

Changing the point of view about the role of Large Scale Assessment: how European countries manage evaluation in decentralization processes.

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Summary

IEA-TIMSS, IEA-PIRLS and OECD-PISA Large Scale Assessment
and the European decentralized governance

The Italian case

The study:

- Objectives
- Methodology
- Analysis

Main conclusions

IEA and OECD- PISA Large Scale Assessment

- School system evaluation has developed during the time with the promotion in European and not European countries of Large Scale Assessment tests. This kind of approach identifies a movement from the top to the bottom of the system and at the same time it has created an interest among these countries towards evaluation models that are more and more elaborated. Therefore it is observed a greater activity from the central system to its peripheral parts that has been emphasized towards School Evaluation.
- Burns e Koster (2016) identify a series of common trends among the OECD countries and in particular a wide decentralization process that allows schools to respond to their local and territory needs and that represents a shift from hierarchical relations between school and central government towards a stratified governance into which different actors work and interact at different levels.
- In these processes the responsibilities are increasingly taking up by private or public intermediate organizations and by governing bodies elected by the central government (Au e Ferrare, 2015).

The European decentralized governance

The vertical dimension focuses on the decentralization of powers towards intermediate public or not-public organizations.

This trend is strictly connected to the reforms of school autonomy promoted in the past twenty years that focused on the need to improve democratic participation, the management of public funding invested in education and, especially in recent years, on the quality of school.

The horizontal dimension refers to school managers and teachers' powers in creating schools networks and peer relations among schools (Hargreaves 2010).

The Italian case

As in other Italy have organized its autonomy since 1999,

In Italy, the influence of the International Large Scale Assessment has enhanced the interest in the evaluation of school system and towards National Evaluation System, School Self –evaluation and Improvement, which have been introduced by the P.D 80/2013.

The vertical dimension is given by the actions of the Regional School Offices and other intermediate organizations that collaborate with them (Regional and Provincial Staffs introduced by the C.M 47/2014)

The horizontal dimension that is given by the actions of school networks, territorial networks and networks with specific aims, organized with common objective to create tools for schools useful for their process of self-evaluation and improvement.



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The study –(the objectives, the methodology)

The objectives

In order to understand the features of the decentralized processes, we developed a study aimed at understanding the decentralized processes in Italy with a special attention on actions promoted by School Regional Offices and school networks to support schools in their evaluation and improvement processes.

We focalized on middle decisional centers which stand between the most centralized education systems and schools.

Methodology

The study, through an analysis of documents implemented by qualitative and quantitative method and lexical-textual analysis, describes the main laws, regulating evaluation system and it identifies the actions that have been realized at a decentralized level to support and help the schools in the processes of evaluation and improvement

Two data sources:

Systematic collection of information present on the official websites of the 18 School Regional Offices.

Recollection of documents from the Ministry of Education and Research (MIUR) on the accountability process started after the amending of the M.D 435/2015 and 663/16, that made public funding in proportion to schools and schools networks that are present on the territory to implement improvement projects



The study –Analysis- 1st step- Analysis of the Regional School Offices Websites

The qualitative analysis has identified the main themes of the documents.

The review distinguishes all the initiatives of the Ministry of Education (documents on the MD 435/15 and on the MD 663/16), from the additional actions proposed at a Regional level and by the Regional School Offices and schools networks.

The Ministry Decree 435/15 and 663/16 establish a financing to support evaluation and improvement actions carried out by schools and schools networks.

	Ministerial Initiatives	Training Conferences	Regional and Provincial Staffs	MD435 e 663	External experts meetings	School Networks
Piedmont						
Liguria						
Lombardy						
Veneto						
Friuli Venezia Giulia						
Emilia Romagna						
Tuscany						
Lazio						
Marche						
Umbria						
Abruzzi						
Molise						
Apulia						
Basilicata						
Campania						
Calabria						
Sicily						
Sardinia						



The study-Analysis -2nd step-The analysis of the main schools networks supporting school evaluation and improvement

Schools networks analysis has identified THE presence of 17 schools networks in the territory of which 3 created before the launch of NES and no more operating, 7 existed before NES and are still working and the other 4 have been created after the launch of NES. Rete delle Reti includes many of these networks within it.

NETWORK NAME	REGIONS	Date of birth-end	Number of schools involved	Reference framework	LINK
AU.MI.RE	Marche	1996- operating	154	SNV	http://www.aumi.it/
Stresa	Lombardy	1998-2012	34	CIPP model	---
Progetto aQUa	Tuscany	1998-2001	200	EFQM School	---
AIR	Lombardy	1998- 2004	108	BasedReview	---
Qualità Totale	Lombardy	1998- operating	12	UNI EN ISO 9001	https://www.einaudicremona.gc
AVIMES	Piedmont	1996- operating	50	CIPP model	http://reteavimes.it/
AICQ Nazionale	All regions	1998- operating	n.d.	ISO, EFQM, CAF	http://aicqna.it/
Requs	Lombardy	2001- operating	---	CAF	http://www.requs.it/
Faro	Sicily	2001- operating	150	CAF	http://www.faro.it/
SIRQ	Piedmont first, than the others	2001- operating	161	ISO 9000-ISO 9001, EFQM, CAF	http://www.sirq.it/
Rete Nazionale	Sicily, Apulia, Veneto, Campania, Lazio	2010- operating	16	Peer Review	http://www.isfol.it/eqavet/progr
Peer Review	Lazio	2015- operating	30	SNV	http://www.valutazioneinprogre
Valutazione in progress	Lazio, Tuscany, Emilia Romagna	2015- operating	20	SNV	http://www.valutazioneinprogre
PRO.VA.MI	Campania	2015- operating	20	SNV	http://reteprovami.net/
Lisaca	Campania (Salerno and provinces)	2015- operating	50	SNV	http://www.lisaca.it/la-rete-lisa
				SNV con SIRQ, AU.MI.RE, FARO, AICQ	
Rete delle reti	All the regions	2015- operating	---	Nazionale	http://www.retedellereti.it/



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The study-Analysis -3rd step-The analysis of the financings plans

The review of the document referred to the improvement projects financed through the MD 435/15 and 663/16

The analysis has been carried out by using a quantitative study: the documents are divided into items to ease their complexity and quantity.

The semantic-lexical analysis has identified some «key-words» that are listed in the following tab.

	Frequency	%
TRAINING	228	34,9
SELF-TRAINING	5	0,8
ASSISTANCE AND COLLABORATION WITH EXTERNAL EXPERTS	41	6,3
SEMINARS	20	3,1
WORK GROUPS	85	13,0
LABORATORIES	77	11,8
ONLINE PLATFORMS	9	1,4
CLASSROOM LABORATORIES	11	1,7
RESEARCH-ACTION	46	7,0
MONITORING AND EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS	66	10,1
CULTURAL EXCHANGES/ STUDY TRAVELS	7	1,1
FRONT OFFICES	5	0,8
SHARING DOCUMENTS	52	8,0
PARENTS COMITEE	2	0,3
Total	654	100,0

The study- The on line survey

These three stages of the analysis have been followed by an on line survey on the limey-survey platform proposed by INVALSI to the representatives of the Regional School Offices to know which politics have been promoted at a territory level to help schools to acquire the professional competences useful to deal with the self evaluation and improvement process.

Research questions

- Which actions Regional School Offices have promoted/ promote to support self-evalutaion and improvement after the launch of the National Evalutaion System (NES)?
- Which actions were being developed before the NES?
- Is there a temporal continuity between the actions implemented before and after the launch of NES?
- Are the actions promoted to support the self evaluation linked to those supporting improvement ?

Respondents

16 RSO on 18 answered the on line survey.

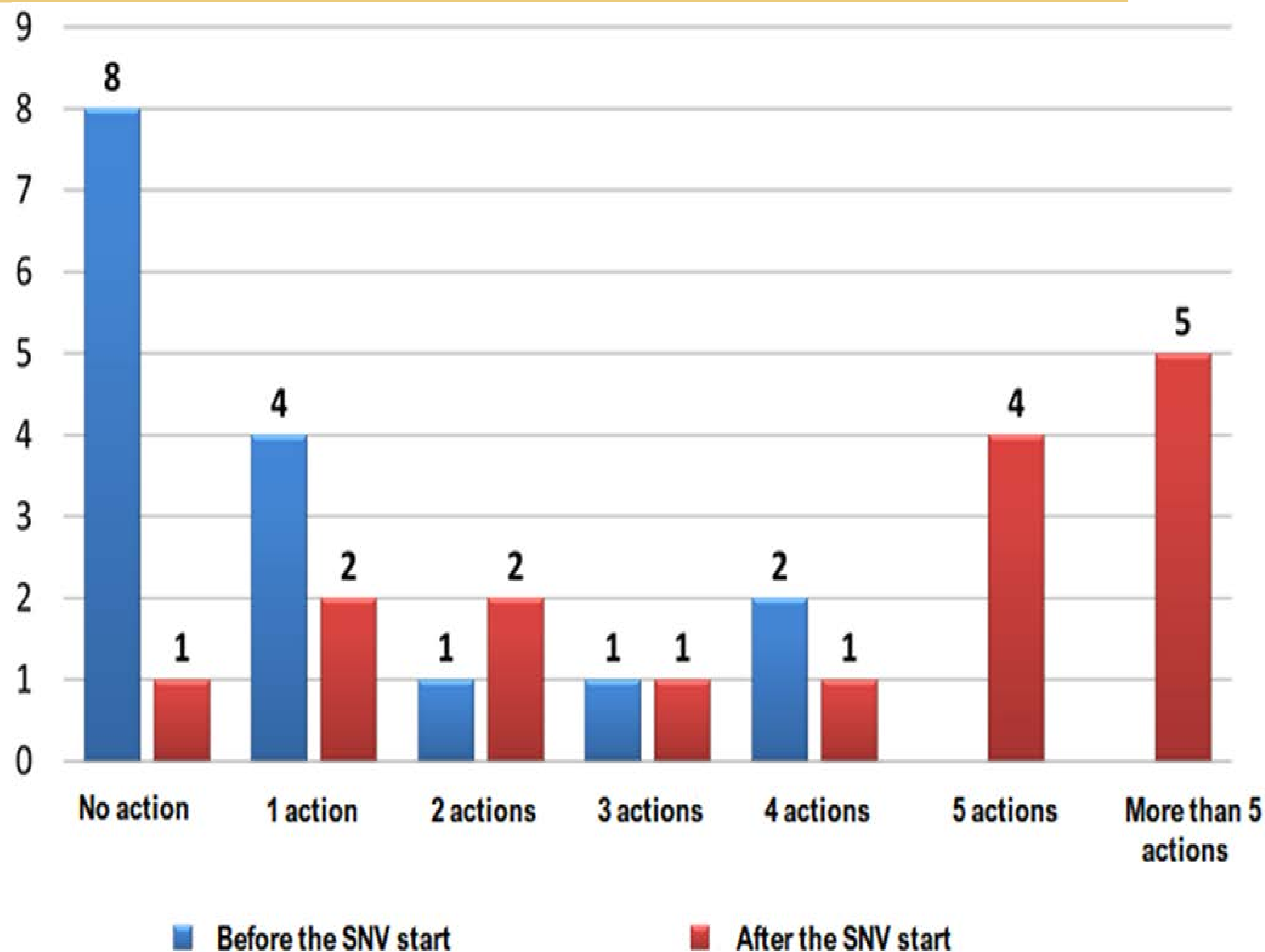
The Representatives answering to the questions were :

- 1 Managing Director
- 1 School Manager
- 12 Technical directors
- 2 Seconded teachers

The on line survey –Some Results

Number of RSO for the actions implemented to support the self evaluation and improvement of schools

Mainly the type of actions have been seminars, training conferences, training courses and projects



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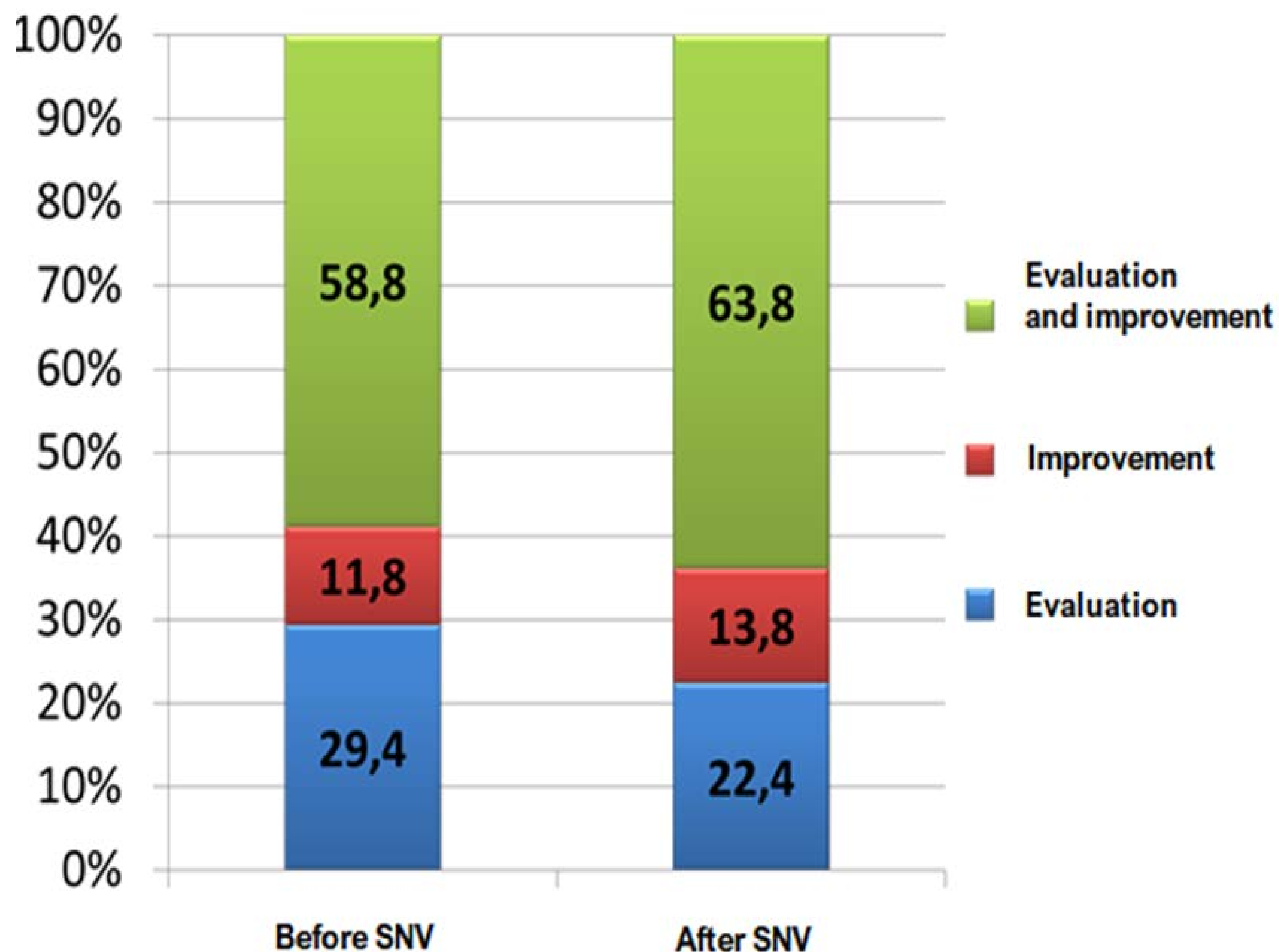


The on line survey –Some Results

The 16 RSO that answered the on-line survey have described an amount of 75 actions supporting schools self-evaluation and improvement:

17 actions before the launch of the National Evaluation System (NES)

58 actions after the launch of (NES)



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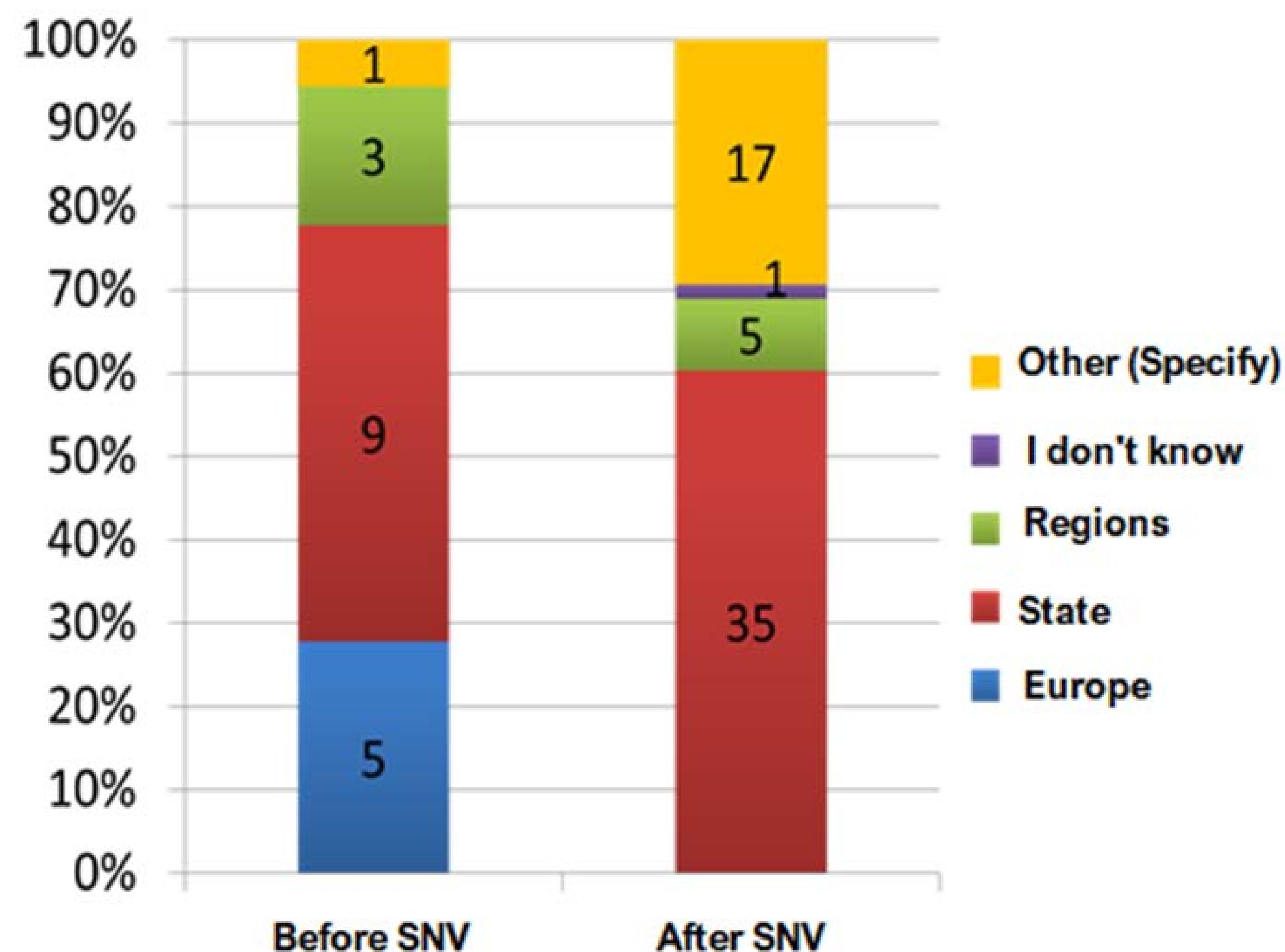
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The on line survey –Some Results

The financings result to be mainly state financing for both the action implemented before and after the launch of NES. To notice the presence of European financngs for the action before the NES anf the absence for all the actions of private and provincial financings. Source : INVALSI on line survey to Regional school Offices 2018



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The on line survey –Some Results

Regional and Provincial Staffs

The Circular of Ministry n. 47 /14 attributes to RSO the duty of instituting Regional and Provincial Staffs to follow the objective of giving and additional support at a territory level to National Evaluation System and to schools in their process of self-evaluation and school improvement.

In 9 Regions the Regional Staffs are still operating, in 6 Regions they have been created but they are not working anymore and one Region confirmed that it was not activated.

8 RSO have organized Provincial Staffs in all the provinces of the Regions and only 2 Regions confirmed that they are still operating in their territory



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The on line survey – Respondents comments

The RSO have expressed in particular the need of implementing and following the path of School Managers, Internal Evaluation Teams training and other School System Actors involved in School Self-Evaluation and Improvement, with a specific reference to Self-Evaluation Report and Improvement Plans in relations to social accounting.

- Besides it has been underlined the importance of a greater support for the comprehension and writing of Self-Evaluation Report and Improvement Plans and the divulgation of SNV (NES) features and actions among school stakeholders as well as the importance of an in- depth analysis of Social Account

Conclusions

School evaluation is developing a **constructivist approach** into which evaluation becomes a social, political, collaborative, learning process for teachers and for all the actors involved in the evaluation process.

The evaluation process takes a new direction which is both top-down and bottom-up.

Therefore **Large scale assesement** has been a trigger for evaluation development. It has **still an important role** for accountability, even though it is a subject of reflection for schools themselves

From one side we have the RSO that act as decentralized organizations following the ministerial objectives according to the characteristics of their territories and on the other side the networks, which act at a decentralized level following among the other objectives that of supporting National Evaluation System, School Self Evaluation and Improvement.

Therefore the evaluation and improvement process needs to be followed, structured, supported and shared in theoretical and operative modalities and for its complexity it is needed to monitor and regulate the economic, cultural, social and human resources that are involved in the implementation of these processes. (Janssen e Ehren, 2015; Ehren et al., 2017) at a central and decentralized level.

This research is not exhaustive, since there are some aspects that have been identified during the study that are worth of interest, apart from some missing data and from the fact that we had two outlier regions that did not answer the on line survey and it will be implemented by a further analysis through a qualitative method to have more information on the system of decentralization in relation to school evaluation in Italy.



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APPROFONDIMENTI SU:

[www.invalsi.it/value/
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GRAZIE



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