

CHAPTER 4: TEACHER APPRAISAL

Teacher appraisal offers opportunities for improving both teacher performance and the quality of education systems. The Council conclusions on ‘European teachers and trainers for the future’ highlight appraisal as one way to enhance teaching quality ‘by supporting improvements in teachers’ work, by providing constructive evaluation and feedback on their performance, setting up criteria for promotion and recognition of those who accomplish significant achievements’ (1).

In this report, teacher appraisal refers to the evaluation of individual teachers in order to make a judgement about their work and performance. As well as examining their performance in the classroom, appraisal can also involve an evaluation of a teacher’s contribution to the broader objectives of the school in which they work. Usually, appraisal is carried out separately from other quality assurance processes such as school evaluation, although it can take place as part of these procedures as well.

Individual teacher evaluation can have different aims and take various forms. It can be carried out to support the improvement of teaching practices, to ensure teacher accountability and compliance with standards, or both. The actors and methods involved differ widely across education systems, as do the consequences for teachers. Some countries have a single appraisal process, while others have developed several processes.

This chapter focuses on the appraisal of in-service teachers. Appraisal of novice teachers carried out at the end of the induction period is analysed in Chapter 2. Appraisal processes carried out as a form of disciplinary measure in cases of serious underperformance or misconduct are not analysed in this chapter.

This chapter is structured in four sections. The first section provides an overview of the existence of top-level regulations and looks into how often teachers are appraised. The second section analyses the main aims of teacher appraisal. It then looks at certain aspects of the formative dimension, such as measures to remedy weaknesses, as well as teachers’ opinions on the usefulness of the feedback received. The third section identifies who is responsible for evaluating individual teachers, and highlights the key role of school heads in the process. The last section identifies the methods and tools used for teacher appraisal. All sections combine Eurydice and TALIS data. The main findings are summarised at the end of the chapter.

4.1. Extent and frequency of teacher appraisal

This section looks into the way public authorities regulate teacher appraisal, including whether it has to be carried out regularly or if it takes place under specific circumstances such as a teacher request or at the initiative of the appraiser. It then presents TALIS 2018 results on the frequency of teacher appraisal as reported by school principals.

Teacher appraisal is regulated by a framework established by top-level authorities in three-quarters of European education systems. In the remaining education systems, there are no top-level regulations on individual teacher evaluations. Schools or local authorities have full autonomy in this matter. In two countries, there is regional variation regarding teacher appraisal. In Germany, the top-level authorities regulating teacher appraisal are the *Länder*. In Spain, while the central regulations on inspection are issued by the Ministry of Education and refer in very broad terms to the role of inspectors in teacher appraisal, the Autonomous Communities are responsible for issuing more specific regulations.

(1) Council conclusions of 26 May 2020 on European teachers and trainers for the future, OJ C 193, 9.6.2020, p. 14.

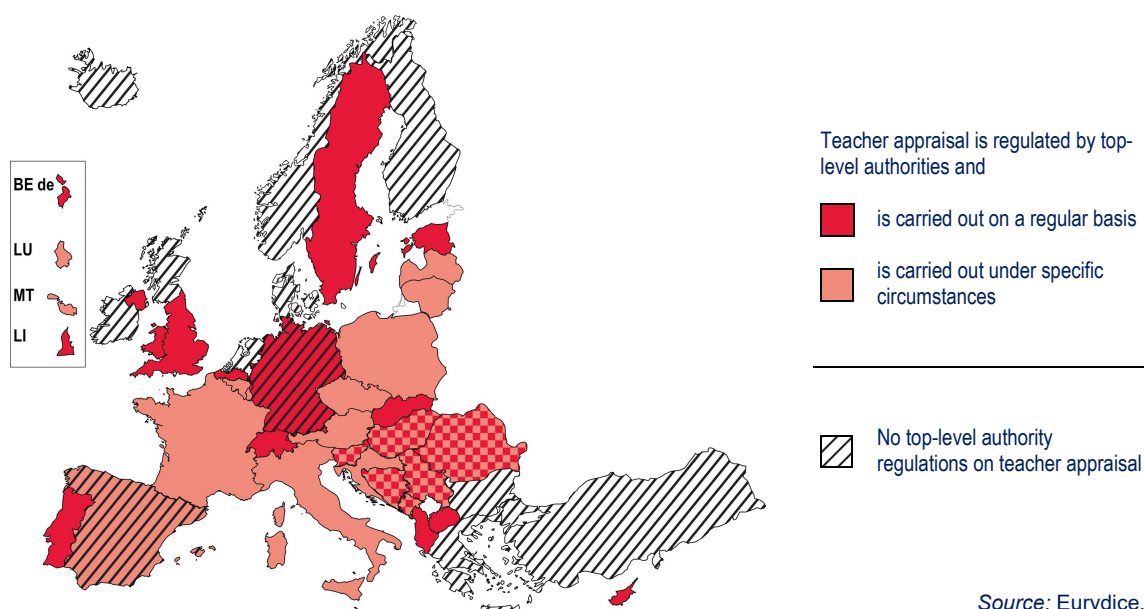
In half the education systems, top-level authorities set the frequency of teacher appraisal. The period between appraisal exercises ranges from one to six years. The appraisal is carried out every year in Estonia, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Sweden, the United Kingdom (England, Wales and Northern Ireland), Albania, Switzerland and Liechtenstein. At the other end of the scale, lower secondary teachers are appraised every six years in Serbia. In Cyprus, regular appraisal starts only after the 10th year of service and takes place every other year thereafter. In Belgium (German-speaking Community), Liechtenstein and North Macedonia, the frequency varies depending on different factors.

In **Belgium (German-speaking Community)**, teachers with a temporary contract are appraised either annually or every two years. Teachers with an indefinite contract are appraised either every three years or upon request, depending on their status.

In **Liechtenstein**, teacher appraisal to help teachers improve performance is carried out annually, while salary-relevant appraisal only occurs every five years.

In **North Macedonia**, teachers are appraised annually by the school head and by a representative from the top-level authority. Moreover, inspectors evaluate the work of teachers as part of the integral evaluation of the school every three years.

Figure 4.1: Existence and frequency of teacher appraisal in lower secondary education according to top-level authority regulations, 2019/20



Minimum frequency of regular individual teacher evaluation (years)

BE de	BE nl	DE	EE	CY	HU	PT	RO	SI	SK	SE	UK-ENG	UK-WLS	UK-NIR	AL	BA	CH	LI	ME	MK	RS
1-3	4	:	1	10	5	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2-4	1-4	1-5	4	1-3	6

Source: Eurydice.

Explanatory note

The Figure shows only the normal appraisal procedures. Appraisal processes carried out as a form of disciplinary measure in cases of serious underperformance or misconduct are outside the scope. Teacher appraisal carried out under specific circumstances refers to teachers evaluated upon their request, at the initiative of the appraiser or at certain points in their career.

Country-specific notes

Belgium (BE de): Frequency varies according to the type of contract.

Germany: A minority of *Länder* have issued regulations on teacher appraisal and have made it a regular exercise.

Greece: A new law adopted in 2020 (Law 4692/2020) introduces a framework for the appraisal of teachers in 'model' and 'experimental' schools. This framework is expected to be implemented starting from 2020/21.

Spain: Information is available only for eight Autonomous Communities. Four of them have issued regulations on teacher appraisal (Castilla-La Mancha, La Rioja, Asturias and Aragón), and appraisal takes place under specific circumstances. Four other Autonomous Communities (Ceuta, Extremadura, Illes Balears and Comunidad de Madrid) have not issued regulations on teacher appraisal.

Cyprus: Regular appraisal starts only after the 10th year of lower secondary teachers' service.

Bosnia and Herzegovina: Teacher inspection occurs every two to four years, depending on Canton or entity.

Switzerland: Teacher appraisal is required in the majority of the Cantons. Frequency varies across Cantons between one and four years.

In countries where appraisal takes place at regular intervals, a distinct evaluation process can be carried out at the initiative of the teacher or of the appraiser. This is the case in several eastern and Balkan countries. In Hungary, Slovenia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia, these distinct appraisal processes aim to inform decisions on promotion, while in Romania, they aim at determining which teachers will receive salary increases. In contrast, the purpose in Montenegro is to help teachers improve their teaching performance.

In **Hungary**, teachers can request appraisal for promotion after a given number of years that vary from 6 to 14 years, according to career level. In addition, teachers are appraised as part of internal and external school evaluation, which both take place at least every five years.

In **Slovenia**, the head teacher must monitor the work and the careers of teachers, and at least once a year conduct an interview with each one. Moreover, appraisal for promotion is performed at the initiative of the head teacher in agreement with the teacher evaluated or at the teacher's own initiative. Finally, since July 2020, after an 11-year suspension due to austerity measures taken following the financial crisis, teacher appraisal for reward schemes linked to exceptional performance can be carried out again at the initiative of the appraiser, usually the head teacher.

In **Serbia**, the frequency of appraisal to improve performance as part of external and internal school evaluations is fixed, while appraisal for promotion purposes is organised at the teachers' request. Moreover, teacher appraisal as part of pedagogical supervision is carried out according to an annual pedagogical supervision work plan made by the Ministry.

In 12 education systems, the frequency of teacher appraisal is not set at top-level. Instead, this process is carried out under specific circumstances that differ across countries. In Luxembourg, teachers are evaluated only twice in order to help them improve performance: in their 12th and 20th years of service. In France and Malta, teacher appraisal takes place in specific years of service that vary according to teachers' progress along the salary scale.

In **France**, appraisal is based on four career interviews throughout teachers' professional life. Career interviews take place when teachers reach certain steps in the salary scale. On average, it takes place every seven years.

In **Malta**, teachers are appraised either by the school principal and/or by subject specialists before moving from one salary scale to the next. New teachers are in salary scale 9 and move to salary scale 8 after eight years of service and then to salary scale 7 after another eight years of service.

Teacher appraisal that is carried out under specific circumstances can be initiated by different parties. In Spain (Asturias and La Rioja), Croatia, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland, teacher appraisal takes place at the teacher's request. In such cases, it is used to inform decisions on teacher promotion to a higher career level or to award financial rewards.

In **Italy**, teachers are appraised when they apply to receive a reward under a scheme that may be launched annually by the school head.

Moreover, in Lithuania and Poland, the school head may also take the initiative to evaluate teachers in order to help them improve their performance. In Croatia, teacher appraisal aimed at improving teacher's performance can also be initiated by the evaluator (usually the school head), but can also be undertaken at the teacher's or parents' request.

Finally, in Belgium (French Community), Czechia and Austria, it is the evaluator – either the school head or an inspector – who decides when to evaluate teachers.

It is worth mentioning that regulations on the frequency of teacher appraisal changed over the last years in some countries. In Latvia, teacher appraisal had to be carried out every five years until 2017, when the regulations changed to give schools autonomy in this matter. In Poland, since 2019, a periodic performance appraisal is no longer obligatory.

In 10 European education systems, there are no top-level regulations on individual teacher evaluation ⁽²⁾. Whether and how teachers are appraised is a matter of local autonomy. More general regulations may, nevertheless, guide the teacher appraisal process.

In **Denmark**, the *Folkeskole Act* entrusts the responsibility of the administrative and pedagogical management of the school, including the professional development of teachers, to the school head. Moreover, based on teachers' collective agreement ⁽³⁾, the school head and the individual teacher are expected to hold a dialogue in order to prepare an individual education plan addressing the teacher's needs in terms of competences and qualifications in order to perform his/her tasks.

In **Finland**, the municipal collective agreements for the education sector 2018 ⁽⁴⁾ and 2020 ⁽⁵⁾ state that in general the decision on staff salary increase should be based on an assessment of his/her performance. The criteria and procedures for such assessments are defined locally. Appraisal of performance may be assessed annually, for example, during a development discussion with the teacher concerned.

In **Norway**, although the employee dialogue is not explicitly enshrined in legislation, according to the guidelines provided by the Working Environment Act ⁽⁶⁾, the employer is requested to give the individual employee the opportunity to take part in processes and decisions concerning their own workplace. The employee dialogue is normally a formal dialogue between the teacher and school head during which the teachers receive feedback on their work.

In **Turkey**, inspectors can assess the competence and work of individual teachers, and provide them with feedback within the framework of school evaluation. This however is not regulated and is left to the initiative of the school inspectors.

In **Iceland**, a new legislation Act on education, qualification and hiring of teachers and school heads (Act 95/2019) ⁽⁷⁾ requires rules framing a system for teacher appraisal to be established. This task, which is entrusted to the new Teacher Council established by the abovementioned law, is on-going.

The TALIS 2018 survey provides some information on how appraisal is carried out in schools. Principals were asked how often their teachers are appraised by five different types of evaluators, including themselves. The other evaluators mentioned were other members of the school management team, assigned mentors, teachers (who are not part of the school management team) and external individuals or bodies. Figure 4.2 shows the frequency reported by school principal.

Data illustrates that teacher appraisal is a common practice in European countries. In the EU, 64.5 % of teachers work in schools where formal appraisal is carried out at least once a year by at least one evaluator. However, there are some geographical disparities in Europe. Teacher appraisal is carried out most often in the three Baltic countries, several eastern European countries (Czechia, Bulgaria, Romania, Slovenia and Slovakia), as well as in the United Kingdom (England), Sweden and Turkey, with approximately 90 % or more of teachers working in schools where they are appraised at least every year. In contrast, in the western and southern parts of Europe, as well as in Finland, teachers work in schools where they are appraised less frequently. For instance, in Belgium (Flemish Community), Italy, Spain, France, Cyprus, Austria, the Netherlands, Portugal and Finland, the proportion of teachers working in schools where they are appraised at least every year is below the EU level.

⁽²⁾ Bulgaria, Denmark, Ireland, Greece, the Netherlands, Finland, the UK (Scotland), Iceland, Norway and Turkey.

⁽³⁾ Local Government Denmark (Kommunernes Landsforening) and the Confederation of Teachers Unions (Lærernes Centralorganisation), 50.01 O.18 17/2019. Protocol 6 - *Continuing education plans in Collective agreement for teachers and others in primary and lower secondary school and for special education for adults* ([Overenskomst for lærere m.fl. i folkeskolen og ved specialundervisning for voksne](#)), [Accessed 15 October 2019].

⁽⁴⁾ Municipal employers (KT Kuntatyöntajat, KT Kommunarbetsgivarna), 2018. Municipal collective agreement for the education sector 2018-2019 (Kunnallinen opetushenkilöstön virka- ja työehtosopimus 2018-2019, Det kommunala tjänste- och arbetskollektivavtalet för undervisningspersonal 2018-2019), [Accessed 18 November 2020].

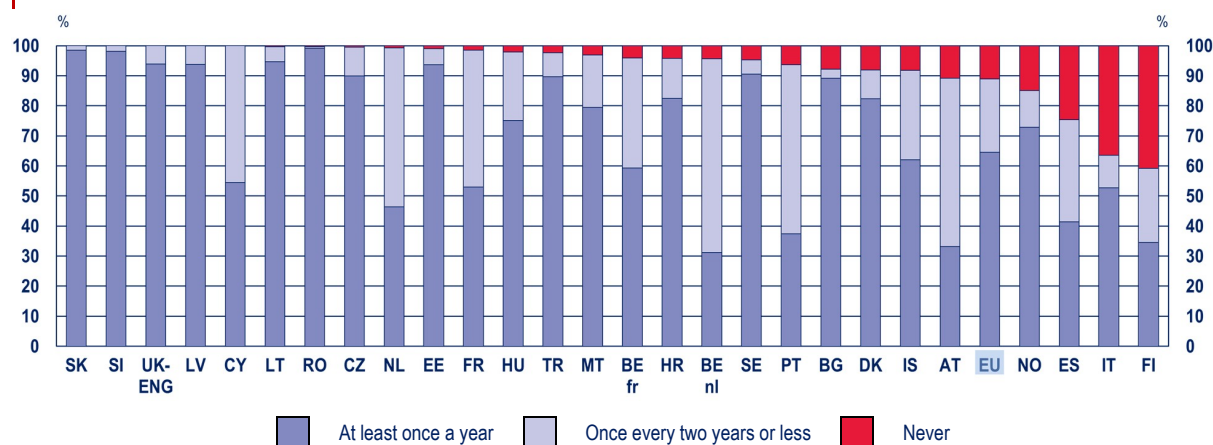
⁽⁵⁾ Municipal employers (KT Kuntatyöntajat, KT Kommunarbetsgivarna), 2020, *Municipal collective agreement for the education sector 2020-2021* (Kunnallinen opetushenkilöstön virka- ja työehtosopimus 2020-2021, Det kommunala tjänste- och arbetskollektivavtalet för undervisningspersonal 2020-2021), [Accessed 18 November 2020].

⁽⁶⁾ Chapter 4, §4-2. https://lovdata.no/dokument/NL/lov/2005-06-17-62/KAPITTEL_5#KAPITTEL_5

⁽⁷⁾ <https://www.althingi.is/altxt/stjt/2019.095.html>.

In **Italy**, teacher appraisal had begun to be regulated a few years prior to the time of the survey. Indeed, in 2015, a financial reward scheme based on the results of teacher appraisal was introduced for all teachers with an indefinite contract ⁽⁸⁾. The implementation of this policy was clearly reflected in the substantial decrease (-33.7 percentage points) between TALIS 2013 and TALIS 2018 in the proportion of teachers working in schools where they are never appraised (OECD 2020, Table II.3.33). However, since the new budget law of December 2019, whether schools allocate part of their funding for the improvement of the educational offer to a financial reward scheme based on teacher appraisal may vary from one school to another ⁽⁹⁾.

Figure 4.2: Proportion of lower secondary teachers working in schools where the principal reports the frequency of their appraisal, 2018



	SK	SI	UK-ENG	LV	CY	LT	RO	CZ	NL	EE	FR	HU	TR	MT
At least once a year	98.5	98.1	93.9	93.7	54.4	94.6	99.1	89.9	46.4	93.7	53.0	75.1	89.7	79.5
Once every 2 years or less	1.5	1.9	6.1	6.3	45.6	5.0	0.5	9.6	52.9	5.3	45.5	22.8	8.0	17.3
Never						0.3	0.4	0.5	0.7	1.0	1.5	2.1	2.4	3.2
	BE fr	HR	BE nl	SE	PT	BG	DK	IS	AT	EU	NO	ES	IT	FI
At least once a year	59.3	82.5	31.2	90.6	37.4	89.2	82.3	62.0	33.2	64.5	72.9	41.4	52.8	34.6
Once every 2 years or less	36.6	13.3	64.5	4.7	56.2	2.9	9.6	29.8	56.0	24.4	12.2	34.1	10.8	24.6
Never	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.7	6.4	7.9	8.1	8.2		11.1	14.9	24.6	36.4	40.8

Source: Eurydice, on the basis of TALIS 2018 (see Table 4.1 in Annex II).

Explanatory note

The Figure is based on principals' answers to question 23 'On average, how often is each teacher formally appraised in this school by the following people?'. Answers 'less than once every two years' and 'once every two years' are grouped together. Answers 'once per year' and 'twice or more per year' are grouped together.

The length of the bars shows the proportion of teachers working in schools where the principal reports the corresponding category of frequency. The value taken is the highest frequency reported by principals across sub-questions a-e.

The data is arranged in ascending order of the frequency category 'never'. For the first five countries, the data is arranged in ascending order of the frequency category 'once every two years or less'.

EU refers to all the European Union countries/regions that participated in the TALIS survey in 2018. It includes UK-ENG.

Varied situations can be observed in countries where teacher appraisal is not nationally regulated (see Figure 4.1). In Bulgaria, Denmark, Norway and Turkey, a higher proportion of teachers than the EU level work in schools where they are appraised at least every year. In Bulgaria and Turkey specifically, around 90 % of teachers work in schools where they are appraised at least every year. In contrast, in Spain and Finland are the proportions of teachers working in schools where they are never appraised at least 10 percentage points above the EU level (respectively 24.6 % and 40.8 %).

In **Spain**, the Autonomous Communities have the autonomy to issue regional-level regulations on teacher appraisal and not all of them have done so (see Figure 4.1).

⁽⁸⁾ Education Reform Law 'Buona Scuola', Article 1, paragraph 126, of Law no. 107 of 13 July 2015.

⁽⁹⁾ 2020 Budget Law, art. 1, paragraph 249.

In **Finland**, the quality assurance system does not rely on appraising individual teachers in a formal way. The development discussions between teachers and school heads may contain evaluative elements, but very often these focus on the coming school year and the teachers' needs and plans for CPD. Teachers are expected to be ready to reflect on their work and the quality of it, as well as to continuously maintain their professional skills.

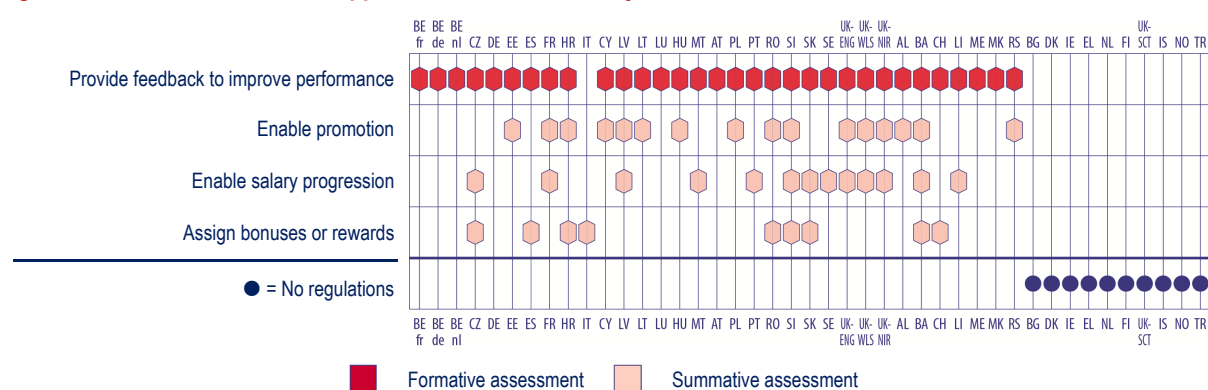
4.2. Aims and consequences of teacher appraisal

As for any kind of evaluation, two main goals of teacher appraisal can be identified. On the one hand, appraisals can have a formative purpose, providing teachers with input to help them identify ways to address weaknesses and improve their teaching skills. On the other hand, teacher appraisal can also have a summative purpose, when it looks at past performance in order to determine whether the required standards are met or recommended practices are followed.

The main aims of teacher appraisal, listed in Figure 4.3, can be related either to the formative or the summative nature of teacher appraisal. The formative dimension of teacher appraisal is in evidence when the process aims to provide feedback in areas requiring improvement, while teacher appraisal has a summative dimension when it aims to inform decisions on promotion to a higher career level, salary progression or other financial rewards.

This section analyses whether appraisal is intended only to provide teachers with feedback on their performance or whether it also has other purposes such as assessing readiness for promotion. It then focuses on appraisal for formative purposes, by discussing teachers' opinions on the usefulness of feedback they receive at school, as well as the frequency of discussions on how to remedy weaknesses following teacher appraisal as reported by school principals.

Figure 4.3: Main aims of teacher appraisal in lower secondary education, 2019/20



Source: Eurydice.

Explanatory note

The Figure shows only the normal appraisal procedures: appraisal processes carried out as a form of disciplinary measure in cases of serious underperformance or misconduct are out of scope.

Country-specific notes

Germany: Information applies to the minority of *Länder* that issued regulations on teacher appraisals (see Section 4.1).

Spain: Figure 4.3 shows the situation in four Autonomous Communities. In Asturias and La Rioja, the aim of teacher appraisal is to inform decisions on financial rewards. In Aragón and Castilla-La Mancha, the aim is to provide teachers with feedback in order to help them improve their performance.

As shown on Figure 4.3, the most common reason for appraisal is to provide teachers with feedback on their performance in order to help them improve. Except Italy, all countries with regulations report that providing feedback on performance is among the aims of their teacher appraisal system. In a few education systems (Belgium, certain *Länder* in Germany, Spain (Castilla-La Mancha and Aragón), Luxembourg, Austria, Montenegro and North Macedonia (until 2022)), driving improvement is the

single main aim of teacher appraisal. In Belgium (French Community) since 2019 and in Austria, however, the results of teacher appraisal, although not directly linked to financial rewards, are taken into account when deciding to assign new responsibilities to teachers.

In **Belgium (French Community)**, the changes being introduced as part of the Pact for excellence in teaching (*Pacte pour un enseignement d'excellence*) reform, now take teacher appraisal results into account when assigning additional responsibilities to teachers. Since 1 September 2019, teachers with 15 years' seniority and no unfavourable evaluation reports are classed as 'experienced teachers' to whom specific whole-school tasks such as pedagogical coordination, relations with parents, or referent roles for beginning teachers may be entrusted. These roles may be accompanied by a slight reduction of classroom hours.

In **Austria**, the school head takes teacher appraisal results into account when deciding to award teachers new functions such as subject coordinator, transition manager for cooperation between primary school and lower secondary school or substitute school head.

In other countries where there are regulations, teachers are appraised for a variety of reasons. The most common pattern, as stated previously, is that in addition to a formative evaluation aimed at providing feedback (see Figure 4.3), there are forms of summative evaluation intended to assess whether a teacher's performance and/or competences should be recognised via promotion, salary progression, bonuses or other rewards.

Teachers' appraisal results are used as part of the promotion process in 16 education systems. In 14 of them, it is a requirement (see Figure 1.13). In the remaining two countries (Estonia and Albania), school heads have the autonomy to use teacher appraisal as part of the criteria for deciding on teachers' career advancement.

Teacher appraisal is used to inform decisions on salaries in 13 education systems. In France, Malta, Portugal, the United Kingdom (England, Wales and Northern Ireland) and Liechtenstein, teacher appraisal results are taken into account when deciding on teachers' progression along the salary scale (see Section 1.3.2). In Sweden, collective agreements stipulate that salary increase is influenced by the regular individual 'development talk' between school head and teacher. In Czechia, Latvia, Slovakia, Slovenia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, the teacher appraisal process can lead to a salary increase at the discretion of the school head.

Teacher appraisal is taken into account for the awarding of bonuses or other financial rewards to teachers in nine education systems: Czechia, Spain (La Rioja and Asturias), Croatia, Italy, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia (since July 2020, see Section 4.1), Switzerland and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Frequency of remedial discussions and impact of feedback to teachers

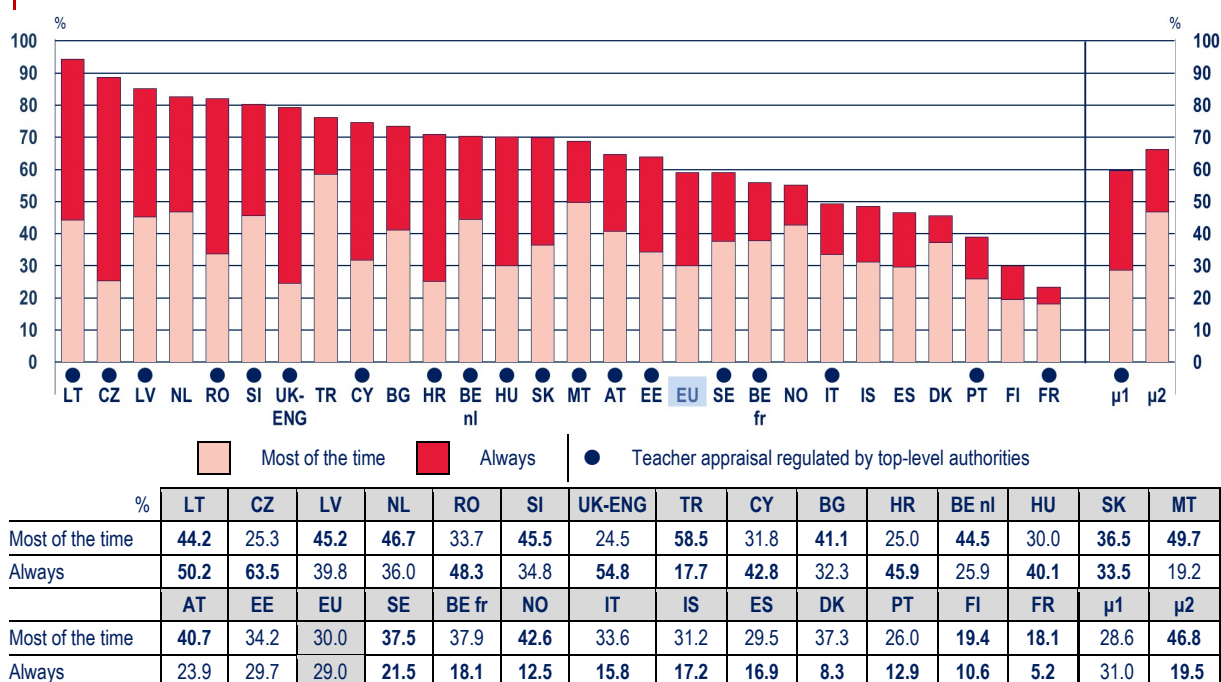
In the Council conclusions on 'European teachers and trainers for the future' ⁽¹⁰⁾, providing teachers with feedback is identified as a key element in supporting improvements in teachers' work. Additionally, the latest report of the ET 2020 Working Group on Schools, which was set up by the European Commission, highlights that a well-designed teacher evaluation process 'should include positive feedback and improve, through encouragement and practical support, the performance of teachers' (European Commission 2020, p. 52).

Eurydice data reveals that, except Italy, all countries with top-level regulations on teacher appraisal see providing feedback to improve teachers' performance as one of the goals (see Figure 4.3). However, research suggests that beyond simply providing feedback, the quality of feedback also plays an important role in determining whether teachers can use it to improve their practice (Ford T.G & Hewitt K.K., 2020). In order to shed light on what kind of feedback is provided to lower secondary teachers, two sets of TALIS 2018 data are considered here.

⁽¹⁰⁾ Council conclusions of 26 May 2020 on European teachers and trainers for the future, OJ C 193, 9.6.2020.

In the TALIS 2018 questionnaire, principals were asked to what extent (never, sometimes, most of the time or always) measures to remedy weaknesses in teaching are discussed with the teacher following formal teacher appraisal. This question was addressed only to the principals of schools where teacher appraisal is carried out (see Figure 4.2). Data reveals that although post-appraisal discussions exist almost everywhere, they do not take place systematically in all countries. In 2018, across the EU, 95.4 % of teachers worked in schools where the principal reports that post-appraisal discussions on remedial measures take place (OECD 2020, Table II.3.42). However, the proportion of teachers working in schools where appraisal is ‘always’ followed by such discussions is much lower (29.0 %, across the EU, see Figure 4.4).

Figure 4.4: Proportion of lower secondary teachers working in schools where the principal reports that remedial discussions follow appraisal, by frequency, 2018



Source: Eurydice, on the basis of TALIS 2018 (see Table 4.2 in Annex II).

Explanatory notes

The Figure is based on principals’ answers to question 25 ‘Please indicate the frequency that each of the following occurs following teacher appraisal’, option (a) ‘measures to remedy any weaknesses are discussed with the teacher following teacher appraisal’. Schools where the principal reported ‘never’ to each option of appraisal in question 23 are excluded from the calculations.

The data is arranged in descending order of the sum of the frequency for categories ‘most of the time’ and ‘always’.

EU refers to all the European Union countries/regions that participated in the TALIS survey in 2018. It includes UK-ENG.

Statistically significant differences from the EU value are indicated in bold (in the table below the figure).

For ‘teacher appraisal regulated by top-level authorities’, see Figure 4.1.

μ1=average for countries where teacher appraisal is regulated by top-level authorities.

μ2=average for countries where teacher appraisal is not regulated by top-level authorities.

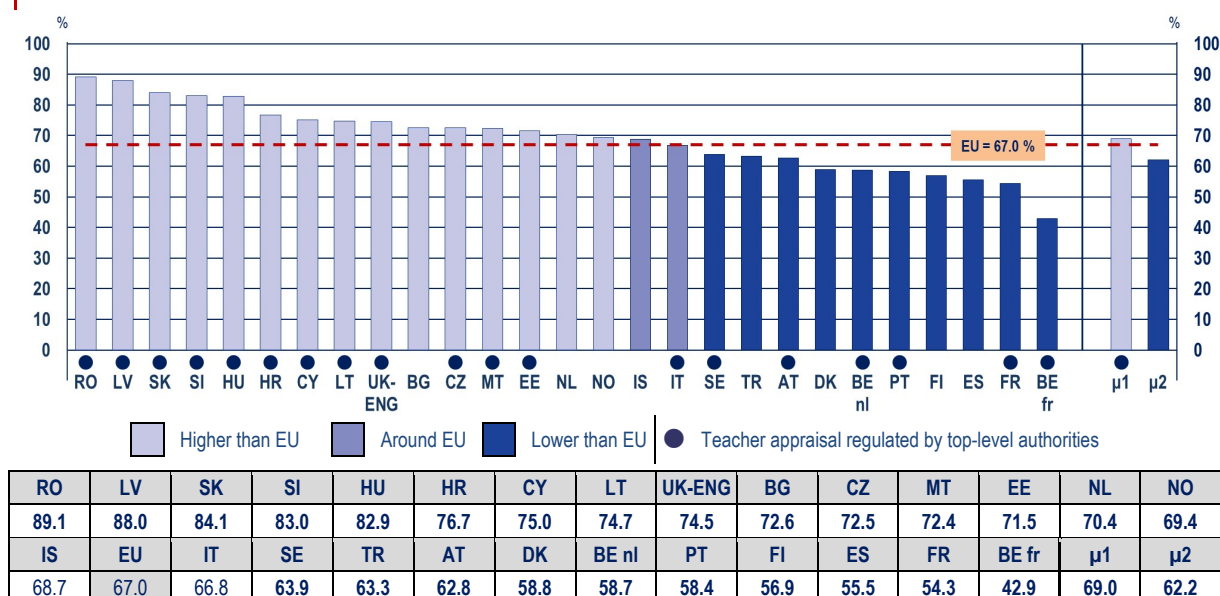
TALIS 2018 data suggests that post-appraisal discussions take place more systematically in the countries where there is a national framework for teacher appraisal. In those countries, a significantly higher proportion of teachers worked in schools where a discussion on remedial measures always occurs following teacher appraisal (31.0 %, S.E. 1.25) than in countries with no such framework (19.5 %, S.E. 1.14). Moreover, it is worth bearing in mind that schools where appraisals do not take place are excluded from these calculations. This is important when considering data related to countries where there are no regulations on appraisal, especially as three of these countries also have the largest share of teachers for whom appraisal never takes place at all (see Figure 4.2).

Except in Bulgaria and the Netherlands, the countries where appraisal is not regulated are below the EU level for systematic remedial discussions taking place after appraisal. In contrast, most countries with a national framework for appraisal are above or around the EU level for such remedial discussions. This is true in the participating eastern and Balkan countries, Belgium (Flemish Community), Cyprus, Austria, Malta and the United Kingdom (England). However, there are a few exceptions to this trend. In Belgium (French Community), France, Portugal and Sweden, the proportion of teachers who work in schools where appraisal is 'always' followed by a remedial discussion is lower than the EU level. In France, in particular, only 5.2 % of teachers work in schools where appraisal is 'always' followed by a discussion with the teacher on measures to remedy any weaknesses in teaching. In addition, the proportion of teachers working in schools where post-appraisal discussions take place systematically is also below the EU level in Italy, where teacher appraisal is carried out for reward and does not aim to provide teachers with feedback for improvement.

The opinion of teachers on the usefulness of the feedback they received also varies across countries. Teachers were asked whether feedback received during the last 12 months before the survey had a positive impact on their teaching. Although feedback can be provided both through formal appraisal and as part of more informal discussions, it can nevertheless be assumed that teachers' responses regarding its impact is a valid indicator of their opinion on feedback received as part of appraisal.

At EU level, 67.0 % of teachers who received feedback during the last 12 months before the survey found that it had a positive impact on their teaching practices (see Figure 4.5). Still, approximately a third of teachers reported that feedback was not useful for improving their work. There seems to be a relationship between the proportion of teachers who expressed a positive view about feedback received, and national guidelines on teacher appraisal. In the countries where teacher appraisal is regulated, 69.0 % (S.E. 0.34) of lower secondary teachers indicated that the feedback received was useful for changing their teaching practices. In contrast, 62.2 % (S.E. 0.62) of teachers expressed this opinion in countries where there is no national framework for teacher appraisal.

Figure 4.5: Proportion of lower secondary teachers who found feedback received during the last 12 months had a positive impact, 2018



Source: Eurydice, on the basis of TALIS 2018 (see Table 4.5 in Annex II).

Explanatory notes

The Figure is based on teachers' answers to question 30 'Thinking of all the feedback that you have received during the last 12 months, did any of these have a positive impact on your teaching practice?' The dataset was restricted to teachers who report having received feedback in question 29.

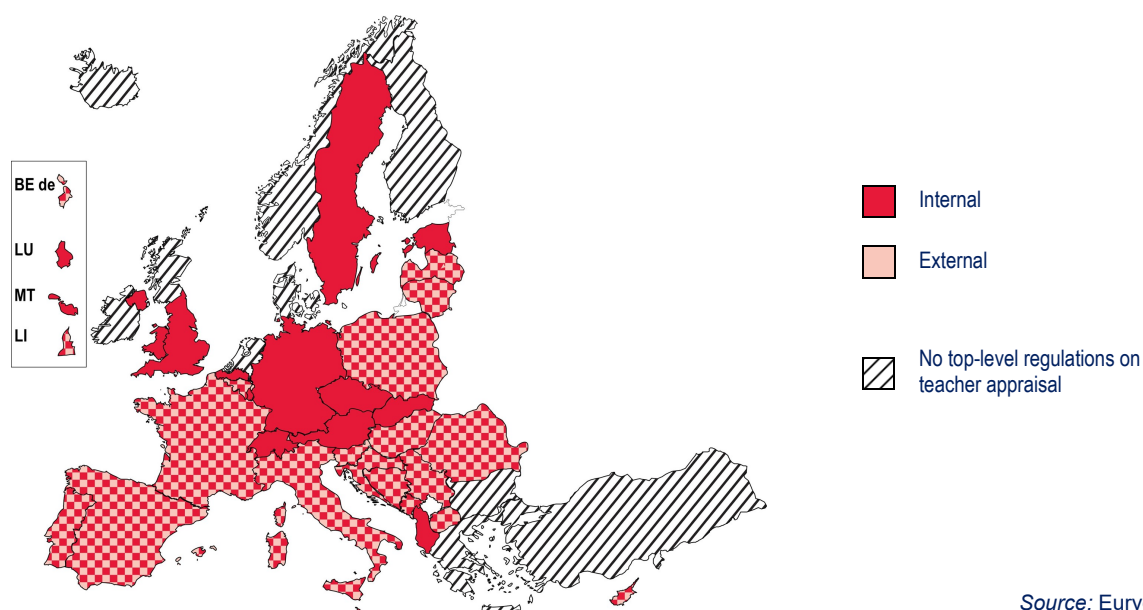
The intensity of the bar colour and the use of bold in the table indicate(s) statistically significant differences from the EU value. The data is arranged in descending order of the proportion of teachers who found feedback had a positive impact. EU refers to all the European Union countries/regions that participated in the TALIS survey in 2018. It includes UK-ENG. For ‘teacher appraisal regulated by top-level authorities’, see Figure 4.1. μ_1 =average for countries where teacher appraisal is regulated by top-level authorities. μ_2 =average for countries where teacher appraisal is not regulated by top-level authorities.

Interesting patterns are revealed when the TALIS 2018 results on the frequency of post-appraisal remedial discussions are put together with teachers’ opinions on the impact of feedback received. In many countries where the proportion of teachers working in schools where post-appraisal discussions are systematically carried out is above or around the EU level, the proportion of teachers finding feedback useful is also higher than the EU level. This can be observed in the participating eastern and Balkan countries, Cyprus, the Netherlands, Malta and the United Kingdom (England). In contrast, in most of the countries/regions where post-appraisal remedial discussions take place less often, the proportion of teachers who find feedback useful is below the EU level. This applies to four countries where there are no national frameworks and therefore no common aims for teacher appraisals: Denmark, Spain, Finland and Turkey. The combination of fewer post-appraisal discussions and fewer teachers finding feedback useful for improving their teaching practices can also be observed in four countries/regions where providing feedback for improvement is among the aims of teacher appraisal, i.e. in Belgium (French Community), France, Portugal and Sweden. This would suggest that feedback could be provided more often and more systematically following teacher appraisal in those education systems. Moreover, principals and other evaluators involved might benefit from CPD on how to provide formative feedback.

4.3. Appraisers

This section looks at who is responsible for evaluating individual teachers. It investigates whether it is a process internal to the school or if external stakeholders are involved. It also looks at the links between the evaluators involved and the main purposes of appraisal (to provide feedback, for promotion or for salary increase/rewards). Finally, it analyses the importance of the school head as appraiser.

Figure 4.6: Teacher appraisal as an internal and/or external process at lower secondary education, 2019/20



Source: Eurydice.

Explanatory note

The Figure shows only the normal appraisal procedures: appraisal processes carried out as a form of disciplinary measure in cases of serious underperformance or misconduct are out of scope. More information on the appraisers involved in each country is available in Annex I.4.

Country-specific notes

Germany: Information applies to the minority of *Länder* that issued regulations on teacher appraisals (see Section 4.1).

Spain: Information applies to the four Autonomous Communities that have issued regulations on teacher appraisals. In Asturias, teachers are appraised by the school head. In Aragón, Castilla-La Mancha and La Rioja, teachers are appraised by the inspector.

Teacher appraisal is considered an internal process when it is conducted by stakeholders from within the school where the appraisee works (e.g. the school head or a member of the school board). It is considered external when it involves stakeholders from outside the school (e.g. the inspectorate or ministry representatives).

In 14 education systems where teacher appraisal is regulated by top-level authorities, appraisals are conducted only within the school, usually by the school head, and sometimes with other school staff (see Annex I.4). In Luxembourg, Malta, Austria, Sweden and Switzerland, teacher appraisal is conducted solely by the school head. In the other education systems, school leaders, other members of the management team or school body are also involved in the process.

In **Belgium (Flemish Community)**, the first evaluator, who is in charge of the appraisal process and takes the final decision, should have a management role (head teacher, deputy head teacher) or a teacher support role (technical advisors, coordinator). The second evaluator should have at least the same 'grade' as the first evaluator, or should be a member of the school board. The second evaluator has a guiding role and can be asked by either the staff member concerned or the first evaluator to be present during evaluation interviews.

In **Czechia**, the school head may entrust another member of the school's management (usually his or her deputy) to carry out teacher appraisal.

In **Estonia**, the school head might delegate teacher appraisal duties to the head of studies.

In the maintained schools ⁽¹¹⁾ in the **United Kingdom (England, Wales and Northern Ireland)**, teachers are appraised by their line manager, who can be the head teacher or another teacher.

In **Slovakia**, teachers are appraised by their 'direct supervisor' (senior teacher) while the school head makes decisions in terms of salary progression on the basis of the results.

In **Albania**, the teacher appraisal process involves both the school head and the school board.

There is no clear relationship between the purpose of appraisal and the evaluators involved. Teacher appraisal is conducted solely within the school in three education systems where the main aim of teacher appraisal is to improve performance (Belgium (Flemish Community), Luxembourg and Austria). Teacher appraisal is also an internal process in a number of education systems where the goal of appraisal is to improve performance and to inform decisions on promotion, salary progression or bonuses.

In 19 education systems where the process is regulated by top-level authorities, teachers are appraised by both external and internal stakeholders (see Figure 4.6). This is the case in five education systems where the main aim of teacher appraisal is formative.

In **Belgium (French Community)**, teachers may be appraised by inspectors at the request of the school organising body or at the request of the school head. Teachers may also be appraised by the school head.

In **Belgium (German-speaking Community)**, teacher appraisal is always carried out by the school head. School inspectors may contribute to the process at the request of the school head or the school supervisory authority.

In **Germany**, school principals and school supervisory authorities are responsible for different aspects of the appraisal procedure depending on the regulations of the individual *Land*, on the grounds for appraisal, on types of schools, etc.

⁽¹¹⁾ A maintained school is a publicly funded school that is funded via the local authority.

In **Montenegro**, teachers are evaluated by three different external evaluators: education inspectors who focus on schools, advisors for quality assurance and teachers' professional organisations. Moreover, teachers are also appraised by the school head or school management as part of internal school evaluation.

In **North Macedonia**, external advisers from the Bureau for Educational Development and school head are each in charge of conducting a teacher appraisal process annually. Moreover, inspectors from the municipality or from the State Education Inspectorate monitor the work of the teachers as part of the integral evaluation of schools.

In France, Cyprus and Latvia, both external and internal evaluators are involved in a single appraisal process that is carried out both to improve performance and inform decisions on promotion and/or salary progression. In Italy, external and internal evaluators are also involved in a single appraisal process to identify which teachers are entitled to receive a reward based on their performance.

In **France**, the teacher appraisal process includes classroom observation by an inspector followed by separate interviews with the inspector and the school head.

In **Italy**, the school committee responsible for teacher appraisal linked to rewards comprises the school head, three teachers, an external appraiser (a teacher or school leader from another school or an inspector) and two parents.

In **Cyprus**, both the inspector and the school head evaluate teachers. The external evaluator consults the school head but he/she takes the final decision.

In **Latvia**, teacher appraisal is carried out by a commission that includes the school head, other members of the school management team, other colleagues from the school, representatives from national and local level authorities and from teachers' professional organisations. This commission delivers a decision on the teacher's evaluation on the basis of which the school head decides on the final result of the appraisal process.

Other countries have even more complex teacher appraisal systems. Hence in Lithuania, Hungary, Poland, Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Serbia, when teacher appraisal is related to promotion, more or different evaluators are involved compared to the regular appraisal process carried out for formative purposes.

In **Lithuania**, when the school head initiates an evaluation of teacher performance in order to set recommendations for improvement, he/she can ask a more experienced teacher or the deputy head to help in this process. In the case of teacher appraisal for promotion purposes, the school head sets up the team of evaluators, which can include the deputy head, higher level teachers, local authority representatives, members of the school board, or experts from higher education institutions.

In **Hungary**, regular appraisal is carried out by Master teachers from other schools trained as inspectors on the one hand, and on the other hand by other teachers in the school as part of the school's self-evaluation. Appraisal for promotion involves the school head or the deputy head as well as Master teachers.

In **Poland**, teacher appraisal is carried out by the school head, who has the leeway to consult diverse internal stakeholders such as the parents' council, the students' body or other teachers. Appraisal for promotion purposes also involves the school head, as well as representatives of the local school authorities and of the regional pedagogical supervision body.

In **Slovenia**, both regular teacher appraisal and appraisal for the purpose of reward schemes are carried out by the school head. However, in the case of appraisal for promotion to a specific title, teachers are evaluated by the school assembly of teachers. It is the Minister, following a proposal by the head teacher, who decides on the teacher's advancement.

In **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, inspectors evaluate teachers as part of the school evaluation, while the school head is in charge of teacher appraisal for the purposes of promotion and salary increase.

In **Serbia**, teacher appraisal that takes place as part of school evaluation is carried out by either internal or external evaluators. However, when teachers apply for career advancement, both types of evaluators are involved. The school head informs and consults different internal stakeholders – the teachers' council, the parents' council and an internal body that consists of teachers teaching the same subject – while an educational advisor from the district school authority carries out an appraisal procedure.

In Portugal, Romania and Liechtenstein, evaluations for the purposes of a salary increase or financial bonuses involve different evaluators compared to regular teacher appraisals.

In **Portugal**, teacher appraisal is carried out by the department coordinator. However, when a teacher states that he or she hopes to obtain the highest mark (Excellent), the evaluation includes also class observation by a teacher from another school who is specifically qualified in supervision or teacher evaluation. A special committee of the pedagogical board, coordinated by the school head, is responsible for the supervision of the whole process.

In **Romania**, the first stage of annual teacher appraisal is performed by the school methodical team, which consists of a minimum of three members, gathered by study subjects, related subjects or curricular areas, while the second stage is carried out by the school board. On the other hand, the appraisal process for obtaining the merit grade, which involves an increase in salary for five years, is carried out by an inspector.

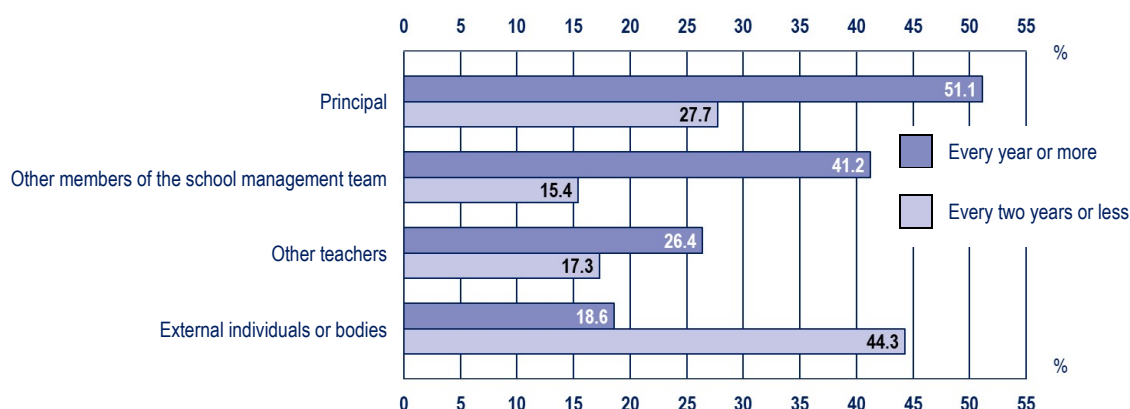
In **Liechtenstein**, both school heads and inspectors jointly carry out the usual appraisal of teachers. Moreover, in the case of the salary-relevant appraisals, a top-level authority representative (head of relevant division) is involved as he/she has to attend the final staff discussion between teacher, inspector and school head and sign the appraisal form alongside the school head and the inspector.

Finally, in some cases, appraisals that provide feedback for improvement, or which lead to financial rewards and promotion, are each carried out by different evaluators.

In **Croatia**, appraisals that mainly aim at providing teachers with feedback to improve performance are carried out by the school head, sometimes with the support of other school staff. In contrast, appraisals for promotion and rewards are carried out by a committee composed of teachers, professional associates and the school head, or a person elected to a scientific and teaching position who does not work in the school of the teacher concerned. Moreover, an expert committee formed of individuals who have at least 11 years of experience as teachers, professional associates or school the head is also involved in appraisals for promotion.

The data reveals that, in most types of appraisal processes, the school head (or other members of the school management team) is the main evaluator. TALIS 2018 data confirms that the school head is most often the one conducting teacher appraisals. Indeed, approximately half of teachers work in schools where they are appraised at least once a year by the school principal (51.1 %), which is more than for any of the other appraisers considered (see Figure 4.7). For comparison, 41.2 % of teachers work in schools where they are appraised at least once a year by other members of school management, 26.4 % by other teachers and 18.6 % by external individuals or bodies. Similarly, the smallest proportion of teachers (21.2 %) work in schools where they are never appraised by the school head (see Table 4.3). For the other evaluators, these proportions range from 37.2 % (by external individuals or bodies) to 56.3 % (by other teachers).

Figure 4.7: Proportion of lower secondary teachers working in schools where the principal reports frequency of appraisal by evaluator, EU level, 2018



Source: Eurydice, on the basis of TALIS 2018 (see Table 4.3 in Annex II).

Explanatory notes

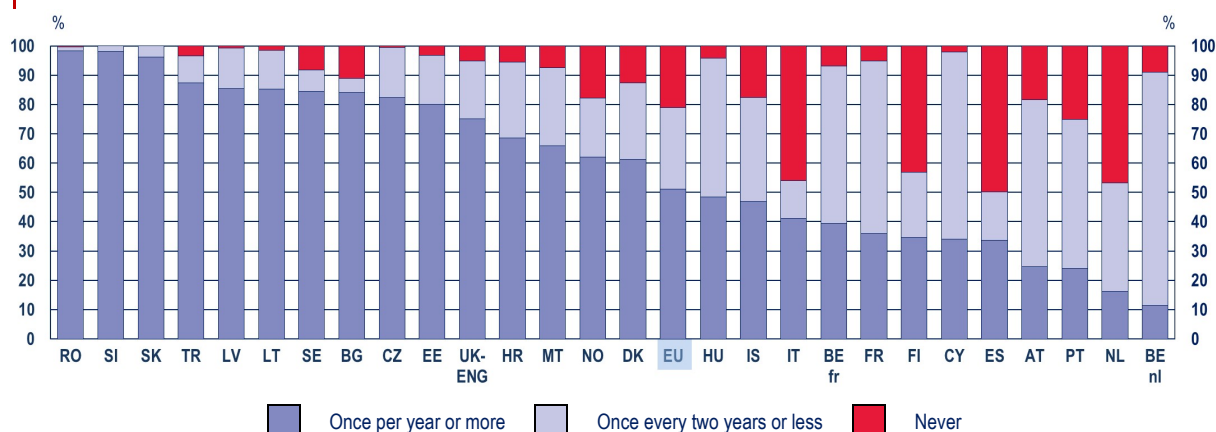
The Figure is based on principals' answers to question 23 'On average, how often is each teacher formally appraised in this school by the following people?' options (a), (b), (d) and (e). Answers 'less than once every two years' and 'once every two years' are grouped together. Answers 'once per year' and 'twice or more per year' are grouped together.

The length of the bars shows the proportion of teachers working in schools where the principal reports the corresponding category of frequency by evaluator.

EU refers to all the European Union countries/regions that participated in the TALIS survey in 2018. It includes UK-ENG.

There is some variation between countries. In Czechia, Latvia, Slovenia, Slovakia and Romania, principals reported that they are involved in the evaluation of all or almost all teachers (see Figure 4.8). The proportion of teachers working in schools where they are never appraised by the school head is above the EU level in four countries: Finland (43.1 %), Italy (46.0 %), the Netherlands (46.8 %) and Spain (49.8 %). In Spain and Finland, there are no national frameworks on teacher appraisal (see Figure 4.1). Spain, Italy and Finland are also the three countries with the highest proportion of teachers working in schools where they are never appraised (see Figure 4.2). In the Netherlands, the picture is different. While almost half of teachers work in schools where they are never appraised by the school head, this is the case for only 9.7 % of teachers when the appraiser is a member of school management (see Table 4.3 in Annex II). This would indicate that in the Netherlands, where there is no national framework on teacher appraisal, teachers are appraised regularly by their management.

Figure 4.8: Proportion of lower secondary teachers working in schools where the principal reports being the appraiser of teachers, by frequency of appraisal, 2018



	RO	SI	SK	TR	LV	LT	SE	BG	CZ	EE	UK-ENG	HR	MT	NO
Never	0.4	0.0	0.0	3.4	0.7	1.4	8.3	11.1	0.5	3.2	5.1	5.5	7.4	17.7
Once every two years or less	1.3	1.9	3.9	9.4	14.0	13.4	7.2	4.7	17.1	16.7	19.8	25.9	26.7	20.2
Once per year or more	98.3	98.1	96.1	87.3	85.4	85.2	84.5	84.2	82.4	80.1	75.1	68.6	65.9	62.0
	DK	EU	HU	IS	IT	BE fr	FR	FI	CY	ES	AT	PT	NL	BE nl
Never	12.6	21.2	4.2	17.6	46.0	6.8	5.2	43.1	2.2	49.8	18.3	25.1	46.8	9.0
Once every two years or less	26.1	27.7	47.4	35.6	12.9	53.7	58.9	22.3	63.9	16.6	56.9	50.8	37.1	79.7
Once per year or more	61.3	51.1	48.4	46.8	41.1	39.5	35.9	34.6	34.0	33.6	24.7	24.1	16.2	11.3

Source: Eurydice, on the basis of TALIS 2018 (see Table 4.3 in Annex II).

Explanatory notes

The Figure is based on principals' answers to question 23 'On average, how often is each teacher formally appraised in this school by the principal?' option (a). Answers 'less than once every two years' and 'once every two years' are grouped together. Answers 'once per year' and 'twice or more per year' are grouped together.

The length of the bars shows the proportion of teachers working in schools where the principal reports the corresponding category of frequency.

The data is arranged in descending order of the frequency category 'at least once a year'.

EU refers to all the European Union countries/regions that participated in the TALIS survey in 2018. It includes UK-ENG.

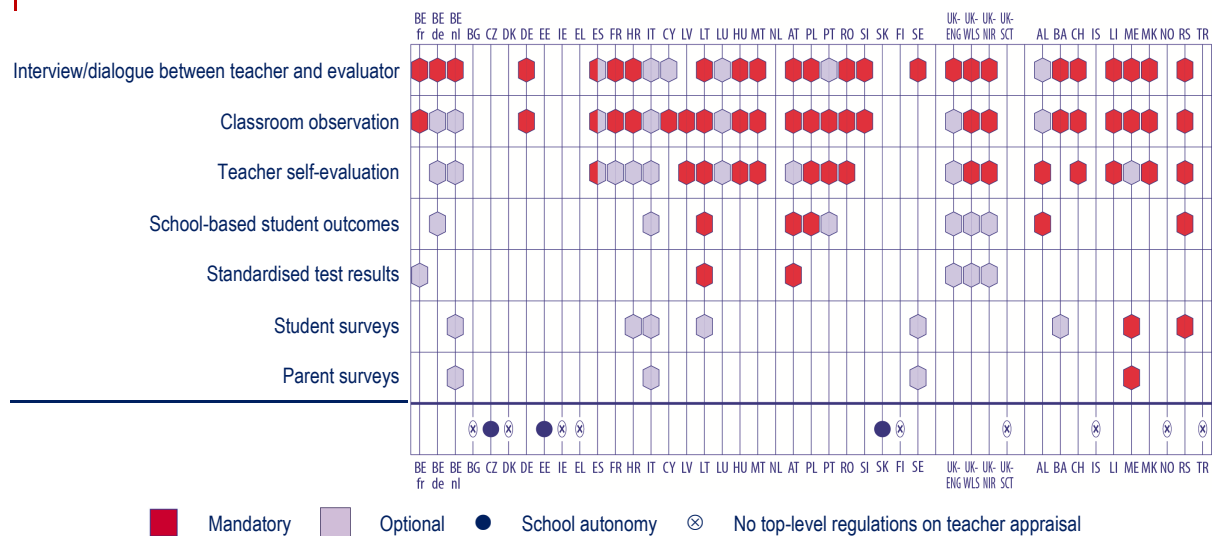
4.4. Methods of evaluation

Teachers may be appraised using a variety of different methods and sources of information, such as classroom observation or analysis of student survey replies. This section starts by describing the evaluation methods that are included in the top-level regulations on teacher appraisal and distinguishes between those methods that are mandatory and those that can be used optionally. It

then completes the picture of evaluation methods used for teacher appraisal with data on practices reported in 2018 by school principals and teachers.

According to legislation and other official documents, the two most common methods for conducting teacher appraisal are a discussion or interview between the appraiser(s) and the teacher and classroom observation. It is mandatory to use these methods in 24 and 23 education systems respectively (see Figure 4.9). Teacher self-evaluation is the third most-used method for individual teacher evaluation, with 15 education systems considering it a requirement and ten seeing it as optional.

Figure 4.9: Methods used for teacher appraisal in lower secondary education, 2019/20



Source: Eurydice.

Explanatory note

Mandatory means that legislation or other official documents require the method or source of information to be used as part of teacher appraisal. Optional means that top-level regulations or recommendations mention that it is left to the discretion of the appraiser(s) as to whether they use the particular method. The Figure shows only the normal appraisal procedures: appraisal processes carried out as a form of disciplinary measure in cases of serious underperformance or misconduct are out of scope.

Country-specific notes

Belgium (BE fr): The marked sources of information are those used by inspectors. The school head has autonomy to choose the sources of information when he/she carries out teacher appraisal.

Germany: Information applies to the *Länder* that issued top-level regulations on teacher appraisal.

Spain: Information applies to the four Autonomous Communities that have issued regulations on teacher appraisal. Asturias: only the interview/dialogue between teacher and evaluator is compulsory. In Aragón, all the three methods are optional. In Castilla-La Mancha, the methods of appraisal always consist of a self-evaluation report, an interview with the inspector, and classroom observation. In La Rioja, the evaluator takes a self-evaluation report into account.

In contrast, the use of other methods such as student outcomes or parent and student surveys to appraise teachers is far less regulated by top-level authorities. These sources of information are suggested for teacher appraisal only in a handful of European countries. They are often indicated as optional. There are a few exceptions. For example, in Lithuania, Austria, Poland, Albania and Serbia, it is compulsory to use school-based student outcomes as a source of evidence in teacher appraisal.

Standardised student achievement tests often serve as an important source of information about student performance, differences between schools and the overall performance of an education system. The national testing of students is a widespread practice. Most European education systems⁽¹²⁾ organised nationally standardised tests for students in basic skills during compulsory

⁽¹²⁾ The only exceptions were Belgium (German-speaking Community), Greece, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina (where nationally standardised tests in compulsory education are held in only two cantons, Sarajevo Canton and Tuzla Canton) and North Macedonia.

education in the 2018/19 school year (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2019b). However, these tests are rarely used for teacher appraisal. Considering the results of students' national tests for teacher appraisal is mandatory only in Lithuania and Austria. National tests are used as an optional source of information during teacher appraisal in Belgium (French Community) and the United Kingdom (England, Wales and Northern Ireland).

In several countries, the regulations on evaluation methods differ according to the type of appraisal process. For instance, in Montenegro, student surveys or student interviews are used in the case of teacher appraisal carried out by inspectors as part of external school evaluation but not when the school head or other management staff member evaluates teachers. In Lithuania, Portugal, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Serbia, different regulations apply in the case of appraisal carried out for promotion or salary progression purposes in contrast to regular appraisal. In Lithuania, only the evaluation methods to be used in the case of appraisal for promotion are regulated. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, classroom observation is compulsory only in the case of appraisal for promotion. In Serbia, student outcomes and surveys for students evaluating the teacher's work are additional sources of information used systematically only in the case of appraisal for promotion.

In **Portugal**, while teacher self-evaluation is always mandatory, classroom observation is only mandatory in three cases: firstly, for the progression to salary levels 3 and 5; secondly, for teachers with prior negative results; and lastly, for teachers that hope to obtain the highest mark (excellent). Interview/dialogue between teacher and evaluator is optional in all cases.

In a few countries, the evaluation process is little standardised or not regulated at all. In Czechia, Estonia and Slovakia, no regulations cover the methods to be used in teacher appraisal, and schools have full autonomy in this matter. In three other countries, the requirements are limited to conducting an evaluation interview, providing the appraisers with broad room for manoeuvre in designing the process according to the circumstances.

In **Belgium (Flemish Community)**, when a member of staff is evaluated, an evaluation interview must take place between the staff member and the evaluator(s). The other methods used are to be decided by the appraiser and agreements can be made locally (i.e. at the level of the school or the level of the school umbrella organisation), if necessary.

In **Sweden**, student surveys or other methods can also be used as sources of information in addition to the annual meeting/interview between teacher and school head linked to salary progression. However, this is optional.

In the **United Kingdom (England)**, while strictly speaking the only mandatory method is a teacher-appraiser interview, different policy appraisal models⁽¹³⁾ recommend using a variety of methods and provide further guidance on how to use them in an appropriate way.

TALIS 2018 data shows that top-level regulations can only partially account for the methods actually used across Europe to appraise teachers. In particular, the use of students' results in national tests and school-based student results is very widespread, although little regulated (see Table 4.4 in Annex II). Classroom observations, school-based results and students' external results are the three most common sources of information reported by principals in those schools where teacher appraisal takes place.

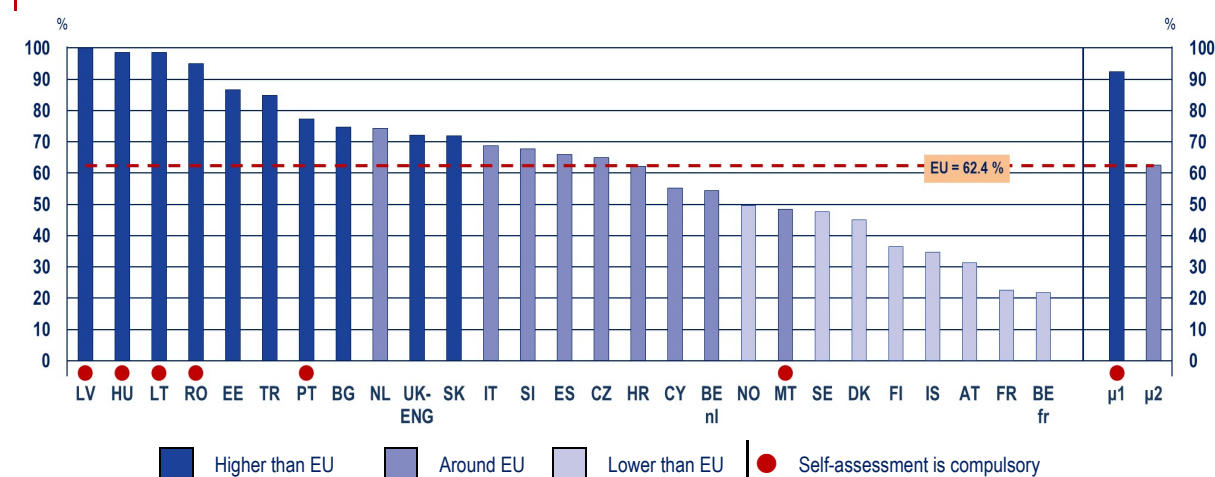
Across the EU, a smaller but yet substantial proportion of teachers work in schools where, in the process of teacher appraisal, student survey responses related to teaching are used (71.4 %). Only in France does a minority of teachers (24.4 %) work in schools where this happens.

⁽¹³⁾ DfE guidance (revised 2019) – Implementing your school's approach to pay – https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/786098/Implementing_your_school_s_approach_to_pay.pdf
DfE (revised 2019) – Teacher appraisal and capability: model policy – <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teacher-appraisal-and-capability-model-policy>

According to TALIS 2018 data, among the methods analysed, teachers' self-assessments are the least used. In the EU countries, slightly less than two thirds of teachers (62.4 %) work in schools where the principal reports that self-assessment is used in formal teacher appraisal (see Figure 4.10). However, when the purpose is to improve quality, self-evaluation is often emphasised as an important element. As highlighted by the ET 2020 Working Group on Schools set up by the European Commission, self-evaluation can help to make appraisals effective and balanced, and contribute to a positive perception of the process among teachers (European Commission 2020, p. 57).

The use of teachers' self-assessment in appraisals, as reported by school principals, varies a lot across countries (see Figure 4.10). Indeed, in Latvia, Hungary, Lithuania and Romania, 95 % or more work in schools where the principal reports that self-evaluation is used for teacher appraisal. In contrast, in Belgium (French Community), France, Malta, Austria, Sweden, as well as in the other four Nordic countries (where teacher appraisal is not regulated), a minority of teachers work in schools where this method is used for teacher appraisal. At the lower end, barely one in five teachers in Belgium (French Community) and France works in a school where self-assessment is part of teacher appraisal.

Figure 4.10: Proportion of lower secondary teachers working in schools where the principal reports the use of self-assessment of teachers' work as part of appraisal, 2018



LV	HU	LT	RO	EE	TR	PT	BG	NL	UK-ENG	SK	IT	SI	ES	CZ
100.0	98.7	98.7	95.0	86.6	84.8	77.2	74.8	74.3	72.2	71.8	68.8	67.8	65.9	65.0
EU	HR	CY	BE nl	NO	MT	SE	DK	FI	IS	AT	FR	BE fr	μ1	μ2
62.4	62.2	55.1	54.3	49.5	48.4	47.5	45.1	36.4	34.7	31.2	22.6	21.8	92.5	62.6

Source: Eurydice, on the basis of TALIS 2018 (see Table 4.4 in Annex II).

Explanatory notes

The Figure is based on principals' answers to question 24 'Who uses the following types of information as part of the formal appraisal of teachers' work in this school?' option (f) 'self-assessment'. The length of the bars shows the proportion of teachers working in schools where the principal reports the use of self-assessment across the five different possible evaluators.

Schools where the principal answers 'never' to each option of appraisal in question 23 are excluded from the calculations.

The intensity of the bar colour and the use of bold in the table indicate(s) statistically significant differences from the EU value.

The data is arranged in descending order.

EU refers to all the European Union countries/regions that participated in the TALIS survey in 2018. It includes UK-ENG.

For 'self-assessment is compulsory', see Figure 4.9.

μ1 = average for countries where self-assessment is compulsory according to top-level regulations.

μ2 = average for countries where self-assessment is not compulsory according to top-level regulations.

TALIS 2018 survey data seems to suggest that the existence of national regulations making self-assessment mandatory contributes to the use of this method for teacher appraisal. Among the countries where self-assessment is required by top-level authorities, 92.5 % of teachers work in schools where this evaluation method is used for teacher appraisal. By contrast, this number was 62.6 % in the countries where self-assessment is not mandatory.

Teachers also shed light on the use of self-assessment as a source of information in the context of their evaluation. They were asked whether the feedback they received was based on a self-assessment of their work among different sources of information. Like school principals, teachers rank self-assessment as the least used method of information for providing feedback. However, the proportions differ substantially: while according to principals 62.4 % of teachers work in schools where self-assessment is used in their formal appraisal, only 35.4 % of teachers report that self-assessment is used for providing feedback (see Table 4.6 in Annex II). This difference may partly be explained by the fact that data reported by principals only applies to those schools where appraisal takes place (see Figure 4.2), and would be slightly lower if reported against the scale of the whole teacher population. Another reason that might explain such differences in the results is that in some teacher appraisal processes, teacher self-assessment is used but does not lead to feedback for teachers. This could be the case, for instance, when the goal is promotion or financial rewards, and when self-assessment takes the form of a self-evaluation regarding compliance with standards. It is important not to overestimate, on the basis of the principals' reporting, the proportion of teachers who work in schools where self-assessment is used as a method that contributes to the formative dimension of teacher appraisal.

4.5. Conclusions

Most European countries have a clear set of rules that guide teacher appraisal, evaluation and feedback. Teacher appraisal is regulated by top-level authorities in the vast majority of European education systems, with a set frequency for appraisals in 20 of them. In the remaining education systems⁽¹⁴⁾, teacher appraisal is not regulated by top-level authorities and schools or local authorities have full autonomy in the matter.

The TALIS 2018 survey illustrates that teacher appraisal is a common practice in European countries. However, there are some geographic disparities in Europe regarding the frequency of teacher appraisal. Teacher appraisal is carried out most often in the three Baltic countries, several eastern countries, the United Kingdom (England), Sweden and Turkey, where 90 % or more of teachers work in schools in which they are appraised at least every year. In contrast, in the western and southern parts of Europe, as well as in Finland, teachers are less often appraised.

In almost all countries where teacher appraisal is regulated, the process is intended to provide feedback on performance in order to help teachers to improve. The Council conclusions on 'European teachers and trainers for the future' identify feedback to teachers as a key element in supporting improvements in teachers' work⁽¹⁵⁾. TALIS data suggests that in the countries with a national framework for teacher appraisal, more teachers consider the feedback they receive to be helpful, compared to teachers in countries where there is no such framework. Moreover, in the countries which have a national framework, the evaluators tend to provide teachers with feedback more systematically following the appraisal process, compared to countries without national regulations on appraisal.

⁽¹⁴⁾ Bulgaria, Denmark, Ireland, Greece, the Netherlands, Finland, the United Kingdom (Scotland), Iceland, Norway and Turkey.

⁽¹⁵⁾ Council conclusions of 26 May 2020 on European teachers and trainers for the future, OJ C 193, 9.6.2020.

Nevertheless, there are some exceptions to these trends. Indeed, in Belgium (French Community), France, Portugal and Sweden, the number of teachers working in schools where post-appraisal discussions always take place, and who find feedback useful for improving their teaching practices, are significantly below the EU level. This seems to suggest that teacher appraisal does not always fulfil its formative role, despite this being identified in national regulations as one of its objectives.

In addition to providing teachers with feedback, teacher appraisal is also often used to identify good performance, which can subsequently lead to the award of bonuses, salary progression or promotion. The combination of formative and summative goals results in systems of varying complexity. While in some countries there is a single process for teacher appraisal carried out internally at the school (e.g. in Czechia, Malta, or Sweden), in others specific appraisal processes for promotion or financial rewards are carried out. Indeed, in a number of eastern and Balkan countries as well as in Portugal and Liechtenstein, when teacher appraisal relates to promotion, salary increase or bonuses, different or more evaluators are involved than for regular appraisals carried out for formative purposes. Beyond the varied existing patterns of evaluators, it is worth mentioning that the school head is involved in almost all countries where the process of teacher appraisal is regulated, whether alone or with other evaluators such as school leaders or inspectors. TALIS 2018 data confirms that teacher appraisal is conducted most of the time by the school head.

TALIS 2018 data shows that overall regulations can only partially account for the methods actually used across Europe to appraise teachers. According to legislation and other official documents, classroom observation and interviews or dialogue discussions between the teacher and the appraiser(s) are the two most common methods used to carry out teacher appraisal. In some countries, this practice is accompanied by teacher self-evaluation. The use of other methods such as student outcomes as well as parent and student surveys to appraise teachers is rarely regulated at top-level. However, TALIS 2018 data shows that the use of students' external results and school-based results is very widespread. Across the EU, more than 90 % of teachers work in schools where such information is used for teacher appraisal. Self-assessment of teachers' work, although emphasised as a key element of the process when the purpose is to improve quality, is the least common method for teacher appraisal. This was reported by principals, as well as by teachers in relation to the type of information used to provide them with feedback. Nevertheless, the data reveals that the use of self-assessments for teacher appraisal was significantly higher in the countries where this method is mandatory according to top-level regulations.

