

# Teacher Education Policies in Portugal

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This report focuses on the role of the State (Parliament, Government, and Ministry of Education) in initial and in-service teacher education in Portugal. Essentially descriptive, it presents the written teacher education policies rather than their implementation and results achieved; it does not even approach the reasons that legitimate them.

As teacher education is provided by higher education institutions, especially initial education, there are two types of state policies in this domain: higher education policies for all types of institutions and programmes<sup>1</sup>, including teacher education and specific policies for teacher education programmes. The latter will be our focus<sup>2</sup>. Brief reference to basic and secondary education policies will also be made as they outline teachers' performance profile and consequently their qualification profile.

This report addresses the following main issues on which policy definitions have been set out and summarises their present contents<sup>3</sup>:

- What are the *qualifications* needed for teaching in schools?
- Which *institutions* are suitably able to ensure an education leading to these qualifications?
- What characteristics should be held by the *curriculum structure of programmes* in order to lead to professional teacher qualifications and what are the *admission conditions*?
- What kind of *state funding* should be assigned to teacher education institutions?
- How should *authorisation* be granted to run teacher education programmes?
- How to promote and assure teacher education *quality*?
- What is the articulation between teacher education, teaching activity and teaching *career* admission and advancement?

## II. THE EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYSTEM

The education and training system teacher specific education exists for is organised as follows:

- (i) *pre-school* education: from 3 to 6 years of age;
- (ii) compulsory *basic education*: lasting 9 years – covering the ages of six to fifteen – it is composed of three cycles lasting four, two and three years, respectively;
- (iii) *secondary education*: lasting three years and covering the ages of fifteen to eighteen, allows a range of choices – general education and technological courses as well as vocational courses, some of which are alternance-based.

For youngsters and adults who do not successfully complete basic and secondary education, or a

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<sup>1</sup> To be more precise it should be mentioned that these policies are also different depending on the following categories: *university* or *Polytechnic* higher education; *public* or *private* higher education.

<sup>2</sup> Three reasons are usually called upon to legitimate the existence of a specific policy for teacher education. The first one relies on the fact that the state has a policy for basic and secondary education, both in state and private schools, namely concerning overall and specific objectives. Teacher education policies are held to be a constitutive element of policies on the nature and the quality of basic and secondary education. The second reason is related to the fact that the Ministry of Education is the major employer of teachers (at school level private schools only comprise about 10% of the students) without relying on selection of teaching candidates. Finally, regulation policies to licence any professional activity usually have implications on professional qualifications. In Portugal, regulation policies licensing professional teaching activity are fully included in the teacher education policies.

<sup>3</sup> In presenting the written policies, this report is mainly based on the legal documents and often relies on the actual expressions used in those documents, which are not quoted in the interests of 'readability'.

vocational qualification, there are *second choice education and training opportunities*, the most attended ones being recurrent education and vocational alternance-based training.

Higher education, where teacher education is provided, is organised according to the binary system – polytechnic and university; masters and doctorate degrees are only available in universities.

Several changes have been occurring in basic and secondary education over the last few years, with implications on teacher performance profiles, thus constituting new challenges for their education<sup>4</sup>. These changes lead broadly to a more context-driven teacher activity, which shapes a performance profile increasingly approaching that of an autonomous *professional* over that of a civil servant or technician.

### III. THE TEACHER EDUCATION SYSTEM

Embodied in a lifelong learning perspective and in the wider process of professional development, the teacher education system includes initial education, in-service education, and specialisation. There is no induction period<sup>5</sup>, yet, as we shall see, initial teacher education programmes include more or less long periods – mostly lasting one school year – of internship in schools.

The teacher education system's overall political purpose is the improvement of the quality of teaching and students' learning by enabling teachers to reflectively act, throughout their teaching life cycle, as professionals of change at classroom, school and educational territory levels.

*Initial* teacher education aims to provide teachers not only with basic information, methods, and scientific and pedagogical techniques, but also with personal and social education suited to teaching performance requirements. It is also supposed to allow for professional re-conversion and teacher mobility. *In-service* teacher education aims to promote teachers' permanent professional development, namely from a self-learning perspective. *Specialisation* qualifies teachers to perform specific educational functions such as school management, class co-ordination, teaching subject-matters co-ordination, resource-centre management, in-service teacher education management, etc.. Altogether, the teacher education system is supposed to develop in close articulation with research and innovative projects focusing on school educational reality.

### IV. PROFESSIONAL TEACHING QUALIFICATIONS

**1. Initial qualifications.** According to the 1986 Education Act, professional teaching qualifications should correspond to professional performance needs at each teaching level; the Government is responsible for defining teacher competence and education profiles necessary for admission to a teaching career.

The expression “teacher competence and education profiles” has different meanings depending on different characterisation levels of professional teaching qualifications and on its focus either on processes or outcomes:

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<sup>4</sup> The following stand out: (i) the setting out of *nation-wide curriculum guidelines for pre-school education*; (ii) the setting out of *essential competencies* to be achieved by students at the end of each cycle of basic education and to be evaluated in national examinations; (iii) the creation of *cross-curriculum themes* (citizenship education through its most stressed branches such as politics education, environmental education, sex education, ...) to be achieved through all the curriculum units (subjects); (iv) the creation of *project areas* which imply alternative methodologies in relation to the most common ones; (v) a deeper emphasis on the role to be played by *students' learning formative evaluation* as a central element of the teaching process organisation; (vi) the increasing *autonomy of schools*, with implications on the number of teachers to be involved in school development tasks beyond direct contact with students, which should be performed in teams, namely in what concerns *local development of the national curriculum, school self-evaluation* and deeper *connection to community members and institutions*; (vii) encouragement of the introduction of *information and communication technologies* into the teaching process; (viii) the promotion of *experimental teaching* as a complement or an alternative to most traditional theoretical and book-centred teaching; (ix) the setting out of *more ambitious learning outcomes* considering the contribution of education for economic competitiveness and social cohesion: more students learning and more learning achieved, (x) the adoption of aims related to the *European dimension of education*; (xi) the insertion of basic and secondary education from a *lifelong-learning perspective*. In addition to these educational policy measures, some on-going phenomena also set new challenges to teaching performance and education: the increasing social and cultural *heterogeneity* of students and the so-called *discipline and violence* problems in schools.

<sup>5</sup> A probation period is due but it has not been implemented.

- *differentiation of professional teaching qualifications*: teaching specialities requiring qualifications, defined in terms of teaching level(s) and teaching subject-matter(s) (for instance: qualifications to teach Biology and Geology in the third cycle of basic education and in secondary education);
- *competencies to be learned* (to be held) for the professional performance of teaching functions related to each speciality;
- *teacher education curriculum*: what should be *taught*, and *how*, to student teachers so they learn the competencies that characterise each teaching qualification.

(a) *Definition of teaching qualifications.* Up to now, only the scope of the different teaching qualifications has been defined and made the object of more explicit educational policy. Therefore, teachers are qualified as:

- *class teacher*: pre-school teacher; primary school teacher (1<sup>st</sup> cycle of basic education)
- *subject-matter(s) teacher*: 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle of basic education teacher; secondary school teacher (3<sup>rd</sup> cycle of basic education and secondary education); upper secondary school teacher (only for subject matters exclusively belonging to this teaching level).

A subject-matter teacher is qualified either to teach *one* single subject, or, as in the field of languages and exact and natural science, to teach *two* subjects. In this case even the specification of the subjects is politically defined<sup>6</sup>.

(b) *Competence profile for professional teaching performance.* There is no detailed, clear political definition of the functions which professional teacher education programmes qualify one to perform, nor even of the competencies which should be held or learned in order to do so. Yet, the broad definition reported in the sufficient to characterise teaching activity as *professional*. According to it, teacher education enables teachers:

- to assume a critical and active Education Act is attitude in face of social realities;
- to undertake innovative approaches and research in relation to their educational activity;
- to undertake self-evaluation and self-study in an on-going and reflective manner.

These elements are enough to confirm that the overall characterisation of teaching qualifications present in this political definition is not that of a *civil servant* who can follow external rules, nor that of a *technician* using standard practices whilst unaware of the specific context s/he acts in. Rather, it is the characterisation of a *professional* capable of analysing each teaching situation and producing the teaching practices likely to lead the highest number of students through the learning process, and capable of evaluating and reflecting on their own practice in a way which increases their competence in this process.

However, there is a more detailed, specific, though implicit definition, of competencies needed for professional teaching performance. This definition is present in policies related to curriculum and student assessment, to school management and evaluation, and to teachers' duties.

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<sup>6</sup> This definition of teaching qualifications has long been regarded as inadequate considering on-going changes in the basic and secondary education curriculum structure (the extension of compulsory education from 6 to 9 years, in 1986, stands out) and in school typologies according to the level of teaching they provide. Therefore, redefinition of teaching qualifications is underway, chiefly affecting the teaching levels it prepares for.

To clarify this implicit definition there has been a recent decision to establish a political definition of a performance profile in the teaching fields and levels for which each teaching qualification provides preparation. Preparation for this is now in the initial stages<sup>7</sup>.

(c) *National teacher education curriculum.* Sometimes professional teaching profiles also characterise the programme's content and process, that is, what should be taught and how, in a type of national teacher education curriculum. Given the ever-increasing autonomy of higher education institutions responsible for teacher education, such levels of specification for the political definition of professional profiles has not been considered adequate. With regard to the nature of the professional to be prepared, the effectiveness of such a measure would also be controversial. Definition of the programme's curricula – specific objectives, strategies, methods, activities and evaluation – is due to the higher education institutions, bearing in mind the outcomes implicitly or explicitly expressed in the performance profiles. Although this is the overall state of mind, there is, however, some political definition concerning the broad curriculum structure of teacher education programmes, as we shall see later in this report.

**2. Qualifications for teaching specialised functions.** The Education Act also considers the existence of specialised functions in educational administration and in schools, the performance of which calls for specific qualifications to be acquired by teachers on specialised education programmes.

The specialised training and qualification fields are as follows: (i) Special education; (ii) School and educational administration; (iii) Socio-cultural activity; (iv) Educational guidance; (v) Curriculum organisation and development; (vi) Pedagogical supervision and training of trainers; (vii) Teaching staff management and guidance; (viii) Educational communication and information management. Within each specialised qualification field, mention is made of the specialised functions it prepares for. In addition, the qualification profiles have been defined for each of these fields in terms of *competencies to be developed*, in view of the demands required by these functions: (i) critical analysis; (ii) intervention; (iii) training, supervision and evaluation; (iv) consultation.

## V. TEACHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

**1. Initial and specialised education institutions.** Since the mid 80's, all initial teacher education, and also, more recently, specialised education, has been supplied by higher education institutions in the context of the international trend towards its "universitisation". Up to this point, since the mid 70's, pre-school and primary school teacher education had been provided by Normal Schools, which already conferred post-secondary level qualifications, but not higher education qualifications. The practical pedagogical education of secondary education teachers has long been provided by the educational administration. From the mid 70's to the late 80's, universities gradually took over this responsibility by falling back upon the collaboration of schools. However, there are still teaching qualifications universities do not provide. In such cases teachers are hired from graduates who have only academic qualifications in the subject-matter to be taught, their theoretical and practical pedagogical education being guaranteed by the educational administration, with the support of higher education institutions, in most cases some years after having begun their teaching activity.

In accordance with the political definition of the Education Act, Universities are entitled to provide professional teaching qualifications in all education levels and fields. *Teacher Education Colleges*, the

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<sup>7</sup> The immediate need for definition of these profiles stemmed from the creation of an accreditation system for initial teacher education programmes mentioned later. They form the main means of judging the adequacy of the preparation/qualification which the programme seeks to assure regarding the demands of professional teaching. Judgement on adequacy is central to the accreditation procedure, as will be explained later. Although deriving from this immediate need, these profiles also constitute important guidelines for the organisation of teacher education programmes in higher education institutions, in that they express and systematise the outcomes to be achieved. They may also be relevant, not only to the process of certifying graduates' professional teaching qualifications, but also in the process of constructing a professional identity, both of teachers in general and each type of teacher in particular, and of their trainers.

successors to Normal Schools, are integrated in Polytechnic higher education and are only entitled to provide qualifications for pre-school and the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> cycles of basic education. Recently, parliament offered these Colleges the possibility of preparing for the 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle of basic education as well, although there is a lack of political definition, which would make creation of the respective programmes practicable (*cf.* chart 1).

*Chart 1 – Higher education institutions and teaching levels for which they can guarantee teacher education programmes*

	Pre-school education	Basic education			Secondary education
		1 <sup>st</sup> cycle	2 <sup>nd</sup> cycle	3 <sup>rd</sup> cycle	
Universities					→
Teacher education colleges				→	

Whereas most Teacher Education Colleges are exclusively dedicated to teacher education and all teaching-staff departments exist for this purpose, in universities, departments for subjects to be taught are also directed to provide other types of training, although in many, teacher education makes up the highest percentage of their activity. The former *are* teacher education *institutions*; the latter *run* teacher education *programmes*.

It should be noted that the State guarantees a public network of teaching institutions at all school levels, including higher education and, therefore, in the field of teacher education<sup>8</sup>.

**2. In-service teacher education institutions.** The range of institutions supplying in-service education is wider. Besides university and polytechnic higher education institutions, teacher and school associations can form *In-service Teacher Education Centres*; in principle, the same is also possible for central and regional departments of the educational administration which aim to supply in-service education programmes not supplied elsewhere<sup>9</sup>. It should be stressed that many institutions also organise short-term initiatives for teachers which may be relevant to their professional development.

<sup>8</sup> *Table 1*  
*Initial teacher education programmes per type of institution and teaching level (1999-2000)*

Institutions Teaching levels	Public Universities N = 13	Public Teacher Education Colleges N= 14	Private Higher Education N = 19	Total
Pre-school	6	14	11	31
1 <sup>st</sup> cycle	6	13	8	27
1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> cycle	0	68	38	106
3 <sup>rd</sup> cycle and upper secondary	141	0	25	166
<b>Total</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>330</b>

Source: National Institute for Accreditation of Teacher Education

<sup>9</sup> *Table 2*  
*Accredited Centres for In-service Teacher Education (December 1999)*

## VI. TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMMES

**1. Initial teacher education programmes.** In accordance with the changes introduced by the Education Act of 1997, pre-school, basic and secondary school teachers acquire their professional qualification through higher education programmes, graduating with a *Licenciatura* degree. Prior to this, the professional qualification for pre-school and primary school teachers was supposed to be acquired through 3-year programmes leading to a Baccalaureate higher education degree. After the changes of 1997, the *unification of qualification levels* for all teachers was completed.

(a) *Professional teaching qualification awards and length of programmes.* Since 1986 the same Act has stated that the diploma to be awarded by teacher education programmes should certify the specific professional qualification in which training has been given. The Government's political definition stresses that it is the teacher education programmes which award professional teaching qualifications, clarifying that it is this qualification which enables entry to a teaching career. These programmes simultaneously award academic degrees and professional diplomas and confer and certify professional qualifications.

According to the Education Act, all *licenciatura* programmes last from 4 to 6 years. After the above-mentioned changes, pre-school and primary school teacher education programmes became 4-year programmes, all others generally last five years, or six in some cases.

(b) *Curriculum structure of programmes.* In its definition of the teacher education profile for entry to a teaching career, the Government not only identifies the outcomes to be achieved in a very general way, as we have seen, but it also defines both the global components for the programmes' curriculum structure and their weight within the whole.

The curriculum structure of the programmes and of each of their components should substantiate some of the politically defined principles, some of which are more outcome-based and others more process-based: (i) to promote learning of the different functions appropriate to the demands of a teaching career; (ii) to ensure integration both of the scientific and pedagogical features and of the theoretical and practical components; (iii) to be based on methodological practices similar to the ones teachers would use in their teaching activity; (iv) to enhance critical analysis practices, research and pedagogical innovation and the constructive involvement of the environment.

The previously mentioned Government political definition, following a broad statement on the components which the teacher education curriculum should comprise – (i) personal, social and cultural development, (ii) scientific knowledge of the subject-matter, and (iii) didactic and pedagogical training – subsequently organised the three components differently (the first two merge and the third is divided into theory and practice): (i) *personal, social, cultural, scientific, technological, technical or artistic training* for a specific teaching speciality; (ii) *educational sciences* (including specific didactics); (iii) *pedagogical practice*.

The political definition also considers the *weight* of the various components in the programmes. Two overall principles rule this consideration: (i) the cultural and scientific education component should be of

Higher Education Institutions	85
School Associations	201
Teacher Associations	57
Other	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>363</b>

Source: *Scientific and Pedagogic Council for In-service Teacher Education*

increasing importance the higher the teaching level teachers are being prepared for, (ii) the pedagogical-didactic component should be emphasised when educating pre-school and primary school teachers. The political definition even sets out quantitative parameters to define the components' weight. Therefore: (i) the *pedagogical-didactic education* component and the *pedagogical practice* component should be kept in balance with the *cultural and scientific education* component, and both should not exceed 60% of the time allocated to all subjects in programmes for pre-school and primary school teachers; (ii) the *cultural and scientific* component should not exceed 70% of the time allocated to all subjects in programmes for teachers of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> cycles of basic education, and 80% in secondary teacher education programmes.

The presence of these three components has been assured in two ways: all components are either present throughout the programme, in *parallel*, or the theoretical and practical pedagogical and didactic components *follow* (generally after the 3<sup>rd</sup> year) the cultural and scientific component, this only being the case in teacher education programmes for subject-matter teachers. For both subject-matter teachers of a vocational and artistic nature, and secondary subject-matter teachers, professional teaching qualifications can also be acquired through a *licenciatura* graduate programme, which guarantees academic subject-matter preparation, complemented by a suitable pedagogical education programme<sup>10</sup>.

The governmental political definition is more detailed concerning the *pedagogical practice* component. After stating the formative value of this component in the development of the skills and competencies teacher education integrates, it is also established that this component should be materialised through diversified activities to be supplied throughout the programme. There is then the possibility of it assuming the nature of an internship in its final part, the institutions therefore being connected to a network of schools. Co-operation mechanisms to be established with the school network, and the conditions under which pedagogical practice should be developed, are also the object of the Ministry of Education's specific political definition, these are, however, variable, depending on the programme. Several features distinguish the pedagogical practice supplied in teacher education programmes for pre-school teachers and teachers for the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> cycles of basic education from that supplied in those for the 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle of basic education and for secondary education<sup>11</sup>.

(c) *Admission to initial teacher education programmes.* Access to any higher education programme and therefore to any initial teacher education programme can be achieved through successful completion of any secondary education course. There is no specific policy for access to teacher education programmes. However, their specificity can be taken into account by higher education institutions through the establishment of admittance conditions, and by the Ministry when defining the number of students to be admitted yearly.

In the first case, the institutions set out the subjects for which national exams are required and the minimum mark to be achieved. As there is an overall mark of admittance to higher education, an allowed minimum mark has also been established. That is, political definition gives training institutions the

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<sup>10</sup> Two types of situations comprise this reality, but these have rarely been taken: (i) The *licenciatura* programme covers, over four years, the cultural and scientific, and the educational sciences components, whereas the complementing programme covers, over one year, the specific didactic and pedagogical practice components; and (ii) the *licenciatura* programme only covers, over four years, the cultural and scientific component, whereas the complementing programme covers the remaining components over two years.

<sup>11</sup> In the first case, the logic of the *teacher education situation* prevails: (i) the school teacher who is supposed to supervise practice is entitled to a salary bonus provided by the higher education institution and (ii) does not benefit from any reduction in teaching activity to accomplish it; (iii) the student-teacher takes on the responsibility of teaching the classes assigned to his/her supervisory teacher and (iv) is not entitled to a work contract signed by the Ministry of Education, nor does s/he earn a salary for the supervised teaching activity s/he undertakes; (v) assessment of pedagogical practice is the higher education institution's exclusive responsibility.

Contrarily, in the second case, the participation of the Ministry of Education is significant, thus the logic of the *professional activity starting position* prevails: (i) the supervised teaching is called internship and the supervisor is entitled to a salary bonus and (ii) reduction in teaching activity, both provided by the Ministry of Education; (iii) the student-teacher is assigned her/his own classes to teach during this period; (iv) the Ministry of Education signs a work contract with her/him and pays the corresponding salary; (v) evaluation during this period is the shared responsibility of the higher education institution teacher and the school teacher where the internship takes place.

responsibility of settling admittance requirements in relation to previous qualifications in terms of areas and rates attained with no disregard of the politically settled minimum.

The number of students to be admitted yearly in each higher education institution is settled each year by the Ministry of Education following the institutions' proposals. The Ministry can thus regulate the number of future teachers in-training by taking into account factors linked to the institution and to the overall number of teachers needed. However, the estimate of teachers needed has not been considered in the definition of the *numerus clausus* for teacher education programmes.

**2. Teacher Education Specialisation programmes.** There is an overall policy for programmes that professionally qualify and certify specialised teaching activities. According to it, the programmes' curriculum priority should favour scientific and pedagogical education over merely technical or administrative training and a more specific definition is settled for its components: (i) a general educational sciences component not exceeding 20% of the total number of hours; (ii) specific education in the field of specialisation, which should not fall below 60% and (iii) a third component directed to the design, development and evaluation of a project to be undertaken in the same field. The programme's minimum duration is 250 effective training hours.

Provided it follows these parameters, specialised education can be obtained through programmes conferring either a *licenciatura*, masters or doctorate degree or merely a post-graduate diploma.

Conditions are also settled with regard to the teaching-staff on these programmes: teachers with a masters or doctorate degree must effectively guarantee 70% of the total number of hours.

Admission to these programmes is limited to graduates (i) with a professional teaching qualification for any non-higher education school level (ii) who have carried out teaching functions for at least five years. In 1999, 48 specialised teacher education programmes were accredited.

**3. In-service teacher education programmes.** In-service teacher education is generally carried out through short-term actions of a minimum duration of 15 hours, the form of which have been politically defined: (i) courses; (ii) modules; (iii) attendance on higher education single subjects; (iv) seminars; (v) workshops; (vi) training placements; (vii) projects; (viii) study groups.

The accredited actions are attributed credits (required for advancement within a teaching career), 25 hours corresponds to one credit. School Association Centres have supplied most in-service education programmes<sup>12</sup>, with "courses" having the highest percentage of all supply. However, in the last few years there has been increasing growth in forms such as "workshops", "projects", and "study groups".

## VII. TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMMES' FUNDING

**1. Initial teacher education.** There is no specific policy for state funding of institutions and initial teacher education programmes as the general funding policy for higher education applies to them. Yet policy is different for public and private sectors, and in the public sector funding depends on the different programmes groupings, one of which are the teacher education programmes. However, there is indirect

<sup>12</sup> Table 3  
In-service education actions with accreditation in force on 31.12.99

Higher Education Centres	School Association Centres	Teacher Association Centres	Other	Total
1 274	8 026	1 453	722	<b>11 475</b>

Source: *Scientific and Pedagogic Council for In-service Teacher Education*

funding for 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle and secondary teacher education programmes covered by universities. In question is funding for school internship<sup>13</sup>.

**2. Specialised and in-service teacher education.** There is a specific funding system for specialised and in-service education supplied by in-service teacher education centres, whether or not this involves higher education or public or private institutions. A specific Ministry of Education body is responsible for the management of this system. The Ministry of Education sets out the priorities in terms of content and type of action and the Centres apply for funding with concrete in-service teacher education action.

### VIII. AUTHORISATION FOR RUNNING TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMMES

Authorisation for the creation and operation of an initial teacher education *institution* is not the object of any specific political definition, the overall policy being applied with regard to the creation and running of higher education institutions, which, as can be noticed, is different if it involves university or polytechnic, public or private education. Authorisation for running a *programme* and public *recognition of degrees* awarded by initial teacher education programmes also follow the overall policy regarding programmes in the higher education sector to which they belong<sup>14</sup>.

Although teacher education programmes award not only academic degrees but also professional diplomas, programme running used until recently, to depend on a similar process to that followed by any higher education programme conferring academic degrees, mindful of a brief checking procedure on its conformity to teacher education legal rules. The similarity of the processes having been identified as inadequate, the running authorisation of programmes aimed at preparing teachers and certifying initial professional teaching qualifications recently became dependent on profession-enabling recognition through a specific procedure – that of *professional accreditation*. The running of in-service and specialised teacher education programmes also depends on accreditation.

### IX. PROMOTING AND ASSURING QUALITY IN TEACHER EDUCATION

**1. Promotion of quality.** Promoting the quality of teacher education programmes, as in the case of other higher education programmes, is the responsibility of autonomous higher education institutions, and is mainly conducted by their pedagogical and scientific co-ordination bodies, therefore relying upon financing resources and incentives available and acting according to the appropriate legal framework. One of the main instruments for the promotion of quality used for this purpose is institutional and programme *evaluation*. This evaluation is assured by associations of each sector's higher education institutions under the co-ordination of the National Council for the Evaluation of Higher Education. It is a self-evaluation procedure initially undertaken by the institutions' staff and then validated by an external committee. The evaluation procedure that started in public higher education in the mid 90's (the first evaluation procedure of all institutions and programmes being expected to be completed in 2000) was extended to public and private polytechnic higher education only at the end of the decade.

One of the aims of the recently created National Institute for the Accreditation of Teacher Education is also to promote, at national level, debate and dissemination of ideas and practices on the quality of initial

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<sup>13</sup> In fact (i) student-teachers are remunerated as full-time teachers although they undertake training and teaching on a part-time basis; (ii) supervising teachers get a small supplementary bonus directly from the Ministry of Education and (iii) are assigned reduced working hours, which incurs costs as schools must rely upon other teachers' work; (iv) finally, sometimes teachers cannot be assigned full-time teaching activities to allow for student-teachers training placements, which also incurs extra costs as they are paid as full-time workers.

<sup>14</sup> Therefore, state university education programmes are created by the appropriate university bodies, although programme operating depends on its registration in the Higher Education Directorate. Polytechnic education programmes are created by the Minister of Education following this Directorate's analyses of the institution's proposal. Private higher education courses are created by the respective institutions but programme operating authorisation is granted by the Minister of Education following analysis of the proposal by the Higher Education Directorate.

teacher education. This activity is about to start although no specific funding has yet been settled for initiatives to be carried out by the teacher education institutions.

At European community level, the incentive for dissemination of ideas and practices has been higher, mainly through ERASMUS and then COMENIUS growing increasingly over the years that higher education and non-higher education institutions have been involved in projects within the context of these programs.

Finally it is worth noting that the recently created accreditation of initial education, and former in-service education, although more directly aimed at *certifying* the quality of professional teacher education, can also contribute to the *promotion* of quality and innovation in this domain.

**2. Quality assurance.** The certification of professional teacher education quality is done through a process of professional accreditation.

(a) *Professional accreditation of initial education.* Professional accreditation evaluates how appropriate the teacher education programme is to the quality demands of professional teaching performance. Recognition of a teacher education programme leading to a professional teaching qualification requires an *initial professional accreditation* certificate. This entitles the higher education institution itself to certify the professional teaching qualification of graduates. Accreditation is valid for a limited period, therefore, to keep programmes which lead to professional teaching certification running, they are required to obtain *professional accreditation renewal*. So, it is a question not only of *ex-ante* but also of *ex-post* accreditation. The framework for the professional accreditation procedure is composed of the legal norms for teacher education, overall and specific professional performance profiles and quality standards for initial teacher education programmes. Definition of the former lies with the Ministry of Education, while the latter is the accreditation body's responsibility. Accreditation also takes into account the programmes' internal and external evaluation reports undertaken by the higher education quality evaluation system.

The accreditation body, the National Institute for the Accreditation of Teacher Education, is a public institution to which Government has delegated this responsibility. It is governed by a General Council, where there is representation of teacher education institutions, basic and secondary teachers, parents, teachers' employers, departments of the Ministry of Education, student teachers and business. General Council members are appointed by the institutions they represent, and its President is appointed by the Council of Ministers. Appointment of the Accreditation Committee members is made by the General Council.

As the system for initial teacher education professional accreditation was created in June 1999, the accreditation of programmes has not yet started. Its instruments and methodologies are being prepared with the participation of social partners. In addition to future new programmes, all existing teacher education programmes will have to apply for professional accreditation.

(b) *Accreditation of in-service and specialised education.* Teacher Education Centres must be accredited to provide state-funded teacher in-service education with effects on career advancement. Higher education institutions and Ministry of Education departments are free from accreditation. The centres' accreditation has a limited validity period (3 years), and needs to be renewed after this period.

To be financed by the State and effect career advancement, all in-service education *actions* must also be accredited. When these effects are not intended, teacher education supply is not subject to any politically defined conditions. Previous accreditation is also needed for programmes aiming to certify specialised education for specific educational functions.

The Scientific and Pedagogical Council for In-service Teacher Education is responsible for this accreditation procedure. It is composed of people appointed by the Ministry of Education. The possibility

is politically open for the process of accreditation of in-service and specialised education to become the responsibility of the institution in charge of initial teacher education professional accreditation.

(c) *Inspection*. All higher education institutions and programmes, and therefore those that prepare teachers, are submitted to inspection by the General-Inspection of Education. The legal framework for the running of higher education programmes has implicit quality requirements, so inspecting conformity is also a means of quality assurance. It should be stressed that inspection has only recently extended its sphere of action to higher education, its activities having, up to now, mainly focused on private higher education. Inspection also comprises specialised and in-service teacher education actions organised by higher education institutions and by In-service Teacher Education Centres, although it has been focusing on financial management features.

## X. TEACHER EDUCATION AND CAREER

One teacher education policy issue is its relationships with the licence to teach, employment as a teacher and career admission and advancement when employed in the public sector of school education (the vast majority of teachers).

**1. Licence to teach: certification of professional teaching qualification.** According to the Education Act, graduates with a diploma certifying specific professional qualifications are allowed to teach, thus constituting the licence to teach. The diploma certifying the professional teaching qualification is obtained, as has already been indicated, through successful attendance on *licenciatura* programmes organised by higher education institutions according to the demands of teaching performance in the respective education level.

Formerly, certification of professional teaching qualification for subject-matter teachers was obtained in a different way. Graduates with an academic diploma (Baccalaureate or *Licenciatura*) could start teaching and later on, could obtain certification of professional qualifications through pedagogical training (theory and practice) organised by the educational administration and run in schools. It should be highlighted that a certain level of academic qualification was required to be admitted to this complementary pedagogical training. However, although increasingly less so, it has been necessary to rely upon people without this kind of academic qualification, who would not be able to access this training without completing their academic education.

As for programmes leading to the professional qualification of subject-matter teachers which have been created and run, it has became less and less necessary to rely upon people without academic qualifications. Yet, admission of these people to teaching continues to be allowed. Several reasons justify this, some of which stand out, such as the non-existence in higher education institutions of professional qualification programmes for some subject-matters, and the shortage of a qualified professional supply in others, namely in schools located in certain geographical and social areas. That is why the alternative to obtaining professional qualifications continues to exist and is guaranteed by the educational administration in co-operation with initial teacher education institutions. It is worth nothing that the 1986 Education Act settled that resorting to professionally unqualified teachers on a permanent basis should, in the short term, be made unnecessary.

One of the goals of the National Institute for the Accreditation of Teacher Education, beyond the accreditation of initial teacher education programmes, is that of the *external certification* of professional teaching qualifications. However, there is still no political definition clarifying the circumstances for the implementation of this prerogative: whether only in the case of professionals in other fields who would be interested in a professional reintegration to this field or in broader circumstances.

**2. Licence to teach for graduates of other European Union Member-States.** Mention should also be made of the licence to teach being granted to citizens whose diploma has been obtained in other European

Union Member-States and in countries that have signed the agreement on the European Economic Area. The respective European community directive is in force in Portugal. Graduates who hold a higher education diploma sanctioning professional education with a minimum duration of three years, and who are licensed to teach in the Member-States where their education has been completed, or in any other Member-State, can apply for a licence to teach in Portugal. They may be required to take a Portuguese Language exam.

As in Portugal access to teaching is still possible for those holding academic qualifications only, a license to teach has also been granted to people in the same conditions coming from European Union Member-States and from the European Economic Area<sup>15</sup>.

**3. Teacher education and access to teaching in the public sector.** There is also a political definition of access to teaching in the public sector of school education. There is no selection procedure for applicants. They are sorted at national level within each teaching speciality only on the basis of their qualifications and correspondent marks. Priority is given to graduates with a professional teaching qualification certificate but, when there is a supply shortage, those holding more or less suitable academic qualifications can also get jobs. Lists are periodically publicised of the programmes the Ministry of Education acknowledges as academically qualifying for teaching. The former can be employed on a permanent basis with a career structured on several levels; the latter, in certain circumstances, can also be employed on a permanent basis, only becoming entitled to admission and advancement within a teaching career after they obtain a professional qualification certificate<sup>16</sup>.

**4. Teacher education and advancement within a teaching career in the public sector.** Advancement along the various levels of a teaching career (with reference only to different remuneration and not different functions) is also dependent, although not exclusively, on attendance on in-service teacher education actions. Therefore there is the political definition of an in-service education credit system to be carried out by the institution in charge of its accreditation. Acquisition of a certain number of credits by attending accredited in-service education actions is a minimum requirement for advancement from one career level to another. This is the common way for linking education and career. There is, however, another though less frequently used way: graduation with academic degrees of a higher level than the one held (*licenciado*, master and doctor). For example, as most pre-school and primary teachers and some subject-matter teachers, graduate with the Baccalaureate, it has recently become possible for them to acquire the *licenciado* degree through completion of a complementary programme organised by higher education institutions. This allows career progression in terms of salary. Career progression is also possible with the obtention of a masters or doctor degree.

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<sup>15</sup> Up to November 1999, about 200 applications had been submitted to the department of the Ministry of Education in charge of this matter. Among these, 68 did not fulfil the conditions needed to proceed because of inadequate instruction in the process or because of non-conformity, 46 were supposed to take a Portuguese Language exam and 100 were granted a license: only 8 applicants with professional qualifications were permitted to teach, the remaining 92 held academic qualification. The nationality of the authorised applicants is reported in table 4.

*Table 4*

*Number of citizens with a diploma obtained in another-Member-State of the EU who were granted authorisation to teach in Portugal, according to their nationality*

Spanish	Portuguese	Italian	German	French	Belgium	Dutch	Austrian	Danish	British	Others	Total
31	21	18	10	7	6	3	1	1	1	3	100

Source: DGAE

<sup>16</sup> In 1997, all teachers in public primary education held professional teaching qualifications, whereas in the 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle only 87.8% did. Within the full range of the 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle of basic education and secondary education teachers, only 3/4 held professional qualifications (source: DAPP).

In addition to being able to attend in-service education initiatives after work, all teachers have the right to exemption from teaching for 8 days per year. Moreover, each year a small percentage of teachers can also enjoy a sabbatical for the same purpose.

**5. Teacher education and access to specialised functions.** Access to specialised functions to be undertaken in schools does not yet depend on specific professional qualifications obtained through specialised education programmes and certified by higher education institutions. As noted, there is a political definition regarding qualifications and competencies needed to undertake these functions. However, access is not yet restricted to those who have acquired a specific professional qualification, nor do they receive priority, except in the case of special education.

## XI. SOME CURRENT ISSUES FOR TEACHER EDUCATION POLICIES

**1. Teacher education centred in professional teaching outcomes.** The specific expected outcomes of teacher education are not clearly established and the definition of the curriculum components to achieve them is nearly generic, as higher education is, scientifically and pedagogically autonomous. Therefore it is small wonder there is great curriculum diversity in the more than three hundred programmes provided by nearly fifty institutions, even among programmes which prepare for the same teaching qualification. There is no evidence given this diversity, although desirable to a certain extent, that equivalence among the main outcomes is being achieved and that these are suitable to the teaching subjects and levels they should qualify for. Doubts increase if we consider the weak tradition of higher education providers in teacher education curriculum development, implementation and evaluation centred in professional teaching outcomes. At the same time, several new challenges to the role of teachers have emerged or are emerging, and the teacher education culture of universities and colleges is changing slowly in response to them. It is expected that this situation will be improved by the recently created professional accreditation system of teacher education programmes and by the political definition of professional teaching profiles which constitutes the framework of that system. In particular, if its implementation is paralleled by the development of the accreditation body's other task, that is, the promotion of teacher education quality by means of promoting debates and disseminating ideas and practices within this field among the institutions and social actors engaged in it.

**2. Conditions of schools and of professional teachers' participation in practice and internship.** Supervised student-teaching practice is necessary for learning initial teaching competence. There is general agreement on the need for substantial improvement in this component of teacher education. Some of the problems stem from the difficulties of finding enough well qualified supervising teachers; of higher education institutions appropriately valuing practice as an unavoidable opportunity for qualifying teachers; and of establishing effective links with the schools where the internship takes place. The lack of well qualified supervisors and of other favourable conditions for internship increases when the number of student-teachers in the same teaching speciality is high and exceeds the number of the teachers needed, as is often the case.

**3. Professionally qualified teachers in all teaching specialities and nation-wide.** In some teaching specialities, namely in arts, technological and vocational areas, there is no possibility of obtaining professional qualifications before being employed as a teacher. Moreover, some schools do not attract enough qualified teachers. Thus, despite the great investment made in the last two decades, still more than twenty percent of secondary school teachers do not hold a professional qualification, and some do not even hold an appropriate academic one.

**4. In-service teacher education centred on the problems in teaching and school learning outcomes.** There are some doubts whether in-service teacher education is having the needed effect on teaching and school learning outcomes. Most in question are: (i) the varied training needs of employed teachers and, in some

cases, the lack of academic and professional teaching qualifications is significant; (ii) in-service teacher education is more supply than demand driven; (iii) and demand is nearly always an individual choice and driven by career advancement through obtaining training credits; (iv) teachers and schools have scarcely been accountable for the learning outcomes of their students.