

## Portugal

### Introduction

Education in Portugal rests on two fundamental ideals:

- Emphasizing basic learning in economics and the information society;
- Encouraging and consolidating the dynamics of change, giving the school a central role to play in building knowledge, know-how, skills, attitudes and interests.

The Portuguese education system aims to implement some changes particularly in building a system based on life-long learning to facilitate diversity in educational choices, employability and the adaptability of qualifications.

The Education Act (Law no. 46/86 of 14 October) stipulates nine years of compulsory schooling applying to pupils who are enrolled for the 1<sup>st</sup> cycle of basic education (ensino básico).

### Pre-primary education

Age	3 to 5 year-olds.
Duration	3 years.
Description	Pre-primary schools are not compulsory.
Timetable	In pre-school establishments, education last for five hours a day divided into two periods, five days a week. The timetable can be complemented by social-educational activities.
School year and holidays	Activities start between 10 and 15 September and end between 12 and 15 July. School holidays are at Christmas, Carnival and Easter and last for 5 working days, either consecutive or around the weekend.
Subjects	Content areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Personal and social training</li><li>• Expression/communication that covers three fields:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Command of expressions of different types – physical, dramatic, artistic and musical expression;</li><li>○ Command of language and a start to writing;</li><li>○ Command of arithmetic;</li></ul></li><li>• Understanding of general knowledge<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Educational continuity - as a process that starts with what children already know and have learnt, creating the conditions for the success of later learning;</li><li>○ Educational intention - that is the result of the reflective process of observation, planning, action and assessment developed by the educator, to adapt teaching practice to the needs of children.</li></ul></li></ul>
Exams	The assessment carried out with the children constitutes an educational activity and, at the same time, the basis for evaluation for the teacher. The teacher's reflection, based on the observation of effects, allows them to establish the progress made in the learning of each child and, simultaneously, make the educational process more appropriate to the necessities of the children and the group.

Schools	Public or private.
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### Compulsory education

Basic education (**ensino básico**) is compulsory and includes three cycles (4 + 2 + 3 years). The move up from one cycle to another is progressive, each cycle completing and adding to what was learnt in the previous cycle, and the three viewed as a whole.

Age	6 to 15 year-olds.
Duration	9 years.
Description	Initial enrolment in the 1 <sup>st</sup> year of <b>ensino básico</b> is compulsory for all children who have completed 6 years of age by 15 September. The admission conditions to subsequent cycles - 2 <sup>nd</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> cycles depend, basically, on pupils successfully completing the cycle immediately below, or already having the equivalent qualifications. Children who reach the age of 6 between 16 September and 31 December may also be admitted to <b>ensino básico</b> if a request is made. Children who prove to be precocious as a whole and which justifies their beginning school a year earlier than usual, may enrol in the 1 <sup>st</sup> year of <b>ensino básico</b> provided they have reached the age of 5 by the start of the school year.
Portuguese name	Escola Básica
Timetable	Duration of weekly school time for the different teaching levels with the entry into force of Decree-Law no. 6/01, of 18 January is the following: In the <b>1<sup>st</sup> cycle</b> of “ensino básico” the number of daily school hours is fixed at 5 hours, including breaks (total of 25 hours) The distribution of teaching time per discipline is not fixed. Teaching time is managed by the teacher who takes into consideration the characteristics of the group and the timetable of the school, approved in the teachers’ council. In the <b>2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> cycles</b> of “ensino básico”, the management of the school determines the number of daily hours for pupils in these teaching levels, complying with general regulations and applying the school's teaching autonomy (2 <sup>nd</sup> cycle, 5 <sup>th</sup> and 6 <sup>th</sup> years, 16+16 in periods of 90 minutes and 3 <sup>rd</sup> cycle, 7 <sup>th</sup> , 8 <sup>th</sup> and 9 <sup>th</sup> years, 17+17+17,5 in periods of 90 minutes).
School year and holidays	The main guidelines for organising the school year are the following: - The school year is the period between 1 September and 31 August; - The school year, fixed annually in a ruling from the Minister of Education, lasts for 180 effective days of school activities in schools of “ensino básico”; - Each term lasts for approximately 3 months, followed by a break of a week from school activities; - Breaks from school activities occur at Christmas, Carnival and Easter; - School activities begin on 15 September and end in the 2 <sup>nd</sup> half of June.

Subjects	<p>The curriculum in the <b>1<sup>st</sup> cycle</b> of ensino básico (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> years of schooling) involves the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Compulsory disciplinary curricular areas: Portuguese language, Mathematics, Environmental studies, Self-expression (Artistic and Physical-motor);</li> <li>- Non-disciplinary curricular areas: “Área de Projecto”, “Estudo Acompanhado”, “Formação Cívica”;</li> <li>- Optional curricular disciplinary area: Moral and Religious Education;</li> <li>- Enhancement activities.</li> </ul> <p>In this cycle, in any year of schooling, schools may provide the beginnings of a foreign language using oral and playing approaches.</p> <p>The <b>2<sup>nd</sup> cycle</b> of “ensino básico” works on a multi-teacher scheme, is organised in study areas that are multi-disciplinary, preferably with one or two teachers for each area. The curricular plan in the 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle of “ensino básico” (5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> years of schooling) is the following:</p> <p><b>Disciplinary curricular areas:</b></p> <p><i>Languages &amp; Social Studies</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Portuguese language</li> <li>- Foreign language</li> <li>- History and geography of Portugal</li> </ul> <p><i>Mathematics and Sciences</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mathematics</li> <li>- Natural Sciences</li> </ul> <p><i>Artistic and Technological Education</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Visual and Technological Education</li> <li>- Musical Education</li> <li>- Physical Training</li> </ul> <p><b>Moral &amp; Religious Education</b></p> <p><b>Non-disciplinary Curricular Areas:</b></p> <p>“Área de Projecto”</p> <p>“Estudo Acompanhado”</p> <p>“Formação Cívica”</p> <p>In the <b>3rd cycle</b> teaching is also organised according to discipline or groups of disciplines, on a multi-disciplinary scheme, with one teacher per discipline or non-disciplinary curricular area. It is compulsory to learn a second foreign language in the 3rd cycle, choosing from French, English, German or Spanish. The curricular plan of the 3rd cycle of “ensino básico” (7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> years of schooling) is the following:</p> <p><b>Disciplinary Curricular Areas:</b></p> <p><i>Portuguese Language</i></p> <p><i>Foreign Languages I &amp; II</i></p> <p><i>Human and Social Sciences:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- History</li> <li>- Geography</li> </ul>
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	<p><i>Physical and Natural Sciences:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Natural Sciences</li> <li>- Physics-Chemistry</li> </ul> <p><i>Mathematics</i></p> <p><i>Artistic Education:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Visual Education</li> <li>- Other discipline (on offer by school)</li> </ul> <p><i>Technological Education</i></p> <p><i>Physical Training</i></p> <p><i>Introduction to ICT</i></p> <p><i>Moral and Religious Education</i></p> <p><b>Non-disciplinary curricular areas:</b></p> <p><b>Project Area</b></p> <p><b>Monitored Study</b></p> <p><b>Civic Education</b></p>
Exams	<p><b>“Avaliação formative”</b> is the main method of assessment in “ensino básico”. It is systematic and continuous and regulates teaching and learning, by using a variety of instruments for information search, in line with learning and the context in which it occurs. End of term, or end of year, <b>“avaliação sumativa”</b> uses information on the pupil provided by “avaliação formative” and consists of giving an overall opinion on pupil learning, the main aim being to support the educational process and certification.</p> <p>In the <b>1st cycle</b> “avaliação sumativa” is recorded in all curricular areas. In the <b>2nd and 3rd cycles</b>, a mark is given on a scale of 1 to 5 and a report written on non-disciplinary curricular areas and the qualification of "Unsatisfactory", "Satisfactory" and "Well done" awarded. Up to the 2004/05 school year, “avaliação sumativa” at the end of the 9<sup>th</sup> year of schooling, still includes “provas globais” at class level, which cover mainly what has been learned towards the end of “ensino básico”.</p>
Schools	State, private or co-operative school.

### Secondary education

According to the legal framework established by the Education System Act, ensino secundário corresponds to what is generally defined as **upper secondary education**, i.e. the three-year cycle after the conclusion of compulsory education.

#### Upper secondary education and post-secondary non-tertiary education

Age	15 to 18
Duration	3 years
Portuguese name	Escola Secundária
Description	Regular secondary education is structured around differentiated forms, comprising two branches: Courses mainly geared to the pursuit of further education called <b>“cursos gerais”</b> , and courses geared to working life called <b>“cursos tecnológicos”</b> ; pupils may

	<p>change from one course to another.</p> <p><b>“Escolas profissionais”</b> provide an alternative to the regular education system, designed for young people whose immediate goal is to enter the job market. Courses offered at “escolas profissionais” may also lead to higher education. Two other forms of subsidiary training have been recently created: a short-duration one, the <b>“10.º ano profissionalizante”</b>, and a post-secondary training path, the <b>“cursos de especialização tecnológica”</b>.</p>
Timetable	<p>Taking into account the number of lessons per week, each class has lessons predominantly in the morning or in the afternoon, although in some days the timetable may occupy both parts of the day. The morning shift starts between 8.00 and 8.30 and continues until 13.00 or 13.30; the afternoon shift runs from 13.30 or 14.00 until 17.30 or 18.00. The distribution of teaching hours is variable, but on days when both shifts are occupied, lunch break can last one or two hours.</p>
School year and holidays	<p>The school year runs from 1 September to 31 August, including teaching days and all other activities, such as exams, class organisation, timetable, tasks that are also the teachers' responsibility. The effective teaching period is determined every year by the Ministry and it lasts 180 days.</p>
Subjects	<p>The curricular structure of all courses in secondary regular education, both in general and in technological courses, is organised in three educational components: <b>general component; specific component; technical, technological or artistic component.</b></p> <p>The <b>general component</b> is common to all courses and has a number of subjects aiming at the pupil's general personal and social development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Portuguese</li> <li>- Foreign Language *</li> <li>- Introduction to Philosophy</li> <li>- Physical Education</li> <li>- Personal and Social Development/Moral and Religious Education – optional</li> </ul> <p>* The system offers four possible choices: English, French, German and Spanish. The pupils choose one of the languages studied in “ensino básico”; if he/she has studied only one, he/she will start a new language.</p> <p>The <b>specific component</b> includes a number of subjects specific to each study area, namely two or three core subjects in each agrupamento being the remaining timetable filled by optional subjects – it envisages to develop competencies and knowledge specific to each field of knowledge.</p> <p>Beyond the educational components of general, scientific or technical nature, study plans also include a <b>non-disciplinary area</b> – “Área-escola” – in which cross-curricular activities and projects are</p>

	<p>developed, mobilising knowledge and skills acquired, promoting initiative, organisation and autonomy, encouraging a closer link between school and community.</p>
Exams	<p>- <b>“Cursos gerais e tecnológicos”</b>  In <b>“cursos gerais”</b> pupils take final examinations in the subjects of general and specific educational components that are part of the study plan in the 12<sup>th</sup> form, with the exception of Physical Education and Personal and Social Development/Moral and Religious Education (Catholic or other religions). In <b>“cursos tecnológicos”</b>, <b>“avaliação externa”</b> applies to all subjects of general and specific components, with the same exceptions, and still in the subjects of the technical component that do not have a predominantly practical character.</p> <p>- <b>“Cursos profissionais”</b>  Pupils attending <b>“cursos profissionais”</b> do not have to take final national exams for completing the course. If they want to proceed to higher education, they take national exams in the specific subjects required by each university or polytechnics according to the field of knowledge.  These assessments are done by the <b>“conselho de turma”</b> and each school is responsible for determining procedures to be used. At the end of each term, classification in modules are made public, provided they are equal or higher than 10 (in a scale of 0-20).  These courses also include, as an integral part of assessment, the <b>“prova de aptidão profissional” (PAP)</b>, which is an interdisciplinary project whose final product is presented to the community in a public session. Pupils who obtain a grade of 10 or more have passed this test.</p> <p>- <b>“10.º Ano profissionalizante”</b>  Assessment covers the essential and formative learning acquired by pupils in the different subjects and in work related training. Marks range from 0 to 20. Assessment of practical training covers the capacity of the pupil to adapt to the working environment and the capacity to apply the knowledge, skills and attitudes developed during training. At the end of practical training, pupils will take an overall <b>“prova de aptidão profissional” (PAP)</b>, which includes practical work based on the tasks that most represent the profession for which the course provides the qualification. Pupils pass with a mark of 10 or more in all subjects, in the practical training and in the <b>“prova de aptidão profissional”</b>. To conclude the course successfully, the attendance of the pupil is also taken into consideration, and this may not be less than 90% of annual teaching time for each subject, and not less than 95% of the time allocated to the training period. This does not affect the scheme applicable for justifying absence.</p>

	<p>- <b>“Cursos de Especialização Tecnológica”</b></p> <p>Assessment is formative (“formativa”) and summative (“sumativa”). “Avaliação formative” covers all training components, is systematic and continuous and is given a descriptive and qualitative mark. “Avaliação sumativa” is a mark on a scale of 0 to 20 for all training components. Passing the course requires a pass in all the disciplines and training components of the course. Approval in disciplines and training components requires a pass of 10 marks or more.</p>
Schools	Public and Private.

### **Tertiary education**

As laid down in the Education Act, **“ensino universitário”** provides a solidly based scientific and cultural preparation and provides technical training to develop skills in professional and cultural work and also encourages the development of skills in idea forming, innovation and critical analysis.

Age	From 18 up
Duration	From 3 to 6 years
Potuguese name	Ensino Superior
Description	<p>This teaching system is divided into:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- “Ensino Superior Universitário”;</li> <li>- “Ensino Superior politécnico”.</li> </ul> <p>The Master's or Doctorate degree is granted exclusively by universities. For the common bachelor's or honours degree, the Education Act lays down that "mobility between “ensino universitário” and “ensino politécnico” is based on the principle of mutual recognition for the merits of training and skills acquired" (Art. 13, no. 8).</p> <p>The consequence of a very specific historical context, in which the state network of universities and polytechnic institutes was unable to meet very high student demand, expansion of higher education was absorbed, to a large extent, by the mushrooming of private institutions, mainly universities, in Portugal in the eighties and nineties.</p>

<p>Timetable/ School year and holidays</p>	<p>On the whole, the academic year lasts for 15 to 16 weeks per semester, and it is likely that a student will have on average 25/26 to 32 hours a week of teaching activities.</p> <p>The scientific council is responsible for this organisation, which, however, complies with what is laid down in this same law, and is basically the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The awarding of degree to each course is made conditional on the passing of compulsory and optional subjects in scientific areas foreseen in the study plan, completing a total of previously stipulated credit units;</li> <li>- The setting up of a study plan according to a system of credit units equivalent to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>15 hours of theory, or</li> <li>40 hours of practical teaching, or</li> <li>22 hours of theory and practical teaching, or</li> <li>30 hours of practical training or seminars.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>Subjects</p>	<p>The curricular plans in ensino superior are the responsibility of the school.</p> <p>The programmes for the different disciplines are co-ordinated in each group or department by committees made up of all teaching staff who are head teachers or in charge of theoretical and practical classes. The scientific councils are responsible for overall co-ordination.</p> <p>Each higher education institution covers specific areas of knowledge through the offer of graduate and post-graduate courses. The first are found in the Higher Education Guide, published annually by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education.</p>
<p>Exams</p>	<p>The regulation for assessing knowledge and testing teaching experiences is chosen by the institution, as part of the teaching autonomy of the Portuguese school of higher education (“ensino superior”).</p>
<p>Schools</p>	<p>Public or Private.</p>