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# 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*



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# 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

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# 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

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# 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?

Actions in White Paper No 41 (2008–2009) *Quality in ECEC*

- 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*
- How to assess general quality of kindergartens without child outcomes? Parent satisfaction? Children’s well-being?

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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»?

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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?

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# 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