



30 September 2003

EDC-QA (18)

**PROJECT**  
**EDUCATION FOR DEMOCRATIC CITIZENSHIP :**  
**FROM POLICY TO EFFECTIVE PRACTICE THROUGH QUALITY**  
**ASSURANCE**  
**(EDC-QA PROJECT)**

*Third meeting*  
*Preddvor, Slovenia, 7 – 9 September 2003*

*Report*

## INTRODUCTION

The third meeting of the project “Education for democratic citizenship : from policy to effective practice through quality assurance (EDC-QA project)” took place in Preddvor, Slovenia on 7-9 September 2003. It was an extended meeting as it included all the researchers who prepared the national reports on quality assurance in education in their country<sup>1</sup>, experts from Sweden and England and a representative from the Standing International Conference of Inspectorates (SICI). The meeting was moderated by Michela Cecchini. The proposed programme, which was slightly adapted as the meeting proceeded, and the list of participants appear respectively in appendix 1 and 2.

The meeting objectives were to :

- continue to build up knowledge on QA in education and QA for EDC in SEE specifically and in Europe in general
- exchange views on the context, needs and possibilities for EDC QA in SEE
- develop a common understanding and framework for the preparation of the instrument for the quality assurance system for EDC (eg. objectives, structure, contents, preparation method(s) and calendar)

Working methods included presentations and plenary discussions of the results of the stocktaking of QA in SEE and the international review of QA models; presentation and plenary discussions of case studies (Sweden and UK); working group discussions

At the meeting,

- An evaluation of the research process (preparation of national reports on QA in SEE countries) took place;
- The initial findings of the stocktaking reports (regional analysis of national reports on quality assurance in the SEE countries) were presented and discussed, allowing for a clearer understanding of the current situation, potentials and obstacles in relation to quality assurance in education in SEE;
- The initial findings of the international review of QA models and case-studies from QA systems in Sweden; Scotland, UK; England and Wales, UK; Slovenia were presented and discussed, allowing for a clearer understanding of challenges and issues for preparing EDC specific quality assurance systems;
- An outline of the QA tool kits for EDC was agreed upon, including their objectives, contents and structure;
- A review of the nomination process of EDC-QA focal points in each country was carried out and country-specific strategies were developed where necessary;
- The follow-up to the national reports and the regional analysis was agreed upon, including discussions in each country between the researchers and responsible persons in the education ministries; translations and publication in paper and electronic forms;
- The next steps for the preparation of the QA tool kits for EDC were agreed upon;

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<sup>1</sup> Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia

- A concluding round on the meeting and on the prospects for the overall project took place.

This meeting report presents the main findings thematically rather than chronologically. Where appropriate, discussion results are outlined in detail in an appendix.

## **I. EVALUATION OF THE STOCKTAKING PROCESS**

An evaluative discussion of the stocktaking process – production of national reports on quality assurance in education in SEE – took place at the beginning of the meeting, for two reasons. The discussion was moderated by Bernd Baumgartl.

Firstly the Preddvor meeting corresponded to the conclusion of the stocktaking phase, particularly with the presentation of the initial findings of the regional analysis. In order to ensure the coherence with the objectives of the EDC-QA project, it was agreed at the first meeting of the project core group<sup>2</sup> to carry out an on-going evaluation, in other words to provide for quality assurance of the EDC-QA project as a whole.

Secondly the evaluation is also to be formative, i.e. comments on the first project tasks would inform the planning of the next tasks to be discussed at the Preddvor meeting.

The main results of the evaluative discussion are presented in appendix 3.

## **II. RESULTS OF STOCKTAKING : NATIONAL REPORTS AND REGIONAL ANALYSIS**

The objective of the stocktaking exercise was to provide a picture of the situation in each individual country and regionally of quality assurance in education.

In general it appears that quality assurance elements exist in different forms in different countries. Secondly, given the current situation of quality assurance of education in Southeast Europe, no system from other countries can be applied : a specific QA system for SEE needs to be developed.

The initial findings of the regional analysis presented by Cameron Harrison, particularly obstacles and assets for carrying out quality assurance in education and for EDC in Southeast Europe, are set out in appendix 4.

The ensuing discussion particularly highlighted that

- while EDC appears as a priority in policy formulations, EDC is not embedded in school practice
- while a number of countries are developing quality assurance policies, this is not shared across the region. Furthermore self-evaluation and quality

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<sup>2</sup> meeting held in Ljubljana in February 2003, cf. report, document EDC-QA(4)

assurance are far from being embedded in school practice, partly due to a centralised education system and little devolution of responsibilities

- the teaching culture appears in certain countries to be based on double standards : the standards defined at policy level and those of day to day practice. There seems to be a need for bringing the two standards closer together in terms of professional standards
- difficult working conditions (e.g. salaries, equipment, etc) tend to dominate discussions on quality in education
- empowering teachers for change, i.e. raising their awareness and motivating them for change appears to be a key issue and a first step in introducing quality assurance processes.

### III. QUALITY ASSURANCE MODELS : ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

The key objective of the Preddvor meeting was to lay the foundations for carrying out the next task of the EDC-QA project : the preparation of a quality assurance instrument specific for EDC.

Several plenary presentations of quality assurance models contributed to identifying essential issues and challenges and to building up the understanding of quality assurance in education in general and specifically for EDC. These were the presentation of :

- the Scottish and Slovenian models, by Janez Krek
- the Swedish indicators instrument BRUK<sup>3</sup>, by Maria de Age
- quality assurance indicators and mechanisms for citizenship education in England and Wales, by Liz Craft
- the findings of the international review of QA models by Janez Krek

Key issues and challenges, which emerged from the presentations, are presented thematically. They will need to be taken into account in the next steps of the project activities.

#### Constitutive elements of quality assurance

- Strategies for quality assurance include a number of elements :
  - a) e.g. in Slovenia : in-service teacher training; school inspection, external assessment of knowledge; school leadership; self evaluation,
  - b) e.g. in England and Wales : local EDC advisors, monitoring provision, inspection, research, assessment, support networks;
- It is necessary to set up all elements of a QA system and the relationship between them;

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<sup>3</sup> BRUK stands for Bedömning, Reflektion, Utveckling, Kvalitet : assessment, reflection, development, quality

- It is necessary to determine and agree on what is meant by standards and by indicators : standards may be understood as part of the curriculum and answer the question *what*; indicators are necessarily part of an evaluative instrument and answer the question *how*;
- Indicators need to be differentiated from statistics. Indicators are a tool for school development. The purpose of a system of quality indicators is to increase the quality of childcare and education (Sweden);
- The benefits of the BRUK system of indicators in Sweden are
  - a) For schools and teachers : starting point of discussions on quality,
  - b) For inspection : a common quality language exists; schools are prepared for inspection,
  - c) For both schools and inspection : it is easier to focus on a specific characteristic;
- Self-evaluation corresponds to addressing the questions: how are we doing, how do we know, what are we going to do now ? (c.f. How good is our school, Scotland). Self-evaluation is a means for quality assurance. Self-evaluation is not the final goal (Slovenia). Knowledge of how things should be and of how things are leads to development (Sweden);
- that members of school staff should be themselves responsible for designing and conducting their own self-evaluation is crucial for establishing a philosophy of accountability;

#### An instrument on EDC

- There shouldn't be any major difficulty to define EDC conceptually : EDC concepts seem to be shared, most approaches overlap in spite of a few specificities;
- The evaluation instrument to be prepared needs to make sense to schools. A holistic perspective of EDC should be adopted and include not only concepts but also school activities and the working of the school, as well as the dimensions of knowing, feeling, doing;
- All contemporary (post reform) curricula have in common that they include references to knowledge, values, skills;
- Can EDC standards and indicators be defined at the level of the SEE region ? yes, this is possible and desirable. The goal of developing a set of generic indicators should be to serve as an example. They can also help to compare instruments that will be – or already are – developed in particular countries;

#### Instrument development strategies

- It is necessary to ensure a democratic process for the preparation of the instrument;

- Self-evaluation and quality assurance must be given a place in the system. A QA system specific for EDC has to fit into existing QA institutional structures. When designing national models for quality assurance in EDC, there should be an investigation and analysis of the whole education system;
- EDC should become part of self-evaluation projects where they exist (e.g. in Slovenia);
- The EDC QA instrument can be structured around key areas, sub areas, indicators: e.g. output of a school; teaching-learning processes in a school; management and organisation in a school; the context of a school; input into a school. Examples from England and Wales, Scotland, Sweden should be used to define the key areas<sup>4</sup>;
- There are two possible approaches for designing an evaluative instrument for measuring performance :
  - a) grading, e.g. Sweden, Scotland,
  - b) description of stages of implementation, e.g. England and Wales;
- several methods for collecting evidence can be considered : e.g. ask people what they think, e.g. with questionnaires; look at documentation and resources; engage in direct observation; analyse data (c.f. How good is our school, Scotland);
- quality reports play important roles as instruments for empowerment of teachers; accountability; policy development (e.g. Sweden, England and Wales). Decisions need to be made whether reports should be confidential, internal or published;
- An instrument should include references to legal texts and/or curricula (Sweden);

#### Instrument implementation / use strategies

- Self-evaluation and QA initiatives depend on the institutional setting and support. Training and support of users (teachers, school heads) is vital : e.g. existence of EDC local authority advisors, EDC training of school heads (England and Wales);
- Should self-evaluation as a fundamental school task be made compulsory by legal requirement ? E.g. self-evaluation as a compulsory fundamental school task required by law; schools freedom on how to do it; voluntary use of a self-evaluation instrument, as e.g. in Sweden ?

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<sup>4</sup> other possible examples include models from Ireland (whole school evaluation) and Flanders (cross curricular approach)

#### IV. AN OUTLINE FOR THE EDC QA TOOL KITS

The main outcome expected from the Preddvor meeting was the discussion and agreement on an outline for the instrument for quality assurance for EDC. This objective was reached with the help of the above listed presentations, and in plenary and working group discussions.

First of all, a number of key principles and objectives were re-stated and re-endorsed :

- The fundamental objective of developing quality assurance for EDC is to make EDC actually happen in schools;

- Quality assurance is a long-term process leading to the empowerment of schools. It means moving schools towards change. It is not quality assessment or quality control. But it leads school towards accountability vis-à-vis pupils and parents and not the educational system. Quality assurance cannot be pushed from outside, it will not work if schools and governments do not accept it;

- In other words, underlying quality assurance in education and for EDC is the implementation of a strategy for change which should follow guidelines such as : do not neglect the local context; educational change should be prepared, not imposed; change needs support and pressure; educational professionals will do what they believe in; ownership over time not overnight; have a contact point, face, name;

On this basis, participants agreed that the next step of the EDC-QA project should aim to produce very practical TOOL KITS for the use of practitioners.

Finally discussions produced two specific outputs :

- an overall outline including various characteristics, the structure and reflections on the use of the tool kits,
- elements of an “EDC map”.

##### 1. outline of the EDC QA tool kits

- Developing quality assurance systems specifically for EDC focusing on schools requires

- a process of school self-evaluation on EDC,
- the integration of this school self-evaluation process and results into a quality assurance system.

It was therefore agreed to produce two separate tool kits.

- Discussions underlined that the tool kits, produced at regional level, should be generic and include contextual indications for their use in the various countries. They should be user friendly and at the same time sophisticated given the complexity of EDC. For example they could start from simple issues to be addressed and become gradually more complex;

- The target groups would be schools, inspectors, and ministries;
- The following structure of the tool kits was agreed to :

<b>TOOL KIT 1 : an evaluative instrument for school self-evaluation in EDC</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. map of EDC</li> <li>2. the evaluative instrument : quality indicators, measuring performance, collecting evidence</li> <li>3. advice for schools on how to use the instrument</li> </ol>
<b>TOOL KIT 2 : embedding the use of the EDC evaluative instrument into a QA process and system</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. advice on “after the school self-evaluation on EDC : what next ?” / preparing an individual school development programme</li> <li>2. advice for building QA systems for EDC : empowerment, support, accountability</li> </ol>

- The production of the tool kits will involve re-engineering QA mechanisms for EDC goals, i.e. looking at existing components of quality assurance systems and how to change them for EDC;
- However, the preparation of the two tool kits will differ : the preparation of tool kit 1 will rely primarily on the findings of the international review of QA models and on key elements and approaches of specific self-evaluation models. The preparation of tool kit 2 will rely heavily on the findings of the stocktaking process (national reports and regional analysis) and will most likely require additional information and analysis of existing educational systems and QA strategies;
- The importance of suitable and effective implementation strategies was particularly underlined. The following points were raised
  - teachers need to be empowered, their motivation needs to be fostered to use such tool kits : awareness of possibility to change situations, benefits of self-evaluation and quality assurance such as self-improvement, professional development;
  - the use of the tool kits by ministries requires the development of their sense of ownership of the process. Hence the need : to involve them in the EDC-QA project and in the preparation of the tool kits (see also chapter V.3. below); of having a political strategy (c.f. Council of Europe conference of Education Ministers, Athens, 10-12 November 2003);
  - EDC practitioners will be involved in the project via the national EDC-QA teams;
  - Country specific strategies for the implementation of the tool kits should be prepared;

- The use of the tool kits should be piloted in a selected number of schools. This will be carried out in the second phase of the EDC-QA project;
- The use of the tool kits should be voluntary;
- The use of the tool kits in the national education systems as a whole corresponds to a possible fourth phase of the EDC-QA project that has not been budgeted in the original funding application. Such a step would depend on the political will and political decision in each single country.

## **2. Elements of an “EDC map”**

It was agreed that when defining the EDC field, it is necessary to adopt a holistic perspective. The Council of Europe documents<sup>5</sup> provide the most suitable basis for drawing the “EDC map”. The map should be prepared as a resource for each country to identify its own priorities. It should contribute to raising awareness about EDC and its various dimensions. It should help make EDC aspects explicit and understood as part of an EDC whole.

Two working groups produced different approaches for drawing an EDC map and identifying relevant indicators. They addressed the questions : where and how would successful EDC be identified ? They were seen as complementary : Group 2 could use the conceptual framework prepared by Group 1 to check that EDC is done adequately in its identified areas.

The results of the working groups are set out in appendix 5.

## **V. NEXT STEPS**

The following next steps were discussed and agreed to.

### **1. Stocktaking reports**

Those national QA reports requiring it will have to be finalised within a fortnight (deadline 23 September 2003). Reports will be edited in close co-operation with their authors. They will be published in paper form, on a website to be created by CEPS / SEE Education Cooperation Network and possibly on a CD-ROM. The feasibility of publishing them as a compendium will be examined. Translations of the national report would be carried out via the SEE ECN or with national resources. The number of copies to be produced will be decided in due time via a consultation on the yahoo group.

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<sup>5</sup> Draft common guidelines on EDC adopted by the Ministers of education in October 2000; recommendation 2002 (12) on EDC adopted in October 2002

## **2. Preparation of the EDC QA Tool kits**

After the Preddvor meeting, a new phase of development work, and not research as such, will begin. A small drafting group will be constituted with the responsibility of preparing the tool kits on the basis of the results set out above.

The work of the drafting group will necessarily be supported by country-by-country consultations and contributions, thereby potentially involving all present researchers.

They will not only be requested for comments on drafts of the tool kits. Particularly for Tool kit 2, information on country specific institutions, needs and strategies will be necessary. Information would be requested on the basis of clear specifications and would most likely involve cooperation at national level with educational policy makers.

Researchers will be kept informed about developments concerning the drafting group.

## **3. National ownership**

All but one focal points have been nominated, or nomination strategies were discussed individually between researchers and the UNESCO representative.

There was a strong consensus that the focal points should be involved as soon as possible in the project. To reach this aim

- clear terms of references and information on the EDC QA project will be sent to the focal points. They will be given access to the yahoo group;
- researchers are invited to organise a meeting with their respective focal point to discuss their national report and possible follow-up emerging from the report and the discussion. Researchers are invited to prepare a brief note on their meeting and to share it via the yahoo group;
- a visit by UNESCO and the EDC QA coordinators and their participation in meetings to present the EDC-QA project can be organised upon request;
- organising the first meeting of the regional consortium involving all focal points will be given priority over the first meeting of national teams.

## **VI. MEETING EVALUATION**

Participants were requested to fill in an evaluation questionnaire. A final *tour de table*, took place where participants expressed their views on the prospects of the EDC-QA project. The findings will be included in a forthcoming Evaluation Brief .

## **Appendix 1** **Programme**

### **Saturday, 6 September 2003**

Arrival of participants

### **Sunday, 7 September 2003**

- 10:00 – 13:30 Question and answers on EDC-QA project for newcomers  
 Presentation of QA models by Janez Krek  
 Evaluation discussions :
1. Discussion of first evaluation brief, document EDC-QA(14)
  2. Evaluation of stocktaking process

*Lunch*

Excursion to Bled

### **Monday, 8 September 2003**

#### **Introduction**

9:00 – 9:30 Opening, presentation of participants, meeting objectives and programme

#### **Challenges and issues at stake**

9:30 – 10:30 Presentation and discussion of the regional analysis on Quality assurance in SEE by Cameron Harrison

10:30 – 11:00 *Break*

11:00 – 12:30 Initial introduction and first exchange of views on the “instrument for the quality assurance system for EDC”

Document : discussion paper EDC-QA(16)

Examples of questions to be addressed : What do we mean by QA instrument and instrument ? What would be the instrument’s objective(s) ? How would an EDC-QA instrument contribute to develop QA and make EDC practices effective in each country? .....

12:30 – 14:00 *Lunch*

#### **Quality assurance models and practices**

##### **Session I : objectives, standards, indicators (& relations to benchmarks)**

14:00 – 15:00 Panel :

1. findings from the international review on QA models by Janez Krek
2. Case study presentation : Sweden, by Maria N. de Agé, Swedish National Agency for Education

[each input : 20 minutes presentation, 10 minutes questions and answers]

15:00 – 15:45 Discussion

15:45 – 16:15 *Break*

16:15 – 17:30 Working groups : Examples of questions to be addressed : What link between EDC and good education (EDC as standard of education) ? What makes good EDC ? What will show that good EDC is being done ? How to move from standards to indicators ? What to bear in mind in relation to the EDC and QA contexts in each country ? .....

17:30 – 18.30 Reports and discussion in plenary

### **Tuesday, 9 September 2003**

#### **Quality assurance models and practices**

##### **Session 2 : structures, tools and mechanisms**

9:00 – 10:30 Panel 2 :

1. findings from the international review on QA models by Janez Krek
2. findings from the regional analysis on QA in SEE, by Cameron Harrison
3. Case study presentation : England, by Liz Craft, Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA)

[each input : 20 minutes presentation, 10 minutes questions and answers]

- 10:30 – 11:00 Discussion  
11:00 – 11:30 *Break*  
11:30 – 12:30 Working groups  
Examples of questions to be addressed : How to integrate EDC in existing QA mechanisms ? How is EDC to be assessed, evaluated, reported, improved ? Who is responsible to do what ? What support is needed for EDC QA ? What to bear in mind in relation to the EDC and QA contexts in each country ? .....
- 12:30 – 14:00 *Lunch*  
14:00 – 15:00 Reports and discussion in plenary

**Planning the preparation of the instrument for the quality assurance system of EDC**

- 15:00 – 17:30 Plenary discussion and working groups (methods to be decided according to needs and results so far)  
Document : discussion paper EDC-QA(16)  
Examples of questions to be addressed : What is the suggested outline for the instrument ? What contents and questions need to be researched and developed further ? What resources can be used for preparing the instrument ? Who will do what when ?

[16:00 – 16:30 *Break*]

**Closing**

- 17:30 – 18:00 Next steps and conclusions  
18:00 – 18:30 Evaluation of the meeting and closing

**Wednesday, 10 September 2003**

Departure of participants

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### **Appendix 3**

#### **Evaluation of stocktaking process**

##### **Successes**

- finished reports
- interest, support from education ministry
- contacts, emerging network
- emergence of holistic picture of educational system
- interest raised through interviews, promotion of idea of quality assurance
- EDC “boom”, EDC as a priority
- much learning took place

##### **Difficulties**

- tight deadline, little time
- demanding research instrument, not focused on EDC only
- need to clarify terminology, meaning of quality assurance, QA in education and / or EDC QA, QA or quality in education, QA or quality control
- scarce available data
- gap between QA on paper and in reality
- other concerns override the quality debate (S.O.S by schools)
- education ministry not available
- political partisanship of educational managers

##### **Suggestions for next steps**

- realistic timing
- simple research instrument
- build on contacts and networks
- develop country specific strategies
- develop ownership of education ministries, e.g. through presentation of national reports

**Appendix 4**  
**Initial findings of regional analysis**  
**on quality assurance in education in Southeast Europe**

1. While there is a wide range of understandings and interpretations of the key ideas of QA, there appears to be intense interest in the field in all countries, with a number explicitly stating the development of “Quality in Education” as a priority for development.
2. The slogan “Quality in Education” is not always linked to the idea of a QA system in the utterances – and, one suspects, in the minds – of those using the slogans.
3. Many reports indicate a serious lack of understanding of the essential nature and purpose of a national QA system – even on the part of those holding key positions in ministries and other responsible bodies.
4. Obstacles
  - the current form and roles of inspectorates
  - the absence of benchmarks and reliable performance data
  - lack of appropriate support and unreformed national teacher training institutions
  - current organisational practices and cultures in schools
  - current patterns of school management
  - Lack of understanding and leadership at policy level
5. Assets
  - current developments in EDC curriculum documentation
  - existing pilot programs in EDC and current explorations of QA
  - a recognition of EDC as a priority
  - a recognition of the policy/praxis gap and the need to tackle it effectively

**Appendix 5**  
**Preparing an EDC map : results of working groups**

**Working group 1**

*The EDC “mountains”*

1. rights and responsibilities
2. valuing differences
3. civic participation -> active citizenship
4. justice
5. peace

*add to valuing differences*

- integrated classes
- inclusive
- valuing religious, ethnic and other differences (eg holidays celebrations)
- fair resources distribution
- special programmes
- intercultural activities and planning
- optional courses
- student centred, individualised methods

**Working group 2**

*1) EDC areas – where to look for EDC ?*

- \* leadership and management
  - policies and documents
  - organisation
  - planning
  - coherence of EDC work through team work
  
- \* class activities
  - atmosphere / culture
  - learning outcomes
  - roles
  - methods (variety)
  - assessment / grading
  
- \* school-life
  - student council
  - community involvement (school community links)
  
- \* relationships
  - students-students
  - teachers-teachers
  - teachers-students
  - parents’ involvement
  
- \* aims of curriculum
  - general aims
  - operational / by subjects

2) *EDC characteristics for one area and its two sub areas*

Area : citizenship school life

Sub area 1 : student council

- existence of student council
- real decisions, with impact
- appropriate to situations of pupils (eg age)
- inclusive, all students involved, not only the few representatives
- students are aware of possibilities and limitations
- democratic working methods and decision-making

Sub area 2 : school – community links (pupils in the community, community into the school)

- involvement of all pupils
- voluntary
- value based (eg solidarity)
- beneficial for community, for school, for pupil(s)
- reflective / reflected