

Inspectorate Profile

Federation Wallonia-Brussels (BELGIUM)

July 2024

1. Overview of the Inspectorate

Age of inspectorate

Several types of inspectorates have followed one another in French-speaking Belgium since 1929. However, the Service général de l'Inspection in the Federation Wallonia-Brussels was in fact created in 2007.

Structure of inspectorate

The Service général de l'Inspection (SGI) is centrally organised. Inspection regulation or standards do not vary across regions.

<http://www.enseignement.be/index.php?page=24234>

Size

214 inspectors. 1 Chief Inspector and 2 General Inspectors.

Remits

Pre-primary, primary, secondary schools, artistic education, adult education, school guidance centres.

Unit of inspection

Schools and teachers.

Purpose of inspectorate

As regards audits, the action of the SGI is based on the International Framework for Professional Audit Practice, including the Core Principles for the professional practice of internal audit, the Code of ethics, Standards and the definition of internal audit - 2017 edition.

What is your strapline/motto?

Relationship with government

The SGI operates as part of the Ministry of Education.

The missions are multiple and varied and include the following: carrying out school audits; controlling the level of the education provided in schools; controlling school curriculum; detecting possible mechanisms of segregation in schools; taking part in the development of standardized tests; carrying out thematic inspections.

The SGI is not allowed to publish reports without government approval.

Accountability

A new decree defining the duties of the SGI was issued in 2019.

A report about the general state of education (every year) and a report about the activities of the SGI (every two years) are sent to the government.

Impact of inspections

So far, the impact of our inspections has not been assessed.

Quality assurance of inspections

School audits must be subject to a constant programme of quality assurance and improvement.

2. Evaluation process

Self-evaluation

More autonomous teaching teams, working together and taking decisions to shape the future of their school is the principle behind the new school management system introduced by the Federation Wallonia-Brussels as part of the Pact for Excellence in Education.

<http://www.enseignement.be/index.php?page=28280>

This reform aims to make the education system more efficient and fairer. In practice, each headteacher and his/her teaching team draw up a management plan based on a self-evaluation which, once approved by the Federation Wallonia-Brussels, becomes a contract of objectives for a period of six years.

<http://enseignement.be/index.php?page=28608&navi=4933>

As part of an audit of a school with a performance gap, or when a school is unable to draw up its management plan, the auditors examine the school's diagnosis (strengths, weaknesses, etc.) among all the documents made available to them.

Focus of inspection

Inspectors/auditors provide schools with assurance on the management of risks related to their activities with reference to the audit framework.

Furthermore, inspectors verify the legal compliance of a series of educational matters. Among other things, they evaluate educational devices or the professional and pedagogical skills of teachers.

Inspection framework

In the context of school audits, a framework has been set up. As for other missions, the fulfilment of the legal compliance is verified.

Inspection time and resources

Inspections usually last several days.

An audit is carried out by a team of two to four inspectors. Other missions are usually carried out by one inspector.

All inspectors are former teachers. Some have an experience as headmasters as well. Auditors (inspectors) receive specific training.

Frequency of inspections

School audits are risk-based.

The Pact for Excellence in Education has set up a specific scheme for schools facing special difficulties, requiring appropriate support. This is one of the 3 categories of schools that are audited. These schools are the furthest from the average of schools with the same profile and

belonging to the same group of socio-economic classes. They are selected by the Administration from a whole series of data around a set of four indicators. These four indicators relate to pupils' results and career paths, school climate and educational team. Regarding school audits, the achievement of the objectives set by the schools is used for risk assessments.

A plan is established for the evaluation of educational devices.

For the other missions, inspections are carried out on request.

Non-inspection activities

The SGI is involved in numerous missions like complaints examination and support for initial training.

3. Consequences of inspection

Reporting

Depending on the missions, reports are sent to the headmaster, the provider, the education authorities or the government. The points that have been made by the inspector(s) and the recommendations that have been addressed have to be considered by the headmaster, the provider or the education authorities.

Grading

The SGI does not grade schools. By decree, there are sanctions (e.g., withdrawal of subsidies) for schools, providers or education authorities that do not comply with the rules or do not take the recommendations into account.

Sharing inspection findings

The findings are shared with other educational actors such as training institutes. The SGI uses thematic reporting (e.g., the state of education in language immersion schools). The reports are sent to the government.

What happens following an inspection?

When a school fails to attain the requirements, the follow-up of the file is handled by the Administration.