

# Improving the quality of teaching and learning in higher education through supporting professional development of teaching staff



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## Summary

The aim of this paper is to present recent developments in different European universities to ensure quality by initial entry training and continuing professional developments of tertiary educators in the area of quality teaching and learning which has been stressed also by Bologna renewal of study programmes. It is based on the data from case studies initiated by NETTLE – thematic network of tertiary level educators. A case study of a course in initial entry training for university staff at University of Ljubljana is presented in a greater detail. The focus of empirical study is the evaluation by participants of competencies needed for quality teaching as well as methods and approaches appropriate to develop them. The importance of systemic policy and institutional support for the future development of this vital area is being stressed.

## Keywords

training of tertiary educators, initial courses, teaching in HE, quality in higher education, competencies of university staff, course evaluation, methods for active learning

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## Introduction

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Some questions that are going to be dealt with:

- What are the most important competencies and skills required from tertiary educators for quality teaching that creates deep learning and not only “survival oriented” learning,
- what kind of support at the policy and institutional level exists in different (national) contexts and what support is still needed to develop the necessary competencies,
- which models, methods and approaches are appropriate to develop those competencies and how to assess their effects,
- what are the visions and plans for professional development of teaching staff to enhance quality of studies in HE.

## The quality of teaching and learning is a vital part of the quality of higher education

Teaching at university level is getting to-day much more demanding because of massification, an increase in numbers and heterogeneity of student population, their mobility, information explosion. It is not the same to teach students of the upper 10% of population with specialised interests, usually similar to the teacher’s than to teach about a half of population. How to achieve a comparable level of quality?

One of the main official aims of the university reform driven by Bologna process is enhancing academic quality of studies. Here, we are not going to probe deeper into different, other, potentially controversial aims, like employability, flexibility and mobility of students and graduates, nor to discuss numerous non-intended effects of study reform following Bologna process (in Slovenia, one of the effects seems to be that the overall length of studies is going to increase instead of decreasing!).

We shall limit our discussion to the need to broaden criteria of academic quality in order to include not only the quality of research but also of teaching provision. This means paying more attention to the pedagogic competencies and skills of those engaged in teaching — “tertiary level educators”. This need has also been stressed in the frame of the Tuning Educational Structures in Europe (TUNING) project. In the Final Report on Phase 1, it has been observed:

*“Since traditionally universities have conceived their task as limited to the elaboration and transfer of disciplinary knowledge, it is not surprising that many academics are not used to considering the issues of teaching/learning methods and are not familiar with (or even diffident towards) the vocabulary and the conceptual framework used to describe and classify those methods” (Application for the NETTLE project, 2004).*

The quality of teaching connected to the competencies of teaching staff is slowly getting its place among quality criteria. Thus, the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) stated in Guidelines for national external quality assurance systems:

*“Institutions should have ways of satisfying themselves that staff involved with teaching of students are qualified and competent to do so” (ENQA, 2007, cit. after van de Ven and oth., 2008, 4) and further: “institutions should ensure that their staff recruitment and appointment procedures includes a means of making certain that all new staff have at least the minimum necessary level of competence” (idem).*

The inadequate preparation and training for teaching and the general lack of competencies of teachers in HE to implement a successful reform of the curriculum and organisation of teaching and learning has also been thematised in Croatia (Kovač i dr., 2004).

The underlying idea is that HE institutions should slowly move away from rigid traditional lecture-based teaching to more student-centered concept of encouraging active learning, with more diverse methods; this requires setting challenging goals and assignments, monitoring student learning and providing appropriate feedback. The prerequisite for this is a deeper understanding of the learning process and mastering a wide of teaching and assessment methods, together with the commitment to students’ progress (Marentič Požarnik, 2005). This represents a basis from which a list of teacher competencies and also corresponding training programmes can be developed.

Observations across Europe show that provision of formal education and training programmes for tertiary level educators in the area of teaching and learning

have been piecemeal and uncoordinated. This was one of the reasons to establish a European thematic network NETTLE — Network of European Tertiary Level Educators that included academics from 35 institutions from 23 countries, active in the field of university staff development or higher education policy. NETTLE was primarily concerned with the enhancement of teaching quality. The central aim was to foster a common understanding of what it means to be an educator within Higher Education (HE), and to encourage the development of educator skills to ensure a high quality experience for all students in higher education. One of the aims was also to develop European-wide academic framework within which to equip tertiary level educators with the competencies and skills necessary to provide effective and validated support for learners (Baume, 2008). Among other aims were:

- To carry out a needs analysis of the competencies and skills required of tertiary level educators,
- to research and compare existing provision to meet these needs, both on entry to the profession and later on and to identify any significant gaps,
- to make recommendations for future developments.

NETTLE started with the questions “What skills are necessary to become an effective and efficient teacher working within HE ?” and “What practice is there which supports this development?” Through iterations of research and analysis NETTLE has been gathering information on the rich diversity of approaches across Europe to develop a draft framework for educational development. In parallel, institutional case studies have been collected to illustrate in-context use of educational skills development. Case studies represent a unique and important source of examples of educational development activities taking place within 35 partner universities from 23 countries. Analysis of the results shows the substantial variability of approaches to, and availability of courses on improving teaching and learning for university staff (Kalman, A., ed. 2008).

## **Policy and characteristics of pedagogical training of teachers in HE in different European countries**

The main finding of the NETTLE comparative study, based on case studies, structured by a questionnaire with open questions, can be summarised as follows: In contrast to the trend towards a greater comparability of study programmes, the situation in the area of initial and continuous training of teachers in HE is char-

acterised by extreme variability. Here, only a summary of the results are going to be presented (Kalman, 2008; van de Ven and oth. 2008):

- In general, there is an absence of national legislation to state an obligation for teachers in HE to have an initial entry training certificate;
- nevertheless, there are numerous initiatives of pedagogical formation of HE teachers in form of short courses and workshops in a majority of universities (93%);
- In 52% there are courses for initial education training (IET), in 31% other types of courses;
- In the majority of cases, those courses are not mandatory; in 38% of cases, it is mandatory for new staff or staff in applied institutions — polytechnics (the Netherlands, Ireland, Norway, Latvia, Cyprus, Finland — for applied sciences, Sweden);
- such training in different forms is being offered in 38% of cases by (university) centres, in 32% by departments (for education etc.);
- 71% of institutions have centres that organise courses, consultations, innovative projects. Some centres are attached to the university, some to teacher education institutions; some are specialised (for medical, technical staff — Sweden). In UK and the Netherlands, every university has a centre;
- there are basic courses (on development, delivery with a variety of teaching methods and assessment of students) and advanced courses with modules on specific topics and skills, like mentoring and e-learning;
- In the duration of initial courses, there is an enormous variation, from a few hours (16 hours) to 2 years or more (1600 hours); most courses (44%) can be mastered between 100 and 250 hours of study time (contact hours plus independent study), extended to 2 and 3 semesters);
- among methods used, lectures are still quite common (in 50% of cases), although in 88% of cases, there is a combination of different methods;
- 65% of courses have some form of assessment; it is based on portfolio that documents different activities (30%), written assignments (25%) or on examinations (17%);
- In 86% of cases, participants receive a certificate or diploma; but there are in most of the cases no major consequences of passing a course for promotion or employability; they are not connected to any reward system which restricts the effects;
- The policy context (supportive or not) is very important.

## **The Case study — University of Ljubljana**

The summary of the case study is presented following the main questions from the NETTLE questionnaire.

### **What if any relevant national or regional / state policy is there?**

There is no explicit national policy to encourage the necessary changes in promoting the quality of teaching and. In this context, the development of teaching competencies of university staff is not yet being regarded as an important ingredient of the curricular reform.

There may be a change when an independent agency that has been planned for many years, to monitor quality, also in accreditation of new and renewed study programmes, will finally be founded.

### **What is the University context?**

The University of Ljubljana is the oldest and largest of Slovenian universities. It was founded after the 1<sup>st</sup> world war when Yugoslavia emerged as a new state. The university consists of 23 institutions and has about 60.000 students (regular and part-time). Its striving for excellency is being still officially defined mostly in terms of (internationally recognised) achievements in disciplinary research, like in Shanghai ranking of universities where it holds a rank around 500.

### **What is the policy of the University on training its teachers?**

There is no explicit and consistent policy in this area. In the official document, regulating the habilitation and promotion procedures of university staff (Merila, 2001), there were very precise criteria to be met i.e. for research work and publications in specific journals, but as regards “pedagogical qualification”, there is a certain ambiguity. According to the document, “pedagogical qualification” counts for approximately 25% of the promotion criteria and is also analytically explained. When it comes to present evidence however, the most important evidence required is the obligation for new teachers (lecturers or “docents”) to have a “probationer lesson”; further “pedagogical points” can be received for being a mentor to students on master’s or doctoral level or for writing textbooks and other material for students — but no points for attending inservice courses to improve teaching or for presenting other evidence of actual improvements in teaching. Even in prepar-

ing the last version in 2009, numerous proposals to include bonus for attending courses, have been ignored. Maybe the most important development in the last years has been to introduce the student questionnaire (it is obligatory and comes in a standard form for the whole university). This has to a certain extent focused the attention to the pedagogical process as teachers get yearly statistical report of the points compared to the average. The student report is also a part of promotion documents.

### **What course, programme or other process does the University run?**

The Centre for Educational Development at the Faculty of Arts has been offering different courses and seminars since late 70-ies (for details about early beginnings — see the doctoral thesis of the author — Marentič Požarnik, 1994). Those courses were voluntary and not officially accredited until 1999 when the University Senate as well and the Council for Higher Education of the Ljubljana University have accredited the course on “Foundations of teaching in higher education”. At present, it has been renewed according to Bologna framework as an elective subject of doctoral studies or as a programme of continuous professional development and is waiting for accreditation.

### **How many months or years does it take a member of staff to complete the course?**

The course (6 contact days of 8 hours) can be completed in one semester. It is being structured in the form of modules that take 1—2 days of contact time each, with a week or two in-between to complete assignments. We are still looking for the best organisation, the principle being to alternate contact time with productive “homework” assignments.

### **How many hours of study time does take a member of staff to complete the course?**

According to the questionnaire, the amount of study time to complete assignments varies a great deal among participants (from 10 to over 30 hours), the average being about half of the contact time, which means 24 hours versus 48 hours or 72 hours for the whole course.

## How is the course taught? What methods and resources are used?

The underlying philosophy is the cognitive-humanist and constructivist paradigm of professional development. One of the main goals is to deepen the participants' awareness of their own conceptions of teaching and learning and of students' perspective which helps them to make the transition "from teaching to learning" (Barr, Tagg 1995). The teacher should become aware of the variation of ways in which learning and teaching can be conceived and carried out (Prosser, Trigwell, 1999). It is not mainly about improving teaching techniques, although many of the participants are expecting practical "tips".

The main goals of the course are:

- To master basic procedures in planning, delivering and assessing study results in HE courses, by trying to optimally "align" those procedures (Biggs, 1999).
- To get familiar with a variety of teaching methods and approaches and criteria of their choice according to teaching goals and student characteristics,
- To get aware of the importance of student motivation and its relation to learning environment,
- To acquire a reflective and researching attitude to own teaching practice and a readiness for gathering evidence of its effectivity as a basis for improvement.

There are three trainers that cooperate, also in team teaching. The prevailing methods are based on experiential and peer learning; there is minimal amount of lecturing and some required reading, followed by group discussion. Participants have ample opportunity to present and compare their expectations and experiences and to get different kinds of feedback. Their initial views on main problems in teaching (like the lack of motivation in students) are being confronted and challenged by the students' perspective (in the form of students' answers on the question about their best and worst study experience the participants bring from their institutions — see Marentič Požarnik, Šteh, 2002, Šteh, Marentič Požarnik, 2004).

Every participant has to perform a mini-lecture which is being evaluated by the peers and the trainers; he/she also gets comments in private on videotaped lecture by the mentor and has to present a written reflection on gains from this experience. Also, a report on one peer observation of real teaching (in pairs) and a seminar work based on applied research study into own teaching have to be accomplished. As regards resources, the Centre has started a series of booklets on improving



university teaching. Besides, some foreign literature, especially British, is being recommended and used.

### **Are participants assessed? If so — by what means? Do they gain an award? What sort?**

There is a lot of formative assessment with feedback of different participants' activities and products during the process (like mini lecture with reflective analysis, written reports on reading assignments, peer observation, seminar thesis). We are planning to introduce a more formalised portfolio to document the products and reflections. Participants that have performed all the assignments and have been present at least 80% of contact time, get an official certificate, signed by the Dean of Faculty of Arts.

### **What are the consequences of passing (e.g. completing probation, salary increment?), or of not passing?**

There are no consequences; actually “non passing” happens rarely, only when the candidate is prevented from attending 80% of the time or not presenting evidence of different activities and assignments. Usually, candidates do present the certificate as a part of their habilitation — promotion documents. But to our knowledge, they are not treated in any way differently from their colleagues that do not present such a document.

### **What proportion of eligible staff take part in the course?**

It is difficult to estimate — maybe 5 percent. Although there is neither official support nor broad publicity, there are always enough candidates to attend — sometimes more than we can take (because of active methods, the group should not exceed 20 participants).

### **What arrangements are made for the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) of staff after the course?**

The Centre offers other 2—3 day courses on different topics (student assessment, communication in teaching, group work, tutoring, e-learning...) and since 1992, a yearly “Summer school for improving university teaching”, usually with

renowned guest lecturers from abroad. The attendance is not limited to participants of the introductory courses, although there are some “chronic” attendants that keep coming faithfully year after year.

Also, the role of the professional organisation, named SATHE — Slovenian Association for Teaching in Higher Education, founded in 1996, should be mentioned. It organises for its members “study evenings” and discussions on topics of interest.

### **How successful is the course in achieving its goals? What is the evidence for this?**

We use to apply an evaluation questionnaire at the end of each course. The immediate reactions are very positive. Participants like active methods, useful knowledge, good group climate, opportunity to learn from experiences and from each other and also the fact that “trainers actually do what they preach”. We are going to present some evaluation results from the last two courses later on.

We do not know much about long-term effects of the course which has as the main goal to bring about positive changes in conceptions of teaching and in participants’ teaching decisions and activities. In 2002, we performed a study among former participants to find out whether they perceive any long-term effects of the course (Marentič Požarnik, Puklek Levpušček, 2002). On the basis of a questionnaire and an interview we probed into their conceptions of “good” teaching and “good” student and asked them also about any changes they introduced as a consequence of the course.

The results showed that the courses did not change their conceptions or teaching practices in any dramatic way. The course gave them a “push” in the direction they were already going and gave them confirmation that their attempts to improve were “right”. In terms of their professional development, according to Kugel (1993), most participants made the transition from “subject orientation” to the first stage of “student orientation”; they started to “see” the students in the lecture hall and to take into account their limited capacity of reception by trying to improve delivery. Only some moved to the second or third stage — to regard students as active and independent, giving them practical assignments or engaging them in group work, projects or meaningful dialogue. Most changes they introduced were in the area of assessment.

When asked about sources of incentive and obstacles to introduce changes in teaching, the participants mentioned most often (in 53% of the cases) students as

the main source of incentive and teaching environment (too high workload, too rigid and overloaded programmes, too large groups of students, no support from colleagues...) in 90% as the main obstacle.

## Preliminary evaluation study of competencies developed in courses 2008 and 2009

In order to get more informations about the quality of the course “Foundations of teaching in higher education”, especially regarding the competencies obtained, we performed an evaluation study starting with following questions:

- How do the participants rate the importance of different competencies of teachers in HE after completing the course,
- To what extent did the course help them to develop those competencies,
- Which activities and methods used contributed most to this development.

Although the concept of (professional) competence is difficult to clarify and can be easily misused or simplified (Weinert, 2001), it can represent a useful starting point for planning and reflection on professional development whrn wisely used. Key competencies are multilayered “complex systems of knowledge, beliefs and action tendencies that are constructed from well-organised domain-specific expertise, basic skills, generalized attitudes, and converging cognitive styles” (Weinert 2001, 53).

There were numerous attempts to define and list competencies of (primary and secondary) teachers (see Marentič Požarnik ...), but not so many of teachers at the tertiary level. In the frame of NETTLE, a preliminary list was developed and validated by a group of university experts from different countries.

## Procedure

After one-semester course on teaching and learning in HE, which was described earlier, the participants in the last two cohorts (in Spring semester 2008 and 2009) were asked to rate a list of 25 teaching competencies of university teachers developed by NETTLE experts, on a 4-point scale. (see also: <http://www.nettle.soton.ac.uk>). Further, they were asked to indicate which of those competencies has the course helped them to develop.

Finally, they had to distribute 10 points (of general gain from the course) among different activities and methods that were used during the course.

## Participants

In 2008, there were 19 participants, in 2009 — 22 participants. The majority were assistants (also some docents) from science and technology departments, some also from economy and health area. The attendance was voluntary, although in some institutions, they were encouraged to join.

## Results

Table 1

How did the participants of the course in 2008 assess the importance of learning and teaching competencies and their development during the course

	Learning and Teaching competencies for teachers in Higher Education	Mean	St.	
1	Ability to analyse or synthesise complex theories and basic principles of a specific discipline	3,79	1	
2	Ability to identify critical connections between aspects of relevant knowledge and their application in practice, policies and methods	3,79	1	
3	Ability to reflect on one's own teaching practice	3,21	1	
4	Ability to use available methods in teaching and research	3,21	1	
5	Capacity to identify differences between open and closed learning systems	3,16	1	
6	Capacity to identify differences between open and closed learning systems	3,67	1	
7	Ability to identify conceptual relations in different systems	3,26	1	
8	Competence in assessment	3,68	1	
9	Ability to manage projects for improvement of teaching, learning, working and teaching environment	3,23	1	
10	Ability to manage educational programmes	3,17	1	
11	Ability to analyse and assess educational programmes	3,25	1	
12	Ability to determine educational needs and strategies	3,41	1	
13	Ability to lead or coordinate educational services and projects	3,15	1	
14	Capacity to assess progress and achievement	3,71	1	
15	Competence in assessment of teaching and learning strategies	3,16	1	
16	Competence in collaboration with students	3,68	12	A
17	Knowledge of the subject in its depth	3,26	1	
18	Ability to assess the outcomes of learning and teaching activities	3,67	10	A
19	Ability to manage student activities, teaching and learning	3,65	7	B
20	Ability to create a relevant and useful learning	3,27	11	B
21	Ability to make use of learning and teaching strategies for learning management	3,25	10	B
22	Ability to manage time effectively	3,15	1	
23	Ability to manage open and closed learning systems	3,25	10	B
24	Capacity of the need for continuous professional development	3,27	1	

## Comments

The level of importance of each competence was assessed on a 4-point scale:

None	Weak	Considerable	Strong
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>

The participants also indicated, which competencies has the course helped them to develop

fr — the frequency of answers

**N = 19**

Because of the small numerus we did not perform any extensive statistical operations; for a general orientation, we took mean ratings that exceeded 3,50 as indicators of high importance; also, we took as a significant result when more than a third of participants indicated that the course helped them to develop a certain competence (bold).

**X** means that a certain competence was high on both the rated importance and the perceived development.

**Table 2**  
How did the participants of the course in 2009 assess the importance of learning and teaching competencies and their development during the course

	Learning & teaching competencies for teachers at Higher Education	Mean	St.
1	Ability to analyse individual and group dynamics and to use it productively in a classroom setting	3,70	0
2	Ability to design professional activities for diverse aspects of students' knowledge and their application in real life contexts and contexts	3,77	0
3	Ability to control students' work intensity, class	3,69	0
4	Ability to select the most suitable teaching methods and materials	3,24	0
5	Awareness of the individual roles of participants in the learning process	3,77	0
6	The demand for the content and the nature of a discipline of studies	3,14	0
7	Ability to design individual exercises and formal contents	3,45	0
8	Competence in controlling	3,17	1
9	Ability to manage a class for achievement of the educational set of learning and teaching competencies	3,51	0
10	Ability to manage individual programmes	3,47	1
11	Ability to analyse individual progress of students	3,28	0
12	Ability to determine individual needs and demands	3,19	0
13	Ability to analyse individual students' learning and teaching competencies	3,32	0
14	Orientation to learners' progress and achievement	3,29	0
15	Competence in selection of teaching learning strategies	3,28	1
16	Competence in collaboration in the classroom	3,34	0
17	Plans and procedures to be followed in a class	3,40	0
18	Ability to create the atmosphere of learning and teaching in the classroom	3,29	1
19	Ability to communicate effectively with students and colleagues	3,41	0
20	Ability to manage a classroom in a real life setting	3,25	1
21	Ability to manage a classroom in a real life setting	3,25	1
22	Ability to manage a classroom in a real life setting	3,24	0
23	Ability to manage a classroom in a real life setting	3,24	1
24	Ability to manage a classroom in a real life setting	3,24	1
25	Awareness of the need for continuous professional development	3,40	0

See comments in table 1!

There were answers from 22 participants in 2009

**Table 3**  
**Participants' perceived "gain" from different course activities**

Course activity	% of points 2008	Rank	% of points 2009	Rank
1. lectures with discussion	13,6	4	16,8	2
2. practical exercises	15,3	3	11,8	5
3. mini lectures with (video)feedback	26,0	1	25,2	1
4. reading assignments	4,6	7	7,3	7
5. writing and presenting seminar paper	10,8	5,5	15,7	3
6. peer observation with reflection	18,6	2	13,8	4
7. nonformal discussions	10,8	5,5	9,3	6

Comment:

At the end of the course, we asked participants to estimate how much they gained from different course activities by dividing 10 points among them. The activities were described earlier in the case study. In 2008, we got answers from 19 participants, in 2009 from 22 participants.

## Discussion

The mean ratings of competencies show that participants were not so much orientated toward more theoretical, analytical, research and management aspects of their teaching role, but more directly to the teaching-learning process itself — how to counsel, communicate, deliver, assess students. Beside more “technical” teaching skills, participants in both groups stressed also competencies that have to do more with attitudes and personality than knowledge and skills, like creating a good group climate and being committed to student progress.

The areas in which they indicated considerable gain correspond to a great extent to the central aims of the course. The differences between the two groups would deserve further analysis. As the methods in the courses are participant-centered and sensitive to their needs and ideas, every group develops its own dynamics.

The ranking of different activities and methods as to their contribution to learning of participants show that the decision to put active, experiential methods

and peer learning in the centre was correct. The participants stated that they learned most from the mini lectures with feedback and (reflective) analysis and least from reading and discussing professional literature. That even non-formal discussions in coffee breaks were relatively more effective than learning from books, comes nevertheless as a small surprise.

In general, the participants appreciated that the trainers in the course were setting personal examples of varied active methods as well as of creating favorable group climate and being committed to their progress; this was stated in written comments and also expressed by participants on various occasions. It increases the credibility of the whole activity, in contrast to mere lecturing and “preaching” about (inter)active methods which still happens in some university settings.

## What plans are there for the future of the course?

As with the year 2009/10, all courses should be compatible with Bologna regulations, we modified the programme of the existing course Foundations of Teaching in Higher Education and presented it for accreditation in two modes:

- As two elective subjects in doctoral studies — 3rd level (Didactics in higher education I and II, each comprising 5 ECTS),
- as a programme for continuous professional development (CPD), comprising 3 modules:
  1. Teaching for active learning — 4 ECTS,
  2. Independent and e-learning — 3 ECTS,
  3. Assessment and evaluation — 3 ECTS.

The last question in the case study was: What else do you wish to say about the training (initial or continuing) and / or professional accreditation or qualification of those who teach and otherwise support learning in the University?

The answer at the moment is not encouraging. The Ministry and the universities are still largely ignoring this area. Recently, we made another attempt to influence university policy measures, in the sense of a more “systemic approach” (Biggs, 1999, Prosser, Trigwell, 1999). One of the proposals was to recognise the course as an asset in promotion and habilitation procedures forming an important part of a “teaching portfolio” to document the candidate’s teaching ability and his/her professional development in this area. But unfortunately, this attempt failed and new promotion procedures (Merila... 2009) remained unchanged in this respect, making at the same time requirements for scientific production even more rigorous.



Thus, basic personnel and material conditions for the continuation of this activity as well as motivation of young staff to attend courses in the future are uncertain. The irony is that it happens in the same year when renewed study programmes that presuppose a teaching process at a higher level of quality are being introduced in all Slovenian universities.

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## Improving the quality of teaching and learning in higher education through supporting professional development of teaching staff

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### Sažetak

U radu se prikazuje stanje i razvojne tendencije na području početnog i daljnjeg usavršavanja visokoškolskih nastavnika za uspješniji pedagoški rad (didaktičko usavršavanje) na različitim europskim sveučilištima, kao dio "kulture kvalitete" visokog školstva, koju naglašava i bolonjska obnova programa. Prikaz je zasnovan na nizu studija primjera izrađenih u okviru europske tematske mreže NETTLE. Detaljnije je prikazana studija primjera tečaja Osnove visokoškolske didaktike na ljubljanskom sveučilištu. U empirijskom dijelu analizirano je kako sudionici procjenjuju važnost pojedinih kompetencija na

ovom području i uspješnost pojedinih metoda i pristupa za njihovo usavršavanje. Naglašava se i uloga systemske podrške visokoškolske politike i samih sveučilišnih institucija za daljni razvoj ove nepogrješive komponente kvalitete visokog školstva.

### **Ključne riječi**

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Usavršavanje visokoškolskih nastavnika, tečaj didaktike, visokoškolska didaktika, kvaliteta visokoškolske nastave, evaluacija usavršavanja, kompetencije visokoškolskih nastavnika, aktivne nastavne metode.