Work plan Case Studies

Erasmus+ 2014 Key Action 2 (KA2), Strategic Partnerships Project
Project name: Polycentric inspections of networks of schools
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1. Introduction

The focus of the case study in each country is to analyse how 'polycentric inspections' have an impact on the functioning and quality of networks of schools and/or service providers. In the first phase of the project we have mapped 'polycentric' inspections in each of the four countries and have described differences between the systems in how they inspect networks, and their position in networks and in the education system.

In each of the four cases, Inspectorates of Education inspect a network of schools and include indicators in their framework on how schools are working together to support school to school improvement and/or provide inclusive education to children with special needs and/or learning disabilities. The countries vary in the extent to which these methods and frameworks are fully developed and implemented (Bulgaria starting to develop such models, England and the Netherlands pilot testing aspects of a polycentric approach and Northern Ireland fully integrating inspections and school to school improvement and evaluations). In our case studies we aim to develop and test polycentric models of school inspections and specifically look at the mechanisms and context of their impact, to answer the following questions:

- What role can school inspectors have, and which working methods can they use in enabling/facilitating improvement/innovation and complex problem solving in networks of teachers and schools?
- What roles and working methods of Inspectorates of Education are effective in promoting improvement/innovation and complex problem-solving in schools?
- How are these roles and working methods related to the structure and context of the education system in which they function; how can they be transferred to other contexts and systems?

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2. Describing the four cases

2.1 The Netherlands

In the Netherlands, new legislation is implemented which requires a set of schools to work in partnerships to provide inclusive education for all children (also children with disabilities) under 76 new (primary) education authorities. Each new education authority now governs a set of regular and special needs primary schools and has to ensure smooth cooperation between these schools in the provision of care and high quality education to each individual pupil.

The Inspectorate of Education inspects the quality and functioning of these partnerships of schools. A new inspection framework, ('toezichtkader voor samenwerkingsverbanden'; inspection framework for cooperative chains'), describing the quality of partnerships of schools and additional sanctions for educational authorities in charge of partnerships of schools, has been developed for this purpose. This case study will look at 'Steunpunt Onderwijs Enschede' (SPOE), an education authority comprised of 43 regular primary schools and 2 special needs schools who have agreed on common structures and arrangements for education and care to students both within and across schools (see SPOE.nl). This education authority will be inspected by the Dutch Inspectorate of Education during the course of our project.

2.2 Northern Ireland

In Northern Ireland, schools have been working in networks for some time now and the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) has developed area-based evaluations to support the work of such networks. An example of such a network is the West Belfast Partnership Board's Education and Training forum. They have initiated a strategic networked alliance, called the Area Learning Community (ALC), consisting of all post primary school principals and all relevant educational stakeholders, including the Northern Irish Inspectorate (ETI). These principals and their stakeholders have agreed on protocols for sharing performance data and school to school support, aligned to and agreed upon with the district inspector (ETI). The central question underlying these protocols, school to school support and district inspections are 'How do we improve the quality of education not only in individual schools but for the entire community? Both the work of the Area Learning Community, as well as area based inspections and inspection reports have this question as their starting point. This case study will include the Northern Irish Education and Training Inspectorate and the Area Learning Community. The case study will be coordinated by Dublin City University (DCU). The letters of intent 'West Belfast Partnership', 'West Belfast Area Learning Community', and 'CMSS' describes the cooperation between these partners.

2.3 England

England has seen a number of changes over the last couple of years with the aim of establishing a 'self-improving education system'. Changes include the establishment of teaching schools, national leaders of education, the academisation of schools and increasing numbers of schools working together in formal partnership models (e.g. federations and Multi Academy Trusts), and informal school improvement partnerships. An example of an informal school evaluation and improvement partnership is the *NAHT school review process*, an initiative from NAHT (National Association of Head Teachers). The model develops constructive peer reviews led by school leaders. An informal cluster of 3 primary schools who are starting the peer reviews in 2016 have been recruited for this case study. We will look at how the peer review in itself impacts on collaboration between schools, as well as how the peer review work informs Ofsted inspections of single schools and how Ofsted inspections shape the peer reviews (both in standards of evaluation, type of evidence collected and schedule of peer review).

Additionally a second, formal, network of schools will be recruited for the case study. The formal network will be a Multi Academy Trust, consisting of primary and/or secondary schools who have been or will be

subjected to Ofsted's focused inspections. Focused inspections are Ofsted's main model of inspections of networks of schools (currently only implemented to inspect MATs) and our case study will look at the impact of these inspections on the functioning of the MAT.

2.4 Bulgaria

School inspections have changed dramatically in Bulgaria the last couple of years. Since 2013, the Bulgarian Ministry of Education implemented and tested a new model for school inspections in 1000 schools. National standards and instruments for inspection were introduced and tested by Regional Inspectorates and selected schools with the purpose of improving the quality of education in schools, and supporting school improvement.

For the purpose of this project, 10 schools in the region of Sofia have been recruited who are currently developing and implementing peer reviews, share good practices, collaborate for improvement of schooling they provide, and who will be inspected by the Sofia Inspectorate of Education during the course of our project. The case study will be coordinated by Sofia University and will include the network of 10 schools and the Sofia Inspectorate of Education (SIE). We will look at how the peer review in itself impacts on collaboration between schools, as well as how the peer review work informs SIE inspections of single schools and how SIE inspections shape the peer reviews.

2. Theoretical framework

Our data collection will cover the same variables in all the four countries, while also allowing for country-specific questions and analysis. The timeline of data collection will follow the implementation of the 'polycentric inspection' models in each country. The following variables will inform the comparative data collection and analysis:

2.1 Evaluation and inspection practices

Evaluation and inspection practices include the internal evaluations and inspections in/of single schools/service providers that are part of the network, as well as any peer review, external evaluation and inspection activity of the network of schools/service providers.

The definition of internal evaluation used to guide the case studies is of *a process of purposive evaluation of school practices which provides insights into the educational experiences of students, as more than those measured by test data* (Simons, 2013). It is variously termed: internal evaluation, (school) self- evaluation, self-review, data use, data- based decision making, inquiry, internal accountability. Internal evaluation is carried out solely by staff internal to the school and these may be groups of teachers and/or other members of staff, school leaders or designated project staff (Nevo, 2001). 'Data coaches' may work, as employees of the school, with teams to facilitate the interpretation of data and in using it to plan changes to teaching approaches. Schools may also work with external partners, such as a research partnership or a school district/local authority or employ a 'critical friend' or external data coach to give support in the design of internal evaluation, the interpreting of evidence and to prompt reflection and planning for improvement. However, internal evaluation is distinguished from external types of evaluation in the fact that members of the school's professional personnel are in charge of the evaluation. External evaluations would, on the other hand, see an external authority (e.g. Inspectorate of Education) decide on evaluation criteria, collect data on school performance and report evaluation results.

We are interested in the <u>frequency</u> of both internal and external evaluation activities of both single schools in the network as evaluations of the network itself, as well as the <u>methodology, valuing, and user involvement</u> in/of all these evaluation activities.

- Methodology involves the collection and analysis of empirical data for the study and judgment of particular aspects of social life. A distinction is often made between quantitative methods, using (quasi)experimental methods to analyse if a treatment or program is effective in bringing about desired effects and to explain and predict effects, and qualitative methods that aim to improve understanding and meaning. Each approach comes with a range of theory, instruments and conditions for appropriate designs.
- Valuing and judging involves the making of value judgments about the quality of some object, situation or process (p.80). There are a number of ways to make value judgements. The first approach focuses on making a final judgment of pass or fail where multiple-outcome judgements feed into a single value statement of a programme's worth. Such an approach generally uses a quantitative, planned and purposeful approach where data and statistics and (ideally) a comparison between a control and experimental group is used to inform a final judgement. The second approach includes a comparison of similar entities where the evaluator determines the appropriate criteria for which judgements are to be made and presenting judgements on those set of criteria. The third approach is 'goal-free' in which the evaluator assumes the responsibility for determining which program outcomes to examine, rejecting the objectives of the programme as a starting point.
- User involvement: which stakeholders are involved in which phase of the evaluation (e.g. the definition stage in which the goals, processes, resources of an evaluation etc. are specified, the installation stage which aims to identify discrepancies in the implementation of the program, the process stage in which the extent of attainment of short-term outcomes or enabling objectives are determined, and the product stage which aims to determine the attainment of terminal or ultimate objectives).

Within this variable we are specifically interested in polycentric models of inspections of networks of schools and/or service providers and how they develop over time in response to school networks. In our comparative paper we have outlined indicators to map the methodology, valuing, and user involvement of such inspections:

Table 1. Shifting roles and working methods from single school inspections to 'polycentric inspections'

Dimension	Continuum 'Monocentric' inspections of single schools – 'Polycentric' inspections of networks of schools/service providers	Specific practices of 'polycentric inspections'
Methodology	Explaining and predicting – Interpretation, understanding and validating knowledge	Agenda (e.g. standards) for inspection is (also) set by schools and stakeholders Inspection schedules include visits to all schools/stakeholders at the same time Inspection framework includes standards to evaluate network activities and effective cooperation between schools/stakeholders (looking at power balances and checks and balances and openness to external stakeholders and knowledge), inspection of dynamics in the network There is a connection between individual school inspections and inspections of networks, such as when evaluation of individual school performance takes into account their role in the network, or when network performance takes into account the quality of individual schools in a way that would strengthen high quality network-level outcomes (and not corrupt collaboration such as when inspections enforce meaningless collaboration). Thematic inspections: topics for an annual or thematic report are decided on by stakeholders in the system (e.g. representatives of schools, networks)
Valuing	Single value judgment (pass/fail) – Grading 'critical competitors' Evaluator values – Evaluator facilitates the valuing by stakeholders Planned and purposeful – Goal-free, flexible and adaptable to stakeholder needs	Valuing is focused on analysing, validating and disseminating good practices of how to improve student achievement (describing why the good practice worked for the host school, how the host school created process knowledge -'this is how we did it'-, and making explicit the theory underpinning practice -'these are the principles underpinning why we did it and what we did')
Use/User involvement	Involvement of primary decision-makers – Involvement of wider group of stakeholders Schools/network as end users of evaluation findings - Involvement of stakeholders in	Inspection feedback is given to all schools/stakeholders in an open forum and agreements are made about a shared agenda for change; feedback is targeted to, and adapted to relevant actors Intelligent consequences which include removal and/or inclusion of partners in/out of the network, shifting partners to other networks (where they better fit), follow-up with other stakeholders in the system on the support they should

	definition, process, product, cost-benefit analysis stage	provide to the network. Consequences and interventions go beyond sanctions and rewards of individual schools and include intelligent techniques (e.g. information sharing, persuasion, targeted monitoring) to improve the functioning of the network (both in terms of structural and relational contingencies, such as strength and density of ties, quality of knowledge sharing) Inspectorate shares information from individual school inspections with the network (authority) Inspectorate ensures that there is a follow-up of inspections (of both schools and networks) in the system, potentially also by other stakeholders (e.g. Ministry, local authority), an example are the 'regional methodological councils in Sofia
Other		Status and main functions of Inspectorate and the extent to which they are part of the network (e.g. who has authority over setting agenda/standards, and deciding on judgements and consequences) Inspectorate is independent of Ministry Inspectorate has legislative remit to inspect networks; Legislative power to inspect networks and clear legislative framework for inspections on the network level. Inspectorate builds network capacity : provides information in annual report on functioning of network Interplay between individual school inspections/inspectors and inspections/inspectors of networks (knowledge exchange between inspectors). Indicator on interplay between individual school inspections and inspections of the network: communication of results from individual schools to the network (by the Inspectorate), formal sharing of results from individual school inspections with the network authority, follow-up embedded in the frameworks, knowledge management by the Inspectorate in scheduling and assessing individual and network of schools. Inspectorate builds capacity of networks on a country-level: e.g. through an annual report which provides an overview of networks and effective and ineffective arrangements, and provide suggestions to improve functioning of school networks.

2.2 Relationships, collaboration, structure of the network

Networks are 'structures of interdependence involving multiple organizations or parts thereof, where one unit is not merely the forma subordinate of the others in some larger hierarchical arrangement (O'Toole, 1997, p.45, cited by Janssens, 2015). Some authors however have a looser perspective on networks and refer to an organisational concept that does not necessarily reflect a structured body but instead focuses on the organizing principle of a group (Janssens, 2015). Here we use Janssens definition (2015, p.5):

Networks that primarily deliver and manage a variety of public services. These are instrumental and goal-oriented networks, mainly publicly funded, with participants belonging to the same or to different sectors and variously committed to network goals. They can be formally mandated through a top down process but can also (informally) arise from the grassroots level, their boundaries can be formally stated but may also be fuzzy.

We are interested in networks of schools, service providers and their stakeholders who have a role in defining, regulating and shaping school quality. Networks can include both formal and informal partnerships of schools and/or other service providers and stakeholders who collaborate to solve local problems and achieve network-level outcomes (see next section). Formal networks have specific agreements among partners on governance and financing, common objectives tied to a public policy purpose and shared governance (Mayne et al, 2003).

Studies of effective networks, such as the one by Provan and Kenis (2008), describe how such networks have a good fit in the structural (e.g. governance, size, geographical spread) and the relational (type and level of cooperation and available expertise and competencies) contingency of the network, such as a network that has little cooperation between the members of the network needing strong central governance. Review studies by CUREE (2005) and West (2010) suggest a number factors that play a role in effective networks in education, such as reciprocity between stakeholders, institutional relationships, transparency of expectations and review of progress, continuity and regularity in membership, acknowledgement of contributions of members, continual consultation and belief in the collaborative process. We will analyse the functioning of the network on these features and particularly:

− Social capital in networks (social relations between people in the network, with external shareholders and stakeholders, and the resources and knowledge they exchange)
− Trust
− Goals and outcome differentiation (shared values and goals, explicit versus implicit goals)
− Mix of partner organizations (capacity, size, structure, maturity, credibility of participants, homogeneity of network and similarity of partners)
− Patterns of interactions (frequency and reciprocity and content of interactions)
− Level of available resources (financial, human, physical)
− Structure of the partnering arrangement (level of shared governance, centralized/decentralized, information, exclusion, control, switching mechanism, regional proximity)
− HRM issues (clarity of roles and responsibilities, opportunities for career development within the network, identity and how individual partners identify themselves with/in the network)
− Stability of partnering arrangement (durability over time and adaptability to change, high barriers to enter or leave, repeated play)
− Degree of formalization of agreements (agreed decision-making roles, network manager and quality of leadership of the network)

The following aspects are specific for participating countries:
− Netherlands: monitoring of pupil guidance and placement of children
− Northern-Ireland: increased collaboration across service providers, increased evaluation capacity, improvement of network/school culture and quality of network leadership

– Bulgaria: the school network was created for the purposes of the project – developing and testing new frameworks for peer review and polycentric inspections.

2.3 Network-level outcomes (e.g. sharing resources, joint CPD)

Network-level outcomes go beyond the remit of individual schools or service providers and include the attainment of positive outcomes that could not normally be achieved by individual organizational participants acting independently. Outcomes might include open communication, strengthened network capacity and production of knowledge to solve problems that are relevant for the entire network and go beyond the remit of each individual school in, for example, addressing low achievement orientation in communities, lack of homework support, or improve service provision and integration of services across the network such as access to specialized education programmes (e.g. for gifted students). These practices will be different for different types of networks, depending on specific local issues that need to be addressed. For each country the following network-level outcomes have been identified:

– England: sharing resources, joint CPD, improvement activities, support, joint initial teacher training
– Netherlands: quality of individual schools (particularly system of pupil care as that impacts on the network), all children are placed in a school and no children at home, effective use of resources and finances, transition of students, balanced enrolment/balanced distribution of special needs children among mainstream schools, satisfaction of parents and students, placement of children, functioning of network coordinator and authority, uninterrupted learning.
– Northern-Ireland: transition of students, offering of 24 courses across the network, streamlining of services, increased test scores in the region, sharing resources, number of students attending, progression of students
– Bulgaria: student achievement (entrance and exit data), sharing good practices on common problems and development of new practices in the following areas: inclusive education and working with students with special needs, school-family relations, in-service teacher training, satisfaction of partners with collaboration and value for their school
– All: increase in student achievement performance of schools in the network, increase in attendance patterns, increase in transition to further education, increase of retention of students (lower dropout rates), streamlining services/sharing of services (can be unintended). Addressing low achievement in communities, transition of students, shared services.

2.4 Dysfunctional network-level effects

According to Mayne and Rieper (2003), collaborative arrangements often lose sight of the public objectives they are serving as there are many different levels of government involved in delivering the service, where each level may have different objectives. The complexity of managing the network and the partnership arrangement often pushes the public interest aside and creates a range of opportunistic behaviours and potential dysfunctional effects. In our case studies we are interested in learning about potential dysfunctional effects of networks, particularly when such dysfunctional effects arise as a result of inspections of networks. Dysfunctional effects we are interested in are:
1. Groupthink
2. Transaction costs
3. Power struggle
4. Single partners protecting their own independence and identity/ Competition between partners in the network
5. Degrading services to small partners
6. Diffusion of roles and responsibilities, limited clarity for clients who is responsible for what
7. Fragmentation of delivery services
8. Decreased motivation to collaborate, partners leaving the network
9. Knowledge is not equally shared between partners

10. Less weight placed on single school inspections
11. Single schools hiding behind the brand of the network/activities of the network (gaming, making sure low level performing schools are not inspected)
12. Openness to external stakeholders and transaction costs in negotiation competing agendas of different stakeholders.

Specific examples of potential dysfunctional effects in each country:
- England: selling improvement packages that are popular and driven by external accountability and easy to offer, shifting dysfunctional teachers across the network, increase of salary of network managers, making profit, competition between schools
- Netherlands: schools refusing special needs students, degrading their services to special needs students to force others schools in the network to take these students in.
- Northern-Ireland: collaborative competition, competitive collaboration, competition to collaborate to increase power and position within the network
- Bulgaria: power struggle, competition between partners in the network, diffusion of roles and responsibilities, limited clarity who is responsible for what, decreased motivation to collaborate, less weight placed on single school inspections, who 'leads' the network

2.5 External context

External context is the environment in which networks and the Inspectorate of Education function and which impacts on the effect of 'polycentric' inspections. We will look at the following features of the external context:
- Resources, support from the community for network collaboration
- Competition between schools in the network (do they service the same area?, regional proximity)
- Socio-economic context of the network
- Legislative position of networks and what they should collaborate on
- Structure of education system and (changes in) national policies
- External support for the network
- Polycentricness of education system and who are the key stakeholders

The following elements of context are specific to each country:
- England: marketization, changes in assessment and inspection system, role and position of RSCs, available databases on existing networks, national policy on MATs and Ofsted's brand and power.
- Netherlands: financial incentive to take on special needs students, allocation of budget to network authority, collaboration with local council, national policy on inclusive education, support by PO-raad to networks
- Bulgaria: network was established for project so cannot share budgets or resources, focus on sharing knowledge, strong competition between schools, changes in structure of the education system; changing roles and responsibilities of Inspectorates of Education due to new Education Act (10.2015), inspections will be carried out by an independent body
- Northern-Ireland: Due to the resource requirements of the area inspections ('usually a 10 to 15-day block model where evidence is gathered across two or three weeks'[1]), there is a need to look at less resource intensive solutions to carrying out area inspections. There is also a need to look at objective gaps between single unit inspections and polycentric inspections.

We will look at interactions between these variables over time, and specifically how network functioning and network outcomes (both positive and dysfunctional) change as a result of both internal and external

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[1] http://www.etini.gov.uk/index/what-we-do/types-of-inspection-amended-2.pdf

evaluation practices, how these changes are affected by external context, and how evaluation practices (particularly inspections) change as a result of changes in the networks. The following framework summarizes the key relations we are interested in:

Figure 1. Conceptual framework for case studies
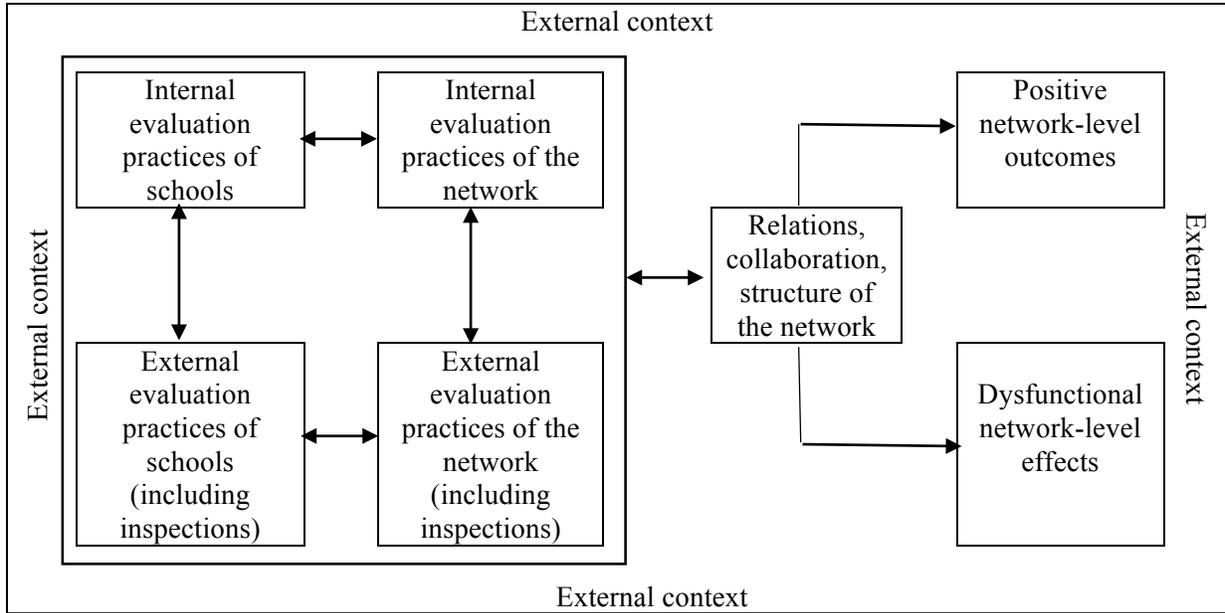
3. Timeline of data collection and instruments in each country

There are ideally four time points of data collection: before, during and at two intervals after the inspection of the network. However, as the implementation of 'polycentric' inspection models is different across the four countries, the data collection points will also differ, allowing us to look at different time points of change. Differences between countries are:

Northern-Ireland: the area-based inspection took place end of 2009, with the report published in April 2010; there are no new area-based inspection scheduled because of the resource requirements of single school inspections. Quality assured inspections are taking place by district inspectors, but on an ongoing 4-monthly basis. There will be no pre-inspection data collection as the area-based inspections have already taken place. Data collection will include retrospective account of how inspections took place and how the network prepared for area-based inspections. There will be no observation of the area-based inspections

England: informal network will not receive focused inspections but pre/post data collection will be organized around peer reviews and look at relation between peer reviews and single school inspections. The peer review will be interviewed. The second case study will include a Multi Academy Trust who has already received a (polycentric) focused inspection; the case study will collect data retrospectively (similar to Northern Ireland) but will exclude observations of focused inspections.

Netherlands and Bulgaria will include the four time points of data collection (including pre-inspection data collection). Netherlands, and Bulgaria will include observation of inspections of the network.

The table below provides an overview of the key variables for the case studies, including a time table and instruments for the data collection. The table has been adapted to each country to outline country-specific data collection (e.g. who will be interviewed and when: representative of the network - network leaders, network manager-, representatives of a selection of schools -heads, teachers).

Table 1. General template of timeline and instruments for data collection

Variables	Prior to inspection (ideally 1-2 weeks)	Inspection	Immediately inspection (ideally 2-3 weeks after inspection)	6 months after inspection
	Interviews with the network. The sample needs to include: - The network manager/coordinator, representative of the network authority - Representatives of committees/bodies functioning on the level of the network - One representative on the management AND teaching level of ALL the schools/service providers in the network Interviews with inspectors (and/or peer reviewers) of the network Questionnaires given out to those not covered in interviews (as a back up) Data and document analyses (e.g. inspection reports, performance data, self-evaluation/peer review reports, school improvement plan)	Shadowing/ observation	Interviews with the network. The sample needs to include: - The network manager/coordinator, representative of the network authority - Representatives of committees/bodies functioning on the level of the network - One representative on the management AND teaching level of ALL the schools/service providers in the network Interviews with inspectors (and/or peer reviewers) of the network Questionnaires given out to those not covered in interviews (as a back up) Data and document analyses (e.g. inspection reports, performance data, self-evaluation/peer review reports, school improvement plan)	Interviews with the network. The sample needs to include: - The network manager/coordinator, representative of the network authority - Representatives of committees/bodies functioning on the level of the network - One representative on the management AND teaching level of ALL the schools/service providers in the network Interviews with inspectors (and/or peer reviewers) of the network Questionnaires given out to those not covered in interviews (as a back up) Data and document analyses (e.g. inspection reports, performance data, self-evaluation/peer review reports, school improvement plan)
Evaluation practices (internal evaluation, peer review, inspections of both single schools and the network)	X	X	X (feedback addressing network-functioning, who got the feedback; perceived differences in single/network-level inspections, were	X (changes in peer review, internal evaluations, is there increased clarity on what a high quality network is)

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			network-level inspections implemented according to school/network expectations, satisfaction with network-level inspections)	
Relationships, collaboration, structure of the network	X	X	X (intentions to use inspection feedback to change network functioning, who takes ownership of inspection findings)	X
Network-level outcomes (e.g. sharing resources, joint CPD)	X	X	X (intentions to use inspection feedback to improve network-level outcomes)	X (action plans on improvement)
Potential dysfunctional effects (transition costs)	X	X (inspectors addressing dysfunctional effects during visit)	X (whether inspector addressed dysfunctional effects, are all schools provided with inspection reports, are schools becoming aware of dysfunctional effects because of inspections)	X (action plans on improvement)
External context	X	X	X (changes when inspection report comes out, additional support provided when network is not functioning)	X

3.1 Timeline and instruments for data collection in England

Table 2a. Timeline and instruments for data collection in England: informal network of 3 primary schools (and NAHT peer review)

Variables	Prior to peer review (ideally 1-2 weeks)	During Peer review/inspection	Immediately after inspection (ideally 2-3 weeks after inspection)	3/4 months after peer review
England-specific questions for data collection:	Interviews with: - head teachers of 3 schools - teacher/head of department in each school - lead of peer review Questionnaires to those not included in interview Data and documents to analyse: website, newsletters, prospectus, policies, Ofsted reports, DfE student achievement data, self-evaluation and preparatory documentation for peer review and/or inspection	Observation of peer review of network Inspection of individual schools Data and documents to analyse: Ofsted documentation, feedback received during the visit, emphasis of observations/documents/interviews. Comparison with self-evaluation and documentation for peer review and/or inspection	Interviews with: - head teacher of school - other teachers/head of department in each school - Ofsted (lead) school inspector of each school Questionnaires to those not included in interview Data and documents to analyse: website, newsletters, prospectus, policies, Ofsted reports, DfE student achievement data, self-evaluation and preparatory documentation for peer review and/or inspection	Interviews with: - head teachers of 3 schools - teacher/head of department in each school - lead of peer review - Ofsted school inspector of each school - Regional School Commissioner - Regional HMI Questionnaires to those not included in interview Data and documents to analyse: website, newsletters, prospectus, policies, Ofsted reports, DfE student achievement data, self-evaluation and preparatory documentation for peer review and/or inspection
Evaluation practices (internal evaluation, peer review, inspections of both single schools and the network)	Different interview questions for Headteacher/other staff/lead reviewer/inspector (if inspection is carried	- How are peer review results taken into account when assessing the quality of individual schools, is it used as an evidence base and to what extent are peer review findings and assessments informing	- How have the peer review results been taken into account when assessing the quality of individual schools, was it used as an evidence base and to what extent are	Different interview questions for Headteacher/other staff. See below for full interview schedules

Relationships, collaboration, structure of the network Network-level outcomes (e.g. sharing resources, joint CPD) Potential dysfunctional effects (transition costs) External context	out). See below for full interview schedules	Ofsted grades? Also, vice-versa – the extent to which peer review is informed by Ofsted judgements or preparation for a forthcoming inspection - Is the establishment of the peer review impacting on the assessment of the quality of leadership? - What feedback on the quality of the school and particularly on collaboration in the network/network-level outcomes is given to the school?	peer review findings and assessments informing Ofsted grades? - What follow-up on the inspection visit is scheduled by Ofsted? - Is the peer review network providing single schools with support in following up on inspection visits? - Are inspection findings incorporated in the peer review? - What feedback on the quality of the school and particularly on collaboration in the network/network-level outcomes was given to the school? - What changes are schools planning, particularly in their collaboration with other schools?	

Table 2b. Timeline and instruments for data collection in England: Multi Academy Trust (and focused inspections)

Variables	Retrospective (interviews/questionnaires with MATs that have received focused inspection letters)
England-specific questions for data collection:	Interviews with: - head teachers of schools - teacher/head of department in each school - representative of trust - Ofsted school inspector of each school and lead inspector of focused inspection - Regional School Commissioner - Regional HMI Questionnaires to those not included in interview Data and documents to analyse: website, newsletters, prospectus, policies, DfE student achievement data, self-evaluation and Ofsted focused inspection letters/ Ofsted single school inspection reports, funding agreements, letters of delegation, data systems in the trust
Evaluation practices (internal evaluation, peer review, inspections of both single schools and the network) Relationships, collaboration, structure of the network Network-level outcomes (e.g. sharing resources, joint CPD) Potential dysfunctional effects (transition costs) External context	- What changes have schools implemented, particularly in their collaboration with other schools? - Any changes in their involvement in the peer reviews/school internal evaluations, and why? - Any other collaboration with schools in and across the trust, Ofsted, HMI, RSC developed over the last couple of months? - Any preparation underway for upcoming peer reviews or Ofsted inspections? - Roles and responsibilities within the trust (centralized/decentralized; how much of schools' budgets is sliced and allocated to the trust?) - Rate of expansion - Collaboration between HMI, Ofsted, RSC, head teacher boards, LEA, DfE in monitoring and intervening in schools/the trust - Internal accountability/evaluation/data collection within the trust

Table 2c. Timeline and instruments for data collection in England: Multi Academy Trust (and focused inspections) that did not have a focused inspection yet (provided we can find one)

Variables	Prior to inspection (ideally 1-2 weeks)	Inspection	Immediately inspection (ideally 2-3 weeks after inspection)	6 months after inspection
England-specific questions for data collection:	Interviews with: - head teachers of schools - teacher/head of department in each school - representative of trust - Ofsted school inspector of each school and lead inspector of focused inspection - Regional School Commissioner - Regional HMI Questionnaires to those not included in interview Data and documents to analyse: website, newsletters, prospectus, policies, Ofsted reports, DfE student achievement data, self-evaluation and preparatory documentation for peer review and/or inspection	Shadowing/ observation of peer review of network Inspection of schools/network	Interviews with: - head teachers of schools - teacher/head of department in each school - representative of trust - Ofsted school inspector of each school and lead inspector of focused inspection - Regional School Commissioner - Regional HMI Questionnaires to those not included in interview Data and documents to analyse: website, newsletters, prospectus, policies, Ofsted reports, DfE student achievement data, self-evaluation and preparatory documentation for peer review and/or inspection	Interviews with: - head teachers of schools - teacher/head of department in each school - representative of trust - Ofsted school inspector of each school and lead inspector of focused inspection - Regional School Commissioner - Regional HMI Questionnaires to those not included in interview Data and documents to analyse: website, newsletters, prospectus, policies, Ofsted reports, DfE student achievement data, self-evaluation and preparatory documentation for peer review and/or inspection
Evaluation practices (internal evaluation, peer review, inspections of both single schools and the network) Relationships, collaboration, structure of the network	- How did this partnership of schools come together? - Whose decision was it to collaborate? - Have schools worked together (and who in the school)?	- What are specific topics for the focused inspection? - How is the outcome letter informed by inspections of single schools?	- What strengths and weaknesses are outlined in the outcome letter? Is it clear to the MAT who is responsible for the implementation of focused inspection findings and what are plans to follow up on	- What changes have schools implemented, particularly in their collaboration with other schools? - Any changes in their involvement in the peer

Network-level outcomes (e.g. sharing resources, joint CPD) Potential dysfunctional effects (transition costs) External context	- What other networks are schools part of? Which one is most influential in shaping their work, and why? - Do schools know their regional HMI and RSC? How, has there been any kind of collaboration/ interaction? - Has there been any collaboration between Ofsted, RSC and regional HMI in preparing for the visit? - Is the trust providing single schools with support in preparing for inspection visits? - Is the trust providing any other kind of support or centralized coordination? - How are schools and the trust preparing for focused inspections? - Are Ofsted inspectors, regional HMI and RSCs collaborating in preparing for the visit?	- Is there any involvement of the trust in the focused inspection, what kind of involvement? - Are Ofsted inspectors, regional HMI and RSCs collaborating when undertaking the focused inspections? - How are peer review results or evaluation activities of the MAT taken into account when assessing the quality of individual schools and the MAT? Is it used as an evidence base and to what extent are peer review findings and assessments informing Ofsted grades? Is the establishment of the peer review impacting on the assessment of the quality of leadership? - What feedback on the quality of the school and particularly on collaboration in the network/network-	these findings (both from the trust as from HMI, RSC, Ofsted)? - - How have the peer review results been taken into account when assessing the quality of individual schools, was it used as an evidence base and to what extent are peer review findings and assessments informing Ofsted grades? - Was the establishment of the peer review impacting on the assessment of the quality of leadership? - What follow-up on the inspection visit is scheduled by Ofsted/regional HMI/RSC? - Is the trust providing single schools with support in following up on inspection visits? Are inspection findings incorporated in the evaluation activities of the network? - What feedback on the quality of the school and particularly on collaboration in the network/network-level outcomes was given to the school? - What changes are schools planning, particularly in their collaboration with other schools?	reviews/school internal evaluations, and why? - Any other collaboration with schools in and across the trust, Ofsted, HMI, RSC developed over the last couple of months? - Any preparation underway for upcoming peer reviews or Ofsted inspections?

		level outcomes is given to the school?		

3.2 Timeline and instruments for data collection in the Netherlands

Table 3. Timeline and instruments for data collection in the Netherlands

Variables	Prior to inspection (ideally 1-2 weeks)	Inspection	Immediately inspection (ideally 2-3 weeks after inspection)	6 months after inspection
Netherlands-specific questions for data collection:	Interviews with: - Inspector of the network SPOE - Manager of SPOE - School inspectors of each school - Head teachers of schools (a selection) Questionnaires to: Head teachers, teachers, … Data and documents to analyse: Website, newsletters, Inspection reports of schools and the network, preparatory documentation for inspection, support plan	Shadowing/ observation of peer review of network Inspection of schools/network	Interviews with: - Inspector of the network SPOE - Manager of SPOE - School inspectors of each school - Head teachers of schools (a selection) Questionnaires to: Head teachers, teachers, … Data and documents to analyse: Website, newsletters, documentation about inspection	Interviews with: - Inspector of the network SPOE - Manager of SPOE - School inspectors of each school - Head teachers of schools (a selection) Questionnaires to: Head teachers, teachers, … Data and documents to analyse: Website, newsletters, Inspection reports of schools and the network
Evaluation practices (internal evaluation, peer review, inspections of both single schools and the network) Relationships, collaboration, structure of the network Network-level outcomes (e.g. sharing resources, joint CPD) Potential dysfunctional effects (transition costs)	- How did this partnership of schools come together? - What are the advantages and disadvantages of being one-third part of a formal network? - What is the reason for the catholic schools not to join SPOE? - Have schools in the network worked together (and who in the school)? - Do schools know the school inspector that visits the school?	- What are specific topics for the inspection (of schools and of the network)? - Are the inspectors of the schools collaborating with the inspector of the network and vice versa? - What feedback on the quality of the schools and particularly on	- What feedback (strengths and weaknesses) is given to the school and to the network? Is it clear to the school / network who is responsible for the implementation of the inspection feedback? - Are the schools aware of the inspection feedback the network received, and vice versa? - Are inspection findings of the schools incorporated in	- What strengths and weaknesses are outlined in the feedback report? Is it clear to the school / network who is responsible for the implementation of the inspection results and what are plans to follow up on these results? - Was there any attention paid to the relationship and collaboration between the schools and the network in the inspection reports?

| External context | - Has there been any collaboration between the Dutch Inspectorate and the schools in preparing for this school inspection?
- Has the school changed the level of provision as a result of being a member of the network (e.g. concerning inclusive education)? And if so, how? E.g. has it limited their offer of services, or expanded it?
- What contextual factors do you recognize as influential for the network in a positive and negative way?
- What role does the school attendance officer play within the network? Is he/she collaborating with the schools and network to minimize the amount of children not attending school? | collaboration in the network was given to the school?
- Does the inspector takes into account the contextual factors of the schools / network? | the evaluation activities of the network?
- What changes are schools and the network planning based on the inspection feedback, particularly in the collaboration with each other and the improvement of network-level outcomes? | - Have schools in the network worked together to improve (and who in the school)?
- What changes have schools implemented, particularly in their collaboration with other schools?
- What changes has the network implemented? |

3.3 Timeline and instruments for data collection in Northern Ireland

Table 4. Timeline and instruments for data collection in Northern Ireland

Variables	Post Inspection
Northern Ireland-specific questions for data collection:	Interviews with: - Inspectors and district inspectors - Senior Management of the Inspectorate - School inspectors of each school in the network - Head teachers, heads of departments and teachers of schools (a selection) - Questionnaires to: Head teachers, heads of departments and teachers of schools … Data and documents to analyse: Website, newsletters, Inspection reports of schools and the network
Evaluation practices (internal evaluation, peer review, inspections of both single schools and the network) Relationships, collaboration, structure of the network Network-level outcomes (e.g. sharing resources, joint CPD) Potential dysfunctional effects (transition costs) External context	- How did this partnership of the network come together? - Who is part of the network and what role do they have? - What are the advantages and disadvantages of being part of a network that consists of formal and informal sub networks (e.g. Post Primary ALC and Primary ALNC)? How does this have an effect on relationships within the network? - Are parents, students' part of the network? If so, what role do parents and students play in network decision making? - What changes have schools implemented, particularly in collaboration with other schools, members of the network? - What changes has the network implemented? - What changes have schools and the network planned based on the inspection feedback, particularly in the collaboration with each other and the improvement of network-level outcomes? - Are inspectors of schools collaborating with the inspector of the network and vice versa? - Have schools in the network worked together (and who in the school, e.g. Principals, Heads of Department, etc.)? - Are schools aware of the inspection feedback the network receives, and vice versa (and who in the school, e.g. Principals, Heads of Department, etc.) What evidence exists to suggest that this is the case? - Has the school changed the level of provision as a result of being a member of the network (e.g. concerning inclusive education)? And if so, how (e.g. has it decreased their offer of services, or expanded it)? - What new managerial/quality assurance/centralized roles, procedures have been established? - What are the factors necessary for network self-evaluation and polycentric inspection to mutually and beneficially co-exist? What model of polycentric evaluation co-existence should be applied (e.g. sequential, parallel model)

	- Which network-related activities, meetings have been scheduled? To what extent have network-related activities been integrated into existing school-level practices/workload? - Has the establishment of the network created additional workload, and what does that exist of? If yes, is it supported financially or in other ways? Does it contribute to school/network-level outcomes? - How has/is the inspection process impacting on this? Which element or aspect of the inspection process specifically (e.g. of individual schools, frameworks, network-level inspections)? - How can the Area based model of inspection be more effective in terms of Inspection resources, personnel required to carry out an Area Inspection? What might it look like? - What factors need to be taken into account when operating a dual model of school and polycentric inspections? - How can you find a balance between school inspections and polycentric inspections? What might this look like? - What contextual factors do you recognize as influential for the network in a positive and negative way? - Does the inspector take into account the contextual factors of the schools / network? - How important is it for inspectors to understand the cultural aspect of the area, network and why?

3.4 Timeline and instruments for data collection in Bulgaria

Table 5. Timeline and instruments for data collection in Bulgaria

Variables	Prior to inspection (ideally 1-2 weeks)	Inspection	Immediately inspection (ideally 2-3 weeks after inspection)	6 months after inspection
Bulgarian-specific questions for data collection:	Interviews with: 10 principals and of SIE deputy chief-inspector Questionnaires to: teachers from 10 Sofia schools, inspectors from SIE Data and documents to analysis: students performance (external evaluation), school self-evaluation data, school year plan, RIE year plan, plans for particular inspections Framework for peer review, inspection framework	Shadowing/ observation of peer review of network Inspection of schools/network	Interviews with: 10 principals and of SIE deputy chief-inspector Questionnaires to: teachers from 10 Sofia schools, inspectors from SIE Data and documents to analyse: inspection reports, school improvement measures/plan, follow-up inspection plan	Interviews with: 10 principals and of SIE deputy chief-inspector Questionnaires to: teachers from 10 Sofia schools, inspectors from SIE Data and documents to analyse: follow-up inspection reports, school improvement plans, network joint measures/establishments/documents, revised/added frameworks for peer-review and inspection (polycentric)
Evaluation practices (internal evaluation, peer review, inspections of both single schools and the network) Relationships, collaboration, structure of the network Network-level outcomes (e.g. sharing resources, joint CPD) Potential dysfunctional effects (transition costs) External context	- Why did schools join Sofia network of schools? What expectations they have had? - What do they hope to gain from it? - Have schools worked together/collaborated before joining the network? - What are the advantages and disadvantages of being part of that network? - Is the peer review network providing single schools with	- How are peer review results taken into account when assessing the quality of individual schools, is it used as an evidence base and to what extent are peer review findings and assessments informing SIE reports? - What feedback on the quality of the school and	- What feedback (strengths and weaknesses) is given to the school and to the network? Is it clear to the school / network who is responsible for the implementation of the inspection feedback? - How have the peer review results been taken into account when assessing the quality of individual schools, was it used as an evidence base and to what extent are peer review findings and assessments informing SIE report?	- What strengths and weaknesses are outlined in the feedback report? Is it clear to the school / network who is responsible for the implementation of the inspection results and what are plans to follow up on these results? - Was there any attention paid to the relationship and collaboration between the schools and the network in the inspection reports? - Have schools in the network worked together to improve (and who in the school)?

support in preparing for inspection visits? - How external factors enable or threat functioning of the network (legislation, good practices, funding, etc.) - How do schools deal with parents and extended family? - What are the socio-economic characteristics of the students, region, network schools? How does it influence the network? - Are there students with different ethnic background? How this influences individual schools and the network?	particularly on collaboration in the network/network-level outcomes is given to the school?	- What follow-up on the inspection visit is scheduled by SIE? - Is the peer review network providing single schools with support in following up on inspection visits? Are inspection findings incorporated in the peer review? - What feedback on the quality of the school and particularly on collaboration in the network/network-level outcomes was given to the school? - Are inspection findings of the schools incorporated in the evaluation activities of the network? - What changes are schools planning, particularly in their collaboration with other schools?	- What changes have schools implemented, particularly in their collaboration with other schools? - Any changes in their involvement in the peer reviews/school internal evaluations, and why? - Is there improved trust, collaboration and satisfaction among network member schools? Desire to continue networking? - Any new collaborations established as result of functioning of Sofia network? - Is there sharing and spreading good practices of the network with other actors/stakeholders? - Is the inspectorate planning changes in the inspection framework and practices as result of testing polycentric modes of inspection? -

4. Guideline pre and post interviews with network

The following interview questions are for the partners in the network. The sample needs to include:
- The network manager/coordinator, representative of the network authority
- Representatives of committees/bodies functioning on the level of the network
- One representative of the management AND of teachers/front line service providers of ALL the schools/service providers in the network

Follow up questionnaires can be send to those not included in the interviews.

Each country will adapt the following set of general questions to the specific country context; questions also need to be adapted for pre and post inspection/peer review interviews, as well as adapted to the specific respondent.

A. Introduction

Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed by us. The interview will take approximately 60 minutes. The interview will be tape recorded and transcribed for research purposes only; the final report will not include any identifying information and we will make sure to check our findings with you before publication. Please feel free to withdraw from the interview at any time with no need to further explain.

Outline country-specific aims and set up of the project and specific procedures for reporting.

B. Defining the network

Structure of the network
1. Who is part of this network, and what is the purpose of the network?
2. Who decides that these actors are part of the network?
3. How are these actors (stakeholders, other service providers) involved in the network, what is their role?
4. What are the different roles and responsibilities of actors in the network; who is responsible for the functioning of the network?
5. Why do individual actors want to be part of the network?
6. How, and on what topics do actors in this network cooperate? What type of knowledge do they exchange?
7. What are the government arrangement of this network? E.g. who decides on what? How is this agreed on and what regulations are in place for decision-making and cooperation? What is the structure of collaboration and governance of the network? What regulations are there about decision making and co-operation? What regulations are in place for the governance of this network?
8. What role does geographical/moral/cultural proximity play in the functioning of the network?
9. What is the size of the network and how does this effect its functioning?
10. How effective is this network? What do individual schools and teachers think of the network? How are they made aware of the network or how is their work impacted by the network?
11. How has the network changed over time? And why? What caused the change?
12. How flexible is the network in redefining its purpose and members?
13. Is the network divided into sub-networks with specific responsibilities? Does the network have a clear vision and goals that are understood and supported by all members?
14. Is the governance structure a good fit for you network (legislative/non legislative)?
15. Is attention being paid to both the management of the network, and management in the network?
16. Is the network appropriately resourced to do its work?
17. Does the network have both the internal and the external legitimacy it requires?

18. Are all members' perspectives taken into account when making decisions and is there a shared belief in the collaboration process.
19. Are there opportunities for career and professional development?

Relationships and collaboration
1. Are all the members similarly engaged with the network, or are there members who 'set the tone'?
2. If you had to draw out the position of each member within the network, what would that look like (e.g. is there one partner central in the network, who is on the boundary)?
3. Who is trusted/distrusted and why?
4. Who is the 'go to point' for specific type of knowledge?
5. What is the position of the Inspectorate/lead peer reviewer in the network?
6. Is the network/relationship structure evolving as expected and contributing positively to the work of the network?
7. Are there multiple levels of involvement?
8. What do individual schools and teachers and other stakeholders think of the Network?

Legislative position of the network
1. Is there legislation underpinning the establishment of the network? If so, which legislation?
2. Is the network publicly or privately funded?
3. Are you allowed to share resources in the network? What kind of resources do you share?
4. Is the resource sharing established by legislations? Or is it a network decision?
5. What is the current national policy on school networks?

C. Network-level outcomes
1. How effective is the network?
2. How is the work of individual members impacted by the network?

The following questions are country-specific:
England: sharing resources, joint CPD, improvement activities, support, joint initial teacher training

Netherlands: quality of individual schools (particularly system of pupil care as that impacts on the network), all children are placed in a school and no children at home, effective use of resources and finances, transition of students, balanced enrolment/balanced distribution of special needs children among mainstream schools, satisfaction of parents and students, placement of children, functioning of network coordinator and authority, uninterrupted learning.

Northern-Ireland: transition of students, offering of 24 courses across the network, streamlining of services, increased test scores in the region, sharing resources, number of students attending, progression of students

Bulgaria: student achievement (entrance and exit data), sharing good practices on common problems and development of new practices in the following areas: inclusive education and working with students with special needs, school-family relations, in-service teacher training, satisfaction of partners with collaboration and value for their school

All: increase in student achievement performance of schools in the network, increase in attendance patterns, increase in transition to further education, increase of retention of students (lower drop out rates), streamlining services/sharing of services (can be unintended). Addressing low achievement in communities, transition of students, shared services,…

D. Evaluation practices of/in the network
Inspection framework

1. What does the framework for inspections and/or peer reviews of networks/clusters of schools look like, which standards are included and what is evaluated?
2. To what extent does the framework include standards to evaluate network-level outcomes or to evaluate collaboration between schools/service providers?
3. Are there criteria to come to an overall judgement on the effectiveness of the network, or of schools/service providers within the network? What are these criteria?
4. To what extent do schools/actors in the network have a role in informing the inspection/peer review framework, or in bringing in topics for inspection or peer reviews?
5. Who decides on whether the network, or school/service provider within the network is effective/good?
6. How were the standards/criteria for peer review/inspection developed and what informed them (e.g. research, legislation, other accountability/monitoring frameworks)?

Evaluation process/inspection visit and follow-up
7. To what extent does the peer review/inspection framework take into account/build on school/network self-evaluation and peer review?
8. How are the schools/other actors (and potentially other stakeholders) involved in setting the agenda for inspection visits, in generating and collecting and interpreting evaluation data and in making judgements based on data?
9. How are assessments communicated and to whom?
10. How is ownership of findings created or enforced?
11. How/who decides on how to act on inspection/peer review findings and how is/should this be communicated to/with the Inspectorate?

Embedding in regulatory context and clarity of formal responsibilities and roles
12. Who is responsible for which part of the evaluation and improvement process (standard-setting, design and implementation of inspection measures, collecting and analyzing findings, making judgements and deciding on actions)? To which extent are these responsibilities set in legislation or otherwise regulated or negotiated?
13. What is the regulatory/legislative context of the framework? Does it support inspections or the forming of networks? How? Does it support involvement of schools/actors in the network or other stakeholders to decide on the standards in the framework?

E. Impact of polycentric inspections
1. What are the benefits and pitfalls of polycentric inspections; e.g. of inspecting (or peer reviewing) networks of schools, and of sharing inspection responsibilities with (networks of) schools?
2. What are ways to improve these types of inspections and what changes to these inspection models are planned/needed?
3. What is the impact of these type of inspections on individual schools, the network and potentially other stakeholders (specifically for this network)? How do you know? What's the evidence of impact?
4. Are there differences in how single schools generally prepare for single school inspections versus polycentric inspections?
5. What elements/aspects of polycentric inspections have an impact?
6. How is ownership of findings created or enforced?
7. Are there consequences from 'polycentric inspections'? What are they?
8. Does the Inspectorate collaborate with other stakeholders to ensure that schools/school networks improve? How? Why these stakeholders? Why not?
9. How do they have an impact? What are the mechanisms of change? On which types of networks do you expect to have the most impact? And why?
10. What are potential unintended consequences of polycentric inspections/inspections of networks?

F. Potential dysfunctional effects of polycentric inspections of networks (transition costs)

Groupthink
1. How free are you as a network member to express different views, or develop different practices?
2. Are current dominant practices in the network set by the external inspection/accountability framework?
3. How has/is the inspection process impacting on this? Which element or aspect of the inspection process specifically (e.g. of individual schools, frameworks, network-level inspections)?

Transaction costs
4. What new managerial/quality assurance/centralized roles, procedures have been established?
5. Which network-related activities, meetings have been scheduled? To what extent have network-related activities been integrated into existing school-level practices/workload?
6. Has the establishment of the network created additional workload, and what does that exist of? And if yes, is it supported financially or in other ways? Does it contribute to school-level/network-level outcomes?
7. How has/is the inspection process impacting on this? Which element or aspect of the inspection process specifically (e.g. of individual schools, frameworks, network-level inspections)?

Single partners protecting their own independence and identity
8. Is there any part of your service provision or expertise that you would <u>not</u> want to share with other partners in the network? If so, why not?
9. How has/is the inspection process impacting on this? Which element or aspect of the inspection process specifically (e.g. of individual schools, frameworks, network-level inspections)?

Competition between partners in the network
10. Is there some level of competition between partners in the network (e.g. in attracting students, teachers, resources)
11. How has/is the inspection process impacting on this? Which element or aspect of the inspection process specifically (e.g. of individual schools, frameworks, network-level inspections)?

Power struggle
12. Does membership of the network lead to conflict? Has your membership of the network resulted in any conflictual situations emerging? And if so, what? How is being resolved, do you expect it to be resolved?
13. Who sets the agenda of the network?
14. How has/is the inspection process impacting on this? Which element or aspect of the inspection process specifically (e.g. of individual schools, frameworks, network-level inspections)?

Degrading of services (e.g. degrading support to special needs students so that other partners in the network have to take over the support and education of special needs students):
15. Have you changed the level of your provision as a result of being a member of the network? And if so, how? E.g. have you limited your offer of services, or expanded it?
16. How has/is the inspection process impacting on this? Which element or aspect of the inspection process specifically (e.g. of individual schools, frameworks, network-level inspections)?

Diffusion of roles and responsibilities
17. Ask all network partners and their stakeholders: what are they responsible for in terms of network-level outcomes and what are responsibilities of others? How clear is that for clients or users of the

network-level outcomes? (e.g. NI: area-learning communities, schools, Inspectorate, DfE, local political party, public service providers in the community)

18. How has/is the inspection process impacting on this? Which element or aspect of the inspection process specifically (e.g. of individual schools, frameworks, network-level inspections)?

Fragmentation of delivery services

19. Have you chosen to specialize in offering specific services as a result of being a member of the network?

20. How has/is the inspection process impacting on this? Which element or aspect of the inspection process specifically (e.g. of individual schools, frameworks, network-level inspections)?

Decreased motivation to collaborate, partners leaving the network

21. Do all the partners participate equally in the network?

22. Have partners left the network and why?

23. How has/is the inspection process impacting on this? Which element or aspect of the inspection process specifically (e.g. of individual schools, frameworks, network-level inspections)?

Knowledge is not equally shared between partners

24. What knowledge is shared between partners, how often, how, between who?

25. Do all partners have equal access to network-related information (refer to specific network-level outcomes)? And if not, why not?

26. How has/is the inspection process impacting on this? Which element or aspect of the inspection process specifically (e.g. of individual schools, frameworks, network-level inspections)?

Less weight placed on single school inspections

27. Which type of inspection feedback is used for improvement/drives improvement most? (single school/network-level inspection feedback)

28. How has/is the inspection process impacting on this? Which element or aspect of the inspection process specifically (e.g. of individual schools, frameworks, network-level inspections)?

Single schools hiding behind the brand of the network/activities of the network (gaming, making sure low level performing schools are not inspected)

29. How as a network did you prepare for the inspection? Did you change practices in order to maximize the inspection assessment/grade, develop new protocols or procedures to be assessed positively?

30. What are some of the network-practices that you would not want to outline to the Inspectorate? Specific aspects of the network that you don't want the Inspectorate to know about?

31. How has/is the inspection process impacting on this? Which element or aspect of the inspection process specifically (e.g. of individual schools, frameworks, network-level inspections)?

Openness to external stakeholders and transaction costs in negotiation competing agendas of different stakeholders.

32. Who are relevant external stakeholders for the network?

33. What are their expectations of the network?

34. Do external stakeholders have a shared understanding or goal of/for the network?

35. How do you address a situation where there are competing goals for the network?

36. How has/is the inspection process impacting on this? Which element or aspect of the inspection process specifically (e.g. of individual schools, frameworks, network-level inspections)?

For each case: use the general question and detail it for specific context (e.g.: replace 'network-level outcome' with country/case-specific outcome)

F. External context of the network

Resources
1. Do schools and the network receive enough resources to provide a good level of education and evaluate and improve (network-level) outcomes? If not, how does this influence the education you provide?
2. Who provides these resources?
3. How are resources allocated within and across schools (who decides)?
4. Are there enough teachers, and are you content with the initial teacher training?

Socio-economic
5. Can you describe the socio-economic characteristics of the students / region the network is in?
6. Are there students from (different ethnic) minority backgrounds?
7. Is the number of students increasing or decreasing? ('Bevolkingsgroei/-krimp')
- *Bulgaria*: How do schools deal with parents mostly, or with extended family? What are the consequences for migration for the school? If there is migration (parents are leaving the region, but children stay and stay at school) in the region, (how) does it influence the network? How they are dealing with problems concerning the pupils?

Support from community
8. Do you receive adequate support from local authorities?
9. Are there positive relationships developed with local authorities during the past time?
10. Are there sufficient external community services provided for schools and students by other agencies?
11. Which partners support and/or pressurize the network to improve (in general and as a result of 'polycentric inspections', how/why?

5. Guideline pre and post interviews with Inspectors of the network

The following guideline contains questions for inspectors of the (schools in the) network.

A. Introduction

Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed by us. The interview will take approximately 60 minutes. The interview will be tape recorded and transcribed for research purposes only; the final report will not include any identifying information and we will make sure to check our findings with you before publication. Please feel free to withdraw from the interview at any time with no need to further explain.

Outline country-specific aims and set up of the project and specific procedures for reporting.

B. Defining the network to inspect
1. How was it decided to inspect this network and specific timing of inspection?
2. Who from the network (which actors, stakeholders, other service providers) is involved in the network inspection, what is their role?
3. Are there other stakeholders who should be, or are, involved in the inspections, perhaps on a more ad hoc basis?
4. How would you describe this network in terms of the relations within the network (trust, power), level of collaboration (any specific partner 'setting the tone'), and the governance structure?
5. Are there any network-level outcomes of this network, which ones? Do you know how they were decided on?
6. What has been your involvement with this network over the past year(s)?

B. Evaluation practices

Inspection framework
7. What does the framework for inspections and/or peer reviews of networks/clusters of schools look like, which standards are included and what is evaluated?
8. To what extent does the framework include standards to evaluate network-level outcomes or to evaluate collaboration between schools/service providers?
9. Are there criteria to come to an overall judgement on the effectiveness of the network, or of schools/service providers within the network? What are these criteria? How do you decide if the network is effective or ineffective (e.g. what are norm indicators, criteria for assessing effectiveness)?
10. To what extent do schools/actors in the network have a role in informing the inspection/peer review framework, or in bringing in topics for inspection or peer reviews?
11. How were the standards/criteria for peer review/inspection developed and what informed them (e.g. research, legislation, other accountability/monitoring frameworks)?
12. Who decides on whether the network, or school/service provider within the network is effective/good?
13. To what extent do schools/actors in the network have a role in informing the inspection framework, or in bringing in topics for inspection?
14. What is the relation between polycentric inspections and single school inspections?
15. What is the relation between the inspection standards to evaluate single schools versus the standards to evaluate the network?

Evaluation process/inspection visit and follow-up
16. How do inspectors prepare 'polycentric inspections'? Which data is collected and analysed prior to the visit? How is the schedule for the inspection visit informed, and what does it look like (which types of data collection and with whom)?

17. To what extent does/did the framework take into account/build on school/network self-evaluation and peer review?
18. How are/were the schools/other actors (and potentially other stakeholders) involved in setting the agenda for inspection visits, in generating and collecting and interpreting evaluation data and in making judgements based on data?
19. How are inspection assessments communicated and to whom?
20. How is ownership of findings created or enforced?
11. How/who decides on how the network should act on inspection/peer review findings and how is/should this be communicated to/with the Inspectorate?
12. Are there consequences for the 'polycentric inspections' (both formal as well as informal, as well as consequences enforced by the Inspectorate and other stakeholders in the system)?
13. Does the Inspectorate collaborate/liaise with other partners to ensure the network improves? How, what does this look like?
14. Is there any follow-up to the 'polycentric inspection', either by the Inspectorate or other partners in the system?

Embedding in regulatory context and clarity of formal responsibilities and roles
15. Who is responsible for which part of the evaluation and improvement process (standard-setting, design and implementation of inspection measures, collecting and analysing findings, making judgements and deciding on actions)? To which extent are these responsibilities set in legislation or otherwise regulated or negotiated?
16. What is the regulatory/legislative context of the framework? Does it support inspections or the forming of networks? How? Does it support involvement of schools/actors in the network or other stakeholders to decide on the standards in the framework?
17. Are there enough resources to implement 'polycentric inspections'? Do you expect the Inspectorate will be sufficiently resourced in the future to implement these types of inspections?

C. Impact of 'polycentric inspections' (positive and negative)
1. How do schools/the network prepare for 'polycentric inspections'? Are there differences in how different schools within the network prepare for 'polycentric inspections'? Are there differences with how single schools generally prepare for single school inspections versus polycentric inspections?
2. Do you think 'polycentric inspections' have an impact on the functioning of individual schools and of the network in general, and on this network specifically? Do you have any evidence or specific examples supporting your answer?
3. Do you think 'polycentric inspections' have had any dysfunctional effects in:
   a. Motivating (schools within the) network to develop 'groupthink'?
   b. Are current dominant practices in the network set by the external inspection/accountability framework?
   c. Increasing transaction costs within the network
   d. …
4. Are there specific inspection practices that have contributed to these positive and dysfunctional effects?
5. Which type of inspection feedback is used for improvement/drives improvement most? (single school/network-level inspection feedback)

D. External context
1. Do you take into account the contextual factors of the network?
2. What other contextual factors do you recognize as influential for the network in a positive and negative way?
3. Which partners support and/or pressurize the network to improve, how/why?