

SUMMARY REPORT

Workshop on Current Developments in External School Evaluation in German Speaking Countries

4-5 May 2023, Salzburg/Austria

Representatives from Bavaria, Baden-Württemberg, Hamburg, Hessen, North Rhine-Westphalia, Austria, South Tyrol and the Canton of Zurich discussed current developments in external school evaluation during an international workshop, organised in Salzburg/Austria with the support of SICI.

The main topics were:

- (1) Using data from external evaluations for educational monitoring and school development
- (2) Strengthening the links between internal and external school evaluation

The professional exchange also addressed ways to deepen international cooperation and identified future topics of common interest.

SUMMARY

Topic 1: How can aggregated data/evidence from external evaluations be (better) used for education monitoring and school development?

Inputs: Bavaria, Hamburg, Austria, Canton of Zurich

Discussion & lessons learnt

External evaluation generates important data for educational monitoring, especially through systematic and direct insight into teaching and everyday school processes. It systematically generates data and knowledge on school process quality as an important supplement to input and output data. The use of aggregated evaluation data by decision makers and practitioners can be facilitated by the following measures:

- High quality data production through
 - scientific foundation of the evaluation procedure (while clarifying that evaluation is not research) and quality assurance
 - specificity of the procedure and focus on a limited number of concrete requirements
 - transparency about the instruments, methods and quality criteria used
 - high professionalism and credibility of evaluators as school quality experts
- Effective communication of aggregated data through
 - continuous stakeholder management (by raising interest in data among policy makers and practitioners, proactively addressing information needs, creating opportunities for structured exchange, etc.)
 - practice-oriented preparation and synopsis with other relevant data
 - targeted use of various information channels
- Promoting the use of data by decision-makers and practitioners by
 - promoting the acquisition of data literacy in initial and continuous teacher training; creating practice-oriented settings (data workshops, co-interpretation of data by producers and users, etc.)
 - strengthening professional networks, increasing commitment in data-based collaboration between teachers, promoting collaborative quality development

- Increasing benefits for data users by involving them e.g. in determining priorities of external evaluation, etc.

Topic 2: How can internal evaluation be linked to external evaluation?

Inputs: Austria, Hessen, South Tyrol

Discussion & lessons learnt

- Content coherence and functional interfaces between internal and external evaluation within a closed quality management system appear essential to better understand challenges at schools and to use findings for quality development in a targeted way
- In some countries there is a legal obligation for schools to conduct internal evaluations on a regular basis; however, this is often not implemented consistently
- Schools often lack capacities and skills to carry out internal evaluation, have low awareness of the relevance of and benefit from internal/external evaluation and quality management
- Schools need external support in designing, implementing and interpreting the results of internal and external evaluation (e.g. through school development counselling, through externally supervised internal evaluation)
- It is important to offer quality-assured, easily accessible instruments for internal evaluation (e.g. within the framework of evaluation platforms)
- At the management level (school management, school supervision/school administration), there is a need for clarity and commitment with regard to the implementation of external/internal evaluation and the use of results

OPEN EXCHANGE: possible future focus of cooperation

The following topics of common interest were identified as future priorities for international cooperation and exchange (German-speaking group or SICI in general):

- **Assessment of the quality of teaching as the core process of schools:** focus on methods and criteria for the assessment of future-oriented teaching and learning settings (open formats, digital learning, AI-supported formats, etc.).
- **Effective use of data and communication of results**

Organising further workshops among German-speaking external evaluation offices was considered suitable for deepening cooperation (ca. 1 workshop per year).

Participants identified cross-national peer reviews and shadowing of evaluation procedures as possible future methods of targeted professional exchange and mutual learning.