

ANED country report on equality of educational and training opportunities for young disabled people

Country: Portugal

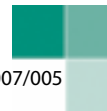
Author(s): Alexandra Pimenta; Andreia Marques

The information contained in this report was compiled by the Academic Network of European Disability experts (ANED) in May 2010.

The [Academic Network of European Disability experts](#) (ANED) was established by the European Commission in 2008 to provide scientific support and advice for its disability policy Unit. In particular, the activities of the Network will support the future development of the EU Disability Action Plan and practical implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Disabled People.

This country report has been prepared as input for the Thematic report on the implementation of EU Equality of educational and training opportunities in European countries with reference to equality for young disabled people.

The purpose of the report ([Terms of Reference](#)) is to review national implementation on equality of educational and training opportunities for young people, and in particular the National Strategic Reports of member states from a disability equality perspective in education and training, and provide the Commission with useful evidence in supporting disability policy mainstreaming.



Section 1: Executive summary and conclusions

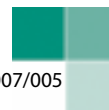
The analysis of the evolution of the Portuguese legislative process in terms of inclusive education shows that it was accompanied by the successive political and social changes that occur at national level. The legislative frameworks that conducted to a more or less inclusive education, respects differences and promotes equal opportunities of access to educational and personal, social and professional success by all children and youth with disabilities.

Proven examples can be seen in the policy guidelines related to education, inclusion, rehabilitation and integration of pupils with SEN, during the years, which have been responsibility essentially of three ministries, health, social security and education. Nevertheless, the relative importance of these three areas were not equal in the process, so education has gained prominence, in policy, in detriment of health and social security. In the last three decades of the last century responsibility for Special Education is primarily of two ministries, the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Employment and Social Solidarity.

Under the Ministry of Education, special education, like other educational response, is decentralized, with competences distributed between the Central Services, the Regional Services and Local Services. Under the Ministry of Labour and Solidarity, two agencies have expertise in areas of greatest importance to social and occupational integration of pupils with special educational needs: Social Security and Employment and Vocational Training Institutes. Also important, is the role of the Ministry of Science, Technology and Higher Education, specially in what respects tertiary education and ICT programs and measures.

Pupils with special educational needs are subject to compulsory schooling and can not be exempted from its frequency. It includes the ability to have additional supports to encourage equal opportunities in school. With the exception of pupils with specific individual curriculums, all pupils with special educational needs are subject to the system of transition of year common in mainstream education. Pupils with specific individual curriculums are subject to specific assessment criteria defined in the respective individual educational program.

Nevertheless, we may say that, accordingly to the scarce data available, Inclusion Education in Portugal is a on-going process which is developed in a context with many fragilities, namely in what concerns financing, lack of conditions in mainstream schools to meet the individual needs of SEN, the difficulty in getting specialized resources and the lack of specialized mainstream teachers' training, which are effective obstacles to inclusive practice. These problems divide some specialists about the methodology and legislation adopted at national level, in particular with regard to the new Decree-law 3/2008. Although, it is important to mention that these opinions are focused in the improvement of the quality of education offered to SEN students in mainstream schools in Portugal, not in the "old segregating model".



Section 2: Legal and policy context

Special Education in Portugal is guided by the principles enshrined in legislation, which is the Education Act, Law No. 46/86, 14th October, Decree-Law No. 35/90, 25th January; Decree-Law No. 3/2008, 7th January – and the underlying philosophy is based on several international resolutions such as the Salamanca Declaration for Special Education Needs.

These principles can be summarised under three fundamental rights:

- The right to education: all children with special education needs, even as the result of a problem (or problems) in a particular area of development, have the right to education. At compulsory school age, education for children and adolescents with special educational needs, no matter how complex they are, should be provided within the education system.
- The right to equality: the inalienable right of all children to equal opportunity in gaining access to and achieving success in education, without any type of discrimination, and with educational resources and support adequate to the individual needs of each one.
- The right to be part of society: it is a principle that they have the right to attend mainstream schools of education, which from the perspective of school for all, find the right solutions for the needs of each individual. The rule is that preferably these handicapped children should be included in the mainstream teaching system, with the solution of special schools being the exception, only when all means for keeping pupils in the normal school alongside their peers have been exhausted.

For this attempt to enshrine the right, duty and responsibility of the state and civil society in dealing with persons with disabilities and/or have special learning needs, the development of ideas and scientific and pedagogic research, at national and international level, related to special education was crucial. Also important were the recommendations made by international bodies on access for students with disabilities to the mainstream system of education and the experience gleaned over a number of years in which pupils with disabilities have attended mainstream schooling.

The new Law No. 85/2009, 27 August, establishes the regime of compulsory schooling for children and youth who are school age, increasing from 9 to 12 years, and establishes the universality of preschool education for children from 5 years old, including those with special needs.

Specific Legislative Framework

The Education Act (Decree-Law No. 46/86, 14th October), assumes special education as a specific type of education that facilitates the socio-educational recuperation and integration of individuals with special educational needs caused by physical or mental disability.

The Decree Law 3 / 2008 defines the legal framework of special education. This decree-law defines the support provide to specialized education in preschool and in primary and secondary levels in public, private and cooperative in order to create conditions for the adequacy of the educational process to the special needs of students . Special education aims educational and social inclusion, access and educational success, autonomy, emotional stability and the promotion of equal opportunities, preparation for further studies or for an adequate preparation for professional life and a transition from school to employment of children and youth with special needs. The Decree was amended by the Law 21/2008.

Decree-Law No. 35/90, 25th January, stipulates that students with special educational needs, resulting from physical or mental disabilities, are obliged to attend compulsory schooling

Decree-Law No. 301/93, 31st August, consecrates the compulsory attendance of basic education by students with special educational needs

Decree-Law No. 95/97, 23rd April, was amended by the Joint Order No. 198/99, 3rd March, defines the legal basis of specialised training for nursery, primary and secondary teachers

Joint Order No. 495/02, 7th May, identifies the organisation of the teaching component for teachers in special education and teaching, as well as teachers working in other areas of educational support at the pre-school and basic education levels

Decree-Law No. 20/06, 31st January, defines the procedures regarding the teacher placement application system, creating the special education recruitment group for the first time. It repeals the Decree-Law No. 35/03, 7th February.

General Objectives

As stipulated in the Education Act (Decree-Law No. 46/86, 14th October), special education aims at facilitating the socio-educational recuperation and integration for individuals with special educational needs caused by physical or mental disability. The following objectives, which are part of the general education system, are particularly important in special education:

- The development of physical and intellectual potential
- Assistance in acquiring emotional stability
- Developing communication possibilities
- Reducing limitations caused by handicap
- Support for family, school and social integration
- Developing independence at all levels
- Preparing for adequate vocational training and integration into working life

Decree-Law No. 3/2008, 7th January, establishes, regarding the reference units and schools: the implementation conditions, the objectives, the human and material resources and the organisation and running of the above mentioned units and schools.

Ordinance 1102/97 and 1103/97 define the access conditions for pupils going to special education schools and requirements in order for schools to function.

Special education schools have already begun a process of reorientation for Inclusion Resource Centres (IRC). In partnership with the community, these resource centres support the inclusion of children and young people with disabilities through facilitating access to education, training, work, leisure, social participation and an autonomous life, while promoting the full potential of the individual. The IRCs work in partnership with school clusters.

- Arising from this general objective, specific objectives of Inclusion Resource Centres are:
- Support the development, implementation and monitoring of educational individual programs;
- Create and disseminate materials to support work to the teaching practices in of assessment and intervention;
- Advocate for the educational community inclusion of people with disabilities and disability;
- Promote and monitor processes of transition from school to post school youth with disabilities and disability;
- Mobilise the support employers and professional integration;
- Promote the levels of academic and professional qualifications, supporting schools and students;
- Promote the training of teachers;
- Promote social participation and independent living;
- Design and implement training activities throughout life for young with disabilities and disability;
- Support the process of assessing the situations of capacity by reference to the ICF;
- Promoting accessibility;

Definition of the Target Group and eligibility process

The target groups for special education are the following:
Pupils with significant limitations in terms of activity and participation in one or more areas in life due to permanent functional and structural issues, which result in continued difficulty in terms of communication, learning, mobility, autonomy, interpersonal relationships and social involvement.



The transfer of children and young people that need special educational support is done by school and school cluster administration and management. After referral, the executive council requests the special education department's assessment of the referred children and young people. The objective of the assessment is to collect information that permits:

- verification that it is a permanent special educational needs situation
- guidance for the drawing up of an Individual Educational Programm



Section 3: Evidence of outcomes and progress towards inclusion

In Portugal, up to 70 years, the supply in the area of education for children and youth with disabilities, was very scarce. The Ministry of Education was limited to maintain special classes of the Institute António Aurélio da Costa Ferreira, who had been created in the '40s, in a mainstream school.

Given the lack of response from official institutions, in the 60s there was a movement organization of parents, which underpins the establishment of several private institutions of social solidarity. In general these institutions were organized by type of disabilities.

With the reform of 1973, the Ministry of Education integrates the first time in its organizational structure, powers in the field of special education. Although tentatively assumed these new responsibilities of the Ministry of Education were already the result of a growing movement for the education of all children, which gets a big boost with the establishment of democratic rule.

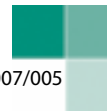
During the 70s and early 80s, there was a proliferation of establishments created by special education cooperatives and social solidarity. In 1978/79, the number of pupils in 132 special schools exceeded 8000, and in mainstream education, there were 22 teams of special education that served about 1,100 students with physical and sensory disabilities. But this situation is changing rapidly. Today is about 28,000 the number of students with disabilities in regular schools of education as the frequency of special schools (n = 3576) decreased by 55% (2166 and on fences and IPSS 1410 schools in special education).

This decrease in student numbers has been accompanied by a reorientation of many special education schools for the modality "resource centers" general tendency nowadays in Europe.

Indeed, special schools (CERCI and IPSS) have in recent years, admitting fewer students and focus, in developing activities to support mainstream schools with pupils with disabilities within the specific curriculum areas as therapies, the transition to working life and early intervention.

Since 1990's Portugal has been improving best conditions for SEN pupils to access mainstream education and also to benefit from quality learning.

Special schools are thus in Portugal, to monitor the movement of many European countries by setting up increasingly as "resource centers" to support teachers, parents and other professionals, will nevertheless continue to ensure an educational response groups of students with problems of great complexity.



The activities in this mode "resource center", held in "Partnership Projects" funded by the Ministry of Education under subparagraphs b) c) Ordinance 1102/97, were analyzed by the Ministry of Education in the years 2003/04 and 2004/05, with based on data of self-assessment of the promoting institutions.

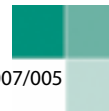
Thus, the services provided fell mainly on (i) support the integration of pupils with special educational needs in schools regular education, (ii) supporting the transition from school to working life and (iii) the provision of early intervention services in childhood.

Most projects are technical experts and distinguished acting, mainly by the diagnosis, evaluation and educational intervention from children and youth with special needs and their families.

Nowadays inclusive school basic principles – based upon humanistic beliefs concerned with people's rights, equity and social justice – are unquestionable. Teachers, parents and politicians recognize that traditional, formal models can lead to segregation and discrimination making social and educational integration difficult for disabled people. However, in order to maintain and develop quality education for these pupils it is important not only to preserve the availability of specialized human resources and specific tools but also to implement severe changes in the schools organization and in pedagogical practice.

In 2005, and according to the recent publication "**Educação Inclusiva – da retórica à prática**" (Inclusive Education - from rhetoric to practice), the Services of the Ministry of Education and National Education Council had detailed data on the actual situation: 1 in 16 students had special education measures, a number that grew every year; the total number of students identified with special educational needs 1 in 20 were in Institutions of special education; students whose first language is Portuguese, ethnic minorities and social risk were largely referred for special education; lack of a rigorous system of referral and identification needs; late referral of children with disabilities by health services; of all teachers support in mainstream schools, only 40% held training courses in special education; inadequate organization and distribution of educational resources specialist; which rendered ineffective the educational activity; high number of students whose age exceeded the expected level of education who attended, particularly in the 1st Cycle of Basic Education; many children who saw their entry into the 1st level of education delayed by one or more years ; responsibility for students with special needs was always assigned to an outside school. Much of the difficulties were due to the processes of referral and evaluation of children with special education needs.

By identifying these problems, in terms of pupils with special education needs, is ongoing since 2005, a reorganization of the provision of special education in Portugal. The purpose of this reorganization is to ensure that all pupils with special educational needs under the best conditions for quality learning in the inclusive school.



The differentiation of policies for the academic success of students with special educational needs permanent first result was the creation of a group of recruitment of special education recusrsos concentrating in school and not in coordination structures outside. The number of teachers recruited this group of some 6,000 involved in the system in 2005-2006 (to 60,000 students) fell to 3963 in 2006/2007 to go up to 4779 in 2008/2009.

A second measure already implemented is the establishment of a network of schools and groups of schools in reference to the problem of low incidence and high intensity, such as blindness, low vision and deafness, and specialized support units for children with autism or multiple disabilities. In the Resolution of the Council of Ministers No. 120/06, 21st September and Decree-Law No. 3/2008, 7th January, the specific types of education for the blind, low vision, deaf and those with multiple disabilities and problems of autism include: Structured teaching units for teaching pupils with autism and specialised support units for pupils with multiple disabilities and congenital deafness and blindness

In 2006/2007, 878 students were deaf students attending 212 schools in 123 groups (4 per school and 7 per group of schools). That same year, blind or low vision students were 787 (154 blind and 633 low vision) in 591 schools (1.3 per school).

In June 2008 data, in general, shows that there were 49,877 SNE students in basic, 3.9% of a population of 1.28 million. The most recent balance points to only 33 891 (2.85%) from 1.24 million. Of these, 31 776 are integrated into normal schools and 2115 students were in specialized schools.



Section 4: Types of support for students and trainees

a) Types of Support

Decree-Law No. 3/2008, 7th January defines the specialised support given to pupils with permanent special educational needs and is implemented via the following measures:

- Personalised pedagogical support
- Individual curriculum adjustment
- Adjustment to the enrolment process
- Adjustment to the assessment process
- Individual specific curriculum

Specialised support provided in public, private and co-operative pre-school, basic education and upper secondary education aims to create the conditions for the adjustment of the educational process to pupils' special educational needs. The goals of special education are educational and social inclusion, educational access and success, autonomy, emotional stability, as well as the promotion of equal opportunities, preparation for further study or post-school or professional life.

An **Individual Educational Programme** is defined for pupils with permanent special educational needs. The IEP documents the specific needs of each pupil and stipulates and justifies the educational response and the respective form of assessment. The application of any form of adjustment to the teaching and learning process is not permitted without one.

The IEP is drawn up by the teacher responsible for the group or class or class tutor, depending on the teaching or education level that the pupil attends, by the special education teacher and parents or guardians, which means by whoever knows the pupil best and whoever works directly with them. For it to be implemented, it has to be approved by the pedagogical council and have the express agreement from parents or guardians.

With regard to changes in the curriculum, pupils can benefit from individual curriculum adjustment or a specific individual curriculum.

The **individual curriculum adjustments** mean not compromising the common curriculum or the pre-school curriculum guidelines. To this end, subjects or specific curriculum areas can be introduced, such as Portuguese Sign Language and Portuguese Language/Second Language Portuguese for deaf pupils, reading and writing in Braille, orientation and mobility, vision training and adapted motor activity, among others, allowing access to the common curriculum, as well as greater autonomy.

These adjustments can also mean the introduction of objectives and intermediate content or the dispensation of activities where the pupil's functional level means it is extremely difficult or impossible to achieve the respective task. Dispensation should happen only when support technologies are insufficient to help achieve the task in question.

The **specific individual curriculum** involves significant changes in the common curriculum, which may mean: (i) the prioritisation of curriculum areas or certain content over others; (ii) the elimination of objectives and content; (iii) the introduction of complementary content and objectives regarding very specific aspects (i.e. non-verbal communication, the use of support technology in communication, mobility, accessibility) or (iv) the elimination of curriculum areas.

The level of education during school age, the rights and duties are the same both for students with special educational needs (SEN) or for children without disabilities.

Since, however, take into account the fragility of the disabled population there are special quotas for certain areas, such as:

- The priority in the frequency of kindergartens to the public network of the Ministry of Education;
- Permission to enter the primary education a year later than is required (upon a request from the parents and an opinion of teachers and educational support technical and specialized services);
- The possibility to register the vehicle for one. Cycle of a school district of residence or elsewhere, far from home, providing better access to resources and pedagogical support to facilitate integration of students with SEN;
- Registration in February. And 3. Cycles of the Basic Education and Secondary Education can be performed only by subjects (provided it is ensured sequentiality of common education system);
- The possibility of referral to special education institutions where the official school proves unable to meet or satisfy the needs of these students (provided they are first exhausted all other resources and for special education which has proven to result in benefit to students with SEN and that the consent of the family is gathered in advance);
- Access to an educational system which consists of special equipment and special compensation, materials and curriculum adaptations, special assessment, fitness classes or the organization of classes and special education;

- The right to full exemption of tuition, fees and charges related to registration, certificate of attendance and utilization during compulsory schooling and the right to secure additional support and education to promote equal opportunities;
- The right to special quotas of places for applicants to higher education with physical or sensory disability.

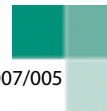
Apart from all these benefits, there is still a requirement that either the registration or attendance in basic education ends with the attainment of their diploma or certificate or because the students make up 15 years of age during the school year in which it is entered (excluding the situations that can delay enrollment). The composition of the classes in which the student is integrated with SEN can not exceed 20 elements and should not be made with more than two elements with SEN (unless adequately substantiated exceptional cases).

The responsibility of the educational program for students with disabilities rests with the support teacher education, is however, extremely important collaboration of parents in the preparation and review of that program and individual education plan for their students. When students with disabilities do not get the diploma of basic education but need to attend vocational training or even joining a job, the solution is to go to the school attended and request a certificate specifying the competencies achieved. For more detailed information you can query its law and recourse to the Departments of the Ministry of Education, including the Regional Education Centers Educational Area schools and area of residence of the person concerned.

The school is involved in a set of activities based around the curriculum and curriculum enhancement, aiming to create the conditions for the expression and development of exceptional capacities and the resolution of any problems. This development plan is applicable to those students who demonstrate exceptional learning capacities and can include the following methods:

- differentiated pedagogy in the classroom
- tutoring programmes for study strategies, guidance and advice for the student enhancement activities at any point in the academic year or at the beginning of a cycle (Implementing Order No. 50/05, 9th November)

Special education approaches are also organised with the aim of integrating young people with disabilities into the labour market. To this end, within the Ministry of Work and Social Solidarity, which is also an authority in social and socio-professional integration, there are official schools, residences and centres for occupational support. Similarly, this Ministry funds individuals through subsidies, and also finances private institutes for social solidarity with socio-educational schools.



Educational/ Vocational Guidance, Education/Employment Links

Whenever pupils have permanent special educational needs which prevent them from acquiring the learning and competencies defined in the common curriculum, three years before they reach the age limit for compulsory education, the school should complement the Individual Educational Program with an Individual Transition Plan (ITP).

The first phase of the ITP is to discover the wishes, interests, aspirations and competencies of the respective young person. Based on this data, and in relation to the pupil's capacity to exercise a professional activity, this phase includes an assessment of the needs of the job market in the young person's community and the seeking of training opportunities or real work experience.

Once the possibilities of training or internships are registered, it is important to identify the competencies (academic, personal and social), adjustments and special equipment required. After this assessment, it is necessary to establish protocols with the services and institutions where the young person will train or be an intern, to define the tasks they will do, the competencies required and the support needed to achieve these tasks, if and when necessary.

According to the Order No. 279/2009, of 6 January, there were approved the regulations for granting of IEFP the Resource Centres for information, evaluation and career guidance, placement and post-placement support for people with disabilities.

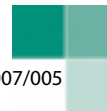
With regard to young people whose disabilities do not allow them to work, research should focus on finding occupational activity centres that can provide activities that interest them and are appropriate for their individual competencies.

New Opportunities

The reform of the Portuguese vocational training system led to the national strategy New Opportunities, which was launched in 2005 to improve the level of qualification of the Portuguese population. They adopted an integrated education and vocational training policy aimed at generalizing secondary education as a benchmark for the qualification of young people and adults and their integration in a globalised society of knowledge.

Persons with disabilities are also a priority of this programme and are included in its scope, although there are some specialized treatments according to needs.

Some protocols were signed for the creation of New Opportunities Centres specialized according to certain groups of people with disabilities. The aim of these protocols is to adapt and develop the orientation of Recognition, Validation and Certification Centres to secondary schools, adapted to the characteristics of people with disabilities.



Measure Inov-JOVEM - Young Executives for Innovation in SMEs

Measure Inov-Jovem supports the organization of work placements in SMEs for young people with higher qualifications in the areas of education and training relevant to the innovation and management of private companies.

This measure is promoted, managed and executed by the Employment and Vocational Training Institute. It also applies to young people with disabilities.

This measure includes unemployed youth aged 35 years, including qualified with higher level qualifications in areas of specific training and who meet the following conditions:

- Young people seeking their first job;
- Young people looking for new employment.

To Persons with disabilities does not apply the age limit.

b) Trainees

Teachers's training

In what respects Teachers from the special education recruitment group with specialised training in specific areas are placed in schools to promote support activities for students with permanent special educational needs. The Ordinance No. 212/2009 of 23 February, states the identification of requirements which provide the necessary professional qualification for teachers to pursue teaching in the field of Special Education in Portugal.

Teacher training covers initial, specialized and lifelong training.

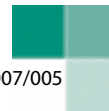
Initial Training

Kindergarten/pre-school and primary education teachers' initial training lasts for four years, including a professional training in state or private Colleges of Higher Education leading a degree. Teachers also can graduate from a public or private University and be permitted to teach a specific subject or group of subjects. Secondary education teachers' training also takes four years at a state or private University and also includes a professional training, leading to a degree. These teachers are awarded qualifications to teach specific areas.

Specialized Training

Kindergarten/pre-school, primary and secondary education teachers can specialize in some areas (e.g. special education, counselling, pedagogical supervising, school administration, curriculum development, and so on).

This type of training lasts for one or two years and takes place at public or private Colleges of Higher Education, it is equivalent to a post-graduation and awards teachers professional qualifications allowing them to work in specialized areas.



Lifelong Training

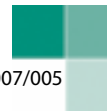
Kindergarten/pre-school, primary and secondary education teachers may apply to additional different training modalities to update and broaden their knowledge as well as their skills – training courses, action programmes, workshops, studies circle, conferences, among others. The duration depends on the type of training modality chosen.

Lifelong training can be implemented by higher education institutions, by school clusters in training centres, by training centres of scientific or professional associations, by central or local administration centres, all of them accredited by the Scientific Pedagogical Council for Lifelong Training. Training boards are either of public or of private nature and teachers or others, with relevant curriculum vitae concerning a particular area and suitably accredited, can be chosen as trainers. Lifelong training modalities entitle those who attend them to a certificate and to some credits vital to the progress in their career as teachers.

In 2006, a specific recruitment group was created for Special Education teachers, which was made operational by Decree-Law No. 20/06, 31st January.

The organisation of educational provision in the area should focus on a limited group of students whose needs demand a specialisation of material and human resources and it is the responsibility of the school to manage those resources in such a way that it meets the needs of all students.

Via support given to the vocational training units of the institutions, the Employment and Vocational Training Institute has incentives for practical vocational training courses.



Section 4a: Financial support

The Ministry of Education funds its central and regional services, state non-higher education establishments, as well as social school activity via the State budget. It also subsidises private and cooperative education and professional schools.

Apart from the Ministry of Education, municipal bodies also take responsibility for educational funding, including the construction, maintenance, supply and some expenses of pre-primary and 1st cycle establishments. It is also their responsibility to guarantee the funding for school transport, complementary educational and free-time activities.

Compulsory education is free of charge, while pupils in secondary education and their families make a small financial contribution to education through the payment of enrolment and tuition fees.

The Ministry of Education finances special needs education in Portuguese mainstream school system at the different education levels, paying the salaries of special education teachers and other professionals (psychologists, therapists, sign language trainers and interpreters), providing specific materials, paying for nutritional supplements, transport, specific equipment, assistive devices and professional aid.

Only in exceptional circumstances when mainstream education has confirmed not to be able to supply pupils with the educational responses they need, are they allowed attending private and non-profit special schools free of charge for families during the compulsory schooling age. The costs are supported by Ministry of Education.

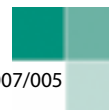
All special education institutions (private and non-profit) are under responsibility of Ministry of Education and gradually they are changing into resource centres where specialized professionals, equipment and teacher's training are available to help mainstream schools and community through partnership agreements.

State higher education funding is the responsibility of the State, via the Ministry of Science, Technology and Higher Education, complemented by its own income and a flat-rate fee paid by students and their families.

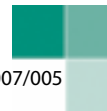
Financial Support for Pupils' Families

The criteria for financial support for pupils with special educational needs, which indirectly benefits their families, ensure the attendance and the conclusion of compulsory education.

The attribution of funds for the acquisition and/or the maintenance of technical assistance necessary to ensure the right conditions for access to the curriculum are also considered.



Specific legislation establishes the maximum amounts and the regulations of the monthly payments by co-operatives and education and special teaching associations, as well as for-profit-education and special teaching establishments, overseen by the Ministry of Education, whose fees are reviewed annually. The financial contribution that families make to special education for children and young people, to determine the special education subsidies from social security, is also established annually via specific legislation.



Section 4(b): Personal assistance, equipment and adaptations

For the teaching of specific areas of the curriculum, such as Portuguese Sign Language, Braille or the use of Support Technologies, special education teachers and other professionals with specific training in schools, such as Portuguese Sign Language trainers and interpreters, are placed in schools by the Ministry of Education.

The Ministry of Education resource centres produce school books in Braille, in large font and in digital Daisy format.

The creation of a national network of **ICT Resource Centers for Special Education** follows a policy of inclusion of pupils with Special Educational Needs in mainstream and the measure was included in the Action Plan for the Integration of Persons with Disabilities (PAIPDI), the creation of 25 Resource Centres based in groupings of schools.

The purpose of the ICT Resource Centre for Special Education is to assess these students for purposes of appropriate technologies to support their specific needs, information / training of teachers, professionals, carers and families education on the problems associated with different areas of disability.

Each Centre has a range of action and support to other groups of schools, at district level. The network covers the whole country with seven centers in the North, 6 in the Centre, 7 in the area of Lisbon and Tagus Valley, 3 in Alentejo and 1 in the Algarve.

According to Ministry of Education, the Budget allocated to Special Education increased 6,9% from 2006 to 2007. The number of specialised staff also increased: Occupational therapists, physiotherapists and speech therapists were 59, in 2006, 112, in 2007 and 199 in 2008; Sign language trainers were 53, in 2006, 65, in 2007, and 74 in 2008; and sign language interpreters were 41, in 2006, 58 in 2007 and 76 in 2008.

There have been produced 18.000 volumes in Braille and 1458 books in digital format for students with lower vision. The program e-escola¹ (e-school) was enlarged to pupils with special needs and the state covers the costs of the adaptation of the computers and programs (software).

¹ Technological Plan for Education (TPE) has been implemented, with a view to increase school access to information and communication technologies. Within the TPE different initiatives have been launched: Programmes e.escola, e.professor and e.oportunidades, providing students (2nd and 3rd cycles of compulsory education and upper secondary education), teachers and adults (in adult education programmes) access to exceptional conditions on the acquisition of laptops with broadband Internet. This programme was enlarged to young people with special education needs enabling more than 250 thousand individuals to have access to a computer with Internet connection.



Support in access to Higher Education

Each year, under the legislation that regulates access to higher education, a special quota for students with disabilities is previewed, and there are a percentage of vacancies reserved for admission.

The assessment of disability is made, particularly in the areas of receipt of information, mobility and locomotion, oral and written communication.

In evaluating the performance of individual candidates should be taken into account the repercussions in terms of capacity limitations in relation to the areas mentioned, the type and degree of success of the adjustments and adaptations that have been developed within the educational process.

The assessment of applications for admission to this quota is processed by the documents analysis and, if deemed, necessary interviews and case analysis by an evaluation committee (appointed by the Minister, on a joint proposal of the Directors of the Departments of Secondary and Higher Education), taking into account the possible implications for the education of the candidate.

The implementation of strategic guidelines to support these students depends on each institution taking care to study forms of support, creating structures and equipment and to establish appropriate forms of identification and monitoring their students as possible.



Section 5: Evidence of good practice

In 2006, the Special Education Department of the Ministry of Education promoted a publication which aims to provide an incentive for quality education through recognition and dissemination of successful practices within the special needs education, which can inspire new ways of quality.

The articles that compose it, written by professionals who work with students educational needs of prolonged nature, practices intended to describe education which have contributed to the educational success of children and young people perspective of inclusion:

- LEARNING TO LOOK FOR ANOTHER: Inclusion of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder in the School of the 1st Cycle of Basic Education
- TRANSITION FROM SCHOOL TO ADULT LIFE: An Integrated Learning Experience
- EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES: Education Support Unit for Deaf Children and Young People of Évora
- EARLY CHILDHOOD INTERVENTION: Centered Practice in Family and Child Life Places
- LEARN ALL TOGETHER: Unity Support Students with multiple disabilities

The publication is available in Portuguese:

http://sitio.dgidc.minedu.pt/recursos/Lists/Repositrio%20Recursos2/Attachments/417/NEE_Praticas_Sucesso.pdf



Section 6: References

Ministry of Education:

www.min-edu.pt

General Directorate of Innovation and Curricular Development

<http://sitio.dgidc.min-edu.pt/especial/Paginas/default.aspx>

Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity

www.mtss.gov.pt

Ministry of Science, Technology and Higher Educational

www.mctes.pt

Social Security Institute

www.seg-social.pt

Employment and Vocational Training Institute

www.iefp.pt

National Institute for the Rehabilitation

www.inr.pt

European Agency for Special Needs Education

www.european-agency.org

Eurydice

www.eurydice.org

Diário da República Electrónico (Official Journal)

www.dre.pt