

The professional developmental needs of higher education-based teacher educators: an international comparative needs analysis

InFo-TED June 2016, Brussels

Teacher educators' professional learning

- European agenda for improving the quality of teacher education (EC 2010, 2013, 2015)
- Teacher educators' professional learning is under-researched
- Few systematic routes for teacher educators' ongoing learning
- Two forms of professional learning; in-service programmes and continuous experiential learning (Lipowski et al., 2011)
- Positioned within a complex amalgam of the biography, identity work, skills, values and dispositions embedded within different learning communities (Feiman-Nemser, 2001)

Comparative professional learning needs analysis

Research questions

(1) What professional learning activities do higher education-based teacher educators value?

(2) How best can these activities be realized?

Questionnaire:

(i) Professional learning preferences

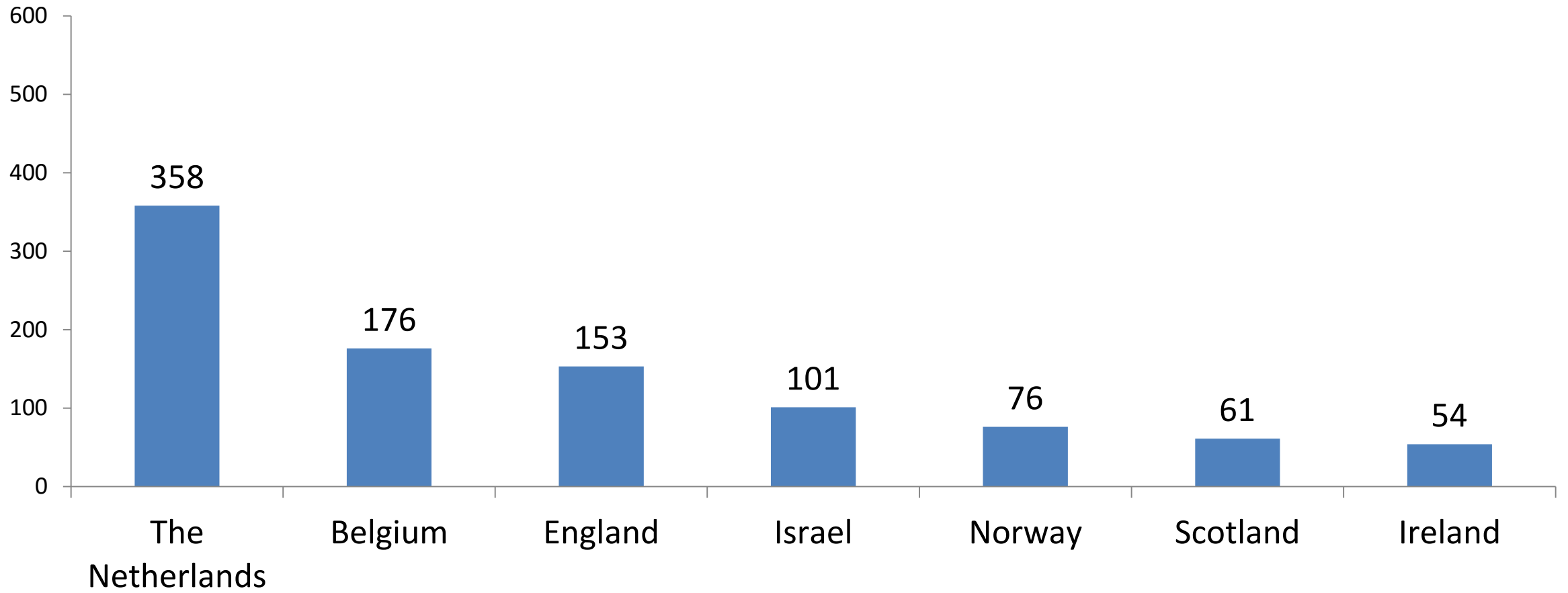
(ii) Factors considered before a professional learning activity is engaged in

(iii) Research dispositions and experience

(iv) Role description and background information

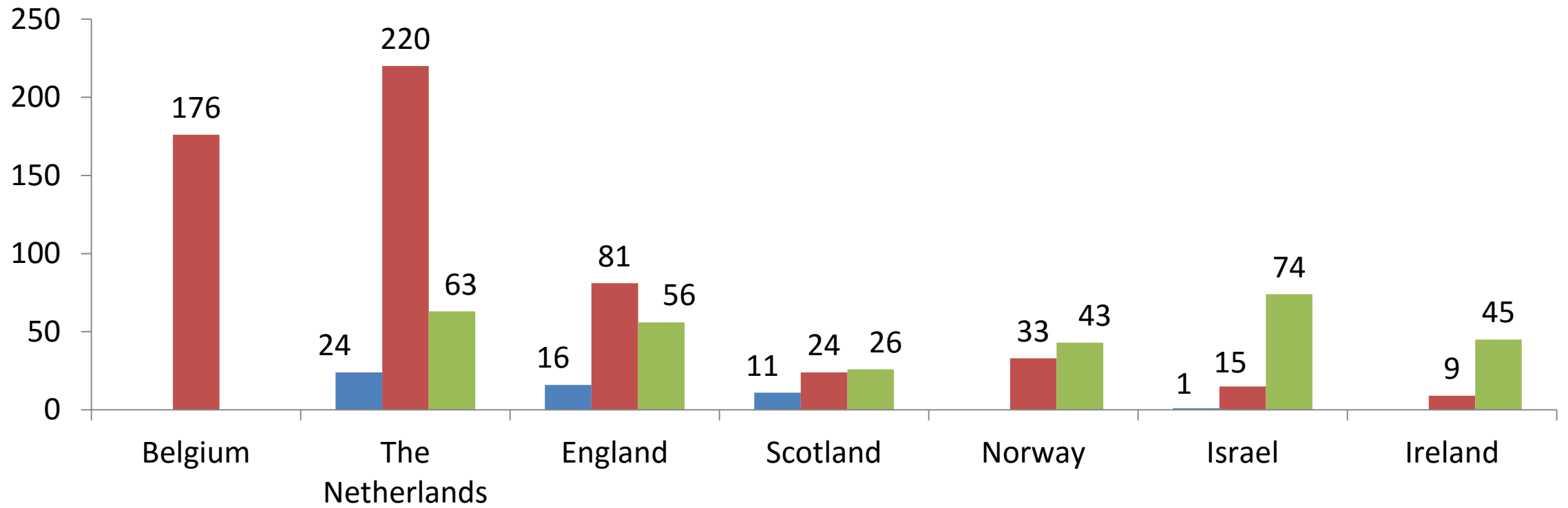
Qualitative responses: (a) What are your most important professional learning needs? (b) What professional learning would best meet these needs?

The Sample



Academic Degree

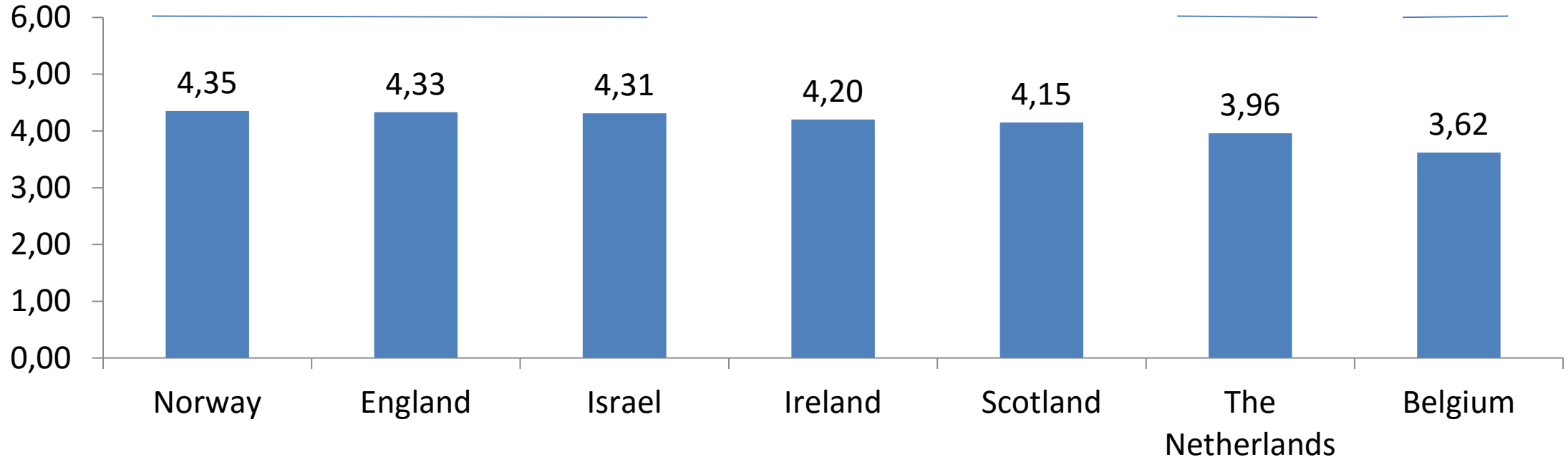
■ BA ■ MA ■ Dr



Teaching Experience (Prior to TE)

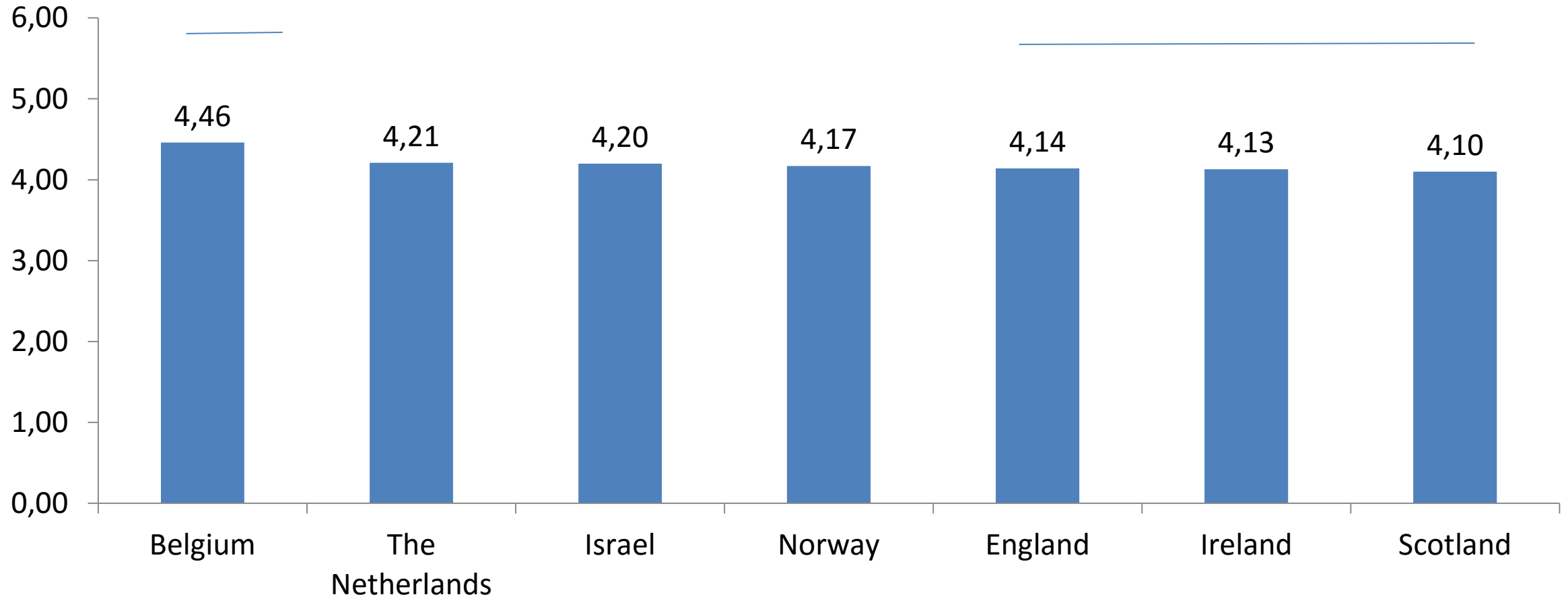
	Yes	No
Scotland	97%	3%
England	95%	5%
Norway	78%	22%
The Netherlands	75%	25%
Ireland	74%	26%
Israel	73%	26%
Belgium	59%	41%

Academic Interest*



* Lines represent significantly different groups (Tukey HSD < .05)

Educational Interest*



* Lines represent significantly different groups (Tukey HSD<.05)

Learning needs and learning opportunities

Codes	Learning needs	Learning opportunities
Availability (or not) of time	Research reading/conducting research/academic writing and thinking; discussion with colleagues; new programmes	Reduced workload; sabbatical/study leave; managing workload
Research skills	Two levels – (i) how to conduct research and (ii) how to extend research profile	Research seminars, workshops, courses; collaborating with colleagues; work in and with groups
Use of ICT/online learning/social media	Online learning; social networking and social media	Courses and training workshops; personal coaching and mentoring
Publish research/academic writing	Two levels – (i) begin writing and (ii) increase publication rate/quality	Coaching and mentoring; collaborating with colleagues
Consideration of pedagogical principles/delivery	Up-skilling in new pedagogies; generic teaching and learning strategies; class management; new procedures and systems	University courses, workshops, seminars, conferences, ITE colleagues

Discussion

- Teacher educators far from being a homogenized professional group
- Extent to which teacher educators ever develop an integrated professional profile, i.e., teacher/practitioner AND researcher
- Two types of professional learning needs arise; (i) educational capacities related to day-to-day remit, and (ii) requirements for progressing an academic career
- Collaborative professional learning communities for teacher educators
- Preference for professional learning opportunities that are continuous and based around experiential learning
- Allocating designated time for proper induction and professional learning

Conclusion

- Teacher educators have a genuine passion to learn with and from colleagues and peers, and to become part of a learning community of like-minded individuals, albeit with different professional trajectories

Moving forward ...

- Article re-submitted to EJTE (May 2016) – ‘The professional developmental needs of higher education-based teacher educators: an international comparative needs analysis’
- Symposium at ECER, August 2016, Dublin, Ireland – ‘Surveying Teacher Educators’ Professional Development Needs in Europe – and beyond’
- Symposium at BERA, September 2016, Leeds, UK – ‘Meeting the professional learning needs of Higher Education-based teacher educators’
- Possible book on perspectives on teacher educators’ professional learning needs
- Follow-up interviews in each country to provide greater insights into the relationship between professional learning opportunities and the learning processes and outcomes gained from these