



SICI NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2019

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

An Executive Committee meeting was held on 8 and 9 July in Wales. Key decisions at this meeting were to:

- further explore the possibility of European funding and communicate this to the members
- organize a focus group on the website at the next national coordinators meeting
- revise the criteria for funding projects
- revise the guidelines for organising workshops
- ask members to determine a priority theme for 2021
- start preparing the next strategic plan

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

Updates from the SICI network

Some words about ...

...The inspectorate update of Portugal

In the scope of the monitoring program, the Portuguese Inspectorate of Education and Science (IGEC) has been developing an activity focused on pre-primary education: Jardins de Infância da Rede Nacional. The activity is concerned with creating a high standard educational environment that promotes child-centred educative approaches in well-managed classrooms.

Although the activity's core is educational practice, attention is also paid to organizational practice and legal aspects that are intertwined with the quality of the provision.

The methodology of the activity includes a follow-up which aims to support the kindergartens' pedagogical managers and their teams in order to improve pedagogical practices that, in turn, will impact the quality of the processes and the children's education.

The findings in the last report were clear about the effects of this specific activity on the improvement of the provision in pre-primary education.

...The inspectorate update of Belgium – French Speaking Community

Adopted in May 2015 by the Government of the Wallonia-Brussels Federation, the Pact for Excellence in Education is based on an ambition shared by all stakeholders in education, namely to strengthen the quality of education.

The implementation of the Pact goes together with greater autonomy and accountability in the organization of schools. On the basis of general objectives set by the Government, a management plan is drawn up within each school.

Since 1 September 2019, the General Inspection Service (SGI) has been in charge of carrying out audits in cases where a school refuses or is unable to draw up its management plan, or following the intermediate or final evaluation of its contract of objectives. Schools with significant performance gaps compared to the average of schools are also audited.

...The inspectorate update of Sweden

The Swedish Schools Inspectorate has continued to develop its inspection methods. Based on risk assessment schools and school owners now get different types of inspections – what they call situation-based inspection. Based on several pilot projects, parts of the new inspection model have already been introduced. In September 2019 they take the next step, now focusing on the school owner and the analysis of its schools' results and the distribution of resources to guarantee all pupils an equal education. The reports address both positive aspects and areas of improvement.

...The inspectorate update of Ofsted

Ofsted has launched a new education inspection framework (EIF) from September 2019. The framework is for state schools, further education and skills providers, non-association independent schools and registered early years settings.

Inspection will focus on the real substance of education, the curriculum. They will be grading schools and other providers on the areas that matter most to parents:

- the quality of education
- behaviour and attitudes
- personal development
- leadership and management.

For more detailed information, please see the framework page on the website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/education-inspection-framework>.

You can also read their research into and Amanda Spielman's commentary's on the curriculum here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/hmci-commentary-curriculum-and-the-new-education-inspection-framework>.

In other news, they are consulting on their initial teacher education (teacher training) framework in January.

... Cooperation between Flanders and the Netherlands

Both inspectorates are currently in the middle of a peer review. The purpose of a peer review is that one inspectorate gives feedback to the other. This feedback can then be used to evaluate or possibly improve the own working methods. The two inspectorates involved choose the subject on which they want to receive feedback.

Flemish inspectors have now participated in inspections in the Netherlands. Based on the questions that the Netherlands had prepared, they provided feedback during a meeting with Dutch inspectors. The Flemish colleagues had observed very carefully and gave us very useful feedback.

In the autumn Dutch inspectors will conduct a peer review in Flanders.

... Cooperation between Estonia and the Netherlands

Hille Voolaid and Kristin Hollo from Estonia will take part in an inspection in the Netherlands. They will be visiting schools and the inspection office in Tilburg. The goal is to get an overview on two topics the inspectorate and the system of inspection of primary and secondary education and to learn about risk-based inspection. The inspection system in the Netherlands has left a great impression to them. Estonia is also moving towards a risk-based system of inspections and is therefore very interested in their experience and know-how, for example, what are the tasks and responsibilities of state and local governments and responsibilities while securing the quality of the school.

... Cooperation between Estonia and Flanders

Elen Ruus and Kristin Hollo from Estonia will also be job-shadowing in Flanders. The context and organization of this visit are similar to the one in the Netherlands.

...Activities and co-operations in Basque Country

On May 9th 2019 Basque Country celebrated a training session about the impact of inspection and job-shadow in Bilbao with all the school inspectors in the Basque Country (around 90). They had the pleasure of having SICI president Chantal Manes-Bonisseau and Herbert Altrichter, from the University Johannes Kepler in Linz, Austria as main speakers. Chantal presented the document "L'impact de l'inspection. Conclusions des réflexions de la SICI en 2018" and Herbert talked about the "Impact of Inspection in the schools".

To finish with, they listened to three of their colleagues that had been in Ireland from 1st to 5th April, doing a job-shadow activity in Cork, Ireland, thanks to the contacts they got through SICI.

The session was very positively evaluated and their colleagues showed an interest about the results of the SICI work during 2018, and about the research findings given by Altrichter.

Their colleagues showed also great interest in the job shadow experience and we hope to be able to organize again this activity for next year.

...Study visits in the Netherlands

As in many other inspectorates, the Dutch inspectorate is developing continuously. They want to improve their supervision or adjust it to changed circumstances within their education system. In doing so, they would like to make use of the experience and developments of their foreign colleagues. This is the main reason why a team of Dutch inspectors keeps a close watch on the development of the supervision in one or two inspectorates of SICI. In the past few years, they collected information through SICI-workshops, international studies about school supervision and regional meetings (Offshore-group). Besides that they give some of their inspectors the opportunity to visit a foreign inspectorate for a study visit. During this study visit they gather information about the way the supervision takes places. Their aim is to get a view on current themes and developments regarding supervision.

There have already been study visits in England, Estonia and Lithuania. And soon some colleagues will visit Sweden, Norway and Wales.

****** We would like to take the opportunity to address other inspectorates, that have undergone significant changes or want to communicate other relevant information, to write a text and send this to the SICI secretariat for the next newsletter. Please keep in mind that this text has to be short (10 lines) and to the point******

******We would also like to ask to keep the SICI secretariat up to date about ongoing activities between members. This will make it possible to create an overview of existing projects and report about them at the General Assembly.******

Updates about projects...

Some words about ...

...The SICI project “Professional Communication”

The project about professional communication in which Estonia, Lithuania, Scotland and The Netherlands work together, can almost be completed.

The research focuses on which particular aspects of the feedback meeting after an inspection contribute positively to the willingness of schools to improve their education? The research in the four countries has been completed and the report is now ready to be published. The project group expects that they will soon be able to spread the results within SICI. A short presentation about the results will probably be given during the GA.

They can already tell one of the results:

Most important elements of a good feedback session according to inspector:



Providing clear evidence and exemplars



Making clear what the strengths and areas for development are



Retaining relationship



Considering the context of the school (board)

Curious about what schools think? Then read the report as soon as it is published.

The Netherlands have experienced the cooperation with the other countries in this project to be very enjoyable and very useful.

...The Erasmus+ project “BIBESOIN”



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



1. Elda, Spain

The first ‘Short-term joint staff training event’ of the Erasmus+ project ‘BIBESOIN’ (Better Inspection for better social inclusion) took place in Elda, Spain from February 27th until March 1st, 2019.

The project partners could experience the cooperation between the Ricardo Real primary school in Monovar and an institution of people with special needs. People with special needs are trained to give ‘classes’ to the pupils of the primary school. At the Monastil school in Elda, our team was divided in groups of three or four participants to visit and observe different classes of two different kinds, ordinary grouping with an innovation programme and special grouping with socially disadvantaged students. After an introduction in the Spanish education system we discussed during a working session the weak points and challenges concerning inclusion in the school. In the school ‘La Canal’, a secondary school in Petrer, the visit and exchanges were focused around the unit for special needs students, which is operational since September 2017. We attended a special education class, as well as ordinary classes where students were integrated. We had a discussion with the staff involved in the inclusion experience to help us understand the inclusion process and its challenges. At the inspectorate headquarters in Alicante, Mr. Pablo Ortega (head of inspectorate) presented the Spanish educational system, before moving on to presenting the approach in terms of inclusion. This presentation was followed by a lively discussion with the project partners. We also learned about the cultural background of the Spanish educational system and saw how culture reflects the educational system. A certified tour guide introduced the history and culture of Alicante and the Valencian region. That helped the participants to better understand the origins and

the nature of the Spanish education system and gave lots of background information about the culture. Elda is an important city with a long history in the shoe industry. The city has a strong European identity/dimension and invests a lot of time and energy in European projects. The Mayor believes that projects funded by the Erasmus+ are important for the whole of Europe due to the possibility of sharing good practices and experiences. Students of the Monastil school in Elda carried out a presentation about the Erasmus+ project 'Stick Together', a project the school has participated in during the past three years, focusing on students' mobility and inclusion in Spain, Hungary, Italy and Germany. The aim of the project was to raise awareness on disability, ethnic minorities, sexism/gender violence and migration/racism. The Head of the school introduced members from the Elda civic society and a representative from an NGO, who assist the school and who work with minority groups operating in the Valencian region. Schools need to build links/contacts with families of minority groups. This is required to consolidate the work done by schools. Partners discussed the need of inspectors to consider these matters.

- *Which are the good practices that we've seen or heard during the visits or in the meetings, that inspectorates can promote?*

There were three different levels:

- Visit of the cooperation between primary school and daycentre for adults with special needs
- Students with special needs in IES La Canal participating in mainstream classes (with a co-teacher)
- Special classes in mainstream school for dropout students as extra opportunity (IES Monastil)

Three strengths:

- Strong working relationships between teachers and other adults
- Partnerships internal and with external stakeholders
- Leadership support in terms of physical and financial resources

The importance of the community, the role of families as a major stakeholder in the education of vulnerable groups. In parallel there is also an innovation in mainstream education that also has a positive impact on the welfare of all pupils.

Questions for the following training events:

- *How can Inspectorates adapt their system for stimulation or evaluate these good practices?*
- *How can the professional development of Inspectors be adapted?*

Weblinks about this training event:

<http://www.intercomarcal.com/noticias/ELDA/quince-inspectores-de-siete-pa%C3%ADses-de-la-uni%C3%B3n-europea-se-re%C3%BAnen-en-el-ies-monastil-de-elda-para-hablar-de-inclusi%C3%B3n-educativa/96791.html>

<http://www.intercomarcal.com/noticias/ELDA/clausura-de-las-jornadas-organizadas-por-el-ies-monastil-de-elda-en-torno-al-proyecto--stick-together-/96849.html>

<https://www.lateuaradio.com/col%C2%B7legis/un-grup-dexperts-internacional-visita-el-col%C2%B7legi-ricardo-leal-i-el-molinet-dins-el-projecte-erasmus-per-la-inclusio-educativa/>

2. Cardiff, Wales

The second 'short term staff training event' was held in Cardiff hosted by the Welsh Inspectorate Estyn in July 2019. The meeting was attended by 16 visiting senior inspectors from Cyprus, Estonia, Flanders, Malta, the Netherlands, and Sweden as well as 2 inspector trainers from France and 3 school leaders from Elda, Spain as critical friends.

The focus of the visit was to provide inspectors, trainers and critical friends with an opportunity to

- *learn about Welsh education policy on addressing disadvantage in schools arising from poverty and that which arises as a result of a learners' special educational needs*
- *receive training on Estyn's inspection framework and tools*
- *try out these methods first-hand in schools and experience how some schools address disadvantage*
- *discuss the strengths and areas for development of each partners' approaches to evaluating how effectively schools address disadvantage*

On the first day, visitors experienced how Estyn's framework distinguishes between provision (the things that the school does) and the standards of education and wellbeing achieved as a result. They learnt how school leadership is judged by the effectiveness of leaders and management systems in bringing about high quality provision and standards.

Visitors were introduced to the range of information that inspectors have available to them on inspection, such as contextual information on the levels of disadvantage at the school, data on attendance, on standards achieved at the end of compulsory education, information on wellbeing and the effectiveness of the school's work from pre-inspection questionnaires of parents, learners, school staff and governors, and the approaches used by Estyn to inspect schools' self-evaluation and improvement planning processes.

In the afternoon, participants took part in training on inspection tools. They experienced how Estyn observes lessons, always judging teaching by its impact on standards. They learnt how "learning walks" are used on inspection to "feel the temperature of a school", for example learners' attitudes to learning, or to follow up on cross-cutting themes such as provision for literacy. Visitors also had an opportunity to evaluate a school's plans for addressing disadvantage and explore how interviews with leaders, learners and teachers inform inspection outcomes.

Day two was an opportunity to see the theory in practice! Participants were split into groups to visit 4 primary and secondary schools with very diverse contexts. Here they observed lessons and evaluated these through an "Estyn lens". They conducted or observed interviews with teachers, learners and leaders and reviewed learners' work. They experienced an insight into how Estyn evaluates a school's provision based on its impact on learners. Some inspectors took an opportunity to discuss with schools whether and what influence Estyn's approaches had on their practice in schools.

The final day was set aside for reflection and discussion of the strengths and limitations of methods used by Estyn and that of other inspectorates to evaluate and influence practice and policy on addressing disadvantage.

There was also an opportunity to learn about Welsh history and culture.

While the programme was jam-packed, it led successfully to open and honest discourse amongst peers around the effectiveness of inspection practices across several nations in this policy area. It is fair to say that all those involved were excited to share what they had experienced and this led to some lively debate about different approaches.

The training therefore made an important contribution to achieving the aims of the project as a whole.

3. Tallinn, Estonia

Estonia is organizing the next transnational project meeting of the BIBESION project in October. Participants from the Flemish Region of Belgium, Spain, Wales, Estonia, Cyprus, Malta and France will be meeting in Tallinn to discuss the work that has been done and the future plans for the BIBESION project.

At the end of this year will start up the TESSIE (Toolbox for Evaluation and Stimulation Social Inclusion in Education) website where you'll find all reports and documentary material concerning BIBESION.

Other information

Coming SICI events

<u>Date</u>	<u>Country</u>	<u>Theme</u>
23 – 24 September 2019	Ireland	Developing the innovation into the system and measuring its impact (efficiency and cost)
13 – 15 November 2019	London	General Assembly – Innovative inspection practices
5 – 6 March 2020	Utrecht	The quality assurance that inspectorates have in order to make reliable, fair and effective judgements
21 – 22 May 2020	Prague	Improving the quality of inspection using feedback from schools on impact.
24 – 25 September 2020	Finland	Devising communication strategies
November 2020	France	“General Assembly”

SICI-General Assembly 2019 in London:

The General Assembly 2019 in London will take place on 14 and 15 November and will have the same format as the General Assembly in Serbia.

Preparation SICI-workshop March 2020 in the Netherlands:

On 5 and 6 March 2020 the Netherlands will organize the first SICI workshop on the subject of internal quality assurance of inspectorates. They have already started the preparations for the workshop. The preliminary content that they would like to address is “The quality assurance that inspectorates have in order to make reliable, fair and effective judgments”. They also would like to discuss the way in which the inspectorates conduct research into the quality of inspectors’ judgment and the activities that result from this.

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 priority theme 2021

The priority theme for 2019 is "Innovative practices of Inspection" and for 2020 " Internal quality insurance of Inspectorates".

The priority theme for 2021 will be decided on during the General Assembly in London. The Executive Committee proposes the following themes:

1. Communication (with schools, policy makers, among inspectors....)
2. Differentiation (in inspection forms, frequency, intensity, risk-based, board inspection, situation-based) - why and how?
3. Contribution of inspection to equity and excellence

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 new 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.

...funded by SRSS

For your consideration: the European Commission has set up the 'Structural Reform Support Service' to assist ministries and other national authorities of the 28 EU countries to prepare, design and implement reforms in a wide range of policy fields, including education. The aim is to address system-level challenges with a wider impact, whether those are current deficiencies or forward-looking efforts to improve upon an existing system. Currently one inspectorate is already benefitting from a project to improve quality assurance and inspection, and we would encourage you to consider this possibility for your own work. Support can be requested through a short (3 pages) request form to be submitted each October (country-internal deadlines vary but tend to be around early October). Please have a look at the website and don't hesitate to get in touch directly with SRSS staff (e.g. Konstantin.SCHELLER@ec.europa.eu or Patricia.PEREZ-GOMEZ@ec.europa.eu) for further information or to discuss a potential reform issue.

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

Book on European school inspection and evaluation: history and principles



SPECIAL DISCOUNT PRICES FOR SICI MEMBER ORGANISATIONS AND THEIR STAFF

This ground-breaking book by Adrian Gray, a former SICI Executive Committee member, shows that school inspection has been a key factor in the European educational landscape for 200 years. Its impact was evident to commentators from the early 1800s, but its history was often turbulent due to rapid political and social change. The book also shows how inspection and evaluation approaches have changed and developed, especially over the last fifty years, reflecting changing ideas about school leadership and accountability – and also responding to technical changes like new data and exam systems. It is a story that combines both politics at a continental scale and the human details of life as an inspector from Portugal to Russia.

This is an important step for SICI as we seek to grow and extend our influence on best inspection practice. We will be developing a number of conference presentations around the content of the book which will be adapted to the needs of audiences such as policy makers, school leaders and new school inspectors. The content will be of great value for education policy makers and inspectors globally as we see how inspection works in different contexts.

For conferences and training materials, contact the author at: Adrian.gray@rivereducation.co.uk

HOW TO ORDER:

The book will be available in print and later in e-book formats. **National inspectorates and other organisations many negotiate a bulk price for multiple orders** – please contact us at sales@bookwormretford.co.uk. Individuals who are employed by inspectorates that are members of SICI can order at the discount price of €23 by contacting the publisher through email from an official email address. Normal price is €32.50 and e-book will be €18 (€16 for SICI members).

SICI orders should be emailed to: sales@bookwormretford.co.uk

You can also order from Amazon and other online stores but no SICI discount applies.