

# **SUPERVISION IN THE TURKISH EDUCATION SYSTEM**

## **SUPERVISION IN THE TURKISH EDUCATION SYSTEM**

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### Abstract

Supervision is a part of the contemporary management process that helps educational institutions accomplish their goals by evaluating their performance and offering recommendations for improvement and growth based on the results. In the Turkish Education System, the Ministry of National Education is in charge of supervising educational institutions to guarantee that they are adhering to the purposes, basic principles, and objectives of the legal and

legislative framework. There are two distinct organizational structures for educational supervision: one with "chief inspectors," "inspectors," and "assistant inspectors" working under the Board of Inspection, which executes operations with the Minister's direction or approval, and the other with "educational inspectors" and "assistant educational inspectors" under the Directorate of Educational Inspectors. Although the job of both boards is the same, their authority and personal rights are different. The first is the central organization of the Ministry of National Education, while the second is the provincial organization under the Provincial Directorates of National Education. These entities were formed as the Presidency of the Board of Inspection in the Ministry's central organization and the Presidencies of Education Inspectors in the provinces. Over the last 30 years, Türkiye's system of educational supervision has been shaped by changing legal precedents on who is eligible to be an inspector, their level of authority, their rights as individuals, and even whether they should actively supervise in the provinces. For 30 years, attempts to alter the monitoring system have left it ineffective and insufficient.

Keywords: Supervision, the Turkish Education System, the Ministry of National Education, the Presidency of Education Inspectors, the Inspection Board, inspector.

## Resumen

La supervisión educativa es una cuestión importante en Turquía, país en el que trabajan un millón de docentes. El objetivo de estas inspecciones es mejorar la calidad de la educación de los alumnos y evaluar el rendimiento de los docentes. Además, el proceso de supervisión educativa también contribuye al

desarrollo profesional de los docentes. A los inspectores de educación que trabajan en las provincias se les ha encomendado la tarea de supervisar cada año las instrucciones de los docentes candidatos y contratados. Por lo general, se espera que los inspectores observen la supervisión de la instrucción realizada por los directores de los centros escolares, en lugar de supervisar ellos mismos directamente. En otras palabras, en Turquía la tarea de supervisión de la instrucción recae en dichos directores. No existe ninguna disposición jurídica que el director deba utilizar para llevar a cabo la supervisión. Esta situación impide que la inspección educativa alcance un determinado nivel y que los directores actúen en el marco de su propio entendimiento. De este modo, la función de identificar con precisión la situación existente mediante la observación no puede llevarse a cabo con eficacia. Cuando el elemento de retroalimentación del sistema no funciona, el desarrollo de la enseñanza y el aprendizaje depende de la voluntad y el esfuerzo personales del profesor. Sin embargo, puede decirse que debería adoptarse un enfoque más profesional y eficaz en el proceso de supervisión de la enseñanza, y que debería llevarse a cabo con regularidad en todos los centros.

Palabras clave: *Supervisión, supervisión de la docencia en Turquía, problemas de supervisión, inspectores de educación, director de centro escolar.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The education system in Türkiye is managed by the Ministry of National Education (MoNE). The MoNE oversees planning, implementing, and supervising educational activities. Supervision is carried out to improve the efficacy and efficiency of educational activities, to promote the quality of education for students, and to ensure justice in education. Supervision is conducted to enhance the quality of education in schools, to satisfy the requirements of students and teachers, and to meet the expectations of parents and society.

The responsibility for supervision in the Turkish Education System lies with the "*chief inspectors, inspectors, and assistant inspectors*" of the Ministry of National Education's Inspection Board and "*the education inspectors and assistant education inspectors*" working in the Presidency of Education Inspectors under the Directorates of National Education in the provinces. School principals also become a part of the supervision process by conducting course inspections of teachers in their schools. The tasks and responsibilities of inspectors working under the Ministry of National Education's Inspection Board and education inspectors working under the Provincial Directorate of National Education will be described in this article.

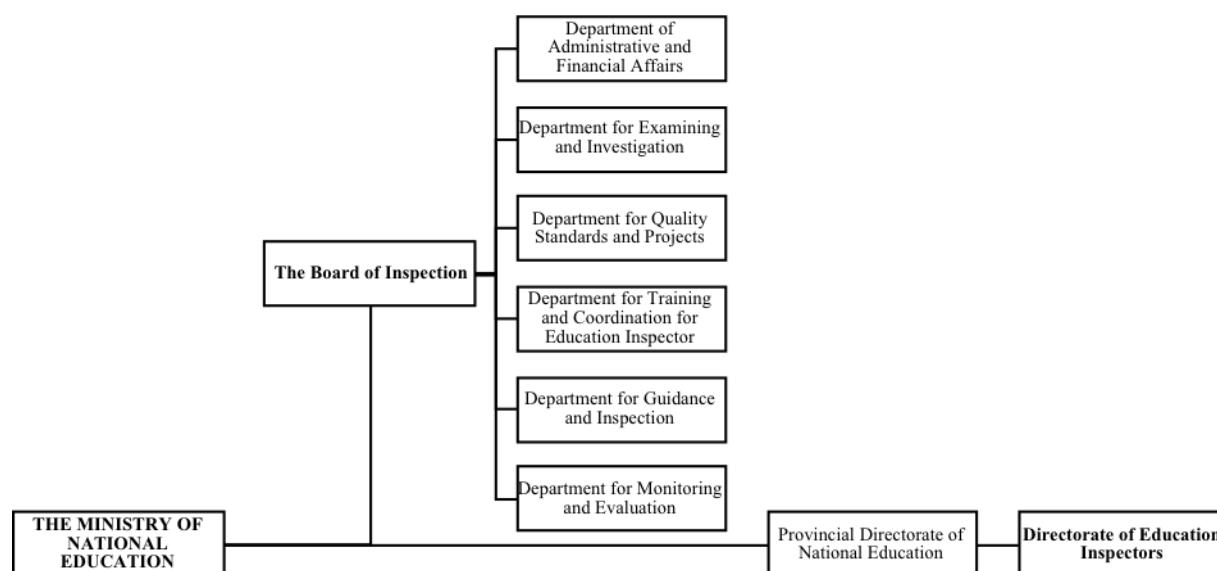
Supervision by authorized persons is employed in the Turkish Education System to verify whether educational institutions are achieving their goals, basic principles, and objectives set by the legal/legislative framework. Supervision is considered part of the contemporary management process and helps educational institutions accomplish their goals by evaluating their performance

and offering recommendations for improvement and growth based on the results. Supervision or inspection is described as the control of human conduct and the things they generate in accordance with the established principles and standards for public welfare (Aydın, 2013, p. 119). According to a broader and classical definition, supervision is the process of determining whether organizational actions are in accordance with the accepted objectives by controlling human behavior and the products they produce in line with the principles and rules accepted for the public good (Başaran, 1989, p. 207; Bursalıoğlu, 1994, p. 129; Taymaz, 1982, p. 2). The purpose of educational supervision is to contribute to setting boundaries, identifying priorities, and developing strategies to help improve education, equity, quality, internal and external efficiency, costs, financing, governance, and supervision. Thus, educational supervision can help to correct, improve, and realize educational goals (Başar, 2000).

According to Article 42 of the Constitution of the Republic of Türkiye, education and training in the Turkish education system are carried out under governmental supervision and control, in accordance with Atatürk's ideals and reforms as well as modern principles. According to Article 56 of the National Education Basic Law No. 1739, the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) is responsible for the execution, monitoring and supervision of education and training services on behalf of the state. In the Turkish education system, there are two different educational supervision structures: one consisting of "chief inspectors, inspectors, and assistant inspectors" organized under the Board of Inspection, which operates on the order or approval of the Minister, and the other consisting of educational inspectors and assistant educational inspectors working under the Directorate of Educational Inspectors. Although the job of both boards is the

same, their authority and personal rights are different. The first is the central organization of the Ministry of National Education, while the second is the provincial organization under the Provincial Directorates of National Education. These entities were formed as the Presidency of the Board of Inspection in the Ministry's central organization and the Presidencies of Education Inspectors in the provinces. There is no direct hierarchical subordinate-superior relationship between the Ministry's Board of Inspection and the Presidencies of Education Inspectors. Figure 1.1 depicts the central and provincial organizational structures of the Ministry of National Education (MoNE, 2023b, 2023c).

*Figure 1.1 Organizational Structure of the Ministry of National Education*



## The Ministry of National Education's Central Organization Structure: The Board of Inspection

The Ministry of National Education's Board of Inspection which has operated since 1838 under various names and organizational structures, continues to provide services through the Ministry's inspectors with the vision of ensuring that excellence is achieved in education and training and that every citizen receives quality education at international standards by leading individual and institutional development through guidance and supervision (MoNE, 2023a).

The Board of Inspection is composed of the chairman of the Board of Inspection, the heads of departments, and the inspectors and assistant inspectors working in duty and work centers in the central organization of the Ministry of National Education. At the core of the organizational structure of the Board of Inspection are

- a. *the Department of Administrative and Financial Affairs,*
- b. *the Department for Examining and Investigation*
- c. *the Department of Quality Standards and Projects,*
- d. *the Department of Training and Coordination,*
- e. *the Department of Guidance and Inspection,*
- f. *the Department of Monitoring and Evaluation* (MoNE, 2023b).

The Board of Inspection reports directly to the MoNE. This subordination and receiving directives from the Minister for inspection and supervision signifies that the Ministry's inspection structure is being strengthened. In the system, they are perceived as officials appointed by the minister and working on behalf of the

minister. The title "Ministry Inspectorate" is regarded as a prestigious rank in the Turkish educational system. The following are the functions of the Presidency of the Board of Inspection as established by legislation (Official Journal, 2018, Article 320):

- a. To provide guidance to Ministry personnel, Ministry schools and institutions, private education institutions and real and legal persons on matters within the scope of the Ministry's mandate,
- b. To create and guide plans and programs that will guide public institutions and organizations, real and legal persons, and voluntary organizations operating in the field of duty of the Ministry in their activities,
- c. To carry out the control and inspection of the services provided by or under the supervision of the Ministry in cooperation with the relevant units, to analyze, compare, and measure the processes and results according to the legislation, predetermined goals and objectives, performance criteria, and quality standards, to evaluate them based on evidence, to report the results obtained, and to convey them to the relevant units and persons,
- d. To carry out inspection, examination, and investigation works and procedures through inspectors within the framework of the duties and powers of the Ministry in relation to the activities and transactions of the organization and personnel of the Ministry and all kinds of organizations under the supervision of the Ministry, with an understanding that prevents irregularities, emphasizes the educational and guidance approach,
- e. To carry out guidance, on-the-job training, supervision, evaluation, examination, research, and investigation services for formal and non-



- formal education institutions of all levels and types, and provincial and district national education directorates through inspectors,
- f. To ensure the coordination of the work of inspectors and the integrity of the execution of guidance and supervision services,
  - g. To perform other duties assigned by the minister.

*The Chairman, chief inspectors, inspectors, and assistant inspectors* who operate in the Presidency's units and work centers make up the Board of Inspectors. Ankara serves as the Presidency's operational hub. The inspectors assigned to the Presidency's units work out of this location as well (Official Journal, 2023).

*Chief inspectors* are chosen from among individuals who have held positions as supervisors or inspectors of education at various levels within the Ministry of Education, as well as from those who have earned the title of inspector after succeeding in a competition exam and leading a department. The Assistant Inspector Proficiency Test scores and the outcomes of written and/or oral exams administered by the Presidency serve as the basis for the selection process. The chief inspector is chosen from among the candidates with the greatest points (Official Journal, 2023).

To become an *assistant inspector* in the central organization or provincial organization of the Ministry of National Education, it is necessary to get enough points from the written and oral exams. Candidates who will participate in this exam must not be older than 35 years old and they are not permitted to have previously taken it more than once. During your professional career, this exam may only be taken twice. Candidates who have completed their degrees in the

faculties of law, political science, economics, and administrative sciences as well as those who have at least 8 years of teaching experience are eligible to appear for the exam. Those who have previously been expelled from the Board of Inspection while serving as assistant inspectors and those who failed the inspectorate competency exam during the promotion from assistant inspector to inspector cannot take the exam (Official Journal, 2023).

For teachers and graduates of the faculties of law, political science, economic and administrative sciences, and economics and business administration, the subject of the written exam varies. While non-teacher graduates of the faculties of law, political science, economic and administrative sciences, economics, and business administration are asked questions about law, economics, finance, and other subjects (general culture, statistics, measurement and evaluation, and Atatürk's Principles and History of Revolution), teachers are primarily quizzed on general legislation (legal regulations) and the legislation of the Ministry of National Education (Official Journal, 2023).

To pass the written exam, the candidate must receive at least 60 points in each of the four sections and at least 70 points overall (out of a possible 100). Four times as many candidates as there will be assistant inspectors hired during that time and will be invited to the oral test. Candidates are evaluated in the oral exam based on their (a) level of knowledge on the exam subjects, (b) ability to comprehend and summarize a subject, ability of expression and power of reasoning, (c) merit, ability to represent, suitability of behavior and reactions to the profession, (d) self-confidence, persuasiveness, and credibility, (e) general ability and general culture, and (f) openness to scientific and technological

developments, with points deducted for each (Official Journal, 2023). There is no controversy over the objectivity of written exams, however there is a prevalent belief in Turkish society that oral exams lack objectivity.

The training period for the assistant inspectors is three years. At the end of this three-year period, assistant inspectors take written and oral exams on the Constitution and General Laws, Financial Laws, National Education Legislation Inspection, Examination-Investigation Procedures and Techniques. Those who are successful are appointed as *inspectors*. In the training of assistant inspectors, it is aimed to develop qualities such as attitude, behavior, and representation ability required by the inspectorate, teach the legislation and practices within the field of duty and authority, increase their professional knowledge and skills in inspection, guidance, examination, investigation, and preliminary investigation, and develop the habit of scientific study and research. In-service training programs are organized to ensure that assistant inspectors learn the legislation and practices as well as inspection, guidance, research, investigation, and preliminary examination methods. There is an inspector responsible for taking and executing the necessary measures for the on-the-job training of assistant inspectors. The assistant inspector is expected to collaborate with the relevant inspector who oversees their training for at least a year. At the end of the sixth month and the period of working together, the relevant inspector must create an evaluation report on the qualifications of the assistant inspectors, which must then be presented to the Presidency. In addition, assistant inspectors must prepare a thesis on the subjects determined by the Presidency within the scope of the training program and defend their thesis in front of a jury. Assistant inspectors cannot independently conduct inspections, examinations, investigations, and preliminary examinations. They can perform these tasks

under the supervision of the inspectors they collaborate with. Nonetheless, after working for eighteen months from the date of their admission into the profession, those who are regarded as qualified may be authorized to carry out these duties independently upon the proposal of the President and the approval of the Minister (Official Journal, 2023).

Inspectors shall prepare the results of their inspection, guidance, research, evaluation, examination, investigation, and preliminary examination activities according to the nature of the work: (a) inspection report; (b) guidance report; (c) monitoring and evaluation report; (d) research report; (e) criminal complaint report; (f) review report; (g) investigation report; (h) preliminary investigation report; (i) referral report (this is a report prepared to be sent to the competent authority or relevant institutions and organizations in order to be duly carried out in matters requiring investigation and investigation in other institutions) (Official Journal, 2023).

*The duties and authorities of the inspectors working in the Ministry of National Education Inspection Board Presidency are specified in the relevant regulation as follows (Official Journal, 2023):*

- a. To complete the reports to be prepared as a result of the inspection, guidance, examination and investigation works within twenty days at the latest, and within the additional period given for comprehensive works.
- b. To contribute to the professional development of the assistant inspectors they work with.
- c. To carry out the work in the units, boards, and commissions to which they will be assigned.

- d. To immediately notify the Chairman of the Board of Inspectors of the corruption they learn about during the inspections and which is outside the scope of their duty orders, to act against those responsible, in accordance with the investigation procedure to which they are subject, and to collect evidence in cases where delay may cause harm and loss of evidence.
- e. To examine the results arising from the implementation of the legislation, to investigate the ways of eliminating and correcting the inaccuracies and deficiencies to be seen, and to report to the Presidency with a report on the measures and opinions to be taken to ensure that the work is carried out at the desired level.
- f. Within the scope of the relevant orders and approvals of the Ministerial Authority, to conduct research in Türkiye and abroad on various subjects, to participate in commissions, courses, seminars, and meetings to which they are assigned.

Inspectors are authorized to suspend *(a) those who are inconvenient to remain in office in terms of public service requirements, (b) those who refrain from showing money and documents and bills with the value of money, all kinds of goods and movables, their accounts, documents, and books, and from answering questions related to them, and those who behave in a manner that complicates and obstructs the inspection, examination, and investigation, (c) those who commit acts falling within the scope of the Law on Combating Bribery and Corruption, and (d) those who forge documents and falsify records* from duty in relation to the matters they are assigned (Official Journal, 2023).

According to the latest published statistics, there are 19,155,571 students studying in 70,383 public and private schools and institutions in Türkiye as of 2023. The number of teachers working in these institutions is 1,139,673 (Official Gazette, 2022). The Ministry of National Education supervises these institutions with a total of 500 inspectors, including 50 chief inspectors and 450 inspectors. 25 of the chief inspector positions and 425 of the inspector positions are filled. The current inspectors were selected from among education inspectors and ministry inspectors who had previously served in the provinces.

The Ministry of National Education's Provincial Organization Structure: The Directorate of Education Inspectors

Education supervision at the provincial level is carried out by *The Directorate of Education Inspectors under the Provincial Directorates of National Education*. *The Directorate of Education Inspectors* consists of the head of education inspectors, deputy heads of education inspectors, education inspectors, assistant education inspectors, and personnel working in the office of education inspectors. The coordination of the activities of education inspectors and the integrity of the execution of guidance and supervision services are ensured by the Ministry. *The Directorate of Education Inspectors* is responsible for planning and carrying out guidance, on-the-job training, supervision, monitoring and evaluation, research, examination, investigation, and preliminary investigation services for the institutions in the province (Official Gazette, 2022).

*The head of education inspectors* shall be appointed from among education inspectors upon the proposal of the President and approval of the Minister and

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shall be dismissed by the same procedure. The head of education inspectors is obliged to

- a. monitor, supervise and evaluate the work of deputy heads of education inspectors, members of the examination and evaluation commission, education inspectors and assistant education inspectors and clerical staff and monitor/keep their attendance and absences;
- b. carry out the necessary work to establish guidance and supervision regions and groups and submit them to the approval of the governorship with the consent of the provincial director of national education;
- c. attend professional meetings related to guidance, supervision, monitoring and evaluation, examination and research together with these groups, when necessary, in order to ensure coordination between guidance and supervision groups (Official Journal, 2022).

*Deputy heads of education inspectors* are obliged (a) to follow up on the guidance, supervision, monitoring and evaluation, investigation, inquiry, preliminary investigation, research and similar issues carried out by education inspectors and assistant education inspectors within the framework of their field of duty, to ensure that they are finalized in due time, (b) to carry out guidance, supervision, monitoring and evaluation, research, investigation, inquiry, preliminary investigation and similar studies personally or together with the education inspectors and assistant education inspectors to be assigned when necessary. Deputy heads of education inspectors are appointed from among the education inspectors working in that province upon the recommendation of the head of education inspectors, the approval of the provincial director of national education and the approval of the governor, with the number of education

inspectors and deputy education inspectors being one in provinces with up to 50, two in provinces with 51 to 100, three in provinces with 101 to 200, and four in provinces with more than 201 (Official Journal, 2022). According to the latest statistics published as of 2023, there are 1,455 education inspectors in total, including 1,155 education inspectors and 300 assistant inspectors, distributed across 81 provincial centers.

*Guidance and supervision regions and guidance and supervision groups* are formed so that specialized institutional guidance and supervision can be carried out based on the geographical situation of the settlements where the institutions are located, transportation conditions, physical proximity, number of schools, institutions, program types and teachers' fields. It is essential that the groups are formed according to the components of research, examination, investigation, preliminary examination and guidance and supervision. Education supervisors and assistant education supervisors are distributed to guidance and supervision groups in a balanced manner by taking their fields into consideration. It is essential to work in a guidance and supervision area for at least one academic year. Group heads, who are appointed by the head of education inspectors for one year, are responsible for ensuring that the work to be carried out by the group in guidance, supervision, monitoring and evaluation, and research is carried out in a timely and orderly manner (Official Journal, 2022).

The duties and authorities of *education inspectors and deputy education inspectors* are to carry out guidance, on-the-job training, supervision, monitoring and evaluation, research, examination, investigation, and preliminary examination of public and private formal and non-formal education institutions of all degrees



and types in the province and private student accommodation services institutions. The orders for assignment of education inspectors and assistant education inspectors for guidance, supervision, monitoring and evaluation, research, examination, investigation, and preliminary examinations are given by the head of education inspectors based on the approvals to be duly obtained regarding these matters. When the units of the central organization of the Ministry require work to be carried out by education inspectors in the provinces on subjects falling within their fields of duty, these requests are directly forwarded to the Presidency. If deemed appropriate as a result of the evaluation made by the Presidency regarding these requests, the education inspectorates are asked to carry out the necessary work (Official Journal, 2022).

Guidance and inspection, monitoring and evaluation, examination, investigation, and preliminary investigation services are carried out using the e-Inspection module within the framework of coordination and integrity determined by the Presidency, taking into account the relevant legislation, three-year work plan, annual activity program, procedures, principles and guidelines and task instructions. The task standards published by the Presidency are complied with in the studies. *Guidance service*, which includes preventive guidance, corrective and remedial guidance, and developmental guidance options, is carried out within the scope of the three-year work plan and annual activity program in a way to cover all, one or more of the guidance areas and guidance types by prioritizing institutional development in line with demand or need. Education inspectors carry out guidance activities by taking into account the self-assessment findings of the institutions, making use of the principles, guidelines and task standards. *Inspection services*, which include process inspection, result inspection, performance inspection, system inspection, financial inspection,

compliance inspection, thematic inspection, personnel inspection, relevance inspection, course inspection, self-assessment options, cover public and private formal and non-formal education institutions of all degrees and types affiliated to the provincial organization of the Ministry and private student accommodation services institutions. In inspection activities, it is essential to prevent corruption and irregularities, to determine the level of achievement of the learning outcomes in the curriculum, and to contribute to improvement and development. After the inspection group completes its work on the institution, the findings about the institution are shared with school administrators, teachers, and other staff. Institutions and units prepare an Institutional Development Plan in line with the findings and recommendations stated in the report within one month of receipt of the guidance and inspection report and send it to the Presidency of Education Inspectors (Official Journal, 2022).

It is essential to conduct periodic inspections of public institutions once every three years, private education institutions every year, and of private student accommodation services institutions twice a year. Official institutions that are found to be inadequate in the inspections are included in the scope of the inspection again after one year according to the findings of the inspection. The development process of institutions identified as risky in terms of education is monitored, necessary guidance is provided at frequent intervals until the risks are eliminated and sanctions are imposed when necessary. Classroom observation is conducted during institutional supervision or separately. Classroom observations of prospective and contracted teachers are carried out every year with an emphasis on guidance. The education inspectors' offices systematically monitor and periodically evaluate whether the education, training and management services carried out in the provinces are carried out in

accordance with the plan and program objectives, quality standards and performance criteria, and with the students' achievement of the learning outcomes stipulated in the curricula according to the principles determined by the Presidency. Every year in August, the monitoring and evaluation report of the provinces is prepared and submitted to the provincial directorate of national education. A copy of the report is sent to the Presidency (Official Journal, 2022).

## 2. CONCLUSION

Supervision in the Turkish Education System is carried out by the Ministry of National Education's Inspection Board and Education Inspectors working under the Provincial Directorate of National Education. The supervision system has been characterized by debates over who should be an inspector, the authority of inspectors, their personal rights, and even whether inspectors should actively inspect schools in provinces. In 2016, all inspectors working in the ministry and provinces were transferred to the provincial organization, and their status was equalized; 500 of them were chosen and appointed as ministry inspectors. All the remaining provincial education inspectors were neutralized and deposed (Ergün & Çelik, 2018). The provincial education inspectorate was reestablished in 2022, and inspectors' authority was reinstated. Yet, given the number of instructors, students, and schools, fulfilling the inspection assignment with the current inspectors will be difficult. While there existed an established and functional supervisory system with its flaws 30 years ago, the endeavor to alter the system for 30 years has left it useless and insufficient. The inspection sub-system of the Turkish Education System is an example of how existing systems should not be interfered with until a well-designed system to replace them is created.

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