The new roles of secondary school headteachers
THE NEW ROLES
OF SECONDARY SCHOOL
HEADTEACHERS
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INTRODUCTION

Recognition of the critical part that school quality plays in pupils’ performance is leading to a far-reaching review of the roles entrusted to managerial staff who are experiencing a considerable increase in their responsibilities and workload. New knowledge, competencies and attitudes are required of them that effectively meet the quality imperatives.

In a number of countries the evolving functions of headteachers are as yet unmatched by changed recruitment methods or by appropriate training and support. Other countries, conversely, have made real efforts to fill this gap.

Undertaken in conjunction with Education International (IE) and in cooperation with the Institute for Research in the Sociology and Economics of Education (IREDU), this work reviews international research into the profession of secondary school headteacher, into the new competencies expected of them and into their recruitment, training and appraisal.

It stems from a process of thought and debate on which UNESCO embarked in June 2004, in the context of its Interagency Consultative Group on Secondary Education Reform, on trends, challenges and priorities in school management and on options for strengthening cooperation, transparency and synergies at the national, regional and international levels.

The EFA Global Monitoring Report which in 2005 focused on the “quality imperative” already emphasized that headteachers could “strongly influence school quality”.

This publication is designed to draw national authorities’ attention to that impact and to give them, in the context of secondary education reform, a number of guidelines for introducing recruitment and training policies to enable headteachers to exercise their leadership functions optimally, to the benefit of the entire school community.
OBJECT OF THE STUDY

The field of secondary education

Change in education systems affects all levels of education, but there are substantial differences in the organization of each level because they react differently to pressures and require specific solutions to the problems they encounter.

Primary education is generally provided in schools of restricted size scattered broadly across the country. Pupils are usually entrusted to a single teacher who is responsible for teaching the entire curriculum. Consequently, school structure is fairly simple, administration is relatively straightforward and the division of work among the staff members is rather limited.

Secondary education differs from the preceding level in that teachers are more specialized and the organization is consequently more complex. Since work division is more pronounced, issues of coordination become more important.

There are in fact also differences between the two tiers that are distinguished within secondary education itself. In most countries the lower secondary tier is seen as part of basic education. It often covers the end of the compulsory education period. The higher secondary tier is generally viewed as preparation for employment or for further studies in higher education.

At the present time the lower secondary tier seems to be regarded as requiring the most attention, both in developing countries that have not yet achieved universal primary education and in the most developed countries where secondary education is universal. In the latter group, stable numbers at secondary level have in some cases been achieved relatively recently and not all educational structures and methods have been fully adapted to the requirements of universal education, causing disparities that are perceived as unfair.

In developing countries that are working towards universal primary education, secondary education is seen both as an outlet for the growing number of primary school leavers and as a means of promoting the country’s economic and social development by raising the labour force’s skill levels.

According to UNESCO’s Global Education Digest 2005, four out of five 10-15 year-old children throughout the world are enrolled in first-tier secondary education, which in most countries is now part of compulsory education.

Secondary education is advancing rapidly throughout the world, with the number of pupils enrolled having risen from 321 million in 1990 to 492 million in 2002-2003. The biggest increase has been observed in South America which, with Europe, has the highest gross enrolment rates (almost 100%) at that level. Next come North America, East Asia and Oceania, with rates in excess of 90%. The gap is greater in West Asia, where only 69% of pupils of an age to attend the first tier of secondary education are enrolled.
Africa lags far behind: despite a 5% annual increase in the secondary school enrolment rate since 1998, the rate is barely 45%. The worldwide gross enrolment rate at the higher secondary tier is only 51%. Europe is the exception with rates in excess of 100%, this being due to the fact that some young people are enrolled in several programmes. In the Americas 70% of young adults are enrolled in a higher secondary school or equivalent. Next come East Asia (48%) and West Asia (40%).

The lowest enrolment rate of 29% is recorded in Africa.

Secondary education, the weak link in education systems

In many countries of the South secondary education is seen as ineffective, of poor quality and ill-adapted to contemporary social and economic needs. The curriculum is too discipline-centred, too knowledge-based and too partitioned. Teaching methods have changed little, remaining based on the pupils passively absorbing the teacher’s words. The organization is often centralized and the school is largely closed to the surrounding world. Teachers are poorly qualified and the heads and their teams lack training suited to the growing diversity and complexity of the tasks facing them.

To a lesser degree, these shortcomings also apply to lower secondary education in a number of developed countries. The problems differ in seriousness, notably between countries of the North and South, but also between countries of a comparable development level. This diversity stems from different histories and traditions that are sometimes rooted in different concepts of the role of education. Hasty generalizations and superficial analyses should, therefore, be distrusted.

World-wide research and information gathered by international organizations none the less allow some common features to be identified. The constraints on schools arise in part from material situations that differ widely from country to country, particularly in respect of available resources, but they also arise from reforms which in terms of their design and implementation have many shared features.

The key role of headteachers

The major educational policy trends observed around the world place the school at the heart of the reforms. Growing decentralization and autonomy place the principal responsibility for implementing those reforms on headteachers and their ability to bring all the staff and the pupils together to work for common objectives.

Teachers clearly have an essential role to play in improving the school’s performance, but that role cannot be individual.

While high-quality initial training, an individual ethical code and professional standards are important factors, they are not enough, particularly in a changing system, to guarantee achievement of the best possible results, individually by pupils and collectively by schools.

The need for teachers to work together and with other actors connected with the school to achieve shared objectives implies at once new roles for the management teams, new practices on
the part of teachers and new professional relations. The teacher’s function with regard to the pupils, in the classroom, is not in itself changed. Teachers have always had the objective of helping the pupils in their care to perform well in their specialist field or subject. What changes is the teachers’ role in the school, their relations with their colleagues, the parents and the educational authorities. This is where management action is decisive.

**Methodology**

The approach here is to review research and analyses throughout the world in order to identify the factors conducive to academic achievement and to improving it. The literature is abundant in a number of Western countries where there are countless works and periodicals exclusively devoted to this topic. The first empirical studies were done in countries where education is most decentralized. These are also countries in which the application of social sciences to education is best organized and most extensive.

Countries whose education system is more centralized began more recently to recognize the great diversity of real situations that lay behind the seeming uniformity of their educational organization. They embarked upon measuring situations and upon analysing the differences that these measurements revealed.

Research is far less plentiful in the poorest countries and in many cases studies of schools’ performance have been carried out at the instigation of international organizations and of development funding institutions.

In view of the many different ways in which education systems are organized, studies of the factors that determine academic achievement at school level seek as far as possible to limit the influence of differences in the school environment, which do necessarily have an impact on the school’s performance. The prime example is the administrative environment, which has a powerful impact on practices. Eliminating its influence means analysing schools that belong to a homogeneous space in which the legal and administrative framework is uniform. Other examples are the social and cultural environment or public attitudes to education. For that reason, research for the practical purpose of improving schools’ performance is usually carried out in a national or regional context.

The scope and sophistication of this research is restricted by opportunities to access suitable data or to gather new data because of the paucity of resources allocated to it. Thus studies in the poorest countries often have to rely on simpler methodologies and smaller samples than research in the most advanced countries. The number of qualified researchers, and the quality and size of data bases in which information is systematically gathered, explains why research in this field is more abundant in the North than in the South, but also why there are great disparities among the affluent countries themselves.

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1 There is, for instance, a review dedicated to this kind of research, School Effectiveness and School Improvement, and works such as The International Handbook of School Effectiveness Research (see Bibliography).
EXISTING ANALYSES

Existing analyses can be broken down into three groups:

1. Macroscopic analyses of an entire education system, aimed primarily at measuring the development of its performance or at comparing it with that of other countries.

2. Microscopic studies at classroom or school level, whose principal aim is generally to understand the processes at play and their impact on results.

3. Other and rarer studies seek to establish a link between these two levels of analysis and to show how the overall performance of an education system interacts with locally observed processes.

The performance of educational systems (macroscopic studies)

The production and analysis of country-level data for purposes of international comparison began in the 1980s with international studies by the IEA (TIMSS, PIRLS) and the OECD (PISA).

The analytical scope of these studies, which initially related to a small number of countries, has continually broadened and now extends well beyond the developed countries. In parallel or more recently, in some parts of the world similar international studies have been developed in respect of both primary and secondary education:

- **SACMEQ (Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality)**, set up in the 1990s with IIEP support, now involves 14 countries in Eastern and Southern Africa. The principal objectives are to gather reliable data usable by decision-makers to plan educational quality and to strengthen national education systems’ capabilities in research and assessment.

- **Another international venture is “Monitoring Learning Achievement” (MLA)**, jointly conducted by UNESCO and UNICEF in some 40 countries in Africa, Asia, the Arab world, Europe and the Latin America and Caribbean region. Data collection at primary education level is intended to enable each country to identify factors that foster or undermine learning, to analyse problems encountered, to formulate paths for political change and to introduce new practices. This project is not restricted to academic subjects, but also covers areas such as health, nutrition and hygiene. To that end questions are asked of pupils, teachers and heads, and also of parents.

- **The “Programme for Analysis of the Educational Systems of CONFEMEN Countries” (PASEC)** was launched in 1991 by the education ministers of the French-speaking countries of sub-Saharan Africa. The programme relates the pupils’ achievements to a set of 16 in-school factors and eight out-of-school factors. Here too, the researchers’ main aim is to provide decision-makers with action paths to improve the effectiveness of education systems.
The Latin American Laboratory for Assessment of the Quality of Education (LLECE),
whose first study, published in 1987, covered 13 countries. Currently 18 countries are
involved in the Laboratory. It is sponsored by UNESCO’s Regional Office in Santiago de
Chile. Tests are administered to representative samples of Third- and Fourth- year pupils
in the various participating countries. The programme’s principal objective is to promote
improved educational policies at both macro and micro levels.

The performance of schools (microscopic studies)

As of the 1950s economists began to take an interest in education as an economic activity
in respect of which a relationship can be established between the resources used and the results
achieved. The school and the classroom are the factory and the workshop in which the yield of
educational production and the various factors involved in it can be measured.

In the 1960s empirical research into the American school system, including the famous
Coleman report in 1966 on equality of opportunity in education, tended to minimise the part
played by schools in differences in pupils’ achievement, this being summed up in the expression
“the school doesn’t make a difference”. Social factors were considered to play a far greater part than
the resources deployed in schools.

When the measurement of what might be considered to be results was improved, and a
broader view was taken of the factors that influence school learning, the vision changed substan-
tially and at the start of the 1980s research findings reached the opposite conclusion, that school
had the predominant role.

Identifying which factors most influence educational achievement fulfilled the educational
authorities’ need to define the priority actions for improving the quality of education for which
they had responsibility.

This shift of research towards management gave rise to increased interest in measurement
and in developing instruments for observation and indicators on the basis of which policy could
be conducted to improve schools and the school system.

From “school effectiveness” to “school improvement”

Some disillusionment set in as research into school effectiveness grew because it could be
seen that the application of its findings on the ground did not lead to improved performance.
Research changed tack: rather than comparing the performance of different schools in the light
of their characteristics, the effects of changes in practice and organization began to be monitored
in each school. This more pragmatic approach was in response to the question: “What works to
improve quality and performance?”
The “school effectiveness” trend in developed countries

The results of 30 years of research into school performance, chiefly in the English-speaking countries and later throughout Europe, can now be summed up. Launched in the USA in the late 1970s (Rutter et al. 1979, Edmonds 1979), the movement has developed throughout the world. These studies were reviewed at the end of the 1990s (Teddlie & Reynolds 2000, Scheerens & Bosker 1999). Teddlie & Reynolds (2000, pp. 142-143) show the high degree of convergence among works aimed at identifying the characteristics that explain the differences in school performance. Of course, there are differences from country to country that have to do with the way the educational system is organized.

Most of the 10 or so characteristics or groups of characteristics identified as factors with a positive influence on school effectiveness are closely linked with organization and policy at school level:

- Exceptional leadership in the teaching field, support for teachers, monitoring of results, definition of clear guidelines.
- Organization of teaching, group composition, support, coordination of programmes and methods.
- Emphasis on the pupils’ learning, timetabling, priority placed on basic learning.
- The school climate, the cohesiveness of the teachers, consultative decision-taking, pragmatic approach to problems.
- School culture, a clear vision of the mission, emphasis on improving results.
- High expectations and demands of the pupils and teachers, intellectual stimulation.
- Rigorous monitoring of the pupils’ progress and of the school’s results.
- Concern for the staff’s training and professional development.
- Partner relationships with parents and their involvement in the school.

Some recent studies in the countries of the South

These studies share a methodology based on comparing monographs on a small number of schools selected for their performance level so as to be representative of all the schools. A small number of schools are chosen whose performance is seen as excellent in respect of some indicators that are available for most schools, and some schools whose performance is particularly weak. A study in depth of their workings highlights the characteristics that distinguish the most effective from the least. When these monographs are produced, the emphasis can be placed on a series of specific factors, as was done in the case of the following works, where the emphasis was placed on the role of headteachers and the organizational aspects.
Africa: the ADEA-AFIDES study

In 2004, the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) and the International French-speaking Association of Directors of Educational Establishments (AFIDES) launched a study entitled “La gestion scolaire et la réussite des élèves” (School management and pupil achievement). This is a series of coordinated case studies in 16 schools in four African countries – Guinea, Mali, Central African Republic and Senegal.

The findings published in 2005 show that “these schools visibly succeed well because people work there with a strong will to make it so. Consequently a series of measures and practices is deployed that supports the teachers’ mobilization, the pupils’ commitment and the value placed on success. Great attention is paid to learning and its appraisal, which are the focus of shared concern and of sustained supervision despite the size of the groups” (Pelletier 2005).

Asia: A study in Bangladesh

Launched in 2002, a study entitled “Case studies in the management of high-performing schools” was conducted in seven Asian countries with the assistance of the IIEP in the context of the Asian Network of Training and Research Institutes in Educational Planning (ANTRIEP).

The study conducted in Bangladesh by the National Academy for Educational Management was also based on comparison of two State schools and two schools from an independent network. In late 2004 it gave rise to a seminar and the publication of a report. The latter emphasized that “despite the problems relating to the research methodology, it created a better understanding of the management problems of schools and provided ways forward to improve their performance”. (NAEM 2004, p. 66)

Latin America: El Salvador

The study by Hernández, Lázaro & Flores, 2000, cited in Borden 2003, is a qualitative study based on observation of 28 schools divided into 14 “high-performing” schools and 14 less successful ones using standardized tests of Spanish and mathematics.

In the high-performing schools, the headteachers exercise strong leadership, visit classrooms, and encourage creativity and innovative teaching. They consult with parents with a view to improving the school. This attitude is the stronger where the headteachers have been in their posts for a long time.

In smaller schools where the heads themselves teach, more particularly in rural areas, their leadership of the teachers is restricted but relations with parents are positive.

The school’s role in the education system’s performance

In developed countries, whether or not a private sector exists, the application of the new public management principles to education has resulted in greater school autonomy together with increased responsibility. The role of the public authorities has changed: the national and regional
bodies set the educational objectives and standards against which the schools’ performance is assessed.

Studies of school effectiveness, and more particularly the major international comparative studies such as TIMSS and PISA, have brought to light a great variation in school performance achieved in the education systems compared. In attempting to explain those differences, it was observed that the scale of resources allocated to education mattered less than school organization and the incentive systems included in it. (Wössman 2003). Based on the findings of the TIMSS study, it was shown that institutional factors, such as the degree of decentralization of decision-taking or the importance that the teachers attach to assessing pupils’ progress, explained three quarters of the variations in performance between countries, whilst factors representing the resources used or the pupils’ social origins accounted for no more than one quarter of the variations.

Research into the headteacher’s role

The 30 years of research into school performance (“school effectiveness”) and into factors that improve it (“school improvement”), principally conducted in the developed English-speaking countries, have established that the quality of headteachers is the chief factor in school performance.

Although their action is decisive, their influence is wielded indirectly. Of the various factors that make up what is conventionally called “the school effect”, those with most weight derive from tasks commonly done by headteachers and management teams.

An indirect role

Performance depends on the quality of the pupils’ learning and this takes place very largely in the classroom. What happens in the classroom depends on many factors, predominant among which is, obviously, the teacher. Teachers may vary in terms of their knowledge, competencies and attitudes and this explains a large part of the variance in results observable among different groups of pupils. But it has been established that other factors are at play: the interactions that occur among the pupils themselves, which are often summed up in the expression “peer influence”. The teacher may act on and encourage those interactions, but only when in the presence of the group. The group, however, has its own experiences and its own life, especially in secondary education when it changes teachers for the different subjects on the programme, enhancing the need for cohesion and coordination among the different teachers.

Although sometimes difficult to observe and to transmit during their initial training, the characteristics of teachers that ensure the quality of their pupils’ learning are quite clearly identified in recent research work. Moreover, these studies tell us nothing very new about those characteristics: in-depth knowledge of the subject taught; an aptitude for communicating with pupils and for establishing relations with each of them; an ability to handle the different situations that may arise in class and to organize individual and group work.
Headteachers who are not present in their school’s classrooms have varying degrees of control over these different factors of quality. They can take action on the composition of groups or the coordination of the teams of teachers, and ensure that a climate conducive to class work and to tranquillity among pupils and their teachers reigns in the school.

But they can also influence the teachers’ individual activity if they are able to select them, to motivate them and help them to appraise themselves, to train themselves and to develop individually and as a team.

Finally, by setting everyone ambitious objectives, they can maintain a high degree of aspiration that will stimulate each and every one of them.

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**School heads and school improvement**

As mentioned above, improvement of school performance calls for a collective capacity for change and for constant innovation. Research into the requisites for performance improvement enables six dimensions of a school to be identified that are conducive or non-conducive to innovation (Gather Thurler, 2000).

**→ Organization of work**

The more bureaucratic the school is, with everyone taking refuge in their own space and their own tasks rather than dealing with the problems, the less it advances. If, conversely, the organization tends towards the “adhocratic”^2^ model described by Mintzberg, initiatives taken by all parties to identify and resolve the real problems lead to development of knowledge, structures and practices, even without orders stemming from a school project or an educational reform.

**→ Professional cooperation**

The more the actors share their understanding of the targets and means, the more they disclose their practices and formulate strategies together, and the more the school becomes a centre of innovation.

**→ Attitude to change in the school’s culture**

There are schools in which change is a chore reluctantly accepted under the pressure of ministerial orders or of compelling circumstances: in other schools, reflection is a practice ingrained in the persona of the head and most of the teachers.

**→ A project dynamic**

Collective action risks going round in circles, turning into activism and gradually losing its meaning unless the school succeeds in adopting an approach based on clear targets, decision-making and working methods, consultation arrangements and a timetable. The project approach is not an end in itself, but a way of making the teachers the actors of organizational and professional development.

**→ Leadership and ways of exercising power**

Changes in social relationships and power relations in the school do not come about just through the charismatic or authoritarian actions of a head, but are built gradually as part of a

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^2^ Adhocratic organization is a system in which the rules are little formalized so as to reduce internal rigidities. Rules are “ad hoc”, i.e. defined in the light of the nature of the problems to be resolved.
collective process of self-searching and formulating new ways of thinking and acting, including the delegation and sharing of power.

→ **Identity of a learning organization**

The change process depends on the actors’ ability to share ideas and issues that on the face of it are not connected, in a joint approach that enables an intelligible and explicit link to be established between routine activities and innovative and in some cases utopian activities. To achieve this, part of the collective work consists in analysing practices in the school, with a view to gaining better insights into the effects produced, the obstacles encountered and possible ways of overcoming them.
REFORM AND EVOLUTION IN EDUCATION SYSTEMS

The changing context

Over the last 50 years the education system’s role has changed profoundly throughout the world. To varying degrees, depending on their level of economic and social development, all countries have undergone the double pressure of the democratization of education and social transformation. The explosion in school enrolment stemming from universal education policies, first in primary education and then in secondary, has created a number of tensions in the school which has had to address an increasingly diverse public.

Society has also undergone major structural upheavals with a change from a largely agricultural economy towards an industrial and subsequently a services economy.

Technological progress and globalization have profoundly changed the attitudes, aptitudes and competencies that education is required to produce or to transmit to new generations. The lengthening of the period of schooling and the prospect of lifelong education, which alone can underpin continued societal change, call for a redefinition of the objectives and organization of the different levels of the education system.

The growing awareness that this redefinition now requires a constant process of adaptation, rather than occasional readjustment through reforms, has resulted in strong sustained pressure on teachers, schools and school systems as a whole.

Society’s expectations of the school are becoming increasingly complex and pressing.

The changing role of teachers

For teachers, who are and will remain the essential engines of education, the changes and new expectations can be analysed at four levels: in relations with the pupil, in conduct of the class, in the school and in relations with the parents and society which form the school’s environment.

Teachers must manage differentiated learning processes and develop in all pupils the aptitudes that will enable them to continue their learning autonomously. That means that they should be able to observe and assess all the pupils individually so as to guide and advise them. In the classroom, they must manage what is known as diversity, i.e. cultural, social, ethnic and religious differences. They are entrusted with a decisive share of the building of social cohesion. They are asked to assume responsibility, cutting across school curricula based on disciplines, for teaching social responsibility, citizenship and ethical behaviour. In cooperation with specialist staff they are also sometimes asked to teach children with special needs whom it is wished to include in mainstream education rather than placing them separately in special schools.

3 See OECD (2005b) pp. 107-113
Within their schools, and sometimes in networks that extend beyond them, they must define objectives and work in teams, and measure and assess the results achieved jointly by the teaching team. They are also expected to apply in a coordinated manner the new information and communication technologies that are playing a growing part in education and society. Organizing international school exchanges and developing sustained contacts with foreign schools often responds to a strong expectation on the part of families and of society at large for pupils to be exposed to international relations and intercultural communication, which are becoming essential in a world of growing globalization. To enable the school to cope with these changes, teachers are increasingly often induced to take part in organizational and managerial tasks in specific areas, acting as team leaders and taking part in a more collegiate form of management.

Lastly, teachers are asked to advise parents and to cooperate with them in finding specific solutions to the problems which their children encounter during their schooling. Often they also take part in the cultural and social life of their town or neighbourhood, and develop partnerships between the school and the community in which it operates.

These “new roles” are just emerging in some countries but are already widely recognized in many others which have a tradition and organization supportive of individualized learning or of the involvement of the school and its staff in the local community. Recognition of these new roles and appreciation of their importance in the performance of the school and the education system have led many countries, in recent decades, to review the training of their teachers and to define the skills and attitudes that society expects of them. Codes of professional practice and ethics are increasingly often established, with the participation of teacher representatives, to save as guidance for the vocational training they receive and to guide them in their early careers.

The evolving role of headteachers

To cope with the many constraints noted above, and to maintain the cohesion and autonomy of their schools, headteachers must also display new and diversified skills.

They can no longer behave like teachers who for a time fulfil a largely honorary function as representatives of their teacher colleagues and coordinators of teaching activities.

While in the most developed countries headteachers have qualified colleagues to whom they can delegate a large share of the daily tasks of organizing the teaching duties and managing the school logistics, their overall responsibility leads them to intervene on many fronts:

- Meeting parents, noting their opinions and involving them in the school;
- Motivating teachers and other staff involved in education and ensuring that they work together;
- Interpreting the supervisory authorities' policy and explaining it to all;

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4 This point is developed in the Eurydice report on the teaching profession (Eurydice 2002) as of page 59 of volume 3.
Organizing the assessment of pupils’ performance;

- Motivating teacher teams to involve everyone in improving the school.

**Educational reforms**

Part of the change described above cannot be ascribed to the education system itself since it is merely the outcome of the general societal trend. But it is also in part linked directly to policies instituted, in a more or less coordinated manner, in a very large number of countries. Indeed, the last two decades of the 20th century witnessed profound changes in the organization of education systems and the school’s relations with the public authorities and the diverse communities that surround it.

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**Decentralized management of the education system**

In many countries where management of education was concentrated at State level, mass enrolment in secondary education following that in primary education has laid bare the limits of centralization. In parallel with the partial devolution of political power to subnational level, decision-making and supervisory authority in education has been decentralized. In some cases this was a simple devolution bringing administration closer to “the field”, in others it was a more extensive transfer of organizational and supervisory authority to regional authorities or autonomous agencies, in others again the granting of very extensive autonomy to schools themselves. This may be viewed as the application to the educational sector of “new public management” methods which were spreading rapidly throughout the world.

In view of the extent and complexity of education system management, tasks have been redistributed among the various administrative levels of the system.

Two domains should be distinguished in discussing decentralization of the education sector: that of the resources applied and that of educational objectives, content and methods. The two do not necessarily go together: an increase in managerial autonomy may be accompanied by a reduction in teaching autonomy, and vice versa.

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**Increased managerial autonomy for schools**

The concept of managerial autonomy is often associated with the English term “management”, which is seen as distinct from administration or even from control and as referring to practices prevailing in private industrial or commercial enterprises.

The term *management* has given rise to misunderstandings because it has not always been grasped that, in the case of education, it corresponded to different areas in which the same methods and organization as were used in other economic activities were not necessarily valid.
In fact, three areas of decision-making can be distinguished:

- Management of resources
- Management of people
- Management of educational programmes (curricula)

In the organization of an education system these three areas may be assigned to different actors. Such a distribution necessarily restricts each of the actors in their ability to make decisions. Consequently, increased autonomy inevitably involves concentrating these areas on one of them, to the detriment of the others.

One principle of educational reform in recent decades has been to concentrate the bulk of decision-making authority on the school. The “school-based management” trend bases management of the education system on the widest possible autonomy of the school.

**School-based management**

“School-based management” posits that the school should have complete control over the resources it uses, in respect both of equipment and facilities and of personnel, and over the manner in which it uses them. “Governance” of the school – i.e. the way it is organized and the internal distribution of powers of decision – may take quite different forms but generally rests on a governing board and a headteacher responsible to that board. The board may include representatives of the school staff, but is in its majority made up of representatives of authorities and of society in the broad sense and, in particular, of parents, who are sometimes described as “stakeholders”.

**Autonomy and responsibility**

The increase in schools’ autonomy – their decision-making powers – is matched by increased responsibility for headteachers or for school management boards. Responsibility here means accountability to the authorities and to the entity that they represent.

In an administrative type of organization, inspection is the authorities’ preferred instrument for ensuring that directives and missions assigned to schools are respected. Traditionally, most administrations throughout the world have or have had a body of specialized functionaries, endowed with extensive powers of investigation, whose role is to ensure that rules enunciated and decisions taken at the top are in fact respected and applied throughout the organization.

However extensive it may be, the school’s autonomy cannot be complete: the political authorities retain a right of oversight, linked in part to the fact that they generally provide a large part of educational funds. That oversight is restricted to a few factors considered essential to the community. It consequently applies not to the resources used or the processes utilized, but to the objectives of targets to be met. That is achieved either by setting standards or by concluding target-based contracts.

Supervision is replaced by a steering system through which the authorities seek to channel each school and the whole of the school system in the direction they have defined.
Obviously, the process is the same when greater autonomy is granted to the internal actors in any organization and in particular in schools. Steering through objectives, standard-setting or contracts becomes the headteachers' method of managing all members of the teaching community. Consequently, we can speak of steering at various levels of the school system. The appropriate techniques and methods can be applied at all levels, and their dissemination becomes an important issue for educational reform.

**Society's increasing requirements of schools**

In the most advanced countries, following a phase of democratization leading to universal secondary education, quality has become the priority for educational policy. In the poorest countries, education is viewed as the key factor for development and ambitious targets have been set in respect of both quality and quantity.

The emerging or developing countries are seeking a means of reconciling increased enrolment with a minimum quality guarantee.

For a number of them, establishing private schools has provided an answer to the shortage of public funding. When a quality private sector has been set up, the competition facing public sector schools forces them to change their organization and to become more open to their economic and social environment.

**Top priority for management of teaching**

Although the increased autonomy that schools enjoy has made facilities management tasks more complex, the emphasis on scholastic performance in the appraisal of headteachers and assessment of their schools increasingly leads them to give priority to the management of teaching and to see themselves as leaders and motivators of the teaching community for which they are responsible.

This is the sphere in which their influence is most important: their role is critical but indirect. They do not intervene in the classroom where the bulk of the school’s teaching activity takes place. They are expected to create a favourable climate for teaching and learning: they must shield pupils and teachers from external pressures whilst stimulating their aspirations by setting each of them appropriate objectives.

**The quest for performance**

Since the 1980s the quest for *school effectiveness* has influenced education systems throughout the world.

An additional, broader factor is the application to the public sector as a whole of new public management principles. This doctrine, which originated in the English-speaking countries, has spread increasingly through the rich countries and is now also being taken on board by the poor countries. It aims to increase the efficiency of the public sector and to increase government oversight over it. It consists mainly in drawing where possible on the operation of the market: increased
autonomy for administrations, enhanced responsibility for public servants, placing relations on a contractual footing, and clearer definition of political objectives.

In the case of schools, this reform took the shape of greater autonomy for schools together with enhanced responsibility for headteachers. The role of the education authorities has been transformed: the national and regional authorities set training targets and the standards on the basis of which schools' performance is assessed.

Less successful schools are subject to pressure to adapt and change, but that pressure is not always matched by real opportunities for teachers and headteachers to take action.

At the same time parents maintain an ever more watchful oversight over the schools that their children attend. They are often involved in the decisions taken by advisory or governing boards and seek to impose their own objectives which sometimes differ from or even contradict those of the teachers or education authorities.

_________________________ Laying the foundations for permanent improvement

The observed results of improving the quality of education over a relatively long period show that the improvement effort must be maintained over time or the progress achieved is lost. This principle, in line with the concept of quality assurance, has implications for the organization of schools and the role of the headteacher.

In this regard, the role of the education authorities is to ensure the orderly functioning of the education system and allow it to change continuously. Headteachers and their teams are the agents of that change in the place where it occurs, i.e. at school.

The innovation component now seems to be the priority (Gather, Thurler and Perrenoud, 2003) because of the increasingly unacceptable gap between the school's stated objectives and its results, but also because, in a changing society, managing means steering ongoing transformations, whether they stem from changing social demand, switches in education policies, renewal of knowledge (subject matter or teaching skills), changes in the school intake or cultural and economic change.

_________________________ Steering by results

Seeking greater effectiveness in the school system involves the use of performance indicators to measure the results of schools, regions or school networks and the entire country.

_________________________ Steering schools and education systems

The reconciliation of increased school autonomy and stronger steering by the national authorities involves establishing an information system able to produce indicators that can be used both at national level and in schools and local education authorities. Steering is increasingly based on the measurement of results.

A technocratic approach to managing the education system prioritizes resource and activity indicators. It has increasingly been acknowledged that similar resources applied to similar schools
do not produce the same results in terms of learning and that it is better to observe the results of the activities directly, even though the measurement may be imperfect.

**Steering at system level**

In addition to the well-known international studies by EIA (TIMMS, PIRLS, etc.) and the OECD (PISA), there are other international studies at both primary and secondary level.

For example, the aims of the SACMEQ, discussed above, are to gather reliable data that decision-makers can use in planning educational quality and to strengthen the research and assessment capabilities of national education systems.

Monitoring Learning Achievement (MLA) aims to enable each country to identify factors that promote or detract from learning, to analyse problems encountered, to formulate plans for political change and to apply new practices.

The Programme for the Analysis of the Educational Systems of CONFEMEN Countries (PASEC), drawn up by the education ministries of the French-speaking sub-Saharan countries in 1991, is principally aimed at providing decision-makers with action guidelines for improving the effectiveness of education systems.

The Latin American Laboratory for Assessment of the Quality of Education (LLECE) aims in the 18 participating countries to promote the improvement of educational policies at both macro and micro levels. Very particular emphasis has been placed on the actions that the work of assessment can produce to contribute to improving learning.

**Steering at school level**

Many education systems are equipped with an educational management information system (EMIS) at national or regional level. At regular intervals (usually annually) they record the number of pupils enrolled in each year and school and various items of supplementary information on each pupil.

They also gather information on the teachers in each year and on headteachers. They gather all this information for each school and then analyse it to establish comparisons among regions, localities and even schools within them. They use these results to enable new ways of improving their systems to be devised.

When the systems also gather information on the results achieved by pupils in standardized tests or in regional or national examinations, the information is at hand for an even more refined steering of schools.

Suitably processed, this information can provide management teams with particularly effective tools for steering their schools. It shows changes over time and relates the school’s performance to that of reference schools or to regionally or nationally calculated averages. This is known as a “School performance feedback system”.

An example is the Steering Indicators for Secondary Schools (IPES) used in France.
SECONDARY SCHOOL STEERING INDICATORS IN FRANCE

Created in 1994, the steering indicators for secondary schools (IPES) cover school structure, pupil characteristics, their educational origins, the teachers, pupils’ performance and prospects and the school environment. They cover the current school year and the previous record. They are calculated by the statistical service at the Education Ministry. They are presented as statistical tables. Schools can access their own indicator scores and regional and national averages. They also have national references for more qualitative indicators that they calculate themselves. Finally, each school can construct different indicators depending on their perceived needs, and they are given tools to do so.

The IPES set of indicators is derived from data mainly gathered in schools (in particular with the GEP/SCOLARITE software) and consolidated first at regional and then at national level. This national database of secondary school pupils supports large-scale statistical processing while enabling each school to recover its own data processed on a common basis with cross-references to regional and national averages.

However, as a note from the High Council for School Assessment (HCEE) observes with respect to the lycées, “consequently there are many studies, tools are available, but there is no coherent and coordinated procedure for using these tools and studies to promote an effective overall assessment of each lycée.”

Such a procedure, which should involve but not be restricted to a self-assessment, has to be set up. Yet again the High Council must deplore, in this regard, the poor coordination of works, the failure to capitalize on their results and the paucity, not to say the non-existence, of use to which they are put, especially in schools themselves.

Evaluation of schools’ use of steering data

In England the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) was contracted by the Department for Education and Skills for a study to evaluate the use that primary and secondary schools made of data to improve teaching and the learning processes (Kirkup 2005). This research shows that secondary schools are more reluctant to use indicators than primary schools. Teachers and team members use the data more readily if it is quickly obtainable, accessible and usable by everyone and compatible with the school’s management system.

Indicators are chiefly used for identifying failures, setting objectives and forming suitable pupil groups. Their use enables teaching to be personalized for groups and individual pupils, discussions to be held with parents, and teachers to improve their methods through discussions with colleagues or appraisers.

Teachers’ general impression is that the use of indicators helps the school to assess itself and to improve. However, this impression seems to be linked to their school’s position in the performance classification of schools.
The effect of educational reforms in the world

Convergence of reforms

Despite differences in resource levels and despite the diversity of initial positions and of major organizational principles in education systems, a consensus seems to be emerging on a number of points.

There is an increasing awareness that in a situation of diversity of contexts and resources, the application of uniform rules and rigid standards leads to increased inefficiency and the maintaining of unfair situations.

The diversification of practices required for actual improvement of school performance can only come about if the organizing authorities succeed in transforming their relations with headteachers by focusing their action on a small number of essential points.

In parallel, the role of teachers and of school management teams must also be transformed, as must relations within the school, between management and teachers, and outside it, with the educational authorities and education’s various partners.

Redistribution of responsibilities within the system

In countries with a very decentralized education system, where schools enjoyed a very wide autonomy in respect of the curriculum, there has been a strengthening of decision-making and supervisory power in the hands of the State. The introduction of a national curriculum in England and the strengthening of assessment procedures were led by a national agency. Although managerial autonomy was preserved and initially even increased, this policy of refocusing was seen as a move towards centralization that was completely foreign to the country’s educational tradition.

In countries where decision-making power was heavily concentrated at national level (France, Japan, China, Spain and several Latin American countries), there has been a strong decentralizing movement towards schools, local authorities and local administrations. But that transfer of power from the centre to the periphery chiefly concerned the tasks of managing facilities and teaching in schools. The central authorities retained a number of prerogatives that enabled them to preserve or to strengthen their ability to set the major objectives and to have them respected. In its 1996 study on labour trends in the educational sector, the ILO already observed that the work of administrative staff at central and even regional level had changed considerably following decentralization policies. The number of administrative tasks had decreased, to be replaced by activities in support of choice of direction, standard setting, research and information. In parallel with the change in national priorities and policies, tasks were more related to disbursing funds to lower administrative levels or directly to schools themselves, the various educational levels or the corresponding schools, and to certain specific population groups (disadvantaged persons or minority groups).

The transfer of many decisions to a lower level has reduced some aspects of authority but strengthened advisory or coordinating roles which promote an overall concept of the education system, its problems and the factors for success in achieving its objectives. In some countries some administrative functions have been pruned to redirect resources to teaching. Obviously, these changes have not been uniform at global level.
In a large number of countries the central administrative authority has been maintained, as have its traditional roles in respect of curricula and teacher employment: globally, however, the administrative authority was deeply altered during the 1990s by the transfer of responsibilities and decentralization.

The difficulties of decentralization

In a centralized bureaucratic system, supervisory functions are particularly important and justify the existence of a hierarchy and of inspection bodies. It is difficult to change the mission of inspection staff and make them act as advisors and providers of assistance to schools with increased autonomy.

A devolution of decision-making power to local level is often matched by a distribution of that supervisory responsibility among several stakeholders: parents, local authority and headteachers. When involved in school governance, parents can play a part by denouncing many malfunctions they may observe and that are regrettably to be found in many developing countries: absenteeism, lax or negligent teachers, damage to premises, violence and deterioration in the school climate (Hannaway Carnoy).

Senior education staff monitor the use of resources. Headteachers and their immediate colleagues observe and measure the pupils’ achievement as a basis for action to improve the quality of teaching and the functioning of the school.

If decentralization is not matched by increased steering and assessment at system level, the result is to growing differences among schools or local subsystems. This differentiation may help to meet the population’s diversified needs but it may also create or increase discrimination or unfairness.

Decentralization of decision-making in education can also lead to new problems when local politicians are pondering to a particular constituency, or local school administration authorities find it difficult to stand back from the closer relations that the proximity of schools creates and which may restrict the ability to assess.

As the IIEP observed with regard to the decentralization policy in Nepal, centralized planning and statistical services still have a driving role to play in steering implementation, reducing inequalities and transmitting information about results in different regions. This calls for the establishment or strengthening of an education management information system, involving several stages: rationalizing data gathering and improving their inputting and analysis; ensuring that information is properly communicated and that it is used by decision-makers at all levels, from headteachers to government officers.5

5 IIEP Newsletter, vol. XX, no. 4
THE PROFESSION OF HEADTEACHER

Conceptions of the headteacher’s role

Conception of the profession of headteacher differ from one country and period to another. Broadly, there can be said to be three models linked to different concepts of the school that are in turn dependent on the organization of the education system.

First teacher among equals

This concept prevails in many countries at primary level, where the head is a teacher released from a part of his/her teaching duties, depending on the size of the school. It may also be found in higher education, when the dean is a professor elected by the college of his/her peers for a fixed term. It is less usual in secondary education because of the size of schools but it remains, at least in spirit, where the headteacher is elected by the college of teachers from among their number. In Europe this situation is found in Spain and Portugal (Eurydice, 1996).

This implies that headteachers need no qualification other than those required of teachers and that they may return to teaching. Such a return is most unusual in secondary education.

This vision of the headteacher is the more common where headteachers continue teaching in the schools they manage. This situation prevails in primary education in many countries, especially when the size of the school is small. But it can also sometimes be found in secondary education, as in Germany, Portugal or Spain and, of course, in every country where no distinction is made between the two levels and compulsory education is integrated into a single structure lasting nine or 10 years.

Recently a new reason was found for headteachers to retain their teaching role when the emphasis was placed on their leadership of teaching:

Indeed, the headteachers’ legitimacy in their colleagues’ eyes appears to be better founded if it rests on their teaching competencies rather than the authority of their position.

Separation of the functions of teacher and headteacher

As schools increase in size and the burden of administration and assessment grows, the functions of teacher and headteacher are tending to diverge. In several countries, notably Germany, thought has been given to appointing headteachers trained in administration and management and with no first-hand teaching experience. In the USA, there is no formal requirement for headteachers to have taught and specialist university training in school management is trusted to prepare people for the job. In France, teachers’ distaste for managerial positions has encouraged other staff in the national education system to take them up and the proportion of counselling and educational support staff (who do not have teaching status) competing for posts is growing regularly.
The administrator

In a bureaucratic system the activities of the various agents are coordinated on the basis of impersonal rules, and the role of managerial staff is chiefly to transmit those rules, adapt them to local circumstances and ensure they are applied. Headteachers are a link in the administrative chain whose authority and competencies derive from the hierarchical superiors to whom they are subordinate. In public sector schools it is not unusual for headteachers to be viewed as representatives of the State and to be invested with a particular authority, as in Germany or France.

The manager

Here the reference-point is clearly the enterprise. Only rarely can a school really be run as a private enterprise. However, many private schools in both rich and poor countries are founded and run by private individuals or have recourse to private capital. Their management rules are no different from those of private industrial or commercial activities, except for public regulations specific to education. In such cases headteachers are real bosses and may adopt a boss's style. Sometimes public sector headteachers view and present themselves in this way.

The manager-headteacher is active in two fields, management of resources and management of people in a technical sense.

The leader

This term has steadily come to occupy a special position in literature on school management. Its popularity is due to the fact that no other term reflects so clearly the new concept of the managerial function emerging in education systems. It has become an official term in Great Britain, where thinking about and transformation of the profession has probably changed most in recent years. The School leader has replaced the traditional Headmaster.

The concept of leader, unlike that of manager, implies that the actors to be coordinated have a degree of autonomy in their work. Coordination is therefore based more on persuasion and example than on authority or distribution of tasks.

Leadership may be defined as a process of influencing the work objectives and strategies of a group or organization; of influencing the actors in an organization to introduce strategies and achieve objectives; of influencing the functioning and identity of a group and, lastly, of influencing an organization's culture.6

The different fields of action of the management team

Facilities management

This consists of secondary but time-consuming functions: management of premises, facilities, ancillary activities (catering, boarding, etc.). They often require much technical competence.

Most of these functions can be delegated given sufficient human resources with adequate skills.

6 Brunet & Boudreault 2001
Financial management

Depending on the size and financial autonomy of the school, this may be of very variable complexity. In schools which themselves manage the totality of their resources, it may prove very onerous: drawing up the budget, placing orders, paying invoices and paying school staff entail burdens fully comparable with those of a small or medium-sized enterprise. It is generally done by a specialist staff but remains the responsibility of the headteacher, who must have a basic understanding of these matters to grasp the issues and give the necessary instructions. The financial manager’s competence and the trust that person establishes with the headteacher are invaluable.

Human resources management

This is of greater or lesser importance depending on the school’s responsibilities for staff recruitment, promotion and training. In some countries, the entirety of these tasks is done jointly by the school board and the headteacher. At the opposite end of the current spectrum, the school has no say in these decisions which are taken at the level of an educational district or sometimes at national level.

The school’s control of its human resources policy, although a major burden and responsibility, is also a key tool for implementing its teaching policy.

Administrative management

Advances in technology, IT and communications have made these tasks much easier, making them routine and increasing opportunities for adapting and making use of the data gathered.

Management of teaching

The set of what are described as teaching tasks performed in a school is quite varied and its boundaries are not fully defined. The school’s central activity, the process of teaching pupils, is influenced by virtually every aspect of its functioning. Management of teaching is considered to relate to the content of teaching, its organization and methods, and assessment of pupils’ learning and of their progress.

It may to a greater or lesser extent be constrained by decisions, regulations and standards established at local, regional or national level.

Here again widely divergent degrees of school autonomy are found.

The broadest educational autonomy entrusts the entire responsibility for management of teaching to the school, which decides what curricula to teach, which methods to apply, how to group pupils, how to assess their learning and to what extent their schooling should be individualized.

A school always has a minimum of autonomy in teaching, even if there are very strict standards stipulating curricula, teaching methods, methods of organization and assessment rules. What happens in the classroom depends on each teacher, who is of necessity autonomous in the teaching methods used.
→ **Functions as facilitator**

These are dominant in the management of teaching and are more difficult to delegate. They require the ability to make use of research findings.

Facilitating and leadership of teaching can be organized on a distributed basis by calling on teachers who are themselves leaders in their discipline or department.

→ **The school’s external relations**

Headteachers, sometimes in conjunction with the chair of the school board, represent the school in its relations with the outside world: with different tiers of educational administration and with the various partners, in the first place parents. Relations with parents are so special that in some countries parents are viewed as members of the school community. Since the 1970s they have increasingly been associated, through their representatives, in the various school decision-making bodies.

### Varying composition of management teams

Studies of the working conditions of headteachers and their renewal have shown that a new approach is needed to the way their role is seen and to redistributing the functions of motivation and leadership in schools.

Since several functions can be distinguished in the work of headteachers, those functions can be separated and performed by different people in a great variety of combinations.

Different managerial structures may be encountered:

- **Joint headship**
- **A headteacher and a manager**
- **Collegiate headship**
- **A headteacher and a deputy headteacher**
- **A headteacher and a head of teaching**
- **A head of teaching and an administrator**

The management structure depends:

- On the school's autonomy from the authorities (entities, education offices and organizing authorities)
- On the system of governance: division of decision-making power between the headteacher and the school board
Sometimes on a mandatory distribution of fields of decision-making among specialist staff posted to the school.

In most countries, headteachers of larger schools have several deputies or assistants. The tasks assigned to them may vary considerably from school to school, both in the regulations or statutory definition of functions and in observable practice on the ground.

Also, within a single education system with homogeneous regulations and practices, the way in which the management team’s tasks are organized may vary as a result of each headteacher’s specific interests and aptitudes. They may choose to involve themselves more deeply in one aspect of the profession and, while retaining overall responsibility for the school’s operation, largely delegate other administrative areas to deputies or staff members.

Lastly, and we shall come back to this, a headteacher increasingly acts as a trainer and mentor for his or her deputies who, under his or her guidance, prepare for managerial functions that they will perform in other schools. This role is sometimes explicitly included in the headteacher’s job definition. However, given that not every headteacher has a taste or the requisite qualities for this training role, this “apprenticeship” situation can be properly discharged only in the context of a wider support framework for new headteachers.

Responsibilities may be more widely distributed in schools

Where the school is seen as an administrative unit, the headteacher is a functionary of authority; where it is seen as an enterprise, the headteacher is a manager; where it is a collegiate organization, the headteacher is a leader or facilitator.

Certainly, the staff resources allocated to a school do much to determine what functions the headteacher exercises and the scope for delegating a number of tasks. In the wealthiest countries, small schools are generally less well provided with support staff and headteachers will themselves have to deal with most of these tasks. In poor countries both the number and quality of support staff may prove problematic. Turning to teaching staff to provide the administrative or facilities support is only a makeshift, since teachers have no training in these fields.

In such cases a headteacher may be perfectly well aware where the priorities should lie in the work and, none the less, become absorbed in secondary tasks.

A sufficient number of well-trained colleagues is among the most elementary prerequisites for good management.

In the teaching field, some responsibilities for leadership/facilitating may be delegated to teachers provided that this does not reduce their teaching contribution in their classrooms. Only where teachers have an available margin in their working time can such a sharing of competencies be contemplated. Here again, a school that operates with minimal resources lacks these opportunities for organization, which can have a powerful impact on its effectiveness. Countries which devote sufficient resources to their education system can encourage “shared leadership”, which is likely to have several positive consequences for the quality of the school and system.
A more complex and challenging profession

Headteachers often feel that they are not on top of all the tasks expected of them.

They are confronted with many claims on their attention and are not able to structure their work and devote time to thinking out and preparing the decisions that are taken in their schools.

The decentralization of authority over education to bodies and entities closer to the school increases the administrative burden. School boards and local education offices demand more information and reports while higher administrative authorities demand more statistics and school activity reports.

Societal problems do not stop at the school gate and headteachers are faced with outbursts of violence or antisocial behaviour by young people.

Parents, whether individually or through their representatives on school bodies or their association, demand attention. Activities that take place on school premises outside school hours often require the headteachers’ involvement, especially if they live on the premises.

Despite working hours well in excess of those of teachers, their remuneration is only a little higher than that of their best-paid teachers.

The “advantages” that school holidays offer educational staff are of little relevance. Headteachers spend more time at school than most other staff.

New tasks implicit in educational reforms

Policies of increasing decentralization, autonomy of school management and privatization have moved responsibility for decision-taking to the level of regional or local entities, to parents or communities and to educational professionals in the school. The result has been an increase in the role and responsibility of the headteacher, increased diversification of areas for decision-making and a proliferation of supervisory bodies and partners.

Increased school autonomy over the organization of teaching goes hand in glove with an increase in headteachers’ responsibilities involving assessing teachers and, as far as possible, organizing teachers’ in-service training and professional development or creating the necessary conditions for this purpose (finding replacement staff and re-organizing schedules). These two tasks (or at least one of them) are already required of headteachers in several European countries and other OECD countries. In Denmark, the headteacher determines the organizational policy, distributes resources and decides on the allocation of teachers to courses. In New Zealand, headteachers are required to assess new teachers and recommend them to the Teacher Registration Council if they consider full registration is justified even though, in practice, the shortage of teachers means that virtually all of them obtain registration (EURYDICE, 1996b and 1997a; BIE 1999).

When increased autonomy is accompanied by stagnating or reduced resources, the headteachers’ new tasks include seeking out additional financial resources to enable them to run
their schools. This fund-raising activity, for which they are not necessarily qualified, causes them to move outside their schools and form relationships with several potential partners. Fund-raising is cited, for example, by headteachers in South Africa as one of the most distracting activities that may lead them to neglect tasks that are of higher priority for the quality of their pupils’ learning.

Old roles and new combined

During periods of change, management policy and the roles of headteachers become superimposed and sometimes conflict with each other.

The continuation of the “old” tasks while new roles are emerging makes many feel that their workload has increased considerably and that they cannot cope. The burn-out syndrome that has recently surfaced in professional literature is one of the symptoms of that.

When the recommended new practices are inadequately explained and are not accompanied by the necessary training, they may seem to conflict with the old principles or rules which, however, do not disappear.

Implications of reforms for professional relations

Relations with the educational authorities

Decentralization has profoundly changed the nature of relations with the organizing authorities. The greater autonomy of the school and its headteacher in organizing pupils’ learning processes has been paralleled by a stricter definition of the required standards. The school is judged and may be penalized if it does not meet minimum requirements or does not make progress towards the allocated or agreed objectives.

This implies that the organizing authorities no longer interfere in management decisions as long as the school meets its objectives or makes progress in the required direction. The “performance” replaces the “means requirement”, in which methods and processes were prescribed in detail. This totally transforms the obligation of accountability and the nature of reports that must be produced for the supervisory authority. The key phase in relations with the latter becomes that of negotiating the resources necessary to achieve the results to which one commits.

Relations with parents

Headteachers must reach an understanding with parents, who have become sometimes powerful members of the school board in which they share the decision-making power. They must act, rather than as mediators between the parents on the outside of the school and teachers on the inside, as referees in conflicts that may arise within the school itself.

As, furthermore, educational progress has considerably reduced the culture gap between parents and teachers, the latter are subjected to pressure that they perceive as a loss of social status.

Relations with the economic and social environment

The school’s new openness to its environment finds expression in two separate trends.
Firstly, the problems that society cannot resolve find their way into the school, which can no longer be considered a sanctuary. Violence, trafficking and risk-taking behaviour do not stop at the school entrance and require especial vigilance on everyone’s part. Teachers, in particular those in “difficult” schools, rightly complain that the peace and tranquility needed for effective learning are not always present. Sometimes they voice the feeling that the school is tasked with solving societal problems to the detriment of its traditional role of education. It is headteachers who must bear these new tensions because they are the chief interlocutor for the authorities and social institutions and the intermediary between them and the teachers.

The quest for supplementary funding which school autonomy permits, and sometimes demands where basic funding is insufficient, is a completely new activity, especially for the public education sector. The headteacher, if necessary with the help of members of the school board, is required to create various partnerships with communities, enterprises and the voluntary sector. These partnerships strengthen the school’s autonomy and enable it to develop a plan that may go beyond what is strictly prescribed by the organizing authority.

But at the same time, they present a risk to the schools that succeed most with them: such schools’ relatively comfortable financial position may induce their major funders to reduce their contribution. In the case of some schools, located in a more beneficial economic and social environment, the additional activities they can offer their pupils by resorting to local partnerships may appear excessive to less fortunate schools whose position could be improved by a redistribution of public funds.

In countries whose education system is chiefly in the public sector, this is one topic in the debate about the consequences and fairness of what some see as at least a partial privatization of educational funding.

 Relations with teachers

Arguably, the area most affected by reforms is the relationship between headteachers and teachers.

Decentralization has strengthened the headteachers’ role in teacher recruitment and appraisal. Traditional appraisal procedures as applied through periodic teacher inspection used to be infrequent and far more concerned with teaching methods than with outcomes. The new emphasis on results places constant pressure on teachers, and the headteachers serve as intermediary between them and the school assessment authorities: they collect and compile the results of learning tests. On learning how their schools’ results compare with those of comparable schools or of the entire region or country, they report back to the teachers and set targets and steps to be taken.

As leaders of teaching, they must persuade sometimes very individualistic professionals to work together. They must provide advice and suggest methods even though they may feel that their own education gives them no particular authority in that area. Their situation is more comfortable if they can draw on a team of seasoned teachers to provide joint leadership.


**Job attractiveness**

The question of the attractiveness of careers in education has been raised in many countries which fear that they may not be able to replace the large numbers of teachers due to retire in coming years (EURYDICE 2002 and OECD 2005). Maintaining the quality of newly-recruited teachers is sometimes a concern too. At times the problem is even more acute in respect of headteachers.

It is widely observed that headteachers’ workload has increased. The ILO has observed that in 1994 the statutory or expected average working hours of headteachers, which almost everywhere was 40 hours a week (only the Czech Republic and the United Kingdom reported a higher average number of hours) had hardly changed. Nevertheless, the considerable overtime devoted to a whole gamut of ancillary activities in some countries is rarely included in the workload (ILO 1996). Recent assessments in the USA suggest that the headteacher of a primary or first-tier secondary school works an average of nine hours per day and 54 hours per week (Olson 1999). Increased diversification of roles may well accentuate those aspects of headteachers’ work.

It might be thought that the small difference in remuneration compared with that of teachers made the headteacher's job relatively unattractive. It is a commonplace and is due to the continuing influence of the traditional view which basically sees headships as outlets or promotions for teachers. There is little comparative information on headteachers’ remuneration but in a few countries, such as the USA, their remuneration is considerably higher than that of teachers – which does not protect the country from a shortage of headteachers.

Indicators that the job may be unattractive are difficulties in recruitment, measured by e.g. the number and duration of vacancies, and the number of resignations. We also have fairly imprecise data on the frequency of specific disorders such as professional exhaustion (burn-out syndrome), which is defined as a state of protracted physical, psychological and mental exhaustion which primarily affects people who give their all to their work and take on responsibilities.
THE NEW COMPETENCIES

The competencies required of a headteacher are not identical with those required of a teacher. An excellent teacher does not necessarily make a good headteacher. However, a knowledge of the teaching profession with its constraints and its freedoms is essential for a headteacher, and in most countries that leads to teachers being recruited as headteachers.

Although it is desirable for teachers to be familiarized in their initial training with practices designed to improve school performance that they will have to apply, it is just as useful for them to be made aware of the managerial functions to which they may accede as their careers develop.

Some of the qualities required to exercise those functions, however, are related to personality and character traits that develop over time, and cannot easily be acquired through training.

Competencies expected of headteachers

Highlighting the transformation of the headteacher’s role and the new competencies it requires does not mean that the competencies traditionally applied by headteachers have become obsolete. Similarly, some of the tasks described as “new” could be said to have existed previously, but their importance was secondary to others. The current expectations which have arisen in response to policy and organizational changes in education systems are merely a change in the priority placed on the tasks to be performed and the skills to be preferred in selection and training.

Priority for leadership of teaching

The expression “leadership of teaching” refers to a headteacher’s ability to lead a process of change that sustainably involves the participation of all members of an educational community.

Improvement of the quality of education and learning can only result from each teacher’s individual action in the classroom and in conjunction with colleagues and all other staff who contribute to the school’s operation.

This ability to facilitate requires the headteacher to prioritize relations with people, to work consultatively and seek everyone’s participation and everyone’s subscription to a common plan. The headteacher must, therefore, know everyone and take an interest in their career development and their performance needs.

The headteacher has a key role in defining and leading the school plan. The definition of the plan he or she puts forward to the school is based on a vision of the future that both rests on shared values and breaks with traditions.

In leading the plan headteachers must anticipate and prepare everyone for the changes to avoid surprise and the loss of commitment that may stem from it. Headteachers must be pragmatic, adapt to reality and find compromises.
While the way in which headteachers may exercise this function of teaching leadership depends largely on their own qualities and the particular situation of the school, it is also largely shaped by existing managerial tradition. In countries where education has long been decentralized, the emphasis is more usually placed on developing a “school culture” and on building a community to improve performance. In countries with a strong tradition of centralization, this approach encounters resistance and leadership will be presented differently: greater autonomy is given to all the actors and the leader agrees contracts with all of them stipulating the objectives they must reach and the compensation they may expect. This contractual view of leadership places more weight on the results to be achieved and the means of achieving them and less on the climate to be created in the school.

Competency frameworks for headteachers

In recent years, a new tendency has been observed to describe in exact detail the headteacher’s role by drawing up frameworks of competencies or sets of professional “standards”.

Professional standards and competency frameworks

A small number of countries has chosen to approach the problem of recruiting, training and developing managerial staff by drawing up competency frameworks. These frameworks are jointly designed by the professionals and the organizing authorities, and they identify and describe in detail the knowledge and competencies required to manage a school effectively.

They are intended for use in designing training and development programmes: pre-service training, training on taking up the post and in-service training. In part they enable training providers to be chosen and their programmes to be agreed.

They may also be used as a basis for assessing candidates for professional accreditation.

Lastly, they may be used in the periodic in-service assessment of headteachers and in defining personal development programmes as their career progresses.

They all contain practically the same elements but differently defined and ordered, reflecting different priorities.7

The American framework begins with leadership of teaching, developing a vision for the school and responsibility for building its culture before moving on to managerial and organizational abilities. The British framework is more detailed, but reveals the same priorities. The French framework first spells out the competencies relating to organization before tackling the ability to develop and lead the school plan. In respect of plan leadership it emphasizes understanding national guidelines and the dialogue to be established with the educational authorities. The contrast between the two styles of leadership mentioned above emerges clearly in this comparison.

7 The American, Canadian, British and French frameworks are annexed.
RECRUITMENT, APPRAISAL AND TRAINING

The importance that leadership of teaching has assumed in headteachers’ functions will doubtless tend to maintain and strengthen the preference for recruiting them from proven teachers or educators who have acquired in school the experience needed to lead teams of teachers.

However, that recruitment can be prepared well ahead of time, through teachers’ own training or by teachers increasingly specializing by rotating through various responsibilities in a school before being accredited as suitable for headteachership.

That possibility raises the question of the headteacher’s career. This career concept stands in contrast to two frequently observed concepts: The “principal” may be seen as a teacher who has stopped or reduced his or her teaching activities to dedicate himself or herself to leading and managing a school. The position is temporary because the principal is expected to return to teaching duties after a certain time. The concept is consistent with the headteacher being elected by colleagues and is still frequently encountered in higher education. The difficulty is that very few headteachers return to teaching after holding such a position.

The second and more “realistic” view sees headship as an outlet for brilliant teachers or those tired of teaching. They then take this path for the rest of their working lives and are aware of changing profession and beginning a second career.

Recruitment of headteachers

Recruitment is a key act

The change in headteachers’ functions calls for the use of different competencies or skills which must be ascertained in candidates at the time of recruitment or acquired through initial or in-service training. A large part of these skills cannot be passed on through traditional training of the academic type. Nor can trust be placed in “on-the-job” learning – a process of trial and error that rests on an individual who is placed in a position of responsibility without preparation or supervision.

When formally organized, the training of future or newly-appointed headteachers is changing to take account of these new roles and the new competencies required.

The concept of career

The problems of headteachers’ careers are closely linked with those of teachers’ careers. For most young people choosing the teaching profession, the prospect of doing the same thing for 30 or 35 years is relatively off-putting. The prospects of professional development, regardless of salary development, appear limited. A small number of them may envisage a second career in education administration but aspiring teachers or new recruits are not usually offered a clear career prospect in which a progression of tasks and functions is planned and organized.
Recruitment as a headteacher or deputy headteacher tends to happen when a teacher has a considerable service record, and when they are fully trained – which takes a certain time – they have only a limited period left in which to exercise their functions fully.

This problem is starting to be tackled in a number of countries and interesting innovations have already been made.

NEW CAREERS IN EDUCATION IN THE UNITED KINGDOM
(ENGLAND AND WALES): THE FAST-TRACK TEACHING PROGRAMME

The Fast-track Teaching Programme was introduced in 2000. Its purpose is to offer qualified teachers in the early stages of their careers the prospects of rapid advancement and varied support for their training and development.

It is designed to encourage young teachers to take up responsibilities in schools. After five years they should be ready to undertake the functions of a Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher or Advanced Skills Teacher.

Support will be made available in school by a mentor and by access to a network of resources and persons.


Among other recent examples, the creation of new posts of Senior Assistant Masters/Mistresses in Guyana should be noted in particular (IBE 1999). In Argentina, attempts to adopt a career structure with many characteristics identical to those in the United Kingdom have not been successful, partly on account of strong opposition from teacher unions (Vegas, Pritchett & Experton, 1999).

Recruitment methods

Great diversity is to be observed in the conditions of recruitment of headteachers around the world.

Requirements for appointment may be qualifications or professional experience as a teacher or administrator.

Recruitment generally involves specific training which may be preliminary or may occur on taking up the position or in the early years of tenure.

Requirements for recruitment

In most countries headteachers must be qualified as teachers and have served from two to 10 years in a school. In Europe only Finland, which requires teachers wishing to become headteachers to obtain an advanced diploma in school administration, does not impose a length-of-service qualification.
In this it resembles the majority of American states which require a specific professional qualification (licensure), acquired through a university course in education management, for access to headteachersonship. This qualification may sometimes be acquired after taking up the function. Sometimes the license may be obtained in two stages, one before recruitment and the other a few years later. Although most education administrators started their professional lives as teachers, it is not a requirement and access to the profession is quite diversified.

**Experienced teachers “thrown in at the deep end”**

Headteachers may still (as was frequently the case a few decades ago) be appointed and take up their position immediately, without specific training. This happens in particular in many countries of the South where in-service training is impossible to organize for headteachers of schools outside the large cities for reasons of cost and travel time. In these circumstances, thoughts turn to the possibilities of new communication technologies and the development of on-line training adapted to the country’s needs. UNESCO has set up the International Institute for Capacity-Building in Africa (IICBA), which has its headquarters in Addis Ababa in Ethiopia, with a view to developing the use of ICT in education and to promoting cooperation in training teachers and educational administrators.

However, a widespread use of ICT is largely dependent on access to equipment and networks. Telephone or electrical network connections are sometimes problematic and workstations scarce or dysfunctional.

**The training of headteachers**

**Different approaches to training**

The conception of training is closely linked to the role attributed to headteachers, and it is consequently no surprise that the objectives and methods of training have evolved.

Observing the content of training programmes traditionally offered to newly recruited headteachers, one notes that there are often courses in public administration, public finance and budgetary law. These courses, which correspond to the administrative conception of the headteacher’s functions, tend to disappear or to be downgraded in the most recently developed programmes, considered to be the most “advanced”.

In other programmes the emphasis is on managerial aspects. The technical and managerial conception of training often takes the form of a set of specific programmes, a training menu from which the new headteacher chooses in the light of his or her needs.

In recent programmes the introduction of networked exchanges and of “mentoring”, which use the transmission of seasoned headteachers’ experience as a pillar of training, takes account of the contingent nature of leadership. The transmission of experience and confronting viewpoints is better preparation for situations that are always individual. A preferred emphasis on personal development leads to the provision of personalized training.
Training methods

Headteachers’ professional training may be organized in a large number of ways. The options chosen will depend on available resources and the answers to a number of questions.

→ **Should training precede recruitment or follow it?**

Conceivably, as in numerous professions, part of the training might be acquired in academic or professional teaching establishments. A second instalment would then follow when the qualified candidate was recruited by an employer. The balance between these two parts depends on the requirements for a particular position and the complexity of the functions to be discharged. Some university programmes produce “ready-to-employ” graduates but for some positions everything must be learned upon recruitment by an employer. In some countries headteacher recruitment is conditional on possession of a specialized higher education diploma. In most, however, the sole requirement is to have taught or to have worked in the education sector for a certain number of years: training, if any, is supplied upon taking up the post.

→ **To whom should the organization of training be entrusted?**

The profession itself may be left to define the methods and content of the training thought necessary to qualify: in Canada, for instance, there is a professional body that takes responsibility for training headteachers.

The employer naturally has an interest in organizing the training of its staff, especially if the initial training of the persons recruited is thought inadequate. But the profession and the employers may leave it to specialist training bodies to organize training, providing it with a set of more or less binding “specifications”.

→ **What training methods?**

Traditional programmes may be found that comprise a structured body of learning or a catalogue of short courses from which one can pick and choose. The former offer the advantage of coherence but are not always suited to the needs of a diverse public.

Courses may be provided in training centres or by distance learning. Distance learning is often used in countries where low population density and long distances make on-site training too costly in time or money. Distance learning may combine self-tuition with tutorial or mentoring sessions.

Lastly, new forms of cooperative working have been developed using options made available by progress in information and communication technologies: networking, internet forums, distance mentoring using e-mail. These techniques are particularly valuable for people who must undergo training while in post, because their “time-shifting” aspect allows work to be done at one’s own speed and when time is available.

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Initial training

→ **Training prior to recruitment**

In some countries such as the USA, the right to practice requires preliminary university-style training sanctioned by a diploma equivalent to a Master’s degree. These programmes seek to equip future headteachers with immediately usable professional knowledge. Elsewhere, although there
is no such requirement, universities offer similar programmes on education management, which give candidates for headships an extra advantage.

The programmes offered by American universities in the 1990s were subjected to convergent criticism which led to a far-reaching restructuring. Although they were approved by the states, those programmes suffered from a lack of selectiveness and a content unsuited to the new emerging needs. They were criticized for relying too systematically on overly theoretical education provided by teachers unfamiliar with the reality of working in schools.

They were reformed to make room for more work experience in schools and to allow greater customization to each student's needs and plans. In some cases, state educational authorities have relaxed the requirements for accreditation (licensure) by enabling some of the training to take place after the new headteachers have been recruited.

**Initial training after recruitment**

Most countries recruit without prior training.

Training prior to taking up the post is sometimes restricted to a few weeks. In the best cases, it may last up to six months. It is followed by a period of variable length during which the new headteacher is still considered a trainee. When the appointment is as deputy headteacher, that period may be extended until a full headteachership is secured. This protracted period of acquiring the necessary skills and experience may involve a mentor, an experienced colleague who follows the new headteacher's progress on a one-to-one basis. In France the headteacher naturally plays that role for the deputy appointed to his or her school after the competitive recruitment examination.

Initial training is tending to become more complex and more customized. It lasts for a relatively long time, requires a combination of methods and tends to involve relatively complex programmes.

**In-service training**

After their initial training headteachers may feel the need for ongoing training. This enables them to update their knowledge and keep up with changes decided by the political authorities. In-service training also marks out the career of educational administrators as they secure promotion or change posts. It is also a tool for personal development on the basis of the professional appraisal arrangements for headteachers.

These diverse functions require in-service training to be organized pragmatically and to use a range of resources and training methods.

In countries where thinking is most advanced about in-service training for headteachers, training through research is included: practising research is in fact seen as likely to increase individual self-reliance and the ability to manage change.

The advantage of this can be seen when the career developments available to headteachers are particularly elaborate, such as what is being established in England and Wales. There the headteacher's career consists of several stages: one prepares for the position of headteacher
by acting as “leader of teaching” and deputy headteacher. A confirmed headteacher may be promoted to advanced head and be given a role as an adviser and mentor. Finally, as consultant head, one is required to take part in appraisal, help to design schools’ development plans and take part in guiding the school system.

How can competencies be unified?

Customization of training calls for a variety of training methods and an overview of the learning. How can the experience and knowledge that an individual acquires throughout a professional lifetime be structured coherently?

Unless this problem is solved, the profession may well splinter.

Reference to a clear framework will enable the different elements in each individual’s training to form a coherent whole and a homogeneous professional body to emerge.

Customized training calls for watchful monitoring and external validation. That is why it is so closely interwoven with appraisal.

Two examples of training systems for headteachers

The English training system

The NCSL coordinates:

- Courses leading to NPQH qualification
- Training on taking up a post
- In-service training

This training is organized by regional centres in partnership with universities. It was assessed in March 2005 (MORI).

The French system

Managed at regional (Académie) level, it relies on a national resource centre, the Ecole Supérieure de l’Education Nationale (Higher Academy of National Education, ESEN).

When the appointee takes up the post, it provides a blend of external training modules and a system of apprenticeship which relies on experienced headteachers.

In-service training is very limited.

It was assessed in 2005 (the Obin report).
Appraisal

Given the strategic role that they play in improving school effectiveness, appraisal of headteachers’ competencies also holds a key part in professional and career development. Virtually all European countries provide some form of appraisal by the organizing authority or by inspectors but, curiously, EURYDICE (1996) noted, in its mid-1990s survey, that in almost half of them appraisal was not regularly done at least at one or more levels.

In recent years, however, in the spirit of decentralization of management to school level, appraisal of the headteacher is giving way to assessment of the school as a whole. Given that schools are in a variety of positions, the organizing authority is replacing the impersonal, formal criteria of inspection with an assessment based on objectives negotiated with the schools and the management teams. Each school’s development project or strategic plan, which is defined on the basis of specific constraints and available resources, in accordance with broader objectives set at local, regional or national level, becomes the model for the assessment. The progress achieved which can be imputed collectively to the management team, the school staff and its partners is measured with reference to objectives defined by the school or derived by it from broader objectives, taking account of the real situation.

In countries where this school plan system has been introduced, observation of the circumstances in which it is applied has confirmed that schools are extremely varied in respect of motivation and organization (as is shown by analysis of school plans in France).

The headteachers, place in the development and leadership of this collective plan is extremely varied. They may try to bring the educational community to work together on a genuinely collective plan, with the risk that the project may appear limited and not unified. Conversely, they may with minimal consultation develop a plan which is essentially their own: this may appear more coherent and ambitious but its objectives are less likely to be implemented because they are not shared by everyone.

Assessment of the school, appraisal of the headteacher

It is inevitably hard to distinguish between the school’s plan and the management team’s plan. Headteachers can only be appraised personally on their ability to apply a specific plan, in a specific context. For that reason, personal appraisal procedures for headteachers tend to become individualized.

On recruitment or appointment to a school, each headteacher negotiates a “contract” with the employer which will serve as a reference-point for appraisal. The headteacher commits to objectives to be achieved over the medium term, taking account of the school’s position as noted at the outset. That contract will periodically be renegotiated and adapted in the light of progress observed.

The role of competency frameworks in appraisal

Frameworks of competencies for managerial staff have been drawn up for different purposes in different countries. One purpose, as presented above, is for use in headteachers’ initial and in-service training.
A second purpose is to advise the public and the school’s partners – parents, local elected representatives and economic and social officers involved in education – what expectations they might have of the school and its managers.

A third purpose is for use in appraising serving headteachers and defining areas in which they require improvement and training.

In most countries where such frameworks exist, they have been developed in conjunction with the employers, headteacher representatives and experts. They are therefore accepted by everyone, but none the less arouse suspicion in the organizations representing the personnel concerned, who particularly fear their use in appraisal processes and career development.

Annexed are three examples of competency frameworks developed in England, the USA and France. Despite the quite far-reaching differences between those three countries’ education systems, a high degree of convergence will be noted among the frameworks.

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**Appraisal methods**

The new methods of appraising managerial staff in France are completely in accordance with this concept. On taking up office, the new headteacher establishes a diagnosis of the school and suggests to his or hersuperior, the Rector of the Académie, objectives which will after discussion be formalized in a “statement of mission”, against which the headteacher will be assessed.

In the different context of the USA, the outcome of the local-level appraisal by the school superintendents leads to similar proposals (Lashway, 2003). The Center for School Leadership Development of the University of North Carolina proposes the following procedure. Headteachers undertake a self-appraisal on the basis of the frameworks of competencies laid down at state and federal level. They then discuss that appraisal with their superiors so as to identify areas in which they should develop. The superiors help them to define some professional development objectives. For each of them a strategy is defined with factors against which their achievements will be measured and a timetable. Headteachers and their superiors meet periodically to monitor progress and conduct a review.
CONCLUSIONS

After presenting this panorama of the problems that economic, political and social change in education systems is creating for school leadership, and giving examples of innovative solutions found across the world, attention should now be focused on a small number of particularly important points. They relate to school governance, the recruitment and careers of headteachers, their appraisal and their training.

**Governance**

The headteacher must have the means to develop the school

If headteachers are given the responsibility for managing change and permanent improvement in their schools, they must have the necessary means of action. This includes the ability to establish and motivate teams around themselves and in the school as a whole.

This implies having a voice in teacher recruitment and career development: headteachers must have a range of incentives that they can use in response to the preference of each member of the school staff. Those incentives include adjustments to working conditions and allocating specific functions and financial or other rewards for discharging them. In short, headteachers must have available every option that is compatible with the law or personnel statutes to adapt the work and compensate for any hardships of people serving in the school.

Headteachers must be able to concentrate on the essentials to ensure their pupils’ success

To that end schools must have specialist staff of a sufficient standard to handle the facilities and administrative functioning. There must be at least one administrative and financial manager and one or more deputies depending on the size and complexity of the managerial tasks.

**Recruitment and career**

Recruit early and plan a career path

Candidates for leadership positions should be identified as early as possible among interested teachers or those with appropriate aptitudes. That would enable a transitional arrangement to be made involving limited responsibilities in the field of leadership of teaching.
Provide appropriate training during preparation for the post and early service

Account should be taken of the complexity of the headteacher’s profession by providing flexible personalized training before entry into post and in the early years.

Appraisal of headteachers

Appraisal related to the school plan

The appraisal methodology to be instituted must seek to measure the headteacher’s ability to lead a development plan for a school taking account of its particular characteristics. The appraisal relies on self-appraisal and on a framework of competencies. It leads to the possibility of personal development through appropriate training and a stimulating career progression.

Training

Teacher training

Content on school management should be included in teacher training to assist relations with headteachers and to alert teachers from the onset of their careers to leadership roles. That will enable teachers who might have the taste or aptitude for managerial work to be involved in it quite early, or potential headteachers to be identified.

In that regard, reforms in the recruitment and training of headteachers recently introduced in the United Kingdom seem particularly suitable (National College of School Leadership).

Prepare future headteachers in advance of recruitment

Headteacher training should be designed as a continuum starting with initial teacher training and leading to a gradual diversification of functions, taking account of the individual’s wishes and aptitudes. This implies that the design of teacher training should not be isolated from that of management staff.

Training in research and through research

With a view to fostering permanent innovation so as to improve school performance continuously, teachers and headteachers should be given research-based training to prepare them to question existing practice. That training should commence in initial training and continue throughout the career so as to produce independent-minded professionals capable of analysing their practices and adapting them continuously.
ACRONYMS

ADEA   Association for the Development of Education in Africa
AFIDES  International French-speaking Association of Directors of Educational Establishments
ICP    International Conference of Principals
IEA    International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement
IPES   Steering Indicators for Secondary Schools
ISLLC  Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium
ESEN   Ecole supérieure de l’éducation nationale (Higher Academy for National Education) (France)
HCEE   Haut Conseil pour l’Evaluation de l’Ecole (High Council for School Assessment)
NCSL   National College of School Leadership (England and Wales)
NPQH   National Professional Qualification for Headship
PISA   Programme for international student assessment
SACMEQ Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Consortium for Monitoring Education Quality
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Annex 1: Competency frameworks for secondary school headteachers

**American ISLLC framework**

The framework most used in the USA to define the content and assessment of headteacher training programmes, produced by the ISLLC, the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium.

A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by:

- facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by the school community;
- advocating, nurturing, and sustaining a school culture and instructional programme conducive to student learning and staff professional growth;
- ensuring management of the organization, operations, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment;
- collaborating with families and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources;
- acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner;
- understanding, responding to, and influencing the larger political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context.

**Ontario College of Teachers’ Principal Qualification Programme**

The Principal Qualification Programme is based on the acquisition of knowledge, competencies and methods which will prepare the holder of this qualification to:

- respect the Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession and the Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession;
- build and sustain learning communities that support diversity and promote excellence, accountability, anti-racism, equity, partnerships and innovation;
- demonstrate accountability for the achievement of all students and promote student success and lifelong learning in partnership with staff, parents and the community;
- align, develop and monitor programmes, structures, processes, resources and staff to support student achievement;
- manage and direct the human, material, financial and technological resources for efficient and effective schools;
- initiate, facilitate and manage change, and operate successfully in a dynamic environment that is characterized by increasing complexity;
understand and apply education and student-related legislation in Ontario and district school board policies that have an impact on the school, students, staff and community;

dialogue with persons interested in education on all aspects of education at provincial level and at district school board level.

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These competencies are grouped in six areas:

1. **Shaping the Future**
   - Think strategically, build and communicate a coherent vision in a range of compelling ways
   - Inspire, challenge, motivate and empower others to carry the vision forward
   - Model the values and vision of the school

2. **Leading Learning and Teaching**
   - Demonstrate personal enthusiasm for and commitment to the learning process
   - Demonstrate the principles and practice of effective teaching and learning
   - Access, analyse and interpret information
   - Initiate and support research and debate about effective learning and teaching and develop relevant strategies for performance improvement
   - Acknowledge excellence and challenge poor performance across the school

3. **Developing Self and Working with Others**
   - Foster an open, fair, equitable culture and manage conflict
   - Develop, empower and sustain individuals and teams
   - Collaborate and network with others within and beyond the school
   - Challenge, influence and motivate others to attain high goals
   - Give and receive effective feedback and act to improve personal performance
   - Accept support from others including colleagues, governors and the LEA

4. **Managing the Organization**
   - Establish and sustain appropriate structures and systems
   - Manage the school efficiently and effectively on a day-to-day basis
   - Delegate management tasks and monitor their implementation
   - Prioritize, plan and organize themselves and others
   - Make professional, managerial and organisational decisions based on informed judgments
Think creatively to anticipate and solve problems

5 Securing Accountability

- Demonstrate political insight and anticipate trends
- Engage the school community in the systematic and rigorous self-evaluation of the work of the school
- Collect and use a rich set of data to understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school
- Combine the outcomes of regular school self-review with external evaluations in order to develop the school

6 Strengthening Community

- Recognize and take account of the richness and diversity of the school’s communities
- Engage in a dialogue which builds partnerships and community consensus on values, beliefs and shared responsibilities
- Listen to, reflect and act on community feedback
- Build and maintain effective relationships with parents, carers, partners and the community, that enhance the education of all pupils

National framework of activities and competencies of managerial personnel
Ministry of National Education – France (2001)

→ Administer the school

- Be familiar with the general organization of the State, national education and the school
- Be able to identify and recognize the hierarchy of standards (political and administrative)
- Know the range of competencies of the headteacher and of each of his or her usual interlocutors

→ Know

- The legal and administrative foundations of the school’s functioning
- It’s budgetary and financial operating rules

→ Appreciate the conditions in which his/her responsibility is exercised

→ Develop through consultation the school’s teaching and learning policy

→ Build that policy (school plan) on the basis of knowledge of:
• the learning methods of children and adolescents;
• the behaviour of young people and adults;
• the pupils’ study paths, their strengths and potential, the nature of their difficulties;
• teaching programmes, reference frameworks;
• the major objectives attached thereto.

→ In the framework of a dialogue with the regional management (Rector, regional inspector and their technical advisers), establish the necessary links between national and regional guidelines and the school in its context

→ Drive, motivate and lead this teaching and learning policy

→ In order to manage and develop the school’s human resources:
  • act in accordance with the regulation and code of ethics for management of staff;
  • identify strengths and weaknesses in staff;
  • value, encourage, help;
  • assess the way the staff exercise their profession, personal involvement;

→ In order to mobilize individuals and work in teams:
  • analyse, synthesize and describe the elements of a policy or project;
  • create suitable conditions for teams, in particular for the management team; motivate them and involve oneself in it;
  • listen, take account of opinions, negotiate;
  • call upon expertise, delegate (set objectives, require a report);
  • decide.

→ In order to steer a plan:
  • set objectives;
  • analyse a situation, measure and describe the shortcomings;
  • formulate and apply strategies;
  • regulate (reformulate the problems so that they can be addressed), evaluate;
  • measure the extent to which objectives have been met, report on it;
  • make relevant use, in relation to the plan, of simple statistical tools.

→ In order to communicate:
  • organize consultation and information exchange;
- clearly explain policies;
- highlight the actions, successes and results of teams and individuals;
- communicate in case of crisis;
- enable, facilitate and develop teamwork.

→ **Listen to and understand what is expected of the position and one's own performance in it**
Annex 2: Examples of training schemes for secondary school headteachers
Extracts from Huber & West (2002)

Headteacher qualification in Germany

The scheme in the land of Bavaria

Provider: Akademie für Lehrerfortbildung und Personalführung Dillingen

Target group: Recently appointed headteachers; all types of school

Objective: to help leaders to assume their new responsibilities and to play a key role in the effective management of their school within the framework of central directives, and in the implementation of development processes proposed by the Ministry of Education of the land of Bavaria.

Content:

Course I: Discussion of the management function; school organization and administration; educational legislation;

Course II: Managing conferences; staff leadership (headteacher’s functions, leadership methods and principles, management strategies); communication competencies; other topics: teamworking, teaching programmes, etc);

Course III: Staff leadership (conflict management); school improvement and quality (school plan, school profile, identity, SRS strategies); respect for the environment;

Course IV: Representational function; working with parents, management of temporary staff; teaching foreign pupils.

Method: seminars, lectures, teamwork, motivation techniques, role-play, simulation, learning through doing, discussion periods, visits (to innovative schools and foreign school systems).

Course plan: 15/20 course days over the year.

Schedule: Course I: one week during the summer vacation, between appointment and taking up office; Course II: one week in November/December; Course III: one week in May/June; Course IV: one week organized locally.

Status: mandatory.

Cost: no data: State-funded course.

Headteacher qualification in England and Wales, Great Britain

National Professional Qualification for Headship

Provider: accredited centres under contract to the Ministry of Education; in future the National College for School Leadership should play an important part in agreeing the contract with providers and in quality assurance.

Target Group: those aspiring to management positions, prior to application.
Objective: to teach the leadership and managerial skills needed to apply for a headship.

Content: mandatory module: strategic leadership and transparency (drawing up a strategic plan aimed at improving academic achievement; implementation for high-quality teaching; monitoring and assessment of school effectiveness; reports on school efficiency and effectiveness for the board, the staff, the parents and the pupils).

Complementary modules: teaching and learning; leading and managing staff; efficient and effective deployment of staff and resources.

Method: self-assessment, courses, seminars, workshops, case studies, simulations, progress reports and group presentations; material used: inspection reports, research findings, video, etc.

Course plan: 10-25 course days (depending on the number of modules) plus the project in a school environment, individual study and preparation of a mission, over 1-3 years.

Schedule: mandatory module: 180 hours (60 hours at the centre and 120 hours for the school plan, individual work and mission preparation); the other three modules: 90 hours each (30 hours at the centre and 60 for the project and mission in a school environment).

Status: optional (mandatory since 2002); greatly appreciated by school recruitment panels.

Cost: between €3,200 and €4,700 (£2,000-3000) per person depending on the number of modules selected. Several funding sources are suggested, but candidates may also be self-funding.

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National scheme applicable to secondary education

Provider: ESEN and regional centres.

Target group: future secondary school headteachers chosen through the selection process after succeeding in the competitive written (a dossier) and oral examination.

Objective: to instil the leadership and managerial skills needed to manage a secondary school.

Content: administration; educational legislation; management techniques; budgets; teacher appraisal; relational skills; managing conferences and group meetings.

Method: modular seminars at the institute alternating with practical placements in school (with the headteacher as mentor), in an enterprise or in a public service.

Course plan: Phase 1: “training for first position”: 24 weeks (120 days) spread over six months, full time, from January to June, immediately after selection.

Schedule: 4-6 weeks in the institute, regularly alternating with placements to schools lasting 12 weeks in total; 4-6 weeks of practical training in an enterprise and two weeks of practical training in a regional public service.

Phase 2: “In-service training”: 21 days: Placements of one or two days immediately after appointment to a headteachership or deputy headteachership during the two-year probationary period.
**Status:** mandatory: selection and training form a single whole: training reserved for persons selected: selection and training are required for access to a headship position.

**Cost:** no data: qualification funded by the State: participants benefit from training leave for the full duration of the first phase.

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**Headteacher qualification in the Netherlands**

**Provider:** Nederlandse School voor Onderwijsmanagement (NSO – Netherlands School for Educational Management), operated jointly by five universities.

**Target group:** candidates for and holders of headships and deputy headships, particularly at secondary level.

**Objective:** to develop management skills in education (school or other) environments; improving prospects for acceding to a management position through formal qualification (certificate).

**Content:** context management and strategic management; organizational management; operational management; management and organization theory; organizational models in the education sector; organization diagnosis; decision-making; school management, management advice; marketing and public relations; contractual activities; monitoring the school culture; management styles; staff management; recruitment, selection and leadership of new colleagues; appraisal interviews; leadership of serving personnel; relations with staff and collective negotiations; leadership of education; study programmes and teaching; creating modules; productivity and quality; innovation; external and internal leadership, external training advice and leadership; information management systems; management of IT installations; finance and budget, individual management problems, some leadership practices in educational environments.

**Method:** lectures, reports, seminars, training sessions, consultations, role-play and simulation, case study, colleagues’ articles, log-book (on the personal learning process)/ written reflections, school plan/placement in an educational environment.

**Course plan:** 144 course days (four semesters, each with 215 days of attendance), plus preparation and implementation of the placement plan (four semesters, 140 hours each), research and reading of specialist articles, and placements, over two years.

**Schedule:** seminars: 20 hours per semester on Wednesdays (afternoon or evening); training: 75 hours per semester, on Fridays and Saturdays; supervision: 15-20 hours per semester; placement project: 140 hours per semester.

**Status:** optional, recognized by the authorities in view of the NSO’s reputation.

**Cost:** around €7,200 (16,000 guilders) per person; financed by the attendees (sometimes by the school budget).
Headteacher qualification in Hong Kong, China

Introductory course

Provider: Ministry of Education of Hong Kong.

Target group: recently-appointed headteachers.

Objective: introduction to new tasks and responsibilities, to facilitate the redefinition of functions, relations and responsibilities among the different staff categories.

Content: topical problems of education policy in Hong Kong; role and functions of secondary school headteachers; school plan and mission; communication; use of IT in education and inspection; management by objectives; prevention of corruption; management of change; increasing autonomy; working with people dealing with educational or emotional difficulties; educational legislation and regulation; function of management in secondary education; the headteacher as a leader; staff selection; school finance and accountability; programme management; relations between management and the media; quality assurance; inspection; annual provision and estimates; labour law; crisis management; team-building; prioritization; action plan and post-training assessment.

Method: courses given by external personnel, discussion, case studies.

Course plan: nine days over two-three weeks.

Schedule: nine 3-6 hour sessions covering the six topics.

Status: mandatory.

Cost: no data, publicly funded.