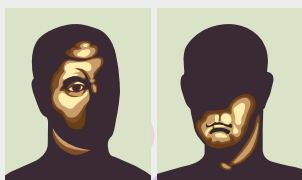


Rimantas Želvys

# IN-SERVICE TRAINING OF TEACHERS

ANALYTICAL REPORT



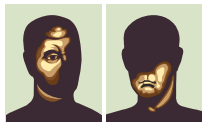
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ИССЛЕДОВАНИЕ ПОДГОТОВЛЕНО В РАМКАХ ПРОЕКТА BELARUS BEEHIVE,  
КОординатор исследовательской и экспертной части проекта  
ИНСТИТУТ «ПАЛІТЫЧНАЯ СФЕРА»

Rimantas Želvys

# In-service Training of Teachers

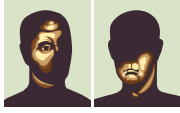
*Analytical Report*



Исследование подготовлено в рамках проекта Belarus Beehive, координатор исследовательской и экспертной части проекта – Институт «Палітычная сфера».

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2024



# Introduction

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In-service training is an important and effective tool of implementing educational reforms. Key actors in the field of education – teachers and school principals – need to be informed about the forthcoming changes and trained to deal with them in their practical activities. Quite often reformers make mistakes by concentrating primarily on structure and contents of education, financial and legal aspects, etc. and leaving the issues of initial and in-service training for the future. While committing this mistake they can anticipate the failure of education reforms, because no changes will take place unless the teaching corps accepts it and gains necessary competences for its implementation. However, even in times when the education system is not undergoing significant changes, in-service training is no less important because of continuous transformations of the surrounding environment, development of new theoretical approaches and teaching methods, etc. The policymakers should also take into account the natural internal motivation of teachers to act as active participants in the process of lifelong professional development. International large-scale studies, in particular the Programme for International student Assessment (PISA) and the Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS), provide some interesting and informative facts about teachers' participation in the process of continuous professional development and in-service training activities.



# What PISA study tells about in-service training

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PISA was launched in 2000 and currently is the largest student achievement study worldwide. Though PISA survey focuses on measuring 15-year-old school pupils' performance on mathematics, science, and reading, it also collects and analyses numerous contextual data, including information about initial and in-service teacher training. A detailed PISA-based study on teacher training policy was published in 2018 (OECD, 2018). The obtained data reveals that in high-performing countries participation in professional development is compulsory for teachers in order to seek a promotion or salary increase. Such requirements ensure high participation rate in professional development programs. Evidence shows that continuous professional development of teachers contributes to the success of students. For example, participation rates in professional development activities were positively related to a country's performance in PISA 2015 in science. In almost all highly performing systems at least 80% of PISA-participating students were in schools which organize in-service workshops that deal with specific issues faced by the school or which organize workshops for specific groups of teachers. The advantage of school-based workshops, comparing to attending a lecture delivered by an external specialist, may come from the peer-learning opportunities. Another advantage is that issues discussed during the training sessions can be more directly related to concrete and common challenges in the classroom. School workshops and one-to-one coaching or

mentoring programs offer natural settings for productive forms of professional development (OECD, 2018). On the other hand, we would like to note that other forms of in-service training can't be neglected as well. For example, in times of launching major educational reforms external trainers may become change agents of crucial importance as they are aware of what the reformers intend to do and can deliver that message to schools.

The OECD (2018) report notes that monitoring and appraisal of teachers is central to the continuous improvement of schooling. Monitoring and appraisal procedures enable teachers to get feedback about their performance and also provides opportunities to recognize and reward effective teaching. OECD reviews on teacher professional development show that there is no single model or global best practice of teacher appraisal. However, the OECD (2013) report provides a number of policy suggestions for improving teacher appraisal:

- Establishing teaching standards to guide teacher appraisal and professional development;
- Resolving tensions between the developmental and accountability functions of the teacher appraisal;
- Conducting regular developmental appraisals at the school level, based on the multiple sources of evidence, including frequent classroom observations conducted by competent evaluators internal to the school;
- Ensuring that teacher appraisal feeds into professional and school development;
- Establishing periodic career-progression appraisal involving external evaluators;
- Preparing teachers for appraisal processes and strengthening the capacity of school leaders for teacher appraisal (OECD, 2013).

The periodicity of appraisal can vary widely across countries. Some OECD countries conduct periodical mandatory appraisals once in three, four or five years, while some others – every year or twice in a year. Appraisals are typically based on classroom observations and interviews between the teacher and the

evaluators. There are OECD countries which also use information about the student outcomes as one of the sources of the appraisal. Even if it is not a formal requirement, a large majority of principals reported that analysis of student test scores is used along with classroom observations and interviews. However, the excessive and straightforward use of student test scores for teacher appraisal may lead to misinterpretations and provoke negative consequences: there are observations that in such cases teachers may tend to avoid teaching in “difficult” classes and get rid of less performing students. The consequences of teacher appraisal vary widely, but most countries combine accountability and developmental functions in a single process. In some of the countries teacher appraisal results are reported as the major determinant of salaries, while in others the length of service or undertaking additional roles and tasks are considered as more important (OECD, 2018).



# What TALIS study tells about in-service training

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■ Since the launch of the TALIS study there were three cycles of surveys – 2008, 2013 and 2018. Results of the TALIS 2018 survey demonstrated once again that teachers consider in-service training as an important part of the lifelong professional development. One of the indicators used in TALIS 2018 survey was teachers' participation in different kinds of the in-service training activities, namely, the percentage of teachers' participation in training, derived from teachers who have at least attended one of the following types of professional development in the 12 months prior to the survey:

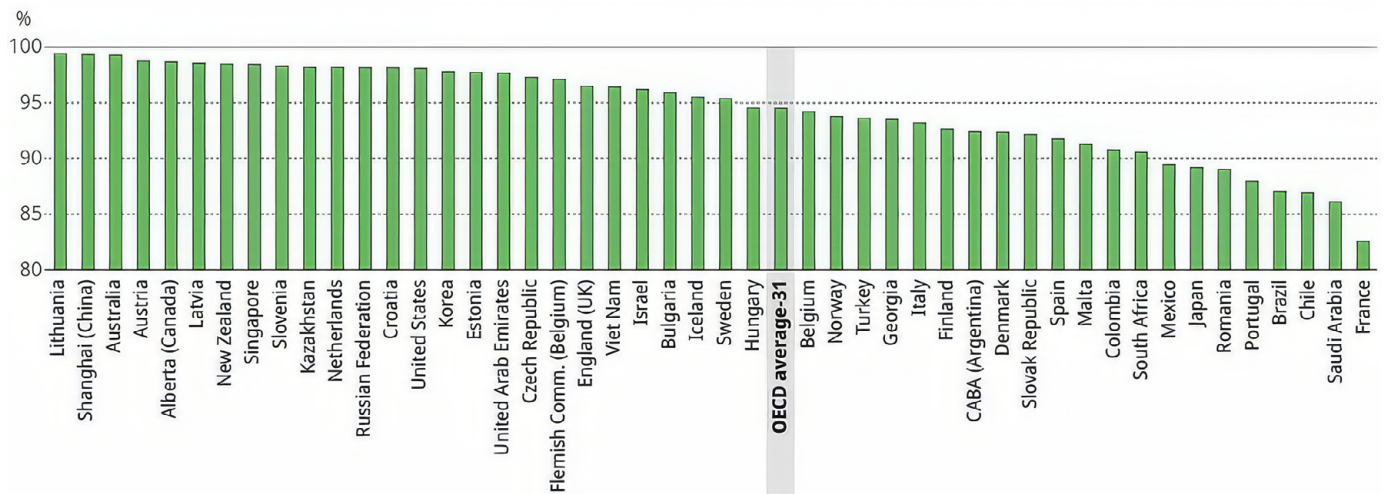
- courses/seminars attended in person
- online courses/seminars
- education conferences
- formal qualification programs
- observation visits to other schools
- observation visits to business premises, public organizations, or non-governmental organizations
- peer and/or self-observation and coaching
- participation in a network of teachers

- reading professional literature
- other types of professional development activities

On average across the OECD countries, the most common forms of professional development, according to teachers, are: “courses/seminars attended in person” (76%); “reading professional literature” (72%); and “education conferences where teachers, principals and/or researchers present their research or discuss educational issues” (49%). Literature indicates that training is potentially more effective when teachers are able to participate in a wide range of formats. Participation in courses or seminars or reading professional literature, may develop knowledge-based skills. Others, like participation in professional networks or coaching, foster collaborative and social skills (OECD, 2019). Critics claim that traditional approaches, e. g., attendance of courses and seminars in person, view teachers as passive recipients of knowledge. These types of in-service training are important as they provide teachers with the content and subject knowledge, necessary for improving the teaching practices. However, usually they are disconnected from the context of their schools. School-based training can be a more school-centered and cost-efficient way to support teachers and principals. However, participation in school-based professional development is lower across the OECD countries than traditional approaches to training. Like a school-based professional development, participation in professional networks has also been identified as an innovative and effective form of professional development. This type of training creates a collegial environment, where teachers and principals are encouraged to collaborate and share their ideas. However, across the OECD countries, only 40% of teachers state that they participated “in a network of teachers formed specifically for the professional development of teachers” (OECD, 2019). Results indicate that there still exists a vast potential of developing networks of teachers within as well as across the countries.

Educational systems have usually made use of career progression incentives (i. e. promotion, salary increases, bonuses) to promote participation in the in-service training. Although these incentives have shown a degree of success, they run the risk of transforming training into just a means to ensure work stability





**Table 1.** Percentage of lower secondary teachers who participated in professional development activities (Source: TALIS 2018)

(OECD, 2019). Apparently other kinds of incentives could play a more significant role. Schools should seek for alternative ways of encouraging teachers to be actively involved in the process of continuous professional development. One of the possible options is creating a learning culture and developing school as a learning organization. The concept of school as a learning organization implies making continuous learning a natural and permanent cultural factor prevailing among the members of the educational community (Senge et al., 2000; Simonaitienė, 2003).

Table 1 shows that Lithuania is the leader among the participant countries with almost 100% attendance rate. Over 90% of Lithuanian teachers participated in “courses/ seminars attended in person”. Lithuania is one of only two countries where continuous professional development is mandatory for both maintaining employment and for the purposes of promotion. It is also the country with the highest share of teachers accessing training activities (OECD, 2019). The above-mentioned facts encourage to take a more in-depth look into the Lithuanian case.



## The case study: in-service teacher training in Lithuania

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■ During the three decades of independence Lithuania underwent a series of reforms aimed at improving the system of in-service training of teachers. From the Soviet past Lithuania inherited a rigid and highly centralized in-service training model, where a single central in-service training institute organized courses for teachers of virtually all levels of education and specialties. At least once in five years each teachers had to undergo a standard four-week course in pedagogy, psychology and subject methodology. Most of the courses were taught by the lecturers and methodologists, who worked full-time at the In-Service Teachers' Training Institute in Vilnius, and the audience was given practically the same course content every five years. Teachers, especially the ones who came from other regions of the country, were not happy as they had to stay away from their schools and families for the period of four weeks, listen to the same courses, and live in the dormitory which couldn't provide quality accommodation. The staff of the institute could not show much initiative and had to work in accordance with the programs approved by Moscow authorities. The courses ended with the formal examination procedure, which wasn't taken seriously neither by the teachers, nor by the staff of the institute. There were no course assessment procedures and teachers' feedback was not taken into account.

After the breakdown of the Soviet Union a newly appointed leadership of the Ministry of Education and Culture faced the challenges of reforming the system of in-service training. Reformers were not familiar with systems of in-service training other than the Soviet one and thus faced the twofold challenges. The first one was the challenge of “path dependency” – specialists working in this field found that it was psychologically difficult to get rid of the traditional thinking about the system of in-service training. They were aware that the content of courses has to be changed, but preferred to retain the traditional form of four-week sessions. Another challenge was the challenge of “educational lending and borrowing”. There was no one single “Western-type” model of in-service training, and reformers were facing the dilemma of choosing one option out of numerous different alternatives. Different models and schemes of in-service training were applied during the last three decades, and in this respect Lithuania can be considered as an interesting case of probing different ways of transforming the Soviet model of in-service training into something else.

Perhaps the first spontaneously emerging model was the creation of the two parallel systems. During the first years of independence universities, regional educational authorities and NGOs started to establish their own in-service centers. They offered alternative courses in addition to the courses provided by In-Service Teachers’ Training Institute. Therefore during the transition phase the central Institute, which was inherited from the Soviet times, co-existed with newly emerging small and flexible in-service training centers. Though the Institute maintained some of the coordinating functions, gradual decentralization of structure and contents of in-service training was gaining momentum. The policy of the Ministry of Education and Culture during the early 1990s was to maintain the central in-service training institution, which was much easier to manage and control compared to regional in-service training centers. Besides that, the central institute was the important tool of spreading reform ideas, During the second half of the 1990s most of the reforms were implemented and there was no further need to maintain one central institute, controlled by the Ministry. In 1999 the central institute was reorganized into the Centre for Professional Development of Teachers, which was granted the same status as

the rest of in-service training centers. In 2009 the Centre became a structural part of the newly created Centre for Educational Development. In 2019 the Centre became a structural part of the National Agency for Education. According to the current mission statement, the Agency “develops and / or implements qualification improvement programs of specialists working in educational institutions” (NŠA, 2023), which means that in-service training is just one of the many functions of the Agency.

The newly established in-service training centers offered programs, which differed in contents, length and quality, and eventually Ministry officials decided that all programs had to undergo the process of formal accreditation. Initially the Ministry formed groups of experts who had to review and assess the programs. The review of the numerous programs required lots of time and efforts. The composition of the expert groups and their decisions were often questioned. Eventually institutional accreditation replaced the accreditation of study programs. Accredited in-service training institutions were granted the right to offer training programs without any additional approval.

The system of funding also underwent significant changes. The Education Law requires that teachers working in schools should upgrade their qualifications by participating in the in-service training activities. In order to ensure the process of upgrading qualifications, the Ministry provides necessary funding. Teachers are granted the right to attend in-service training courses at least five days per year, while securing for that period their regular salary. During the first decade of independence in-service teacher training courses were funded centrally: In-Service Teacher Training Institute and regional centers received the funding directly from the Ministry. Since 2002 the formula funding (money follows the student) was introduced. The state donation for schools in Lithuania, called a “school basket”, includes money for professional development of teachers, and through the “basket” schools receive funding which they can use in accordance with their training needs. After Lithuania became EU member state in 2004, the European funds in addition to the “school basket” became available for in-service training. Currently many in-service training activities, both national and international, are organized within the framework of various EU-funded educational projects.

Currently the Lithuanian in-service training system is partially decentralized – accredited in-service training institutions organize courses for teachers and school principals, while the Ministry defines priorities and allocates funding. Partial decentralization of in-service training significantly increased the possibilities of choice. In contrast to the Soviet model, when all teachers had to undergo their training in Vilnius. Nowadays teachers can choose location close to their permanent place of residence and freely choose the topic and the length of the course – daily, weekly, one-time or continuous, etc. On the other hand, the Ministry, in contrast to the previous model, has fewer possibilities to implement a coordinated in-service teacher training policy, which has caused difficulties in implementing curriculum and other reforms. By the end of 2020 as many as ten higher education institutions and sixty-five accredited training centers provided in-service training courses for teachers (ŠMSM, 2022). The results of state audit revealed that the Ministry didn't assure successful implementation of national in-service training policy and didn't manage to create an effective system of in-service training. Teachers were choosing the least effective ways of training – about 60 percent of provided courses lasted just one day or 6 hours. Research data shows that time is too short for acquiring new competences (Valstybės kontrolė, 2016).

In-service training is directly related to the lifelong professional development of teachers. Attendance of in-service training courses is one of the preconditions for acquiring a higher qualification category. Currently Lithuanian teachers can obtain four qualification categories: “teacher”, “senior teacher”, “teacher methodologist” and “expert teacher”. Teachers can undergo the appraisal procedure voluntarily in accordance with the requirements indicated in the Regulations for the Teacher Appraisal (ŠMSM, 2023). Teachers can pursue acquisition of any qualification category in one or several subjects if they meet the established requirements. The evidence of in-service training (portfolios, certificates, etc.) should be included in a package of documents presented to the appraisal commission. Higher qualification category may result in the increase of income, but acquiring a higher qualification category does not oblige the school to pay a higher salary. Teacher can expect the salary increase when the school budget allows. Higher qualification

category can also be an advantage in case of applying for a higher professional position: deputy principal, principal, etc. Teachers who are granted high qualification categories are also invited to read in-service courses and lead workshops, participate in external accreditation of educational institutions, etc. School principals can also undergo an appraisal procedure and acquire a qualification category. There are three formal qualification categories – 1st, 2nd and 3rd. Third category is the lowest, and first category is the highest.

After introduction of the concept of competence-based learning in early 2000s the term “competence” became the key word in documents related to in-service training and professional development of teachers. Before the introduction of competence-based learning the contents of in-service training courses was presented by indicating topics which were supposed to be covered by lecturers and/or trainers. Nowadays the course programs indicate which competences will be updated and improved during the in-service training activities. According to our understanding, introduction of competence-based learning has its own shortages and advantages. On one hand, certain aspects of professional development of teachers, which in-service training courses claim to develop (e.g. intuition, creativeness or empathy) are difficult to describe in terms of competences. On the other hand, competence-based approach gives more flexibility for in-service training institutions as they are not forced to limit themselves to providing lectures on some specific topics. Competences can be developed in a variety of ways and teachers are free to choose the most preferable models.

In 2022 the Ministry approved five priority areas for professional development of teachers for the period of 2023–2025:

1. Improvement of digital competences of teachers.
2. Improvement of competences of inclusive education.
3. Improvement of the competences of civic education.
4. Improvement the competences of teaching practice and didactics.
5. Improvement of the competences of leadership for teaching and learning.

In-service training courses which are in line with designated priority areas have an advantage of receiving the budget funding; however, teachers and schools still have a right to select courses on their own, especially if the school administration and/or teachers themselves can cover the costs of training.

Countries worldwide apply different models and forms of in-service teacher training. Three main forms in Lithuania, according to current legislation, are: induction, sabbatical and regular training. Induction training embraces in-service activities during the first year of the teaching career. Mentors are trained to lead and monitor the induction process. Sabbatical means one year granted for in-service after eight years of a teaching practice at school. Regular training means at least five days of in-service courses throughout the academic year. Induction and sabbatical are relatively new forms of in-service training in Lithuania. A number of projects and initiatives related to induction and mentorship were implemented during the last decade while sabbatical is still not widely cultivated as it requires additional funding, finding and hiring substitute teachers, etc.





# Mentorship

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■ The idea of mentorship — providing support for the novice teachers during the first years of their teaching practice — gained popularity during the last 10–15 years. The very idea is not new. During the period of the Soviet rule experienced teachers also used to help the new ones during the start of their professional career. However, advice and support they provided was mainly occasional and didn't bear the nature of a systemic and coordinated activity. During the first decade of the twenty first century the idea of mentorship underwent serious transformations. The previous model, when experienced teachers helped their new colleagues to solve the emerging problems at school, was gradually replaced by the new approach assuming that mentors need to acquire certain specific competences which could enable them to provide support in a more qualified and systematic way. Higher education institutions started to offer formal programs of mentorship training, including the ones granting an academic degree. Eventually several hundreds of Lithuanian teachers were trained to provide mentorship services. The Ministry hopes that introduction of mentorship in schools will help to diminish the number of dropouts among the novice teachers. Since 2020 the mentorship service is also provided for new school principals. Lithuanian school principals can take part in short-term and long-term mentorship programs. Short-term mentorship lasts from three to six months and is provided by local educational authorities. The aim is to help school principals in solving specific problems of school governance: human resource management, teambuilding, etc. Long-term mentorship lasts at



least one year and is coordinated on a central level by a National Agency on Education. The aim is to provide general support and counseling for school principals during the first or the second year of their principalship.



# Problems related to in-service teacher training

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■ The usefulness of in-service teacher training is generally acknowledged worldwide. On the other hand, one can hear a number of critical responses, voiced both by practicing teachers as well as educational policy makers and/or course organizers, indicating that teacher training is not always sufficiently effective and efficient. Their concern is quite understandable, as in-service training usually requires significant investments of time and money. Some of the problems related to in-service training are listed below:

1. In-service training courses are too academically-oriented. There is a general understanding that educational theory is a necessary attribute of professional training of teachers. A would-be teacher should acquire a solid theoretical background which enables him/her to understand the nature of events which are observed in his/her working place. However, serving teachers prefer to receive consultancy and advice of a practical nature. They can be bored of listening to educational theories which they already know from their undergraduate studies. Even if the theory appears to be unheard of or renewed, the skeptical attitude still prevails and it's really difficult to find a theoretical approach which arouses genuine interest of the teaching corps. In this

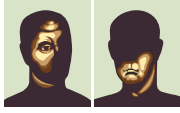
sense formal postgraduate studies (e.g. Masters) are more positively perceived as the participants are aware that they are on the academic track and this is to be expected in pursuing an academic degree. Short-time training courses bear a different nature and teachers often prefer to listen to the practical experience of their more advanced colleagues and/or trainers or get the newest information about the forthcoming changes in national education system.

2. In-service training courses quite often do not lead to any formal recognition of acquired new competences. The most common outcome of attending an in-service training courses is a certificate of participation. In some countries the appraisal system is organized in accordance with the principal "quantity leads to quality"- a certain number of certificates with an indication of the length of the course can lead to acquiring a higher qualification category. However, this is not always a case. Certificate of attendance can be just one of the numerous indicators of higher qualification and can bring a relatively small number of points which a person seeking to acquire higher qualification category needs to collect. For these reasons teachers may prefer a more formal route of seeking a postgraduate certificate in education or a Masters degree.
3. Teachers often prefer to choose courses which sound attractive but do not necessarily correlate with the needs of the school or the state. For example, teachers may choose to improve their personal competences (leadership, problem-solving or communication skills) though changes in education policy may evoke the urgent need to update the skills of inclusive education or multiculturalism. In a partially decentralized system the role of a school principal in effective management of the process of in-service activities of the staff becomes increasingly important. The same remark also applies to the management of in-service training at the national level. The Ministry is primarily interested in a kind of training which helps teachers and schools to understand and accept the ideas of the ongoing reforms. For that reason several years ago the Ministry started to indicate the priority areas for professional development of teachers. Experience of the previous decades convinced

policy makers that some kind of centralized organization of training activities is necessary.

4. In a partially decentralized system it's difficult to assure the quality of services provided by in-service training institutions. The problem was faced in Lithuania soon after the In-Service Teachers' Training Institute lost its monopoly. Alternative in-service training institutions started offering courses for teachers, and the newly developing market of in-service training services was rather chaotic and difficult to monitor. The first attempt of the Ministry was to start the process of accreditation and to fund only accredited programs. It appeared to be a difficult task as numerous groups of experts had to be formed in order to review a large number of applications presented by in-service training centers. Next step was the introduction of institutional accreditation of in-service training centers in 2003. It's a combination of external evaluation and internal self-evaluation. Self-evaluation is focused on two key areas of activities – "Learning environment" and "Management and administration". Though there are established criteria of evaluation, changing social environment also changes the concept of quality. Experts wonder whether earlier established indicators adequately reflect the current understanding of quality (Šedeckytė-Lagunavičienė, I., 2017). Previously accredited programs may become irrelevant if they don't follow the recent policy changes.
5. A relatively large group of course participants treat in-service training courses as an opportunity to have some rest from the school routine and gain some free time. Perhaps this is the reason why teachers often favour courses organized in another town and especially in another country. Research, conducted in Lithuania, showed, that 65% of teachers were perceiving courses as an attractive alternative to everyday school practice (Dačiulytė et. al. 2013). The possibility of changing the usual school environment is not bad in itself; however, the problem is that relaxation is achieved at the expense of poor attendance during the training sessions. Course organizers should be able to combine effective training with opportunities of participating in socializing events, excursions and other leisure activities at the end of the working day.

6. School-based courses are often presented as examples of more effective forms of training. Main arguments in favour of school-based training are financial: there is no need to cover travel expenses for participants; practical: training premises and other facilities are provided with no extra-cost; social: course participants are familiar with each other, so they can easier work in teams and discuss problems directly related to their own school. Participation of the school management team can also be considered an advantage. However, school-based training apparently has its negative side: teachers are often distracted by the need to solve minor school-related problems. They keep coming and going or answering the phone calls; sometimes they tend to leave after the official school working hours are over. In other words, during the school-based training there is no chance of getting away from the everyday school routine.
7. The average age of Lithuanian teachers is 49.3 years, school principals – 53.8 years (ŠMSM, 2023). 57% of teachers are older than 50 years, which means that many of them will reach the retirement age during the next 10–15 years. In terms of financial efficiency one can wonder whether is it worth investing in the in-service training of teachers, who are supposed to leave their teaching positions after a relatively short period of time. Currently there are no formal age restrictions for in-service training of teachers, but, having in mind limited resources, which the national budget allocates for education needs, perhaps it makes more sense to invest in training of beginning teachers and launching more induction and mentoring programs.



# Recommendations for the improvement of the in-service training system

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1. In-service training of teachers and school principals should become one of the first important steps in implementing any kind of curriculum or other school-related reform in education. Reformers should be aware that changes will not happen unless the teachers will be ready to accept and implement them. In order to achieve the expected outcomes one should start from teacher training.
2. During a period of transition from centralized to a more decentralized model of in-service training a parallel system of traditional and newly founded in-service training institutions needs to coexist for a certain period of time. Transformation takes time, and new ways of in-service training have to gain a certain level of status and prestige in order to replace the existing traditional ones. The strong tendency of “path dependency” in post-soviet countries usually exclude the possibility of rapid changes.
3. Attendance of in-service training courses should lead to granting higher qualification categories. Teachers should be motivated by providing some formal recognition of their achievements. However, the very fact of attending the courses should not be considered the only evidence of gaining new competences. Publications, mentoring and tutoring, participation in methodological-practical conferences and other kinds of professional activities should also






be acknowledged. When participation certificate becomes the only proof of professional development, teachers get involved in a race of attending as many seminars as possible without paying due attention to their relevance and quality.

4. Higher qualification category should lead to the increase of salary: without financial incentives teachers will not be motivated to gain new competences and attend in-service training courses. However, the link between a qualification category and a salary level should be flexible; in a decentralized system of funding the school authorities do not always have sufficient budget for the immediate salary increase. One should also bear in mind that salary increase usually has a temporary effect. In order to maintain a permanent motivation for continuous professional development it is necessary to create a learning culture in schools.
5. Induction is a very important form of in-service training. Research shows that first years of working at school can be decisive and determine the amount of teacher drop-out. Specialized training of mentors for induction purposes has to be organized in order to provide a qualified support for beginning teachers. Sabbatical may seem an attractive form of continuous professional development; however, it's not always easy to find substitute teachers. Perhaps retired teacher can be temporarily hired to solve the problem of replacement.
6. The Ministry needs to elaborate a clear state strategy of in-service training and keep the situation under control. Lithuanian in-service training system, besides its evident achievements, is most often criticized for the lack of coordination. Defining priority areas and allocating additional funding for the most urgent training needs could be some of the ways of governing the in-service training process on the national level. The same remark applies to the school level. School principal must assess the training needs of the staff and encourage individuals to plan their own continuous professional development.
7. In countries where reforms are aimed at decentralization and increased autonomy of schools, the competences of school principals start to play an extremely important role. Training of school principals and providing mentorship services thus become one of the priority tasks for reformers.



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