

SICI – The Newsletter

April 2026

We support the improvement of education

through improving inspection processes

From the President

As we continue our shared work this spring, this month's newsletter brings together important developments in governance, professional learning, and system-level insight. I want to begin by thanking all members who have taken the time to review and comment on the proposed draft new SICI Statutes. Your thoughtful engagement reflects the strength of our network and the collective responsibility we hold for SICI's future. The feedback received will play a vital role in ensuring that our arrangements remain clear, robust, and fit for purpose.

This edition also highlights a timely and significant contribution from Ana Pires, who represented SICI Executive Committee at the recent European Training Foundation (ETF) Skills Lab Network of Experts webinar on AI, skills, and the future of work. Her insights resonate strongly with the themes we are exploring across our professional learning programme and reinforce the importance of understanding how technological change is reshaping education systems.

As we finalise this newsletter, colleagues are gathering in Wales for our workshop on AI in inspection work, and I look forward to sharing reflections from the event in next month's edition. Together, these activities help us build momentum towards our June workshop in Plovdiv, where we will turn our attention to future-oriented inspection and its role in driving educational quality.

With warmest wishes,

Janie

Governance Update - Thank You for Your Contributions

Thank you to all members who have taken the time to review the proposed draft new SICI Statutes and to share your reflections during the consultation period. We appreciate the careful consideration that members have brought to this important work.

The consultation materials circulated last month, including the draft statutes, summary of key changes, webinar presentation, and feedback form reflect extensive legal, organisational, and operational analysis. The proposals aim to modernise SICI's legal form, clarify roles and responsibilities, while preserving the mission and values that have guided SICI since its establishment.

Your feedback is essential in ensuring that the final statutes are clear, robust, and reflective of the needs of our diverse membership. Members will receive the full set of materials in a separate communication in advance of the Extraordinary General Assembly in May.

5 May 2026 – Extraordinary General Assembly

Spotlight Feature

Integrating AI into TVET: Skills, Inclusion, and the Future of Work

On 26 February, SICI was represented at the European Training Foundation (ETF) Skills Lab Network of Experts webinar, Integrating AI into TVET: Implications for Semi-Skilled Occupations and Job Redesign. The event brought together perspectives from the European Union, Singapore, Palestine, and Turkey to examine how artificial intelligence is reshaping labour markets and vocational education and training (VET) systems.

A central message emerged across all contributions: AI transitions are fundamentally skills and education transitions. Rather than eliminating whole occupations, AI is transforming tasks within them—reducing routine activities while increasing the importance of human judgement, communication, and adaptive problem-solving. The extent to which these changes lead to opportunity or inequality depends heavily on governance, institutional readiness, and workforce development strategies.

Particular attention was given to semi-skilled occupations, where AI adoption may generate significant productivity gains by embedding expert knowledge into accessible decision-support tools. These opportunities, however, sit alongside risks such as deskilling, algorithmic management, and unequal

access to technology. Balanced regulatory frameworks and targeted training investments will be essential to ensure that AI supports—not undermines—equity and mobility.

The webinar also highlighted the rapid integration of AI into VET occupations themselves. Applications in technical fields, healthcare, business administration, and engineering are reshaping what it means to be vocationally competent. Future graduates will require hybrid skill profiles that combine occupational expertise with digital and AI literacy, ethical awareness, and the capacity for continuous learning. For training providers and inspectorates alike, updating occupational standards and strengthening partnerships with industry are becoming urgent priorities. In education and training settings, AI offers opportunities for personalised learning, simulation-based practice, and enhanced accessibility. Yet presenters emphasised that AI must complement—rather than replace—educators. Teacher and trainer professional development is therefore a decisive factor in successful implementation.

Across all contexts, the discussions reinforced that inclusive AI transitions require coordinated strategies linking education, labour markets, and economic development. Investment in human capital, institutional capacity, and equitable access to training will determine whether AI becomes a driver of shared prosperity or a source of widening inequality.

Upcoming Workshop – Plovdiv, 10–12 June 2026

We are pleased to remind members of our next SICI workshop, which will take place on 10–12 June 2026 in Plovdiv, Bulgaria. Hosted by the National Inspectorate of Education in partnership with the SICI Executive Committee, the workshop will explore how future-oriented inspection can act as a driver for educational quality.

The programme will include keynote presentations, panel discussions, plenary sessions, and small-group work, offering participants the opportunity to exchange experience on new approaches to quality assurance and the competencies needed for 21st-century learning.

The workshop will be held in a hybrid format, with further details, including the programme, travel and hotel guidance and registration information and online participation arrangements, to follow shortly.

Member Request – Reporting to Students After Inspection (Ireland)

In September 2024, the Irish Inspectorate introduced a student-friendly page in some of its primary and post-primary inspection reports. This page summarises key findings and recommendations in a format designed specifically for students.

Our colleagues in Ireland would now like to connect with other inspectorates that have developed mechanisms for reporting directly to students following an inspection. This may include oral feedback, written summaries, or other approaches.

If your inspectorate has introduced such a mechanism, please contact Charlene Brazil at charlene_brazil@education.gov.ie.

Call for Member Articles – Share Your Work With the Network

As we continue to strengthen the rhythm and reach of our monthly newsletter, we warmly encourage members to contribute short articles, updates, or reflections for future editions. These contributions help showcase the breadth of activity across our network and highlight the innovative work taking place within inspectorates across Europe.

Articles of around 250–300 words are ideal, though shorter pieces are equally welcome. We are also happy to include photographs from events, visits, workshops, or other relevant activities.

To support the monthly publication cycle, submissions are best received by the 15th of each month at contact@sici.international.

Your insights and experiences are central to strengthening our shared learning. We look forward to featuring more member voices in the months ahead.

National Coordinators Open Forum – Update and Next Meeting

The National Coordinators Open Forum of 26 March 2026 focused on how arts education is organised and evaluated within school inspection systems. Colleagues shared a wide range of approaches, with many inspectorates relying on general frameworks rather than subject-specific criteria or specialist inspectors. The discussion highlighted the challenge of ensuring meaningful evaluation while maintaining a broad and coherent view of overall school quality.

The next NCOF will take place on Thursday 30 April 2026 and will address the theme of research security. Participants will be invited to share insights on whether they supervise this area, and which organisations are responsible for safeguarding research against risks such as undue influence, unauthorised access, and the misuse of sensitive information, while still supporting international collaboration.

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