Conclusions of the German OECD teacher review

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A multi-goal review

- Similarly to other OECD thematic reviews this review has had several goals
  - contributing to the international synthesis study
  - enhancing mutual policy learning for participating countries (through presenting relevant policy solutions in Germany)
  - providing external expert feedback to the German national authorities
- These three goals had to be balanced

How did we see the context?

- ## The impact of low economic growth
  (public spending reductions, growing voice of economic players)

- ## Civil service and public administration reform
  (key goals: decentralisation, deregulation, competition, quality management, client orientation, performance-related remuneration)

- ## Increased social diversity
  (e.g. immigrants, social layers threatened by exclusion, the collision of western and eastern cultural patterns)

- ## The „PISA shock"
  (breaking trust: high spending may not return high value)

How did we see the context?(cont.)

- ## A situation of transition - a positive climate for change
  (after decades of high level stability the German system is now in a situation of accelerated change - „our system is at a turning point")

- ## Intensive social dialogue - a delicate social-political balance
  (particularly active civil society; a perceived need for political cautiousness)

- ## A high number of national and local/school level innovations
  (with rather intact administrative structures)

How did we see the system?
Aspects that have been analysed:

- *<u>Governance</u>*
- *<u>The structural features of the system</u>*
- *<u>Professional preparation</u>*
- *<u>The teacher labour market</u>*
- *<u>Status, career, incentives</u>*
- *<u>Recruitment and working conditions</u>*
- *<u>School management and leadership</u>*
- *<u>Evaluation and quality assurance</u>*

How did we see the system? (detailed)

- *Governance*
  - 16 centralised, rather isolated systems with relatively low level federal activity
  - strong legal tradition and high level administrative capacity; few alternative steering instruments
  - sectoral administration rather isolated from other public policy areas
  - limited role of local communities
  - relatively low level of school autonomy, little stress on management (emerging priorities)
  - high level civil activity (unions, associations)
  - strong corporate industrial influence in VET

How did we see the system? (detailed)

- ## *Structural features*
  - pre-school not integrated into the system
  - duration of ISCED 1 (primary) level is relatively short
  - high level institutional complexity at ISCED 2 (lower secondary) level
    (a relatively high number of rather isolated subsystems with few possibilities for horizontal moves)
  - high enrolment rates at ISCED 3 level with high participation rates in VET
  - Old and new Länder show different enrolment patterns

How did we see the system? (detailed)

- ## *Professional preparation*
  - long initial training with a long practice-based, induction type part (apprenticeship model)
  - relative institutional isolation of initial, inductive and in-service training
  - responsibility shared between universities and sectoral administration
  - high level structural fragmentation according to school types and disciplines
  - theoretical orientation diminating even in practical areas (e.g. methodology as theoretical subject)
  - high number of institutional innovations

How did we see the system?(detailed)

- ## *Teacher labour market*
  - high level structural fragmentation according to school types and disciplines (few opportunities for horizontal moves)
  - particularly high proportion close to retirement (50% above 50)
  - high demand for part time jobs (33%) .
  - unbalanced demand and supply between Länder (the simultaneity of shortage and oversupply)
  - many new initiatives to open flexible, alternative and specific target-related pathways for recruitment

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How did we see the system?(detailed)

- ## *Status, career, incentives*
  - general civil servant status with a high number of exceptions (salaried employees)
  - high level job security and highly competitive salaries (in international comparison)
  - remuneration linked to age and qualification (weak role of extra duties, professional performance or task complexity)
  - strong discipline-related professional identity
  - frequent part time teaching and early retirement
  - lack of non discipline-related differentiation and few opportunities for professional promotion

How did we see the system?(detailed)

- ## *Recruitment and working conditions*
  - general civil servant status (with very high number of exceptions)
  - highly transparent centralised recruitment with low level school involvement (with many new initiatives to increase it)
  - working hours defined in teaching hours alone
  - lack of auxiliary personnel
  - signs of decreasing social esteem and job satisfaction
  - teachers as „lonely fighters" (low level of teamwork)

How did we see the system?(detailed)

- ## *School management and leadership*
  - schools *as organisations* are not generally seen as the key vehicle for improving quality
  - principalship seen mainly as an administrative duty, relatively low level professionalisation of school management
  - high number of new initiatives conducted in this area (school level strategic planning, self-governing school initiatives)

How did we see the system? (detailed)

- ***Evaluation and quality assurance***
    - relatively low attention given to evaluation as a key function of the education system (compared with other developed countries)
    - accountability based rather on administrative than on professional criteria (compliance with legal norms)
    - evaluation and quality management seen as emerging new priorities, increasing awareness in this area

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How did we see the key priorities?

- Creating a New Professional Profile for the Teaching Profession
- Improving the Preparation and Development of Teachers
- Assuring an Adequate Supply of Good Quality Teachers
- Improving Teachers' Career Structure and Incentives
- Strengthening Accountability
- Modernising Governance and Management ◇

- ***Creating a New Professional Profile for the Teaching Profession***
  - facing growing *student diversity* and the need for new *social tasks*
  - being better prepared to assist *individual learning* in diverse populations
  - putting the *school as an organisation* in the focus (participation in collective strategic planning, quality management, and collective professional development)
  - living together with continuous *evaluation*
  - looking at teaching as a *creative profession* (this may be in contrast with civil service)

- ***Improving the Preparation and Development of Teachers***
  - shifting stress and resources from IT to CPD
  - setting and enforcing new national standards for teacher education and creating accredited teacher training faculties in universities
  - approaching phase I. and II. with a strong component of school practice in accredited schools
  - overarching disciplinary and school-type divisions
  - enhancing new contents (e.g management, evaluation, development of teaching skills)
  - demand driven, school oriented CPD with quality assurance

- *Assuring an Adequate Supply of Good Quality Teachers*
  - continuation (after evaluation) of ongoing measures (e.g. inter-land mobility, media campaigns, additional qualifications, alternative pathways)
  - more flexible employment and incentive packages (e.g. for teachers working in difficult areas)
  - enhancing moves between discipline and school-type related categories
  - taking back early retirement by increasing attractivity
  - creating flexible replacement solutions

- *Improving Teachers' Career Structure and Incentives*
  - a more differentiated career structure (defining new roles and related new job profiles and offering professionally attracting new roles to older teachers in schools)
  - increasing consistency between discipline and school-type related categories
  - linking incentives and career progression to aspects other than qualifications and seniority (e.g complexity, workload, performance)
  - making the regulation of *teaching hours* more flexible

- ***Strengthening Accountability***
  - developing and encouraging an advanced *evaluation culture*
  - continuing the development of national *standards*
  - setting performance objectives and targets in the framework of *school level strategic planning*
  - regular *school based staff appraisal* based on professional self-evaluation and peer evaluations
  - enhancing the *professionalisation* of evaluation and quality improvement
  - involving *stakeholders* and *clients* into evaluation

- ***Modernising Governance and Management***
  - harnessing the potential of the federal structure
  - increasing the role of *local communities* and developing their capacities
  - continuing the policy of making schools more *autonomous* (including personnel management) and more *responsive* (enhancing organisational learning)
  - further *professionalisation* of management and leadership
  - modernising *inspection* (e.g. further division of administrative and professional tasks)

Some conclusions

- The particularly high proportion of teachers close to retirement is both an exceptional *challenge* and an *opportunity*
- There is a high level *motivation* and *capacity* for change: there is a potential in the system to become a model for managing changes
- There is a growing *tension* between the rapid accumulation of changes/innovations and the relatively unchanged regulatory framework
- Teacher policy will necessarily be key area of education reform: both as a *target* and as a *carrier*

Thank you for your attention!