

## Wage Formation and the Swedish Teachers' Union

OECD Comparative Teacher Policies Conference

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## New strategy for the teachers' union

- School improvement and professional development should lead to better status and salary increases
- Shift from a teachers' wage earners' union to a teachers' professional union.
- From boxing to dancing as a strategy for negotiations



## Trends in mid-80's and beginning of 90's

- **Decentralisation:** municipalities take over responsibility for schools and teachers from the state
- **Deregulation:** shift from management by regulation to management by objectives
- **Privatisation:** introduction of voucher system
- Teachers, head teachers get more autonomy
- The profession takes more responsibility



## Collective agreement in 1995: "On the Threshold of the 21st Century"

- Joint approach to school improvement
- 20 concrete actions to support the process



## Collective bargaining 1993

- The employer (municipalities) seeks fundamental changes in the systems of wages and working time.
- The two teachers' organisations unite in resistance
- The result: status quo
- Agreement on joint work ahead of forthcoming round of negotiations



## New wage system

- Local negotiations
- Individual salaries
- 10% extra allocated to encourage/reward school improvement



## Next step: "Agreement 2000"

- Possibility for individual salary agreed directly between head and teacher
- New role for local trade union branch: framework agreements, quality assurance and support to members
- At least 20 % raise in five years to come

## Problems in implementing

- Local negotiators sought "objective" systems
- Requires good knowledge/skills from all those involved
- We took considerable responsibility, but the employers did not

## Why individual salaries?

- The old system offered very poor salary development
- Common interest in a new salary system, which should promote school improvement and professional development
- Changing attitudes from members anticipated
- Make the teaching profession more attractive

## How does it work?

- Wage review is conducted at the local level each year
- Firstly a local partners' consultation (municipality level)
- Secondly a salary dialogue head and teacher
- Finally an agreement between partners at the municipality level

## How will it become a driving force?

- Requires a professional discussion
- What is a good school?
- What is a good teacher?
- What is a good result?

## N.B.'s

- Accept that this is a subjective system
- Wage criteria must be anchored in each school
- Accept varying increases at the individual, school and municipal levels
- The impact of market forces may be seen as negative, but offers an effective way to deal with a shortage of teachers

## Four opportunities for teachers to influence their salaries

- First employment
- Transfer from trial period to permanent employment
- Change of employment or position
- Each year at the wage review

Läraryrbundet

## Wage development 95 - 05

- Average wage development 56,6 %
- Inflation during the period 9,7 %
- Real wage increase 46,9 %

Läraryrbundet

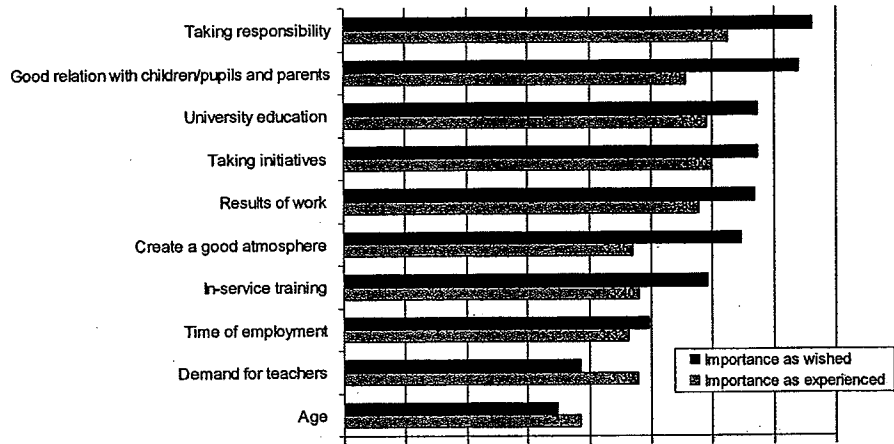
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Läraryrbundet

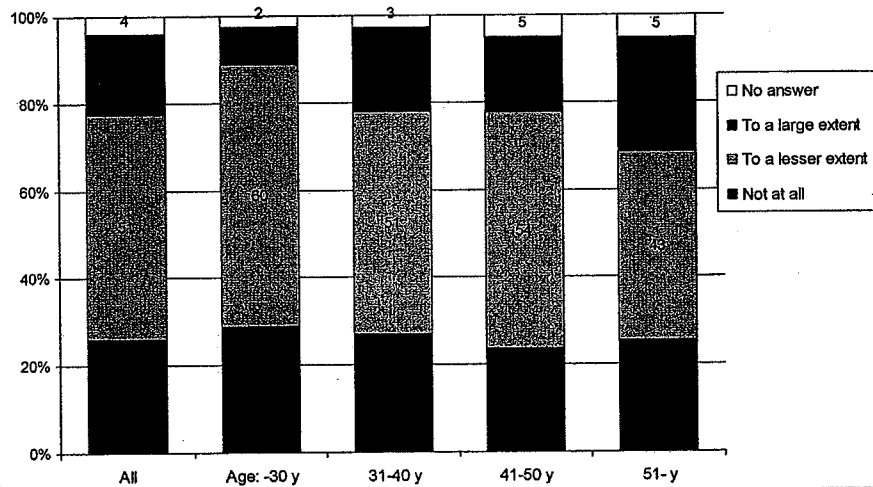
The wage setting process

April - May 2004

How important do you think each of the following aspects should be when the pay for your work is to be decided?  
(1=completely unimportant; 5= very important)



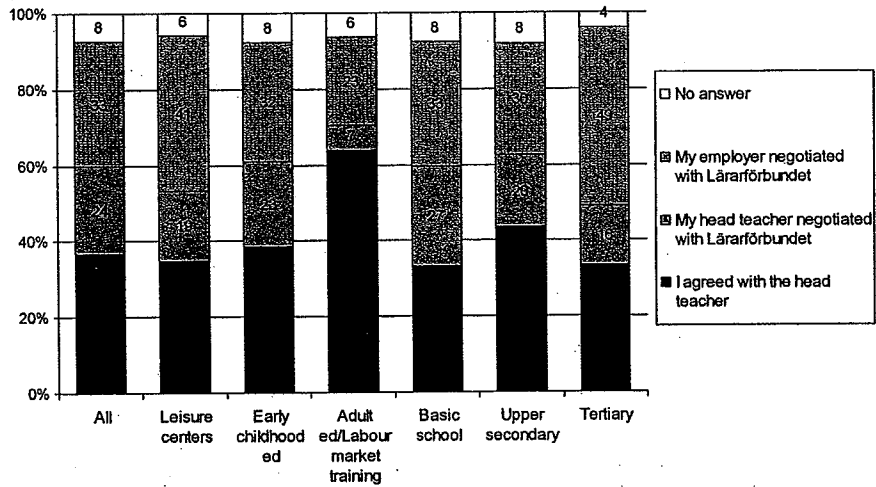
Do you experience that your salary depends on the results you achieve?



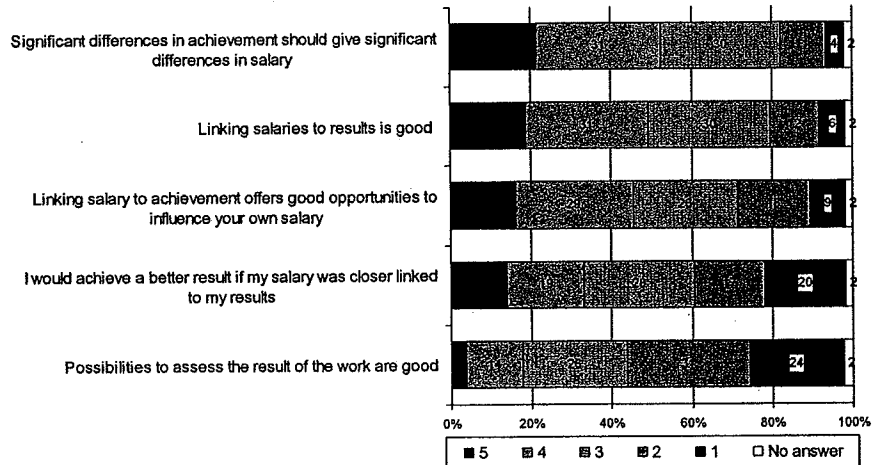
### Comparison with 1999

◀ The impact of result on salaries is considered to have increased evidently since 1999, when roughly 40 % felt that the result did not matter.

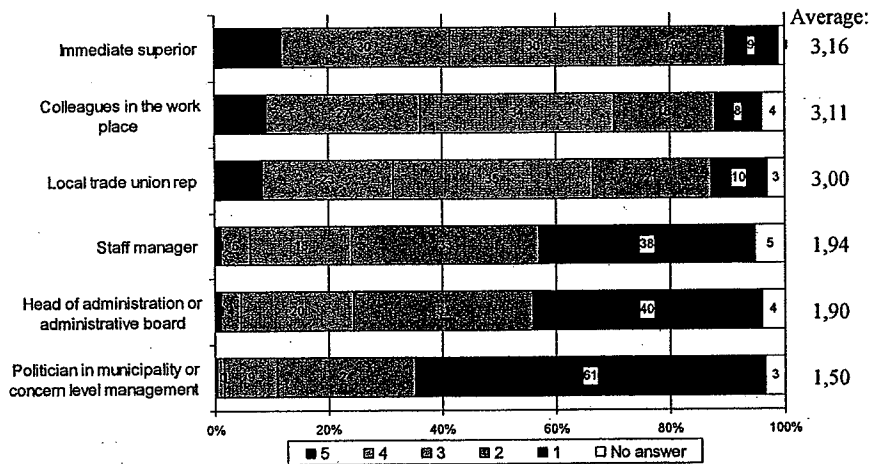
How was your salary decided last time?



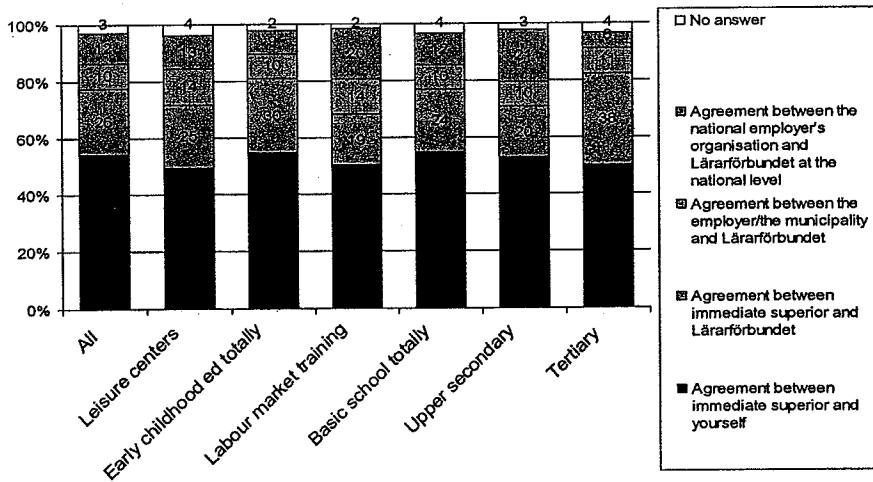
What is your opinion on each of the following statements on wagesetting for teachers?  
(1=I do not agree at all; 5=I agree completely)



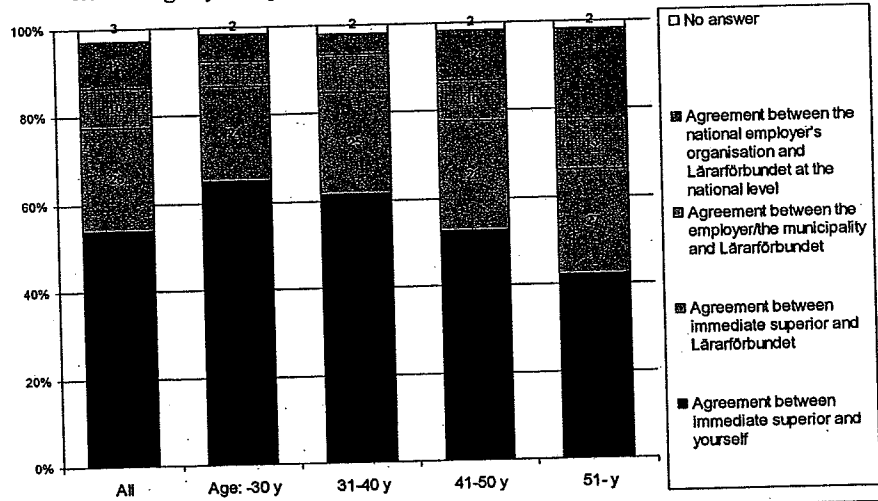
What confidence do you have in the following persons when it comes to their ability to set your salary in a fair way? (1=no confidence ; 5= very big confidence)



According to your opinion, how should your salary be decided?



According to your opinion, how should your salary be decided?



## Conclusion

- A majority of the members of Lärarförbundet have had their salary established after a negotiation between Lärarförbundet and their immediate superior/employer, but there are also around one third of the members who have agreed with their immediate superior on their own.
- Taking responsibility and treating children/pupils/parents well are seen as the single most important aspects in wage-setting. Teachers also think that great importance should be attached to university education, taking initiative and results of work as well as the ability to create a good atmosphere.
- According to teachers, the treatment of children/pupils/parents and the ability to create a good atmosphere have the lowest priority.
- A clear majority think that their own salaries to a large or certain extent depend on the results they achieve. This a significant increase since 1999.
- A clear majority of Lärarförbundet's members think that salaries should be set after their own agreement with their immediate superior, which is to be compared to roughly one third in 1999.

## Conclusion

- Amongst the members of Lärarförbundet, there is a general discontent with salaries. Salaries are considered particularly low as compared to the rest of the labour market.
- Taking responsibility, taking initiative and results of work are now considered to be more important to salaries than before and now there is equally a broad support in the surrounding society for this.
- However, many are reluctant to the possibilities to assess the result of work in a fair way and the confidence in the ability of the immediate superior or others to set salaries is limited.
- A majority of teachers prefer to negotiate their salary with their immediate superior themselves. In this respect a considerable increase has occurred, which could be seen as an expression of discontent with the former wage-setting process but also as a scepticism towards the possibilities to get a fair assessment.