



Let's care

BUILDING SAFE AND CARING SCHOOLS
TO FOSTER EDUCATIONAL INCLUSION
AND SCHOOL ACHIEVEMENT

D6.7 Policy Scoping Report



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DOCUMENT CONTRIBUTORS

Deliverable responsible	POLO	
Contributors	Organisation	
Alessio Perpolli	POLO	
Diego Grazioli	POLO	
Maciej Dymacz	ARID	
Aleksandra Lenartowicz	ARID	
Alba Couso Losada	COM	
Iglika Angelova	KITE	
Nuria Lores	CID	
Miguel Mendez Perez	JEX	
Macarena Verástegui	PROMA	
Jurgita Vaitiekuniene	PRSC	
Pedro Dias	UCP	
Reviewers	Organisation	
Ángela Ordóñez Carabaño	COM	
Abel Muñiz	ZIC	



Carolina Simón	ZIC
----------------	-----

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviation	Description
ESL	Early School Leaving
STEM	Science, technology, engineering and math
TEIP	Educational Territories of Priority Intervention Programme
VET	Vocational education and training
CFAE	Centros de Formação de Associação de Escolas [Schools Association Training Centers]



Executive Summary

The LET'S CARE teacher-student attachment-based education model aims to prevent early school leaving, and this policy scoping report is designed to support the development of policy recommendations and strategies to create a more supportive and nurturing educational environment for all students. This deliverable main purpose is to facilitate a dialogue with policy-makers and to provide a foundation for future actionable policy recommendations. This report analyses the different aspects necessary to develop effective policy recommendations and strategies for implementation, starting from the existing policies and legislations related to early school leaving and the needs and perspectives of teachers and families.

The document is divided into 4 parts: introduction, objectives of the policy scoping process, analysis and review of policies and needs, and conclusions with the project's positive outcomes and considerations.



1. Introduction

The main objective of LET'S CARE research is to comprehensively define and improve the caring dimension of educational inclusion and academic success strategies. LET'S CARE project aims at identifying the most impacting factors responsible for underachievement, poor engagement, or early school leaving in the 4 ecological and social pillars of the educational communities: Individual, Relational, Community, and Political. Therefore, the project promotes the research of innovative approaches to eradicate the educational and social exclusion of economically, socially, and culturally disadvantaged learners. LET'S CARE project aims to promote the diffusion of good practices for the creation of a stimulating and supportive school environment, tackling the increasing gap between learners, promoting the capacity of institutions and staff to be innovative, and positively developing their learning approaches and environments, as indicated by the Council Resolution for an European Education Area 2021-2025 in the Priority Area 1 (Council of European Union, 2021).

The scope of the project includes an important political action and advocacy for a proper school future. The necessary change to promote the learners' well-being through the action in the 4 project pillars strongly requires the involvement of policy and decision-makers at geographical levels: local, regional, national, and European. In order to produce effective policy recommendations, it is therefore necessary to define a concrete overview of the political and social state of the art on early school leaving prevention, as well as on teachers' and family members' needs that emerged during the project focus groups work.

2. Objectives of the policy scoping report

This policy scoping report will support the development of policy recommendations and strategies for the prevention of early school leaving by following the LET'S CARE teacher-student attachment-based education model. The main objective of this report is to facilitate a dialogue with policy-makers. The report contents presented in this deliverable aims to provide a base to develop actionable policy recommendations related to all the legislations of the countries involved in the project, and supported by the results of the initial analysis of teachers and families' needs implemented in Spain, Portugal, Italy, Bulgaria, Poland and Lithuania.



3. Scoping review of policies legislation and stakeholders needs

In order to properly understand how the LET'S CARE educational and policy proposal could be integrated into the existing contexts, an analysis of the main elements that influence policy recommendations' effectiveness has been carried out, taking under consideration the following aspects:

- existing legislation on early school leaving in the countries involved in the project piloting;
- legislative aspects related to the pillars of the LET'S CARE proposal in all the countries involved in the project piloting;
- needs identified during the focus groups with teachers and interviews with the families.

3.1. Early School Leaving policies in the LET'S CARE piloting countries

An analysis – still in its draft version - summarising the initial research work, based on the existing policy to prevent Early School Leaving (ESL) at the European level, has defined the following aspects:

- In all the LET'S CARE project countries, there are existing general policies addressing the prevention of ESL.
- These measures are often included in more general laws on schooling education.

The following paragraphs will present the most significant policies for preventing ESL in the LET'S CARE piloting countries. The detailed analysis of these policies is published in D2.2 “Policy paper: economics of early school dropout: impact assessment and policy recommendation”. In this chapter we present a summary of the findings that will support LET'S CARE policy scoping.

3.1.1. Bulgaria

Bulgaria is the only country participating in LET'S CARE project with a specific **Strategy to reduce the share of early school leavers (2013-2020)**. This strategy is mostly based on the alliances between schools (especially for VET programs), local businesses, and the local community. Other actions promoting this strategy are:

- sharing of good practices among schools;
- teachers training on how to deal with multicultural school environments, special educational needs, and risk of early school drop-out;



- family participation in the educational process;
- the existence of specialised and supportive personnel (experts, teachers' assistants, psychologists, pedagogical advisors, and social workers) to offer proper educational support and to work in the school coexistence climate (considering non-violence policies, students-mentor plans, and discipline approaches);
- giving importance to student participation in the school through self-government and student parliaments.

This legislation addresses the LET'S CARE framework's main pillars "Safe Teaching" (P2) and "Safe Education" (P3).

The Bulgarian government has promulgated, in the last school years, new **yearly National Programs** to improve:

- educational environment (physical and socio-emotional),
- teachers' professional competencies,
- the integration between school and community,
- STEM, art, and sport teaching-learning.

It is also worth mentioning that the Bulgarian national "**Support for Success**" project launched in 2019 and co-funded by the European Union focused on primary and secondary schools with a high presence of vulnerable students. It aimed to promote strategic actions for teachers' training, family involvement, educational support and guidance for students, individualisation of learning, language actions for migrant people, after-school activities, specialised personnel for support, and the link between the school and the local community.

3.1.2. *Italy*

Italy does not have a specific strategy for preventing ESL, but it is possible to identify national programs which include ESL prevention, among other objectives.

The Italian National Operational Program "**For the School (2014-2020)**" (financed by European funds and updated in 2021) promotes teachers' specific training concerning ESL problems, educational support through tutoring activities, school financial budget, educational and professional guidance, after-school activities (related to sports and arts), and practical activities connected with the labour market requirements.



Currently, Italy is investing part of the **National Recovery and Resilience Plan (2021-2026)**¹ to implement extraordinary intervention to reduce territorial disparities in the first and second high school levels. In order to develop a strategy to tackle early school leaving, the plan promotes:

- teachers' training,
- mentoring and guidance programs,
- school-time extension,
- support of school leadership,
- personalisation of school pathways in low-performing schools.

The Italian government, through subsequent notes, has provided suggestions to the schools to implement certain activities autonomously:

- collaboration between schools and their local territory
- the integration of curricular and extra-curricular offers for an extension of the school time
- individualised programs for students
- individualised small-groups educational support
- educational and professional guidance for students
- training courses for parents about children's ESL risk
- Setting up of School Prevention Teams

3.1.3. Lithuania

Lithuania does not have a specific strategy for preventing ESL, but it is possible to identify national laws and programs that address ESL among their objectives.

The **information system on out-of-school and truant children** (order no. V-515 of 2010) has set up an early warning system that collects and reports data regarding ESL. The **"Alternative Education Project in the Educational System"** (order no. V-1092 of 2011) has been approved in the framework of the "Human Resources Development Action Program" (2007-2013 partially founded by European Union). This project aimed to offer an alternative educational approach to decrease drop-out rates and facilitate the students' passage towards upper secondary education or VET programs. The two primary actions of the project have been:

1 <https://pnrr.istruzione.it/riforme/>



- train teachers and support staff in alternative education methods,
- conduct feasibility studies on these education methods.

It is also worth highlighting the **“Schools for Young People” program** (Order no. ISAK-2549 of 2005). This program has been designed to assist young people in rejoining the education system and completing basic education. The schools involved in this program have prioritised personalised and hands-on lessons to enhance students’ motivation. The students mainly came from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds, and the schools provided:

- educational support,
- emotional aid to improve social skills,
- boarding facilities, if necessary.

3.1.4. Poland

The Polish ESL rate is below the European average (4.8% in 2022)², so the policies focus more on increasing the quality of education for all the learners. The most important policy developed is the **Human Capital Development Strategy 2020** (Resolution N r 104 of the Council of Ministers of 18 June 2013, item 640) and, in particular, the specific objective “Raise the level of skills and qualifications of citizens”. This objective is pursued, among others, through access to high quality early childhood education, teachers’ training, improvement of the social perception of teachers’ profession, school-family cooperation, validations of previous learning (even if it is from non-formal education), educational and professional guidance, school-local environment alliances (giving special importance to enterprises opinions to link education with labour market requirements), individualisation of the educational process (giving an essential role to creativity, innovation, and students’ interests).

- Poland has developed and adopted the **"Lifelong learning perspective"** (Annex to Resolution No. 160/2013 of the Council of Ministers of 10 September 2013). The strategy promotes lifelong learning for children and adults to broaden and complement their competences and qualifications in accordance with the challenges they face in their professional, social, and personal lives.

2

https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/EDAT_LFSE_14_custom_6078836/bookmark/table?lang=en&bookmarkId=41c6e587-cd58-4683-bdfb-b17263bca853



- The main objectives of the strategies are to:
- promote creativity and innovation of individuals through individualised approach to learners, active and practical learning, collaborative problem-solving and improvement of communication skills,
- define a transparent and coherent national qualification system,
- provide a diverse and accessible range of early childhood care and education,
- tailor education and training to the needs of a sustainable economy, labour market changes, and social needs.

3.1.5. Portugal

The main general policy implemented in Portugal for the prevention of ESL is the **Educational Territories of Priority Intervention Programme (TEIP)**, launched in 1996 and still funded up to these days.

TEIP aims to decrease school drop-out working from preschool to secondary levels, especially in areas affected by poverty and social exclusion. Schools supported by TEIP can use the funds to hire extra personnel and request specialist advice on educational strategies. Schools under TEIP create a three-year "Multi-annual Improvement Plan" that outlines their strategies. These plans are periodically assessed, considering factors like early school leaving rates, academic performance, school environment, and participation. Based on the evaluations, adjustments are made for subsequent three-year periods. Various stakeholders, parents, local bodies, businesses, and cultural and sports groups are involved in developing the plans. The TEIP3 Program focuses on three primary areas:

- school culture and pedagogical leadership,
- curriculum management,
- partnership and community.

Furthermore, Portuguese schools have **curricular autonomy and flexibility** established by several Ordinances and Decree-Laws in the last years. Schools can manage more than 25% of total credit hours for developing innovative curricular and pedagogical plans to improve academic success and tackle early school leaving. Those Plans allow schools to redistribute times and curricular modules, create new disciplines, and reorganise classes.

The **National Program for the Promotion of School Success** (Resolution No. 23/2016) promotes the introduction of school Strategic Action Plans to promote school success, teachers' cooperation through good practices sharing, educational support (mentoring), and educational guidance. The



plans include students' and parents' participation and collaboration with other social actors and local communities.

The schools can apply for additional personnel or other resources acquisition by presenting a project through the **Escolhas Program** (financed by the Portuguese Government and the European Social Fund). The Escolhas Program is designed to promote social integration, ensure equal opportunities, and foster social cohesion, specifically targeting children and teenagers from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds. This includes a special focus on children with migrant background or from Roma communities. The program interventions focus on areas like Education, Employability, and Community participation.

3.1.6. Spain

The **Program for educational guidance, advancement and enrichment in centres of special educational complexity (PROA+ 2021-2023)** seeks to reduce ESL, emphasising the support of vulnerable students (with educational or socio-educational needs). The program highlights the significance of fostering an inclusive learning environment. It caters to early childhood, primary and secondary education levels and allocates funds across various autonomous regions.

The program finances school projects and actions like:

- training teachers to hold positive expectations of students.
- enhancing the continuity of teachers and supporting the induction of new educators.
- encouraging teachers' collaboration and the sharing of effective practices.
- organising workshops for families.
- guiding students in their academic pathways and during school transitions.
- implementing tutoring and mentoring initiatives.
- strengthening emotional learning.
- creating plans that prioritise equality and harmonious coexistence.

The **Plan for the Reduction of Early Educational Leaving (2014-2020)** sets up the guidelines that articulate regional work against ESL. The measures include:

- facilitating access to second-chance education,
- recognising prior learning,
- implementing academic support programs,
- providing scholarships,
- offering educational guidance,



- enhancing the quality of interpersonal relationships within schools.

The **National Reform Program of 2019** incorporates a list of measures regarding ESL (based on previous recommendations) indicating the state and expected impact of all of them:

- better access to early childhood education,
- training for teachers,
- school community participation,
- family participation in school (through parent associations),
- validation of previous learning,
- educational reinforcements,
- scholarships,
- educational guidance (including VET pathways), or dual VET programs.

3.2. Analysis of policy applications in the school contexts of the LET'S CARE countries

The LET'S CARE policy suggestions will mainly address the last 2 pillars of the safe education approach: Safe School (P3) and Safe Education (P4).

An analysis of the school legislations and organisational aspects in the project countries has been carried out to identify common legislative dynamics and good practices. This analysis provides information about the legal and social conditions on which the policy proposal will be based. For each Pillar we have identified the main elements that can influence the implementation of a Safe Education approach, taking into consideration the developmental, individual, relational, organisational and legal aspects. The elements that have been considered in the analysis are:

- Safe School: school-family relationship, parents' training, in-service teachers training, and presence of practitioners in the psycho-pedagogical field.
- Safe Education: organisational and hierarchical structure of the school.

3.2.1. School-family relationship

The school-family relationship is crucial because a child's learning process is deeply intertwined with their home environment. A collaborative partnership between schools and families is known to foster a more nurturing learning atmosphere, enabling students to succeed academically and grow emotionally. This partnership also encourages families to become more involved in their children's



education and helps them to better understand and support their child's learning. It also provides an opportunity for families and schools to work together to set and reach educational goals.

Bulgaria

In the Pre-school and School Education Act, parents are defined as participants in the educational process together with children and pedagogical specialists (Article 2, paragraph 2). One of the principles of the educational process is the engagement of parents (Art. 3, para. 2, item 11). In the National Strategy for Educational Integration of Children there is a special chapter that is dedicated to parents that defines their rights and obligations, the forms of interaction (i.e., parent meetings, individual consultations, training) and the means of communication (i.e., student notebook, electronic diary, email).

The individual interaction between family and school is regulated in the Inclusive Education Ordinance: the parent community participates in activities aimed at changing attitudes and accepting psychological support for the prevention of violence and aggression, counselling, and partnership in the preparation of school rules and procedures.

Parents have the right to participate in school education as members of formal parent organisations as stated in the chapter Board of Trustees for Preschool, Middle and High School education (Art. 306 - Art. 309), and the chapter Public Councils (Art. 265 - Art. 270). Parents have the right to associate in the legal form of parental boards (where members are only parents) and to participate in the public councils (i.e., joint parents, teachers, school management). Both forms of organisation imply financial participation of parents individually or in solidarity. The decisions made in both forms are voluntary.

Italy

The Italian Constitution (Articles 30, 33, and 34) assigns to the parents and the school the responsibility of instructing and educating children. The President of Republic Decree no. 416/74 has been the first law regulating the parents' participation in school life. With the Educational Co-responsibility Pact (Decree No 235/2007), parents are invested in educational co-responsibility. For the growth and development of students it is essential to have an educational partnership between the family and the school, based on shared values and effective collaboration, with mutual respect of areas of competence. Parents elect their representatives to participate in parents' assemblies, class councils, and school councils (that is chaired by a parent).

The relationship between teachers and parents is regulated by the specific times of meetings during the year. By the actual National Collective Labour Agreement of 14/07/2023 art. 44 comma 5, in order to provide an efficient connection between school, family, and students, the school council (with parents representatives and chair), following the proposal provided by the collegial meeting of



teachers, defines the modalities and criteria for the relationship, which can therefore be different from school to school. Usually, the schools organise two moments each year in which parents can meet teachers to be informed about their child's academic results and behaviour. In the majority of schools, teachers are available according to a scheduled time during school hours to meet parents. The parents have the right of assembly to define and discuss problems concerning general aspects and characteristics of the school.

Lithuania

The role of parents in school is regulated by Article 46 of the Law on Education of the Republic of Lithuania about the rights and duties of parents (guardians or caregivers):

- receive free information about operating schools, educational programs, and training forms;
- participate in selecting (or select if necessary) the child's educational program, form, and school or other education provider;
- receive information about the child's educational conditions and achievements;
- participate in school self-government;
- exercise the rights provided for by the Law on Special Education and other laws.

All Lithuanian schools are independent institutions. Therefore, they operate in accordance with their internal management: every school has its procedures for parents' information, education and cooperation. Parents are informed about their children's achievements and problems using e-diary, email or in writing. Schools organise Parents' Days in which they can talk to teachers. Once or twice a year, the schools organise parents' meetings. Furthermore, individual consultations are organised by parent – student – teacher (or class teachers) at least once a year.

Every school has its School Board, which includes teachers, students, and parents. Moreover, every class has its Parents Council. All of them participate in the meetings where all the questions are discussed, and decisions are taken.

Non-formal school-family relationship is always welcome in Lithuanian schools. There are different events organised where the whole family is invited to participate: festivals, celebrations, and career training activities involve parents in school life. Volunteer parents sometimes help teachers during lessons, after-school activities, and school events.

Poland

The essential legal framework regulations on the representation of parents and their status at school are in Chapter 4 'Social bodies in the educational system', in Articles 83 and 84 of the Education Law



Act (2016). The school's cooperation with parents is regulated in the Regulation of the Ministry of Education of 11 August 2017 on requirements for schools and institutions. Concerted interaction and consensual agreement between school and parents is possible in a variety of forms in Poland. Depending on the needs, these can be individual or team-based. Examples of these forms of cooperation are:

- school-wide information meetings with the school management, the Parents' Council, the school pedagogue, class teachers, and subject teachers;
- organising information meetings, class meetings with the class teachers, parent-teacher meetings; information showcases, notice boards, maintaining the school's correspondence with parents through written or telephone information.

According to Teacher's Charter Act (1982) and Education Law Act (2016), parents have the right to:

- be reliably informed about their children's academic progress, successes, and problems, and to express themselves and comment on the work of the school and its quality,
- be acquainted with the basic documents of the school: Educational Programme, School Statutes, the child's participation in religion classes, etc.
- receive counselling from the counsellor and educator,
- apply for free textbooks and free school meals,
- decide on their child's participation in extracurricular activities and sports competitions,
- participate in the life of the school (class events, school events, trips, school plays, etc.),
- review the work of teachers seeking professional promotion,
- have two representatives on the competition committee for the school director,
- participate in the parents' council.

Portugal

In Portuguese legislation, parents play a key role in their educational development, in cooperation with schools. The Status of Student and School Ethics (Decree-Law no. 51/2012) define the expected commitment of their parents. Parents have to cooperate with the teachers in their pedagogical mission, especially when solicited, collaborating in the learning process of their children. Parents can participate in the meetings of the multidisciplinary team for the definition and assessment of the individual educative program for students with disabilities (Decree-Law no. 54/2018).

There is a weekly schedule foreseen in the Diretor/a de Turma [Class Tutor], schedule to meet with parents, and there are meetings that occur throughout the school year for student assessment (Normative Dispatch no.10-B/2018). Schools also conduct different initiatives - this is dependent on



each school as it is not legislated - to 'bring parents into the school': some more traditional (such as school parties), some less traditional like inviting parents to conduct activities for students or teachers (e.g., talk to students about their work, provide opportunities for students to do job shadowing, contribute for teachers' training).

Parents can have 3 institutional roles in the school organisation:

1. They can institute Parents Associations of a school that can intervene in the organisation of the extra-curricular activities, sport, and social environment connection. These associations are represented in consultative bodies at regional and national levels, which influence educational policy (Decree-Law no. 29/2006);
2. Parents' representatives are members of the General Council that, among other tasks, elects the principal of the school (Decree-Law no. 75/2008);
3. After primary education, where each class has a Conselho de Turma [Class Council], two parents, elected by the others as representative, participate to the council and make the liaison between all parents and the Class Tutor (Decree-Law no. 137/2012).

Spain

The Organic Law of the Spanish government (3/2020) specifically mentions the promotion of family participation. Parents can receive detailed information about the pupil's schooling period and about all procedures, grants, and support available. The law states (Article 51.2) that the schools "*relate to families and provide them with adequate attention through tutoring, meetings, and other channels. Likewise, the exchange of information by electronic communication, using information and communication technologies*".

The Article 50.3 of the Law defines the right of families to create Associations, Federations, and Confederations as an instrument of active participation, promoting the participation of families in the management of the schools and facilitating their representation and participation in School Councils.

3.2.2. Parents' training

The involvement of the parents in the development of a Safe school is not limited to the positive relationship. It is important that parents receive the appropriate training, so that they can play a more active and informed role in their child's educational experience, by providing support, setting goals, and encouraging their child to reach their full potential. Parents need to be empowered with the knowledge and skills and this can include the importance of parental involvement in their child's learning, understanding the school's curriculum, knowing how to support their child's learning, and developing a shared educational plan with the school.



Bulgaria

Schools are allowed to train parents, but there is no budget and clearly defined rules for this activity. There are no instructions for the principal's duty for time and place for training activities for/with parents.

Italy

Each educational institution, within the framework of its autonomy, can propose types of training for parents in the desired areas. As a consequence, if parents decide to participate in conferences and/or training courses, they may do so, even if there are no national or local indications on this matter.

Lithuania

In their independence the schools can decide to organise parents' training. For example, lectures on positive parenting held by school psychologists can be organised. Also, some schools organise events for parents such as conferences, meetings with different professionals, psychologists, and trainers.

Poland

In Polish schools teachers, pedagogues, and school psychologists are obliged to organise courses and training for parents who, in turn, must actively participate in these workshops. Teachers are trained on how to conduct meetings with parents in order to shape their educational attitudes towards the activation and development of their children's talents.

The school pedagogues and a psychologists work to make parents aware of the developmental progresses of children and how to stimulate their personal growth.

Portugal

Currently, there is no legislation on this topic. Yet schools are allowed to contribute to parents' training/parental development. Therefore, parental training/education by the school is a practice which depends on each school, its resources, and the school project/ambitions concerning parental support. Several schools in Portugal foresee this goal and practice, usually through different means - mainly Psychology Services of the school, projects with the support of sociocultural educators and cooperation between the schools and Universities/other institutions.

Spain



According to Article 50.3, the school administration can promote the creation of “schools for parents” in collaboration with their associations, federations, and confederations. In Extremadura, the law states that training in the educational field is a right of families. The initiative for this training comes both from the families themselves and from the schools. In this field, the role of Associations, Federations, or Confederations of families is very important.

3.2.3. In-service teachers training

A teacher's in-service training is imperative in the rapidly changing educational environment. With pedagogical practices continuously adapting due to advancements in research, technology, and societal shifts, it's crucial for educators to stay updated. Moreover, as classrooms become more diverse, teachers need tools and strategies to address the multifaceted needs of their students, ranging from different backgrounds to varied learning capabilities. Continuous professional development is more than just updating skills; it's an opportunity for reflection, sharing, and collaborative problem-solving. As a result, educators can be able to design learning experiences that are engaging and inclusive.

The understanding of how a country organises and implements the professional updating of the teachers provides information both on the political interest about the topic and on the way the policy recommendations on this subject should be presented.

Bulgaria

Bulgarian teachers are obliged to declare to the school director at least 3 credits for in-service training in 3 years. The Ministry of Education provides in-service teachers training through:

- National Program for Qualification of Pedagogical Specialists³ which has 2 functions: support young teachers as an addition to Senior Teachers tutoring and provide a professional teaching degree for specialists coming from STEM areas (engineering, architecture, etc.)
- National Center for Increasing the Qualification of Pedagogical Specialists⁴ that implements trainings in support of National Programs of the Ministry of Education and in close liaison with the Teachers' Unions, psychologists, pedagogical advisors, etc. The trainings are mainly addressed to School Directors.

3 <https://web.mon.bg/bg/101243>

4 <https://niokso.bg/>



Furthermore, all universities in Bulgaria are allowed to train teachers through their specialised departments for information and qualification for teachers. The departments are state structures and operates through a credit system for the short, medium, and long-term courses (1,2-3 and 5 credits each).

According to the law there are eligible companies that can provide teachers training. There is a register of approved programs for improving the qualifications of teaching specialists⁵ that contains a list of Entitled Companies with special and standard developed programs, authorised to carry out qualification activities for pedagogical specialists. These programs have the same credits as university courses.

Italy

In-service teacher training is “compulsory, permanent, and strategic” as defined by Law 107 of 2015. The training duty can be completed within the 40 hours dedicated to teacher board activities or the 40 hours dedicated to class councils. There are private and public bodies that provide teachers training. The Directive 170/2016 addresses the issue of accredited bodies to deliver training courses. The Ministry of Education sets up the Operational System for Training and Updating Initiatives for School Staff (SOFIA), an online platform with all the recognised courses available for the teachers⁶. Teachers can pay the private training courses using a special fund provided yearly by the State.

Lithuania

In-service teachers’ training is compulsory. This is regulated by Article 49, Clause 2 of the Law on Education of the Republic of Lithuania. Teachers have the right and the duty to participate in professional development events at least 5 days a year. Teachers’ qualification development programs can be carried out by accredited educational institutions (municipal level) or teacher training centers (national level).

Pedagogical staff can improve their professional competences in events in the framework of the national programs and through self-education, as well as by participating in mentoring trainings, observations and discussions of educational and managerial activities, reflections on practical activities, internships and other non-formal adult education events (Order no. Įsak-556 2007).

5 <https://rq.mon.bg/home>

6 <https://sofia.istruzione.it/>



Poland

In-service teachers training in Poland is regulated by several laws:

- Act of 14 December 2016 Article 70;
- Teachers' Charter Act of 26 January 1982 Article 70;
- Regulation of the Ministry of Education of 23 August 2019 Article 3 and 4;
- Regulation of the Ministry of Education of 25 August 2017 Article 22-23 on pedagogical supervision;
- Regulation of the Ministry of Education of 9 August 2017 Article 24.

The planning of in-service teacher training is preceded by an assessment of the school and the teachers' needs. Professional development activities undertaken at the school (training and conferences) should also coincide with the indications in the head teacher's pedagogical supervision plan for a given school year.

For each school year, the school director determines the professional development needs of the school teacher. The in-service training shall be included in a timetable and carried out in three-year cycles taking into account the conditions indicated in the regulation. The school director submits an application to the leading authority for the funding of in-service training for teachers in the following calendar year, taking into account the relevant needs of teachers.

Furthermore, the school director prepares a pedagogical supervision plan for each school year which includes development activities, including organising trainings and meetings.

Portugal

In-service formal or semi-formal training is not mandatory and there is not a specific number of hours that teachers must attend every year. Despite this, the professional updating is highly recommended and incentivised, as it is one of the elements necessary for teachers to progress in their careers (Decree-Law no. 41/2012). For this purpose, teachers are required to have a minimum of either 25 hours (e.g., teachers in the last phase of career progression) or 50 hours during the total length of each assessment cycle (usually 4 years). There are different modalities of training (Decree-Law no. 22/2014) that are valid for career progression, with different numbers of associated hours (e.g., more theoretical, more practical, including supervision hours, Master, Doctorate, Post-graduate diplomas).

Over the last 10 years, the in-service training available for teachers is mostly organised by Centros de Formação de Associação de Escolas (CFAE) [Schools Association Training Centers] (Decree-Law no. 22/2014). The CFAE are a group of different schools that come together to assess the training needs of their teachers and determine what are the priorities for in-service training usually in a four-year in-service training planning. The training provided by CFAE is free and occurs every school year.



Training can also be organised both by public or private institutions such as universities, associations of teachers and teachers' unions, or professional training institutions - these can be free or for a fee. The Ministry of Education also occasionally organises free training for all teachers (e.g., when a new Decree-Law is published, and teachers must learn how to implement it).

Spain

There is an in-service training program for teachers that is regulated by law and aims at the continuous improvement of the teaching profession. The program can be semester or yearly, and is managed and financed by public institutions called Centros de Profesores y de Recursos (Teachers and educational resources centres). The in-service training is not compulsory but attendance of at least 100 hours of training in 6 years allows a salary increase for the next 6 years.

According to the Extremadura law 4/2011, teachers have to acquire, throughout their working life, a set of professional competences necessary for the development of their work, with the aim of improving the comprehensive training of pupils and their success at school. Teachers training starts with the initial training and is a process that has to provide the improvement of the professional competences through ongoing training.

3.2.4. Presence of practitioners in the psycho-pedagogical field

The presence of psycho-pedagogical practitioners in schools offers a multidimensional approach to student well-being. These professionals provide crucial support, enabling students to while also addressing emotional and psychological challenges. The psycho-pedagogical support from professional figures is crucial to implement the changes connected to the development of a Safe School. An analysis of the role these professionals play in the various school systems gives us an indication of how important psycho-social well-being at school is considered in different countries.

Bulgaria

Psychologists, pedagogical advisors, and other specialists are present in Bulgarian schools, and they participate in the planning of activities in the Pedagogical Council of the school.

The functions of the School Psychologists are:

- Diagnostic assessment of children developmental dynamics;
- Monitoring the social and emotional situation of each child (also through meetings with parents);



- Consulting on effective working methods (teaching – learning).

The responsibilities of the pedagogical advisor are generally of consultative and supportive nature with activities such as:

- advising, guiding, helping in solving problems;
- evaluation of students' relationships in school, in class, in social groups;
- consultancy for Special needs;
- prevention of possible problems or deviations;
- planning and carrying out independently, together with municipal and non-governmental institutions, activities that have a developing effect on adolescents.

Italy

Italy remains the only European country not to have a national legislation for the structural inclusion of psychologists in schools. Schools are allowed to hire external experts for counseling and psychologists as support for students and teachers. The provision of this service depends on the availability of funds that may come from agreements with local health authorities, regional education offices, students and their families, institutions, banks, associations or through contributions from the school fund.

Psycho-pedagogical and social professionals external to the school participate in multidisciplinary team meetings together with teachers and assistants to draw up the Individualised Education Plan for learners with disabilities or special educational needs (Article 13 of Law 104/92).

Lithuania

Each school has a team of support specialists (such as psychologist, social pedagogue, special pedagogue, speech therapist, teacher's assistants). The size of the team depends on the number of students in the school and is regulated by legislation. In every Lithuanian school, preschools, general education, and VET initial courses, there is a School Child Welfare Commission (Order No. V-579 of April 2011). The Commission include 3 to 5 members (depending on the number of students in the school) among which teachers, psychologists, and social pedagogical experts can be found. Their functions are:

- identification of students' needs,
- ensuring safe learning environments,
- suggesting solutions to improve teacher-student and student-student relationships,
- making proposals for the provision of financial assistance for low-income families,



- contributing to teachers' training regarding pupils' welfare (among others).

Since not all small schools have teams of specialists, they can seek help from the self-government pedagogical psychological services and get the necessary service. There are 60 municipalities in Lithuania and 80% of them have pedagogical psychological services. Pedagogical psychological services are financed from the municipal budget.

Poland

According to Article 42d(1) of the Teachers' Charter, mainstream kindergartens and schools can employ pedagogical teachers, special educators, psychologists, speech therapists or pedagogical therapist.

The tasks of the psychologist at the school include:

- assessing difficult situations in order to solve educational problems that constitute a barrier and limit the student's active and full participation in school life,
- initiating and conducting mediation and crisis intervention activities,
- support for teachers, tutors, and parents in identifying individual developmental needs of the child or student and the reasons for educational failures or difficulties in functioning.

In case of necessity of psychological and pedagogical support, the school director determines the procedure for obtaining the parents' consent. Since psychological and pedagogical assistance is voluntary, parents have the right to refuse it. Importantly, this does not exempt teachers and specialists from observing the child's behaviour and development, and providing support.

At the beginning of April 2022 the Polish parliament (Sejm) has adopted a draft amendment to the Education System Act, which included, among other things, provisions on the employment of specialist teachers in schools and kindergartens. The draft is now to be sent to the Senate. According to the assumptions contained in the document, the number of pedagogues, psychologists, speech therapists, special educators and educational therapists will be increased.

Portugal

The Decree-Law no. 54/2018, sets up the psycho-pedagogical support in school. The law defines the role and the function of the Multidisciplinary Team of Support for Inclusive Education (EMAEI), which is responsible for the proposal of the measure(s) of support to learning. It is suggested that psycho-pedagogical support occurs mainly indirectly, through capacity building of teachers and other educational agents, so these can intervene every day and optimise the teaching-learning processes.



The psycho-pedagogical support is often provided by the Psychology Department of the school: every school cluster has at least one school psychologist (full-time or part-time). One of the expected tasks of school psychologists is psycho-educational support (Decree-Law no. 190/91).

Psycho-pedagogical support can also be provided by:

- Other professionals, such as occupational therapists, speech and language therapists, and physiotherapists.
- Special Educational Teachers: this is a disciplinary group, foreseen in the Decree-Law 54/2018, and it is also another permanent member of the EMAEI.
- Support teachers: these are teachers that do not need to have a specialisation in psycho-pedagogical support but can be placed by the school principal in some support modalities (e.g., in situations of reading difficulties, to intensify specific learning in groups of students).

Some schools also have, temporarily, 'extra' resources (e.g., other psychologists) that can, sometimes, be used to provide psycho-pedagogical services for the school. These resources are funded by projects that school has applied to, or by the municipality.

Spain

Public schools are mandated to have teaching coordination bodies which, at a minimum, include the didactic coordination departments and the guidance/psycho-pedagogical department. Public secondary schools are required to have a guidance department.

Furthermore, schools that require specialised assistance will have experts in therapeutic pedagogy and speech and hearing therapists. If needed, the schools can also have support units and benefit from the specialised consultation of educational psycho-pedagogical professionals.

3.2.5. Role and responsibilities of the school director

To analyse how actions to promote a Safe Education can be addressed, we have included an analysis of the roles and duties of school directors in the piloting countries. This allows us to examine how the school autonomy is ensure or managed in different regions. School directors are crucial because they guarantee that educational plans and policies are actually put into practice effectively. Understanding the decision-making processes enables us to better understand how schools adapt to new educational challenges and goals

Bulgaria



The School Director is nominated by a concourse established by the Ministry of Education and held in the Regional Inspectorate of Education in the presence of a Commission.

The director's main responsibilities are:

- Ensure healthy and safe conditions for education and work and protecting the life and health of students during the educational process;
- Assist the school board in carrying out its activities;
- Comply with the code of ethics for those working with children, approved by the National Council for Child Protection;
- Allocate, coordinate, and control the activities of the assistant principals, teachers, educators, service personnel;
- Ensure the fulfillment of state educational requirements and the quality and results of the educational process;
- Correct keeping and storage of school documentation;
- Prepare and implement of the school curriculum (for which class, what additional activities will there be, and which teacher will lead them).

The school principal determines, organises, and reports to the Regional Inspectorates about the responsibilities of teachers. The principal may appoint a teacher only in connection with the normative documents of the Ministry of Education, that is, full compliance with the educational qualification, specialty, age, and job description.

Italy

The school director is hired by the Ministry of Education through a national public course and concourse. The requirements for accessing the concourse are: to be a permanent teaching staff member, to have at least five years of service, and to hold a university degree.

According to Legislative Decree no. 165/2001, the school manager is responsible for:

- management of financial and instrumental resources and of the results of the service, for which they must periodically report to the School Council;
- management, coordination, and enhancement of human resources, in compliance with the competences of the school boards;
- Organising school activities according to criteria of educational efficiency and effectiveness;
- Maintaining labor relations with the Unions.



The school director signs every memorandum or document issued by the school and assumes legal responsibility for any consequences. The school director is also an appointed member of the School Council and chairs the Executive Board of the School Council, the Teachers' Board, the Class Councils, the Teachers' Service Evaluation Committee.

Lithuania

The appointment of the school director is made through the municipality, which announces a call for the five-year position. Candidates must pass a national evaluation to be chosen.

The functions and role of the school director are defined by Article 59 of the Law on Education of the Republic of Lithuania "Appointment of the head of the educational institution and his powers". The director hires and dismisses teachers and employees, concludes employment contracts with employees, which define functions, wages, work, and rest time. The school director is also responsible for the school safety.

In cooperation with the school boards, the director can decide how to structure the lessons of the different subject and the school calendar (following the National Educational Plans).

Poland

The headmasters of the a public school in Poland is nominated by the authorities after a concourse. Polish law requires that the person who accepts the position of school director must first of all be an active teacher (Education Law Act 2016). The position of school director can also be entrusted to a non-teacher, but this is extremely rare. The requirements for the position of school director are: a master's degree and pedagogical preparation and qualification for a teaching position; bachelor or postgraduate degree in management or a qualification course in educational management; at least five years' teaching experience; has obtained at least a good performance evaluation; there are no disciplinary or legal proceedings pending; meets the necessary health conditions.

The main tasks and responsibilities of the school director are:

- direct the activities of the school,
- carry out pedagogical supervision,
- ensure the safety of teachers during activities,
- evaluate the work of teachers and their professional achievements and dismiss them or propose prizes or distinctions,
- decide on the employment and dismissal of teachers, the imposition of disciplinary sanctions on teachers,



- make proposals, after consultation with the pedagogical council and the school or establishment council, for distinctions, prizes, and other distinctions for teachers,
- cooperate with parents,
- decide on school admissions, removal or awarding of students.

Portugal

The school principal is a unipersonal body, assisted by a deputy principal and a few adjuncts, who are responsible for the leadership and management of the school or school cluster. The school principal is a teacher who meets some criteria (e.g., specific training in leadership) and applies for this post, and then needs to be elected by the General Council.

The school principal is responsible for several aspects of the school 'life' which influence teachers, (Decree Law no. 75/2008). Mainly:

- to preside the pedagogical council;
- to assign the service for all the teaching staff, being able to choose how many hours a teacher is teaching in that school, which classes and academic years they teach at, which tasks are given to teachers in the non-teaching hours, among others;
- to appoint the school coordinator (or cluster coordinator);
- to appoint the teachers who will have class tutor roles;
- to propose the name of three teachers who will then be voted by each department to be the coordinators of curricular departments.

The school principal is also responsible for ensuring the necessary conditions for the teachers' performance assessment to take place (Decree-Law no. 75/2008). Indeed, the school principal intervenes in the process but is not the only one responsible and is not the person who assesses the teachers, as there is an evaluation team presided by the principal with four teachers elected by the Pedagogical Council who monitor the process. The assessment itself is conducted by one internal assessor (the coordinator of the curricular department) and one external assessor (Regulatory Decree no. 26/2012).

Spain

In Spain the school directors are appointed internally. The authorities set up a concourse based on the merits of the candidates and their plan for the directorship and define the criteria for the assessment of the proposals. Teachers interested in becoming school directors present their directorship project to a committee composed by representatives of the authorities and of the



school. The directorship project should be aimed at achieving school success for all pupils, and should include, among others, content on gender equality, non-discrimination and the prevention of gender-based violence. Future directors must have attended a specific course on managing. The course is free of charge and can be completed by any teacher with five years of experience. In the rare case where there are no candidates, the provincial education authority makes the selection among the school's teachers.

According to the law the director of the school represents the school and the educational administration in the school, and shall exercise their functions with leadership, both in the field of education and of the school itself. The school director shall exercise their functions with leadership, both in the pedagogical field and in community relations.

3.2.6. School organisation

The last element that we have considered in our analysis is the framework that defines school systems, focusing on their hierarchical and organizational patterns. We consider two perspectives. First, we examine the major political structures that determine educational policy, such as the Ministry of Education and various regional administrative bodies. These entities often set schools' broader goals and standards. Second, we shift our focus to internal decision-making boards within schools. School operations are often handled by these groups, and they impact students and the school environment directly.

By examining these structures, we can understand decision-making pathways and identify factors that contribute to shaping educational outcomes. Recognizing these influential bodies is crucial, since they are the primary targets for our policy recommendations. Engaging directly with these entities ensures that our recommendations are not only heard but also have a higher likelihood of being implemented effectively to foster positive change in the educational system.

Bulgaria

The Bulgarian Minister of Education and Science is a central body of the executive power for conducting the state policy in the field of education and science. The National Inspectorate of Education at the Council of Ministers is a body for external inspection of kindergartens and schools and has the task to compile an independent assessment of the quality of education provided⁷.

⁷ www.nio.government.bg



There are 28 Regional Departments of Education as territorial administrative structures subordinate to the Minister of Education and Science. Their main tasks are to:

- assist in providing conditions for the functioning of institutions in the system of pre-school and school education on the territory of the region;
- coordinate the interaction between the educational institutions, the territorial administrative bodies, the bodies of local self-government, the managements of the regional structures of the representative organisations of employees and employers;
- control the observance of state educational standards, the Pre-school and School Education Act (LPSE), the Vocational Education and Training Act (VETA) and other normative acts in the system of pre-school and school education by the institutions on the territory of the respective region⁸.

At the regional level, there are also the Inspectorates that monitors the training process, dropout, relations, and regulations, and respond and investigate complaints.

Each municipality has a Department of Education that is responsible for all schools and kindergartens in the area, according to the national and regional policies.

Schools can benefit from a moderate independence. School directors and service units can appoint teachers and other staff. Directors and pedagogical councils have the opportunity to make independent decisions regarding the management of schools and to make changes and additions to the curricula after approval by the regional administrations of education and the Ministry of Education. The schools can determine the free and mandatory elective subjects and the teachers can choose the methods and textbooks among those approved by the Ministry of Education and Culture. The school Public Council, even if is not a governing body, has possibility to cooperate with the local community for the educational activities of the school.

Italy

Presidential Decree 275/1999 recognises to each school autonomy in teaching, organisation, research, experimentation, and development. Consequently, the Ministry of Education issues documents to help individual school institutions draw up their own curricula with the National indications for the curriculum:

- pre-schools and the first cycle of education (Decree of the President of the Republic 254/2012 and “National indications and new scenarios” 2018)
- vocational schools (Decree of the President of the Republic 87/2010) and technical institutes (Decree of the President of the Republic 88/2010);

⁸ <https://www.mon.bg/bg/324>



- high schools (Decree of the President of the Republic 89/2010).

The Regional School Office is a peripheral office of the Ministry of Education (Decree of the President of the Republic 260/2007) and is organised at provincial level.

The Decree of the President of the Republic 233/1998 establishes the creation of school clusters called 'Comprehensive Institutes'. A comprehensive institute is an educational institution in which several levels of education coexist: pre-school, primary, and middle school. The comprehensive institute therefore administratively unites several school premises located in the same territory, grouping together a minimum of 600 pupils. The comprehensive institute has a single school director, a single school board, and a unitary board of teachers.

The main collegial bodies of the schools are (Law Decree 297/1994):

- Class councils, composed by the teachers and the elected representatives of the parents of the same class. The class council deals with the general progress of the class, makes proposals to the school director, expresses its opinion on school projects, makes proposals for an effective school-family relationship.
- The School Board is the body that directs and manages the general economic and organisational aspects of the school. It represents all components of the school (teachers, parents and non-teaching staff, and, for high schools, also students) with a variable number of representatives depending on the size of the school.
- The teachers' board is composed by the school teaching staff and is chaired by the School Director. It has decision-making powers concerning the educational functioning of the school. In particular, it takes care of the planning of educational action to adapt - thanks to the autonomy granted to Italian schools - the teaching programmes to the specific needs of the environment and to encourage interdisciplinary coordination. (Decree of the President of the Republic 275/1999).
- Parents' assemblies may be either class or school assemblies. Elected class representatives are entitled to convene a parents' assembly. The headmaster and class teachers may attend the assemblies with speaking rights. Parent assemblies may also be requested by the class teachers.

The school organisational chart lists the roles of the various members of the school government (director, staff members of the director, teachers with specialised functions, department heads, liaison officers, committees) who work in a collaborative way with the aim of offering students a quality school service.

Lithuania



All Lithuanian schools are independent institutions. School autonomy is defined by Article 60 "School Self-Government", Article 61 "Municipal Educational Self-Government Institutions", Article 62 "State Educational Self-Government Institutions", Article 63 "Participation of School Community Members in Educational Management" of the Law on Education of the Republic of Lithuania.

Educational programs are approved at the national level by order of the Minister of Education, Science and Sports. Within their autonomy, schools prepare individual education plans for the academic year taking into consideration the Ministerial general education plans.

The organisational structure of the schools in Lithuania is based on principal and school self-government, which consists of a:

- school council
- methodical council
- student council.

Poland

In Poland the core curriculum, i.e. the set of learning objectives and teaching content in different types of schools, is set by the Ministry of National Education in accordance with the provisions of the Education Law. Issues related to the core curriculum and, more broadly, to the state educational policy, are currently the exclusive competence of the Minister of National Education and school superintendents. Even if a local authority has the right to create a regional educational policy, it must subordinate it to the educational policy of the state. The headmaster is responsible for including in the school set of curricula all of the core curriculum established by the ministry for a given educational stage.

The main collegial and management bodies of the school are:

- The board of education, which is the decision-making body of the school. The board of education legislates on:
 - work plans of the school
 - adopting resolutions on the results of pupils' classification and promotion (or removal from the lists), and on pedagogical innovations and experiments in the school,
 - the organisation of in-service training for teachers.
- The school council is an optional body and is rarely appointed; it represents in equal numbers teachers, parents and pupils. Formally speaking, the school council is representative of all school communities. The School Council may, on its own initiative, assess the situation and



the state of the school or establishment and make appropriate proposals to the headmaster, the pedagogical council, and the authority in charge of the school or establishment. Its tasks are limited to giving an opinion on a request from the governing body to extend the principal's term of office, or to give an opinion on a candidate.

- The parents' council has a consultative role. The representatives of the council take part in the selection committee for the role of director. It has strong links with the local authority, business, churches, associations, and political parties.
- The students' council, especially in primary and middle schools, is more of a student assembly, rarely considered by the school director as element of cooperation that can support the work on the school to provide the best possible educational services.

Portugal

The Portuguese educational system is still highly centralised and the policy-making comes first from the Ministry of Education. Recently, there has been an effort to decentralise some dimensions of the public educational system, with several competencies being transferred to the municipalities (Law no. 50/2018 and the Decree-Law no. 21/2019). Although most of these competencies are related to administrative and financial aspects, the municipalities have been increasingly involved in the definition of educational policies, through the development of strategic municipal educational projects, in articulation with schools and school clusters, as well as with other local institutions with educational goals (e.g., public libraries, museums, health centres, police).

When it comes to pedagogical and curricular autonomy, the “Ministry of Education is responsible for determining the curricula and the educational objectives. Schools are allowed flexibility in the curriculum up to 25% of the prescribed time (or more if there are curricular innovation plans)” (Tintoré et al., 2022, p. 8). The autonomy and curricular flexibility are established in the Decree-Law no. 55/2018, and it provides autonomy to the schools in what concerns the organisation of the Autonomy Curricula Domains (DAC), a time in students schedules where interdisciplinary or curricular articulation takes place.

The school principal has an important role as they must develop a four-year project for the school, which needs to be approved by the General Council.

The Pedagogical Council also has power in the decisions of the school, since most decisions are approved within this council, including the internal regulations of the school (Decree-Law no. 75/2008).

Since the Decree-Law no. 75/2008, most Portuguese public schools have been organised in what is called *Agrupamentos de Escolas* (school clusters) “an organisational unit with its own administrative and management bodies, made up of different public educational establishments from pre-school



establishments to schools with one or more educational levels or cycles. The number of schools that comprise each group or cluster may vary” (Tintoré et al., 2020, p. 356).

The organisation and management of the schools is based on four bodies:

- The General Council, composed by representatives from teaching and non-teaching staff, parents, upper secondary education students, municipalities, and the local community. It is responsible for the definition of the school strategic orientation;
- The School Principal;
- The Pedagogic Council, which coordinates and supervises the pedagogical action of the school. The composition is defined by each school, but some aspects are common such as the school principal as president, and the coordinators of the curricular departments (e.g., Language Department, Science Department).
- Administrative Council is responsible for the administrative-financial component of the school, also presided over by the school principal.

Besides these management bodies, each school defines the rest of the coordination and supervision structures (e.g., defining how many curricular departments the school has and how they are organised). Usually, the other organising structures are:

- Coordinators of school establishments (when there is a school cluster, there are coordinators responsible for each school who respond to the school principal and support his/her actions in that cluster);
- coordinators of curricular departments;
- coordinators of Class Tutors;
- Class Council;
- Class Tutors.

Spain

In Spain the competences in the field of education are managed by each region. The main national normative of reference is Organic Law 3/2020 of 29 December, which amends Organic Law 2/2006 of 3rd May on Education. At the regional level we are referring to the Extremadura law 4/2011, of 7th March, on Education in Extremadura.

There is a policy making hierarchy, ranging from the regional administration or regional ministry to the schools themselves:

- Regional Ministry



- General Department
- General Directorates
- Heads of Service
- Consultancies / Educational Programme Units.
- Educational Centre management teams.

The Educational Centre (school) management team is the executive governing body and, as such, is responsible for the coordinated planning and management of public schools. It shall be made up of the heads of management, the head of studies and the secretary's office and, where appropriate, the heads of studies. The number of assistants in the heads of studies is established by the educational administration according to the groups of pupils and teachers, as well as by the heads of such other single-person bodies as may be established by regulation.

Within the school organisation we can also identify 6 bodies:

- The Management Team, which includes School director, Head of Studies, and Secretary Office
- The School Council which is the governing and participatory body of the educational community in public schools. The main responsibilities are to:
 - Govern and involve the educational community in public schools.
 - Assesse the school's general performance and evaluation results.
 - Approve and evaluate the school's educational project and operational rules.
 - Ensure adherence to coexistence regulations.
 - Appoint a member to promote gender equality measures after receiving necessary training.
- The Head of Studies has the following responsibilities:
 - To exercise, by delegation of the Director and under his authority, the leadership of the teaching staff in all matters relating to the academic regime.
 - To replace the Director in the event of absence or illness.
 - To coordinate the academic, guidance and complementary activities of teachers and pupils.
 - To draw up the academic timetables of pupils and teachers in relation with the criteria approved by the Teaching Staff and with the general timetable included in the annual General Programme, as well as to ensure their strict compliance.



- To coordinate and direct the action of the tutors and, where appropriate, of the school guidance teacher, in accordance with the tutorial action plan.
- To coordinate, with the collaboration of the representative of the teaching staff in the teachers' centre, teacher training activities, as well as to plan and organise teacher training activities carried out by the centre.
- To organise academic events and complementary activities, in accordance with the guidelines approved by the School Council.
- To coordinate and promote student participation and to organise the attention and care of students during recreational-outdoor periods and other non-teaching activities.
- The Secretary's Office has the responsibility to:
 - Lead the teaching staff on academic matters, under the Director's authority.
 - Act as Director in their absence or illness.
 - Coordinate teacher and student academic and extracurricular activities.
 - Set and ensure compliance with academic timetables, based on approved criteria.
 - Direct tutor actions and school guidance, aligned with the tutorial plan.
 - Manage teacher training activities and organizes center-led training.
 - Organize academic events based on the School Council's guidelines.
 - Promote student participation and oversees non-teaching activity periods.
- The Head of Departments (in secondary schools):
 - Participates in curriculum planning, coordinates lesson programming, and drafts annual reports.
 - Manages and coordinates departmental academic activities.
 - Calls and presides over regular department meetings.
 - Communicates program details to students.
 - Schedules and oversees exams for baccalaureate or training levels, collaborating with department members for assessments.
 - Manages spaces, facilities, materials, and equipment for the department, ensuring maintenance.
 - Encourages evaluation of the department's teaching practices and various projects.
- The Guidance/psycho-pedagogical Service main responsibilities are to:
 - Suggest improvements to the school's educational project and yearly program.



- Partner with tutors to create educational strategies following the pedagogical committee's guidance.
- Offer educational, psycho-pedagogical, and career advice to students, especially during pivotal transitions.
- Prepare an annual report on academic and career guidance for the school council.
- Develop guidelines for supporting students with special needs.
- Assist teachers in identifying early learning challenges and making adjustments for students, especially those requiring special education.
- Conduct mandated psychological and pedagogical assessments.
- Teach designated student groups following regulations.
- Assist in crafting guidance on students' academic and career paths.
- Offer advice on the psycho-pedagogical components of curriculum planning.
- Support educational research and suggest ongoing training opportunities.
- Coordinate supplementary activities with relevant departments.
- In vocational schools, liaise on employment and guidance with proper authorities.
- In schools with attached boarding, collaborate with boarding staff for student welfare.

3.3. Analysis of the needs emerged during the focus groups

One of the most important elements of an effective policy recommendation is compliance with the actual needs of the target groups. Let's Care partners have implemented, in the framework of WP3, a data collection through focus groups with teachers and interviews with families. The analysis of the answers provides the consortium with a clear image of the challenges and potentialities that have to be addressed by the policy recommendations. The plan will be further integrated with the results of the next interviews with stakeholders and policy makers.

3.3.1. Analysis of the needs of the teachers

Focus Groups have been carried out with teachers from different countries (Bulgaria, Italy, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, and Spain) collecting their perspective on the concept of "Safe Teaching" and how it translates into their daily practice in the classroom, detecting those barriers and facilitators for its implementation.



Teachers agreed that building secure bonds (that is to say a positive affective relationship with their students) is critical to students' educational success and emotional well-being and improves their motivation to learn and participate in class. The teachers recognise that there are different barriers that can hinder this bond with students. These situations can be different in each educational context and relate to the different educational agents involved in the school context, such as the families, the school management, the teaching staff and, also, the public administration.

Teachers would need **families** to:

- Understand the importance of regular attending.
- Listen to their requests and suggestions.
- Support the creation of an educational collaboration school-home for the child's development.
- Keep positive expectations that fit the characteristics of the children.
- Show flexibility and cooperation in troubleshooting.

At the **school management** level, teachers need:

- Partnerships among the educational actors that are in the schools.
- Collaborations with other schools to encourage interchange of practices and experiences among teachers.
- General support and understanding.
- To provide more spaces for reflection and collaboration among teachers.

To improve their **professional** performance, teachers affirm that they need:

- More funds, resources, and materials for school and extracurricular activities.
- Professional training that can adapt to diversity and meet the educational needs of students.
- Increased support from other professionals of the education (psychologists, speech therapists, pedagogues, social workers, etc.).
- Programmes to practice exchange and mutual support within the school and among different institutions.
- More planning time for the teaching-learning process.

For the teachers it is necessary that the **ministries or public administrations**:



- Protect and defend teachers, taking care of their mental health.
- Value the teaching profession economically.
- Promote training courses on different methodologies and work strategies.
- Provide guidance to teachers.
- Provide more funding for the schools, especially with additional funding to respond to language barriers with families.
- Offer more scholarships for successful students.
- Hire more external professionals to support the work of teachers at school or for the professional support to families who need it (social workers, psychologists).
- Promote greater stability in educational objectives and laws.

3.3.2. Analysis of the needs of the families

In the framework of the data collection in WP3, partners from Bulgaria, Italy, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, and Spain have implemented interviews with families coming from different social contexts about their view of the school climate and how they think the school-family relationship can be improved.

Summarising the main ideas collected about the **climate in the schools** it is possible to affirm that:

- The families have generally identified a positive climate in the school, expressing trust in the professionalism of teachers or educators to resolve conflict situations, keep peace, and promoting a friendly and supportive community.
- Parents want for their children a safe physical and emotional environment, clear rules agreements, and commitment to follow by the entire school community.
- Inclusiveness is an important element to be ensured for all the learners with difficulties or different ethnicity.
- School should be interesting and motivating for all the learners.

The opinions expressed by interviewed parents about **how to improve the relationship** between them and the school can be organised around the following 6 thematic axes:

- Financial aid. The families highlight this point as one of the main ones, either aid from the school in the form of scholarships or from the municipality with free or reduced-price services (such as the school canteen or transport).



- Extend the opening time of schools. When there are no caregivers available, families require full-time school because children can stay in a secure environment.
- Make schools more inclusive for children and families with migrant background. The parents suggest language support services, out-school activities for emotional bonding (e.g. with sport initiatives), assistance from non-governmental organisations and associations that provide educational and social assistance and support, organisation of cultural exchange days to meet the various ethnic groups.
- Increase the number of special need teachers or provide more teachers training on how to work with special needs learners. There is a need for teachers specialised in the problems of students with disabilities or other educational needs, since the number of these learners is increasing. In some cases, teachers do not have specialised training on how to handle the behavior of students with difficulties or how to support them in the learning process. In the countries where the special need teachers are present in class, often the hours at their disposal are too little.
- Reduce the pupil/classroom ratio. Classes are often too crowded, and this prevents teachers from adequately teaching children and supporting those with the greatest needs.
- Change the focus of the school and the attitude of the teachers to be more motivating. School should help, discover, and support a child's strengths, and according to the parents there is a great need for teachers with a different approach to reach this objective. Learners should be motivated to become critical and creative thinkers. Parents would like to have more extracurricular activities and a better dialogue and support from the school.

4. Conclusions

LET'S CARE aims to raise the level of existing attention to the needs of the child and all the dynamics that contribute to the well-being of the pupil at school.

The legislations of the analysed countries carry within them the seeds that can bloom to strengthen and structure this attention to the needs of the student. Often in the analysed legislations the general and generic framework of legislative references is clear, necessary for including different school orders and the different political, cultural, and geographical realities that make up the school environment in the various countries.

All legislation reinforces this perspective linked to the LET'S CARE project objectives, but none specifically addresses the 4 essential pillars in an integrated manner.



In developing this policy scoping report, we propose the dimension of a European and strongly integrated vision on pupils' needs that can take its inspiration from the various legislations we have collected.

As a final suggestion we can stress that policy must make a further effort - within the framework of local, regional, and national legislative autonomy - to address the issue of early school leaving, of a school attentive to the needs of children, of greater social cohesion in the relationship between family and school, and of a strong awareness that a school of well-being builds a future of well-being for people.



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