

## Overview

### Population

As of 1st January 2015, the population of Portugal was estimated to be 10 581 86. This is an increase of 0.21 % (22 386 people) compared to a population of 10 559 474 the year before. In 2014 the natural increase was negative, as the number of deaths exceeded the number of live births by 9 081.

### Climate

The climate in mainland Portugal varies from north to south and from coast to mountain. The south experiences Mediterranean weather with particularly mild winters and hot summers. Further north, the coast is warmed by the Gulf Stream, so winters are still mild and summers are warm. Further inland summers are hotter but the winter temperature drops. In winter you can even find snow in Portugal.

In the Algarve summers are particularly dry and sunny with 12 hours of sunshine each day and an average maximum temperature of 28 degrees and minimum of 15 degrees Celsius. Temperatures in the north of Portugal are a little lower.

### Education System (for children from Portugal)

Compulsory education in Portugal lasts 12 years, taking pupils from the age of 6 to 18. Financial assistance may be available for extra expenses such as school meals, transport and textbooks, depending on the family's circumstances.

0-2 years: Nursery

3-5 years: Kindergarten

Basic Education:

6-10 years: 1<sup>st</sup> Cycle

10-12 years: 2<sup>nd</sup> Cycle

12-15 years: 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle

15-18 years: Secondary school

Grade scales range from 5 -1 (5 = excellent, 2 or below in main subjects means repeating a year). In secondary school the range is 0 -20 (20 = excellent and below 10 you need to repeat the subject).

**SEN:** Whenever possible, students are integrated into mainstream schools, with adaptations to the curriculum and studies depending on the type and degree of the student's need. Special supervision is provided, with the help of specialist teaching staff; assessment is also geared to take the student's difficulties into account.

## Education System – main differences and implications for schools

### School starting age

Pupils' experiences of pre-school education are not uniform, and formal education tends to start later than in the UK. Between the ages of 6 and 17 education is compulsory and free. Children who are 6 by the 16<sup>th</sup> September are eligible to attend the first cycle of basic education. Those reaching this age by 31<sup>st</sup> December may also be admitted, but priority is given to older children when allocating places.

Progression to the next year group is not automatic; pupils are assessed at the end of each school year in a National Examination, and at the end of each cycle. Those who are considered satisfactory will go on to the next stage. Pupils who do not meet the required standards may be asked to repeat all or part of the year.

At the end of the third cycle pupils who achieve the required standard in the general assessment receive a certificate of basic education (diploma do ensino básico) awarded by the school.

### School day

During the 1st cycle of basic education, children attend 25 hours of compulsory schooling per week. Classes begin at 9.00 am and end at 3.30 pm, with morning and lunch breaks. Some schools operate in shifts. If this is the case, parents can choose the shift they would like their child to attend; mornings 8.00 until 1.00pm, or afternoons from 1.15pm until 6.15pm. At the age of ten, school days become longer: Cycles 2 and 3 of primary education share the same timetable as secondary education. School generally tends to start at around 8.45 am and finish at 16.45. Children are entitled to a 15-minute break in the morning and afternoon and a lunch break of one hour and 15 minutes.

### Curriculum

At primary school children are mainly taught literacy, numeracy, RE and PE with subjects like geography, history starting from the second cycle, but very Portuguese specific. New arrivals are not familiar with these subjects on a broader scale.

Most schools use blackboards or whiteboards in class; interactive whiteboards are starting to be used in most schools. Most schools do not have a computer for every child but children are encouraged to use the computer in work groups. This is now changing and IT classes have been introduced in primary school.

## Literacy

From the 1st cycle pupils start to learn how to speak and write Portuguese language correctly.

In the 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle pupils start to learn about poetry and grammar.

Independent writing starts much later (usually not until age 9). Children in the lower years of primary school might need extra support with independent writing (e.g. writing frames, partially completed sentences etc.).

## Maths

Note: the use of point and comma is the other way round. Compare the English thousand (1,000) and the Portuguese mil(1.000).

Similarly the expression of decimals 0.5 and 0,5 respectively.

At a glance the numbers 1,4 and 7 written in the continental style may cause confusion.

## Cultural sensitivities

Under the Portuguese Constitution, all citizens have the right to education and culture, and also the right, defined as fundamental, to learn and to educate and to set up private schools. The State therefore seeks to ensure that education is democratic and that the education given in schools and through other means contributes to equality of opportunity, overcoming economic, social and cultural inequality, to individual personal development and to a spirit of tolerance, mutual understanding, solidarity and responsibility, to social progress and democratic participation in public life. The State also seeks to promote democracy in the arts, providing the means and encouragement for all citizens to enjoy cultural activities, both as artists and audience, in collaboration with the media, cultural associations and foundations, arts and leisure organisations, heritage and conservation associations, residents' associations and other cultural bodies.

Finally, the State also encourages and supports scientific research and creativity and technological innovation, with a view to ensuring freedom and autonomy, increased competitiveness and links between scientific institutions and industry.

## Parental involvement and attendance in Portugal

Children must repeat a school year if they do not achieve the expected minimum grade; the responsibility to achieve lies mostly with the parents; often parents have to pay for private tuition to ensure their child achieves the expected grades, and this happens mostly in Maths.

Children are not allowed to take time out of school for holidays or family celebrations. Parents usually support this as it is entirely up to the parents to make sure their child catches up with school work if they do.

Children take all of their books to school and back home, plus text and exercise books every day for homework, so parents can see what they have been learning. Parents have parents evening at the end of every term so they know how their children are doing in school.

## Language differences that may cause problems with Literacy

### Alphabet/Script

The Portuguese orthography is based on the Latin alphabet, and makes use of the acute accent, the circumflex accent, the grave accent, the tilde, and the cedilla, to denote stress, vowel height, nasalization and other sound changes. Accented letters and digraphs are not counted as separate characters for collation purposes.

A full list of sounds, diphthongs, and their main spellings, is given at Portuguese phonology. This article addresses the less trivial details of the spelling of Portuguese, as well as other issues of orthography, such as accentuation.

### Spellings

The spelling of Portuguese words is largely phonetic, but some phonemes can be spelled in more than one way. In ambiguous cases, the correct spelling is determined through a combination of etymology and morphology and common tradition, so there is not a perfect one-to-one correspondence between sounds and letters or digraphs. Knowing the main inflectional paradigms of Portuguese, and being acquainted with the orthography of other languages of Western Europe can be helpful in this regard.

### Punctuation

Portuguese punctuation is generally similar to English, commas are more frequent, especially in parenthetical expressions, and semi-colons are rarely used.

## Modal verbs

In English modal verbs are 'must' (dever), 'may' (poder), 'can' (conseguir/poder) but in Portuguese 'may' and 'can' sometimes could mean the same thing.

## Word order

In English when we say "the class teacher", it would be the other way round in Portuguese, so would be "the teacher class" (o professor de turma).

## Gender/Articles

Nouns, adjectives, pronouns, and articles are moderately inflected. There are two genders (masculine and feminine) and two numbers (singular and plural). When saying the girl or the boy in portuguese we use: 'a menina' (the girl) in feminine, and 'o menino' (the boy) for masculine.

## Vocabulary

Bilingual dictionaries usually indicate (Braz.) or (Port.) where there are variants. It is important to be aware of these. An everyday word in one country may have a different connotation in the other. Apart from this, younger pupils may be offered a translation which has no meaning for them.

Weekdays are numbered; Monday being the second day of the week, through to Friday which is the sixth.

Capital letters at the beginning of the days are not used except for a special Sunday e.g. Domingo De Ramos – Palm Sunday.

Misunderstandings can arise when a word has developed an altered meaning after being absorbed into a language e.g. Pessoal, depending on the context, can be personnel / staff (n) or personal (adj).

## Useful classroom words

### Greetings

Welcome	Bem-Vindo
Hello	Olá
Thank you	Obrigado
Please	Por Favor
Goodbye (formal)	Adeus
Bye (casual)	Tchau
Morning	Bom Dia
Afternoon	Boa Tarde
Are you OK?	Estás bem?

### School Routine

School playground	Recreio da escola
School office	Secretaria
Hall	Salão
School	Escola
Assembly	Assembleia
Toilets	Casa de Banho
School field	Campo da escola
Classroom	sala de aula
Registration	Registro
Computer suite	sala de computadores
Tutor group (class)	
Break time	recreio/intervalo
Outside	Lá fora
Inside	cá dentro
Fire drill	exercício de incêndio
Packed lunch	almoço de casa
School dinner	almoço escolar
School nurse	enfermeira da escola
First aid room	enfermaria
Staff room	sala de professores
Lunchtime	hora de almoço
School uniform	farda escolar
Library	Biblioteca
Reading book	livro
Library book	livro da biblioteca
Copy	cópia/copiar
Label	etiqueta/rótulo
Colour	cores
Pen	caneta
Pencil	lápiz
Yes	sim
No	não

## Days of the week

Monday	Segunda-feira	2a
Tuesday	Terça-feira	3a
Wednesday	Quarta-feira	4a
Thursday	Quinta-feira	5a
Friday	Sexta-feira	6a
Weekend	Fim-de-semana	

## Numbers

Zero	zero	
One	um	
Two	dois	20 vinte
Three	três	30 trinta
Four	quatro	40 quarenta
Five	cinco	50 cinquenta
Six	seis	60 sessenta
Seven	sete	70 setenta
Eight	oito	80 oitenta
Nine	nove	90 noventa
Ten	dez	100 cem
How many?	Quantos?	

## Instructions/Questions

Work with a partner- trabalhar com um colega  
Use your dictionary- usa o teu dicionário  
Do you understand? - compreendes?  
Talk about this at home - fala sobre isto em casa  
Translate these words at home - traduz estas palavras em casa  
You can write in Portuguese - podes escrever em português  
Write in sentences - escrever em frases  
Fill the blanks - preenche os espaços em branco  
Annotate - anotar  
Highlight - sublinhar  
Draft - rascunho  
Please be quiet - está quieto/calado por favor  
Come here please - anda aqui se faz favor  
Sit on the carpet - sentar na carpete/chão  
Where does it hurt? - Onde e que dói?  
Well done! - muito bem!