

## **Policy recommendations: Promoting authentic assessment in the Romanian in-service teacher training system**

Having analyzed the current situation in Romania concerning the assessment of teachers' competences upon completion of accredited<sup>1</sup> in-service teacher training programs<sup>2</sup>, and having drawn our conclusions upon testing an innovative approach to authentic assessment involving action research<sup>3</sup>, within the project entitled *Promoting authentic assessment in the Romanian in-service teacher training system*, implemented by the Romanian Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking Association, with the financial support of the Foundation Open Society Institute, we are making the following recommendations to the major stakeholders in the Romanian in-service teacher training system.

### ***I. Recommendations for the National Centre for the In-Service Training of School Staff (CNFP)***

- 1) CNFP should clearly articulate its requirements as concerns the documentation submitted by in-service teacher training program providers, including as concerns assessment of teachers' competences.
- 2) CNFP should require that the proponents of in-service teacher training programs clearly describe the specific competences that their proposed training programs aim to develop, as well as the manner in which the aforementioned competences will be assessed.
- 3) CNFP should consistently promote the authentic assessment of competences; more specifically, CNFP should pursue teachers' improved performance along the lines of competences resulting from completion of a particular training program in an authentic, professional setting, while performing authentic professional tasks.

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<sup>1</sup> Accreditation of in-service training programs for teachers in Romania is granted by the National Centre for the In-Service Training of School Staff, in Romanian: Centrul National pentru Formarea Personalului din Invatamantul Preuniversitar [CNFP]

<sup>2</sup> See *Analysis of the current situation in assessing teachers' competences upon completion of accredited in-service teacher training programs in Romania*

<sup>3</sup> See *Authentic assessment in the Romanian in-service teacher training system. Guidebook for training providers*, Chapter 3.

- 4) CNFP should promote authentic assessment through direct communication with the in-service teacher training program providers, including through:
  - publishing a guidebook for the assessment of competences developed by teachers as a result of completing a training program;
  - including the criterion of authenticity of assessment of the competences developed by the training program beneficiaries in the program evaluation grid to be used during the program accreditation process;
  - providing consultancy for the training providers who submit in-service teacher training programs for accreditation;
  - making available a set of practical solutions and models of carrying out authentic assessment of teachers' competences.

## ***II. Recommendations for providers of in-service teacher training programs***

- 1) Training providers should describe in detail the specific competences that the training program they submit for accreditation aims to develop.
- 2) Training providers should carefully plan and describe in details the assessment of each competence that their training program aims to develop. Assessment should be done in as authentic a manner as possible, in other words, the assessment tasks, the context of the assessment, the results of the assessment, the form of assessment, as well as the criteria of assessment should be defined by a high degree of authenticity. The training providers should plan to assess the competences teachers develop while completing their training program in the environment where those competences will be used.
- 3) When enrolling participants in a training program, or at the first group meeting at the latest, the training providers should share with the program beneficiaries as explicitly and unambiguously as possible how they plan to assess the competences the participants are expected to develop.
- 4) The training providers should promote authentic assessment through direct communication with the trainees, including through permanently providing constructive feedback which will contribute to their professional development.
- 5) Training providers should encourage the use of action-research with the aim of developing reflective teachers who take responsibility for their continuous professional development.

- 6) Training providers should make sure that they provide all the necessary support for their trainees to carry out their assessment tasks as best they can. Ideally, support should be provided directly and individually to each participant, which would allow observation of how the competences developed by the trainee teacher are used in practice.
- 7) Training providers should require the trainees to carefully document their progress in the development of the competences targeted by the in-service training program.
- 8) Training providers should include carefully designed reflection activities in all training programs, regardless of the competences their program aims to develop.

### ***III. Recommendations for the school management team***

- 1) The school management team should carefully assess the teachers' training needs taking into account the outcomes of the education services provided by their school.
- 2) The school management team should encourage the teachers to participate in training programs that develop the competences they need for the successful implementation of the school development plan.
- 3) The school management team should seek information about the assessment of teachers' competences upon completion of an in-service training program.
- 4) The school management team should consistently monitor whether and how the teachers use the competences developed in the training programs they have completed.
- 5) The school management team should assess the impact of the training program on the quality of education provided by the school.
- 6) The school management team should maintain contact with the in-service training providers and inform them about the impact of the delivered training program on their school.

### ***IV. Recommendations for the beneficiaries of accredited in-service teacher training programs***

- 1) Teachers should seek to learn as many details as possible about the available in-service teacher training programs, especially as concerns the competences the programs aim to develop.

- 2) Teachers should choose training programs that meet their own professional development needs, as defined by the school's development plans.
- 3) At the very first meeting of the trainee teacher with the training providers, the trainee teacher should ask for all the details concerning the assessment of competences developed upon completion of the selected program. Such details could include the manner in which assessment is planned to be carried out, the assessment tasks and criteria, the description of the expected performance etc.
- 4) Trainee teachers should ask the training providers for support so as to be able to complete the assigned tasks as best possible.
- 5) Trainee teachers should ask for feedback on the accomplishment of their assessment tasks so as to develop the competences targeted by the training program; in addition, trainee teachers should ask the evaluators to explain the grade they are given in the final evaluation session.
- 6) Trainee teachers should document their progress in developing the competences targeted by the training program as carefully as possible.
- 7) In the classroom, after having completed a training program, the teachers should pursue the impact of using the newly acquired competences upon the students' learning.