OHTE GENERAL REPORT ON THE STATE OF HISTORY TEACHING IN EUROPE 2024

VOLUME 1
COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS
Provisional Version

OBSERVATORY ON HISTORY TEACHING IN EUROPE

COUNCIL OF EUROPE
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1949 - 2024
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

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Cover design and layout: ZN

Cover photos: Europeana, The Auschwitz Museum, Bibliothèque nationale de France
@Lefteris on Canva
Canva pro

Council of Europe Publishing
F-67075 Strasbourg Cedex
http://book.coe.int

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Foreword

"Teaching history, grounding democracy" is the declared priority of the Observatory on History Teaching in Europe (OHTE), an Enlarged Partial Agreement of the Council of Europe created in 2020. Its main mission is to provide an overview of the state of history teaching in its member States, based on reliable data and facts on how history is taught. The OHTE supports the Council of Europe's work in the field of education and history teaching, including the European Cultural Convention from 1954, by promoting quality education to improve the understanding and practice of democratic culture by all learners in Europe.

The OHTE's contribution to these priorities of the Council of Europe over the past seventy years takes the form of preparation of general reports on the state of history teaching. These reports, of which this is the first, examine the way in which history is taught in its member States, from a myriad of angles, such as the amount of time allocated to history in school curricula, the creation processes and use of textbooks and other learning materials, the ways assessment is organised or the analysis of how the initial and in-service training of history teachers is put in place. The general reports provide a factual reading of the way in which history is taught in each OHTE member State.

History is not spared from manipulation, which often runs counter to the values we defend on a daily basis at the Council of Europe. The Reykjavík Declaration adopted in May 2023 by the Heads of State and Government of the member States during the 4th Summit resolutely reiterates the member States' commitment to combating hate speech and disinformation, including the manipulation of history, which have been recognised as serious risks and challenges that our democratic societies must face together. At a time when Europe is witnessing a resurgence of conflicts and old rivalries, high-quality history teaching in our member States must help to build bridges and facilitate understanding between our societies and cultures, which remain the strength and wealth of our continent.

Together, let us teach history to ground democracy.

MARJA RUOTANEN,
Director General of Democracy and Human Dignity

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Chapter 1
Introduction

History education is increasingly recognised for its contribution to democratic citizenship education (Colla 2021; Ammert et al. 2022). A stated objective of the Council of Europe's history education programme is to strengthen the link between history education and the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (CDC), where history is part of the competence "Knowledge and critical understanding of the world" (Council of Europe 2018a). Viewed though this lens, knowledge of the past becomes important not only for its own sake but also, perhaps primarily, for developing young people's analytical and critical thinking skills, not just providing them with factual information but also developing their historical thinking. In turn, this should allow them to become informed, active citizens, thus playing a crucial role in building and maintaining democratic societies.

At the same time, few would disagree that history has become of late an increasingly contested field. As the democratisation of the discipline has engendered more plural narratives that have given voice to previously marginalised groups, from women to minorities, it has come to challenge established narratives intended to sustain notions of national or European identity, long held as sacrosanct. The toppling of Edward Colston's statue in Bristol (and the subsequent pitched battles over statues of historical figures across Europe) epitomises the eruption into public space of tensions between bottom-up pressures to reassess dark legacies that are often part of national and European identities such as slavery and colonialism and the staunch defenders of the status quo.

These contests are played out against the background of a digitisation that is profoundly reshaping societies as we knew them. The prominence of social media, driving increased polarisation and leading to the proliferation of alternative sources and interpretations of "fake news" and "fake histories", exposes today's youth to problematic historical content that can challenge the official curriculum or give it potentially dangerous, manipulative spins. And while manipulation of history for political purposes has been one of its recurrent features ever since the establishment of the modern discipline (Cârstocea 2022), Russia's war against Ukraine has brought to the fore its destructive capabilities. With the Russian government invested in manufacturing an alternative history denying Ukraine's existence with the purpose of legitimising its war of aggression against Ukraine, this has most recently translated into the production of textbooks for high school students (Safronova 2023; see also Amacher, Portnov and Serhiienko 2021). As such, disinformation and "alternative facts" are not only promoted by marginal individuals or groups online but can be an integral part of revisionist state policies that represent a threat to peace in Europe.

This is happening at a time when, as frequently claimed, the number of hours assigned to history education is being decreased in many countries, alongside a defunding of history departments at universities, where history teachers in many countries are trained (Stradling 1995: 23; Ikpe 2015; Schmidt 2018; Kirchner Reill 2023).

The gap between academic history and history education is perceived to be increasing – and has been decried by both types of practitioners, despite their often being unaware of each other's work (Seixas 2004; Ahonen 2005). Just as history may be more important now than it has been in a long time, the status of the history professional – as academic, educator, specialist – is increasingly being called into question. This is taking place against a background where people are generally more sceptical about scientific expertise. However, whereas in the life sciences such scepticism is mitigated by specialist jargon, laboratory-based methodologies, and so on, the status of the history professional is much more exposed because history draws on people's lived experience and is something in which everyone engages at a non-specialist level (at the level of the family, community, etc.).

Any attempt to address and respond to these challenges to history education with a view to strengthening the implementation of the Council of Europe's recommendations on history teaching would need to be grounded in solid, verified empirical data about the state of history teaching and to carefully consider the views of all stakeholders, from education authorities through history teachers and educators to students. It would need to involve academic historians as well, both because they are often responsible for training future generations of teachers and because the gap between the state of the art in history research and history education cannot be bridged without the co-operation of both sides. At the moment, reliable data about history education are not available even at a national level in most states, let alone a comparative study at an international level.

The present report aims to provide a clear picture of the state of history education in member states of the Observatory on History Teaching in Europe, covering both formal aspects of the curriculum and a wide variety of classroom practices, and is therefore a unique source for those seeking to respond to the challenges confronting educators and education authorities, some country-specific, others transnational.

THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE'S WORK ON HISTORY TEACHING

The work of the Observatory on History Teaching in Europe (OHTE) draws on the long-standing legacy of the Council of Europe in the field of history education. More precisely, it falls within the framework of the European Cultural Convention, which emphasises the importance of learning about the histories of other member states to foster greater mutual understanding between the peoples of Europe. Following this general conviction, two long-lasting intergovernmental co-operation programmes were created, with one focusing on the revision of history textbooks (1953-91) and the other focusing on the teaching of history (1965-91). The aims of such programmes were to introduce and develop the idea of Europe in history education based on facts and to complement the hitherto predominant focus on political and military history by diversifying the topics and approaches with a view to cultural, economic and social history, all the while avoiding using history as a propaganda tool for European unity. Furthermore, through these programmes, the member states recognised the role history education can play in developing learners' critical thinking skills. Consequently, they encouraged their governments to introduce school students to scientific methods in history education, to offer multiple perspectives on historical questions and to create links to other curricula areas, especially citizenship education (Committee of Ministers 1983; Council of Europe 1953, 1965, n.d.a, n.d.b). As a result of these efforts, most member states were engaging in curricular reforms by the late 1980s.

Multiperspectivity was one of the main concepts in the Council of Europe's history education programme, and aspects of it were further developed over the years. It involves viewing historical events from several perspectives and acknowledging that historical actors, irrespectively of how close they might be to a certain event, have only partial and limited views of it, and that, consequently, different – and often contrasting – interpretations of any historical event (co) exist. Multiperspectivity is defined as "a way of viewing, and a predisposition to view, historical events, personalities, developments, cultures and societies from different perspectives through drawing on procedures and processes which are fundamental to history as a discipline" (Council of Europe 2003: 14). This is reflected in the sources, which often present us with diverging narratives of the same event or historical process, even from eyewitnesses, depending on their role in it and their personal biases, political views, cultural backgrounds and social status, and on the relative importance of the respective event for different actors involved. While this is often taken for granted by most historians from their exposure to a variety of primary sources, it can be obscured in history teaching that seeks to convey an uncontroversial, authoritative narrative account of the historical facts.

In this light, **the "New Europe" programme** (1989-98) **was created to provide support for the reform of history teaching in central and eastern European countries in their transition from former communist countries to liberal democracies.** The development of democratic citizenship education was a prominent aim here, including how history teaching can reflect the positive values of liberal democratic societies. To this end, a set of criteria was developed to evaluate curricula, teaching resources and teaching practices in this light. This sparked several bilateral and regional co-operation programmes aimed at supporting history teaching in line with the standards and values of the Council of Europe (Council of Europe n.d.c).

After the conclusion of this programme, shorter-term intergovernmental projects, which aligned with the basic principles outlined above and that were closely connected with the political developments at the time, explored certain aspects in more depth. The Yugoslav Wars, for instance, again demonstrated the need to strengthen the civic component of history teaching with a view to developing a historical understanding of and appreciation for the diversity of European societies (Council of Europe 2002) and to furthering its potential to contribute to the prevention of crimes against humanity in the present. This became an integral part of the Committee of Ministers' 2001 recommendation on history teaching in twenty-first-century Europe, which stresses, for example, the importance of teaching about the Holocaust and other genocides and crimes against humanity to prevent such events in the future.

Using the 2001 recommendation as its basis, the Council of Europe's Programme on Remembrance of the Holocaust and Prevention of Crimes against Humanity that the Council of Europe (Council of Europe n.d.d) has maintained the special emphasis on the Holocaust. This programme resulted in the adoption of the Committee of Ministers' 2022 recommendation

on passing on remembrance of the Holocaust and preventing crimes against humanity. Other intergovernmental projects that were explicitly aimed at promoting intercultural tolerance and appreciation of societies' diversity through history teaching were the **"The image of the other in history teaching" project** (2006-9) (Council of Europe n.d.e), which led to the Committee of Ministers' 2011 recommendation on intercultural dialogue and the image of the other in history teaching, and the current project **"Educating for diversity and democracy: teaching history in contemporary Europe"** (2019-) (Council of Europe n.d.f). Furthermore, the Committee of Ministers (2020) has adopted a recommendation on the inclusion of the history of Roma and/or Travellers in school curricula and teaching materials.

The second big thematic focus of such co-operation programmes has been to **strengthen "the European dimension in history teaching"**, through the identically named project (2002-6) (Council of Europe n.d.g) and "Shared histories for a Europe without dividing lines" (2010-14) (Council of Europe 2014), both of which identify key dates to be used in activities and materials to demonstrate the European impact of such events, while at the same time acknowledging and appreciating the diversity of perspectives in relation to the identified topics across Europe.

The close connection between history teaching and the development of learners' critical thinking skills, based on critically questioning historical narratives by engaging with historical evidence from multiple perspectives, strengthens learners' capacities to act as responsible democratic citizens and serves as a red thread that connects the mentioned projects. This intertwined relationship has been expressed in the context of the Council of Europe's (2018a) Reference Framework on Competences for Democratic Culture, in which history makes part of the competences related to "knowledge and critical understanding of the world". It is in this context that the Observatory on History Teaching in Europe complements the above-mentioned work of the Council of Europe by offering an additional mechanism.

THE OBSERVATORY ON HISTORY TEACHING IN EUROPE

The Observatory is an Enlarged Partial Agreement of the Council of Europe, comprising 16 member states and two observer states.[1] The Observatory was established in November 2020 at the initiative of the French government as one of the priorities of its presidency of the Council of Europe (Council of Europe 2020). In line with the standards and recommendations of the Council of Europe in the field of history education, the Observatory promotes approaches that embrace multiperspectivity and the interrogation of evidence, leading to critical discourse among students. This reflects its **vision of a Europe in which history teaching is deeply grounded in the promotion of democracy and in the appreciation of the diversity of societies.**

More concretely, the Observatory contributes to the realisation of this vision by providing a clear picture of how history is taught across Europe through the periodical publication of factual reports. It operates on a platform of co-operation to engage various stakeholders in the field of history education with the findings of its reports, and to explore innovative ways to teach history in line with its values. The co-operation platform is currently implemented through the Annual Conference of the Observatory and the Transnational History Education and Co-operation Laboratory (HISTOLAB), a joint project between the Council of Europe (Education Department) and the European Union (European Commission Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture).[2]

The OHTE consists of the governing board, the Scientific Advisory Council (SAC) and the secretariat. The governing board, composed of one representative from each member state, defines and adopts medium-term and annual programmes, and monitors the implementation and management of the Observatory's resources. Representatives of the governing board also co-ordinate the responses of the member states' education authorities to the surveys conducted in the data collection process for the reports. However, the board has no influence over the final content of the reports, and the Scientific Advisory Council is responsible for verifying their scientific rigour. The SAC is composed of 11 experts in the field of history education, who do not represent OHTE member states' governments or official positions. In fact, they are elected solely based on their professional qualifications and can come from states that are not members of the OHTE. The SAC is consulted on the Observatory's programme and assists the governing board by delivering opinions on matters concerning the Observatory's activities. The third component of the OHTE is the Observatory's secretariat. Headed by an executive director under the oversight of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, the secretariat ensures the smooth running of the Observatory's activities, provides support for the work of the two statutory bodies, ensures transparent communication among delegations of OHTE member states and other stakeholders and promotes the Observatory's work to enlarge its membership. To produce the reports, the OHTE convenes expert groups that operate under the supervision of the SAC.

THE OHTE GENERAL REPORTS

The OHTE produces general and thematic reports that provide a clear picture of the state of history teaching in its member states, based on reliable data and facts. The thematic reports explore relevant themes and issues in depth, and the first of these, Pandemics and natural disasters as reflected in history teaching, was published in 2022. The second thematic report, "Economic crises in history teaching", is to be published in 2024.

The general reports, of which the present one is the first, are intended to provide a snapshot – from multiple angles – of how history is generally taught. The present report captures the current status of history teaching in the OHTE member states. As further general reports are produced, this picture will become more dynamic and allow for a longitudinal overview of history education to reveal changes and developments over time. Moreover, while

1. Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Cyprus, France, Georgia, Greece, Ireland, Luxembourg, Malta, North Macedonia, Portugal, Republic of Moldova (observer), Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Türkiye and Ukraine (observer).

2. For further information, see the website of HISTOLAB at https://histolab.coe.int, accessed 25 July 2023.

the present report necessarily addresses the state of history teaching in schools broadly, trying to cover as much ground as possible and privileging comprehensiveness over detail, future reports will be able to zoom in on areas that are identified as particularly relevant and/or sensitive, as well as on history education beyond the classroom. One of the explicit purposes of this first general report was actually to identify areas in need of further research.

Having as their starting point the official national curricula and the place of history within education systems, the general reports are not limited to this formal, structural level. Instead, they are meant to encompass a broad range of dimensions pertaining to history education, relating to structure, content and pedagogies. Some of the elements covered by this first general report include thematic foci within curricula; transversal competences specific to the discipline; preferred pedagogical practices; the degree of freedom teachers have in selecting materials and teaching methods; the relative weight given to different approaches to history (for example, political, social, cultural, economic, gender history); and the different scales of analysis (for example, local, national, European, global history) at which history is taught at different levels of education. The overview of possible aspects, issues and topics presented here, while purposely designed to have a broad scope, is not intended to be exhaustive.

To facilitate learning across the member states and an exchange of practices, a similar structure has been employed for the individual country entries, even if education systems and the place of history education within each country vary significantly. This presents a challenge for comparative research, one that has been mitigated in this report by combining the presentation of aggregate data, which is useful for identifying common patterns, with breakdowns by country that highlight some very important differences encountered across the OHTE member states. Obtaining reliable data, moreover, is conditioned by the active participation and co-operation of different stakeholders involved in history education in the research undertaken for this report: education authorities, teachers and educators active in different professional capacities and in different types of schools, independent experts capable of providing impartial analysis of the collected data, and the oversight and review provided by a different group of experts. One of the unique advantages of the OHTE is its ability to draw on this combined expertise: from its governing board, through privileged access to teachers in the member states and a pool of independent experts tasked with undertaking the research, to the Scientific Advisory Council, which reviewed and validated both the data collection process, including its methodology, and its results. The work of experts with different research backgrounds made possible the mixed-methods approach applied in this report, bringing together statistically reliable quantitative data with the necessary nuances provided by qualitative research. **The quality of such a report ultimately hinges on this combination of expertise, on the extensive resources required to make it possible and on the multilayered and multistep process of verifying and validating the data, which involved both state authorities and independent experts.** The OHTE is uniquely placed to meet all these high demands and, consequently, to vouch for the quality and reliability of the data provided in this general report.

Some of the findings of the present report point to the need for further research on some dimensions of history education and for the use of different methodologies than the ones employed here. At the same time, future reports will aim to preserve a measure of consistency over time, which is crucial for enabling the longitudinal overview mentioned above. However, in future reports some of the formal elements covered here will be summarised instead of being covered in detail, with attention directed primarily to recent changes and to more in-depth exploration of particular areas.

Learning from the different ways in which history is taught across the continent may provide useful insights to inform more inclusive and less antagonistic views of European history. Mindful of such differences, the OHTE general reports do not seek to promote a harmonisation of curricula, which would be counter-productive to both the specific historical trajectories and the diversity of the present-day realities of each member state. Instead, by identifying both commonalities and the areas that show significant variation between countries, they aim to provide bases for comparison and cross-fertilisation between history teaching practices across member states.

STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

The first OHTE general report is divided into three volumes. **The present volume** (Volume 1) **comprises a comparative analysis, with this introductory chapter providing the background and context for the report and an overview of its overall rationale.** Chapter 2 outlines the methodology used in compiling the report, further elaborating on the information provided below about the two surveys and the focus groups. Chapter 3 discusses the place of history in the education system, as well as recent educational reforms that have impacted it. Chapter 4 analyses history curricula in the 16 OHTE member states and includes transnational analysis that reveals trends and patterns visible across the countries covered by the report, as well as significant differences. Chapter 5 explores textbooks and other educational resources, with regard to both how they are designed and assessed by education authorities and other actors and how teachers actually use different types of resources in the classroom. Chapter 6 delves more into the actual dynamics of teaching, providing information on the pedagogies employed by teachers and the type of content covered in the classroom. Chapter 7 discusses learning outcomes and assessment, including examinations, and their impact on teaching practice. Chapter 8 provides a comparative analysis of the initial and in-service training of history teachers in the 16 OHTE member states. Finally, Chapter 9 – "Conclusions" – brings together the data covered in the previous chapters, leading to the report's main findings and pointing to opportunities for further research into areas identified as particularly relevant. A glossary provides definitions for key terms used in this report.

Volume 2 presents key information about the state of history teaching per member state and offers a visual representation of the history courses in each country. Volume 3 is a Technical Appendix, which makes available the research instruments used. It further offers additional in-depth information about the validity and reliability of the Teachers' and Educators' Survey (TES), as well as additional data derived from the TES responses.

CHAPTER 2
METHODOLOGY

Chapter 2
Methodology

At the international level, research in history education has grown in recent years and is beginning to consolidate as a specialist subfield. Review studies agree that historical thinking and historical consciousness are two fundamental axes of research in recent decades (Seixas 2017) and that these works have focused mainly on the curriculum, textbooks and, to a lesser extent, interviews, student perceptions and observation records to evaluate teaching interventions and case studies (Epstein and Salinas 2018). The validation of questionnaires, as well as other data collection instruments and observation scales, have started to have a greater impact on this area of knowledge in recent years (Van Straaten, Wilschut and Oostdam 2018; De Groot-Reuvekamp, Ros and Van Boxtel 2018).

To study the complexity of history teaching requires a research approach that collects both quantitative and qualitative data to obtain a fuller and deeper picture of the situation rather than relying only on either. Therefore, a convergent mixed-methods design was used for the research (Creswell and Creswell 2018). This type of design allows for the triangulation of data and sources to obtain complementary information on topics (Creswell and Plano Clark 2018). To this end, the Scientific Advisory Council and the expert group of the Observatory on History Teaching in Europe developed the Education Authorities' Survey (EAS) and the Teachers' and Educators' Survey (TES), the latter being subject to expert judgment in a piloting phase to obtain evidence on their content validity. Simultaneously, a series of 11 focus groups with history educators (educator focus groups, EFGs) from the member states were carried out between December 2022 and April 2023. While the rationale of the EAS was to provide official baseline information directly collected from the competent ministries of the member states, the TES and the EFGs were designed to collect detailed, in-depth evidence at the practitioner level about the teaching and learning of history in schools of the OHTE member states. Official information provided by the education authorities could then be complemented with insights derived from the teachers. This allowed for a more grounded analysis of the state of history teaching in the OHTE member states. A summary of the methodology is presented below, including the questionnaire used, the focus groups, a description of the participants and the data analysis procedure.

INSTRUMENTS

The report has been constructed on the basis of three data collection tools: a. Education Authorities' Survey; b. Teachers' and Educators' Survey; and c. educator focus groups.[3] The theoretical background of these instruments is based on the following.

- The documents about history teaching published by the Council of Europe (for example, 2018a, 2018b; Committee of Ministers 2001, 2011, 2020, 2022).
- Studies about historical thinking skills and second-order concepts in history education (for example, Chapman 2011; Lee 2005; Lévesque 2011; Seixas and Morton 2013; Van Drie and Van Boxtel 2008; VanSledright 2011; Wineburg 2001).
- Studies about historical consciousness, the public use of history and the construction of national identities in history education (for example, Barton and Levstik 1998; Carretero, Asensio and Rodríguez 2012; Epstein and Peck 2018; Grever and Nieuwenhuyse 2020; Létourneau 2014; Lévesque and Croteau 2020; Wertsch 2002).
- Studies about didactic methodology, history instruction and educational resources in history lessons (for example, Cózar and Sáez 2016; Gómez et al. 2022a; Monte-Sano, De la Paz and Felton 2014; Nokes 2017; Reisman 2012; Van Boxtel and Van Drie 2012).
- Studies about history textbooks (for example, Ailincai et al. 2020; Cajani 2006; Foster and Crawford 2006; Foster 2011; Gómez et al. 2020; Stöber 2013; Zachos and Michailidou 2014).
- Studies about assessment and learning outcomes (for example, Ercikan and Seixas 2015; Seixas 2011; VanSledright 2014).
- Studies about the training of teachers (Gómez, Rodríguez and López-Facal 2022; Peck and Herriot 2015; Wiley et al. 2020).

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE EDUCATION AUTHORITIES

The Education Authorities' Survey (EAS) consists of seven sections. The first collects data for the respondent's country, the institutions or authorities that provided the information and the contact details for potential additional clarifications.

The second section focuses on the place of history in the educational system. It asks about the different forms of schooling that exist in the member states, the different levels of education (primary, lower and upper secondary) at which history is taught either as a standalone subject or as part of multidisciplinary courses, and about recent reforms related to history teaching.

The third section, on history curricula, considers the political level at which curricula are adopted, the processes related to the design and approval of the history curricula (and the extent to which different stakeholders are included) and the procedures for monitoring the curricula's implementation. It also looks at how the member states' history curricula reflect the diversity of societies and how neighbouring countries feature in them. In addition, the authorities were asked to provide the history curriculum for each course.

In the fourth section, dedicated to history textbooks and educational resources, authorities were asked to provide information about the legal status of different educational resources in regard to history teaching (for example, whether materials are mandatory, encouraged or banned from use in history classes), the approval procedures for official resources, where applicable, and the extent to which such resources are paid for by the state or by the students and their families.

In the fifth section, on history teaching and learning in practice, the authorities were asked about the extent to which teaching methods are regulated by the state and whether the government recommends certain teaching practices, such as field trips to museums or memorial places, and, if so, how the implementation of such guidelines or regulations is monitored.

The sixth section, on learning outcomes and assessment, collects information related to assessment, including data about the presence or absence of final assessment tests, the competences that are assessed through exams, the types of tests used, the degree of support available for students with specific educational support needs and who is responsible for final evaluations. Finally, the authorities are also asked to provide samples of the exams used in each course.

The final section is devoted to teachers and their education. The questions are to elicit information on how initial teacher training is organised in the member states, the prerequisites for becoming a history teacher and the possibilities or requirements for ongoing in-service training.

Representatives of the education authorities of the 16 countries responded to this questionnaire. A descriptive analysis of each of the questionnaire items was carried out, as well as a content analysis of the responses to the qualitative questions.

COURSE OVERVIEW TABLES

An overview of the history courses offered in the framework of the public education system was created for each member state.[4] Each table contained the title of every history course and every multidisciplinary course that included history offered in the respective country's public education system in the school year 2021/22. The entry for each course was accompanied by data about the school grades and the corresponding age groups to which the course was offered, the school type and/or educational level at which it was offered, and its status as a compulsory and/or optional course.

As part of the data collection phase, the education authorities provided qualitative

3. The links to the research instruments used can be found in the Technical Appendix (see Volume 3, Item 1).

4. The template document filled in by the education authorities can be found in the Technical Appendix (Volume 3, Item 1). An overview of courses, by member state, can be found in the respective country sheets in Volume 2.

data about the place of history as a subject in the public education system, organised by each course listed in the overview for the respective country. These data included the language(s) in which each course was offered; for whom the courses were compulsory, if applicable (for example, students following specific subject concentrations); the percentage of students who elected to take the course if it was offered as an optional subject; the number of teaching hours per school year allocated to the course; the organisation of the course (chronological, thematic or competence based); the requirement to take end-of-stage examinations as part of the course; and the prescribed resources for the course (historical content, teaching and learning approaches, textbooks and/or other educational resources).

In addition, the education authorities provided data in a second section addressing various aspects of the history curriculum, again organised by each course listed in the overview for the respective country. Specifically, they indicated how well descriptions of course aims matched those described in the course curriculum, the geographical scope of the course curriculum, the existence of local and/or regional variations in the course curriculum, the chronological scope of the course curriculum and the fields of study included in the course curriculum.

The course overview tables also play a fundamental role for the Teachers' and Educators' Survey (described in the next section), in which teachers were asked to provide information on the history course they taught most frequently by selecting the respective course from a list of courses based on the information provided by education authorities. The data from the course overview tables supplemented the qualitative data from the Education Authorities' Survey (EAS) responses. By indicating whether various history courses were compulsory or optional, and whether history was taught as a standalone subject or combined with other disciplines, the tables determined the place of history as a subject matter at each level of the public education system of each country.

TEACHERS' AND EDUCATORS' SURVEY

The questionnaire consists of six sections that were translated into all the languages of the OHTE member states and distributed in an online format. The translations were proofread by experts in history education whose mother tongue was that of the surveys. For piloting purposes, the initial draft questionnaire was submitted for analysis to 32 teachers and history educators from different European countries who assessed each item for relevance, sufficiency and clarity. These experts were asked to rate the statements "items are relevant", "items are sufficient" and "items are clear" for each section on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The results suggest that the items can be considered relevant, sufficient and clear for measuring the proposed constructs.

A description of these sections is presented below, together with the reliability and validity indicators obtained for each of them.

Section I focuses on collecting information on the demographic and educational background of participants. It includes data on their country, nationality, school type, gender and age and, in addition, their teaching experience, including their years of teaching history and their position at a school. The section also looks at the training they received, such as initial training, university degrees in history and training in pedagogy or history didactics.

Section II focuses on history curricula. It explores the type of curriculum followed (state/non-state) and the exact courses the participants teach (and answer the survey for) based on the course overview provided by the education authorities. The section also examines the perceived flexibility or rigidity of the curriculum and the density of its content, including teachers' preferences for potential additions or removals. Additionally, it investigates whether teachers perceive societies' diversity to be adequately reflected in the history curriculum. The reliability analysis shows acceptable values ($\alpha = .75$; $\omega = .75$), indicating good internal consistency. (Kline 1999; McDonald 2013; Revelle and Zinbarg 2009). However, evidence was obtained indicating that all items appear to discriminate well (that is, to distinguish two or more groups) between respondents with a positive perception and a negative perception of the curriculum (that is, high response values on a given item are

Table 2.1 – TES participants by member state, school location, and school type and level

	School location				School type				Educational level				n	Total (%)
	Rural	Rural (%)	Urban	Urban (%)	Public	Public (%)	Private	Private (%)	Primary	Primary (%)	Secon-dary	Secon-dary (%)		
ALB	613	49.52	625	50.48	1 219	98.47	19	1.53	140	15.91	740	84.09	1 238	**18.98**
AND	0	0.00	12	100.00	12	100.00	0	0.00	6	85.71	1	14.29	12	**0.18**
ARM	228	51.35	216	48.65	423	95.27	21	4.73	0	0.00	384	100.00	444	**6.81**
CYP	93	30.59	211	69.41	297	97.70	7	2.30	55	20.75	210	79.25	304	**4.66**
FRA	71	26.89	193	73.11	237	89.77	27	10.23	4	1.63	241	98.37	264	**4.05**
GEO	106	38.27	171	61.73	247	89.17	30	10.83	14	5.56	238	94.44	277	**4.25**
GRC	138	23.71	444	76.29	538	92.44	44	7.56	148	27.87	383	72.13	582	**8.93**
IRL	38	23.31	125	76.69	146	89.57	17	10.43	6	3.92	147	96.08	163	**2.50**
LUX	35	33.02	71	66.98	102	96.23	4	3.77	0	0.00	95	100.00	106	**1.63**
MLT	8	11.43	62	88.57	52	74.29	18	25.71	0	0.00	65	100.00	70	**1.07**
MKD	251	38.56	400	61.44	649	99.69	2	0.31	21	4.02	502	95.98	651	**9.98**
PRT	36	16.98	176	83.02	196	92.45	16	7.55	0	0.00	198	100.00	212	**3.25**
SRB	383	35.59	693	64.41	1 063	98.79	13	1.21	2	0.19	1 030	99.81	1 076	**16.50**
SVN	48	41.03	69	58.97	116	99.15	1	0.85	0	0.00	111	100.00	117	**1.79**
ESP	53	21.72	191	78.28	179	73.36	65	26.64	44	21.05	165	78.95	244	**3.74**
TUR	195	25.62	566	74.38	740	97.24	21	2.76	7	1.57	439	98.43	761	**11.67**
TOTAL	**2 296**	**35.21**	**4 225**	**64.79**	**6 216**	**95.32**	**305**	**4.68**	**447**	**8.28**	**4 949**	**91.72**	**6 521**	**100.0**

associated with high scores on the full scale and, conversely, low scores on a given item are associated with low scores on the full scale).

Section III focuses on history textbooks and educational resources. It includes questions on the frequency of resource usage in the teaching of the respondent, the decision-making processes determining which resources are used in class and who finances these resources. Additionally, there are items assessing history teachers' perceptions of the history textbooks available. The items of this section obtained good reliability indices (α = .85; ω = .89), indicating strong internal consistency.

Section IV focuses on history teaching and learning in practice. Its first subsection, which obtained good reliability indices (α = .82; ω = .87), explores the frequency of using different teaching methods and techniques, as well as barriers to quality history teaching as perceived by educators. The second subsection examines the content of history teaching in terms of topics, approaches, geographical scales and historical periods covered. It further asks about the importance teachers assign to each topic, as well as how frequently they address them in class. Good reliability indices were also obtained for both importance (α = .83; ω = .89) and frequency (α = .83; ω = .91) in this subsection. The third subsection aims to identify other subjects commonly associated with the teaching of history; as it consists of only a single item, values regarding the reliability of the items were not obtained. Lastly, the fourth subsection focuses on the factors influencing history teaching practices, which yielded lower reliability indices (α = .57; ω = .72), meaning that the results of this section must be interpreted with caution.

Section V collects data about learning outcomes and assessments. It consists of two subsections, with the first focusing on the aims of history teaching as expressed by the respondents, and the second collecting information about the frequency of the use of 10 different learning assessment techniques and methods. The reliability analysis results were excellent (α = .92; ω = .94) for the first subsection and good (α = .86; ω = .89) for the second section, indicating strong internal consistency.

Section VI concerns teachers' education and asks questions related to teacher training received in recent years, training opportunities, the funding of training and participants' perceptions of in-service training opportunities, as well as the areas considered relevant to in-service training. In this case, it is not appropriate to calculate reliability measures since the items are of different types, are answered on different scales or are open-ended.[5]

Participants

The Teachers' and Educators' Survey was distributed through European and national history teachers' associations, ministries of education of the OHTE member states, professional networks of the two OHTE statutory bodies (the governing board and the Scientific Advisory Council) and OHTE social media channels. The collected replies represent a self-selected sample of teachers who voluntarily responded to the survey. A total of 6 521 responses were collected from teachers in the 16 OHTE member states **(Table 2.1)**, 2 296 (35%) from rural schools and 4 225 (65%) from urban schools **(Table 2.1)**. Regarding the type of school in which the respondents teach (public or private), of the 6 521 responses obtained, 6 216 selected a public school (95%), while 305 selected a private school (5%) **(Table 2.1 and Figure 2.2)**.

In terms of the level of education at which they teach, 447 (8%) of respondents are primary school teachers, while 4 949 (92%) **(Table 2.1 and Figure 2.3)** teach in secondary schools. This notable difference can, however, be contextualised by factoring in the relatively small number of history courses taught at primary school level: of a total of 128 history courses reported by the education authorities in the OHTE member states, only 20 (16% of the total) are part of primary education. Teachers in primary education are still relatively underrepresented compared to their counterparts in secondary education, but the imbalance appears lesser given the respective number of courses. Moreover, for most of the responses to the TES, the differences between primary and secondary school teachers were not too significant. Where there were obvious differences in the rates of response on a certain item, a breakdown by primary and secondary school teachers has been provided.[6]

Figure 2.1 – Rural/urban distribution of TES participants by member state

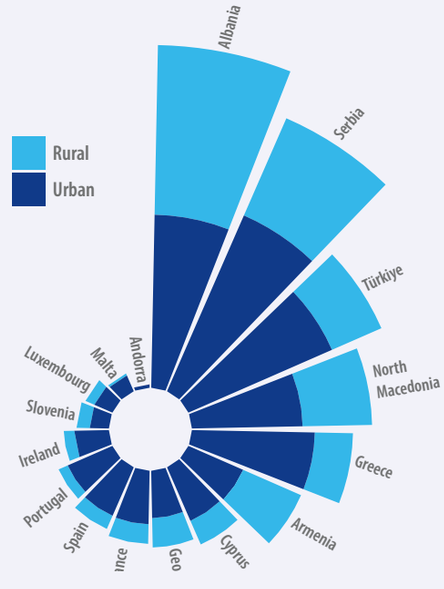
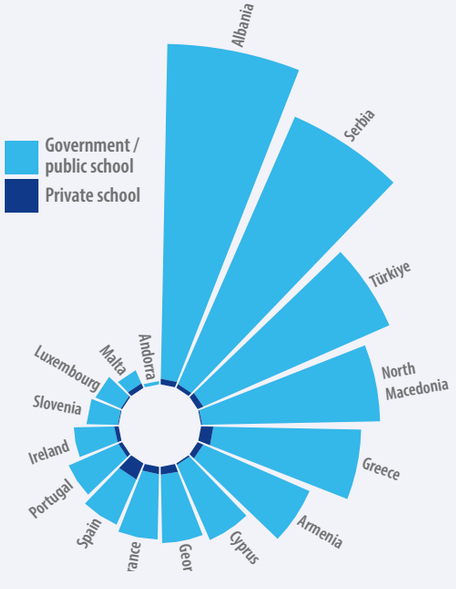


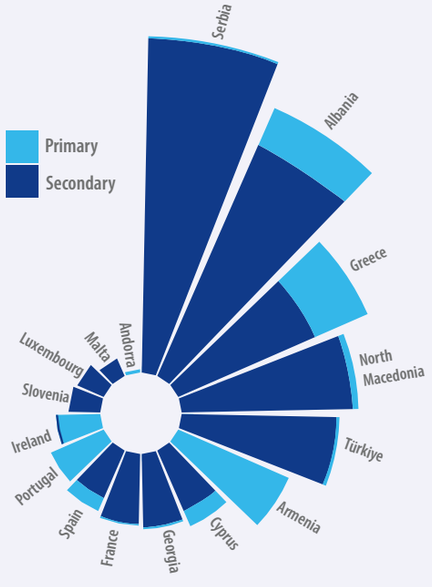
Figure 2.2 – Distribution of TES participants by school type and member state



5. There is a more detailed analysis of the validity and reliability of the TES in the Technical Appendix (Volume 3, Item 2).

6. When the information is presented for the total sample of surveyed teachers, it should be understood that the results may vary between the countries; where possible and/or relevant, a breakdown by member state is also provided.

Figure 2.3 – Distribution of TES participants by educational level



Across the OHTE member states, 6 343 participants responded to the question regarding their gender identification, of which 4 002 identified as female (63.10%), 2 164 identified as male (33.19%), 85 specified other options (1.30%), 83 preferred not to indicate their gender (1.27%), and nine declared themselves non-binary (0.14%) **(Table 2.2)**.

Their ages ranged from 20 to 74 years (mean = 44.43, standard deviation = 9.56). In terms of overall teaching experience, 1 915 (31.35%) indicated having between 0 and 10 years of experience, 2 116 (34.65%) between 10 and 20 years of experience and 2 076 (34%) indicated having more than 20 years of experience.

With regard to the positions held by the participants, the vast majority were history teachers (4 017, or 51.38%), followed by 1 548 teachers (19.79%), 985 head teachers (12.60%), 370 history teachers' mentors (4.73%),

Table 2.2 – Gender distribution of TES participants

Gender	n	%
Female	4 002	61.37
Male	2 164	33.19
Please feel free to specify if none of the above apply	85	1.30
I prefer not to say	83	1.27
Non-binary	9	0.14
No answer	178	2.73
Total	6 521	100

295 history teachers' co-ordinators/counsellors (3.77%), 224 deputy head teachers (2.87%), 172 trainee teachers (2.20%), 167 substitute history teachers (2.14%) and 41 inspectors (0.52%). With regard to the educational level of the participants, 3 195 have a master's degree (53%), 1 977 a bachelor's degree (32.8%), 313 a doctoral degree (5.19%) and 116 a high school certificate (1.92%), while 427 have none of the above (7.08%). Out of the total of 6 521 respondents, around 75% of respondents have a degree in history and around 80% have received pedagogical training at university level. Finally, 98% of the participants indicated that the state curriculum is followed in their schools, which corresponds with the present report's focus on public schools.

While, overall, good validity scores were obtained, one of the limitations of the TES is that a sample of voluntary response – and therefore not random sampling – was used. Therefore, it is possible that the participants do not accurately represent the views and sensibilities of all history teachers. While this is a fairly common problem in social science research, in this case, given the general amplitude of the sample, it can be considered that the sampling error (difference between a statistic (the value obtained in the sample) and its corresponding parameter (the value in the population, that is, number of history teachers) could be between 1.5% and 2% for a confidence level of 95%.

Method of data analysis

The analysis was carried out in three phases. In the first phase, the database was cleaned and the data organised for further analysis. The existence of out-of-range values (for example, values not included in the scale) was also checked. In the second phase, a descriptive analysis of the responses to each block of the questionnaire was carried out. Frequencies, measures of central tendency and dispersion were analysed (means, standard deviations and variances). Finally, in the third phase, reliability indices (Cronbach's alpha and McDonald's omega), multivariate outliers (responses that deviate greatly from other observations on several variables) using Mahalanobis D2 distances (the distance between two points in a multivariate space) and Guttman errors (inconsistencies in people's responses to the scales) were analysed. Mokken scalability analysis (MSA) was used to assess whether the scores of the different items in each subscale reflected the same latent variable. The Mokken scale is a non-parametric item response model commonly used to evaluate measurement scales in psychology (Molenaar and Sjitsma 1984). Item scalability was assessed using Loevinger's homogeneity coefficient (H). The homogeneity coefficients (H) obtained allow us to assess the unidimensionality of the subscales. The cut-off values used in previous studies (Molenaar and Sjitsma 1984; Stochl, Jones and Croudace 2012) were considered. All H values must exceed .3 on a unidimensional scale. Values between .3 and .4 indicate low accuracy, between .4 and .5 indicates medium accuracy and values above .5 indicate high accuracy (Stochl, Jones and Croudace 2012). Subsequently, the automated item selection procedure (AISP) was used to divide the item set into unidimensional scales (Ark 2007). In addition, cases where respondents selected response options inconsistent with the expected general pattern (Guttman errors) were analysed. The basic idea is to compare the number of observed errors with the number of errors expected under the marginal independence model (Mokken 1971). R version 4.0.4 (2021-02-15) was used for the data analysis. Values considered within normality were obtained in all the variables analysed.[7]

FOCUS GROUP

To supplement the information gathered through the questionnaires, 11 focus groups were conducted between December 2022 and April 2023.[8] Focus groups enable different objectives to be achieved: first, to understand the actors' point of view and their interpretation of events; second, to identify common ideas and representations as well as the cognitive schemes that organise them; and, finally, to gather information that helps to situate the actors in the socio-historical space and to understand their present practices in this light (Devillard 2004; Foucault 2019). For this purpose, the focus group has been conceived as a conversation

7. There is a more detailed analysis of the validity and reliability of the TES in the Technical Appendix (Volume 3, Item 2).
8. The full list of educator focus groups can be found in the Technical Appendix (Volume 3, Item 1).

between participants and researchers (Jociles 2005-6). Approaching the object of study in a conversational way "forces us to engage in dialogue in the same registers as those of everyday social life", so that "the issues relevant to social agents and how they deal with them" can be understood in a context that approximates the original one (Devillard, Franzé and Pazos 2012: 357).

As a method, focus groups allow participants' attitudes, feelings, beliefs, experiences and reactions to be drawn on in a way that would not be feasible with other methods (Jociles and Rivas 2000). These attitudes and feelings are more likely to be revealed via the social gathering and the interaction that a focus group entails, as they elicit a diversity of views and emotional processes within a group context (Gutiérrez Brito 2008). Thus, the focus groups aimed to better understand the dynamics and challenges of history education and the attitudes and beliefs of teachers, textbook authors and education authorities. In addition, the focus groups enabled gaps to be filled in the information gathered through the questionnaires and a deeper exploration of the topics and dynamics in them.

To maintain the diversity of the experiences collected and to avoid creating a false homogeneity of the material collected through the focus group interviews, we have preferred to indicate trends and to illustrate them with excerpts from the focus groups in the different thematic chapters (Pollak 2006). In the analysis, it must also be considered that participants come with expectations created by the pre-interview conversations. These conversations would not have existed outside the focus group space, and the mere act of contacting the participants beforehand to inform them about the research will have created expectations that influenced how they approached the interview, a pre-selection of topics to talk about and a certain attitude towards it. This means that information derived from the focus groups needs to be approached with caution.

Participants

Focus groups are limited in terms of their representativity, as the participants fit a specific profile of history educators – engaged in active learning and multiperspectival teaching – as they are part of the Observatory's and EuroClio's network. The focus groups were conducted in English, which is another factor that limited the selection of participants, as they needed to have enough language fluency to participate in the conversations. Nonetheless, their responses and participation have been deemed valuable for providing better insights into the reality, challenges and dynamics of history teaching.

In total, 11 focus groups were conducted with 49 participants from all member states of the Observatory except Andorra **(Figure 2.4)**. Of the 11 focus groups, four were conducted online and seven in person, within the framework of conferences and events organised by the Observatory, such as the Annual Conference of 2022, the European Innovation Days in History Education within the framework of HISTOLAB in 2023 and the EuroClio Annual Conference in 2023.

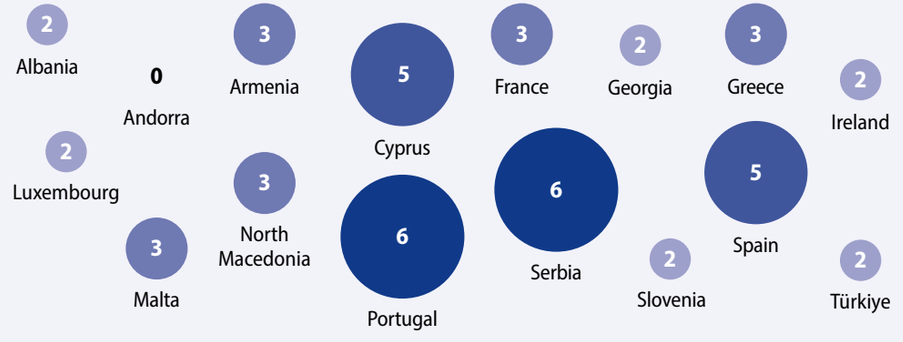
The participants were chosen according to their country of practice, which sometimes does not correspond to their country of origin. The focus group participants included primary and secondary teachers, teacher trainers, textbook authors and representatives of education authorities, whose professional profiles and activities often overlap.

Procedure and data analysis

Regarding the content of the focus group interviews, the script follows the structure of the questionnaires to maintain internal coherence and consistency in the data collection, although the results might differ. Thus the questions refer to how and by whom the curricula are created, what impacts history teaching in practice, what textbooks and resources are used for teaching history classes and the reality of teaching history in the participants' local, regional and national contexts.

Finally, the analysis has also been based on the themes of this report: the place of history in the educational system; history curricula; textbooks and other educational resources; history teaching and learning in practice; learning outcomes and assessments; and teacher training. Thus, the data were first organised according to the different sections, recognising the intersections and connections between them, and then analysed.

Figure 2.4 – Number of Educators' Focus Groups EFG) participants by member state



CONCLUDING REMARKS

Using different methods and sources in data collection means having a data set that both allows triangulation to validate the results and facilitates complementarity to produce a more comprehensive representation of the reality that is being studied (Kelle, Kühberger and Bernhard 2019). This design is also in line with the trend in historical education research in recent years (Bernhard, Bramann and Kühberger 2019) for using different techniques to collect information, various data sources and advanced analytical methods and for triangulating sources and data. The TES obtained good results in terms of validity and reliability. The only exception is the reliability scores for one subsection of the questionnaire focusing on the factors influencing teachers' choices, which needs to be interpreted with caution.

In short, the combination of quantitative and qualitative elements (questionnaires and focus groups) and various sources (education authorities and educators) provides a broader perspective on history education that allows areas for improvement to be identified. This study can therefore provide a broader understanding of the current state of history teaching in the 16 member states of the OHTE. The students' perspective, however, is not considered in the present report.

CHAPTER 3

THE PLACE OF HISTORY IN THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

Chapter 3

The place of history in the education system

This chapter provides a broad overview of the place of history as a school subject in the OHTE member states. It is divided into three sections: first it examines the different forms of schooling in the member states and how their models of history education vary accordingly. Second, it analyses the place of history as a school subject in the public education system of the member states at the primary and secondary levels, as well as in vocational/technical education at the secondary level. Finally, it summarises recent trends in history education reform in the member states since 2012.

The data analysed in this section were provided by the education authorities and relate to structural differences between public education systems, the stages at which history is taught, the status of history as a compulsory or optional school subject, and the status of history as an independent standalone course or as a constituent part of multidisciplinary courses. This has been supplemented by qualitative data collected from focus groups with teachers and educators from the OHTE member states.

TEACHING HISTORY ACROSS DIFFERENT SCHOOL TYPES

School types

All education authorities in the 16 member states reported different school types in their education systems. These relate to differences between the entities operating schools and/or the curricula followed by schools, which often have implications for the way history teaching is organised. According to the data provided, there are several variations in school types across the OHTE member states.

- The existence of both public and private schools was reported by all 16 member states, with the former operated by the state and the latter by private non-state bodies.[9] Private schools can follow distinct curricula only in Cyprus, France and Luxembourg **(see Table 3.1)**.[10]
- Schools with linguistic and/or curricular differences form a substantial part of the public education system in Andorra and

9. Ireland and Spain also reported the presence of semi-private schools, that is, publicly funded schools that are owned by private entities.

10. In France there are private schools under contract and non-contract private schools. While schools under contract follow public curricula, non-contract schools may follow distinct ones.

Luxembourg. Andorra operates schools that follow the curricula of either the Andorran, French or Spanish education systems. Luxembourg operates schools that follow the national curriculum, an international European curriculum, the British curriculum or a combined Luxembourgish–German curriculum.[11]

- Religious schools or schools with religious affiliations encompass multiple types of schools. For example, in Türkiye, İmam Hatip schools are part of secondary general education (Eurydice 2023) and follow the general secondary education as well as a special vocational curriculum to train students as imams. History teaching follows the general public curriculum. In Ireland and Spain, public schools can be religiously affiliated but, regardless of this affiliation, follow the curriculum of the state public education system. In Georgia and Malta, religious schools are privately operated.[12]

- There are schools for students belonging to minority groups in Cyprus, Georgia, Serbia and Slovenia. These are operated by the state but with linguistic and/or curricular variation. In Türkiye, some minority schools are privately operated and follow the state history curriculum. In Cyprus, while most of the schools that accommodate the needs of members of national minorities are public schools,[13] there are also some private schools with curricular adjustments. The government of Cyprus subsidises the tuition fees of students belonging to the Armenian, Maronite and Latin religious groups, who choose to attend private schools. The subsidisation is significantly higher for Maronite and Latin children attending Terra Santa College and St Mary's School, the private schools particularly affiliated with these groups. In Albania, schools for students of national minorities follow the Albanian public history curriculum, but they also include the history of their respective kin state in their respective languages.

- Some member states have schools that specialise according to subject fields. The following subject fields were reported: arts or fine art (Albania, Greece, North Macedonia, Türkiye); foreign languages (Albania); music (Albania, Greece, North Macedonia); natural sciences (Türkiye); social sciences (Türkiye); and sport (Albania, North Macedonia, Türkiye).

- State-operated schools offering vocational or technical education at the secondary level were reported by all 16 member states.

11. Depending on the type of school they attend, students study for different qualifications, for example the Luxembourg diplôme de fin d'études, the European Baccalaureate, British A-Levels and/or the German Abitur.

12. In Georgia, all schools follow the state curriculum. However, religious schools (private schools) have in addition their own specific programmes focusing on religion and the history of religion (the Bible or the Koran and the history of Christianity or Islam). State authorities ensure, through school accreditations, that such programmes do not conflict with the Constitution of Georgia or with the principles and goals of the national curriculum. In Malta, Catholic schools follow the state education model but can modify the history curriculum at the school level.

13. According to the Cyprus Constitution, the term "national minorities" designates the following minority groups of citizens of the Republic of Cyprus: the Armenian, Maronite and Latin (Roman Catholic) religious groups, composed of citizens of the Republic of Cyprus who at the establishment of the Republic of Cyprus in 1960 opted in accordance with its constitution to be part of the Greek community (Article 2, paragraph 3 of the constitution).

Table 3.1 – Curricular differences between public and private schools in member states[14]

Member states in which private schools **follow the same curricula** as public schools	Albania	Greece	Slovenia
	Armenia	Ireland	Spain
	Georgia	Portugal	Türkiye
Member states in which private schools may **follow distinct curricula**	Cyprus	France	Luxembourg

Variations in history education across public school types

History education varies not only between different types of public schools but also across member states, as shown by data provided by the education authorities **(Table 3.2)**. For example:

- Adjustments to history curricula are sometimes made according to regional specificities. In Andorra, schools following the French and Spanish systems incorporate aspects of Andorran history into their curricular content. In Spain, which has a decentralised public education system, the departments of education of the autonomous communities have the flexibility to incorporate regional perspectives into their history curricula.

- Adjustments to history curricula are often made in schools for students belonging to minority groups. Such schools sometimes follow the state-prescribed curriculum, as in Georgia. In other instances, the curriculum may include additional content specifically related to the cultures and histories of minority communities, as in Cyprus and Serbia. In Slovenia, schools for Italian and Hungarian minorities follow different programmes. In Cyprus, members of the Armenian, Maronite and Latin religious groups who wish to attend private schools with curricular adjustments are financially supported by the state.

- In religious schools, which are privately rather than state operated, curricular variations often arise (for example, in Georgia and Malta).[15] However, in Türkiye, religious schools that are state operated (that is, İmam Hatip schools which provide vocational training for imams) follow the public history curriculum and offer additional history courses on the history of Islam.

14. According to the education authorities, such data are not collected in Andorra, Malta, North Macedonia and Serbia.

15. In Malta, Catholic schools generally follow the standard state model in history education but can and do make modifications at school level.

Table 3.2 – Curricular divergences based on school types in member states

Member states in which other types of schools (run on a religious, linguistic or minority basis or in preparation for a certain profession) **follow the same curricula** as other public schools	Albania	Ireland	Slovenia
	Andorra	Malta	Spain
	Armenia	North Macedonia	Türkiye
	Georgia	Serbia	
Member states in which other types of schools (run on a religious, linguistic or minority basis or in preparation for a certain profession) may **follow distinct curricula**	Cyprus	Greece	Portugal
	France	Luxembourg	

Fifteen of the 16 education authorities reported that history teaching in the public education system is offered in different languages. Only Albania reported that classes are conducted solely in Albanian.

Usually, variations in the languages in which history education is carried out correspond to the official languages in a country. For instance, in Ireland, English and Irish have equal legal standing and history can be taught in either language. Similarly, in Malta, history can be taught in either English or Maltese. In Spain, where different autonomous communities have multiple official languages, history can be taught in any of those languages in the respective regions.[16] In Luxembourg, German is generally used to teach history at the primary and lower secondary levels, while French is generally used at the upper secondary level. Variations in the language used for history education also often correspond to the languages spoken by minority groups.

- In Albania, Greek minority schools teach Greek history in the Greek language, and the North Macedonian minority schools teach the history of North Macedonia in the Macedonian language.
- In Cyprus, the publicly operated Armenian Nareg schools for the Armenian minority teach the Armenian language, history, geography and religion in the respective minority language.
- In Georgia, there are schools that teach in the languages of Armenian, Azerbaijani (Azeri Turkish) or Russian minority groups.
- In North Macedonia, schools offer history teaching for students with minority backgrounds in different languages, including Albanian, Bosnian, Serbian and Turkish to varying degrees.[17]
- In Serbia, any of the eight minority languages (Albanian, Bosnian, Bulgarian, Croatian, Hungarian, Romanian, Ruthenian and Slovak) can be used for history education depending on the region in which a school is situated.
- In Slovenia, schools for the Hungarian minority, located in the north-east of the country, teach bilingually (in Slovene and Hungarian).

An analysis of data collected from the focus groups, supplemented by data provided by the education authorities, highlights a general concern among educators regarding the language history is taught in, especially in countries with a significant immigrant population. New demographic trends have translated into increasingly multicultural classrooms composed of students from different backgrounds and with varying levels of language proficiency, which raises the question of which language to teach in to ensure that all students are able to follow the curriculum (whether in history or other subjects). This issue was raised by educators from Cyprus, Luxembourg, Malta, North Macedonia, Portugal and Türkiye.[18]

HISTORY AS A SCHOOL SUBJECT IN THE PUBLIC EDUCATION SYSTEM

Primary level[19]

Fifteen of the 16 education authorities reported that history education is present in some form as a compulsory subject in public primary education. In Albania, history begins to be taught as an independent standalone subject at this level from the fourth grade onwards. In other countries, history is not offered as a separate standalone subject at this level but as part of a broader multidisciplinary course focusing on social sciences/studies, humanities and/or civics/citizenship education. In Ireland, history is taught in the first two grades of primary school as a combined subject, while it becomes a separate subject from the third grade onwards. Such courses integrate historical content alongside content from other disciplines such as geography, languages or religion. Examples of such courses are:

- Andorra: social sciences (sciènces socials)
- France: history and geography (histoire et géographie)
- Georgia: "Society and I" (მე და საზოგადოება), "Our Georgia" (ჩვენი საქართველო)
- Ireland: social and environmental education
- Luxembourg: human and natural sciences (sciences humaines et naturelles)

16. Aranese in Catalonia; Basque in the Basque Country and Navarre; Catalan in Catalonia and the Balearic Islands; Galician in Galicia; and Valencian in the Valencian Community.

17. Bosnian is no longer included from the sixth grade of the primary level onwards. Serbian is no longer included from the first grade of the secondary level onwards.

18. EFG 1, 2 December 2022; EFG 2, 25 January 2023; EFG 3, 26 January 2023; EFG 4, 1 February 2023; EFG 6 and 7, 8 March 2023; and EFG 9, 20 April 2023.

19. Level 1 of the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED).

- Malta: social sciences
- North Macedonia: history and society (Историја и општество)
- Portugal: environmental studies (estudo do meio)
- Serbia: nature and society (priroda i društvo)
- Slovenia: "Getting to know the environment" (Spoznavanje okolja), "People and society" (Družba)
- Spain: "Understanding of the natural, social and cultural environment" (Conocimiento del medio natural, social y cultural)
- Türkiye: social studies (sosyal bilgiler)

Three countries reported a mix of standalone and multidisciplinary courses distributed across different grades at the primary level. In Albania, a multidisciplinary citizenship course (Qytetari) is taught in the first three grades, while history is taught as a standalone subject from the fourth grade onwards. In Cyprus and Greece, social studies (Κοινωνικες Σπουδες) is taught as a multidisciplinary subject in the first two grades (up to the age of 8), while history is taught as a standalone subject from the third grade onwards.

Data provided by the authorities indicate that history, whether as a standalone subject or as part of a multidisciplinary subject, does not always begin to be taught in the first grade of primary education. History education begins in the third grade of primary education in Georgia, Greece and Serbia; in the fourth grade of primary education in France, Malta, North Macedonia and Türkiye; and in the fifth grade of primary education in Luxembourg.[20]

In Armenia, historical content is not covered at the primary level. History begins to be taught at the lower secondary level as part of an interdisciplinary subject, "Our homeland and culture" (Հայրենագիտություն).

Secondary levels[21]

Data provided by the education authorities show that history generally tends to become a separate standalone subject at either the lower or the upper secondary level. There are, however, exceptions to this: in France, history continues to be taught in combination with geography at both the lower and the upper secondary levels.

The education authorities also reported variations in the status of history as a compulsory or optional subject. In Armenia,[22] Cyprus,[23] Georgia, Greece,[24] Luxembourg,[25] Serbia, Slovenia and Türkiye, history was reported to be a compulsory subject throughout public schooling from the point of its introduction into the curriculum. In France and Malta, history remains a compulsory subject throughout the secondary levels of public schooling, but with students given the option to cover more or less content depending on their chosen subject concentration.

Where history was indicated to be an optional subject at the secondary levels, the education authorities reported that the school grade at which history becomes optional varies. For example:

- In Albania and North Macedonia, history becomes an optional subject in the final year of public schooling, when students are able to choose it as one of the subjects for their school leaving examinations.
- In Andorra and Portugal, history forms part of a compulsory multidisciplinary primary and lower-secondary-level course, with history then becoming an optional standalone subject at upper secondary level.
- In Ireland and Malta, history forms part of a compulsory multidisciplinary primary-level course, then becomes a compulsory standalone subject at lower secondary level before becoming an optional standalone subject at upper secondary level.
- In Spain, history forms part of a compulsory multidisciplinary primary-level and lower-secondary-level course. In upper secondary education, a standalone course on the history of the contemporary world (historia del mundo contemporáneo) is optional, while a standalone course on the history of Spain (historia de España) is compulsory for all students in their final year.

In some countries, the authorities reported that students choose to follow strands with distinct subject concentrations at the upper secondary level; this is the case in Cyprus, Portugal, Serbia and Türkiye. Such structures often influence whether history is a compulsory or an optional subject, whether it is part of end-of-stage examinations, as well as on the areas of focus that are covered. For example, in Portugal, history is compulsory only for those following the humanities strand.[26] In Türkiye, where school types vary according to subject concentrations, history remains a compulsory core subject, with the focus of additional history courses differing across schools: for example, students at fine arts schools (güzel sanatlar lisesi) take a compulsory course on the history of art and/or music, while those at sports high schools (spor lisesi) take a compulsory course on the history of sport.[27] In Cyprus, history is compulsory throughout upper secondary education for all students and in all strands (with the exception of the last year in technical education). In some cases where students choose subject concentrations, a form of history education remains compulsory for students regardless

20. In France, there is however the course "Questionner le monde" (Exploring the world) offered from the first grade of primary education, which features a module on "Questionner le temps" (Exploring the time).
21. Levels 2 and 3 of the ISCED, referring to lower and upper secondary education respectively.
22. In Armenia, history forms part of a compulsory multidisciplinary course in the first year of lower secondary education. Compulsory standalone courses on different aspects of Armenian and world history are taken throughout the remaining four years of lower secondary education. During the three years of upper secondary education, a standalone course on Armenian history remains compulsory for all students, while standalone courses on Armenian church history and world history are compulsory only for the first year and the first two years respectively.
23. In Cyprus, all students are required to study history in upper secondary education, but not all are required to take end-of-stage examinations.
24. In Greece, a standalone history course is compulsory for all students in upper secondary education, but those concentrating on the humanities follow a separate history curriculum with more content.
25. In Luxembourg, history is included as both a standalone and a multidisciplinary subject at both lower and upper secondary levels and is compulsory throughout these grades.
26. History is offered as an optional subject to students following the socio-economic sciences or natural sciences strands.
27. In these specialised schools, other standalone history courses with a more general focus (for example, Turkish culture or contemporary world history) are optional for students.

of their subject concentration. This applies to Serbia, where history remains compulsory for all students throughout secondary education.[28]

In Türkiye, all final-year high school students are required to take a course on the history of the Turkish Republic.

Vocational and technical secondary education

The education authorities reported variations in the position of history in vocational and technical secondary education in their respective public education systems. For example:

- History as a standalone course is compulsory for students in vocational and technical secondary education in Albania, Cyprus, Greece, Malta,[29] North Macedonia, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain and Türkiye.
- In Armenia, history as a standalone course is compulsory for students beginning vocational and technical education. The duration for which history remains compulsory varies according to the chosen programme.
- History forms a part of a compulsory multidisciplinary course (covering subjects such as languages or civics) in vocational and technical education in France, Luxembourg and Portugal. In Andorra, historical content is included in courses organised around clusters of skills and competences.
- In Georgia, history is a compulsory subject only for students in vocational and technical education who choose to sit entrance examinations to transition to academic education at university level.
- History as a standalone course is an optional subject in some programmes of vocational and technical education in Ireland. Schools can choose which programme to follow.[30]

TRENDS IN HISTORY EDUCATION REFORM SINCE 2012

The education authorities reported on reforms to 10 aspects of history education in their respective public education systems since 2012. These are presented in **Table 3.3**.

Four of the 16 member states – Andorra, Georgia, Ireland and Serbia – reported reforms across all 10 areas, while one country – North Macedonia – reported no reform in any area.

Reform was most frequently reported in the area of in-service training for teachers: 14 countries reported reform in this area, with only Albania and North Macedonia reporting no reform in this area. Reform was also frequently reported in the area of educational resources: 13 countries reported reform in this area, with only Luxembourg, North Macedonia and Portugal reporting no reform in this area. Reform was least frequently reported in the area of teacher qualifications: 10 countries did not report any reform in this area, with only Andorra, Armenia, France, Georgia, Ireland, and Serbia reporting reforms in this area.

Many education authorities, included those from Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Cyprus, Portugal, Serbia and Türkiye, reported a general move towards more competence-based or skills-based history education in their respective public education systems. However, the focus groups revealed that the results of such reforms are in some cases undermined by forms of examinations (for example, university entry exams) which continue to be based solely on factual knowledge. Such exams oblige teachers to prepare students accordingly and to relegate the application of critical and skills-based approaches to second place.[31] This accords with the findings of the TES, where the majority of respondents finds exams to have a (very) strong influence on their history teaching (see Chapter 6), while assessment forms testing factual knowledge are commonplace in the OHTE member states (see Chapter 7). Moreover, some member states, including Georgia, Greece and Malta, reported a move towards greater digitisation (that is, the use of digital tools and resources in teaching and learning) in the classroom.

Table 3.3 – Areas of reform in history education in the public education systems of OHTE member states since 2012, as reported by their education authorities

	AREA OF REFORM									
	Historical content	Qualifications of history teachers	Student assessment	End-of-stage examinations	Learning outcomes	Teaching methodology	Time allocated to teaching history	Initial teacher training	In-service teacher training	Educational resources
ALB	●				●	●				●
AND	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
ARM	●	●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●
CYP			●	●		●	●	●	●	●
FRA	●	●	●	●			●	●	●	●
GEO	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
GRC			●	●	●	●			●	●
IRL	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
LUX	●								●	
MLT	●		●	●	●			●	●	●
MKD										
PRT					●	●			●	
SRB	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
SVN						●		●	●	●
ESP	●		●		●	●	●		●	●
TUR	●				●				●	●

Note: ● = reform reported by education authorities.

28. In Serbia, students with a socio-linguistic concentration are required to cover more content than those with a science–mathematics concentration.
29. In Malta, students opting to take one or two vocational subjects are required to follow the core curriculum for history, with more content covered if it is chosen as a subject specialisation.
30. History is offered as a standalone optional subject in upper secondary school as part of the Leaving Certificate Established programme and the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme. History is not offered in the Leaving Certificate Applied programme. Schools have the autonomy to decide which programme to offer.
31. EFG 1, 2 December 2022; EFG 7, 8 March 2023.

The education authorities also reported reforms in how history teachers are being trained. Some countries reported a restructuring of initial teacher training; for example, with the introduction of professional master's degrees as a requirement for entering the teaching profession, as in Ireland and Malta.[32] Similarly, some countries, including Luxembourg, Portugal and Serbia, reported that changes have been made to update in-service teacher training through the introduction of specialised training on subjects such as the Holocaust, human rights or multiperspectivity. In Luxembourg, such continuous in-service training for teachers has been made compulsory.

Data on changes in the time allocated to history teaching, where provided by the education authorities, vary across the OHTE member states. Some countries have reported an increase. For example:

- In Georgia, the time allocated to history has increased at all educational levels.
- In Türkiye, the time allocated to history has increased at the upper secondary level, with the subject now compulsory in all four grades at this level as opposed to only the first three grades.

Other education authorities reported a mix of increases and decreases in the time allocated to history education at different educational levels. For example:

- In Albania, the time allocated to history (as part of a multidisciplinary course) has increased at the primary level, with the subject now compulsory in the fourth and fifth grades as opposed to only in the fourth grade. Previously, 35 hours were dedicated to history per school year; under the new curriculum 70 hours per school year are allocated to history in both the fourth and fifth grades. The time allocated to history education at the upper secondary level has decreased in that the subject is no longer compulsory in the final grade; however, the time allocated to the subject, if taken as an option in the final grade, has increased.
- In Greece, the time allocated to history in the third grade of lower secondary education has been reduced. The time allocated to history in the third grade of upper secondary education has been increased for students concentrating on humanities subjects through the introduction of a separate course on modern Greek history.

In some instances, data collected from the focus groups reflect challenges to the time allocated to history education. Notably, an educator from Malta reported a reduction in the hours dedicated to history during the Covid-19 pandemic (2020 onwards), which were not easily restored after the end of pandemic-related measures.[33]

Data on changes in the status of history as a standalone subject or as a constituent part of a multidisciplinary subject, where provided by the education authorities, similarly differ across the OHTE member states. Georgia and Greece reported no change in this area. Slovenia similarly reported no change in this area and additionally emphasised that history is considered a "subject of national importance". Malta reported that the status of history as an independent subject has been strengthened and that there are no plans as of May 2023 to merge history with other subjects in a broader multidisciplinary course. In Türkiye, during the revision of history curricula in 2018, a standalone history course at the 11th grade became compulsory for some school types. As reported by the authorities, this allowed for the pressure created by the intense content of the programme due to a different distribution of the content of the history lesson over three years instead of two to be alleviated in part.

Conversely, the focus group data point to a trend in some countries to combine courses with other subjects within the scope of broader multidisciplinary courses. In North Macedonia and Spain, planned reforms to education laws to be introduced in the school year 2023/24 would allow for history to be taught concurrently with subjects such as geography, literature and art history, thus sharing teaching hours under the umbrella of a broader multidisciplinary course.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

There are significant structural differences within and between the OHTE member states' public education systems, both in the languages used for history education and in the curricula adopted by schools. The qualitative nuances between these highly differentiated systems prevent us from identifying fixed typologies. Nevertheless, it is possible to draw general conclusions about the position of history as a school subject in these public education systems.

The qualitative data analysed in this chapter demonstrate that history education is present in public primary education in all member states but one (Armenia). History education is present in public primary schools as independent standalone courses, as part of broader multidisciplinary courses that include history as a constituent component or as a mix of both types of courses across different grades. These courses were reported as always being part of a compulsory core curriculum for primary education.

At the same time, the data indicate a more differentiated picture of the position of history in public secondary-level education: While the exact point in the schooling life cycle varies between the countries, history becomes an independent standalone subject at some point in all OHTE member states. Such history courses are sometimes organised by subtopics with a narrower curricular focus. The status of history as a compulsory or optional subject, however, varies greatly across the member states. Within individual member states, this status also varies according to the subject concentrations offered to students at the secondary level. There is sometimes a mixture of compulsory and optional history courses, for example with history beginning to be taught as a compulsory course but becoming optional at a higher grade. In systems where history is compulsory for all students, there is also variation, with students given the option to cover more or less content or with the curricular focus of courses differing according to subject concentrations. In vocational and technical secondary education, the position of history in the curriculum can take the form of either an independent standalone course or a multidisciplinary course; these can be either compulsory or optional.

In terms of reforms to history education since 2012, some general trends can be observed in the move towards competence-based or skills-based education, as well as digitisation in several countries, although there are difficulties in the effective implementation of such reforms in practice. Some aspects of history education, such as in-service teacher training and educational resources, have undergone reform in most member states, while others, such as teacher qualifications, have changed less frequently.

32. As of May 2023, teachers in Malta also have an induction period of two years, an increase from the previous period of one year.
33. EFG 2, 25 January 2023.

CHAPTER 4

HISTORY CURRICULA

Chapter 4

History curricula

Curricula are building blocks of education systems, and history curricula represent the baseline from which a high-quality history education can develop, while allowing educators the flexibility to organise their teaching in practice. Especially in the present context, where public space has been fragmented and polarised and alternative political discourses have proliferated, history curricula can provide a framework to strengthen learners' appreciation of peace, democracy, human rights and the inherent diversity of our societies. It can do so, for instance, by helping to develop learners' historical and critical thinking skills to enable them to engage in an informed manner with claims made by politicians or encountered online.

How history curricula are organised in the different member states differ greatly. This chapter provides data on important elements of the curricula of the 16 OHTE member states, as well as comparative analysis to identify convergent and divergent elements. The analysis is based on the questionnaires directed at education authorities and teachers, as well as on information derived from the focus groups. The chapter is divided into several parts dealing with the institutions responsible and the stakeholders involved in the design and, where applicable, monitoring of the implementation of curricula. It also examines the national dimensions of the curricula, and the components that go beyond them, by emphasising multiperspectivity, a European dimension and/or giving a voice to minority groups to reflect the intrinsic diversity of societies.

WHO WRITES THE CURRICULA?

All the OHTE member states except for Spain have a centralised education system with curricula prescribed at the national level.[34] In Spain, the central government is responsible for the design and establishment of the basic aims, competences, assessment criteria and content to be incorporated into the curriculum. Once these general guidelines are approved, the department of education of each autonomous community develops the final curriculum for their territory.

In seven OHTE member states **(Table 4.1)**, the Ministry of Education is exclusively tasked with the development and control of state curricula. In the remaining nine countries, other state authorities besides the Ministry of Education, such as the Albanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Pre-University Education, are involved in the development or control of state school curricula. In Ireland, the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment advises the Minister of Education on curricular matters and assessment procedures on subjects that are part of the curriculum. Differences in the political and administrative organisation of each country means that these can sometimes include regional or local authorities.

34. All information presented in this and the next two sections derives from the answers to the EAS unless stated otherwise.

Table 4.1 – Involvement in curriculum development of other public administrative bodies[35] besides the Ministry of Education

Member states in which **other state, regional and local administrations, besides the Ministry of Education, are also involved** in the development and control of history curricula	Albania, Greece, Ireland, Luxembourg, Malta, North Macedonia, Slovenia, Serbia, Spain
Member states in which **the Ministry of Education is solely responsible** for the development and control of history curricula	Andorra, Armenia, Cyprus, France, Georgia, Portugal, Türkiye

There are also differences in the actors involved in curriculum design: 10 countries invite non-state actors to participate in designing national curricula, while in six countries state bodies are exclusively responsible for this **(Table 4.2)**. Examples of such non-state actors involved in curriculum design are civic organisations working in the field of education in North Macedonia, the history teachers' association of Slovenia and, in Georgia, a conglomerate of representatives of the academic sphere and of members of the Georgian teachers' association, which also attempts to transfer pedagogical innovation from the international to the local level. Armenia invites teachers from private schools and independent education consultants to contribute to the design of national curricula. Ireland has a very open system of online surveys available to all members of the general public, and any interested person can make a personalised written submission on the formulation of curricula.

While in eight OHTE member states the education authorities reported that representatives of minority groups are involved in curriculum design, five member states reported that they do not have such mechanisms in place **(Table 4.3)** and three member states indicated that they do not collect such data. The involvement of representatives of minority groups in curriculum design is aligned with Council of Europe recommendations to this effect (Committee of Ministers 2011, 2020) and can serve several purposes. It mirrors more closely the diversity of societies and the often divergent experiences of different cultural, ethnic, linguistic or national groups in the past: a history education that includes the voices of minority groups is closer to the historical record. At the same time, it can also serve as a tool to redress historical injustices against (previously) marginalised communities, and hence contribute to a more ethical approach to the past.

35. In some cases such institutions are still affiliated with the Ministry of Education.

Table 4.2 – Stakeholder involvement from civil society in curriculum development

Member states in which civil society organisations **participate** in curriculum development	Albania, Armenia, France, Georgia, Ireland, Malta, North Macedonia, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain
Member states in which civil society organisations **do not participate** in curriculum development	Andorra, Cyprus, Greece, Luxembourg, Serbia, Türkiye

Table 4.3 – Involvement of minority groups in curriculum development[36]

Member states in which representatives of minority groups **participate** in curriculum design	Albania, Cyprus, Georgia, Ireland, North Macedonia, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain
Member states in which representatives of minority groups **do not participate** in curriculum design	Armenia, Greece, Malta, Portugal, Türkiye

CURRICULA MONITORING

While Malta and Portugal reported not having assigned any institution to assess history curricula or their implementation, the remaining 14 member states indicated that there are mechanisms in place to assess the curriculum and its implementation in schools **(Table 4.4)**. In Cyprus, the implementation of history curricula is assessed by inspectors, the Pedagogical Institute and a scientific advisor from the University of Cyprus. Ireland reports that such inspections seek to identify good practices and to offer recommendations with

36. In Cyprus and Serbia, members of distinct religious groups participate in the design of their specifically adjusted curricula. The education authorities indicated that such data are not collected in Andorra, France and Luxembourg.

the goal of informing both policy making and teaching practice. The Georgian authorities state that such assessment aims to ensure the "use of constructivist principles, to control if the teaching–learning process is oriented towards the long-term objectives".[37] In Spain, the authorities reported that such assessments are conducted in order to improve quality and equity in education, to orientate educational policies, to increase the transparency and efficiency of the education system and to assess whether national and European educational objectives have been achieved. While in most OHTE member states such assessments are organised by state administration bodies affiliated to the Ministry of Education, in France the Conseil supérieur des programmes, an interprofessional body consisting of academics, researchers, education specialists and elected representatives can also participate in curriculum assessment at the request of the Ministry of Education. In Luxembourg, curricula are assessed by a dedicated national commission consisting of history teachers. In Serbia, the Institute for the Assessment of Education relies strongly on external evaluators to fulfil its task. However, their mandate is limited to assessing the implementation of the history curricula, while the curricula are not subject to such evaluations.

Table 4.4 – Assignment of bodies to assess curricula and their implementation

Member states in which **the state assigns** an institution/service/carrier to assess the curriculum and its use in the classroom	Albania	Georgia	Serbia
	Andorra	Greece	Slovenia
	Armenia	Ireland	Spain
	Cyprus	Luxembourg	Türkiye
	France	North Macedonia	
Member states in which **the state does not assign** an institution/service/carrier to assess the curriculum and its use in school class	Malta	Portugal	

37. EAS, Georgia.

MULTIPERSPECTIVITY AND THE INCLUSION OF MINORITY GROUPS

According to the education authorities, all the OHTE member states encourage teachers to use multiperspectival methods, which is important in the current context where students can easily access different sources. In Portugal, the educational system aims to develop students' capacities to analyse different points of view and to problematise them. Multiperspectival teaching can also start from "the topic of the multicultural character of the state, where all ethnic communities are mentioned", as the education authorities in North Macedonia indicated. It can also be applied to critical reflection on a personal level, as in Albania: "by investigating personal, family, area/place for students to engage with local resources and visit historical sites. This helps them appreciate the importance of the past in their lives".

The use of multiple sources during history lessons can also be a way of implementing a multiperspectival approach in practice. In Armenia, teachers use various textbooks and historical sources to explain opposing points of view on the same event such as the Cuban missile crisis. A multiperspectival approach to this historical event is also used in Luxembourg, where teaching balances the American and Soviet points of view on the crisis. In Greece, curricula guide students "towards the discovery of the historical past by means of a critical viewing of events". According to the Andorran authorities, "knowledge of the geographical, historical, social, economic and political characteristics of a country is the cornerstone of the construction of students' identity as individuals and as citizens".

All countries mention their neighbours in their curricula. How they do so, however, differs significantly, and most references relate to the countries' respective histories but also to contemporary politics. In Albania, for example, there is a pronounced focus on Kosovo,[38] although other neighbouring countries (Greece, Italy, Montenegro, Serbia) are also represented in the curriculum. In Ireland, its shared history with the United Kingdom features prominently in the curriculum. The history of all neighbouring states is also covered in France, Georgia, Greece, North Macedonia, Türkiye and Slovenia; with reference to the latter, the education authorities acknowledge that the history of the country "is so much linked to the Austrian, Italian, Hungarian and Croatian history" that the inclusion of these neighbours in the curriculum is necessary".[39] In Andorra and Luxembourg, a significant part of the curriculum is dedicated to neighbouring countries, respectively France and Spain, and Belgium, France and Germany. In a number of states (Armenia, France, Greece and Portugal), references to neighbouring states are focused primarily on political and military history. Relevant historical legacies, regional as well as national, are frequently visible, such as the history of the Mediterranean region in Cyprus and Malta, that of the Ottoman Empire in Albania, Armenia, Cyprus, Greece and Malta, and that of the Vikings in Ireland. In some countries (for example, in France, Ireland, Portugal and Spain), the focus on the European dimension of history, particularly with a view to European integration, is very pronounced and much more visible than the focus on any neighbouring state, despite their importance in

38. All references to Kosovo, whether the territory, institutions or population, in this text are in full compliance with the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.

39. EAS, Slovenia.

each country's history. According to the Serbian education authorities, the declared goal of the history curriculum is to allow students to draw conclusions about the relationship of national history to regional, European and world history, based on selected examples.

The highly complex question of how states articulate multiperspectivity and the pluralism of curricula is also related to the question of the inclusion of minorities in curricula. Almost all the OHTE member states reflect societies' diversity (in terms of culture, ethnicity, language, nationality, religion or gender) in their history curricula. Such a component is absent from the curricula only in Andorra and Armenia **(Table 4.5)**. Religious groups, both historical and contemporary, are present in the curricula of Cyprus (Armenian, Maronite and Latin), Greece, Portugal (Jewish and Muslim) and Türkiye (Armenian, Assyrian and Jewish). The curricula of Georgia, North Macedonia, Serbia, Slovenia and Spain tend to focus instead on ethnic and national minorities. Migration is an important topic addressing diversity in the history curricula of Greece and Ireland. The Maltese curriculum includes specific learning outcomes related to teaching about anti-Jewish pogroms in the context of the Black Death, "which familiarises learners with the dangers of scapegoating, marginalisation and persecution of minority populations that have been regularly associated with disease outbreaks in history" (OHTE 2023: 32). The persecution of Jews, mostly in the context of the Holocaust, is also part of the curricula of Cyprus, France, Luxembourg, Portugal and Serbia. France and Spain are the only countries that reported the representation of minority groups based on sexual orientation (in the context of the AIDS pandemic) or gender in their curricula (OHTE 2023: 23-4).

Table 4.5 – Inclusion of minority groups in the history curricula

Member states in which **minority groups** (cultural, ethnic, linguistic, national, religious or sexual/gender) **are included** in their history curricula	Albania, Cyprus, France, Georgia, Greece, Ireland, Luxembourg, Malta, North Macedonia, Armenia, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Türkiye
Member states in which **minority groups** (cultural, ethnic, linguistic, national, religious or sexual/gender) **are not included** in their history curricula	Andorra, Armenia

Nine OHTE member states include the history of Roma and/or Travellers in the history curricula (**Table 4.6**). While this is a welcome finding in view of the 2020 recommendation of the Committee of Ministers on the inclusion of the history of Roma and/or Travellers in school curricula and teaching materials (Committee of Ministers 2020), the extent to which this inclusion is aligned with the principles of the recommendation requires further research. However, seven member states do not include Roma and/or Traveller histories in their curricula. Compared to the overall inclusion of cultural, ethnic, linguistic, national or religious minority groups more generally (in the curricula of 14 out of the 16 OHTE member states), the number of countries in which Roma and/or Travellers are absent from the history curriculum is significantly higher.

Table 4.6 – Inclusion of Roma and Travellers in history curricula

Member states in which **Roma and Travellers are included** in the curricula	Albania, Cyprus, France, Ireland, Luxembourg, North Macedonia, Portugal, Serbia, Spain
Member states in which **Roma and Travellers are not included** in the curricula	Andorra, Armenia, Georgia, Greece, Malta, Slovenia, Türkiye

According to the EAS, in those countries that include references to Roma and Travellers in the curriculum, the Roma community is mentioned mostly within the framework of the events of the Second World War. References to the Roma Holocaust/genocide, are made in the history curricula in Albania, Cyprus, France, Luxembourg, Portugal and Serbia. Beyond that, according to the Spanish education authorities, at secondary-level history teaching, the acknowledgement of the Roma people and other ethnic minorities in Spain and their histories are taught to show students the value of cultural differences in order to combat stereotypes. In Portugal, the Atmo Romano Pedagogical Kit is available on the website of the national Directorate-General of Education.[40] It is intended for use by teachers of history and other subjects at different levels to valorise and disseminate Roma culture, to preserve identity and promote greater inclusion, and to increase understanding of the similarities and differences between Roma and the majority culture. At the same time, it aims to provide information and to sensitise educators to the importance of promoting intercultural dialogue through better knowledge of Roma culture. In Albania, Roma history and culture is addressed in several topics in primary education. In Ireland, the then Minister for Education and Skills requested in 2018 an audit of Traveller culture and history in the

40. Available at www.dge.mec.pt/kit-pedagogico-romano-atmo-alma-cigana, accessed 17 July 2023.

curriculum. The "Traveller culture and history" research report (NCCA 2023) was published in response to the audit findings and is meant to inform the review and updating of curriculum specifications, the development of resources and materials for teachers/practitioners, and more generally to promote intercultural approaches to education.

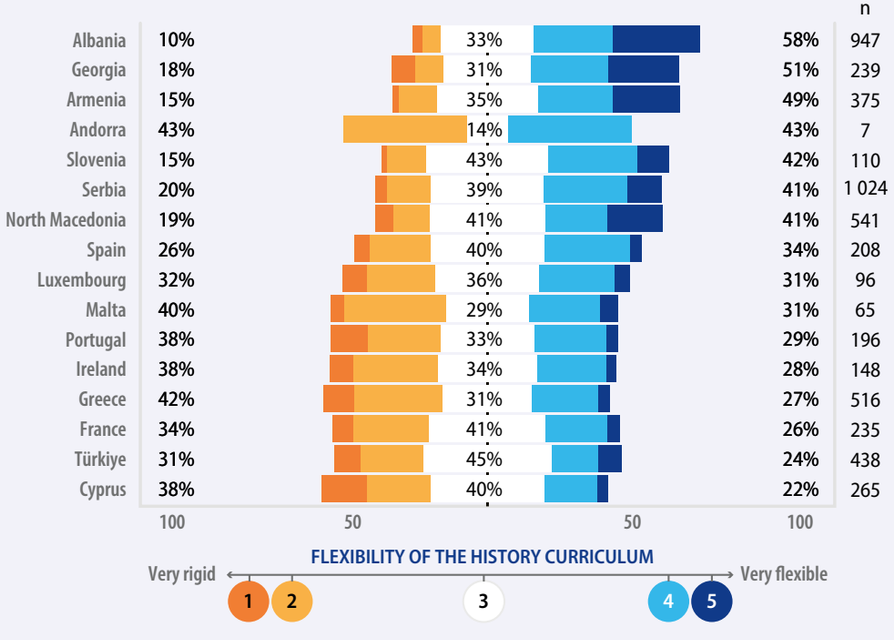
CURRICULA FROM THE TEACHERS' POINTS OF VIEW

As the responses to the TES show, teachers in the 16 OHTE member states consider curricula to be relatively flexible, relatively efficient in addressing diversity and relatively manageable. However, a significant share of respondents indicated that they find the curricula hardly manageable or even unmanageable in terms of the density of content.

On average, 40% of respondents perceive the curricula to be flexible or very flexible while 23% find them rigid or very rigid. The member states in which most participants view the curricula as flexible or very flexible are Albania (58%), Georgia (51%) and Armenia (49%). The biggest share of teachers who responded that they view the curricula as rigid or very rigid are in Greece (42%), Malta (40%), Ireland, Portugal and Cyprus (38% each). In Andorra, the same percentage (43%) of respondents perceive the curricula to be flexible and rigid, while no respondent perceives the curricula to be very rigid or very flexible **(Figure 4.1)**.

Figure 4.1 – Flexibility of the history curriculum as perceived by TES respondents, by member state

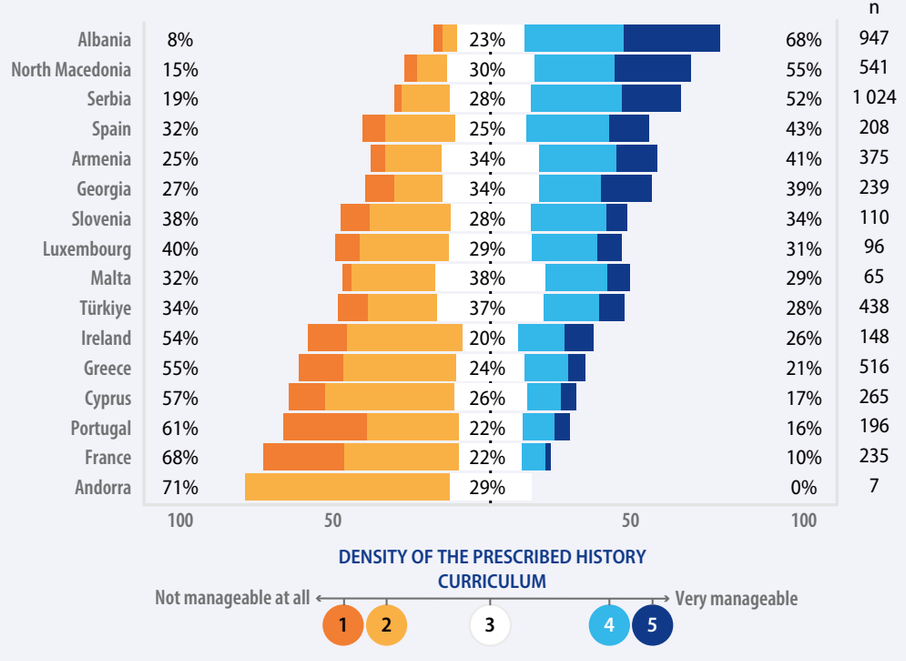
How rigid is the curriculum structure and its requirements, and how much room for discretion is there for you to organise your teaching?



With regard to the density of history curricula, on average 42% of the TES participants consider the curricula to be manageable or very manageable. In contrast, nearly one third of respondents (30%) consider the curricula to be hardly manageable or not manageable at all. The perception that the curricula are manageable or very manageable in terms of content density is most commonly expressed by educators in Albania (68%), North Macedonia (55%) and Serbia (52%). In contrast, the biggest share of teachers who find the curricula hardly manageable or outright unmanageable are from Andorra (71%), France (68%) and Portugal (61%). While in Andorra no respondent indicated that curricula are manageable or very manageable, no teacher indicated that it was not manageable at all either (Figure 4.2).

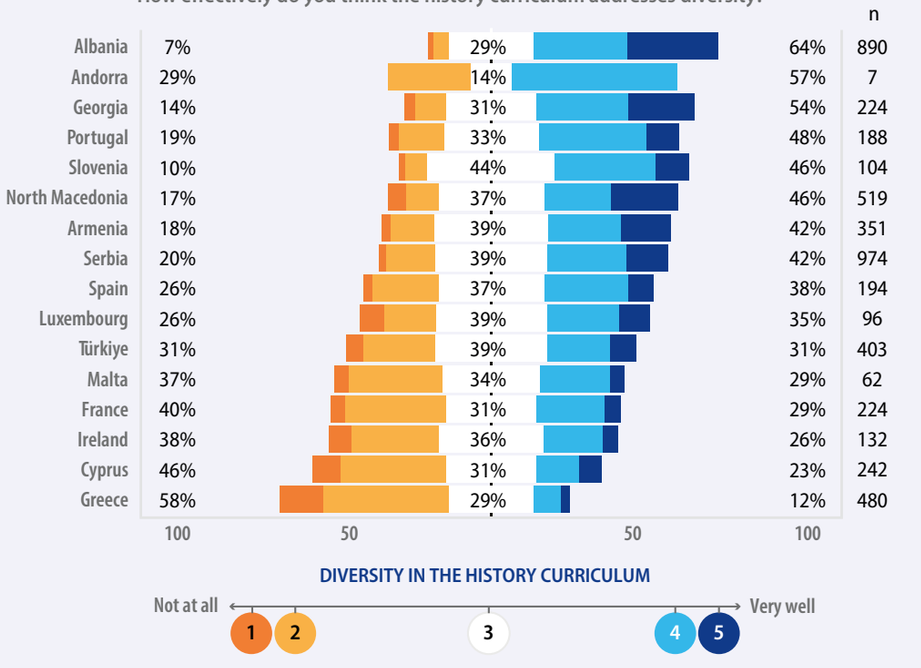
Figure 4.2 – Density of the history curriculum as perceived by TES respondents, by member state

How manageable is the amount of content that you have to cover according to the curricula?



Regarding how effectively history curricula in the member states address diversity, 41% of respondents from the OHTE member states believe that the history curricula address diversity well or very well, compared to 24% who believe they do not. Analysed according to the country where respondents are teaching, 64% of teachers from Albania, 57% of those from Andorra and 54% of those from Georgia indicated that diversity is well or very well addressed by the history curricula. The largest share of respondents indicating that the curriculum addresses diversity insufficiently or not at all are from Greece (58%), Cyprus (46%) and France (40%) **(Figure 4.3)**.

Figure 4.3 – Effectiveness of history curricula in addressing diversity as perceived by TES respondents, by member state



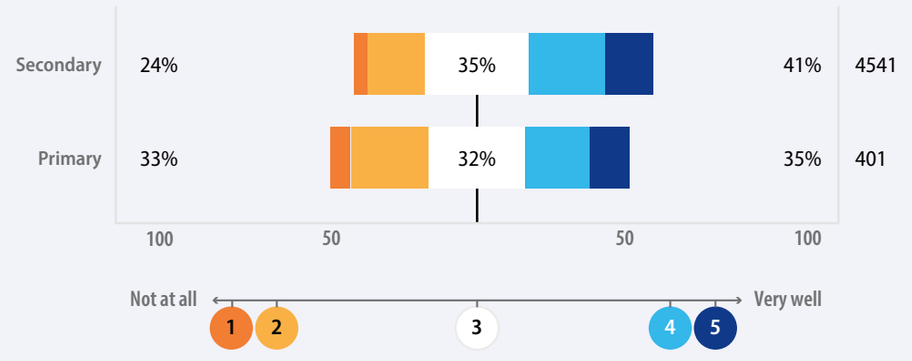
There is an interesting discrepancy between primary and secondary school teachers regarding the extent to which they believe the curricula are effective in addressing diversity **(Figure 4.4)**. Primary school teachers appear to be much more critical of this aspect than secondary school teachers, raising questions about whether diversity is addressed in different ways at different levels of education, the nature of the resources involved and the higher level of complexity of history classes in secondary education.

With reference to teachers' points of view about topics that should be added or removed from the curricula, the introduction of new topics was supported by 52% of the respondents to the TES, while 63% also supported the idea that certain topics should be removed. This is a sign of disagreement over the current curricula between practising teachers, which needs further research to identify the specific topics that teachers believe should be added and removed.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

To conclude, in the majority of the OHTE member states, history curricula are not the exclusive prerogative of state institutions but involve a variety of non-state actors in their

Example Figure 4.4 – Views of TES respondents, by educational level, on the history curricula's effectiveness in addressing diversity[41]



design and further development. At the same time, the responsibility for monitoring their implementation does appear to lie primarily with state agencies. These features help explain some of the notable differences between different educational systems with respect to curricular design and monitoring. The OHTE member states show a tendency, albeit to different degrees, towards the inclusion of a European dimension in the history curricula and towards developing an inclusive curriculum in all senses of the term (based on multiperspectivity and including references to neighbouring states as well as to different minority groups). While all the OHTE member states include references to neighbouring countries in some way in their curricula, France, Ireland, Portugal and Spain place a special emphasis on a wider European perspective, including also the history of European integration. In most OHTE member states, society's diversity in terms of culture, ethnicity, language, nationality, religion and gender is reflected in the history curricula. Compared to the inclusion of minority groups more generally, Roma and/or Travellers receive significantly less coverage in the history curricula, featuring in the curricula of only nine of the 16 member states. It is also noteworthy that only the education authorities of France and Spain reported the inclusion of the histories of sexual and gender minorities to some extent in their curricula.

Teachers in the OHTE member states find their history curricula to be rather flexible, to be manageable and to effectively address societies' diversity. However, almost one third of all TES respondents consider history curricula to be overloaded. Furthermore, respondents teaching at the secondary level appear to be moderately more satisfied with the effectiveness of the curricula in approaching diversity in society, which may be related to the higher complexity that history teaching can accommodate at this level of education.

41. There were no responses from primary-level history teachers from Armenia, Luxembourg, Malta, Portugal and Slovenia. Primary-level history teachers from Serbia constituted 0.19% of the total respondents.

CHAPTER 5

HISTORY TEXTBOOKS AND OTHER EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

History textbooks and other educational resources

This chapter focuses on textbooks and other educational resources as some of the major instruments of history education. Textbooks and other educational resources used for history education are customarily thought to serve the function of disseminating national ideologies, perceptions and messages to be conveyed to the next generation (Foster 2012). Starting from the 19th century, history teaching has been considered an important tool for creating and reinforcing national identity and for encouraging loyalty to their nation states among citizens. Prominent scholars such as Ernest Gellner (1997), Anthony Giddens (1991) and Anthony Smith (1991) argued that history education and textbooks are designed to transmit ideas about the nation and the state to create, maintain and reinforce national identity. This feature extended to the 20th century: history textbooks often contained statements glorifying their own nation and disparaging others (Pingel 1999). However, after the Second World War, major international institutions such as the Council of Europe, UNESCO and the Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research (GEI) played a central role in promoting textbook revision and research into textbook content, organising international conferences on such issues and developing many initiatives and textbook projects (Foster 2012). The Council of Europe engaged in a long-standing effort to promote peace education and has initiated several international history textbook revision programmes since 1953 (Stobart 1999; see Chapter 1 of this report).

The present report builds on this legacy. This chapter provides updated information regarding history textbooks and other educational materials used in the OHTE member states. Within this context, it examines the selection processes pertaining to history textbooks and other educational resources, their use in practice, the procedures for quality control and monitoring, and the provision and authorisation procedures for educational materials. The different guidelines in place for preparing, evaluating and selecting history textbooks in each member state are described in detail. The chapter concludes by presenting teachers' perceptions on the various resources and materials used in history classes in the member states of the Observatory.

SELECTION PROCESSES FOR HISTORY TEXTBOOKS AND EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

The selection processes for textbooks and other educational materials in the OHTE member states are similar in some respects and different in others. Based on the data provided by the EAS, the Ministry of Education alone decides which textbooks and other educational resources are used for teaching and learning history in Armenia, Cyprus, Greece and Türkiye.[42] In Georgia, Portugal and Serbia, the responsibility is shared between the ministry and all history teachers at school level. In Portugal, the state authorities approve a list of textbooks that teachers can choose from, with some exceptions. National commissions in Luxembourg, to which each school sends a representative, choose a history textbook that is financed by the state. In Andorra, France, Ireland, Slovenia and Spain, all history teachers at school level decide which textbooks and other educational resources are to be used in history classes, without the involvement of the education authorities. In North Macedonia, teachers decide for themselves individually.

In Georgia and Serbia, besides the officially approved materials, teachers are free to use additional teaching materials, which are not scrutinised by the education authorities.

In Portugal, the official website of the Ministry of Education (República Portuguesa)[43] publishes a list of all textbooks, both certified and non-certified, which it updates every year. The pedagogical council of individual schools or a group of schools chooses the textbooks to be adopted for the history teaching from the list of certified materials. However, not all textbooks are submitted to the assessment and certification procedure. Such uncertified textbooks can be used only for subjects whose manuals have not yet undergone the process of evaluation and certification or have been exempted from the evaluation and certification procedure.

In North Macedonia, history teachers choose individually the materials to be used in relation to the specific topic and content. In Ireland, the decision on which, if any, materials to use is taken at the school level. According to their education authorities, teachers in Andorra, Armenia, Greece, Ireland, Luxembourg, Malta, North Macedonia and Slovenia are allowed to use materials not approved by the authorities without any restriction. For different languages taught in North Macedonian schools, authorities recommend textbooks that teachers can use, but without any obligation to do so. In Cyprus and Türkiye, in contrast, teachers are required to use the official textbooks. Nevertheless, they are free to use other educational sources or materials in their teaching. In the Georgian national curriculum, the licensed textbooks are the main reference documents. The option to use unlicensed materials is limited to those meeting the following standards: they must reflect the academic knowledge and methodology currently in force and must not offend the state's interests, which is determined by the Ministry of Education. In Albania, a special commission set up by the Ministry of Education and Sports selects three textbooks for each subject. Teachers are free to choose one of these three textbooks to use with their students in class and to combine it with other materials to achieve the learning outcomes defined in the curriculum.

42. All information presented in this section derives from answers to the EAS unless stated otherwise.

43. www.portugal.gov.pt/en/gc21/ministries/education.

THE USE OF HISTORY TEXTBOOKS AND OTHER EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

Policies on the use of textbooks and other resources

As reported by the education authorities of the 16 OHTE member states, textbooks are mandatory in history teaching in Albania, Cyprus, Georgia, Greece, Luxembourg, Serbia, Slovenia and Türkiye. Textbooks can be used in Malta and Portugal, but without any obligation to do so. Their use is encouraged in Armenia, France, North Macedonia and Spain. The Andorran education system does not use textbooks **(see Table 5.1)**.

According to the information provided by the education authorities, none of the OHTE member states discourages or prohibits the use of any of the resources in **Table 5.1**, except Malta, which discourages the use of historiographical bibliography and literature such as historical novels and graphic novels. As shown in **Table 5.1**, some member states have no policy on the use of video games and apps for smartphones and tablets with historical content.

In general, the use of primary documentary sources, oral sources, teacher notes, printed or digital press, museums and other places of heritage, reports in popular magazines, visual sources, artefacts, search engines, websites and databases is allowed and/or encouraged for history teaching by the education authorities in the OHTE member states. In Ireland, there is no policy on educational resources in general, as the Department of Education does not generally approve, commission, sponsor or endorse educational textbooks or online materials. However, a common concern arising from the focus group discussions was that there are too many resources available, both digital and printed, and teachers expressed the need for special training on how to select and use specific materials in history classes.[44]

44. EFG 3, 26 January 2023; EFG 7, 8 March 2023; and EFG 8, 9 March 2023.

Table 5.1 – Policies regarding the use of textbooks and other educational resources for history teaching in OHTE member states

= Required = Encouraged = Allowed = Discouraged = No Policy

Resource type	ALB	AND	ARM	CYP	FRA	GEO	GRC	IRL	LUX	MLT	MKD	PRT	SRB	SVN	ESP	TUR
Apps for smartphones and tablets with historical content	Encouraged	Required	Encouraged	No Policy	No Policy	No Policy	Allowed	No Policy	Allowed	No Policy	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed	Encouraged	Encouraged	Encouraged
Artefacts (e.g., painting, architecture, sculpture, contemporary art)	Encouraged	Encouraged	Encouraged	Encouraged	Allowed	No Policy	Allowed	No Policy	Allowed	Encouraged	Encouraged	Allowed	Allowed	Encouraged	Encouraged	Encouraged
Cinema and documentaries with historical themes	Required	Encouraged	Encouraged	Encouraged	Allowed	Encouraged	Allowed	No Policy	Encouraged	Encouraged	Encouraged	Allowed	Allowed	Encouraged	Encouraged	Encouraged
Audiovisual sources (e.g., newsreels, private archives, commercials)	Encouraged	Encouraged	Encouraged	Encouraged	Encouraged	Encouraged	Allowed	No Policy	Encouraged	Encouraged	Encouraged	Allowed	Allowed	Encouraged	Encouraged	Encouraged
Audio sources (e.g., music, the sound of a steam engine, etc.)	Encouraged	Encouraged	Encouraged	Encouraged	Allowed	Encouraged	Allowed	No Policy	Encouraged	Encouraged	Encouraged	Allowed	Allowed	Encouraged	Encouraged	Encouraged
Visual sources (e.g., paintings, photographs, drawings)	Required	Encouraged	Encouraged	Encouraged	Encouraged	Encouraged	Allowed	No Policy	Required	Required	Encouraged	Allowed	Required	Encouraged	Encouraged	Encouraged
Historiographical bibliography	Encouraged	No Policy	Encouraged	Required	Allowed	Encouraged	Allowed	No Policy	Encouraged	Discouraged	Encouraged	Allowed	Encouraged	Required	Encouraged	Encouraged
Literature (e.g., historical novels, graphic novels)	Required	Encouraged	Encouraged	Encouraged	Encouraged	Encouraged	Allowed	No Policy	Encouraged	Discouraged	Encouraged	Allowed	Encouraged	Encouraged	Encouraged	Allowed
Local and regional festivals and traditions related to historical events	Encouraged	Required	Encouraged	Encouraged	No Policy	No Policy	Allowed	No Policy	Allowed	Allowed	Encouraged	Allowed	Encouraged	Allowed	Encouraged	Allowed
Local cultural heritage (e.g., costumes, food traditions, celebrations)	Encouraged	Required	Encouraged	Encouraged	Encouraged	No Policy	Allowed	No Policy	Allowed	Allowed	Encouraged	Allowed	Encouraged	Encouraged	Encouraged	Allowed
Museums and other places of heritage interpretation	Required	Required	Encouraged	Required	Encouraged	Encouraged	Allowed	No Policy	Encouraged	Encouraged	Encouraged	Allowed	Encouraged	Required	Encouraged	Encouraged
History textbooks	Required	No Policy	Encouraged	Required	Encouraged	Required	Allowed	No Policy	Required	Allowed	Encouraged	Allowed	Required	Required	Encouraged	Required
Oral sources	Required	No Policy	Encouraged	Encouraged	Encouraged	No Policy	Allowed	No Policy	Encouraged	Allowed	Encouraged	Allowed	Encouraged	Encouraged	Encouraged	Allowed
Primary documentary sources	Required	Required	Encouraged	Required	Encouraged	Encouraged	Allowed	No Policy	Encouraged	Required	Encouraged	Allowed	Required	Encouraged	Encouraged	Encouraged
Printed or digital press	Required	Required	Encouraged	Required	Encouraged	Allowed	Allowed	No Policy	Required	Allowed	Encouraged	Allowed	Allowed	Encouraged	Encouraged	Allowed
Reports in popular magazines on historical topics	Encouraged	No Policy	Encouraged	Encouraged	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed	No Policy	Encouraged	Allowed	Encouraged	Allowed	Allowed	Required	Encouraged	Allowed
Search engines and websites with historical content not necessary validated by education authorities	Required	No Policy	Encouraged	No Policy	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed	No Policy	Encouraged	Allowed	Encouraged	Allowed	Allowed	Required	Encouraged	Allowed
Websites and databases with historical content approved by the education authorities	Encouraged	No Policy	Encouraged	Required	Encouraged	Encouraged	Allowed	No Policy	Encouraged	Encouraged	Encouraged	Allowed	Encouraged	Encouraged	No Policy	Encouraged
Teacher notes	Required	No Policy	Encouraged	Required	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed	No Policy	Encouraged	Required	Encouraged	Allowed	Encouraged	Allowed	No Policy	Allowed
Video games	No Policy	No Policy	Encouraged	No Policy	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed	No Policy	Allowed	No Policy	No Policy	Allowed	Allowed	No Policy	Encouraged	No Policy

The use of textbooks and educational resources in teaching practice

The results of the TES show that textbooks, teacher notes, and websites and databases with historical content approved by the education authorities (in the order of importance) are the most commonly used resources in history classrooms **(Figure 5.1)**.

In total, 83% of the teachers who responded to this question indicated that they use textbooks in every or almost every lesson. However, the frequency of their use varies widely between the OHTE member states **(Figure 5.2)**. The highest share of respondents indicating that they use textbooks in every or almost every lesson are teachers from Albania (92%), Serbia (91%) and Georgia (90%). The highest share of respondents indicating that they never or rarely use textbooks are teachers from Malta (38%), followed by Luxembourg (29%) and Spain (27%). The focus groups confirmed that, even where textbooks are not mandatory, teachers often find them appealing because of the limited time teachers have for preparing teaching material and the mandatory exams for history courses, which are frequently based on the content of textbooks and curricula.[45]

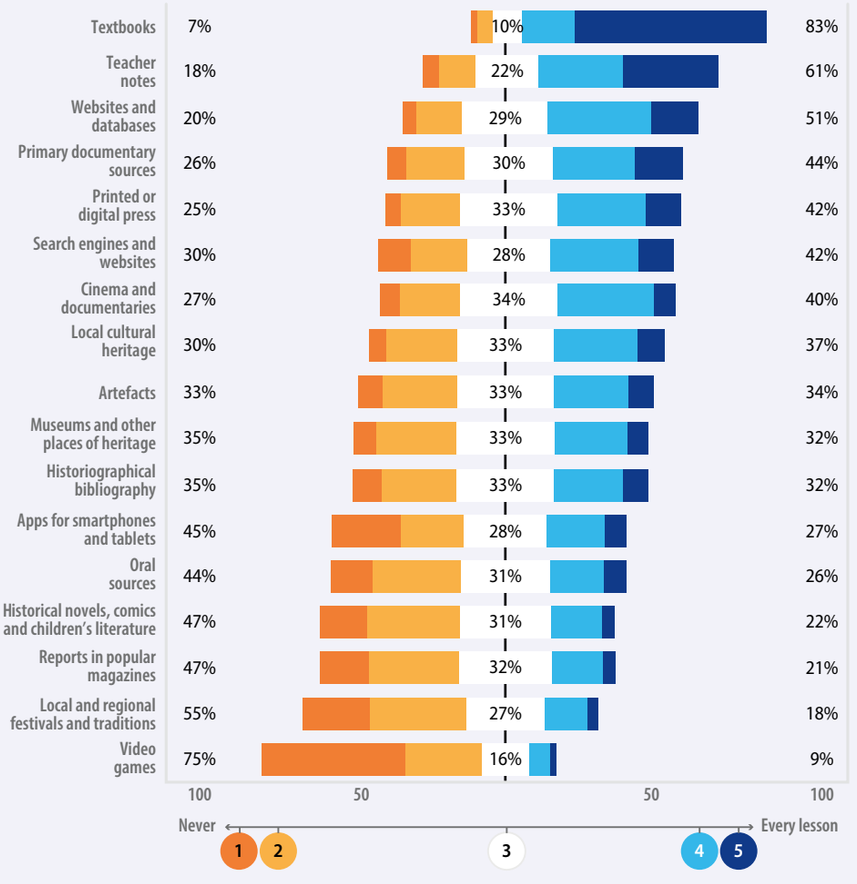
Teacher notes are the second most frequently used resource after textbooks, with 61% of respondents stating that they use them in every or almost every lesson **(Figure 5.3)**. The highest share of respondents indicating that they use teacher notes in every or almost every lesson teach history in Cyprus (84%), Malta (78%) and Ireland (77%), while the highest share of respondents who said they never or rarely use such notes are teachers in France (64%), Georgia (48%) and Luxembourg (32%).

On average, the least used resources by teachers in OHTE member states are video games, followed by local and regional festivals and traditions with historical content, and literature. With regard to video games, 75% of respondents

45. EFG 8, 9 March 2023.

Figure 5.1 – Frequency of use of textbooks and other educational resources as indicated by TES respondents[46]

How frequenly do you use the following types of educational resources in your teaching of history?



indicated that they would never or rarely use them in their teaching. The highest share of respondents who indicated that they never or rarely use video games are from France (87%), Ireland (86%) and Greece (83%) **(Figure 5.4)**. It is noteworthy that variance in this regard is rather low, as for 12 member states the share of respondents who never or rarely teach history using video games is 70% or higher.[47] Still, video games appear to be most widely used in Türkiye, with 20% of respondents indicating that they would use this resource in every or almost every lesson, followed by Armenia with 18%, and Albania with 12%, of respondents.

46. A comprehensive breakdown of all items per country can be found in the Technical Appendix (Volume 3, Item 3, Table 3.1).

47. Cyprus, France, Georgia, Greece, Ireland, Luxembourg, Malta, North Macedonia, Portugal, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain (see Figure 5.4).

Figure 5.2 – Frequency of textbook use as indicated by TES respondents, by member state

How frequenly do you use the following types of educational resources in your teaching of history?

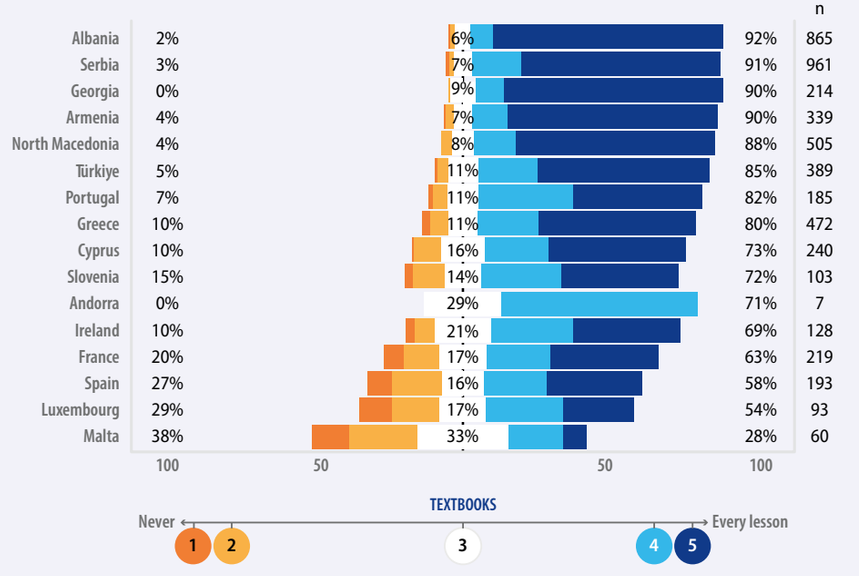


Figure 5.3 – Frequency of the use of teacher notes as indicated by TES respondents, by member state

How frequenly do you use the following types of educational resources in your teaching of history?

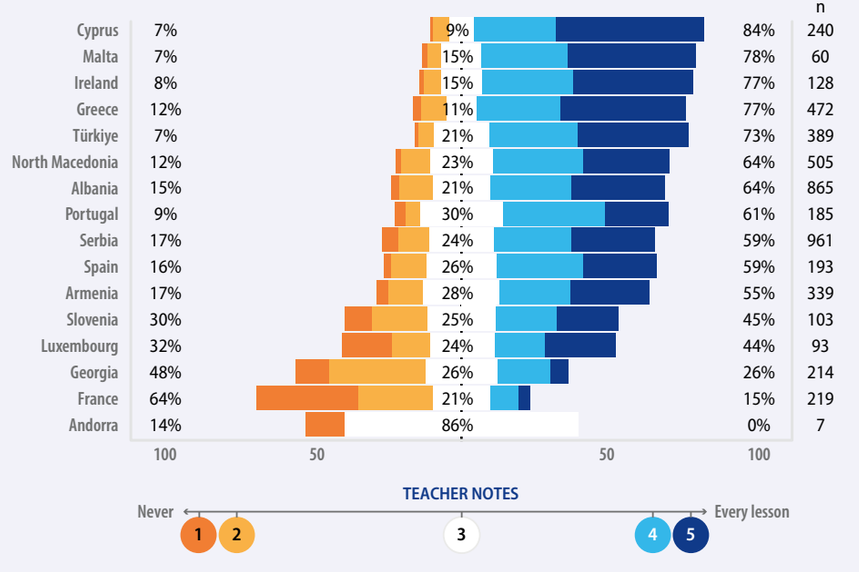
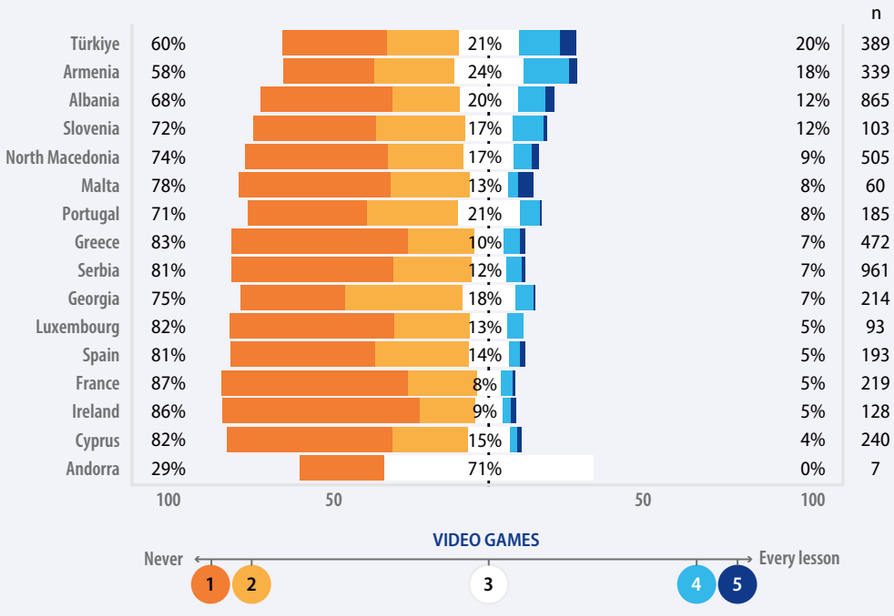


Figure 5.4 – Frequency of the use of video games as indicated by TES respondents, by member state

How frequenly do you use the following types of educational resources in your teaching of history?



With regard to local and regional festivals and traditions with historical content **(Figure 5.5)**, 55% of respondents indicated that they would never or rarely use these types of resources. However, there is a notable degree of variance between the member states. While the highest share of respondents indicating that they would never or rarely use these kinds of resources are from Cyprus (83%), Greece (81%) and France (73%), it seems to be most widely used in Albania (28%), Spain (24%) and Armenia (22%), judging by the share of responses indicating that local and regional festivals or traditions with historical content are used in every or almost every lesson.

There is an interesting discrepancy between teachers in primary and secondary education with regard to the use of local and regional resources **(Figure 5.6)**: festivals and traditions with historical content, cultural heritage, museums and other places of heritage interpretation. Primary school teachers consistently seem to use such educational resources more frequently than secondary school teachers; this aspect calls for further research into the factors accounting for this difference.

Figure 5.5 – Frequency of the use of local and regional festivals and traditions with historical content as indicated by TES respondents, by member state

How frequenly do you use the following types of educational resources in your teaching of history?

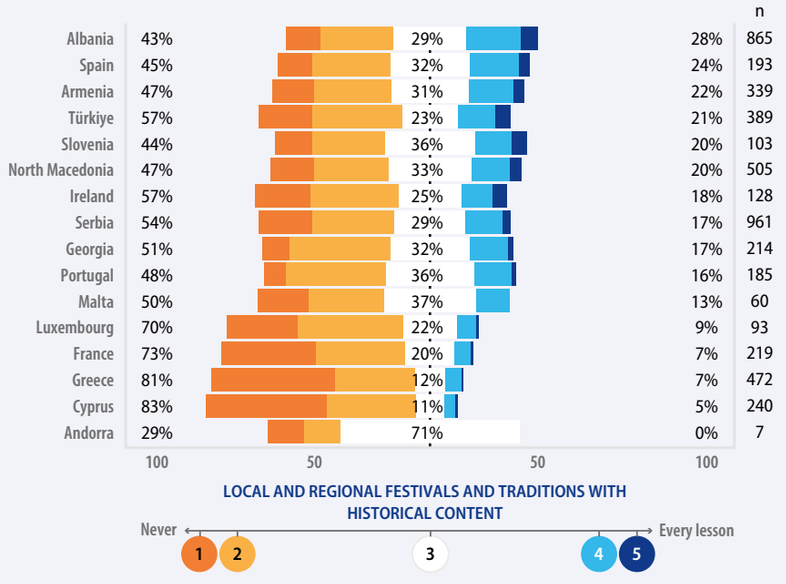
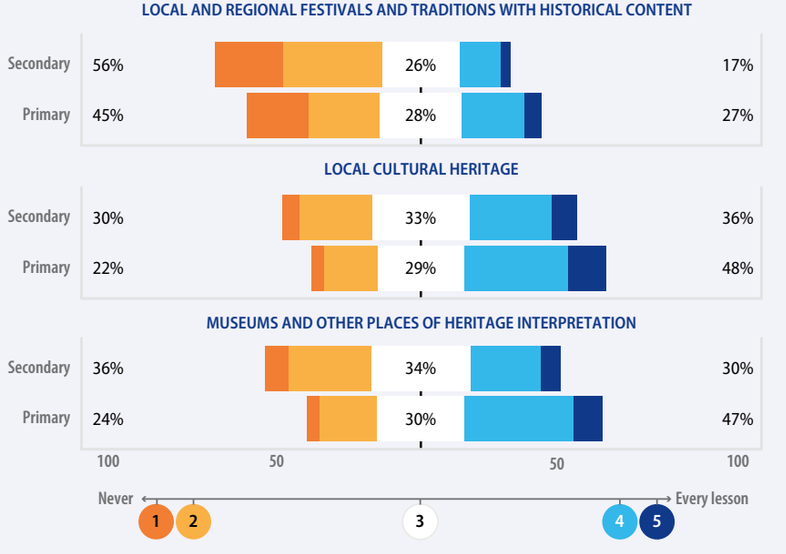


Figure 5.6 – Breakdown of the use of local and regional heritage resources by primary and secondary school teachers[48]

How frequenly do you use the following types of educational resources in your teaching of history?

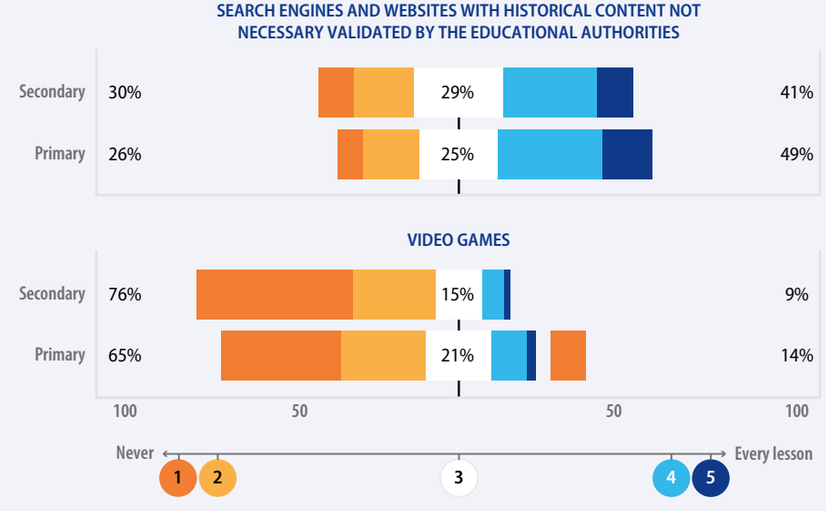


48. There were no responses from primary-level history teachers from Armenia, Luxembourg, Malta, Portugal and Slovenia. Primary-level history teachers from Serbia constituted 0.19% of the total respondents.

Similarly, there is a notable difference in teachers' use of video games, and of search engines and websites that have not necessarily been validated by the education authorities, with primary school teachers indicating that they use both types of resources more frequently than secondary school teachers **(Figure 5.7)**.

Figure 5.7 – Breakdown of primary and secondary school teachers' use of online resources not necessarily validated by the education authorities and of video games[49]

How frequenly do you use the following types of educational resources in your teaching of history?



PROCEDURES FOR THE QUALITY CONTROL AND MONITORING OF EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

All the OHTE member states have varied procedures in place for the quality control of educational resources, except France, Ireland and Slovenia. No data are available for Andorra and Greece. The procedures are either the same for all levels of education and regions or differ according to the region or school type. For instance, there are procedures in place for the quality control of all educational resources in history classrooms that are used at all levels of education and in all regions in Armenia, Cyprus, North Macedonia, Spain and Türkiye. In Albania, Georgia, Luxembourg, Malta, Portugal and Serbia, procedures for the quality control of educational resources apply only to schools that are funded by the authorities. In Malta, the procedures also differ according to the school type, as there are different measures in place for religious schools. In Portugal, the Ministry of Education implements the procedure for the quality control, assessment and certification of textbooks through the accreditation of entities as evaluation committees. The assessing entities subsequently consider the criteria and specifications identified in the legislation. In North Macedonia, the Bureau for Development of Education checks the equipment and resources used by teachers. In Türkiye, all educational materials have to be approved by the Board of Education according to a set of criteria. Procedures vary from one region to another in Spain, with the aim of ensuring that they accord with the principles and values of the constitution and the provisions of the Organic Law on Education. In Cyprus the Pedagogical Institute oversees the quality control of educational resources used in history classrooms, while in Serbia the Ministry of Education is responsible for the approval and quality control of textbooks.

In Albania, the quality of textbooks is controlled by the Agency for the Quality Assurance of Pre-University Education (ASCAP). In Armenia, the Ministry of Education designs the standards for the textbooks and selects from the various textbooks submitted by publishing companies, from which schools can choose which to use. In Malta, printed resources and textbooks for public schools are selected following a public call for publications; church and independent schools follow their own independent procedures. In Türkiye, commissions composed of representatives from the Ministry of Education, teachers and academics review the materials independently and then discuss and approve the materials together in a panel meeting. In Spain, oversight of textbooks and other curricular materials, as well as the inspection process, fall within the responsibility of the education authorities of each autonomous community. The Department of Education in Ireland does not generally approve, commission, sponsor or endorse educational textbooks or online materials. However, it provides advice and support through the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) and its teacher support services, Oide. It also issues guidelines for teachers and provides support materials to help and guide their work with students.

In Georgia, the Division of Licensing, in co-operation with the Educational and Scientific Infrastructure Development Agency (LEPL) within the Ministry of Education and Science, conducts the quality control of textbooks. However, the Ministry of Education and Science leads the process of licensing the textbooks. In Serbia, the Institute for the Improvement of Education continually monitors the use of textbooks in classes and provides expert evaluation. The Pedagogical Institute of the autonomous province of Vojvodina is responsible for providing expert evaluations of and opinions on textbooks and teaching materials written in the national minority languages for education (Croatian, Hungarian, Romanian, Ruthenian and Slovak) in the territory of the province. In Greece, the Ministry of Education seeks the advice of the Institute of Educational Policy on decisions regarding textbooks and educational resources.

Table 5.2 lists the main categories of the procedures in place for the quality control and monitoring of textbooks and educational resources provided by the education authorities of the OHTE member states.

49. There were no responses from primary-level history teachers from Armenia, Luxembourg, Malta, Portugal and Slovenia. Primary-level history teachers from Serbia constituted 0.19% of the total respondents.

Table 5.2 – Aspects included in the quality monitoring of history textbooks, as indicated by the education authorities

✓ = Included X = Not Included / = Data Not Shared

Resource type	ALB	AND	ARM	CYP	FRA	GEO	GRC	IRL	LUX	MLT	MKD	PRT	SRB	SVN	ESP	TUR	TOT
Provision of necessary material and activities for the development of historical thinking concepts and skills	✓	/	✓	✓	X	✓	/	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	X	10
Suitability for use by teachers and students in practice	✓	/	✓	✓	X	✓	/	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	11
Use of unbiased language	✓	/	X	X	X	✓	/	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	9
Correct presentation of national history	✓	/	✓	X	X	✓	/	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X	✓	9
Presentation of multiple perspectives	✓	/	✓	✓	X	✓	/	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X	✓	10
Equal representation of women	✓	/	✓	✓	X	X	/	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓	X	X	✓	7
Inclusion of children's perspectives	✓	/	X	X	X	X	/	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X	X	X	5
Inclusion of sources representing different ethnic, linguistic, religious and socio-cultural groups	✓	/	✓	X	X	✓	/	X	X	✓	✓	✓	X	X	X	X	6
Inclusion of sources representing Roma and/or Travellers	✓	/	✓	X	X	X	/	X	X	X	✓	✓	X	X	X	X	4
Inclusion of sources representing sexual/gender minorities	✓	/	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	X	X	✓	X	X	X	X	2
Accuracy of historical information provided	✓	/	✓	✓	X	X	/	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	X	9
Qualification of textbook authors	✓	/	X	✓	X	✓	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X	X	8
Other*	X	/	X	X	X	✓	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	✓	2

* In Georgia, the inclusion in history textbooks of sources representing sexual/gender minorities, of children's perspectives and of sources representing sexual/gender minorities is less emphasised.

In Türkiye, additional measures for monitoring the quality of Turkish history textbooks are that they should not contain negative generalisations, prejudice or humiliation relating to any religion, sect, culture, ethnic structure of any part of society or over-glorifying expressions relating to any individuals or groups.

In 11 out of the 16 member states where quality monitoring procedures are generally in place, "suitability for use by teachers and students in practice" is evaluated according to the information provided by the education authorities.

After this, the aspects included in the quality monitoring mechanisms in most member states are "the provision of necessary material and activities for the development of historical thinking concepts and skills" and the "presentation of multiple perspectives" (both in 10 out of the 16 states). The "correct presentation of national history" in the eyes of the education authorities, the "use of unbiased language" and the "accuracy of the historical information" provided are subject to evaluation in 9 of the 16 member states.

The aspect least often included in the quality monitoring of the member states' history textbooks is the representation of sexual/gender minorities, which are reported to be included only in Albania and Portugal.[50] This is noteworthy, as for these countries no examples of inclusion of sexual/gender minorities in the history curricula were reported via the EAS. In contrast, in Spain, where the inclusion of these groups in the history curricula was described in Chapter 4, and quality monitoring mechanisms are generally in place, this aspect is not part of such evaluations. Furthermore, the "inclusion of children's perspectives" (in 5 out of 16 states) and of "sources representing different ethnic, linguistic, religious and socio-cultural groups" (in 6 out of 16 states) are rarely assessed in such mechanisms. Regarding the inclusion of the latter, monitoring procedures take the representation of Roma and/or Travellers into account even less frequently (in 4 out of 16 states). The equal representation of women is part of the quality monitoring in seven member states.

THE PROVISION OF TEXTBOOKS AND EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

Fourteen of the OHTE member states provide free resources to be used in history classes to some extent, whereas Andorra and Spain reported that such data are not collected. While in Andorra textbooks are not used, in Spain a possible explanation may be that the government has no legal competence in the selection of educational resources. In Armenia, Cyprus, Luxembourg, Malta, North Macedonia and Türkiye, the state pays for the history

50. Women are conceptualised as a separate category that is included in seven member states' quality monitoring procedures.

schoolbooks. In Malta, however, students of religious and independent schools must pay for their own textbooks. In Slovenia, state and local authorities cover the cost of textbooks, whereas in France, some local authorities may pay for the textbooks if they wish. In Albania, Georgia, Greece, Ireland and Portugal the cost of schoolbooks is shared between the state and student families. In Serbia parents and/or pupils pay for the textbooks.

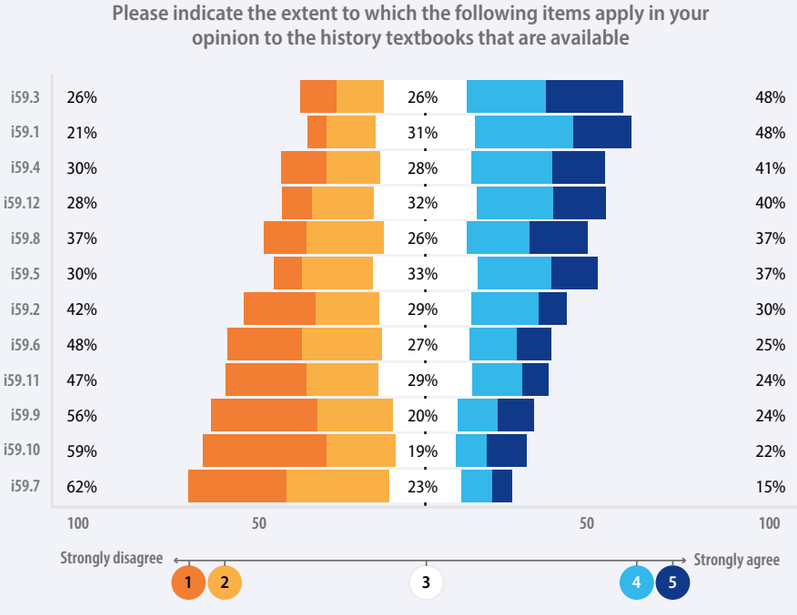
In some member states, textbooks are provided for free at only some levels. In Albania, textbooks are provided free only for compulsory education. Parents and/or students buy their textbooks in upper secondary education. In Ireland and Slovenia history textbooks for primary schools are also free. In Ireland, special schools also offer free history textbooks.[51]

Some member states have programmes to subsidise textbooks in different ways. The Department of Education in Ireland provides a book grant to all recognised secondary schools within the Free Education Scheme to provide financial assistance with textbooks. The free textbooks project, funded by the Ministry of Education in Serbia, provides free textbooks for families with three or more children and for families who are recipients of social benefits (that is, socially or economically disadvantaged families get free textbooks for their children). However, from the 2023/24 school year, some municipalities have provided free textbooks for all children in elementary and secondary schools. In Spain, both state and regional authorities provide book grants for students in compulsory education. Additionally, the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MEFP) has developed the Espacio Procomún Educativo initiative, a network of open educational resources (OER),[52] where one can search, display and download learning items in standard formats and with open licences for use in pre-university education. Its social network provides a meeting point for the educational community that facilitates interaction with other users and creates communities for sharing, valuing and disseminating different kinds of educational resources.

TEACHERS' VIEWS ON THE HISTORY TEXTBOOKS

Almost half of the teachers who responded to the questionnaire believe that history textbooks provide the necessary material and activities for the development of historical thinking concepts and skills related to how we learn about the past (48%). At the same time, 30% of teachers stated that the history textbooks set major constraints on how they teach history. The results of the TES show that almost half (48%) of teachers agree that history textbooks use unbiased language, while one quarter (26%) disagree **(Figure 5.8)**. Around 41% agree and 30% disagree that history textbooks present a nation-centred narrative. The percentage of teachers who perceive that history textbooks present multiple perspectives (37%) is slightly higher than of those who are sceptical (30%). However, almost half of teachers (48%) believe that gender history is not appropriately represented in the history textbooks, while 62% think the same of the history of childhood. More than one third of respondents believe that different ethnic, linguistic, religious and socio-cultural groups are not adequately represented in history textbooks (37%), but a similar percentage believe that they are adequately represented. The percentage of those finding that these minorities are not adequately represented rises to more than half (56%) in regard to the representation of Roma and Travellers in history textbooks. Similarly, 59% of teachers support the notion that different sexual/gender minorities are not adequately presented in history textbooks. Nearly half (47%) of the respondents believe that the information in history textbooks is not outdated, and 40% that the methods used in history textbooks are suited to the needs of students.

Figure 5.8 – Views of TES respondents on the history textbooks in their countries[53]



Note:	
i59.1: The history textbooks provide the necessary material and activities for the development of historical thinking concepts and skills related to how we learn about the past	i59.7: History of childhood has an appropriate place in the history textbooks
i59.2: The history textbooks set constraints on the way I teach history	i59.8: Different ethnic, linguistic, religious and socio-cultural groups are presented adequately in the history textbooks
i59.3: The history textbooks use unbiased language	i59.9: Roma and Travellers are presented adequately in the history textbooks
i59.4: The history textbooks present a nation-centred narrative	i59.10: Different sexual/gender minorities are presented adequately in the history textbooks
i59.5: The history textbooks present multiple perspectives	i59.11: The historical information provided in the history textbooks is outdated
i59.6: Gender history has an appropriate place in the history textbooks	i59.12: The methods that are used in history textbooks are suited to the needs of students

51. The provision of free textbooks for students of primary and special schools in Ireland was introduced in September 2023.

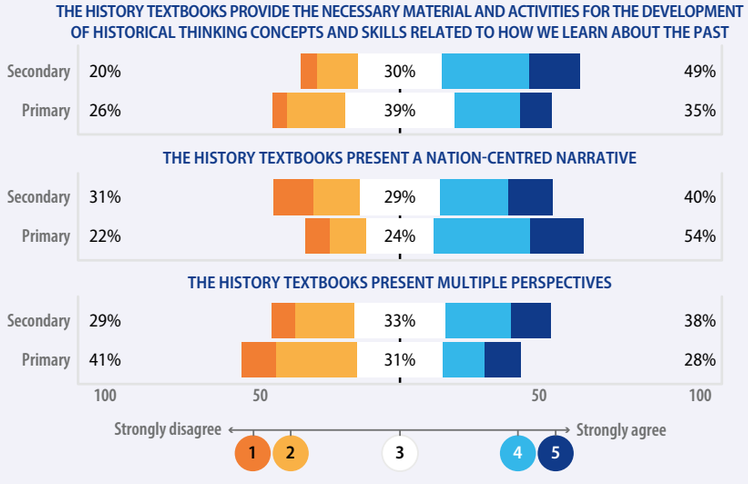
52. Available at https://procomun.intef.es, accessed 13 September 2023.

53. A comprehensive breakdown of all items per country can be found in the Technical Appendix (Volume 3, Item 3, Table 3.2).

There is also an interesting discrepancy between primary and secondary school teachers **(Figure 5.9)**. Primary school teachers consistently appear more sceptical of the extent to which textbooks enable the development of historical thinking concepts and skills (26% agreement versus 20% disagreement) and present multiple perspectives (41% versus 29%). In contrast, primary school teachers believe that textbooks present a nation-centred narrative much more than secondary school teachers do (54% versus 40%).

Figure 5.9 – Views of primary and secondary school teachers on historical thinking, multiperspectivity and nation-centred narratives in history textbooks[54]

Please indicate the extent to which the following items apply in your opinion to the history textbooks that are available



Additionally, when it comes to the representation of diversity within textbooks **(Figure 5.10)**, primary school teachers once again consistently appear more critical than secondary school teachers with respect to the adequacy of the representation of different ethnic, religious and socio-cultural groups (48% versus 36%), Roma and Travellers (62% versus 56%) and sexual/gender minorities (69% versus 59%). This calls for further research into potential discrepancies in the content of the textbooks available at primary and secondary school level.

A detailed assessment of the data at member state level shows that there is highest agreement that history textbooks do provide the necessary material and activities for the development of historical thinking concepts and skills among participants teaching in Slovenia (78%), Albania (67%), Georgia (64%) and Serbia (63%). The biggest share of respondents who disagree come from Cyprus and Greece (both 51%), followed by Malta (36%) and Spain (31%) **(Figure 5.11)**.

54. There were no responses from primary-level history teachers from Armenia, Luxembourg, Malta, Portugal and Slovenia. Primary-level history teachers from Serbia constituted 0.19% of the total respondents.

55. There were no responses from primary-level history teachers from Armenia, Luxembourg, Malta, Portugal and Slovenia. Primary-level history teachers from Serbia constituted 0.19% of the total respondents.

Figure 5.10 – Views of primary and secondary school teachers on the representation of diversity in history textbooks[55]

Please indicate the extent to which the following items apply in your opinion to the history textbooks that are available

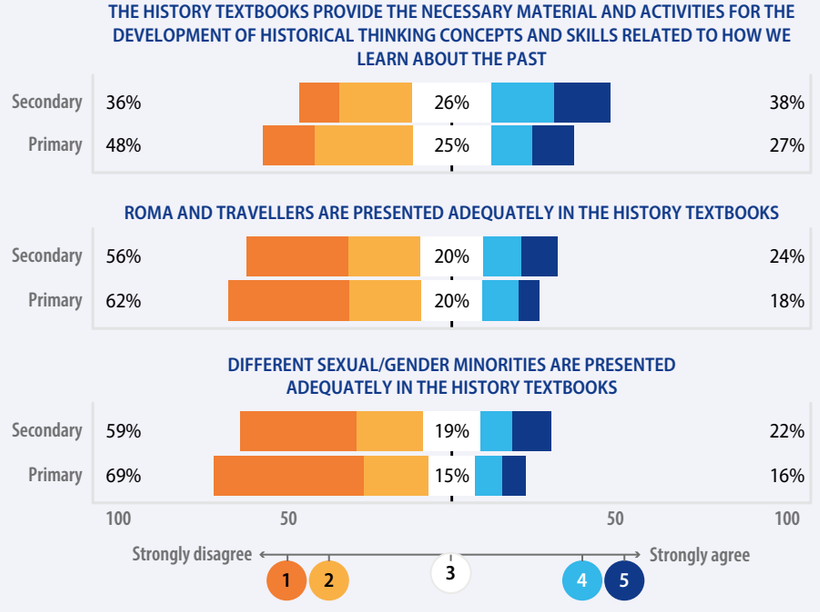
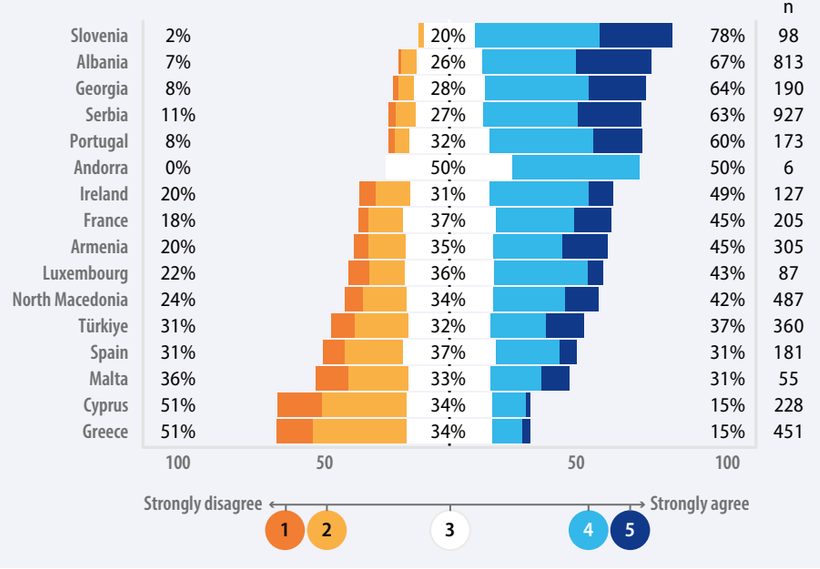


Figure 5.11 – Views of TES respondents, by member state, on whether history textbooks provide the necessary material for developing historical thinking skills

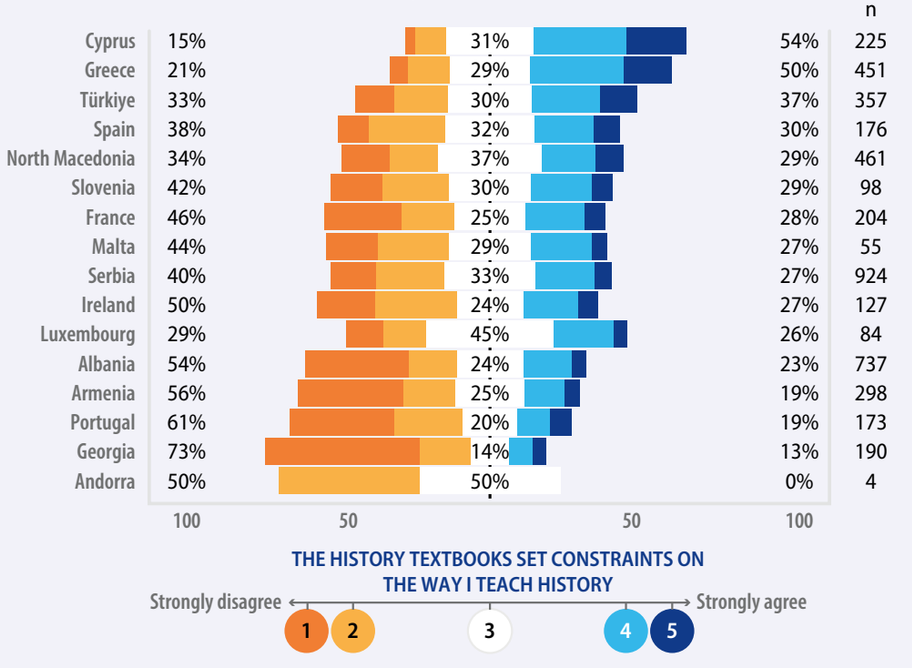
The history textbooks provide the necessary material and activities for the development of historical thinking concepts and skills related to how we learn about the past



Accordingly, half of the surveyed teachers in Cyprus (54%) and Greece (50%), but also more than one third of those in Türkiye (37%) expressed a view that the history textbooks set major constraints on the way they teach history **(Figure 5.12)**. In contrast, the overwhelming majority of respondents from Georgia (73%) disagree or strongly disagree with the statement that their history textbooks constrain their history teaching, followed by teachers in Portugal (61%), Armenia (56%) and Albania (54%).

Figure 5.12 – Views of TES respondents, by member state, on whether textbooks set constraints on their history teaching

Please indicate the extent to which the following items apply in your opinion to the history textbooks that are available



As shown in **Figure 5.13**, 73% of the teachers in Slovenia, 70% in Albania and 61% in Serbia believe that the history textbooks use unbiased language. Most commonly, respondents from North Macedonia (40%), Greece and Luxembourg (both 34%), Spain and Türkiye (both 33%), Armenia (32%) and France (31%) disagree with this statement.

Two thirds of respondents in Türkiye (67%), and more than half of the teachers in Albania (56%) and Greece (55%), agreed that history textbooks present a nation-centred narrative **(Figure 5.14)**. The participants who most commonly rejected such a statement were from Andorra (75%), Georgia (65%) and Portugal (51%).

Figure 5.13 – Views of TES respondents, by member state, on unbiased language in history textbooks

Please indicate the extent to which the following items apply in your opinion to the history textbooks that are available

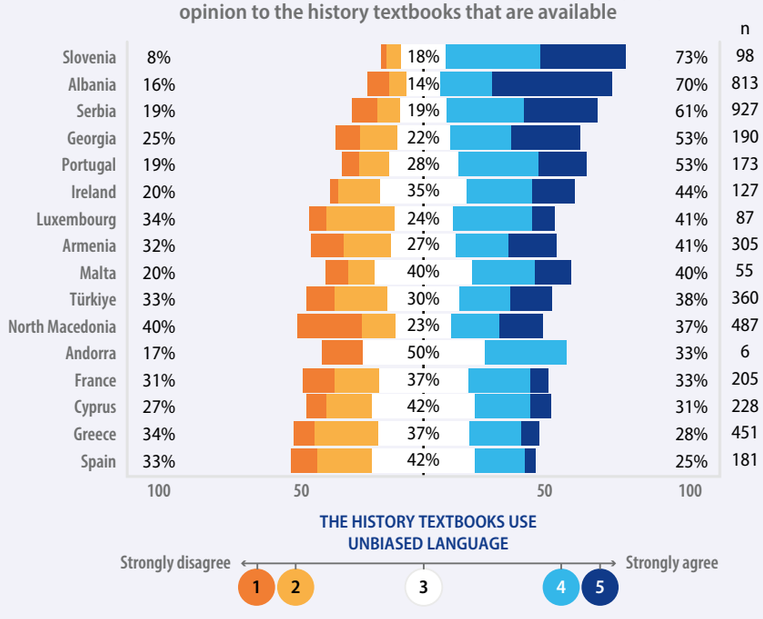
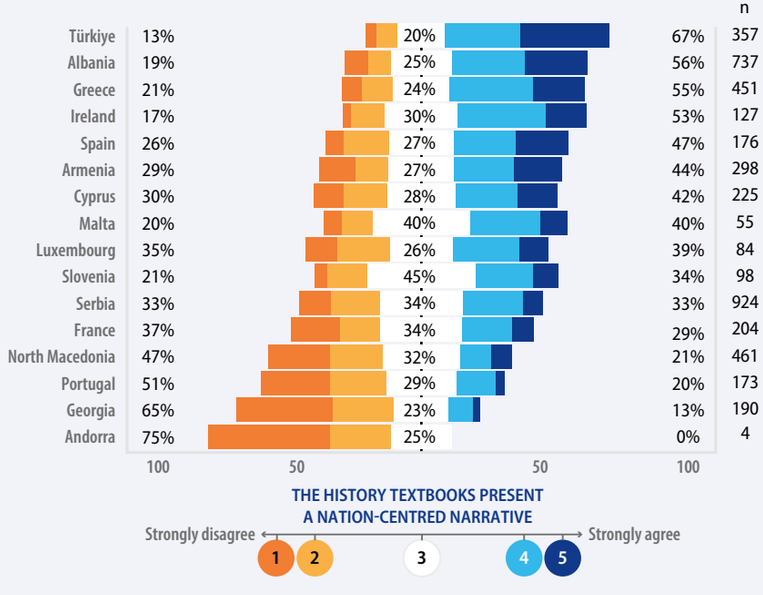


Figure 5.14 – Views of TES respondents, by member state, on a nation-centred narrative in history textbooks

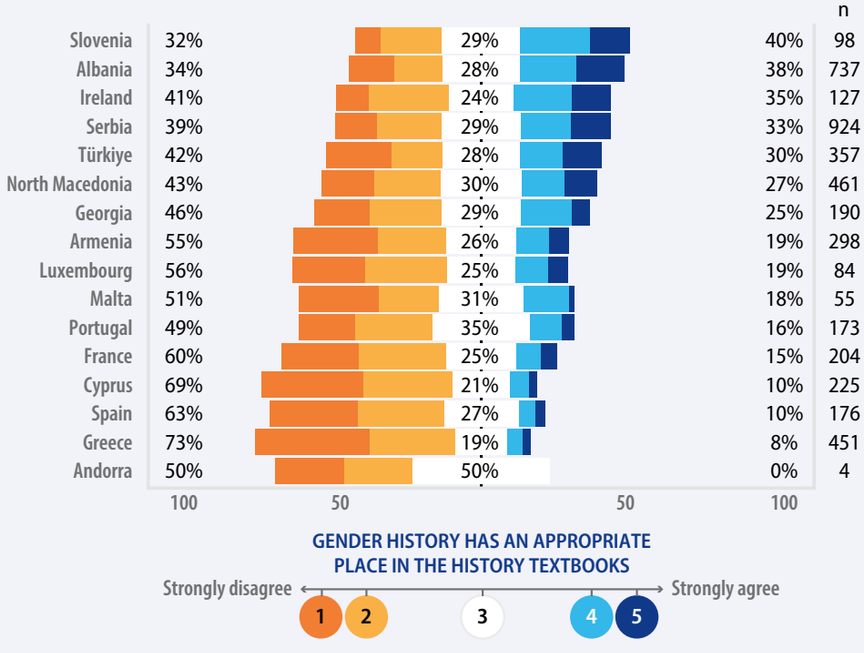
Please indicate the extent to which the following items apply in your opinion to the history textbooks that are available



While more than one third of teachers from Slovenia (40%), Albania (38%), Ireland (35%) and Serbia (33%) believe that gender history is accorded an appropriate level of importance in history textbooks, the majority of surveyed teachers in Greece (73%), Cyprus (69%), Spain (63%), France (60%), Luxembourg (56%), Armenia (55%) and Malta (51%) stated that gender history is not adequately considered in textbooks **(see Figure 5.15)**.

Figure 5.15 – Views of TES respondents, by member state, on the place of gender history in history textbooks

Please indicate the extent to which the following items apply in your opinion to the history textbooks that are available



There is a strong consensus among a large majority of the teachers from various OHTE member states that the history of childhood is not adequately presented in the history textbooks. Although still in a considerably large share, Albania (47%) and Slovenia (42%) were the countries where the smallest percentage of teachers considered childhood history to be inadequately included. In all other countries, the majority of teachers regard the history of childhood as not having an appropriate place in textbooks **(Figure 5.16)**.

Another important result of the TES is that the majority of the teachers in six member states believe that different ethnic, linguistic, religious and socio-cultural groups are not adequately represented in the history textbooks **(Figure 5.17)**. At least two thirds of respondents from Greece (76%), Cyprus (68%), Andorra (67%) and Spain (65%) perceive these groups to be not adequately included. In contrast, more than half of teachers from only three member states perceive minority groups as adequately represented: Albania (59%), Georgia (54%) and North Macedonia (52%).

Figure 5.16 – Views of TES respondents, by member state, on the adequate representation of childhood history in history textbooks

Please indicate the extent to which the following items apply in your opinion to the history textbooks that are available

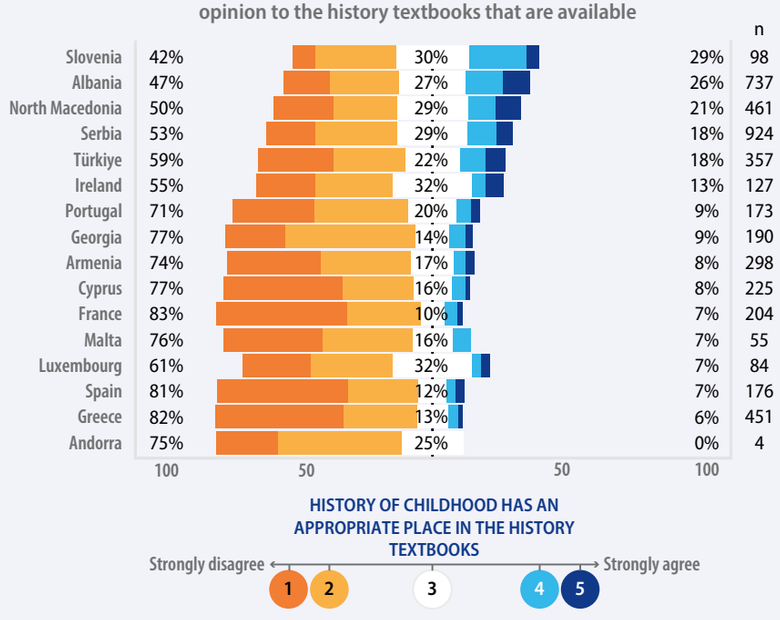
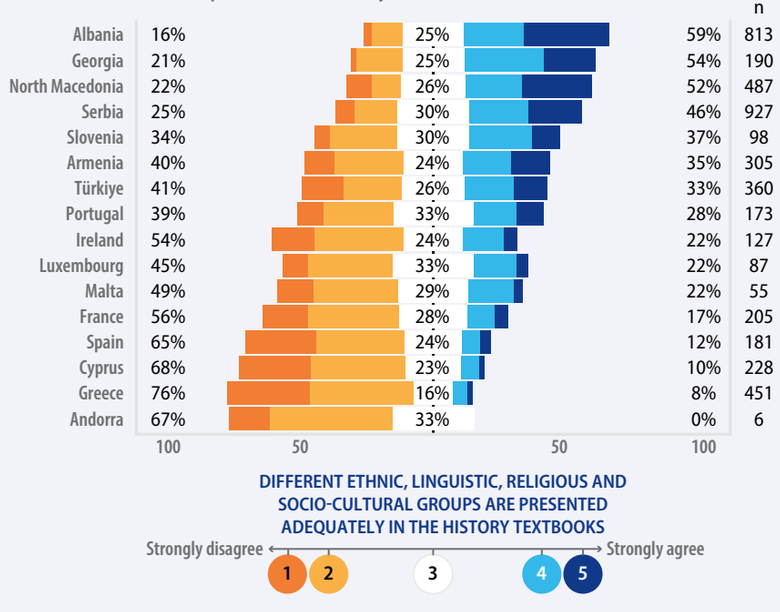


Figure 5.17 – Views of TES respondents, by member state, on the adequate representation of different ethnic, linguistic, religious and socio-cultural groups in history textbooks

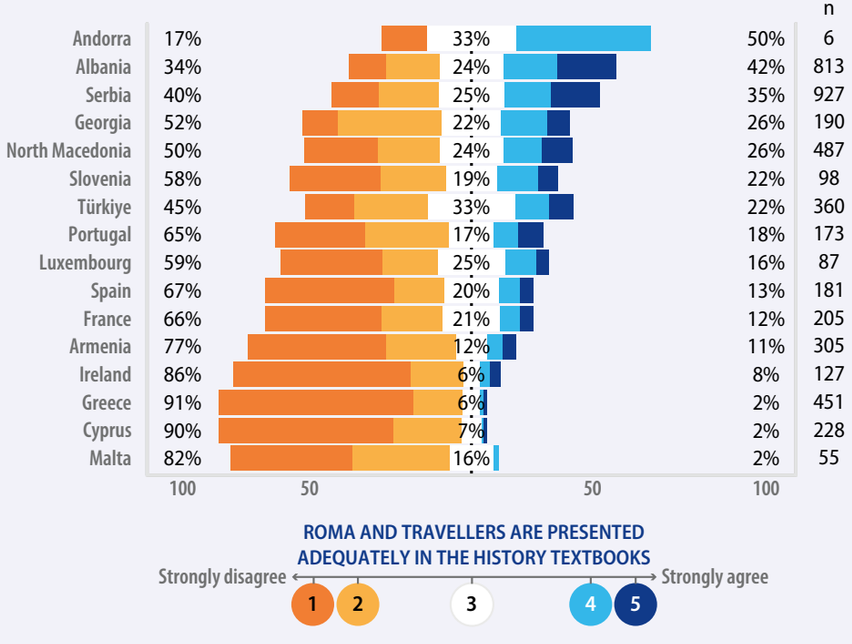
Please indicate the extent to which the following items apply in your opinion to the history textbooks that are available



In regard to the representation of Roma and Travellers in the history textbooks this is even more pronounced. The majority of history teachers in 12 member states stated that, in their view, Roma and Travellers are not adequately represented in the history textbooks **(Figure 5.18)**. Nearly all respondents from Greece (91%) and Cyprus (90%), and more than three quarters of respondents from Ireland (86%) and Malta (82%), view the representation of Roma and Travellers most critically on average in OHTE member states: significantly more than three quarters of respondents disagreed with the statement that Roma and Travellers are adequately represented in history textbooks. In no member state did a solid majority of history teachers agree with this statement. Only in Andorra did 50% of respondents express their agreement with how Roma and Travellers are represented in history. After Andorra, the highest rates of agreement are among teachers from Albania (42%) and Serbia (35%), where more than one third of respondents expressed their satisfaction with this statement. In Serbia however, this result is still lower than the result obtained for the dissatisfaction with the inclusion of Roma and Travellers (40%).

Figure 5.18 – Views of TES respondents, by member state, on the adequate representation of Roma and Travellers in history textbooks

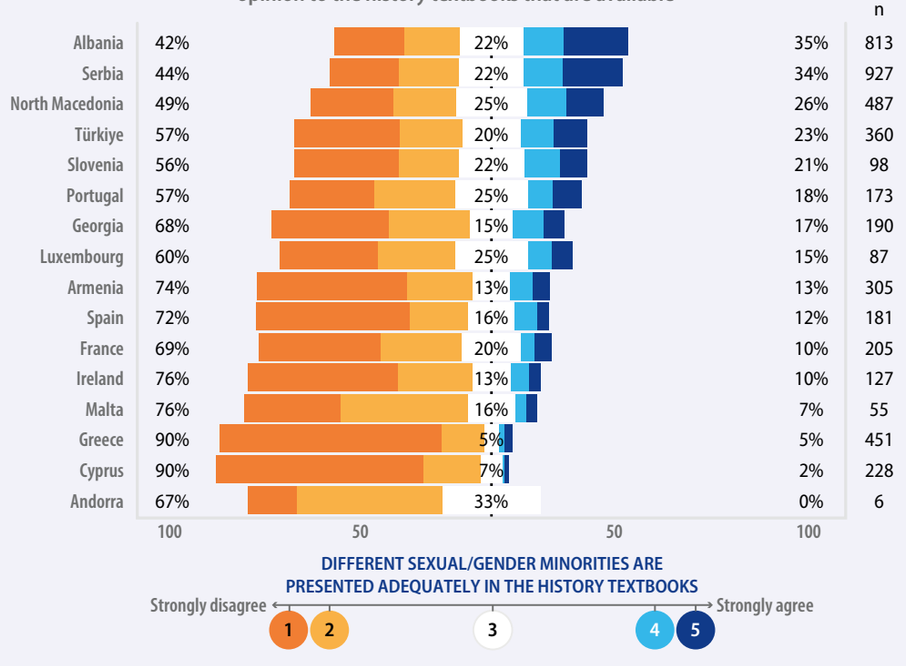
Please indicate the extent to which the following items apply in your opinion to the history textbooks that are available



A very similar result applies to the inadequate representation of different sexual/gender minorities in history textbooks, where the majority of respondents in 13 countries express concerns about the adequateness of how sexual/gender minorities are included in textbooks **(Figure 5.19)**. Respondents from Cyprus and Greece (both 90%) almost have a consensus in the perception that these minority groups are not adequately represented. This perception is also shared by more than three quarters of respondents from Malta and Ireland (both 76%). In no country was there a majority of teachers who perceived the inclusion of sexual/gender minorities to be adequate. In every member state, the share of respondents who find such minority groups not adequately included in textbooks outweighs those who express satisfaction with their representation. Teachers who consider their textbooks as favourable in this regard come from Albania (35%), Serbia (34%) and North Macedonia (26%).

Figure 5.19 – Views of TES respondents, by member state, on the adequate representation of sexual/gender minorities in history textbooks

Please indicate the extent to which the following items apply in your opinion to the history textbooks that are available



Overall, most TES respondents indicated that they consider the historical information presented in their textbooks to be up to date. In eight member states, a majority of respondents expressed disagreement with the statement that the historical information in textbooks is outdated **(Figure 5.20)**. The highest share of teachers endorsing the view that textbooks in their respective countries are up to date were from Malta (64%), Georgia (62%) and Luxembourg (58%). Respondents find their textbooks outdated especially in North Macedonia (33%), Cyprus (31%) and Greece (29%), although a larger share of participants from North Macedonia (38%) and Greece (34%) and an equal share from Cyprus (also 31%) perceive them to be up to date.

Figure 5.20 – Views of TES respondents, by member state, on the extent to which the information presented in history textbooks is up to date

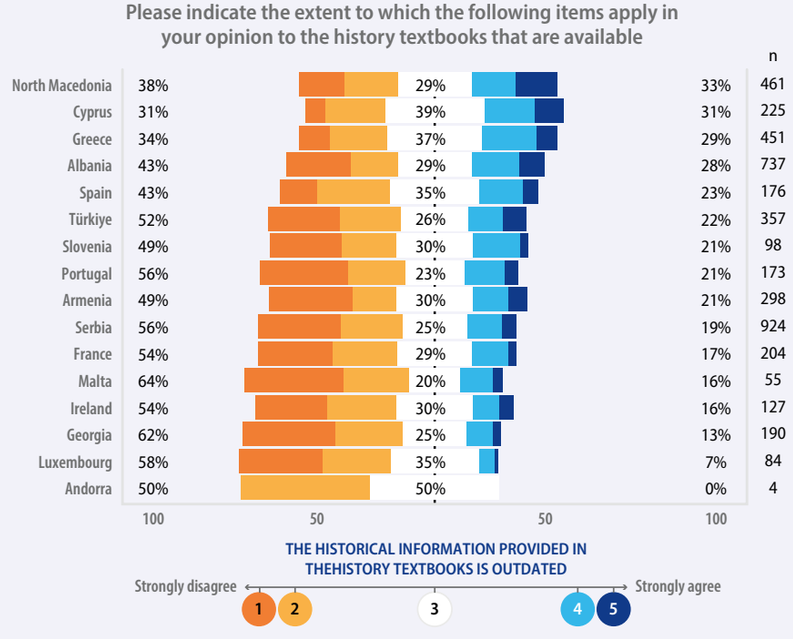
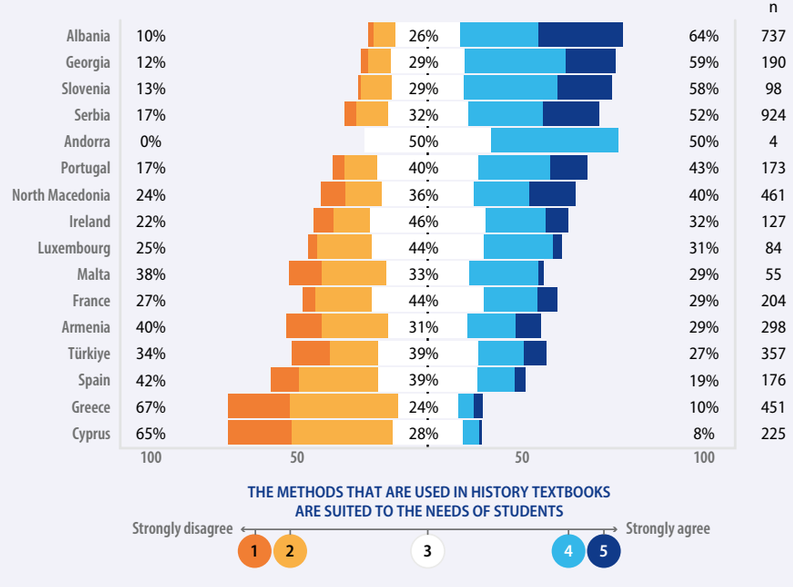


Figure 5.21 – Views of TES respondents, by member state, on the suitability of methods in history textbooks to their students' needs



In regard to the suitability of methods used in history textbooks, the majority of respondents in Albania (64%), Georgia (59%), Slovenia (58%) and Serbia (52%) expressed agreement. Only respondents from Cyprus (65%) and Greece (67%) find the methods proposed by history textbooks to be largely unsuited to students' needs **(Figure 5.21)**.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The results of the EAS and TES indicate great differences among the member states on how teachers in OHTE member states approach and employ textbooks and other educational resources. Some member states (for example, Cyprus, Greece and Türkiye) have centralised school systems with a detailed official curriculum and textbook policy that keep the educational materials and resources used in history classes under state control. However, most member states share the authority for the production of textbooks and other educational materials with local bodies, publishing companies, teachers and various other institutions.

The TES found that, on average, textbooks clearly remain the most widely used type of resource in history teaching in the OHTE member states, followed by teacher notes and, in third place, websites and databases with historical content approved by the education authorities.

Nonetheless, teachers have diverse views on the utility of textbooks and other educational resources; whether textbooks promote multiple perspectives, critical thinking or nation-centred approaches; and whether they use biased or unbiased language. While in general respondents largely agree that information in the textbooks is up to date and that the methods they suggest are suited to the needs of the students, there is deep concern among the teachers surveyed from various member states that societies' diversity is not adequately represented in the history textbooks. This is especially so in regard to sexual and gender diversity and to Roma and Travellers. The under-representation of Roma and Travellers in history education across the member states can also be seen in the inclusion of sources representing Roma and Travellers in the history textbooks and is part of the formal procedure of quality monitoring in only 4 out of 16 member states.

CHAPTER 6

HISTORY TEACHING IN PRACTICE

Chapter 6

History teaching in practice

While the formal dimensions of history education, such as its place in the educational system, the history curriculum, and the textbooks and other educational resources recommended or prescribed in different countries, are undoubtedly key to good-quality history education, the actual dynamic of what happens in the classroom is no less important. While they depend on how much room is allowed for innovation and the deployment of different pedagogies in the history lesson, such pedagogical approaches, beyond the formal curriculum, often shape history teaching and how it can help stimulate historical thinking and historical consciousness, preparing students to become active democratic citizens. Such information is more difficult to deduce exclusively through quantitative methods. For this reason, this chapter combines quantitative and qualitative methodologies, making use of data obtained from the focus groups. The chapter presents findings and data derived from both the teachers' and authorities' surveys and focus groups undertaken with practising teachers to provide an insight into how history is taught in practice across the 16 OHTE member states.

The chapter is divided into three sections. The first section presents the results of the analysis of the substantive content of history teaching, by looking at the relevance teachers assign to fields of history (social and economic history, gender history, etc.), the frequency of their coverage in lessons, the different geographical scales (local history, national history, European history, etc.), the periods covered (medieval history, contemporary history, etc.) and the cross-curricular links with other subjects. The second section describes the diversity of teaching methods and their differences according to country and other variables, such as the experience of teachers. It also analyses the methods proposed by authorities and their tools to collect information about teaching practices in history lessons. The section describes the factors that teachers consider most influential in their practice. Finally, the third section consists of teachers' concerns and what they perceive as obstacles to good-quality history teaching. When approaching the data, it is important to keep in mind the potential limitations in that much of the data is derived from teachers' self-reporting on their own teaching practice in both the TES and focus groups.

SUBSTANTIVE CONTENT IN HISTORY LESSONS

The approaches to history that are most significant for history teachers are social and economic history and political and military history. Three of every four respondents considered both fields of knowledge important or very important (74% and 73% respectively). Additionally, more than half of teachers from all the OHTE countries considered migration history, art history, history of minorities and cultures, and environmental history as important or very important. The least significant field for teachers was gender history: only 37% of respondents indicated a high importance **(Table 6.1)**.[56]

Half of the teachers responding to the questionnaire regarded the history of minorities and cultures as very important. However, teachers in the focus groups noted that such histories tend to be taught from a European perspective and that classes on this subject rarely involve learning about non-European histories, except where learning about colonialism.[57] The potential of such history teaching to tackle stereotypes and prejudices by helping to understand the historical links and intersections between different communities that share the same space was also reflected in the focus group discussions. The focus group participants emphasised that, to fully benefit from this potential, alternative sources of information that include the perspectives of marginalised groups should be introduced in history lessons because such voices are often absent or underrepresented in standard learning materials. The need to include the voices of members of minority groups is also in line with the Council of Europe (2018b) recommendations.

However, teachers in the focus groups said that there are many challenges to achieving this, mainly involving the need for and the use of sources to explain the other's point of view. Otherwise, when minority groups are mentioned in class the perspective will always be the majority's point of view. For example, the available sources for teaching about the colonisation of Latin America tend to be from Spanish colonists, not indigenous peoples.[58] Teaching the colonial past as a challenging part of history in many European countries is a way to reconcile past, present and future. In the same vein, another challenge that teachers always face in class concerns the stereotypes and prejudices that students bring from home and that might also be held by teachers. Thus there is a demand for training that will equip teachers with the tools and mechanisms to deconstruct students' and their own prejudices and stereotypes in the classroom.

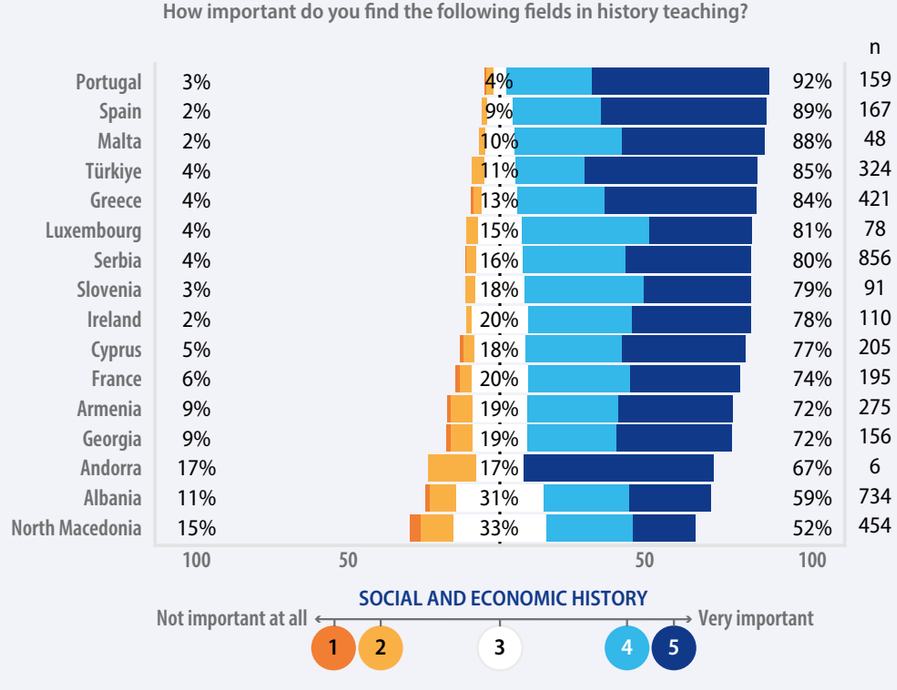
There are notable differences between countries as to the fields of history considered most relevant by teachers. The teachers who rated the relevance of social and economic history highest are from Portugal (92%), Spain (89%) and Malta (88%). At the other end of the scale, this percentage is 59% for teachers in Albania and 52% for those in North Macedonia **(Figure 6.1)**.

Table 6.1 – Importance of fields in history teaching, as indicated by TES respondents[59]

Item	Mean (sd)	Not very or least important (%)	Moderately important (%)	Very or most important (%)	n
Social and economic history	4.07 (0.96)	6.68	19.63	73.69	4 279
Political and military history	4.06 (1)	7.9	19.56	72.54	4 279
Migration history	3.68 (1.01)	12.36	30.27	57.37	4 279
Art history	3.63 (1.11)	16.57	28.23	55.2	4 279
History of minorities and cultures	3.55 (1.07)	16.92	30.38	52.7	4 279
Environmental history	3.55 (1.14)	18.93	28.44	52.63	4 279
Gender history	3.06 (1.23)	33.28	30.12	36.6	4 279

Note: the TES asked teachers, "How important do you find the following fields in history teaching? Ranging from 1 (not important at all) to 5 (very important)".

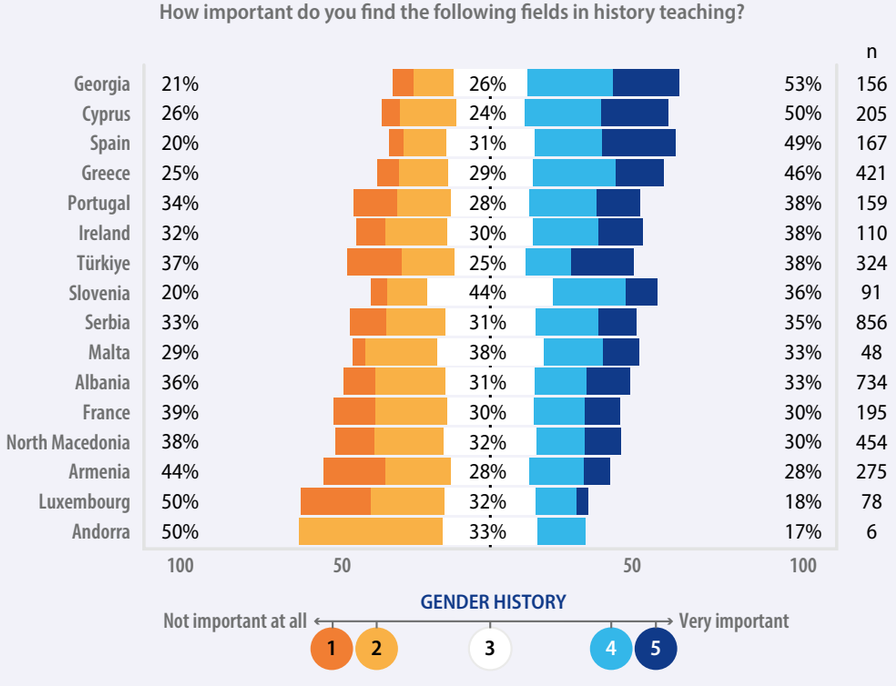
Figure 6.1 – Importance of social and economic history as indicated by TES respondents, by member state



56. The data in this chapter are derived from the TES where not indicated otherwise.
57. EFG 3, 26 January 2023; EFG 4, 1 February 2023; EFG 5, 2 February 2023.
58. EFG 3, 26 January 2023.
59. A comprehensive breakdown of all items per country can be found in the Technical Appendix (Volume 3, Item 3, Table 3). No definitions of terms were provided for the teachers in the TES.

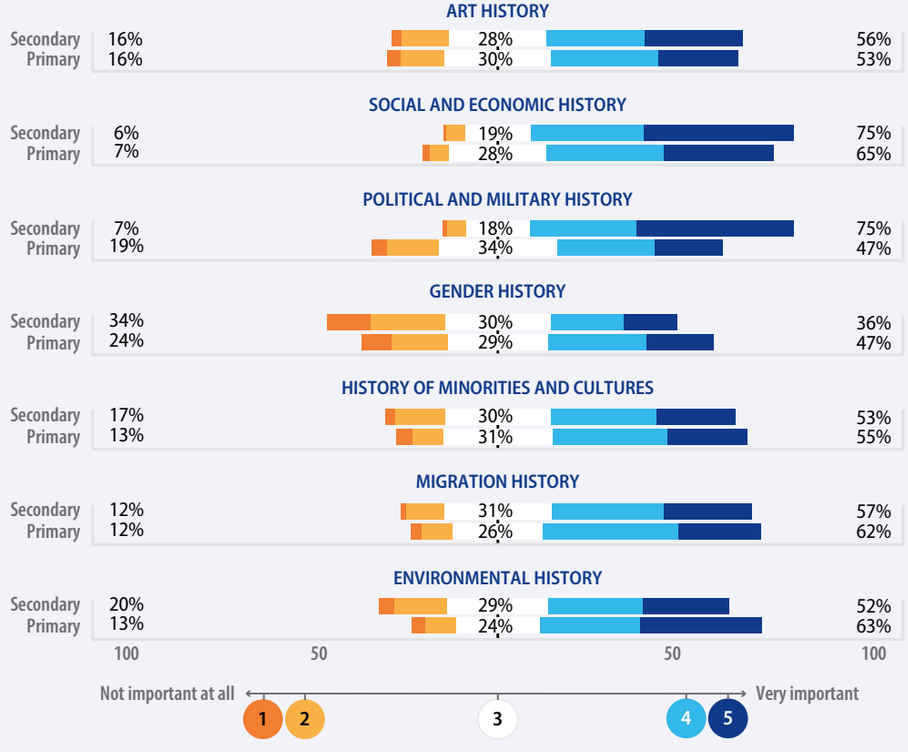
The item with the lowest overall score is gender history. The teachers who rated the importance of this field of history lowest are from Andorra (17%), Luxembourg (18%) and Armenia (28%). In contrast, teachers from Georgia (53%), Cyprus (50%), Spain (49%) and Greece (46%) consider gender history to be important or very important **(Figure 6.2)**. There are also observable differences on the basis of the respondents' gender. Male teachers scored its importance significantly lower (2.83 out of 5) than women (3.19 out of 5) and people who declared themselves non-binary (3.33 out of 5).

Figure 6.2 – Importance of gender history as indicated by TES respondents, by member state



There is a notable difference as to the importance assigned to different fields of history by primary and secondary school teachers **(Figure 6.3)**. While the percentages for art history and history of minorities and cultures are fairly similar, both social and economic history and political and military history, the two fields of history that respondents found most important overall, are significantly seen as less important by primary school teachers. This is an interesting find, particularly as it correlates with considerably higher emphases being placed on the importance of gender history, environmental history and migration history by respondents who teach in primary schools. It is a surprising find to some extent, given the expectation of a higher degree of complexity in the history education being offered at secondary school level, and needs to be investigated further.

Figure 6.3 – Perceived importance of different fields of history by primary and secondary school teachers[60]



In addition to examining their importance, the presence of different fields of history in history lessons has also been explored. As shown in **Table 6.2**, the fields of history that are most frequently covered in history lessons are political and military history (73% of teachers teach it often) and social and economic history (61% of teachers teach it often). More than 50% of the teachers from 15 of the 16 OHTE member states frequently teach political and military history **(Figure 6.4)**. In contrast, nearly half of the teachers said they never or rarely cover in their history lessons gender history and environmental history, and 4 of 10 teachers never or rarely handle migration history and history of minorities and cultures.

60. There were no responses from primary-level history teachers from Armenia, Luxembourg, Malta, Portugal and Slovenia. Primary-level history teachers from Serbia constituted 0.19% of the total respondents.

Table 6.2 – Frequency of use of fields of history, as indicated by TES respondents[61]

Item	Mean (sd)	Never and rarely (%)	Sometimes (%)	Almost always and regularly (%)	n
Social and economic history	4.04 (1.11)	11.04	15.63	73.3	4 247
Political and military history	3.73 (1.10)	14.36	24.32	61.31	4 247
Migration history	3.11 (1.17)	32.28	30.91	36.8	4 247
Art history	2.99 (1.18)	37.34	29.83	32.82	4 247
History of minorities and cultures	2.89 (1.12)	38.52	33.43	28.04	4 247
Environmental history	2.61 (1.20)	50.97	33.43	28.04	4 247
Gender history	2.51 (1.18)	53.8	26.11	20.1	4 247

Note: the TES asked teachers, "How important do you find the following fields in history teaching? Ranging from 1 (not important at all) to 5 (very important)".

These findings are consistent with previous research on the presence of the history of minorities and cultures and gender history in textbooks, curricula and teacher training (Chiponda and Wassermann 2011; Schugurensky and Wolhuter 2020; Steven and Martell 2019). Social and economic history has a notable presence in the history lessons (more than 60% of teachers indicate that they teach this field of history often). However, the low presence of history of minorities and cultures, migration history and environmental history (only about 30% of teachers indicate that they teach them often) and the even lower presence of gender history (20%) show that the approach of this field of history is primarily from a social structural perspective. This approach, popular in the mid-20th century, is based on the analysis of social structures, social groups, demography and so on, ignoring for the most part more recent developments in social history (since the 1970s), which saw the inclusion of microhistories, the gender dimension and the histories of minority groups within its remit. As such, topics emphasised by the Council of Europe (2018b), such as the histories of women and minorities, of ordinary life and of sensitive and controversial issues, have not yet been consolidated as the focus of the history lessons.

There are once again significant differences between countries. Teachers from Serbia (92%) and Armenia (89%) indicated that political and military history is the field of history they teach most often in their lessons (Figure 6.4). These figures are significantly lower for teachers in Georgia (57%) and Albania (49%).

Generally, the field least taught in history lessons is gender history. Fifty per cent or more of the teachers from 10 of 16 OHTE member states rarely or never teach gender history in their history lessons. **Figure 6.5** shows that it is rarely or never taught by teachers from Andorra (0%), Malta (6%), Cyprus (6%) and Greece (7%).

61. A comprehensive breakdown of all items per country can be found in the Technical Appendix (Volume 3, Item 3, Table 4).

Figure 6.4 – Frequency of use of political and military history as indicated by TES respondents, by member state

How frequenly are you teching the following fields in history teaching?

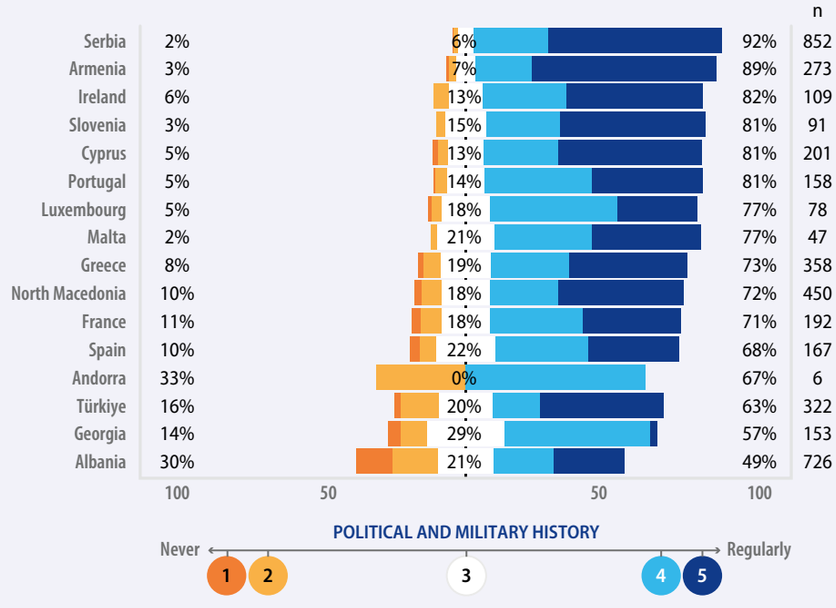
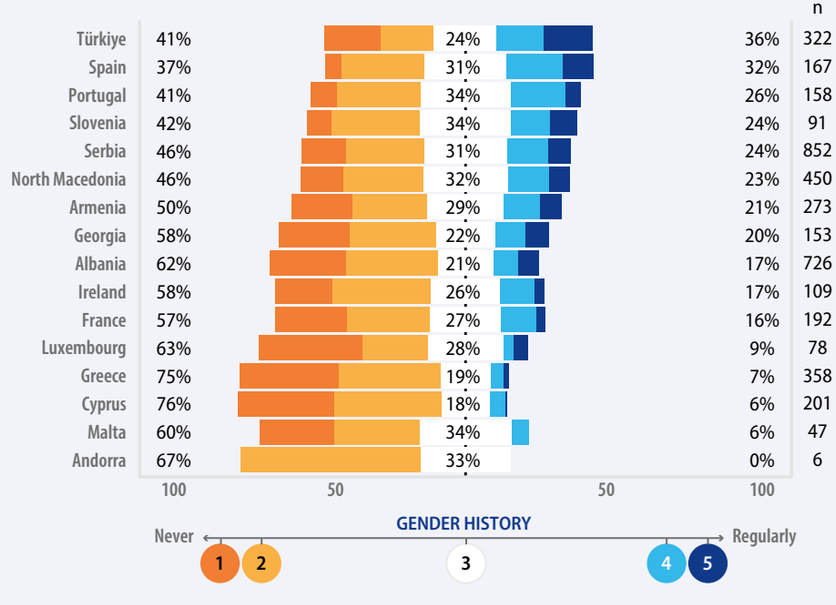


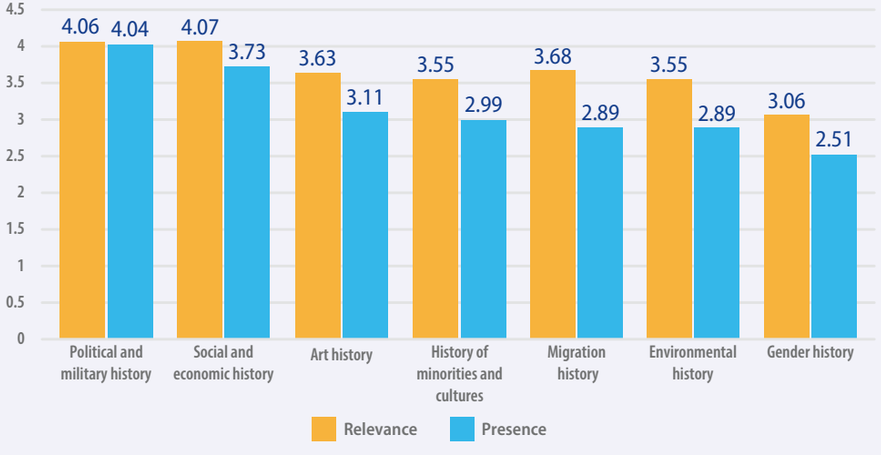
Figure 6.5 – Frequency of use of gender history as indicated by TES respondents, by member state

How frequenly are you teching the following fields in history teaching?



It is important to compare the differences between the relevance teachers assign to these fields of history and their frequency in history lessons. The scores obtained for the frequency of the teaching of any given field of history were consistently lower than the scores teachers assigned to their perceived relevance. Only political and military history obtained a similar response rate in terms of both relevance and presence in the history lessons. The fields of history that are least represented in history lessons in comparison to their relevance as indicated by teachers are environmental history (mean 2.61 in terms of presence/mean 3.55 in relevance) and migration history (mean 2.89 in terms of presence/mean 3.68 in relevance) **(see Figure 6.6)**.

Figure 6.6 – Comparative relevance for teachers compared to presence in history lessons as indicated by TES respondents[62]



GEOGRAPHICAL SCALES, PERIODS COVERED AND CROSS-CURRICULAR LINKS

In terms of the geographical scales at which history is taught, most teachers place the most emphasis on national history **(Table 6.3)**. This demonstrates that the legacy of closely connecting history teaching to national identity still has a strong influence on history curricula and history lessons today (Carretero 2011; Wilschut 2010). More than half of teachers (54%) indicated that national history is relevant or most relevant in their history lessons. This percentage drops to 48% for European history, 44% for world history and 27% for both local/regional history (subnational) and regional history (supra-national), respectively.

62. Standard deviations to the mean value for these items are provided in Tables 6.1 and 6.2.

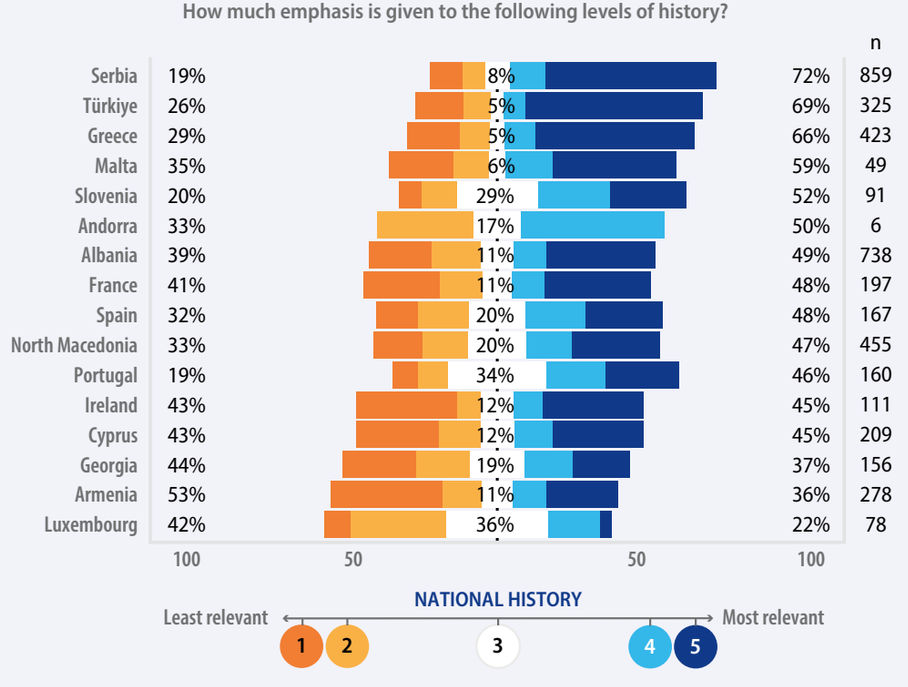
Table 6.3 – Emphasis on geographical scales of history[63]

Item	Mean (sd)	Not very or least relevant (%)	Moderately relevant (%)	Very relevant or most relevant (%)	n
National history	3.44 (1.58)	32.52	12.87	54.60	4 302
European history	3.27 (1.14)	27.36	24.59	48.04	4 302
World history	3.18 (1.45)	33.31	22.31	44.37	4 302
Regional history (supra-national)	2.72 (1.19)	46.69	27.03	26.26	4 302
Local/regional history (subnational)	2.39 (1.40)	60.11	13.18	26.71	4 302

Note: The TES asked teachers: "How much emphasis is given to the following levels of history? Rank the following five options on a scale from 1 (least relevant) to 5 (most relevant)".

There are notable differences between countries in this respect as well. Nearly 70% of teachers from Serbia and Türkiye and two out of three teachers from Greece ranked national history as very or most relevant **(Figure 6.7)**; 36% of teachers in Armenia and 22% of teachers in Luxembourg indicated it to be relevant.

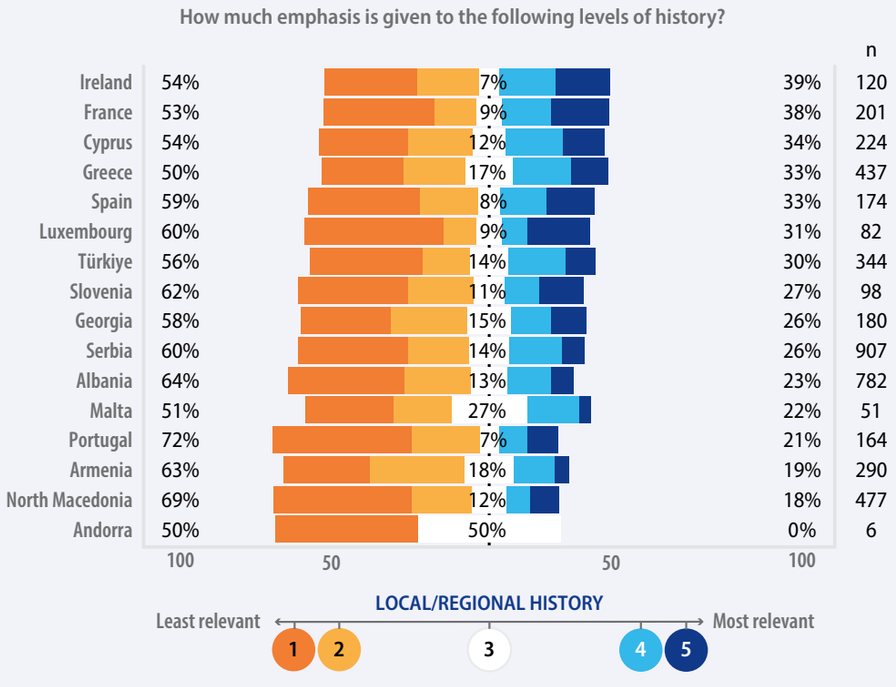
Figure 6.7 – Emphasis on national history as indicated by TES respondents, by member state



63. A comprehensive breakdown of all items per country can be found in the Technical Appendix (Volume 3 , Item 3, Table 5).

Overall, local history was the least emphasised. The teachers who ranked local history highest come from Ireland (39%), France (38%) and Cyprus (34%), whereas those in Portugal, Armenia, North Macedonia and Andorra saw it as least relevant in their history lessons **(Figure 6.8)**.

Figure 6.8 – Importance of gender history as indicated by TES respondents, by member state



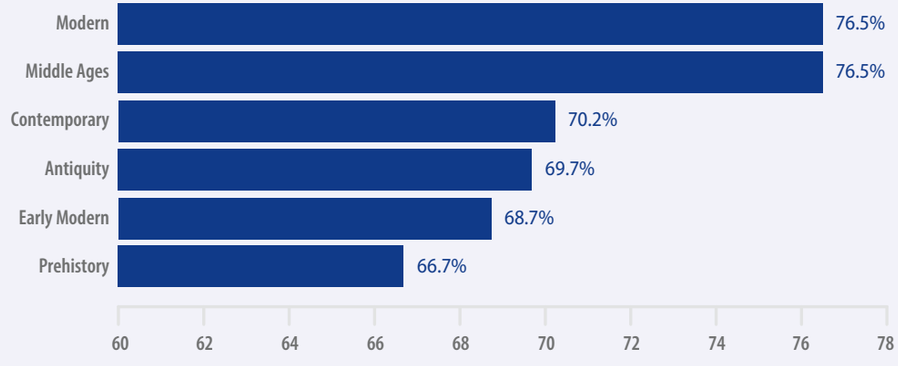
The differences in the periods covered by teachers are small **(Figure 6.9)**. Modern history and the Middle Ages appear relatively more frequently in history lessons (76% of teachers in each case). They are followed by contemporary history and antiquity, at approximately 70% each, and by early modern history and prehistory (69% and 67% respectively). Several observations can be derived from these data. First, not only are the figures fairly similar, but all the scores are quite high. This correlates with some teachers' comments from the focus groups that everything from prehistory to the present day is taught repeatedly in the course of a student's education.[64]

The slight differences might, in turn, be explained by the courses covered by teachers who responded to the questionnaire, which could correspond to their personal preferences for a specific period or, alternatively, by the chronological structure of the curriculum.

64. EFG 3, 26 January 2023; EFG 5, 2 February 2023.

However, in the focus groups, participants also mentioned external influences that might affect their decision on what to teach, mainly political or other social pressures stemming from the influence of religious institutions or parents, and also from curricula overload. This makes some teachers consciously decide to leave out certain issues, such as the history of other cultures or controversial areas.[65] Additionally, teachers themselves might be seeking to balance the curricula by emphasising certain periods of history or topics that they find most relevant, as curricula are perceived as overloaded on average by around 30% of TES respondents (see Chapter 4). The influence exercised by different factors in the preference for certain historical periods over others, minor as it appears to be based on the data above, warrants further investigation.

Figure 6.9 – Historical periods covered, as indicated by TES respondents[66]



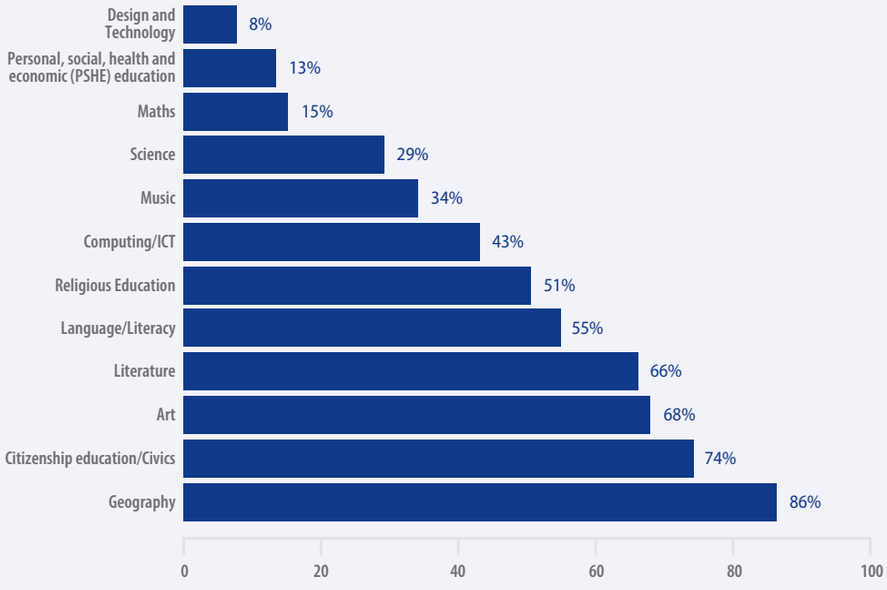
Note: The TES asked teachers, "How much emphasis is given to the following levels of history? Rank the following five options on a scale from 1 (least relevant) to 5 (most relevant)". It was possible to select multiple options. The percentages represent the total number that each option was selected in relation to the overall responses of this question (n = 4 302).

The most frequent cross-curricular links are with geography and citizenship education/civics in the 16 OHTE member states: 86% of teachers indicated that they engage in cross-curricular links with geography and 74% with citizenship education **(Figure 6.10)**. In second place for cross-curricular links are art, literature, language/literacy and religious education, with results ranging from 66% to 51%. Between 43% and 29% of teachers engage in cross-curricular links with computing/information and communication technologies, music and science. Finally, under 25% of teachers engage in cross-curricular links with maths (15%), personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education (13%) and design and technology (7%).

65. EFG 7, 8 March 2023; EFG 8, 9 March 2023; EFG 11, 22 April 2023.

66. A comprehensive breakdown of all items per country can be found in the Technical Appendix (Volume 3, Item 3, Table 6).

Figure 6.10 – Cross-curricular links made in history teaching as indicated by TES respondents



Note: The TES asked teachers, "With which subjects do you make cross-curricular links to history? Please tick all that apply". It was possible to select multiple options. The percentages represent the total number that each option was selected in relation to the overall responses of this question (n = 4 226).

METHODS AND PEDAGOGIES IN HISTORY LESSONS

The TES, particularly its findings on the frequency of methods employed, shows a variety of methods/techniques being used in history lessons by teachers from OHTE countries **(Table 6.4)**. The most frequent method used is lecture/presentations, with 68% of history teachers always or often using this pedagogy. The second most frequently used method is periodisations and timelines (54%) and the third debating on controversial issues (54%). These findings are in line with studies such as those of Voet and De Weber (2020) about the main goals prioritised by teachers, with historical knowledge related primarily to factual data and periodisations.

History teaching practice based on direct instruction persists (Nokes 2017). However, the study of timelines – an integral part of direct instruction – can be done in such a way as to induce thinking about periodisations in history as social constructs as opposed to simply memorising them. In this way, debates on controversial issues allow for reflection on how history is constructed. Similarly, lectures/presentations may also involve interactive elements, for example by embedding intermittent student tasks such as "What would you do next?", or analysis of primary sources/perspectives, in the lesson.

Table 6.4 – Methods for teaching and learning history as indicated by TES respondents[67]

Item	Mean (sd)	Never or rarely (%)	Sometimes (%)	Often or always (%)	n
Lectures/presentations	3.88 (1.06)	10.64	21,26	68.1	4 537
Periodisations and timelines	3.6 (1.07)	15.51	30.14	54.35	4 537
Controversial issues	3.57 (1.03)	14.85	31.22	53.93	4 537
Contrasting historical sources	3.44 (1.06)	18.69	32.56	48.75	4 537
How history is written and used	3.41 (1.01)	17.43	36.2	46.37	4 537
How history is represented in the public space	3.34 (1.05)	20.78	34.61	44.61	4 537
Project-based learning	3.19 (1.08)	26.16	34.15	39.69	4 537
Place-based learning	2.83 (1.06)	40.99	32.72	26.29	4 537

Note: the TES asked teachers, "How important do you find the following fields in history teaching? Ranging from 1 (not important at all) to 5 (very important)".

It is therefore important to acknowledge that, depending on how they are implemented, these methodologies may indicate a preference for rote learning or single-narrative approaches, but they may also involve the development of historical thinking skills.

According to the focus groups' findings, the use of lectures/presentations in history lessons is related to another challenge: parents' pressure on their children to pass and get good grades, especially when a final examination is near. As one teacher put it, "Many parents still think that history is memorisation and that it is just a question of knowing a lot, as much as possible, about that subject instead of improving the skills that students need".[68]

Thus, it would appear that there is a degree of pressure from parents to encourage the direct instruction of historical content and memorisation so that students pass what are primarily fact-based examinations. However, further investigation would be needed to clarify whether these have indeed been prompted by the nature of the examinations or whether parents (and teachers themselves) believe that didactic, teacher-centred approaches are a guarantee of good exam results.

As shown in **Table 6.4**, there is moderate use of some pedagogies related to historical thinking, such as contrasting historical sources (Monte-Sano, De la Paz and Felton 2014; Reisman 2012), and of methods related to developing a historical consciousness, such as how history is represented in public spaces (Kölbl and Konrad 2015; Körber 2021). Slightly less than half of the respondents indicated that they use these methods frequently in their history lessons.

According to the focus groups' findings, teachers try to bring in more active learning to develop historical thinking when possible. Thus teachers are using more research methods not only to research events and figures of the past but also

67. A comprehensive breakdown of all items per country can be found in the Technical Appendix (Volume 3, Item 3, Table 7).

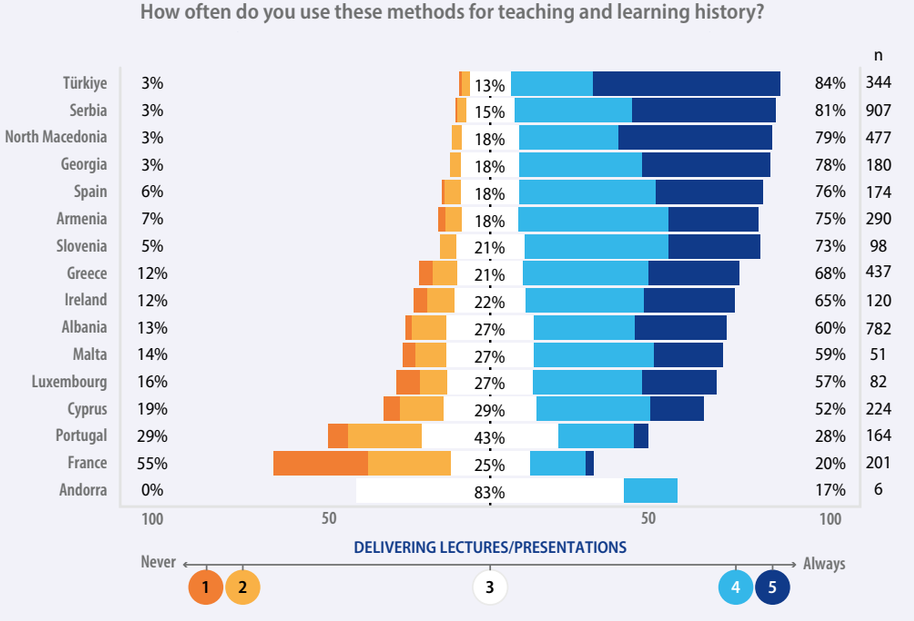
68. EFG 4, 1 February 2023.

to understand how to use primary sources and to explore multiperspectivity.

Finally, the least used methods are place-based learning (26%) and project-based learning (40%). We can observe a still unconsolidated use of active methods such as project-based learning or the use of visits to heritage places, despite research that has shown the positive results they yield in history lessons (Gruenewald, Koppelman and Elam 2007). Forty-one per cent of teachers' responses indicated that they never or rarely use place-based learning and 26% of teachers never or rarely engage in project-based learning. These results are consistent with the findings analysed in Chapter 5 about the use of museums.

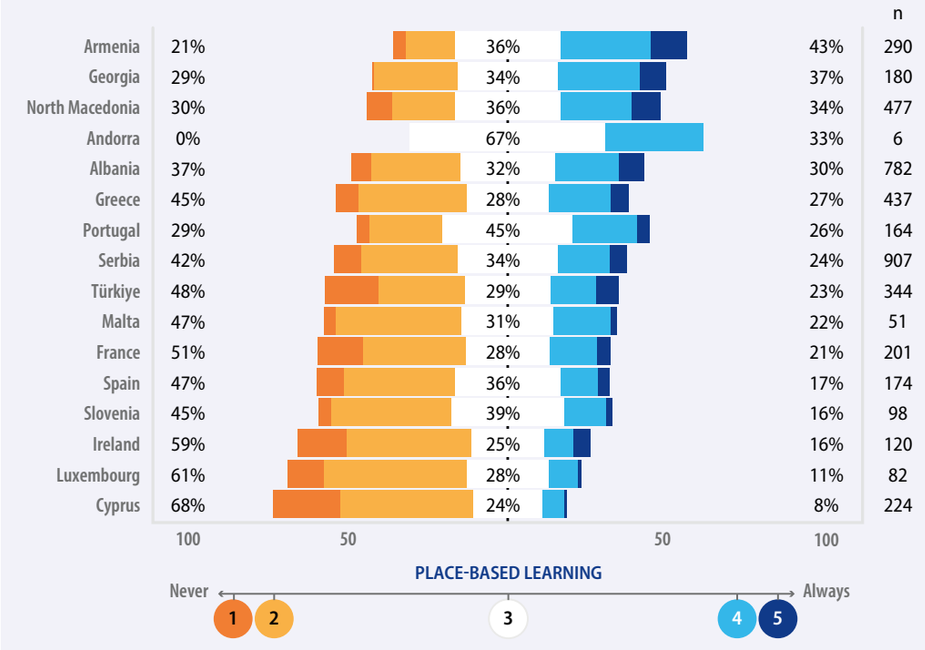
There are observable differences between countries. Most teachers from Türkiye (84%) and Serbia (81%) said that they always or often use lectures/presentations in their history lessons **(Figure 6.11)**. This percentage is significantly lower in Portugal (28%), France (20%) and Andorra (17%). There are also some differences in the use of this method according to the years of experience of the teachers who responded to the survey: 66% of history teachers with 18 or more years of experience replied that they regularly use this method in their classrooms. This percentage increases to 77% for history teachers with four or fewer years of experience.

Figure 6.11 – Use of lectures/presentations as indicated by TES respondents, by member state



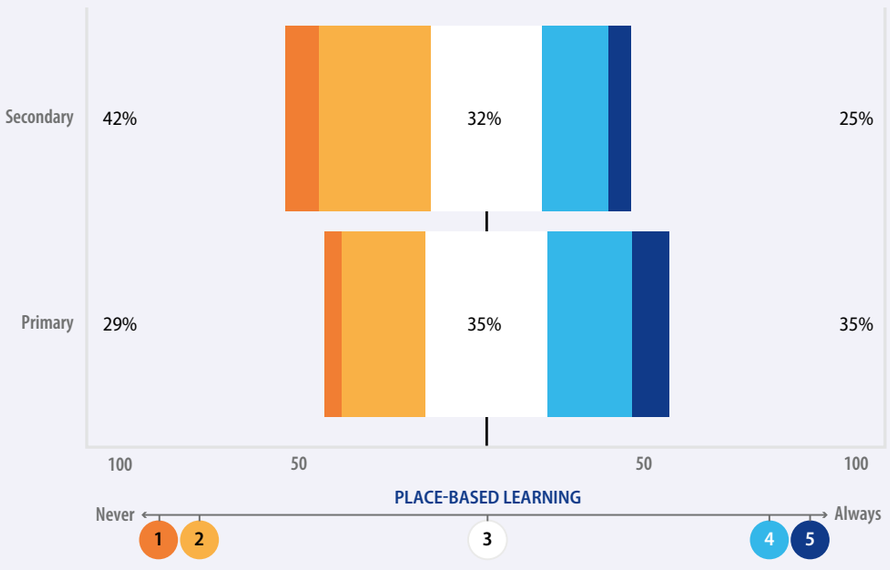
According to the participating teachers, the least used method is place-based learning **(Figure 6.12)**. The teachers who indicated a more frequent use of this methodology are from Armenia (43%), Georgia (37%), North Macedonia (34%) and Andorra (33%). This percentage decreases to 11% among teachers from Luxembourg and to 8% for those from Cyprus. There are also some differences in the use of this method according to the experience of the teachers who responded to the survey. The teachers who use it most frequently have more than 16 years of experience (about 28% of them use it often or almost always), while this percentage is lower for teachers with two or fewer years of experience (22%). Especially when considered together with the finding that lectures or presentations are less used by more experienced teachers, this may indicate that, with increasing teaching experience, educators become more confident to try out other, more active learning-based modes of instruction. This finding in turn has implications for both initial and in-service teacher training, which could be explored in more detail.

Figure 6.12 – Use of place-based learning as indicated by TES respondents, by member state



At the same time, there is a notable difference with regard to place-based learning between primary and secondary school teachers: the former seem to be using this methodology much more frequently than the latter **(Figure 6.13)**. This correlates well with the more pronounced importance of local and regional educational resources noted in Chapter 5.

Figure 6.13 – Breakdown of place-based learning in terms of its use by primary and secondary school teachers[69]



The main concern of teachers in the focus groups was the time it takes to implement more active methodologies. A significant proportion of teachers perceive the density of curricula to be hardly or not manageable (30% according to TES respondents: see Chapter 4), suggesting that they lack the time for active learning methodologies, especially in the latter years of high school, where they need to prepare students for the final examinations, which are based mainly on memorising facts.[70] Thus, overloaded curricula and the high-stakes pressure of exams discourage teachers from implementing new methodologies or using additional resources. According to data obtained from the questionnaire, the use of such methods may also depend on the experience of teachers.

According to the authorities, 11 of the 16 OHTE member states collect information on actual teaching experiences **(Table 6.5)**. In some countries, the monitoring takes the form of sharing best practices. For example, in Serbia the Institute for the Improvement of Education publishes examples of good practices via a website.[71] The Ministry of Education in Spain publishes several annual awards for good practices in Spain. Teachers' engagement is also recognised by the Ministry of Education in Armenia through an annual competition for the best teacher of the year. At lower secondary level in Ireland, history teachers assess students' work through classroom-based assessments, engaging in subject learning and assessment review meetings to evaluate the work's quality against national standards, fostering professional dialogue between teachers and providing feedback based on comments rather than marks or grades.

Table 6.5 – Member states that collect information about teaching practices, as indicated in the EAS

States that **collect data** about teaching practices	Albania	Georgia	Serbia
	Armenia	Ireland	Spain
	Cyprus	North Macedonia	Türkiye
	France	Portugal	
States that **do not collect data** about teaching practices	Andorra	Luxembourg	Slovenia
	Greece	Malta	

According to the EAS, 9 of the 16 OHTE member states regulate which teaching and learning methods should be used in practice **(Table 6.6)**. Among the methods regulated by the nine member states, project-based learning, place-based learning, using contrasting historical sources and multiple narratives about past events, and working with periodisations and timelines are the ones prescribed most frequently. It should be noted, however, that even though the use of these methods is prescribed by the education authorities, the responses to the TES indicate that in practice project-based learning and place-based learning remain the least used methods in the classroom. There is an interesting potential discrepancy here, which correlates with other findings in the report and seems to indicate that a transition to more active learning methodologies has been adopted by the education authorities in the OHTE member states in principle, but that its implementation may be lagging as a result of constraints (such as the time available for covering the curriculum) or examinations focusing on the memorisation of facts (see Chapter 7).

69. There were no responses from primary-level history teachers from Armenia, Luxembourg, Malta, Portugal and Slovenia. Primary-level history teachers from Serbia constituted 0.19% of the total respondents.

70. EFG 1, 2 December 2022; EFG 7, 8 March 2023.

71. Zavod za unapređivanje obrazovanja i vaspitanja Republike Srbije (ZUOV), available at https://zuov.gov.rs, accessed 13 July 2023.

Table 6.6 – Teaching and learning methods that should be used in practice, as indicated in the EAS*

	Lectures/ presen-tations	Controversial historical issues	Questioning how history is represented in public space	Reflecting on how history is written and used	Project-based learning	Place-based learning	Working with periodisations and timelines	Using contrasting historical sources
Albania	●		●	●	●	●	●	●
Andorra		●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Cyprus	●	●		●	●	●	●	●
Greece	●	●		●	●	●	●	●
Luxembourg					●		●	●
North Macedonia	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Serbia	●	●	●		●	●	●	●
Türkiye	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●

* **Georgia:** According to the education authorities, the following constructivist approaches are required: active learning; building new knowledge based on previous knowledge; organisation and interconnection of knowledge; learning to learn – work on three categories of knowledge. This is the basic framework; the rest is determined by the methods and strategies used by the teacher individually with the student.

According to the EAS, 11 of the 16 OHTE member states recommend visiting museums or historically symbolic places, with only Albania, Greece, Ireland, Slovenia and Spain not making such recommendations. For example, in Portugal the Ministry of Education can suggest some activities as a general framework, but in practice teachers have autonomy to organise them; in Serbia, the Ministry of Education issues instructions/ recommendations for carrying out excursions listing the specific museums, memorials and historically symbolic places to be visited; in Armenia, the Ministry of Education provides teachers and students with free access to all museums and historical places for a certain number of visits per year.

State regulations stipulate the use of information and communication technology (ICT) in 12 of the 16 OHTE member states. The education authorities of Andorra, Albania, Armenia, Cyprus, France, Greece, Ireland, Luxembourg, North Macedonia, Serbia, Spain and Türkiye indicated that ICT is recommended or prescribed in the curriculum.

For example, Ireland has a Digital Strategy for Schools, in which the curriculum plays an important role, as it features a series of key skills including digital literacy at lower secondary level. Portugal's Digitisation Programme for Schools (República Portuguesa 2020) promotes the training of teachers to develop and improve their digital skills. This constitutes an instrument for reflection and change of practices in educational organisations and a strategic reference to support decision making and monitoring of the work in schools. The Spanish curriculum aims to ensure that all areas of study contribute to the development of the competences for democratic culture, as developed by the Council of Europe (2018a). Consequently, it is recommended that all subjects make use of ICT resources so that students can develop digital competences. Irish curricula emphasise the use of multiple perspectives in learning history, as well as the analysis of different historical sources (written, visual, audiovisual); these sources can be complementary and do not necessarily have to contradict one another. The education authorities in Armenia and Cyprus offer a free web page, computers and visual materials so that teachers can use ICT in teaching and learning. Despite efforts by the authorities to enhance the use of ICT in history lessons, 56% of teachers ranked ICT in first place in terms of their training preferences (see Chapter 8).

INFLUENCING FACTORS IN HISTORY TEACHING

Textbooks (72%) and exams (56%) are the most influential factors for teachers in their educational practice **(Table 6.7)**. These answers are coherent with the use of textbooks in history lessons (see Chapter 5) and the aforementioned frequency of methods of instruction such as lectures/presentations. In contrast, initial teacher training (43%) and student needs and interests (38%) were the factors that scored lowest. This finding stands in contrast to other research that highlights the importance of these issues in the construction of teachers' identities (for example, Patterson, Bridgelal and Kaplan 2022).

While the TES did not specifically enquire into this aspect, further investigation is needed to explore the extent to which teachers engage with the historical research on the periods and/ or topics they cover in their classes.

Table 6.7 – Factors most influential in teaching practice as indicated by TES respondents[72]

Item	Mean (sd)	(Very) small influence (%)	Moderate influence (%)	(Very) strong influence (%)	n
History textbooks	4 (1.1)	10.16	17.75	72.09	4 135
Exams	3.55 (1.17)	18.07	25.85	56.08	4 135
In-service professional development	3.4 (1.21)	21.93	27.96	50.11	4 135
Initial teacher training	3.19 (1.28)	30.21	26.77	43.02	4 135
Student needs and interests	2.91 (1.44)	37.05	24.96	37.99	4 135

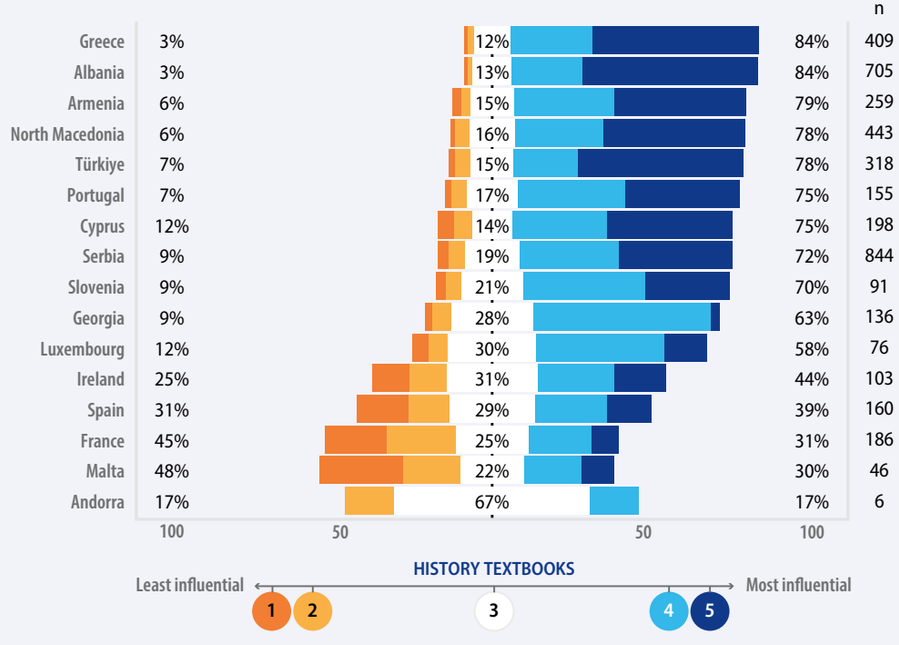
Note: The TES asked teachers, "Which factors are most influential in determining what and how you teach in practice? Ranging from 1 (least influential) to 5 (most influential)".

72. A comprehensive breakdown of all items per country can be found in the Technical Appendix (Volume 3, Item 3, Table 8).

Differences can be noted between countries on the basis of the TES **(Figure 6.14)**. Teachers from Greece and Albania, for example, considered that textbooks greatly influence their educational practice (84%), whereas less than one third of teachers from France, Malta and Andorra consider them a determining factor.

Figure 6.14 – Influence of textbooks in teaching practice as indicated by TES respondents, by member state

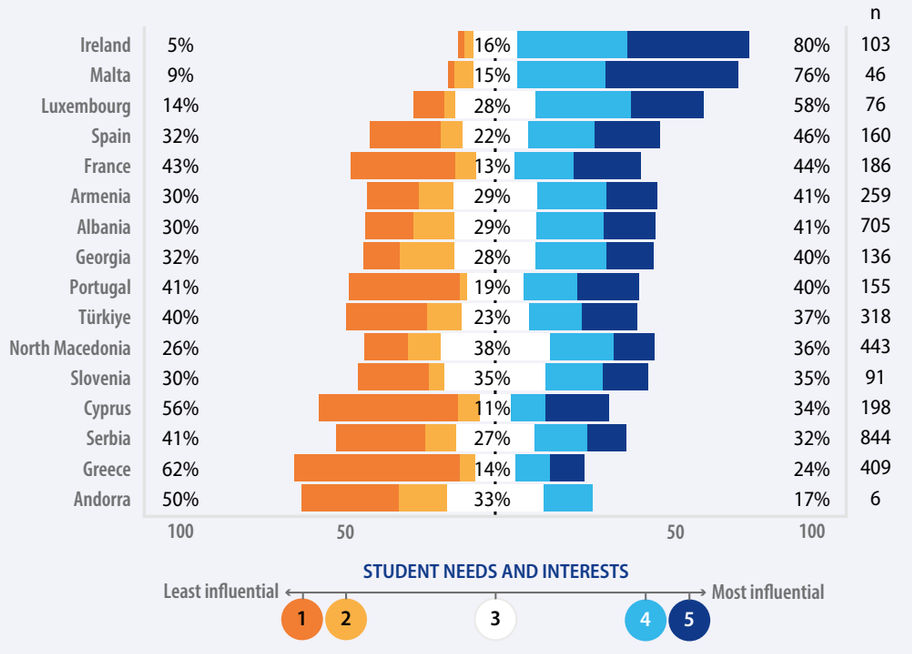
Which factors are most influential in determining what and how you teach in practice?



In general, the lowest-rated item was student needs and interests. The teachers who consider it more influential in their educational practice are from Ireland (80%), Malta (76%) and Luxembourg (58%). In contrast, only 24% of the respondents from Greece and 17% of those from Andorra's teachers considered it influential (Figure 6.15). There are significant differences related to teachers' years of experience. For the teachers with more than 20 years of experience, student needs and interests are very influential (66%) but this percentage decreases to between 10% and 12% for teachers with under 10 years of experience.

Figure 6.15 – Influence of student needs and interests in teaching practice as indicated by TES respondents, by member state

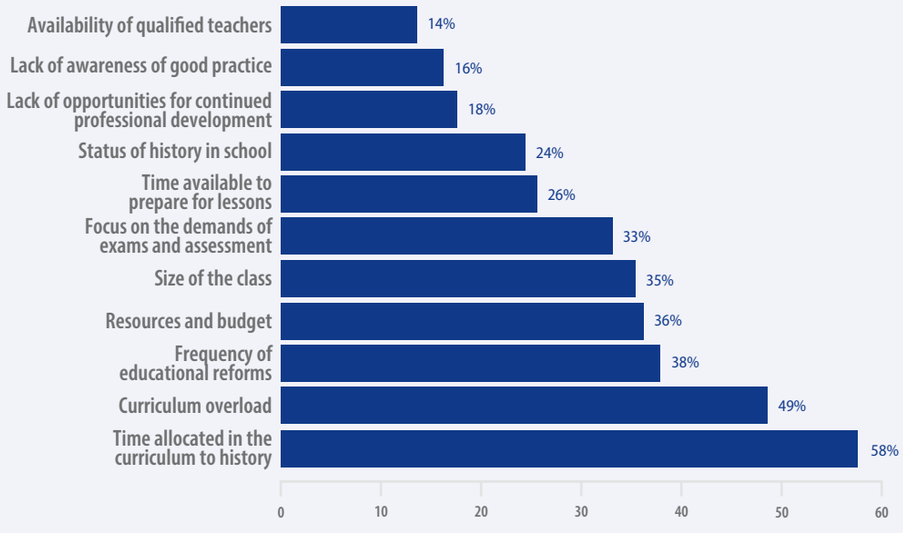
Which factors are most influential in determining what and how you teach in practice?



CONCERNS ABOUT AND OBSTACLES TO GOOD-QUALITY HISTORY TEACHING

As **Figure 6.16** indicates, time allocated in the curriculum to history and curriculum overload were identified as the two most significant concerns or obstacles in relation to good-quality history teaching in the opinion of history teachers (57% and 48% respectively). This result shows a curriculum frequently considered by teachers to be oversized coupled with minimal time available to teach the historical knowledge proposed. This perception by teachers is widespread and is also supported by academic research (Wooley 2022).

Figure 6.16 – Concerns about or obstacles to good-quality history teaching as indicated by TES respondents[73]



Note: The TES asked teachers, "Which of the following represent your concerns/obstacles for quality history teaching in your context? Please tick all that apply". It was possible to select multiple options. The percentages represent the total number of times each option was selected in relation to the overall responses to this question (n = 4 606).

This finding also correlates with the data derived from the focus groups, from which can be discerned that teachers are constrained by an overloaded and restrictive curriculum, especially where there is a final examination at the end of the year. At the end of the cycle, curriculum overload and high-stakes exams have a significant impact on the what and how of teaching. According to a participant, especially where topics are not mandatory in a course that is subject to an end-of-stage exam, content that is optional and thus not included in such examinations is usually skipped.[74]

Additionally, some teachers indicated in the focus groups that there can be pressure from the authorities if their students do not pass the final examinations or if there are differences between the grades received in class and those in examinations. Such pressure can involve calls from the administration,[75] negative impact on career progress[76] or in some instances special training.[77] Thus, even though there are no inspectors inside the classroom, there is pressure to follow the curriculum to ensure that students pass the exams. Focus group participants also indicated that pressure on teachers to ensure that their students pass the exams can also be exercised through informal means such as social pressure or the pressure to accept bribes, if corruption takes place at a higher level. The educational systems of countries with low teacher salaries are especially vulnerable to corruption.[78]

According to the teachers' questionnaire, the second most significant group of factors influencing teaching practice (between 38% and 35%, see **Figure 6.16**) are frequency of educational reforms, resources and budget, and size of the class. These answers relate to the general educational policies and working conditions: the economic resources available to teachers, and the student–teacher ratios in the classroom.

Furthermore, during focus groups teachers indicated that the available budget for schools also impacts what can be done in the classroom, for example, accessing the internet or computers or having enough of a budget to print posters and photos. A low budget limits the possibilities of teaching. Additionally, since the economic crisis of 2008, the national budgets for education have been reduced and, in some cases, as in Greece, Ireland and Portugal, have never recovered. This has also sometimes resulted in cuts in salaries or in salaries frozen for over a decade, as well as in a reduced number of teachers.[79] Moreover, newly appointed teachers work under different conditions and remuneration than older teachers, as reported for example in Ireland.[80] The low salaries compared to other jobs requiring a similar level of qualification, in industry for instance, the pressure stemming from different societal groups, including parents, and the lack of appreciation for the teaching profession in many societies have led to young graduates often not being motivated to go into the teaching profession.[81] This has resulted in the reduction of standards of the profession as some countries have lowered teachers' entry requirements to address teacher shortages.[82]

Ranked third in terms of significance (between 33% and 24% of teachers: see **Figure 6.16**) are the answers related to educational practice: focus on the demands of exams and assessment, time available to prepare for lessons and status of history in schools. The concerns raised by the lowest number of respondents related to teacher training: lack of opportunities for continued professional development, lack of awareness of good practice and availability of qualified teachers (below 20% of teachers).

73. A comprehensive breakdown of all items per country can be found in the Technical Appendix (Volume 3, Item 3, Table 9)
74. EFG 5, 2 February 2023.
75. EFG 8, 9 March 2023.
76. EFG 9, 20 April 2023.
77. EFG 8, 9 March 2023.
78. EFG 8, 9 March 2023.
79. EFG 4, 1 February 2023; EFG 7, 8 March 2023; EFG 10, 22 April 2023.
80. EFG 4, 1 February 2023.
81. EFG 5, 2 February 2023.
82. EFG 4, 1 February 2023; EFG 5, 2 February 2023.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

This chapter addressed history teaching and learning in practice. To summarise the substantive content, political and military history and social and economic history are the most relevant fields of history for teachers and the most widely used in their history lessons. Very often, political and military history is related to the national state discourse about the glorious past of a country, wars and victories, whereas the everyday history of common people (history from below) and the ordinary history (history with a human face) can help students to identify with those who experienced wars and conflicts. The idea of European unity, arising from the aspiration to prevent the horrors and destruction of war experienced by the continent, can be transmitted through history education that focuses on human social rather than exclusively political and military aspects. In this sense, teachers think that the history of minorities and culture, environmental history and migration history are particularly relevant but their presence in history lessons is less common. The field of history with the lowest score in terms of both relevance and presence is gender history. It appears that topics proposed by the Council of Europe (2018b) to develop multiperspectivity in history teaching have still not been fully translated into educational practice. That said, more research is needed to unpack the broad categories mentioned above, clarifying exactly what is being taught under political and military history or social and economic history, for example. While these broad categories could also cover topics such as the history of minority groups or gender history, their relative under-representation in terms of both perceived relevance and frequency would seem to indicate otherwise.

National history remains a dominant theme: more than half of the teachers ranked it as the most relevant. This emphasis can be explained by the role that history teaching has had even up to the present day in the construction of nation states, in which political and military history dominates. European history is the second geographical scale emphasised by teachers, while local history was ranked as the least relevant. It would be interesting for future research to analyse the perception of European history in relation to processes of Europeanisation and in a more differentiated manner. In terms of historical periods, the Middle Ages and the modern age (including liberal revolutions and the Industrial Revolution) are most frequently covered by teachers, although differences between historical periods were not too pronounced and all of them, from prehistory to the present day, appeared generally well represented. The most visible cross-curricular links are with geography and citizenship education/civics.

In terms of the methods used in history lessons, teachers often use pedagogies associated with unidirectional instruction (lectures/presentations and periodisation). However, techniques related to working with historical thinking (work with historical sources) and historical consciousness (representation of the past) also have a notable presence. Active methods such as place-based learning or project-based learning are used least. These preferences appear to be closely related to the concerns or obstacles that teachers identified as factors influencing their teaching practice: curriculum overload and the lack of time to try out active learning methodologies, and the influence of textbooks and exams.

Monitoring by the education authorities involves mainly recommendations about methods or ICT use, creating good practice platforms and recognising teachers' engagement through awards. There is general agreement in the focus groups about teaching practice that the schools' infrastructure and curriculum guidelines can be relevant factors in history teaching and learning practice, but that teachers themselves are the key element. As some participants mentioned, not all teachers are eager to develop themselves and agree to join further training. Some may want to play it safe and just follow the curriculum. However, many teachers are willing to reflect on how they can use their critical sense to develop students' historical thinking, on how to explore new ways to engage students and develop historical concepts more deeply, and how to develop the students' literacy using historical sources. Education authorities must provide the opportunities for this type of professional development.

CHAPTER 7

LEARNING OUTCOMES AND ASSESSMENT

Chapter 7

Learning outcomes and assessment

Learning outcomes are "what a learner is expected to know, understand and/or be able to demonstrate after completion of a process of learning" (Council of Europe 2018a: 75). No less important than the input that goes into the teaching of history in terms of content and pedagogy, learning outcomes as the identification of learning objectives and the extent to which they have been met are in themselves a building block of good-quality history education. This is typically measured through assessment – formal and informal, summative and continuous, undertaken regularly in class or at the end of a course or even cycle through final examinations. Consequently, designing forms of assessment that are attuned to the envisioned learning outcomes is extremely important. Moreover, assessment is often the most reliable indicator of whether the goals set out in curricula, textbooks and other educational resources, and/or developed further in accordance with teachers' own practice and expectations in the classroom, are actually met.

This chapter focuses on what students should learn in history classes and how these learning outcomes are measured by different types of assessment. The chapter is divided into three parts. The first part discusses the learning outcomes and objectives that most teachers believe are important, and the differences between countries, especially when it comes to the use of history education for identity building. The second part gives an overview of the assessment tools and methods that teachers use and how frequently they use them, and comments on the suitability of the assessments that are used for the measurement of the learning outcomes that are considered most important. The third part offers a closer look at exams as the type of assessment that has the greatest influence on teaching practices.

LEARNING OUTCOMES AND OBJECTIVES

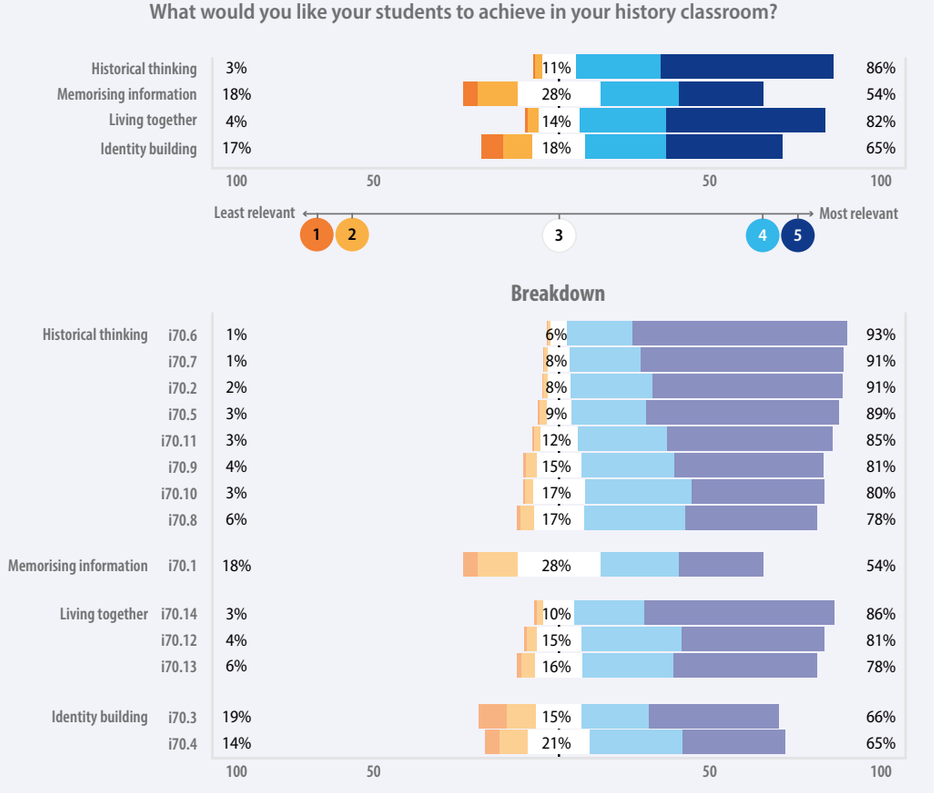
The first part of this chapter analyses the learning outcomes that both the education authorities and the teachers in the 16 OHTE member states find relevant, how they relate to each other and what can be said from the research undertaken for this report on the extent to which the learning outcomes are translated into practice. The sources of information are the EAS, and especially the teachers' questionnaire, where respondents were asked to indicate how relevant they believe certain learning outcomes to be. The available options for responding were different between the EAS and the TES. In the former, the education authorities were asked to assess the extent to which the following learning outcomes correspond to the aims stated in the curriculum:

- Strengthening national identity;
- Developing competences for democratic culture;
- Enhancing critical learning and 21st-century skills (such as problem solving, collaboration and creativity);
- Reinforcing labour market skills;
- Developing historical thinking competences;
- Developing awareness of the cultural diversity of past societies/cultural heritage;
- Developing awareness of current global challenges (such as environmental pollution, migration, refugees);
- Promoting historical empathy and/or multiperspectivity.

The results of the research show that most of these learning outcomes are deemed as aligned with curriculum aims in all the member states, with the exception of "reinforcing labour market skills", which was entirely absent in some curricula and was otherwise consistently ranked lowest in terms of its importance across the member states. The only partial exceptions were Georgia, Ireland and Slovenia, where it was still ranked second lowest. Two other learning outcomes that education authorities identified as relatively less represented in curriculum aims were "awareness of current global challenges" and "strengthening national identity". However, in the latter there are notable exceptions: the education authorities in Armenia, Greece, Malta, Portugal, Serbia and Türkiye consider "strengthening national identity" to be a very important learning outcome. At the opposite end of the spectrum, the learning outcomes that the education authorities across the OHTE member states indicated as being most aligned with curriculum aims were "awareness of the cultural diversity of past societies", "developing competences for democratic culture" and "enhancing critical learning and 21st-century skills". These were followed by "developing historical thinking competences" and "promoting historical empathy and/or multiperspectivity", each of which scored highest in terms of their importance in the curriculum in 9 out of 16 member states.

The questionnaire directed at teachers and educators used slightly different categories for the learning outcomes and enquired about the relevance that the respondents themselves attached to them rather than their presence in the curriculum. Both the categories of analysis and the results of the TES are shown in **Figure 7.1**.

Figure 7.1 – Teachers' views on the relevance of learning outcomes as indicated by TES respondents[83]



Note:	
i70.1: To learn and remember historical facts, dates and processes corresponds to the cluster "Memorising information" in the graph above	i70.8: To understand and reflect on the ethical dimension of history
i70.2: To recognise and discuss the historical significance/ relevance of events and processes	i70.9: To ask and answer historical questions
i70.3: To develop national pride	i70.10: To contextualise historical events and developments
i70.4: To develop a sense of shared European identity	i70.11: To be aware that there are multiple perspectives in history
i70.5: To critically analyse historical sources	i70.12: To learn about multiple identities and cultures that co-existed in the past
i70.6: To identify the causes and consequences of historical events and processes	i70.13: To learn about historical injustices, including forms of political, social and economic violence against minorities
i70.7: To understand and recognise continuity and change in history	i70.14: To develop competences for democratic culture

83. A comprehensive breakdown of all items per country can be found in the Technical Appendix (Volume 3, Item 3, Table 10).

The learning outcomes that most respondents to the TES find (very) relevant for their students to achieve in their history classes are related to historical thinking.

> Historical thinking is associated with the craft of the historian. It involves the use of critical thinking skills to process information from the past. These skills include strategies that historians use to construct meaning of past events by comparing and contrasting sources of information. (Trombino and Bol 2012)

Accordingly, the variation between respondents from different OHTE member states was lowest for the learning outcomes related to historical thinking, which in turn means that teachers agreed most on the importance of this type of outcome. Nevertheless, there were some differences, as the proportion of teachers who found this set of outcomes (very) relevant ranges from 92% of the respondents from Georgia to 64% of the respondents from Spain **(Figure 7.2)**.

However, that historical thinking is seen as (very) relevant by teachers does not necessarily mean that these learning outcomes are also achieved in practice. The likelihood that certain learning outcomes are achieved is also influenced by the choice of content, of teaching methods and of teaching tools. For example, 89% of the respondents find critically analysing historical sources a (very) relevant learning outcome **(see Figure 7.1)**, whereas 26% of them indicate that they never or almost never use primary sources as an educational resource **(see Figure 5.1)** and 19% indicate that they never or almost never contrast historical sources **(see Table 6.4)**. Respondents from different countries disagreed most on the relevance of the learning outcome "asking and answering historical questions", although on average 81% of respondents across the OHTE member states reported finding this learning outcome to be relevant or very relevant.

The second group of learning outcomes that the respondents find (very) relevant are related to living together in diverse democratic societies **(Figure 7.3)**. These learning outcomes are aligned with value-based approaches to teaching and learning, such as global education (Council of Europe 2019), education for democratic citizenship and human rights education (Committee of Ministers 2010).

In terms of learning about multiple identities and cultures that co-existed in the past, there were significantly fewer respondents who found this learning outcome (very) relevant in Andorra (67%), Luxembourg (53%), Malta (67%) and Spain (54%) compared to the OHTE average (81%). The number of respondents who found this learning outcome (very) relevant (81%) is not matched, however, by the values obtained with regard to the relevance of migration history (57%), the history of minorities and cultures (53%) and gender history (37%), all of which can be seen as more specific components of "learning about multiple identities and cultures that co-existed in the past" (see Chapter 6).

Figure 7.2 – Teachers' views on the relevance of learning outcomes related to historical thinking as indicated by TES respondents, by member state

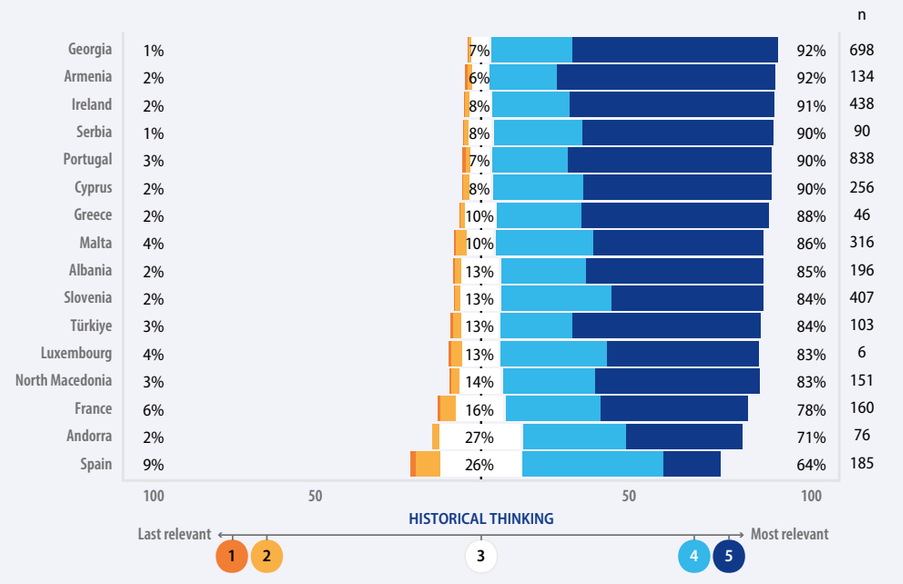
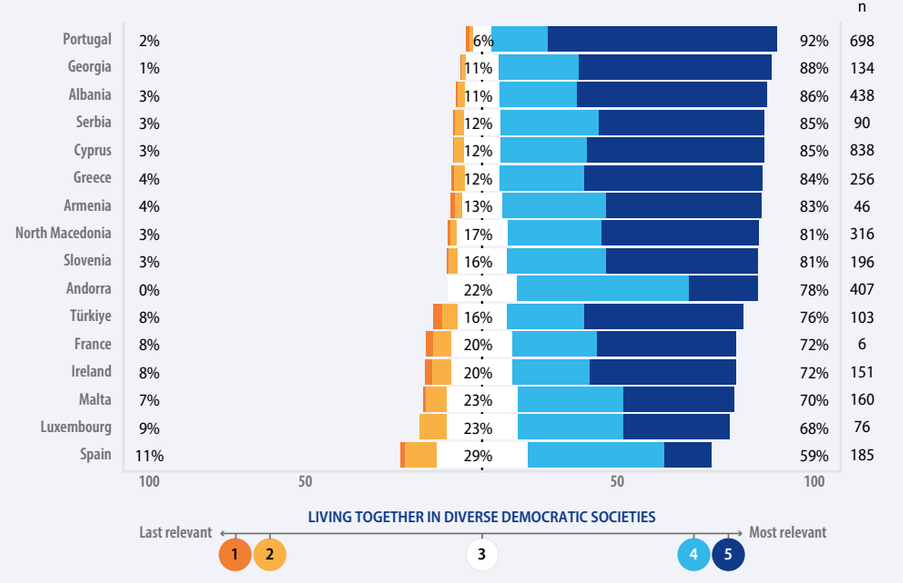


Figure 7.3 – Teachers' views on the relevance of learning outcomes related to living together in diverse democratic societies as indicated by TES respondents, by member state



This could indicate a potential discrepancy or confusion related to terminology, which is also encountered with respect to other aspects of history education covered by this report (see, for example, the section on multiperspectivity in Chapter 4). In such cases, it appears that teachers are more likely to find broader categories, formulated in more "neutral" terms, more relevant than their more specific articulations, which, as in the case of terms such as "minorities" or "gender", might be read as more "political". Some of the broader categories of analysis in this report (see also the section on fields of history in Chapter 6) seems to be worth unpacking and studying further in future research.

The third group of learning outcomes relates to identity building **(Figure 7.4)**. The number of teachers who find this very relevant is considerably smaller than those listed above. Developing a sense of European identity is considered important by an almost equal number of history teachers to promoting national pride.[84] A Pearson correlation coefficient was computed to assess the linear relationship between variables. The highest correlation between developing national pride and other learning outcomes that are not related to identity building is with learning and remembering historical facts, dates and processes ($r = .396$, 95% CI [.369, .421], $p < .01$). The highest correlation between the development of a sense of shared European identity and other learning outcomes that are not related to identity building is with developing competences for a democratic culture ($r = .383$, 95% CI [.356, .408], $p < .01$).

It is important to note, though, that these figures are fairly similar, which in turn could indicate that developing a national and a European identity are not necessarily mutually exclusive; Carretero Rodríguez-Moneo and Asensio (2012: 7) note that, in the past, official school programmes in many countries presented historical content that was explicitly intended to create a specific national or cultural identity and that this use is now more implicit. The data from the TES provide some insights into how teachers in the OHTE member states see this. On average, the number of respondents to the teachers' questionnaire who find the development of national pride and the development of a sense of European identity (very) relevant are very similar: 66% (for national pride) and 65% (for European identity).

A closer look at the data reveals that there are, however, important differences between countries, especially when it comes to preferences for one of the two types of identity building mentioned above. In several OHTE member states more respondents found the

Figure 7.4 – Views on the relevance of learning outcomes related to identity building as indicated by TES respondents, by member state

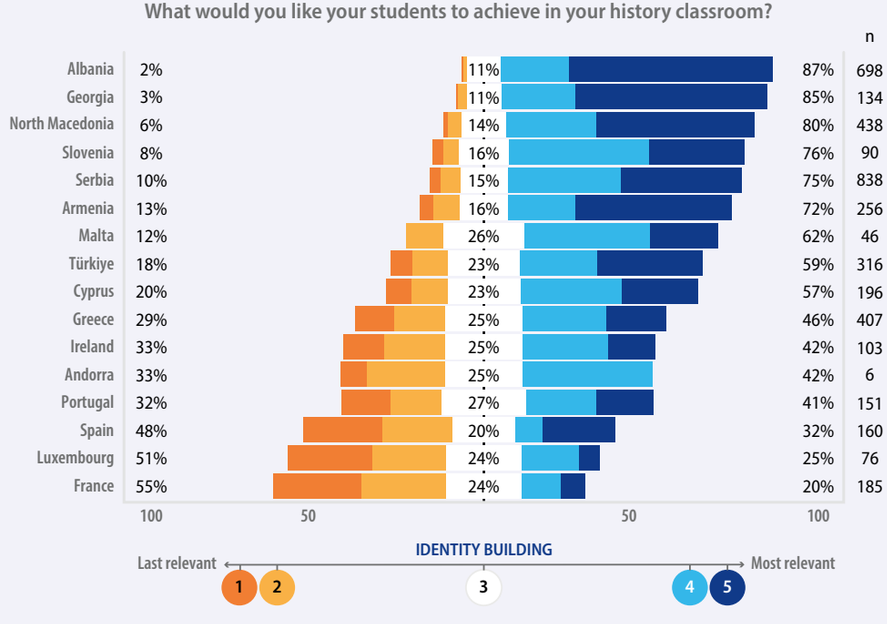
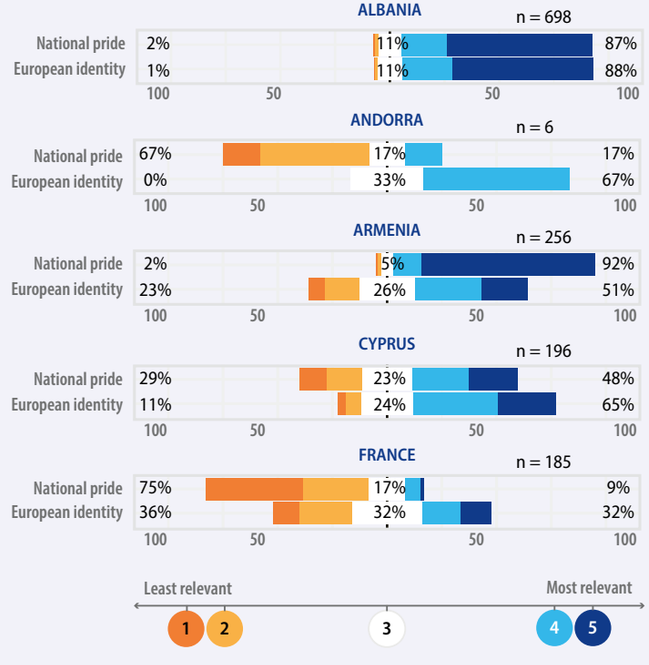
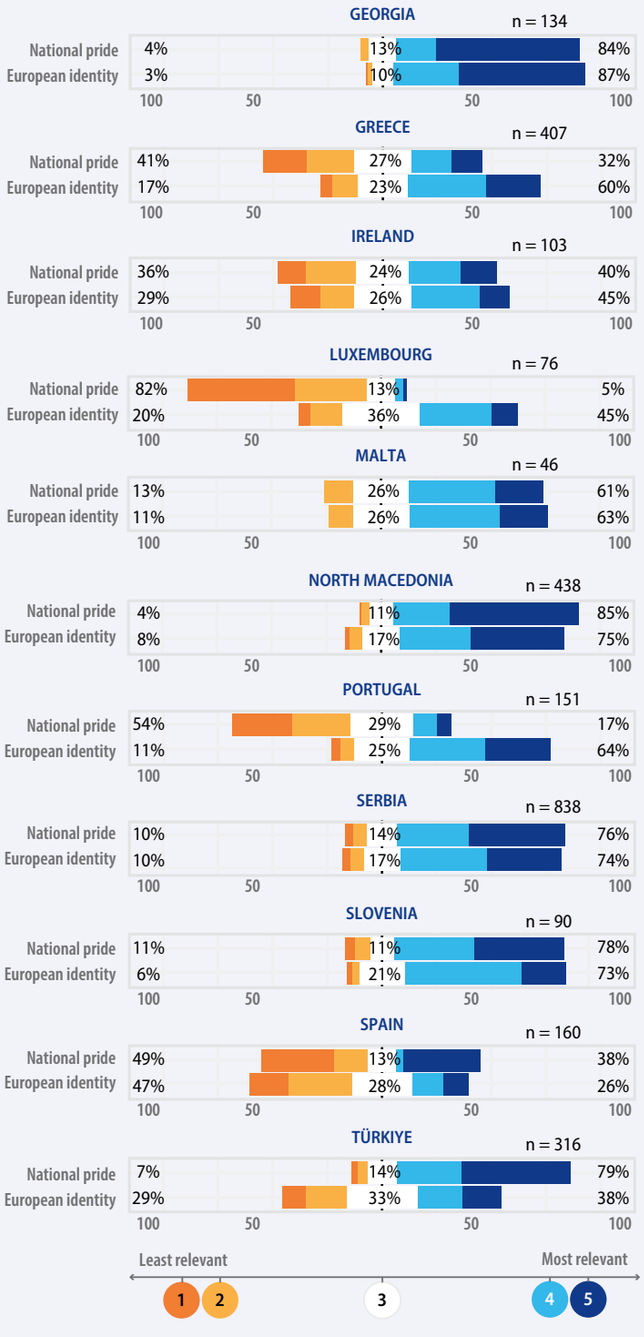


Figure 7.5 – Variations in teachers' views on identity building as a learning outcome across OHTE member states[85]



84. A more detailed analysis of this learning outcome can be found below in this chapter.

85. There were no responses from primary-level history teachers from Armenia, Luxembourg, Malta, Portugal and Slovenia. Primary-level history teachers from Serbia constituted 0.19% of the total respondents.



development of a sense of European identity to be more relevant than the development of national pride **(Figure 7.5)**. This is most clearly the case for Andorra (+50%), Portugal (+47%) and Luxembourg (+40%), but also for Greece (+28%), France (+23%) and Cyprus (+17%). There are also several OHTE member states where more respondents found the development of national pride more relevant compared to developing a sense of European identity. This is most clearly the case for Türkiye (+41%) and Armenia (+41%), but also for Spain (+12%) and North Macedonia (+10%).

On this basis, the following categories emerge.

- More support for national identity, less for European identity: teachers from Armenia and Türkiye find the development of national pride to be more important and the development of a sense of belonging to Europe to be less important than teachers in other OHTE countries. Teachers from these countries support the use of history for identity building but see its role as mainly to foster national identity.

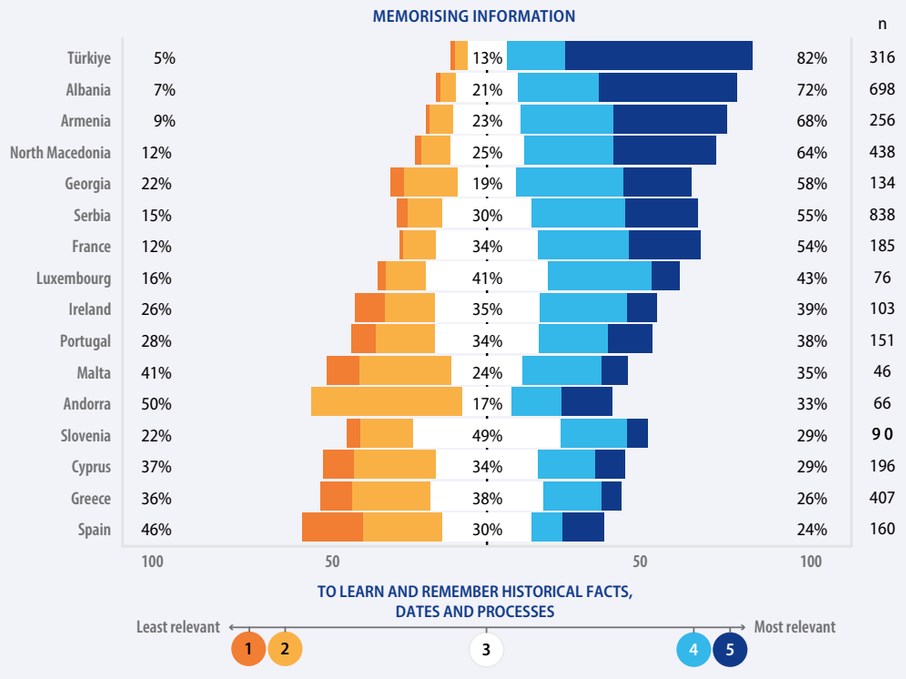
- More support for both national and European identity: teachers from Albania, Georgia, North Macedonia, Slovenia and Serbia find the development both of national pride and of a sense of belonging to Europe more important than teachers in other OHTE countries. This indicates broad support in these countries for the use of history for identity building.

- Less support for national identity only: teachers from Andorra, Cyprus, Greece and Portugal find the development of national pride less important than teachers in other OHTE countries. The importance they attach to developing a sense of belonging to Europe is similar to that of respondents in other OHTE countries. It is likely that teachers from these countries are also generally less supportive of the use of history for identity building.

- Less support for both national and European identity: teachers from France, Ireland, Luxembourg and Spain find the development both of national pride and of a sense of belonging to Europe less important than teachers in other OHTE countries. This indicates lower support in these countries for the use of history for identity building.

Figure 7.6 shows the fifth and last group of learning outcomes in the order of importance that history teachers assign to it: "to learn and remember historical facts, dates and processes". However, more than half of respondents across the OHTE member states (54%) found this learning outcome to be still (very) relevant. There is very high variation across different countries between the number of respondents to the teachers' questionnaire who found this learning outcome (very) relevant. The highest percentages of respondents who find this learning outcome (very) relevant are from Albania, Armenia and Türkiye. In contrast, history teachers from Cyprus, Greece and Spain found this learning outcome to be the least relevant. The corresponding percentages for each OHTE member state are shown in **Figure 7.6**.

Figure 7.6 – Views on the relevance of learning outcomes related to memorising information as indicated by TES respondents, by member state



ASSESSMENT

Assessment is the key to ascertaining the extent to which students have met the learning outcomes discussed in more detail above. The methods of assessment that are used in history education in the 16 OHTE member states, and at different levels of education, vary significantly.

Requirements for assessment

Table 7.1 shows the types of assessment methods that teachers in the OHTE member states are required to use. Most (14 out of 16) education authorities prescribe the use of at least eight types of assessment methods. Portugal is the main exception, where the education authorities do not require teachers to use any specific type of assessment. While the education authorities in Portugal have a national recommendation to diversify assessment methods in all school subjects, they did not report on any specific assessment methods that history teachers were required to use, leaving these up to the teachers' professional autonomy. The other exception is Luxembourg, where teachers are required to use only two types of assessment methods: knowledge-based and source-based questions. The latter are actually the most commonly used types of assessment overall, being prescribed by education authorities in all the OHTE member states except for Portugal. The third and fourth most frequent types of assessment required by education authorities are oral presentations or examinations (all member states except Portugal and Luxembourg) and essays (all member states except Portugal, Luxembourg and Spain). Multiple choice questions are prescribed by the education authorities in 11 OHTE member states, and are not compulsory only in France, Georgia, Luxembourg, Portugal and Slovenia. Less frequently used methods of assessments are portfolios (prescribed only in Andorra, Georgia, Slovenia and Türkiye), project work (prescribed only in Albania and Cyprus), role play (used only in Cyprus) and take-home assignments (prescribed only in Malta).

Table 7.1 – Assessment methods prescribed by education authorities in the OHTE member states as indicated by the EAS

	ALB	AND	ARM	CYP	FRA	GEO	GRC	IRL	LUX	MLT	MKD	PRT	SRB	SVN	ESP	TUR
Knowledge-based questions	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•
Source-based questions	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•
Oral presentations or examinations	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•		•	•	•	•
Essays	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•		•	•		•
Multiple choice questions	•	•	•	•			•	•		•	•		•		•	•
Portfolios		•				•								•		•
Other*	•			•						•						

* Other forms of examinations are project work (Albania); assessment based on classroom or take-home tasks (Malta); project work and role play (at primary level in Cyprus)

Note: • = assessment methods reported by education authorities

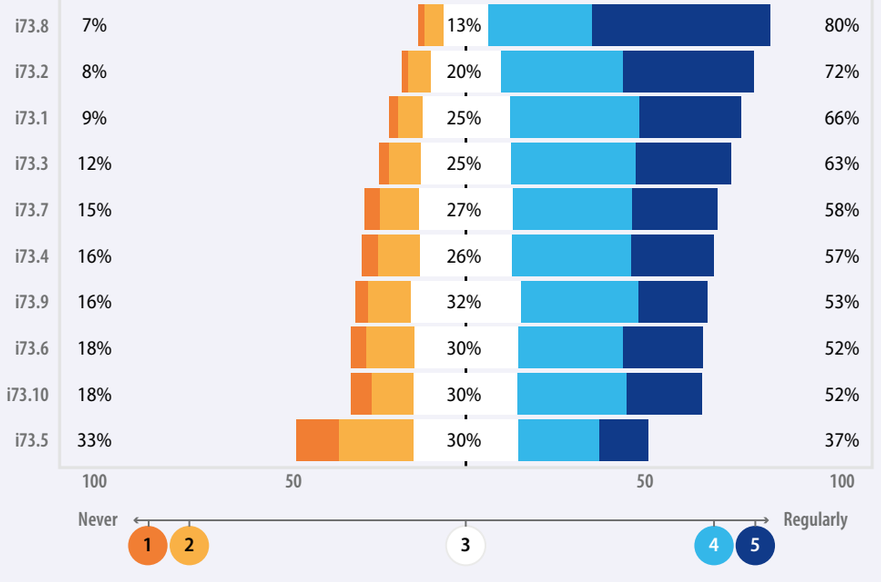
Use of assessment methods

In addition to the assessment methods prescribed by the education authorities, attention should also be paid to their use in practice by teachers. The results of the teachers' questionnaire show that oral assessment and factual questions about historical events or personalities (in that order of importance) are the most frequently used methods of assessment, with more than 70% of teachers using each of these two methods regularly **(Figure 7.7)**. They are followed by exercises that require the interpretation of historical sources and essays that require argumentation, with more than 60% of respondents in each case stating that they regularly use them. At the other end of the spectrum, the least frequently used methods of assessment are activities that assess student competences for democratic culture (52% of the teachers use these regularly) and activities such as role play or simulations, where students are asked to demonstrate historical empathy (37% regular use). A positive finding arising from these data relates to the variety of types of assessment employed by teachers in the OHTE member states. All 10 assessment methods included in the survey are used fairly regularly by the teachers, all but one (activities meant to foster historical empathy) by more than 50% of teachers.

There is a notable degree of variation between the OHTE member states in the frequency with which each type of assessment is used **(Figure 7.8)**. The most frequently used method, oral assessment, is employed most regularly by more than 90% of the respondents in Armenia (94%), Albania (93%), Serbia (93%) and North Macedonia (91%). In contrast, oral assessments are least frequently used by teachers from Malta (43% of teachers never or almost never use this method, and only 24% of teachers use it regularly), Luxembourg (32% regular use), Andorra (40% regular use) and France (47% regular use). In all other countries, more than 50% of teachers regularly use oral presentations or examinations as part of their assessment.

Figure 7.7 – Frequency of use of different assessment methods as indicated by TES respondents[86]

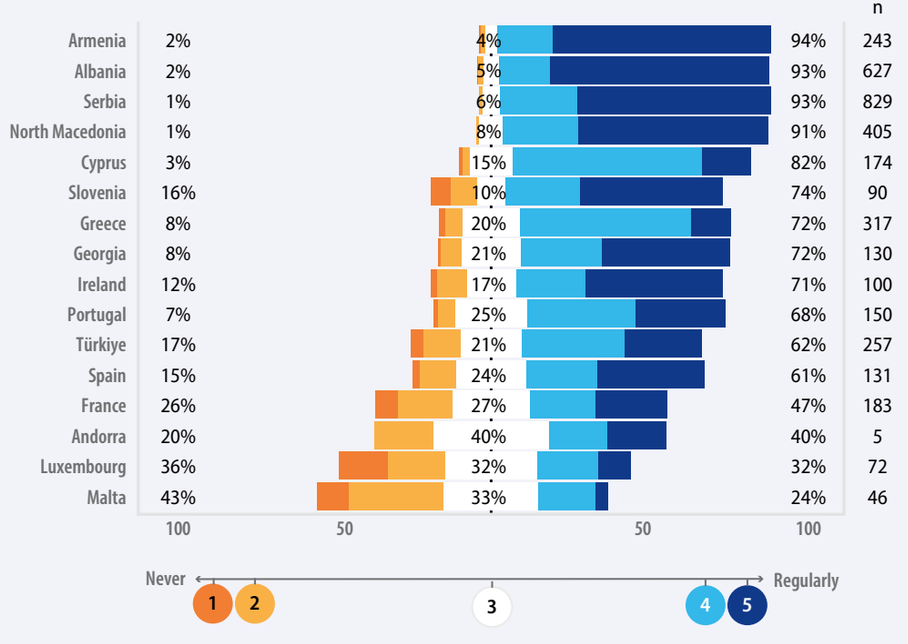
How frequently do you use the following methods to assess your students performance?



86. A comprehensive breakdown of all items per country can be found in the Technical Appendix (Volume 3, Item 3, Table 11).

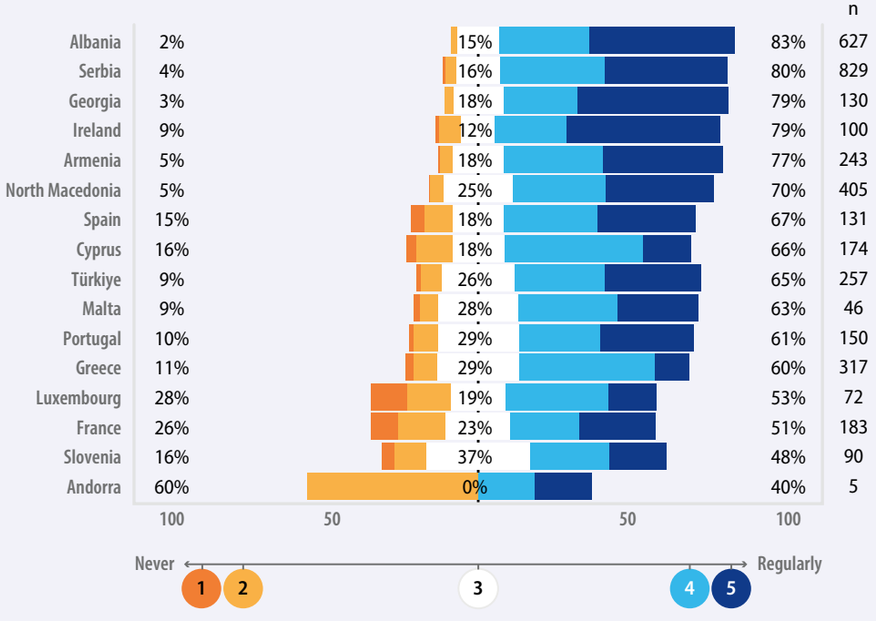
Note:	
i73.1: Exercises that require the interpretation of written and visual historical sources	i73.6: Project work (e.g., presentations, tours, exhibitions and documentaries)
i73.2: Factual questions about historical events or personalities (true/false, multiple choice, link dates with events)	i73.7: Exercises meant to demonstrate understanding of substantive historical concepts (e.g., Industrial Revolution, modernisation, migration)
i73.3: Essay questions that require argumentation (e.g., causes/consequences, change/continuity, historical interpretations)	i73.8: Oral assessment
i73.4: Research tasks where students collect and process information themselves	i73.9: Activities that assess student understanding of multiple perspectives on history
i73.5: Activities, such as role play and simulations, where students demonstrate historical empathy	i73.10: Activities that assess student competences for democratic culture

Figure 7.8 – Frequency of oral assessment (i73.8) used in history teaching as indicated by TES respondents, by member state



Factual questions about historical events or personalities are most commonly used in Albania (83% of teachers use it regularly), Serbia (80% regular use), Georgia (79%), Ireland (79%), Armenia (77%) and North Macedonia (70%) **(Figure 7.9)**. It is least frequently used in Andorra, where only 40% of teachers use this method regularly, Slovenia (48% regular use), France (51% regular use) and Luxembourg (53% regular use). In all other countries, more than 60% of teachers regularly use factual questions as part of their assessment.

Figure 7.9 – Frequency of factual questions used in history teaching (i73.2) as indicated by TES respondents, by member state



Exercises that require the interpretation of written and visual historical sources are most frequently used by teachers in Portugal (93% use them regularly), Georgia (89%), Luxembourg (88%) and Ireland (82%). At the other end of the spectrum, only 48% of teachers in Armenia, 59% of teachers in Serbia and Greece and 60% of teachers in Slovenia regularly use this method of assessment **(Figure 7.10)**.

Figure 7.11 shows that essay questions that require argumentation are most frequently used by teachers in Georgia (88% of teachers use this method regularly), France (83%), Andorra (80%) and Portugal (79%), and least frequently used in Spain (46%), Malta (50%), Slovenia (52%) and Türkiye (54%).

Figure 7.10 – Frequency of exercises used as assessment in history teaching that require the interpretation of written and visual historical sources (i73.1) as indicated by TES respondents, by member state

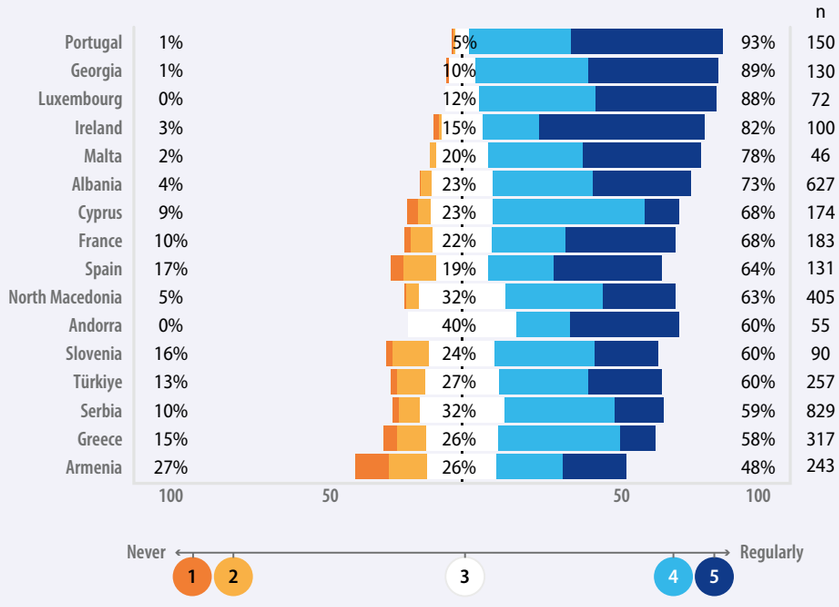
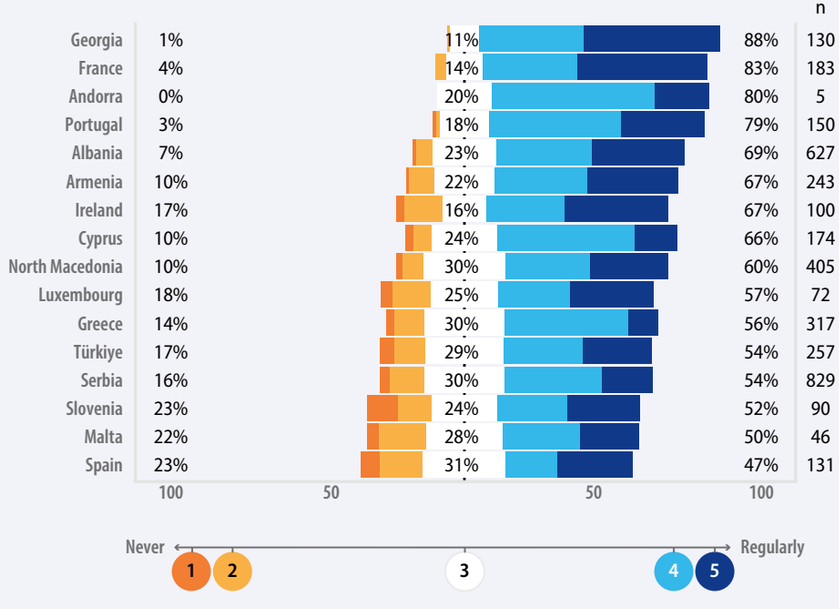
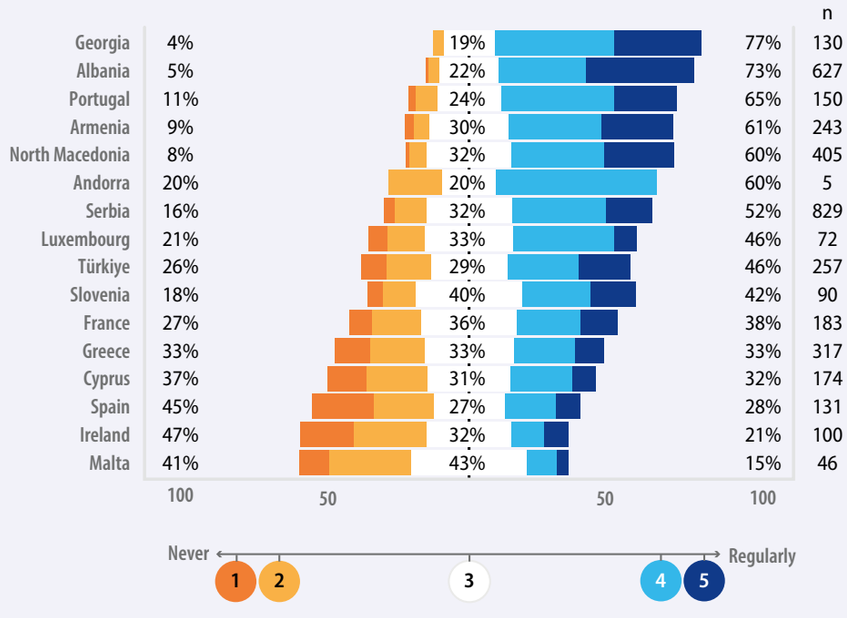


Figure 7.11 – Frequency of use of essays as an assessment in history teaching (i73.3) as indicated by TES respondents, by member state



Although activities that assess student competences for democratic culture was the second least frequently used type of assessment across the OHTE member states, this method is employed significantly above the OHTE average of 52% by teachers in Georgia (77% of teachers use such activities regularly in assessment), Albania (73%), Portugal (65%), Armenia (61%) and North Macedonia (60%) **(Figure 7.12)**. In contrast, the teachers who assess students' competences for democratic culture least frequently are from Malta (only 15% of teachers use such activities regularly in assessment), Ireland (21%), Spain (28%), Cyprus (32%) and Greece (33%).

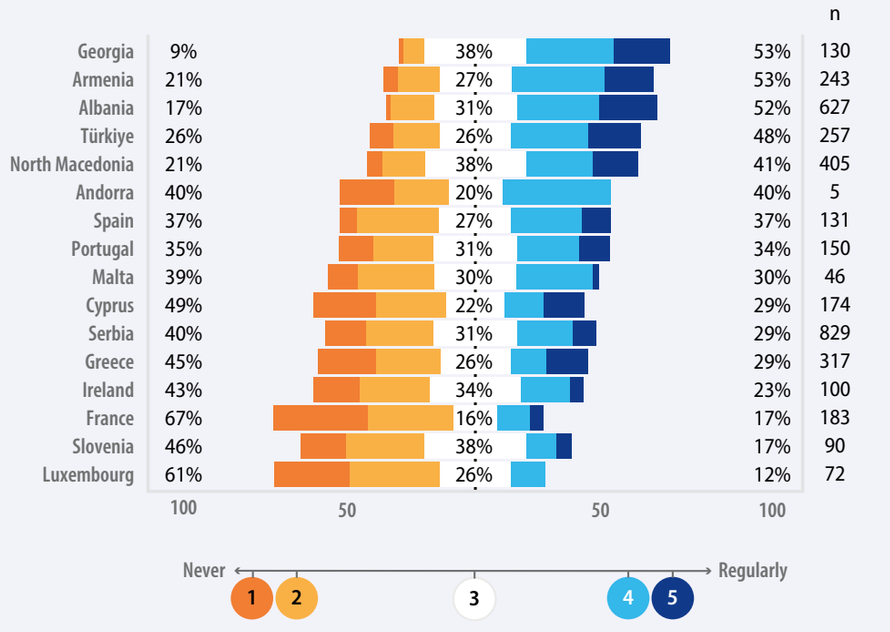
Figure 7.12 – Frequency of activities assessing students' competences for democratic culture used in history teaching (i73.10) as indicated by TES respondents, by member state



The least commonly used type of assessment, involving activities meant to stimulate students' historical empathy such as role play or simulations, is used significantly above the OHTE average in Georgia and Armenia (53% of teachers regularly use it), Albania (52%) and Türkiye (48%). It is used least frequently by teachers in Luxembourg (12%), Slovenia (17%), France (17%) and Ireland (23%) **(Figure 7.13)**.

There are notable discrepancies between teachers' responses on learning objectives and those related to assessment. When teachers were asked about learning objectives, 9 of 10 teachers found the "use of historical sources" (very) relevant. When it comes to assessment, however, only half of the teachers indicated that they frequently use "exercises that require the

Figure 7.13 – Frequency of activities assessing students' historical empathy (i73.5) as indicated by TES respondents, by member state



interpretation of written and visual historical sources". These data can be correlated with the importance of exams and other forms of summative assessment (presented below) to reveal a gap between teachers' preferences and the structural constraints they face in adjusting their methods of assessment to the formal learning objectives.

Participants in the focus groups indicated that the introduction of new curricula also tends to include alternative types of assessment. For example, a participant from Armenia reported that students in private schools are now required to complete one project per year.[87] A participant from Malta reported that students must perform different tasks to pass the subjects:

> Some of these tasks are prescribed by the curriculum and students are free to choose. At the lower ages, these consist of outings to historical sites, writings, research or collage. At later grades, it can include visits to the archives and work on documentary sources, or illustrated essays which amount to doing research through presentations.[88]

87. EFG 1, 2 December 2022.
88. EFG 6, 8 March 2023.

Participants in the focus groups from Cyprus[89] and Serbia[90] mentioned the use of peer assessment as a good practice – an assessment method that was not included in the teachers' questionnaire – as it helps students to understand the criteria better, to reflect on their learning and to learn how to communicate feedback. Furthermore, as a history teacher from Portugal put it:

> I see [peer learning] as a co-construction of knowledge. It is very important to build new knowledge with the students' knowledge (formal and non-formal) and our academic knowledge. It is important to communicate to students why we teach this and why we use these criteria and strategies, and to place them in the centre of all that is happening in the school. A student-centred approach is essential.[91]

Several teachers admitted during the focus group that they do not feel confident enough to assess project-based learning and other types of outcomes. They also highlighted the lack of skills among teachers to conduct competence-based assessments. A focus group participant from Cyprus emphasised that teachers rely on assessments that only test knowledge, even though such assessments are not mandatory, but that the content and methods included in history teaching tend to align more with the nature of historical learning when there are no final examinations nor external pressures for university entrance exams.[92]

Suitability of the assessments

Not all assessment methods are equally suited for the assessment of each learning outcome. Ercikan and Seixas (2015: 1) note that the rethinking of history and its role in society have obvious implications for history assessment. More complex processes – historical thinking, historical consciousness or historical sense making – demand more complex assessments. The assessment of controversial issues is particularly challenging (Blevins, Magins and Salinas 2020; Gómez et al. 2022b). The learning to disagree guide, which includes practical guidance on the assessment of competences when students discuss and debate issues on which they disagree (EuroClio 2020), can be a useful resource for teachers to tackle this challenge.

Availability of assessment forms adapted to students with special needs

Some children will experience more difficulty learning history than others for various reasons, such as not speaking the local language, being used to other ways of learning or having learning difficulties. Teachers need to adapt their teaching to comply with the level of knowledge, interests and skills that students bring to the classroom. All the education authorities of the OHTE member states in which end-of-stage assessment is conducted[93] (except for Georgia and North Macedonia, where no data are available) reported that alternative forms of assessments are offered to students with special needs. For example, a focus group participant from Greece indicated that written examinations can be adapted as oral examinations for students with learning difficulties.[94]

EXAMS

Most of the OHTE member states do not conduct examinations that include history at the primary level. In Georgia and Türkiye, however, exams at the primary level, which include elements of history, are in place for integrated courses.[95] At the secondary school level, all member states except for Spain have some form of final examination at the secondary school level, often at the end of middle or high school. In Albania, Andorra, North Macedonia and Portugal, such examinations are entirely optional.

Data from the education authorities' questionnaire indicate that end-of-stage examinations are set at the national level in 11 of the 15 member states that reported the use of such assessments. The exceptions are Armenia, where end-of-stage examinations are set at the regional level, and Greece, where end-of-stage examinations are set by schools at the lower secondary level and nationally at the upper secondary level. No data are available for Georgia and North Macedonia.

All of the 15 member states that reported the use of end-of-stage examinations indicated that these examinations assess knowledge of historical content and historical thinking skills. In addition, a focus on social and civic skills was reported by six countries: Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Cyprus, Malta and Türkiye. A focus on generic skills was reported by Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Portugal and Türkiye.

The education authorities in all the 15 member states that reported the use of end-of-stage examinations, except Georgia and North Macedonia, where no data are available, indicated that these include written examinations. Additionally, Andorra, Armenia, France and Greece also reported the use of oral examinations, while Andorra, France, Ireland and Malta also reported the use of coursework. Malta also reported the use of in-class assessments by teachers. Portugal, Ireland and France include final essays as part of the final examinations.

Ten of the 15 member states that use end-of-stage examinations reported that history carried the same weight as other subjects in the framework of this assessment. The exceptions are France, where the weighting of history depends on the programme followed by students, and Malta, where history is not an entry requirement for further study at the tertiary level. No data are available for Georgia, North Macedonia and Türkiye. Some countries have final examinations at the end of different student cycles; for example, at the end of lower secondary education (Armenia, Serbia and Slovenia) and in 12th grade at the end of high school (Armenia; and Slovenia, where such an examination is optional). These are organised for different purposes, such as getting a diploma or accessing the next level of schooling, be it high school or university.

89. EFG 9, 20 April 2023.
90. EFG 8, 9 March 2023.
91. EFG 9, 20 April 2023.
92. EFG 6, 8 March 2023.
93. There are no end-of-stage examinations in history throughout the schooling cycle in Spain alone.
94. EFG 7, 8 March 2023.
95. In Georgia, such exams are conducted at the end of the integrated course "Our Georgia", while in Türkiye history is part of an integrated social studies course. No data are available for Malta.

Focus group participants agreed that a good quality-assessment framework includes a variety of assessment methods (for example, project work and debates) that enable teachers to cater to the different strengths of their students. This allows students to demonstrate their historical knowledge and understanding through a range of different skills, rather than being assessed solely through more rigid methods such multiple choice questions that test only their ability to memorise facts.[96] As a teacher put it:

> The criteria on which students are assessed have to be balanced between knowledge and various historical thinking skills because, otherwise, there's no incentive to teach multiperspectivity if that is in no way examined in the assessment.[97]

The research undertaken for the purposes of this report focused mainly on the use and types of final examinations for history courses. More research is needed to clarify the kind of historical content and/or geographical scope covered by these exams.

According to the information collected through the EAS, different people are involved in the marking of end-of-stage examinations across the OHTE member states. Government-appointed external examiners are employed for this task in Albania, Ireland and Slovenia. Teachers themselves are responsible for marking in Greece. In other cases, a mix of internal and external examiners can be observed. For example, in Andorra, government-appointed external examiners are used only at the upper secondary level. In Cyprus and France, the use of internal or external examiners depends on the type of examination taken. In Luxembourg, Malta and Portugal, marking is undertaken by a mix of the students' own teachers and external examiners. Artificial intelligence or computer systems are used for marking in Armenia, Serbia and Türkiye.

Teachers' views on the exams

According to the TES, after textbooks, exams are the most important factor that influences what teachers teach in practice. Almost 30% of the teachers indicated that exams influence their teaching strongly or very strongly (see Chapter 6).[98] Focus group participants indicated that the presence of external final examinations, such as state-level, high-stakes exams or end-of-stage exams, creates pressure for both teachers and students. This was reported by participants from Albania,[99] Ireland and Portugal,[100] Greece and Portugal,[101] and Cyprus.[102]

As a consequence, the teachers who are teaching a course associated with a final external examination have to ensure that they cover all the material included in the curriculum that may be part of the exam. A focus group participant from Greece[103] noted the pressure associated with the requirement to cover a large amount of compulsory curricular content within a limited period of time. Another participant from Cyprus stated: "If history as a subject is going to be examined, you cannot escape the curriculum; you have to go period by period, hour by hour".[104]

Thus the presence of high-stakes exams at the end of the school year or cycle pressurises teachers to teach students with a view to memorising facts to pass the exam, leaving no space for other activities or methods or the use of additional resources. Because the grades of the students often impact the teachers' performance evaluation, the teachers are pressurised to spend more time training students how to pass the exam, so-called teaching to the test.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

History teaching in the OHTE member states is supposed to do many things. All the learning outcomes included in the teachers' questionnaire were considered (very) relevant by at least half of the respondents. The number of respondents who found certain learning outcomes (very) relevant are highest for learning outcomes related to historical thinking and lowest for learning and remembering historical facts, dates and processes. The importance attached to so many different learning outcomes adds to the two challenges that history educators are most concerned about: the time allocated in the curriculum to history and curriculum overload.

Assessment of these learning outcomes is made through a variety of methods. Data collected from the TES show that all 10 assessment methods included in the survey are used fairly regularly by the teachers, all but one (activities meant to foster historical empathy) by more than 50% of respondents. Teachers in all OHTE countries are either required, or in Portugal recommended, to use specific types of assessment. There is more freedom in terms of how history is assessed throughout the year when there are no final examinations at the end of the year. In this context, it is up to teachers to choose other types of assessment, which focus more on competences, skills and a critical understanding of history. In these cases, it is possible to better align assessments with the learning outcomes, including the ones that are more complex to assess such as those related to historical thinking skills. However, teachers often refrain from engaging in this type of assessment because grading becomes more difficult as these forms of assessment do not correspond to the type of knowledge tested in exams.

End-of-stage exams, especially if they are externally assessed, have a significant influence on teaching practices. The research revealed several issues with these exams, which some teachers in the focus groups believe sometimes prevent students from choosing history as a subject when there is an exam associated with the course. The combination of overloaded curricula, which 49% of the TES respondents identified as an obstacle to good-quality history teaching, and high-stakes exams that cover most or all of the curriculum creates time pressures for both teachers and students. While the data pertaining to learning outcomes, assessments and examinations were for the most part derived from the TES and EAS, with additional input from the focus groups, more research is needed into the actual content of the exams. Additional research would allow for a comparison of the importance teachers assign to certain learning outcomes with the requirements of the education authorities in each country.

96. EFG 6, 8 March 2023.
97. Ibid.
98. Only textbooks are more influential: 37% of the teachers indicated that textbooks influence their teaching to a large or very large degree.
99. EFG 1, 2 December 2022.
100. EFG 4, 1 February 2023.
101. EFG 5, 2 February 2023; EFG 10, 22 April 2023.
102. EFG 6, 8 March 2023.
103. EFG 7, 8 March 2023
104. EFG 6, 8 March 2023.

CHAPTER 8

HISTORY TEACHERS AND THEIR EDUCATION

Chapter 8

History teachers and their education

The educational and professional development of history teachers both in their initial training and during their teaching careers is strongly connected with the quality of the history education, in the ways it is defined and described in the Council of Europe recommendations and publications (see Chapter 1). University undergraduate and postgraduate studies, initial and in-service training programmes, tutoring, mentoring and assessment are key factors in cultivating the capacity of history teachers to compile and implement cohesive and constructive lesson plans, to adjust appropriately to the ever changing societal and cultural school environment, to enhance their students' historical thinking and democratic competences, to be aware of modern trends in historiography and to respond effectively and creatively to educational reforms.

This chapter presents an analysis of the education and professional development of history teachers, and is divided into two parts. The first part is based on the information provided by the education authorities and on the findings of the focus groups. It also examines the criteria that apply in the appointment systems for history teachers in the OHTE member states. The second part deals with the professional development of history teachers. It analyses the forms, consistency, frequency and to some extent quantity and quality of the in-service training available in each member state.

HISTORY TEACHERS' QUALIFICATIONS AND INITIAL TRAINING

This section explores the prerequisites for becoming a history teacher in the OHTE member states, specifically, four key dimensions.

First, it examines the academic qualifications and the content covered during the undergraduate and postgraduate studies of prospective teachers. This evaluation aims to determine whether these educators have been given a foundational background in history and received instruction in history pedagogy, including practical experience gained through initial teacher training seminars and a practicum.[105] Second, it scrutinises the placement of history teachers in primary and secondary schools. This analysis considers the potential differences in the roles assigned to history teachers at these two educational levels,

105. The term "practicum" refers to the part of the initial training course that involves supervised practical application of the theoretical knowledge in school classes; during the practicum, the trainee student teachers usually attend lessons and/or compile and implement lesson plans.

taking into account their expertise in history and the qualifications deemed necessary for their positions. The third aspect investigates the entry procedures that regulate history teachers' integration into the school system. This comprehensive research includes an exploration of the initial selection processes for teachers, including the presence or absence of entry exams, as well as any provisions for in-service re-evaluations where applicable. The study also identifies the institutions responsible for conferring the necessary accreditations. Last, the chapter explores the range of school subjects assigned to history teachers. It seeks to ascertain whether these educators are primarily prepared to teach only history as a subject matter or if their responsibilities encompass a broader spectrum of subjects within the school curriculum. Where a broader curriculum is involved, the specific subjects included in their teaching roles are identified.

At the one end of the spectrum are countries where a three- or four-year bachelor's degree in history plus a master's in pedagogy is required (Albania, France, Georgia, Ireland, Luxembourg, Malta, Portugal, Spain and Türkiye). At the other end of the spectrum are countries where neither specific education in the subject nor any expertise in history teaching methodology is required (for example, Cyprus and Greece). In Cyprus, secondary-level history teachers are appointed from graduates of the departments of history and archaeology, Greek language, philosophy and pedagogy who have completed a two-semester teacher training programme offered by the Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth and the University of Cyprus. In Greece, history teachers are primarily appointed from graduates of departments of history and archaeology, Greek language, philosophy and pedagogy. As a secondary mandate, the right to teach history is also given to graduates of university departments of foreign languages (English, French and German), theology, sociology and civics.

In the middle of the spectrum are the history teachers in Andorra, Armenia, North Macedonia, Serbia and Slovenia, who are historians but have little training in pedagogy and history didactics. There are remarkable differences in the majority of the member states between history teachers in elementary, lower and upper secondary schools.

While elementary school teachers are graduates of general pedagogical departments and do not necessarily hold master's degrees in history or history didactics, higher secondary school teachers are required to possess specialist subject knowledge to a satisfactory extent. In Ireland, to become a primary school teacher, one must complete a programme of initial teacher education. There are two options to choose from: a) a four-year undergraduate initial teacher education (ITE) programme and b) a two-year postgraduate ITE programme called the Professional Master of Education (PME), following the award of an undergraduate degree at Level 8 or higher on the National Framework of Qualifications, which has a European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) credit weighting of at least 180 credits. ITE programmes at both primary and secondary levels must include substantial periods of school placement. A history teacher at the secondary level must also fulfil a set of criteria that testify to their possession of sufficient subject knowledge as well as the pedagogical skills to teach history specifically.[106] Finally, Serbia is exceptional in that primary school teachers are almost exclusively historians **(see Table 8.1)**.

Table 8.1 – Teacher training and the specialisation of history teachers at primary and secondary education level based on information provided via the EAS

	Primary schools	Secondary schools
Albania	More generally to teach across a range of subjects and disciplines	Exclusively or primarily as history teachers
Andorra	As teachers of history and one or more other disciplines	Exclusively or primarily as history teachers
Armenia	More generally to teach across a range of subjects and disciplines	More generally to teach across a range of subjects and disciplines
Cyprus	More generally to teach across a range of subjects and disciplines	More generally to teach across a range of subjects and disciplines
France	As teachers of history and one or more other disciplines	Exclusively or primarily as history teachers
Georgia	As teachers of history and one or more other disciplines	As teachers of history and one or more other disciplines
Greece	More generally to teach across a range of subjects and disciplines	More generally to teach across a range of subjects and disciplines
Ireland	More generally to teach across a range of subjects and disciplines	As teachers of history and one or more other disciplines
Luxembourg	As teachers of history and one or more other disciplines	Exclusively or primarily as history teachers
Malta	More generally to teach across a range of subjects and disciplines	As teachers of history and one or more other disciplines
North Macedonia	As teachers of history and one or more other disciplines	As teachers of history and one or more other disciplines

106. To register as a teacher of history at secondary level, a person must have obtained (1) an undergraduate degree in teacher education which a) combines the study of one or more of the curricular subject disciplines, with other initial teacher education components including school placement, foundation studies and professional studies; b) is accredited by the Teaching Council in Ireland for the purposes of secondary level teaching; c) is at level 8 or higher on the NFQ; d) has a ECTS weighting of at least 240 credits of which teacher education studies is assigned a minimum of 120 credits; and e) satisfies the requirements for at least one curricular subject as published by the council on its website at the time of the application; or (2) a postgraduate qualification in teacher education that a) includes school placement, foundation studies and professional studies; b) is accredited by the council for the purposes of secondary-level teaching; c) is at level 8 or higher on the NFQ; d) has a ECTS weighting of at least 120 credits; and e) is commenced following the award of an undergraduate degree at Level 8 or higher on the NFQ which has a ECTS credit weighting of at least 180 credits and which satisfies the requirements for at least one curricular subject as published by the council on its website at the time of the application; or (3) a qualification or qualifications obtained which, in the opinion of the Teaching Council is or are of an equivalent standard to the standards required under paragraphs 1 or 2 set forth above, having conducted an assessment of that qualification in accordance with the General System.

Details of the requirements for each curricular subject, including history, are provided at www.teachingcouncil.ie/en/publications/ite-professional-accreditation/curricular-subject-requirements-post-primary-from-1-jan-2023.pdf, accessed 7 November 2023.

	Primary schools	Secondary schools
Portugal	As teachers of history and one or more other disciplines	Exclusively or primarily as history teachers
Serbia	Exclusively or primarily as history teachers	Exclusively or primarily as history teachers
Slovenia	As teachers of history and one or more other disciplines	As teachers of history and one or more other disciplines
Spain	More generally to teach across a range of subjects and disciplines	Exclusively or primarily as history teachers
Türkiye	More generally to teach across a range of subjects and disciplines	Exclusively or primarily as history teachers

Initial training and practicum at school classes are carried out during the final year of the prospective teachers' undergraduate studies (for example, in Cyprus, Greece, North Macedonia) or during their postgraduate specialisation (for example, in France, Malta, Portugal and Spain). In some member states (for example, Albania, Georgia and Türkiye), the practicum is a distinct procedure and a prerequisite before one is granted the right to teach.

According to the data submitted by the education authorities of the OHTE member states, initial teacher training programmes are designed and implemented by several organisations and institutions: higher education institutions (colleges and universities), national training institutions supervised by the ministries of education, independent organisations, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and teachers' associations, as in Georgia, Portugal, Slovenia and Türkiye. The curricula for the history teachers' training programmes in Andorra, Armenia, Cyprus, Greece, Luxembourg, North Macedonia and Portugal are set at the national level and must usually be approved by the authorities. In contrast, in other member states (for example, in Albania, France, Ireland, Malta, Serbia, Slovenia and Spain), the procedure is more decentralised. Examples of decentralised initial training systems are those of Spain and Ireland. In Spain, the Ministry of Education sets the overall framework of prerequisites to be eligible to teach history and the university departments design their own training programmes autonomously on this basis, while in Ireland the Teaching Council sets the criteria and the college departments of teacher education plan and implement their training courses. Prospective history teachers may choose any of the various programmes they believe better meet the eligibility criteria set by the Teaching Council.

While in Albania, Andorra, Cyprus, France, Georgia, Luxembourg, Spain and Türkiye the selection system is based on exams, in most of the other countries there are other criteria, such as a certain level of university education. Nevertheless, passing an exam is not required for substitute and non-permanent teachers. In the vast majority of the OHTE member states, newly appointed history teachers are evaluated at the end of their probationary period, which usually lasts one to two years. In North Macedonia, for example, at the end of their first year of teaching, beginner teachers are required to plan and implement a history lesson in a school determined by a state committee appointed by the Ministry of Education and Science, which is also tasked with evaluation of the lesson.

In only a few countries (Albania, Andorra, Georgia, Malta, Serbia and Spain) have prerequisites to continue teaching history been established, and history teachers are re-evaluated on their subject knowledge and teaching abilities during their career. In Albania, teachers are evaluated after 5, 10 and 20 years in service through a standardised test, as well as according to their professional portfolio. In Malta, the professional development of teachers is a precondition for salary increases; additionally, every few years, it is mandatory for teachers to attend in-service seminars. Furthermore, teachers' methods are evaluated in practice by educational officers.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND IN-SERVICE TRAINING OF HISTORY TEACHERS

According to the education authorities and the focus group findings, the providers of in-service training vary between the member states. In Albania, Cyprus, Luxembourg, Malta, Spain and Türkiye, the providers are mostly agencies that belong to or are controlled by the state.[107] At the other end of the spectrum lie Serbia, Armenia and North Macedonia, where the training providers are universities, NGOs and history teachers' associations. A mixed model applies in Andorra, Georgia, Greece, France, Ireland, Portugal and Slovenia.

In terms of the content and the forms of in-service training, the education authorities of all the member states claim that they offer history teachers a great variety of training and re-training seminars both in person and online. Modern teaching methods, the use of new technologies, multiperspectivity, competence- or skill-based teaching and learning, and content knowledge and awareness of modern historiographical trends are the core pillars of teacher training programmes. Some countries (for example, Albania, France, Ireland, Portugal, Spain and Türkiye) appear to have more cohesive statutory frameworks for continuing professional development, in that they provide teachers with updated lists of seminar courses to choose from so that they can select those that meet their professional needs. However, most courses cited in the education authorities' reports are more generic and are not specific to history teaching methodology. For example, in Türkiye, only the course "Teaching Methods and Techniques (History) Course Trainers Training on Applied Science Education (History)" out of a vast list of training courses appears to be directly connected to history teaching. The support service of the Department of Education in Ireland (Oide) has a dedicated history team, which offers a broad range of professional learning experiences for teachers.

107. For Albania, Cyprus, Luxembourg, Malta and Spain this information derives from the EAS. For Türkiye, it derives from EFG 1, 2 December 2022.

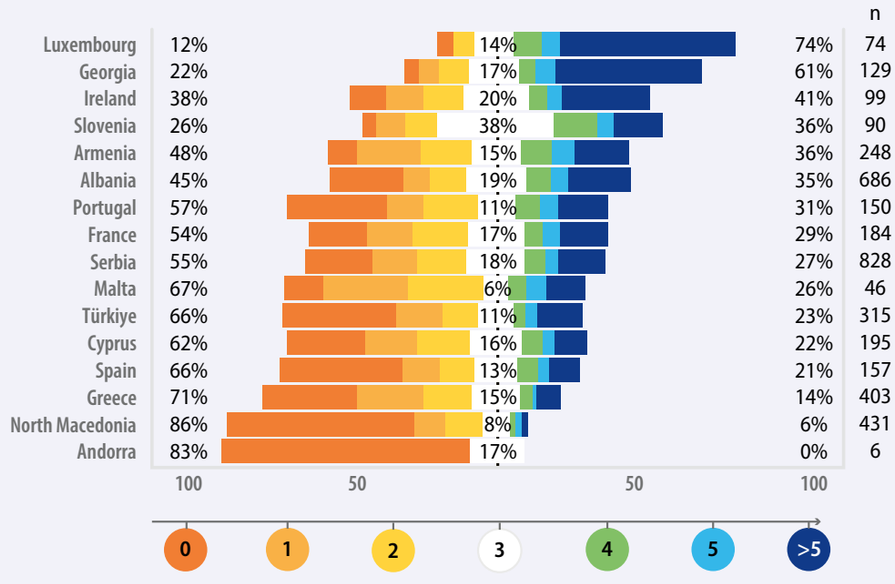
In the great majority of the member states, in-service training is optional and takes place both during and outside of formal working hours.[108] In Cyprus a number of training courses, including training courses in history, are compulsory and take place both outside and within working hours. Only in Albania, Andorra, Georgia, Portugal and Spain is training conducted exclusively in teachers' spare time. In Albania, it is compulsory for teachers to dedicate at least 18 hours over three days per year to in-service training. Luxembourg is rather exceptional in that training is compulsory and takes place entirely during formal working hours. In Andorra and Georgia, such training is compulsory and takes place outside working hours. In some countries a certain number of training hours or days should be completed during a period of one or more years of service. In Armenia, Malta and Spain, for example, the completion of a certain number of hours of training is linked to an increase in the teachers' salaries.

In countries (for example, in France and Ireland) where teachers have the opportunity to attend training courses during their formal working hours, this applies on condition that the schools remain open and the principal consents. In Ireland, primary teachers who complete accredited professional development courses during their summer holidays are given the opportunity to accrue extra personal vacation days throughout the school year.

In response to the question "How many times in the past three years have you attended seminars on history teaching provided by the education authorities?", history teachers were asked to indicate a value between 0 (none) and more than 5. The same question was asked for seminars conducted by non-governmental or non-state organisations and institutions. More than one quarter (28%) of the 4 041 respondents stated that they had attended no teacher training seminars organised by the education authorities in the three years preceding the survey, while 29% reported participating in one or two seminars; this means that more than half (57%) of the participants had attended on average fewer than one training seminar per year in this period of time. At the same time, 16% of the respondents reported having participated in three seminars in the previous three years, meaning on average one per year, while 27% reported attending more than one seminar per year meaning four (7%), five (4%) or more than five (16%) seminars in the mentioned period. Participation rates are even lower for training provided by NGOs, as almost three out of four respondents (71%) reported having participated in fewer than three seminars in the respective period, meaning on average fewer than one per year, while 11% reported attending such courses on average once per year, and 16% that they had taken part in more teacher training events provided by NGOs. Remarkable differences between countries can be noted **(Figure 8.1)**.

Figure 8.1 – Number of times during the last three years that TES respondents had attended training seminars organised by the educational authorities, by member state

How many times in the past three years have you attended seminars on history teaching provided by the education authorities (e.g. Ministry of Education, institutions)?



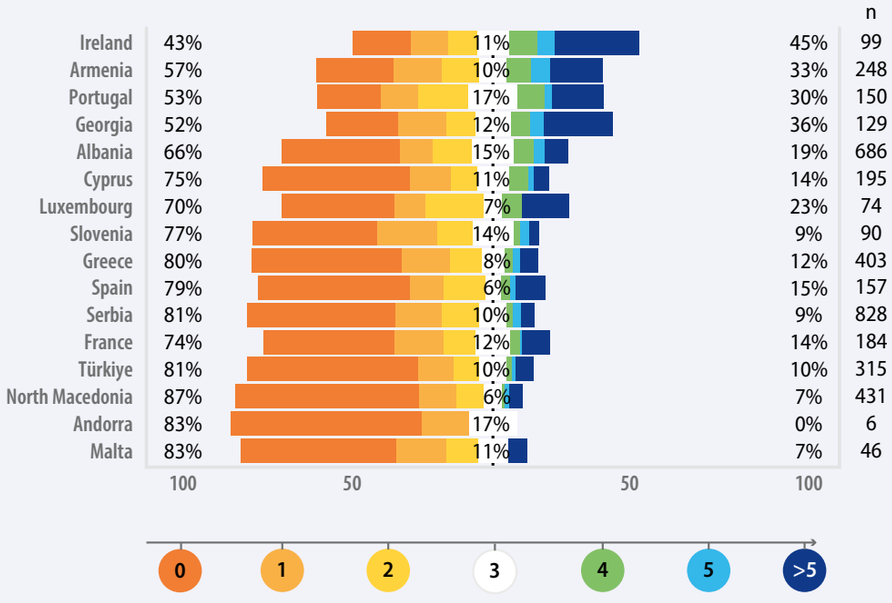
At one end are the countries with minimum participation in training seminars provided by the state (fewer than one a year): 83% of teachers in Andorra, 86% in North Macedonia, 71% in Greece, 67% in Malta, 66% in Spain and in Türkiye, 62% in Cyprus and 57% in Portugal. The picture in four other countries appears in diametric contrast, as 74% of teachers in Luxembourg, 61% in Georgia, 41% in Ireland and 36% in Slovenia indicated that they had attended at least five seminars over the past three years.

With reference to seminars provided by NGOs the numbers are much lower **(Figure 8.2)**; there are no considerable differences between teachers in terms of age and teaching experience. Nearly 6 out of 10 teachers with relatively little experience (0-10 years) had attended less than one seminar a year, with 80% of them beginner teachers (0-2 years of teaching experience). Those percentages are higher with reference to seminars provided by NGOs.

108. In Portugal and Spain it is optional and takes place outside of the working hours, while in Armenia, Greece, Ireland, Slovenia and Türkiye it is optional too but takes place both during and outside formal working hours. In France in-service training is mostly optional.

Figure 8.2 – Number of times during the last three years that TES respondents attended training seminars organised by NGOs

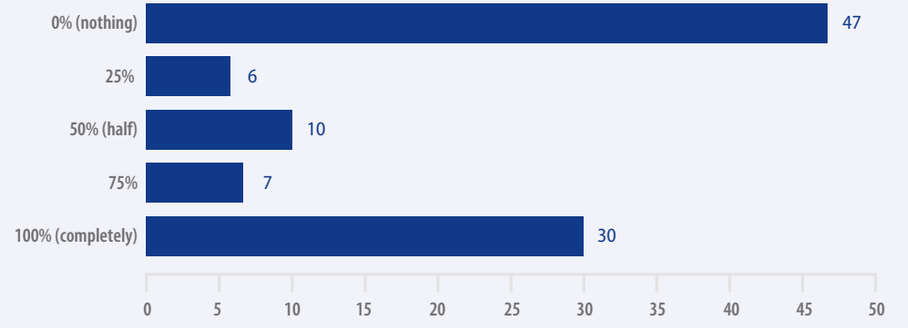
How many times in the past three years have you attended seminars on history teaching provided by non-governmental/non-state organisations/institutions?



In terms of awareness of the time available to attend training seminars, more than 4 out of 10 teachers answered that they do not know if "there is a maximum number of working days that they are allowed in order to attend teacher training on history teaching". Among them, the teachers with school teaching experience of up to eight years appear the least informed. Teachers in Slovenia and Georgia appear to be much more aware of the legal status of the in-service training system; in Slovenia 60%, and in Georgia 39%, of teachers answered that they know the time available for training on history teaching. Remarkably, 74% of the Slovenian respondents had attended at least one seminar a year, while 47% of the Georgian respondents had attended more than two.

Similarly, in response to the question "How much of the costs (fees, travel, accommodation) for professional development/in-service training are usually covered for you?", from a range of 0% (nothing) to 100% (completely), nearly half of the teachers responded "nothing" **(Figure 8.3)**. Only in a very few countries (Andorra, Georgia, Portugal and Slovenia) were most or all of the costs of such training covered. Even so, according to the focus groups, records, in Slovenia, the country with the highest scores on training seminars participation, one of the main selection criteria of the teachers is the cost of the seminar and not its subject.[109] Furthermore, only 31% of all respondents from the OHTE member states stated that their participation

Figure 8.3 – Share of costs related to professional development covered by the employer, as indicated by TES respondents



in professional development courses on history teaching counts as working time.

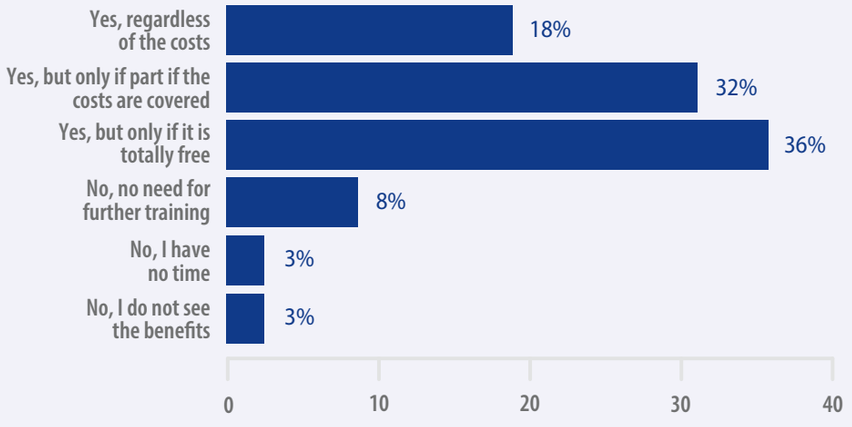
The data appear to show that the more time teachers have available, which counts as working time, that is equal to the time spent in school service, or the greater the extent to which they receive reimbursement by the authorities, the more they participate in training seminars. However, more detailed and in-depth research needs to be undertaken in countries (for example, in Andorra, France, Portugal and Türkiye) where, despite the advantageous conditions, history teachers do not participate in seminars on a regular basis.

The question "Would you like to have more opportunities for professional development as a history teacher?" covers a critical aspect that is also related to previous sections of the TES. Teachers were asked to choose from a six-point scale, ranging from the lowest ("No, I do not see the benefits") to the highest ("Yes, regardless of the costs"). The vast majority of the respondents (86%) would like more opportunities for training, but only 18% of them do not worry about the costs, while 14% answered that they do not see the benefits, have no time or do not need further training **(Figure 8.4)**.

There are notable differences between the countries. At one end of the spectrum, a remarkable percentage of history teachers from Cyprus (37%), Spain (29%), Luxembourg (28%) and Greece (26%) selected one of the negative options ("No, I do not see the benefits", "No, I have no time" and "No, no need for further training"), while at the other end teachers from Albania (75%), Armenia (71%), France (76%), Malta (72%), Serbia (69%) and Türkiye (74%) are asking for more opportunities for professional development but only if the total or part of the costs will be covered. The percentage of teachers in several countries who would welcome more opportunities for training regardless of the costs is relatively high: 41%

109. EFG 5, 2 February 2023.

Figure 8.4 – Demand for more opportunities for professional development, as indicated by TES respondents



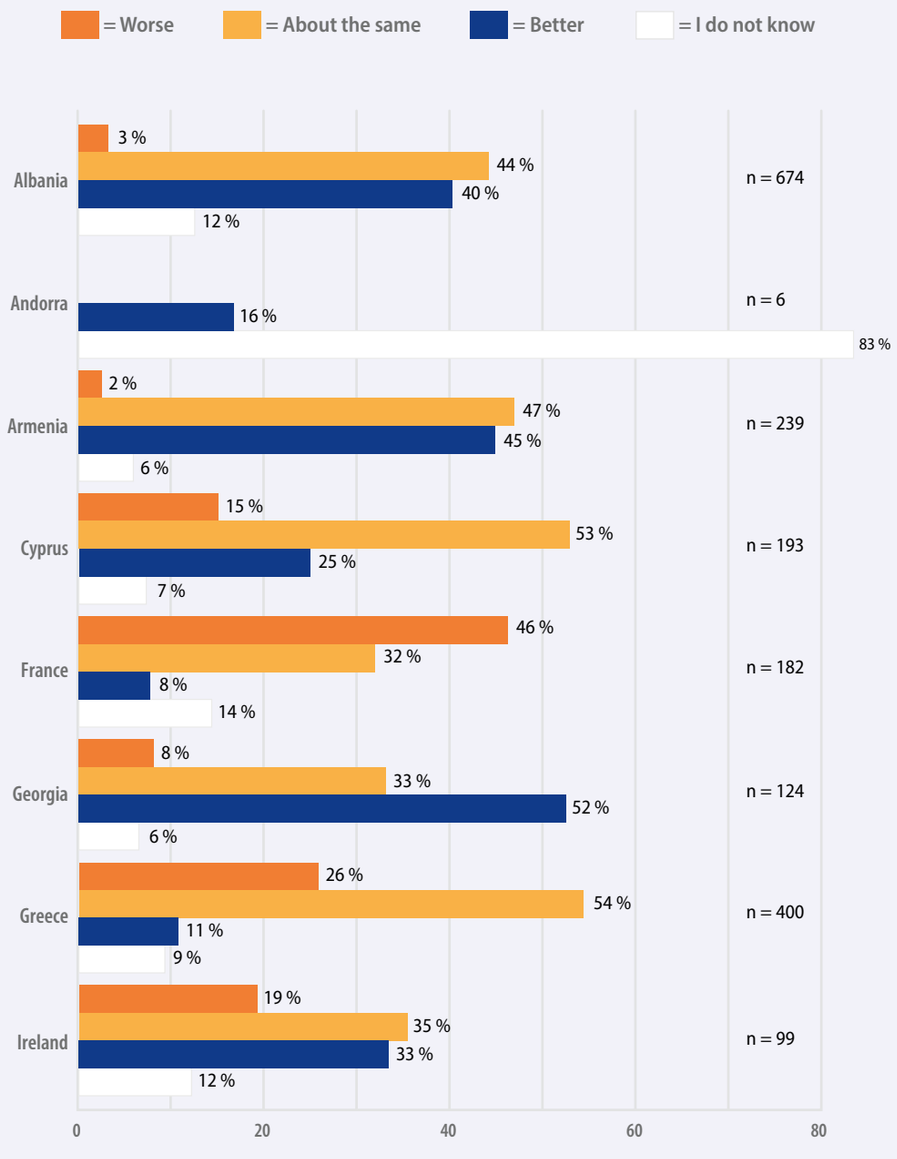
Note: The TES asked teachers: "Would you like to have more opportunities for professional development as a history teacher?" Only one of the proposed options could be selected (n = 3 990).

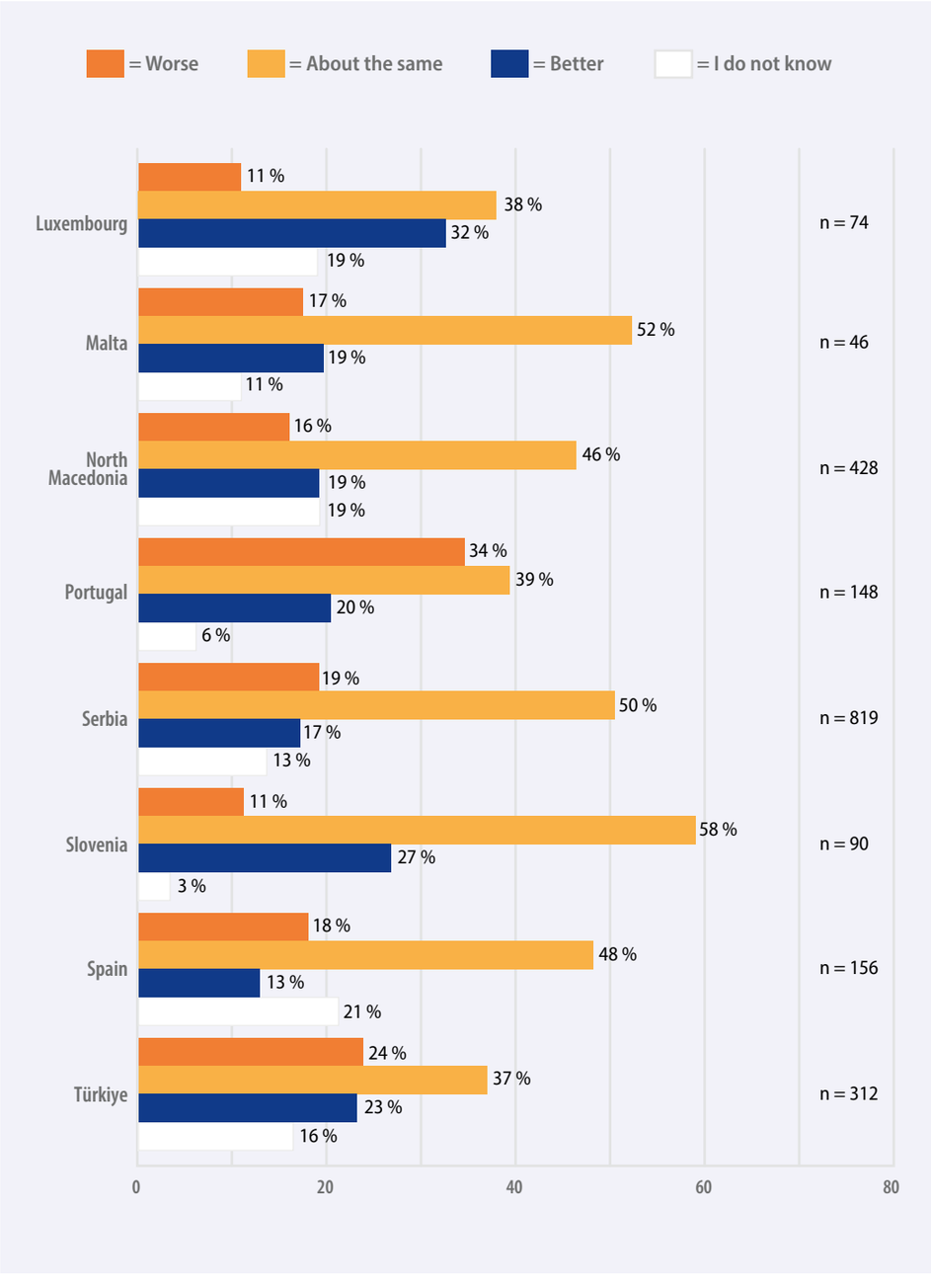
of the respondents in Slovenia, 35% in both Ireland and Portugal, 30% in Georgia, 26% in Armenia and 27% in North Macedonia. The issue is complex and requires further investigation. It may be related to many factors, such as the level of wages in each country, the specialisation and expertise of the history teachers, the content and quality of the existing training programmes, the assessment systems for the teachers, the frequency of the educational reforms, the pressure and intensity of teachers' everyday work and/or the motivation for professional development (Ecker 2018; Baron 2013; Malysheva et al. 2022; Fitchett and Heafner 2017; Rantala and Khawaja 2021).

The question "Do you think that the opportunity to get professional development/in-service training on history teaching has gotten better, worse or has it remained the same over the last three years?" also belongs in the same context. The majority of the teachers chose "about the same" (46%), which means that they are not aware of any significant changes in terms of improvement or deterioration. In second place is the view that the opportunities for professional development have improved, corresponding to the preferences of one out of four respondents. Teachers from Georgia (52%), Armenia (45%), Albania (40%), Ireland (33%) and Luxembourg (32%) have the most positive opinions about the progress of the training programmes over the past three years **(Figure 8.5)**. In contrast, teachers from France (46%), Portugal (34%), Greece (26%) and Türkiye (24%) appear to be the most pessimistic, arguing that it has become worse. If the statistical data is analysed in terms of teaching experience, the most experienced history teachers (with 18+ years of teaching experience) are more critical of the training systems than the newer employees; nearly 7 out of 10 believe that the situation has become worse or, at the very least, remained the same.

8.5 – Perception of TES respondents, by member state, as to whether opportunities for in-service teacher training have become better or worse during the last three years

Do you think that the opportunity to get professional development/in-service training on history teaching has gotten better, worse or has it remained the same over the last three years?

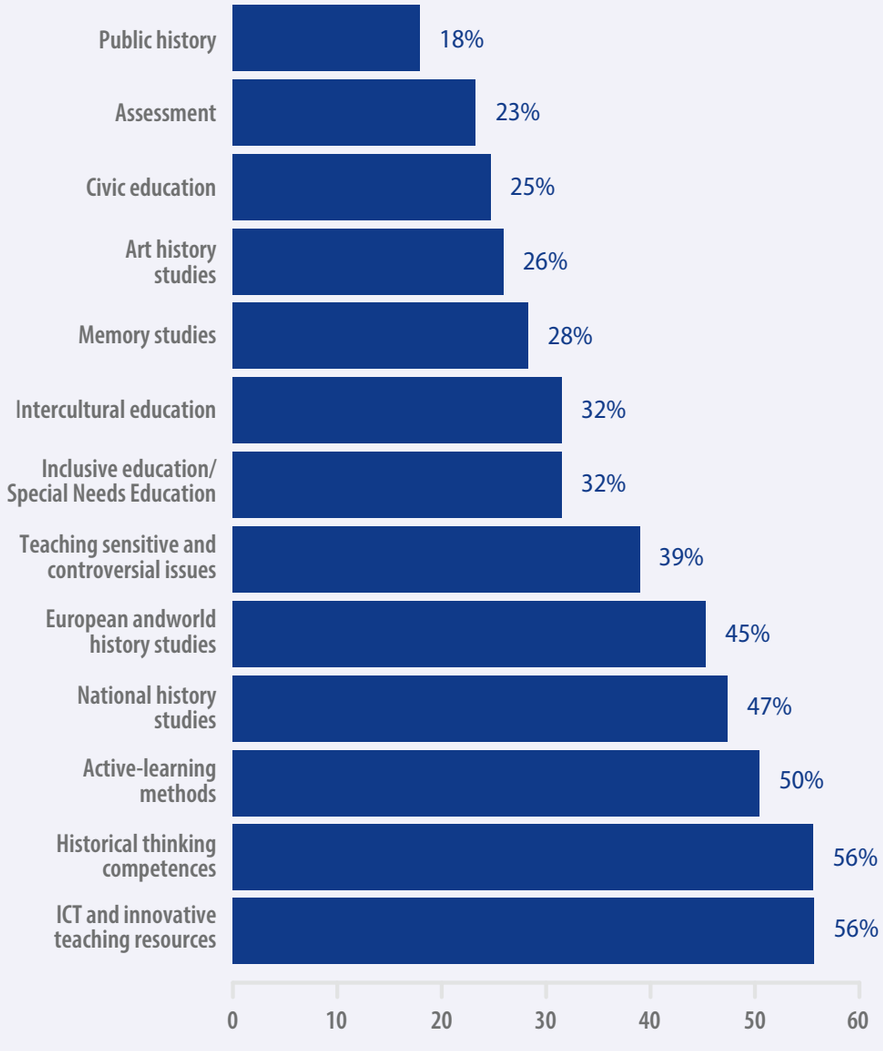




Finally, given the question "What areas for continued professional development do you think are relevant for you as a history teacher?", teachers were asked to choose without any limitations between 13 different types of training, including pedagogy and history teaching methodologies; interdisciplinary fields of study that are or could be linked to history teaching (art history, intercultural education, civic education, memory studies, public history); and historiography in terms of geographical scale (national, European and world history). As **Figure 8.6** shows, the vast majority of respondents chose more than three options. Most of them prioritise ICT and innovative teaching resources (56%), historical thinking competences (56%) and active learning methods (50%). National history and European and world history rank fourth and fifth, with 47% and 45% respectively. Art history, civic education, assessment and public history are the lowest ranked types of professional development in terms of their relevance for teachers.

The below findings display similarities with teachers' responses to the previously posed questions "How much emphasis is given to the following levels of history?" and "How important do you find the following fields in history teaching?". (In Chapter 6, we saw how social and economic history and political and military history were placed at the highest level.) In terms of teaching resources and methodology, although teachers ranked very highly the use of traditional tools such as history textbooks and exams as the most influential in their existing class practices (see Chapters 5 and 6), they recognise the need for ICT and innovative teaching resources, historical thinking competences and active learning methods. This could be an indication of why they prioritise the above items in teacher training programmes. However, the coexistence of teachers' preferences for recently emerging fields of study over traditional ones also probably reflects contradictions within the history teachers' communities, which was also remarked on in the focus groups.

Figure 8.6 – Demand for specific areas of continued professional development as indicated by TES respondents



Note: The TES asked teachers: "What areas for continued professional development do you think are relevant for you as a history teacher?" It was possible to select multiple options. The percentages represent the total number that each option was selected in relation to the overall responses of this question (n = 3 990).

CONCLUDING REMARKS

In the majority of the OHTE member states, the expertise of history teachers varies between primary and lower and upper secondary school levels. Apart from Serbia, where history teachers are exclusively historians at all educational levels, history teachers in primary schools are not required to possess wide or in-depth subject knowledge, whereas teachers with a specialisation in history are appointed in secondary schools.

In most of the countries, initial training is conducted during the final year of undergraduate studies or during the master's specialisation of prospective teachers. Depending on the degree of state centralisation, training programmes are designed and implemented by higher education institutions, national training institutions supervised by the ministries of education, independent organisations, NGOs and teachers' associations. Entrance exams are required to register as a history teacher in Albania, Andorra, Cyprus, France, Georgia, Luxembourg, Spain and Türkiye, while the remaining countries apply selection systems based on the qualifications and teaching experience of applicants.

In the majority of OHTE member states, in-service training is optional and takes place both during and outside of formal working hours. Although the education authorities of all member states claim that a great variety of training seminars are provided, more than half of the history teachers in Andorra, Cyprus, France, Greece, North Macedonia, Malta, Spain and Türkiye state that they have attended fewer than one seminar a year.

Although almost all the state authorities stated that educational reforms had been recently introduced in this area, nearly half of the respondent teachers claimed that the opportunities for professional development remain the same, while the majority of the most experienced teachers believe that provisions for training have become worse. Finally, history teachers prioritise the need for seminars in the domains of ICT and innovative teaching resources, historical thinking competences and active learning methods.

CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSIONS

Conclusions

The first OHTE general report provides valuable factual data showing the diversity of approaches to history teaching across the 16 member states. This mirrors the inherent diversity of national, European and global societies, and is simultaneously the product of, and designed to respond to, the context in which it developed. As the first such report, it has purposely privileged comprehensiveness over detail on any one particular dimension of historical teaching, trying to cover as many of its different aspects as possible from curricular content through pedagogies and teaching practice to assessment and the training of teachers. The mixed methodology adopted for data collection and analysis, combining verifiable quantitative data derived from surveys directed at both education authorities and teachers with qualitative data provided by focus groups, acts as a guarantee of its reliability.

Despite the diversity of history education in different European countries, comparative analysis identified a number of discernible patterns. These patterns, as well as data related to the teaching of individual member states and their clustering with respect to different features of history teaching, can prove helpful for the future development of good-quality history education. Despite the inclusion of a section dealing with relevant recent reforms, this first report necessarily presents a fairly static picture of the present state of history education in the OHTE member states. Subsequent reports, which will be published at regular intervals, will render this picture more dynamic, facilitating longitudinal study across time, as well as providing the opportunity to delve into particular dimensions of history teaching that are identified as particularly salient.

MAIN FINDINGS

The main findings of the first OHTE general report are the following.

1 History education is present in some form in public primary education in all member states except for Armenia, either as a standalone subject or, more frequently, as part of a multidisciplinary course. Understandably, history education is much more complex at the secondary level, where its status (compulsory or optional, standalone or multidisciplinary, focus of the curricula) varies widely not only across member states but also across different levels of education and types of schools.

2 In the majority of the OHTE member states, history curricula are not the exclusive prerogative of state institutions. Examples of civil society actors involved in curriculum design are civic organisations working in the field of education; teachers' associations; representatives of minority groups; individual teachers and independent education consultants; and even the general public.

3 Cross-curricular links with other subjects are frequent. Among these, in order of importance, geography, citizenship education, art, literature, language/literacy and religious education are most frequently seen as complementary to history education.

4 The most frequently used educational resources according to teachers are textbooks, teachers' notes, and websites and databases with historical content approved by the education authorities.

5 Teachers expressed several concerns regarding educational resources, ranging from an excessive abundance of resources available, both digitally and in print, through the need for training on how to be selective in their use in history classes, to the adequacy of textbooks. With regard to the latter, concerns were expressed in particular about multiperspectivity, the extent to which they foster critical thinking and the representation of cultural, ethnic, linguistic, national, religious and sexual/gender minorities, particularly Roma and Travellers, as well as the coverage of topics such as gender history and the history of childhood in textbooks.

6 Primary sources are viewed by history practitioners as essential to the discipline's specific methodological approach and thus as key to good-quality history education. However, in light of survey results indicating that a significant number of teachers rarely or never use primary documentary sources in their history classes, there is still room for improvement, all the more so in conjunction with the widespread use of online historical content indicated by respondents to the survey.

7 The most relevant approaches to history addressed in the classroom, as indicated by the teachers, are, in order of importance, social and economic history, political and military history, migration history, art history, the history of minorities and cultures, environmental history and gender history. The frequency of the last three, while they are seen as important, is considerably more limited. The field of history with the lowest score in terms of both importance and frequency is gender history.

8 There is a discrepancy between teachers' preferences for certain pedagogies and the frequency with which they use them. Didactic methods (for example, lectures and periodisations) are the most commonly employed, although methodologies related to historical thinking and historical consciousness also feature notably. Active learning methods such as place-based or project-based learning are the least frequently used. This is related to concerns about the time allocated to history in the overall curriculum and to curriculum overload, the two most significant obstacles consistently identified by teachers to good-quality history education, followed by the pressure placed on their teaching practice by textbooks and exams.

9 All member states encourage teachers to use multiperspectival methods, and most of them include some minorities (cultural, ethnic, linguistic, national, religious or sexual/gender) in their history curricula. In contrast, fewer than half of the member states explicitly mention the European dimension in their curricula.

10 The learning outcomes that history educators find most relevant are, in order of importance, related to historical thinking and living together in diverse democratic societies, whereas the one they find least relevant is learning and remembering historical facts, dates and processes.

11 A variety of assessment tools and methods are prescribed by the education authorities in OHTE member states, and an even wider range are used by teachers in practice. The most frequently used methods are oral assessment and factual questions about historical events or personalities, followed by interpretation of historical sources and essay questions requiring argumentation. The least frequently used types of assessment are activities related to historical empathy (such as role play and simulations) and activities that assess students' competences for democratic culture. When they are in place, final examinations, which assess both knowledge of historical content and historical thinking skills, influence both the teaching practice and the assessment because the teachers will focus mainly on enabling students to pass the exams.

12 Prospective history teachers in the vast majority of OHTE member states hold an academic degree in history and a master's degree in pedagogy and/or didactics. There is a discrepancy between primary and secondary education: primary school history teachers in most member states, unlike those in secondary schools, are not required to possess extensive and in-depth subject knowledge.

13 There is a notable discrepancy with respect to in-service teacher training. While education authorities in most member states encourage and offer a variety of training, these are often poorly attended when they take place outside of regular working hours and/or are not financially supported by the authorities. With regard to their preferences for specific areas of in-service training, teachers prioritise training in ICT, innovative teaching resources, historical thinking competences and active learning methods.

14 Across several dimensions of history teaching, there are discrepancies between more experienced teachers and those who are relatively new to the profession, with the former being consistently more confident in using active learning pedagogies.

15 Across several dimensions of history education, there seems to be a general discrepancy between what teachers think is relevant and what they describe as happening in practice in the history classroom. In what might be evidence that the transition towards good-quality history education has been adopted in principle, teachers consistently assign relevance to active learning methodologies and competence- or skills-based history teaching rather than to more didactic approaches to history, pedagogies and/or educational resources. However, the implementation of this transition is still wanting, for reasons that may have to do with its complexity.

This first general report provides a snapshot of the present state of history education in the 16 member states of the Observatory on History Teaching in Europe. It seeks to respond to a lack of reliable centralised data about different aspects of history education, which is absolutely vital if the contemporary challenges that confront it are to be addressed. As emphasised above, the report purposely privileges comprehensiveness, proceeding from a formal analysis of the place of history in school education through an exploration of the curricula and educational resources, learning outcomes, forms of assessment and state-regulated examinations, to pedagogies and classroom practice more generally and the initial and in-service training that teachers receive. Casting the net wide is in line with the report's intention to identify patterns that emerge in considering all these different dimensions of history education together. This concluding section draws on the report's main findings to indicate avenues for further, in-depth research that will be developed in subsequent reports and/or that member states might want to enquire into themselves.

A first observation is related to the report's aims to clearly establish the basic formal parameters of history education, at the expense of the finer grain of the substantive content of different curricula. Building on these formal bases, further reports will need to examine more closely what is actually being taught in different courses across the students' life cycle. At the level of the curricula, following an examination of the processes leading to their design and monitoring, as well as the various institutions, state and non-state, involved, further qualitative research is needed into their actual content. At the same time, given that a common concern expressed by many teachers across the OHTE member states is related to curricular overload, further study could seek to assess the feasibility of covering curricula in the number of hours allocated to history teaching.

While the present report draws attention to the differences between primary and secondary education whenever these appeared relevant, more research is needed to unpack these broad categories, factoring in the significant variations between member states regarding what constitutes primary and secondary education. This is especially true for secondary education, which typically covers more of the students' life cycle and is correspondingly given more weight in curricula; almost 85% of all history courses taught across the 16 OHTE member states are secondary school courses. Just as the level of complexity of a history lesson varies between primary and secondary education, so the content and approaches used in the early stages of the latter (for 11- to 12-year-olds) are most likely very different from those deployed in teaching final-year students, who are 18-19 years old.

With regard to the educational resources used by teachers, the report confirmed the continued primacy of textbooks as the main such resource currently in use. Given their importance, more analysis appears warranted not only into the formal processes of the production, approval and distribution of textbooks, including their financing, which the present report has undertaken, but also into their content. At the same time, the next two types of resources that teachers indicated they use most frequently – a) teacher notes and b) websites and databases with historical content approved by the education authorities – require even more clarification. What exactly do these online resources provided by education authorities contain, and who is responsible for their production, maintenance, monitoring and updating? And, while teacher notes are by their very nature highly personal and thus less likely to be subject to overall analysis as a category, further reports could seek to enquire in more depth into the different types of materials and sources teachers draw on when preparing their notes, presumably going beyond those prescribed by the education authorities. Engagement with historical research and developments in the wider discipline are notably underrepresented in the teachers' responses. Fewer than a third of teachers across the OHTE member states indicated that they use such resources often or almost always, but the present report did not enquire further into the types of scholarly literature and methods teachers engage with or into the reasons why a majority of teachers do not find historical scholarship to be a useful resource for informing their teaching practice. Given the widespread concerns about the gap between historical research and history education, as well as the efforts made to bridge it, more in-depth analysis of this is necessary.

Political and military history and social and economic history continue to be the types of history that are both most frequently taught and found to be most important by teachers. These, however, are very broad overarching categories, and more work is necessary to unpack them, to explore in more depth what teachers mean when they express their preference for them. Despite the surveys' emphasis on multiperspectivity across many of the dimensions of history education investigated in this report, no clear picture emerges of its deployment in classroom practice. Despite evidence of a formal commitment to multiperspectivity in the curricula, educational resources, pedagogies and learning outcomes across the OHTE member states, there is little concrete information about its practical implications in the findings. This calls for future in-depth studies of how multiperspectivity is articulated at the level of actual history classes, and what types of resources and/or activities are used to familiarise students with a multiperspectival approach to history. This aspect appears especially important in light of the Council of Europe's commitment to the mission of peace in Europe, for which awareness of the diversity of societies across history is crucial.

Teachers were consistent in their interest in using ICT across the different dimensions of history education analysed in the report. It was also the most prominent type of in-service training teachers said they would be interested in undertaking. This is an important finding,

given the importance of digitisation in recent reforms in several OHTE member states, as well as both the challenges to and opportunities for history education posed by the digital turn, and warrants further research into how to develop online resources to benefit students while training them to navigate the potential pitfalls of unreliable historical data available on the internet.

The main obstacle to good-quality history education identified by teachers relates to the limited time available to develop and implement activities to stimulate students and engage them in more active forms of learning. Concerns were expressed about the limited time allocated to history in the overall curriculum, curriculum overload, the time available to prepare for lessons and, indirectly, the pressures associated with the demands of exams and assessment. In terms of the resources needed to develop good-quality history education, time appears to be one of the most valuable, and further insights into teachers' views on how time pressures could be alleviated would be most useful.

Throughout the report, a divergence between teachers' preferences in principle and their pedagogies in practice was evident and needs further investigation, particularly as it relates to an overarching tension between methodologies geared more towards factual knowledge and those aiming to develop students' historical competences and skills. These are often viewed as contrasting approaches, with competence-based education typically seen as more progressive than "outdated" methods related to factual knowledge, although hardly any history practitioner would argue against the importance of the latter, though they may raise questions about the nature of the "knowledge" in question. However, rather than viewing this tension primarily as an either/or dichotomy with normative implications, a more fruitful path ahead in the development of good-quality history education may be exploring potential meeting points and synergies between the two. To this effect, the combination of synthetic and comparative data presented in this report might present a good point of departure.

Glossary

Active learning occurs when students take an active role in constructing knowledge and understanding, using higher-order thinking skills rather than passively taking notes or following instructions. Active learning activities can range from smaller discussions, debates or case studies to more large-scale problem-based or place-based learning (Brame 2016).

Assessment tools and methods are what educators use to evaluate, measure and document the learning progress, skill acquisition or educational needs of students.

Competence-based or skills-based teaching and learning focuses primarily on the development of students' competences and skills in the discipline of history. It focuses on competences such as analysis, evaluation and synthesis (Black 2011) or on observable skills typically linked to historical thinking or reasoning such as the use of evidence or the development of historical arguments.

Content (also historical content, substantive content) is the information, topics, facts, theories and substantive concepts (for example, revolution or feudalism) included in a sequence of teaching and learning. It pertains primarily to knowledge.

Course refers to the sequence of units or modules followed by students within a specific disciplinary or multidisciplinary area of study.

Curriculum is an overarching plan for learning that typically includes components such as a rationale, learning aims and objectives, content, learning approaches or activities, resources, timing and assessment (Van den Akker, Kuiper and Hameyer 2003).

Democratic citizenship education "means education, training, awareness raising, information, practices and activities which aim, by equipping learners with knowledge, skills and understanding and developing their attitudes and behaviour, to empower them to exercise and defend their democratic rights and responsibilities in society, to value diversity and to play an active part in democratic life, with a view to the promotion and protection of democracy and the rule of law" (CM/Rec(2010)7).

Didactic or teacher-centred approaches are teaching methods or strategies that are organised, driven and delivered by teachers. These approaches focus on the teacher conveying information, usually placing the learner in a more passive role of receiving knowledge and ideas.

Didactics more generally means "the systematic study of the instructional process" (Kansanen 2002).

Digitisation refers to the use of digital tools and resources in teaching and learning.

Direct instruction is a teacher-centred mode of instruction in which the teacher explicitly explains and demonstrates for students the skills or knowledge to be learned (Baumann 1983). Note: it is not used here to denote the strictly structured and scripted approach that is also labelled "direct instruction" in some contexts.

Exams are formal tests taken by students to demonstrate their level of achievement in a particular subject or to obtain a qualification.

Generic skills are applicable and useful in various contexts, and thus can be supposedly transferred between different work occupations (Cinque 2016: 399).

Historical consciousness relates to students' sense of the relationship between past, present and future as well as of their place in this continuum. It spans collective memory, disciplinary history and public opinion (Seixas 2002; Clark and Grever 2018).

Historical empathy is "an element of historical thinking that focuses on our efforts to understand people from the past who lived in different contexts and held different moral frameworks from our own" (Lévesque 2008).

Historical thinking concepts are a key aspect of historical thinking, providing a framework for historical enquiry. These concepts include causation, consequence, continuity, change and historical significance (Seixas and Morton 2013).

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Members of the expert group and other contributors

Selected by the OHTE Scientific Advisory Council and appointed by the governing board in October 2021, the experts group tasked with the preparation of the first OHTE general report on the state of history teaching in Europe comprises academics and history educators from five different European countries, and the European Association of History Educators (EuroClio) consortium represented by the EuroClio Executive Director Steven Stegers, including:

- Cosme J. Gómez Carrasco, Professor of Didactics of Social Sciences in the Faculty of Education at the University of Murcia, Spain
- Dilek Latif, Associate Professor in International Relations, expert in history education affiliated with the Association of Historical Dialog and Research (AHDR), Cyprus
- Angelos Palikidis, Associate Professor in History Didactics at the Department of History and Ethnology at the Democritus University of Thrace, Greece
- Anna Zadora, Associate Researcher and Lecturer at the University of Strasbourg, Associate Researcher at the University of Geneva, Switzerland.

The statistical analysis and graphical presentation of the data included in the report were produced by Jairo Rodríguez Medina, Assistant Professor at the University of Valladolid, Spain.

The scientific rigour of the drafting process of the first general report was ensured by the OHTE Scientific Advisory Council, which is composed of 11 renowned persons in the field of history teaching and learning, chaired by Chara Makriyianni. Two SAC members, Raul Cârstocea and Marko Šuica, acted as SAC rapporteurs for the preparation of the report.

Members of the OHTE Governing Board contributed greatly to the creation of the report by co-ordinating and facilitating the process of data collection in the context of the Education Authorities' Survey and follow-up questions regarding official information, which arose during the drafting process. The governing board is composed of one representative from each member state and is the OHTE's decision-making body.

The final revising of the manuscript was by Raul Cârstocea.

The secretariat of the OHTE played a crucial co-ordination role in ensuring the successful publication of the report.

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Why do we learn history?

History education is increasingly recognised for its contribution to democratic citizenship education. Knowledge of the past is important not only for its own sake but also for developing young people's analytical and critical thinking skills. It should not only provide them with factual information, but it should also develop their historical thinking, thus allowing them to become informed, active citizens.

When taught according to quality history teaching precepts, history as a subject matter can play a crucial role in building and maintaining democratic societies.

How history is taught matters.

The mission of the Observatory on History Teaching in Europe (OHTE) is to provide a clear picture of the state of history teaching in its member states. This is done through OHTE general reports on the state of history teaching in Europe and OHTE thematic reports, which explore particular areas of interest and how they are treated in history lessons.

This first OHTE *General report on the state of history teaching in Europe* captures the state of history teaching in the OHTE member states. It covers topics such as the place of history in education systems, thematic foci within curricula, the use of history textbooks and other educational resources, preferred pedagogical practices, learning outcomes and assessment, as well as information on history teachers and their training.

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OBSERVATORY ON HISTORY TEACHING IN EUROPE

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