

## Country Profile PORTUGAL

### 1. Basic information

**Country name:** Inspectorate of Education and Science (IGEC). Webpage, available English at <http://www.ige.min-edu.pt/>.

**Structure of inspectorate:** IGEC is led by a Senior Chief Inspector and two Senior Deputy Chief Inspectors. The fixed structure is composed by two central organic/organizational units: Juridical Department and Administration Department; and by two flexible organic/organizational units: Provisioning, Accounting and Assets Unit and Communication and IT Unit. The core structure is composed by nine multidisciplinary teams (MT), centrally and locally:

- Higher Education and Science MT
- Pre-School, Primary and Secondary Education MT
- Audits and Financial Control MT
- North Area MT
- Centre Area MT
- South Area MT
- Ombudsmanship MT
- Monitoring, Control and Evaluation Multidisciplinary Team - North
- Monitoring, Control and Evaluation Multidisciplinary Team - South

The inspection does not vary across regions. The inspectors belong to a special group of public servants with a specific status and career.

**Age of inspectorate:** The history of school inspection in Portugal can be traced back to 1771. The first inspections were conducted by the Royal Table of Censorship. After the 1910 Republican Proclamation things inevitably changed. The global reform undertaken in 1971 established the National Education Ministry and the Inspectorate acquired its current design in 1979. The Inspectorate of Education and Science (IGEC) acquired its current denomination in 2012, following the Regulatory Decree Law no. 15/2012.

**Size:** IGEC's staff is around 240 people (senior management, inspectors, senior officers, technical, administrative and auxiliary staff).

**Remits:** IGEC intervenes in the educational system, i.e., in all the schools and services of the Ministry of Education. IGEC is responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of the technical-pedagogical and administrative-financial branches of pre-school, schools (clusters and singular schools) and universities, both public, private and partnership-built schools, as well as schools and courses abroad where Portuguese is taught. IGEC also inspects and audits higher education institutions.

**Unit of inspection:** We inspect kindergartens, schools, clusters of schools and universities. Since 2015, we inspect the Sciences subject and since 2017 English as a foreign language from grades 3 to 6.

**What is your strapline?** We don't have a strapline.

**Relationship with government:** IGEC is a branch of the Education Ministry and the Science, Technology and Higher Education Ministry. IGEC may not publish reports without government approval.

**Accountability:** In the scope of technical support, IGEC is responsible for proposing and cooperating within measures intended to improve the educational system as well as the Scientific, Technological and Higher Education; to support pedagogically and administratively the school governing bodies; and, if necessary, to start disciplinary proceedings as consequence of regular inspective activities, as well as to represent the Ministry of Education in the inspection structures of the European Schools.

## 2. Evaluation process

**Self-evaluation:** Since 2002 it is mandatory that schools develop their self-evaluation. For most of the schools, the process started after 2006, after IGEC's visit to the schools in the scope of the External Evaluation of Schools. Self-evaluation has been encouraged through different activities and it is taken into account when inspections are made.

### **What do you examine during inspection?**

Finances are looked at by the Multidisciplinary team of Audits and Financial Control. Legal compliance is addressed in the scope of control programme (vide IGEC's Plan of Activities). We also do evaluation activities and monitoring activities. At the moment, we observe classes in the scope of some of the monitoring activities, namely *Special Education; Managing the Curriculum: Teaching Sciences; Managing the curriculum: Teaching English from grades 3 to 6; Development of the oral and writing skills.*

### **Do you have an inspection framework? Is this a quality or compliance model?**

We have both, as referred to before.

**Inspection time and resource:** Inspections go from 1 day (ombudsmanship) up to 15 days (audits). The average is 5 days.

**Frequency of inspections:** Schools are inspected according to programmes, which are developed in all the schools in the mainland. Some activities are risk based.

**Main business:** Besides what has been said, we also examine complaints coming from the public (students, parents, teachers mainly). We do not take part in the election of headmasters.

### **3. Consequences of inspection**

**Reporting:** We have published the reports regarding external evaluation of schools since 2006 and they are available at IGEC's website. Since 2017 other school reports have been published on the website.

**Grade:** Institutions are only graded in the external evaluation process. The grade is a qualitative one (excellent, very good, good, poor, very poor). There are neither rewards nor punishments regarding the grades. The schools with poor results are visited at 3 different moments during the school year as to that monitor the schools.

**Knowledge sharing:** A global report is annually published regarding each activity in the scope of the programmes.

**What happens following an inspection?** Schools do not shut down. The strong ones are encouraged to flourish and the weak ones are monitored more closely and encouraged to partner with other schools in order to improve their quality.

**What is the stated purpose of your inspectorate?** IGEC seeks to act in a forward-looking manner, in accordance with the political priorities established and in a reactive way, according to the diverse variety of situations which lead to its intervention.