The new law on teacher registration for newly qualified teachers (NQTs) in Sweden is due to take effect from 1st July 2012. For NQTs, this will mean having to take part in a mandatory induction programme, being supported by a mentor and being assessed as to whether or not they can be recommended for teacher registration (Swedish Government Bill 2010/11: 20; SOU. 2008:52). Head teachers will be responsible for the assessment and will have to submit written confirmation to the Swedish National Agency for Education, the authority that is formally responsible for the registration of teachers. Teachers and preschool teachers who are already employed may request that registration takes effect from 1 July 2011, albeit without the provision of a probation year, although the head teacher will still be obliged to submit confirmation of their suitability as a teacher.

In this key-note, critical aspects linked to the Swedish reform are discussed and problematised. These include the role of mentors in a system characterised by the formal evaluation of new teachers, challenges associated with the assessment of new teachers’ proficiency, how the proposed Teachers’ Disciplinary Board may lead to more pressure being on teachers but also strengthen teachers’ legal security and how the reform may change roles, positions and identities within schools (see also Aspfors, Fransson & Heikkinen, in press; Devos, 2010; Fransson, 2010). Important research questions for the future are also identified and discussed.

Key words: assessment, head teachers, teacher registration, mentors, new teachers.
References: