



## Retaining Newly Educated Teachers In The Process Of 'Transformation From Study To Work' Through Promotion Of Inclusive School Environments

Author(s): [Christian Quvang](#) (presenting)

Conference: ECER 2015, Education and Transition

Network: [20. Research in Innovative Intercultural Learning Environments](#)

Format: Paper

### Session Information

#### **20 SES 07, Culture and Diversity for Pre-Service Teachers, Researching Learning Transitions in Challenging Settings and Retaining New Teachers**

Paper Session

Time: 2015-09-09

17:15-18:45

Room: 665.Oktatóterem [C]

### Contribution

#### Retaining Newly Educated Teachers In The Process Of 'Transformation From Study To Work' Through Promotion Of Inclusive School Environments

In the EU there seems to be a challenge for newly educated teachers being retained in their new jobs. In other words, the transition between study life and working life seems difficult and for too many newly educated teachers so confusing that they give up, leave their job and change their professions. (RETAIN project description Comenius Project:17:2013).

Referring to the theme for this year EERA conference the reason for these challenges could relate to transitions both "from one psychosocial status to another" and "to the transition of communities from one situation into another". So in reality having full filled ones education and once made this important transition is yet another important change in the development of a professional career be it teacher, social worker, nurse etc.

For teachers many younger and newly educated finds the transition from studies into the teacher profession difficult and a large part of young teachers leave the teacher profession only after a few years of active career. Thus, statistics from UK shows that about half have left the teacher profession within 5 years. A Danish survey from 2011 shows that 11% of the newly graduated teachers, who have experience as teachers, do not expect to continue in the profession. In a study about newly educated teachers it is stated (Fibæk Laursen: 2006:79), that: "... 44 % of the teachers were thinking of changing to another profession. The strains are according to the investigation due to not only the cooperation with children and their parents as it is often stated in the debates. Surprisingly the investigation showed that the relation to the colleagues was just as well seen as a significant straining factor". Based on these findings and other research results there will be a strong focus

on how school management can support the process of retaining newly educated teachers, due to the importance of a leadership which defines, overlooks and develops the working place environment to be inclusive for everybody.

The challenges in this situation are the basis for the project and hence this paper based on this research question: "How and with what 'tools' is it possible to develop an inclusive and creative working environment within schools, which is motivating for both teachers and pupils. This furthermore inspires to collaboration between teacher generations, between the school and the outside world, between pupils and teachers, and between teachers and parents. As a consequence of this research question the objective for the RETAIN project is: "... through action research, to develop, test and propose a tool box, containing tools, methods, recommendations and supportive training material that can assist school managers as well as teachers - young or experienced - to create an inclusive and creative working environment together" (RETAIN project description Comenius Project:17:2013).

With the strong focus on school leadership the RETAIN project will be based on a specific theoretical perspective and practical approach developed by The National Research Centre for Inclusive Practice (NVIE/DNCIP) in Denmark called 'The Inclusion Compass'. The idea behind this Compass is that school management, to develop an inclusive school including newly employed teachers, has to involve all stakeholders e.g. parents, pupils, external consultants, local authorities and the local community and in the context of this RETAIN project and paper ALSO the employees - both the experienced and the novices. The theoretical approach in this project amongst others draws upon action learning theory and the works by Lave & Wenger (1991), Wenger (1998), Bruner (1993), research done by Bayer and Brinkkjær (2003) and investigations by The European Agency for Development of Special Needs Education (2012).

## Method

Based on literature studies, reviews, analysis of documents, quantitative investigations and focus group interviews with school management and school teachers in a number of schools in each of the five participating countries, England, Turkey, Spain, Belgium and Denmark, there will be produced a basis for the key objective in this project: the development of a number of toolboxes.

More specific the research methodology in this initial phase is mainly qualitative and is focused in the analysis of the information collected in the schools about how they deal with the retention of the teachers, the cooperation between experienced teachers and novice teachers and the promotion of the newly educated and employed teacher's resilience. The studies made in every country accomplish a first function of initial assessment. It will have to allow adapting the subsequent intervention as it is described in the framework document of the project. Furthermore, as a second function, the information collected in each country will be joined to the one of the rest of the schools taking part with the objective to triangulate the information and make a global study of the selected variables and dimensions. In the present phase of the project and in the Danish part of the project, action learning will be the methodology related to the development of the toolbox based on The Inclusion Compass and hence participation by the stakeholders, which in this case will be school management and teachers. The development of the toolbox based on The Inclusion Compass will be related to typical issues and challenges mapped out by the data collected and related data analysis.

The NVIE Inclusion-Compass is a way to work with and shift between different perspectives to gain new information based on a team dialogue. For example you look at a specific dilemma related to inclusion for an employee as an example of one stakeholder view. Having reflected and shared views about the pro and cons for ideas and solutions on a certain RETAIN dilemma from the employee perspective, you can change your perspective to the pupil or one of the other stakeholder perspectives to reflect over the same dilemma, but now of course from the parent perspective and so on.

## Expected Outcomes

The study expects to be able to discuss outcomes concerning the conditions for researching the emergence of innovative and creative communities of practise within cross professional work focusing on an intercultural and inclusive practise both within the field of practical professional work. The aim is both to qualify the research into professional development with regard to innovative and creative cross professional competences and to discuss possible European perspectives on enhancing inclusive practise, diversity and sustainability by innovative cross professional competencies. Of special interest is the possible outcome that we might point to how to develop research into important conditions for the development of shared meaning and engagement over a period of time in the benefit of cross professional collaboration and development of an inclusive practise. On a lower scale, this research project already has produced significant knowledge about obstacles and constraints but also possible ways in which to promote retainment for newly educated and employed teachers. The results so far relates to

issues as:

- The importance of school management responsibility
- The multi pressure on teachers related to issues like cooperating with parents, academic outcome and measures.
- The relation between experienced teachers and novice teachers
- The need for local situated perspectives and solutions
- The innovative perspective as a platform for retainment
- Becoming a teacher through communities of practise

With these outcomes it becomes clear that possible pathways to retainment, which has to be tested, includes the implementation of inclusive core values and perspectives in school routines such as the following two issues (quotes from European Agency ... Profile of Inclusive teachers:2012:10):

- "Working with others - collaboration and teamwork are essential approaches for all teachers"
- "Continuing personal professional development - teaching is a learning activity and teachers take responsibility for their own lifelong learning"

## References

Bayer, M. og Brinkkjær, U. (2011) Newly Qualified teachers' careers in the first 18 months". Page 10 - 22 In: Ulla Lindgren, Finn Hjordemaaal, Sven-Erik Hansen & Ka Sjöholm (eds.). Becoming a Teacher - Nordic Perspectives on Teacher Education and Newly Qualified Teachers. Report from the Faculty of Education, Åbo Akademi University. No 30. Vasa 2011.

Bruner; Jerome (1993) Acts of Meaning. Harvard University Press.

European Agency for Development of Special Needs Education (2012) TE4I. Teacher Education for Inclusion - Profile of Inclusive Teachers. [www.european-agency.org](http://www.european-agency.org)

Fibæk Laursen, P: Support af nye lærere. Tidsskriftet MONA (Matematik- og Naturfagsdidaktik), 2006, nr. 1. Københavns Universitet, Institut for Naturfagernes Didaktik, [www.ind.ku.dk/mona](http://www.ind.ku.dk/mona).

Larsen, Doris O, Quvang, Christian & Willumsen, John (2014) Promoting innovative and creative cross professional Competences for Inclusion, Diversity and Sustainability - challenges to educational research. Paper presented at ECER Porto 2014.

Lave, Jean & Wenger, Etienne (1991) Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation. Cambridge University Press.

Lifelong Learning Programme. RETAIN project description Comenius Project: 17: 2013. Application Form 2013 Call for proposals.

National Research Centre for Inclusive Practice (NVIE) (2012) The Inclusion Compass. [www.nvie.dk](http://www.nvie.dk)

Quvang, Christian & Willumsen, John (2007) Challenges for the inclusive teacher? Report. DNCIP

Christian Quvang & Willumsen, John (2009) Innovative co-operation between teachers and experts promoting inclusion. Report. DNCIP

Willumsen, John & Quvang, Christian (2015) Index for inklusion i skolen og andre fællesskaber. DNCIP/NVIE (in Print)  
Wenger, Etienne (1998) Communities of practise. Cambridge University Press.

## Author Information

Christian Quvang (presenting)

National Research Centre for Inclusive Practice/University College South Denmark, Denmark