

Austria – setting clear roles and responsibilities

In Austria the responsibility for the quality management system for schools (QMS) lies with the three governance levels: schools, regional level (Bildungsdirektion) and federal level (GD III in the Ministry of Education, Research and Science, BMBWF). Good cooperation between all levels is crucial.

Schools' headteachers are responsible for school quality and quality of teaching; they are obliged to implement the QMS and use it as a tool for quality assurance of teaching and learning and for strategic and continuous school development. The leaders of a school are the ones who inform, motivate and enable teachers for the QMS. They are supported by school quality coordinators (Q-SK), teachers with special training in the QMS who dispose of in-depth knowledge of the QMS, its functions, tools and instruments. School quality coordinators are nominated by the headteachers.

At regional level, school quality managers (former school inspectors) are responsible for the implementation and use of the QMS in schools of one region (there are 31 educational regions in Austria). Every three years they lead a management and performance review with every headmaster of their region based on the school development plan.

The department III/5 of the Ministry of Education, Research and Science (BMBWF) is responsible for the overall strategic development of the QMS. The ministry stays in close cooperation with the school quality managers at regional level. Moreover, there is a support structure at this level: the Q-RK (regional quality coordinators) who support schools and especially the school quality coordinators (Q-SK) in their work with the QMS.

The specific roles and tasks within quality management of these actors are defined either by task profiles or by laws and regulations. They are transparent on www.qms.at (in German only):
<https://www.qms.at/ueber-qms/akteurinnen-und-akteure>