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Topic # 1

Information and Communication Technology in initial teacher education in Portugal: An analysis of first cycle degree courses in basic education

Manuel Meirinhos meirinhos@ipb.pt, Escola Superior de Educação de Bragança, Portugal
António Osório ajosorio@iec.uminho.pt, Universidade do Minho, Portugal

In a period of constant allusions to the reform of education systems and to models of professional teacher training, with the aim of adapting to the Europe of Knowledge, we have set out to perform an analysis of the curriculum plans of the various teacher training institutions, both public and private, which in Portugal deliver the course of Basic Education. The results are analysed in the light of the professional teacher profile and the respective competencies which bibliographic research permits us to characterise.

This work has as its objective the realisation of a critical reflection on the introduction of competencies in Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) into the Licence's Degree in Basic Education (1st cycle of Bologna), in the area of initial teacher training in Portugal. This type of training began functioning in the 2007/8 school year, in different public and private institutions of Teacher Training.

For the present reflection, curriculum plans of the respective degrees were analysed, which were consulted on the Web sites of the institutions. In addition, the decree-laws and ordinances which approved the study plans were considered and the Portuguese legislation related to the creation of these degrees was analysed. We have sought to carry out the analysis in accordance with the professional teacher profile which the thematic bibliography today enables us to identify.

In this text, we begin by describing the context of professional training in the contemporary information society. We enumerate, in what follows, in a general way, the competencies necessary for this new professional profile and we identify those which are found in the Portuguese legislation. Following a presentation of the more relevant indicators and their interpretation, we emphasise the need for training in ITC before the professional life of the future teacher begins.

A new context of professional training

The information society, as a paradigmatic organiser of western society, is based on a new vision of a globalised society, supported by the development of ICT. These technologies enable the rapid production and distribution of information and of scientific knowledge, accelerate change and stimulate, therefore, the need for permanent training. The utilisation of ICT in all fields of life, both personal and professional, alters social and cultural coordinates, causing society to become more mediated in the processes of communication, interaction, socialisation, work, learning and training. This framework of reference must necessarily have repercussions in the updating of education systems and professional training.

It is enough to bring to mind some of the European Union, UNESCO or OECD documents, because these international organisations seek to guide educational policies and the