



Research-based Reflective Innovation: The Implementation Process of the Accredited European School Tyrol

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Research-based Reflective Innovation:

The Implementation Process of the AES-Tyrol

research-based

In the implementation process, a team of scientists is involved, using scientific instruments.

innovation

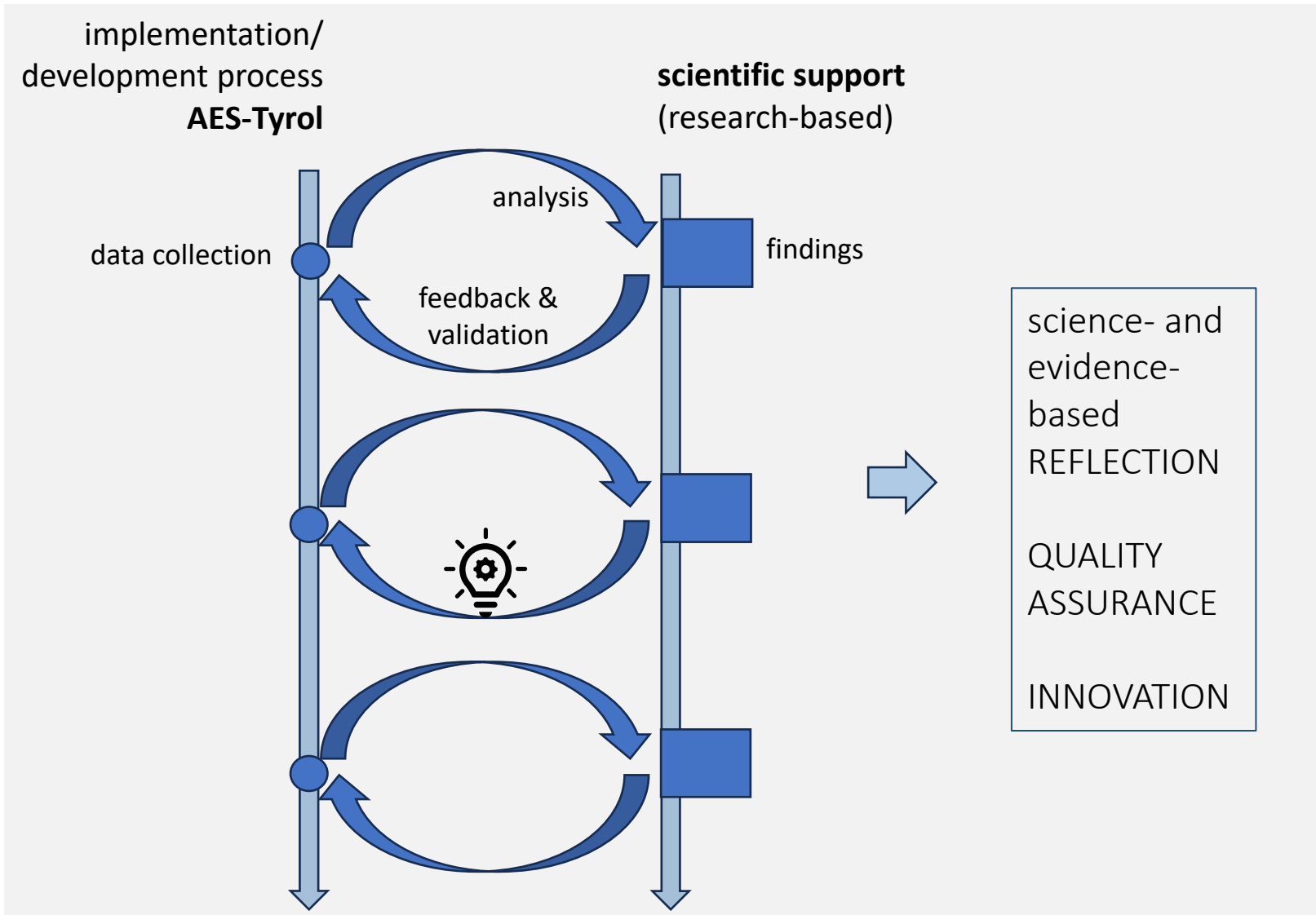
The implementation of the AES-Tyrol as a new element in the Austrian education system (first comprehensive school) conflicts in terms of legislation, structure and content. This requires innovative approaches.

reflective



The meaning will be explored throughout the presentation based on the case study of the scientific support of the AES-Tyrol.

Iterative Cycle: School Development Process



Case-Study:

scientific support as a tool
for innovative reflection



1. (Accredited) European Schools



System of **supranational educational institutions** with **standardised, transnational curricula and syllabi** across Europe

Aim: provision of **multicultural, multilingual education** for pupils from different national backgrounds

2005: extension of the system: **Accredited European Schools**

(Schola Europaea, 2025a; Leaton Gray et al., 2018; Savvides, 2008)



13 European Schools
in 6 EU member states

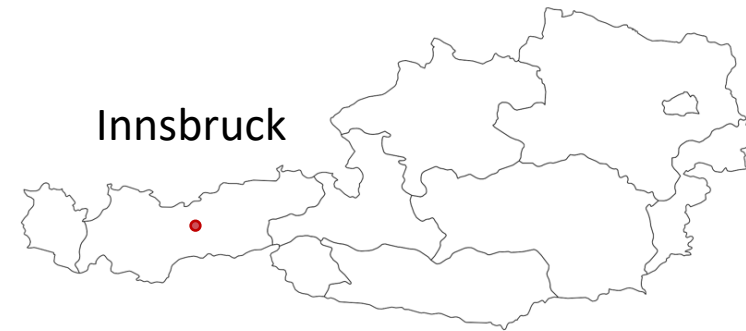
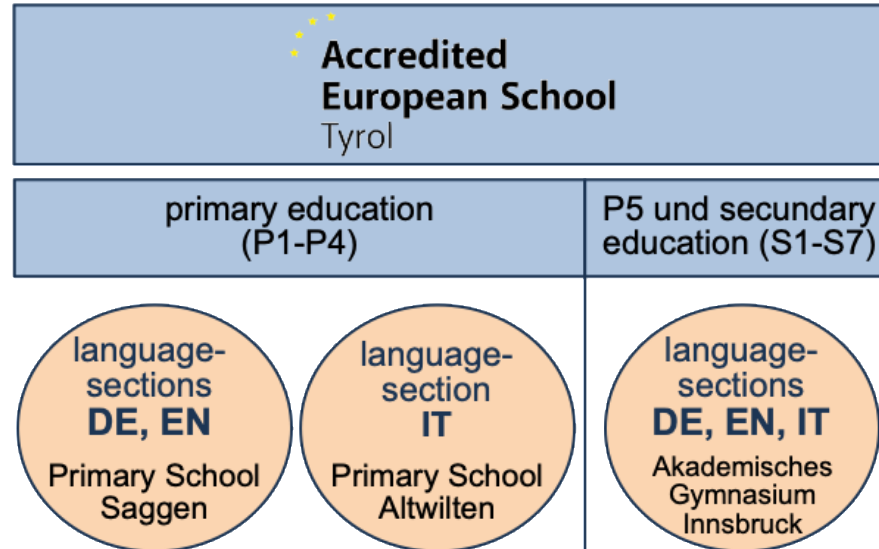


24 Accredited European Schools
in 14 EU member states



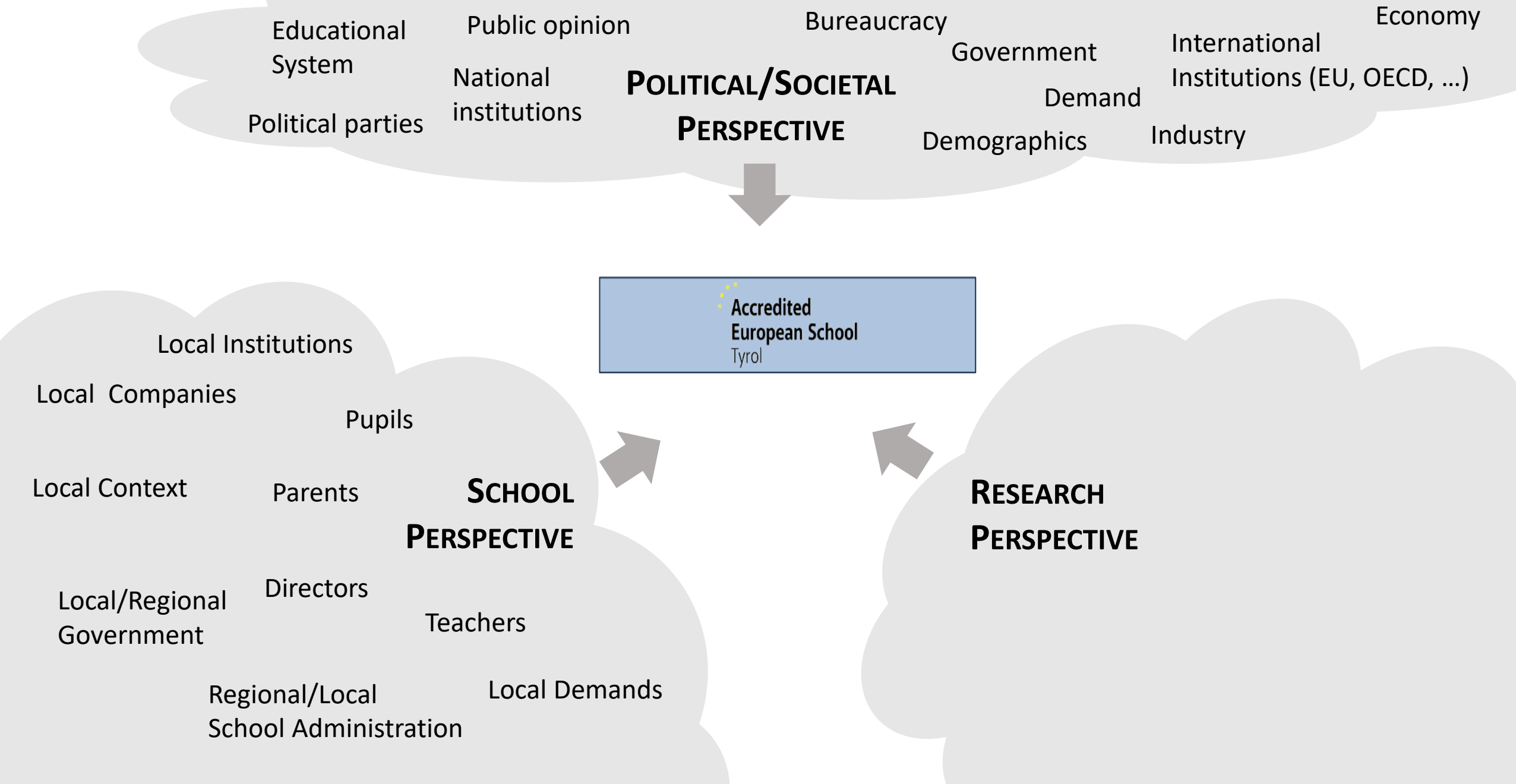
Fig. 1: Map of ES and AES locations (Schola Europaea, 2025b)

Austria's First Accredited European School

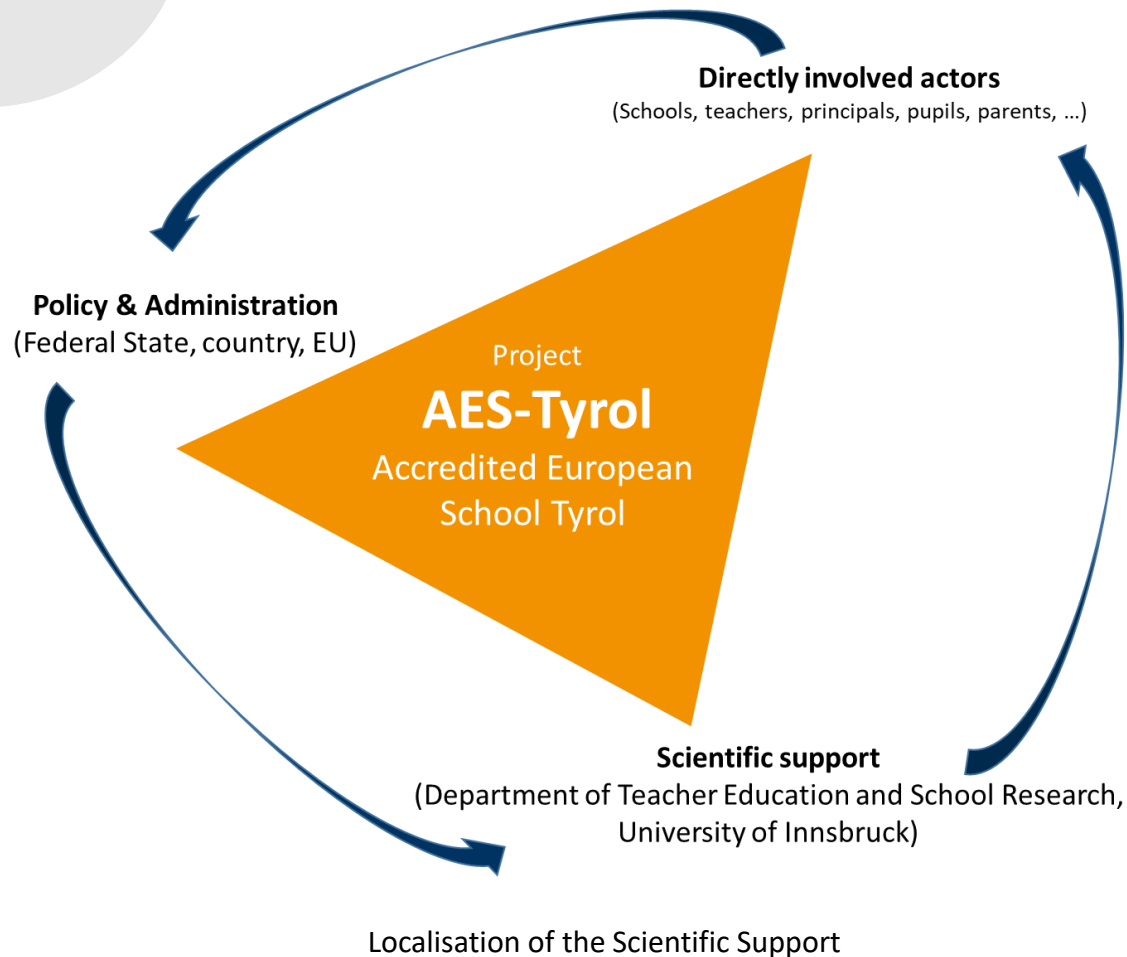


Homepage

2. Research Approach: AES-Tyrol



RESEARCH PERSPECTIVE



Sabrina Bacher

(international schools, language didactics, curriculum development)



Sarah Bachlechner

(multilingualism)



Christian Kraler

(system analysis, teacher education, methodology)



Claudia Schreiner

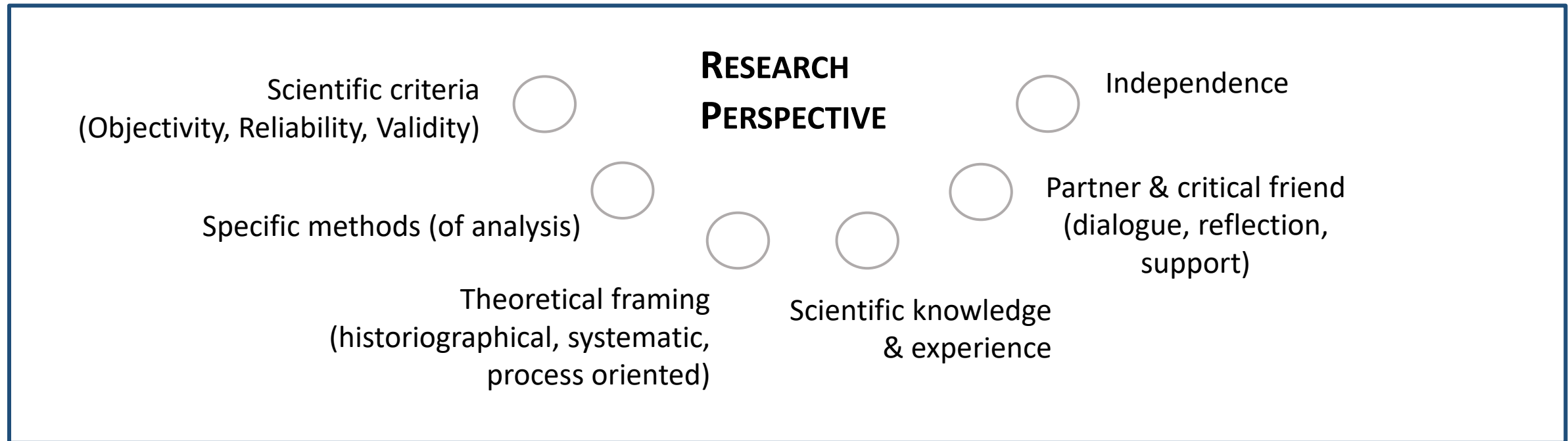
(pedagogical diagnostics, evaluation, system analysis)



Selina Silian

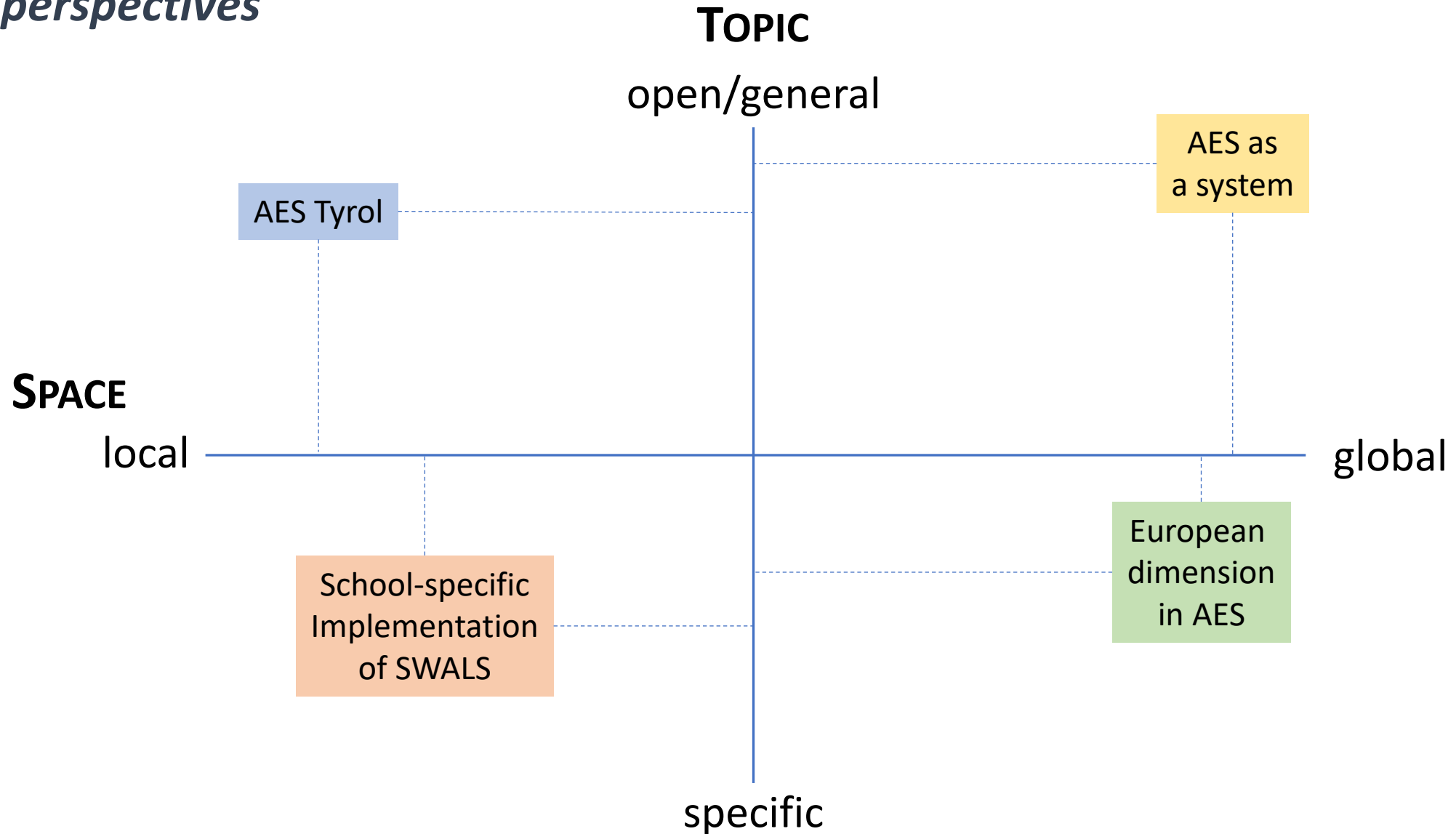
(European Schools specialist, language didactics)

- Researching the planning, implementation and realisation of the AES-T
- Identification and analysis of success factors and challenges, macro-meso-micro dynamics and glocality
- AES-Tyrol as a classic prototype: a scalable model solution for similarly designed projects in Austria



**Favourable towards the project, no pressure to succeed,
but supportive, distanced and independent**

Research perspectives



2. Research Approach: Research Questions

1

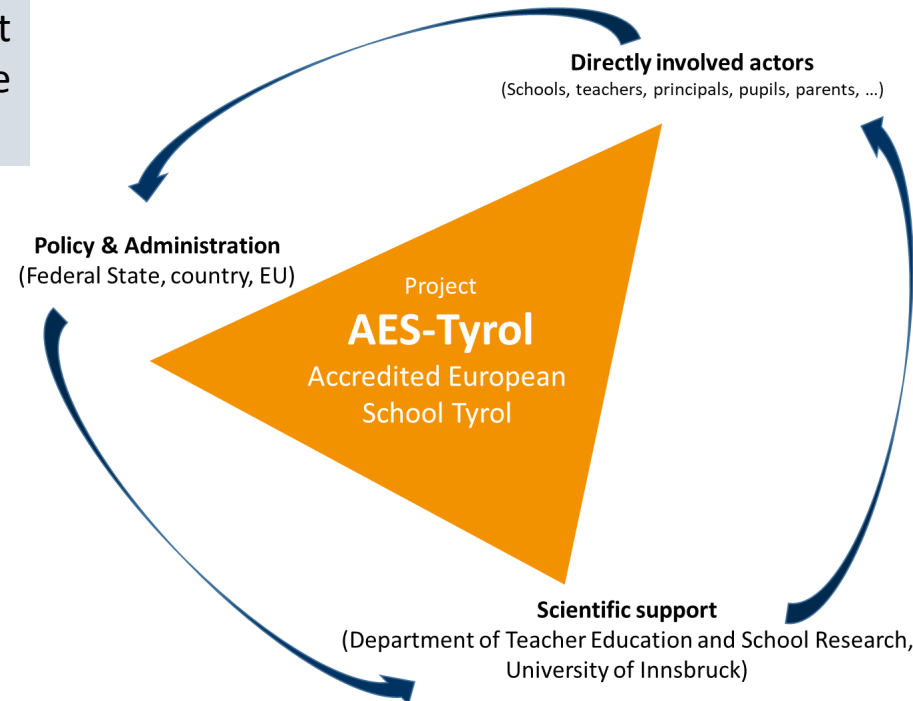
Which **challenges** in terms of content and organisational structure can be identified over the project period?

2

Which specific **processes** can be identified?

3

How does the existing school system **react** at all levels **to the implementation** of a different content and organisational-administrative structure?



4

Which **conditions for success** can be identified both for the project itself and for comparable projects in Austria?

5

Which **impact** does the project have at different system levels (local, regional, national, EU-wide)?

6

What are the overall **prototypical findings** for a scalable model for further comparable projects?

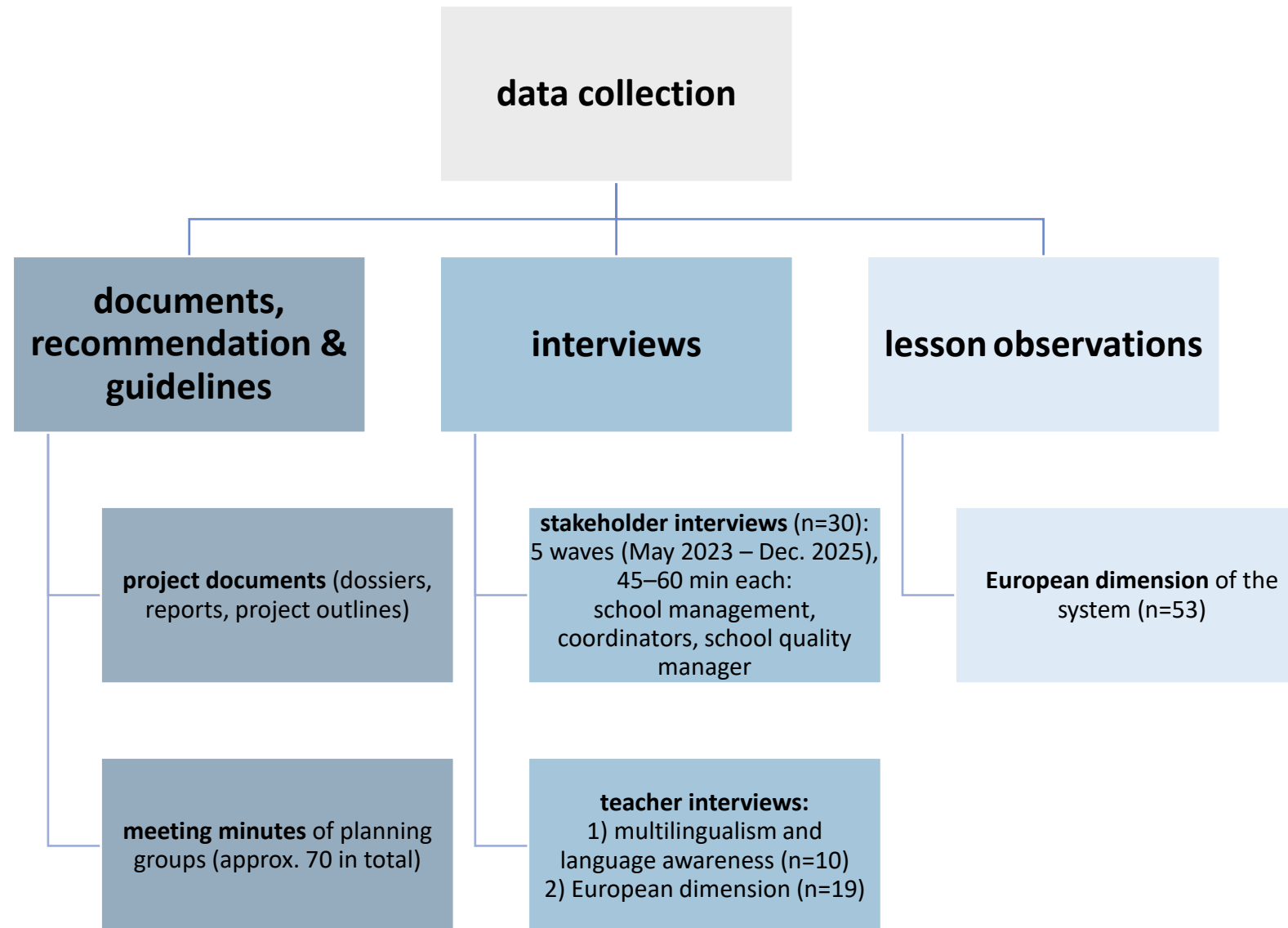
Process research (Bennett & Checkel, 2015; Abdallah et al., 2019)

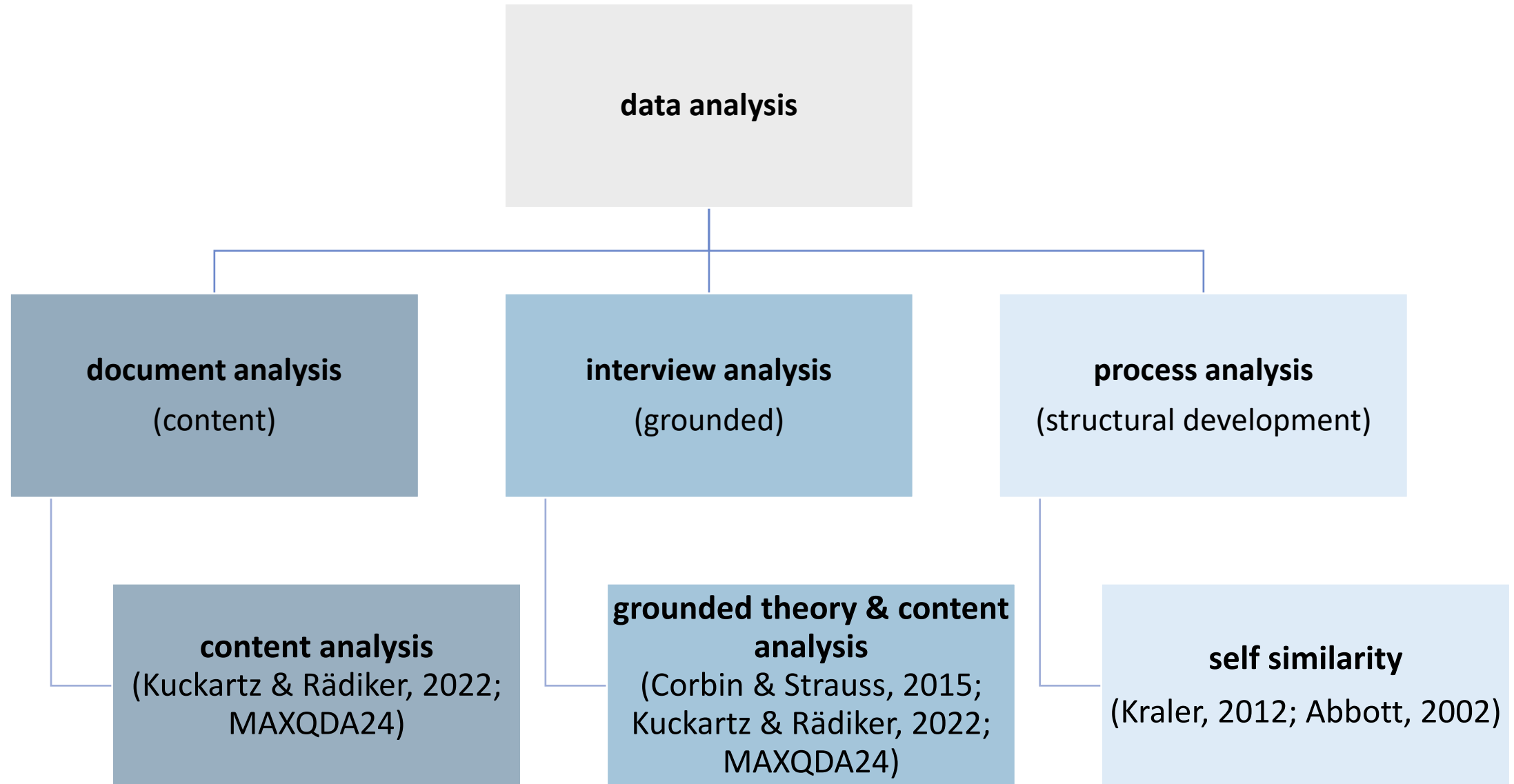


Fig.: Multi-level system (Fend, 2008)

Modelling the AES implementation as:

- a **dynamic system** in which various **agents** (Latour, 1996) interact and **self-similarity** appears (Abbott, 2007; Kraler 2012, 2025)
- a **multi-level system** (macro: policy, meso: school, micro: classroom) (Fend, 2008; Kraler, 2025)
- an **institutional actor** in education (Fend, 2008; Kraler, 2025)

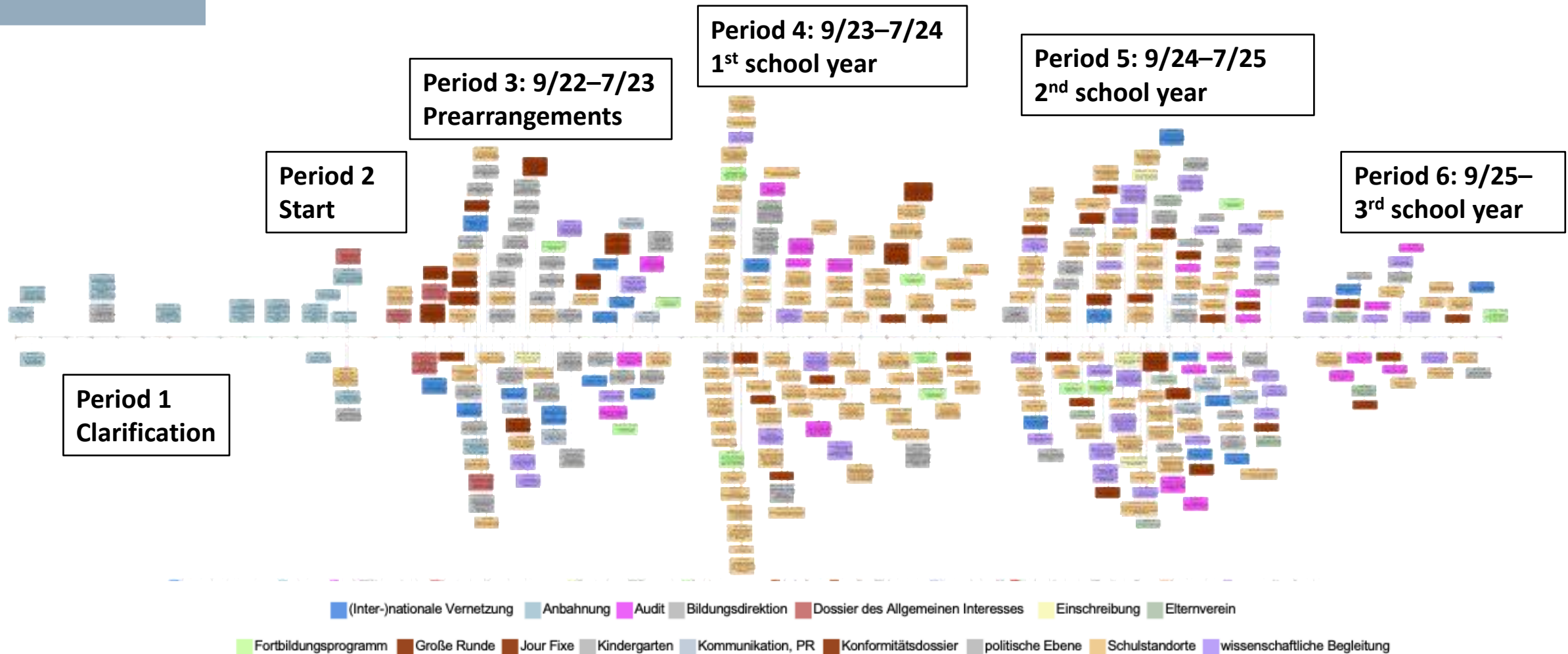




2. Research Approach: Findings

document &
process analysis

June 2021–March 2026



document &
process analysis

Self-similar patterns over time

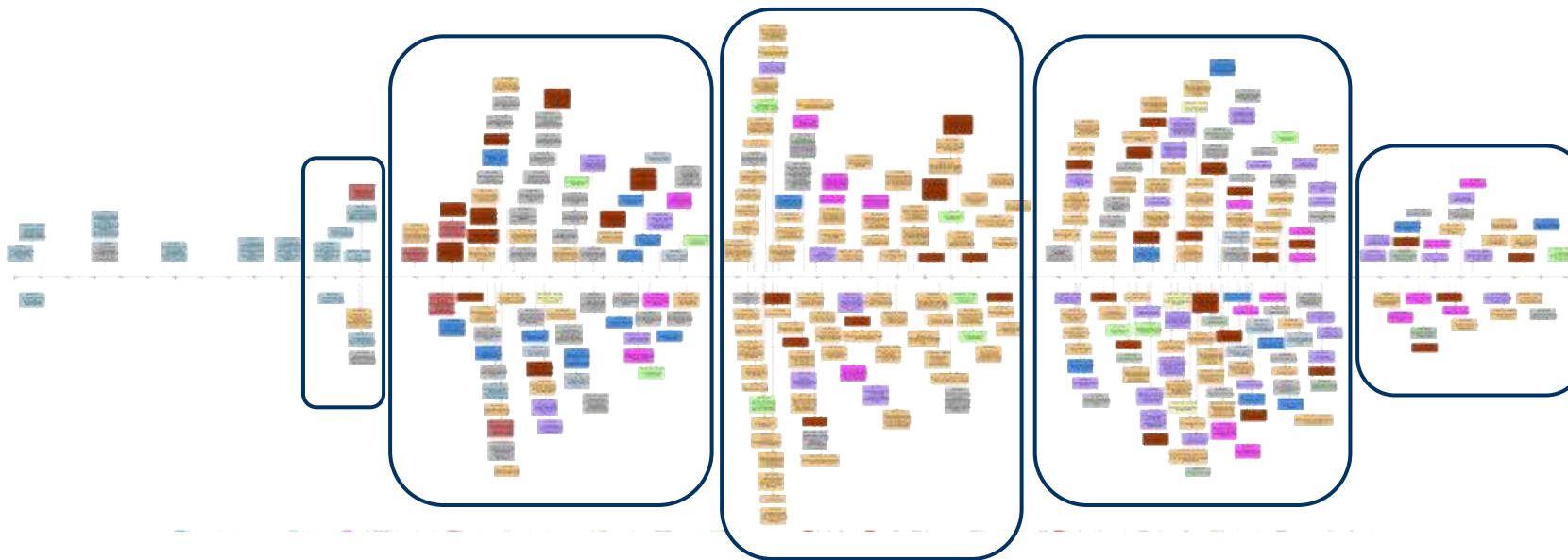


Fig. 4: Self-similar patterns in the timeline of the implementation process



Romanesco
broccoli



Fern

2. Research Approach: Findings

document &
process analysis

Institutional TP: Accreditation of the AES-Tyrol

→ Official accreditation of the AES-Tyrol as
24th accredited school in the system

Systemic TP: Early Education (Nursery cycle)

→ first comprehensive
system in Austria (from
Kindergarten to European
Baccalaureate)

Social TP: Study visit to ES Mol

→ Feeling of community and
commitment across stakeholders

Fig.: Tipping points AES-Tyrol

interviews

Identified challenges

Pressure to succeed

- Expertise from international programmes at the school locations adds pressure to succeed

Short-termism and parallelism

- Navigating rapid preparation and implementation phases with quick decision-making and immediate responses → pressure of simultaneity

Paradox of action

- Making necessary decisions and taking action despite incomplete knowledge of the full context

Communication

- Ensuring timely, coordinated communication and integrating new knowledge within a highly complex project environment

Identified conditions for success

Expertise at existing schools

- Specific prior knowledge and experience as foundation to absorb new information and adapt the European concept within the Austrian national framework

International networking

- Building strong relationships with other European schools, joining the broader network ('family'), and receiving support from European inspectors and ES (including further training)

Milestones

- Gaining information, sharing experiences, and fostering community through key events
- Official school start (on different levels) -> experience of success

Cooperation

- High degree of collaboration between participating schools, school administration, policy, ES/AES-network

2. Research Approach: Findings

lesson observations

Focus of the observations:
the realisation of the
European dimension
(Savvides, 2008;
Convery & Kerr, 2006)

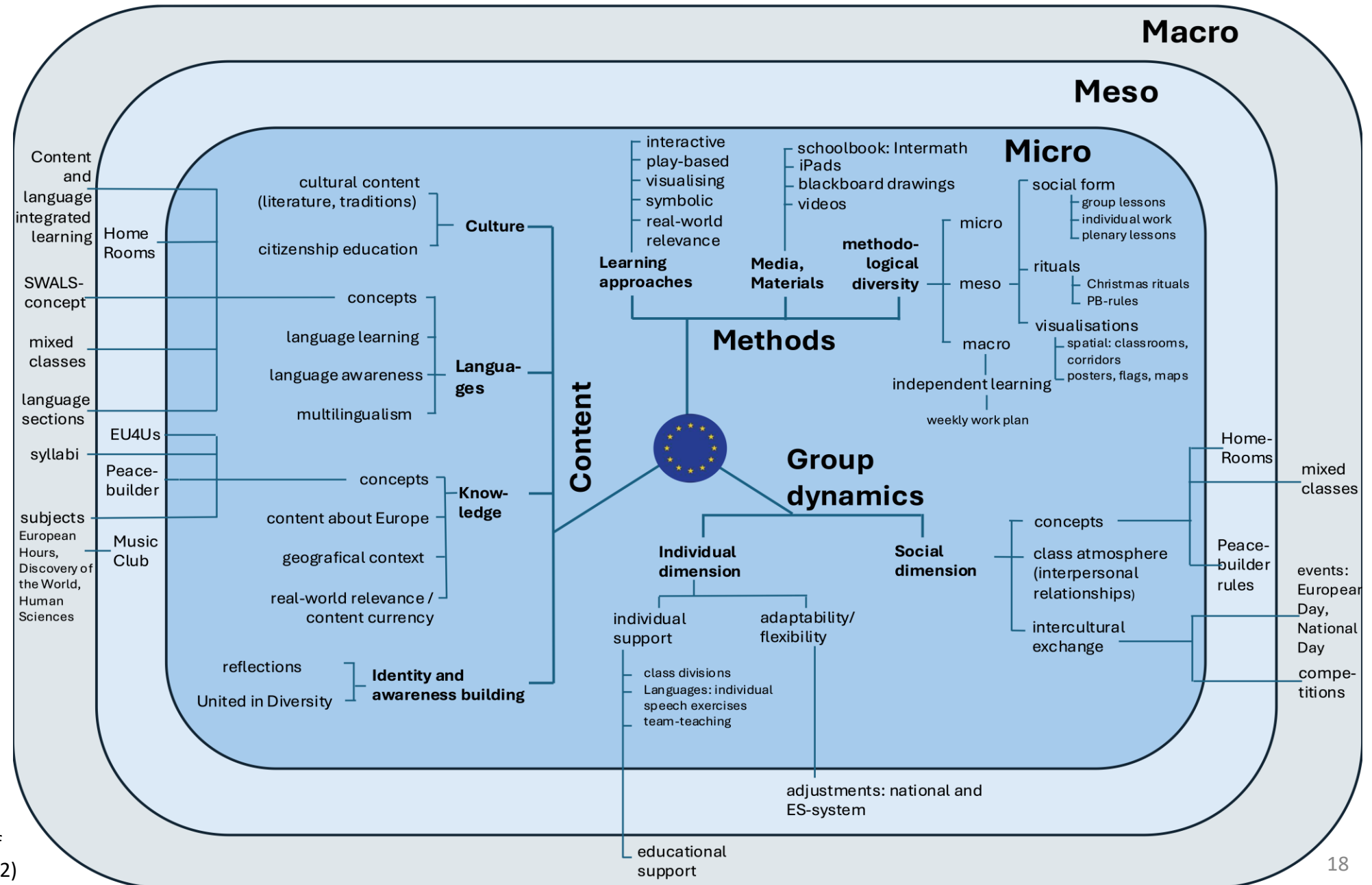
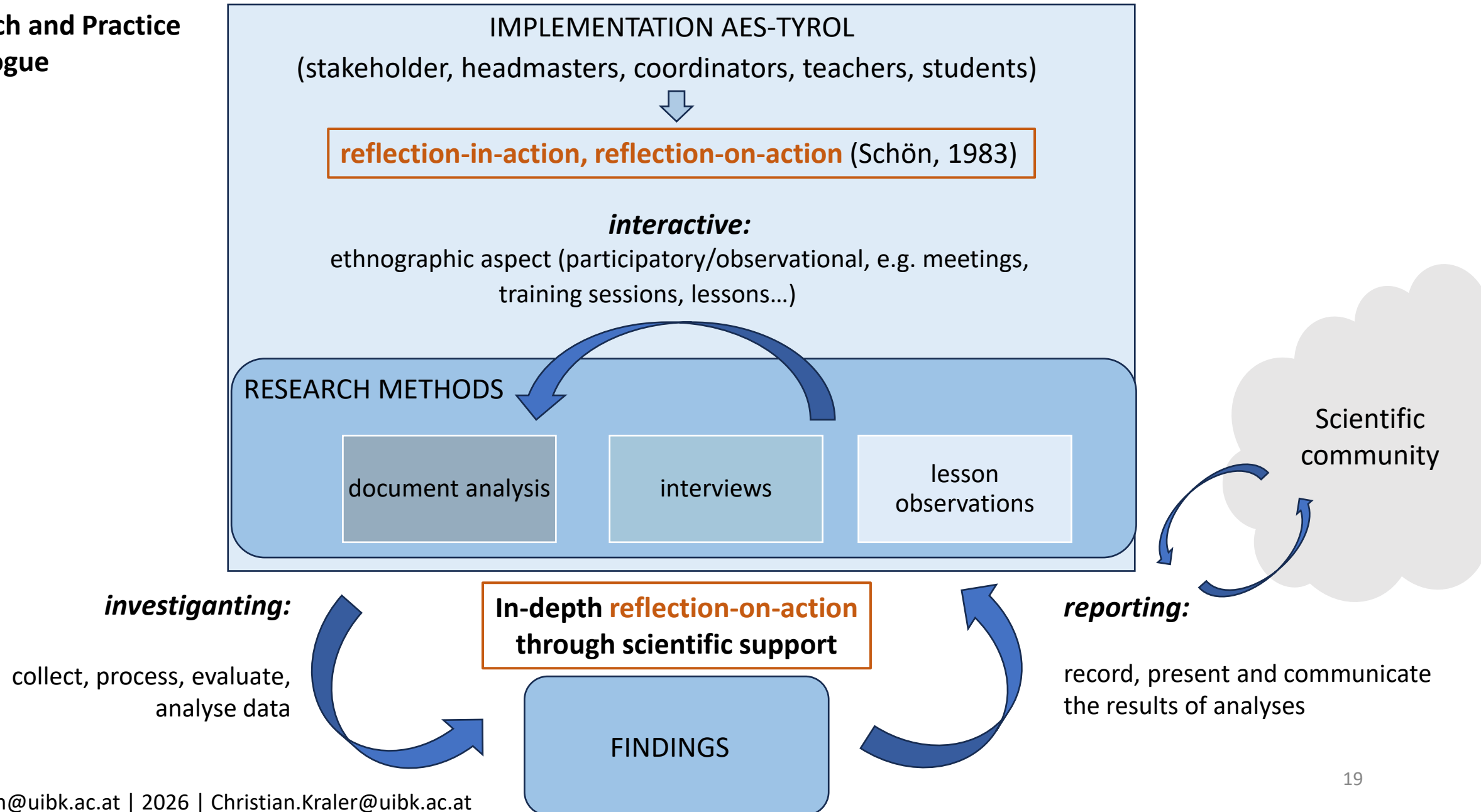


Fig. 6: Preliminary findings of the lesson observations (n=12)

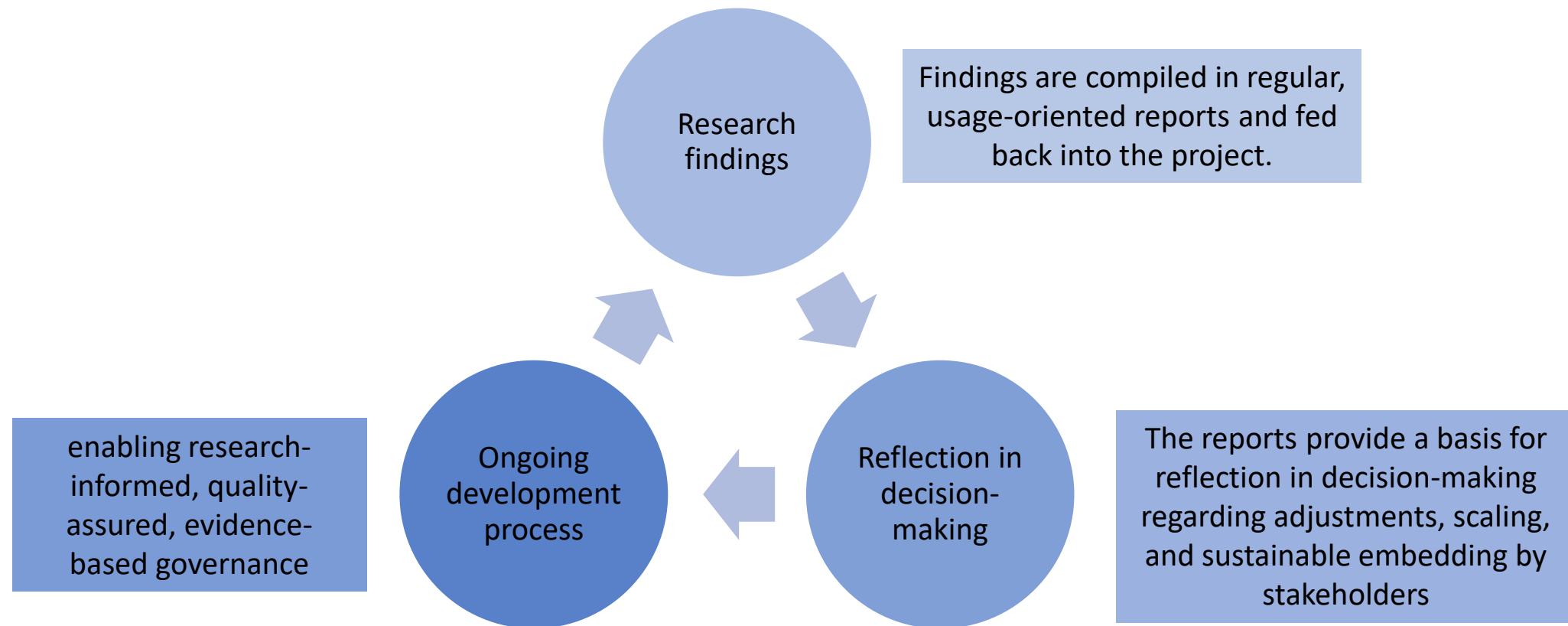
3. The Role of Scientific Support

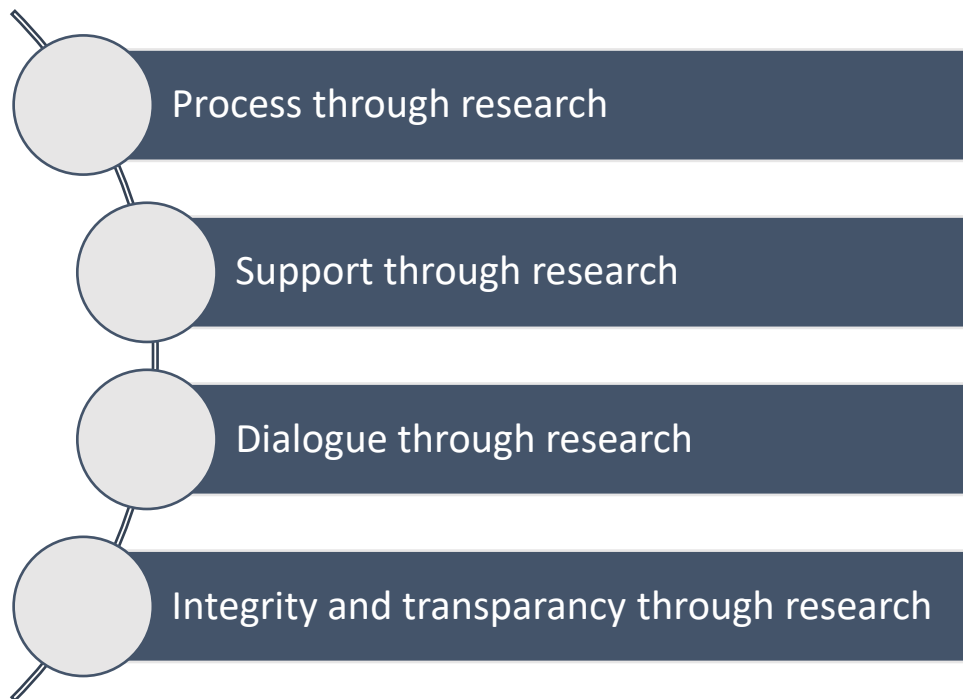
Research and Practice in Dialogue



Case study AES-Tyrol:

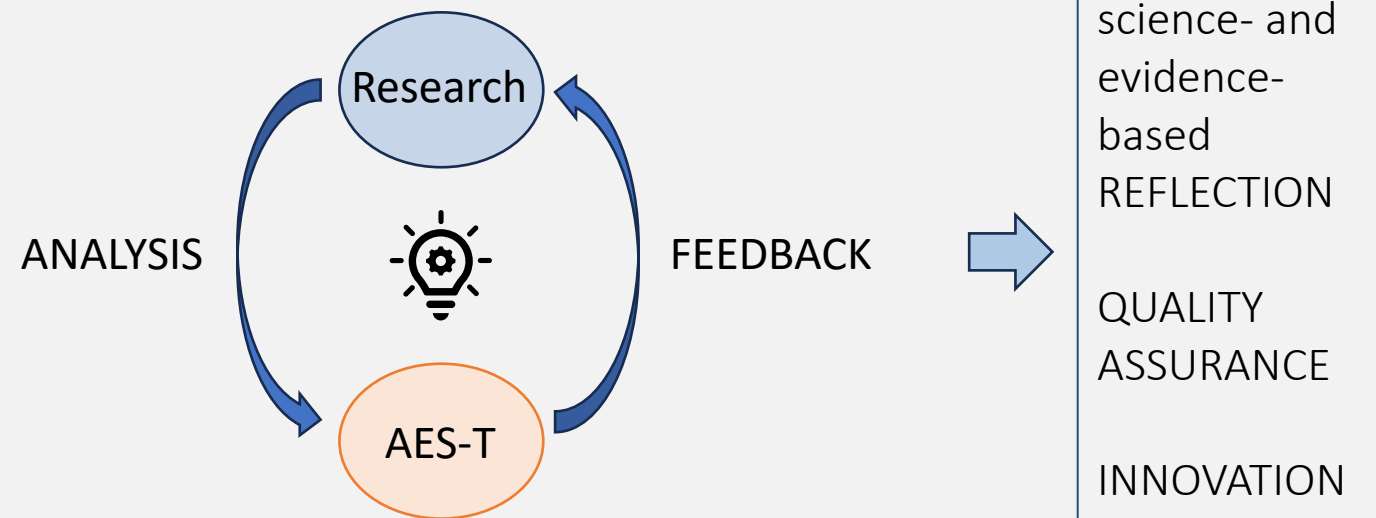
- The implementation is characterised by structural and context-dependent changes: challenges and factors of success at different stages of the implementation
- Self-similarity reproduces the new structure and creates meta-stability
- processes, dynamics, milestones and tipping points at macro-, meso-, and micro-level





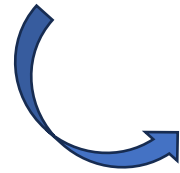
context: stagnation and viscosity in education systems (Kraler, 2012)

Iterative Cycle

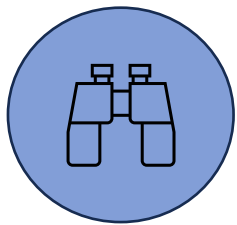




currently: **Project phase II**: Sept. 2024 – Aug. 2027



Project phase III: Sept. 2027 – Dec. 2028



- Implementation of Elementary Education
- European Baccalaureate
- Research partners for an AES in-depth analysis

MANY THANKS FOR YOUR ATTENTION!

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