

GOVERNING COMPLEX EDUCATION SYSTEMS: SECOND THEMATIC CONFERENCE

Effective Local Level Governance in Education

*Lord Hotel and Conference Centre, 218 Krakowska Avenue, Warsaw 02-219, Poland
16-17 April 2012*

Background

Complexity in education systems is on the rise due to a number of intersecting trends. Parents in OECD countries have become more diverse, individualistic and highly educated. As evidence about school and student achievement has become more readily available, stakeholders have also become more demanding, pushing schools to cater for the individual needs of their children.

Partly in response to this, governments in almost all OECD countries have increased school autonomy and stimulated demand sensitivity and sometimes competition. The combination of these new governance regimes with increasingly individualised, informed and demanding populations suggests that complexity and the importance of diverse local contexts can only be expected to increase.

At the same time, ministries of education remain responsible for ensuring high quality, efficient, equitable and innovative education. This responsibility is reinforced by the increasing importance that is attached to education for building a strong knowledge economy and also by international comparisons such as PISA that increase the visibility of national performance. One of the crucial questions for OECD countries is, therefore, how to achieve national objectives for education systems under the condition of increasing complexity. The Governing Complex Education Systems project focuses on this issue by targeting two key elements: governance mechanisms and knowledge options (for further information see: www.oecd.org/edu/cei/gces).

Conference Theme

This second thematic conference will look at the local level and its role in governing complex multilevel education systems. It follows the first thematic conference of the GCES project, which focused on the role of central government and took place in The Hague on 21-22 November 2011. It is also the international conference for the Polish project “Improving Education Management Strategies at Local and Regional Levels“, funded by the Polish Operational Program Human Capital.

As regional, local, and school levels receive more autonomy, two fundamental questions must be posed:

1) What is the role of local authorities and schools in the governance process?

2) How can we ensure that local authorities and schools have the capacity to govern their local systems and that local stakeholders are holding them accountable?

The goals of the meeting will be to share challenges that local authorities and schools are facing with accountability structures and measures, as well as discuss the types of capacity building and knowledge systems that are needed on the local level. The first results of a case study on Poland for the GCES project will also be explored. Challenges for local authorities and schools in terms of designing long-term strategies will be woven throughout the two days, including in one of the parallel conference workshops. The meeting will be structured around the workshops as well as three keynotes, with participants taking part in all workshop topics.

Conference Agenda

| Monday, 16 April 2012 | |
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| Sala Lustrzana 2 (Mirror Room 2) | |
| 9:00 | Registration |
| 9:30 – 10:00 | Welcome <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Miroslav Sielatycki, Deputy Minister, Polish Ministry of National Education</i>• <i>Tracey Burns, Centre for Educational Research and Innovation, OECD</i> |
| 10:15 – 11:00 | Keynote address: “Two decades of decentralization in education governance: Lessons learned and future outlook for local stakeholders” <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Marius Busemeyer, University of Constance, Germany</i> |
| 11:00 – 11:30 | Coffee break |
| 11:30 – 12:15 | Keynote address: “Capacity building on the local level: The role of knowledge and use of research” <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Philippa Cordingley, Centre for the Use of Research and Evidence in Education, Coventry, UK</i> |
| 12:15 – 12:30 | Goals of meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Tracey Burns, OECD/CERI</i> |
| 12:30 – 13.30 | Lunch |
| 13:30 – 14:15 | GCES Case Study: <i>The introduction of external evaluation of schools in Poland</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Grzegorz Mazurkiewicz, Jagiellonian University, Kraków, Poland</i> |
| 14:15 – 15:30 | First round of workshops <p>Three parallel workshops will be organised on the themes of Accountability, Capacity Building and Strategic Thinking. All participants will participate in all three of the workshops. The workshops will focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Challenges that local authorities and schools are facing with accountability structures and measures• Capacity building and knowledge systems at the local level: the challenge of interactivity• The issues and questions that local authorities and schools run into in terms of designing long-term strategies |

Agenda continued...

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| 15:30 – 16:00 | <i>Coffee Break</i> |
| 16:00 – 17:30 | Second round of workshops |
| 19:30 | <i>Hosted Dinner at Restauracja Kryształowa (Crystal Restaurant, in the hotel)</i> |

| Tuesday, 17 April 2012 | |
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| Sala Lustrzana 2 (Mirror Room 2) | |
| 9:30 – 10:15 | Keynote address: “Differentiation of local school systems. The use of national examination systems to evaluate education processes at the local level” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Roman Dolata and Artur Pokropek, Warsaw University, Poland (TBC)</i> |
| 10:15 – 10:45 | <i>Coffee break</i> |
| 10:45 – 12:15 | Third round of workshops |
| 12:15 – 13:15 | <i>Lunch</i> |
| 13:15 – 14:30 | Debating key messages A panel debates the key issues from the seminar and next steps for the project. |
| 14:30 – 15:00 | Close of meeting |

The GCES thematic conference series

This is the second in a series of thematic conferences for the OECD/CERI project Governing Complex Educational Systems. The third conference will be organised in Autumn 2012 (location to be announced). The themes of these conferences were/will be:

- *Effective Governance from the Centre*: this conference took place on 21-22 November 2011 in The Hague, Netherlands. All conference materials, including presentations and background papers, can be found on the project website: www.oecd.org/edu/ceri/gces.
- *Effective multilevel governance* (Autumn 2012): Is there an optimal division of labour among the different levels in the system? How to ensure sufficient levels of trust for the levels to work together? How to manage conflicts between the different levels?