

Czech and Finnish Primary School Teacher in the Background of Inclusive Education

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Abstract

The paper discusses the issue of primary school teachers in the conditions of inclusive education in the Czech Republic and Finland. The aim of the thesis is to create and compare real profiles of Czech and Finnish primary school teachers with an emphasis on finding out what is behind the quality of inclusive education in Finland and how these findings can improve inclusive education and the teaching profession in the Czech context. The key aim is to create an ideal profile of a first grade teacher in inclusive education, i.e., a conception of the teachers' own learning processes, competences and real conditions that a teacher needs for his/her work in a heterogeneous classroom. In order to achieve the goal, the comparative nature of the work and the design of the qualitative case study was chosen, where the case is understood as a primary school teacher against the background of inclusive education — the total number of participants is 20 teachers (10 Czech and 10 Finnish). The main methods for securing data were content and thematic analysis of Czech and foreign sources. The findings became the basis for further reflection and the creation of semi-structured interviews and observations. The first round of data processing used case studies of individual participants, which were subsequently supplemented by data obtained by axial coding. Real profiles of both Czech and Finnish teachers were then created. These profiles were compared and a draft ideal profile of a primary school teacher in inclusive education was created, which reflects the data obtained by the research of this thesis with the data from the thematic analysis and was created from below, based on the opinions and experiences of the teachers themselves. The results show that the professional primary school teacher has a positive attitude towards inclusive education; uses a variety of teaching strategies leading to active involvement of pupils; is involved in his/her own professional development and the development of the school as a community; uses individualisation and differentiation in his/her work and is part of a multi-professional team. Conditions must be created for the teacher to do his/her job where other teaching staff are available to take away from the teacher's high demands for specific knowledge of special education and legislation; lower class sizes; the introduction of pupil assessment criteria and the use of appropriate forms of assessment.

Keywords: primary school teacher, inclusive education, professional competences, conditions for inclusive education, case study

1. Introduction

Inclusive education has become a hotly debated topic worldwide in recent years. Looking back in history, this has not always been the case, and society and education systems have undergone, with varying degrees of success, a transformation from segregation of pupils with different disabilities into institutions, special schools or exclusion from primary education, through the integration of these pupils and efforts to provide them with a basic education, to the current inclusion of these pupils in mainstream classes and the opportunity to learn with their peers regardless of the degree and nature of their disability. When looking at inclusive education, it is necessary to acknowledge the efforts behind all the changes and processes implemented so far throughout history.

Among the most fundamental change that has taken place and undoubtedly stands at the beginning of inclusive education is the shift to a new perception of the child and understanding of his/her needs and potentials, where the child becomes a unique individual with his/her own needs and his/her own unique inner world. This step would never have happened without the contribution of knowledge from other disciplines such as psychology, philosophy and medicine. Although these sciences have contributed substantially to the understanding of childhood and the necessity of respecting the personality concept, educational policy — the drafting, agreeing and monitoring of compliance with the applicable legislative documents — has played a key role in the promotion of inclusive principles (Helus, 2009; Opravilová, Hejlová et. al., 2016; Foreman, 2020).

2. Theoretical Background

2.1 Inclusive Education and Its Definition

Inclusive education occurs in a heterogeneous classroom where pupils are educated together according to their abilities and interests. The essence of this education is empathy and respect for the individuality of pupils/individuals. Pupils/individuals with disadvantages thus gain the opportunity to become rightful members of society (Anderlik, 2014). Spilková (2014) in her definition points out that inclusive education is made up of several factors and areas. Stubbs (2008, p. 40) sees inclusive education as a process that goes beyond the boundaries of the school: “Inclusive education refers to a wide range of strategies, activities and processes that seek to make the universal right to a quality, relevant and appropriate education a reality. It recognises that learning begins at birth and continues throughout life and includes learning at home, in the community and in formal, informal and non-formal situations. It seeks to enable communities, systems and structures in all cultures and contexts to combat discrimination, celebrate diversity, promote participation and overcome barriers to learning and participation for all people. It is part of a broader strategy to promote inclusive development, with the aim of creating a world where peace, tolerance, sustainable use of resources, social justice and the basic needs and rights of all are met.” The implementation of inclusive education also includes the factors behind the whole process. These factors are legal, economic, historical, pedagogical, psychological and philosophical.

2.2 Professionalisation in Teaching

Many experts consider the essence of professionalization to be the enhancement of the quality of teachers in the areas of professional skills and knowledge (Tomková & Spilková, 2019). Although knowledge is crucial, it is not sufficient on its own to distinguish a professional from a layperson; a teacher must possess skills—judgment and problem-solving abilities. Defining the key criteria of professionalism can direct the solution to the issue of professional teacher education and the overall professionalization of the profession. The quality and professionalisation of the teaching profession is considered a key factor that influences the quality of school education. Research shows that it has a major impact on pupils’ educational outcomes, even greater than the quality of the curriculum. The way to ensure this quality of teachers is to define and characterise professional competences.

2.3 Teacher in Inclusive Education

The teacher is an essential person in the educational process. It is the teacher who co-creates the climate of the classroom, coordinates the activities of students, manages and evaluates the learning process and is responsible for the results of this process (Průcha, 2002). The teacher’s profession is highly variable and responds to the current needs of society. Valisová and Kasiková (2010) state that the teaching profession entails a binding requirement for lifelong learning and mastery of a range of skills. These requirements for teachers change fundamentally with the implementation of inclusive education, specifically with the idea of ensuring equal access to education for all pupils without distinction. With inclusive education, the school environment is becoming increasingly diverse in terms of the student population. Teachers are among the first to have to deal with this diversity, as they have to orient themselves to the diagnosis of pupils, differentiate the curriculum, master new teaching strategies, cooperate with parents, etc., i.e., acquire the new competences that a heterogeneous classroom brings with it. The World Health Organization states (2011, p. 222), “The principles of inclusion should be built into teacher education programmes and teachers’ attitudes and values should be prioritised over knowledge and skills.” “The preparation of future teachers that would be ideal and meet the demands of working in a heterogeneous classroom in particular has not yet been found. Nor can the work of the teacher in this type of education be clearly set.”

2.3.1 Primary School Teacher

Kratochvílová et al. (2015) state that in characterising a primary school teacher, we need to focus on what they need to know, be able to do and what they need to be like. Without a doubt, the most distinctive feature of being a primary school teacher is the broad content of the different subjects that the teacher must master at a certain level. The requirement for integration of subjects for primary school teachers makes demands not only on mastery of the content of the curriculum, but also on finding common points of contact and breaking down the

boundaries between isolated subjects, which corresponds to the holistic view of the world that it is necessary to convey to the primary school child and the overall character of the 21st century. Other specific knowledge is knowledge of the management and organization of teaching processes, didactic knowledge, knowledge of the curriculum, as well as knowledge of psychology (Tomkova et al., 2012). The acquired theoretical didactic and disciplinary knowledge provides the possibility of successful practice and turns into skills and creates pedagogical thinking (Kratochvílová et. al., 2015). The last characteristic, according to Kratochvílová et. al. (2015) is the personality characteristic, which includes personal qualities and skills.

This characteristic is complemented by the specificity of the primary school teacher working mostly alone with pupils, which entails increased responsibility for pupils, their education and further development. Thus, any negative influence of the teacher on the pupils can have serious consequences. The specifics of the profession are constantly being modified and evolving with the development and direction of trends in pedagogy and society. With the implementation of inclusive education, primary school teachers have to newly cope with the demands of cooperation with professional institutions and teaching assistants, school psychologist, etc. (Tomková & Spilková, 2019).

2.4 Evaluation Tools for Teacher Evaluation and Inclusive Education

The theoretical background of the dissertation further presents some tools used for evaluation/autorevaluation of teachers in inclusive education, focusing on their competences or on factors that may influence the teacher's work. These evaluation tools and standards frameworks are Sentiments, Attitudes and Concerns about Inclusive Education Revised, The Teacher Efficacy for Inclusive Practices and The Inclusive Teacher Profile. From the Czech environment, the Standard for the Quality of Professional Competences of Student Teachers was selected as it responds to the needs of teachers and offers a starting point for undergraduate studies. So far, the most recent document in the Czech context at national level is the Quality Standard for Professional Competences of Student Teachers. There is no valid and official instrument in the Finnish context, teacher evaluation in Finland is entirely the responsibility of the principal of the educational institution and the main aim of formative evaluation is teacher empowerment and professional development. Principals in Finnish schools conduct individual development interviews directed at the teacher's work, working conditions and professional development. Recently, however, the Finns have begun to focus on the development of standards to define teacher quality. The Finnish standards created by the universities are represented by the Seven Core Competencies and the Multidimensional Adapted Process Model of Teaching.

These evaluation tools are used as a basis for thinking about the methodological approach of the research part of the dissertation. The selected evaluation tools are not specifically designed to evaluate primary school teachers.

3. Research

3.1 Purpose

The aim of the research part of the dissertation is to describe and compare the views and experiences of a primary school teacher working with pupils in complex current conditions of inclusive education in the Czech Republic and Finland. On the basis of the summary of the results of the research part of the thesis, real profiles of primary school teachers in the Czech Republic and Finland will be created and compared, and these profiles will be interpreted against the background of the complex conditions of inclusive education in the Czech Republic and Finland. The final output is the creation of an ideal competent primary school teacher in the conditions of inclusive education and recommendations for teacher professionalisation in the Czech environment.

3.1.1 Research Questions

Which professional competences do primary school teachers in mainstream classes consider as key in ensuring quality teaching in inclusive education?

How do primary school teachers rate their mastery of professional competencies in relation to inclusive education?

What teaching concepts/activities in teaching do teachers choose to ensure quality inclusive education?

What are the real conditions to practice the profession of a primary school teacher, what other factors influence their work and what conditions do teachers need for their work?

3.2 Methodology

To achieve the objectives of the thesis, a case study design was chosen because, according to Handel (2008, p. 104), a case study allows "a detailed study of one or a few cases." The Pedagogical Dictionary (2009, pp. 188-189) adds that in a case study, the case under study is "[...] described and explained in detail, so that a type of clarification is achieved that cannot be achieved when examining the same objects in a collective set. The

advantage of the method is the possibility of a deep understanding of the nature of the case [...]" A distinctive feature of the case study is also its difference from laboratory or isolated research, as it takes place directly in the field (Stake, 1995). Stake (p. 106) himself defines the case study as, "an effort to understand a particular social object in its uniqueness and complexity," emphasizing the perspective of the participants and a holistic conception of the issue under study. This thesis corresponds in its characteristics to an instrumental case study because it considers the case as an important means to achieve the answering of the research questions — the teacher as a case is central to the thesis, but is only a means to answer the research questions and achieve the thesis' goal. The main interest of the thesis is to explore why and how the phenomenon works (Stake, 1995).

3.2.1 The Case and the Selection of Participants

The case chosen for this thesis was a primary school teacher in different inclusive education settings, i.e., the characteristics of a primary school teacher in inclusive education. The research sample of participants consisted of a total of 20 participants (10 Czech primary school teachers and 10 Finnish primary school teachers). When selecting the participants themselves, a purposive and purposeful sampling was chosen, following predefined criteria, so that participants with high variability were selected, i.e., with a high telling value that will yield rich data on the phenomenon under study (Novotná, Špaček & Jantulová, 2019): (1) two teachers teaching in a capital city; (2) two teachers teaching in an urban school; (3) two teachers teaching in a faculty school; (4) two teachers teaching in a school with an increased number of pupils with a different mother tongue; (5) two teachers teaching in a school with an increased number of socially excluded pupils.

3.2.2 Data Collection

The three main methods of the case study were chosen for data collection according to Stake (1995): literature study, observation and interview. The choice of multiple data collection methods ensures what is known as data triangulation, which provides validity and reliability to qualitative research, an often contested part of qualitative research. The final method used in the comparative studies was comparison, in line with the dissertation research defined above as a collective case study. The comparison will help to identify and describe the strengths and weaknesses of teacher issues in inclusive education in the Czech environment with a comparison of the same issues in Finnish colleagues, including providing further recommendations and creating an ideal profile of a real primary school teacher in a heterogeneous classroom.

3.2.2.1 Content and Thematic Analysis

In the first part of the research, a content analysis of available and relevant documents was chosen, namely selected domestic and foreign studies, publications, statistics and national and supranational documents. Due to the nature of the study, which does not only deal with the enumeration of concepts but also explores the relationships between them, it is a relational content analysis (Carley, 1993). Before the actual data collection, the sample or type of files to be analysed was defined, followed by determining the level of analysis or defining the categories to be searched — phrases and themes. The data collected was coded, i.e., the listed units were categorized based on the supported theory. These categories denoted not only articles, chapters of monographs, but also less delimited topics, e.g. arguments, etc. (Scherer, 2004). The obtained data from the content analysis were integrated into files according to the similarity of the containing topics and further served for the thematic analysis of Czech and Finnish documents, from which the subsequent description of crystallized topics of the investigated issue in both countries was made and is included in separate chapters of the research part of the thesis. The analysis and descriptions provide us with basic data for the other parts of the research — observations and interviews. The identified phenomena affecting the teaching profession that need to be addressed, since according to the literature they are at the beginning of the success of inclusive education: (1) the determination of professional competences and their development; (2) the perception of attitude as a key phenomenon for the quality of inclusive education; (3) the support of teachers; (4) the changing demands on the profession; (5) the creation of a professional teacher.

3.2.2.2 Observations

The second part of the research began with observations in the participants' classrooms where they are class teachers. The observations conducted can be characterised as participant-centred, as the aim was to provide an in-depth description and analysis of the phenomena under investigation (Hendl, 2008) arising from the content and thematic analysis, which is hereafter referred to as teaching processes and real conditions. One teaching unit (45 minutes) taught by the research participant was used for observation each time. Data recording was done in a field journal using Spradley's observation matrix. Prior to the actual interviews, what Stake (1995) calls "narratives" were compiled in accordance with Stake's (1995) research design, using descriptions to form an overview of real teaching situations and processes. These constructed stories became the basis for the interview section on teaching processes and conditions. The observations resulted in key processes and conditions which then became the basis for the next part of the research—the semi-structured interview.

3.2.2.3 The Semi-Structured Interview

The semi-structured interview was informed by the data gathered from the thematic analysis and the outcomes of the observations. For this empirical part of the thesis, a professional competency framework was developed as a tool to answer questions in the area of core professional competencies and self-evaluation of professional competencies. The framework developed for the purpose of this research was designed to define a system of competencies for primary school teachers and to be relevant to the issues of this thesis. The basic documents for the development of this framework are the aforementioned and existing frameworks and evaluation tools.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with each teacher individually to ensure that responses were authentic and not influenced by another person. The interview is divided into four main areas to cover the full breadth of the research questions, i.e., core professional competencies, self-evaluation of professional competencies, teaching processes and real-world conditions, and other influencing factors. Each of the areas contains key foundational questions which were further developed with supplementary questions where appropriate. Prior to the interview, the teachers were familiarised with the areas and criteria of the developed professional competence framework, which was also available to them throughout the interview. Audio recordings were made of each interview, from which transcriptions were made.

3.2.3 Analysis of Observation and Interview Data

For the initial data analysis, case notes were created for each case under study, taking into account the data collected through observations and interviews. The brief case studies served to provide a holistic view of the issue. Subsequently, the interviews were transcribed and a selective protocol was developed, focusing only on predefined criteria. The criteria were clearly defined in advance and focused on the main areas of the interview: (1) professional competencies; (2) self-evaluation of professional competencies; (3) teaching processes; and (4) conditions. These selective protocols were then used for axial coding (Hendl, 2008), and the MAXQDA program was used for interview transcription and coding. The basic codes were based on the interview areas already mentioned, and additional categories and codes were created during axial coding (see Appendix 2 and 3). The coded categories were subsequently integrated to create a description of the phenomena under study. These data complemented the original individual case studies and an ideal profile of the primary school teacher emerged, which provided answers to the research questions. The interpretation of the data was based on an emic perspective and is ordered by describing the case one part at a time (Stake, 1995). The case studies are supplemented by statements from the individual teachers interviewed. In the case of the Finnish teachers' case studies, the statements were translated from English into English. Each time ten case studies were created, a realistic profile of a Czech and Finnish primary school teacher in inclusive education was created. This profile emerged from the comparison and analysis of the created case studies based on the frequency of the obtained statements and conveys a comprehensive picture of the Czech and Finnish teacher. The final step was the comparison of these profiles between the Czech Republic and Finland with further elaboration—the creation of a profile of the ideal primary school teacher in the conditions of inclusive education and suggestions for improving the quality of the teacher's work in the Czech Republic, specific suggestions for improving the working conditions of the Czech primary school teacher as well as focusing attention on the development of specific (necessary for the implementation of inclusive education, teaching all pupils) professional competences.

4. Results

4.1 Design of an Ideal Profile of a Competent Primary School Teacher in the Conditions of Inclusive Education

On the basis of the comparison of research results, we now propose an ideal profile of a competent primary teacher who teaches in the conditions of inclusive education and specify the conditions that teachers need to practice their profession in inclusive education. The draft profile is created from below, based on the experiences and opinions of the interviewed Finnish and Czech first grade teachers and their comparison.

In the ideal profile of a competent 1st grade teacher in inclusive education, the values and attitudes component of the teacher's professional competences is key. The teacher understands inclusive education as supporting the learning of all pupils in the classroom. He/she accepts inclusive education as beneficial not only for pupils with SEN, but for all pupils in the class, for all actors in education, and for society as a whole, as a way to create equal opportunities in education for all. It acts with respect and tolerance for the individuality of the pupil.

A competent teacher of the 1st grade in inclusive education has a deeper knowledge of primary pedagogy and didactics focused on the specifics of teaching in the 1st grade. He deepens his knowledge of special pedagogy and actively completes his knowledge of legislation affecting the conditions of his work directly in the classroom. He masters the breadth of teaching strategies, the core of which are procedures differentiating the objectives, contents and methods of teaching.

He cooperates with other teaching staff in teaching. Emphasises the development of pupils' key competences and leads pupils to take responsibility for their learning. Plans teaching and learning tasks with an emphasis on

differentiation and individualised support for the learning of pupils with different learning needs. It focuses primarily on forming small learning groups of pupils, not only according to performance but also according to pupils' other needs and interests, led by other teaching staff. It also incorporates individual learning for pupils, not just those with SEN, accompanied by another member of teaching staff. Allows pupils to choose their task and space. Throughout the work, the teacher talks to pupils about their learning process and gives them ongoing feedback. Assesses pupils on the basis of pre-defined criteria.

The focus is on creating a safe environment for learning, building a positive climate. It works with the legal guardians of students who become partners in the educational process, creating a learning community.

A competent Grade 1 teacher in inclusive education is able to self-reflect and uses reflection and self-reflection to improve his/her practice. He/she continuously develops professionally, is interested in pedagogy including the results of current research investigations, seeks new ways to make teaching and pupils' learning more effective, thinks pedagogically, thinks in context, and argues for innovations in his/her teaching. He works on developing his personality.

In order to work effectively with a heterogeneous class, a competent first grade teacher needs clear and functioning conditions, created by the school administration and the state, in the development of which he himself also actively participates. In the school, he or she gradually expands his or her experience of working with pupils with different learning needs and shares and reflects on it in a multiprofessional team. He makes use of support measures that include teacher collaboration with other teaching staff in the classroom and in the school, and material provision, including multi-level teaching materials. Utilizes a systemic professional development setting for teachers that focuses not only on developing knowledge of special education and the skills needed to differentiate instruction for students, but also on preventing the threat of overwork, burnout, and practicing the teaching profession at the expense of personal needs and interests.

4.2 Discussion and Conclusions

The results of the comparative research show significant differences between Finnish and Czech first grade teachers in thinking about the teaching profession within the concept of professional competences and perceiving the importance of their components for the implementation of inclusive education. The Finnish teachers interviewed emphasise the centrality of values and attitudes, or positive attitudes towards inclusive education. Czech teachers consider knowledge, especially knowledge of special education, to be a key component of teachers' professional competences. Why is this so? There are several reasons for this: Finnish society is historically and religiously value-oriented. The emphasis on the value and attitudinal component of education and its outcomes can be seen not only in the thinking of the teachers interviewed, but also in the Finnish national curriculum for primary education, which emphasises respect, tolerance, freedom and equality. The Finnish teachers interviewed do not deny the importance of professional knowledge. However, they see it more as one of the follow-up steps to the implementation of inclusion in school education and understand it as a broad spectrum of knowledge in special education, didactics, but also legislation. The Czech first grade teachers interviewed emphasise the importance of knowledge in their professional equipment. They mainly mention knowledge of special pedagogy. This is related to the current development of inclusive education in the Czech Republic, which is in a phase emphasising teachers' care for pupils with special needs. It may also be related to the continuing emphasis of the Czech education system on measurable learning outcomes, which is precisely knowledge, both in pupil education and in pre-service and in-service teacher education.

Significant differences were found in how confident Finnish and Czech Grade 1 teachers felt about working in an inclusive classroom. Their self-confidence in practicing their profession is related not only to the overall setting of society and the acceptance of teachers as professionals in their profession, but also to the individual teachers' approach to their professional development and lifelong learning. From the opinions of the teachers interviewed, it is clear that Finnish teachers take an active approach to their professional development and are expected by the state to be active, including engaging in the national debate on education.

The nature of teaching processes and their organisation is essential for the implementation of inclusive education in the sense of teachers' work with pupils with different learning needs. Finnish teachers in Key Stage 1 can base teaching characterised by differentiation and individualisation on collaboration with a team of other teachers and experts from other professions. Their pupils often work in different groups, although mostly based on pupil performance. Teachers are supported by two levels of curriculum materials. They do not focus only on pupils with SEN when planning lessons, but prepare differentiated work for all pupils, groups of pupils and individual pupils. The mainstream classes form very large groups of pupils. Czech first-grade teachers are not usually so well supported in their collaboration with the broader teaching team, which is probably why they continue to prefer frontal teaching. They are not equipped with a sufficient breadth of teaching practices to enable differentiated and individualised learning for pupils with different learning needs. Differentiation is most often addressed by shortening tasks and extending the time for pupils with SEN to complete a task. The neuralgic

point of differentiation and individualisation of teaching, as testified not only by Finnish but also by Czech teachers of Grade 1, is the improvement of the processes of self-assessment and evaluation of pupils. They are aware of the importance of clearly defining objectives at different levels, linking objectives to assessment procedures, the importance of clear assessment criteria and also of assessing not only the results but also the pupils' progress in learning.

The Finnish and Czech first grade teachers interviewed agree that inclusive education brings increased demands on their work. They rate the conditions they have for their work as good, although they also point to a number of limitations, not only in the area of funding. The results of the research in this thesis clearly show that teachers of Grade 1 who work in inclusive education need sufficient staffing in classrooms and schools, especially enough teaching assistants, paired teachers, special educators and school psychologists with whom they need to share and consult on individual pupil cases and classroom situations. They also need these other teaching staff to take over from the teacher some of the activities associated with caring for individual pupils or communicating with pupils' guardians or other institutions. They need clearly defined criteria for pupil assessment. They need the work of guidance offices to be streamlined. In this part of the paper we ask: How can the experience of Finnish first grade teachers working in the specific conditions of their journey towards inclusive education of pupils inspire the Czech education system and Czech teachers? It is necessary to create such conditions in the long term so that teaching is perceived by society as a full-fledged and respected profession. It is necessary that the vision of inclusive primary education is a long-term vision, which is also gradually fulfilled and implemented in a systemic way, and not prosecuted by constant changes that the teacher is unable to even register. It makes his work frustrating and unnecessarily drains the energy he needs to spend on thinking through and implementing learning processes that will help each pupil develop. In the context of Finnish education, one of the important conditions for good teacher performance is that most primary schools have similar conditions and also similar quality, regardless of school type, focus and demographics. Czech teachers have very different conditions in this respect, and the road for some to quality education for all pupils with different needs will be a long one. The solution can be seen not only in funding, but also in the demands on the quality of teachers' professional competences for working in heterogeneous classrooms, stemming not only from the requirements of the school management or the Czech School Inspectorate, but also from the internal need of each of them to develop professionally and take responsibility for the quality of their work and their professional development.

As part of the research outputs, an ideal profile of a competent first grade teacher in the conditions of inclusive education was proposed, which was created from below, based on the experiences and opinions of the interviewed teachers. This profile corresponds to the European Profile of an Inclusive Teacher. Both build on the importance of values and attitudes, collaboration and professional development of the teacher. In our opinion, the competency framework for student teachers, which is currently being developed at the Ministry of Education in the Czech Republic, should also include requirements related to the expected work of graduates in an inclusive classroom and school environment. However, the emphasis on values and attitudes such as respect, diversity and tolerance in the work of the graduate teacher is absent from the current draft, the importance of the personal component and the development of soft skills is neglected and the emphasis remains on knowledge. In our view, the emerging framework does not yet reflect the results of international research or the recommendations contained in existing professional frameworks or standards, where the emphasis on the development of attitudes and skills associated with teaching in a heterogeneous classroom is already expressed in various ways. An example is the Quality Standard for Professional Competencies for Student Teachers. In our opinion, the framework, which is essential for quality teacher training and which should apply to all institutions providing pre-service teacher education at master's level, should also include clearly expressed requirements for the work of a graduate teacher in inclusive education. Our ideal profile of a competent teacher of the first level, which was created from below and which emphasises the same values as the European profile of an inclusive teacher, could be one of the appropriate bases for further development of the Competence Framework for Teacher Graduates and thus for the creation of adequate conditions for the implementation of inclusive education in the Czech Republic. It could also be used and further developed by teachers in practice, as part of their further professional development and involvement in professional discussions of education policy.

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