

Chapter 8

Building leadership capacity for system improvement in Austria by Louise Stoll, Hunter Moorman and Sibylle Rahm

This chapter provides information and analysis on Austria's Leadership Academy. The Leadership Academy (LEA) is an initiative of the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture (now Education, Arts, and Culture) launched in 2004 to equip leaders in Austria's education system with the capacity to lead an emerging body of reform initiatives and help establish a new culture of proactive, entrepreneurial school leadership.

The Leadership Academy was selected by the OECD Improving School Leadership activity as an innovative case study because of its system-wide approach to leadership development, its emphasis on leadership for improved schooling outcomes, its innovative programme contents and design, and its demonstrated potential to achieve effective outcomes.

This chapter is based on a study visit to Alpbach and Vienna, Austria, in April 2007 organised by the Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture at the request of the OECD. The visit included review of documentation, meetings with stakeholders, and some site visits at both locations. The chapter provides the rationale for exploring this programme, sets the Austrian national and provincial context within which LEA operates, describes the programme design and content, analyses the practice in terms of constructs and impact, and ends with some reflections. The list of documents consulted and the visit itinerary, showing respondents contacted during the visit, are included in the annex.

8.1 The OECD case study visit to Austria

Austria faces challenges from global economic competition, technological change, and demographic shifts experienced by many other countries in Europe and the rest of the world. To address these challenges, Austria is adopting more flexible, inventive forms of public policy decision making, favouring devolution to local levels and market-based choice. The government is also committed to developing a more flexible, responsive education system that will achieve higher quality outcomes for all pupils. This commitment implies, and necessitates, change in the established manner of doing business in schools, provincial and national government, and in the larger culture. Austria's social and political traditions and the organisation of its government and education system are not always well suited to support such change. Powerful central, hierarchical, and consultative traditions must be modified in ways that both maintain continuity with the past and adapt to the needs of the future. Policymakers, the education system at large, and school leaders themselves – at all levels – need to feel responsible for developing more effective leadership, in greater quantity and distributed among a larger share of the education enterprise, needed to meet the current challenge.

It is the mission of the Leadership Academy to prepare the new order of leadership. More ambitiously, it aims to:

- change the culture of the education system so that it can embrace change;
- adopt new values and practices;
- serve well a diverse pupil population and their communities;
- continue to improve according to the requirements of a changing society and a changing world.

The study team comprised the rapporteur, Louise Stoll, visiting professor at the London Centre for Leadership in Learning, University of London; Hunter Moorman, OECD consultant and expert in leadership, education reform, and organisation development; and Sibylle Rahm, Professor at the Otto-Friedrich University in Bamberg, Germany.

Following this introductory section, the chapter moves to a description in Section 8.2 of the context, highlighting key conditions in Austria that explain or influence the Leadership Academy, including its policy rationale. In Section 8.3 we examine the Leadership Academy programme, outlining its purpose, goals and key features and considering its conceptualisation of leadership, school improvement and leadership learning. Programme effectiveness and ensuring continuous improvement are the focus of Section 8.4, while Section 8.5 addresses the necessary policy conditions and implications. We conclude the chapter, in Section 8.6, with some areas for reflection and recommendations for other countries considering such a programme.

8.2 Background to the Leadership Academy: the Austrian context⁶

Austria's historical and social context

Austria is a parliamentary democracy organised as a federal state comprising nine provinces (Länder). The official language is German, but the country is home to diverse ethnic groups who come largely from Eastern European countries, the former Yugoslavia and Turkey, among other countries.

Austria has a well developed market economy. The country is prosperous, but the economy has slowed down recently and unemployment has risen (although the unemployment rate is still substantially lower than the EU average). Globalisation and the expansion of Europe pose long term challenges, bringing more competition and the need to develop knowledge based and value added sectors. The previous government sought to introduce a more liberal, market oriented economic agenda and to revamp the role of the state, emphasising deregulation and privatisation, reform of public administration, and narrower targeting of social benefits.

Two-thirds of Austria's population of just over 8 million inhabitants (2001 census) live in urban areas, but the country has a substantial rural tradition. The population is ageing and population growth is low. Austria's social context is also changing. Single parent households and working parents have become more common. Immigrants comprise a growing share of the population, with 12.5% of the population foreign born (OECD, 2006). An older and increasingly immigrant population puts pressure on the national treasury and the country's generous health and pension systems. Schools are under increasing pressure to meet diverse student needs, satisfy roles formerly played by the family, and maintain public confidence.

Yet some long standing social conditions persist. Austrians tend to live and work close to their places of birth and to identify closely with their local and regional areas. Geographic and job mobility are low, and teachers and school leaders customarily remain in one school over a career, occasionally hampering recruitment of teachers and school heads. Values and traditions emphasising social cohesion, trust, and stability strongly influence social and governmental processes. Decision making in schools and school systems is a highly consultative process encouraging participation and negotiation among diverse interests. Decisions carry the weight of social commitment but come slowly and tend not to reach too far.

Austria's changing education system

The Austrian educational system is highly structured and differentiated. It offers pupils and parents many choices and avenues, alternatives and second chances.

6. This section draws heavily on the Austrian country background report prepared for the Improving School Leadership activity, "Improving School Leadership Country Note: Austria", by Michael Schratz with the support of Katalin Petzold, December 2007, available at www.oecd.org/edu/schoolleadership; on background information provided in "Attracting, Developing, and Retaining Teachers, Country Note: Austria", by Françoise Delannoy, Phillip McKenzie, Stefan Wolter and Ben van der Ree, April 2004, available at www.oecd.org/edu/teacherpolicy; and on the Eurydice Database on Education (2006).

Schools are organised into general and academic secondary schools, with upper and lower secondary education levels and an elementary level. In upper secondary education the school system is divided into a general education branch and a vocational branch. Both, however, lead pupils towards higher education entrance qualifications.

The Austrian school system is selective, tracking pupils after only four years in primary school into either general or academic secondary schools according to their marks. There is pressure on students and parents to compete for more prestigious schools, on teachers to prepare students well, and on schools to compete for students.

In the early years of this century, there have been on average approximately 853 000 pupils and students per year in elementary, general secondary and academic secondary level schools combined (based on 2004/05 data for primary and Hauptschule pupils and 2002/03 data for academic secondary school students, found in Eurydice Database on Education, 2006). The number of primary school pupils has been declining, a trend that is forecast to continue until 2008 and further. The number of secondary school students has also begun to decline. Austrian schools are becoming more multicultural and classrooms increasingly marked by heterogeneity of language, religion, ethnicity and national origin.

Responsibilities for education legislation and implementation are divided between the federal government and the Länder. Decision making authority for financial, personnel, and other policy decisions is divided within the ministry (and in some cases the chancellery), between federal and the provincial school authorities, and between the different layers of the school system and school leaders.

Consultation plays an important role in the system. Stakeholders – teachers, parents, students and the community – are afforded formal participation in decision making, and teacher unions, organisations, and groups have a strong influence on decisions.

Education has always been heavily contested among political decision makers. The extensive distribution of responsibilities between different bodies and entities can be seen both as a product of and a brake on political interests. Prior membership in the teacher union or support for a political party seems to exert a strong if informal influence in the selection of school heads.

The differentiated system, divided governance, extensive consultation, and partisanship contribute to the strengths and quality of the education system. At the same time, they can complicate governance, slow decision making and impede change.

Reform context

The Austrian school system is by tradition compliance oriented, bureaucratic, and cumbersome. In solving educational problems schools and other parts of the system have tended to look up the hierarchy for guidance and to respond reactively, rather than proactively to take the initiative. Much of the policy debate and dialogue about improvement has focused on inputs rather than outputs. The discussion tends to be on how to operate the system, instead of questioning whether the system is producing the most appropriate results for society. Diffuse decision making limits and slows the pace of change.

Membership in the European Union and the shock of PISA results have underscored these shortcomings. PISA findings indicate that many students are not developing the skills necessary to participate in lifelong learning. They also reveal substantial disparities

in the performance of students and allocation of entitlements in different classes, schools and regions (Haider *et al.*, 2003, in OECD, 2007).

The results of PISA and other large-scale assessments like TIMSS and IGLU have generated heated political and public discussions about the quality of schooling, and triggered a major educational “culture change”. A growing system of standards, assessments, and transparency measures has introduced greater school accountability and heightened pressure to perform. Devolution has increased local autonomy – and conflict. Numerous individual reforms and efforts to streamline the education governance and delivery system are shifting power and responsibility, opening new opportunities, and creating tension where duties and privileges are added or lost.

In 2005 the Austrian Ministry of Education’s *Zukunftskommission* (Future Commission) proposed a framework for education reform and numerous specific proposals for improvement. The principles included systematic quality management, greater autonomy and more responsibility, improvement of the teacher profession, and more research and development and better support systems (cf. Haider *et al.*, 2003, cited in Schratz and Petzold, for the OECD, 2007). Among the panoply of specific initiatives which are starting to be implemented, some of the most far-reaching are:

- The adoption of national standards (Bildungsstandards) and assessments in year 4 (primary school) and year 8 (general secondary school and academic secondary school). The emphasis on outcomes, monitoring, and accountability represents a major change for Austrian schools.
- A measure to improve teaching and enhance learning centred leadership by limiting class size to 25 pupils per class. An initiative for individualised teaching and learning (including quality assurance) will complement this measure.
- Authorisation (and in some cases funding) for some schools to provide extended day supervision for pupils.

Austria’s long tradition of school inspection is also changing. School inspectors, organised by province, district, and subject and by school type, regularly examine the quality of teaching and the implementation of leadership and management tasks in a school, and identify areas in need of improvement. Two quality assurance programmes are adding a broader dimension to schools’ and inspectorates’ interaction, strengthening schools’ own quality assurance roles and emphasising inspectors’ leadership and enabling roles.

The changing role and conditions of school leadership

Heads of school in Austria are civil servants either of the federal government (the heads of academic secondary schools and secondary vocational schools) or of the province (the heads of primary, general secondary schools, special schools, pre-vocational schools and vocational schools).

The traditional duties of the school head have been to implement laws and directives from above, administer the budget and school resources, monitor curriculum and teaching and learning, and work with teachers to modify them as needed. Heads also maintain communication with the school authorities, parents, and community and manage the process of school partnership consultation. In smaller schools, they also teach classes.

Both the duties of school heads and the way they carry out their duties are changing. Deregulation and somewhat expanded local autonomy have added broader pedagogical leadership duties to their traditional administrative and fiscal responsibilities. The impending introduction of national standards with result-based assessments and national tests also intensifies heads' responsibilities to provide pedagogical leadership. A large list of specific reform initiatives means that school heads must now lead successful change processes, support teachers in their new duties, manage the collaboration of school partners and increased levels of conflict and stress in schools, and ensure the success of the large variety of school reforms for which they are responsible.

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Although school heads' autonomy in budgetary, staffing, and curricular decision making has been increased by recent government policy, their discretion is still limited. Schools do not have authority for employing or dismissing staff. The complex distribution of responsibilities and extensive consultative processes constrain the autonomy of school leaders. Strong traditions of teacher autonomy and responsibility for interpretation of curricular guidelines further dilute decisive leadership and change.

As new laws and functions redefine the role of the school head, the relationship between school head and teachers is becoming more complex. While the head is the teachers' supervisor, teachers have a substantial degree of independence, resulting both from the tradition of classroom autonomy and from provisions requiring teacher and parent (and sometimes pupil) participation in important school decisions. Heads are responsible for monitoring and mentoring teachers, but most do not go deeply into teacher evaluation and coaching, because of collegial relationships or the lack of time due to pressure of administrative tasks. School heads have little direct authority to reward or sanction teachers. They do not, as noted above, have authority to hire and fire teachers, although they may advise on the choice of new teaching candidates. They have no say in setting teacher pay, which is uniform across the country, or in offering extra pay or bonuses, although they can recommend them to higher authorities. School heads are supposed to build teacher commitment to professional development, and as leaders of teaching and learning need to be able to direct teachers' continuing growth, but they have little authority or leverage for doing so.

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Leadership learning in Austria

The most significant opportunities for leadership learning consist of a compulsory management training, individual courses offered by the teacher training institutions on a variety of topics, and the Leadership Academy.

New school heads are required to complete a compulsory management training programme within the first four years of their provisional appointment for their contract to be extended. The programme is offered as a part time course by the individual

provincial in-service training institutes. Broadly, the training includes a set of modules and a phase of self-study. Modules cover communication and leadership, conflict management, lesson supervision, school development, and educational, vocational, and household legal rights, regarded as core competencies for new school leaders (Fischer and Schratz, 1993, in Schratz and Petzold, 2007). Participants use self-study to explore pertinent literature, conduct projects combining theory and practice, and take further training to their needs.

There is no required pre-service preparation for aspiring heads. Aspirants can take modules of the compulsory management training, but they are still required to take the full programme upon being named head of a school. Apart from the compulsory management training, no induction programmes are required. The different provinces however offer new heads a variety of special support programmes on topics such as coaching, supervision and other regular meetings to exchange experiences of novices and experts. Further participation in professional development programmes is expected but not compulsory. Nor is it a condition of continued employment as a school leader, or for promotion or increased compensation. There are no systematic professional development programmes on the regional level; only short term options. Thematically focused training supports the introduction of new reform initiatives and keeps school leaders abreast of innovation on the regional and national levels. In addition, a pilot project has been conducted in different provinces to explore innovative practices of blended learning through e-learning components in different content areas.

Policy rationale for the Leadership Academy

National policymakers in Austria identified the need to prepare school leaders to lead and sustain systemic change. In 2004, the Minister of Education, Science and Culture founded the Leadership Academy (LEA).

School heads have newly acquired autonomy but little experience of operating outside a hierarchical, bureaucratic structure. The original intent of the LEA was to develop in heads the capacities to act more independently, to take greater initiative, and to manage their schools through the changes entailed by a stream of government reforms. As the benefits to systemic change of involving a wider participant group became apparent, inspectors, staff of in-service training institutes, and executives from the Ministry of Education and provincial education authorities were added as participants. The LEA's brief in its first phase became to train 3 000 school leaders and other executives in education leadership positions in a very short period of time on the basis of the latest scientific findings on innovation and change.

8.3 The Leadership Academy programme

Ambitious objectives

The Leadership Academy provides leadership development for school heads, inspectors, government officials, and staff from university, in particular from university colleges of education. It aims to enable them to manage the introduction of national reforms and to lead processes of school improvement. Individual learning and development, project leadership, and network relationships are the key elements of the programme. Each year, a cohort (called a “generation”) of 250 to 300 participants

progresses through four “forums”, three-day learning experiences consisting of keynote presentations with group processing and of work in learning partnerships (pairs of participants) and in collegial team coaching (CTC) groups, each comprising three sets of partnerships. With support and critique from these learning partners and CTCs, each participant develops and implements a project in his or her own institution over the course of the year. Learning partners and CTCs meet regionally in the interim between forums and also come together with other participants in regional networks. Generation IV was completed in October 2007, with generation V scheduled to start December 2007.

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The formal goal of the Leadership Academy is “sustainably improving the preconditions and processes of young people’s learning in all educational institutions” (LEA, 2007a). The purpose more simply stated but equally ambitious is to prepare leaders at all levels and in all types of schools to *work in and on the system* (LEA, 2007b).

The programme has in its sights two levels of change. At one level, leaders are prepared to implement the government’s ambitious reform agenda effectively and to enable schools to function with greater local autonomy and initiative. Thus, LEA builds participants’ capacity to play their roles more intentionally and proactively, to take more responsibility, to motivate their staff teams and develop their organisation. In this way they will be seen to be working effectively within a system where autonomy has been increased. They will be using new skills, systems understanding, and relationships to focus on the core task of education for the future. This involves building vision, developing team spirit, clarifying roles and values and emphasising pedagogy. Public law cannot be easily changed and, therefore, effective school leadership and management in this context means achieving as much as possible within the existing system.

But the introduction of several recent reforms under the impetus of the Future Commission also underscores the need for school leaders skilled at managing change.

At another level, LEA is creating the critical mass needed to fuel systems change. Leaders emerge from LEA with new values and attitudes in place of the traditional compliance-oriented stance, with new relationships across a traditionally segmented education system, and with a systems understanding that puts their practice in a far larger context. A critical mass of such leaders should begin to “reculture” the system, to introduce new understandings and norms of professional practice. As stated in the project documentation (LEA, 2007a, p. 1): “The programme for the professionalism in leadership works along a new understanding of theory and practice which transforms the educational system by taking the quality of leadership as the starting point for systemic innovation.” In the end, the system should be more open, flexible, and inclusive, inclined to balance stability with innovation, and committed to and accountable for high quality outcomes.

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Well considered theories of action

Programmes are more likely to reach their goals when they are guided by a theory that effectively links action to outcome. Theories of action in relation to school leadership, as Elmore (Chapter 3) interprets them, are “a set of logically connected statements that...connect the actions of leaders with their consequences for quality and performance”. Ideally the theory of action will provide a logical, powerful, and actionable relationship of action to change, and leaders’ (or programmes’) actual practice will correspond to their espoused theories (Argyris, 1993; Argyris and Schon, 1978).

The LEA programme is based on theories of action about effective learning-centred leadership, about effective learning of leadership learning, and, implicitly, about effective systems change. These are described below.

Leadership

The leadership theory of action links a set of outcomes through intervening conditions to a set of leadership skills, attitudes, and dispositions. The outcomes are implementation of national reforms and creation of more independent, solution-oriented schools. Intermediate variables are conditions shown by research to lead to effective schools, like motivated and high quality teachers and engaged parents, and those conditions shown by experience to diminish school effectiveness, like compliance orientation and classroom isolation. The programme provides the third ingredient in the equation, a repertoire of attitudes, skills, and dispositions equipping leaders to work with these conditions.

The programme sums up its approach with the dictum *Handlung schafft Wirklichkeit*, or “action creates reality”. The LEA attempts to instil a bias toward the effective action needed to implement reforms and to solve problems and succeed locally. The several elements of this approach are:

- building self-knowledge needed to marshal personal resources for emotionally and intellectually stressful challenges of leadership;
- instilling an orientation toward proactive behaviour and initiative;
- replacing the “heroic problem-solver” stance with a future-oriented solution-creating disposition;
- creating an understanding of the complex nature of learning;
- building a systems orientation, awareness of the larger context of schooling and reform, and openness to relationships needed for strategic leadership;
- opening participants up to the habit of changing their mental models and assumptions of “the way it is”;
- developing new skills like giving and receiving feedback, working collaboratively, delegating and sharing work.

Leadership learning and development

The LEA programme approaches leadership learning as a complex task that takes place over time and as a result of several interactions. Presentations draw on general and adult learning theory by, for example, grounding new knowledge in participants’ current knowledge and combining academic and experiential processes to construct new

knowledge. New material and exercises are sequenced logically and coherently to establish the emotional and intellectual conditions necessary for effective learning. The key theoretical construct is that training and experience pursued according to the principles embedded in the programme design will produce learning that can be effectively applied in the participant's home organisation. Core elements of the learning model are:

- sequenced introduction of new ideas (usually in familiar contexts);
- engagement of participants' own base of knowledge and experience;
- demonstration and modelling;
- frequent opportunity for discussion and development of applications;
- basing learning around problems and projects in the participants' own organisation;
- using diverse approaches to fit diverse learning styles;
- providing emotional and intellectual support, feedback and correction in a safe, trusting atmosphere;
- establishing a comprehensive professional learning community practice to sustain application of learning and change.

Systems change

Also underlying the LEA programme is an implicit theory of systems change with two key elements: programme graduates who have new attitudes, skills, and dispositions will change their own schools through their behaviour and the impact of their projects; and a critical mass of graduates will lead over time to a broadly changing education culture.

Carefully blended programme design, content, and operation

The Leadership Academy programme consists of a seamless mix of leadership focus, principles of learning, structure, and curriculum content. To an exceptional degree, “the medium is the message”, as all the elements of the programme are designed with the participant's learning in mind. In the following sections, what is in actuality a composite blend is described as a set of discrete elements for the purposes of presentation.

Focus on leadership

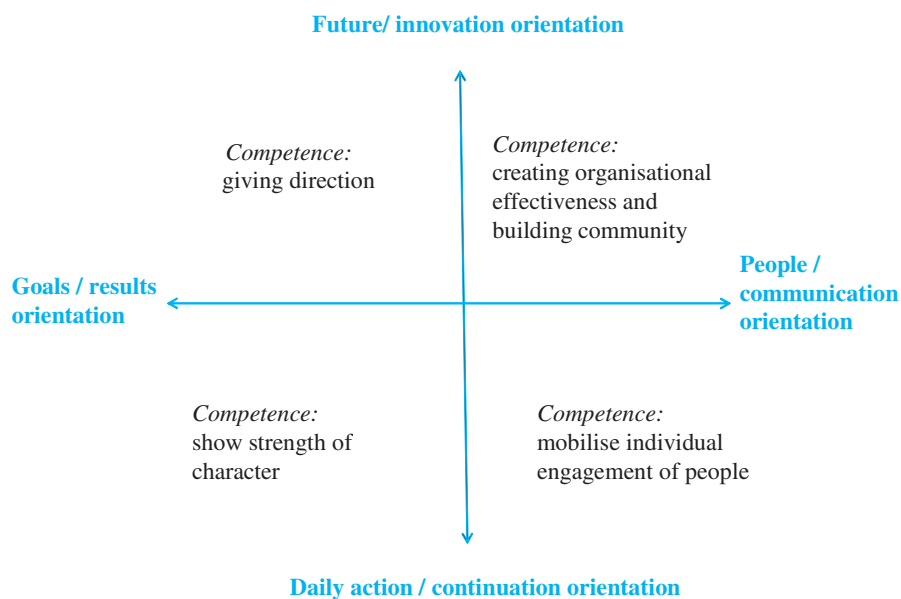
The programme is premised on the idea that leadership quality is the starting point for systemic innovation (Schratz and Petzold, 2007). The central design feature of the programme is its concentration on leadership in several dimensions.

Learning-centred leadership

The leadership competence model (Figure 8.1), based on the work of Riemann (1977) and Ulrich *et al.* (1999), underpins the theoretical approach to the programme. The model shows how leaders balance their work between promoting change and leading for the future on the one hand and recognising the need for continuity on the other. At the same

time they balance the orientation towards results against the importance of communicating with people and the capacity to build up relationships through working together. The model suggests that leaders need to give direction, show strength of character and mobilise individual commitment as well as creating an atmosphere of achievement within organisations.

Figure 8.1 Leadership competence model



This is not straightforward in a system with many stakeholders. As a union leader we interviewed described it, the effective leader has to work with pupils, parents, peers and teachers “in a complex network”.

Our visit to a school led by one of the first Leadership Academy alumni highlighted these competences at work. The head felt very much in charge of the school’s future and possibilities, and was described by her school inspector as having clear aims, being confident, feeling responsible to follow national educational policy but comfortable to inform the inspector of specific doubts about ministry policy: “She takes responsibility for the details which she forms according to her beliefs and has the capacity to shape policy to the school’s needs.” Colleagues, parents and a student we spoke to felt that there was a sense of democracy and that decisions were not taken without a consultation process. This included students, the representative of whom described a good leader as one who “listens to students and respects their ideas”. Teachers in this school wanted to be involved in school development and, somewhat unusually within the Austrian context, admired leadership that: “leaves space for the energy teachers bring by themselves”.

Leadership for learning

Leadership for learning through leaders’ influence on learning has been identified as a critical element of successful school leadership (Leithwood and Riehl, 2003) and is

central to the LEA approach. Schratz (2006) explains how, in Austria, “leading” and “learning” have traditionally been considered as separate domains of thought associated with different people. School leaders lead (also sometimes teaching), teachers teach and learners learn. The LEA, however, systematically co-ordinates leadership and learning, by emphasising the learning of both pupils and school leaders.

The LEA programme aims to bridge the gap between leadership and learning by drawing on a model of five dimensions of leading and learning developed at the University of Innsbruck (Schratz and Weiser, 2002): knowledge; understanding (meaning); ability (application); individual (personal) and group (social). It is seen as applicable to leadership and learning for the future. The pedagogical focus on learning has grown since the programme’s first generation. During our visit to a Leadership Academy forum, we attended an engagingly presented session introduced by an LEA director with the questions: “What are we doing in leadership for learning? What is the focus? What is the impact on pupils?” The five dimensions were then introduced through “leadership theatre”. Participants were invited to consider them in relation to the school’s role, teaching methods, a particular subject, assessment and people’s personal biographies. Interviews with several participants suggested that this was new thinking for them. This session followed up one at the previous forum which had focused on how pupils, staff and leaders learn.

Leaders’ learning is also critical, as described in a “chain of effects” model (Schley and Schratz, 2004), developed for and used with generation 1 participants. This chain of effects is described as a mental web of meaningful relationships pointing the way from leading to learning and back again (Schratz, with Petzold, 2007). It shows, “in theory how leadership impacts on people, planning, culture and structures and how, through interaction, it produces action and results related to the school’s goals”.

Leading school development and change

Focusing on school development is a key feature of improving schools, enabling leaders and teachers to monitor and evaluate practice in order to improve the practice of teaching and learning (Elmore, Chapter 3). Austrian quality initiatives (*e.g.* QIS; QIBB) sustain the maintenance and enhancement of quality in the educational sector, focusing on teaching and learning in a changing society. Quality development includes a changed view on school management and leadership. Teachers must become learners and school heads have to cope with the tasks of school development and school improvement. As outlined in an OECD report on teacher policy in Austria (Delannoy *et al.*, 2004), the increase of schools’ autonomy makes it more difficult to become an effective head. Furthermore, with the inspectorate’s changing role, we heard several times about the importance of a positive working relationship and of how school leaders inform their inspectors of their plans and discuss with them their aims, grades and development. One head reflected that positive relations with her inspector provide a good basis for what she wants to do.

The shift to greater school-level autonomy has meant that schools now need to be learning organisations, finding solutions to everyday problems and challenges such as personalisation, the increase in information, social changes and global thinking and acting (Austrian Federal Ministry for Education, Science and Culture, undated).

Heads have to be aware of their strategic role and to take responsibility for leadership of learning. Heads have to implement external reform strategies and activate reform

energies in their staff. Leaders must not only care for resources and outcomes but also for the development of the school's vision and educational offerings. They must inspire, motivate and create an atmosphere that will lead to staff commitment and students who are highly motivated to learn: in short, they need to build the capacity for continuous and sustainable learning (Stoll *et al.*, 2003). Leadership in autonomous schools is a challenging task that includes having the personal capacity to bring about positive change and paying greater attention to the emotional side of leadership.

Leading learning organisations, professional learning communities and networks

Increasingly, leadership and improvement literature are pointing towards the benefits of collaborative working in what are variously described as learning organisations (Mulford, 2003) and professional learning communities (Stoll and Seashore Louis, 2007). This is a challenge in a culture where many teachers have been used to working independently. Leaders have to aim at enhancing the practice of individual teachers, developing collaborative capacities of all professionals working at school, and making connections with other schools through learning networks (OECD, 2003) and other partnerships. The intention is that schools in Austria will increasingly become professional learning communities. The Leadership Academy promotes this approach by creating a professional learning community among its participants and introducing learning strategies that can be adapted for use back in schools.

Systemic and distributed leadership

Systemic thinking as the basis of change management involves thinking about the system as a whole. From a systemic point of view, the interrelationship and interdependence between different levels of the system is critical. This requires a multi-level approach to influence the system and leadership at all levels throughout the system.

Promoting system leadership is a key intention of the Leadership Academy; a commitment to collaborating with colleagues at all levels for the benefit of all children and young people, not just those for whom they have the closest connection, described both in this programme and elsewhere as “system thinkers in action” (Fullan, 2005). This has been a major consideration for involving large numbers of leaders at different levels of the system – schools, districts, training colleges, and the ministry – working together in partnerships, teams and networks.

Hopkins (2006) argues for “a systemic approach that integrates the classroom, school and system levels in the pursuit of enhancing student achievement”. Our experience suggests that while the intention is to promote the development of professional learning communities within schools, issues relating to teacher professionalism need to be addressed (see final section) before greater distribution of leadership will occur throughout Austrian schools.

Schools themselves are complex organisations, with several intersecting domains: curriculum and teaching and learning, organisational structure and processes, school culture, professional development, and pupil and classroom management, as well as budget, personnel, and facilities matters. The addition of school autonomy, school improvement and development processes, and quality initiatives creates a complex, challenging learning process for those in it. It is not enough to be skilled in managing the individual parts, though that is important; the competent leader must also understand and be able to guide the system as a whole.

School heads also operate in a larger system environment beyond their schools. This necessitates a pattern change in individual leaders' thinking, as most have been accustomed to acting in passive compliance toward that outside system. School autonomy, quality programmes, accountability, and extensive reforms now require leaders to have a broad network of contacts in the system, to understand and anticipate the reaction to their actions of other parts of the system, and to be effective in creating strategic collaborations and negotiating for support and resources from the system.

Project planning, management and costs

The LEA is a project in which the Ministry of Education, Arts and Science, *Kulturkontakt Austria*, the University of Innsbruck, the University of Zürich and the *Institut für Organisationsentwicklung und Systemberatung (IOS)* Hamburg closely cooperate. The two project directors collaborate, one providing the greater share of personal professional development know-how, the other the greater share of education and host country expertise. The project directors manage a scientific team, of which they are a key part, and are linked to an organisational team managed by the project manager in the ministry who is responsible for the overall organisation of LEA and the co-ordination among stakeholders. The teams have clearly assigned responsibilities, and regular meetings are scheduled in which planning can take place for the forums, research and evaluation and ongoing activities with participants and alumni. The scientific core team is small, consisting of the two directors with two assistants (one oversees the design of the LEA's training didactics, the other co-ordinates research activities) and a project manager who looks at how the LEA's aims and goals can be put into practice. They are supported by the wider team, who include the regional network coordinators. The ministry partner also oversees the policy aspects, checks qualifications of potential participants and is responsible for communication with participants in between the forums.

The ministry's contract with the universities has funded the full start-up and operating costs of the programme. The cost for supporting the programme each generation (programme cohort) has been a little over 500 000 Euros, or, after the initial year in which overall costs were slightly higher, just under 2 000 Euro per participant. The cost per participant covers all programme planning and management, costs to put on each forum (including presenters, conference site rental, media, lodging and food for all participants), services and support for such items as the website and learning materials, and miscellaneous costs. Participants' organisations are responsible for transport to and from the conference site for each forum.

A high degree of substantive and training expertise is required of the expert team providing the programme. At least at present, it is not intended that the programme will be institutionalised or incorporated into existing routines or organisations; rather, needed resources will continue to be procured from external sources.

Powerful learning principles

A set of principles of learning underlie the Leadership Academy curriculum.

Creating a trusting environment and relationships

Establishing trust between the professional members of the Leadership Academy is the starting point of the training. The forums start with an emotional “invitation”, as one of the directors described it. A regional coordinator explained how “LEA offers an emotional access to people, therefore it becomes easier to work on the cognitive level”, and a primary head said “trust helps us to expose ideas we may not expose in other situations”. The result, as one secondary head commented, is “I can’t describe my feeling. I feel very close to colleagues I didn’t even meet before October”.

The forums start with an emotional “invitation”: a primary head said “trust helps us to expose ideas”; the result, said one secondary head, is: “I feel very close to colleagues I didn’t even meet before October.”

Providing self-directed and constructivist learning opportunities

In many senses, the learning is self-directed (Hallinger, 2003). Learning opportunities give participants the freedom to make their own choices. They are responsible for their decisions, but they reflect on alternative ways of acting in the pedagogical arena. Networking and learning partnerships provide opportunities to experience leadership. In addition, plenary meetings focus on school life issues and collaborative team coaching group members work together on tasks related to the presentations. This means that learning is considered as one’s own activity, as a constructive activity, and not as a simple consequence of training.

The starting point for leadership learning is developing the personal capacity of individuals. School leaders need to understand themselves as leaders as well as in relationship to others and the system. It is a fundamental programme assumption that leadership, and growth as a leader, begins with knowledge of self. A leader has to know about his/her “inner team” (LEA, 2007b) – the different facets of personality that shape any person’s action – and be able to balance those inner voices to become authentic. Clarifying one’s own position before communicating with colleagues is essential. Knowledge about the team members in the school community and the ability to communicate with them and to motivate them follows this self-knowledge.

Experiential learning and varied learning strategies

The participants’ everyday problems play a central role in the design. Each person brings their own development “situation” – generally some problem in their home organisation – to the Academy as a learning project case. Participants develop and implement their projects using new learning gained from the LEA. CTCs serve as “critical friends” (Costa and Kallick, 1993) or coaches to project owners over the course of the year, helping them gain new insight, confidence, and competence in their roles as school leaders.

Learning is structured in ways that appeal to a variety of learning styles. Forum trainers employ a mix of approaches including large-group lectures, case studies,

scenarios and stories. Serious content is leavened with self-deprecation and ample humour. Great care is taken in “scaffolding” new knowledge with existing knowledge, and participants are frequently invited to reflect on, discuss, and speak to the plenary audience about their emerging understanding. Formal learning sessions are mixed with informal learning conducted in social settings. In the course of their learning participants listen, watch, write, create, and act out (in drama, dance, or other kinaesthetic methods). Through their learning partnerships and CTCs, participants are often in the role of learning facilitators. The scientific team members themselves model the importance of different learning and teaching styles through their different personalities and experiences.

The LEA training equips participants with skills, techniques, and tools they can use as school leaders. While these can change from year to year, depending on the particular programme emphasis, the training usually includes skill development in communication and feedback, mentoring and coaching, project management, working strategically, and leadership competence.

The LEA training equips participants with skills, techniques, and tools they can use as school leaders, including skill development in communication and feedback, mentoring and coaching, project management, working strategically, and leadership competence.

The training also emphasises the importance of understanding the different dimensions of learning. These are identified as learning to: know, understand, do, live together, and be. These underscore the cognitive, constructive, practical, social, and existential dimensions of learning. The programme seems to say that all dimensions are present in any learning situation, but learners will have different preferences for or strengths in the different dimensions. Learners can be more effective when they understand these dimensions and their preferences, and teachers and leaders of learning can be more effective in supporting others when they too appreciate the implications of these learning dimensions. Participants report that after identifying their own learning preferences and understanding the preferences of others, they began to feel more responsible for and competent at managing system change.

Learning as part of a community of learners

The LEA functions as a community of learners that enriches the individual growth of participants and models principles of learning communities that participants can introduce in their home organisations.

A learning community or learning organisation is reported to perform more effectively and to improve its performance on the basis of experience (Senge, 1990a, 1990b; Marquardt, 1996; Mulford, 2003). Typically such organisations incorporate values, structure, and processes that enhance the capacity of workers to perform at high levels, to adapt to change in the organisation’s environment, and to make ongoing improvements in the quality of their work and output. Key elements are reflection and openness to learning, collective responsibility and shared goals, collegial and transparent work habits, explicit and common definition of effective practice, quality systems, flexible allocation of resources, and maximum use of internal expertise. The community is carefully developed, building from the pairs of learning partners, to CTC groups, to regional networks (see details below). Conditions for learning and professional development are introduced and extended at each level.

The LEA's commitment to operating as a learning organisation reflects the assumption that personal development and school development to improve pupils' learning are interrelated. Personal change of leaders who help each other in learning communities makes possible the improvement of their learning outcomes. Social bonds and norms inspire trust, a sense of safety, and confidence. Transforming the educational system needs a multi-level approach. Starting with individuals, helping them to reflect on their own attitudes, making them communicate in networks and then changing learning communities in the larger system are the crucial points in the Academy's change process.

Taking a holistic approach

Reflecting the belief that learning is a complex process involving all dimensions of the human being, the LEA also provides the opportunity to develop and nourish other skills and talents. It invites participants to walk in the Alpine surroundings of the residential forums, to dance, to practise gymnastics, and to experience survival camp techniques. LEA participants initially show a rather reserved attitude towards this extended learning approach, but such reservations vanish over time.

The LEA also invites participants to walk in the Alpine surroundings of the residential forums, to dance, to practise gymnastics, and to experience survival camp techniques.

Creating the LEA culture

The creation of a body of shared norms, concepts, and vocabulary is one distinctive feature of a reculturing effort. A few examples will illustrate the LEA's practice in this regard. In a break with custom, all participants and staff immediately adopt the familiar form of address (*duzen*), equivalent to connecting on a first-name basis but an even stronger indication of openness and trust. Terms like *Handlung schafft Wirklichkeit* and *Musterwechsel*, the notion of altering fixed patterns or mental models, serve as banners of the new attitudes and practices LEA introduces. Teaming and collaboration are the dominant modes of interaction and learning; habits of going it alone are quickly broken down. Responsibility for self and for learning is constantly underscored. When, for example, participants ask trainers questions or appeal to the trainers' expertise, the trainers often turn the matter back to the participant, putting the responsibility for thinking and learning on the participant's shoulders.

Connected programme structure and strategies

Forums

In the initial meeting, the first forum, participants are introduced to the philosophy, organisation and structure of the LEA. Learning partnerships and collegial team coaching groups are formed. The second forum is important for defining development projects and practising collegial team coaching. The scientific team provides tools for professional project management. The third forum invites participants to talk about their experiences while implementing their reform initiatives. Workshops provide communication skills, problem solving strategies and motivation. In the final certification forum, participants present their projects, deciding in their collegial team groups which project will be

presented. For graduation each participant has to write up their work and document their personal and professional development processes.

Learning partnerships and collegial team coaching (CTC)

The LEA offers learning opportunities for school leaders by building learning partnerships and networks of learning leaders. The learning partnerships and the CTCs function as discussion groups in which members develop understanding of new learning and link new to existing knowledge. They also serve as critical friends supporting participants in their learning from project experience and seeing their situation from different perspectives. As one primary head commented: “The diversity of participants is very important to help me look beyond the four walls of my school.” CTCs follow well defined rules for coaching that include giving and receiving feedback and helping participants take responsibility for their learning. The Leadership Academy’s directors observe team interaction. Although they do not interfere in the group process, they take “time out” opportunities to raise questions or offer analysis about project substance and group process.

Teamwork is an important condition for successful schools, and interviewees described the contribution of learning partners and CTCs to their competence in teamwork. Motivating others to follow new pedagogical concepts was, from their point of view, a very difficult task. Knowledge about different ways of learning and tensions in the “inner team” (different inner voices or identities) of their colleagues and staff clarified for them the nature of resistance to change. This seems to be the starting point for collegial team coaching that opens up action possibilities. Team members together reflect on difficulties in the change process and seek solutions. The disposition to clarify one’s own position, then to listen to others, to leave one’s comfort zone and to motivate others to improve pupils’ learning is at the heart of the LEA approach.

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Collegial team coaching is a structured micro-world in which participants find their way with the help of others. Field-based experiences are brought forward for systematic analysis. The working process of the CTC groups is characterised by a sequence of steps to discuss each person’s case. After the presentation of one CTC member there follow questions from other participants, a coaching conference, the definition of the main subject, brainstorming ideas, a reflection on the process and feedback. The CTC work is a team reflection which leads not only to insights about the challenges of leadership but also to ideas about solutions.

Regional networking

CTCs are grouped into regional networks that meet periodically to explore substantive and administrative topics related to the LEA programme and to link graduates to the alumni network. The networks support leaders in many ways. Trust and co-operation among professional colleagues can activate innovative resources. In a safe environment, leaders can test out and receive feedback on their ideas and school practice. The networks foster school leaders’ capacity for systemic thinking – establishing a connection between individuals and system structures. Transformation of the educational system needs a multi level approach. Helping leaders to reflect on their own attitudes,

recognise interrelationships between different levels of the educational system, and discerning critical system variables that make system change possible are crucial elements in the change process.

Assessment, certification and membership

The assessment of the personal development of candidates in the Leadership Academy is based on their documented projects. Learning partnerships, CTC meetings and regional group meetings provide feedback for participants. The CTC provides two reviewers for each report and the participant has to defend her or his report to these two peers, one of whom is the learning partner. In addition to the formative evaluation there is also a summative assessment by the scientific team.

The Leadership Competence Scale defines indicators for assessment of leadership abilities. Participants complete this at the beginning and end of the experience and, since generation 2, some colleagues are also asked to complete the scale as part of a 360° feedback process.

A “micro article”, in which participants write about a critical incident, was used in earlier generations but stopped because it did not help participants think about their project in a positive, forward-oriented manner. Project leaders hope to reintroduce it in a revised form. A “photo evaluation”, whereby participants took pictures of how they envisaged leadership in schools, was also used with earlier generations, but the scientific team did not have the capacity to evaluate these.

Those successfully completing the assessment tasks become certified as members of the Leadership Academy. Others receive confirmation of participation but do not become members of the Leadership Academy network.

Participants who successfully complete the full training and assessment are certified and admitted into the graduate ranks of the Leadership Academy. The fourth and final forum concentrates on synthesising key learning, project presentations, planning continuation of the learning partnerships, CTCs, and regional networking, and award of certificates. The expectation of graduate members of the Academy is that they will continue the process of learning and they will contribute to the learning of others

LEA alumni have an important role to play in the personal development of leaders and in supporting the networking of groups. Alumni serve as mentors of subsequent candidates. They lead regional meetings and give advice to collegial teams. The network coordinators establish contacts between LEA generations (generation I-IV) and foster open communication in the system.

8.4 Programme effectiveness and continuous programme improvement

Quality assurance and ongoing quality improvement of leadership development programmes are critical to ensure programme goals and participants’ needs are being addressed and the programmes are responding to contextual changes and updates in the knowledge bases. In this section we draw on and extend an evaluation framework used at the National College of School Leadership in the UK, based on a framework used to evaluate training programmes (Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick, 1998) to present information about programme effectiveness and continuous improvement.

More than one in six leaders have taken part

As noted, this is an ambitious programme, with the intention of reaching half of all Austrian school leaders in a relatively short period of time; hence the large size of each generation. From 2004 to autumn 2007, 1 015 school leaders (16.9%) have completed the LEA, and a further generation of 259 was due to start the programme in December 2007. Several of those we interviewed spoke positively of the experience of being with a large number of colleagues and also the access to colleagues from other generations.

High degree of engagement

Our observations and interviews suggested a high level of engagement with the programme, and considerable enthusiasm about both the content and processes of the Academy. The ideas were new to most participants and there seemed to be an excitement about being able to “see” different ways of communicating and resolving issues. Inevitably, in any externally guided professional learning experience, trainer quality is an important factor for a positive experience. The consensus was that the quality of inputs during the forums was very high, professionally stimulating and challenging, and greatly appreciated. For the most part, CTCs were equally engaged and self-sustaining, although some required more focusing and support during the forums, raising an issue for those considering this approach about how to ensure engagement and high quality partnership work between forum meetings. The extended nature of the programme and its demands in terms of having to carry out a project and write a report was also particularly helpful for some participants in sustaining commitment.

Follow-up after graduation appears to be a less successful dimension of the programme. Programme alumni are intended to constitute a virtual academy providing benefits and support for ongoing leadership practice and sustaining momentum for the new leadership culture. Regional networks are the vehicle for alumni participation. Participation rates and effectiveness of the regional networks are reported to be uneven. Lack of focus and direction in some networks elicited more negative comment than any other element of the LEA programme. Yet anecdotal evidence of successful ongoing interactions across learning partnerships, CTCs, and regional networks indicates the potential of the virtual academy to be an effective mechanism.

Positive impact on leadership practice

While this is a relatively young programme, it seems to have a powerful impact on individuals. A leadership competence scale (Pool, 2007) is used to assess the participants at the beginning and end of the programme. Originally, this was just completed by the participants, but since the start of generation 4, it has also been given to ten members of staff in participants’ organisations, as a form of 360° feedback.

On one hand, our interviews highlighted many examples of personal leadership outcomes. While, in some cases, prior beliefs had been reinforced, we heard many stories about how patterns of thinking about problem solving and communication with colleagues had been changed. Creating a more supportive atmosphere through being more self aware, taking a sensitive approach towards others and encouraging mutual appreciation, building trust and involving others were important outcomes. Examples cited by colleagues of alumni showed the impact from their perspective. And inspectors spoke of school heads who had taken up their more autonomous role more quickly. They described evidence that these heads were more goal-oriented and their aims were clearer

and better focused, they communicated better and more precisely and involved teaching staff more, they were freer in their decisions and were able to look at their problems from different points of view and compare results.

These heads were more goal oriented and their aims were clearer and better focused, they communicated better and more precisely and involved teaching staff more, they were freer in their decisions and were able to look at their problems from different points of view and compare results.

As a consequence of these changes, colleagues sometimes saw a chain reaction, with heads presenting an example for teachers and students who then began to act in a similar fashion. We also heard from an alumnus involved in research exploring the impact of the Leadership Academy on generation 1 that there was much greater self-reflection, leading to a noticeable change in communication: “You can feel the work of the LEA.”

In addition, an important outcome of leadership learning is its application in practice and how this affects others with whom participants in leadership learning come into contact. Again, there were many stories of how what participants learnt through the Leadership Academy was influencing daily work outside. Apart from the project that all participants are expected to carry out in their organisation as part of the programme, other examples included: applying the patterns of thinking to a range of different problems; using the leadership competence survey with staff throughout schools or all school heads in districts; developing middle managers; and integrating CTC groups into a regional school management course. Participants and some alumni also use their learning partner or other members of the CTC as sounding boards if they have a problem, and it was clear that a number of personal friendships have developed between learning partners. We also heard from some colleagues of how the new culture of communication is having an impact on staff in participants’ organisations.

An interesting example of change within an organisation is where the director general of one of the ministry directorates participated, and has applied the Leadership Academy approaches across the directorate. A colleague described how it is helping them clarify their vision and change their orientation to work and ways of communicating with each other.

This brings us to the question of system impact.

On the way to system-wide changes

Bringing about system-wide change is notoriously difficult. Later in the chapter, we consider this in more depth, but we were interested to consider what evidence there was of system-wide change. In a sense, the considerable change in attitudes and orientation to leadership that appears to be a result for many of the Leadership Academy participants produces a groundswell at various levels of the system where people have been involved – schools, districts, regions, teacher training institutes and parts of the ministry.

Two factors appear to be particularly significant, however, in whether a leadership academy such as this can achieve the change articulated in the phrase “working on the system”.

The first is critical mass. The more people who participate, the stronger the impetus for change is likely to become. For example, we heard of a situation where almost a third of school inspectors from a particular region have now participated in the Leadership

Academy and are creating a new culture in their area. It appears, however, that at present the Leadership Academy is not at the point where critical mass has been reached.

The second factor is the involvement of ministry leaders at the most senior level. Our discussions suggested that those ministry officials who have participated have, for the most part, found the Leadership Academy experience as powerful as their peers. Many of these officials, however, are not at a high enough level within the ministry to be able to effect the kind of structural changes that might be needed to ensure the greatest system-wide impact. Certainly, some graduates of the Leadership Academy are moving into positions of influence throughout the system and this may have an effect, but it will depend on how many people are involved and the particular positions into which they move.

A minority of participants did not find benefit

The effects of the programme, of course, were not identical for all participants. It sometimes depended on where people came from and their prior experience. The project documentation states that participants must have had three years experience of being a school head. In more recent generations, this rule has been relaxed. It appeared, in a few cases, that those who were in the first few years as a school head sometimes found that dealing with management issues prevented them getting the most out of the LA processes.

More particularly, impact seemed to depend to some extent on whether people were open to the experience and in particular to reflecting on questions of their own leadership and their personal role. The general view was that the Leadership Academy was successful for the large majority of participants who took up the mindset and method of working. There appeared to be several reasons why there was a lack of change in a small minority (approximately 10-15%) of participants. Some were able to feel the need for leadership but unable to engage deeply because they were very content oriented. Others were unable to translate all their reflection back into the reality of life as a leader, especially if faced with resistance to change from teachers. For some others, the LEA experience was unable to address a lack of sensitivity in terms of communication or, occasionally, might have exacerbated it.

As far as the different roles of school heads, inspectors, teacher trainers or ministry leaders is concerned, there does not appear to be a noticeable difference in impact between the groups. Their spheres of influence are of course different, and some individuals in particular groups may have greater scope to bring about significant change in other people's daily work.

Sustained impact on participants

Inevitably, ensuring impact over time is important for the Leadership Academy and any similar ventures. From discussions with a number of alumni, it appears that the personal effects of the Leadership Academy do last over time. Changed patterns of thinking and ways of operating seem to be long lasting, and many alumni have continued applying ideas and approaches they have learnt, even if they engage less frequently or hardly at all with the Leadership Academy's offerings for alumni. The research currently being carried out in generation I schools will clarify what aspects of the Leadership Academy experience retain their effects over time and how it has infiltrated into the

schools and other communities. We talk further about the challenge of sustainability in the final section.

Ongoing monitoring and evaluation

Each forum is evaluated by participants and they can also write their opinions on cards. The feedback is considerable. A team member has the brief to promote effective programme delivery by planning ahead, anticipating problems, taking feedback into account, analysing any problems, and liaising with the programme directors and other team members to ensure that adjustments are made. Team meetings are held to discuss quality improvement, and team members consider these meetings a critical part of their ability to make necessary changes. The team also has external critical friends with expertise in organisational development and school development. These people have attended forum sessions and provided their own feedback, which is incorporated into programme planning and revisions.

Every participant brings their “case” (project) to their CTC meetings. In the first generations, one member of the leadership team was responsible for three CTCs during the entire period and monitoring was not specifically scheduled. The leadership team felt that the coaching was not operating as well as it might, so each CTC is now observed at least once by a member of the leadership team during every forum to check for problems with the coaching process. A “time out” signal is used if the leadership team member wishes to make a point that will help the team’s metacognitive perspective on their learning, and the leadership team member may also step in to model the kinds of questions to ask or highlight, for example, when the CTC is ignoring the human side of a problem.

In addition, each of the six cases is documented at every CTC meeting. Roles are assigned at the beginning of each session with one member of the team taking the role of writer who completes a form and checks back with other members of the CTC that she/he has accurately represented the situation, colleagues’ responses and decisions. By looking at the forms for each case over time, it is possible to see whether and how participants are reframing problems or if they are just jumping straight in to dealing with them. This information is fed back into the programme design.

Furthermore, a national research project started in late 2006 to look at generations 1, 2 and 3, to follow the 10 schools involved over a 15 year period. Questionnaires were sent out to school leaders, teachers, pupils and parents, with follow up interviews. At the time of our visit the initial data were being analysed. Alumni are also involved as part of the research team.

8.5 Policy conditions

This section examines a broad set of policy conditions related to the LEA’s quality and impact and to the ultimate achievement of the government’s overall goals in education leadership.

Issues of implementation and co-ordination

The federal government’s initiative and support have been critical to the launch and implementation of the Leadership Academy. It is unlikely that a programme of this sort –

addressing a national need, requiring considerable resources to support, and depending on large enrolments – could have been initiated by a provincial government, a university, or a private provider. The government is unusual in its recognition of the importance of leadership for learning and leadership for system change. It has launched a visionary and innovative initiative in the Leadership Academy.

The government is unusual in its recognition of the importance of leadership for learning and leadership for system change. The Leadership Academy is an innovative initiative.

There is, however, a legacy of issues arising from the manner of the programme's launch. LEA was begun as a personal initiative of the former minister and introduced into the bureaucracy, as it was described to us, "from the side". That is, the programme was not developed in accordance within the customary bureaucratic procedures. Advantages were speed of launch, dedicated resources, and attention as a ministerial priority. While this has led to a positive response from many school heads, there seem to have been several potentially adverse consequences.

Ministry support and connections with other related national initiatives

The ministry is in a position to provide symbolic and substantive support for the LEA by enrolling ministry officials, including those at the top levels in the programme. There is disagreement within the ministry whether ministry participation in LEA has been adequate so far. LEA participants have been recruited from seven directorates and 78 departments in the ministry. Programme advocates state that attendance by top officials has been strong: 21 of the 85 officials who are in the position of director general or department Head have participated, which is just under one quarter. Others disagree. "If you have a rigid system that doesn't want to change and then a LEA that stimulates change, you'd have to hope management would be the first to attend, but this is not what has happened," stated one official. It seemed to the visiting team that some conflict over "bureaucratic turf" could either limit participation or create impressions of lack of support for the programme in some quarters.

The programme also appears to lack the fully co-ordinated connections with other national initiatives on school leadership and school reform that might have resulted had it been developed within the main education policy framework.

Lack of complementary structural change

Some officials pointed out that the LEA's impact will be blunted because its drive to change culture through individuals has not been accompanied by a parallel effort to change the structure of the system. The LEA is a logical approach to changing school leadership, they say, but it clashes with the power structure. They feel it is important to know what the political context is in the country and bring together (make congruent) the logical and political structure. Programme graduates, they imply, will still end up working in a cumbersome system characterised by layers of government, separate school systems, extensive consultation processes, civil service based personnel systems, and other impediments; and existing holders of power will resist the new ways. It was no doubt easier to launch a culture change initiative than to take on the political interests behind the structure, and it may be that once critical mass is attained, there will be sufficient momentum to create structural change. But for the moment, almost the entire burden for

systems change rests on the LEA, and this may be too much to ask of any one leadership development programme.

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Coherence of national reform agenda

The LEA does not appear to be part of a coherent overall national agenda for education reform. There are certainly a large number of reforms underway. The team was impressed at the intent behind the work of the Future Commission and the commitment to create a responsive, world class education system evident in the many initiatives underway. But we did not see that there was a coherent agenda behind these initiatives, nor was it clear where the LEA fitted into an overall plan. Any success LEA enjoys, and there seems to be ample promise of success, would be greater within the context of a well aligned body of reforms supported by a coherent policy agenda targeting school leadership and school outcomes.

The Leadership Academy's "home"

Finally, the LEA has no permanent structure or organisational home. What once might have been an advantage, offering speed and flexibility, now seems to some observers within the system to be a potential liability. As a programme that is both outside the bureaucracy and "virtual", the LEA now seems vulnerable to bureaucratic whim and to lack the impact of a programme more centrally situated in the bureaucracy. Moreover, LEA relies on the unique talents and background of two individuals and their teams. The programme quality, direction, and continuity rely almost entirely on this capacity. The ministry does not have such capacity, nor are steps being taken that could somehow institutionalise it.

Assumptions about change impact

Since the LEA is designed as a change programme, it is appropriate to examine the assumptions of its change strategy. The theory of change can be stated as follows: a well designed programme, following established principles of change management, will produce effective individual leaders whose projects and subsequent behaviour will help change each individual's organisation. These leaders will eventually constitute the critical mass needed to change the overall system culture. We explored programme effectiveness in Section 8.4. Here we raise some points on the programme's assumptions about its change impact with policy implications.

Adaptive change

The LEA appears to exemplify principles of managed change. Viewed from the perspective of general systems change theory, the programme incorporates such requisite elements as a vision of the desired future, modelling appropriate behaviours, generating a constant stream of pertinent information, providing ongoing feedback and support, and celebrating success. The LEA also fits well with the elements of the more particular model of "adaptive change" (Heifetz, 1994; Heifetz and Linsky, 2002), with for example a safe "container", consistent modelling, and "turning up and down the heat". However,

these change elements are confined to the LEA programme itself; they are less evident in the larger system. That is, with the exception of one directorate where the LEA programme was made a very high priority, and thus modelling commitment to change, we saw less indication that the ministry was acting as an effective change agent itself by adhering to these principles. The LEA thus bears a very large burden for effecting change in the overall system. This burden would certainly be better off shared.

The LEA's success as an agent of culture change will depend first on the quality and impact of each participant's project and behaviour in their organisation and, second, on the programme's capacity to create the needed critical mass of change agents within the system. It is hard to assess the impact, current or potential, of either of these conditions. Again, however, it does seem that their success would be greatly enhanced by parallel structural change and by more powerful change management efforts beyond LEA itself on the part of the ministry.

An early policy decision to expand participant eligibility has had profound and positive consequences for the programme. Originally intended for leaders of schools at all primary and secondary levels and with general, academic, and vocational focus, eligibility was opened up to include school inspectors, university programme providers, and regional and national government officials. Such diverse participation across all elements of the education governance, accountability, training, and delivery system has enhanced the programme emphasis on breaking down system boundaries and barriers and promoted the development of a deeper, more inclusive systems orientation among participants.

The decision to apply to the LEA is made by the applicant, although at times official encouragement or directives motivate applicants. The LEA accepts a balanced cohort that is representative of the diverse target population. It is not clear how well this voluntary approach works, given the LEA's aim to produce culture or systems change and create a critical mass of change agents. Some observers in Austria question whether the national government shouldn't put all or the majority of its middle or top level officials through the programme early on. In their view the ministry at present lacks the breadth of understanding, commitment, and coherence needed to fulfil the LEA vision. Similarly, where school inspectors play so potentially central a role in school quality and accountability, and in hastening or slowing school-level change, training the entire corps early on could create more powerful leverage for change.

Leverage points

Because most of the structural factors that make the education system complex and slow to change are also deeply embedded in the country's culture and traditions, it does not seem likely that these will be changed any time soon, either through policy decision or more indirect culture change. There are, however, a few leverage points where disproportionately large improvements in school leadership could be returned at relatively low levels of investment.

Changes to tenure of teaching staff

School heads identify a variety of conditions that would help them perform better. Cited more often than any condition was the authority to choose or change their school's teaching staff, something out of their reach at present. Using a football analogy, one head

said that as long as he has a mediocre team over which he has no selection control, he cannot take full responsibility for his school.

Reducing administrative overload

Among a variety of conditions hindering the exercise of effective pedagogical leadership, school leaders – especially primary and general secondary school heads with little or no administrative support – report feeling overloaded with administrative tasks and heightened feelings of stress. As one school head phrased it: “The school head’s duties are so manifold, diverse, and widespread, and we are not trained for them or able to find the time to manage them all.” In fact, far from easing such burdens, the provision of legal autonomy has created new administrative and managerial duties. Assignment of personnel who could relieve some of the administrative burdens from school heads could pay large dividends.

Amending criteria for selection of school heads

There appears to be the need for greater rigour and objectivity in the selection of school heads for the job. Respondents with a variety of different positions in the system identified the tradition of political intervention, favouritism, and patronage as problematic. Requiring that selection be made according to explicit criteria related to the job requirements of pedagogical leadership would be one step toward the selection of principals on merit and fitness for the job.

8.6 Food for thought

The Austrian Leadership Academy is an ambitious and innovative programme, with an aim to reach many leaders throughout the system. It seeks to influence their individual professional practice and, as a consequence, bring about system-wide change to address the needs of a rapidly changing world. At this point, approximately 40% of the 3 000 school leaders for whom the programme was initially developed have received their certification; that is, approaching one fifth (16.9%) of the total number of Austrian school leaders. This is a considerable achievement in two-and-a-half years. It has impact in terms of coverage, as not only school leaders but a diverse range of participants benefit from the interaction. As a regional coordinator described, it regional inspectors “... have formed a new culture”.

But there are other indicators of success. Most participants reflect on the powerful and sustained impact the Academy has had on their leadership practice. They are applying a new set of skills in their daily practice. Furthermore, engagement with the Academy remains high even after the training process is finalised: 60% of participants stay connected, valuing the networks they have developed.

In this section, we raise issues that countries would want to consider if developing a similar programme within their context, other than ensuring that the programme addressed their own important contextual issues. For us, the key challenge in relation to the Leadership Academy can be summed up as one of sustainability. Here, we consider sustainability from a number of perspectives: depth, length, breadth, capacity, integration, and system change (see Hargreaves and Fink, 2006).

Depth: the power of change through continued development

This is a demanding programme, seeking significant change in personal patterns of thinking, responding and communicating. From our limited experience, it is hard to tell whether the depth of change experienced by individuals through the LEA will enable them to promote the necessary innovation to deal with increasingly adaptive challenges. Our guess is that, with system support and continuous training, this is possible. However, the timing of participation in the LEA needs to be aligned to leadership training and development trajectories. If initial management training occurs after people become school heads, then it makes sense to recruit people to the Leadership Academy after 3 to 5 years as a school head. This is because our interviews suggest that some practical management issues tend to overwhelm new school heads, making it hard for them to focus on the Leadership Academy curricula. Bringing the compulsory management training forward so that it occurs before people take up their role as school head, as used to happen in Austria and happens in some other counties, would be another way to address this.

Length: ongoing involvement and support structure for alumni

Maintaining the spirit of the Leadership Academy is not always easy. Once out of the programme, the intention is that alumni will create collegial commitment through the alumni network. In reality, approximately 50% carry on with collegial links and approximately 60% with their partnership dialogue. A member of the programme team explained how alumni attend follow up events: “to feel the spirit/the power [but] they say it’s hard to continue when so many people are looking at problems. So they are looking for a support structure and systems that will sustain it. It’s not enough to meet. It’s about having a connection.”

From experience of other networks, we know that sustainability requires a common purpose and task, facilitation, infrastructure, face-to-face meetings and a small amount of money to cover these. A few people felt that the significance of membership in the Academy following graduation was diluted by the lack of active involvement among many graduates. They recommended that ongoing membership be granted only to alumni who stayed active in the network. It certainly makes sense that membership should be linked to active contribution to the Leadership Academy, whether through alumni events, support meetings, the website or learning partners and CTC colleagues. There was even a suggestion that alumni should be helped to start a new project. It seemed to be understood, therefore, that after all of the intense work to bring about change, continuation of commitment and use of ideas is essential.

Ongoing involvement appears to be a particular issue for ministry participants because offerings for alumni tend to be school focused and, as a ministry leader described it, “at the operative level”, while ministry leaders focus more “at the abstract level”. It seemed that an ongoing support network for ministry personnel would be valuable, although some ministry leaders particularly valued the CTC connections they had made with school and inspector colleagues

Breadth

Critical mass

At what point does the number of people who have been through the LA experience translate into a critical mass of education leaders who can exercise strategic, person-centred leadership for learning? We heard of one region where eight of the 26 school inspectors have participated in the LA and, as a regional coordinator described it, “have formed a new culture”. Some interviewees wanted to see more school heads and inspectors participating because, in a ministry leader’s words: “Whether we’ll succeed in bringing about systemic change depends on how many we can penetrate... It’s only possible if the process continues and more take part.” Another ministry leader commented: “If all 6 000 were in the Leadership Academy, there would be nobody left with responsibility in teaching in education who could say ‘this is not possible, this doesn’t concern me, I can’t do this’.” If the other points raised in this section are addressed and not too many alumni retire in the next few years, it may be a matter of only a few years before critical mass is reached.

Involvement of senior ministry leaders

A ministry leader was not alone in commenting: “it will only succeed if the people who take part are in leading positions”. It appears that the involvement of senior ministry leaders can have a particularly powerful effect on the system when they follow up their own participation by replicating LEA processes with their staff, as has happened throughout one directorate. At present, from seven ministry directorates, one director general and three deputy directors general have participated. Indeed, while few senior ministry leaders had participated in the Leadership Academy, a number felt that the decision makers at ministry and provincial level should be involved: “Start at the top of the system” (ministry leader).

Spreading ideas across regions

Several school leaders and inspectors share their experiences with other non-involved colleagues in their own regions, but this seemed to depend on individuals and the number of the LEA’s current participants and alumni in a district or region. Perhaps some independently offered regional seminars and regional leadership meetings might help to spread leadership ideas across the whole region. Some participants also felt that more regional meetings for people working at a particular level – “speciality meetings” – would help people to apply what they have learnt. A regional coordinator suggested that there would be more power if the Leadership Academy could be experienced by regional policy makers, “so LEA projects are seen by people at the policy level”. Like any other voluntary initiative, however, this one faces the challenge of persuading uninvolved people (heads, inspectors and ministry personnel) to become involved. Some see it as a club, others feel “we don’t need it – you just deal with your school” (primary school head), while some inspectors, in particular, appear to be afraid that they may lose power by attending given that in their current role, as one interviewee described it, “compulsory school sector inspectors tell schools what to do”. Developing a regional strategy with regional partnerships may be beneficial. This has already been started in one region, where the regional coordinator is in close contact with local politicians.

Parallel development of increasing teachers' professionalism and distributing leadership

An issue highlighted many times throughout our visit was that of teacher autonomy and the need for greater teacher professionalism. We are aware that the Ministry of Education has invited one of the Leadership Academy directors to lead a group looking at increasing the teachers' "professionalisation", and has developed a model with five domains of professionalism: personal mastery of their craft (individual competence); capacity for reflection and discourse; considering and sharing their knowledge and skills; awareness of their professionalism (seeing themselves as experts); collegiality (understanding the benefits of co-operation); and capacity to deal with differences and diversity. This model seems to support the concept of a professional learning community, but the extent to which it is realised in teacher practice will depend in part on the extent to which it influences the curriculum of the new *Pädagogische Hochschulen*.

In addition to the need for a parallel approach to teacher development, there is the issue of increasing pressure on school leaders. This may need addressing through widening the client group for leadership development. School administrators already have their own development programmes but these are not focused on leadership for learning. It may be valuable to place a greater emphasis on development of senior leadership teams as well as promoting greater distribution of leadership through teacher leadership development. As one ministry official commented, "the definition of leadership is not just heads. It is teachers who have influence on a team. It's difficult. In a future oriented society, I see a strong role for the LEA." It would be ideal if there were a coherent stream of professional preparation and development programmes for administrators and teachers. Such a programme stream would align the current compulsory management training, the LEA programme, and other training for administrative leaders. It would also align with the content of teacher preparation, in order to promote coherent concepts of the school as a learning community.

Capacity for programme delivery

With such a large programme, it is impossible for the project directors and scientific and administrative project team to facilitate the entire programme. Ensuring that all CTCs are visited once during each forum is a demand on the project team's time, and providing facilitation support to CTCs between forums would certainly help those who experience difficulties with the process. The initiative requires high quality facilitation. It makes good sense that there is an extended project team with regional coordinators who facilitate network meetings but, inevitably, the success of regional networks depends on the quality and leadership of coordinators and their ability to draw out the leadership and ownership of members. Already, some generation 1 participants are playing support roles. Other alumni might also become more involved, but ministry involvement is needed to institutionalise this capacity.

Clearly, the planning required is extensive and having a co-ordinated team that meet regularly is valuable. With oversight of more than one generation at a time, this task becomes even more critical and depends on being able to plan ahead.

Integration into national leadership training frameworks and with other initiatives

For successful change initiatives to become institutionalised, they need to become integrated into the system; part of the normal way of life. One ministry official thought it is possible that because the original idea came from outside the system the ground for innovation was more open. It is important for the Leadership Academy to be connected to the system and its other initiatives. It does complement the mandatory management training, and it is helpful that it draws some regional network facilitators from those involved in school management courses. Regional network coordinators also reflect different roles in the system – heads of different kinds of schools, school inspectors and regional inspectors – which is likely to promote further integration. Furthermore, helping school leaders engage effectively with national quality development initiatives and making the best use of the new standards as they are introduced is a useful effect of the LEA. Additional links can be seen with the QIBB. Other important connections are being made by the LEA alumni who have become experts in quality assurance and standards, and who have been invited to act as role models and provide examples at sessions at the teacher training colleges.

More efforts are needed to co-ordinate the content of the compulsory management training and that of LEA. First, both programmes should share a common vision of leadership for learning and of its management and leadership aspects. It is especially important that the initial training for new school leaders contain not only straightforward managerial content, important as that is, but also material that links management functions with the overriding goals of leadership for learning. At the same time, there is room in the LEA programme for more explicit and fully developed focus on the content and operation of schools as learning communities. Second, our informants expressed a range of views about the quality of their compulsory management training. Given that the programmes are offered in a variety of institutions, it seems likely that quality and content vary by provider. The state should continue its efforts to monitor programme quality and take steps to ensure the uniform quality of the management training and its co-ordination with the LEA.

While increasing integration is desirable, the LEA needs to continue to have the flexibility to adapt as necessary and help lead innovation. This could be stifled if it is bureaucratised within a system of hierarchical structures. So far the Leadership Academy appears to have been able to achieve this fine balance. It may be time for closer integration, but if system change is not addressed, the challenge will be to retain its adaptive quality and sustain the energy of cultural change (see next section).

System change

Aligning cultural and structural change

The key question here is whether cultural change, in itself, is enough to achieve the impact desired for the Leadership Academy, or whether it needs to be accompanied by structural change. A ministry leader reflected, “How long do the flames exist? What happens if you come back to school and you are faced with the old structures?” The Leadership Academy was introduced fairly quickly into the system: this meant there was no preparation of the system and no accompanying structural changes. Given the cycle of political change, it may be necessary to change structures such as those for the hiring of

teachers: “Otherwise it won’t have the impact they expect/hope it to have” (ministry leader).

National change strategy

We have commented on issues related to overall national reform strategy and the Leadership Academy’s place in it. The LEA is a bold and innovative initiative, but we are inclined to think that it is asked to do too much – that achieving the goals for which it was instituted requires a more comprehensive national message and strategy for school reform. (If these elements are in fact to be found in the Future Commission report or some other document or policy, we have not come across them.) In particular, the message would communicate a vision of the effective or high-performing school, of dynamic professional learning communities, and of powerful leadership for learning. The strategy would generate pervasive dialogue about this message and use key points in the system to apply the vision. We note, in this regard, the intent of the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber to promote a shared vision and understanding of school leadership and responsibility for school performance. Even the process of formulating such a vision and strategy could play a significant educative function as well as generating broad based support for the outcome. A more explicitly framed and comprehensive national reform message and strategy would advance the work of the Leadership Academy and achieve the results intended for it.

Summary

The Austrian Leadership Academy is a bold and creative initiative that, in three years, has already reached approximately 40% of the 3 000 leaders for whom it was designed. We conclude that its future can be viewed in terms of sustainability, essentially:

- whether it can promote the depth of change necessary for the changing educational landscape;
- whether its alumni will maintain an ongoing involvement with its ideals and practices and whether the support they need will be available;
- whether a critical mass of leaders, including key ministry leaders, will be reached and ideas spread across regions so that other leaders can become engaged;
- whether the programme leaders can involve enough high quality people to help build their capacity for delivery and facilitation of a very large and growing programme;
- whether the LEA is integrated into national leadership frameworks and other related initiatives;
- whether the necessary changes occur to system structures as part of a coherent national change strategy.

These are challenges that we believe any system considering such an innovative approach to leadership development will want to consider seriously.

Box 8.1 Summary conclusions on Austria's Leadership Academy

This chapter provided information and analysis on Austria's Leadership Academy (LEA), an initiative of the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture (now Education, Arts, and Culture). It was launched in 2004 to equip leaders in Austria's education system with the capacity to lead an emerging body of reform initiatives and help establish a new culture of proactive, entrepreneurial school leadership. The Leadership Academy was selected by the OECD *Improving School Leadership* activity as an innovative case study because of its system-wide approach to leadership development, emphasis on leadership for improved schooling outcomes, innovative programme contents and design, and demonstrated potential to achieve effective outcomes. This chapter is part of a larger OECD activity, *Improving School Leadership*, designed to help member countries improve policy and practice related to school leadership.

Austria is undergoing social, economic, and political change in response to global economic competition, membership in the EU, immigration and changing family structure, an ageing population and growing social programme costs, among other causes. The nation's strong, cohesive social structure and traditions provide stability but also hinder desirable change. Schools and the education system have been generally compliance oriented, bureaucratic, and cumbersome. The national government has introduced a large agenda of school reform, and school leaders with new skills and initiative are needed to implement these reforms. The Leadership Academy responds to this need.

The Austrian Leadership Academy is an innovative and carefully crafted response to a need to prepare a large number of school leaders over a short period of time to fulfil their role effectively in an increasingly autonomous system. Blending content and process, it focuses on developing learning centred leadership and an orientation to systems change through an approach that emphasises building personal capacity in a supportive learning community.

Positive outcomes of the LEA can already be seen. In three years, it has reached approximately 40% of the 3000 leaders for whom it was designed. A high proportion of leaders have participated voluntarily; there is generally a high degree of engagement; it has had a positive impact on leadership practice; and it has produced some changes in the wider school system. Sustained impact, while not entirely clear at this point, shows signs of promise. Further research and evaluation should help to assess this.

This study has identified some obstacles to the LEA reaching its full potential, and some conditions that could enhance the likelihood of achieving the overall goals for education reform for which the LEA is one strategy:

- *Ministry support and integration with other national initiatives:* High participation by senior ministry officials would strengthen the LEA's message and impact, and could also help improve co-ordination between the LEA and other ministry initiatives to improve education. Integrating the LEA and other national and provincial leadership and management training into a coherent framework (as well as co-ordinating with teacher training) would also pay dividends for all programmes.
- *Institutionalisation of the LEA programme:* Without compromising its current flexibility and innovative nature, consideration should be given to grounding the LEA on a firmer institutional base, so as to provide longer term capacity for sustainability and growth.
- *Structural change and national change management:* Changes in education structure and processes could reinforce and extend the changes the LEA achieves through individual and culture change, as would a more coherent government agenda and message for education reform.
- *Changes at key leverage points:* More rigorous principal selection procedures, greater principal authority or influence in selecting and dismissing (and rewarding) teachers, and reducing the principal's administrative workload would enable improvements in school leadership practice.
- *Programme sustainability:* the LEA's long term effectiveness can be enhanced by continuing the programme and graduating increasing numbers of leaders, strengthening ministry participation, improving the alumni and network follow up experience, and taking steps to make teachers more professional and distribute leadership more widely.

Annex 8.A1

Case study visit programme

15-19 April 2007

Sunday 15 April 2007 Site Visit and Interviews in Alpbach

- 19.30 Informal dinner with team members and guests of the Academy
- Mrs Maria Gruber-Redl, Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture
 Mr Wilfried Schley, IOS Hamburg
 Mr Michael Schratz, University of Innsbruck
 Mr Bernhard Weiser, University of Innsbruck
 Mr Paul Resinger, University of Innsbruck
 Mrs Katharina Barrios, IOS Hamburg
 Mr Eike Messow, Breuninger Stiftung
 Mr David Green, Director of the Centre for Evidence-Based Education (CEBE), Princeton, New Jersey
 Mrs Eisele, Ministry of Education, Baden-Württemberg, Germany

Monday 16 April 2007, Site Visit and Interviews in Alpbach

- 08.30 – 10.30 Plenary meeting: “5 Dimensions of Leadership for Learning”
- 10.30 – 11.00 Interview with a LEA participant (target group school head/primary school)
 Nora Hosp, school head, primary school, Innere Stadt, Innsbruck
- 11.00 – 12.30 Plenary meeting: Collegial Team Coaching (CTC) – Methods and Specification
- 12.30 – 14.00 Lunch
- 14.00 – 15.00 Collegial Team Coaching: observation of a selected coaching group
 15.00 – 16.00 Interview with the ministry’s project manager
 Mrs. Maria Gruber-Redl, Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture
 (alternative: observation of a 2nd CTC-Group)
- 16.00 – 17.00 Walk in the Alpine surroundings (alternative: Interview with the ministry’s project manager)
- 17.00 – 18.00 Interview with the LEA participant and dean of the University College of Education in Klagenfurt (target group Teacher Training Institution)
 Mrs. Marlies Krainz-Dürr, PH Klagenfurt
- 18.00 – 19.00 Interview with a LEA participant (target group school inspectorate)
 Mr Wilhelm Prainsack, provincial school inspector, Klagenfurt Stadt
- 19.00 – 20.00 Dinner with the scientific deans of the academy
- 20.00 – 21.00 Interview with the scientific deans of the academy
 Mr Wilfried Schley, IOS Hamburg
 Mr Michael Schratz, University of Innsbruck

Tuesday 17 April 2007 Site Visit and Interviews in Alpbach / Journey to Vienna

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| 08.30 – 09.30 | Interview with representatives of the QIBB quality initiative in the Länder
Mrs Judith Wessely, provincial school inspector for technical schools in Vienna, LEA alumna
Mr Wilhelm König, provincial school inspector for technical schools in Lower Austria, LEA participant |
| 09.30 - 10.30 | Interview with scientific team members of LEA
Mr Bernhard Weiser, University Innsbruck
Mr. Paul Resinger, University Innsbruck |
| 10.30 – 12.00 | Interview with the regional coordinators of LEA in the Länder |
| 12.00 – 13.00 | Interview with officials of the Union of Public Services representing teachers/school heads
<i>Mr. Walter Meixner, Chairman, Regional Directorate for teachers/school heads of general compulsory schools</i>
<i>Mr. Wolfgang Muth, Chairman, Regional Directorate for teachers/school heads of academic secondary schools</i> |
| 13.00 – 14.00 | Lunch break |
| 14:00 – 14.45 | Interview with LEA alumnus (target group school head/VET schools)
Mr. Jordan, school head, Vocational College |
| 14:45 – 15.30 | Interview with LEA alumnus (target group Teacher Training Institution; school management programmes)
Mr. Happ, In-service training institution Innsbruck |

Wednesday 18 April 2007, Vienna

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| 08.30 – 11.30 | School visit to the academic secondary school GRG 21
"Bertha von Suttner" Schulschiff
Mrs Judith Kovacic, school head, LEA alumna who is realising an innovative school based project and takes part in the midterm research project on the effectiveness of LEA
Interviews with
school head and members of the teaching staff working on the LEA project
parents
representatives of the SGA
the administrator |
| 12.00 – 13.00 | Interview with Mrs Silvia Wiesinger, In-service training institution Vienna Director, dep. of school management training and international co-operations |
| 13.00 – 14.30 | Lunch |
| 14.45 – 15.30 | Interview with LEA alumnus, representing the target group school head of general secondary school / special needs school / pre-vocational school |
| 15.30 – 16.30 | Interview with LEA alumnus representing the target group ministry and members of his staff
Mr Friedrich Faulhammer, Ministry for Science and Research
DG for higher education and University Teacher Training |

Thursday 19 April 2007, Vienna

- 08.30 – 09.30 Visit to the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber and presentation of recent involvements in educational policies, project “Leadership Award - School Head of the Year”, event “Entrepreneurship Education for Schools’ Innovations”
- Mr Michael Landertshammer, Director, dep. of educational policy
- 10.00 – 12.00 Round Table “School management and policy related to school improvement”
- Mr Anton Dobart (opening), Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture. DG responsible for broad education policy related to school improvement and reform in general schooling; project owner QIS
 - Mr Josef Neumüller (moderation), Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture. Director, dep. for international relations
 - Mr Edwin Radnitzky, Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture. Deputy Director, dep. research, planning, quality development; project manager QIS
 - Mrs Anneliese Ecker, Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture. Deputy Director, dep. of vocational education and training and in-service teacher training
- 12.15 – 13.15 Interview with DG Theodor Siegl, Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture
DG responsible for broad education policy related to school improvement and reform in vocational schooling; project owner QIBB
- 14.00 – 17.00 OECD review team meeting

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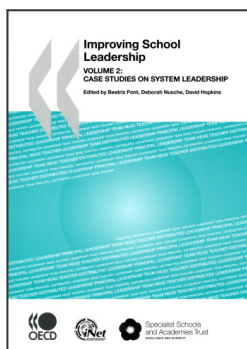
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