



SICI NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 2021

Introduction

The SICI Executive Committee would like to improve communication with members, especially concerning the implementation of our Strategic Plan. One approach to this is to issue a regular 'News Update', usually produced after each Executive Committee meeting. We would encourage members to respond to the information in this update, and to submit any information that they would like to highlight to other members. Please use the contact details at the end of the newsletter.

Update from the Executive Committee

The activities of SICI have been considerably disrupted as a result of the lockdown. Nevertheless, the Executive committee continued working and has met several times by using digital technologies such as Teams and Zoom. Below you may find a current state of affairs:

- The overview of the regional groups is as following:

Hille Voolaid	Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Slovak Republic, , Lithuania, Norway, Slovenia, Sweden, Finland
Herman Franssen/ Janie McManus	Belgium (Dutch speaking community), England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales, Ireland, the Independent Schools Inspectorate, the Netherlands, Malta
Tommy Lagergren	Austria, Bavaria, Hamburg, Hessen, Lower Saxony, North Rhine-Westphalia, Belgium (German speaking community), South Tyrol
Bart Maes	Basque Country, Belgium (French speaking community), France, Luxembourg, Portugal, Cyprus, Italy, Madeira
Gordana Čaprić	Bulgaria, Kosovo*, Montenegro, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Serbia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan

- It is SICI's ambition to support the development of inspections and the cooperation between the different inspectorates. Various goals and key actions were formulated in the strategic plan.

Therefore the EC has developed a questionnaire to map out the areas in which inspectorates want to share their knowledge and experience with other inspectorates and the areas in which they would like to know more about the knowledge and experience of other inspectorates.

This activity aimed at the following two goals of the strategic plan.

- Support improvement of inspectorates and the professional competence of inspectors
 - Provide advice, support and evidence based on the experience of members to enhance the professional learning of inspectors.
 - Promote joint learning events like peer reviews and job shadowing.
- Promote and support partnership and cooperation between inspectorates.
 - Promote projects by taking stock of members' needs and actively use calls for proposals.

The EC will compile a total overview based on the responses on the questionnaire. Subsequently, the members themselves can take contact with each other on the basis of the overview to discuss whether they find some form of cooperation. Different forms of cooperation are possible:

- Exchange of knowledge and materials
- Joint meeting to share experiences and knowledge
- Organizing mutual job shadowing/study visits
- Organizing peer review
- Setting up a joint project

If you have any questions about the questionnaire, please contact: Erik de Bou (erik.debou@onderwijsinspectie.be) and Herman Franssen (H.Franssen@onderwijsinspectie.nl).

- The EC is glad to invite members to the SICI General Assembly on Thursday November 18th to November 19th, 2021. The General Assembly will take place on site and in hybrid format.

The SICI Executive Committee and the Swedish Schools Inspectorate have developed a varied programme to stimulate discussion around wrapping up the theme of internal quality assurance of inspectorates and launching the theme of Contribution of inspection to equity

and excellence which will be the thematic priority of 2022. There will also be a follow-up of the webinars on the effects of the pandemic.

The meeting of regional groups as well as the annual meeting of national coordinators will create additional opportunities to share good practices and promote further co-operation among SICI members.

You can register by sending an email to the SICI Secretariat.

Any queries concerning the program should be directed to: Tommy Lagergren (tommy.lagergren@skolinspektionen.se) or to the SICI Secretariat.

- On regularly basis SICI organizes **Open Forums for National Coordinators**.
 - Time: 27/10/2021; 22/12/2021
 - Where: Online by MS TEAMS
 - Topics: Can be sent to the SICI secretariat until the day before by national coordinators
 - Aims:
 - Improving the communication between the national coordinators and the different regional groups (key action 3)
 - Meeting the needs and questions from different members, Interested members could join as appropriate (key action 5)
 - Sharing best practices (key action 6)
 - Exploring and diversifying ways of collaboration and cooperation between members (key action 7)
 - Improving communication and dissemination of SICI's work (key action 8)
 - Discussing ideas and topics to work together with researchers (to organize SICI webinars and workshops, to disseminate research reports, to invite speakers) (key action 1)
 - Providing advice, support and evidence based on the experience of members to enhance the professional learning of inspectors. (key action 2)

Please find our previous newsletters by clicking on the following link: <http://www.sici-inspectorates.eu/Contact-us/EC-Minutes>.

Some words about ...

...The inspectorate update of Bulgaria

A brand new inspection ordinance is entering into force since 16th of September 2021. This is the legal law document for regulation of inspections.

The team of the National Inspectorate of education in Bulgaria develops new Inspection Framework including new criteria, indicators, questionnaires and all other tools for measuring of educational quality.

The changes are focused on the redefined areas of inspection:

1. Educational process: academical results, efficiency of the interaction and competence approach in the education and socialization, class management, assessment, support for students' s development, teamwork between teachers and other pedagogical staff for the individual progress of every child/student.
2. Management: human resources management, incl. efficiency of the continuous professional development, assessment/appraisal of pedagogical staff, management of information and technological resources, partnership management for school/kindergarten development and for enhancing of students' s progress, effective leadership
3. Institutional environment: physical environment, informational and library assurance, development of the organizational culture in the school/kindergarten, conditions for support and effective interaction among all participants in education process and with the stake holders, satisfaction of participants in the education process.

Bulgarian inspectorate works on the preparation of 3 visits to partner organization in the Netherlands, Estonia and Italy as part of Erasmus+ project :“Quality Training and Positive interaction in the Inspection Process”.

The inspectorate is approved beneficiary of short term project “Quality Inspections trough Quality of Inspectors' s Training – QIQIT”, also funded by Erasmus +.

...The inspectorate update of the Independent Schools Inspectorate

The Department for Education confirmed that routine inspections of association independent schools should resume in September 2021. The current inspection cycle has been extended and will now conclude in summer 2023. This means we have re-started routine Regulatory Compliance Inspections (RCIs) and Education Quality Inspections (EQIs). Feedback told us that the adjustments made to non-routine RCI and EQI inspections during the summer term – to help mitigate against the risks of Covid-19 – were effective, and they will continue during the autumn term.

During the 2020/21 academic year – despite a Government suspension of routine inspections – ISI carried out over 178 inspections, visits and remote reviews. These were at schools where either concerns had been raised, progress needed monitoring against previous non-compliance, or a material change had occurred. As a result, the non-compliance rate was higher than average, at 16.5 per cent. The most commonly failed parts of the Independent School Standards in the schools we inspected were welfare, health and safety and quality of leadership and management.

As routine inspections recommence, we will publish comparative data on a termly basis to identify trends in regulatory compliance and education quality against pre-pandemic levels. In terms of inspection practice, one of our key areas of focus will be school culture and schools' implementation of updated regulatory requirements and statutory guidance, including [Relationships and Sex Education](#) and [Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools](#).

...The inspectorate update of Kosovo*

During 2021, as in the rest of the world, Kosovo also faced a very difficult situation due to Pandemics COVID-19. For this reason, the Inspectorate of Education was not able to fulfil the obligations provided by the work plan for 2021.

Throughout the year the Education Inspectorate was more focused on:

1. Overseeing the implementation of the legislation in force, including the implementation of measures against COVID-19:
 - the realization of the lesson according to the scenarios prepared:
 - scenario A - with the presence of students in the school,
 - scenario B - mixed,
 - scenario C-distance learning scenario / on-line;
 - the realization of the supplementary lesson/classes:
 - four Saturdays during April and May,

- one week in the June;
 - thematic inspections were carried out in order to control the implementation of anti-COVID-19 measures (over 800 thematic inspections and re-inspections);
2. Supporting schools during the internal performance evaluation process:
 - as per legislation in force, each educational institution every year must carry out internal performance evaluation;
 - during the internal evaluation the school can identify many shortcomings and weaknesses which are as a result of the situation with the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as find best methods for overcoming this and face other challenges;
 - inspectorate gave recommendations for overcoming these difficulties and raised them within other stakeholders responsible for this emergency situation;
 3. Evaluation of the performance of directors and deputy directors of educational institutions. This performance appraisal process started in March 2021 and so far over 30 school principals and deputy principals have been evaluated.

During 2021 the Inspectorate of Education has been supported by various governmental (GO) and non-governmental organizations (NGO), such as: GIZ, USAID, British Council, etc.

...The inspectorate update of Madeira

The Regional Inspectorate of Education (Madeira) has concluded the first phase of the implementation of the monitoring activity called "Learning Development" in the current school year, now beginning the implementation of the 2nd phase.

This inspection action is part of the strategy to develop actions that promote the quality of education and teaching establishments, academic success of students, the change the of culture of retention, promoting critical spirit and to assume the ethical commitment to transform the socio-educational reality.

The action focused on 10 education and teaching establishments of the 1st cycle of basic education with pre-school and nursery school, with a total of 1990 children and students, of these 123 with the application of support measures for learning and inclusion (selective and/or additional). 1127 with support from school social action, 351 kindergarten teachers and teachers and 267 non-teaching staff. The aim of the inspection activity was to observe and analyse the planning, implementation and evaluation of children and students' learning, and the adoption and evaluation of measures to improve

school results planned in the light of the diagnosis and implemented by schools (Deming cycle or PDCA cycle [Plan, Do, Check, Act]).

This intervention privileged qualitative methodologies, with recourse to quantitative methodologies. To collect information, we used working meetings with the school director, direct observation, panel interviews with elements of the educational community (teaching and non-teaching staff, parents and guardians, and students), planning documents, medium and short-term, macro and micro, school results and reports of achievement and evaluation of the planned.

Regarding the treatment of the collected information, it was carried out the analysis of statistical information and planning documents, medium and short term, macro and micro, school results and reports on the implementation and evaluation of the plan and the analysis and production of inferences from the information collected in notes during the interviews.

The results were derived from the comparison of the actual situation with the reference situation made in the last phase of intervention, after the diagnosis and the subsequent improvements made by the schools.

...The inspectorate update of the Republic of Slovenia

The school year in Slovenia began on September 1, just like every year. Pupils up to the fifth grade of primary school do not wear masks. Everyone else (as well as teachers) must wear them. This is also the focus of our targeted inspections, which we have much less than in the first half of the year. Inspectors come to work every other week, and in between we work from home. Thus, a maximum of half of the employees are always present at the inspectorate, but we work separate, each in his own office. We wear masks in all enclosed spaces, but when we are alone in the office, we can also be without them.

From May to November, there is also bilateral technical assistance provided by our Inspectorate to the Inspectorate of Montenegro. It is a project funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Republic of Slovenia. In the first week of September, we hosted three inspectors from Montenegro in Slovenia, who looked at our system of education and inspection control; and in the third week of September we will take turns and go to Montenegro to see their school and organisations.

...The inspectorate update of the Scotland

1. Education Scotland support

Education Scotland continues to provide support to practitioners through its web resource. Link attached.

[Education Scotland | Education Scotland](#)

2. SICI webinar

HM Inspectors recently delivered a webinar to SICI members. This was entitled, 'Health and wellbeing during and after the pandemic'. The webinar had a number of sections, including Scotland's focus on the health and wellbeing of children and young people; Experiences of the pandemic - staff, children and young people from two schools; and Food in schools in Scotland. We will upload webinar materials to the SICI website over the coming weeks.

Thanks to all who attended – we hope you found the webinar useful!

3. Session 2021

HM Inspectors at Education Scotland will complete three national thematic inspections by the end of December 2021.

The subjects of these inspections are:

1. Supporting children's and young people's wellbeing

Ensuring that the health and wellbeing of children and young people remains a high priority for everyone involved in Scottish Education over the coming year. This national thematic will explore specific approaches that schools and establishments are taking to support all children and young people with their health and wellbeing needs.

2. Local approaches to recovery

The impact of the pandemic will be different for some schools, establishments and learners across Scotland. This national thematic will focus on how schools and establishments identify their priorities for improvement as part of COVID-19 recovery. The thematic will explore how schools are supporting children, meeting individual needs and mitigating gaps in children's learning and progress. It will outline the ways in which the pandemic has impacted on practice and provision, and the approaches schools are adopting to improve outcomes for learners.

3. Outdoor learning

As a result of the pandemic, many schools and establishments have had an increased focus on learning outdoors both during periods of remote learning, and in returning to buildings. This national thematic will explore how schools and establishments are making use of outdoor spaces during the pandemic to support learning and achievement.

[HM Inspectors of Education will undertake a phased return to scrutiny activities this academic year | News | News and events | Education Scotland](#)

4. Session 2022

From January 2022, HM Inspectors will undertake a programme of individual early learning and childcare (ELC) setting inspections and school inspections. HM Inspectors will continue to take account of COVID-19 recovery and the context in which establishments and settings have been working, as well as providing evidence for the Scottish Government's National Improvement Framework.

Link attached for [2021 National Improvement Framework and Improvement Plan: Summary document](#).

...The inspectorate update of the Slovak Republic

In academic year 2021-2022 the Slovak Inspectorate has a plan to carry out thematic inspections of primary and secondary schools with the aim to get information about the way in which education is adapting to the circumstances due to the distance learning.

Our goal is to find out what adjustments in the content of education in relation to the state educational program the school has implemented in order to ensure the continuity of education; and to find out what system of measures the school has applied in education of the students who did not have conditions for distance learning.

School inspectors in kindergartens will carry out thematic inspections to ascertain the introduction of compulsory pre-primary education and observe the process of teaching and learning of children for whom pre-primary education in kindergarten is compulsory.

In November the Slovak School Inspectorate will launch an Erasmus+ project „School inspection - the partner of a satisfied student and a successful school, “in partnership with the Czech School Inspectorate and the Finnish Education Evaluation Centre.

The priorities of this project will be given to developing new methods and inspection tools (related to the well-being and school self-evaluation) and enhancing inspectors' continuous professional development.

Through exchange of professional knowledge and experience of the participating partners the Slovak Inspectorate wants to achieve the following objectives:

- To develop an inspection tool for evaluation of wellbeing at primary and secondary schools by implementing examples of good practice of project partners.
- To provide methodological support focused on wellbeing for primary and secondary schools through webinars and educational materials for teachers and school directors.
- To innovate self-evaluation criteria in the inspection tool for external school evaluation with the use of the experience of partner countries.
- To promote self-evaluation through methodology and webinars designed for school management and staff of pilot primary and secondary schools.

...The inspectorate update of the Netherlands

1. Renewed framework 2021

In August 2021, the Dutch Inspectorate of Education has implemented a renewed framework. We expect the English translation of the Framework to be available soon. The principles of supervision (such as the schoolboard inspections, the task of guaranteeing that schools and school board meet basic quality/legislation, stimulating improving beyond basic quality by own ambitions of schools and boards) remains solid. However, there have been some serious adjustments. These are:

- The developments in the quality of the educational system have become supervision activities at school boards. We assess what contribution a school board makes to the system as a whole
- In the working processes we will focus more on adjusting the inspection process to the quality of the school board. Inspectors will have more freedom to customize the inspection methods (proportionality and customization)
- The framework is now been subdivided in quality standards on three levels: the educational system as a whole, the school boards, the schools.
- The standards of quality assurance for schools and school boards have been adjusted. Financial quality and educational quality are being integrated on school board level.

- Extra attention for citizenship. From August 1 2021, there are new legal requirements for promoting citizenship in primary, secondary and special education. We have incorporated these requirements into the 2021 Framework.

We will inform you as soon as the renewed framework is published on our website.

2. Effective remote teaching and learning

This review article describes how to design effective remote teaching and learning. First, it describes 6 risks of remote teaching and learning. Next, it looks at the components of effective remote lessons and effective approaches at school level. It also describes how schools can involve parents in remote teaching and learning. Research insights set out in this article hold true for all sectors, from primary to higher education. We have visually summarized this information in an infographic. [Effective remote teaching and learning | Publication | Inspectorate of Education \(onderwijsinspectie.nl\)](#)

3. State of Education 2021

The Dutch Inspectorate of Education yearly reports about the state of education. The education report 'The State of Education 2021' outlines developments and key themes in Dutch education. In this report you will find a summary that reflects on major developments and facets of education that are in need of improvement. The appeal we are issuing in this years' State of Education is 'From repair to renovation': switch from the proposed repair to a renovation. The government has made additional funding available to address the adverse effects of the pandemic, to tackle the root causes of the decline in basic skills but also to try and make lasting improvements in education. [The State of Education in the Netherlands 2021 | Annual report | Inspectorate of Education \(onderwijsinspectie.nl\)](#)

4. Research consequences of 16 months Covid-crisis

We are momentarily doing research in order to visualize the consequences of the corona crisis for education with the focus: what is the quality of education for pupils/students, what is the view of the students, is there currently an adequate response to the (learning) needs and how are they managed? And to analyze which adjustments or emphases in our supervision in the coming years this will require. For this we are doing interviews and surveys under a large number of school boards, schools and pupils/students. This research will be finalized at the end in October 2021

Updates about projects...

Some words about ...

...The Erasmus+ project “BIBESOIN”



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



Current state of affairs:

- The third ‘Short-term joint staff training event’ of the Erasmus+ project ‘BIBESOIN’ (Better Inspection for better social inclusion) was organised online by the Quality Assurance Department (QAD) of Malta, 20th and 21st April 2021: ‘Reducing barriers and increasing learner engagement through digital technologies’
- The fourth ‘Short-term joint staff training event’ was organised in a hybrid way by the Primary Education Inspectors’ Organisation (OEDE) of Cyprus from 19th and 21th October 2021 in Limassol.
- The ‘multiplier event’ to inform all stakeholders (which was originally planned in November 2020) will be organized in France, Poitiers, 16th December 2021, in and by the institute IH2EF, <https://www.ih2ef.gouv.fr/who-we-are>, in cooperation with all partners.
- On the SICI website you can find all information about the BIBESOIN project: the purpose, information about the partners, all training event and transnational meeting reports and TESSIE (the Toolbox for Evaluation and Stimulation Social Inclusion in Education).
<https://www.sici-inspectorates.eu/Activities/Projects>

Other information

Coming SICI events

<u>Date</u>	<u>Online/on site</u>	<u>Title</u>
18 – 19 November 2021	Sweden	“General Assembly”
December 2021	Poitiers	BIBESOIN Multiplier event

2022	Webinar?	Book on ‘European School Inspection and Evaluation: History and Principles’ written by Adrian Gray.
March / April 2022	Scotland	
June 2022	?	
Autumn 2022	France	
17 – 18 November 2022	Ireland	General Assembly

You can always find an overview of the SICI activities by clicking on the following link: <http://www.sici-inspectorates.eu/News/Calendar>

Call for projects

...funded by SICI

One of the key actions of the SICI strategic plan is to promote and support partnership and cooperation between inspectorates. A subtheme of this key action is to help fund projects working collaboratively in line with SICI’s aims and priorities. Therefore, we would like to inform you about the criteria for funding SICI projects:

SICI can fund projects up to 3000 euros per year for two years in a row.

The EC will make a decision within one month about the application on the basis of the following elements:

1. The project is designed as a multilateral project of minimum 3 members.
2. All participating members co-finance and invest human resources into the project.
3. The project aims at developing or at further exploring an aspect of the SICI strategic plan. The aims are part of a short project description.
4. There is a project budget.
5. A plan for evaluating the project is presented with the application.
6. The dissemination into SICI is planned (Minimum: report in a workshop or GA)

A member of the EC will be appointed as a contact person for the project.

SICI contact details

Please let us know if you have any remarks or questions. Always feel free to submit any additional information, which can be used in the following newsletter.

Email SICI secretariat: sici@vlaanderen.be