

21 PORTUGAL - National report on family support policy & provision

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21.1 Trends and issues related to demography

1.1 Fertility rates

Portuguese fertility rates were among the highest in Europe during the 70s, but this has declined severely after the 1980s and 1990s, in contrast with some other European countries where the fertility rates were increasing during this period. After 2000, the fertility rate has stabilised below 1.4. Portugal has one of the lowest fertility rates in all OCDE, and is among the group of countries with the smallest number of births.

Table 1. *Fertility rates*

Year	Fertility rate
2010	1.39
2015	1.31
2016	1.36
2017	1.38
2018	1.42
2019	N/A

1.2 Families with children by number of children

Overall, in the last decade the number of households with children shows a slight descendant curve, contrasting with the upward trend in the number of households without children. Households with children are predominantly families with one child.

Table 2. *Households by number of children*

Year	Number of children (%)			
	0	1	2	3+
2010	48.8	30.1	17.4	3.7
2015	50.2	30.0	16.8	3.0
2016	50.5	29.6	16.8	3.1
2017	51.5	28.3	17.0	3.1
2018	52.4	27.8	16.5	3.3
2019	52.4	28.0	16.4	3.2

Source: Eurostat (2020)

1.3 Percentage of the population from 0 to 19

The percentage of the population aged 19 or under has steadily lowered during the last decade, and is currently at 19.1%. This figure represents a minus of 1.6% in this age group. Likewise, Portugal follows the trends of other European countries of an aging population. The old-age dependency ratio in 2019 between the age groups 15-64 vs +65 years is of 33.9% and it increases to 53.9% if we compare the 20-50 vs +60 years of age groups. Indeed, for 2050, it is expected that 40% of the Portuguese population will be 65 or older, and Portugal will be the fourth oldest country in the world, after Japan, South Korea, and Spain (United Nations, 2015).

Table 3. *Population aged 19 or under*

Year	%
2010	20.7
2015	19.7
2016	19.5
2017	19.4
2018	19.2
2019	19.1

1.4 Percentage of the population over working (retiring) age

The share of the population aged 65 or above has been increasing in the past decade; indeed, year by year, the figures are higher, signalling the expansion of this age group.

Table 4. *Population over working age (proportion of population aged 65 or more)*

Year	%
2010	18.3
2015	20.3
2016	20.7

2017 21.1

2018 21.5

2019 21.8

1.5 Cultural/social/ethnic diversity and identities:

Although the migrant population is increasing in Europe, it is important to note that the percentages of foreign-born population is around 8% in Portugal which is not high when compared with other European countries. More so, when looking at children under five where the percentages are around 4%. If one considers the percentage of foreign-born children (under five) in the total number of children, Portugal shows only approximately 1.5% of foreign-born children. Thus, the overall picture indicates that Portugal is not, in comparative terms, under significant pressure due to large proportions of foreign-born population or children.

As Nata and Cadima (2019) posed these numbers certainly underestimate the cultural diversity within a country, as a particular national (ethnic) minority is not reflected in these statistics: Gypsy communities. Please note that, within the Portuguese context, the term Gypsy is preferable to the term Roma. There is no official number of the Portuguese Gypsy population, as it is forbidden by the Portuguese law to identify citizens based upon their ethnicity. Some estimates have been set forth ranging from approximately 0.2% to 2% of the Portuguese population, respectively.

This minority is the most impoverished one within the Portuguese population, as well as the most discriminated against, compared to other ethnic/migrant groups in Portugal (Nata & Cadima, 2019)

1.6 Migration patterns

If until 1980 Portugal was essentially a country of emigration and at the beginning of the 1990s 30% of all Portuguese lived or worked abroad; in 2017 there were 38,273 persons considered to be permanent emigrants (emigrants for more than one year) and 29,925 permanent immigrants. In 2015, 388,732 foreigners were living in Portugal, representing around 4% of the population, with Portuguese-speaking communities being the most represented ones (Brazil, Cape Verde, Angola, and Guinea Bissau) alongside with immigrants from Ukraine. Foreign communities living in Portugal are, nevertheless, diversified, including citizens of over 150 countries. The share of children immigrants has been varying between 12 and 16%.

The flux of emigrants is still high, as the rate of transnational mobility has been increasing with more qualified youth trying to find a job in the European Union.

Table 5. *Number of Immigrants*

Year	Number of Immigrants					
	Total	Aged under 15	%	From countries with low HDI	From countries with low HDI (aged under 15)	%
2013	17,554	2392	13.6	1895	304	16.0
2014	19,516	2395	12.3	1828	263	14.4
2015	29,896	4050	13.5	3433	476	13.9
2016	29,925	4071	13.6	4629	605	13.1
2017	36,639	4755	13.0	3356	469	14.0
2018	43,170	5274	12.2	6224	750	12.1

21.2 Trends and issues related to family structures, parental roles and children's living arrangements

2.1 Family household types

Available data show an increase in households composed of one adult and couples without children and a decrease in households of couples with children. This trend was already identified in Table 2 regarding the number of households with children and is also related to the decline in fertility rates previously mentioned. In addition, it is relevant to note the increase in the number of single parent families and single person households with individuals older than 65 years.

Table 6. *Household types*

Year	Aver-age house- hold size	Single person house- holds	Couple without children	Couple with children	Single parent families	Other	Single person household aged 65 or + (from the total of single person households)
2010	2.7	18.0	23.5	38.8	8.7	10.9	N/A
2015	2.7	21.6	23.6	35.7	10.4	8.6	52.8
2016	2.7	21.7	23.4	35.5	10.7	8.7	54.0
2017	2.6	22.1	23.9	35.0	10.7	8.2	54.4
2018	2.6	22.7	24.3	34.0	11.1	7.9	54.1
2019	N/A	22.5	24.8	33.8	11.1	7.8	54.9

Source: National Statistics Office (2020a)

2.2 Marriage and divorce rates

Marriage and divorce rates have been stable in the past decade, nevertheless the marriage crude rate has a decrease and women's age at first marriage an increase. The marriage rate is lower than the EU-28 average (4.4 in 2016) but the divorce rate is higher than this average (1.9 in 2015). Indeed, the number of divorces per 100 marriages in Portugal has shown values as high as 72, on 2015, which is significantly higher than the EU-28 average (43.1 in 2015).

Table 7. *Marriage and divorce statistics*

Year	Marriage rate	Divorce rate	Women's age at first marriage	Number of divorces/100 marriages
2010	3.8	2.6	27.7	69.8
2015	3.1	2.3	30.2	72.2
2016	3.1	2.2	30.4	69.0
2017	3.3	2.1	30.7	64.2
2018	3.4	2.0	31.1	N/A
2019	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

2.3 Lone-parent families

The average household size has been constant as seen on table 6; but the number of single-parent families has been increasing.

2.4 New family forms

Same-sex marriage was legally approved in 2010 (Decree Law n°9/2010) and from that date on the marriage rate have been steadily increasing.

Table 8. *Same-sex marriages*

Year	Marriage rate
2010	266
2015	350
2016	422
2017	523

2018 607

2019 677

Source: National Statistics Office (2020b)

2.5 Family structures and changes across social groups;

See section 2.1

2.6 and 2.7 children and youth living in institutions, in out-of-home care such as foster care; home-based support.

The legal framework for children and youth protection had a significant update (Decree Law n° 142/2015) during the last decade which have contributed to improve deinstitutionalization, avoiding long institutionalization periods and offering more support to children and families. Thus, there is a decrease in the number of children in institutions, and also an accentuated decrease from 2010 to 2018 in home-based care.

A note of concern regards the number of children living in specialized institutions (youth between 12-17 years with severe emotional difficulties and disruptive behaviours) which has increased and reached full capacity in the past years. This indicator is worrying since the number of institutionalized youth and children with mental health difficulties has been increasing (CASA, 2019).

Table 9. *Children in Institutions or out-of-home care*

Year	In Institutions	In specialized institutions ¹	Home base care	Other type of foster care
2010	8219	N/A	553	N/A
2015	7617	60	303	N/A
2016	7203	72	261	N/A
2017	6583	94	246	630

2018	6118	97	200	617
2019	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

¹ Youth between 12-17 years with severe emotional difficulties and disruptive behaviours

Source: CASA, (2019)

Table 10. *Children in institutions by age*

Year	0 - 3	4 - 5	6 - 9	10 - 11	12 - 14	15 - 17	18 - 20	21 - 24
2017	616	287	696	519	1447	2735	1253	0
2018	578	273	639	479	1318	2509	1096	140

Source: CASA (2019)

21.3 Trends and issues related to socio-economic disadvantage and welfare

3.1 Poverty rates

Poverty rates for the population have been under 20%, and show a slight decrease in the last two years of data (2017-2018); however, poverty or social exclusion of individuals under 18 have been over 20% with a steadily decrease in the past eight years.

Severe material deprivation also shows a declining trend across the past years.

Table 11. *Socioeconomic disadvantages rates*

Year	At risk of poverty ¹	At risk of poverty or social exclusion	At risk of poverty or social exclusion (< 18 y)	Severe material deprivation	Severe material deprivation (< 18 y)
2010	17.9	25.3	28.7	9.0	10.8

2015	19.5	26.6	29.6	9.6	11.0
2016	19.0	25.1	27.0	8.4	9.6
2017	18.3	23.3	24.2	6.9	7.4
2018	17.3	21.6	21.9	6.0	5.7
2019	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

¹ Cut-off point: 60% of median equalized income after social transfers)

3.2 Employment/unemployment rates

Employment rates have been increasing slightly while unemployment is decreasing. Nevertheless, in 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, these numbers are following an inverse trend.

Table 12. (Un)Employment rates (15-64 years of age)

Year	Total employment	Total unemployment
2010	65.3	12.0
2015	63.9	12.6
2016	65.2	11.2
2017	67.8	9.0
2018	69.7	7.0
2019	N/A	N/A

3.3 Patterns of economic and employment disadvantage related to gender, age, and migrant status

While unemployment rates of young people (15-24 years of age) have been increasing; employment rates have had a decrease from 2010 to 2017 and a slight increase from 2017 to 2019. A turning point around 2016 has been observed both for men and women, i.e., an increase in unemployment rates until 2016 and a decrease afterwards. This is likely related to the alleviation of financial restriction measures that were imposed in Portugal, in the preceding years, by Troika (including the European Commission (EC) the European Central Bank (ECB) and the international Monetary Fund (IMF)).

Nevertheless, women's unemployment rates are always higher than men's are.

Data on immigrants' employment situation is scarce; the available data by the OECD shows that in 2018 the unemployment was of 8.5, and the employment of 75.1 (OECD, 2019). In light of this, a trend cannot be reported.

Table 13. (Un)Employment rates by gender and age groups

Year	Employment (15-24 y)	Unemployment (15-24 y)	Employment Men (vs women)	Employment Men aged 15 or +	Employment Women aged 15 or +	Unemployment Men	Unemployment rate women
2010	6.6	16.1	52.5	60.7	49.2	9.8	11.9
2015	5.5	18.3	51.3	56.2	46.9	12.2	12.7
2016	5.7	17.8	51.3	56.9	47.5	11.0	11.2
2017	5.9	19.1	51.3	59.0	49.0	8.4	9.4
2018	6.1	20.6	51.1	60.1	50.3	6.6	7.4
2019	6.2	20.1	51.0	60.5	50.8	5.8	7.1

Source: National Statistics Office, (2020c) – INE- Employment Statistics

A defining feature of the Portuguese labour market in terms of gender is that not only women are almost equally represented in the active labour force, but the percentage of working mothers is quite high (76% in 2011) contrasting with the European Union average of 57% (OECD, 2011).

The gender pay gap in Portugal is salient and more accentuated amongst upper-level professionals. Nevertheless, there has been a positive trend in this regard with the gender gap showing a slight reduction in the past decade.

Table 14. *Gender pay gap (women vs men)*

Year	Total	Senior managers and executive	Middle Managers	Unqualified Workers
2010	-18.0	-28.3	-14.4	-11.0
2015	-16.7	-26.4	-13.9	-10.5
2016	-15.8	-26.2	-13.2	-8.8
2017	-14.9	-26.4	-13.5	-7.6
2018	-14.5	-26.1	-13.4	-6.9
2019	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: National Statistics Office (2020d)

3.4 Patterns of education disadvantage

It is relevant to also mention the attendance of early childhood education and care (ECEC) in Portugal. The enrolment rates are superior for the 3– to 5-year-old range than for the aged three and under. In Portugal, around 50% of the children under three years are enrolled in ECEC (Nata & Cadima, 2019). Despite the vast majority of these organizations are non-profit and public-subsidized, participation rates vary by family's income, with higher participation rates among the most economically advantageous families (59,5%) compared to the lower income families (36%) (Nata & Cadima, 2019).

In regard to another important indicator of education disadvantage - the early school leaving rate, there has been a substantial decrease in these figures in the past decade, with the 2019 rate being very close to the European target set at 10%. It is worth mentioning that the rate is quite unbalanced in terms of gender with men dropping out of mainstream education earlier.

Portuguese population has been increasing their education level, as shown in table 16. The figures for no education and less than nine years of education have been dropping, and the number of people with secondary and higher education is increasing.

Table 15. *Early school leaving rate (18-24 years) by gender*

Year	Total	Men	Women
2010	28.3	32.4	24.0
2015	13.7	16.4	11.0
2016	14.0	17.4	10.5
2017	12.6	15.3	9.7
2018	11.8	14.7	8.7
2019	10.6	13.7	7.4

Source; National Statistics Office (2020e)

Table 16. *Education level of the population aged 15 and above (%)*

Year	No formal education	Up to 9 years of education	Secondary education (12 th grade)	Higher education
2010	10.6	62.2	15.4	11.8
2015	8.3	54.7	19.9	17.1
2016	7.9	53.9	20.4	17.8

2017	7.3	53.5	21.1	18.1
2018	6.7	52.7	21.9	18.7
2019	6.3	51.5	22.7	19.6

Source: National Statistics Office (2020f)

3.5 Major social welfare trends such as disadvantage risks and welfare benefit receipt levels

Indicators above have already showed that children and youth are represented in poverty and social exclusion rates with figures higher than 20%.

Important also is that Portugal is one of the least successful countries in reducing the rate of child poverty due to social transfers (Nata & Cadima, 2019).

National social benefits and support to meet family needs are dependent upon the family's income and have changed considerably in the past years; for instance, in 2010 cash benefits for families changed, increasing selectivity and eligibility criteria, and reducing the amounts of benefits (Wall & Correia, 2014). These changes in family policies had dropped the impact on public spending on benefits and services for families, and thus the economic vulnerability and child poverty rates of families have increased (Wall et al., 2013).

3.6 Housing problems

Overcrowding rate has been decreasing in the past eight years, being lower than the EU-28 average (15.5% in 2018). The housing cost has increased severely from 2010 to 2015, due to the major financial crisis of 2011, and has shown a decreasing trend afterwards both in total and also when considering households with children. In both cases, the current rate is lower than the EU-28 average (10.4 for total; 9.6 for children in 2018).

Table 17. *Overcrowding and housing cost overburden*

Year	Overcrowding Rate	Housing cost overburden	Housing cost overburden - children
2010	14.6	4.2	6.1

2015	10.3	9.1	11.8
2016	10.3	7.5	9.4
2017	9.3	6.7	7.2
2018	9.6	5.7	7.3
2019	N/A	N/A	N/A

3.7 Summary

Economic growth in Portugal was above the EU average for most of the 1990s, but it has regressed drastically in recent years. Portugal was one of the European countries, along with Greece, most affected by the 2008 crisis, leading to the need for external help. Portugal is one of the EU countries with a greatest gap between social classes and its critical financial situation has weakened the welfare system, affecting the most vulnerable groups - people under 18 years of age and over 65 – about 1/5 are at risk of poverty (Costa, Baptista, Perista, & Carrilho, 2008; INE, 2016). Indeed, inequality levels, child poverty, and the inefficacy of social transfers to diminish these gaps, alongside a lack of systematic services/programs to tackle inequalities, put high pressure on families and children's support.

The lack of support for families, low wages, gender imbalance, and a demanding labour market is also behind the low fertility levels found in Portugal.

On the positive side, and comparing with other European countries, Portugal does not face particular pressure from high migrant or ethnic minorities' diversity. Also, the country is moving towards higher education levels of the population, especially the younger population.

21.4 The national public policy orientations, frameworks, institutions and actors which shape the goals, substance and delivery of family support policy and provision

4.1 Membership to the EU – YES, 1 January 1986

4.2 Relationship with European Union

In the Council of the EU, national ministers meet regularly to discuss the implementation of EU laws and coordinate policies. Council meetings are regularly attended by representatives from the Portuguese government, depending on the policy area being addressed.

The Council of the EU does not have a permanent, single-person president (such as the Commission or Parliament). Instead, its work is led by the country holding the Council presidency, which rotates every six months. During these six months, ministers from that country's government chair and help determine the agenda of Council meetings in each policy area, and facilitate dialogue with the other EU institutions.

Dates of Portuguese presidencies: Jan-Jun 1992 | Jan-Jun 2000 | Jul-Dec 2007

In January 2021, Portugal has again taken the presidency of the council.

European Economic & Social Committee

Portugal has 12 representatives on the European Economic and Social Committee. This advisory body – representing employers, workers, and other interest groups – is consulted on proposed laws, to get a better idea of the possible changes to work and social situations in member countries.

European Committee of the Regions

Portugal has 11 representatives on the European Committee of the Regions, the EU's assembly of regional and local representatives. This advisory body is consulted on proposed laws, to ensure these laws take into account the perspective from each region of the EU.

Portugal also communicates with the EU institutions through its permanent representation in Brussels. As Portugal's "embassy to the EU", its main task is to ensure that the country's interests and policies are pursued as effectively as possible in the EU.

4.3 Influential policy actors and their orientation to family policy, family support and social policy

Several policy actors could be identified. One of them is the National Board for Education which entails all activities related to the education system, and also comprises measures, actions and programs directed at supporting families and youth.

Another important actor is the National Committee for the Promotion of Rights and Protection of Children and Youth. This national committee coordinates 310 local commissions spread throughout the country that aim to promote children and youth rights, and prevent all conditions that may impair or put children's and youth safety, health, education or development at risk.

In the health sector, family health policies, programs and services are coordinated at the national level by the Directorate-General of Health, at the regional level by the Regional

Administration of Health and at local level by the Clustered Health Centres. Effective intersectoral action have demanded a strong institutional dialogue to develop and implement programs, such as the National School Health Program and the National Framework for Health Education, and increasingly, collaboration among Family Health Units and the Community Care Units, has provided the integration and continuity of prevention healthcare to at-risk groups of children and youth. Besides, under the Health Strategy 2020 there has been an emphasis on the role of healthy family environments, alongside the dissemination and implementation of best practices to empower and promote the resilience of families. Family and parenting programs promote health literacy and parent competencies, as well as reduce health inequalities that injure significant health indicators through the individual and family life cycles.

The National System for Early Childhood Intervention may also be identified as a relevant actor in terms of family policy and support since this system aggregates a set of services from different ministries, namely from the Health, Education and Work and Social Affairs Ministries. This organized system intervenes with children aged 0 to 6 to ensure all have the same development opportunities by strengthening their caregivers' competencies, promoting family and community resources, and identifying and intervening with all children who need early childhood intervention.

The Family Support and Parenting Counselling Centre (*Centro de Apoio Familiar e Aconselhamento Parental*) provide psychosocial support to families with differing needs and risk levels. These community entities, which integrate the institutional network of the National Institute for Social Affairs, offer a range of three basic services: family preservation, family reunification and family mediation.

4.4 Influential lobbying groups

Family policy lobbying is primarily done by NGOs. Influential NGOs that provide support services and advocate on behalf of vulnerable families and children include those related to the Catholic Church, such as União das Misericórdias Portuguesas, the National Confederate of Private Institutions of Social Solidarity (Confederação Nacional das IPSS) which aggregates non-profit institutions public-subsidized; many of them with a catholic board. Another important group is the Child Support Institute (Instituto de Apoio à Criança) founded in 1983 aiming at protecting and promoting children's rights and the *Associação para o Planeamento da Família* (Family Planning Association) founded in 1967 to assist all individuals in making free and conscious reproductive choices and to promote positive parenting.

4.5 Influential policy/research networks

Initiatives that can be found to have an important role in doing research and influencing policies are the of Family Policy Observatory (*Observatório para as Políticas da Família*), which develops autonomous or by request research projects focused on several strands of family support initiatives. Many of their projects translate into policy or research briefs, which are highly relevant for policy actors.

There are also important networks that advocate for children and women protection against violence, such as APAV – Victims Support Association and AMCV- Women and child against violence. Regarding LGBT+ rights, an important association is ILGA.

The Portuguese Society for Family Therapy (SPTF) is also worth mentioning.

4.6 The political system and its relevance to family policy/family support

It is generally recognized that the Portuguese welfare state has never reached the dimension and the importance it has reached on other countries of Europe, due to deep rooted historical and political reasons. Portugal shares with other southern European countries (Italy, Spain, and Greece) a welfare system characterized by a high level of subsidiarity to the family (Andreotti, Garica, Gomez, Hespanha, Kazepov, & Mingione, 2001). In Portugal there are low levels of state support as the state provides support only when family resources are exhausted. The levels of social protection are generally low and policies are fragmentary, despite the boosts that occurred since the adhesion to the European Union (Ayala-Nunes, 2019).

Furthermore, in recent years, the economic crisis led to a cutback in benefits for families and policy objectives moved away from an explicit pro-family and pro-egalitarian perspective toward a more implicit and residual policy perspective (Wall, 2016).

4.7 The democratic system and main political parties

Politics in Portugal takes place in a framework of a unitary semi-presidential representative democratic republic, whereby the Prime Minister of Portugal is the head of government. Portugal has a multi-party system. The President of Portugal is the executive head of state and has several significant political powers, which he exercises often.

Executive power is exercised by the President and the Council of Ministers. Legislative power is vested in both the government and the Assembly of the Republic. The Judiciary of Portugal is independent of the executive and the legislature.

Since 1975, the party system has been dominated by the social democratic Socialist Party and the liberal-conservative Social Democratic Party.

The country is divided into 18 districts, each headed by a governor appointed by the Minister of Internal Administration and two autonomous regions: the Azores and Madeira archipelagos

4.8. The institutional framework for government and state roles and remits for family support in general and family support services in particular

In Portugal there is no ministry or specific entity for family affairs or family policies. The National Institute for Social Affairs is the main responsible for most of family support initiatives, such as parental leave, cash support, and others.

Portugal is one of the countries where a fewer percentage of the GDP is spent in family policies (family expenditure in cash benefits): around 0,74%; the mean value across the EU is 1,48% (OECD, 2015).

There has been a delegation of state responsibility for disadvantaged families to third sector institutions (mostly private publicly subsidized NGOs) and to regional and municipal authorities. At present there is no specific governmental body with responsibility for overseeing family policies and their impact (Wall, 2016).

4.9 The ways in and degree to which professionals, parents/families, children and young people, and communities are involved in policymaking and reviews

In general, consultations with various external stakeholders during the policy making phase is regarded as a best practice and most national policies are issued for public consultation.

The involvement of these actors, however, seem to vary across different services and sectors. Parents, families, and children seem to be more involved with local services, for instance with those that are developed by the social sector or with health services; however, most policies are elaborated and defined at a central level (e.g., at a ministry or government level) where they may not be directly involved. Professionals are more involved than families, but it may also depend on their professional status; i.e. a practitioner working in a “daily” bases with families is not directly involved in the decision-making of policies. The structure seems quite hierarchical.

21.5 List the dedicated family and/or young people strategic policy documents that have been launched since the year 2000

From our own analyses and deriving from a set of interviews done with key-actors in family policy and family support we highlight the following policies:

- 1) National system for Early Childhood Intervention (Decree Law-281/09)

- 2) Inclusive Education (Decree Law- 54/2018)
- 3) ADELIA project
- 4) Program ESCOLHAS – (“Choices” program) (Renewed by Ministry council resolution nº 151/2018)
- 5) TEIP – Priority intervention schools (Decree Law - 20/2012)
- 6) Primary Health Care Services Reform
- 7) National Strategy for Infancy (expected to be published by the end of 2020)

5.1 Indicate whether participation of families and young people has been mentioned in the document

- 1) The participation is mentioned with a passive stance; i.e., they are expected to be involved but not explicitly mentioned how.
- 2) Parental involvement is explicitly stated throughout the document.
- 3) Project ADELIA – Apoio à Parentalidade Positiva - is focused on the promotion of positive parenting. One of its main axes explicitly stated the involvement of families and children.
- 4) Program ESCOLHAS aims to promote the social inclusion of children and youth from most vulnerable settings, and it is explicit in the regulation of the program that the target population (children and youth aged 6-25) should be involved in the actions.
- 5) TEIP is a government initiative implemented in schools located in economic and social disfavoured areas. In the formal deliberation the involvement of families and young people it is not explicit.

5.2 Indicate the extent to which such participation has been implemented

- 1) The aim is to empower families and give them tools to overcome the challenges of a child with developmental limitations. The practitioners that work with each family do this involvement. There are regular meetings between local intervention teams and parents; from this encounters, associations of parents have been established and are currently gaining some prominence in the community.
- 2) It is mandatory for any measure to take place that parents are involved and participate in the design of their child’s adapted educational curricula.

- 3) ADELIA is not being implemented nationwide; however, the involvement of families is implemented in the regions where the project is being developed. These involvements may take different forms, as a major aim of the project is the empowerment of families and parents alongside social innovation projects.
- 4) Unclear. It depends on the methodologies that each team implementing the program uses.
- 5) Unclear. It depends on the methodologies that each team implementing the program uses.
- 6) The primary health care service has suffered major changes in the last couple of years and one of its major changes is the existence of a “family health team” composed by a physician, nurse and administrative staff, which is assigned for each family. This allows for a proximal response to family needs. The participation of families, however, does not seem to include an active involvement.

21.6 The main forms and modalities of child and family support provision since 2000 with a particular emphasis on approaches to, and developments in, child and family support services:

6.1 The priorities in child welfare and family policy

The new focus of family policies underlines support for very poor families, the strengthening of selectivity mechanisms and a move away from state responsibility for families in general, by encouraging the non-governmental sector and families themselves to act as the “front-line” of support for persons “in need” (Wall et al. 2014). Family policy has therefore been included in social policy.

One main policy instrument, the “Programa de Emergência Social” (Social Emergency Programme) was introduced in 2011 with the main objective of reaching out to individuals and families in extreme poverty by providing support in kind. Measures include: a network of third-sector canteens, the introduction of free breakfast at school for children from disadvantaged families, and an uprating of unemployment benefits for low-income couples with children, in which both parents are unemployed and unemployed single parents who are not receiving alimony.

6.2 The main types of family provision and support and key features

Since 2010 cash benefits for families have been changed along two main lines: increased selectivity, with eligibility criteria focusing on support for families with very low income, and cut-backs in the amounts of benefits (Wall, 2016).

Cash support

- Family Allowance (*Abono de Família*) – Main cash support to families. The amount depends on the families' income and is available until children and youth are up to 16 years of age. From 16-24 the support exists if youngsters are in education.
- Prenatal family allowance (*Abono de Família Pré-natal*) – Cash support to mothers to be after their 13th week of pregnancy. Also dependent on women's annual income.
- Scholarship: cash support for students under 18 enrolled in secondary education and dependent on families' income.
- Minimum Income Benefit (*Rendimento Social de Inserção*)- It is not specific for families with children; however it is the cash benefit with the greatest impact on the reduction of extreme poverty. It comprises cash support, dependent on families' income and requires a signed agreement regarding social and professional responsibilities (e.g. the active search for a job).
- Food Fund "Fundo de Garantia de Alimentos" – cash support for single parent families to provide for food, when one of the parents does not fulfill his/her responsibilities of food supply.

Other support

- School Support (*Apoio Social Escolar*) – aimed at children and youngsters from low-income families, and includes cash and commodities such as food (in school canteens), transportation to/from school, accommodation and scholarships.
- School textbooks – free for all students enrolled in primary school.
- Dentist voucher – voucher for children under 16 years of age enrolled in public or semi-public schools.

Work and family balance measures

- Maternity and paternity leave – Maternity leave is paid at 100% for 120 days or 80% for 150 days. The rate can be 100% if the other parent (either the mother or the father) uses 30 days in exclusive. Father's leave is paid at 100% for 25 days.

- Enriching Curriculum Activities – *Atividades de Enriquecimento Curricular*: activities available for children enrolled in primary school allowing children to be in school facilities up to 17.30h. Around 86,3% of students are enrolled in this type of activities (OFAP; 2017).
- Childcare support for children under three was around 49,1% coverage (2017). Most of these services are not public and belong to the third sector; though the enrollment fees are calculated considering families income.
- Pre-school coverage is around 90,8% (2017); with just 53% enrolled in public facilities.

6.3 *The types of funding involved such as state, charity vs private sector providers and in terms of the different professionals/practitioners*

Local authorities, third sector institutions, charitable church organizations and schools have often introduced other forms of support (e.g., helping families to pay rent, paying for schoolbooks), thereby seeking to reach out to needy children and families and compensate for a decline in State responsibilities for families (Wall, 2016).

Many government initiatives, programs and policies are undertaken/operationalized through semi-private institutions who receive funds to implement family support programs and also use European incentives (e.g., childcare and eldercare facilities; ESCOLHAS program).

6.4 *Approaches to policy monitoring and evaluation and consideration of limitations*

There are several limitations to policy monitoring and evaluation. Most indicators, when collected, relate to the quantification of the number of people using a specific measure, facility or program. For instance, the number of people that receive family allowance or the number of children and families target by the local intervention teams (of early childhood intervention) or the number of families enrolled in ADELIA program actions. The evaluation of more substantive gains in terms of parental competences, promotion of child development is not systematically assessed. Major limitations relate to the scarcity of human resources to implement additional actions and to the complexity of the interventions and the lack of coordinated action - many families are being assisted by and through many different programs; different practitioners and ultimately by different organizations.

Some initiatives, such as ADELIA, have planned a detailed assessment of its actions. This assessment will be assisted by a university-based research center.

6.5 *Limitations in national and official data and statistics*

Data is spread throughout several institutions, because there is no global family policy or an observatory for families and children. This makes it harder to compile and have access to rigorous, comparable data. Official data, derived from national census is also limited, for instance it is not possible to obtain disaggregated data on race and ethnicity.

Data regarding efficacy of different interventions is even harder to obtain, therefore our approach used the voices of key actors in different sectors to understand the challenges faced in collecting data.

21.7 Critical academic commentary on current family support policy and provision. What are the prominent policy and practice developments related to family support services from children's rights, social equality, and evidence-informed perspectives?

7.1 What are the pressing policy, practice, and research challenges impeding developments?

There are several positive initiatives regarding family and children support in the last decades in Portugal. A challenge that can be highlighted relates to the lack of a concerted global family policy. One can identify three main branches where family policies are undertaken: education, health, and social. Each branch has a different ministry and though some initiatives, such as the early childhood intervention diploma, assumes an inter-ministerial agreement, this is hard to implement.

Another challenge mentioned during the interviews was the vulnerability of many policies and programs to politics and politic parties. As an example, even the oldest family policies, such as family allowances, change their eligibility criteria from government to government. Initiatives that are more recent also became highly dependent of the current political agenda.

Despite these challenges, there is a willingness to use and support new policies with the most recent scientific knowledge. Indeed, work-family balance and leave initiatives, early childhood intervention system or program ADELIA were the result of academic and evidence-based research. Nevertheless, this auscultation of the scientific knowledge does not occur in a systematic manner and the flows of information are not fully established.

Another important aspect relates to the assessment of policies and programs effectiveness. Again, we can highlight efforts in this regard but there is a shortage in terms of tools and procedures to identify a good assessment practice. Indeed, the initiatives are assessed from the point of view of the number of users/targets and from the subjective point of view of the practitioners that implement them.

7.2 What are the pressing gaps in provision

A transversal challenge highlighted in our interviews with key actors is the shortage of human resources to implement in full the existing policies.

Another gap is the translation of policies and programs to practice; i.e., their implementation across country and across different social realities. This could be promoted at the local level by municipalities, who could arrange and articulate resources from different sectors to ease the implementation.

An additional gap is the lack of a systematic evaluation and monitoring approach to the initiatives that are already taking place.

7.3 Policies and practices related to support of children and families in the Context of COVID-19

Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic the government has launched a set of measures to assist workers and their families, several of which are highlighted below:

- Tele-work mandatory during emergency state if the job is compatible with this work modality.
- Over several periods in 2020, due to restriction measures imposed by the government such as the closing of schools and childcare facilities, absences from work were justified, particularly when the employee had to be caring for a child under 12 years of age or any relative with a health condition/disability.
- During the period when schools were closed workers were entitled to a monthly income if they stay home caring for their dependent child (and were not in telework).
- When a child is in isolation due to COVID-19, the worker who cares for the dependent child is entitled to a subsidy.
- A worker in isolation due to COVID-19 receives the salary in its full amount for a maximum of 14 days.

Additional financial support measures:

- Changes in the calculations of the Minimum Income Benefit (*Rendimento Social de Inserção*).
- Extension of the duration of the Unemployment Subsidy and Minimum Income Benefit.
- Increase in the number of Food Program beneficiaries.
- Changes on the calculation of the Family Allowance (*Abono de Família*).

- Financial support for rent payments of families with severe loss of income due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Suspension of all measures related to the termination of rental contracts.

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