Two models for inspection in one national context: Swedish school inspection in 1960 and 2010

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Purpose and content

- To describe the form and function of the Swedish inspection around 1960 and contrast it to the form and function of the inspection around 2010.

Those 50 years mirror the changes in the policy governing of the schools. In Sweden – as well as elsewhere - there has been a shift in school policy between 1960 and 2010. The present policy is illuminated by historical parallels
Material

Texts of different origin:
Written national curriculum
The Education Act, laws and other public regulations
The reports from the school inspectors.
The inspection before 1960

From the start of elementary school 1842 there was identity between the school and the State church. The first school inspectors were appointed in 1861 - vicars or experienced school teachers.

The task for the inspection at that time was
- to promote quality in the elementary school
- to over-bridge the gap between national and local political ambitions and
- to support a minimal quality level and a common national standard.
The school around 1960 – a part of the welfare state

- opportunities for all pupils to get access to education (also university education)
- an active citizen - a progressive social goal
- the democratic school as a prerequisite for learning
- one comprehensive school – no parallel school forms
- new content in the national curriculum (1962)
- supporting the municipalities to develop the school.
The organisation of the inspection around 1960

- organized through the National Board of Education
- a combination of state governance and regional influence
- an authority with roots in independent bureaucracy
- inspectors were experienced teachers (often head-teachers)
- males (until 1968)
- a “one-man-agency” with an independent position
- a hands-on-inspection, with a very short distance between inspector and inspected
- state subsidies were distributed by him.
The school in 2010

• More and more pupils attend independent schools (free of fees)
• 11% of the 7-16 years old attend an independent school. All schools, public as well as independent, have to follow the goals in the national curriculum
• there are a variety of profiles: confessional, pedagogic, or with a certain subject direction or language profile.
The Inspection in 2010

- The School Inspectorate was created in 2008 and was still in a phase of growth in 2010.
- The goal is to secure quality, equivalence and efficiency.
- The number of fulltime employees were 341.
- The organisation has a national state board and regional offices.
Governing by inspection

- The different ways governing can take place – or not – by inspection is investigated in our project.
- There are a variety of tools for the state to choose, and that the general school policy puts limits also for the inspection.
- In 1960, the main goal of inspection was to implement reforms, strengthen the comprehensive school and to provide a channel for local influence in the national governing of schools.
- In 2010, one goal of inspection is a de-comprehensivisation, or the market’s diversity in provision of schools.
- There is a new emphasis on individual pupil’s rights, as well as the parents’.
- Legal matters expand and educational matters diminish.
Conclusion

In the Swedish history of inspection, it seems as if the main role has been to help the politicians to solve urgent problems. However, during different periods, the content of those problems have changed.

In the 1900\textsuperscript{th} century, the main issue was general quality and standard raising.

In 1960, it was to support the acceptance for and establishment of the new comprehensive school.

In 2010 it was a part of the school market and the choice policy and an agency for individual legal rights.
Thank you!