



## Working Group 2 – Demographic Challenges

*Meeting 8 November 2010*

*Minutes*

Chair: Camilla Vendelboe Hagensen, KL, Denmark (EFEE)

### **Background**

The orientation paper for the working group on Demographic Challenges was prepared by the ETUCE and EFEE secretariats. It was agreed upon by the ESSDE Steering Committee on the 28<sup>th</sup> of October 2010. The orientation paper aims at supporting the process of the working group by clarifying the issues and the methodology. After 3 meetings over a period of one year, the WG will by principle present a proposal of action to the ESSDE plenary.

### **Preliminary discussion**

The WG undertook a preliminary discussion over the demographic challenges as presented in the orientation paper. Camilla Vendelboe Hagensen, indicated that the WG needs to narrow down the issues on a specific axis before being able to think of a possible outcome.

It was agreed that the WG will focus on recruitment and retention of teachers in the education sector. The main question to answer is *“How to attract more qualified teachers, male and female, in the education sector and prevent teachers to drop out of the sector”?*

### **Content/Issues**

The WG members shared views and experiences related with recruitment and retention of teachers. The main points that emerged from the discussion are:

#### **Socio-professional status of teachers**

A part of the explanation to the teachers' shortage and dropout in some countries is a perception of a decreasing social status for teachers. Numerous factors are to be considered to explain this phenomenon. Basic working conditions and wages are a significant element shaping the social status of teachers. One member state mentioned that wages was an issue in relation to the status of

teachers, while another member stated that wages was not an issue in its home country. The WG agreed that while the WG's outcome will not focus on funding of education neither on teachers' wages, these elements could be taken into account in the overall discussion. The "image" of the teaching profession was mentioned several times as also important for the teachers' status. One WG member reported a national campaign involving all the education stakeholders aimed at spreading a more positive narrative on teaching.

### **Gender dimension**

The WG agreed that there is a gender dimension within the issue of recruitment/retention of teachers as a majority of teachers are female, and that the WG should focus on how to attract more men to the teachers profession. At the same time, WG members pointed out that a majority of school leaders are male. It was agreed that the WG's outcome would integrate the gender dimension.

### **Career opportunities and development**

A lack of career opportunities and development was identified as another factor in the discussion on recruitment and retention. Some members underlined that the headmaster position is less attractive than in the past. A reflexion should be undertaken on the possibilities for teachers to upgrade their management qualifications and become school leaders as well as how to provide other career opportunities for teachers. Opportunities of continuous professional development (CPD) through in-service training programmes should also be considered a means of supporting career opportunities. Another possible factor could be the support of school leaders, e.g. receiving non-teaching elements like networking and supervision among other school leaders. The purpose should be to enhance the attractiveness for becoming a school leader and career development.

### **"Praxis shock"**

Teachers' average age is often over 55 and under 35 years. Some members pointed out that there is a drop-out of teachers from the education sector after a few years of teaching. It was suggested to deal with an improved mentoring to support and motivate new teachers and use the knowledge from experienced teachers. The WG should look into ways of decreasing the risk of praxis shock, where mentoring could be one means to deal with this issue. One of the other explaining factors to this phenomenon is a gap between the young teacher's expectations and the reality of the work.

### **Qualified teachers**

WG members pointed out that the shortage of teachers that is reported in many countries is more complex than a lack of work force supply. Depending on the national and regional contexts, a shortage of qualified teachers can be experienced in specific areas (e.g. chemistry or mathematics) while too many candidates are found for other matters. Opportunities for mobility from other sectors into the education sector and between different levels of the education sector could be taken into account in the further discussion in the WG.

### **Other factors**

Other factors were also mentioned as important for recruitment and retention of teachers: teacher education, changing populations and multi-cultural characteristics of classrooms, as well as teachers' retirement schemes.

### **Process**

The WG agreed that the members will send to David Poissonneau from the ETUCE secretariat (for the trade-unions) and Camilla Vendelboe from the EFEE (for the employers) a national contribution before the next meeting. The national contribution will build on a set of questions to be designed by the ETUCE and EFEE secretariats. The secretariats will then use these contributions and come up with a draft proposal of summary and action for the next meeting.

The information was given that the European Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee for the hospital sector (EPSU-HOSPEEM) is likely to deliver joint production on recruitment and retention in late 2010. The WG agreed that further information on this should be provided in order to assess if some inspiration from this work can be useful for the WG in education.

### Annexes

- Orientation paper (EN and FR)
- List of references

Participants 08/11/2010

<b>Workers</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>First name</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
1	DE	Beckmann	Udo	VBE
2	DK	Vejbaek	Merete	DLF
3	EE	Parkel	Vaike	EEMU
4	IT	Benedetti	Rosella	UIL
5	NO	Montfort Roedelé	Sonia	UEN
6	PT	Chagas	Carlos	SINDEP
7	SE	Weigelt	Anna	Läraförbundet
8	DE	Brauckmann	Sandra Elena	dbb (CESI)
9	UK	McAnea	Christina	UK (EPSU)
10	EU	Krarup Bjerrum	Sidsel	ETUCE
11	EU	Poissonneau	David	ETUCE

<b>Employers</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>First name</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
1	BE	Cherifi	Ghezala	Ministry of Education
2	DE	Klassen	Gerhard	TdL
3	DK	Vendelboe Hagensen	Camilla	KL
4	HU	Pataki	Mihaly	KIMSZ
5	HU	Sipos	Laszlo	KIMSZ
6	IE	Moriarty	Michael	IVEA
7	NO	Smit	Malin	HSH
8	SK	Haas	Ladislav	Ministry of education
9	UK	Simmonds	David	EFEE
10	EU	Cooper	Stephen	EFEE
11	EU	Haasova	Ingrid	EFEE