

## Contribution of Portugal

### Questionnaire on norms and standards for quality of education

*Human Rights Council Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education*

1. Norms concerning aspects related to the quality of education in Portugal are disseminated in a variety of legal and regulatory instruments, such as the Basic Law on the Education System (Act 46/86, of 14 October, as amended by Act 115/97, of 19 September, and by Act 49/2005, of 31 August). Other instruments also apply, such as Act 85/2009, of 27 August, which establishes mandatory schooling and guarantees universal pre-school education for all children as from 5 years of age, and legislation on the evaluation of teacher performance.
2. Norms, standards and minimum requirements applicable to the education sector are as follows, relevant to the required items:
  - a. School infra-structure is regulated by Decree-Law no. 6/2001, of 18th January, with the modifications introduced by Decree-Laws no. 209/2002, of 17th October, no. 396/2007, of 31st December, and no. 3/2008, of 7th January – Establishes school organisation and management in basic education, and by Decree-Law no. 74/2004, of 26th March, as amended by Decree-Laws no. 24/2006, of 6th February, no. 272/2007, of 26th July, and no. 4/2008, of 7th January – Establishes school organization and management in secondary education.
  - b. Class size and pupil-teacher ratio are governed by Order no. 14 026/2007, of 3<sup>rd</sup> July, as changed by Order no. 13170/2009, of 4<sup>th</sup> June, and Order no. 6258/2011, of 11<sup>th</sup> April, and furthermore sundry guidance notes inherent to this matter.
  - c. Minimum qualification for the teaching profession, for all levels of non-higher education, including pre-school education, has been set at Masters degree level by Decree-Law No. 43/2007, of 22<sup>nd</sup> February, and Decree-Law no. 220/2009, of 8<sup>th</sup> September, as regulated by Ordinance no. 1189/2010, of 17<sup>th</sup> November.
  - d. Working conditions for teachers, and their professional development, are regulated by the Comprehensive Law on Education, set by Law no. 46/1986, of 14th October, as changed by Laws no. 115/1997, of 19th September, no. 49/2005, of 30th August, and no. 85/2009, of 27th August.
  - e. The general curriculum guidelines for Pre-school Education (Legislation: Order no. 5220/1997, 4th August) stress the need of promoting children's personal and social development, based on situations of democratic daily life, in the perspective of Education for Citizenship. In the general curriculum guidelines for Basic Education, Education for Citizenship (Legislation: Decree law no. 6/2001 18th January) is considered a cross-curriculum area. These guidelines also set up a non-disciplinary area – Education for Citizenship – aiming at

children's integrated development. Another non-curriculum area – *Área de Projecto* – provides the opportunity for the development of citizenship and human rights projects. Finally, the curriculum guidelines for Secondary Education (Legislation: Decree law no. 74/2004, 26th March) also refer to Education for Citizenship as a curriculum cross-cutting area. In addition, schools organise activities around this theme, favouring and valuing students' participation. These activities also aim at supporting the personal and social development of students, namely, by promoting health awareness and preventing risk behaviour.

- f. Teaching-learning processes are not subject to norms and standards, but their effectiveness and quality are part of the assessment process of teaching staff.
  - g. Decree-Law no. 115-A/1998, of 4th May, as changed by Law no. 24/1999, of 22nd April, approves the autonomy, administration and management of public establishments of pre-school, basic and secondary education, as well as their respective school clusters, Decree-Law no. 6/2001, of 18th January, with the modifications introduced by Decree-Laws no. 209/2002, of 17th October, no. 396/2007, of 31st December, and no. 3/2008, of 7th January establishes school organisation and management in basic education and Decree-Law no. 74/2004, of 26th March, as amended by Decree-Laws no. 24/2006, of 6th February, no. 272/2007, of 26th July, and no. 4/2008, of 7th January establishes school organization and management in secondary education.
  - h. Law no. 31/2002, of 20th December approves the assessment system for non-higher education teaching and learning, Normative Order no. 1/2005, of 5th January, as corrected by Correction Statement no. 3/2005, of 10th February, with the changes set by Normative Order no. 6/2010, of 19th February establishes the principles and procedures governing the assessment of learning and competences of students in the three cycles of basic education and, finally, Normative Order no. 50/2005, of 9th November sets, within the internal summative assessment, policy principles and guidelines for implementation, monitoring and evaluation, monitoring and development of recovery plans as an intervention strategy with a view to educational success of basic school students
3. Portugal collects information about schools, including information on the assessment on the adherence to standards, in three ways;
- a. Public schools: The Office for the Coordination of the Information System of the Ministry of Education (*Gabinete Coordenador do Sistema de Informação do Ministério da Educação - MISI@*) continuously collects and processes data originating from schools in the public system:
  - b. Private Schools: Every year the Office for Statistics and Planning of Education (*Gabinete de Estatística e Planeamento da Educação – GEPE*) conducts the Annual School Survey, collecting a similar set of data from schools in the private sector;
  - c. Finally, the System for the Information and Management of the School Offer (*Sistema de Informação e Gestão da Oferta Educativa e Formativa - SIGO*)

collects data pertaining any entity (schools and other institutions) active in the field of Adult Education.

4. In the field of education and training the strategy implemented in recent years has focused, inter alia, on promoting educational success by improving the quality of education and training and the reduction of the levels of early leaving of the education and training system, as well as gaining efficiency through the management of the resources allocated to education. The main education policy measures implemented include the following dimensions:
- Consolidation of decentralisation and devolution of powers from central to regional and local levels of administration (local education authorities);
  - Full implementation of the new model of administration and management of schools, strengthening the autonomy of schools, increasing the levels of accountability through the creation of the figure of the Director, and the enhancement of these functions;
  - Extension of Pre-school offer for all children aged 5;
  - Universality of the public offer of the last year of Pre-school Education (5 year olds);
  - Reform of Special Needs Education;
  - Expansion of the educational offer, through the generalisation of vocational courses and the increasing of supply in these areas in public schools;
  - Continuity in the certification of qualifications acquired outside the education system for youngsters and adults obtained through the New Opportunities Initiative;
  - Reorganisation and renewal of the School Network;
  - Continued effort to equip all schools with new technology through the Technological Plan for Education;
  - Consolidation of the National Reading Plan, which aims to raise the levels of literacy of the Portuguese citizens and raise our country to the level of our European partners;
  - Consolidation of the School Libraries Network, the basic structure supporting the development of the National Reading Plan. Several school libraries were established, many schools established the figure of librarian teacher, and several training initiatives in this subject were organised for staff. Catalogues of the School Libraries Network were enriched and online catalogues were created, allowing an easy search and access;
  - Initiatives were launched to support school students underperforming in the subjects of Portuguese Language, Mathematics and Science;
  - The enhancement of the Educational Territories for Priority Intervention (TEIP);
  - Evaluation of the profession and work of teachers, through the negotiation of a new statute, the promotion of ongoing training plans, the implementation of a new model of teacher evaluation aimed at identifying, distinguishing and cherishing individual merit, contributing also to a better performance by the improvement of the formative wing of the process.

Inclusive education and personalized learning are considered among the various objectives of the National Qualification Catalogue, including the promotion of "expertise for the development of individuals, the promotion of social cohesion and the exercise of citizenship" and the "promotion of qualification and socio-professional integration of groups with particular difficulties of integration". In the years of 2009 and 2010 the main initiatives were:

- the construction and provision of qualification levels for people with disabilities and disability dual certification Level 2 (list of training, professional profile and reference for processes of recognition, validation and certification of skills);
- the experimenting of methods adapted to specific audiences;
- the availability of the methodological guide for the Access of Persons with Disabilities and the Disability Process of Recognition, Validation and Certification - Basic Level.

The teaching of Portuguese as a non-mother language in the National Curriculum has been a concern of the Ministry of Education, which led to the issuing of guidelines to guarantee the school success of children of immigrant families, namely the guidelines for a programme aiming at the inclusion of students for whom Portuguese is not the mother language .

Teacher initial training for pre-school, basic and secondary education includes cultural, social and ethic components and learning /awareness of the problems of present times.

Teachers have been developing training options in the area of Education for Citizenship and Human Rights. Several support materials have been published by the Ministry of Education or co-published by the ministry and other private and public services, namely in the Human Rights field in a school context.