar. As a result of the project, the University of Zadar recently started a postgraduate

programme in educational leadership development, leading to an academic degree. Another expert group, working in the framework of implementing the national strategy for education, science and technology, also developed proposals of standards and licensing requirements for educational leadership, also available on the website of the *Education and Teacher Training Agency* at the time of writing this chapter. Unfortunately, the potential policy debate has been interrupted by the postponement (yet again) of the licensing deadline, defined by the 2008 legal stipulations, until 2021. With the policy (mis)adventures stretching across more than twenty years (with the first committee at the state ministry level being formed in 2005) and the likely lack of public discussion until the newly proclaimed deadline looms, it is difficult to formulate any conclusion, much less a final one. Can the answer be found along the lines of *plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose?* Probably not, which is the reason for the recommendations extended to school leaders and policy actors provided below.

4 Recommendations to School Leaders and Policy Actors

The Croatian experience with the development of occupational standards for principals and with training and licensing procedures is a mixed blessing. Nevertheless, it could be turned into a success story through the adoption of the following recommendations:

- Influential policy actors should commit to making and implementing informed policy choices instead of adopting the narrative of 'depoliticisation' of education (cf. Žiljak 2009) and avoiding potentially damaging decisions. This will be welcomed by all educational stakeholders and can only trigger positive changes in the educational system. Ultimately, the choice of an actual training and licensing model will be less relevant than the demonstration of commitment itself.
- *Occupational standards matter*. At the time of writing this chapter, there seems to be consensus among different research groups working to define a set of such standards, while additional inputs

can be obtained from benchmarking with comparable small countries in Europe, or international groups/organisations in the field.[17] Standards can be adopted voluntarily, even without the active support of educational policy, as exemplified by some of the experiences described in this chapter.

- *School leaders should do whatever they can to achieve higher levels of competence and autonomy*, regardless of the current licensing requirements, and an ambiguous future policy. The cited research, as well as educational practice, shows that stakeholders' expectations of principals are rising. Simultaneously, public funds cannot be guaranteed, regardless of the rhetoric on the social importance of education. This leaves principals with the need to develop their own solutions to the varied and multiple challenges faced by their educational institutions.

Notes

1. http://www.npbea.org.
2. See the following report for a historical overview and a discussion of the challenges of educational leadership in the US, around 2013: http://ccsso.org/Documents/Analysis%20of%20Leadership%20Standards-Final-070913-RGB.pdf.
3. Nevertheless, it should be noted that the US National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) had met for the first time as early as in 1917 (Goodwin et al. 2005).
4. https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/national-college-for-teaching-and-leadership.
5. https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/professional-development-for-school-leaders.
6. https://nationalcollege.org.uk/.
7. http://en.solazaravnatelje.si/.
8. https://www.ets.org/sls.
9. Once again, in the US, relevant associations are, de facto, in charge of the accreditation process, which is currently run by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (http://caepnet.org/), according to standards, revised for the last time in 2011 (http://www.npbea.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/ELCC-District-Level-Standards-2011.

pdf; http://www.npbea.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/ELCC-Building-Level-Standards-2011.pdf).
10. http://www.oecd.org/pisa/.
11. See especially Chapter 5 in Pont et al. (2008a).
12. The entire description of the public policy 'Europeanisation' is based on an account provided by Žiljak (2009) in a review paper (available in Croatian only).
13. http://www.azoo.hr/images/AZOO/Ravnatelji/RM/1_Program_ospos-osbljavanja_ravnatelja.pdf; http://www.azoo.hr/images/AZOO/Ravnatelji/RM/2_Izvedbeni_program_osposobljavanja_ravnatelja_.pdf (available in Croatian only).
14. The majority of training materials and other outputs, produced by the Education and Teacher Training Agency, are available online (in Croatian only): http://www.azoo.hr/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=5868:struno-usavravanje-i-osposobljavanje-ravnatelja&catid=507:radni-materijali&Itemid=631.
15. The institution is officially named Scientific Centre of Excellence for School Effectiveness and Management. At the time of writing this chapter, it functions as a research group, founded by a competitive public call at the national level.
16. See the detailed website on CQF, available in English (http://www.kvalifikacije.hr/hko-en), as well as the official CQF policy document in English (http://www.herdata.org/public/CROQF_Introduction_to_qualifications_book_B5.pdf).
17. For example, the European Policy Network on School Leadership platform (see http://www.schoolleadership.eu) could be used for further benchmarking.

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15

Educational Management and Leadership in Montenegro

Boban Melović

1   Challenges for Educational Policy in Montenegro

More than a decade after the wave of changes in Europe, the education systems of the countries of this region are again facing new challenges. Education has become an increasingly important sector of common policy and it seems that the countries wishing to achieve European standards will come under pressure to adapt their education policies to new common paradigms. Although some of the countries of the region may see this as an undesirable restriction of their newly gained sovereignty, most of them will probably use the accession process as an instrument to solve their problems. EU accession will help them to identify sooner the already existing challenges, to elaborate the appropriate answers, and to construct efficient instruments for implementing their policies (Halász 2004).

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Education is seen as a key factor of societal development (Results Educational Fund 2009), and Montenegro is continuously implementing reforms in this area in order to make the educational system compliant with modern trends and quality. In recent years, reforms have been conducted at all levels of education. The reforms were preceded by the adoption of new laws and amendments for the appropriate level of education, and for its harmonisation with EU legislation.

In this context, the vision of the Montenegrin education system is to develop Montenegro as a society of knowledge, where education, as the key factor of economic and social development, will be of high quality, flexible, efficient, with professional human resources that will have competitive knowledge, skills and competences and that will be qualified to take part in the labour market, where each individual has equal opportunities for personal and professional development. In terms of educational policy, it is necessary to take into account all the issues an educational system faces during a period of crisis (Hartley 2015).

A very important issue is the challenges that come from the labour market. Namely, significant disproportions in the labour market show a structural mismatch between supply and demand in two main forms: there is demand for personnel with specific qualifications lacking on the labour market, and there is a supply of persons with qualifications that are not required. Tough tasks therefore exist for general secondary education, vocational education and adult education in particular to overcome the structural mismatch between labour force supply and demand and to provide quality, attractive and efficient education on the path to successful employment (EPALE National Support Service for Montenegro 2016, p. 37). Knowledge currently acquired in the system of formal education is generally not sufficient to respond to all the challenges of a modern society.

Montenegrin efforts in education as regards pre-accession negotiations and compliance with European strategies in this field focus on adjusting the educational system to labour market needs. The main directions in this respect are provided by the SEE 2020 Strategy which reflects the Europe 2020 Strategy and the ET 2020 Strategy (European Commission, Europe 2020 strategy).

Starting from the challenges that education is facing, it is of great importance to create a SWOT analysis of the national education system in Montenegro to serve as an overview of the current state and to bring relevant decisions. In this regard, we provide below SWOT analyses of primary and secondary education in Montenegro (Mitrović and Melović 2013, p. 238; Pavičić et al. 2016, p. 37). Data were collected for the SWOT analyses from consultations with principals of schools in Montenegro, which are summarised in the tables below (Tables 1 and 2).

The SWOT analyses of primary and secondary education clearly show the key strengths and the internal deficiencies of the Montenegrin education system. In addition, it is possible to notice both opportunities and threats. A good number of the characteristics can be seen in the results of the research carried out in focus groups.

2 The Role and Position of Principals of Educational Institutions in the National Educational System

The role of managers and leaders gain a special dimension when we discuss the education area. It is no wonder that the '*school improvement movement of the past 20 years has put great emphasis on the role of leaders*' (OECD 2001, p. 32). Fullan (2002) has gone as far as to conclude that '*effective school leaders are key to large-scale, sustainable education reform*'. These statements are of extreme significance for educational management in Montenegro.

In order to analyse the role and position of principals in educational institutions in the national educational system, in June 2017 a focus group was formed in two segments—for primary and secondary education—with a total number of 24 members, and in-depth interviews were held with representatives of 14 educational institutions. The focus group was held with representatives of institutions of primary and secondary education with experience of running educational institutions for three or more years. The key questions posed to the participants of the focus group were:

Table 1 SWOT analysis of primary education

Internal factors

Strengths (+)	Weaknesses (−)
• According to the Constitution, primary education is obligatory and free for everybody, which is a prerequisite for raising the educational level of people in the country	• Incomplete coverage of children of primary age; not all children enrol in primary school, and some leave before completing it, especially pupils from vulnerable groups
• There is an established network of schools to ensure the constitutional right of access to primary education	• Poor conditions in some schools, especially in rural, small schools
• A preschool programme was introduced to prepare children for primary education which results (especially for children from vulnerable groups) in a long-term improvement in social inclusion	• Lack of modern ways of working in school, i.e. teachers are not sufficiently trained to apply modern concepts of teaching/studying
• There is a sufficient number of teachers with an appropriate range of qualifications in primary education	• Pupils are overburdened, and they have an unsatisfactory level of knowledge and competence when they leave school
• There is an infrastructure for publishing textbooks, and textbooks exist for all subjects	• Insufficient good quality school textbooks
• A pedagogical-psychological service exists in the majority of schools, which is an important mechanism for improving the quality of teaching/studying	• In certain cases, school activities are reduced to lessons; extracurricular activities are not fully implemented
• Almost all schools have their own computer classrooms	• The educational role of the school is neglected
	• There is only a formal evaluation of the quality of the school and teachers
	• Pedagogical monitoring and counselling work in schools need to be improved

External factors

Opportunities (+)	Threats (−)
• Projection of economic development in the following decade which sees innovations as a central economic driver	• General poverty in the country, deepening gaps between urban and rural areas, vulnerable families with children, the country overburdened with debt, relatively small GDP and constant budget deficit
• Possibility of using donations and EU funds to finance changes in primary education and more broadly	• Total investments in education, research and development are below the EU average relative to the nominal value of the GDP of developed countries
• Existence of mechanisms to increase support in education	• The largest part of the allocation for education goes on salaries
• Social support to students, reflected in providing transport or means of transport and accommodation for pupils who live far away from school	• Daily politics have a negative effect on education and on the decisions that are made
• Foundations for granting scholarships and awards for deserving students	• Inadequate evaluation of education in terms of the significance of its contribution to social development
• Furnishing and equipping schools and student dormitories	• Educational policy in Montenegro is not based on research (*knowledge-based policy making*), and research in education is not seen as a priority in the development of the social sciences
• Coordination of policies and strategies related to culture and education	
• Fulfilling conditions for Montenegro to join the EU and benefiting from incentives to carry out harmonisation	

Source Author

Table 2   SWOT analysis of secondary education

Internal factors	
Strengths (+)	Weaknesses (−)
• A long tradition of grammar, vocational and art schools in Montenegro • Established network of schools with the capacity to receive a larger number of pupils • Scientific research and professional institutions and staff can solve the problems of secondary education • Sufficient staff with appropriate professional qualifications • Opportunities to continue education or begin employment upon obtaining secondary school qualification • Large population coverage • Broad network of schools and wide provision of different educational programmes • Increased attractiveness of qualification standards, learning outcomes, modular teaching and introduction of entrepreneurship in the curriculum • Support of other institutions and bodies • Experience and results gained in various projects	• Inadequate vocational structure and insufficient geographical distribution of school networks • Low and insufficient access, especially to grammar schools, and significantly lower coverage of pupils from vulnerable groups and underdeveloped system of support and conditions for their education • Low quality of teaching and inadequate knowledge of pupils on leaving school, resulting in them being underprepared for higher education, outdated plans and curricula, poor equipment in schools • Teachers are not well prepared for psychological-pedagogical work with pupils; they are not trained to apply modern concepts of teaching/studying • Undeveloped system for monitoring and evaluating teachers; legal solutions for teacher development are not put into practice • Extracurricular activities are not well developed • Inadequate structure of enrolment and discrepancy of educational programmes and the economy and its needs • Unresolved issues in providing high-quality practical work outside school • Too heavy and inflexible programmes

External Factors	
Opportunities (+)	Threats (−)
• Various standards of educational policy at the EU level have been developed and can serve as support for the overall reform of the education system • Projection of economic development in the coming decade sees innovation as a central economic driver • European funds could be targeted to reform secondary education • A need exists for high quality labour • Opportunities for secondary vocational schools to take an active take part in developing a model of informal forms of secondary education and training • Conditions exist to introduce high-quality partnerships among employers and educational institutions (stimulation of employers, for example through tax incentives, to develop social partnership and to participate in the creation of a national system of qualifications, qualification standards, practice, conducting of exams, etc.)	• General poverty and material deprivation of society as a whole • Total investments in education, research and development are below the EU average relative to the nominal value of the GDP of developed countries • Underestimation of education in terms of its contribution to social development • Insufficient and non-critical implementation of the positive experiences of other education systems • Difficulties in introducing proven innovations in the education system • Poor effects of the existing system of professional development of teachers, together with the insufficient social status of the profession, leading to demotivation and apathy • Insufficient financial allocations and investment in equipping schools

Source Author

1. What is the role of those who manage educational institutions in Montenegro?
2. What is their scope of duty and how do they contribute to the functioning and to the quality of the Montenegrin education system?

The focus groups and in-depth interviewees gave the following results:

- Public institutions in the field of preschool education, pupils' dorms, pupils' and students' dorms, postsecondary non-tertiary vocational schools and adult education providers are governed by school boards. The focus group participants believe that: 'the Governing Board recognises that high-quality preschool experiences help children aged 3-4 to develop the knowledge, skills, abilities, and attributes necessary for a successful transition into the elementary education programme'. This statement corresponds to documents in this area (Preschool/Early Childhood Education 2017, p. 3; The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1990) in which it is stated that such programmes should provide developmentally appropriate activities in a safe, adequately supervised, and cognitively rich environment.
- In recent years, research has confirmed that school boards contribute to more successful education systems (Firestone and González 2007; Hightower et al. 2002; Honig and Coburn 2008; Leithwood 2010; McLaughlin and Talbert 2003; Miller 2010; Saatcioglu et al. 2011; Sheppard et al. 2013). In Montenegro, primary schools, grammar schools and secondary vocational schools which carry out publicly valid educational programmes are governed by school boards. While school boards are granted wide latitude in governing their schools, they are subject to numerous state laws and regulations (Illinois Association of School Boards 2016, p. 3). Depending on the type of activities of an institution and its size, the statute of the institution defines the number of members of the school board or governing board, yet this number cannot be less than five, or more than seven. The participants of the focus group gave their opinion on the significance of school boards. They argue that 'if there is to be meaningful and sustained systems-level change among many schools, the

pressure and support of an effective school board is essential'. This corresponds to the opinion of Sheppard et al. (2009) who conclude that school boards matter a great deal in achieving effective public school systems. However, success is difficult to sustain when key leaders leave the school.

- The participants of the focus group argue that 'high-quality school boards give high priority to differentiating management (which is the administration's job) from governance – which is their job and they highly respect that difference'. Similarly, Shields (2007, p. 17) suggests that for school board members to be credible they must be perceived as accountable and committed to their mandate and their electorate; they should ensure a level of openness and transparency that allows people to have trust in the work done; they should demonstrate a responsiveness that ensures that decisions and actions occur within reasonable timeframes. On the other hand, focus on leadership as a major influence on student outcomes and school improvement tends to diminish the attention given to governing boards which, in some jurisdictions, play an important role in setting the direction of schools and colleges (Bush 2017).

- The meetings of a school board may be attended by a student representative. Members of the school board are elected for a period of four years. Effective board members are often those who have proven successful in their particular vocations or callings and who have demonstrated a genuine concern for community improvement (Trustee Orientation Manual 2010, p. 13). School boards in Montenegro make decisions by a majority vote of all members, unless the statute of an institution provides that certain issues are decided otherwise. On the other hand, some authors have observed that there is a clear link between school boards and financial and academic outcomes (Saatcioglu et al. 2011; Stoica and Safta 2013). The focus group participants conclude that 'the success of school boards is reflected in the management of ambiguities that arise as a result of external pressures such as government mandates, monitoring district progress and maintaining individual schools accountable for student learning'.

- School boards establish a wide variety of policies and standards concerning what the schools are expected to accomplish in areas such as the curriculum, transportation, building maintenance, staff development, student services, labour relations, human rights, and community relations (Hamilton School District Governance 2012, p. 12). The school board in Montenegro is responsible for the adoption of annual work programmes, the annual work plan and reporting on its implementation, the review of programme results and extra-curricular activities, the adoption of statutes, acts on internal organisation and job systematisation and other by-laws, the adoption of the annual financial plan, the adoption of interim and annual financial statements, and resolving, in the second instance, the rights of employees, students, and users of services, in accordance with the law.

- An institution is managed by a principal. The administrative role of the principal 'evolves from that of the practising teacher, with added technical and administrative duties, to that of the full-time manager and developer of human, financial and physical resources' (OECD 2001, pp. 20–24). In the Montenegrin educational system, a principal submits a performance report to the school board at least once a year, and more frequently if required. The principal of a public institution is appointed and dismissed by the minister. A principal's term of office is four years. A principal of an institution is elected on the basis of a competitive public selection procedure and a submitted public institution development programme. In terms of the principal's activities, these are usually considered as internal functions (Bush 2016). In this respect, the participants of the focus group emphasise that 'principals and leaders take on a range of professional activities concerning teaching and learning, with the support of the strategic and operational resource management, notably finance and staff'.

- The principal manages the institution and is responsible for planning, organising and managing the work of the institution, the rational and efficient execution of the curriculum, and ensuring equal rights to education. Similar to the above, in other countries, such as the Netherlands, 'school headmasters (principals) are responsible for the

quality of their schools' as well as for 'all personnel matters, including hiring and firing, staff appraisal, and union negotiation' (Mulford 2003). Principals and others in schools need to 'become coalition builders as much as managers of the internal running of schools themselves' (OECD 2001, pp. 26–27). Fullan (2002, p. 20) argues that we will 'not have a large pool of quality principals until we have a large pool of quality teachers', while the focus group representatives point out that 'school improvement depends on a number of principles that greatly promote the conditions necessary for the sustainable reform of education in a complex, rapidly changing society'.

Besides an explanation of the formal role of decision makers, the focus group also gave important answers with regards to the efficiency of educational management and leadership in Montenegro. They point out that the 'lack of effective leadership in state schools contributes to indiscipline among students and teachers and falling academic standards'. This is consistent with similar research carried out in other countries (National Policy on Education 2016, p. 13).

Further, the participants of the focus group emphasise that 'in order to meet global challenges, the school leader should strike an appropriate balance between a larger number of factors in the relationship between school and environment'. This opinion is confirmed by research carried out by Mulford (2002), who argues that in order for the school leader to meet global challenges there is a need to achieve a greater balance between constant change and continuity, dependence and independence, individualism and community, and homogeneity and heterogeneity.

On the other hand, research carried out in twelve English schools (Day et al. 2000, p. 29) which were recognised for their efficient leadership identified seven tensions (challenges) which the principals face. These tensions 'focus not only on maintaining and consolidating what the schools have already achieved, but also on managing challenges related to improving their potentials'. Managers and leaders in the Montenegrin education system face similar challenges. The participants of the focus group emphasise that 'challenges in education grow every day, so it is necessary for the concept of change management to be

applied so that schools can adapt more easily to intensive changes which occur every day'.

The focus group in Montenegro showed that, although they have the same starting positions, 'leaders in educational institutions develop different leadership styles, because of which they achieve different results'. In decentralised school settings, principals have the autonomy to develop two very different leadership models (Riley and Louis 2000, p. 216):

- a more hierarchical and directive model; or
- a more inclusive model which brings teachers in particular and the local school community into the frame, which can also be recognised in the case of the educational system of Montenegro.

With reference to leadership styles in educational institutions in Montenegro, the participants of the focus group declared that they 'prefer the inclusive model, which is better perceived by pupils and the broader public'. Similar to the above, another study (Mulford et al. 2004) shows that if decision makers in schools are perceived as collegial, cooperative and consultative and offer adequate opportunities for participation, this will more likely lead to a positive perception by pupils of the school and teachers, rather than if decisions are made from above, in other words, if there is a hierarchical or directive model, which does not encourage the broadly distributed participation of teachers (Vennebo 2016).

Teachers' perception of principals' behaviour is of significant importance here. The focus group believes that 'taking into account teachers' perception of the principals' behaviour is in direct correlation with the support which the principals have when they bring strategic and operational decisions'. Such a perception stands out as an important determinant of leadership. Similar to the above, teachers' perceptions of school leaders' empowering behaviour and psychological empowerment (Lee and Nie 2015) correspond to the views of the focus group in Montenegro.

Further, the focus group participants showed concern in the area of teachers' autonomy, where they emphasised that 'a certain number

of teachers do not have enough self-respect and rely on the principal's consent, even though they have the authority to independently make some kind of decisions'. This is why one of the important questions the principals face is when to delegate authority. Another question is how to gauge the readiness of teachers to take on the role of leadership (Tahir et al. 2016). On the other hand, Sarafidou and Chatziioannidis (2013) identified a rather high participation of teachers in decisions concerning pupils and teachers, but a low degree of participation in managing decisions, which was confirmed by the results of the focus group in Montenegro. Focus group participants believe that in the future it will be necessary for 'teachers to cooperate with principals when discussing the decision-making process and improvements to the quality of the education system'.

Another research topic is related to the identification of key segments which the principals should focus on for the sake of the long-term prosperity of the school:

- Individual support—providing moral support, showing appreciation of the work of individual staff and taking their opinions into account.
- Culture—promoting an atmosphere of care and trust among staff, setting the tone for respectful interaction with students, and demonstrating a willingness to change practices in the light of new understandings.
- Structure—establishing a school structure that promotes participative decision making, supporting delegation and distributive leadership, and encouraging teacher decision-making autonomy.
- Vision and goals—working toward full staff consensus on school priorities and communicating these to students and staff to establish a strong sense of overall purpose.
- Performance expectation—having high expectations for students and teachers to be effective and innovative.
- Intellectual stimulation—encouraging staff to reflect on what they are trying to achieve with students and how they are doing it; this provides opportunities for staff to learn from each other and models continual learning in their own practice.

It is also important to mention that it is necessary to work on preparing school leaders, especially through the professional development of newly assigned principals (Shun-Wing and Sing-Ying 2015), an opinion with which all the focus group participants in Montenegro agree.

Based on the above, we can conclude that the principals of educational institutions have a very important role in the national education system in Montenegro. A key issue in the education system, as certain experts (Bollaert 2014; ENQA 2009) point out, is quality assurance (QA). There are various types of participants at various education levels and their task is ultimately to contribute to the functioning and quality of the Montenegrin education system.

3   Best Practices/Benchmarks of Educational Institutions in Montenegro

Within the focus group, examples of best practice in certain segments of education in Montenegro were analysed. The focus group participants determined that 'examples of best practice are represented in all segments of education in Montenegro'. For example, in the area of primary education, we can mention the Public Institution (PI) 'Anto Djedovic' from Bar. This school cooperates with the local community in designing the curriculum in such a way that 20% of the teaching content for all subjects is influenced by the suggestions of the local community. Alternatively, community needs may be addressed by integrating the content suggested by the local community into the syllabi of the existing subjects and giving it importance by allocating a larger number of teaching hours for it to be covered (Anto Djedovic School 2016). To accomplish this, a special cooperation plan was made with representatives of the local community. It was agreed that the school itself would plan possible activities and content in teaching areas, as well as certain days allocated for visits, sport and recreational activities. Cooperation with the local community also foresees cooperation with certain facilities, institutions and organisations through various projects. A plan was drawn up to achieve cooperation with the following entities (Anto Djedovic School 2016):

- Cooperation with institutions and organisations which, through various cultural manifestations and competitions, develop pupils' interest in cultural events (Cultural Centre, library, gallery, museum).
- Cooperation with the Red Cross through participation in humanitarian activities, competitions in First Aid, art and literature competitions, various lectures, workshops, etc.
- Cooperation with the Ministry of Internal Affairs, through lectures on safety in traffic, hiring school policemen and support in achieving pupil safety.
- Cooperation with the Community Health Centre through various educational lectures of physicians, systematic check-ups, regular vaccination, and also by raising the standard of hygiene and facilities in the school.
- Cooperation with the municipality of Bar through participation in sports events, art and literary competitions, through numerous donations for improving the school, and other events.
- Cooperation with secondary schools, through information and presentations, and opportunities to enrol in secondary school—visits and lectures.
- Cooperation with a state-owned infrastructure company in charge of maintaining public parks and with a local agricultural company through greening the school yard and decorating the school premises.
- Cooperation with non-governmental organisations, donations and gifts for children, especially for children with special needs.
- Cooperation with the Employment Agency regarding professional and career information.
- Cooperation with the media, both printed and electronic, and Radio Bar, in providing information on school and other events.

The focus group points out that 'the mentioned example can serve well as a benchmark for other schools in Montenegro'.

In the area of secondary education, an example of best practice can be the Public Institution Secondary Vocational School 'Spasoje Raspopovic' from Podgorica, which has a modern teaching process, using various methods and techniques and applying modern teaching tools and aids, based on combining theory and practice, i.e. school

with employers and professional associations. In fact, the school enjoys well-developed cooperation with the local community, involving numerous partners, among which the following stand out (Vuksanović 2011, p. 10):

- Inpek, a company involved in the production of bread, pastry, dough, etc. Partnership support from Inpek primarily concerns providing conditions for carrying out practical work in the vocational programme for bakers.
- The newspaper publishing company Pobjeda. In this company, it is possible for pupils to do practical work and have professional practice in the vocational programme for printing technicians and graphic technicians.
- A state-owned company responsible for maintaining public parks. In this company, pupils studying to be nursery florists and horticulture technicians do practical work and have professional practice.
- Plantaze, a company founded in 1963, involved in the production of wine and table grapes and peaches, the production and distribution of wine and grape brandy, fish farming, catering and retail. Pupils can engage in practical work in this company, one of the best, most successful and prestigious Montenegrin companies, which adequately prepares them for the future labour market or for further education.
- The Institute for Public Health offers support to the school in providing professional practice for pupils studying to become chemical lab technicians and general technicians.

Given the above, the participants of the focus group emphasise that 'it is not rare that employers offer work to those pupils who stand out during the practical teaching process' and thus 'this school can serve as a benchmark for other secondary schools in Montenegro'. The principles held by the school are compatible with strategic documents with regards to professional education (Strategy of Development of Professional Education in Montenegro 2015–2020; Strategy and Development for Support to Gifted Pupils 2015–2019), as well as examples of good practice in other countries (Sahlberg 2007).

As an example of good practice, we can also mention intensive activities in the area of entrepreneurship education. Entrepreneurship in Montenegro is represented from elementary to higher education. Within professional education, the subject Enterprise is introduced in the area of economics, and the subject Entrepreneurship is introduced as a compulsory subject in all educational programmes in professional education (around 120 programmes). Entrepreneurship centres have been founded in four secondary schools as support to young people with the aim of promoting entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial studies, and entrepreneurship clubs have been set up as extracurricular activities (Ministry of Education 2016). In addition, competitions for the best business plan are organised, and Montenegrin pupils and students achieve significant results in the European market. As the best example in this segment, we can mention the results achieved in the European competition EuroSkills. Participants from Montenegro won first place in the area of entrepreneurship at the biggest and most prestigious European competition in various disciplines—Euroskills 2016 (EuroSkills 2016 Results 2016).

We can therefore conclude that there are good examples in all segments of education in Montenegro. However, it is necessary to look to the development strategies and examples of good practice from other countries (Lasonen and Young 1998), especially those which have a similar education system to that in Montenegro. We especially draw attention to the possibilities of applying knowledge in the SME sector, which is today dominant in most of the economies, and the experiences of Montenegro in this part correspond to certain neighbouring countries, such as Croatia for example (Dabic et al. 2016).

4   Conclusion

The backbone and main driver of education reform in Montenegro is high quality education. Such a desire has resulted in the application of a range of mechanisms for quality control, so that quality can be measured and raised at all education levels. The reforms were preceded

by legislative amendments and changes for the appropriate level of education, and for its harmonisation with EU legislation.

Montenegro has prepared and conducted extensive reform of the education system—at preschool, primary, secondary and higher education levels—in the last 15 years. The strategic goals of the education reform (School Development Plan—Instructions 2011, p. 5) are of a developmental nature and they form a component part of the process of the social, political and economic transition of Montenegro in the context of global change. This corresponds to the education trends which are represented in the European education area.

In order to meet global challenges, school leaders should strike a balance between a large number of factors in relationships between the school and the community. The research conducted confirms that although they have the same starting positions, leaders in educational institutions develop contrasting leadership styles, on account of which they achieve different results.

Viewed in the long term, education constitutes a key aspect of democratic political culture and plays an essential role in improving the rule of law, and, consequently, in raising the economic and social standard of citizens in Montenegro.

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16

An Epilogue: The Policy Tide for Educational Management and Leadership Development in Small European Countries

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To summarise the findings of this volume we draw attention to four inter-related trends. The first trend is that school leadership is being seen to matter. This volume is a contribution to the mounting evidence that has received increasing academic focus in the last decade which

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suggests that education management generally and school leadership in particular are crucial for the successful implementation of education policy. This has two important consequences: one can be captured under the slogan 'education change happens one school at a time'; the other is that while grand policy schemes may be important to rally support and act as a compass for education actors, if they are not accepted and implemented by school leaders they do not amount to much. This also implies that the training and professionalisation of school principals matters and deserves increased attention, both from researchers and policy makers.

The second trend lies in education and policy research, where research outside the prevailing Anglo-Saxon tradition is growing in volume and prominence. This book is in fact a deliberate contribution to this larger general trend in the social sciences and in studies of public policy, moving away from the Anglo-Saxon perspective, dominated by US and UK academics, towards positions that offer a multivariate perspective. In this volume, we have profoundly European perspectives from a number of the smaller European countries in the south-east and in the north. We hope that the number of country cases have convinced the reader that diverse national contexts matter.

We would go even further and conclude that both national and local contexts matter. In every chapter of this volume, this is repeated in different ways in relation to both the academic and policy perspective: one cannot easily understand or explain developments in a country or region without the particular context. Similarly, the case studies show that when policies are not sensitive to the context and do not involve stakeholders, the level of success in implementing these policies is reduced. This is perhaps the most potent lesson for policy makers that this book offers: stakeholder involvement is crucial. Here, the results are very much in line with what other large-scale studies have found in education leadership (Moss et al. 2013). This is also part of a larger trend within the social sciences, moving away from linear approaches in theorising and researching reality to approaches that recognise the complex relationships of social actors, where policy implementation becomes a matter of 'governance' (Sætren and Hupe 2018).

The third trend might be captured by the metaphor that 'the tide is turning' on the predominance of an economic (neo-liberal) perspective of policy related to education management. This has been at the core of the approach by global actors such as the OECD and the EU and it will continue to be very important. But social considerations and shared values like equality and personal development are back on the political agenda—at least in Europe. One could say that the concept of *Bildung* is back! We see this trend at the national policy level when excessive emphasis on international benchmarking is criticised. We see it at the institutional level in the emphasis on educational leadership that is focused not just on efficiency but also on inspiring teachers and students. We see this also in the wider European context where at the international level there is a shift in the focus of the rationale of education—from being primarily its long-term contribution to employment and economic development, to being *also* valued for its role in underpinning social cohesion in increasingly diverse societies. Nowhere is this truer than in the European context.[1]

The concept of ambidexterity discussed in Chapter 2 can be of use when considering the implications of these trends. While the term was originally used to explain the rare ability of being equally adept in the use of both left and right hand, in the context of education management policy it refers to the need to keep both the economic and the social perspective in mind. It also emphasises the equal importance of policy at national level and its implementation at local level. At local level, stakeholder involvement is important, but change also requires the individual initiative of school managers. For the school manager, ambidexterity means an emphasis on both the efficient management and the educational leadership and organisation of institutions that can successfully combine teaching and learning.

From a theoretical perspective, the diverse national and regional contexts, made visible by education practices and traditions, might be seen to challenge the seemingly cohesive body of education-related knowledge, as shaped by global institutions and benchmarking initiatives (Spilane 2013). In reality, multiple models of educational leadership may be emerging, shaped by specific national/regional socioeconomic

circumstances. While the Nordic model has already been described by the practices of cooperation and stakeholder inclusion (Moss et al. 2013), this volume opens other small countries' and regions' perspectives of building relevant bodies of knowledge on what works in education leadership and policy, at local, national and regional levels. The editors and authors of the volume hope that it will motivate other education researchers to join the discussion.

Note

1. The conclusions of meetings of the leaders of the European Union took a decisive turn in this direction following the terrorist attacks in Paris and Brussels in 2015 and 2016 (see http://www.consilium. europa.eu/en/european-council/conclusions/). In a recent communication, the president of the European Commission sees education and culture as 'the drivers for job creation, economic growth, social fairness and ultimately unity [in Europe]' (European Commission 2017).

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