



SIA : THE SICI INSPECTION ACADEMY

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Citizenship in Copenhagen

*Copenhagen - wonderful,
wonderful - Copenhagen for
me!*

These are the opening words of the song from the movie *Hans Christian Anderson*, sung by Danny Kaye. That song also talks of a special welcome from the salty old town of the sea. That is exactly what participants enjoyed at the

SICI / Skolestyrelsen (the Danish School Agency) Workshop on Citizenship, held in that fair city in March.



This was an excellently organised, varied and interesting Workshop. All 61 participants from 16 member countries / regions (including 33 from Denmark) agreed that there were a number of key highlights. They mentioned in particular the visits to schools in the Copenhagen area to see citizenship as an embodiment of school life and activities and test out some evaluative suggestions and the 'market-place' session which followed.

And of course, there was the boat-trip around the harbour and the grand dinner, held in the old Aquarium (not quite in the tanks along with the marine life...), with great food and excellent musical entertainment from the choir of Copenhagen's music school.

The opening of the Workshop focused on the Danish situation, with a reminder that 'democracy' as a basis for citizenship and participation in society is a very long-standing aspect of Danish life and education, deeply rooted in Danish culture and European history.

A number of key presentations set out issues about citizenship - what it is, how it can manifest itself, how the education system can promote it and how it can be evaluated. Of course, this is a highly complex area and keynote contributions did not have answers - though they helped to clarify participants' thinking. In groups of 5 or 6, participants shared views on what citizenship means in their own contexts and discussed reactions to the keynote presentations.

Copenhagen (continued from Page 1)

Some key points

- *The definition of citizenship is dependent on individual countries' interpretations*
- *Students should both learn about citizenship and experience it in their school life*
- *Evaluation / inspection should reflect both what pupils learn and how they experience citizenship in its widest sense*

The schools which participants visited were varied, interesting and even idiosyncratic, - reflecting the traditional freedom of educational thought which is a marker of Danish education. Each group of participants visited a school, so a sample of 8 schools was achieved. As always, the value of seeing children and young people in their own schools cannot be overestimated.

On return to the Workshop centre, participants discussed what they had seen and

created a poster display - one for each school. The subsequent 'market-place' exchange of views allowed for good reflection on what participants had seen and how they might evaluate its quality. Participants had the opportunity to move around, hearing briefly from others of their impressions and findings in the other schools visited. This aspect of the Workshop worked very well and a real 'buzz' of discussion was the result.

Final plenary sessions of the Workshop focused on

issues about evaluating citizenship. To evaluate, there should be definition. Definitions are difficult and depend on individual countries' interpretations, histories and cultures.

Points were made that we must also think beyond the boundaries of classrooms, schools and even countries. It was clear from the final discussion session that citizenship and the inspection of citizenship and citizenship education is a focal point which we must continue to discuss and develop within SICI.



Discussions during the market place activity

Skolestyrelsen is preparing the Workshop report, which will be finalised very soon. It will be placed on the SICI website.

Thank you, Skolestyrelsen and Denmark for such an interesting few days in your wonderful, wonderful Copenhagen.

Update on the SICI Website

Work is on-going to extend and improve the website. With the co-operation of the Czech, Flemish and Scottish inspectorate members, solutions to some continuing teething problems in interactivity

are being worked on as this Newsletter goes to press. In addition, we are hoping to ensure that the Inspection Academy link will be interactive soon and that it will allow not only the storage of

data (the questionnaire information!) but also a discussion platform. Further information will be available at the General Assembly or by separate email from the Secretariat.

Skolestyrelsen – the Danish School Agency

There is no inspectorate in Denmark, such as the term might be understood generally. Responsibility for monitoring the quality of education lies with the 98 municipalities. Each municipality makes an annual qualitative report on each school in its area.

The Danish School Agency was established in 2006. One of the main elements of its work is to monitor the municipality reports. Scrutinising these reports alongside statistical information on school

leavers' outcomes provides the Agency with an indication of schools which may be underperforming or in difficulties. Agency personnel (of which there are only 11) then may contact municipalities in order to ensure that the municipality has a focus on ensuring the quality of the specific school.

Education in the private sector must measure up and align with basic tenets of freedom and democracy in Denmark. The responsibility for ensuring good quality in

this sector lies in the first instance with parents and the School Board. If necessary, the School Board Supervisor will contact the School Agency, which can carry out an inspection of the school.

For more, and more detailed, information about the Skolestyrelsen and about the Danish education system in general, visit the SICI website and click on the blue book (Inspection across Europe), selecting Denmark from the drop-down menu.

SICI Executive Committee (EC) Activities

SICI Executive Committee Meeting June 2010 and Bi-lateral talks with ESEN, France

The SICI Executive Committee (EC) June meeting was held in Poitiers, France, at the headquarters of the Ecole Supérieure de l'Education Nationale (ESEN).

Brokered by Roger-François Gauthier, representative of the French Inspection Générale and current member of the EC, the meeting was complemented by an afternoon of bi-lateral talks with ESEN staff.

EC members and ESEN representatives, including the

ESEN Director Pierre Polivka, along with heads of the various departments in ESEN, exchanged information and explored potential future co-operation.

ESEN is responsible in France for the staff development and in-service training of local inspectors (inspecteurs académiques) from France's 30 education Académies (3,000 inspectors, with around 250 appointed each year) and also of all school principals (14,000, with around 900 appointed each year).

Talks were very interesting and fruitful and may lead to future joint activities. Watch this space!

Upcoming meeting with OECD and other agencies, September 2010

SICI President Graham Donaldson and Secretary-General Yvan Verbauwhede will be representing SICI at a strategic meeting in OECD Headquarters in Paris in September. SICI and a range of other bodies / agencies have been invited by OECD to the meeting which is to discuss issues around how to address educational evaluation.

We await the outcomes with interest!

Outcomes from Amsterdam

The second SICI workshop of the year was held in May in Amsterdam, Netherlands, the city of canals and bikes and tulips, figuring, like Copenhagen, in many well-known songs.

Reflecting the high-level importance of the theme, this was a very well attended Workshop, hosted by the Netherlands Inspectorate. Eighty-five participants attended, with representatives from 23 countries.

Our friend Eyjafjallajökull only managed to prevent the Scottish HMIE representative from attending - oh and the SICI President Graham Donaldson as well....



What are school outcomes?

How should they be evaluated?

How can the evaluations best be communicated?

A total of 10 presentations from different SICI countries informed lively and interesting workshop discussions and plenary sessions.

A number of key points were agreed by participants:

- student achievement is a crucial and indispensable component of the effective evaluation of the quality of education in schools
- student achievement should also therefore figure strongly in schools' self-evaluations
- inspectorates must communicate clearly and effectively with all stakeholders on their evaluations of the schools' outcomes.

The overall conclusion of the Workshop was that ***calculating school output based on student achievement is difficult, but not impossible.***

Participants also agreed on the general premise that ***Inspectorates must strive to adopt reliable and fair output indicators of all types of results for all students: a measure which is practical as well as recognisable for schools.***

A number of inspectorates presented their systems of evaluating the value-added aspects of schools' outputs. Participants appreciated these explanations, but noted that such approaches are not always feasible.

Amsterdam (continued)

They require that much reliable data is available, along with significant research capacity. In addition, political aspects strongly influence the use or non-use of value-added measures, the notion of central examinations and tests and related centralised data-collection.

There was interest in longer-term school outcomes, which might include labour market performance, a school's contribution to social cohesion and other aspects. A general view was that schools should

strive to include such measures in their own self-evaluations but it was clear that there was a long way to go to develop suitable approaches to such aspects.

The Workshop identified a number of areas for further enquiry, research and development. Participants saw many possibilities for further cooperation and mutual support.

SICI could support this process through its Inspectorate Academy work, perhaps by starting

a digital community on the subject of defining and measuring the output and outcomes of schools and considering future Workshops to develop the themes identified. The strategic report of the Workshop will be available very soon and will be on the website.

Many thanks to our Dutch colleagues in the Inspectie van het Onderwijs for hosting this excellent Workshop. We look forward to a follow-up event which will explore further these important themes.

Key conclusions

- *Calculating school output based on student achievement is difficult, but not impossible*
- *Inspectorates must strive to adopt reliable and fair output indicators of all types for all students: a measure which is practical as well as recognisable for schools.*

Update on externally-funded projects

Building an inspection system in Serbia

In June a Scottish / Netherlands team delivered the third Seminar in the project *Monitoring School Quality in Serbia*.

Over the two days of the Seminar, participants worked on how to organise a school visit. Included were role-plays - interviewing teachers, pupils, parents and staff and giving feedback to the school management team on the preliminary findings of the inspection.

The 30 participants were highly motivated and demonstrated very good levels of knowledge and skills.

Overall, it has proved very fruitful to have the involvement of an internationally mixed team of contributors to the project - from Hesse (Germany), Netherlands, England and Scotland.

As well as the training work, the project is supporting the development of a national framework and standards for evaluating the quality of schools.

Training inspectors in Romania

SICI, through its Inspection Academy, is involved as a partner in a large-scale project in Romania. The SICI involvement is in the training of inspectors. There is another part to the project which will aim to train Romanian school principals. The project is just starting and we are ensuring that all the administrative details are in place.

Work on the aspects where SICI will be involved will move ahead from September, notably from the project launch Conference in Ploiesti. More information in the next Newsletter!

Members' News

Romania links with Scotland, Lithuania, Portugal and Spain

The Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Pre-University Education (RAQAPE) has been involved in two Leonardo da Vinci Mobility projects. These projects were envisaged as part of RAQAPE's Strategy for 2007-2011 to develop institutional capacity. The aim was to improve RAQAPE experts' knowledge, skills and competencies within the context of "quality in education". The way chosen was to share best practice and engage in job shadowing with staff from similar institutions in Europe and with SICI members involved in external evaluation and inspection.

In the 2008 project, 10 experts from RAQAPE were trained by The National Agency for School Evaluation from Lithuania. In 2009, 4 experts from RAQAPE were trained by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education in Scotland with another 4 experts by Inspeção-Geral da Educação from Portugal as partners. These projects had a corresponding training programme in Romania, offered also under the Leonardo da Vinci Mobility initiative, by RAQAPE, for 2 inspectors from Inspeção-Geral da Educação, Portugal and for 2 inspectors from Castilla La Mancha, Spain.

Scotland and Norway in discussions on education policy and evaluation

In June 2010, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) in Scotland hosted discussions with 10 representatives from the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, led by Petter Skarheim, the Director General. Joining HMIE Senior Chief Inspector Bill Maxwell were other HM Inspectors, representatives of Learning and Teaching Scotland and two Scottish local authorities, and a secondary school headteacher. SICI President Graham Donaldson was also in attendance for part of the two-day conference. The aims were to discuss common challenges in order to contribute to the development of high-quality learning for students and to consider possible areas for future co-operation. All agreed that discussions were of value and worthy of follow-up.

To that end, links between Scotland and Norway will be further developed in September 2010, when a group from the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research will visit Scotland for discussions with Scottish Government officials, HMIE and local education authority personnel.

Netherlands inspectors in the People's Republic of China

Also in June 2010, inspectors from Inspectie van het Onderwijs, the Netherlands Inspectorate, made a presentation at a conference on evaluation of school quality in Beijing. Their presentation focused on the Netherlands system of risk-based inspection. They also took the opportunity to inform participants at the conference about SICI and the work of its Inspection Academy.

Scotland Inspectorate (HMIE) offers International Training Event

HMIE has just announced that it is to run an International Training event for SICI members who wish to find out more about the Scottish education system, the Scottish approach to quality improvement and the work of HMIE, including the impact of school inspections. The event, which will run from 1 to 4 November 2010, has been organised in collaboration with East Dunbartonshire Council, one of the 32 Scottish local authorities. For more information, contact susan.waugh@hmie.gsi.gov.uk

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REMAINING EVENTS 2010

SICI / Estyn Workshop :

Teaching and Learning
Cardiff, Wales, 8 - 10 September

SICI Conference and General Assembly :

Quality Assurance in the Work of Inspectorates
Bielefeld, North-Rhine Westphalia, 27 - 29 October

STOP PRESS!

Please note that the SICI / Slovak Workshop 'Focus on Innovation' (November 2010) has been postponed. We thank Slovak colleagues for their work so far. Watch this space for further information on the Workshop!

NOTE : Information on Workshops in 2011 at the General Assembly in October!