Monitoring quality in Norwegian ECEC

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Norwegian kindergartens

- Pedagogical institutions
- Integrated system - children (0) 1-5 years old
- A holistic view of play and learning, care and “bildung”
- Voluntary
- 50% privately owned, but publicly financed
National quality goals

• Ensuring *equity* and *high quality* in all kindergartens

• Strengthening kindergartens as *arenas* for *learning* and *development*

• Ensuring participation for all children in an *inclusive kindergarten environment*
Identified monitoring practices across countries (in SSIII)

- Child development or outcomes
- Staff performance
- Level of service quality
- Regulation compliance
- Curriculum implementation
- Parent satisfaction
- Workforce supply and working conditions
Nationally monitored in Norway

Regularly (annual report and administrative records)
• Number of places and attendance rates
• Work force supply and conditions
• Regulation compliance/level of service quality

Ad hoc (surveys)
• Parent satisfaction
• Curriculum implementation
Locally monitored in Norway

At local level (municipalities)
- Regulation compliance - inspection
- Parent satisfaction - surveys
- Service quality – inspection and surveys

In kindergartens
- Assessment of the annual plan and pedagogical work in cooperation with parents and staff
A national monitoring system – why?


- Develop a national system to monitor the development of quality in the kindergarten sector
- Compile an annual national report on the conditions in the kindergarten sector

Considered vital for policy making, for the preschool teacher education and for the professional development of kindergartens
A national monitoring system - what and who?

• Now in a preliminary phase

• The Directorate for Education and Training is working on possible designs for a more comprehensive system
  – Build on existing sources and data, as well as developing new elements
Challenge 1:

**Child outcomes**

- School: Student outcome (grades) is a central component in the monitoring system.
- Kindergarten: Process goals instead of individual learning goals.
  - “Kindergartens shall normally not assess the achievement of goals by individual children in relation to specific criteria” The Framework Plan

Challenge 2: Which quality standards?

- Few concrete regulations in the legal framework and the national quality goals are broad

- Opposition to more concrete regulation
  - professional (disagreement over standards)
  - political (strong local autonomy)

- Are we to monitor minimum standards or «good quality»?
Challenge 3: How to measure?

- Some indicators are important, but not easy to collect through the existing system (annual reports).

- Example: Group size
  - Difficult to measure in an integrated system (0-5 years).
  - Group size may vary throughout the day and within the same institution.
Challenge 4:
Not everything that counts can be counted…

• Process quality
  – Important, but difficult to measure - at least nationally and regularly (Costly, time-consuming, subjective?)
  – Better to monitor at a local level?
Usage of results – an example

• Monitoring of work force revealed need for more qualified staff

Concrete actions taken:
• Launch of a plan to recruit pre school teachers
• Targeted actions for certain regions