

NEWSLETTER 1: AN INTRODUCTION TO THE RETAIN RESEARCH PROJECT

Overall aim:

To develop an **inclusive and creative working environment** within schools which is motivating for both teachers and pupils and which inspires to collaboration between teacher generations; between the school and the outside world; between pupils and teachers; and between teachers and parents.

The issue:

The fact that many young teachers leave the profession within five years (between 40-50% in the UK). The three main factors determining the conditions for young teachers leaving the profession early are:

1. Changes in society
2. Transition from studies to the teacher profession
3. Professional demands

Objective:

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, to create an inclusive and creative working environment together.

The innovative character of the RETAIN project lies within its holistic and **relational approach** to the challenges of retaining young people in the profession as it focuses on the intertwined relationships which constitute the overall working environment of teachers.

A central objective of the project is to identify the forms and characteristics of school environments that can support both the development of the best possible working environments, facilitating the retention of young teachers and the best possible learning environments that can facilitate the learning achievements of pupils.

Participants:

Each partner will work with 5 schools and at least one local authority. Combination of primary and secondary schools.

The main target groups (school management and teachers) will be included in the project from the very beginning in order to gain relevant input to the development phase of the project and in order to ensure the relevance and usability of the project results.

Methodology:

The RETAIN project is designed as an action research project. The objectives of the project will be reached through the following phases:

1. Mapping and data collection of the reasons why new teachers stop working as teachers, and the different support programmes put forward to ease the situation. The 5 pilot schools in each country will be engaged in the mapping exercise. Included in the mapping phase will be questionnaires focusing on the level of stress experienced by teachers.
2. On the basis of the mapping and data collection exercise the project will develop a toolbox with tools, methods and supporting training material to strengthen and enhance the overall well-being of all stakeholders in schools by minimizing the stress factors, improving teachers' ability to cooperate with each other and between generations, developing ways to support new teachers in their transition into work life and creating an inclusive, innovative and creative working environment.
3. In the pilot phase the aim is to try out, if and to which degree the toolbox, and the tools developed, work, and if not, why.
Assessment – evaluation report on the pilot phase.
4. Fine-tuning of the methods and tools developed according to the results gathered in the pilot projects in the local schools.
Launching of the tools, concepts, employee driven and innovative process.
5. Dissemination and awareness raising.