

# Transfer of visual literacy competences to teacher training: an analysis

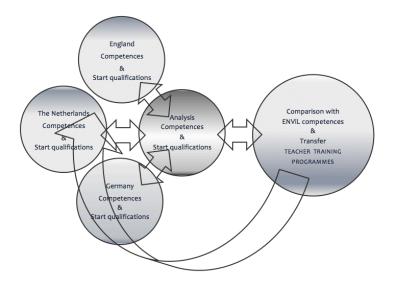
Piet Hagenaars

### 1 Introduction

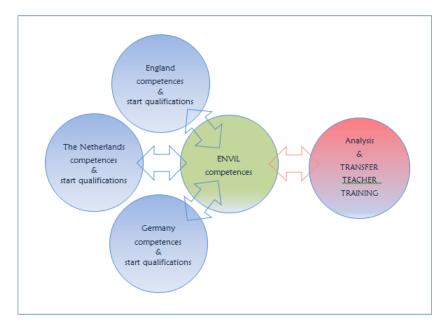
To introduce the visual literacy competences as developed in this Comenius project in the EU Member States, it is first of all necessary to support teachers who are currently active in schools. This calls for the development, design, implementation and dissemination of CEFR-VL-based curricula, teaching methods and training courses for active and future teachers. However, it is equally important to include these elements in the teacher training curricula, a topic that I will address in this article. The teacher should at least possess competences (knowledge, skills, and attitudes) of a similar nature to those that students are expected to acquire during their school career. In addition, teachers should also be able to demonstrate competences and learning skills related to their professional teaching role.

In this chapter I will first review the competences and corresponding key qualifications of starting teachers in visual arts and design for primary and secondary education in three European Member States: England, Germany, and the Netherlands. These countries have been selected because of their size and the substantial differences in their teacher training systems.

Subsequently, I will compare the competences and key qualifications with the competences developed and designed by the ENViL group. Finally, I will explore the prospects for realising a Common European Framework of Reference for Visual Literacy, drawn from the current teacher training for visual arts and design competence models (see: Diagram 1).



Diagram\_1: Approach to analysis and transfer: CEFR-VL for teacher training programmes



Schema\_1 Aanpak analyse en transfer CEFR-VL voor lerarenopleidingen

# 2 The Netherlands - competences within teacher training programmes

The education system in the Netherlands is highly decentralised. As there is no national curriculum the Netherlands has been called 'world champion in school autonomy' (Scheerens, 2010). School autonomy has been particularly marked in terms of curricular content, methodology and materials, including selection and use of textbooks<sup>1</sup>. For some years now, teacher training programmes in colleges of art, connected to Universities of Applied Sciences, have been geared towards competence-based training and learning. In 2013, the competence profile for art teachers was formalised by the professional teaching field (KVDO, 2013). The national platform for teacher training programmes in professional arts education in the Netherlands (KVDO) took the legal framework for teaching qualifications in arts subjects (both curricular and extracurricular) as its starting point, while taking due account of requirements from the profession, the training content and the Dublin descriptors<sup>2</sup>.

A uniform Bachelor's programme in any art discipline leads to the fulfilment of legal

Recently the National Institute for Curriculum Development in the Netherlands (SLO), commissioned by the Ministry of Education, developed and implemented a new curriculum framework for the arts in primary schools, including visual art and design. Due to the autonomy built into the Dutch system, the schools can choose whether to use it or not.

At the initiative of the Netherlands and Flanders, the Dublin descriptors for higher education in Europe were drawn up between 2001 and 2004 and named after the city where the outcomes were agreed. The descriptors are part of a concerted effort to achieve a framework of learning outcomes in higher education, known as the Bologna Framework (the result of the Bologna process). The framework contains a description of learning outcomes in three cycles: the first is the Bachelor's degree, the second the Master's degree, and the third the Doctorate.



competence requirements. This forms the basis for the graduate to be appointed as a subject teacher in primary education as well as the entire spectrum of secondary and higher education and vocational education. It also qualifies the teacher to start working in the extracurricular setting of music schools and centres for arts education (Hagenaars, Brouns, Groenendijk, Van Tilburg & Veldpape, 2012: 21). Following the Bachelor's programme, there is the possibility to take a Master's programme which – while it does not lead to a supplementary teaching qualification – enables (future) teachers to broaden and deepen their competences (Zijlstra, 2011: 3). The visual arts and crafts subjects in primary schools and lower and upper secondary schools are taught by generalists and specialist teachers. In most of the primary schools the generalist also teaches visual art and design, in ten percent of the primary schools accompanied by a visual arts specialist (Hoogeveen, Beekhoven, Kieft, Donker & Van der Grinten, 2014).

The competence profile in art teacher training programmes is focused on five key competences as shown in Diagram\_2. Each key competence is subdivided into a number of behavioural indicators which must be demonstrably acquired by the end of the teacher training. The main key competence is 'critical reflection and development' and this competence should also be visible in the other four key competences: 'artistic competence', 'pedagogic and didactic competence', 'interpersonal competence' and 'school-environmental entrepreneurship'.

Critically reflective competence	Practical artistic competence
	Pedagogical-didactic competence
	School climate competence (interpersonal competence)
	School-environmental entrepreneurship

Diagram\_2: Subject-specific competence profile in visual art and design teacher training programmes in the Netherlands

During their training, students develop their knowledge and skills both in theory and practice of visual art and design, as well as in the teaching profession with course components such as pedagogy, teaching methodology and internships. Qualified art teachers are expected to be able to reflect on their own performance and their social and professional setting. They can define, analyse and solve problems in an artistically responsible manner, and make use of the appropriate techniques. They have theoretical, artistic and cultural knowledge and are able to reflect on their visual art work as well as on the work of others. They have an inquisitive attitude and an innovative focus and take responsibility for appropriate cooperation with cultural institutions. They contribute actively to the creation of new knowledge and to the development of their subject and education in general. They also take responsibility for their own professional development. They are trained at the highest level within their teaching subject and have learned during their training what it means to operate at that level in carrying out their profession. In this respect too, they are willing and able to complete their professionalism by developing their abilities (Hagenaars et al., 2012: 7).

## 3 England - competences within teacher training programmes

Unlike the autonomous school system in the Netherlands, the overall responsibility for



the provision of education in England lies with the UK Government<sup>3</sup>. Furthermore, England has a national curriculum, consisting of a set of subjects and standards used by primary and secondary schools. It covers both the subjects taught as well as the standards in each subject. Most jobs for art teachers require the minimum of a Bachelor's degree completed with an initial programme of teacher training (ITT)<sup>4</sup>. The visual arts and crafts subjects in primary schools and lower and upper secondary schools are mostly taught by generalists (primary schools - a number of whom have gone on to complete specialist training) and specialist art teachers (lower and upper secondary schools).

The Postgraduate (or Professional) Certificate of Education (PGCE) is the most popular route into teaching. It is also the most practical approach when teachers in training already have a degree in the subject they want to teach. This route combines a substantial internship with studying the theory behind teaching and learning to achieve the professional competence 'Qualified Teacher Status' (QTS)<sup>5</sup>. In addition to the competences teachers are expected to acquire during their postgraduate teacher training, they are also required to develop the competences pupils are expected to acquire by the end of all school stages<sup>6</sup> in the art and design programmes. The new art and design study programme is related to the new national curriculum and introduces four key concepts: creativity, competence, cultural understanding and critical understanding. Distinct yet interrelated, these four concepts provide a framework for planning, teaching and assessing the subject. The national curriculum (September 2014) identifies two key processes which define the essential skills and processes, and these in turn are divided into four main objectives. The first two objectives - related to 'explore and create' - are 'produce creative work' and 'become proficient in drawing, painting, sculpture, and other craft and design techniques', the last two - related to 'understand and evaluate' - are 'evaluate and analyse creative works using the language of art, craft and design' and 'know about great artists, craft makers and designers, and understand the historical and cultural development of their art forms' (Department for Education, 2013; NSEAD, 2014).

Explore and create	Creative production		
	Competence in arts, crafts and design techniques		
Understand and	Critical understanding		
evaluate	Cultural understanding		

https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/United-Kingdom-England:Overview Consulted on 23-11-2015 at 12:20.

<sup>4</sup> http://www.nsead.org/itt/index.aspx Consulted on 18-11-2015 at 14:09.

Qualified teacher status (QTS) is required in England and Wales to work as a teacher of children in state schools under local authority control, and in special education schools.

The UK education system is broadly divided into primary and secondary schools, with a few authorities running a three-tier system. The key stages include: Early years foundation stage (EYFS): 3-5 year olds (nursery and reception); Key Stage 1: 5-7 year olds (school years 1-2); Key Stage 2: 7-11 year olds (school years 3-6); Key Stage 3: 11-14 year olds (school years 7-9) and Key Stage 4: 14-16 year olds (school years 10-11). <a href="http://www.prospects.ac.uk/how\_to\_become\_a\_teacher.htm">http://www.prospects.ac.uk/how\_to\_become\_a\_teacher.htm</a> Consulted on 18-11-2015 at 10:32.



Diagram\_3: Subject-specific competence profile in visual art and design teacher training programmes in England

Qualified art and design teachers are expected to be able to prepare and give lessons in drawing, painting, printing, computer-assisted design, photography, sculpture, ceramics, and other crafts. They encourage children to express themselves and develop their talents. They possess a variety of teaching methods, have a positive attitude to experimentation and use a range of multimedia materials. They take into account the different abilities of students so that everyone can succeed. The official documents state that the most effective teachers use the work of other artists to illustrate different possibilities. They organise visits to art galleries and create and curate permanent or temporary exhibitions of work in school for students, parents and visitors (Ofsted, 2009). They set assignments, projects, tests, and exams, preparing and carrying out continuous assessment, marking pupils' work and writing reports. They keep good order in the classroom, deal with discipline issues and do administrative work, including keeping a register of attendance. They prepare for and attend parent-teacher meetings and staff meetings and sometimes supervise out-of-hours activities such as social events or outings. Lastly, they meet regularly with other departments to plan interdisciplinary projects (e.g. Planit, 2015)<sup>7</sup>.

## 4 Germany - competences within teacher training programmes

In the Federal Republic of Germany responsibility for the education system is divided between the Federation and the *Länder* (the country's regional states)<sup>8</sup>. Because there is no federal legislation for education the *Länder* set down agreements about the general aims of education in the 'Agreement of types of school and courses of education at lower secondary level' (Eurydice, 2007).

The visual arts and crafts subjects in primary schools and lower and upper secondary schools are taught by specialist teachers. The aims and competences with regard to teachers in school visual arts consist of practical and theoretical components. Pupils are competent in terms of practical skills when they can develop a product from a concept to a model, work with digital production programmes, and evolve architectonic ideas and illustrate them using two-dimensional or three-dimensional models. Pupils are theoretically competent when they can analyse formal features and their various effects and expressions (ISCED level 2)<sup>9</sup>. The *Kultusministerkonferenz* – the Standing Conference of the ministers of education of the *Länder* – sets the standards, detailing the competences in the field of teaching, education, evaluation, and innovation that must be acquired during programmes that prepare people for a teaching career (Kultusministerkonferenz, 2000). Teacher training programmes are taught at universities and colleges of art and music (Lohmar & Eckhardt, 2013).

In all *Länder*, teacher training can be undertaken at either university or an equivalent institution of higher education and practical pedagogic training (Eurydice, 2007). Art

https://www.planitplus.net/JobProfiles/View/431/20 Consulted on 18-11-2015 at 14:57.

https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Germany:Overview Consulted on 23-11-2015 at 12:32.

ISCED (International Standard Classification of Education) Level 1: Primary education or first stage of basic education; Level 2: Lower secondary education; and Level 3: Upper secondary education.



teacher training (including the visual arts) includes an artistic and theoretical component, an educational theory and psychology component, and teaching practice (internship). However, despite the description of the standards of the Kultusministerkonferenz, they often vary across state borders (Peez, 2015).

The German competence profile in visual art teacher training programmes has three components: artistic competence (art practice), theoretical competence (art history and art theory) and competences in the intermediary educational field (art education and art methodology) (Kultusministerkonferenz, 2015).

Competence in art educational reflection (Critically reflective competence)	Practical artistic competence, including image orientated 10 competence		
	Theoretical artistic competence		
	School subject orientated competence		

Diagram 4: Subject-specific competence profile in visual art and design teacher training programmes in Germany

Qualified art teachers are experienced in artistic thinking and action as well as possessing a repertoire of technical-medial skills. They have basic theoretical knowledge and skills in both art history and current artistic contexts. They are able to use the artistic knowledge and mode of visual expression from their own artistic practice in education. They have comprehensive knowledge of and insights into cultural issues, with a particular focus on the understanding of multimedia images; they have experience in and various approaches to art teaching, as well as experience with the implementation of content-related knowledge in school practice, taking into account the socio-cultural and the social-educational context. They are able to prepare, conduct, and evaluate differentiated and heterogeneous art education for a range of age groups and school types. Finally, they are able to provide progress reports and assessments of the artwork of their pupils (Kultusministerkonferenz, 2015).

# 5 Three teacher training competences compared

Diagram\_5 compares the subject-specific competence profiles and qualifications of teacher training programmes in the three countries. Please note that this is based on main themes rather than detailed analysis; the purpose of the comparison is to present an impression of the similarities and differences.

The diagram shows the overarching concept of 'critical reflection'; two key concepts 'explore and create' and 'understand and evaluate' and three main competences, plus an awareness of the school or school environmental entrepreneurship. In effect, we see artistic and education-oriented competences ('explore & create'), as well as theoretical artistic competences together with school-environmental entrepreneurship ('understand & evaluate'). The pedagogical-didactic competence is located between the two productive and receptive components: 'explore & create' and 'understand & evaluate'.

Understanding of visual media that cannot be considered as art or replace art (Kultusministerkonferenz 2015: 18).



Critically reflective competence (N; G)	Explore & Create (E)	Practical artistic competence (N; G)	Creative production (E)	
			Competence in arts, crafts & design techniques (E)	
			Image oriented competence (G)	
		Pedagogical-didactic competence (N)	School subject oriented competence (G)	
			School climate competence (N)	
	Understand & Evaluate (E)		Cultural understanding (E)	
		Theoretical artistic competence (G)	Art theory competence (G)	
			Critical understanding (E)	
		Environmental awareness (N)	School-environmental entrepreneur	

Diagram\_5: Subject-specific competences in visual art and design teacher training programmes in three EU Member States

(E = England; G = Germany and N = the Netherlands)

Comparing this diagram with the results of the research carried out within the Comenius project (> Ch. 2) reveals a similarity in the curricula in the shape of three main goals: the first relating to the productive and the second to the receptive aspect of visual arts education, while the third is often formulated as an overarching 'cognitive ability such as reflection, observation, or creative thinking' (> Ch. 2).



Qualified art teacher Competences			alified art teacher	The Netherlands	England	Germany
Critically reflective competence	Explore & Create	Practical artistic competence	Creative production	Defines, analyses and solves problems in an artistically responsible manner	Produces creative work; Maintains and develops own creative practice	Experience in artistic thinking and acting from own practice
			Competence in arts, crafts & design techniques	Uses appropriate techniques	Knowledge and skills in various 2, 3 and 4-dimensional techniques	A repertoire of technical medial possibilities of artistic expression
			Image oriented competence			Particular focus on understanding multimedia images
		Pedagogical-didactic competence	School subject orientated competence	Creates new knowledge and develops the school subject; Knows what it means to operate at the highest school level	Prepares and gives lessons in visual arts and crafts; Uses a variety of teaching methods and a range of multimedia materials; Encourages children to develop their talents; Keeps good order in the classroom; A positive attitude to experimentation	Experience with art teaching, art teaching approaches and implementation of content and knowledge in school; Prepares, conducts, and evaluates differentiated art education for several ages and school types; Gives progress report and assessment of pupils' art or media work
			School climate competence	Able and willing to further development of abilities	Sets assignments, tests and exams, marking pupils' work and writing reports; Prepares for and attends parent-teacher meetings and staff meetings	Experience with art teaching and art teaching approaches taking into account the socio-cultural and the social-educational context
	Understa		Cultural understanding	Possesses cultural knowledge and able to reflect on it	Understands the historical and cultural development of artists and art forms	Comprehensive knowledge and insights in cultural questions
	erstand & Evaluate	Theoretical artistic competence nd & Evaluate	Competence in art theory	Knowledge of art theory and ability to reflect on one's own visual art products and those of others	Knows about great artists, craft makers and designers	Basic theoretical knowledge and skills in art history
			Critical understanding	Reflects on one's own performance and surroundings	Evaluates and analyses creative works using the language of art, craft and design	Basic theoretical know- ledge and skills in current artistic contexts which reflect current conditions
		Environmental awareness	School- environmental entrepreneur	An inquiring attitude and an innovative focus; takes responsibility for appropriate cooperation with cultural institutions	Organises visits to art galleries and creates exhibitions of work in school; supervises out-of-hours activities	

Diagram\_6: Competences for starting visual art teachers in the Netherlands, England & Germany



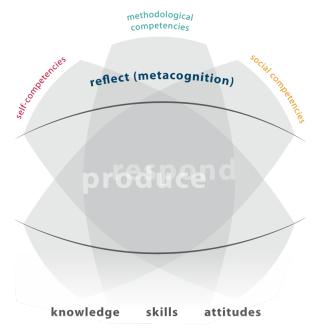
Diagram\_6 shows the competences to be acquired to become a visual art teacher in the three EU Member States dealt with in this article. There seems to be hardly any difference between the teacher competences in the three countries. In a number of cases competences are described on a meta-level, while others are stated in more concrete terms. The classification is done in accordance with Diagram\_5, including three main components with 'critical reflection' as an overarching metacognitive component and two other key components 'explore and create' and 'understand and evaluate'.

As far as I am aware, Germany is the only country which – in line with its competence-oriented thinking (Kultusministerkonferenz, 2004) – has content requirements at state level for subject-related studies and subject-related didactics in teacher training, including those for visual art teacher (Kultusministerkonferenz, 2015: 18-19). In the Netherlands, competence profiles are not approved by the government but by the Netherlands Association of Universities of Applied Sciences. This delegation of responsibilities reflects the educational autonomy of the teacher training programmes (KVDO, 2013: 5-9). In England the pedagogical and didactic competences for teaching are defined at state level (Department for Education, 2013: 10-14) but formal start qualifications have not been formulated.

## 6 Comparing competences of teacher training and CEFR-VL

In comparison to the Netherlands, England and Germany (with its *Länder*-initiated educational legislation) seem to impose more stringent pedagogical and organisational obligations on primary and secondary schools. In England, central government has overall responsibility for the education system and schools are legally obliged to teach the new National Curriculum (IJdens & Van Hoorn, 2014).

The Common Frame of Reference for Visual Literacy Competences (CEFR-VL) is a competence structure model with key competences and their derived behavioural indicators. In Diagram\_7, the white words in bold and a larger font indicate the competences ENViL considers to be important. Since the model is intended to illustrate visual literacy words which have a direct relationship with the term 'images' can be found throughout the model (> Ch. 4), but other words are also emphasized, three of which are addressed in this context: the competences 'produce', 'respond' and 'reflect (metacognition)'. When I define 'production' as 'making images' and 'respond' as 'experience images and process them mentally' (> Glossary) the terms 'produce' and 'respond' are then comparable with the concepts 'production' and 'reception', or 'explore & create' and 'understand & evaluate', as shown in Diagram\_6.



Diagram\_7: Competence structure model - differentiation of competences and reflecting (metacognition)

Metacognition is a second or higher-order thinking process which involves active control over cognitive processes (Wellman, 1985: 1). Next, the term 'reflect' in Diagram 7 needs to be examined in light of the concepts 'metacognition' and 'critical reflection'. According to Gama (2004), self-reflection is clearly related to metacognition. Selfreflection not only provides and individual with a better understanding of what he or she knows, but also with a way of improving metacognitive strategies, enabling the learner to examine how he or she performed a specific learning task (Gama, 2004: 25). Critical reflection is used in education to encourage the integration of theory and practice while enhancing student learning and helping students build self-confidence (Lucas, 2012: 4). The literature of art teacher training speaks about critically reflective teaching and metacognition as a necessary strategy for teacher training, 'a way to continually expand the teacher's knowledge, skill building, and processes for teaching art' (Crespin & Hartung, 1997). On this basis, we may conclude that 'metacognition' and 'critical reflection' are strongly connected concepts in visual arts education. While I have focused here on the many similarities in evidence, there are also differences between the pupils' and teachers' competences, linked to the characteristics and qualifications of being a professional visual art teacher.

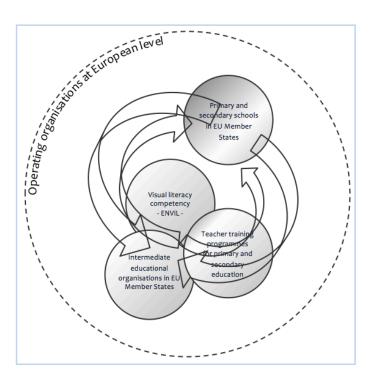
### 7 Closing remarks

Given the similarities between the key competences teachers are required to achieve in training programmes and the framework of competences designed and modelled by ENViL for use in school curricula, there are hardly any substantive objections to implementing the ENViL competences in teacher training programmes and subsequently in the curricula of primary and secondary education in EU Member States.

Diagram\_8 shows possible European and national approaches to introducing and implementing the Common Frame of Reference for Competences for Visual Literacy (CEFR-VL). At European level an obvious candidate would be intermediate operating sector institutions such as the recently created European Network of Observatories in



the Field of Arts and Cultural Education (ENO)<sup>11</sup>, linked to UNESCO as well as to the International Society for Education through Art (InSEA) and ELIA, the European League of Institutes in the Arts. However, given the relatively large size and scope of these institutions and the fact that the EU itself takes no action according to the subsidiarity principle and will only report the state of affairs, this will not be an easy task (Hagenaars, 2015).



Diagram\_8: Reciprocal transfer structure of visual literacy competency for teacher training and basic education

A clear-cut ENViL strategy plan with clear defined policies and goals for implementation, together with a timeframe for completion, may help mobilise efforts to disseminate the results of this Comenius Lifelong Learning Programme project in teacher training. Such a plan may also allow for a range of actions - curriculum reform, teacher education and professional development - to be implemented across the whole EU education system. A strategic approach of this kind is in line with the policy principles of the European Union as regards developing skills and key competences in primary and secondary education in Europe (European Commission, EACEA & Eurydice, 2012).

An introduction of the CEFR-VL at national level offers opportunities when ministries of education or teacher training introduce competence profiles and competence-based

For more information see: <a href="http://www.lkca.nl/onderzoek/europees-netwerk-cultuureducatie">http://www.lkca.nl/onderzoek/europees-netwerk-cultuureducatie</a> Consulted on 15-12-2015 at 11:57.



learning. In cases where a competence-based strategy exists at ministerial level, the emphasis will primarily be on basic skills (mother tongue, mathematics and science) and not on cultural education or visual literacy (European Commission et al., 2012). European countries still have a long way to go and in light of this, ENViL might do well to align its aims to government policy geared towards introducing the visual literacy competency model nationwide (OECD, 2015). A formal national approach is not always desirable when it comes to introducing reforms, even more so because the introduction does not depend exclusively on government policy in cases where teacher training wishes to embrace such a new curriculum model.

It might be more effective for ENViL members to cooperate with institutions at national level, i.e. institutions that review the national curriculum and ensure its development<sup>12</sup>. In some instances, there are links between ENViL members and national or regional intermediating institutes, and these make it easier to share knowledge. There are other important intermediary partners with whom ENViL members might share knowledge and experiences. These include the national associations of teachers in visual art and design, such as the UK National Society for Education in Art & Design (NSEAD)<sup>13</sup>, the BDK, das Fachverband für Kunstpädagogik<sup>14</sup> in Germany, and the Dutch Vereniging Onderwijs Kunst en Cultuur (VONKC)<sup>15</sup>. By working together with these national associations, networks of teacher training institutions will arise and ENViL can distribute and disseminate its revenues. A third method for ENViL members to disseminate and implement its procedures is to forge an intrinsic relationship with other teacher training institutions in the wider area of the corresponding ENViL member.

Piet Hagenaars (1948) is the former Managing Director of Cultuurnetwerk Nederland (2001-2012) and the National Centre of Expertise for Cultural Education and Amateur Arts (2013). He started his career as a teacher of art and art history in secondary and higher education (1970-1979) before becoming director of the Municipal Museum in Oss (1979-1992). In 1992, he took up the post of Director of the Faculty of Arts at the Fontys University of Fine and Performing Arts, and in 1999 he became Managing Director of LOKV, the Netherlands Institute for Education in the Arts, in Utrecht.

Hagenaars has written a significant number of policy-related publications in the field of cultural education. In addition to his daily work, he is also actively involved in provincial and national institutes and commissions in his capacity as policy advisor, board member and chairman, including the Crown membership of the National Council for the Arts. Hagenaars is now working on a PhD thesis on Cultural Education policy in the Netherlands 1975-2015 at the Center of Historical Culture in Erasmus University Rotterdam.

Some nationally and regionally operating intermediary organisations exist. In Germany for example, there is Kultusministerkonferenz, and at Länder level there is the Landesinstitute für Schulentwicklung in Baden-Württemberg or the Staatsinstitut für Schulqualität und Bildungsforschung München in Bayern '. The Netherlands has the National Institute for Curriculum Development (SLO) and in England there is the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA).

http://www.nsead.org/itt/index.aspx Consulted on 01-12-2015 at 15:12.

http://www.bdk-online.info/der-bdk/ziele/ Consulted on 02-12-2015 at 14:52

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http://international.slo.nl/

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