

Evidence-based policy making on school leadership: overcoming complexity and context-specificity

The European Policy Network on School Leadership experience

The EIPPEE Conference 2014
Workshop 5 – KNOWLEDGE BROKERAGE:
LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCE

Oslo, Norway- May 15, 2014

By Kathy Kikis-Papadakis
kathy@schoolleadership.eu



**European Policy Network on
School Leadership**

<http://www.schoolleadership.eu>

What is EPNoSL

- A network of more than 42 institutions aiming to the establishment of knowledge-sharing and close cooperation in the development and implementation of school leadership policies across EU.
- It engages in in-depth discussions and action more than 13 Ministries of Education, research and academic institutions, associations, and representatives of a wide range of other stakeholder groups in the field of school leadership.

EPNoSL as a mediator between research, policy making and school leadership practice: Challenges

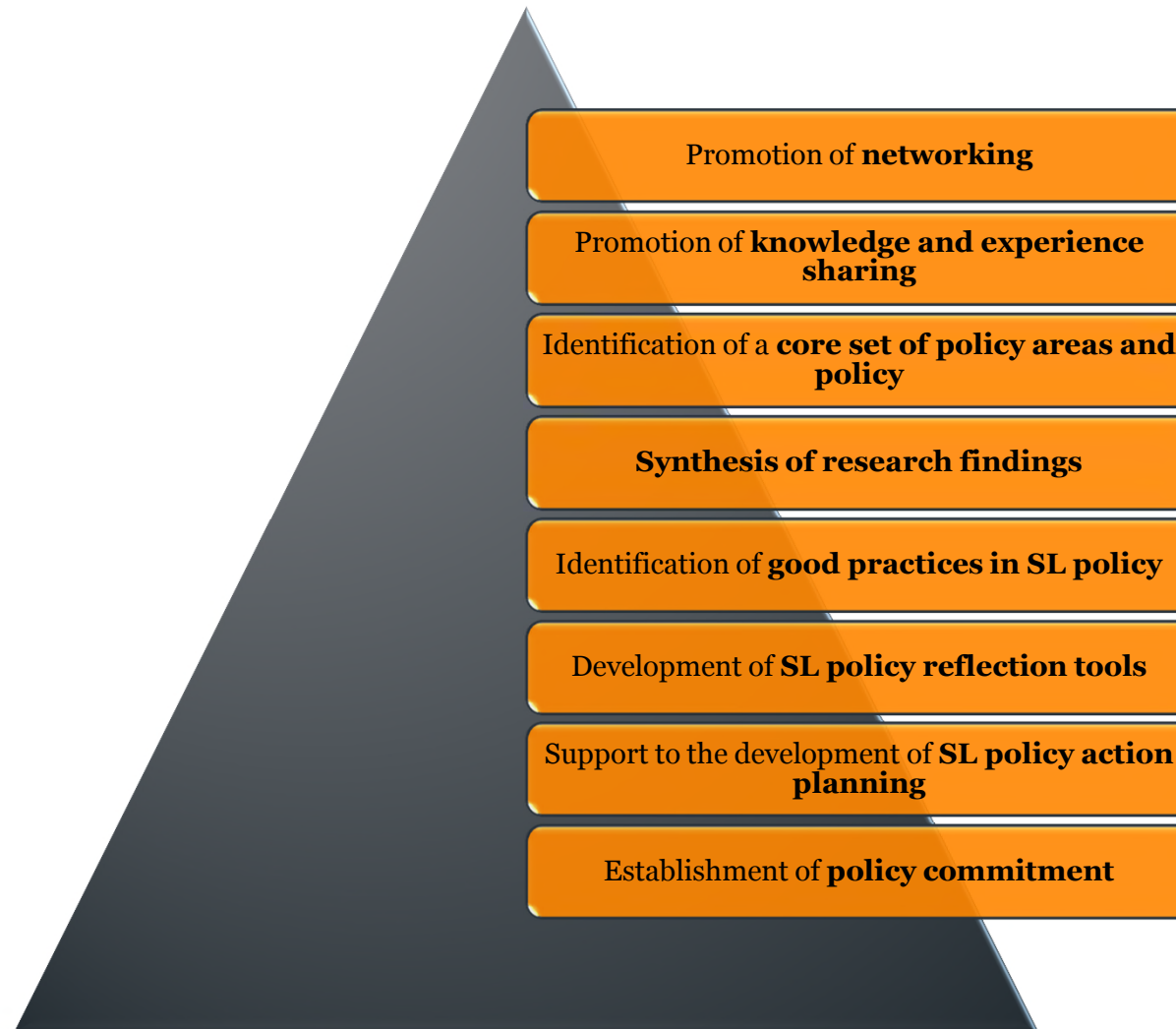
- Challenges faced by EPNoSL to mediate between research/academic communities, policy making communities and school communities at EU-wide level



EPNoSL as a mediator between research, policy making and school leadership practice: Challenges

- a) **Conceptual diversity**
 - Different conceptualizations of what school leadership means – not clear understanding of the difference between school manager and school leader (across school traditions and between different stakeholders)
 - Wide differences in expectations from school leaders (what means to be a good school leader)
- b) **Organizational diversity**
 - Wide differences in the organization of school governance (from highly centralized school governance to highly decentralized)
- c) **Diversity in the professional development and capacities of school leaders**
 - Wide differences in the preparation and professional development of school leaders (from just short-term induction/in-service programmes to demanding compulsory programmes lasting 1-2 years)
 - Wide differences in the procedures and criteria for the selection of school leaders.
- d) **Research**
 - Lack of an extensive body of international research on school leadership in Europe. So far, such research is only quantitative in nature and comes mainly from OECD (e.g. PISA, TALIS, INES Survey on Locus of Decision Making). Some comparative data have also been made available by the Eurydice Network.
 - Wide variation in the SL research available between EU countries and regions. Extensive body of quantitative and qualitative research mainly in the Nordic and Anglo-Saxon regions, much smaller body of research in southern and eastern Europe.
 - Not straightforward/complex relationship between school leadership and major school goals such as learning achievement and equity in learning opportunities, treatment and outcomes.
- e) **Policy making**
 - Great variability in the emphasis that is placed on school leadership policies. In some EU countries, such as Sweden and Austria, SL is high up in the educational policy agenda for more than a decade now, in others the interest in SL has faded out because of other education policies considered as more urgent, while in others SL is only beginning to become part of the policy agenda or target of education reforms.
- f) **Diversity at the level of school leadership actual practices.**

EPNoSL as a mediator between research, policy making and school leadership practice: Structures, tools, mechanisms



Indicators on School Leadership Policy Development

- School Autonomy
 - a) the 2011 OECD-INES survey on locus of decision making
 - b) OECD's PISA composite indexes of school responsibility for resource allocation and for curriculum and assessment
 - c) EURYDICE indicators on decision-making levels
 - d) OECD's PISA school questionnaire statements can be utilised to develop indicators on the degree to which schools make use of the autonomy they have to organise instruction
 - e) OECD's teaching and learning international survey (TALIS) questionnaire for principals (2013): share of time devoted to different types of tasks
 - f) OECD's teaching and learning international survey (TALIS) questionnaire for teachers (2008): hours devoted to teaching and planning or preparation of lessons
- Distributed Leadership
 - a) EURYDICE indicators on distributed leadership
 - b) OECD's teaching and learning international survey (TALIS) questionnaire for teachers on distributed leadership
 - c) OECD-PISA school principals questionnaire on distributed leadership
 - d) OECD's teaching and learning international survey (TALIS) questionnaire for principals on distributed leadership (2013)

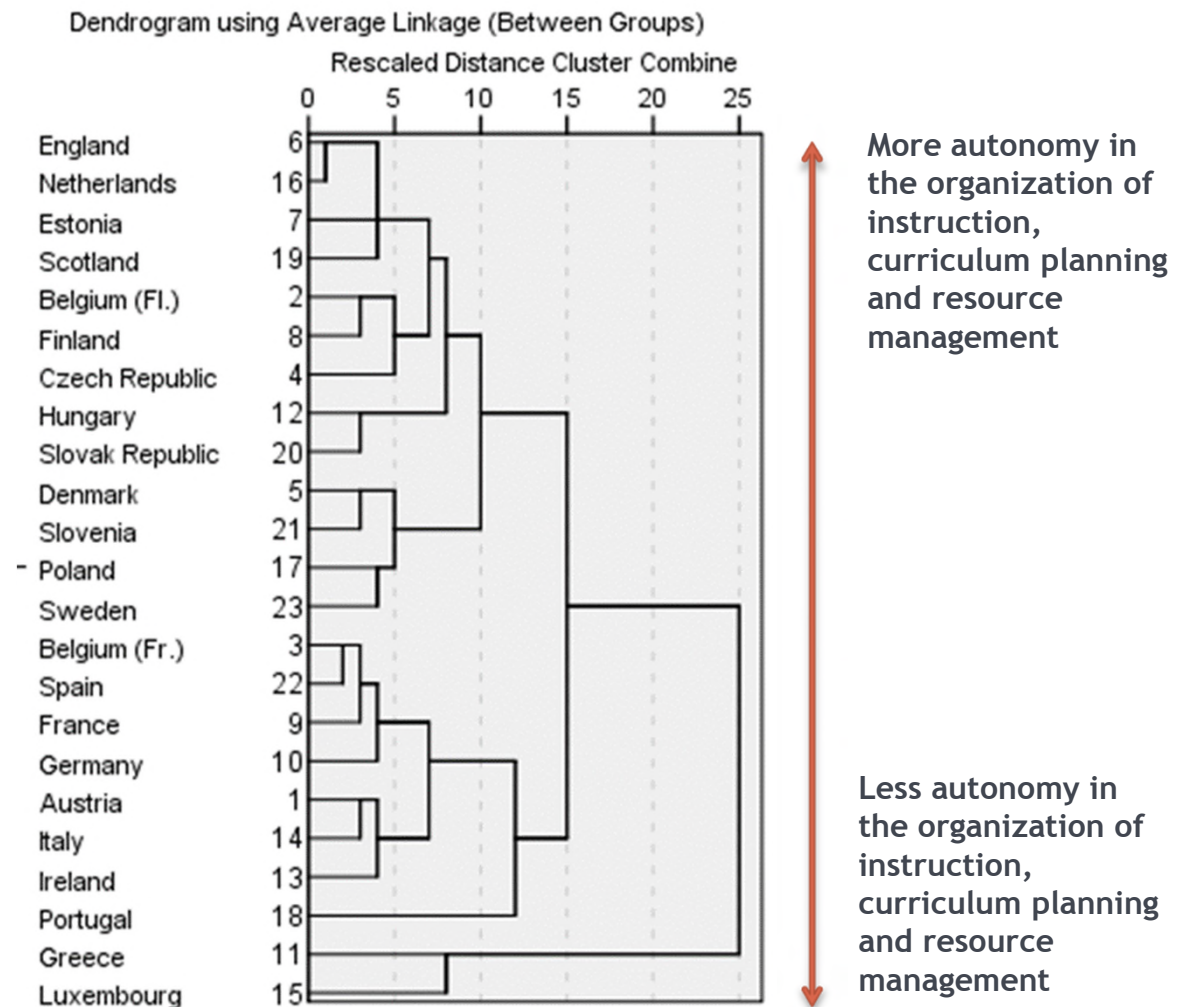
Indicators on School Leadership Policy Development

- Accountability
 - a) OECD's teaching and learning international survey (TALIS) questionnaire for principals on accountability (2008)
 - b) OECD's teaching and learning international survey (TALIS) questionnaire for teachers on accountability (2008)
 - c) OECD-PISA school principals questionnaire on accountability (oecd, 2010)
- Selection, career advancement and succession of school leaders
 - a) indicators on the selection, career and succession of school leaders (EURYDICE, 2013)
 - b) indicators on school heads' salaries, allowances and supplementary payments (EURYDICE, 2013)
- Policy Development
 - a) EURIDICE (2013)
 - b) OECD's teaching and learning international survey (talīs) questionnaire for principals (2013): initial training
 - c) OECD'S teaching and learning international survey (TALIS) questionnaire for principals (2013): CPD activities

Indicators in school autonomy: some findings

Dendrogram identifying groups of countries/school systems sharing common patterns of decision-making levels in matters of the organisation of instruction, curriculum planning and resource management in lower secondary education, 2011

(Data source: OECD, 2012a, indicator D6: Who makes key decisions in education systems?)



Distributed Leadership- Some Results

Percentage of teachers who reported that never or less than once per year engage in activities that indicate distributed leadership practices
(Data source: OECD, TALIS 2008 database)

	Attend staff meetings to discuss the vision and mission of the school	Develop a school curriculum or part of it	Discuss and coordinate homework practice across subjects
Austria	15	46	61
Bulgaria	1	45	31
Denmark	7	4	35
Estonia	12	25	36
Hungary	4	35	34
Ireland	12	26	57
Italy	3	23	39
Lithuania	10	100	37
Malta	3	30	62
Poland	9	18	45
Portugal	31	44	60
Slovak Republic	5	11	16
Slovenia	8	13	52
Spain	16	35	61
Belgium (Fl)	4	68	68

Discussion

- What infrastructures (physical or organisational structures, processes, regulations, etc.) are in place across Europe to help facilitate better use of research in education?
- At what level - local, regional, national or European – does this infrastructure occur?
- What are the most important gaps in institutional capacity and infrastructure?
- How might these gaps be addressed?