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Supporting school innovation in Europe: role of inspection

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Content of Presentation

- 1) Commission's study on supporting school innovation across Europe
- 2) Expert work on quality assurance
- 3) Education and Training 2020 Working Group Schools

Political context – progressing towards a European Education Area

- ❖ European Council conclusions (Heads of State and Government) of December 2017
- ❖ Council conclusions (Education Ministers) of May 2018
- Supporting Member States in improving the inclusive, lifelong-learning based and **innovation-driven** nature of their education and training systems
- Promoting cross-border mobility and cooperation in education and training



Important role of quality assurance



Study on Supporting School Innovation Across Europe

Final report

Education and
Training

1) Innovation Study

Innovation Study:

- ❖ comprehensive review of existing research and school innovation policies across the EU
- ❖ additional perspectives and lessons from beyond Europe (Canada, US, Singapore, Australia, Japan, China ...)
- ❖ what system-level conditions support or constrain innovation processes in schools across different contexts



Definition of innovation:

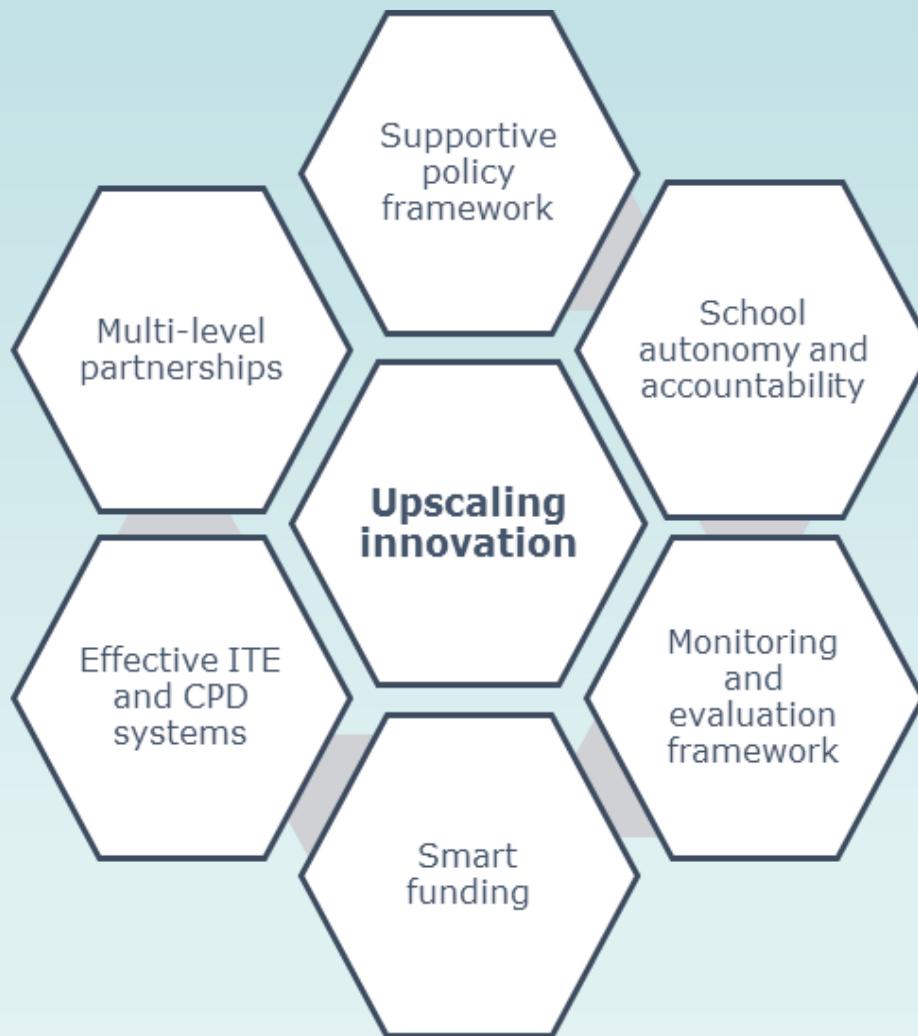
- ❖ At **school level**, innovation is the capacity of schools to embed and sustain pedagogical and organisational practices that are new to a given context and that can lead to improved students' outcomes
 - ❖ At **education system level**, innovation is the capacity of the system to consolidate change and improvement – to promote experimentation, monitor, evaluate, learn from failures, support networking and exchange, as well as design favourable school policies to help embed, tailor and sustain innovation in schools
- Innovation as a **multi-level phenomenon**
- Innovation cannot be sustained when schools operate in isolation. The **broader system** within which schools operate needs to innovate.
- Innovations need to **engage actors at all levels** of the education system to be sustainable, helping to improve learning outcomes for all students

What drives innovation in schools?

- ❖ Supportive and distributed **school leadership**
- ❖ Preparedness, commitment and professionalism of **teachers**
- ❖ A **shared vision** for school development, accompanied by detailed internal strategies and action plans
- ❖ **Engaged students** as active participants in the process of change
- ❖ Openness towards local communities and wider **partnerships**



How can innovation become system-wide?



Source: PPMI

Supportive policy framework

- ✓ **coherent policy framework** covering key areas such as curriculum, school autonomy and accountability measures, teacher and school leader professional development and funding policies
- ✓ supported by a **long-term vision** to embed innovation into school education and ensure system-wide transformation
- ✓ Innovation
 - needs to be explicitly embedded into education policy priorities and strategies
 - requires coordinated system-wide change, involving a broad set of actors

Balanced school autonomy with in-built accountability measures

- ✓ **sufficient school autonomy** accompanied by the necessary support mechanisms
- ✓ 'intelligent' systems of **accountability** combining both vertical and horizontal measures
- ✓ education systems should encourage **evidence-informed policy experimentation with in-built risk management** mechanisms, developing a system that learns from and reflects on both its failures and successes



Monitoring and evaluation framework

- ✓ promoting **culture of evaluation**
- ✓ **capacity building** of education actors at all levels to better use available data and evidence to identify which policy initiatives are successful and to understand the reasons for each initiative's success or failure
- ✓ **piloting school policy initiatives** to test innovative ideas on a smaller scale, with evaluation mechanisms built into the design of these initiatives
- ✓ online **knowledge-sharing** platforms to better spread inspirational examples of school innovation



School partnerships and cooperation with other actors

- ✓ **engagement of inspectorates** in dialogue and learning processes with schools, supporting schools in the innovation process

Case study - Spain, Andalusia (innovative pedagogies)

- school highlighted the support and advice received by the regional inspectorate as key in the process of transformation and especially during critical moments of the process and facing the opposition of a large number of parents
- inspectorate offered support and training to teachers on students' assessment





**Better learning for Europe's young people:
developing coherent quality assurance strategies
for school education**



2) Expert work on quality assurance

Expert report:

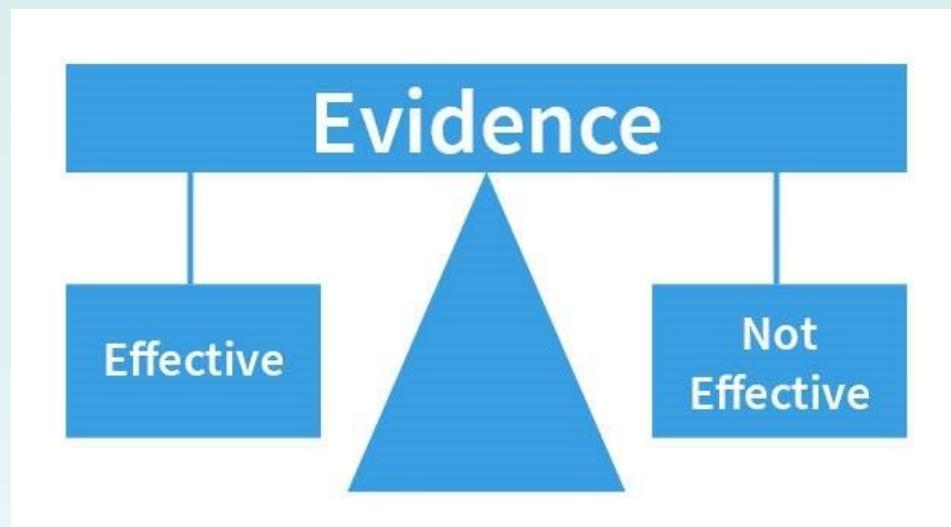
- ❖ analysis of a range of **policy and implementation challenges** related to different aspects of quality assurance in school education
- ❖ commentary **on how countries can address these challenges** in ways which are consistent with a shared European vision on the purpose of education and how system-level improvement can most effectively be achieved in light of such a vision

Vision on quality education for all students:

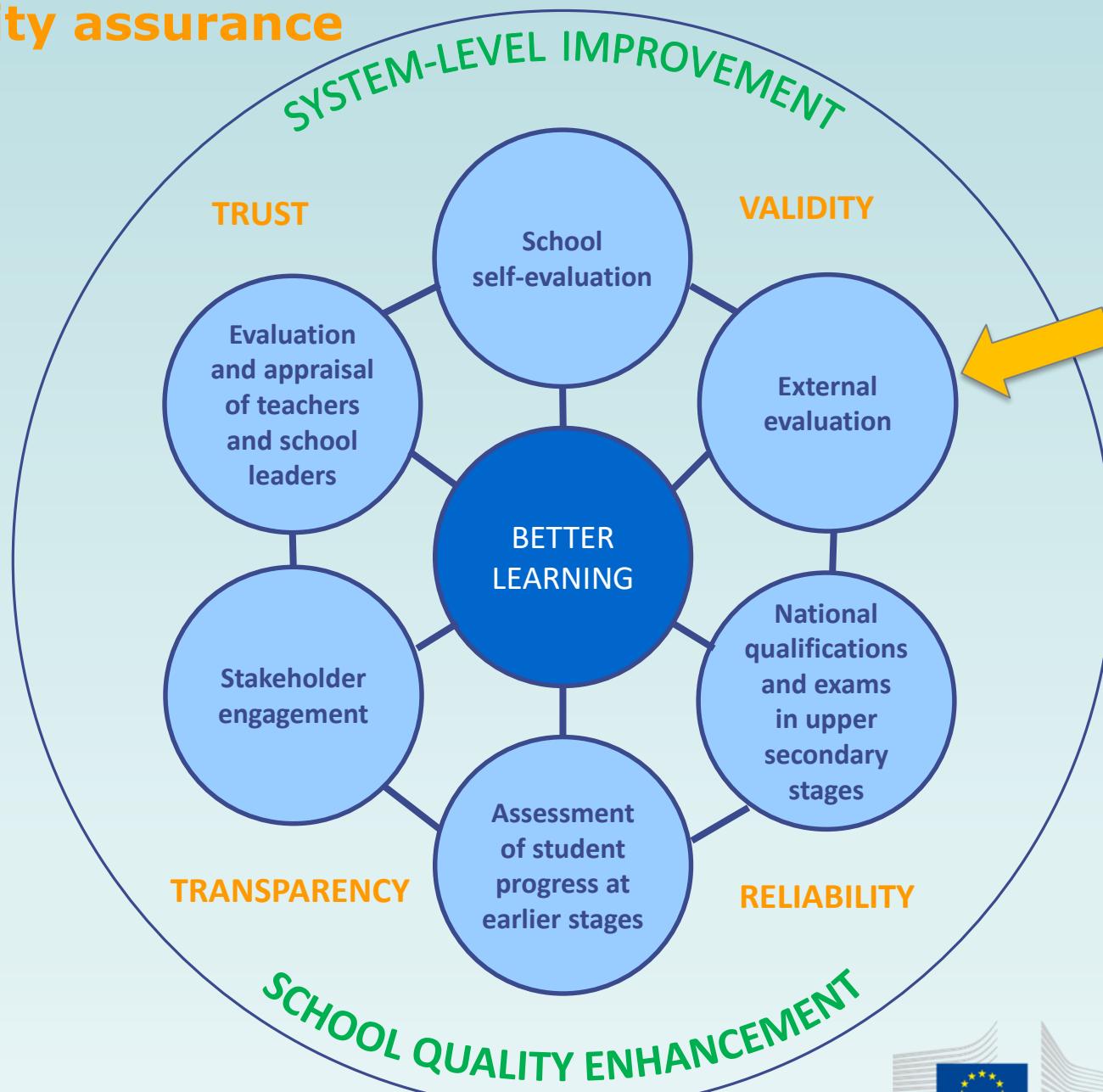
- Commitment to establishing a climate of quality enhancement and trust
- Commitment to a balanced understanding of learner development

Working definition of a quality assurance strategy:

The policies and practical arrangements which govern the way in which a country/region goes about systematically gathering and deploying evidence in order to monitor, evaluate and generate further improvement in the quality of their school education systems.



Key components of a quality assurance strategy:



European
Commission

Inspectorates focused on promoting improvement:

- ❖ Still serve a public assurance role, moderating the quality of school self-evaluation, but can do so **on a more flexible basis** rather than on a fixed cycle, backed up by 'risk-based' arrangements to intervene quickly where there are signs that a school needs to be inspected urgently.
- ❖ Can develop less standardisation and more **flexible customisation in the way they go about inspecting and reporting on schools**, presenting a more rounded, individualised narrative about the school.
- ❖ Can develop a style of **engagement which is more akin to coaching than examining**, with higher levels of professional dialogue built into the process to help schools learn from the experience inspectors bring of practice elsewhere.

Some of the potential benefits of having external quality reviews:

- ❖ come to **richer, more rounded judgements about the quality of provision and outcomes in a school**, based on the synthesis of a wide range of evidence
- ❖ **strike a balance** between evaluating the quality of students' outcomes, the quality of the processes that are leading to these outcomes and the governance arrangements that the school has in place
- ❖ **promote a more balanced view of learner development** by focusing on and giving prominence to areas of competence, such as creativity or social competences

External evaluation processes supporting school self-evaluation:

- ❖ Taking the lead **in developing frameworks of quality indicators** for use in self-evaluation and associated 'toolkits' and guidance
- ❖ Incentivising schools by making **evaluation of the school's self-evaluation and improvement processes** a key feature of the inspection and a prominent aspect of their report on the school inspection
- ❖ **Engaging current front-line practitioners as 'associate members' of inspection teams**, helping to spread quality assurance expertise across the system whilst also bringing highly current experience into the team itself



ET2020 WORKING GROUP SCHOOLS

3) Working Group Schools

2018-20 cycle:

Quality assurance and teacher and school leader careers

Quality assurance

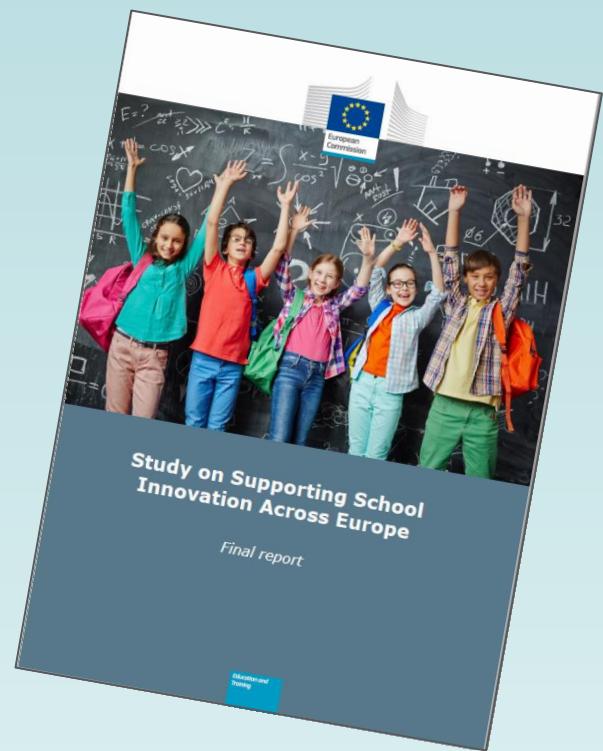
- building on 2016-18 cycle and expert work

What can be done at system level to create the conditions for a school- and teacher-led quality culture to thrive?

Generating and using knowledge across the education system: incentivising and supporting schools to gather and use evidence for improvement & feeding system-level knowledge back to schools in a form and time-scale that are most useful

Supporting broad competence development

Promoting stakeholder engagement



Questions?

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