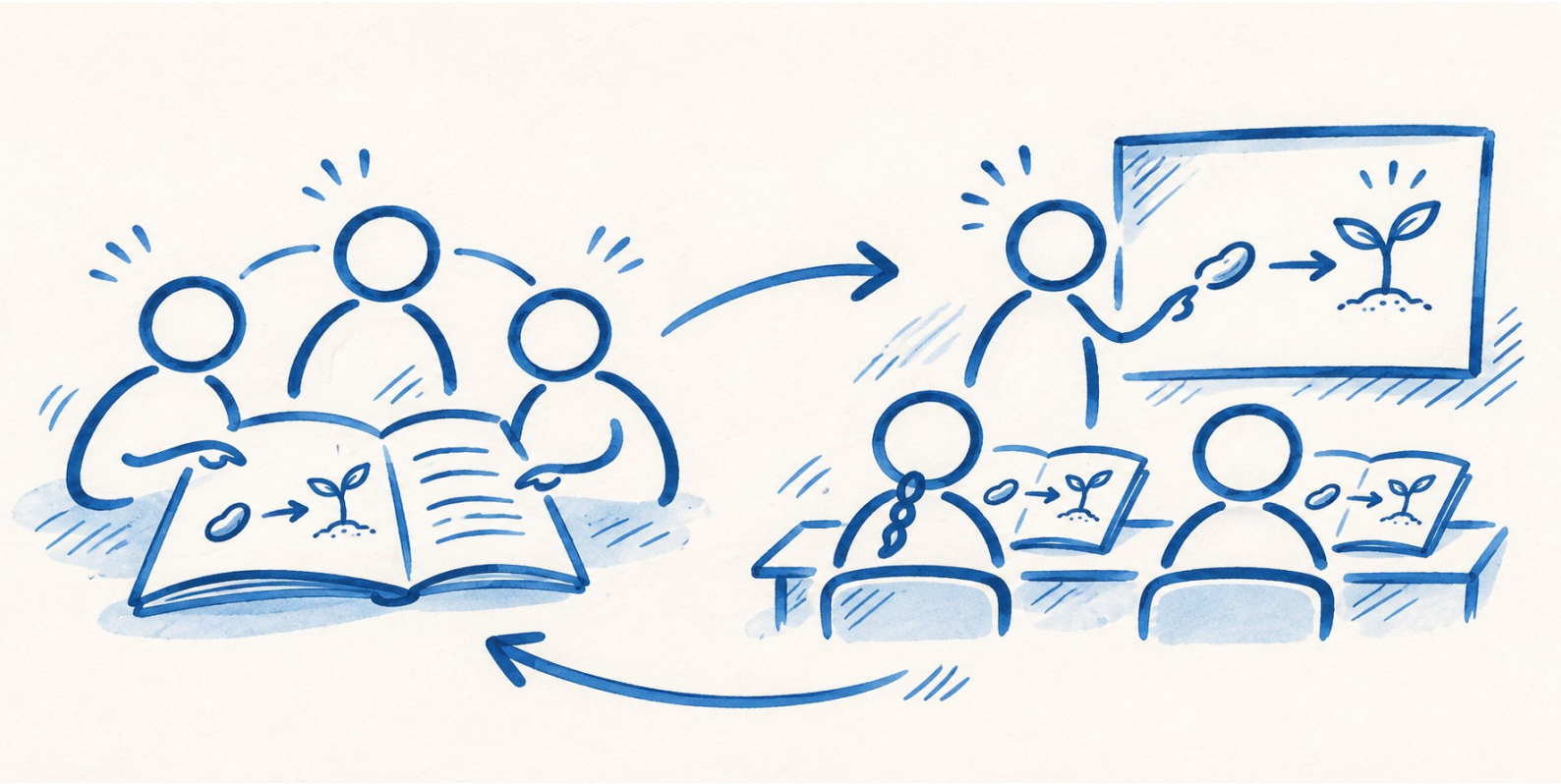
IDEAS FOR PRACTICE



Concept Paper on In-Service Training

for Teachers and School Leaders in General Education in the Republic of Moldova

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The paper proposes a system in which teachers and school leaders choose training in response to the needs of their classrooms and schools. What they observe after applying what they have learned guides the next stage of professional development.

About the paper

The paper draws on the experience of six European education systems and an analysis of in-service training in the Republic of Moldova. It describes development pathways for teachers and school leaders, the roles of the institutions involved, and ways of assessing what changes in classrooms and schools.

The paper proposes an implementation timetable through 2030 and identifies the methodologies and regulations to be developed.

Status of this edition

This edition is a working draft. The development priorities, institutional roles and implementation stages are proposals for discussion.

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List of abbreviations

Abbreviation	Full name
ANACEC	National Agency for Quality Assurance in Education and Research
ANCE	National Agency for Curriculum and Evaluation
API	Application programming interface
CORM	Classification of Occupations of the Republic of Moldova
CRAP	Republican Centre for Psycho-Pedagogical Assistance
CTICE	Centre for Information and Communication Technologies in Education
ET2030	European strategic framework for education and training towards 2030
INEL	National Institute for Education and Leadership
IPRE	Institute for European Policies and Reforms
MEC	Ministry of Education and Research
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OLSDÎ	Local education authorities (local specialist bodies for education)
EU	European Union
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

I. Introduction

In-service training for teachers and school leaders helps improve the quality of education, put curriculum reforms into practice, promote inclusion and improve learning outcomes. As the Republic of Moldova modernises its education system, aligns it with the European Education Area and pursues its national commitments to human capital development, in-service training is becoming a decisive factor in educational progress.

The Republic of Moldova has a functioning in-service training system, an established legal framework and high participation. Recent national and international analyses nevertheless show that widespread participation does not consistently translate into observable changes in educational practice or pupil progress. These findings call for a fundamental rethinking of how the system works.

This concept paper sets a strategic direction. It defines the vision, principles and operating structure of a renewed in-service training system and provides a basis for drafting or revising regulations, methodologies and practical tools. It reflects the priorities of the Ministry of Education and Research, the objectives of the national development strategy *European Moldova 2030* and the *Education 2030* strategy, and the reference frameworks promoted by the European Commission, the OECD, UNICEF and UNESCO for the professionalisation of the education workforce.

The paper is intended to guide the reorganisation of in-service training for teachers and school leaders in general education as a distinct field of adult education. It is linked to the Regulation on Adult Education approved by Government Decision No. 222/2024. Its terminology should therefore be interpreted within the general regulatory framework for adult education. Concepts specific to the teaching profession, including continuing professional development, career pathways, the digital professional portfolio, school-based mentoring and digital micro-credentials, complement the existing framework. They acquire legal effect only through subsequent regulations drawn up under the legislation in force.

How the concept paper was developed

The paper draws on three sources. The first is an analysis of recommendations from the EU, the OECD and UNESCO. The second is a comparison of in-service training models in six European education systems: Denmark, Finland, Poland, Estonia, Ireland and the Netherlands. The third is a diagnostic assessment of the national system, informed by the OECD (2023) and IPRE (2023) studies, developments over the past two years and consultations with key stakeholders.

Structure of the paper

The eight parts lead from the diagnosis and conceptual foundations to the vision and strategic directions, then to the design of the system and the arrangements for implementation.

- Part I introduces the paper.
- Parts II and III examine the European, international and national contexts and establish the starting point.
- Part IV sets out the conceptual framework, including definitions, the underlying model and the principles of the system.

- Part V presents the vision for the redesigned system.
- Part VI sets out the strategic directions for development.
- Part VII describes the system's architecture: the system-wide training cycle, the actors involved, training programmes, professional development pathways for teachers and school leaders, quality assurance, funding and the digital platform.
- Part VIII covers implementation, including the indicative timetable, regulations to be developed and arrangements for monitoring progress.

II. European and international context

2.1. A shift in the approach to in-service training

Over the past two decades, high-performing education systems have fundamentally changed how they understand and organise in-service training. The OECD, UNESCO and the European Commission independently reached the same conclusion. The traditional model of stand-alone courses, accumulated hours and formal certificates has produced no observable change in teaching practice or demonstrable improvement in pupil outcomes. Comparative data show that high participation alone does not guarantee better teaching. These findings have prompted a rethink of the system.

A model of continuous professional learning has emerged. The change concerns the purpose of training as much as its volume or frequency. Professional learning becomes part of a teacher's daily work at school. It starts from actual practice, and its value is measured by the changes it brings about. This approach underlies reforms across the European systems examined in this chapter.

2.2. How high-performing European systems have turned in-service training into continuous professional learning

A comparison of in-service training in Denmark, Finland, Poland, Estonia, Ireland and the Netherlands reveals several common features. Each country has developed practical responses to the same problems: discontinuity across career stages, weak links between training and practice, insufficient support for new teachers and limited incentives for professional development.

High-performing systems treat in-service training as part of a single professional pathway that begins with initial teacher education and spans the whole career. They make this vision operational through institutional structures, standards and arrangements for recognising professional growth.

Ireland formalised this approach in its *Policy on the Continuum of Teacher Education* (2011), which treats initial teacher education and subsequent professional development as interdependent stages of one process. Estonia built a three-level teaching career model: teacher, senior teacher and master teacher. Each level requires teachers to demonstrate the competences specified in the national professional standards. Finland includes in-service training in teachers' conditions of employment. Universities play a central role in both initial teacher education and subsequent professional development, helping to maintain continuity between them.

These systems recognise professional growth in stages, moving beyond the accumulation of credits.

The early years of teaching are treated as a distinct career stage, with formal requirements and dedicated support.

Ireland developed *Droichead*, a national professional induction framework that combines school-based mentoring with external professional learning. The prescribed monitoring period is 60 days in primary education and 100 days in secondary education. An experienced colleague serves as mentor. In the Netherlands, induction forms part of each school's human resources policy and is an institutional responsibility. Estonia formally integrates mentoring into the professional development system and connects it to professional standards and the school development plan.

Their common feature is the institutional basis for mentoring. Defined structures, allocated time and professional recognition allow it to extend beyond individual goodwill.

The systems examined assess the value of training through changes in teaching practice, moving beyond the number of hours or credits accumulated.

Ireland illustrates this shift through *Cosán*, which sets no mandatory number of hours or credits. Its main criterion is the impact on pupil learning. The principal tool is a professional portfolio for reflection, self-assessment and planning. Denmark evaluates training outcomes mainly at local level through classroom observation, self-assessment and peer exchange. According to TALIS 2024, approximately 68% of Danish teachers view the influence of training on their teaching positively. Estonia combines a minimum participation requirement of 160 hours over five years with qualitative portfolio assessment and voluntary certification at successive competence levels.

In the systems examined, schools are where professional learning takes place, is organised and is monitored. Schools also provide the setting in which teachers apply learning acquired elsewhere.

The Netherlands has taken this approach furthest. Each school manages its training budget, determines programme content and selects providers. Professional development forms part of the school's human resources policy. In Finland, municipalities and schools plan training around the needs of the school community. Estonia explicitly connects training plans with the school development plan and the findings of institutional self-evaluation.

In these systems, the principal leads the professional development of teachers and school leaders across the school. The role extends well beyond administering training procedures.

Sustained investment and clear incentives linking training to career progression support professional development in these systems.

The Netherlands allocates €800 million annually to the development of teachers and school principals. Once during their career, each teacher can receive an individual scholarship for a bachelor's or master's degree. Progression on the pay scale depends on demonstrated professional development. Poland links participation in training to advancement through the teaching grades defined in the Teachers' Charter. In Estonia, certification at higher career levels requires a portfolio demonstrating competence and a documented training history.

Predictability and consistency matter across systems with different levels of investment. Teachers know how training will be recognised in their career progression and pay.

Despite differences in national context, the six systems point to a common conclusion. The effectiveness of in-service training depends on the fit between support arrangements, professional incentives and the school's institutional culture. Formal participation requirements alone have limited effect. When support, incentives and school culture work together, training contributes to professional growth and better education.

III. National context

3.1. Sources and evidence for the diagnostic assessment

The assessment of the current in-service training system in the Republic of Moldova draws on two studies published in 2023. The OECD report *An Assessment of the Professional Development of Teachers and School Leaders, and Curriculum and Learning Resources in the Republic of Moldova* offers an external comparison based on OECD methodology and standards. The IPRE study *Assessment of the System of Initial and In-Service Teacher Education in the Republic of Moldova* is a national study using primary data from training participants and providers. The two offer complementary accounts of how the system functions.

The diagnosis also draws on an analysis of significant developments in in-service training between 2023 and 2025.

3.2. The current in-service training system in the Republic of Moldova

The Republic of Moldova has an established, functioning and regulated system that supports teachers' regular participation in professional development throughout their careers. The law requires teachers to participate in in-service training and accumulate study credits periodically. There is a national network of accredited providers and a high level of participation, comparable to that of reference systems such as Singapore. The requirement is 20 study credits every three years. Public funding covers approximately 63% of training days, a significant financial commitment to the professional development of teachers.

Developments in 2023–2025 show a substantial effort to modernise in-service training for teachers and school leaders. They include the creation of INEL, the institutionalisation of professional mentoring, the revision of the Professional Competence Standards and the launch of the national training programmes *Investing in Teachers*, *Investing in School Principals* and *DigiProf*.

The diagnostic studies also identify a significant gap between formal participation in training and its effect on educational practice. At present, the system functions mainly as an administrative part of professional appraisal and certification. Its potential to develop professional competence is underused.

3.2.1. Vulnerabilities of the system

Taken together, the OECD and IPRE studies and the analysis of developments in 2023–2025 identify five dimensions of systemic vulnerability.

Coherence. The training process is incomplete. Essential stages, such as identifying needs systematically, assessing results and using the findings, are absent or take place sporadically. Study credits operate in isolation. Accumulated credits determine eligibility for professional

certification, but provide little evidence of actual development. Disconnected training activities offer no clear progression or cumulative improvement in educational quality.

Relevance. The system lacks a consistent way to collect and analyse the needs of teachers, schools and the system as a whole and turn them into training priorities. Course participation is driven mainly by individual interests or certification requirements. The connection between the training on offer and changes in educational practice receives insufficient monitoring and evaluation.

Responsiveness. Too much time passes between identifying a training need, developing an appropriate response and making it available to participants. Accreditation procedures safeguard quality but make it difficult to respond promptly to emerging needs or to tailor provision. The system has limited capacity to develop programmes that address specific needs identified by schools.

Efficiency. Observable changes in school practice do not adequately justify the resources invested in training. The relationship between cost and demonstrated impact is rarely examined systematically. Formal credit accumulation distorts teachers' motivation and reduces the system's effectiveness.

Equity. Access to quality training is uneven. Teachers in rural areas, small schools and under-resourced communities face financial, logistical and connectivity barriers. In cascade training, quality depends heavily on the preparation of trainers, which varies. School leadership training is also underdeveloped. There is no coherent development pathway, and appointment to a leadership role does not require a specific management qualification.

3.2.2. Diagnostic conclusion

The five vulnerabilities point to one central problem: the limited effect of in-service training on educational practice and pupil progress. When training lacks coherence, relevance, responsiveness, efficiency and equity, educators experience it as an administrative requirement, and its value as a strategic investment in educational quality is lost.

This finding calls for a fundamental redesign of the system. Professional development should start with teachers' actual needs and focus on pupil learning outcomes.

IV. Conceptual framework

4.1. Key terms

Research and policy documents sometimes use professional development, in-service training and continuous professional learning interchangeably, or leave the boundaries between them unclear. This paper defines each term so that its proposals are consistent and the scope of regulation is clear.

Continuing professional development (CPD) is the broadest concept. It encompasses the processes through which teachers and school leaders improve their competences, attitudes and practice throughout their careers. It includes institutional provision as well as non-formal and informal learning, such as reflecting on practice, professional reading, participating in expert networks, talking with colleagues, and learning through projects and international exchanges.

In-service training is the institutionalised, regulated component of CPD. It comprises systematic, planned and assessed programmes delivered by accredited providers. These lead

to formal recognition through certificates of further training, specialisation, retraining or professional competence, including micro-credentials for partial qualifications. In this paper, in-service training sits within a broader professional development framework. Non-formal, informal, collaborative and mentoring activities can also be recognised when documented, assessed and validated under approved methodologies.

Continuous professional learning is the applied dimension of professional development. It encompasses learning embedded in a school's daily work, including joint lesson planning, analysis of pupil outcomes, classroom research, peer mentoring and communities of practice. It can take place within the workplace without external organisation, provided it is structured, incorporates reflection and aims to improve practice.

The relationship between the terms can be expressed simply. Continuing professional development is the long-term goal that teachers and school leaders pursue across their careers. In-service training is the organised way the system supports them in pursuing it. Continuous professional learning is the work they do each day in school with their colleagues.

The **study credit** takes on a new function. It becomes a unit of recognition linked to validated competences and their application in practice. It represents both the workload and the learning outcomes assessed by a competent authority against established standards. Accumulated credits therefore continue to mark a person's professional pathway. Professional recognition rests on demonstrated progress, which attendance records alone cannot establish.

These distinctions clarify the difference between accumulating credits and validating demonstrated professional competence. That difference underpins the system proposed in this paper.

4.2. A new approach to in-service training

The proposed model changes three interdependent aspects of training. It measures changes in educational practice and pupil outcomes, moving beyond hours and credits. It connects individual training events into a progressively more demanding sequence of professional learning. It embeds training in the daily work of the school and the realities of the classroom, bringing it closer to the practice it is intended to improve.

Two bodies of evidence support this approach. International research and the experience of high-performing education systems show that the traditional training model fails to change teaching practice, even where participation is high. The national diagnosis likewise finds high participation alongside limited effects on educational quality. The problem lies in how the system operates.

4.3. Theoretical foundations

The approach set out in section 4.2 draws on an established body of international research on teacher professional development.

Lifelong learning explains the continuing, open-ended nature of in-service training. First articulated in UNESCO reports led by Edgar Faure (1972) and Jacques Delors (1996), the theory describes professional competence as something that develops over time and requires regular renewal as education, technology and society change.

A *competence-based approach* places professional competence standards at the heart of training. From complementary perspectives, Franz Weinert, Guy Le Boterf and Philippe

Perrenoud describe competences as integrated capacities for action, judgement and adaptation. They are demonstrated and validated in actual professional situations, where artificial test conditions cannot fully reproduce them.

Peter Senge's theory of the *learning organisation* (1990) explains the school's role as a collective participant in training. Teachers can apply new skills individually, but when they collaborate systematically and build shared professional knowledge, the whole institution develops and becomes more effective.

Donald Schön's model of *reflective practice* (1983, 1987) describes how teaching expertise develops through reflection on experience. Teachers examine what worked and why, recognise patterns in their practice and make deliberate adjustments. Experience alone does not automatically build expertise.

Research on the *transfer of learning* by Baldwin and Ford (1988) and subsequently Haskell (2001) shows that what participants learn in training is more likely to reach practice when institutions provide leadership support, opportunities to experiment, structured feedback and time for reflection.

4.4. Principles of in-service training

These principles set out the values and concepts that guide how the in-service training system is designed, organised, funded, implemented and evaluated. They inform both policy development and the system's day-to-day operation.

Effectiveness and relevance. In-service training addresses the actual needs of teachers and school leaders, institutional priorities and the development goals of the education system. Its effectiveness is reflected in changes in teaching and leadership practice and in improvements in pupil learning outcomes.

Progression and coherence. Professional competences develop gradually. Each stage builds on prior learning and supports progression towards higher levels of expertise in line with the Professional Competence Standards. Each teacher's and school leader's pathway has a clear direction and internal coherence that give meaning to the volume of training completed.

Professional autonomy and responsibility. Teachers and school leaders take an active role in their own development. They shape their learning to address their own needs, the needs of pupils and their institutional context. Professional autonomy goes hand in hand with responsibility for educational quality.

Flexibility and adaptability. The system accommodates different educational settings, professional roles and career stages and responds to emerging needs in practice.

Equity. All teachers and school leaders have access to relevant, high-quality training, regardless of where they work, their career stage or the resources available locally. The system seeks to reduce financial, geographical and connectivity barriers.

Collaboration. Professional development takes place through interaction and mutual learning in professional communities, mentoring relationships and institutional partnerships. Schools and professional networks build, apply and validate professional knowledge collectively.

V. Vision

By the end of 2030, every teacher and every school principal in the Republic of Moldova has access to relevant opportunities for professional growth grounded in the needs of the classroom and the school. The benefits are visible in the quality of education each pupil receives.

Teachers are supported in becoming reflective practitioners. They examine their work critically and systematically, deliberately adjust their practice and contribute to colleagues' development. School leaders exercise educational leadership that makes the school a place for continuous professional learning.

Every teacher and school leader makes use of in-service training as an opportunity for professional growth.

VI. Strategic directions for development

The vision describes the system the reform aims to build. The following strategic directions identify the changes needed in how training is organised, how the system works and the culture that sustains it.

Direction 1. Establish an adaptive cycle for the in-service training system

Connect the processes of a fragmented system in an adaptive cycle in which decisions are informed by data.

Evidence generated at each stage informs planning for the next. This makes the system predictable and enables it to adjust continually in response to its own findings.

Direction 2. Refocus training provision on specific needs and measurable outcomes

Develop provision around needs identified at individual, institutional and system levels. The current offer is shaped largely by provider availability and administrative certification requirements.

Design and fund programmes against clear outcomes: the observable changes in educational practice that teachers and school leaders bring about after completing training.

Direction 3. Build a coherent continuum of progressively more advanced professional learning

Connect separate training activities in a single professional learning pathway that develops competences gradually throughout a career.

This continuum links initial education, induction and continuing professional development. The competences associated with each stage are aligned with the Professional Competence Standards.

Direction 4. Make the school an institution for professional development

Develop the school as a place where staff learn, apply their learning and reflect together on an ongoing basis. This addresses the current emphasis on training outside school followed by individual application.

The school is both a beneficiary of training and a setting for development. The principal leads the process, linking professional development to institutional priorities and creating the conditions for collaborative learning.

Direction 5. Ensure equitable access to in-service training

Build a varied, equitable system that offers all participants relevant professional development opportunities, expanding the range beyond the predominantly uniform provision now available.

Give funding priority to reducing financial, geographical and connectivity barriers, particularly for staff in rural areas, small schools and disadvantaged communities. A range of training formats supports equity and meets the needs of different settings and professional roles.

Direction 6. Strengthen the capacity of the in-service training system

Clarify institutional roles and strengthen infrastructure and professional capacity so that the system can support and implement the reforms proposed in this paper.

The other strategic directions depend on an appropriate regulatory framework, predictable funding, functioning digital infrastructure and stronger professional capacity at every level, from trainers and providers to school leaders. This capacity is a condition for lasting change.

VII. System architecture

7.1. The adaptive in-service training cycle

The new system is designed as a recurring, adaptive process informed by evidence. It translates the actual needs of teachers, school leaders, schools and the education system into priorities, programmes and training interventions that produce demonstrable changes in educational practice.

Each training cycle ends with analysis and decisions that inform the next cycle. Evidence on needs, programme quality, the application of competences and the effects on educational processes is used to revise priorities, update provision and direct funding. In this way, the system improves continuously.

In practice, planning, funding, implementation and evaluation follow an annual cycle aligned with the budget calendar and institutional planning. Complex strategic priorities may require interventions of different lengths, with opportunities for interim monitoring and adjustment. This combines the predictability required for public funding with the flexibility needed to address complex educational needs.

A. Identifying in-service training needs

This stage gathers and organises the training needs of teachers, school leaders, schools and the education system as a whole. It examines together the competences needed to improve educational practice, implement reforms and support the progress of every pupil.

Complementary sources provide evidence of training needs at four levels.

At individual level, teachers and school leaders assess their own competences against professional standards, the duties they perform and the responsibilities they have taken on.

At institutional level, each school analyses staff needs in relation to pupil outcomes, its institutional development plan and its strategic development objectives.

At local level, the local education authorities (OLSDÎ) consolidate information from schools and identify recurring needs and needs specific to their area.

At national level, the Ministry of Education and Research (MEC) and the specialist bodies use information on planned and ongoing reforms, national assessment results, monitoring findings and other relevant sources.

The analysis distinguishes needs shared by the teaching and leadership professions, urgent needs arising from curriculum reform, digitalisation or inclusion, and needs specific to staff groups or career stages. It also identifies institutional needs linked to school development and local needs arising from the community context.

This stage produces a structured map of training needs, published in aggregated, anonymised form. Teachers and school leaders can use it to recognise their development needs. Schools can relate their plans to system-wide evidence, and institutional and individual providers can adapt their provision to actual demand and educational priorities.

B. Setting in-service training priorities

Priorities are set by considering the evidence from individual, institutional, local and national levels together. The analysis takes account of current education policies, professional competence standards, pupil outcomes, equity needs and the system's capacity to deliver its reform commitments. It balances the general needs of the profession and emerging system needs with targeted support for groups facing professional or institutional difficulties.

Priorities are determined using the following criteria.

- Strategic relevance to the implementation of education policies and reforms.
- Potential impact on the quality of teaching and learning and on pupil outcomes.
- Urgency, as shown by assessment findings, monitoring and other data.
- The scale of the need across the system or within particular professional groups.
- The need to reduce educational inequalities and support vulnerable groups.
- The capacity of the system and adult education providers to deliver the interventions required.
- Sustainability and the scope for using the results in educational practice.

This stage identifies the priorities for the training cycle, the target groups, the expected outcomes and the criteria that will guide the design of provision and selection of programmes for funding by MEC.

It translates the needs map into priorities that guide programme development, revisions to the national training catalogue and the allocation of public resources.

C. Developing, validating and updating the national in-service training catalogue

The national in-service training catalogue is the public register of programmes and activities available to teachers and school leaders. It includes adult vocational training and general adult education programmes. It makes provision transparent and relevant and helps education staff plan their professional pathways. At this stage, programmes are developed, validated and updated to keep the catalogue relevant.

The catalogue is updated in every training cycle to reflect developments in the system.

This stage maintains an accessible, up-to-date national catalogue on the common digital platform. Teachers and school leaders use it to plan training, providers to keep their programmes relevant, and MEC to identify gaps and direct the development of new programmes.

D. Selecting programmes from the national catalogue and approving the MEC-funded training plan

The MEC-funded in-service training plan is the instrument through which the state directs public resources towards programmes identified as priorities for a given cycle.

The national catalogue and the MEC-funded plan have distinct, complementary functions. The catalogue includes validated programmes available across the system. The plan identifies the programmes selected for central public funding in line with educational priorities. Participants can still access programmes outside the plan through other funding sources and arrangements.

Selection follows transparent criteria covering alignment with system priorities, identified needs, practical applicability, capacity to deliver, contribution to equity and previous evaluation findings. Subsequent regulations will establish the selection methodology and the weighting of criteria.

The plan identifies the programmes to receive funding, target groups, allocated resources, implementation period and arrangements for access, monitoring and evaluation. It is normally approved annually in line with the budget process, with provision for multi-year interventions addressing strategic priorities. MEC publishes the plan on its official website in time for schools, teachers and school leaders to plan their training.

This stage concludes with approval of the MEC-funded plan, linking system priorities, selected programmes, allocated resources and intended outcomes.

E. Adapting and delivering in-service training programmes

This stage covers the organisation and delivery of training. Programme delivery involves active professional learning that develops specific competences, encourages reflection and gives participants clear ways to apply what they have learned in their everyday teaching and leadership.

Adult vocational training providers adapt delivery to participants' profiles, career stages, institutional settings and intended outcomes. They may adjust content, organisation, delivery methods, approaches to teaching, learning and assessment, and information provided to participants while maintaining the agreed outcomes and quality standards.

Support for applying competences in practice is part of programme delivery. It helps participants use what they have learned in actual educational settings.

At this stage, programmes are delivered in ways that enable participants to engage actively, develop professional competences and take responsibility for applying them in practice.

F. Evaluation immediately after training

Evidence is gathered immediately after a programme or a substantial module to assess delivery quality, content relevance and initial learning outcomes. Immediate evaluation supports programme quality monitoring. The next stage assesses what actually changes in educational practice.

Immediate evaluation has two components. First, participants give feedback on the relevance of the subject, the clarity of the content, the quality of the trainers, the usefulness of activities, the programme's practical orientation and how well it met their professional needs.

Second, the provider assesses what participants have learned using instruments appropriate to the programme. These can include practical tasks, professional work products, tests, guided reflection, implementation plans or other demonstrations of competence.

The provider conducts the immediate evaluation using standard system-wide instruments and, where appropriate, its own programme-specific tools. It enters the results on the common digital platform. Providers can access data on their own programmes. Schools can access relevant information on their own participants in accordance with data protection rules. OLSDÎ, INEL, ANACEC and MEC use aggregated, anonymised data for monitoring, analysis and system-level decisions.

The result is a set of standardised data on delivery quality and initial learning outcomes. Providers can make prompt adjustments and continue to monitor programme quality.

G. Assessing transfer to classroom and school practice

This stage examines how far participants apply their new competences and how that application improves educational processes. The central question is what changed in teaching, leadership or institutional practice after the training. Several actors share responsibility. Participants document application through professional work products, reflections and examples from practice. School leaders and mentors support observation and validation in the school setting and record relevant information on the digital platform. Providers examine how well their programmes supported application and adapt them in light of the findings. INEL, ANACEC and MEC use aggregated data to analyse the quality, relevance and efficiency of the system.

Transfer is assessed after participants have had enough time to apply what they learned. The interval ranges from several weeks to four months, depending on programme length, complexity and intended outcomes. Providers supply self-assessment, monitoring and evaluation instruments to both participants and school leaders.

Transfer must be evaluated with methodological care. Many factors influence pupil outcomes, so changes cannot automatically be attributed to one programme. The school examines changes in teaching practice and how training contributed to pupil progress, while avoiding simplistic causal claims.

A common national minimum framework for transfer assessment will be elaborated through a methodology. It specifies acceptable evidence, including professional work products, documented reflection, classroom video clips, lesson observation and observation records. It defines the validation roles of the school mentor, principal or leadership team, and of the provider through transfer assessment items built into the programme. It also establishes flexible assessment intervals according to programme complexity and identifies the self-assessment and observation tools providers should supply. Findings inform decisions at school, local and national levels.

The assessment identifies programmes that change practice, the conditions that help or hinder application, and areas where participants, schools or providers need additional support. These findings inform programme adjustment and quality improvement.

H. Using feedback to improve in-service training

This stage closes one cycle and prepares the next. It turns the evidence collected earlier into decisions about policy improvement, priority setting, programme selection, training finance and quality assurance.

Its effectiveness depends on the system's ability to act on evidence, resolve problems and guide the development of teachers, school leaders, schools and the education system as a whole for the benefit of each pupil.

The result is a set of evidence-informed decisions that adjust priorities, provision and funding for the next cycle.

The cycle makes in-service training adaptive. The system can learn from its own operation, improve over time, strengthen effective interventions and direct professional development towards tangible changes in educational practice.

7.2. System actors and their roles

The in-service training system involves seven categories of actors organised into four functional tiers.

- **Central authority.** The Ministry of Education and Research.
- **Specialist national bodies.** The National Institute for Education and Leadership (INEL) and the National Agency for Quality Assurance in Education and Research (ANACEC).
- **Contributing institutions.** The National Agency for Curriculum and Evaluation (ANCE), the Centre for Information and Communication Technologies in Education (CTICE) and the Republican Centre for Psycho-Pedagogical Assistance (CRAP).
- **Local level.** Local education authorities (OLSDÎ).
- **Adult vocational training providers.** Higher education institutions, organisations with educational expertise, certified trainers and other eligible providers.
- **Schools.** Principals, school-based mentors, teachers and other staff with leadership responsibilities.
- **Social and institutional partners.** International organisations, civil society, the private sector, trade unions and professional associations.

The system requires clearly defined institutional responsibilities. Its basic principle is the separation of functions. Methodological coordination and quality assessment are separate from programme delivery. Strategic coordination is separate from operational implementation. Where one institution performs overlapping functions, other competent bodies take responsibility for evaluating and making decisions about that institution's own activities.

The system has five roles: policy development and funding, methodological coordination, programme delivery, accreditation and quality assessment, and system monitoring. Combining all five in one institution creates conflicts of interest and compromises impartiality. Subsequent regulations will define institutional mandates.

The seven categories of actors are organised into four functional tiers.

Tier I. Strategic coordination. The Ministry of Education and Research sets national training priorities, approves regulations, directs public funding and takes responsibility for the overall coherence of the system. MEC ensures that in-service training serves education policies and the progress of each pupil.

Tier II. Methodological coordination and quality assurance. Two bodies have complementary, clearly defined responsibilities. INEL ensures methodological consistency throughout the training cycle, from needs analysis to assessment of transfer to practice, and supplies the evidence for MEC decisions. ANACEC independently evaluates programme quality and the capacity of adult vocational training providers, grants authorisation or accreditation and helps maintain standards across the national catalogue. INEL leads on methodology and analysis. ANACEC assesses compliance with quality standards.

Three other institutions contribute within defined roles: ANCE provides curriculum and pupil outcomes data and expertise, CTICE provides technical and digital support, and CRAP contributes expertise in inclusive education. None of these three coordinates or evaluates the system as a whole.

Tier III. Implementation. OLSDÎ and training providers implement the system. OLSDÎ link the national authorities with schools. Providers deliver programmes adapted to participants' profiles.

The basic route for information runs from the teacher to the school, the local authority and the national level. Schools consolidate needs and evidence of transfer, local authorities aggregate the information and offer methodological support, and national bodies use it to inform policy. The role of local bodies will be aligned with local public administration reform.

Tier IV. Application in schools. The school is the basic unit of the system. The principal and leadership team share responsibility for professional development so that one person does not carry a disproportionate administrative burden. They create the conditions for staff to apply new competences and provide strategic direction for development. School-based mentors help colleagues apply what they have learned in everyday teaching and leadership. Teachers and school leaders take responsibility for their own development: they draw up individual plans, participate in programmes, apply what they learn and document progress in their digital professional portfolios.

Social and institutional partners operate outside the operational tiers. International organisations, civil society, the private sector, trade unions and professional associations contribute expertise, resources, independent evaluations and connections to international good practice. They support the state in carrying out its responsibilities. They contribute through transparent mechanisms aligned with priorities approved by MEC. Representative trade unions and professional associations participate in policy dialogue, particularly on recognition of time spent on training, conditions for participation and professional incentives. Subsequent regulations will set out arrangements for consultation and cooperation.

7.3. Professional development pathways

The pathways organise in-service training into coherent, differentiated routes suited to the circumstances of each teacher and school leader. They take account of career stage, identified needs, institutional setting and development goals. They connect annual appraisal, professional competence standards and training provision, focusing on demonstrated competence and measurable changes in educational practice.

The individual professional development plan is the practical planning tool. Teachers and school leaders use it to commit to goals, select appropriate forms of development and document progress in their professional portfolios.

A fundamental principle is progression without repetition. Over a five-year cycle, training builds on prior learning and leads to higher levels of competence. The individual plan and professional portfolio record that progression and provide a basis for planning the next stages.

The concept paper distinguishes the obligation to undertake continuing professional development from the choice participants generally have over how to pursue it. CPD is a professional obligation for all teachers and school leaders. They generally choose programmes and learning formats through self-assessment and internal school appraisal. Express exceptions are the mandatory pathways for induction, retraining, remedial support and system priorities. Subsequent regulations, aligned with the Education Code, will specify the frequency and conditions for meeting the training obligation.

Pathways are organised in stages defined by competence levels and aligned with the Professional Competence Standards. They are progressively connected to professional certification, the award of teaching and leadership grades, career progression and professional recognition. The related reforms of certification and career structures, together with subsequent regulations, will determine how pathways affect certification, promotion and pay and which benefits accompany higher levels. These provisions will have prospective effect.

7.3.1. Professional development pathways for teachers

The system proposes five pathways for teachers, differentiated by career stage and specific needs.

Professional induction pathway

The induction pathway is mandatory for teachers at the beginning of their careers.

Its purpose is to support gradual integration into school life and consolidate the basic competences set out in the teacher professional standards. By the end of induction, beginning teachers demonstrate that they can plan and deliver effective lessons, manage a class, collaborate with the school team and reflect systematically on their practice.

The pathway combines training for beginning teachers, school-based mentoring, classroom observation and feedback, and documented professional reflection. The school mentor plays a central role in integration, provides ongoing feedback and helps assess progress.

Entry is automatic on appointment. The pathway lasts one to three years, depending on demonstrated professional autonomy and the applicable regulations. It ends when beginning teachers demonstrate the competences set out at basic levels A and B of the Professional Competence Standards and carry out their daily duties in line with the job description.

Professional growth pathway

This pathway is for practising teachers who demonstrate the basic competences set out in the professional standards. It is the main, ongoing route for development throughout a career. The pathway is optional, while participation in continuing training is a professional responsibility.

Its purpose is to develop competences progressively in response to individual needs identified through self-assessment, school objectives and system priorities. Teachers shape their own development by combining programmes from the national catalogue with professional learning in their school and in professional networks.

Entry is through the individual professional development plan, informed by self-assessment and annual appraisal, and the school’s plan for developing staff competences. The pathway

continues throughout active service until the teacher reaches the level required for entry to the autonomous development pathway.

Annual appraisal examines achievement of the goals in the individual plan, evidence of application in practice and progress documented in the professional portfolio. The professional growth pathway forms the basis for career advancement and the award of teaching grades.

Autonomous development pathway

This optional, selective pathway is open to teachers who have demonstrated high performance and typically hold Teaching Grade I or a higher grade.

Its purpose is to develop the highest level of professional expertise, document pedagogical innovation and contribute actively to colleagues' professional development and to educational quality at school and system levels. Teachers on this pathway generate and share professional knowledge as well as benefiting from training.

The school decides on admission on the basis of demonstrated performance and an application portfolio assessed against regulatory criteria. Holding Teaching Grade I or a higher grade does not confer automatic admission. Selection gives this form of professional recognition its credibility and value.

Activities are predominantly advanced. They include specialised micro-qualification programmes, action research, curriculum innovation projects, active membership of national and international professional networks, mentoring colleagues and contributing to the in-service training of other teachers. Activities are aligned with the school development plan.

Assessment focuses on the quality of professional contributions and their effects on colleagues and school practice, going beyond participation. Under the regulatory framework, certification gained on this pathway may be recognised when considering candidates for advanced roles such as mentor, trainer, education policy expert or textbook author.

Professional retraining pathway

Retraining is mandatory for two groups: teachers changing the subject they teach, and specialists entering education from other fields without training in educational psychology and pedagogy.

Its purpose is to close the gap between existing competences and those required to teach effectively. Programmes develop competences in educational psychology and pedagogy and, where appropriate, in the subject to be taught. Training specifically addresses the gaps identified in the candidate's competence profile.

Entry follows a change in post or subject, a decision by the school and an assessment of existing competences. The approved retraining programme determines duration and content in light of the candidate's competence profile and the requirements of the post.

Training includes formal retraining programmes, practical placements in schools and school-based mentoring during the adjustment period. The final assessment certifies that the teacher has acquired the competences needed for the new role.

Remedial support pathway

This mandatory pathway provides professional support for teachers whose annual appraisal or other quality assurance processes identify a need to strengthen basic competences.

Its purpose is to close identified competence gaps and support a return to the professional growth pathway within a reasonable time.

The school decides on entry on the basis of annual appraisal or findings from quality assurance processes. It informs the teacher and involves them in planning support. Teachers returning after an extended career break may request access to training on this pathway. Duration depends on the nature and extent of the gaps and the progress made, up to a maximum of nine months.

Support includes individual mentoring, practical workshops, regular classroom observation and feedback, tailored teaching resources and periodic professional monitoring. The teacher, principal and school mentor develop the support plan together, with clear objectives, deadlines and indicators of progress.

Progress against the support plan is reviewed periodically. Constructive feedback informs adjustments as the teacher develops. Information about entry and progress is strictly confidential. Access is limited to those directly responsible for support and assessment, in accordance with data protection rules and with respect for professional dignity.

7.3.2. Professional development pathways for school leaders

The system proposes three pathways for principals, deputy principals and other staff with leadership responsibilities in general education. The pathways reflect leadership career stage and institutional performance and are linked to professional certification and career progression. All three aim to consolidate and develop management and educational leadership competences in line with the professional standards for school leaders.

Leadership induction pathway

The leadership induction pathway is mandatory for newly appointed school leaders with little or no previous management experience.

Its purpose is to develop the basic management competences needed for the post and support a gradual transition into the school leadership role.

Entry is automatic on appointment. The pathway includes initial training for new leaders before they begin managerial duties, followed by up to one year of mentoring. Mentoring supports the development and implementation of an individual leadership development plan and helps leaders consolidate competences in their own school.

Assessment reviews progress against the professional standards for school leaders using the leadership portfolio, mentor feedback and indicators of how the school functions. Certification of pathway completion is a condition for exercising the full duties of the post under subsequent regulations.

Induction training and certification are linked to the competitive selection and appointment process for school leaders. Because competitions take place at different times, subsequent regulations will align the training calendar with appointments. Training may be completed as a prerequisite or immediately after appointment, before the new leader assumes full responsibility.

Professional growth pathway

This optional pathway is for all practising school leaders in general education who have completed induction. Participation in continuing training remains a professional responsibility. The purpose is to develop management and educational leadership competences in light of individual needs identified through self-assessment, institutional development priorities and system requirements. Each leader combines different forms of professional development in an individual pathway.

Entry is through an individual leadership development plan informed by self-assessment against the competence standards for school leaders. The pathway continues throughout the person's active leadership career.

Annual appraisal examines progress towards the goals in the individual plan and evidence of impact on the school's work, documented in the leadership portfolio.

Autonomous professional development pathway

This optional, selective pathway is open to school leaders in general education who can demonstrate institutional results and the potential to contribute to the system as a whole.

Its purpose is to develop the ability to lead institutional change and innovation and the competences needed to contribute to the wider education system. Leaders on this pathway extend their work beyond one school and take an active role in system improvement.

Admission is competitive and based on a portfolio of institutional performance assessed against regulatory criteria. Selection gives the associated professional recognition credibility.

Assessment examines the quality of contributions to the system and their impact on institutions and the professional community. Leaders who complete this pathway gain the recognition required to take on wider roles, such as mentoring new principals, training colleagues, contributing to education policy or acting as external evaluators, under the conditions set by the regulatory framework.

7.4. In-service training programmes

In-service training programmes are the main means of putting the pathways described in section 7.3 into practice. They serve both teachers and school leaders and are designed to produce observable, lasting changes in professional practice.

7.4.1. Principles for programme design and delivery

Four principles apply to every in-service training programme, regardless of its type, format or provider.

Focus on outcomes and transfer. Each programme states its learning outcomes, how they will be applied in practice and the indicators by which this application can be observed and documented. From the outset, participants know what they will do differently after the programme and how they will demonstrate the change.

Credits validate demonstrated competence. In line with the definition of study credits in this paper, a programme's credits reflect both participants' workload and the learning outcomes assessed and validated. Credits recognise the competences demonstrated and the work or time devoted to learning.

Relevance to educational practice. Programmes are grounded in school and classroom realities. Content, practical tasks and assessment instruments address situations teachers and school leaders actually face.

Responsibility for quality. Providers are responsible for programme design and delivery and for supplying transfer tools that enable schools to assess application. Examples include targeted self-assessment forms and observation records. Participants apply their learning in professional practice. Schools create the conditions for transfer. Effective training depends on all three fulfilling their responsibilities.

7.4.2. Programme format

In-service programmes use a modular format as a basic organising principle of continuous professional learning.

Modules follow successive learning cycles. Participants acquire knowledge and skills, apply them in their work, reflect on the experience and adjust their practice.

Each module concludes with a period long enough to put learning into practice at work. Application is an integral part of every module and helps participants transfer their competences to teaching or leadership. Follow-up sessions allow participants to analyse results, reflect on their experience, identify difficulties and adjust their approach.

Each programme reserves time to adapt content to needs that become apparent within the group during training. In longer programmes or programmes governed by approved curricula, this flexibility operates within curricular requirements and preserves the intended learning outcomes and agreed quality standards.

7.4.3. Types of programme

The national catalogue includes four types of programme. They differ according to where a need is identified and who initiates the response.

System-wide programmes are commissioned by MEC to meet needs shared across the education system or by large groups of teachers and school leaders. They prepare staff to implement curriculum reforms, new assessment frameworks, inclusion policies and other national priorities. Adult vocational training providers are selected competitively to develop them. They form part of the MEC-funded training plan. Both the implementation strategy and the programme itself are evaluated before launch.

Pathway-specific programmes are designed for one of the pathways in section 7.3. They address the distinct needs of each career stage. Teacher and leadership induction, retraining and remedial support programmes are mandatory and have clearly defined content. Programmes for professional growth and autonomous development are optional and varied, reflecting participants' professional objectives. MEC, schools or other sources may fund pathway programmes under the regulatory framework.

Institutional and local programmes are initiated by schools or OLSDÎ in response to needs identified locally. They address challenges faced by a school, a group of schools in an area or a local professional community. They are validated under the regulatory framework and may be included in both the national catalogue and the MEC-funded plan if they address system priorities. Schools may ask institutional or individual providers to develop and deliver programmes tailored to specific needs.

Provider-initiated programmes supplement the national catalogue with topics developed on the basis of providers' expertise and trends in education. Providers initiate these independently of commissions from MEC or requests from schools. Once validated or accredited in line with regulations, they are available to teachers and school leaders as individual or institutional training options.

7.4.4. Programme topics

Training topics reflect Moldova's national education priorities and common international trends identified in the strategic documents of the EU, OECD, UNESCO and UNICEF. The national catalogue covers a wide range of areas. Priorities are reviewed in each cycle in light of evidence on system needs and reforms under way.

Particularly relevant areas for the present period and the near future include the following.

- Implementing the new national curriculum and competence-based approaches to teaching.
- Inclusive education, differentiated instruction and support for pupils with special educational needs.
- Teachers' digital competences, pedagogical integration of technology and responsible use of artificial intelligence in education.
- Assessment for learning and the use of evidence to improve teaching.
- Educational leadership and results-oriented school management.
- The emotional well-being of pupils and teachers, mental health and a positive school climate.
- Education for sustainable development and active citizenship.
- Preventing and addressing violence, discrimination and bullying in schools.
- Working with families and communities in diverse social settings and developing teachers' social responsibility.
- Training for advanced roles in the system, including mentors, trainers and evaluators.
- Contributing to the development and updating of education policy documents.
- Fundraising, developing proposals for educational projects funded outside the regular budget and participating in project teams.

The list is indicative. Specific topics for each training cycle are set through the needs identification and prioritisation process in section 7.1, taking account of the available evidence and the reforms being implemented.

7.4.5. Learning formats and modes of delivery

In-service training uses different learning formats and delivery modes within the programme types described in section 7.4.3. Clear distinctions between these concepts are essential for designing, recognising and funding professional development activities.

A learning format describes the structure of the learning experience, including the interaction between participants, how they engage with the content and the learner's degree of autonomy. The mode of delivery describes the setting and pace: face-to-face, online or blended, with regular or reduced attendance. A training programme combines one or more formats in a specified mode and defines outcomes, duration and assessment arrangements.

Formal and non-formal programmes can use similar formats. What distinguishes them is the framework for recognition and certification. A non-formal programme, like a formal one, has defined learning outcomes, structured content and assessment of learning. It can gain recognition in the system when it meets the established quality and validation criteria.

All formats, regardless of function or formal or non-formal recognition, may be included in an individual professional development plan and may earn study or professional credits. They must be documented and validated against clear criteria: active participation, a demonstrable professional work product, reflection on practice and evidence of application.

Communities of practice, professional networks, study visits, masterclasses and action research are recognised as flexible forms of development. They can be validated when they have clear objectives, structured activities, reflection on practice and evidence of application.

The criteria must be proportionate to their duration and scope. A methodology will set out the recognition criteria and identify the body responsible for moderation or validation.

7.5. Quality assurance and evaluation

7.5.1. Quality assurance across the system

Quality assurance is the function that assesses relevance, applicability and efficiency throughout the training system. It examines the quality of needs data, programme design and delivery, application of competences, provider quality and the way feedback leads to concrete improvements.

The paper takes a broad view of quality assurance that extends beyond administrative compliance. The system needs mechanisms to establish whether training is relevant, well designed and applicable, and whether it can produce real improvements in professional competences, educational practice and, through these, the quality of pupils' learning experience.

Quality is examined at three levels.

Programme quality covers the clarity of learning outcomes, relevance of content, practical applicability, training methods, assessment of initial outcomes and support for transfer.

Provider and trainer quality covers institutional capacity, trainer competences, internal quality assurance, transparency and reporting capacity.

System quality concerns the relationship between needs, provision, funding, participation, transfer to practice and decisions on improvement. Aggregated data are used at this level.

7.5.2. From participation indicators to outcome and impact indicators

The current system relies on input and process indicators: hours accumulated, study credits earned and certificates issued. These measure participation and give limited information about learning.

The new system organises indicators into four categories according to their relevance.

- **Input indicators** include resources allocated, programmes delivered and participants enrolled. They support operational monitoring but cannot by themselves establish quality.
- **Process indicators** include engagement, completion rates and delivery quality. They help providers adjust programmes while these are running.
- **Intermediate indicators** include participant satisfaction, learning demonstrated and perceived applicability. They provide early information on the quality of the training process.
- **Outcome and impact indicators** capture observable changes in teaching and leadership, transfer of competences and contributions to improved educational processes. These are the principal indicators for evaluating quality.

Impact is assessed at three levels: individual changes in participants' practice, institutional changes in school culture, and the system's aggregate contribution to pupil outcomes and to the ability to implement reforms.

The following indicators are proposed for system monitoring.

- The proportion of staff reporting observable changes in their own practice three months after training.

- the proportion of evaluated programmes for which impact has been documented
- the extent to which educational institutions' needs for mentors are met
- the proportion of staff in rural areas who have access to training
- the alignment of individual development plans with professional competence standards.

The MEC will approve the methodology for collecting these indicators through a subsequent regulation.

The concept paper takes a cautious approach to attributing impact. Observed changes in teaching practice or pupil outcomes reflect the interaction of in-service training with school leadership, a culture of collaboration, available resources and the socioeconomic context. This methodological caution is essential to a mature quality assurance system.

Student outcomes therefore serve as indicators of trends and context. They are analysed in aggregate and cross-checked against national assessments and system reports. On their own, they cannot establish the effectiveness of an individual programme.

7.5.3. Quality criteria for in-service training programmes

The quality criteria for in-service training programmes align with the national framework for external quality assurance and the applicable ANACEC guidelines. Where necessary, additional requirements cover applicability, transfer into practice and reporting through the digital platform.

Programme approval, authorisation and accreditation follow consistent, transparent criteria proportionate to the type, scale and purpose of the programme. The criteria fall into four groups.

Relevance. The programme aligns with national priorities approved by the MEC and with the professional competence standards. It responds to needs identified at individual, institutional or system level and contributes to the implementation of education reforms.

Design. The programme sets clear competence-based learning outcomes, uses a modular structure, alternates learning with application, includes follow-up sessions and applies adult learning principles. It balances theoretical content, practical activities, professional reflection and post-training support. For online and blended programmes, the criteria also cover interactivity, active participation and learning outcomes equivalent to those of face-to-face formats.

Capacity. The criteria cover the qualifications and preparation of the designated trainers, the provider's infrastructure and internal quality assurance arrangements, and its ability to adapt the programme to different contexts and target groups.

Reporting. The provider can collect structured feedback, document how participants apply competences in practice, report results through the single digital platform and adjust its programmes in response to the evidence.

Subsequent regulations will set out detailed procedures for programme approval, authorisation, accreditation, monitoring, review, suspension and withdrawal. This concept paper defines the categories of criteria. The institution responsible for quality assurance will develop the methodology for assessing and applying them in consultation with the MEC and INEL.

7.5.4. Quality criteria for providers and trainers

Accreditation of in-service training providers

Quality criteria for providers of adult vocational training and for trainers apply alongside ANACEC standards and procedures, the national framework for adult education and the regulations governing in-service training for teachers and school leaders.

Programme quality depends directly on a provider's institutional capacity to design, deliver and adapt its programmes. The concept paper therefore proposes a provider accreditation system distinct from programme accreditation. A provider can hold accreditation for individual programmes while still lacking the institutional capacity to sustain high-quality provision.

Provider accreditation covers the following criteria.

- **Institutional capacity.** The human, material and financial resources needed to sustain programme delivery.
- **Internal quality assurance.** The provider's own procedures for monitoring, evaluating, reviewing and improving programmes.
- **Human resources policy.** The selection, ongoing training and evaluation of trainers.
- **Professional ethics and transparency.** Codes of conduct, arrangements for managing conflicts of interest, and transparent communication with participants and other beneficiaries.
- **Reporting and collaboration.** Interoperability with the single digital platform and willingness to participate in system-wide reviews of the programme portfolio.

Providers undergo periodic reaccreditation at intervals set by subsequent regulations. Accredited status may be suspended or withdrawn if a provider fails to meet the criteria or consistently performs poorly in impact evaluations.

Certification and evaluation of trainers

The quality of trainers is critical to the effectiveness of in-service training. The concept paper proposes a certification system covering two groups.

- **Institutional trainers** are employed by, or work in collaboration with, accredited providers. Each provider certifies its trainers within the national criteria.
- **Independent trainers** deliver training outside a provider institution or in partnership with accredited providers. Their certification is regulated nationally through a common procedure.

Certification criteria for independent trainers include relevant professional experience, demonstrated skills in teaching and adult learning, the ability to design and facilitate adult learning, adherence to professional ethics, use of participatory methods and the ability to help participants apply their competences in educational practice.

Periodic evaluation of independent trainers draws on their professional portfolios, participant feedback, the quality of materials they develop, immediate evaluation results and, where appropriate, evidence that participants apply the competences they have gained.

Trainers are certified under the applicable regulatory framework. Accredited providers may issue certificates to institutional trainers according to national criteria and validated internal procedures. The institution designated by the MEC administers a single national procedure for

independent trainers and enters certified trainers in the National Register of Independent Trainers.

The following arrangements support the professionalisation of trainers.

- **The National Register of Independent Trainers** is maintained on the single digital platform, is open to the public and is updated continuously.
- **The trainer competence framework** defines the professional standards for trainers working in in-service training.

Professional status for trainers is developed along the same lines as the status of mentors. It includes professional standards, certification, entry in the trainers' register and periodic evaluation. Programme certification requirements are proportionate to programme type and duration.

Training of trainers

The system recognises the need for an in-service training programme for trainers to keep their teaching skills, adult learning competences and subject expertise up to date. The programme receives methodological coordination and may be delivered by specialist adult vocational training providers, including through international partnerships and exchanges of good practice.

7.5.5. Principles of quality evaluation

Five operational principles govern quality evaluation in the in-service training system. All instruments and procedures established by subsequent regulations must observe them.

Proportionality. The evaluation effort must reflect the type, duration, scale and purpose of the programme. A short course and a complex multi-year programme require different evaluation instruments. Proportionality limits the administrative burden and ensures that the data collected can be used.

A formative purpose. Quality evaluation serves primarily to improve programmes, providers and public policy. Oversight is its secondary function. The data collected should help the system learn from experience. Sanctions and the withdrawal of status are measures of last resort, once formative measures have been exhausted.

Triangulation. Conclusions about the quality of a programme or provider draw on a combination of participant feedback, direct observation, professional work samples, validation by an institutional mentor and aggregate results. Using multiple sources reduces the risk of poor decisions and strengthens the evaluation.

Confidentiality and respect for professional dignity. Individual evaluations are confidential, especially those associated with the remedial support pathway. Individual data may not be used for public reporting or comparisons. System-level use is restricted to aggregate data and must comply with rules on personal data protection and the responsible use of information.

Responsible use of data. The quality assurance system defines who can use the data and for what purpose. Adult vocational training providers receive information relevant to improving their programmes. Schools receive data about their own staff. INEL and ANACEC use aggregate data for analysis and system-level decisions. The MEC uses consolidated reports to adjust policy. Access is strictly regulated and use for any other purpose is prohibited.

7.6. Financing in-service training

The financing of the new system rests on public accountability, predictability and the allocation of resources according to their potential educational impact. It will combine central budget allocations, local authority contributions, institutional resources for professional development, national priority programmes and support from development partners.

The state budget will finance national priorities, particularly areas that support system-wide reforms. These include curriculum, assessment, inclusion, digitalisation, school leadership, pupil-centred education, reducing inequities and improving quality. Predictable allocations will allow programmes to be planned annually and give teachers and school leaders equitable access.

Funding decisions use a decision matrix that reflects the system's priorities at the time. The matrix provides a common way to assess how well an intervention serves the intended objectives. It leaves room to vary the priority given to different forms of training and the funding allocated to each. Depending on the context, criteria may include expected impact on practice, urgency of need, contribution to reforms, cost, scalability, equity of access, practical applicability, provider capacity, sustainability and contribution to institutional development. The weight given to each criterion may also vary. The same form of professional development may take priority in one funding cycle and have a secondary role in another, according to needs, available resources and intended outcomes. The matrix makes the system more flexible and directs public funds towards interventions with the greatest potential educational impact.

Digital delivery is available across all functional categories of training. The MEC and INEL periodically review the different forms of provision at a strategic level to inform resource allocation.

Local public authorities may help finance local priorities, particularly the specific needs of schools under their authority, access for staff in rural or remote areas, support for programme participation and the development of local leadership capacity.

Institutional funding supports school professional development plans and strengthens school autonomy. Schools use their own data on performance, self-evaluation, pupil needs and internal priorities to guide staff participation. Schools exercise this choice with a responsibility to demonstrate how the training serves institutional development and the quality of education.

The funding model includes measures to promote equity. Schools with high needs, institutions in disadvantaged areas, staff working with vulnerable pupils and areas with skills shortages receive priority support. Performance criteria for provider funding encourage programme quality and relevance while ensuring equitable access for disadvantaged schools.

Alongside central and local public funding, the model allows direct funding for beneficiaries through training vouchers, co-financing or other flexible instruments. These mechanisms increase choice, professional responsibility and fair competition among providers. Equity measures give priority support to staff in disadvantaged areas and institutions with limited resources.

The training voucher is an exceptional, targeted instrument that the MEC activates to promote both equity and quality. It gives priority to institutions and staff unable to access local resources and funds identified priorities outside routine provision. The financing methodology sets out eligibility, award criteria and transparency requirements.

7.7. National digital platform for continuing professional development

The national digital platform for continuing professional development will provide the new system's central information infrastructure. It will bring together data, processes, programmes, partial professional qualifications, recognised study credits, professional portfolios and evaluation mechanisms in a single, secure, interoperable environment. It will document professional progress, validated competences, transfer into practice and career development, going beyond the recording of training hours.

Alongside administration, the platform has a strategic governance role. It will enable the system to move from recording attendance to tracking professional progress, competence development, application in practice and effects on teaching, school leadership and institutional work.

The national digital platform has five main functions.

1. Information and transparency. Registers of validated programmes, adult vocational training providers, certified independent trainers and mentors, together with an aggregate map of needs.

2. Professional planning. A digital professional portfolio, self-assessment and an individual professional development plan linked to available pathways and programmes.

3. Management of professional development. Programme enrolment, participation records, registration of validated partial professional qualifications, evidence of application in practice and records of study credits earned in accredited programmes.

4. Evaluation and feedback. Immediate evaluation, documentation of transfer into practice and feedback from participants, mentors, school leaders and providers.

5. Governance and decision-making. Dashboards and aggregate reports for schools, local education authorities (OLSDÎ), INEL, ANACEC and the MEC, supporting planning, funding, quality assurance and system improvement.

Technical note. To avoid duplicate reporting and enable integration with providers' digital systems, the national platform may allow technical access through application programming interfaces (APIs). Subject to access rights and data protection rules, providers will be able to send, update or consult data on their own programmes. This includes enrolment, participation records, immediate evaluation results, participant feedback, delivery reports and other relevant platform functions. Technical standards and security procedures will govern API access, including authentication, logging, permissions and the principle of least privilege.

The digital professional portfolio will be the main instrument for planning, documenting, recognising and certifying professional development.

It will bring together the teacher's or school leader's professional profile, annual self-assessment against the professional standards, individual development plan, training completed, digital micro-credentials earned, any relevant university credits, mentoring activities, evidence of application in practice, professional feedback and information relevant to attestation or career progression. The portfolio will show the person's development pathway and demonstrate progress through coherent, validated evidence linked to professional competence standards.

Staff will create and update their individual professional development plans online within the digital portfolio. The plan will link individual needs with professional standards, school objectives, the professional development pathway and programmes in the national in-service training offer. Programme participation, mentoring, professional work samples and evidence of transfer into practice will be linked to the objectives in the plan.

The platform will support standardised data collection for immediate programme evaluation and for evaluating transfer into practice. For relevant programmes, participants will upload professional evidence of how they have applied their competences. A mentor, school principal or provider, as appropriate, may give structured feedback, validate evidence or recommend support. Individual data will be protected. Schools and local and national authorities will use aggregate data in line with confidentiality, data protection and responsible use requirements.

Access will depend on each user's role. Teachers and school leaders can access their own portfolios and plans. Schools can access the information they need for planning and professional support, subject to confidentiality. Providers have access to data on their own programmes. OLSDÎ, INEL, ANACEC and the MEC use aggregate and anonymised data for analysis and system-level decisions. Individual data may not be used for punitive purposes or published without a legal basis and consent, in accordance with data protection rules.

The platform will support the annual in-service training cycle. During system evaluation, it will provide aggregate data on participation, digital micro-credentials, identified needs, programme quality and transfer into practice. During needs identification, it will support individual self-assessment and institutional analysis. When the training offer is updated, it will support the publication of programmes and their alignment with annual priorities. During delivery, it will support enrolment, attendance records and, where appropriate, integration with online learning platforms. During evaluation, it will collect feedback and evidence of impact. At the system feedback stage, its reports and dashboards will inform decisions about priorities, funding, providers and programme improvement.

The platform will be developed in stages, drawing on existing digital tools and ensuring interoperability with relevant education information systems. Implementation will require clear rules for administration, access, institutional responsibilities, data security, confidentiality of individual information, use of aggregate data, and the rights of teachers and school leaders over their own portfolios.

Until the platform is fully operational, existing digital tools and simplified data collection procedures will keep the adaptive cycle running. The platform will actively support professional development through self-assessment tools, resources for independent learning and microlearning, and access to the national training offer. A separate technical design will specify its architecture and interoperability with existing information systems.

The digital portfolio will demonstrate professional progress. Its minimum contents are the individual development plan, evidence of transfer and evaluation results. Data entered once will be reused automatically to avoid duplicate reporting.

VIII. Implementation of the concept paper

8.1. Implementation principles

Provisions that create obligations for teachers, school leaders, educational institutions, adult vocational training providers or other authorities will have legal effect only once they are

incorporated into subsequent regulations drafted and approved under the legislation in force. Until then, the concept paper provides strategic direction, guidance and a framework for action.

Implementation follows four principles. **A phased approach** introduces reform progressively, with piloting ahead of system-wide implementation. **Transparency** requires public, reasoned decisions on regulation and resource allocation. **Participation** involves teachers, school leaders, trade unions, providers and local authorities in drafting subsequent regulations. **Accountability** assigns each actor clear roles and performance indicators.

Implementation also respects the principle of protected time for training. Participation in priority programmes is scheduled during working hours, with proportionate cover arrangements, so that training does not fall exclusively within holidays or personal time. Subsequent regulations and social dialogue will determine employers' obligations, arrangements for cover and remuneration.

To support meaningful participation in policymaking, subsequent training programmes will help stakeholders understand policy documents and regulatory instruments.

8.2. Indicative implementation timetable

The concept paper will be implemented in three stages.

Stage I — Foundations (2026–2027). Adopt priority regulations, pilot the needs identification methodology in 50 institutions, and launch the register of adult vocational training providers and trainers on the digital platform.

Stage II — Expansion (2028–2029). Extend the needs identification methodology across the system, launch the digital professional portfolio for all teachers, pilot professional development pathways and put impact evaluation into operation for priority programmes.

Stage III — Consolidation (2029–2030). Review the system using evidence from Stages I and II, strengthen the national feedback loop, commission an external evaluation of progress towards the vision and update the document in light of the findings.

Implementation requires a sequence of instruments drafted and validated in stages. These cover methods for identifying needs and evaluating transfer, regulations for providers, trainers and programmes, the digital platform's operating framework, and regulations on pathways, attestation and funding. Each stage includes validation and planning workshops with key stakeholders and a review of dependencies between instruments to prevent delays.

An accessible public version of the concept paper and a communication plan will be developed alongside these instruments so that everyone involved can understand their roles, the benefits and the next steps.

8.3. Monitoring and evaluating implementation

The MEC, with support from INEL, will monitor progress annually. The public annual monitoring report will record progress in drafting planned regulations, trends in the system indicators defined in section 7.5.2, findings on the quality of local implementation and recommendations for adjustment.

An independent external evaluation of implementation will take place at the end of each stage (2026, 2028 and 2030), using a methodology agreed with development partners. The findings will inform periodic revisions of the document.

8.4. Transitional provisions

Implementation will preserve the rights already acquired by teachers, school leaders, providers and beneficiaries. Study credits, certificates and programmes recognised before subsequent regulations enter into force will remain valid for the period for which they were granted. Existing programmes and providers will enter the new quality system in stages, with transition procedures, reasonable compliance periods and methodological support. The new professional development pathways will be linked progressively to attestation, with no retroactive effect.

Providers moving to the impact-oriented model will receive methodological support, practical guides and opportunities to learn from other providers. These measures will allow them to adapt to the new criteria, indicators and transfer instruments on equitable terms and within reasonable time frames.

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