

# The Inspectorate of Education of Estonia



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# 1. A Summary Profile of the Inspectorate

## 1.1 Historical Overview

Until the 19th century, the evaluation of peasant schools was carried out by the pastors, together with the Ecclesiastical Council. Until the beginning of Russification in the 1880s, the inspection of schools under the tsarist government was run on a relatively small scale. Inspection of all schools became a responsibility of the curate and of the public school headteachers and inspectors in 1873.

In 1918–1940, schools were supervised and counselled by school counsellors. Later, inspectors and chief inspectors working in rural areas and in the Ministry of Education were responsible for fulfilling these duties. The school counsellors and inspectors were relatively independent in their activities. Regarding the work of counselling, performing inspections prevailed over offering advice. In schools, school counsellors checked the economic situation of the school, study materials and their usage, the documentation of the school and writing of the school chronicle, the school library, the examination of children's health by the regional doctor, fulfilling the obligation of school attendance and many other aspects of school life. They doubtlessly visited some lessons, learning about teacher's own knowledge, teaching skills, children's knowledge and their behaviour.

During the Soviet period, the right to visit and inspect schools was in the hands of the head of the education department and inspectors of schools, who could participate in lessons, in all kinds of study activities and events organised outside classroom and school. They could check the knowledge level of students and the correctness of student evaluation by teachers, give guidance and advice on education and schooling activities to teachers, instructors and headteachers; they could suspend the illegal commands and actions of schools' headteachers, convene teachers' conferences and take part in the work of teachers' councils and methodological unions; they could demand necessary materials from headteachers and teachers, for inspective purposes, make suggestions for motivation of teachers, headteachers and other employees, raise questions on firing schools' employees.

During 1988-1996, the administration of educational system was reorganised several times. In 1993, the Ministry of Culture and Education was established and its area of administration included the State Board of Education as a government institution, carrying out state inspection of educational institutions and inspecting the fulfilment of education related legal acts and national education standards.

In 1993, the procedure of conducting state inspection of basic schools, upper secondary schools and vocational education institutions was established. The main methods of state inspection included: observation and analysis of education and schooling activities, examining students' knowledge orally and in writing, discussions with school's administration, teachers, members of the school board and students, analysis of students' workbooks, schools' documentation, work plans, employees' job descriptions, work contracts and other materials.

The inspector, performing state inspection, had the right to receive all the necessary information from the county government, municipality and educational institution; to visit, after informing the headmaster, lessons and educational events; to participate in the meetings of headmasters, teachers, the school board, the teachers' council and parents; to make suggestions for developing education and schooling activities and precepts for elimination of deficiencies to county governments, municipalities and the headmasters and owners of schools; and to suspend the illegal commands and actions of headmasters

of educational institutions by informing the ministry, the county government and municipality thereof.

## 1.2 Evaluation of the Education System

There is no separate inspectorate in Estonia. Inspection is exercised by the officials of the Ministry of Education and Research or the county government officials on the order of the Minister of Education and Research.

Inspection exercises control over education and schooling activities.

The administrative inspection over actions in an educational institution is exercised by the owner of the educational institution. First and foremost, administrative inspection controls administration and economic activities. The owner of an educational institution has a right to control school activities in all fields.

For each level of education (pre-school, basic, secondary and higher education), the state establishes requirements, called national standards of education. These are set out in national curricula which determine general objectives of the respective educational level, required content, estimated length of study period, required knowledge, skills and experience.

Children who turn seven are obliged to attend school. Pre-primary education is provided in pre-primary institutions. Pre-school childcare institutions are educational institutions. Schooling and education in pre-primary institutions are organized according to the national curriculum. In a pre-primary institution, a child acquires pre-primary education which provides the prerequisites for coping successfully in everyday life and at school. Basic education is compulsory. The basic level of education is acquired in a basic school or an upper secondary school which provides classes for the basic school level. Basic school includes school years from 1 to 9.

Attaining the basic education is based on the national curriculum. In order to graduate from the basic school, students have to complete the curriculum and pass the final examinations of the basic school level.

## 2. The Education System

### 2.1 Structure, Tables, Numbers

See pages 18-19

### 2.2 Description

#### ***Compulsory School Attendance***

Education is compulsory for school-age children to the extent specified by law. A child is at the age of compulsory school attendance if he or she is seven years old by the 1st of October of the current year.

A student is at the age of compulsory school attendance until the completion of basic education (until the end of the 9th grade) or until he or she is 17 years old. A school is required to ensure study opportunities for each child who is subject to the obligation to attend school and who resides in the service area of the school. Schools may accept children from outside the school's service area during the vacancies.

At the government level, an overview of fulfilling compulsory school attendance has been obtained on the basis of statistical data but in 2004 national register of students was launched, aiming to guarantee correct and up to date personalized data. Since 2005, the register of learners forms a part of the integrated Estonian Education Information System.

### 2.3 The Tasks, Responsibilities and Role of the Inspectorate – General Statement, Legal Basis, Characterization in Official Documents

The organization and conduct of inspection for formal education is regulated by the Pre-School Childcare Institutions Act, the Basic Schools and Upper Secondary Schools Act, the Vocational Education Institutions Act, the Private Schools Act, the Universities Act, and the Institutions of Professional Higher Education Act.

In order to ensure the legitimacy and expediency of the activities of governmental educational institutions, inspection is conducted according to the Estonian legislation. In order to ensure the legitimacy and expediency of the activities of municipal educational institutions, the inspection is conducted according to the Local Government Organisation Act.

### 2.4 Mission Statement

The main objective of the inspection is to contribute to acquiring quality education and to ensure the efficiency and lawfulness of education and schooling activities.

### 2.5 Which Organization and Practices are Inspected Besides Schools?

Inspection is conducted in private, municipal and state schools. All pre-schools, basic schools, general secondary education schools, vocational education schools, higher education institutions, schools providing after school activities are the subject for inspection.

### 2.6 Full Inspection of Schools as a Task of the Inspectorate

#### **General Description**

In Estonia there is no separate inspectorate, thus no complex, full-scale inspection is conducted. The Ministry of Education and Research establishes the priorities of inspection for each school year and according to that the county governors carry out thematic inspections.

The ministry carries out inspection in individual matters, for example, when an educational institution has applied for an education license or in case of problems (complaints).

In 2006, the internal evaluation of educational institutions was made mandatory and educational institutions were provided with advisory services on internal evaluation. Since 2006, the ministry has organized advisory services in every educational institution. Since 2009, the advisory services were optional. Since 2013 only pre-school child care institutions are provided with advisory services. Therefore, organization of inspection has been changed and the volume of inspection has been reduced. Inspection is exercised in a specific thematic area (e.g. qualification of teachers, providing support to students, the security of students).

The Ministry of Education and Research organizes inspection, the county governments carry out inspection only on the order of the Minister of Education and Research.

## 2.7 Main Aspects of Quality to be Inspected

The tasks of the inspectors are the following:

- 1) to inspect the fulfilment of requirements deriving from legal acts governing education and schooling activities;
- 2) to analyse problems in implementing legal acts governing education and schooling activities.

Only schooling and education activities are controlled during the inspection. The fulfilment and implementation of legal acts are inspected as well.

## 2.8 The Inspection Process

### ***Thematic Inspection Exercised by County Governors***

The priorities of thematic inspections as well as the sample of educational institutions are established for each academic year by the Minister of Education and Research. The sample includes approx. 10% of educational institutions. The inspection takes up to 8 working days. Thematic inspection is conducted in pre-primary schools and general education institutions.

The Ministry of Education and Research is in charge of the designs of inspection and the analyses of its results.

### ***Inspection Exercised by the Ministry of Education and Research***

The Ministry of Education and Research exercises inspection of educational institutions on individual matters, mostly in private educational institutions or if any problems have been noticed in the activities of an educational institution. Inspection is carried out in all educational institutions that receive a new activity or education license. The purpose of the inspection is to ensure that the actual activities of the educational institution correspond to the documents submitted with the application of the educational license.

## 2.9 Practical Organization

During inspection, the conformity of the activities of the educational institution with corresponding legislation are evaluated. During each academic year a thematic inspection is exercised in ca 10% of educational institutions: in 60 pre-school child care institutions and 60 general education institutions. Besides that, the inspection conducted by the Ministry of Education and Research.

The team that exercises inspection usually consists of 1-2 officials. An inspection official may include experts.

Exercise of inspection is preceded by a planning stage where the objective and scope of inspection are defined, the team formed, data collected, available data analysed, the schedule composed, the directive of the minister or the order of a county governor prepared, and educational institutions are notified of the forthcoming inspection.

The conduct of inspection is based upon the collection of evidence necessary to make an evaluation as all opinions, recommendations, and evaluations must be based upon documents. Copies of collected documents are made on site and signed by the head or secretary of the educational institution.

The objective of the inspector is to collect appropriate and sufficient evidence, which provide the basis for substantiated conclusions.



## 2.10 School's Quality and the Possible Consequences

The results of inspection are documented in a report and must be as specific as possible. A draft report is sent to the educational institution to notify it of the results of the inspection and receive feedback from the educational institution. The head of the educational institution is given at least three working days to review the draft report and compose their own explanations. The educational institution is asked to provide a reply to the draft report in writing by the specified deadline. Reasonable corrections are to be included in the report.

In the case of precepts, a deadline is given to the educational institution for the elimination of deficiencies. The report is signed by all of the officials who took part in the inspection process. The signature confirms the liability of the inspectors exercising inspection for the accuracy and objectivity of the materials included in the report.

The report is submitted to the educational institution whose activities were monitored, to the owner of the educational institution, to the inspectors who carried out the inspection and, if necessary, to other institutions. The report of inspection is a public document.

The reports of the inspections carried out by the Ministry of Education and Research are available on the ministry's website.

A report of inspection may include advisory proposals or compulsory precepts for the head or owner of an educational institution. In case of non-compliance with precepts, penalty payment of up to 640€ may be demanded or the education- or activity license of the educational institution may be revoked.

## 2.11 Full Inspection of Non-Public Schools

The inspection takes place on equal bases in educational institutions managed by the state and in municipal and private educational institutions.

The Ministry of Education and Research issues an activity license for a specified term to private educational institutions on their first application, for which the educational institution has to submit the following documents: the statutes of the private school; the development plan; the proof of the owner of the educational institution about the teachers who correspond to the qualification requirements; information concerning the existence of study rooms (buildings), furnishings and other property necessary for the operation of the private school; for the provision of instruction in higher education, the information concerning the material resources required for the education and research activities.

### ***Owners of Schools***

The owner of a private school can be a foundation, private limited company or a non-profit organization.

Local government is the owner of the municipal school. Public schools are operated by the Ministry of Education and Research.



### 3. Internal-Evaluation

#### 3.1 Obligation of Schools Concerning Quality Assurance and Improvement

In 2006, the Ministry of Education and Research established a mandatory requirement for internal evaluation in pre-primary institutions, general education institutions and vocational schools as well as changed the organization of inspection: the role of internal evaluation has increased and the role of the inspection has decreased.

For smooth implementation of internal evaluation, state counselling was guaranteed to every educational institution from 2006 to 2013. The purpose of counselling was to enhance the objectiveness of evaluation and deepen educational institutions' awareness of their actual situation; offer additional information for comparison; support and develop the conduct of internal evaluation and the preparation for evaluation and development of evaluation culture.

Counselling services were obligatory to educational institutions from 2006 to 2009. Every institution had to choose a counsellor. Counselling was free of charge for the institutions, it was organised and financed by the ministry. From 2009 to 2013, the counselling of educational institutions was optional.

Since autumn 2013, the ministry does not organise counselling. Due to the existence of qualified counsellors, educational institutions can call in counsellors when needed.

Pre-primary institutions can apply for a counsellor from the Ministry of Education and Research which means the process will be financed by the ministry.

The objective of internal evaluation is to ensure conditions for child development and consistent development of the educational institution. This is done by identifying the strengths and areas of improvement for the institution. Based on that an action plan for implementation of development plan is established. During the internal evaluation, the educative activities and administration are analysed and their effectiveness is evaluated. Internal evaluation is linked to the development plan of the institution. Firstly, they will analyse their performance and then prepare a development plan.

The criteria of internal evaluation (leadership and administration, personnel management, cooperation with interest groups, resource management, the education and schooling process; results related to a child/student, personnel and interest groups and statistics of the educational institution) are advisory to the educational institutions.

The methods for carrying out internal evaluation are chosen by the educational institutions.

#### 3.2 Stand Point of the Inspectorate About the Inspection of Internal Evaluation

Internal evaluations are mandatory in pre-school child care institutions, general education institutions and vocational education institutions. During evaluation, it is possible to check the process of internal evaluation and use the results if they are related to the objective of inspection.

#### 3.3 Practice

The administration of an educational institution is responsible for carrying out internal evaluations. The entire school staff participates in internal evaluation. An internal evaluation report is discussed by the school staff council and approved by the board of

trustees and the owner. The procedure of internal evaluation is imposed by the headmaster.

### 3.4 Reporting on the School's Self-Evaluation and Possible Consequences

Educational institutions compose an internal evaluation report at least once every three years or during the development plan. The internal evaluation report points out the strengths of an educational institution and the areas which need improvement. The results are used by educational institutions in their development plans.

All educational institutions submit data to the Estonian Education Information system about the internal evaluation reports and the time of the composition of the adviser's feedback reports. Thus, the ministry is able to review whether internal evaluations have been conducted in an educational institution and whether it has been provided with advisory services.

The results of internal evaluations are public but their publication on the website of the educational institution is not mandatory.

## 4. Inspection of Particular Themes of Quality

### 4.1 General Position

The lawfulness and efficiency of the activities of educational institutions are evaluated through inspection.

The organisation of external evaluation of the study results of general education institutions, standard determined tests, basic school final examinations and national examinations, are carried out through Foundation Innove.

### 4.2 Examples of Particular Themes or Topics

Thematic inspection is exercised by the county governor and is carried out on the basis of the inspection priorities established by the ministry, for example:

Pre-primary education: supporting child development (organising schooling and education for children with special needs; work organisation of teachers; a secure physical environment for children) and assuring the accuracy of data in the Estonian Education Information System.

General education: supporting child development (organising schooling and education for children with special needs; security assurance) and assuring the accuracy of data in the Estonian Education Information System.

The priority in pre-school education and general education in 2016/2017 is taking the individual needs and abilities of children and students into consideration when implementing study and educational activities. The purpose is to evaluate how an age-appropriate, safe, positively affecting, and evolving environment has been created for the students to study and grow.

### 4.3 Processes and Methods in Thematic Inspections

The following methods are used during the exercising of inspection:

- 1) analysis of statistical and financial reports, study results and other collected information, including analysis and verification of data in the Estonian Education Information System;
- 2) review of the educational institution's documentation and analysis of its content;

- 3) interviews with employees, members of the board of trustees (council), parents, students (children) and the owner of the educational institution; in case of a state and private educational institution, with the representative of the local government of the location of the educational institution;
- 4) review of the learning and growing environment of the educational institution, including education and schooling activities, and its analysis.

#### 4.4 Inspection of Staff

Documentation in an educational institution is reviewed during inspection. As a rule, lessons and activities of individual teachers are not inspected in Estonia. In general, lessons are only inspected in case of complaints about a teacher or the teaching process. During inspection, the administration of an educational institution is interviewed and if necessary the teachers, board of trustees, the owner, and students as well.

The inspection and the management of financial resources of an educational institution are exercised by the owner of the educational institution during supervisory control.

#### 4.5 The Judgment about Themes, Topics and Staff and Its Possible Consequences

During the inspection, an overview of the effectiveness of educational institutions is obtained (since the education policy took effect). Summaries of the results of inspectorate are composed each academic year at the level of county government and at the state level. The information received is used for the dissemination of the best practice in educational institutions; for the training of heads and teachers of educational institutions; for the introduction of necessary changes to legislation; and for making decisions concerning education policy.

#### 4.6 Advisory Tasks of the Inspectorate

##### ***Areas and Tasks***

The major task of the external evaluation department is to manage the development and evaluation of the quality systems of educational institutions, including management of inspection and analysis of its results within the area of government of the ministry and providing advice to the minister, chancellor, vice-chancellors, counsellors and departments in the respective areas.

##### ***Practices***

The external evaluation department of the ministry organises the issuing of education licences to educational institutions and activity licences to youth camps; co-ordinates the external evaluation of study results in general education system; organises inspection of education and schooling in educational institutions and youth work agencies; provides services to the ministry concerning the organisation of supervisory control; co-ordinates international surveys in the area of education quality; and organises the generalisation and publication of external evaluation results.

The external evaluation department develops an external evaluation system of education and youth work; plans and co-ordinates activities which help to ensure quality; organises the elaboration of legislation in the area of external evaluation; advises (in its area of activity) specialists in the area of education and youth work; advises officials exercising inspection over educational institutions and co-ordinates their co-operation; and co-ordinates co-operation with international organisations in the area of external evaluation.

## 5. Other Tasks of the Inspectorate

### 5.1 Curriculum Development

Curriculum development is not a task for external evaluation department.

### 5.2 Databases

In order to collect information for organising and purposefully administering the education system, the official register "The Estonian Education Information System" was founded in 2004.

The Estonian Education Information System consists of five sub-registers (see <http://www.ehis.ee/>):

- 1) the sub-register of documents certifying education: records are kept of the issuing of graduation documents certifying basic, general secondary, vocational secondary and higher education, and of reports proving the completion of residency;
- 2) the sub-register of teachers: contains information on teachers, headteachers and vacancies involved in provision of formal education in educational institutions enabling the acquisition of pre-primary, basic, general secondary and vocational secondary education, and on teachers, headteachers, and vacancies in educational institutions enabling the acquisition of hobby activities;
- 3) the sub-register of pupils, university students and resident physicians: records are kept of pupils, students, external students and resident physicians acquiring basic, general secondary, vocational secondary, and higher education;
- 4) sub-register of educational institutions: records are kept of educational institutions enabling the acquisition of basic, general secondary, vocational secondary, higher and hobby education, and of general data and the inventory required for education and schooling in these institutions;
- 5) the sub-register of curricula and education licenses: contains information on the curricula, programmes and education licenses of educational institutions enabling the acquisition of pre-primary, basic, general secondary, vocational secondary, higher and hobby education or in-service training.

The Estonian Education Information System ([www.ehis.ee](http://www.ehis.ee)) provides everyone with an opportunity to review the performance indicators of educational institutions. Data established by the minister's regulation are available for each educational institution.

For example, the following information is available concerning general education institutions: support for students with special educational needs; the ratio of students repeating a class course, the results of final examinations in basic schools and state examinations in secondary schools by subject; the number of teachers with the required qualifications; the average amount of in-service training of teachers (in hours); the age pattern of teachers; the proportion of teachers who left the school during the academic year among the total number of teachers; the percentage of female teachers among the total number of school teachers; a student-to-teacher ratio; the average size of classes; the number of students per computer; and the number of teachers per computer.

The goal of performance indicators is to provide educational institutions with an opportunity to monitor their indicators as a trend, e.g. compare the indicators of the last three years as well as compare them with average indicators of educational institutions of the same type. As performance indicators of educational institutions are publicly available, they also provide information about educational institutions to students, parents, owners of educational institutions, and other interest groups. Performance

indicators published in the Estonian Education Information System are also used in the preparation and carrying out of inspections.

In addition to the aforementioned information system, several other registers are also kept, the following of them are related to education:

- 1) the register of research and development institutions (<http://www.etis.ee>);
- 2) the results of state examinations (not a public register but all examinees can find out their examination results here);
- 3) the register of professions: lists all the existing professional councils (<http://www.kutsekoda.ee>);
- 4) [HaridusSILM](#) is a database consisting all the information related to the education system. It consist of different criteria regarding students, teachers, teachers' salary analyses, education expenditures, teaching staff, research, and performance indicators.

### 5.3 Examinations

Inspectors exercising inspection do not have direct tasks concerning the organisation and carrying out of examinations.

From September 2015, the tests conducted in the electronic testing system will be assessed electronically. Open end questions which cannot be assessed electronically will be assessed by a teacher assigned by the headmaster. The analysis of the results is conducted by Foundation Innove.

In order to evaluate the quality of basic education, the final examinations are carried out with common materials and common assessment criteria. Basic school graduation examinations include an examination in Estonian language, a Mathematics examination and an examination in a subject chosen by the pupil. At the end of upper secondary school students carry out a research or practical work and take national examinations which are administered, composed and assessed by Foundation Innove. National examinations include examinations in Estonian and foreign language, as well as Mathematics. International foreign language examinations, replacing national foreign language examinations are organised and assessed by Innove who is directed by the requirements set by international testing centres.

In 2003, Estonia participated for the first time in the international comparative study of TIMSS (Trends in Mathematics and Science Study). In 2006, 2009, 2012, and 2015 Estonia also participated in the study of PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment). The results of tests and examinations provide inspectors exercising inspection with information to evaluate the performance of an educational institution.

### 5.4 Handling Complaints

Complaints about the activities of an educational institution may be lodged by students, teachers, parents and other interest groups to a county government, the owner or the Ministry of Education and Research. Problems are first attempted to be solved through advisory services, asking an educational institution for additional information and/or reviewing documentation. If problem-solving requires the exercising of inspection, the Minister of Education and Research appoints an inspector to exercise the inspection – an official of the Ministry of Education and Research, or the county governor. For cases in the area of supervisory control (primarily administration and economic activities), applications for exercising supervisory control may be submitted to the owner of a municipal or state educational institution.

## 5.5 Financial or Staff Management of Schools

The control over the use of financial resources and the management of staff is exercised by supervisory control, which is carried out by the owner of an educational institution.

## 5.6 Issuing Schooling Permits

The tasks of the Inspectorate of Education in Estonia also involves issuing schooling permits which has a preventive character. In order to get the schooling permit it is necessary to submit to the ministry: curriculum of the school, development plan, the proof about the teachers who correspond to the qualification requirements; information concerning the existence of study rooms (buildings) and their compliance to the requirements of the Rescue- or Health Board.

## 6. Risk–Based Evaluation

Private educational institutions have to audit the financial activities of the educational institution. An audit is a check of a certain aspect of the institution's activities in order to provide an independent and professional evaluation and to make proposals for the improvement of the situation based on the evaluation. Inspectors do not carry out regular risk-based evaluations but the Ministry of Education and Research may monitor data about an educational institution's activities through the Estonian Education Information System and plan the exercising of inspection where necessary.

The developments of external evaluation see a transition to risk-based evaluation which means that an educational institution will be inspected only if the results are below imposed education standard, for example when the students' study results are low, the number of pupils dropping out of school or repeating one class is large, or when there are complaints about the educational institution.

## 7. Reports of Inspectors

### 7.1. Reporting at the School Level

#### ***Thematic Inspection Exercised by a County Governor***

The results of inspection are documented in a separate report for each educational institution. All data on the report must be verified on site in an educational institution. The county governor submits a draft report to the educational institution before the validation. The educational institution may submit proposals to clarify the report within a given period of time.

The report is signed by all of the officials who took part in the exercising of inspection. The report is approved by the county governor.

#### ***Inspection in Separate Matters Exercised by a County Governor or the Ministry of Education and Research***

The results of state inspection are documented in a report. The report includes brief information about the educational institution, the names of the inspectors exercising the inspection and the experts involved, a summary of the inspection, and any precepts and proposals which have been made.

The report is signed by the officials who took part in the process of inspection. The report is approved by the Minister of Education and Research or the county governor.



## 7.2 Reporting at the County Level

By the 30th of June of each academic year a county governor submits to the Ministry of Education and Research separate consolidated summaries of childcare institutions and schools in which the results of thematic inspection have been analysed across the county. A consolidated summary includes a description and analysis of the situation, input of the inspection, continuation activities, and proposals for changing legal acts or making education policy decisions.

## 7.3 Reporting at the Level of the Ministry of Education and Research

By the end of each calendar year, the Ministry of Education and Research composes an overview of the functioning of the education system which also includes conclusions and analysis of the results of inspection.

## 7.4 Target Audiences

A county governor submits a copy of the report to the educational institution, the owner of the educational institution, the Ministry of Education and Research and, in the case of state and private educational institutions, to the county government of the location of the educational institution.

The Ministry of Education and Research submits a copy of the report to the educational institution, the owner of the educational institution and, in the case of state and private educational institutions, to the county government of the location of the educational institution.

## 7.5 Confidential or Public

The results of inspection are public and the report is published on the website of the county government or the Ministry of Education and Research.

# 8. Structure, Position, Staff and Budget

## 8.1 Structure

Inspection of the education and schooling activities of pre-primary institutions, general education institutions and vocational schools is conducted by officials of the Ministry of Education and Research and county governor.

Inspection of educational institutions in pre-school child care institutions, general education institutions, vocational education institutions and schools providing hobby activities is coordinated by the external evaluation department of the Ministry of Education and Research. The department employs a head of department, deputy head, adviser and experts. Inspection in individual matters or supervisory control is exercised in educational institutions administered by the Ministry of Education and Research.

There are 15 county governments and the officials of education departments of these county governments exercise thematic inspection and inspection in individual matters. There are 213 local governments. The local governments exercise supervisory control over the legality and purposefulness of the administration and activities of the educational institutions administered by them.

## 8.2 Position

The major task of the external evaluation department is to manage the development and evaluation of the quality systems of educational institutions including management of



inspection and the analysis of its results within the area of government of the ministry and providing advice to the minister, secretary general, deputy secretary generals, advisers, and departments in the said area.

The objectives of the activities of the external evaluation department of the Ministry of Education and Research are: to ensure adequate evaluation of the quality, lawfulness and purposefulness of the education and youth work system in the ministry's area of government; to develop the quality assurance system of education and youth work, including the effective functioning and development of the inspection system.

### 8.3 Staff and Budget

There are eight officials in the external evaluation department of the Ministry of Education and Research. Primary task of two officials is to organise the conduct of inspection in pre-schools and schools of general education, and if necessary, to participate in the exercise of inspection.

There are approx. 30 officials in the education departments of county governments (15 county governments) whose main task is exercising inspection in educational institutions.

## 9. Recruitment and Training of Inspectors

### 9.1 General Remarks

Inspectors exercising inspection are public servants and their positions are filled by public competition.

### 9.2 Recruitment Conditions

Qualification requirements have been established for inspectors exercising inspection:

- A master's degree or equal qualification, competence in pedagogy and leadership.
- At least a 5-year experience in pedagogic work.

The (chief) expert of the external evaluation department of the Ministry of Education and Research proceeds in their activities from legislation regulating the activities of the ministry, the statutes of the external evaluation department and the job description. The job description also establishes requirements related to the education level, experience, knowledge and skills, and personal qualities of the (chief) expert.

Requirements related to education level, experience, knowledge and skills, and personal qualities of (chief) expert:

- Master's degree or corresponding qualification;
- it is recommended to have undergone professional and occupational training during the last year in order to raise the level of knowledge and skills required in the service;
- compliance with qualification requirements for inspectors exercising inspection over educational institutions as established by the minister;
- 6 months' experience in the position of senior official in a state institution or a local government or at least 2 years' experience in their field of work;
- good teamwork and communication skills;
- good knowledge of the education system, skills related to searching for and using occupational information;
- thorough knowledge of the principles and organisation of inspection, thorough knowledge of their field of work (legislation, its implementation);
- command of Estonian at a high level, command of one foreign language at an average level with knowledge of occupational terminology;

- computer skills within the limits of the computer programs used in the position
  - recommended knowledge of the state's constitutional order, civil rights and freedoms, the organisation of general government and legislation regulating public service;
  - conscientiousness, ability to take responsibility and make decisions, ability to foresee consequences, trustworthiness, politeness, accuracy;
  - initiative and creativity in the development and implementation of new solutions;
  - the ability to analyse and synthesise;
  - stress tolerance;
  - loyalty and orientation towards the state's interests;
  - presentability, with a good perception of style and situation, empathy.
- The requirements for the position depend on the work assignments of the employee.

### 9.3 Training

A new official is supervised at work by more experienced colleagues.

### 9.4 In-Service Training

An annual appraisal is carried out with the ministry officials, which includes the analysis of work results and training completed. Objectives for the next period are set based on these results and training needs are also assessed. Training of inspectors in county governments is organised internally in a county government. The ministry also holds coaching for the county government inspectors.

## 10. Evaluation of the Inspectorate

### 10.1 Internal

Inspection is exercised on the basis of a developed plan and its execution is monitored and analysed. The work results of each official are evaluated by the head of department during an appraisal.

### 10.2 External

The Ministry of Education and Research has conducted surveys in inspected schools in order to receive feedback concerning the effectiveness of the inspections. The designing of the monitoring can be also be evaluated by the National Audit Office, Chancellor of Justice or an auditor.

### 10.3 Consequences

Feedback is necessary for the rearrangement of the system and the self-development of each official.

## 11. Developments, Prospects

In 2014 the minister approved a new concept for external evaluation. The new concept includes external evaluation of study results, counselling and management of inspection. Thematic inspection has been carried out since 2006. The inspected educational institutions are selected by their location and the time of last inspection.

The tendency of inspection is to focus more on educational institutions facing problems and poor performance, meaning transitioning to risk-based evaluation.

## 12. Contact, Links

The Website of the Ministry of Education and Research, <http://www.hm.ee>.

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## 13. References

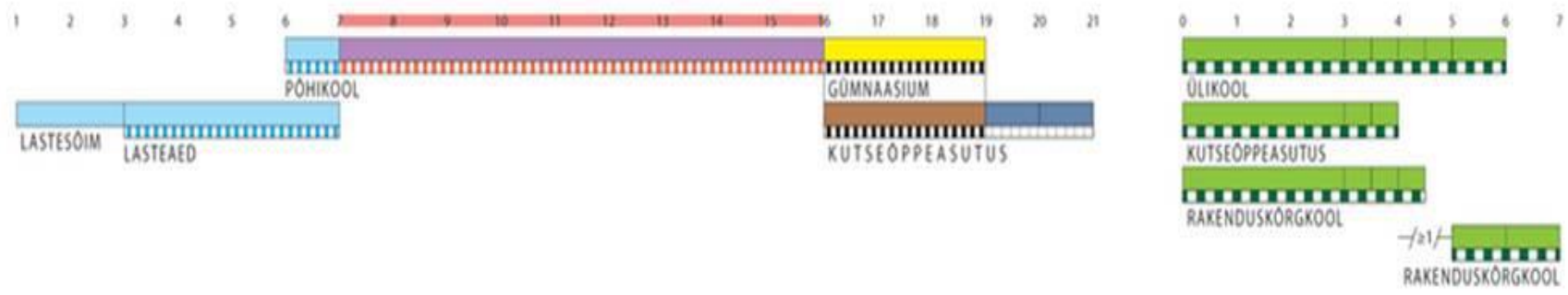
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- Eurydice, Eurybase - Education systems in Europe, available at [http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/eurybase\\_en.php#estonia](http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/eurybase_en.php#estonia)

		ISCED level	Sector	Name of subdivision in your country	Age range of students	Number of schools	Number of students	Number of teachers
PREPRIMARY (ISCED 0)	Pre-school education	0	Pre-primary education	Koolieelne lasteasutus	0-6	634	68 331	8 115
PRIMARY (ISCED 1)	Elementary education	1	Primary education	Algkool, põhikool, keskkool	7-12	57/497 <sup>[1]</sup>	82 824	14 409
LOWER SECONDARY (ISCED 2)	Basic education,	2	Lower secondary education	Põhikool, keskkool kutsekool	13-16	290/499 <sup>[2]</sup> 25	37 157 816	
UPPER SECONDARY (ISCED 3)	General secondary education or vocational training after basic education	3	Upper-secondary education	Keskkool, gümnaasium Kutsekool	16-19	187/19 39	25 879 16 360	
POST SECONDARY, NON-TERTIARY (ISCED 4)	Vocational education	4	Post-secondary, non-tertiary education	Kutsekool,	19-	38	7 731	2 399
FIRST STAGE OF TERTIARY EDUCATION (ISCED 5)	Higher education: Professional higher education programmes, Bachelor's study programmes, Integrated Bachelor's / Master's long-cycle study programmes	5	First stage of tertiary education	Ülikool, rakenduskõrgkool, kutseõppeasutus	19-	24	36 478	4 497 <sup>[3]</sup>
SECOND STAGE OF TERTIARY EDUCATION (ISCED 5)	Higher education: Magister-study programmes	5	Second stage of tertiary education	Ülikool, rakenduskõrgkool	22-	12	11 781	
ADVANCED RESEARCH PROGRAMMES (ISCED 6)	Higher education: Doctoral study programmes	6	Advanced research programmes	Ülikool	24-	7	2 833	
		n.a.	Adult education	Täiskasvanuharidus				n.a.

<sup>[1]</sup> 73 separate primary schools, but primary education is given in a total of 525 educational institutions

<sup>[2]</sup> 265 separate basic schools, but basic education is given in a total of 452 educational institutions

<sup>[3]</sup> Ordinary teaching and research staff working on an academic level



- Early childhood education and care (for which the Ministry of Education is not responsible)
  - Early childhood education and care (for which the Ministry of Education is responsible)
  - Primary education
  - Single structure
  - Secondary general education
  - Secondary vocational education
  - Post-secondary non-tertiary education
  - Tertiary education (full-time)
- Allocation to the ISCED levels: ▤▤▤▤ ISCED 0    ▤▤▤▤ ISCED 1    ▤▤▤▤ ISCED 2    ▤▤▤▤ ISCED 3    ▤▤▤▤ ISCED 4    ▤▤▤▤ ISCED 5A    ▤▤▤▤ ISCED 5B
- ▬ Compulsory full-time education
  - ▬ Compulsory part-time education
  - Additional year
  - > Study abroad
  - ▨ Combined school and workplace courses
  - /n/- Compulsory work experience + its duration