European Education Area Strategic Framework

Working Group on Schools, subgroup 'Pathways to School Success'

Assessing learners' competences: policies and practices to support successful and inclusive education

THEMATIC REPORT

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This thematic report was compiled and edited by the European Commission, Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, in cooperation with Janet Looney (European Institute of Education and Social Policy) and Gillian Kelly (Ecorys), based on the work of and validated by the Working Group on Schools – subgroup 'Pathways to School Success'

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ABOUT THIS REPORT

Under its 2021-25 mandate, the Working Group on Schools, subgroup Pathways to School Success[1] supports the implementation and follow-up of the Council Recommendation on Pathways to School Success[2], which aims to reduce underachievement and early leaving from education and training, as well as promoting well-being at school. The Working Group has been exploring **how policymakers can support effective and inclusive whole-school approaches to integrating formative and summative assessment** *(*sometimes described, respectively, as "assessment *for* learning" and "assessment *of* learning")* **of learners' key competences into teaching and learning**. The Working Group has focused its attention on the need to renew and refocus learner assessment so that it is more coherent with aims for student competence development, and to develop long-term strategies for change.

This report summarises the work carried out by the Working Group on Schools in January-June 2023 and sets out **key messages to guide policymaking at national and regional levels** on how to support effective and inclusive classroom-based formative and summative assessment of learner competences. The report builds on discussions held and expert contributions received in the Working Group plenary meetings (23-24 January and 29 June 2023), an online seminar (7-8 March 2023) and a peer-learning activity in Lisbon (24-25 May 2023). It illustrates the key messages with country and school examples shared on these occasions. These key messages are set out as broad principles that diverse education systems may adapt as appropriate for their education context, governance structure, culture and history. While the report is aimed at policymakers it may also be useful to any school education stakeholder concerned with supporting effective classroom-based assessment of learner competences. The report includes a glossary of key terms and concepts. It is supplemented by the concept note *Learners' assessment policies and practices to support inclusive education*'[3] and the bibliography[4], prepared for the Working Group, which provide the conceptual framework and an overall introduction to the topic.

This report was compiled and edited by Janet Looney (European Institute of Education and Social Policy), Gillian Kelly (Ecorys), Annalisa Cannoni and Oana Felecan (European Commission) in June 2023. It was reviewed and validated by the Working Group members.

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[1] The Working Group comprises representatives from all Member States, EFTA countries and EU candidate countries, international organisations, and stakeholder organisations. It is one of the seven Working Groups of the strategic framework for the European Education Area, whose main objective is to promote mutual learning on policy reform of national education systems to effectively help achieve the European Education Area by 2025.

[2] https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32022H1209(01)

[3] https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/expert-groups-register/core/api/front/expertGroupAddtitionalInfo/46888/download

[4] https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/expert-groups-register/core/api/front/expertGroupAddtitionalInfo/46887/download

1.   INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The **2022 Council Recommendation on Pathways to School Success** acknowledges the key role of assessment practices in supporting competence acquisition and ultimately ensuring that all learners can develop their full potential, irrespective of personal circumstances and socio-economic background. The Recommendation invites Member States to '**[p]romote assessment practices that reflect and support personal learning needs and paths**, in particular by making extensive use of formative and continuous assessment and by combining multiple digital and non-digital forms and tools … that are **inclusive, culturally responsive and participatory**'.

At the same time, **Member States are introducing new competence-based curricula**. Competence-based teaching and learning lays emphasis on applying knowledge in real life situations. This represents a significant departure from content-based approaches and may require new approaches to classroom-based assessment. **The 2018 Council Recommendation on key competences for lifelong learning**[5], defines key competences as those competences all individuals need for personal fulfilment and development, employment, social inclusion, sustainable lifestyle, and active citizenship. The Recommendation highlights that key competences include a range of knowledge, skills and attitudes that go well beyond what might be considered a traditional notion of only 'academic' knowledge as the dominant focus of school systems.

Assessment methods should capture a broad range of learning aims – i.e. not only knowledge, but also the ability to use knowledge in various contexts – as well as learners' personal and social development and well-being. Standardised tests can provide reliable measures of student progress towards learning aims across schools, but in addition, alternative assessments such as portfolios or projects are needed to capture cross-cutting competences (e.g. problem-solving and critical thinking skills, creativity, ability to cooperate, and so on). These alternative assessments can also support a stronger focus on learning processes, and not just learners' grades or class ranking.

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[5] Council Recommendation of 22 May 2018 on key competences for lifelong learning (OJ C 189, 4.6.2018, p. 1).

Box 1: European key competences for lifelong learning

Competences are defined as a combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes. The eight key competences set out in the 2018 Council Recommendation on key competences for lifelong learning are:
 	
   1. literacy competence;
   2. multilingual competence;
   3. mathematical competence and competence in science, technology and engineering;
   4. digital competence;
   5. personal, social and learning to learn competence;
   6. citizenship competence;
   7. entrepreneurship competence; and
   8. cultural awareness and expression competence.
 	
The competences are considered as equally important and may be applied in various contexts and combinations. Skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, teamwork, communication and negotiation skills, analytical skills, creativity, and intercultural skills are embedded throughout the key competences.

Source: Council of the European Union[6]

Evidence of student learning gathered in classroom assessments may be used not only to measure achievements, but also to identify and address different learners' needs and support inclusion. The Working Group has stressed the importance for assessment to be inclusive. **Inclusive assessment** takes into account the needs of all learners, ensures that all take part in the assessment procedures, and that the learning activities planned as a result are appropriate to each individual[7].

Nevertheless, in many EU countries, there are challenges in convincing educational leaders (e.g. policymakers) and other stakeholders (e.g. parents and/or learners) to accept assessment approaches that place less emphasis on learners' marks or class ranking. The Working Group has highlighted that both **mindsets and practices may need to change**.

The Working Group has also highlighted that there needs to be greater focus on **developing an effective relationship between classroom-based formative and summative assessments**, rather than seeing them as competing with each other. Research has shown that formative feedback focused on the learning process rather than the final product, and assessment practices that track progress over time, have been more effective at supporting learning than summative assessments

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[6] Council of the European Union, Council Recommendation of 22 May 2018 on key competences for lifelong learning (OJ C 189, 4.6.2018, p. 1).

[7] Kefallinou, A. and Donnelly, V. (2016). 'Implementing Inclusive Education: Issues', Bridging the Policy-Practice Gap. International Perspectives on Inclusive Education, Vol. 8, pp. 209-227. https:/ /doi.org/10.1108/S1479-363620160000008013. See also Watkins, A. (Editor) (2007) Assessment in Inclusive Settings: Key Issues for Policy and Practice. Odense, Denmark: Euro.

alone[8] and can also support inclusion and participation. Moreover, studies have found that learners' progress can be supported by them being actively involved in learning and assessing themselves and their peers, which are core aspects of effective formative assessment[9].

It should be noted that the Working Group has focused its attention on **classroom-based formative and summative assessment of learner competences** and has chosen not to reflect on the relationship between classroom-based and external summative assessments. However, the Working Group has acknowledged the influence external summative assessment can have on teaching, learning and assessment practices at classroom level as well as on equity and inclusion. A significant body of studies highlights the potential negative impact of external high-stakes assessments (e.g. school leaving and university entrance examinations) on teaching and learning (e.g. 'teaching to the test', coaching)[10][11] as well as on inclusion[12], particularly at secondary school levels[13]. At the same time, less attention has been paid to evidence that in schools and classrooms that favour classroom-based formative assessment to support learning and inclusion, results on external high-stakes assessments may be as good or better[14][15].

The purpose of the Working Group meetings, seminar, and peer-learning activity was to examine more deeply, and within specific country contexts, **how to: (i) ensure consistency across the overall vision for education, aims for student learning and well-being, and classroom-based formative and summative assessment practices; and (ii) embed formative assessment in everyday educational practices**, both at primary and secondary levels. Working Group members have been invited to discuss policies and practices to support successful and inclusive education with regard to assessment in their own country contexts. These meetings have provided the opportunity to explore the **main enablers** of implementing effective classroom assessment of learner competences in various contexts as well as the **main obstacles** and ways to address them.

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[8] Please see the concept note *Learners' assessment policies and practices to support inclusive education* for detailed summaries of research on this topic.

[9] See previous footnote.

[10] Koretz, D. (2005). 'Alignment, High Stakes, and the Inflation of Test Scores', University of California, National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing (CRESST), Los Angeles.

[11] Popham, W.J. (2002). 'Right Task, Wrong Tools', American School Board Journal, Vol. 189, No. 2, p. 18-22.

[12] Davies and Elliott, 2012. UNICEF (2012) criticises the traditional systems of assessment, stating that they 'typically utilise standardized achievement test scores as the sole indicator of success for both students and schools, and ...prioritise excellence at the expense of equity' (p. 75).

[13] Koretz, D. (2005). 'Alignment, High Stakes, and the Inflation of Test Scores', University of California, National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing (CRESST), Los Angeles.

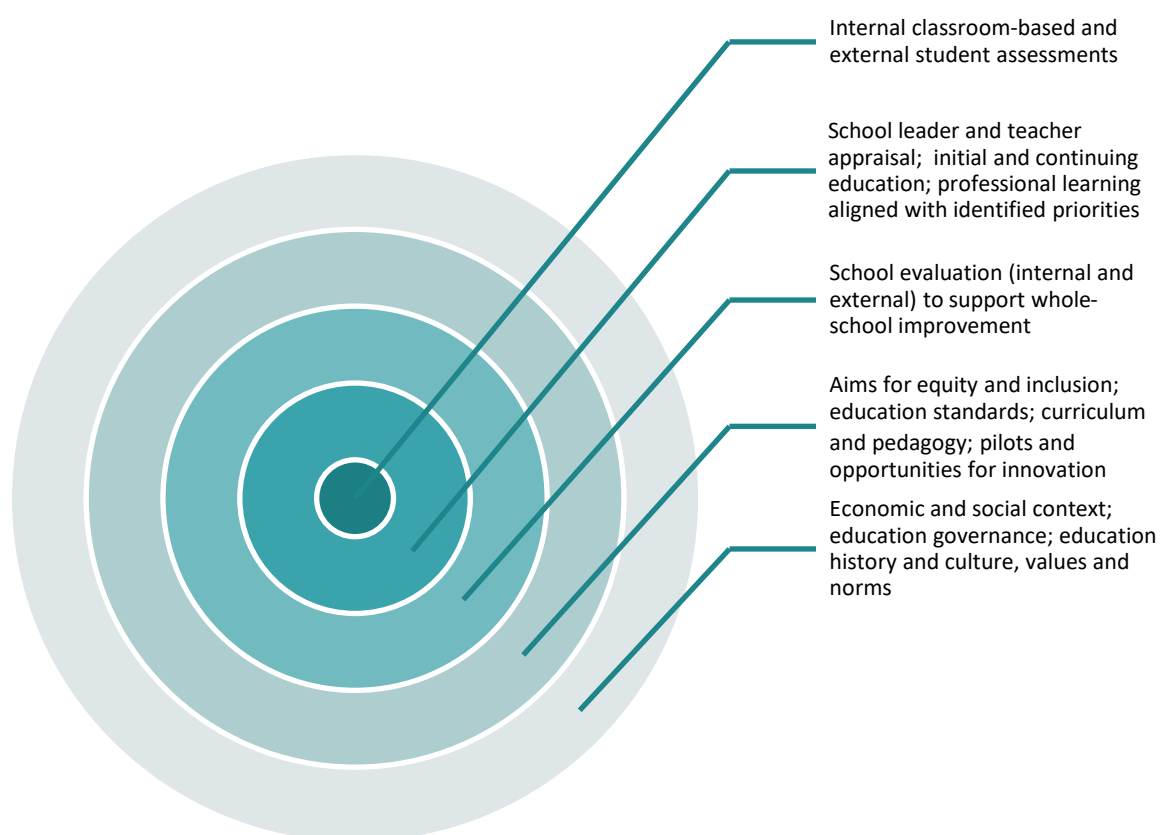[14] Kingston, N. M. and Nash, B. (2011). Formative assessment: A meta-analysis and a call for research. Educational Measurement: Issues and Practice, 30(4), 28–37.

[15] Wiliam, D., Lee, C., Harrison, C., and Black, P. J. (2004). Teachers developing assessment for learning: Impact on student achievement. Assessment in Education: Principles Policy and Practice, 11(1), 49–65.

2. EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT ECOSYSTEM

Classroom-based student assessment is part of a broader evaluation and assessment ecosystem, as illustrated in Figure 1 and explained below.

Figure 1: Key aspects of evaluation and assessment

Internal classroom-based and external student assessments

School leader and teacher appraisal; initial and continuing education; professional learning aligned with identified priorities

School evaluation (internal and external) to support whole-school improvement

Aims for equity and inclusion; education standards; curriculum and pedagogy; pilots and opportunities for innovation

Economic and social context; education governance; education history and culture, values and norms

The outer circle of Figure 1 highlights key aspects of the **broad context** for education evaluation and assessment. The economic and social context of a country have a major influence on the overall aims for education. Education governance arrangements set the vertical (top-down, bottom-up) and horizontal (civil society organisations, school networks, etc.) relationships. The education history, culture, and values and norms are the foundation on which any change strategies are developed.

Moving inwards, **standards** (intended learning outcomes) specify the knowledge, skills and attitudes students are expected to attain at various stages of their education. Broad aims for equity

and inclusion as well as for learner well-being may support more holistic, learner-centred approaches to education. The curriculum covers the objectives identified in the standards and provides flexibility to tailor teaching and learning to meet individual needs identified in classroom assessments. Pilots and opportunities for innovation are also noted here as important mechanisms for testing new approaches and supporting school-level change processes.

The next circle highlights **school-level evaluation**. While approaches to school evaluation vary across countries, most Member States have created frameworks that integrate some combination of internal and external evaluation to monitor school performance and identify areas for improvement[16]. Collaborative, school-based approaches to school evaluation can support school development and teacher professional learning.

In schools, **appraisal of teacher and school leader performance** may be implemented to support their career development, including strengths and areas for further professional learning. Broad stakeholder support for and trust in teacher professionalism and judgement are key to effective classroom-based assessments that include alternative assessments such as portfolios, learner performances, and so on.

The innermost circle highlights both **classroom-based and external student assessments**. Learner assessments, whether classroom-based (e.g. paper-based tests, portfolios, classroom dialogue, projects, etc.) or external (e.g. international assessments, assessments for school leaving, university entrance, etc.), aim to elicit evidence of student learning. Assessment is an integrated part of the teaching and learning process. On the basis of evidence gathered, teachers may make inferences about student learning and plan next steps (a formative use) and/or make decisions related to the status of the student (a summative use)[17]. A range of assessments are needed to more fully capture student competences and higher-order thinking – e.g. for problem-solving, creativity, reasoning, collaborative work, personal and social development and well-being, task performance, and so on.

While the Working Group has focused on classroom-based student assessment, it has also highlighted the importance of overall consistency across all aspects of the system – and that each component supports and strengthens the others, and helps achieve overall aims for quality and inclusive student learning (see key message 1).

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[16] European Commission (2020). Quality Assurance for school development. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.

[17] Black P. and Wiliam D. (2018) Classroom assessment and pedagogy, *Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy & Practice*, Vol. 25 No. 6, 551-575, DOI: 10.1080/0969594X.2018.1441807.

3. KEY THEMES AND COMMON CHALLENGES

Between January and June 2023, the Working Group on Schools considered the overall question of **how effective alignment of formative and summative assessments of learners' key competences can be ensured, supported and more effectively integrated into teaching and learning**.

> **Key themes that emerged during Working Group discussions were on the need to:**
>
> - ensure a balanced and coherent approach to assessing student competences;
> - ensure that approaches to student assessment are 'fit for purpose'; and
> - develop a long-term strategy to integrate new approaches to assessment across systems.

While education systems vary, at a general level, the Working Group identified a number of common **challenges** to ensuring effective and inclusive assessment of learners' key competences. These challenges are set out below.

- **Parental resistance to changes in assessment methods.** Parents frequently prefer to focus only on their children's marks, rather than on more detailed formative feedback. This may be based on their own experience in school and with knowledge-based – rather than competence-based – curricula, and the 'traditional' emphasis on marks and class rankings. Parents may be unaware of the benefits of assessments that focus on the process of learning or may protest against school efforts to reduce the frequency of marks and of summative testing for their children. They may fear negative impact on subsequent educational steps if they do not have grades or numerical marks. In some cases, parents may lack time and/or resources to devote attention to more detailed assessment reporting or they may not be fluent in the language of schooling.

- **Teacher resistance to new assessment policies and practices.** Resistance is frequently tied to practical challenges of integrating new competence-based curricula and assessments that may require more advance planning and lesson time. Teachers may face large classes, staff and resource shortages, or overloaded curricula. Teachers at secondary level may feel the need to 'teach to' high-stakes assessments, rather than broader curricular aims. Difficulties in using formative assessment to identify and address diverse learner needs are reflected in ongoing inequity of learner outcomes, including high levels of grade retention in some countries.

- **Challenges in ensuring that new assessment approaches are consistently implemented across systems**, signalling a need for support to schools and teachers so that they may further develop their assessment literacy and competences.

- **Lack of attention to supporting social-emotional learning and development, as well as to tools to assess them.** This may lead to lower levels of attention to this competence area.

- **Few opportunities for learners and other stakeholders to share their experience and views on assessment at policymaking or school and classroom levels.** Students and parents, for example, may resist the introduction of new assessment approaches that are not what they expected or what they believe supports their future learning prospects. In some cases, they may protest that formative assessment is too much work, or they may not be aware of how it can support their learning.

The next chapters present the key messages for national and regional policy development, following the three broad themes outlined above. These broad themes – or principles – can guide strategies in diverse education systems while recognising that each system will need to tailor its response to its particular context and needs. The key messages are illustrated by brief country and stakeholder examples.

4. KEY MESSAGES FOR NATIONAL AND REGIONAL POLICYMAKERS

4.1 ENSURE A BALANCED AND COHERENT APPROACH TO ASSESSING STUDENT COMPETENCES

Key messages for policymakers

- **Develop a clear, shared vision and aims for student learning, personal development and well-being, through a collective process involving a broad set of internal and external school stakeholders**. This can provide a powerful foundation for change in schools, including the development of innovative learning environments and effective approaches to assessing student competences.

- **Ensure coherence across the overall vision, curriculum, learning standards and assessment (external and classroom-based, formative and summative).** If these aspects are not coherent, it is impossible to have a clear view of student learning or develop effective strategies for learning and school improvement. New approaches to assessment may be needed as school systems introduce competence-based curricula. Keeping curriculum and assessment approaches consistent between primary and secondary education, as well as between secondary and university levels, can facilitate learner transitions.

- **Embed the core principles of inclusion, equity and participation in the design and implementation of assessment of student competences.** At classroom, school and policymaking levels, taking meaningful account of learners' opinions of assessment practices is essential.

- **Establish effective vertical communication channels and develop a shared vocabulary between and among policymakers and school leaders, teachers, parents and students (top-down/bottom-up).**

- **Encourage and facilitate horizontal communication and dialogue, across networks and in schools (school networks and teacher professional networks, teacher educator and other education stakeholder groups), and between educators, learners and their parents – to help implement new curricula and assessment methods, as well as innovation.**

As highlighted in Chapter 3, classroom-based learner assessment sits within broader frameworks setting aims for student learning, curricula, and external student assessments and school evaluations that measure attainment of learning aims. **Consistency** across these different components allows both systems and schools to track the success of student learning and strengthen inclusion, equity and participation.

As countries introduce competence-based curricula, **new approaches to assessment that more effectively measure student learning and development** are needed. In addition to standardised tests, which can provide reliable measures of student progress towards learning aims, there is a need for alternative assessments that can capture more complex, higher-order competences (e.g. critical thinking skills, creativity, ability to cooperate, and so on). Multiple assessments (both formative and summative), administered over time, can provide a more complete picture of student learning and development.

In classrooms, **assessment should also be developed as an integrated part of the learning process**. Classroom learning activities, such as dialogues and discussions or student project work, as well as tests, provide opportunities to elicit evidence of student learning and understanding. Results may be used formatively – to plan next steps for learning – or summatively – to assign marks, support decisions on promotion, and so on.

In Portugal, a 2018 reform introduced a competence-based curriculum that includes a focus on critical thinking, problem-solving, personal development and autonomy, and awareness of global problems. In addition, Decree-Law number 54/2018[18], which gives schools and teachers autonomy and curricular flexibility, recognises formative assessment as a main method for gathering evidence on student learning in classrooms. The law aims to strengthen policies that promote equal access to school, equal opportunities, and educational success. Schools have the freedom and liberty to innovate as they implement these approaches.

In Austria, several steps have been taken to develop a consistent approach to student assessment and school evaluation. Legislation and curricula have been developed to create greater parity between summative and formative assessment in schools. At primary school level, learners receive formative feedback as well as numerical grades. Recent policy developments have focused on early diagnosis of learning needs, standardised tests, and tools to support assessment (e.g. rubrics to guide formative feedback). Most importantly, the Quality Management System for Schools, including the Quality Framework for Schools, supports both school evaluation and student assessment processes.

In Belgium (French Community), the Ministry has promoted classroom-based formative assessment since 1997. The Pact for Excellence in Teaching, first introduced in 2015, highlights the effective and inclusive assessment of learners' key competences. It includes general objectives for learning, guidance standards, reference guidelines for pre-primary, primary and secondary education, and indicators to monitor implementation. Recent changes due to the Pact include a strengthened and extended curriculum for common core

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subjects (until grade 9, i.e. the 3rd year of secondary education, instead of grade 8) that focuses on polytechnics – thanks to the introduction of new subjects such as manual, technical, technological and digital training – or on education in arts and culture. Other changes include a reviewed curriculum for all common core subjects, and new pedagogical models, including a progressive approach to learning difficulties involving regular diagnostic and formative assessments as well as widespread use of differentiation. On 1 September 2023, learners in grades 1-4 started to receive periods with increased supervision – known as 'AP periods'[19]. In addition, initial teacher education will be extended from 3 to 4 years. The Pact also stimulates self-orientation and entrepreneurship among students. To better support teachers in this profound transition of their profession, the French Community developed e-classe.be, an educational resources platform that provides teachers with modern, imaginative and reliable tools, adapted to each level of education and to each subject, and in accordance with the new curriculum.

Croatia has introduced multiple initiatives to support effective and inclusive assessment of learners' key competences in schools. These include a new comprehensive curriculum for primary and secondary education, new and improved textbooks, and new legislation to support the transition towards digital education. In addition, Croatia has introduced policies to improve teachers' profiles, opportunities for professional development, work environment, and pay levels.

In France, various policies on classroom assessment have been introduced over time. These include a framework of laws introduced in 2005 , 2013 and 2019 . Assessment is included as a priority in the 2022-2025 ministerial master plan on continuous training for teachers and staff. Teachers have access to numerous guidelines published on the Eduscol website (national online platform for accompanying teachers) and in circulars, the curricula (to varying degrees, depending on the subject) and the 2013 reference framework of professional competences for teaching and education professions . These different frameworks give teachers relative freedom to conduct classroom assessment as they see fit. While this has led to positive developments in classrooms, especially in preschool and primary education, classroom assessment could be better coordinated within schools and more consistent in terms of aims, types, methods and frequency. Moreover, formative assessment remains underdeveloped in upper secondary schools, with assessment of learning taking precedence over assessment for learning. In France, formative and summative assessments are frequently confused within a single mark. To address this, a policy introduced in 2021 now requires upper secondary schools to explain their assessment approaches.

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[19] Circulaire 8936 du 01/06/2023 : Informations relatives à la mise en œuvre du tronc commun durant l'année scolaire 2023-2024 : http://enseignement.be/index.php?page=26823&do_id=9191.

Lithuania has made significant changes to its assessment system including through its 'Law on Education, Lithuania's Progress Strategy "Lithuania 2030"', a new competence-based curriculum and new assessment method. However, there have been some challenges in teachers' transition from a knowledge-based curriculum and a strong emphasis on grades. In addition, teachers do not have a shared understanding of criteria and standards used to assess competence-based learning. To address these issues, a national teacher training programme on assessment competences is being introduced (initial and continuing teacher education) to build assessment literacy and support a shift in mindset on the purposes of assessment. In addition, new tools have been introduced, including analytical and task-based rubrics, as well as an open interactive item bank with new material to support teaching, learning and assessment of competences.

The National Programme for Assessment for Learning in Norway (2010-2018) was set up to develop an assessment culture where learning is the focus. The main programme has helped teachers to build their assessment practice and has also promoted organisational learning within and across schools, enabling teachers to strengthen their own learning and build peer-learning competence to support one another in developing their own assessment practices. The Morellbakken school in Oslo is one example of how the programme has influenced long-term changes in assessment practice. The school has created a OneNote Repository for Assessment where students record all feedback received as well as their self-assessments. The school has also implemented an organisational learning approach through: (i) the professional learning community in the school; (ii) an assessment network across schools in Oslo and with universities; (iii) collaboration with pupils in the school and across schools; and (iv) collaboration with parents in the school.

In Spain, a new competence-centred curriculum was introduced in 2020 (Organic Law 3/2020 of 29 December 2020, amending Organic Law 2/2006 of 3 May 2006)[20] [21]. These laws set out the assessment features for each educational stage, and highlight the importance of assessing progress in various learning processes, competence levels and learning support strategies to be adapted for each student. Changing assessment in order to change education is one of the principles that are embraced both to achieve the current education system goals and to enable people to fully exercise their rights in a democratic society. The references used for the design of the new curriculum are the EU key

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[20] https://www.boe.es/diario_boe/txt.php?id=BOE-A-2020-17264

[21] See also Royal Decree 157/2022 of 1 March 2022, which sets out the organisation and minimum contents of primary education, https://www.boe.es/buscar/act.php?id=BOE-A-2022-3296; Royal Decree 217/2022 of 29 March 2022, which sets out the organisation and minimum contents of compulsory secondary education, https://www.boe.es/buscar/act.php?id=BOE-A-2022-4975; website of the Spanish educational system: https://educagob.educacionyfp.gob.es/lomloe/ley.html.

competences for lifelong learning, the UN Sustainable Development Goals(SDGs) and Universal Design for Learning (UDL). According to these references, it is essential for assessment to respond efficiently to the various (individual and group) situations in which students find themselves, enabling a prompt assessment so that teachers can readjust the teaching plan, if necessary, to achieve optimal learning. To this end, the new regulations promote the use of diverse assessment tools (anecdote registrations, checklists, rubrics, questionnaires, recordings, diaries) adapted to various learning situations, enabling an objective assessment of all students. The Spanish regions (Autonomous Communities) have subsequently developed new regional curriculum and assessment regulations, and teacher training. Teachers are encouraged to reflect on their assessment practices and to consider the suitability of measures taken to respond to student differentiation, the effectiveness of collaboration set up with families, and other aspects related to teaching processes that may be considered relevant – such as balance within the curriculum, organisation of time and of classroom spaces. This reflection is essential for an effective formative assessment. Teacher training has been developed to support the implementation of the new law.

Building teachers' assessment literacy and competences is essential and should be included in initial teacher education – as highlighted in the key messages.

Box 2: Building teachers' assessment literacy and competences

At the **University of Genoa**, a course on curriculum development on formative assessment for pre-service teachers was implemented in the 2022/2023 academic year. In the autumn semester, 29 pre-service primary teachers took part in the course, while in the spring semester, 100 kindergarten, 100 primary and 40 secondary pre-service teachers were involved in the course. The course consists of three main steps: (i) self-assessment: after a mid-term exam (open-ended questions), pre-service teachers have to assess their own exam following a rubric; (ii) peer assessment: after a mid-term exam (open-ended questions), pre-service teachers have to assess (blinded review) an exam of another pre-service teacher following a rubric; and (iii) group assessment: at the end of the course, pre-service teachers are split into groups of 4-5 and have to present how to design a teaching strategy in some specific situations (given randomly by the teacher); after the presentation, each group of pre-service teachers has to assess the presentation following a rubric. The course has five main objectives: (i) learning assessment strategies; (ii) understanding the complexity of assessment procedures; (iii) personal growth; (iv) professional growth; (v) increasing the motivation to use formative assessment strategies.

Four out of five pre-service teachers indicated that the course was very useful and effective to: (i) understand the complexity of assessment procedures; and (ii) increase motivation to use formative assessment strategies in their future careers. Qualitative results include the following quotes: 'these activities should be included in all courses', and 'finally, an activity that assessed not just my knowledge but my skills and competences'.

Working Group participants noted that **broad stakeholder involvement in policy development** can strengthen buy-in for change, readiness to respond to challenges of implementation, and long-term policy sustainability. Stakeholders may include learners, parents, teachers, school leaders and other school staff, as well as engaged members of the community. Both research and the Working Group have highlighted support for **learners' voices in assessment processes** as being particularly important. At the same time, Working Group members noted that these aspects are underdeveloped. At policymaking level, there is still work to do to increase stakeholder involvement in designing, implementing and evaluating policies. Stakeholders can be involved through online and in-person public consultations, and their feedback is important to inform formative evaluations of policies that are being implemented. In schools and classrooms, more attention is needed on empowering learners in assessment practices, so that they may become protagonists of their own learning.

Box 3: Student voice and assessment
Elwood and Lundy (2010)[22] argue that assessment policy and practice should support the principles and standards of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). These include the below. • **Best interests –** 'one-size-fits-all' assessment systems lead to inequality and discrimination, and are therefore not in children's best interests. Article 29 of the CRC defines education aims as including the development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential, and notes that while assessments have major consequences for learners (e.g. promotion), not all children adapt well to assessment systems. • **Non-discrimination –** teachers' perception of how an individual child or different groups of children are likely to cope with the demands of assessment can affect children's opportunities to succeed. How children experience formative assessment varies[23]. Given that formative assessment approaches have not been developed from a children's rights perspective, they may not be implemented in line with these principles. • **Participation –** Article 12 of the CRC stipulates that in matters that affect them, children have the right to have their views taken into account. Parties to the CRC must 'assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child'. This right, which is considered to be a cornerstone of the CRC[24,25], applies to policymaking as well as classroom practice.[26] Students themselves express that they want assessment that is fair, just, and clear[27].

[22] Elwood, J. and Lundy, L. (2010). Revisioning assessment through a children's rights approach: implications for policy, process and practice. *Research Papers in Education*, *25*(3), 335 — 353.

[23] Marshall, B., and M.J. Drummond (2006). How teachers engage with Assessment for Learning: Lessons from the classroom. *Research Papers in Education 21*, 133–49.

[24] Fortin, J. (2003). *Children's rights and the developing law.* 2nd ed. London: Butterworths.

[25] Freeman, M. 2000. The future of children's rights. *Children and Society* 14, no. 4: 277–93.

[26] Lundy, L. (2007). 'Voice is not enough': Conceptualising Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child for Education. *British Educational Research Journal*, *33,* (6), 927–42.

[27] 7 March 2023, Learner agency and classroom assessment. Working Group seminar, online.

4.2 ENSURE THAT STUDENT ASSESSMENT APPROACHES ARE 'FIT FOR PURPOSE'

Key messages for policymakers

- **Keep the focus on the process of student learning, development, and well-being, rather than solely on academic results.** Attention to helping all learners to develop and improve can support greater equity and inclusion.

- **Disseminate high-quality research and proven good practice in classroom-based assessment that support equity and inclusion and put learners at the centre of the assessment process, and which may inspire broader take-up across school systems.**

- **Develop assessment as an integrated part of teaching and learning processes**[28]. Development should begin in initial teacher education programmes, which should address assessment of competences to be developed in various subject areas, as well as cross-cutting competences. Support for ongoing professional learning communities and other networks, as well as continuing professional development (CPD) programmes to support teachers, is also essential.

- **Encourage teachers to use a combination of assessment approaches, including standardised and alternative assessments, administered over time to support a more well-rounded view of student progress**. Assessments that capture learners' cross-cutting competences, including for personal and social development, and for learning to learn, are an important part of the mix.

- **Support teachers as professionals.** Trust in teachers' professionalism is essential to acceptance of alternative, non-standardised assessments of learner competences. Scoring rubrics with criteria and training to support a shared understanding of educational levels can make alternative assessments more reliable and support teachers' professional development.

- **Invest in further research on effective formative assessment practices and how to adapt the next steps in classroom learning processes**. Controlled studies can provide information on the impact of various approaches and support evidence-based practice. Qualitative research with learners may also provide further insight into how different learners experience formative assessment, and this can support inclusion. Classroom-based formative assessment can be used to identify different learners' needs and tailor the next steps in teaching and learning.

- **Invest in further research into new and more effective ways to report learners' progress, and maintain trust-based relationships with parents and learners.**

There are multiple types of and purposes for learners' assessment. Whether an assessment is 'fit for purpose' depends on whether the evidence gathered supports inferences about what students know – as well as the interpretation and use of results. Classroom assessments focused on student learning outcomes need to provide sufficient detail to support decisions on next steps for teaching and learning (a formative use) or to assign marks or make decisions on promotion (a summative use). Assessments of learner competences will need to include tasks that can provide evidence of the reasoning processes and understanding.

Box 4: Developing effective classroom-based assessments
Effective classroom assessment needs to be developed as an integrated part of the teaching and learning process. Black and Wiliam (2018) argue that both formative and summative assessment need to be grounded in 'appropriate models of pedagogy and instruction, and theories of learning'.[29]
Black and Wiliam (2018)[30] highlight the importance of **coherent theories to support the development of classroom assessment.** The planning and design of classroom activities, they argue, are preceded by appropriate models of pedagogy and instruction, and theories of learning.
Teachers' lesson plans should first set out the key inferences that are important to make, and then consider the various activities that would provide evidence of student understanding.[31] Tasks need to be designed so that they help elicit evidence of student learning, and teachers may then make inferences about student understanding and the next steps for learning.
Black and Wiliam emphasise that the same assessment may be used either for formative or for summative purposes. The distinction between the two, Black and Wiliam note, is based on the types of inferences drawn. When the inferences are used to make decisions about student status or potential, the assessment is summative. When the inferences are used to make decisions about next steps in learning instruction, the assessment is formative[32].

Working Group members highlighted that there is a need to shift various stakeholders' mindsets from thinking that assessments are primarily intended to assign marks towards a view that

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[29] Black P. and Wiliam D. (2018) Classroom assessment and pedagogy, *Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy & Practice*, Vol. 25 No. 6, 551-575, DOI: 10.1080/0969594X.2018.1441807.

[30] Black, P. and Wiliam, D. (1998). Assessment and Classroom Learning. Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy and Practice, Vol. 5, No. 1, 7-74.

[31] Mislevy, R.J., L.S. Steinberg, F.J. Breyer, R.G. Almond and L. Johnson (1998), A Cognitive Task Analysis, with Implications for Designing A Simulation- Based Performance Assessment, University of California, National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing (CRESST), Los Angeles.

[32] Black, P. and Wiliam D. (2018). Op. cit.

assessments should support learning. Sharing evidence on the benefits of formative assessment in helping all learners to improve and achieve results may help influence views.

As an example of the importance of the process of learning, Hattie and Clarke (2018) address the importance of **building a 'feedback culture' in classrooms**, comprised of several key aspects.

- Feedback sits within a formative assessment framework.

- Motivation, curiosity and willingness to learn and deepen current understanding are the aims for all learners (i.e. the skill, will and thrill).

- Embedded challenge mindsets, mindframes, metacognition and deliberate practice, spaced over time, are effective.

- Normalising and celebration of error is key to new learning.

- Equity in learning is maximised through mixed ability grouping.

- Feedback needs to be task-related rather than ego-related.

- The development of a desire to learn needs to be privileged, and there needs to be an absence of external rewards that act as negative feedback.

Source: Hattie and Clarke (p. 8)[33]

In classrooms, new approaches to assessment are also needed to balance dual goals of summative and formative assessment. Multiple forms of assessment, administered over time, can provide a more well-rounded view of learner progress and development. Assessments to support tracking of personal (including social and emotional) competences are also needed.

Malta has introduced several new policies and frameworks to support effective classroom formative assessment. These include a framework setting out learning outcomes and encouraging teachers to use a range of assessment procedures when assessing students. A new system supports weighting of competence-based assessments. Education psychologists conduct assessments of students' social-emotional learning.

In **Slovenia**, for more than a decade, the Zavod Republike Slovenije za šolstvo (National Educational Institute) has been implementing various projects to support and strengthen formative and summative assessment within the mandatory curricula. Slovenia is currently preparing the National Programme of Education until 2033. A working group plans to develop guidelines and strategic goals for education, focusing also on learning, teaching, knowledge assessment and grading to support inclusion.

Stakeholders in **Sweden** pay significant attention to learner grades as a basis for eligibility and selection to upper secondary school and higher education. The curriculum stipulates that teachers should monitor pupils' progress through continuous assessment, but such practices, including formative assessment, are not always sufficiently implemented in practice. A number of recent policies have been implemented in Sweden. These include digitalising

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[33] Hattie, J. and Clarke, S. (2018). Visible Learning: Feedback. Routledge.

national tests and assessment support, introducing the reading-writing-mathematics guarantee, changing 'knowledge requirements' to grading criteria, and placing more focus on subject grades, which provides more time for teachers and students before the final grades are set. Some of these policies can have a positive impact on formative assessment. For example, the reading-writing-mathematics guarantee provides for pupils' knowledge in Swedish and mathematics to be assessed in preschool class and year 1 by using national assessment materials. If the teacher sees that a pupil is unlikely to achieve the requirements, a special assessment must be carried out and extra support must be provided, and followed up on, if necessary.

The **Brussels-based [Singelijn school](#)**, established in 2014, is an alternative, inclusive school. There are many learners with special educational needs, and they are integrated into mainstream classes. The school highlights the importance of supporting children as actors of their own lives and learning. Assessments are portfolio-based. Learners are actively involved in the assessment process so that they learn to take responsibility for their own progress and development. A range of assessment approaches are used to diagnose learner needs and track progress over time. Within classes, assessments are embedded in classroom discussions, group work, and so on. The school never ranks the children and works with each child according to their own rhythm based on their own capacity. When learners grasp new ideas quickly, they then help the other children. Children who are experiencing more difficulties may have one-on-one sessions with teachers to ensure they meet learning goals.

Steiner Waldorf schools have taken an in-depth look at the core curriculum and are now developing digital tools to support schools, particularly to support formative assessment. The project has paid particular attention to children's learning journey in various subjects, and has developed learning descriptors. The project has led to the development of learning opportunities (and not just learning outcomes) in all subjects across the curriculum, and these are embedded in a digital tool. Teachers may choose their content and identify the level of skills and competences that goes along with those.

Instituto de Educación Secundaria Alfonso II in Oviedo (Spain) has introduced a dialogic approach to teaching, learning and assessment as a way to address the needs of learners who are falling behind. The school has created interactive groups to discuss learner progress (with data collection sheets) to accelerate learning. Quantitative results showed that this dialogic approach improved coexistence, reduced grade retention rates, and improved academic results. There is also evidence of improved well-being, and perceptions from mothers and students that the approach was working very well.

Learning to Be[34] (2017-2020), an Erasmus+ policy experimentation, developed a toolkit to assess social-emotional learning. Important outcomes of the project were a toolkit of methods to support social and emotional learning practices in the classroom, and a range of assessment tools, including a classroom observation sheet, a progress monitoring card, and

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[34] [Search | Erasmus+ (europa.eu)](#)

instruments for teachers and administrative staff. Students' self-observation and self-assessment of their social-emotional development is also central to the approach[36].

The **Inclusive School Group of the Academy of Dijon** in France supports teachers in developing and adapting assessment for learners with special education needs and thus in supporting equity. Teachers are provided with access to webinars, training, tools and articles on assessment. For example, at **Collège Marcel Aymé**, many classroom materials for dyslexic students have been adapted with the help of a speech therapist. As a result, the pass rate for national assessments went from 13% to 33%. A charter allowing teachers to propose ideas for adaptation was also provided, to illustrate how additional learning materials for students can be adapted. At the **lycée professionnel Pierre Bérégovoy,** assessment of learner progress takes into account both the expected and the attained learning goals (*attestation de compétences* – skills certificate). Assessment tools are shared with learners to help them understand the principles of the assessment. The aim is to support learner success with diverse and adaptable methods for teaching, learning and assessment.

Working Group members noted significant resistance of stakeholders to decreasing the frequency of summative assessments and marks and increasing formative feedback to learners. This is especially the case at secondary school levels, where there is pressure to prepare learners for high-stakes school leaving and university entrance examinations.

Nevertheless, there is evidence that formative assessment can improve outcomes in summative test (e.g. Kingston et al., in a randomised large-scale control trial, found that formative assessment is the most effective approach to improving learner results on high-stakes tests)[36]. At the same time, teacher effectiveness in responding to the learning needs identified in assessments is essential to good outcomes.

Further quantitative and qualitative research on classroom assessment practices and their impact is needed. At the same time, it is also important to remember that it may not be possible to generalise research results. Classroom practices ultimately need to be based on general principles, and adapted to teacher and learner preferences and needs.

4.3 DEVELOP A LONG-TERM STRATEGY TO INTEGRATE NEW APPROACHES ACROSS SYSTEMS

Key messages for policymakers

- **Ensure that long-term change strategies follow the overall vision for education (key message 1) and draw up a clear plan for implementing and evaluating change processes and their impact.** Change strategies need to build on existing national and regional education contexts and cultures.

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[35] https://www.seuinstitutas.lt/SEUI-projektai/
[36] Kingston, N. M. and Nash, B. (2011). Op. cit.

- **Take a gradual, strategic approach to introducing changes over time and piloting and refining new assessment approaches in selected schools and school networks, before introducing system-wide change.** Changes may also be introduced for a certain primary school cohort and developed in later grades as they progress through school.

- **Support school leaders (school heads, department heads and other leaders) to steer whole-school change, involving all school staff, learners, parents, and other stakeholders in the introduction of new approaches to assessing learners' competences.** Leadership of collaborative school evaluation (internal and external) and school development plans is essential to effective change processes.

- **Guarantee teachers autonomy in integrating new approaches to assessment and provide access to relevant professional learning opportunities as well as to practical guidelines, tools and examples of good practice.** Teachers' involvement in change processes and confidence in their ability to integrate new methods are essential to long-term change.

- **Ensure that teacher certification examinations, professional standards, teacher appraisal and school evaluations all require teachers to demonstrate competences related to classroom-based summative and formative assessment of learner competences**. Consistent emphasis on the need for teachers to develop their capacity to assess learner competences will also provide incentives for teacher educators (both in ITE and in CPD) to include assessment as a significant area for study and as part of their own teaching and learning approaches.

Long-term strategies to introduce new approaches to assessment of learner competences need to build on existing systems, and to take account of why and how different approaches have been developed, and the barriers to and enablers of change.

Working Group members highlighted the importance of strategies to influence mindsets over time. Leadership is essential to changing ideas about the role of assessment of and for learning. At school level, a whole-school approach can be more effective to supporting change in individual classrooms. Teachers may collaborate as they introduce new approaches. Learners may also have opportunities to voice their views in classrooms and at school level. School-level peers may influence mindsets among teachers, learners, and parents.

The Working Group members also highlighted various aspects to be considered in developing an effective strategy, including:

- consistency with curricular aims;
- consistency with collaborative school evaluation and school-based development;
- attention to school learning environments;
- providing guidelines and frameworks to support consistency across schools;

- outreach to and involvement of teachers, parents and learners on proposed changes to classroom assessment and to develop a common understanding and ownership of changes;
- investment in teacher initial and continuing education and professional learning communities in schools and across networks;
- sharing of examples of good practice;
- sharing of evidence on impact of various assessment methods; and
- involving parents in formative assessment by sharing feedback on online platforms.

Working Group members also discussed the importance of **supporting teachers in acquiring the skills, attitudes and confidence they need** to navigate various assessment methods. Indeed, good assessment practices require good teacher training, so that teachers are able to effectively integrate assessment into teaching and learning (e.g. dialogue-based approaches, inquiry-based learning, support for learner self-assessment, and so on). Well-trained teachers can maximise the benefits of various assessment approaches.

Throughout Working Group meetings, members underlined that formative assessment needs to be tied to theories of learning and integrated into the planning and design of lessons and the classroom culture. The relationship between teachers and students, and the use of digital tools to support assessment also need to be considered.

Working Group members shared various steps they have taken to support long-term change.

In 2018, schools in **Portugal** gained greater autonomy and flexibility in designing their curricula. One of the aims was to question and revise the goals, methods and tools for assessment. After some years, the perception arose that upper secondary schools were more focused on summative assessment, offering some resistance to the use of formative assessment, which they saw as taking away time from preparation for final exams. To address this, in external assessment, hybrid formats were introduced (some interdependent subjects, and some real hybrid items), with formative assessment.

In Portugal, formative assessment is still not seen as having the same value as summative assessment, and there are signs that more work is needed to support inclusion. To address these challenges, the Directorate-General for Education launched the MAIA Project (Projeto MAIA – National Project in Training, Supervision and Research in Classroom Assessment) in 2019 to help teachers improve their assessment practices through continuous training. The project is a capacity-building programme at national level in collaboration with teachers' training centres, school leaders and teachers to create conditions for pedagogical evaluation integrated into the curriculum development processes. It aims to update and clarify concepts, and to stimulate reflection, change, and exchange of practices, among other things.

In **Czechia**, some schools, mainly at the primary level, have implemented alternative forms of assessment and gained very good results. To increase take-up, an ambitious policy

framework for 2020-2030 has been introduced. The draft long-term plan for 2023–2027[37] will be submitted to the government for approval in September 2023. Its proposals are set out below.

- Changes in the assessment of pupils in school reports in the 1st, 2nd and 3rd year of primary school (i.e. cancelling traditional grades and replacing them by verbal or criterion-referenced assessment). These changes are proposed to be implemented in 2024-2025, by amending the Education Act and providing methodological support for teachers. The specific forms of support have not been decided yet. However, such support, as included in the draft Long-Term Plan, may include methodological guidelines, training as part of the continuing professional development (CPD) for teachers, webinars, etc. A proposal for changes in assessments in subsequent years of primary and lower secondary education is also expected to be implemented over 2024-2025.

- Support to formative feedback. This support is proposed to be implemented in 2024-2027, through a formative assessment methodology, and an educational offer on formative assessment. As highlighted above, the specific forms of support have not been decided yet, but as stipulated in the draft Long-Term Plan, these are likely to include methodological guidelines. The overall aim is to ensure that at least 25% of teachers in the 1st and 2nd year of elementary education effectively use formative assessment as a constructive feedback tool (at least 50% by 2030).

In **Hungary**, recent policy developments include the new national core curriculum introduced in 2020, which calls for new ways of assessing students in some subjects. The assessment rules and the evaluation system for primary and secondary schools are provided in Act CXC of 2011 on National Public Education and also in Government Decree No. 20/2012 (VIII. 31.) EMMI on the operation of educational institutions and on the use of names of public educational institutions. Some rules are set out below.

- Schools need to include in their local curriculum: (i) how they monitor and evaluate students' written, oral and practical work; (ii) diagnostic, summative and developmental forms (formative) of assessment; and (iii) the principles for assessing behaviour and performance.

- Students' marks are determined based on their mid-year performance and merit marks or their performance in the assessment examination. Parents must be kept informed of students' marks.

- Students are given grades from 1 (insufficient) to 5 (excellent).

- A written grade / qualitative assessment (i.e. no numerical grade given at this time) must be given to first graders at the end of the semester and at the end of the year, and to second

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[37] The 2023–2027 Long-Term Plan for Education and the Development of the Education System of the Czech Republic 2023–2027 will define key measures for the second phase of implementation of the Strategy of Education Policy of the Czech Republic until 2030 and beyond.

graders at the end of the semester. This written grade / qualitative assessment must indicate whether the student has achieved excellent, good or satisfactory results or needs to catch up.

Therefore, in the first and second grade, students receive formative feedback about the skills and competences they have acquired so far.

In **Ireland**, the most important recent policy development in relation to assessment has been the launch of the Junior Cycle Framework in lower secondary schools in 2015. This provides schools with a flexible framework to enable them to design programmes of learning that are suited to the needs of their junior cycle students and to the particular context of the school. The framework outlines the curriculum and assessment opportunities that achieve a balance between learning subject knowledge and developing a wide range of skills and thinking abilities. The dual approach reduces the focus on one externally assessed examination and increases the prominence of classroom-based assessment and formative assessment. Nevertheless, there is still a strong emphasis on summative assessment in the state examination in Senior Cycle (Upper Secondary). Longer-term strategies will need to actively promote and support formative assessment at classroom level and inform parents on the value of formative assessment – including its potential to lead to better outcomes on summative examinations.

5.   CONCLUSION

This report has brought together the results of the work of the **Working Group on Schools (Subgroup 'Pathways to School Success')** on **how policymakers can support effective and inclusive whole-school approaches to integrating formative and summative assessment of learners' key competences into teaching and learning.**

The Working Group has highlighted the importance of consistent, system-wide approaches to learner assessment (external and classroom-based assessments), teacher and school leader appraisal, and school evaluation (external and internal). These approaches should also be coherent with the overall aims for education, including aims for equity and inclusion, and with standards and competence-based curricula.

The key messages developed by the group have been set out as broad principles that may be adapted by diverse education systems as appropriate for their own contexts. To illustrate the messages, examples of national/regional policies introducing new approaches to classroom-based assessment of learner competences have been shared, along with school-level initiatives.

Challenges to changing classroom-based assessment have also been highlighted, including resistance of parents and teachers to changes in assessment methods, for various reasons; challenges in supporting system-wide change to teachers' assessment practices; lack of attention to assessment to support learners' personal development and well-being; and too few opportunities for learners and other stakeholders to share their experience and views on assessment policies and practices. Each of these challenges merits further attention.

While beyond the scope of this report, other aspects have also been raised as areas for further study: persistent tensions with external high-stakes assessments; the importance of deepening trust in teachers' professional judgement and of improving the reliability of alternative, teacher-scored assessments of learner competences; and implications of generative artificial intelligence for student assessment.

These concerns all resonate with longer-term trends in learner assessment as highlighted by stakeholders across Europe, including: the ongoing shift towards competence-oriented education and assessment; changes in the labour market and the need for learners to develop new competences throughout their lives; digitalisation of education and technological innovations; growing socio-economic inequality in Europe and increasing diversity in schools and classrooms due to mobility and migration, and a need for more inclusive assessment practices; and an ongoing focus on developing standards-based curricula and strengthening evidence-based policymaking[38].

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[38] European Commission, Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, *Prospective report on the future of assessment in primary and secondary education : executive summary*, Publications Office, 2020, https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2766/527561.

The Working Group's approach to peer learning across diverse countries and stakeholder groups creates opportunities to explore research evidence as well as to learn from others' experience in promoting change across complex education systems related to these challenges and trends. Sharing of experience and ideas may also inspire new and potentially innovative strategies in the different contexts.

Annex 1: Glossary

Alternative approaches to assessment – Non-standardised assessments, which may include performance-based assessments with open-ended prompts, exercises requiring written explanation, carrying out procedures, designing investigations, compiling a portfolio, or making a performance, such as a speech or a musical recital. While standardised assessments are machine-scored, performance-based assessments are typically scored by human raters[39]. Alternative assessments may capture complex performances and are seen as an effective way to assess learner competences[40].

Competence-based curriculum – 'A curriculum that emphasizes the complex outcomes of a learning process (i.e. knowledge, skills and attitudes to be applied by learners) rather than mainly focusing on what learners are expected to learn about in terms of traditionally-defined subject content. In principle such a curriculum is learner-centred and adaptive to the changing needs of students, teachers and society. It implies that learning activities and environments are chosen so that learners can acquire and apply the knowledge, skills and attitudes to situations they encounter in everyday life. Competency-based curricula are usually designed around a set of key competences/competencies that can be cross-curricular and/or subject-bound.'[41]

Diagnostic assessment – 'Assessment aimed at identifying a learner's strengths and weaknesses with a view to taking necessary action to enhance learning. Also used prior to the teaching and learning process to appraise the learner's readiness or level of achievement.'[42]

Formative assessment – '[T]hose activities undertaken by teachers, and by their students in assessing themselves [that is, students' assessment of their own work as well as their peers], which provide information to be used as feedback to modify the teaching and learning activities in which they are involved. Such assessment becomes "formative assessment" when the evidence is actually used to adapt the teaching work to meet the needs.'[43] Formative assessment may be best seen as a conceptual approach – a dynamic process that teachers adapt according to conditions and needs[44]. Research on formative assessment has also highlighted the importance of timely and specific teacher or peer feedback that provides as much or as little information as the learner needs to advance to next steps on its own[45].

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[39] Looney, J. (2011), 'Integrating Formative and Summative Assessment: Progress Toward a Seamless System?', *OECD Education Working Papers*, No. 58, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://doi.org/10.1787/5kghx3kbl734-en.

[40] Looney, J. (2011), 'Alignment in Complex Education Systems: Achieving Balance and Coherence', *OECD Education Working Papers*, No. 64, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://doi.org/10.1787/5kg3vg5lx8r8-en.

[41] https://www.ibe.unesco.org/fr/node/12065

[42] https://www.ibe.unesco.org/fr/node/12182

[43] Black, P. and Wiliam, D. (2001). Inside the Black Box Raising Standards Through Classroom Assessment, British Educational Research Association.

[44] Clark, I. (2010). 'Formative Assessment: There is nothing so practical as a good theory', Australian Journal of Education. Vol. 54, No. 3, pp. 341-352.

[45] Black, P. and Wiliam, D. (2001). Op. cit.

High-stakes assessments – '[A]ssessments with important consequences for test takers, on the basis of their performance. Passing has important benefits, such as progressing to a higher grade, a high school diploma, a scholarship, entrance into the labor market or getting a license to practice a profession. Failing also has consequences, such as being forced to take remedial classes or not being able to practice a profession. Examples of high-stakes tests include college entrance examinations, high/secondary school exit examinations, and professional licensing examinations.'[46]

Inclusive assessment – '[A]ssessment that takes into account the needs of all learners, ensuring that they all take part in the assessment procedures and that the learning activities planned as a result are appropriate to each individual.'[47] Inclusive assessment is not a new or different set of techniques, but a different way of using assessment to support teaching and learning for all learners.

Ipsative assessment – an example of formative assessment, that measures learners' progress against their own prior performance, and not in comparison to the rest of the cohort or performance standards[48]. Ipsative assessment is preferred for measuring learners' social-emotional development[49] and cross-cutting competences such as creativity[50].

Key competences – '[T]hose [competences] which all individuals need for personal fulfilment and development, employability, social inclusion, sustainable lifestyle, successful life in peaceful societies, health-conscious life management and active citizenship'.. They are composed of "knowledge, skills and attitudes" and go beyond the notion of only (academic) "knowledge".[51]'

Standardised assessments – '[T]ests that are administered and scored under uniform (standardized) conditions.'[52] **Standardised tests** are typically administered as large-scale assessments. Most standardised tests consist of close-ended questions (multiple choice and true or false questions). Standardised tests allow educators to compare class and student progress across a wide geographical area and are often thought to be the most fair and objective format of large-scale testing due to the consistency in questions asked and grading style[53].

Summative assessment - Summative assessments, also referred to as 'assessment *of* learning', are usually defined as cumulative assessments that intend to capture what a student has learned, or

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[46] https://learningportal.iiep.unesco.org/en/glossary/high-stake-assessment

[47] Kefallinou, A. and Donnelly, V. (2016). 'Implementing Inclusive Education: Issues', *Bridging the Policy-Practice Gap. International Perspectives on Inclusive Education,* Vol. 8, pp. 209-227. https://doi.org/10.1108/S1479-363620160000008013.

[48] https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED614089.pdf

[49] A formative, inclusive, whole school approach to the assessment of Social and Emotional Education in the EU - NESET (nesetweb.eu).

[50] Lucas, B., Claxton, G. and E. Spencer, E. (2013) *Progression in student creativity in school: first steps towards new forms of formative assessments.* OECD Education Working Paper No. 86 (Paris, OECD).

[51] Council Recommendation of 22 May 2018 on key competences for lifelong learning.

[52] https://www.ibe.unesco.org/fr/node/12141

[53] https://tophat.com/glossary/s/standardized-test/

the quality of learning, and judge performance against some standards[54]. Summative assessment methods rely on an extrinsic motivation for students, represented by marks, transcripts and diplomas. Summative assessments are generally used to get a final judgment of how much learning has taken place — that is, of how much a student knows and has learned. They are built on strategies to motivate students, provide information about student performance, serve to select or group students, and certify learning and award qualifications.

Well-being (also used interchangeably with Positive mental health): a dynamic state where children and young people realise their own abilities, learn to cope with common stresses of life, to develop a positive sense of identity and the ability to manage thoughts and emotions, to build social relationships, and to acquire an education that fosters active citizenship (WHO, 2018)

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[54] ixson, D. D.; Worrell, F. C. (2016). 'Formative and Summative Assessment in the Classroom'. *Theory Into Practice, 55(2)*, pp. 153–159. https://doi.org/10.1080/00405841.2016.1148989

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