

GOVERNANCE IN EDUCATION



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**Report of the seminar of the European Network of Education Councils,
Amsterdam, 30-31 May 2016**

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INTRODUCTION

EUNEC is the **European Network of Education Councils**. Its members advise the governments of their countries on education and training. EUNEC aims to discuss the findings and recommendations of all European projects in education and training, to determine standpoints and to formulate statements on these issues. EUNEC wants to disseminate these statements pro-actively towards the European Commission, relevant DGs and other actors at European level, and to promote action by EUNEC's members and participants at national and regional level. EUNEC also has the objective that the councils should put internationalization and mobility high on the national agenda, that they should clarify the European policy in education and training towards all relevant stakeholders.

CENTRAL QUESTION

Education and training has always been a vital sector in society because of

- Its role in socialization and social cohesion;
- The economic added value of qualified citizens;
- The development and innovation of the knowledge base and competences;
- Its role in personal development and well-being.

Although in some European countries, there is an important offer of education by civil society organisations, **the education and training sector is in many countries seen as a the public or semi-public service**, with implications in the field of

- Public financing and subsidizing, private funding;
- Quality requirements and autonomy;
- Governance and multiple responsibilities;
- Central decision making versus more decentral models decision-making.

The government model, where decisions are taken at a centralized level, **is now under pressure**, for different reasons:

- Growing complexity in society: one fits all solutions don't work anymore;
- Traditional models of steering and conflict solutions don't work anymore;
- Individualisation in society;
- Technology and new models of educational delivery;
- Pressure on government finances;
- New paradigms on the role of the government; reinforcement of the role of the individual professional; reinforcement of the role of private players.

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We see **an evolution from a government model towards a governance model**. This is a fundamental change in the way of thinking about shaping political and decision-making processes in society. The role of the government is no longer to steer directly policy processes, but rather to coordinate and facilitate policy processes. The governance model refers to the growing mixing and interdependence of public and private actors, to decentralized and horizontal relationships between actors at different administrative levels, depending on each other for the making and implementation of policy.

This general model of governance applies to different policy fields and pushes to create a more coordinated policy taking into account different policy areas such as health care, labour market, social policy, R&D, education and training.

Characteristics of educational governance:

- Processes of decision making at multiple levels;
- Horizontal, interactive and cooperative;
- Subsidiarity;
- Networking, given the interwoven relationships;
- Multiple perspectives;
- Valorisation of the professionalism of the 'executors'; redefinition of the roles the central governors and the executors. The term 'executor of policy' is no longer correct;
- Transversal policy making (coordination between different policy fields).

Governance relates to decisions and processes that define relationships within organizations as well as between and among private and public organizations. Governance defines expectations, grants authority and delineates lines of accountability. Control mechanisms ('checks') need to guarantee the balance ('balances') between the interests of all actors.

Educational governance is particularly complex and multifaceted. It takes place at different levels. Moreover, school as a social and cultural community is under pressure for many reasons.

- Increasing societal demands (a.o. social cohesion). As a consequence, we witnessed, during the last years, the development of quality frameworks, benchmarks and standards and procedures developed by public authorities;
- Growing recognition of the role of education in an economic recovery strategy;
- Education is being repositioned and governed as a public service with standards and criteria based on other reference frameworks than the educational paradigms. Schools are accountable towards the financing government. There is no direct accountability relationship between parents (or students) and schools.

PROGRAMME

Monday 30 May 2016

Chair of the day: Adrie van der Rest, EUNEC president and secretary director of the Dutch Education Council

- 09.00** Registration
- 09.30 – 10.30** **Opening address**
Adrie Van der Rest, EUNEC president
Mia Douterlungne, EUNEC secretary general
- The paradigm shift from government to governance in education.**
Speaker: Tracey Burns, OECD project '[Governing Complex Education Systems](#)'
- 10.30 – 10.45** Coffee break
- 10.45 – 12.15** **The case of a Dutch school** (Hyperion Lyceum, Docklandsweg 2, 1031 KN Amsterdam). Presentation of the school by Elly Loman, school leader Hyperion Lyceum.
- Discussion in small groups**, preparing questions for the school visit
- 12.30 – 13.30** Lunch
- 14.30 – 16.45** **School visit** with carousel conversations with all the actors who are deciding on what is happening in the school: teachers, pupils, school leaders, school governor, inspector, supervisory board, local authorities, actors outside of the school, ..
- 16.45 -17.30** **Reflection by the members.** How do countries deal with these challenges, according to their level of (de)centralization?
- 19.15 -** Conference dinner

Tuesday 31 May 2016

Chair of the day: Manuel Miguéns, secretary general of the Portuguese Education Council

09.30 – 10.45 **Reflection by an expert panel and interaction with the participants**

Alvaro Almeida dos Santos (President of the General Assembly of the National Public Headmaster Association and member of the Portuguese Education Council)

'School autonomy in Portugal and the pressure for compliance with centralised decisions'

Serban Iosifescu (President of the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Pre-university Education)

'School governance: fine tuning improvement and accountability by using data and indicators'

Edith Hooge (professor governance in education at the Tias School for Business and Society, Tilburg University and senior consultant at BMC Advies (advice for the public sector))

'Trends in accountability processes and mechanisms and the role of the government in a multilevel governance system in education'

10.45 – 11.00 Coffee break

11.00 – 12.00 **Conclusions and building blocks for a statement.**
What is the impact of this shift towards governance for education councils? What are the consequences in terms of their composition, their working methods, their output, their communication?

12.00 – 13.00 Closing lunch

Opening Session

Adrie van der Rest

Adrie van der Rest is president of EUNEC and secretary director of the Dutch Education Council

Opening speech:

'Ladies and gentlemen, colleagues,

May I offer you all a warm welcome to this EUNEC seminar on *Governance in Education*.

I'd like to offer a special welcome to our guests who will be speaking during this seminar. Today this will be Tracey Burns and Elly Loman, and tomorrow Alvaro Almeida dos Santos, Serban Iosifescu and Edith Hooge.



I'd also like to extend a warm welcome to those who are attending for the first time; new faces within the network of education councils in Europe. It's good to see you here.

I will be chairing the first day of our meeting, and tomorrow's session will be chaired by Manuel Miguéns, my esteemed colleague of the Portuguese Education Council.

My usual role is that of Secretary of the Dutch Education Council. It is my pleasure, on behalf of the Dutch Education Council, to be your host.

It is nice to see that there is so much interest for the important theme that we are going to be discussing with each other: *Governance in Education*.

Before moving onto the programme, I'd like to talk briefly about the theme.

Schools play an important role in the lives of young people. Schools lead and coach young people on their path towards adulthood. Teachers have a key role to play here. In September last year, during our seminar on *Leading Teachers' Learning* in Dublin, we discussed the concept of the teacher as reflective practitioner. In particular, the perspective of the individual teacher was discussed, but there are also other actors and circumstances that form layers around the teacher and have an impact on the teaching process. I am not just talking about the structure and culture of the school, but also about the actors further removed from the teacher, such as school governing bodies, supervisory bodies and the authorities. These also have an impact on the teaching process. During this seminar, we will zoom out from the individual teacher to all actors in and around the school, looking in particular

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at the relationship between these actors: from the pupil and the teacher to the school leader, the school governing body, the inspectors and the authorities. What we are talking about is governance.

In many countries in the West, in recent decades we have seen a transition '*from government to governance*'. I will speak briefly about governance in general, and will then zoom in on educational governance.

Governance should be understood against the background of developments in society, such as the individualisation of society, the emergence of technology, changing power relationships and interdependences in relationships as parties operate in chains and networks. Based on dissatisfaction with the extent to which traditional problem-solving methods and decision-making succeeded - or did not succeed - in dealing with major issues in an increasingly complex world, the government came in for criticism as a centre of effective political control. Instead of a strong grip by a centralised government on policy and service (*government*), the public sector had to be run in a more horizontal, interactive and cooperative manner. In management theory, governance is about the fundamental changes in thinking on ways in which current society should shape political and administrative processes.

The emergence of governance – together with a number of alternative political and administrative arrangements, such as networks – has also resulted in a redefinition of the role of government and the role of implementation and implementers, including professionals. Rather than directly controlling policy processes, the role of government is increasingly to coordinate and facilitate the political processes. In essence, governance refers to the increasing co-mingling and interdependency of public and private actors. Governance is about decentralised and horizontal relationships between actors at various administrative levels, that are dependent on each other in the formation and implementation of policy.

And now let's talk briefly about educational governance.

Educational governance can be defined as 'apportioning responsibilities with the aim of providing assurances of expert and thorough administration and, as a result, combating the improper use of power by educational institutions'.

(This is about providing assurances of the interdependence of management, control and supervision of an organisation, with the aim of achieving policy objectives efficiently and effectively.)

In a system where responsibilities are divided, checks and balances are needed to provide assurances that the *interests* and the powers are in a *state* of equilibrium. Teachers and school leaders must be allowed to do their work properly.

Administration takes place on multiple levels: at the national level (macro), regional level (meso) and school level (micro). Where a set of rules points to an instrumental perspective of governance, the implementation thereof is the

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expression of the political perspective of governance. Parties can never shape control objectively, because there are too many emotions, interests and opinions involved. Parties battle with each other for the sake of 'the good cause': they want control of the content and ownership, yet their views of this are divergent. The point of reference is then legitimacy; in a practical sense, the emphasis is on process approaches: shaping networks, improving interactions with stakeholders, building vital coalitions and encouraging shared learning.

Management always results in the formation of various dossiers dealing with various issues and various institutional dynamics, and these determine whether you have to organise more instrumentally towards objectivity, or whether you take a more political approach to reduce a lack of objectivity.

Well, that's enough for now about educational governance theory. We are going to take a very practical approach to this theme today. I'll now return to the programme.

In a few moments, we will be starting with an introduction to the paradigm shift from government to governance in education. The aim of this is to sketch a picture of what is happening in this area. This will be followed by a presentation on the case which we will be focusing on for the rest of the day. The principal of the school we will be visiting this afternoon, the Hyperion Lyceum, will be telling us about her secondary school. You will then be set to work. Freshly inspired by both introductions, the idea is to work in small groups to formulate questions that you can ask the various stakeholders during this afternoon's visit to the school.

To ensure that you can form a complete picture of management at the Hyperion Lyceum, we will be holding a discussion carousel in the afternoon. Each small group will have about 25 minutes to speak with a delegation from the Hyperion Lyceum about their position in the school and/or the school's network, the governance of the school and the role they play in this. The discussion will be based on the questions that you formulated. After 25 minutes, we will conclude the discussion and each small group will then move onto another delegation from the school. We will repeat this a number of times so that, by the end of the session, you will have spoken with all actors. The school has put together five groups for us: a group of pupils and parents, a group of teachers, a group of school leaders, a group of governors and external supervisors, and a group of people from the school's periphery (the municipal council and the business sector). We will conclude the day with a reflection in which you can compare your findings on governance here with educational governance in your own country. Tomorrow, we will share our findings with a panel of experts. In this way, we combine academic knowledge with knowledge of professional practice.'

Opening keynote: 'Governing Complex Education Systems'

Tracey Bruns



Tracey Burns heads the [Governing Complex Education Systems](#) project in the OECD's Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI). This project looks at the challenges that governments face in steering complex education systems and the role of knowledge in that process. She is responsible for the publication of [Trends Shaping Education 2016](#). Tracey holds a Bachelor of Arts from McGill University, Canada, and a Master of Arts and Doctor of Philosophy in Psychology from Northeastern University, USA. She is

the recipient of numerous awards and honours, including The University of British Columbia Post-Doctoral Fellowship and the American Psychological Association Dissertation Research Award. Previous to her current work she worked on social determinants of health and on education and social inclusion issues at both the OECD and in Vancouver, Canada. As a Post-Doctoral Fellow at The University of British Columbia, Tracey led a research team investigating newborn infants' responses to language, and was an award-winning lecturer on infant and child development.

Governance challenges in increasingly complex education systems

The Governing Complex Education Systems project (GCES) is motivated by the countries' request: countries feel the pressure to think about governance in a more systemic way, because of a number of governance challenges in these increasingly complex education systems:

- Central regulation to decentralisation and deregulation;
- Increasing school autonomy;
- Increasing numbers of actors and stakeholders;
- Parental choice and voice.

At the same time, education systems face an increasing emphasis on accountability of performance: need for measurable objectives and indicators,

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focus on evaluation and quality assurance, and demand for increasing transparency. This goes hand in hand with an explosion of evidence: data, indicators, research outcomes, outcomes from teachers' practical knowledge... combined with the fact that this evidence is more and more accessible to everyone.

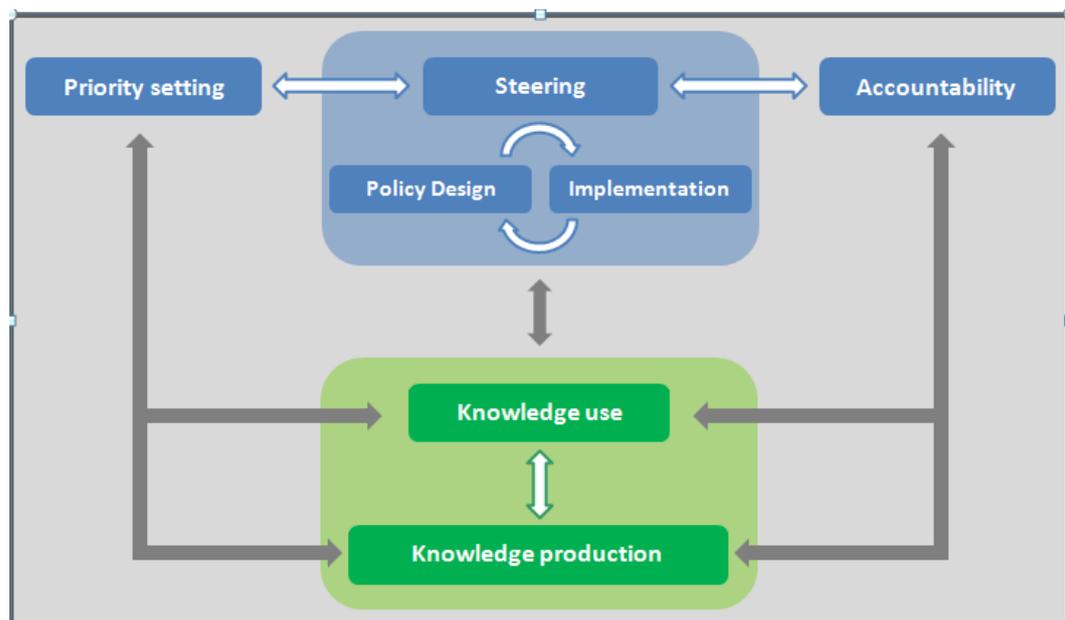
GCES main research questions

Question 1: What models of governance are effective in complex education systems?

Question 2: What knowledge system is necessary to support the effective governance of complex education systems?

GCES analytical model

OECD has looked at different models of governance, in combination with knowledge use and knowledge production. It is clear that these things interact, and feed into a dynamic cycle. It is not possible to consider governance without looking also, at what is happening with knowledge.



Complex education systems

Why is the project looking at governance in 'complex' education systems? Aren't all education systems complex? The idea is to think about governance in a new way, as related to a complex system opposed to a static system.

The following image is a good illustration of what is meant by 'simple', by 'complicated', and by 'complex'.

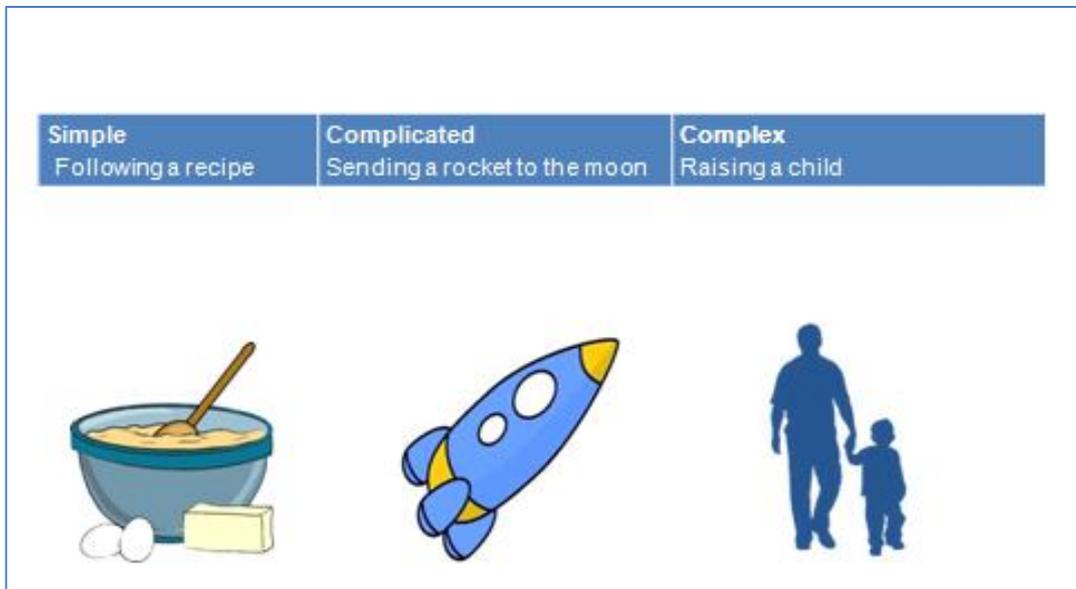
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Following a recipe is simple: one has to pay attention, but there is no risk, as long as one follows step by step.

Sending a rocket to the moon is complicated. Sending a rocket to the moon requires a lot of thinking, a lot of experience. But, once one has figured out how to do it, it is certain that people will be able to do it again.

Raising a child is complex. Expertise can be helpful, but one can do exactly the same things, act exactly the same way and not be sure to have the same result. A child is a living and interpreting organism.

For a long time, policy making in the public sector was considered to be complicated. However, it is actually complex and therefore not easy to control. GCES wants to challenge policy makers to think on a system level.



GCES outputs

OECD recently published

- Part 1: Governance in complex systems;
- Part 2: Accountability;
- Part 3: Capacity and the use of knowledge;
- Part 4: Complexity in policy making.

The 'Governance in Action' publication is upcoming, including a synthesis of GCES case studies:

- Belgium (Flanders);
- Germany;
- Poland;
- Netherlands;
- Norway;
- Sweden.

GCES main findings

The following six findings emerged over the five years that the project is running:

- 1. There is no one right system of governance. Rather than focussing on structures it is more fruitful to focus on processes.**
There are examples of centralized systems that work excellently; there are examples of decentralized systems that are very weak, and vice versa.
- 2. Effective governance works through building capacity, open dialogue, and stakeholder involvement.**
The words 'capacity building', 'open dialogue' and 'stakeholder involvement' are easy to use, but very difficult to realize. Stakeholder involvement has to be understood in a much wider sense than it has been until now. Structures such as education councils, or teaching councils, can be a meaningful way to address this need for broad and structured stakeholder involvement.
- 3. Governance is a balancing act between accountability and trust, innovation and risk-avoidance, consensus building and making difficult choices.**
All those things are pulling against each other at the system level. An example: if radical change is needed, building consensus will not work. If the government wants change absolutely, some stakeholders will be left behind.
- 4. The central level remains very important (even in decentralised systems) in triggering and steering education reform through strategic vision and clear guidelines and feedback.**
- 5. There are systemic weaknesses in capacity throughout most educational systems which contribute to today's governance challenges.**
There is an inherent and unavoidable mismatch between the political reality and the long term vision.
- 6. Importance of key principles for system governance (not just agreement on where to go, but how to get there).**

GCES Core Themes

Three core themes have been identified by the countries as the biggest challenges:

- Accountability systems;
- Capacity building;
- Strategic thinking.

1. Accountability



Accountability is not about looking for someone to blame; it is however sometimes hard to discuss about problems without blaming and pointing fingers. Accountability is about the idea of being responsible and acting up to it. It has to do with transparency of roles: who is accountable to who? All the roles have to be clearly defined. Legitimacy is another key concept: in order to be accountable, you need to believe in the role you have.

In many countries, an added twist is the availability of school rankings, of even teacher rankings, and the media paying much attention to it. The challenge is how to use the media in a constructive way.

Responsibility, trust and innovation are important trade-offs of accountability. Little changes in the roles can cause shifts in responsibility. The issue of trust in teachers plays a role when a government wants to build a teacher evaluation system. And innovation is key if you want to discover at system level how much risk can be built in.

2. Capacity building



In complex systems, the local or regional level is asked to become change managers, sharing knowledge. Countries are struggling with the ways to build this kind of capacities. Another tension is that governments are going to expect too much, assuming that the local level must 'know it all' and therefore not tolerating failures.

In most systems, a lot of data is available. It is good to think critically about who is producing those data, about who is identifying the existing data. In a perfect situation, all the data are there, free to use, and everybody agrees to use it. Unfortunately, this is not always the case.

The 'tyranny of common sense' is not typical for education. Professionals, in different fields, tend to think that they kind of know how to work, and consider capacity building efforts as a devaluation of their professionalism. This is frustrating: if we want to think of education as a science, we cannot only work based on 'common sense'. There is a lot of common sense indeed, but it needs to be completed with research results.

3. Strategic thinking

There is an increased need for strategic thinking on all levels. However, especially outside larger cities, capacity is an issue.

Complex systems need future thinking. However: most jobs in education are day-to-day. Everybody is very busy, and tends not to care about future thinking. The reality is that, often, teachers are not interested in change, and prefer stability. This human aspect is often forgotten. If there is too much change, and too often, there will be no trust.

Elements of effective governance

The GCES identified the following elements of effective governance:

- Effective governance focuses on processes, not on structures;
- Effective governance is flexible and can adapt to change and unexpected events;
- Effective governance works through building capacity, stakeholder involvement and open dialogue;
- Effective governance requires a whole of system approach, aligning roles and balancing tensions;
- Effective governance harnesses evidence and research to inform policy and reform.

The case of a Dutch school: the Hyperion Lyceum

Part 1: Presentation of the Hyperion Lyceum

Elly Loman

Elly Loman is school leader of the Hyperion Lyceum.



Facts and figures

The Hyperion Lyceum is a VWO and Gymnasium school (VWO = Voorbereidend Wetenschappelijk Onderwijs, a secondary school preparing for higher education). The school was founded in 2011 and is constantly growing: from 630 until 810 students, from 60 until 80 staff members.

The school is now housed in a temporary building and will move in the near future to a new building.



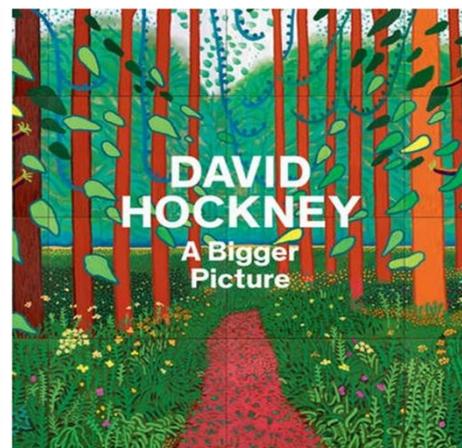
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The school started in 2011 with just the first grade, age 11-12. The school now has pupils from 12 until 18 years, a very important period in their lives, where a lot of change takes place. Teachers and school leaders of the Hyperion Lyceum believe that they can contribute, at least a little bit, to the development of these young people.

The kids at Hyperion Lyceum are bright kids. However, as the picture shows, there still is a lot of diversity, as the pupils come from all over town, from different social, economic and cultural backgrounds.



The school is inspired by David Hockney's 'A bigger picture'. In the same way Tracey Burns has demonstrated the complexity of an education system, David Hockney illustrates that a school is not an entity on itself, but evolves in a community, a city, the world. Hockney, who has been painting for sixty years, shows that you can always embrace change, that you can always grow (by using for instance recent technologies as a painter and making iPad drawings).



Our cornerstones

Students are inquisitive. Hyperion believes that students want to learn, are open. The school system has to cherish and stimulate this openness.

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Belief in a growth mindset. At Hyperion, students are allowed to try, to make mistakes, to go for it, so that they can learn from their failures.

Hyperion wants the students to become critical, rational and emphatic human beings with a great social commitment. The students of Hyperion are privileged already in a sense, so they have a certain responsibility towards other, less privileged people.

Our goals

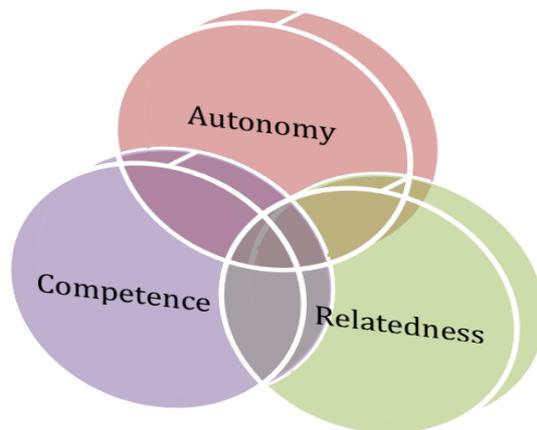
Hyperion wants to provide innovative education that suits the 21st century.

Students have to be able to control their own learning process independently. They have to be guided and monitored during this process.

Hyperion wants exam results above average; simply succeeding is not sufficient.

The school works towards a positive climate with lots of space.

Dutch students are often considered as not motivated, compared to their peers in other European countries. Hyperion Lyceum is convinced that it is the role of the school to motivate the students. School can maybe change the didactics, according to the three needs that are present in every person: autonomy, competence and relatedness.



What we are proud of

Hyperion Lyceum is proud of its pedagogy, of its curriculum, of its Bureau V, and of the fact that the staff workS together as a team.

The pedagogy is very informal. Pupils and teachers call each other by the first name, as a sign that there is small distance. This is a way to show to the pupils that they can ask everything, that they are allowed to make mistakes.

The curriculum is made by the school. It contains a number of standards, needed to be prepared for the final exam. But it also contains a number of extras. The school has introduced three new subjects:

- Logic and argumentation; this subject is highly important in a complex and changing world. It has to do with reading and explaining, with learning to listen and to react to each other.
- Lifestyle informatics;

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- Marvelous minds.

Bureau V or Office V is for a specific group of students, who are so good that they need more. We want to keep them motivated, and to trigger them. Bureau V or Office V wants to enrich, to accelerate, to broaden and to deepen.

What we like to improve

Work has to be done in the field of didactics, of self-direction, of ways of testing and in working towards a balanced curriculum.

Moving to a new building is a good opportunity to discuss self-direction with the teaching team. The school leader is convinced that soft skills such as self-direction will become more relevant and important in the future, although these skills are not objectively measurable. It is a great advantage that the Hyperion Lyceum has the freedom to be different.

Written exams is a good thing, they have to be embraced but need to be complemented by other ways of testing, more adapted to different types of students.

The curriculum is, at this moment, very cognitive, very head-oriented. There is need for balance and more orientation towards the heart and the body.

The following image illustrates the way to the horizon, not as one objective, but as a goal that can be reached from different perspectives. Some students go straight to the objective, some take a different pathway.



Part 2: School visit

The school visit consisted of carousel conversations with all the actors deciding on what is happening at Hyperion Lyceum: pupils and parents, teachers, school leaders, inspectorate, school board, municipality and neighborhood.

Preliminary conclusions by Roos Herpelinck, director at Vlor (Flemish Education Council) and member of the EUNEC executive committee.

Opening a new school is a huge responsibility: it is about building up an organization, a community, but also about sustaining and maintaining these new ideas. To take this promise is not an easy task.

Hyperion Lyceum is a selective school. Teachers are mainly young, they are enthusiastic about the project, they show a pioneers' attitude. There are a lot of opportunities for horizontal interaction, for sharing experiences. The school is a learning community.

The Hyperion Lyceum has a very specific context. The school is built in an urban context, in a newly constructed neighbourhood. This context of growing demography, of young urban population, offers a chance to 'reinvent' school. Within this specific context, the Hyperion Lyceum made an impressive achievement: they reinvented the academic strand of education. To be noted, that the focus is not on vocational education and training neither on education for children with specific needs.

Pedagogic leadership is crucial. The director took the opportunity to set out clear goals. This approach is stimulating and motivating; teachers are not 'counting the hours'.

There is a strong governance model. The unique Dutch system with a lot of freedom for the school is used in an intelligent way, based on trust in the school, in the staff, in the stakeholders.

Remains the concern about the sustainability. This has to do with financing, and with the development of competences among teachers. Will they stay in the school? Will they go out to other schools, and can this type of school organisation be put on a systemic level? Can the innovation that takes place at Hyperion Lyceum be transferred to other schools? This will become clear in the years to come.

School autonomy in Portugal and the pressure for compliance with centralized decisions

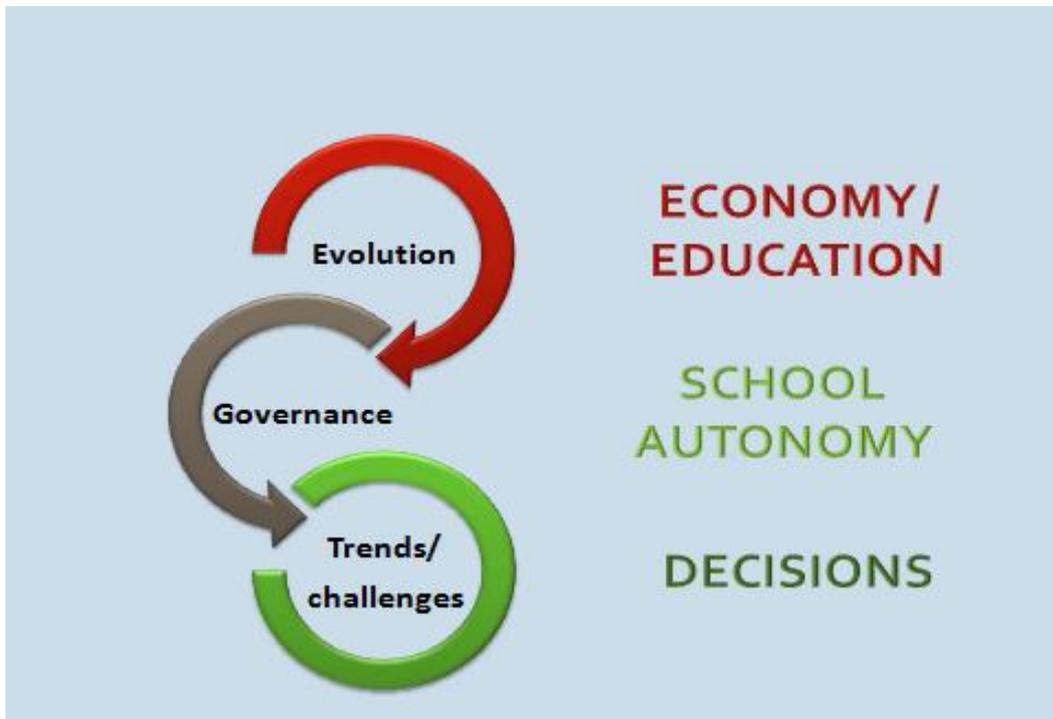
Álvaro Almeida dos Santos

Álvaro Almeida dos Santos graduated in Modern Languages and Literatures (English and German Studies) from the Faculty of Letters, University of Porto. He has a master degree in School Leadership and Management from the Portuguese Catholic University. He has made studies and has written several papers on school leadership, management, governance, and autonomy and is a co-author of a book on Good Practice in Portuguese Schools. He has presented communications on school and education issues in national and international education seminars and conferences. He has been a school leader in a Secondary School, in Valadares, V. N. de Gaia, since 1999. He was elected President of the Portuguese Schools Council (an advisory body for the Ministry of Education) between 2007 and 2010. He was an international expert member in Study on Quality Assurance in EU School Education Systems in 2014 and 2015. Currently, he is the President of the General Assembly of the National Public School Headmaster Association, and co-opted member of the National (Portuguese) Education Council.



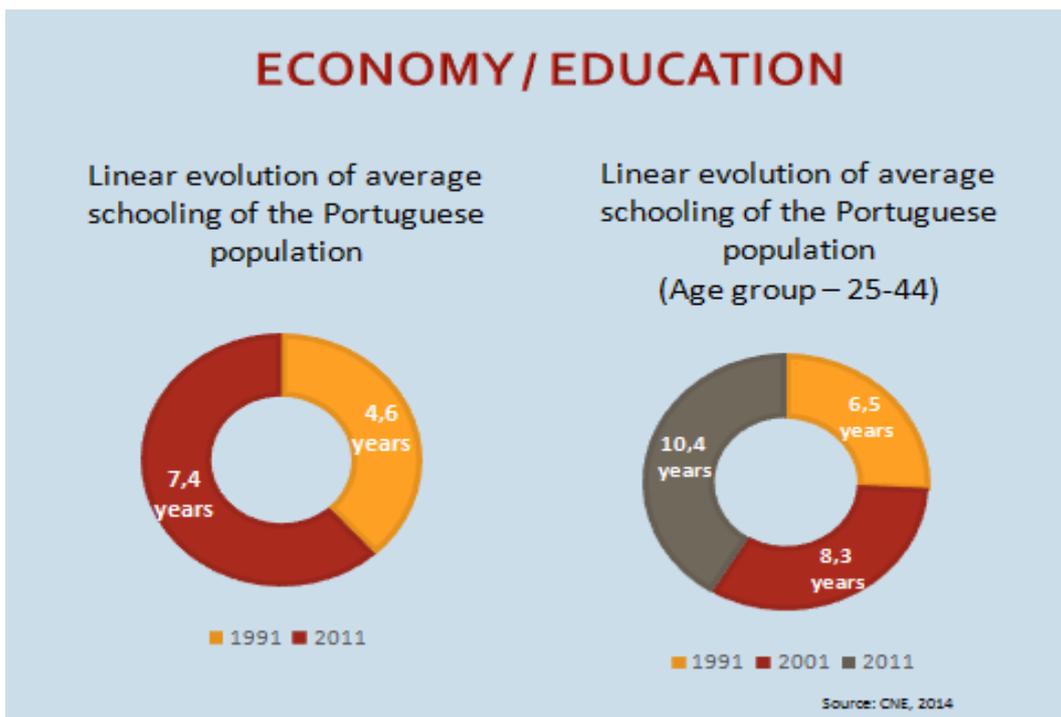
Portugal faced important changes since the seventies. Before, the education system excluded an important part of the population. In order to achieve quality education for all, changes had to be quick.

In this presentation, Mr Almeida dos Santos first focuses on evolutions in economy and education; next, on issues related to school autonomy and governance; finally, some trends and challenges are identified, as well as decisions.



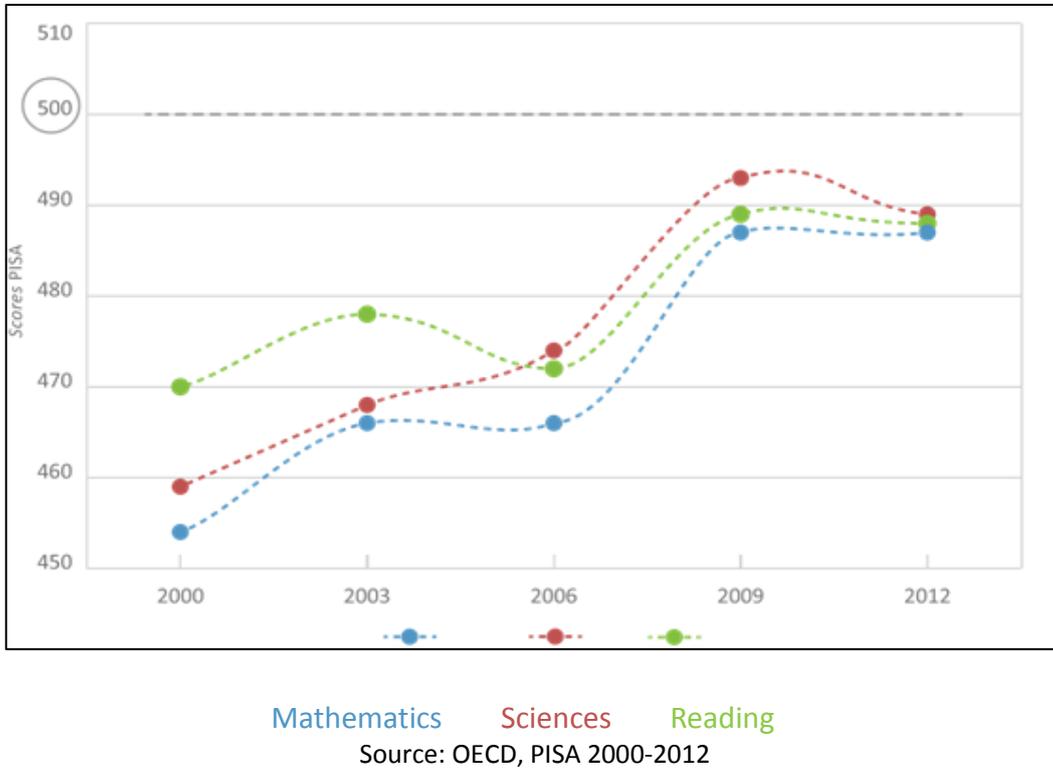
Economy/Education

As the graph below shows, there has been a remarkable evolution in the average number of years of schooling, mainly if the age group between 25 and 44 years is considered.

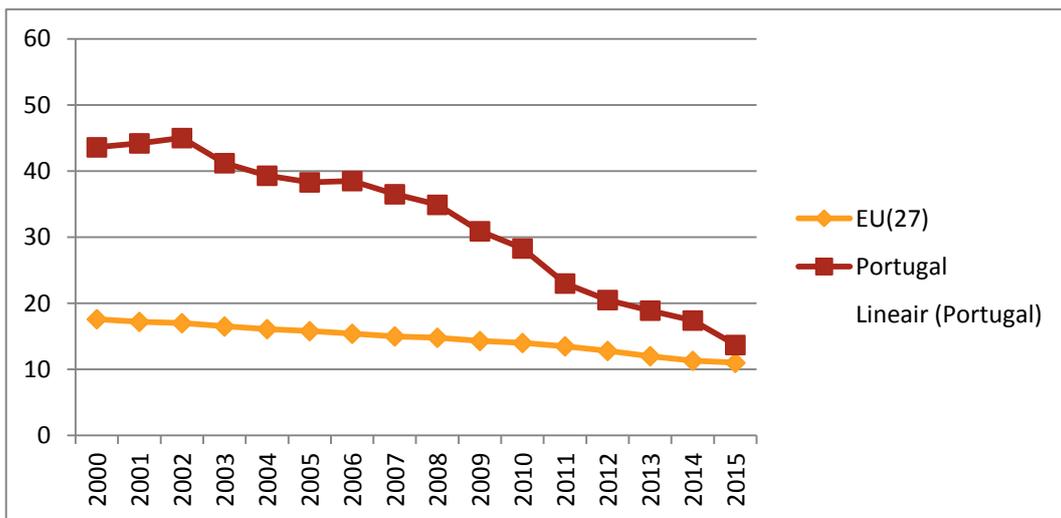


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On the other hand, if PISA-results are considered for Portugal, there is progress starting from the year 2000, for mathematics, sciences and reading. Although the results for Portugal are still below average, there is clear progress.



Early school leaving is a major problem in the Portuguese education system. The following graph shows the population aged 18-24 years with at most lower secondary education and not in further education or training.



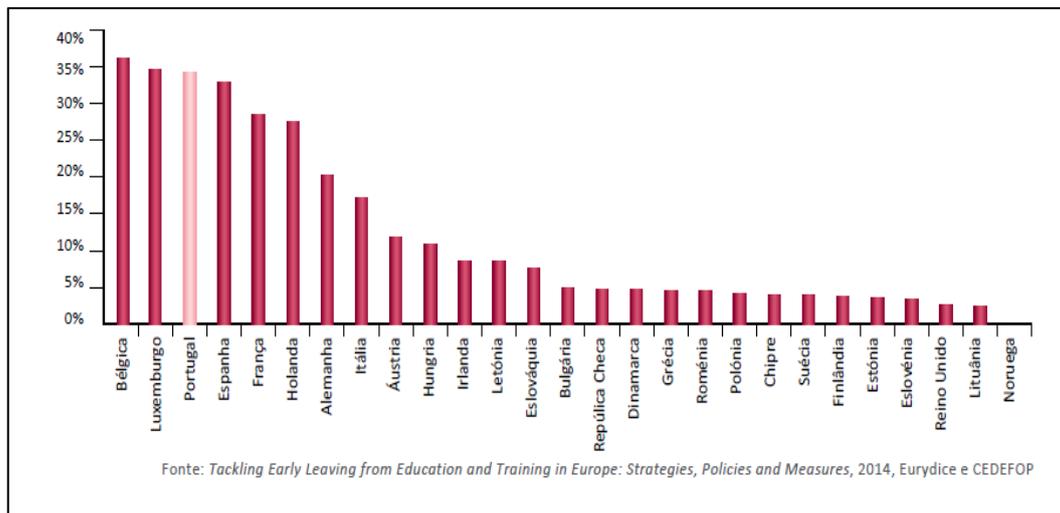
Only recently, there has been an important decrease, but the percentage still remains higher than the EU average. Portugal hopes to reach the 10 % target by 2020. Moreover, the percentages of early school leavers are unequally

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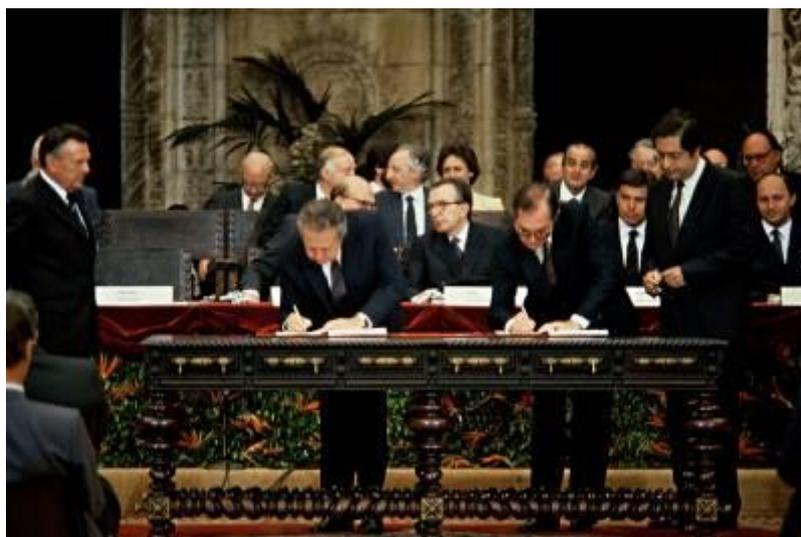
divided regionally, with higher numbers in the interior and in the north of the country.

Grade repetition is another problem that needs attention. The problem is ongoing, a real solution has not been found yet.

The graph below shows the percentage of 15 year students who repeated at least once (PISA, 2012).



Portugal joined the European Union in 1985. The picture shows the Prime Minister of Portugal signing the Treaty of Accession of Portugal, on 12 July 1985.

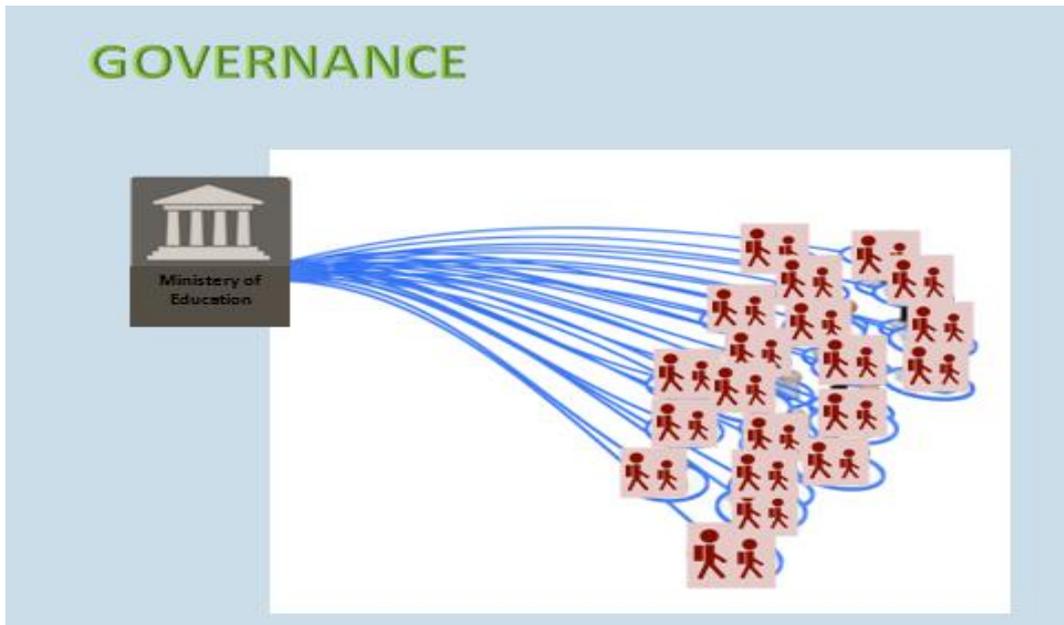


In 1986, the Education Basis Law was voted. And in 2009, compulsory education was extended to 18 years of age.

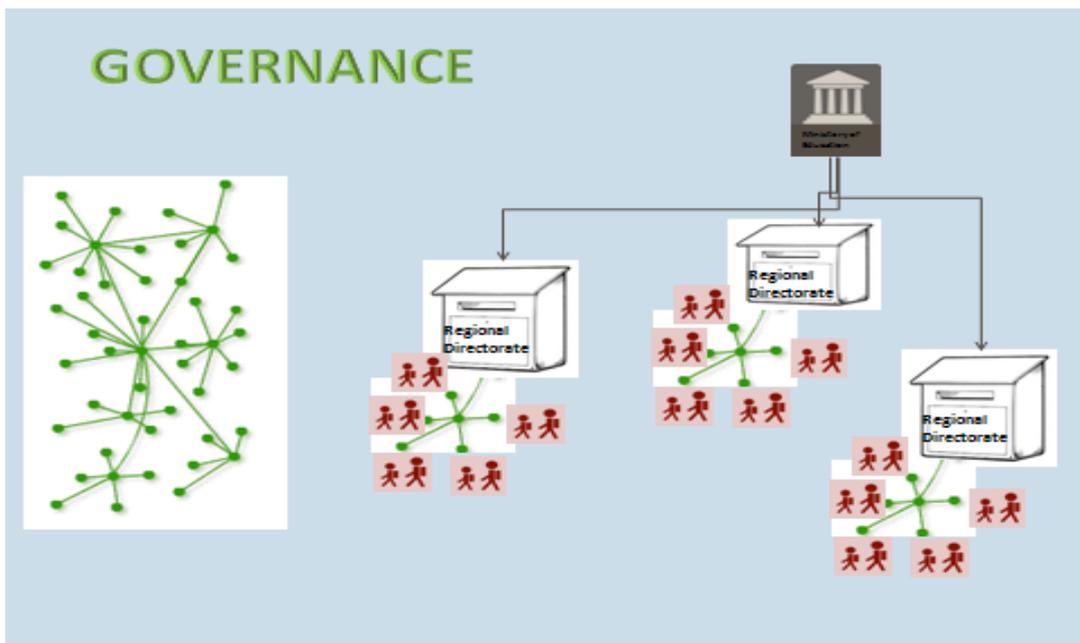
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Governance

The school system in Portugal used to be very much centralized. Decisions about curriculum, management, budget, evaluation, were taken centrally, at the level of the Ministry of Education. The policy was 'one size fits all', whatever the size and location of the school was.



Since then, slight changes were made. Regional directorates were created. In fact, they repeated what was said by the Ministry of Education, by the central board. These directorates serve as 'letter boxes', at an intermediate level.



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Real school autonomy is still an issue in Portugal. Real school autonomy is about decision making at the local level, and this still is not happening, because of a number of reasons:

- A general environment of mistrust in people and in institutions;
- A transient and slippery/unstable legal structure in educational matters;
- Uncertainty in the horizon;
- Feeble connections and couplings between structures, means and aims;
- The heavy bureaucratic and administrative burden consuming time and resources in the name of rationality;
- The trumpeted school autonomy never comprehending relevant decisions for positive change;
- The risk of disappointment and exhaustion when knowing how, willing to, and not being allowed the opportunity.

The following picture shows the distribution of schools and school clusters in Portugal, 2013/2014.

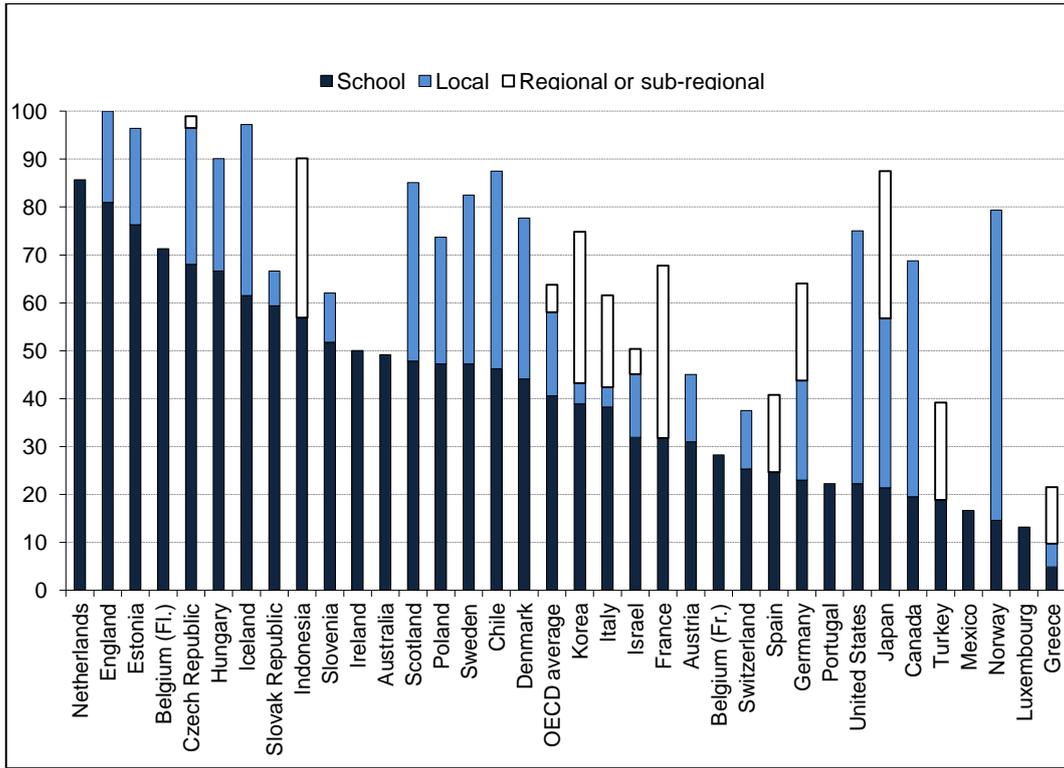
Compared to the demographic distribution, the distribution of schools appears to be very unbalanced.



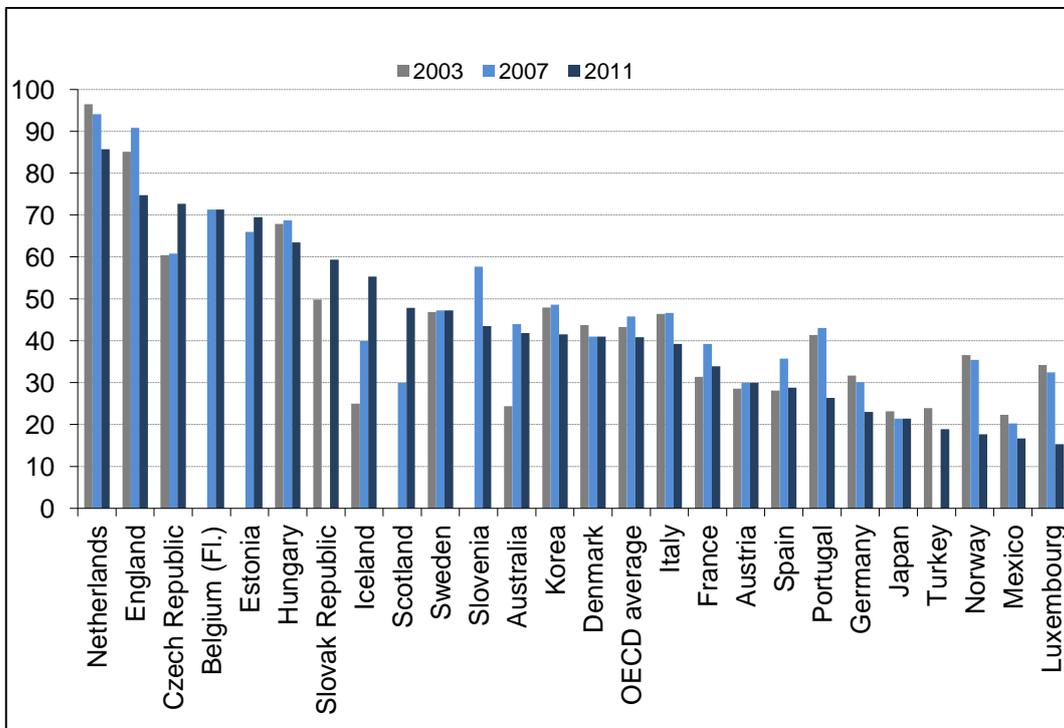
There is another paradox: there are more and more autonomy contracts with schools (from 1 contract in 2001, over 22 contracts in 2007, to 311 contracts in 2014), but still the percentage of decisions taken at the school level remains very low (graph for 2011) and is decreasing from 2003 and 2007 until 2011.

Percentage of decisions taken at each level of government in public lower secondary education (2011):

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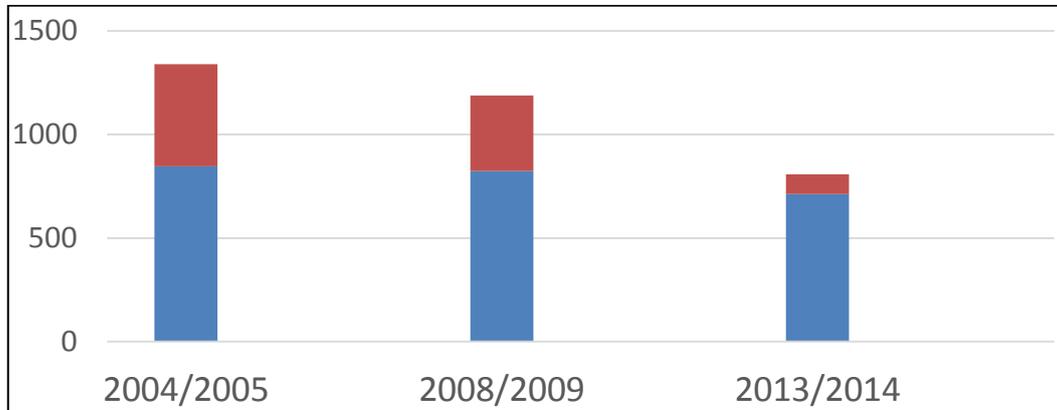


Share of decisions taken at the school level (2003, 2007, 2011).



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Between 2004 and 2014, the percentage of clusters has considerably increased; the percentage of individual schools has decreased (individual schools in red; clusters in blue colour).



Individual schools are generally secondary schools with an important number of students. Cluster schools are mainly primary schools, hosted at different locations, in different buildings.

The reasons for this clustering have to do with demography and decreasing population, and with the compulsory schooling extension. Clusters are ways of rationalising physical, human and financial resources. They were intended to improve the system, allowing different ways of organization, allowing different options for distributing people and tasks.

However, there is some criticism regarding clusters, related to management: sometimes one of the schools is miles away, it is therefore difficult to reach the director. Portugal is still evaluating the results of this clustering system, the CNE (Portuguese Education Council) is working on it.

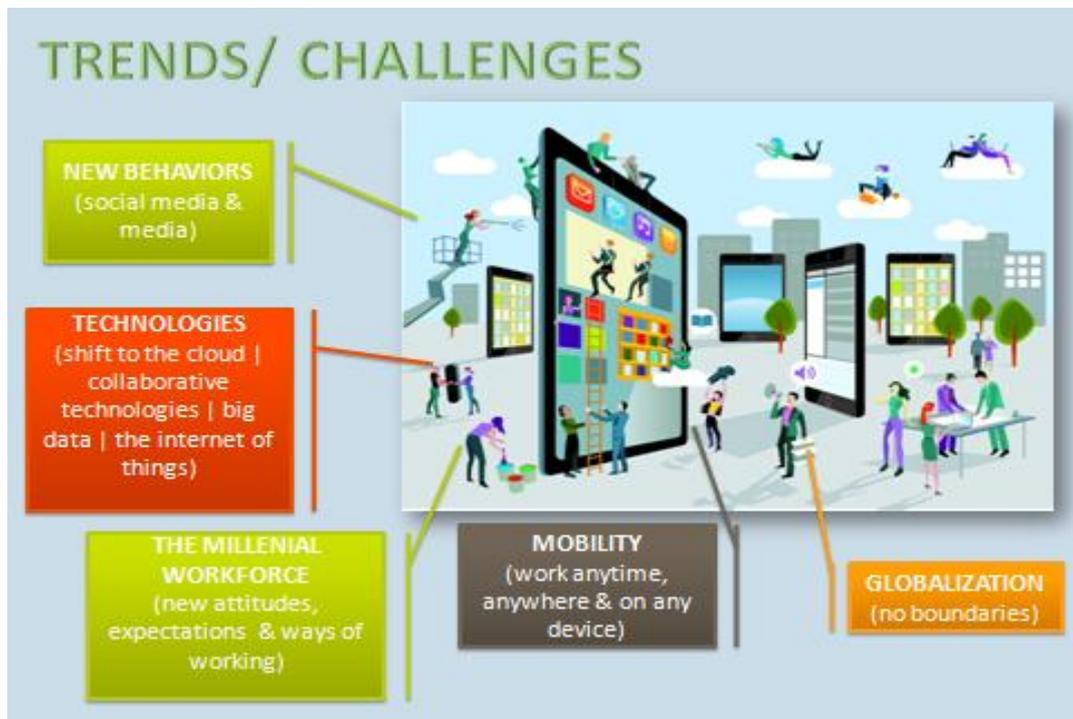
In the end, there is no real autonomy. Whether schools are clustered or independent, they can organise their timetables, distribute their classes etc. They have better results, because they can work on differentiation, on support for teachers. But still they have to follow the orders from the government. The curriculum and the assessment remain national and centralized. Also in terms of recruitment of staff, schools have to stick to the national level. There is a kind of autonomy, but it is centrally controlled.



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Trends and challenges

Today's education is facing the following trends: new behaviours, technologies, the millennial workforce, mobility and globalization:



Inequality is one of the main problems in the Portuguese society. Equal access to quality education can contribute to a more equal society.

Short-termism and the autonomy and decentralisation are possible hindrances of system thinking.

Top priorities remain:

- Tackling the 'culture' of repetition;
- Succeeding in completing the compulsory education within the expected time of school attendance.

Trust

Trust is a key word. It is a paradox that about 30 % of Portuguese rate the Portuguese schools as good or very good, whilst about 70 % rates the school of their own child as good or very good. The situation might seem worse than it actually is. That is why more trust is needed in education: trust in education governance, trust in schools and teachers, trust in the pedagogical relationship, and trust as a learnable skill and attitude.

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‘The challenge lies more in questioning certain assumptions and beliefs rather than regulatory change.’
(EC/EACEA/Eurydice, 2011, p. 60)

School governance: fine tuning improvement and accountability by using data and indicators

Serban Iosifescu

Serban Iosifescu is Chairman of the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Pre-University Education. He is certified trainer, auditor and evaluator for professional competencies (for Trainers) and EQAVET and UNICEF expert.



Mission of the Agency



The Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Pre-University Education (RAQUAPE) is ten years old. Its mission is to accomplish external evaluation of quality education offered by educational institutions (pre-primary, primary, secondary, tertiary-non-university level, including initial VET offered by schools). It includes provisional authorization, full accreditation and recurrent evaluation of educational institutions.

Every five years schools are checked if they respond to the minimum quality standards decided by the government. The purpose of the external evaluation is to demonstrate, for all stakeholders, that a school has the capacity to fulfil its mission (education), by answering five questions:

- Is the school / are the teachers able to motivate pupils to acquire the desired learning outcomes?
- Is the school / are the teachers able to ensure pupils wellbeing?
- Is the school management able to provide resources and leadership in order to get the desired learning outcomes and child wellbeing?
- Is the school management able to improve continuously school capacity to offer quality education?
- Is the school management able to communicate fully and continuously with all relevant stakeholders and institutions from the community?

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To demonstrate the quality of education is the main purpose of the Agency. This is obvious, as education is a fundamental right, and therefore the state has to provide education at a certain quality level and to demonstrate it.

Three questions relate directly to school management. Schools are indeed evaluated as a whole, the evaluators don't go deeper into details.

Improvement versus external evaluation

An evaluation might as well ask the question: 'Where is improvement?'. This is not the case; only in the fourth question, descriptors are defined in terms of progress, in terms of improvement.

The question of improvement versus external evaluation is related to the distinction made by Tracey Burns (OECD) between simple, complicated and complex systems. An education system has to respect certain procedures; this fits for a complicated system, not for a complex system. The last years, in Romania, a more transformational vision on quality is being developed. Schools, as service providers, have to educate the 'clients' to a higher level; the 'customer' is becoming more demanding and forces to education system to work towards improvement.

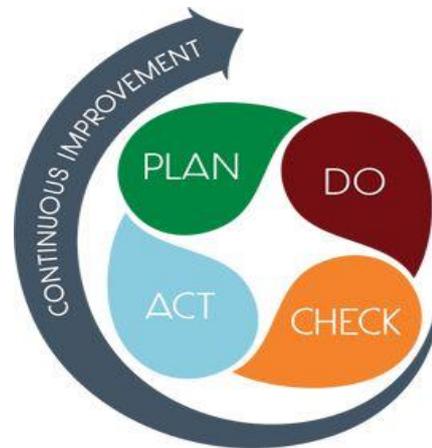
It is not possible to force improvement by external evaluation. Improvement is a result (following external and, mainly, internal evaluation - self-evaluation) conditioned by 'ownership'. For this reason, the improvement decision belongs to:

- Local stakeholders and/or decision makers, in decentralized systems.
- Central stakeholders and/or decision makers, in centralized systems.

(But there is no such thing as a 'pure' centralized / decentralized system).

Improvement is a continuous effort, to reach established targets:

- Planning actions, resources and results;
- Acting; organizing and using resources and getting results;
- Evaluating results (effective? efficient?);
- Reviewing results, judging and deciding further actions, resources and results.



External evaluation has as its main purpose accountability: 'You can't have the same people who are responsible for improving education be responsible for judging

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whether or not that improvement has occurred' (McKinsey, 2007). For this reasons, the decision making process may have different purposes – e.g.:

- Establishing / allowing the establishment of a school (criterion based / standard based judgment);
- Judging the quality, efficiency and equity of education provision – individual schools / comparative / at system level;
- Allocating resources based on criteria and indicators;
- Measuring stakeholders' satisfaction;
- Calibrating internal evaluation / self-evaluation.

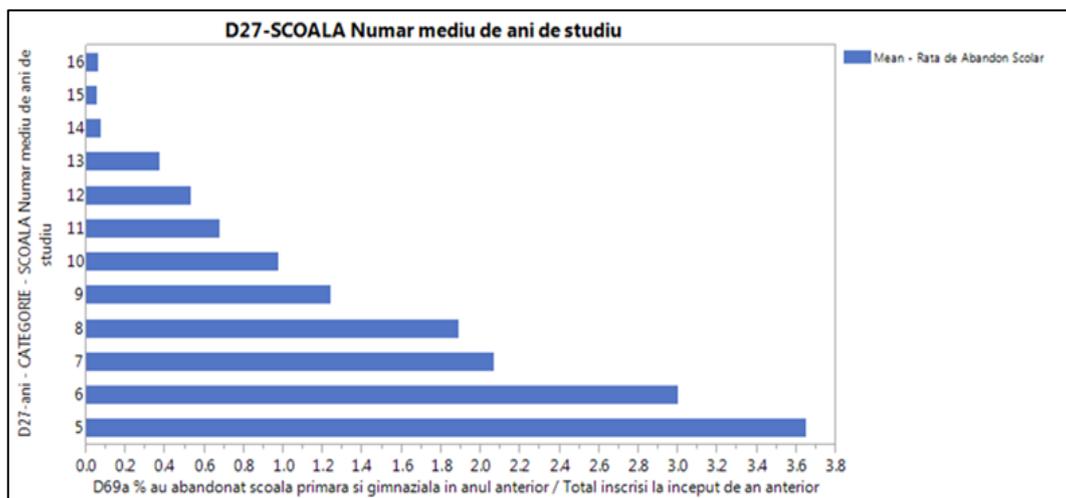
Both improvement and accountability need data:

'All of the top-performing systems also recognize that they cannot improve what they do not measure' (McKinsey 2007)

Data use

Data relevance and use may be different.

An example: the dropout rates according to the parents' level of education. The data in the graph is based on about 5000 schools; conclusions at national level are possible.



For accountability purposes, we will

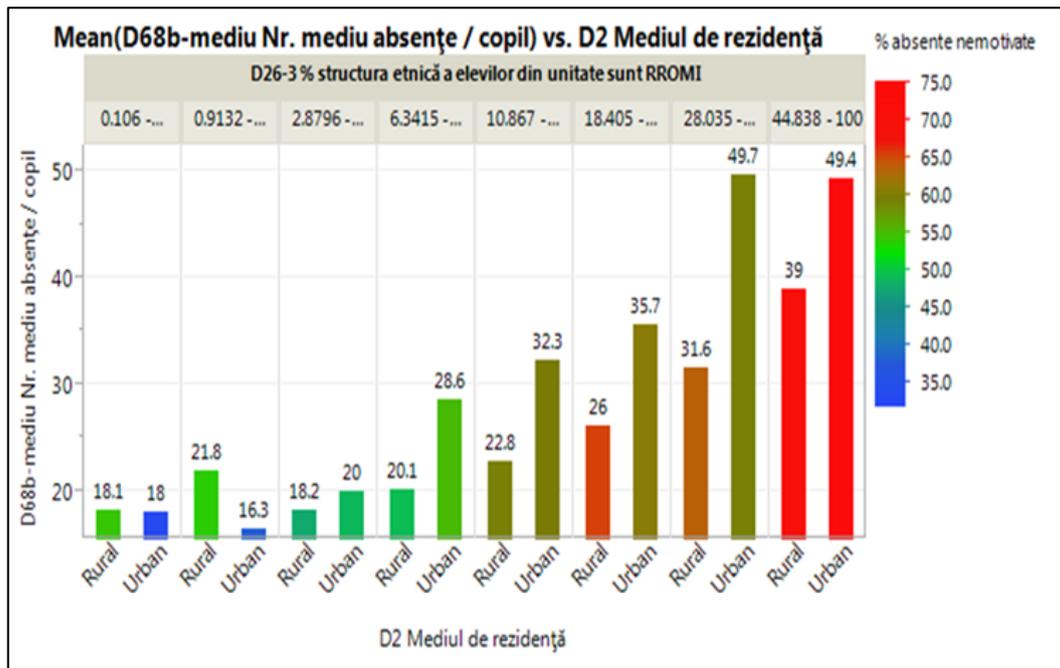
- Judge schools' dropout level taking into account the average level of parent's education and not the national or regional averages;
- Recommend policies and/or interventions targeting pupils from families with poor education and/or schools function in communities with low level of education, in order to boost participation.

For improvement purposes, we will

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- Judge schools' individual dropout level comparatively with schools with similar level of parents' education and act consequently;
- Design early warning systems regarding high dropout risk and register individual pupils, based on the level of parents' education.

Another example: absenteeism according to the percentage of Roma pupils (rural and urban).



For accountability purposes, we will

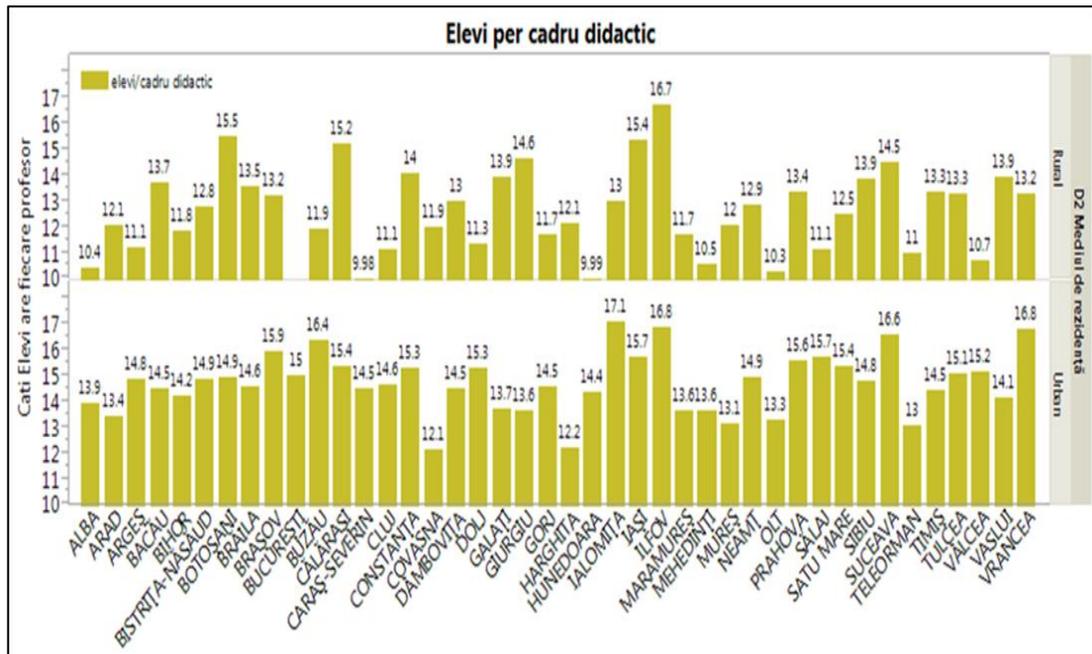
- Judge school results taking into account the percentage of Roma population;
- Recommend national policies and/or interventions targeting pupils from Roma communities (e.g. conditional cash transfer)

For improvement purposes, we will

- Judge school absenteeism in accordance with the percentage of Roma pupils and act consequently;
- Target mainly Roma pupils with support measures in order to reduce absenteeism at school level.

Another example: pupils/teachers ration per county (rural and urban).

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There are huge differences among different counties.

For accountability purposes we will:

- Judge differently the pupils/teacher ratio, depending on the county;
- Recommend public policies to be implemented differently in counties/areas with teacher deficit or surplus (boosting hiring teachers or not).

For improvement purposes we will:

- Hire/fire teachers;
- Increase/decrease enrolment;
- Target extra resources for teachers and teachers' professional development depending on context factors.

Some conclusions

There is a need to balance the scale between 'improvement' and 'accountability':

- Unbalance towards accountability means increased bureaucratic burden, slowing response, diminished efficiency and less resources for improvement;
- Unbalance towards improvement means lack of comparability, equity and predictability at system level and possible waste of resources.

In the end, the purpose is that the Agency becomes useless, because enough trust is generated among the stakeholders. External evaluation would then become just a check from time to time.

Trends in accountability processes and mechanisms and the role of the government in a multilevel governance system in education

Edith Hooge

Prof.dr. E. (Edith) H. Hooge is vice dean and full professor at Tias School for Business and Society. With her chair 'Boards and Governance in Education' she participates in the TIAS GovernanceLAB and in several educational programs.

Edith has more than twenty years of experience with academic research and teaching. She publishes scientific and professional articles and papers, and is member of the editorial board of the European Journal of Education (EJE) and of the Dutch journal NTOR.



During her career Edith always has connected science, policy and practice. She guided board self-evaluations, advised boards, and regularly presides, or is a member, of monitoring or research committees in the area of good governance and governance codes.

After a year of voluntary work in Paris, she studied educational science at the University of Amsterdam. During her study, she carried out research at Braga University, Portugal and at the University of Siena, Italy. After a postdoctoral program Public Administration, she received her PhD at the University of Amsterdam.

Autonomy, the hole in the donut

Autonomy does not exist in itself; it is like the hole in the donut and only exists because of the boundaries. It can be pushed from the inside (leading to coping strategies) and from the outside (government requirements). Autonomy is in the middle of this game between different forces.

The autonomy doctrine is based on three principles:

- Allowing substantial discretion
- Building capacity
- Holding accountable

Allowing substantial discretion in a school

This means that a school should be entitled to formulate its own goals, to design its own curriculum, to hire its own staff, to decide on how to spend the budget, on how to assure and assess quality. In many cases, schools are only entitled to autonomously decide on two or three of the aspects enumerated. It is known that having the possibility to hire its own staff is essential.

Allowing more discretion is not sufficient for real autonomy. Building capacity is another condition.

Capacity has to do with making the acquired autonomy work. It will not go without effort, especially not since the 'central government' is in the DNA of all. If we want real autonomy, the DNA has to change. Capacity can be built, but needs resources, time and trust: failures have to be allowed.

Being able to work with data is part of capacity.

The third basic principle is accountability.

It is a very important, though unpopular principle. Schools have to be able to account for what they strive for, for why they have made certain choices (related to curriculum, staff...). The relation between freedom and accountability is complicated. In fact, a school is freer in a centralized system with a lot of detailed regulations; it is possible to dive into the system and still do what we want. On the other hand, autonomy is not the same thing as complete freedom, on the contrary. An autonomous school is accountable to the government and to the stakeholders. That is the reason why some school leaders don't strive for autonomy: they don't feel able to account.

Autonomy requires strong government, able to organize school accountability, and to align with accountability for the education system as a whole... More autonomy does not mean less government, in fact autonomy requires more and stronger government.

Autonomy will only work when a school responds to these three principles.

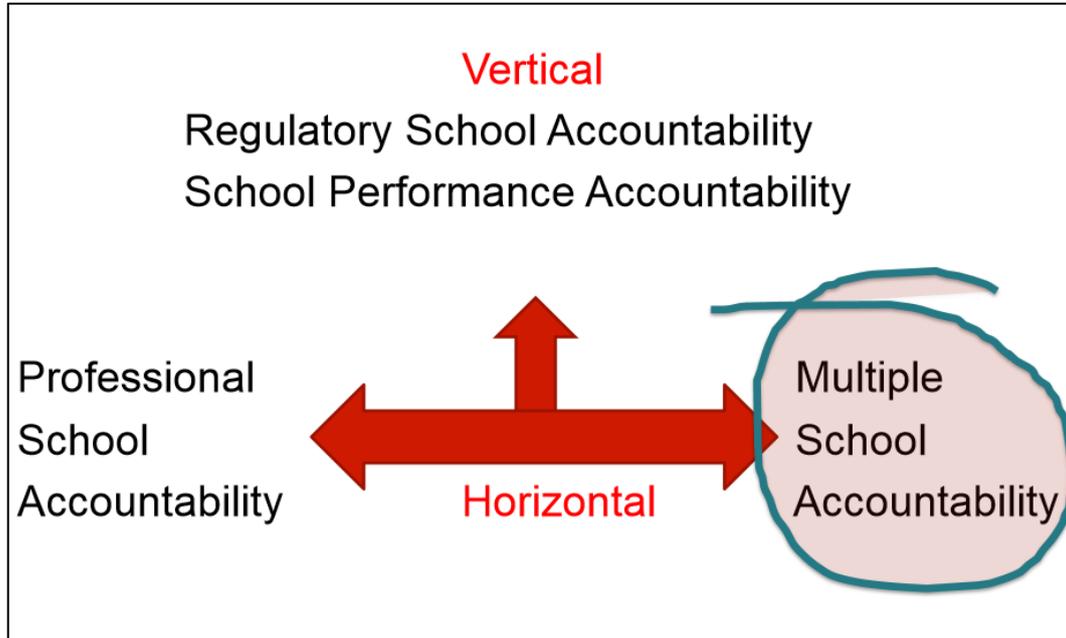
Vertical and horizontal accountability

Vertical accountability is quite familiar for all. Vertical accountability is top-down and hierarchical. It enforces compliance with laws and regulations and/or holds schools accountable for the use of resources in relation to the quality of education they provide.

The last three decades there has been a shift from traditional vertical and regulatory school accountability towards horizontal accountability. In the context of movements of deregulation and of influence of market mechanisms, there is more need for accountability related to the output side of education. This has less to do with external evaluation, but rather with public reporting, assessment, use of data. Horizontal accountability is directed

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at how schools and teachers conduct their profession and/or at how schools and teachers inform and involve multiple stakeholders and are accountable to them.



Vertical school performance accountability (à la PISA) can be helpful to benchmark and to monitor, but there is a downside: if you limit accountability to measurable things, you don't hold schools accountable for the broad comprehensive things they do. Schools will maybe even tend to consider measurable things as important (and pay less attention to wellbeing, for instance).

Horizontal professional school accountability is a way of accounting to peers, amongst teachers as professionals, reviewing each other, having mutual school visits, evolving in professional learning communities. This requires a strong profession, teachers not being just executors.

Horizontal multiple school accountability is about accountability towards all stakeholders in the environment of the school: parents, health workers, labour market, regions, municipalities, neighbourhood ...).

When we look at accountability, there is always this inherent tension between the vertical and the horizontal axe. Often, there is a very strong pull from the vertical axe; this is consuming so much energy that horizontal accountability tends to fade away.

Purposes of multiple school accountability

What can education gain from multiple school accountability?

- Legitimation 'from the ground'.
- Accounting for the education quality: content and process.

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- Improving of the education quality: content and process.
- Involving and engaging local/regional stakeholders: building communities. School is not an ivory tower. This building communities is a democratic value in itself.

How to make it work?

Multiple school accountability means involving students, parents, other education/care/welfare institutions, community, 'world of work', other stakeholders... and asking them for feedback on the three following questions:

- Is school doing the right things?
- Is school doing things well?
- How to improve and adapt?

In order to make multiple school accountability work, the following steps need to be taken:

- Identifying stakeholders
It is important to identify the right stakeholders. These include parents, of course, but also a lot of other groups of stakeholders. Stakeholder management is not easy; there might be tensions between stakeholders, strong stakeholders might dominate the weaker stakeholders. It is important to speak the stakeholders' language, to move towards them and to avoid the distance. Research (UK) shows that there is sometimes a divide between the professionals and the lays. How to manage that is a big challenge.
- Building stakeholders capacity
- Building schools' capacity
Schools need to be able to reach out to stakeholders; they need the means and the resources to manage the dialogue with stakeholders. These are delicate processes; if it is not well managed, stakeholders will feel as not taken seriously, and they will not engage.

The communication and information revolution can be a blessing. Wise use of internet en ICT can ease multiple school accountability. At the moment, there is still a heavy underutilization of the ICT possibilities in terms of giving information, accounting, and establishing dialogue. ICT cannot replace face to face contact, but can certainly boost horizontal dialogue.

Further reading

Looking Beyond the Numbers: Stakeholders and Multiple School Accountability, Edith Hooge, Tracey Burns & Harald Wilkoszewski. OECD Education Working paper No. 85 (http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/looking-beyond-the-numbers-stakeholders-and-multiple-school-accountability_5k91dl7ct6q6-en;jsessionid=l4fb223kwq6n.x-oecd-live-02)

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Making multiple school accountability work, Edith Hooge. In: Governing Education in a complex world. Burns & Köster (Eds.). OECD Publishing.
http://www.keepeek.com/Digital-Asset-Management/oecd/education/governing-education-in-a-complex-world/making-multiple-school-accountability-work_9789264255364-7-en#page1

Statements

These statements are based on the lessons learnt during the seminar on governance in education in Amsterdam, and identify key issues for further debate within EUNEC and within each education council, member of the network.

EUNEC wants to disseminate these statements pro-actively to the European Commission, the European Parliament and relevant DG's. EUNEC also wants to promote action by its members at national/regional level. These statements can contribute to the national advisory opinions of education councils. They should lead to reflection and action by relevant stakeholders in the field of education and training, such as providers of education, teacher trade unions, social partners, students, parents and experts in the field of education and training.

Government versus governance

Education and training as a vital public service

Education and training have always been vital sectors in society because of their role in socialization and social cohesion, because of the economic added value they bring by qualifying citizens and because of its role in personal development and well-being. Education and training also contribute to the development and innovation of the knowledge base and competences.

Although in some European countries, there is an important supply of education by civil society organisations, the education and training sector is in many countries seen as a public or semi-public service. This has implications in the field of public financing and subsidizing, quality requirements and autonomy, governance and multiple responsibilities and the tension between central decision making versus more decentral models of decision making.

The government model is under pressure

The government model, where decisions are taken at a centralized level, is now under pressure, for different reasons. Societies in general, and education systems in particular, are becoming more and more complex: traditional models of steering and conflict solutions don't work anymore. Societies are at the same time becoming more and more individualized. Technological evolutions lead to new models of educational delivery. Above all this, there is also a high pressure on government finances.

The traditional image of policy making appears inadequate, because policy is not linear, does not occur in stages. Policy is deeply influenced by 'events', by disruptions. Policy is at the same time the result of multiple actors. Moreover, is it very difficult to measure the effects of policy lines, as these effects are

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often indirect and difficult to identify. The traditional model of decision making seems to have reached its limits.

From government towards governance

Based on dissatisfaction with traditional problem-solving methods and decision-making models, there has been, during the last decades, an evolution from a government model towards a governance model. This is a fundamental change in the way of thinking about shaping political and decision-making processes in society.

The role of the government is no longer to steer directly policy processes, but rather to coordinate and facilitate policy processes and responsiveness of other actors to emerging challenges. This governance model refers to the growing mixing and interdependence of public and private actors, to decentralized and horizontal relationships between actors at different administrative levels, depending on each other for the making and implementation of policy.

The complexity of educational governance

Educational governance is particularly complex and multifaceted. Education systems are now characterized by multi-level governance where the links between multiple actors operating at different levels are to a certain extent fluid and open to negotiation. Innovation in education is a hampering procession of Echternach. Often, it appears that a good decision, a good plan is not sufficient for real change and innovation. A lot of factors can play a disturbing role. Sometimes, goals are updated or completely changing half way a process of change. Sometimes, schools are re-inventing the innovation.

There is need to deal with this complexity. Education councils play an important role in bringing the actors together and in trying to work towards a common understanding of complex governance issues.

Key elements for effective governance

The OECD Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI) runs the 'Governing Complex Education Systems'¹ project. This project looks at the challenges that governments face in steering complex education systems. What models of governance are effective in complex education systems? And what knowledge system is necessary to support the effective governance of complex education systems?

The key elements for effective governance below are identified based on these GCES-findings and on the input by experts and participants at the EUNEC conference in Amsterdam.

¹<https://www.oecd.org/edu/ceri/governingcomplexeducationssystemsgces.htm>

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Effective governance works through stakeholder involvement, open dialogue and building capacity.

Stakeholder involvement has to be understood in a much broader sense than it has been until now. At this particular point, education councils and teaching councils play a crucial role, offering an adequate structure for dialogue involving all stakeholders.

Involvement of stakeholders can only be effective if it contributes to a common understanding and the development of a strategic vision. Strategic thinking is a challenge in education as well as in many other public sectors. The capacity of education as a system to think strategically has to be enhanced.

Effective governance is based on accountability and trust and offers space for experimentation

Education systems face an increased emphasis on accountability of performances: need for measurable indicators, focus on evaluation and quality assurance, and demand for transparency. However, there is an inherent tension between accountability and systemic innovation, in that tightly controlled accountability mechanisms seek to minimize risk and error, both of which are fundamental elements for the innovation process.

Modern education systems must be able to build learning from failure into their functioning, both to improve pedagogy and practice and the governing of the system as a whole. Innovation in education requires careful risk-taking and the accompanying possibility of failure.

Risk-taking can be accomplished through policy experimentation. There is however, a tension between evaluating the effects of sometimes-narrow experiments, and translating the results into the broader stakeholder network, at system level.

Trust, as a learnable skill and attitude², is a key word: trust in education governance, trust in schools and teachers, and trust in the pedagogical relationship.

Effective governance focuses on processes, not on structures.

There is no 'right' system of governance. There are examples of centralized systems that perform excellently; there are examples of decentralized systems that are very weak, and vice versa. And even in decentralized systems, the national or state level remains very important in triggering and steering education reform. Rather than to focus on structures (which are highly contextualized), it is more fruitful to focus on processes (which are likely to be more universal).

² Presentation by Alvaro Almeida dos Santos at the EUNEC seminar, Amsterdam, 31 May 2016

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Effective governance requires a whole of system approach, aligning roles and balancing tensions.

It is crucial to find the right combination of mutually reinforcing dynamics that are designed to strengthen both accountability and trust. In complex systems, nothing can be done in isolation.

Effective governance harnesses evidence and research to inform policy and reform.

In complex systems, the local or regional level is expected to become change managers. Countries are struggling with the ways to build this kind of capacity. Providing centralized and decentralized decision makers and practitioners with relevant, high quality knowledge is imperative to improve the quality of decision-making and practices.

An often-overlooked area is the capacity to handle data, both for local governments and in schools. The amount of data collected from research and from school and system evaluations should not only be used for accountability purposes, but also for improvement and innovation³. In the governance model, the improvement decisions belong to the central as well as to the local level; stakeholders have to have access to the existing data, and have the ability to interpret them. They have to be able to develop the confidence and skills to analyze and evaluate the relevance of evidence whatever its provenance.

Education councils offer a platform to stakeholders and policy makers to discuss and work towards a common understanding of 'evidence' and to exchange experiences on what works in education.

Multiple accountability

Accountability is one of the key principles of effective education governance.

The last decades there has been a shift from traditional vertical mobility towards horizontal accountability. Vertical accountability is top-down and hierarchical; it enforces compliance with laws and regulations and holds school accountable for the use of resources in relation to the quality of education they provide. Horizontal accountability is directed at how schools and teachers conduct their profession (professional school accountability) and at how schools and teachers inform and involve multiple stakeholders and are accountable to them (multiple school accountability).⁴

Multiple accountability means involving pupils, parents, other education/care/welfare institutions, community, labour market.. and asking feedback on the three following questions:

³ Presentation by Serban Iosifescu at the EUNEC seminar, Amsterdam, 31 May 2016

⁴ Presentation by Edith Hooge at the EUNEC seminar, Amsterdam, 31 May 2016

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- Is the system or the school doing the right things?
- Is the system or the school doing these things well?
- How to improve and adapt?

In order to make multiple school accountability work, the following steps have to be taken:

- Identify the stakeholders;
- Build stakeholders' capacity;
- Build schools' capacity.

What does this mean for education councils?

The key elements of education governance acknowledge the role of education councils as crucial for systemic innovation in education.

Education councils can put governance at the agenda

Educations councils can start the dialogue and the exchange of views related to the governance theme. In their recommendations, it is important to pay also attention to the relation between what is recommended and the current governance structure.

Education councils can play a role in strengthening stakeholders

Education councils are the platforms par excellence where stakeholders can enter into dialogue and build capacity, share common approaches and knowledge. The extent to which this is the case, depends of course of the national/regional constellation of the council and its mission and position.

Education councils can play a role in research brokerage, translating evidence into the stakeholders' language and translating (overwhelming) data and information into policy recommendations and policy design.

Stakeholder management is not an easy task. There might be tensions between stakeholders, the strong stakeholders (the 'professionals') might dominate the weaker ('lay') stakeholders. These are delicate processes. If they are not well managed, stakeholders will feel as not taken seriously, and will not engage.

Nature of recommendations

Education councils will have to consider an even stronger emphasis on strategic recommendations, given the fact that strategic thinking is a key element for effective governance.

The PDCA-cycle needs to be reflected in the advisory agenda. General concepts and global development are constantly evolving. Education councils constantly need to evaluate the results of their actions, to interpret what happens and to judge and decide on further actions.

List of Participants

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