



## INSPECTORATE OF THE BASQUE COUNTRY (SPAIN)

### 1. BASIC INFORMATION

**Country name:** Basque Country (Spain)

The Basque Country is one of the 17 autonomous communities in Spain with a legal provision allowing for the establishment of autonomous administrations and parliaments. The Basque Country has been acknowledged historic specificity, along with the Catalans and Galicians. It is in northern Spain. It includes the Basque provinces of Araba (capital city Vitoria-Gasteiz), Biscay (capital city Bilbao) and Gipuzkoa (capital city Donostia-San Sebastián).

We have complete autonomy on the field of education, within the framework of the Spanish law.

**Structure of inspectorate:** There is a Central Inspectorate and 3 regional Inspectorates. The Central Inspectorate is composed by the Chief Inspector and 3 central inspectors located in Vitoria-Gasteiz. The 3 regional inspectorates are divided into different zones: ARABA, with one zone; BIZKAIA, with 4 zones; and GIPUZKOA, with 3 zones. The Basque Inspectorate is regulated under the Spanish law and has also its own more specific Basque regulations.

**Age of inspectorate:** The educational inspection in Spain has a very old origin (1371) with the *veedores*, people, usually ecclesiastics, in charge of supervising the schools. Nowadays, after the Constitution of 1978, in the State of the autonomies, a new mandate led to the definition in 1984 of a new legal framework for educational inspection with the establishment of a different access system and the extinction of existing bodies up to now. Subsequently, with the legislative development of the education system, a new approach to inspection was taken again (Participation Law -LOPEG-, Law on Quality and Education Law) with the creation of a new body and new functions. The Organic Law 2/2006 of Education establishes the definitive functions of the educational inspection.

Thanks to our competences in education, we are ruled under the DECREE 98/2016, of June 28, of the Inspection of Education in the Autonomous Community of the Basque Country.

**Size:** There are one Chief inspector plus 3 central inspectors, 3 regional chief inspectors, and 8 zone inspectors. There are 73 ordinary inspectors.

**Remits:** We inspect early years schools, compulsory education schools (Primary and Secondary), Upper Secondary schools and vocational schools too.

**Unit of inspection:** We inspect mainly individual schools (state and private), leaders and teachers. We don't inspect local authorities. We also inspect in-service training centers, elementary and medium music and dance schools, boarding schools and languages state schools.

**Our Strapline:** we don't have any strapline, but we are involved in the ones the Department of Education uses in each campaign (for instance, against bullying, for a better inclusive system, etc.). On the other hand, we have our triannual **Action Plan**, framed by our mission, vision and values:

[http://www.euskadi.eus/contenidos/informacion/mision/en\\_mision/adjuntos/MVV\\_PANEL\\_2015\\_english.pdf](http://www.euskadi.eus/contenidos/informacion/mision/en_mision/adjuntos/MVV_PANEL_2015_english.pdf)

**Relationship with government:** The inspectorate of the Basque Country depends directly on the vice-minister of the Basque Autonomous Government's Department of Education. The relationship is direct and we follow his/her commands, although our reports are completely independent.

**Accountability:** At the end of each school year we have to write a report about all our activities. We have a quality management system that allows us to report about any issue when the vice-minister asks for it, with full and detailed information about different aspects related to our work.

## **2. EVALUATION PROCESS**

In general terms, each school has to report on their activities and on fulfilled or not fulfilled aims at the end of each school year. Each inspector revises this report and verifies if the following school year's annual plan follows the proposals given in the previous report. Besides, nowadays we are developing some tools in order to promote self-evaluations in the schools. These tools include indicators at different levels, at they are being used as a pilot project in 20 schools.

During inspection in schools, we analyse the aims each school has agreed to fulfil, the procedures they are going to follow and the evaluation indicators they have proposed according to the objectives. We don't look at finances, but we oversight legal compliance. Our aim is to ensure the rights and duties of the whole school community, to contribute to the improvement of their tasks and results and to collaborate with other departments. We observe lessons of those that have passed the official exam to become a civil servant. We also observe lessons if there is a complaint about one specific teacher.

Besides, we also evaluate or supervise different issues related to students results, cases of bullying, constitution of school boards, treatment of diversity (special needs education, integration of new students from abroad), legal aspects such as timetables, etc.

When evaluating a school (a specific program, the leaders or a specific teacher), we use different tools: or either check lists, or a quality model.

We don't have a stablished period of days to inspect the schools. Along the school year we visit the schools, and in each visit we normally have a specific issue to supervise.

We have a very good evaluation system for school leaders (headteachers, head of studies, secretary). The process lasts 4 school years and it is both a formative evaluation and also a sumative one (at the end, the headteacher has to get a "pass"). During this evaluation period, two inspectors analyse the main documents of the school, have interviews with them, ask parents and staff about the work done, and promote self-evaluation and co-evaluation among the members of the leaders team. The report written includes proposals for improvement as a consequence of what has been observed and evaluated, and these proposals are previously negotiated with the headteachers.

To become a inspector a experience of at least 6 years as a teacher is required. If the teacher has been a headteacher in a school, it is given some more points in the rate. We have to confess that in our system it is not possible to become an inspector with experience in the field. Experience is adquired once you have enter in the inspectorate.

We also collaborate with other offices that belong to the Departmen of Education (provision of staff, give advice about future laws or programs, proposals and control of official exams, etc.), or even with other Departments or organizations, such as Social Affairs, Department of Police, Department of Justice, Health Department, etc.

We are invloved in complaints examinations, and we must report on them.

## **3- CONSEQUENCES OF INSPECTION**

The reports written by the inspectorate are not published. The reports related to the evaluation of schools are given to each school in a private manner, and the headteacher analyses the results with the help of the coordinators, teachers and also with parents if necessary. The reports related to other issues (e.g. an answer to a specific complaint, or a report about statistics) are sent to the vice-minister of education directly.

We don't grade schools. We think it would lead to a negative competition among schools. The findings of inspection are used in two different ways. On the one hand, we revise our targets related to the supervision of the schools, and on the other hand, we report to the vice-minister to take adequate decisions. We do thematic reports (school leaving, bullying, school supervision, etc.), but we don't publish them.

When inspecting a school, if the report is negative we try to help them improving. If there is a negative result in an issue related to legal comands, the school is forced to accomplish the law. There has been no case where a school has been shut down for not having followed the inspectorate's instructions. There is a program where the strong schools give advice to the weak ones and help them in concrete issues.

We have defined a model of school supervision that consists in first getting data about how their work or how their processes are, and second, as a consequence, we send them improvement proposals, on an ongoing process.