

# SICI

The Standing International  
Conference of **Inspectorates**  
Better Inspection, Better Learning

## STRATEGIC PLAN 2016-2020

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# Foreword



**Wulf Homeier**

**President  
The Standing International Conference of Inspectorates**

SICI was founded some 20 years ago on principles which were adapted at the time and have proved very successful.

We have now grown from 8 to 38 members. This development is of course very positive. It also means new requirements and the necessity to adapt the way we work. The Executive Committee (EC) is convinced that we need to make some significant changes so that SICI can continue to fulfil its mission and benefit its members. The EC has therefore worked hard on a plan that is now presented to the General Assembly (GA) for approval.

There are a lot of reasons for our work and even more to improve as inspectorates. In this context I would like to remind you of the trends shaping education we presented over the past few years including: the huge amount of money spent every year on education in Europe (more than 600 Billion € per year); and the challenges we ourselves and the students we are responsible for in a more and more difficult and globalized world have to face. From the EC's point of view, we believe there is no other organisation in Europe that has access to so much information concerning the quality of schools and education compared to SICI. We should not only use this information to improve our own work, we are convinced that it is worthwhile that we make it accessible to policy and decision makers to help them make data-based decisions.

To achieve that, I indicated at the GA in Edinburgh in 2013 that it would be necessary to think about developing SICI further as an organisation. During the GAs in Dresden 2014 and Oslo 2015, as well as at other workshops, we have had more discussions and these have confirmed that our initial ideas on strategic planning for the future were important and they were widely accepted in general.

In our work over the last 3 years, we identified 5 main areas we started to work on and in this work arose a bundle of topics and questions:

- ▶ Vision, mission, measures:  
Are the three main goals from 1995 still sufficient? Is change needed?
- ▶ Quality:  
How can we get an idea of the quality of our work and how to develop it? Do we as an organisation have to work on quality development? Do we need a quality management system?

- ▶ **Activities:**  
Do we still meet our members' needs? Does SICI offer the right things? Do we need to introduce other offers and activities? Do we have to have a qualification programme, for example, to develop our members' competencies?
- ▶ **Governance:**  
Is the way SICI is governed correct for the future concerning the size we have now? What structures do we need to remain effective and to be able to do what we were founded for in times of getting bigger with all the problems caused by that (language, communication, exchange, developing of common goals, ...)?
- ▶ **SICI's voice:**  
Do we have to identify areas in inspection work where it is helpful to have a general SICI position? How can we make SICI's voice heard to contribute to the European discussion about education and school development?

At the GA in Oslo, we promised to develop a detailed Strategic Plan to shape our future work for the GA 2016 in Bolzano and we are proud to present the result of this work to you.

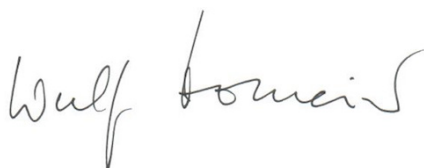
This paper will be the basis for our discussion during the Business Part of the meeting. If you look through the Strategic Plan, you will find it ambitious in aspects of work and time: it is a tough timeline for the next 4 years.

You receive the Strategic Plan now to give you the possibility to reflect and discuss its content at home and prepare for the discussion at the GA. In order to avoid losing too much time, the EC needs the GA's mandate to act in line with the suggested plan. It is therefore important that delegates from all member countries attending the GA are authorised to vote on behalf of their Inspectorate.

SICI works on a voluntary basis, and this means that all those who engage invested a lot of additional work and time. Therefore I would like to thank a number of people who contributed in different areas, roles, kinds and times to create this Strategic Plan:

Sabine Adlkofer, Lower Saxony  
Gonnie van Amelsvoort, The Netherlands  
Gordana Capric, Serbia  
Alastair Delaney, Scotland  
Petr Drabek, Czech Republic  
Adrian Gray, England  
Annemarie Bechmann Hansen, Norway  
Janie McManus, Scotland

Bart Maes, Belgium – Dutch speaking community  
Hana Novotná, Czech Republic  
David Polidano, Malta  
Christiane Schönauer-Gragg, Rhineland Palatinate  
Petter Skarheim, Norway  
Jacqueline Vanhear, Malta



**September 2016**

# Introduction

## Who is SICI?

The Standing International Conference of Inspectorates (SICI) came into being in 1995 and represents 38 education inspectorates and evaluation bodies from across Europe. It provides support to its members through conferences, workshops, projects and other activities. It provides a forum for the discussion of educational policy, with a particular focus on inspection and evaluation.

## Ambition

SICI can make a significant contribution to driving improvement in education, both in local areas and internationally. It has a wealth of information, expertise and knowledge that deserves to be heard. SICI's determination and drive to improve education in its own areas should be harnessed to inform the international debate. By the end of the lifetime of this plan, SICI will have evolved to capture more effectively the knowledge contained within its members, analyse and create new knowledge from this evidence base, and share it more effectively both within SICI to promote improvement and collaboration, and beyond to ensure that evidence from inspection is heard within the international debate on quality improvement.

## Bratislava memorandum 2013

SICI is committed to assisting its members and the wider political and educational community to achieve a better understanding of how inspection can continue to make a strong contribution to improving the quality of the educational experience of young people across Europe; and to making that experience more relevant to their lives today and in the future. To support this, the GA endorsed the 'Bratislava Memorandum' at its annual meeting in 2013 which put forward 10 propositions on the theme of inspection and innovation.

[Bratislava Memorandum original copy](#)<sup>1</sup>

## Governance

The work and direction of SICI is agreed annually at the GA of representatives of all member inspectorates. The GA takes place in October and includes: an account of the year's activities; financial matters; ratification of proposals from the EC; elections to the EC; and meetings of country groupings. Decisions are governed by the SICI Statutes and Articles.

[SICI Statutes.pdf](#)<sup>2</sup>

[SICI Articles of association.pdf](#)<sup>3</sup>

[Amendment-of-SICI-articles](#)<sup>4</sup>

The EC is made up of elected representatives and ensures that the decisions of the GA are taken forward. The chair of the EC is elected from among the EC members and is the President of SICI.

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1 <http://www.sici-inspectorates.eu/getattachment/ae886cf8-33b3-457d-a90a-d06ae4af5954>

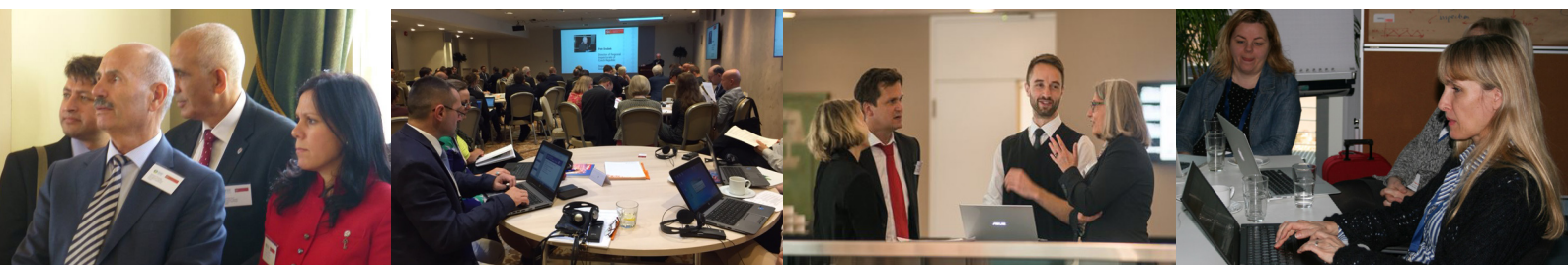
2 <http://www.sici-inspectorates.eu/getattachment/7611adae-03a9-4b17-a95f-0bf268936689>

3 <http://www.sici-inspectorates.eu/getattachment/a78e5708-932a-40c2-9a32-228dbd3c0203>

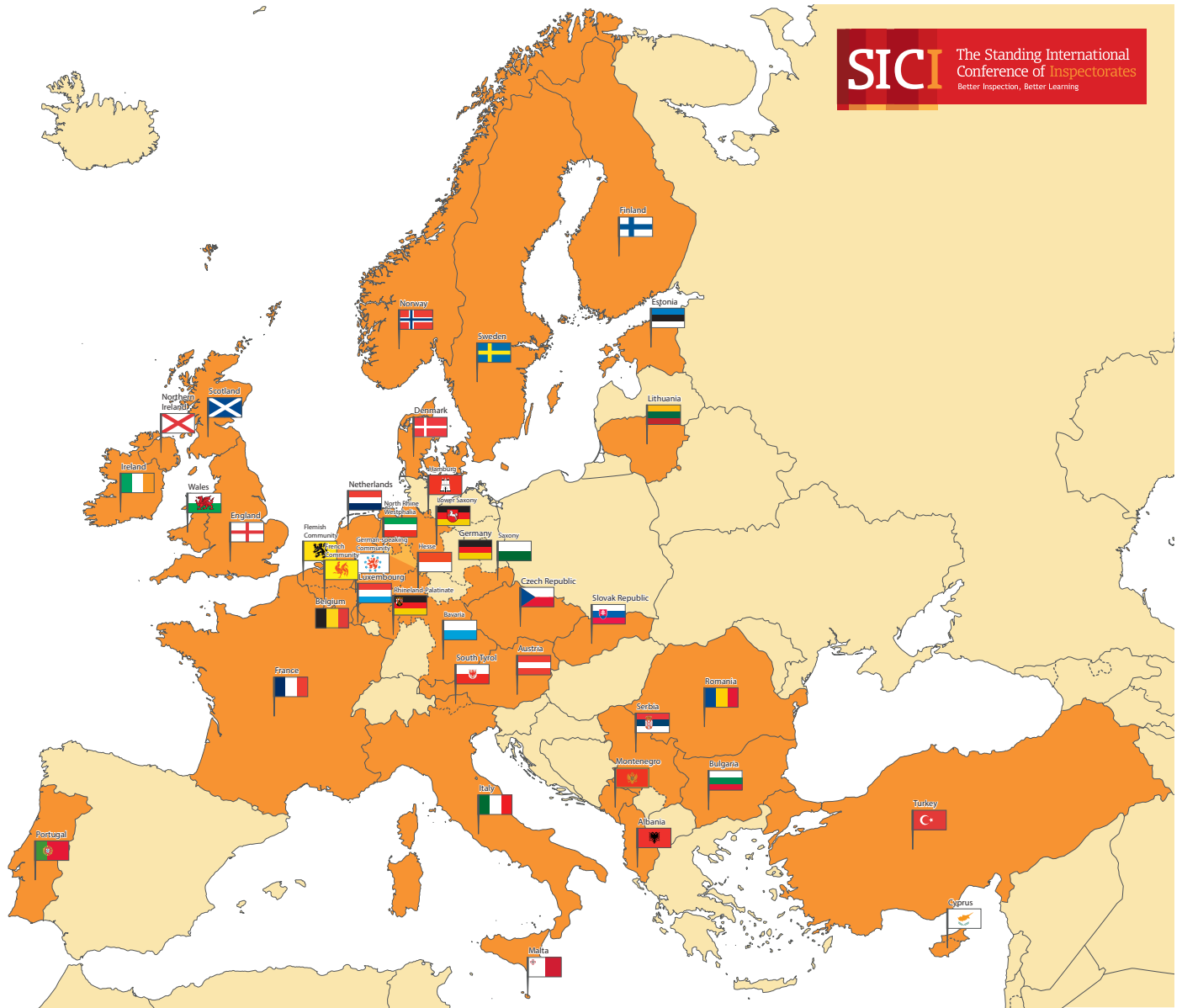
4 <http://www.sici-inspectorates.eu/getattachment/be91c258-7db3-4224-874d-3528a4fcbddc>

# SICI members

Albania	Lower Saxony
Austria	Luxembourg
Bavaria	Malta
Belgium – Dutch speaking community	Montenegro
Belgium – French speaking community	Northern Ireland
Belgium – German speaking community	North Rhine-Westphalia
Bulgaria	Norway
Cyprus	Portugal
Czech Republic	Rhineland Palatinate
Denmark	Romania
Estonia	Saxony
England	Scotland
Finland	Serbia
France	Slovak Republic
Hamburg	South Tyrol
Hessen	Sweden
Ireland	The Netherlands
Italy – Invalsi	Turkey
Lithuania	Wales



# SICI members



# Purpose of SICI

## Vision

### Better Inspection, Better Learning

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## Aims

SICI has set three aims which will directly support delivery of its vision. Each aim makes a unique contribution to creating the overall framework for its work. SICI will plan and organise its work under these aims.

- ▶ Support improvement of inspectorates and the professional competences of inspectors.
  - ▶ Promote and support partnership and cooperation between inspectorates.
  - ▶ Actively participate in the international debate about evaluation and quality improvement in education.
- 

## SICI will fulfil these aims by:

- ▶ gaining and exchanging information, knowledge and insight;
  - ▶ supporting the development of skills and methodologies;
  - ▶ participating in joint inspection and evaluation projects and other ways of cooperation; and
  - ▶ providing knowledge gained through inspection activity to policy and decision makers.
- 





# Creating the Strategic Plan

As you have read in the foreword of this Strategic Plan, and will see in the presentation that will be given at the GA in Bolzano, there are several arguments which made the EC start the development of this Strategic Plan after the GA in Edinburgh in 2013; where we decided on the Bratislava Memorandum with recommendations for the work of member inspectorates.

The main work was carried out over the past 18 months in a series of workshops with the EC working with a broader team of SICI members (Strategic Group); and with external support since spring 2016.

The starting point was a meeting in Prague in spring 2015, where the Strategic Group reviewed work, including: aims; governance structures; statutes; activities; and impact. Following this, they identified the main areas to prioritise and developed an action plan presented at Oslo and a Strategic Plan now.

The Prague workshop was followed by the meetings in Belgrade (September 2015) and Oslo (October 2015), where the Strategic Group presented their work and asked members to agree to continue with the work. In January 2016, the Strategic Group met in Copenhagen and decided to continue with reduced investment to save some money and present the Strategic Plan at the GA in October 2016. They were and are convinced that they needed more discussion between all members to have a reliable basis for a well-considered decision. The Strategic Group continued to work on the Strategic Plan in Cardiff (April 2016), Brussels (July 2016) and Tallinn (September 2016). In these meetings, the EC and broader Strategic Group developed a plan which is realistic and supports what they believe SICI needs.

Because of SICI's governance structure, the EC and its broader team could not do that on their own so they decided to advertise and contract a development officer, Janie McManus from Education Scotland, on a part-time basis for 6 months. She pulled the ideas from discussions with the Strategic Group together; put them forward for review and further discussion; and developed a consistent system which you will find on the following pages.

The sections that follow start with each of the three strategic aims of SICI. They explain what SICI is trying to achieve and some of the key actions required over the next 4 years.

As already mentioned during the presentation at the GA in Oslo, SICI is not a body or individual - SICI is everyone involved, the organisation of institutions and the community of all individual inspectors. All of what the Strategic Group planned and what the EC suggests to decide on will only work if everyone engages in it and contributes – as organisation and as individuals.

To support this the Strategic Group and EC wants to encourage member inspectorates to introduce the position of a "national coordinator" suggested as a key action on page 8 in the column "key actions", and in the detailed implementation plan.

# Support improvement of inspectorates and the professional competences of inspectors

This aim reflects SICI's commitment to continuous improvement of inspectorates and inspectors.

SICI is an enthusiastic community bringing together inspectorates from across Europe. They provide the opportunity whereby inspectors can work together to share experiences and seek solutions to common challenges faced by inspectorates.

Being part of the SICI community provides a forum to learn from each other and develop new approaches relevant for different inspectorates. As a result, SICI contributes to the overall professional learning of inspectors across Europe.

Through participating in SICI events, including workshops and conferences, cutting edge knowledge and powerful practice is shared with a view to enabling education systems and schools to become learning organisations for the sake of better education for all.

A key challenge for SICI is to ensure that individual inspectorates can adapt and use the learning and examples of practice in ways which are suitable and aligned to local contexts. SICI also wants to ensure its members can bring their own activities, resources and challenges and can benefit from the collective advice and experiences of other inspectorates.

## Key actions

Develop a comprehensive and coherent suite of learning programmes to ensure quality and support improvement across inspectorates.

Enhance SICI's capacity to gather, manage and disseminate the significant amount of information and knowledge available to them from across member inspectorates.

Develop further SICI's organisational capacity for collating and disseminating resources and learning shared at workshops and conferences.

Provide advice, support and evidence based on the experiences of members to enhance the professional learning of inspectors.

Encourage each member inspectorate to introduce a 'national coordinator' who will support dissemination of information and resources at a local level as well as drawing out learning to inform SICI's work.

Consult with members on the key priority themes to inform the content of workshops and conferences each year.

# Promote and support partnership and cooperation between inspectorates

SICI wants to build upon already established mechanisms to enhance the strong partnership and collaborative working across European inspectorates. In doing so, SICI will be a place where inspectorates across Europe can meet to enhance the quality of inspection.

SICI is very much about building the collective capacity of inspectorates to learn, innovate and evaluate together in effective ways through creating a vibrant culture of collaboration and partnership working. This in itself becomes a powerful driver for improvement in education.

Every year, three or four member inspectorates run a workshop in collaboration with SICI. The purpose of the workshops is to support partnership and cooperation between inspectorates through sharing information, discussing relevant issues, and developing thinking.

SICI promotes and supports collaborative projects across inspectorates. These collaborative projects are initiated and developed by SICI members and the learning from the projects is shared more widely to enable others to benefit from the knowledge and resources developed.

SICI also facilitates peer reviews between inspectorates, where collaboration between two or more countries can help develop practice in each of the inspectorates.

## Key actions

Continue to provide opportunities for members to meet regularly to support the development of partnerships and collaboration.

Help fund projects which involve at least three countries or regions working collaboratively in line with SICI's aims and priorities.

Continue to support the further development of the regional groupings with common interests, to work as a collective to address common challenges and generate new ideas and practice.

Enhance SICI's online service to promote networking and sharing knowledge. It will include a mix of online tools and resources which brings together inspectors and supports collaboration across inspectorates.

Provide access to expertise across the inspectorates which will allow inspectorates and inspectors to identify a SICI member who they want to learn from and facilitate cross-inspectorate connections.



# Actively participate in the international debate about evaluation and quality improvement in education

As a result of the independent nature of inspectorates, SICI is in a strong position to provide reliable and impartial commentary/evaluations of education practice and its impact.

SICI is in a unique position to link inspection findings from across its members with research and practice to engage in debate about the quality of school evaluation and the quality of education more generally.

This provides the building blocks for inspectorates to engage in debate and critical discussions to jointly achieve in-depth understanding of the quality of education and the role inspection can have to support improvements.

SICI sees debate as a way to shape international understanding, collaboration, and an exchange of ideas which may help shape the way in which inspectorates can influence the quality of education and quality improvement in education.

It is important that SICI encourages an increased visibility and importance to the way inspection evidence can be used to inform improvements in education. This will promote SICI as an influential network of inspectorates that supports improvement in education through inspection.

## Key actions

Develop organisational capacity for collating, analysing and articulating international issues which impact on inspectorates and the quality of education.

Provide opportunities for debate and critical discussions as part of SICI workshops and conferences.

Increase the visibility of SICI through creating and publishing reports based on agreed themes.

Consult with members on the key themes to inform the annual topic for debate.

Gather inspection evidence from a range of members and publish a summary report of key findings online.

Disseminate SICI's findings at other international educational conferences and events.

Organise periodic conferences open to non-SICI participants where SICI summary and thematic reports are used as a focus for debate and critical discussion.

# Implementation plan

## Year 1 (2016-17)

Action	Lead
Establish and implement annual process for consulting members and agreeing on priority themes	Development Officer
Ensure annual learning programme is aligned with SICI's agreed priority themes	Executive Committee
Implement new approach for the submission of proposals for collaborative projects aligned to SICI's priorities	Executive Committee nominated lead and Development Officer
Update Inspectorate profiles for members	Development Officer
Initiate pilot phase to invite members to nominate a national coordinator	Development Officer
Conduct review of current website and develop specification to enrich content and functionality	Development Officer Webpage Administrators
Develop bi-annual communications newsletter for members	Development Officer
Initiate and develop partnerships with other international organisations, including EU, OECD and CIDREE	SICI President
Publish first thematic report focusing on the knowledge strand-inspection's impact on school improvement	Executive Committee nominated lead
Identify and submit applications for possible funding from external sources, including European Commission	Development Officer



## Year 2 (2017-18)

Action	Lead
Establish mechanisms for supporting and gathering information from national coordinators	Development Officer
Publish and promote the outcomes of collaborative projects with members	Development Officer
Enrich the content and functionality of SICI website	Development Officer and Webpage Administrators
Develop a communications strategy to promote the work of SICI	Development Officer

## Year 3 (2018-19)

Action	Lead
Continue to enrich the content and functionality of SICI website	Development Officer and Webpage Administrators
Support national coordinators to promote and use SICI website	Development Officer
Approve and publish summary report of key findings from a range of inspectorates	Executive Committee
Invite non-SICI members to attend one of SICI's conferences to discuss and debate evaluation and quality improvement in education	Development Officer Executive Committee Lead

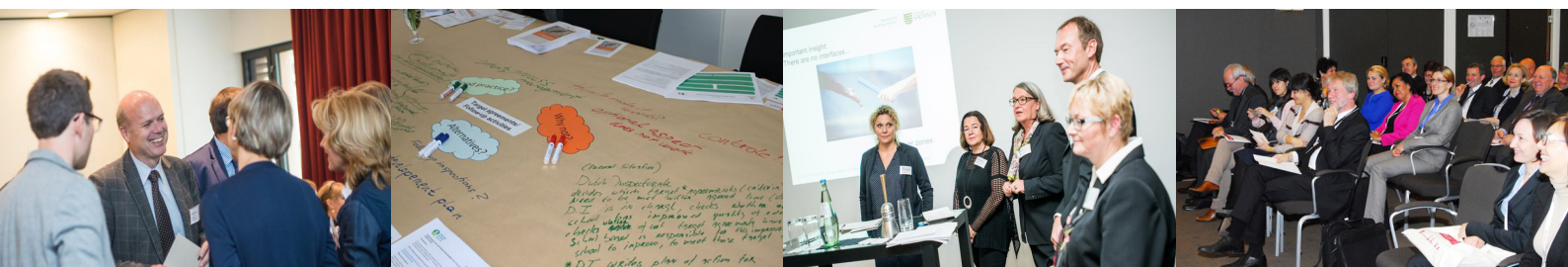
## Year 4 (2019-20)

Action	Lead
Continue with phased introduction of national coordinators	Development Officer
Approve and publish second thematic report on agreed knowledge strand	Executive Committee
Organise a SICI conference open to non-SICI participants to discuss and debate evaluation and quality improvement in education	Development Officer Executive Committee
Promote the work of SICI across a range of other international organisations	SICI President

# What SICI members can expect

As a result of the implementation of this Strategic Plan SICI members will have the opportunity to:

- ▶ contribute to the key themes which will form the content of SICI workshops/conferences and other activities;
- ▶ participate in an enhanced annual learning programme, including workshops, conferences and collaborative activities;
- ▶ participate in debate and critical discussions about evaluation and quality improvement in education;
- ▶ continue to meet with other members in regional groupings who have common interests to share practice, learning and resources;
- ▶ nominate a SICI national coordinator to support dissemination of information about SICI and gather information to share with other members;
- ▶ find out enhanced information about the work of other members;
- ▶ access a new, enriched SICI website;
- ▶ access and make use of summary and thematic reports of inspection findings related to priority themes;
- ▶ continue to submit proposals and access funding to support collaborative projects;
- ▶ read summary reports of collaborative projects which benefit from SICI funding;
- ▶ observe an increased involvement of SICI at international conferences and events; and
- ▶ locate expertise across member inspectorates.



## Making it happen

This Strategic Plan is ambitious. It calls on SICI to develop in new and different ways in order that it maximises the unique knowledge and information it has from members. It is a demanding strategy which requires the commitment and active involvement of its members both individually and collectively for the benefit of each other. This will include members readily contributing time, information and knowledge. The introduction of a 'national coordinator' nominated by each member is a significant contribution that members can make to support implementation of this Strategic Plan.

SICI will deliver this strategy through developing a detailed annual implementation plan which will specify activities to be undertaken. The annual implementation plan and associated costs will be reviewed and updated each year and presented at the GA.

SICI is currently an entirely volunteer run enterprise. Member inspectorates allow staff time to attend meetings, and there is a small administrative unit paid for by SICI, and housed within the Flemish Inspectorate. Roles of responsibility, such as President or Secretary General, are "paid for" by member inspectorates allowing staff time to undertake these roles. Costs associated with implementation of this Strategic Plan will be met mainly by the income generated from membership fees.

SICI can only implement this Strategic Plan successfully if it is able to fund some key resources, including staff. Over the lifetime of this Strategic Plan, SICI will recruit staff 'development officer' to carry out responsibilities and tasks as identified by the EC and detailed in the annual implementation plan. The development officer role will be at an Inspector grade and be seconded on a part-time basis from within a member inspectorate. It is anticipated the development officer staffing resource will cost approximately 22,000 euro per year.

In recent years the EC has set aside a budget to support additional members to attend SICI workshops. This budget has proven to be around twice the amount that has actually been claimed each year. Consequently, it is proposed that the 2017 budget to support additional participation at SICI workshops is reduced by half, to 25,000 euro, and that the remaining budget is reallocated to support the additional expenditure required to implement this Strategic Plan in year one.

More information on attendance at workshops, and the use of the subsidy will be presented within the papers for the General Assembly 2017 in Bolzano, Italy and will be available from the SICI website afterwards.

## Reporting on progress

The EC will provide a presentation at the annual General Assembly on outcomes and progress towards meeting SICI's aims and the key actions specified in this Strategic Plan and the detailed annual implementation plan. At its regular meetings the EC will oversee the work of the development officer and review progress of the implementation plan. The EC will provide members with information on progress via SICI's website.





- ▶ Albania
- ▶ Austria
- ▶ Bavaria
- ▶ Belgium – Dutch speaking community
- ▶ Belgium – French speaking community
- ▶ Belgium – German speaking community
- ▶ Bulgaria
- ▶ Cyprus
- ▶ Czech Republic
- ▶ Denmark
- ▶ Estonia
- ▶ England
- ▶ Finland
- ▶ France
- ▶ Hamburg
- ▶ Hessen
- ▶ Ireland
- ▶ Italy – Invalsi
- ▶ Lithuania
- ▶ Lower Saxony
- ▶ Luxembourg
- ▶ Malta
- ▶ Montenegro
- ▶ Northern Ireland
- ▶ North Rhine-Westphalia
- ▶ Norway
- ▶ Portugal
- ▶ Rhineland Palatinate
- ▶ Romania
- ▶ Saxony
- ▶ Scotland
- ▶ Serbia
- ▶ Slovak Republic
- ▶ South Tyrol
- ▶ Sweden
- ▶ The Netherlands
- ▶ Turkey
- ▶ Wales

The Standing International  
Conference of **Inspectorates**

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