

Lithuania

National leadership and school improvement scoping exercise

**A report for the
British Council
Vilnius
Lithuania**

April 2006

National leadership and school improvement scoping exercise

Aims

The aim of the scoping exercise is to identify a strand of educational leadership that will:

- lead to the design of a development programme over 12 months that will make a significant difference to the quality of education in Lithuania; and
- serve as a test bed for trialling a range of methodologies and development strategies, thus enabling Lithuania to develop a range of activities across educational leadership in the future.

Outcomes

The outcome of the scoping exercise is this written report which reviews school leadership in Lithuania, draws some broad conclusions and proposes an initial 12 month development programme.

Nature

The report has been written in pragmatic style in response to the nature of the scoping exercise and the request for some very practical processes for progressing leadership development in Lithuania.

Acknowledgements

The scoping team from the Centre for Educational Leadership (CEL) at The University of Manchester would like to thank all those who facilitated the exercise and unstintingly gave of their time and expertise.

In particular:

Danguole Kizniene, Projects Manager for Education, Science and Governance, British Council Lithuania

Rasa Snapiene, EIP PCU Director, Coordinator of Leadership Project, Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania

Mindaugas Briedis, Head of the Division of Teacher Pre-service and In-service Training, Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania

Maryte Speiciene, Chief Officer of the Division of Teacher Pre-service and In-service Training, Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania

Ricardas Alisauskas, Head of the Division of the Strategical Planning and Analysis, Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania

Dr. Rita Dukynaite, Chief Officer of the Division of the Strategical Planning and Analysis, Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania

Who set up the exercise, provided a wealth of well-chosen documentation and facilitated the visit.

And the staff of:

School

Teacher Training Centre

(Danguole/Rasa – could you please insert the names of the school and training centre here)

Lithuania

National leadership and school improvement scoping exercise

Contents

- 1. Executive summary**
- 2. Introduction**
- 3. The reform agenda and the implications for leadership development**
- 4. Current national initiatives**
- 5. Towards a national leadership development programme**
- 6. Laying the foundations 2006**
- 7. Appendices**

Appendix 1: Scoping activities

Appendix 2: The Lithuanian education system – key papers

Appendix 3: Leadership development needs

Appendix 4: School leadership development in Lithuania - strengths, areas for development, opportunities and challenges

1. Executive summary

The scoping exercise looked at the role of leadership development in delivering the Lithuanian reform agenda within the National Education Strategy 2003–2012 with a view to establishing how this could be taken forward in a small way in 2006.

It became apparent during the exercise that the quality of leadership is seen as critical to bringing about the changes required to implement the reform agenda. As a result of the desk research and the three-day visit it also became clear that a system of leadership development was required for General Education (6-18) primary, basic and secondary schools and that this should focus on four groups:

- directors of Schools
- potential directors of schools (reserve)
- deputy directors of schools and
- heads of methodological circles

By way of scene setting, Section 3 provides a brief summary of key aspects of the Lithuanian education system and reform agenda relevant to leadership development and identifies the implications for this process.

Section 4 notes that considerable progress has been made in stimulating improvements in the education system over the past few years. However, all stakeholders believe that the next stage of the process requires more coherence across various initiatives e.g. audit, information systems, professional development and a robust and systematic national process for rolling them out evenly across the country.

As the national culture is one of collaboration and mutuality, top down, centralised approaches will not work as they reflect past ideologies and the negative experience of the soviet past. Therefore, democratic collaboration between the MES and the Municipalities is paramount in any change process. So a national change process would need to build on this relationship and engage all the key stakeholders in both the development and implementation of a national strategy. However, within this process, the Ministry is also looking to work with a mix of local, national and international partners.

The key issues that emerged from the analysis in Sections 3 and 4 have been incorporated into a development of the standard SWOT analysis adapted for this process and set out in Appendix 4: School leadership development in Lithuania - strengths, areas for development, opportunities and challenges.

Section 5 draws on that analysis, takes these issues further and suggests some of the factors that should be incorporated in a national leadership development programme and the structural changes, alluded to in the previous section, that would need to be put in place to ensure it has the required impact.

And finally Section 6 makes a series of recommendations for laying the foundations for this process in 2006 as set out below.

1. Establish a national change team led by MES and incorporating key stakeholders with a remit to steer the process from inception to programme completion in 3-5 years time.
2. Establish a development team whose main task would be the design, development, piloting and staffing of the programme(s) and eventually capacity building for roll-out.
3. Engage the development team in a process of leadership development education so that they are fully equipped to assist in the design and development process and make decisions about the nature of a Lithuanian school leadership development programme.
4. Engage consultants to co-develop the programme with the development team to ensure the programme utilises the best international practice.
5. Produce a functional specification for the development and resourcing of the programme(s) design, development and pilot phase.
6. Establish a process for the production and resourcing of a national roll out programme following the successful completion of pilot(s).

In conclusion, the recommendation is to proceed with the development of school leadership development programmes at four levels, though not necessarily at the same time, and produce both a plan for the development stage and for the roll out to ensure careful building of capacity and the securing of adequate resources.

2. Introduction

The Centre for Educational Leadership, The University of Manchester was approached jointly by the British Council, Lithuania and The Lithuanian Ministry of Education and Science to conduct a short scoping exercise into education leadership development in Lithuania. The exercise followed a successful Lithuanian School Improvement External Audit Study Visit in September 2005.

The aim of the scoping exercise is to identify a strand of educational leadership that will:

- lead to the design of a development programme over 12 months that will make a significant difference to the quality of education in Lithuania; and
- serve as a test bed for trialling a range of methodologies and development strategies, thus enabling Lithuania to develop a range of activities across educational leadership in the future.

The outcome of the scoping exercise is this written report which reviews school leadership in Lithuania, draws some broad conclusions and proposes an initial 12 month development programme.

The report has been written in a pragmatic style in response to the nature of the scoping exercise and the request for some very practical processes for progressing leadership development in Lithuania.

The scoping exercise consisted of the following activities:

- Stage 1 A formal agreement on the exercise framework
- Stage 2 Desk research to gather information on the education system, reform agenda and leadership development provision
- Stage 3 A three day visit by three CEL consultants 20-23 February 2006 which included:
 - a meeting with the State Secretary of the Ministry
 - meetings with senior personnel of the Ministry of Education and Science (MES)
 - a visit to Sirvintos Municipality including a Teacher Training Centre, a school, headteachers and heads of subject departments
 - meeting with representatives of a number of School Associations
- Stage 4 The production of a written report
- Stage 5 Further CEL involvement if required

A more detailed account of these activities is provided in Appendix 1: Scoping activities.

The desk research included a review of a number of documents, provided by MES, outlining the national education reform agenda. A full list of these is included in Appendix 2 The Lithuanian education system – key papers.

Therefore, this report draws on the outcomes of the desk research and the meetings with a full range of stakeholders that took place in Lithuania between the 20–22 February 2006. The orientation of all these activities was towards establishing what would be required to develop the leaders capable of leading change and implementing the education reform agenda. This is what this report sets out to do.

3. The reform agenda and the implications for leadership development

It is apparent to all those involved in education at national, municipal and school level that the quality of leadership is critical to bringing about the changes required to implement the reform agenda.

Therefore, this section provided a brief summary of key aspects of the Lithuanian education system and reform agenda relevant to leadership development and identifies the implications for this process.

The Ministry of Education and Science have overall responsibility for the formulation and execution of national education policy. While the Ministry set the national legal framework, responsibility for implementing much of this framework is devolved to county and municipal level. Each of Lithuania's ten counties has a department of education to which certain ministerial duties are delegated. A total of 60 municipalities are under the jurisdiction of these ten counties. Each of the three types of Authority has a role to play in implementing educational policy. Moreover, each has direct responsibility for certain types of educational institutions.

In 2003 there were over 2300 education institutions in Lithuania; of which approximately 2100 were schools. Institutions are grouped by stage and by the nature of the studies that they offer.

Education is compulsory for all pupils from the age of 7 to 16 inclusive. Schooling during these years is referred to as basic education. General education is the term used to describe education from ages 6-18 and includes primary, basic and secondary schools, all of which are described below.

The first stage in the system is pre-school education (ages 1-6). Although it is not compulsory to attend pre-schools, it is recommended that children attend pre-primary preparatory groups from the age of 5 onwards to prepare for subsequent schooling.

The second stage, and the first level of compulsory schooling, is primary education. Pupils will spend four years at this level, from ages 7-10. These four years form the first stage of basic education.

On completion of primary education pupils move to lower secondary school (sometimes called basic schools) from ages 11-16. There are a number of routes through this stage. Pupils unsuited to mainstream general education (usually due to a lack of motivation) may at the age of 12, after one year of lower secondary school, attend youth schools. These institutions offer pupils an opportunity to acquire lower secondary education over a longer period. Pupils doing well within lower secondary can, at age 14, move to a gymnasium (which provides diversified general education in different curricular areas), or to a vocational school, to complete their basic education.

On completion of basic education, pupils are awarded a basic school leaving certificate. This certificate entitles them to attend upper secondary education (from age 17-18), a vocational school or to leave education and go into work. Pupils who complete upper secondary education can take a combination of

national and school-based examinations to try to gain admission into higher education institutions – universities, colleges and schools of high education.

A number of non-mainstream institutions also exist including boarding schools and schools for special education.

Responsibility for this range of institutions is divided between Authorities. The Ministry of Education and Science is directly responsible for vocational schools, and institutions of university-level and non-University level higher education. Boarding schools and schools for special education are controlled by the county authorities, with pre-schools and schools of general education being operated by the municipalities.

In 2004, 98.4% of students attended publicly funded education establishments. Up until 2002, pre-schools and schools of general education were financed from the municipal budgets on a scale that varied from one municipality to the next. School salary levels however were established by the central government. The year 2002 saw the introduction of a new system of financing general education which is based on a per capita or 'pupil basket' model, whereby money follows the pupil. Pupil basket funds are allocated to municipalities by central government as targeted grants. The funds of the pupil baskets are used to pay teachers salaries and for in-service training of teachers, and to buy textbooks and other teaching aids. Non-teaching staff, operational resources and capital assets remain within municipal education budgets. Vocational schools are financed from the state budget, with the budget of each individual institution administered by its head. Higher education institutions are also financed through the state, but enjoy considerable autonomy in relation to their activities.

The level of education of the Lithuanian population has continued to grow during the past ten years. The percentage of people with only primary and basic education has decreased while the percentage of people with secondary and high education has increased and is continuing to do so. However given that the birth rate in Lithuania is diminishing, the actual number of pupils at the basic level of education is decreasing year on year. This diminishing birth rate combined with the fact that many of Lithuania's schools are in rural areas (88% of all primary schools in 2004) has led to the introduction of the school optimisation plan (school closures).

This plan will see the closure of some schools in rural areas, and will therefore impact on school and class sizes. In 2004 the average Lithuanian primary school had approximately 53 students, with 15.6 pupils per teacher; while a secondary school had 679 students, with 13.0 pupils per teacher. The average class size was 22 (25 in urban areas, 17 in rural areas). Increasing class sizes will of course have implications for the teaching profession; a strongly female-dominated profession where 86% of all school teachers are women and where the dominant age group is 40-44 years.

The issues relevant to school leadership fall into two categories. The formal targets for national development and, secondly, some of the contextual issues

that effect the system as a whole. Together they constitute the education environment within which school leaders operate and as such the issues that leaders need to be equipped to address within a support and development programme.

The National Education Strategy 2003–2012 states that the development of education in Lithuania should take into account the new challenges and opportunities in Lithuanian society e.g. the development of democracy and market economy, the process of globalisation, the vast amounts of information, rapid changes and fragmentation of society.

Therefore, the key national challenges that effect school leaders are:

- to help individuals understand the contemporary world;
- to help individuals acquire the competencies and qualifications necessary for professional career and meaningful life;
- to ensure balanced and knowledge-based development of the economy, environment and culture of the country; and
- to guarantee continuity of culture and foster the open and dialogic nature of the culture.

The Strategy goes on to set out how education should help Lithuania and its society to achieve these goals. The key aims, relevant to school leaders, are:

- To develop an efficient and consistent education system which is based on the responsible management, targeted funding and rational use of resources; and
- To ensure a quality of education which is in line with the needs of an individual living in an open civil society under market economic conditions, and the universal needs of society in the modern world.

Under measures of implementation these are translated into more detailed activities and objectives.

An understanding of these – the policy context, and what they mean at school level would be an essential part of a school leadership development programme. This would also ensure that school leaders understood their role in implementing change at school level and could be extended to include their role in systems leadership i.e. their contribution to the national strategy.

During the course of the scoping exercise it became apparent that as well as the formal targets set out in legislation and policy there were other issues nationally and locally of relevance to the development of leaders across the Lithuanian education system. These are, therefore, set out below. They are:

- reducing the drop out and absenteeism rates and, as part of the response, developing more engaging learning processes;
- the declining population has led to the introduction of the school optimisation programme (school closure). This has resulted in increased

competition between teachers and mitigates, to a degree, against co-operation across schools.

- the student basket is the financial formula by which schools receive a significant proportion of their funding - however, there is a long way to go to achieve effective accountability and transparency;
- students curriculum workload is heavy due to the range of subjects and the atomised way they are currently taught;
- many lessons are worthy but uninteresting and increasingly unappealing to a student population familiar with interactive technology including mobile communication;
- many qualified and good teachers are leaving the country for better paid work; and
- the social context often lacks challenge and there is insufficient stimulus for teachers to change their practice in the current culture.

However, to ensure these are seen in context and as part of the full picture, the evidence is that in the best schools, staff:

- understand the mission and the new priorities;
- are highly qualified and committed;
- facilitate high academic achievement and make good use of ICT;
- provide good pedagogical, social and psychological guidance to their students;
- establish good relationships with the local community; and
- create a good learning environment.

Therefore, despite the challenges in the system set out above there are examples of good practice that illustrate the potential for improvement across the school system as a whole.

One of the challenges then is how to raise the standard of all schools to that of the best and at the same time implement reform across the system. This was articulated by MES as the need to develop robust national processes for:

- raising the quality of education across all parts of the country;
- scaling up successful local developments to a national level;
- more effective and efficient use of resources and targeting them on implementing reforms; and
- creating the right climate for change.

However, the Ministry also believes that there is a growing awareness across the system for the need for change and that most directors are aware that they have a key role in that process. Therefore, while there is a good deal of work to be done in convincing people of the merits of continuous change, there is sufficient good will in the system to support the process.

The implications of these issues for the development of school leaders seem to be in six areas, they are:

1. A deeper understanding of the national agenda and how this is implemented in their school.
2. An understanding of the processes involved in engaging their school community in the education process.
3. A profound understanding of what effective teaching and learning looks like in Lithuania and Europe at the beginning of the 21st century and how teaching and learning can be improved in their school.
4. How to work in senior leadership teams and develop leadership at all levels to improve the quality of leadership and management and sustain change.
5. Become more adept at using resources efficiently and effectively and focusing them on the new agenda.
6. Engaging in their own development and further qualification.

Summary

In summary, the challenges are around the leadership and management of change and how to work with government, school staff and the community to achieve the changes needed.

The context is the imperatives of European wide change, technological and societal change which need to be addressed as part of the development of Lithuania as a European country.

The agenda for change is set out in the 'The National Education Strategy 2003–2012' with clear aims, objectives and success criteria. A command of the policy would enable school leaders to better understand their role and their role in systems leadership.

Nationally, the challenge is develop democratic processes and systems and efficient use of resources to enable change to be implemented on a national scale and impact significantly on education standards within the next five years.

4. Current national initiatives

Considerable progress has been made in stimulating improvements in the education system over the past few years. However, all stakeholders believe that the next stage of the process requires more coherence across various initiatives e.g. audit, information systems, professional development and a robust and systematic national process for rolling them out evenly across the country.

As the national culture is one of collaboration and mutuality, top down, centralised approaches will not work as they reflect past ideologies and the negative experience of the soviet past. Therefore, democratic collaboration between the MES and the Municipalities is paramount in any change process. So a national change process would need to build on this relationship and engage all the key stakeholders in both the development and implementation of a national strategy. However, within this process, the Ministry is also looking to work with a mix of local, national and international partners.

A great strength of the education system is the leadership at national level as evidenced by the number of cutting edge initiatives, the commitment of resources and the number of existing agencies that provide a national framework for development. Similarly, there are municipalities who have demonstrated the political and professional will to grasp opportunities and engage their communities in the change process. Some of these and the implications of their work for leadership development are set out below.

Education improvement project

The Education Improvement Project is an initiative that seeks to implement key aspects of the reform agenda. Its main aims are:

- to improve the basic school;
- to improve learning conditions at basic schools and to create a learning environment that meets contemporary standards;
- to improve the incentives for schools to provide better quality education services;
- to arm the teachers of basic schools with the latest teaching/learning strategies and methodologies; and
- to develop more effective and efficient systems of resource management to improve the quality of education.

Two of the four components are directly relevant to leadership development:

- improvements of teaching and learning at basic schools; and
- the creation of the system of education quality management.

Creating a system of education quality management has led to the development of the Education Management Information System (EMIS) and the School Improvement External Audit (SIEA) process. In examining how to improve teaching and learning it has become apparent that a long-term and

integrated programme of training for teachers, heads of school and school teams involving municipality education senior officers is required and this has led to this scoping exercise.

Much has been achieved during the project not least a number of developments that demonstrate that improvement is possible and indicate the nature of the initiatives that need to be developed in order to bring about the necessary change, nationally.

School Improvement External Audit (SIEA)

MES have started a programme of schools auditing with Municipalities, initially on a voluntary basis. SIEA is aimed at creating a climate with a focus on educational improvement as the core purpose of assessment, rather than a process of negative auditing.

The aim is to audit regional educational quality and provide schools with the opportunity to verify the objectivity of its own self-perception and assessment and realise its own position within a generalised regional school situation. The success criteria of each SIEA activity is: has it helped this particular school to improve the quality of the services offered to these particular pupils?

One example of the process in practice was observed in the municipality of Sirvintos. It was evident that the partnership between local government, external consultants, the community and school offered a model for rolling out change at a local level.

The concepts, processes and practice were developed with CEL in 2005. Currently 100 auditors have been trained but a lack of systems and consultancy skills is minimising effectiveness. Therefore, there is a need to develop:

- a critical mass of highly skilled auditors;
- municipality support both politically and professionally; and
- leaders at all levels within schools.

However, SIEA is a critical tool in the process of supporting school leaders bring about measurable improvements in the quality of teaching and learning and pupil attainment in their schools and, as part of the process, measuring themselves against schools of similar type.

Education Management Information System (EMIS)

The Education Management Information System (EMIS) was developed with Harvard University. It provides information on Municipality and school performance. There is a common misconception that it is only of use to MES. Therefore, it is not widely used by headteachers or municipality officials. It is

difficult, without a fuller understanding of the data sets and applications, to make a definitive recommendation, but it would seem that it offers useful performance data. Therefore, the system should be incorporated into a coherent management information system leadership alongside the outcomes of SIEA and school leaders trained in interpreting and utilising the data.

The National Agency for School Improvement

A number of issues were raised by the agency relevant to the development of school leadership. Firstly, it is apparent that there is no common understanding of what leadership looks like across the system. There is work in progress on 'the key competencies necessary for the teacher' but no work on directors, deputy directors or heads of methodological circles.

Secondly, there is no formal leadership structure below directors and their deputies although there are a number of leadership roles but in a variety of forms. Often these are heads of methodological circles (pedagogical leaders) but there is no formal career path or financial incentive to encourage teachers to take on a middle leader role. This leaves a gap at middle leader level making sustainable whole school change very difficult.

Also, since there are no formal intermediary leadership and management roles between teacher and headteacher there are no opportunities to progressively develop leadership and management skills.

Thirdly, there are no genuine consultants in Lithuania capable of developing the kind of leadership and management system and development programme that will enable school leaders to deliver the required changes. Therefore, the country needs to tap into international expertise.

At another level, schools also need external consultancy to support them in implementing the change process. At present calling in a consultant is seen as a sign of weakness. There is a need to develop and legitimise a consultancy, change management support role, with schools.

And finally, because of the current pay structure, directors spend too much time in the classroom and not enough time leading. Improvements in the quality of leadership will need to allow for management time and reward leaders for improving the quality of education and not for the amount of time they spend in the classroom.

Professional development issues for the next five years

Over the next five years the Division of Teacher Pre-Service and In-service Training at MES intends to:

- modernise teacher training and teaching and learning practices;

- introduce integrated and coherent processes for evaluating the efficiency and effectiveness of teacher development programmes;
- develop an integrated quality assurance system for assessing and developing the quality of teaching and teachers;
- develop an agreed set of standards for teacher training;
- create a clear and visible career path for teachers to improve morale and reduce the exodus of good people from the system; and
- use international expertise as part of the development process.

A paper on the modernisation of teacher training is about to be submitted to the Cabinet. It includes proposals for leadership and management development.

Professional development provision

While a number of universities offer leadership and management qualifications they are in the main generic and orientated towards business. It seems difficult to find the right people at the right level in universities interested in developing education leadership and management programmes and qualifications.

There are 57 regional education centres which provide a range of professional development activities for teachers. Many have been refurbished through structural funding.

Vilnius is the largest and conducts training the trainers for other teacher centres. The dominant model is one of transmission through a cascading process. It seems, there are few consultants with a profound understanding of adult learning principles or processes. The centre hosts 1,200 training events a year lasting an average of three days per event.

The management division of the Vilnius regional training centre has been involved in a number of pilot management development projects with Finnish and Norwegian institutions. However, the centre faces a number of issues:

- poor completion rates;
- ineffective links with Vilnius University;
- no processes for applying the learning back in schools;
- a one programme fits all model with no differentiation, personalisation or contextualisation;
- many courses but few links and no overarching philosophy or integrating framework; and
- difficulty recruiting skilled staff and mentors.

The regional training centre in Sirvintos has recently been refurbished to quite a high standard although it lacked the range of ICT facilities available in some other countries. The main activities of the centre were:

- extending teachers' qualifications;
- organising methodological activities;
- managing the school library;
- organising events for pupils; and

- providing informal learning activities for adults, the elderly, social workers, parents pre-school children etc.

The demand for in-service training is constantly increasing. In 2001/02 the centre ran 47 programmes this has grown to 68 in 2005/06. The centre is heavily involved in director and deputy director training. Training costs are covered by the 'pupil basket' MES and the Municipality also fund training.

None of the courses offered by regional education centres are currently accredited at degree level although there are moves to change this. Nor are there distance learning or online elements in the current programmes. However, teachers can come out of school five days a year to train at an external centre and trainers go into schools to deliver whole school training.

There is also a strong feeling across the teaching profession and their representatives that there is insufficient capability within these centres to provide the high quality development activities and processes required to qualify the new breed of leaders required to lead the reform agenda. At the same time, it is recognised that they should be included in the process and given the opportunity to develop and rise to the challenge. As they represent a major existing resource, their involvement and support is critical at this stage of the process. However, should they fail to engage they make actually present a barrier to change and may need reform.

Selection and development of directors

Two constant themes during the scoping exercise were the quality of the director selection processes and leadership development programmes. In particular, there was concern about the way some directors were appointed which undermined leadership in schools and reduced the school's capacity to change.

Official procedures for the appointment of headteachers are in place in some areas but not all. In some cases local issues are more significant in appointing directors than experience or expertise. The result is 'accidental appointments' or headteachers appointed by accident rather than design and therefore unskilled and incapable of effective management or of leading the reform process in their school. Consequently, accidental directors often found it difficult to engage with middle managers particularly regarding professional and pedagogical issues.

Management training has been compulsory for headteachers since 2005 but there is currently no leadership training. New heads are observed and monitored during their first year in post, but it is really too late to start training and preparing them after they are in post. The ideal scenario would be to have a reserve of headteachers (as NPQH does in the UK). However, as there was a similar system in Soviet times, this concept now has some negative connotations.

All the stakeholders interviewed as part of the scoping exercise regarded national guidance on recruitment and selection of school leaders, common pay and conditions and a national framework for leadership development as critical to improving the quality of education in Lithuania.

Summary

A number of critical developments emerged from this part of the scoping exercise and should be taken together with the issues that emerged in the previous section as the themes to be incorporated in a national programme of leadership development. They are:

- definitions and descriptions of leadership and management at all levels focused on efficiency, effectiveness and on greatly improving the quality of teaching, learning and pupil attainment against a measure of what this looks like in three years – stretch in the system;
- a national appointments process including a standards or competency framework;
- a new pay and conditions framework for leaders at all levels in the system;
- school leaders have a command of new teaching and learning methodologies sufficient to lead and support new practice in schools;
- the development of a cadre of trainers and consultants who have the credibility and skills to facilitate leadership development activities at national and municipal levels; and
- integrating existing initiatives and the work of national and municipal agencies into coherent performance and development processes capable of informing and supporting leaders in leading the process of school improvement.

One of the key questions asked of all the stakeholders consulted as part of the scoping visit was: What would a curriculum for school leadership development include? A composite list for leaders generally and directors and heads of methodological circles specifically can be found in Appendix 3: Leadership development needs.

5 Towards a national leadership development programme

Sections three and four sought to draw together the implications for leadership development from the national strategy and context, and reflect on these in the light of current initiatives and resources.

The key issues have been incorporated into a development of the standard SWOT analysis adapted for this process and set out in Appendix 4: School leadership development in Lithuania - strengths, areas for development, opportunities and challenges.

This section draws on that analysis, takes these issues further and suggests some of the factors that should be incorporated in a national leadership development programme and the structural changes, alluded to in the previous section, that would need to be put in place to ensure it has the required impact.

Structural changes

It is understood that a paper is being prepared for the Lithuanian Cabinet on teacher development that incorporates advice on school leadership. A number of themes emerged during the scoping exercise that may be relevant to that work.

It is clear that schools and municipalities need a national school leadership framework that advises on recruitment and selection, structures, pay and conditions and leadership development focused on the task of delivering the national strategy.

There seem to be a number of facets to this:

- the development of a set of leadership competencies that reflect the diverse nature of schools and local context;
- through the developments set out above, the legitimising of their leadership activity with colleagues;
- the development of a clear career structure that contributes to retaining able staff and offers opportunities to progressively build skills for leaders progressing to directorships; and
- a cultural change in schools and municipalities where initiative, entrepreneurship and drive are recognised and rewarded.

Introducing a national school leadership development programme

In addition to the developments outlined above, there are a number of processes and practices that should be built on or developed as part of the process of introducing a school leadership development programme across Lithuania. They are:

- engaging the full range of stakeholders in the design, development, pilot and rolling out of any programme reflecting the vision and values of

- Lithuanian society and the democratic, cultural and economic aspirations of the national strategy;
- in particular, seeking out universities who would wish to develop validation and accreditation processes to add to the rigour and standing of the programme;
- strong leadership from MES departments and agencies to ensure municipalities and providers are effectively guided, resourced and supported as part of a national roll out strategy;
- the development of a coherent and integrated framework of school performance, development and support at municipal level benchmarked against national standards; and
- the production of a national plan for rolling out a programme(s) across the country, systematically and to national standards.

A leadership development programme for impact

The purpose of a national leadership development programme is to provide leaders with the skills and capabilities, knowledge and understanding to implement the national strategy in their school to improve the quality of education.

Leaders at all levels in schools need development and support. As a result of the desk research and the three-day scoping visit it became apparent that a system of leadership development was required for General Education (6-18) primary, basic and secondary schools. It also became apparent that this should focus on four groups:

- directors of schools;
- potential directors of schools (reserve);
- deputy directors of schools; and
- heads of methodological circles.

It is also widely recognised that the development of leadership teams increases the probability that new ways of working will be implemented effectively and have maximum impact. Therefore, consideration should be given as to how individual and team development can be incorporated in any development programme.

It is clear from the success of other recent initiatives that the level of support for school leaders at municipal level is also a factor in the success of any leadership development or change programme. Therefore, consideration should also be given to the development of local consultants, school improvement officers who can support leaders and their teams implement change.

It was clear during the scoping exercise that there is currently insufficient capability and capacity within the system to provide leadership development on a national scale. As a starting point a process of educating key staff about leadership development processes and practices, concepts of professional and organisation development, the qualities of effective facilitation of learning etc.

would inform the production of a well founded functional specification and illuminate the recruitment and selection of a cadre of skilled trainers and consultants.

Building capability and capacity in the system closely mirrors the process for the appointment and development of leaders in that it requires a competency framework, a selection process and a training programme. The appointment and development of a group of potential lead trainers at an early stage would greatly enhance this process. It would also enhance the engagement of key stakeholders if this group was drawn from their ranks.

Clarity about the desired outcome of the programme and the development processes that will achieve them are fundamental to the success of the programme. Therefore, there should be clear key performance indicators (KPIs) for the programme, a process of continuous quality assurance for the programme and a process for impact evaluation designed to measure the degree to which leadership has improved and led to real change in schools.

The way forward

There are a number of clear stages in designing, developing, piloting and rolling out a national leadership development programme. The production of a functional specification for this work would clarify timescales, resources and key capabilities and inform the strategic implementation process.

Having synthesised the outcomes of the scoping exercise and considered the issues for a school leadership development in Lithuania the above elements would seem to offer a coherent process for a national programme of school leadership development.

The next two sections indicate how this could be translated into a national 3-5 year strategy and what could be achieved in 2006 in preparation for that development.

6. Laying the foundations 2006

The aim of the scoping exercise is to identify a strand of educational leadership that will:

- lead to the design of a development programme over 12 months that will make a significant difference to the quality of education in Lithuania; and
- serve as a test bed for trialling a range of methodologies and development strategies, thus enabling Lithuania to develop a range of activities across educational leadership in the future.

The outcome of the scoping exercise is this written report which reviews school leadership in Lithuania, draws some broad conclusions and proposes an initial twelve month development programme.

However, by the end of the scoping visit to Lithuania in February 2006, it seemed that the exercise had stimulated further thinking about a national leadership development programme and that the agenda had moved on. The indication was that activity in 2006 should actually focus on laying the foundations for designing, developing, piloting and rolling out a school leadership development programme which would support a new leadership framework for leaders at four levels:

- directors of schools;
- potential directors of schools (reserve);
- deputy directors of schools; and
- heads of methodological circles.

This is a significant undertaking and, therefore, would require significant ground work to lay adequate foundations for a process of national change.

If this is still the case, the recommendations for laying the foundations for this process in 2006 would be as set out below.

- 1 Establish a national change team led by MES and incorporating key stakeholders with a remit to steer the process from inception to programme completion in 3-5 years time.
- 2 Establish a development team whose main task would be the design, development, piloting and staffing of the programme(s) and eventually capacity building for roll-out.
- 3 Engage the development team in a process of leadership development education so that they are fully equipped to assist in the design and development process and make decisions about the nature of a Lithuanian school leadership development programme.
- 4 Engage consultants to co-develop the programme with the development team to ensure the programme utilises the best international practice.
- 5 Produce a functional specification for the development and resourcing of the programme(s) design, development and pilot phase.

- 6 Establish a process for the production and resourcing of a national roll out programme following the successful completion of pilot(s).

In conclusion, the recommendation is to proceed with the development of school leadership development programmes at four levels, though not necessarily at the same time, and produce both a plan for the development stage and for the roll out to ensure careful building of capacity and the securing of adequate resources.

7 Appendices

Appendix 1: Scoping activities

Stage	Description	Purpose
Desk research	Series of well-chosen background papers on the education system provided by Rasa Snipiene (see appendix 2 for further details)	To gather information on the education system, reform agenda and current leadership development provision in Lithuania
Field research	Meetings with senior personnel at the Ministry of Education and Science	To clarify thinking and seek further explanations on the areas covered at the desk research stage
	Meeting with the State Secretary of the Ministry	To listen to the State Secretary's views on leadership development and how this would contribute to the implementation of the national strategy
	Visit to Sirvintos Municipality including a teacher training centre, a school, headteachers and heads of subject departments	To contextualise the information previously received, and gain an awareness of the needs and concerns of teachers and heads
	Meeting with representatives of a number of School Associations	To gain a deeper understanding of the political context
Written report (first draft)	20 page report that outlines our findings and makes recommendations for a possible way forward	To allow clients to check that report is factually accurate and strategically appropriate before report is finalized
Written report (final draft)	20 page report that outlines our findings and makes recommendations for a possible way forward	Final report for distribution to all parties

Appendix 2: The Lithuanian education system – key papers.

- General Concept of Education in Lithuania, Vilnius 1994.
- Republic of Lithuania Law on the amendment of the Law on Education (new edition by 17 June 2003 No. IX – 1630).
- The National Education Strategy 2003 – 2012.
- Education Improvement Project, Lithuania 2002 – 2005 – Introduction.
- Lithuanian Education System, Jolanta Spurgiene, Lithuania, Summary Sheets on Education Systems in Europe, Eurydice, June 2003.
- Lithuanian Education System (2004/2005)
- Education in Lithuania; Figures and Trends (2004)

Appendix 3: Leadership development needs

During the three day visit element of the scoping exercise, each group was asked about the development needs of school leaders. Some of these were expressed as skill sets. Below is a summary of these both in general terms and for directors and heads of methodological circles.

- A leadership and management development programme that is:
 - coherent and progressive across levels;
 - involves both individual and leadership team development;
 - takes account of the diverse range of schools and their individual context;
 - utilises the learning processes most effective in the Lithuanian education system;
 - is built around learning needs assessment, peer review and feedback processes;
 - underpinned by proven professional practices, academic rigour and a recognisable qualification;
 - sufficiently engaging and challenging to address some of the apathy and no-can-do attitudes in parts of the system;
 - impacts on the quality of teaching and learning in schools;
 - facilitates networks to afford the transfer of practice and peer support; and
 - is facilitated and supported by fully trained and competent staff.

For directors this would also include;

- an understanding of the policy context;
- strategic thinking and political skills;
- communication and interpersonal skills;
- teambuilding and team management skills;
- recruitment and retention strategies;
- change management and influencing skills;
- planning, prioritising and project management skills;
- greater understanding of pedagogical leadership and the skills required;
- how to develop a more contemporary meaningful curriculum – including how to teach pupils to cope with the real world
- budgeting and resource management; and
- promoting the school and improving its image and engaging more effectively with the local community.

For heads of methodological circles:

- How to co-ordinate the work of other teachers;
- Improving advisory skills;
- Delegation skills
- Better planning and project management skills;
- Communication and influencing skills;

- A better understanding of how adults learn;
- Practical strategies for involving all staff in discussions, meetings and development activities;
- Methods for transferring good practice;
- Effective observation and feedback skills and processes;
- Organising development programmes for colleagues; and
- Processes for encouraging co-operation within and across schools.

Appendix 4: School leadership development in Lithuania - strengths, areas for development, opportunities and challenges

Strengths	Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • national strategy for school improvement with clear objectives • drive and commitment of key national and municipal leaders • a commitment to collaboration and democratic processes at all levels of government • Lithuania has relatively good resources including structural funds and a track record of securing external funds to support national change processes • success of small scale, test-bed type improvement initiatives • the best schools are good and offer examples of best practice • large range of existing resources and agencies that are already engaged in development, these would include municipal support the National Agency for School Improvement, the Division of Teacher Pre-service and In-service Training, Education Improvement Project, some universities, the teacher's centres, and professional association groups • international links and ability to leverage support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • developing robust, sustainable processes for rolling out improvement programmes on a national scale • engaging all municipalities and local communities with the education change process across the country • integration of the current initiatives e.g. SIEA and EMIS into a coherent and integrated leadership and school management improvement processes • developing a national framework for leadership at all levels with remuneration and reward structures focused on raising the quality of teaching and learning and resource utilisation • developing a set of standards/competencies that will act as criteria for the selection and development of leaders at all levels and are responsive to municipal differences and school context • selling the concept of fair and transparent appointment processes based on professional standards and performance • developing a national programme for leadership development at all levels • developing credible high quality leadership development trainers and consultants • develop programme evaluation and impact measurement processes
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to build on the recognition across the country of the need for change again, to build on the recognition amongst professional associations and leaders at all levels that they need new management structures, reward systems and systematic leadership development • to develop the quality of existing provision e.g. teachers centres and municipal staff to build a credible platform for national change • to utilise the funded days available for teacher training • to learn from other countries engaged in resolving similar issues and judiciously tap into their experience and expertise • to construct a coherent and integrated framework for leadership development and qualification at all levels that will contribute to raising the quality of education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • insufficient current capacity to scale up systems at a national level • societal atrophy that mediates against risk, initiative and entrepreneurship and change leadership • declining population leading to school closures mitigating against cross school co-operation • good teachers leaving teaching and the country • the integrity of the recruitment and selection process for the appointment of school directors