

# XII

## CARE AND EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN UNDER AGE 6 IN PORTUGAL

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### INTRODUCTION

The main purpose of this document is to give a description of early childhood education and care in Portugal.<sup>1</sup> There are important policy choices to be made, and there is no descriptive work of early education that may be used as a frame of reference. Having reviewed the existing documents—legislation, statistical data, theoretical and field works—we will attempt to present issues that are relevant to the decision-making process both at the educational and at the political level. At the same time, by surveying current trends in legislation and in statistical and organizational data, we hope to provide an orientation for early childhood researchers.

It should be understood at the outset that there are two government ministries that share the responsibility of early childhood education and care in Portugal—the Ministry of Work and Social Security (MWSS) (through the Central Bureau of Social Security since 1976) and the Ministry of Education (ME). They function according to different philosophies, with the ME operating in a centralized fashion out of Lisbon and the MWSS operating through fairly autonomous district structures

called Regional Centers of Social Security (which is a rare exception in the highly centralized Portuguese administrative system).

Although our initial intention was to survey the most relevant statistical information and legislative developments of the last two decades, for two practical reasons, this turned into a difficult task. First of all, the public kindergartens maintained by the ME were started only very recently (in the 1978–79 academic year), and second, the MWSS has in the last two decades undergone structural modifications. These factors obviously complicated the process of gathering the scarce information that exists.

We begin our description by looking at the history of child care, at relevant demographics, and at national child care policy. Following this, we describe the current child care options and preschool curricula. A concluding section highlights present-day research and future issues.

## HISTORICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL PERSPECTIVE

Early childhood services have undergone the same stages in Portugal as they have in other European countries, although with a significant delay regarding the beginnings and the growth of the kindergarten system. This evolution of children's services has naturally encompassed the sequence of political and economic events that have characterized Portuguese history since the late 19th century, when the first kindergartens were created (Gomes, 1986).

The first institutions specifically designed for children under age 6 date back to 1834, during monarchical rule. Developed under private initiative and for social reasons, they were asylums for the education and protection of impoverished children. These institutions, which are still operative, have in many cases retained their original nature until recent times.

In 1882 the first official kindergarten opened in Lisbon, in commemoration of the centennial of Froebel's birth. The ideas and principles of Froebel, together with those of João de Deus,<sup>2</sup> had been known to those concerned with education for some years. The name of Froebel was even invoked before Parliament by a deputy from Porto, Rodrigues de Freitas, who in 1879 advocated preschool education. By calling the government's attention to the subject, he was able to secure a special budget enabling the local authorities to implement kindergartens. Another Froebelian kindergarten was slated to open in Porto in 1880, although it

is difficult to determine whether it actually began operation. Nevertheless, due to the increased interest in preschool education, some primary teachers from Porto were sent to Switzerland to study early childhood education (at this time, the only teacher-training schools operating in Portugal were ones preparing teachers for primary schools).

Although only one (perhaps two) kindergartens had been founded, there was already a large group of intellectuals who were aware of the importance of preschool education and who developed a significant movement in behalf of young children. The name of José Augusto Coelho deserves special mention in connection with this movement. Known as one of Portugal's first modern educators, he is the author of an extensive bibliography on teaching and education. In one of his writings (Coelho, 1893), he analyzes some of the main dimensions of the evolution of the individual and describes a curriculum for "children's school"—for children from 3 to 8 years of age—as well as the main principles on which such a curriculum should be based. He covers all the areas of development: psychomotor, emotional, social, aesthetic, and intellectual. According to him, early education must not only be a pleasant experience for children, providing comfort and security, but must also develop children socially, preparing them for the tasks of the primary school.

Apart from spawning this interesting idea of a "children's school," the growing movement in behalf of young children also gave rise to some legislation concerning preschool education (*Diário do Governo*, No. 141, June 27, 1896). In this legislation, the objectives of preschool education as well as a general program and specifications for teacher training were laid out. The history of preschool education is marked by yet another important event that occurred while the country was still under monarchical rule: the creation of two João de Deus preschools.<sup>3</sup>

On October 5, 1910, when the republican system was proclaimed in Portugal, about 75 percent of the population were illiterate. The republicans were idealistic men, and among their main concerns were the high rate of illiteracy and the lack of primary schools throughout the country, so it is not surprising that the implementation of kindergartens was a part of the *Republican Party Program* (*Boletim do Partido Republicano Portugues*, 1915). Two laws, in 1911, integrate the essentials of the First Republic's ideas on preschool education, establishing the fundamentals of what it should be with regard to objectives, program, teacher qualifications, and so on. The laws also state that other young children's institutions, mainly the asylum-type run by central or local

authority, should be transformed into kindergartens. Yet, in spite of the republican concern for legislation, very little was done, mainly because of the country's chaotic economic situation, high percentage of illiteracy, and political instability (46 different cabinets in 16 years). From 1910 to 1926, only 12 new kindergartens were created: 7 public kindergartens in Porto, 4 private kindergartens of the João de Deus type (in the cities of Coimbra, Figueira da Foz, Alcobaça and Lisbon), and the Israelite School.

During the first years of the Second Republic (1926–1937), no further significant changes occurred, with the percentage of preschool-aged children receiving education remaining below 1 percent. By this time, public kindergartens were eliminated (*Diário da República*, No. 28081/1937); the government realized that the existing kindergarten system served only a tiny percentage of children and that the public treasury could not bear extension of that system to the whole population. Consequently, political measures turned to the stimulation of the educational function of the family and to the support of the private institutions, with the João de Deus kindergartens being highly approved by the government. The Ministry of Education thus ceased to be in charge of early childhood education, and other ministries, such as the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Corporations and Social Welfare, and more recently the Ministry of Health and Assistance (created in 1958), progressively developed services for children before their entry into compulsory education. The main purpose of these services was to decrease child mortality by promoting improved hygiene and nutrition. Since these ministries had no staff specialized in early childhood education, the public health nurse had the primary role in providing the services to young children.

In the mid-1950s the Ministry of Education was mainly concerned with the problems of elementary education and was still not directly involved with early childhood education. It nevertheless continued to encourage private initiative. There were by this time several public institutions dependent on the Ministry of the Interior (through the Department of Social Welfare) that assured assistance to children and less-fortunate families. Until 1966, the majority of the existing centers for children under 6 years of age had no educational purposes and were mainly concerned with the care and basic needs of children. The staff had no specific qualifications.

It was not until 1971, with Veiga Simão heading the Ministry of Education, that preprimary education was reinstated as part of the pub-

lic educational system. This measure was part of a larger plan for reform of the entire Portuguese educational system, which became known as the Veiga Simão Reform.<sup>4</sup> It included plans for the creation of training schools for preschool teachers. In July 1973, preschool education was finally recognized as a constituent part of the public educational system. That same year, the first two public schools for training preschool teachers started to operate in Coimbra and Viana do Castelo. This measure was the result of the government's acknowledgment that most of the existing public services failed to address children's educational needs mainly because staff did not have any professional training.

We should also mention the teacher-training opportunities in existence prior to the founding of the public training schools in 1973. The first two private training schools for preschool teachers, under the initiative of people connected with Roman Catholic movements, appeared as early as 1954 in Lisbon. They were the Child Education Institute (which closed in 1975–1976) and the School of Preschool Teachers (which still operates). In addition, there was a specialized course for "child care nurses," which began in 1939 and which might be considered the forerunner of the training schools for preschool teachers; its original purpose was the training of social workers with a specific vocation in mother-child assistance. Also, in 1958 the School João de Deus was authorized to give professional training to preschool teachers. In the 1960s several private institutions for professional training of preschool teachers were founded throughout the whole country, and most of them were affiliated with religious institutions. Considering its own incapacity for assuming the task, the government highly approved of these private schools. In 1965, because of the number of people working in preschool settings without any kind of professional training, intensive inservice training courses were created for the preparation of preschool assistants and auxiliary staff. Most of the training institutions of the 1960s, however, closed in the wake of political changes after the April 25 Revolution (in 1974).

The April 25 Revolution interrupted the implementation of the Veiga Simão Reform. However, it did succeed in bringing to the fore Portuguese social problems in general, which became the main concern of political measures. Since then, there have been significant increases in the numbers of kindergartens and nurseries as well as training schools for preschool teachers and centers for special education. In many cases, local communities have organized themselves and used local resources for the establishment of new early childhood centers.

After 1974, due to the dispersion of early childhood services among

several ministries, coordination of efforts to help young children became an important issue. These services became dependent on two ministries—the Ministry of Education (ME) and the Ministry of Work and Social Security (MWSS). In accordance with the philosophy of the new system that followed the revolution, extending preschool education to the entire population became an important goal, since the philosophy's aims were to reduce, as soon as possible, socioeconomic and cultural differences, to promote social well-being, and to develop the potentialities of the young (*Diário da República*, No. 542/1979).

All these changes in the area of early childhood education, mainly the creation of new kindergartens and nurseries and the reinstatement of preschool education as part of the public system, had an impact on teacher training. Not only was there a recognized need for more teachers, but there was also a general concern about the professional training of all those working with children.

Table 1 shows the increases in the number of trained preschool teachers during this period. It is easily noticeable that from 1981 onwards, the public schools began to show an increasing concern for having professionally trained preschool teachers. In 1977–78, for example, there were only 8 operational training schools, of which 4 were public. In 1984–85 the total number increased to 27, of which 19 were public. Furthermore, in 1977 the Higher Schools of Education were created, designed to graduate teachers for children 3 to 12 years of age.<sup>5</sup> These schools will in the near future replace all existing preprimary and primary training schools, public or private, and will also provide training for special education teachers.<sup>6</sup> In keeping with this general aim, several

Table 1

NUMBER OF LICENSED PRESCHOOL TEACHERS GRADUATED FROM  
PORTUGAL'S TEACHER-TRAINING SCHOOLS PER YEAR, 1981–86

System	Until 1981	81–82	82–83	83–84	84–85	85–86	86–87	Total
Private training schools	3,874	339	356	439	490	533	551	6,582
Public training schools	806	382	518	490	558	618	612	3,984
Total	4,680	721	874	929	1,048	1,151	1,163	

Note. Statistics obtained from the General Office of Basic and Secondary Education (ME), 1988.

courses for inservice training have been promoted, for auxiliary staff and assistants, throughout the whole country (cf. Gabinete de Estudos e Planeamento, 1986).

## DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

As we have mentioned earlier, the national statistics regarding early childhood services are scarce. For the population under age 6, we have only been able to determine the distribution of two age groups: children from birth to age 2, and children from age 3 to age 5. Table 2 shows the distribution of the under-6 population, together with the distribution of the total population. From the table, we can see that although the districts of Lisbon and Porto have the highest percentages of Portugal's under-6 population (23 percent and 18.8 percent, respectively), it is the district of Braga that has the highest percentage of under-6-year-old children in relation to its total district population (12.1 percent). It is also interesting to note the uneven distribution of Portugal's under-6-year-olds among the 18 districts—with 23 percent in Lisbon and 1.2 percent in Portalegre being the two extremes. This unevenness somewhat reflects the distribution of the general Portuguese population, which is more concentrated near the cities that are the most important industrial and trade centers (Lisbon, Braga, and Porto, for example). There is less variation (or unevenness) in the percentages that compare district under-6-year-olds with district residents; these range from 12.1 percent in Braga to 6.2 percent in Setúbal.

Some of the 18 districts are chiefly rural: Bragança, Vila Real, Viseu, Portalegre, Évora, Beja, Castelo Branco, and Guarda; others are chiefly industrialized: Lisbon, Porto, and Setúbal. In this group, but industrialized to a lesser degree, we can also include Braga and Aveiro. The remaining districts would be described as having a moderate level of industrialization.

Table 3 indicates the extent of mothers' employment in Portugal as of the 1981 general census. It shows that the five most industrialized districts, as one would expect, have high percentages of employed mothers under 39 years old—and this potentially includes mothers of preschool-aged youngsters. These percentages range from 26.4 percent to 63.5 percent. The highest percentages are 63.1 percent in Lisbon and 63.5 percent in Setúbal.

Table 4 shows the percentages of Portuguese children up to 6 years

Table 2  
PER-DISTRICT RESIDENT, AGE 0-2,  
AND AGE 3-5 POPULATIONS, 1981

District	Resident Population	Age 0-2 Popula- tion	Age 3-5 Popula- tion	Age 0-5 Popula- tion	District Age 0-5 Population	
					As % of District Population	As % of District Population
Aveiro	622,988	29,203	31,491	60,694	6.9	9.7
Beja	188,420	7,149	8,072	15,221	1.7	8.1
Braga	708,924	41,817	44,260	86,077	9.7	12.1
Bragança	184,252	8,030	8,416	16,176	1.8	8.8
Castelo Branco	234,230	8,361	9,065	17,426	2.0	7.4
Coimbra	436,324	22,198	22,535	44,733	5.1	10.3
Évora	180,277	7,476	8,507	15,983	1.8	8.9
Faro	323,534	12,023	13,286	25,309	2.9	7.8
Guarda	205,631	7,622	8,078	15,700	1.8	7.6
Leiria	420,229	18,204	18,375	36,579	4.1	8.7
Lisbon	2,069,467	95,718	107,316	203,034	23.0	9.8
Portalegre	142,905	5,019	5,681	10,700	1.2	7.5
Porto	1,562,287	79,853	85,952	165,805	18.8	10.6
Santarém	454,123	17,283	18,711	35,994	4.1	7.9
Setúbal	658,326	17,959	22,698	40,657	4.6	6.2
Viana do Castelo	256,814	11,637	12,338	23,975	2.7	9.3
Vila Real	264,381	12,728	13,734	26,462	3.0	10.0
Viseu	423,648	20,796	22,306	43,102	4.9	10.2
All districts	9,336,760	423,076	460,821	883,627	100.0	9.4

Note. Statistics obtained from the National Institute of Statistics, *XIIth General Census of the Population*, 1984, p. 199.

of age who are served by ME and MWSS early childhood programs. An analysis of this data from 1984 shows that

1. Portugal is far from having total preschool-service coverage of children from birth to age 6. The highest coverage rates for under-3-year-olds are in Setúbal (10.3 percent) and Castelo Branco (10.2 percent), and the highest coverage rate for 3- to 6-year-olds is in Guarda (56.2 percent).

2. The overall percentage of children under age 3 served is considerably less than the overall percentage of 3- to 6-year-olds served—5.8 percent compared with about 32.1 percent.

3. There is a certain inconsistency between some of the districts' preschool-service coverage rates and what we know about parental needs

Table 3  
PER-DISTRICT RESIDENT FEMALE POPULATION (AGED 15-39) AND  
EMPLOYED MOTHERS (AGED 15-39), 1981

District	No. of Resident Females	No. of Employed Mothers	Employed Mothers as % of Resident Females
Aveiro	111,739	33,582	30.0
Beja	54,524	5,422	9.9
Braga	147,917	39,107	26.4
Bragança	40,287	3,910	9.7
Castelo Branco	56,666	7,891	13.9
Coimbra	81,401	20,326	25.0
Évora	41,807	8,053	19.3
Faro	51,559	13,619	26.4
Guarda	47,219	6,026	12.8
Leiria	74,481	17,171	23.1
Lisbon	213,251	134,483	63.1
Portalegre	35,681	4,543	12.7
Porto	276,077	87,331	31.6
Santarém	85,592	17,699	20.7
Setúbal	61,731	39,216	63.5
Viana do Castelo	51,062	9,817	19.2
Vila Real	63,784	5,821	9.1
Viseu	101,896	14,005	13.7
All districts	1,596,674	468,022	29.3

Note. Statistics obtained from the National Institute of Statistics, *XIIth General Census of the Population*, 1984, pp. 199, 397.

for child care (that is, about the districts' industrialization/urbanization and female employment rates, as shown in Table 3). For example, the four districts with the highest ME preschool-service coverage are the *rural districts* Guarda, Bragança, Beja, and Viseu (with 38.6 percent, 26.4 percent, 26.4 percent, and 21.3 percent, respectively). The top three overall coverage rates for 3- to 6-year-olds (56.2 percent for Guarda, 42.3 percent for Castelo Branco, and 41 percent for Beja) also are in *rural districts*. However, this inconsistency is only apparent, as these are inner districts faced with problems such as the geographical isolation of the sparse population groups, which explains the central government's concern with founding new kindergartens to balance the cultural deprivation caused by such isolation. Moreover, in these rural areas children must often be left alone for most of the day while their mothers are working on farms or in other nonprofessional employment.

One might conclude from this that preschool programs are targeted primarily to meet children's educational needs (for cultural experiences and preparation for school) but also to meet the needs of the parents.

4. In 12 of the 18 districts, for 3- to 6-year-olds, the preschool-service coverage rate due to MWSS programs is higher than that due to ME programs.

In comparing the number of Portuguese early childhood institutions dependent on the ME with the number dependent on the MWSS for 1986-87, we find that the number of ME kindergartens (public and private) is substantially higher than the number of MWSS kindergartens—3,302 ME-sponsored institutions versus 1,070 MWSS-sponsored ones.<sup>7</sup> It should also be noted that some of the MWSS institutions in-

Table 4  
1984 PER-DISTRICT COVERAGE OF CHILDREN AGED 0-6 BY  
PRESCHOOL SERVICES OF THE ME AND THE MWSS

District	Percent Covered			
	Ages 0-2		Ages 3-6	
	MWSS Services	MWSS Services	ME Services	Combined Services
Aveiro	8.7	17.3	18.4	35.7
Beja	5.8	14.5	26.4	41.0
Braga	4.0	12.2	7.8	20.0
Bragança	1.6	11.5	26.4	38.0
Castelo Branco	10.2	24.6	17.7	42.3
Coimbra	5.9	19.3	13.2	32.5
Évora	7.1	17.9	12.0	29.9
Faro	4.9	13.1	9.9	23.0
Guarda	9.1	17.6	38.6	56.2
Leiria	6.7	20.4	10.0	30.4
Lisbon	5.5	18.7	11.7	30.4
Portalegre	8.5	17.8	14.8	32.6
Porto	4.4	17.8	10.4	28.2
Santarém	5.8	13.4	19.7	33.1
Setúbal	10.3	24.7	9.4	34.1
Viana do Castelo	2.4	12.8	8.7	21.5
Vila Real	1.3	10.1	9.3	19.4
Viseu	2.2	7.5	21.3	28.8
All districts	5.8	16.17	15.87	32.06

Note. Statistics obtained from the General Office of Basic and Secondary Education (ME), the General Office of Private and Cooperative Education (ME), and the General Office of Social Security (MWSS).

clude nursery schools *and* kindergartens (serving children from age 3 months to age of school entry), while the ME institutions consist of kindergarten programs only (serving children aged 3 to 6 years). Again it must be added that the creation of kindergartens within the public system of the Ministry of Education is recent (1978-79) and that there has been a concerted effort to locate these kindergartens in areas having few preschool facilities.

## NATIONAL CHILD CARE POLICY

### OVERVIEW: PRENATAL TO AGE OF MAJORITY

The pregnant woman's right to medical assistance is provided by law (*Diário da República*, No. 4/1984): She has the right to free medical assistance and all necessary clinical exams, both during pregnancy and for a period of 60 days after childbirth. However, a significant number of Portuguese women, mainly in rural areas, do not seek any kind of medical assistance during their pregnancy and childbirth. The law (*Diário da República*, No. 81/1984) also gives a pregnant woman work leave for prenatal consultations whenever necessary, and an employed woman is allowed a maternity leave of 90 days. Only rarely is the father allowed to have a paternity leave.

Through Social Security, the government gives families a birth grant for each child (13,350 escudos), a nursing grant (2,450 escudos per month for 10 months after childbirth), and a family grant (1,250 escudos per child per month). (\$1 U.S. is approximately 150 escudos.) As a standard of comparison, it should be noted that the minimum national wage is 27,200 escudos per month. The following grants could also be awarded: an orphanage pension (for orphans until the age of majority) and an assistance grant for sick minor children (for a maximum of 30 days per year, totaling no more than the worker's illness compensation.)<sup>8</sup> Beyond this financial support, the law also provides medical assistance and vaccinations to children, as well as twice-a-day work leave (totaling no more than an hour) for nursing mothers throughout the duration of nursing or till the child reaches age 1 (*Diário da República*, No. 81/1984).

Up to age 3 months, a child's main caretaker is considered to be the mother, and only after this age may the child enter into institutional care. For the child 3 months to 3 years of age, the following care options are also possible:

- The child can stay with a paid home day care mother who has no license or specific training in child care.

- The child can stay with a home day care mother who is licensed by the Regional Centers of Social Security.

- The child can attend a nursery.

For children 3 years and above, the informal care options are the same, but the usual formal care option is some kind of kindergarten.

A child may enter Portugal's 4-year primary school at age 6, provided that the 6th birthday is reached by December of the year of school entry. In some cases, primary school entry may be delayed if parents can produce a psychologist's certification that their child has some mental handicap preventing attendance at regular primary school.

Compulsory education normally consists of 9 years of "basic school," although a child can leave the first stage of basic school, primary school, at age 14 regardless of whether this stage has been successfully completed. Children are supposed to have the same teacher throughout the 4 years of primary school, but in the following years of schooling they have as many teachers as academic subjects. In practice, however, children may have two or even more teachers during primary school. This is mainly due to the system of teacher allocation, which is presently under revision by the central government authority because of the problem it causes, namely, instability in primary teachers' careers.

### CHILD CARE OPTIONS

In analyzing the child care options, since these options fall under the sponsorship of two different ministries, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Work and Social Security, we will introduce the ME and the MWSS options separately and consider both the public and the private parts of the system under each ministry.<sup>9</sup>

#### Ministry of Education

Table 5 shows the number of both public and private kindergartens for three selected years out of the last decade in all Portuguese districts. Lisbon, unlike all other districts, has fewer public than private ME-sponsored centers—in 1986–87, only 137 public kindergartens compared with 249 private ones (out of a total of 453 private ones for the whole country). Also Table 5 shows a distribution of the ME-sponsored institutions that supports the earlier observation about ME services—that their development follows a compensatory strategy—with the pub-

lic institutions being located mostly in rural areas, where due to economic difficulties, the private system has little foothold. This is not to say that the private programs that exist in urban areas are able to meet all the urban area's needs, however.

In the year following 1978–79, there was a 186 percent increase in public kindergartens, bringing the total to 406. This was the largest percentage increase for the decade. Private programs however have not developed at the same pace, and their major increase was one of 20.2 percent, in the year following 1983–84, when the total jumped from 483 to 581. During this year, the public system remained unchanged, as can be seen in Figure 1. It is obvious that the increase in ME kindergartens

Table 5  
PER-DISTRICT DISTRIBUTION OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE ME  
KINDERGARTENS FOR SELECTED YEARS DURING THE LAST DECADE

District	No. of Public School Kindergartens			No. of Private School Kindergartens		
	1978–79*	1981–82	1986–87	1976–77	1981–82	1986–87
Aveiro	18	223	354	11	17	16
Beja	4	97	112	2	5	4
Braga	14	100	271	9	9	14
Bragança	3	86	144	—	1	2
Castelo Branco	5	52	84	5	3	2
Coimbra	9	66	136	11	19	18
Évora	4	38	69	2	3	3
Faro	2	24	64	8	14	13
Guarda	12	149	210	—	—	—
Leiria	1	50	135	7	10	8
Lisbon	3	59	137	215	247	249
Portalegre	7	34	67	1	1	1
Porto	4	126	224	65	64	69
Santarém	13	137	264	11	9	8
Setúbal	6	30	61	16	27	33
Viana do Castelo	12	42	60	2	4	3
Vila Real	6	47	103	4	5	5
Viseu	19	188	355	6	6	5
All districts	142	1,548	2,850	375	444	453

Note. Statistics obtained from the General Office of Basic and Secondary Education (ME) and the General Office of Cooperative and Private Education (ME).

\*There are no data for 1976–77, as the public system was not created until 1977.

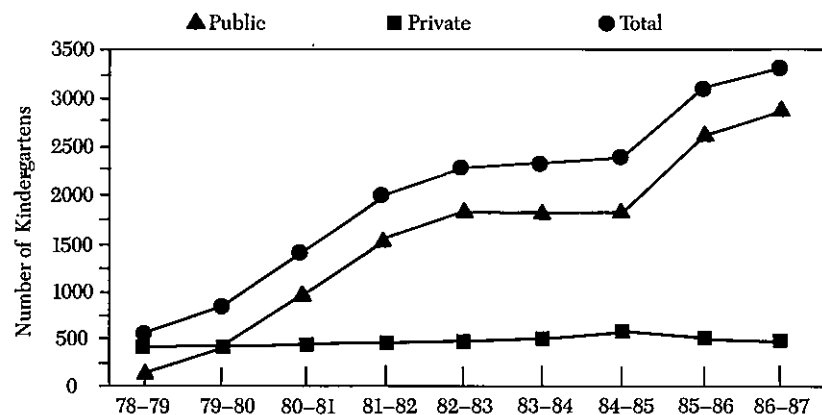
has been mainly in public programs, with the private system remaining stable until 1983–84 and then decreasing after 1984–85.

Usually the child-teacher ratio is different for the two kinds of kindergartens. While in public ones the law stipulates a maximum of 25 children per teacher, private kindergartens have less favorable ratios that sometimes reach more than 50 children per teacher. In 1980–81, there was a private-kindergarten average of 30 or more children per teacher in 10 of the 18 districts. However, in 1984–85 the ratios improved throughout the country, with only two districts (Bragança and Viana do Castelo) having more than 30 children per teacher.

Table 6 has important information regarding kindergarten enrollment. As can be seen, a large percentage of public ME kindergartens operate with a small number of children. Those having fewer than 10 children are mainly located in rural districts (Viseu has 132 kindergartens, out of a total of 361 kindergartens, operating with less than 10 children). This fact points out the need for adapting child care options to the characteristics and desires of the local populations, in order to optimize the investments in preschool education. Unfortunately, only 60 percent of Portugal's available kindergarten places are actually occupied

Figure 1

**PUBLIC AND PRIVATE KINDERGARTENS OF THE ME  
FROM 1978 TO 1986**



*Note.* Statistics obtained from the General Office of Basic and Secondary Education (ME) and the General Office of Private and Cooperative Education (ME).

Table 6

**PUBLIC SYSTEM (ME)—NUMBER OF OPERATIVE KINDERGARTENS AND  
PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION ACCORDING TO ENROLLMENT, 1987–88**

No. of Children per Kindergarten	No. of Operating Kindergartens	Percent of Operating Kindergartens
25	509	17.8
20–24	712	25.0
15–19	884	31.0
10–14	548	19.2
5–9	182	6.4
0–4	17	.6
Total	2,852 <sup>a</sup>	100

*Note.* Statistics obtained from the General Office of Basic and Secondary Education (ME).

<sup>a</sup>Though there are 3,151 kindergartens created by the government, 2,852 is the number actually operating.

by children: There are children where there are no kindergartens, and there are kindergartens where there are not enough children.

#### Ministry of Work and Social Security

From the MWSS, due to the structural modification that we mentioned earlier, we were able to obtain data concerning only three years—1982, 1984, and 1986. The MWSS sponsors many institutions, all connected with child care and education, which may be categorized as follows:

1. Private institutions of Social Solidarity (IPSS)<sup>10</sup>
2. Public institutions affiliated with the Regional Center of Social Security of each district
3. Institutions of Social Activity, affiliated with the autarchy<sup>11</sup>
4. Cooperatives
5. Private, profit-making institutions
6. Factory-sponsored institutions
7. Casas do Povo (People Houses)<sup>12</sup>
8. Other institutions

The main differences among these categories are administrative and not functional. Kindergartens and nurseries are found in every category, either operating in the same building or separately. Special education centers are included in categories 1, 2, 4, and 5.

Table 7 shows the number of nurseries, kindergartens, and joint



nursery/kindergartens under MWSS sponsorship, for the years 1984 (in parentheses) and 1986. There are some obvious conclusions:

■ There is a substantial reduction in all MWSS-sponsored child care options from 1984 to 1986, the main reason being the change in sponsorship (from the MWSS to the ME). This explains the opposite trend—the increase—in ME-sponsored child care options that was observed earlier (Figure 1).

■ The IPSS are by far the most important category for nurseries, kindergartens, and joint nursery/kindergartens.

There is still another MWSS-sponsored child care modality for children up to age 3 that, due to its specific characteristics, is not referred to in Table 7, and that is home day care mothers. For the moment their number, as well as the number served by them, is limited. In 1986 there

Table 7  
INSTITUTIONS UNDER THE MWSS, 1986 (1984)

Type of Child Care Institution	No. of Nurseries	No. of Kindergartens	No. of Joint Nursery/ Kindergartens	Total
IPSS	37 (168)	324 (531)	445 (248)	806 (947)
Public institutions	12 (55)	33 (87)	50 (24)	95 (166)
Autarchy-sponsored institutions	6 (20)	32 (58)	21 (19)	59 (97)
Cooperatives	— (5)	1 (13)	2 (—)	3 (18)
Private, profit-making institutions	22 (111)	59 (262)	63 (4)	144 (377)
Factory-sponsored institutions	— (78)	6 (73)	13 (6)	19 (157)
Casas do Povos	1 (3)	8 (17)	11 (5)	20 (25)
Others	— (4)	2 (14)	— (5)	2 (23)
Total	78 (444)	465 (1,055)	605 (311)	1,148 (1,810)

Note. Statistics obtained from the General Office of Social Security, *Social Security Statistics* (Lisbon: Author, 1986), pp. 31-99.

were 158 home day care mothers in the whole country, who served 535 children. Because the demand for child care outstrips the number of available programs, there is an increase in "underground" (unlicensed) home caregivers. These are difficult to survey, because they try to remain unidentified, so that they do not need to be licensed, which entails paying taxes and being regulated. The selection, training, and supervision of licensed home day care mothers, as well as the provision of their equipment, is the responsibility of the Regional Centers of Social Security.

## DESCRIPTION OF CHILD CARE OPTIONS

### CHILD CARE FROM 3 MONTHS TO 3 YEARS OF AGE

For families with children under 3 years of age, it is the Ministry of Work and Social Security that provides formal options for child care. The following public programs are offered:

- Nurseries (crèches)
- Mini-nurseries (mini-crèches)
- Home day care mothers (licensed)
- Home day care mother groups

The private sector offers only nurseries, which are also under the jurisdiction of the MWSS.

These programs are not enough to meet existing needs, although in recent years there has been a steady increase in the number of available openings for children (about 1,890 per year). The main criterion for eligibility is the family's inability to care for the child.

The nursery is a center whose purpose is to care for children from 3 months to 3 years old while parents are working or unable to care for their child for some other reason. It can operate up to 11 hours per day. The nursery staff consists of a director, a nurse, preschool teachers (whose number depends on the number of children), and kitchen and cleaning staff. The children are grouped according to age: babies (3 to 12 months old), a middle group (12 to 24 months old), and an oldest group (24 to 36 months old). A child's age, although officially the main reason for group placement, can be put aside in favor of psychomotor, emotional, cognitive, or social development needs. For the nurseries in the IPSS group, the MWSS provides around 8,000 escudos per child, with small variations depending on a family's resources and the conditions under which the nursery operates.

The **mini-nursery** is a smaller institution—caring for only 12 to 15 children—that more closely resembles the child's family environment. It costs less to operate because it generally shares the services and equipment of a nearby larger nursery. The staff consists of a preschool teacher, two technical assistants, and cleaning staff. The mini-nursery is a new child care option in which the MWSS is very involved, although only four were operative in 1986.

Programs utilizing **home day care mothers** are normally implemented in deprived areas, where presumably the population is less open to traditional out-of-home care. Home day care mothers are self-employed and receive a salary from the MWSS (which amounts to 28,000 escudos for the care of four children, and an extra food subsidy of 760 escudos per child per month). They care for up to four children aged 3 months to 3 years (their own children, if in this age group, may be included, but without subsidy). Their activity is licensed and regulated by the Regional Centers of Social Security, which also provide them with technical and financial support. They operate 5 days a week, between 4 and 12 hours a day. The MWSS also provides the home day care mothers' training, which consists of a course followed by practical experience and for which the mothers are paid half of the wage for caring for one child. The MWSS provides mothers with equipment and, in the case of low-income mothers, with food. Occasional visits by a public health nurse, preschool teacher, social worker, or psychologist provide the mother with ongoing supervision and support.

Another form of care is the **home day care mother group**—a group of 12–20 mothers who are technically and financially supported by a center-based institution, either private or public, although they operate in autonomous buildings. Rules of operation are the same as those for the individual day care mothers. Like the mini-nursery and licensed home day care mother, it is a new care option presently under development, and there are only 10 for the whole country, serving around 390 children under 6 years of age. The legislation concerning home day care appears in *Diário da República*, No. 158/1984.

#### CHILD CARE FROM 3 TO 6 YEARS OF AGE

For children between ages 3 and 6, the main type of care is the kindergarten program. Its objectives and conditions for functioning are stated in *Diário da República*, No. 542/1979 and are mainly these:

- To provide conditions for social and individual development that are not available at home
- To collaborate with the family in providing health care and education to children, especially to at-risk and socially deprived children
- To allow equal opportunities to all children, regardless of family socioeconomic level
- To compensate for physical, social, or cultural handicaps and diagnose disabilities and deficiencies, mainstreaming the child whenever possible

The two kinds of kindergartens—those under the ME and those under the MWSS—differ in the kind of child care program they offer. The program used by the kindergartens under the ME is an “educational model,” which implies the following:

- When the number of applicants is higher than the number of vacancies, the eligibility criterion is the child's age, with priority given to the oldest children.
  - Programs operate 6 hours per day, 30 hours per week; the teachers serve an additional 6 hours per week for meetings, parent conferences, and preparation.
  - Programs close down 45 days for summer holidays and 2 weeks both for Christmas and Easter holidays.
- The program used by the kindergartens under the MWSS is classified as a “social welfare model,” which means that

- A child's program eligibility depends on the absence or disability of one of the parents, employment of the mother, socioeconomic level of the family, attendance of siblings in kindergarten, and other criteria that may eventually be relevant.
- Programs operate up to 10 or 12 hours per day, 5 days per week.
- The kindergartens may function in centers together with nurseries; this is why MWSS kindergartens usually operate in larger buildings with more children and staff (including cook, nurse, and so on), providing meals and other diversified services for the children.
- Most centers close down for 1 month each year, generally August, for summer holidays.

Since these two official systems of preschool education coexist, the establishment of any new kindergarten requires coordination between them. Whereas the MWSS, in selecting where to establish its kindergartens, takes into account an area's social and cultural deprivation, rate of female employment, and population of 3- to 6-year-olds, the ME consid-

ers not only these factors in an area but also the degree of school adaptation or school success in the first level of primary school and the lack of facilities for fulfillment of compulsory education.

Management of public kindergartens (both ME-sponsored and MWSS-sponsored) is handled by

- A director
- The pedagogical body (professional staff)
- The consulting body (board of directors)

In the ME kindergartens, the **director** is a preschool teacher who is elected for this function, while in the MWSS kindergartens, the director is appointed by the directive body of the Regional Center of Social Security. The **pedagogical body** consists of the kindergarten's director and the inservice teachers. The **consulting body**, which is presided over by the director, consists of the preschool teachers, one elected member of the staff assistants, two parent representatives, and one representative of the autarchy. The creation of this body, which occurred at the same time as the definition of these kindergartens, is an innovation that

1. Gives parents the opportunity to defend their own interests and to be involved in the extrafamilial activities of their children.

2. Promotes a closer relationship between the kindergarten and the community through the inclusion of a representative of the autarchy. (It should be noted that only at the preschool education level do we find the inclusion of both parents and autarchy in the school's governing board.)

In the private sector, the management structures of preschool institutions vary, depending on the kind of institution (whether it is a profit-making one, an IPSS one, a factory-sponsored one, and so on).

The kindergarten staff consists of preschool teachers and assistants. The duties of preschool teachers are legislated (*Diário da República*, No. 542/1979). Teachers must have taken an official 3-year course in preschool education, including a year of practical training. This qualification may be fulfilled in a private training school for preschool teachers, as long as it is officially recognized.

Both ministries provide inservice training for preschool teachers, although in different ways. The ME organizes inservice training in several modalities only for the public centers it sponsors, and it provides supervision of the programs. The preschool teachers are the main target of inservice training among all other professionals dependent on the ME. As to the MWSS, it is up to each Regional Center to organize training programs, normally for the staff in the IPSS and the public institutions under IPSS authority.

The salaries of teachers in public ME kindergartens are equal to those of teachers in public MWSS kindergartens, and both are set by the law (*Diário da República*, No. 290/1975). The salaries of teachers in private schools are variable and generally lower. Beyond teachers, other professionals may be temporarily hired by a kindergarten, according to its needs: doctors, nurses, therapists, psychologists, and others. These hiring contracts are not easily drawn up, as they must have the agreement of several state departments. There are no part-time employees in the public kindergartens, although in the MWSS ones, due to the flexibility in hours of operation, auxiliary staff may be hired to work certain shifts during the day. Generally, the only unpaid staff are the parents, and their involvement is minimal, since teachers have a difficult time sharing their educational role in the kindergarten. Whenever a kindergarten functions as a training center for teachers, the trainees (student teachers) might be considered as "unpaid staff."

Provision of kindergarten staff, facilities, equipment, and financing varies as follows, depending on the type of kindergarten:

- **ME-sponsored public kindergartens.** The ME allocates preschool teachers and auxiliary staff and provides funding for materials. The autarchies provide the buildings and equipment, and there are no fees for the parents.

- **Both ME- and MWSS-sponsored private for-profit kindergartens.** No government subsidy is provided, except in very special circumstances. Families have to pay monthly fees set by the kindergarten, which provides its own staff, facilities, equipment, and materials.

- **MWSS-sponsored private non-profit kindergartens.** Usually the institution that runs a kindergarten must provide the facilities, equipment, materials, and staff. Nevertheless the MWSS provides a per-child subsidy that varies according to the socioeconomic status of the family and of the center. Parents are charged fees according to a sliding scale based on income per capita.

- **MWSS-sponsored public kindergartens.** Facilities, equipment, and staff salaries are the responsibility of the MWSS. Parents are also assessed fees according to a sliding scale based on income per capita.

As we mentioned earlier, the MWSS kindergartens are usually housed in larger facilities than the ME kindergartens are. The public system however has to fulfill certain requirements concerning the space per child (a minimum of 2 square meters) and the number of children per class and teacher (a maximum of 15 for homogeneous groups of 3-year-olds, and a maximum of 25 for other groups).

## PROGRAMS AND CURRICULA

Given the particular features of preschool education in Portugal and the fact that preschool attendance is not compulsory, it is not possible to talk about a single preschool curriculum. Rather, there are several curricula; in each case, the most relevant issues in curriculum implementation are the qualifications, personal characteristics, and years of experience of the teacher.

As a rule, preschool education consists of a set of activities based on general goals and guidelines (with no obligatory character) established by an ME department (General Directory of Basic and Secondary Education). These guidelines describe a program with a strong humanistic trend, valuing activities like art, painting, modeling, storytelling, and role playing (in some rare cases, prereading and prewriting activities may also be implemented). This general program, known as **Project Pedagogy**, is followed in the public ME kindergartens, although public MWSS teachers also commonly base their practice on it. There are, however, some exceptions, like the **João de Deus Schools** and the **Movimento da Escola Moderna (Modern School Movement)**.

The so-called **Project Pedagogy** consists of a set of activities arising from concrete problems in direct connection with social reality. Children collaborate with the teacher in exploring and dealing with a plan for action that will integrate and give meaning to the children's activities. The teachers act in a semistructured way, coordinating action and giving information. The program is flexible, and the activities are evaluated according to the defined objectives. The main goal is to promote autonomy, creativity, and socialization.

The method of **João de Deus** focuses on the preparation of 4- to 6-year-old children for academic learning. The teacher has a very direct and active role. Children have to fulfill a highly structured plan of activities on a scheduled basis (as in primary school). Activities involving drawing, painting, prereading, and prearithmetic are common.

The kindergarten rooms oriented by the **Modern School Movement** have the appearance of workshops with specific areas for specific activities. These areas, or "corners," like the greeting corner, the press corner, the reading corner, the make-believe corner, contain all the materials needed for the activities. A cooperative organization of the space is adopted, and children go around the areas of interest, working either individually or in groups (small or whole-class). The teacher is the key person, whose main objective is the socialization of the child by promot-

ing free individual expression, participation in the group's life, and a spirit of help and cooperation. The development of logical thinking and an initiation of children to reading and writing through "natural methods" are also goals of the Modern School Movement.

## RESEARCH

A survey of the research on preschool education in Portugal reveals that there are few relevant studies, a fact that can be attributed to an absence of a tradition of educational research. Two main reasons account for the lack of preschool research:

1. The preschool system is relatively new.
2. Psychology is a relatively new course (created in 1976), and higher-level education courses began only recently. (Although the Higher Schools of Education were created in 1977, they did not start to operate until 1986.)

There are, however, some noteworthy research projects on preschool-aged children. The projects all use an ecological approach and are part of community-aimed programs. They are

- **The Alcácer Project**—a study of child development in a rural environment
- **The Amadora Project**—a study of socioeducational intervention in deprived areas
- **The Águeda Project**—a study of the integration of handicapped children
- **The Paredes de Coura Project**—discovering the child in a rural environment

Begun in October 1981, the 3-year **Alcácer Project**, "Child Development in the Rural Community," was the result of a combined initiative of the Calouste Gulbenkian and the Bernard van Leer Foundations. Implemented in the rural community of Alcácer do Sal (100 km south of Lisbon), the project aimed at the improvement of the educational quality of the preschool centers in the area. These centers started to operate after April 1974, owing among other reasons to the sudden increase in female employment. In the absence of qualified preschool staff, the community hired women whose only training was their experience as mothers. They were the main target of the project.

Since the project's frame of reference was an ecological approach to development, it also focused on other community systems: the directors,

the parents, and the remaining staff, apart from the children themselves. Conceptualized as an action-research project, its general goal was "to contribute to the establishment of early education models adapted to the development of children in rural areas" (Campos, 1984).<sup>13</sup>

The **Amadora Project**, "Social and Educational Intervention in Deprived Areas," is a global project in which several resources in the community (such as educational, health, and social welfare agencies) integrate their efforts to

1. Give appropriate answers to the socioeducational needs of at-risk children
2. Promote family and community cooperation in and responsibility for the prevention and remediation of socioeducational problems

The project was undertaken in two of the most deprived areas in the district of Lisbon, districts characterized by slum quarters and government housing. The responsible team belongs to the Regional Center of Social Security of Lisbon, which together with the Bernard van Leer Foundation subsidizes this project. It started in 1985 and will last for 6 years (Centro Regional de Segurança Social, 1986).

The **Águeda Project**, "Community Integrated Education," has as its main goals to commit society to the child's development, to marshal facilities and resources, and to give priority to handicapped children. The project is an intervention one that includes all children who have reached kindergarten age. It started in 1975 as a joint initiative of some local centers (Secretariado Nacional de Reabilitação, 1983).

The **Paredes de Coura Project**, "Discovering the Child in the Rural Environment," is aimed at the reduction of school failure, particularly in the first 2 years of schooling. This community intervention project started in the academic year 1984-85 and is subsidized by UNICEF and the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation. The project involves collaboration of professionals from several areas—health (public health doctors and nurses), education (preschool teachers), and social welfare (social workers). The main assumption underlying the project is that the quality of the environment for preschool-aged children determines school success and adaptation, particularly for the first years of schooling.

#### THE FINANCING OF RESEARCH

There are government and private research financing sources, and in the last category, there are national and international sources. Government financing sources include the following:

- The National Institute of Scientific and Technological Research—a department of the ME, founded in 1976, that has as its main functions to finance research in higher education, to contribute to the setup of national scientifically based educational policy, and to collaborate in the training of the highly qualified staff necessary for national development

- The National Junta of Scientific and Technological Research—a department of the Ministry of Planning and Administration of the Territory, founded in 1967, having as its purpose the planning, coordination, and encouragement of scientific and technological research in the national territory

Most of the existing educational research has been financed by private institutions of international scope, such as the Bernard van Leer Foundation, the Aga Khan Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation, and the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation. This last one is situated in Lisbon and is the sole financing source of Years 0 to 1 of the IEA Preprimary Project in Portugal.<sup>14</sup> There are other national foundations that finance more regional and limited projects, mostly ones confined to the areas of the country where the foundations are located, for example, Fundação Engenheiro António Almeida, and Fundação Cupertino de Miranda.

#### INSTITUTIONS RESPONSIBLE FOR STATISTICAL ELABORATION

The National Institute of Statistics is responsible for the national system of statistics and belongs to the Ministry of Planning and Administration of the Territory. In addition, there are other organizations responsible for the elaboration of the statistical data related to each ministry, and these should be pointed out because of their relevance to matters concerning the preschool population. They are the Cabinet of Studies and Planning, which is part of the ME; the Institute of Financial Management, which is part of the MWSS; and the Statistical Service of the General Directory of Health, which is part of the Ministry of Health.

#### FUTURE NEEDS AND ISSUES

From a survey of the existing literature, and from the opinions gathered through interviews with key people in the area of preschool education, the following may be listed as the main needs of the preschool system in Portugal:

- Better methods of data collection to obtain more complete statistics
- Better evaluation of the educational system as a whole and of the preschool system in particular
- Evaluation/intervention studies of preschool teaching methods, of preschool curriculum, of teacher training, of the new care options now available (home day care mothers and home day care mother groups)

In the near future, the government policy will change to include all existing educational and care options, for all age groups, under the sponsorship of the Ministry of Education. This means that the ME will control the kindergartens presently under the sponsorship of the MWSS, with this control restricted however to the kindergartens' educational program and activities.

Another trend is towards the enhancement of what is considered "preschool education," which refers to the period between birth and age of school entry. For example, already as a start, the continual presence of a "preschool teacher" in each group of children under age 3 is now obligatory. This replaces the traditional "nurse." The phase in which the main concern regarding child care in the first 3 years of life was children's health and nutritional status is gradually being replaced by a new phase that focuses on early development and education. Nevertheless, the prevailing idea is that preschool is not a preparation for school, and consequently its noncompulsory character has been retained in recent legislation.

Finally, the recent government effort through the Ministry of Education to expand the rate of preschool coverage and at the same time to suit the particular characteristics and needs of the specific regions of the country must also be pointed out (Pires, 1987). Among the different programs, "itinerant education" deserves a special reference, although it is still in the experimental stage. It consists of educational intervention programs offered by one preschool teacher who visits several localities in which there are fewer than 10 preschool-aged children. The visiting teacher works with children and their families to foster development and education. This program seems not only well suited to regions with low population density but also quite adaptable to specific regional cultural features, and the outcomes thus far are encouraging.

This diversification in response to the needs of specific geographical groups is one of the factors leading the responsible people in the preschool area to hope for an 80 percent preschool coverage rate by 1991-92. In working towards this ambitious and desirable goal, the

country's continued adherence to the European Economic Community certainly plays an important role.

## SUMMARY

We have tried to search out what seems to us to be the relevant information concerning preprimary education in Portugal. This information, gathered from various sources, points up first of all the considerable delay that has characterized the evolution of Portuguese preschool education—a delay influenced largely by the political events of our country.

The first impetus for the creation of the current early childhood education system was the Veiga Simão Reform, although most of its plans went awry due to the April 25 Revolution. The Revolution, however, introduced a new dynamic into Portuguese life in general, which ultimately has contributed to the nation's greater interest in sociocultural and educational phenomena, including preschool education. Because of the changes since then, the picture we face today in the field of preschool education is quantitatively and qualitatively different from that of two decades ago, particularly with regard to the following aspects:

- There is an increase in the number of centers for young children, as well as a greater variety of child care options (for example, the home day care mothers and home day care mother groups). Still, the national coverage of child care needs is less extensive than that of most European countries.

- There is an increase in the number of training schools for preschool teachers and a greater concern with the development of appropriate preschool curricula.

- There is a greater sensitivity on the part of policymakers to the educational goals of kindergartens (as is evidenced by the criteria used by the Ministry of Education in the selection of areas for the establishment of new centers).

- There is a trend towards better coordination of efforts of the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Work and Social Security, so that all children between ages 3 and 6 might receive appropriate services.

- There is a growing tendency towards the mainstreaming of handicapped children who are able to benefit from school, although the care of the most profoundly handicapped children continues to depend on the MWSS.

Although Portugal still faces many problems that stem mainly from a

lack of economic and material resources, the nation's preprimary education system seems to be undergoing a positive evolutionary process.

## AUTHORS' NOTE

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## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup>This report refers only to Continental Portugal, meaning that no data were collected for the islands of Madeira and Açores, which are autonomous regions.

<sup>2</sup>João de Deus was a poet and an educator whose writings describing a new method for teaching children to read were published in 1876. Surrounded by a large controversy, criticized by some and praised by others, his nontraditional method was nevertheless quite successful.

<sup>3</sup>The first two kindergartens using the João de Deus method started to operate in 1911, the first year of republican government. The movement towards its foundation was nevertheless initiated under the monarchial government.

<sup>4</sup>Veiga Simão was education minister from 1970, while Marcelo Caetano was prime minister, and remained until the end of the Second Republic in 1974. His reform is described in the "Projecto do Sistema Educativo" [Educational System Project] and in "Linhas Gerais da Reforma do Ensino Superior" [General Guidelines for Higher Education Reform]. Both documents, which include plans for reforming the entire educational system, are published in *Ministério da Educação (1973)—A Reforma do Sistema Educativo* [Educational System Reform], Lisboa: Ministério da Educação Nacional. Simão's reform was at the time (and under the political situation) considered very innovative and has been difficult to implement.

<sup>5</sup>At the present time there are 14 Schools of Higher Education in the whole country and plans for others to be created.

<sup>6</sup>Since 1975–76, training schools for preschool teachers have admitted male students. Today there are a few male students training to be teachers and a few male preschool teachers.

<sup>7</sup>These are official statistics from two government agencies: the General Office of Basic and Secondary Education (ME) and the General Office of Social Security (MWSS).

<sup>8</sup>From *Schemes of Pecuniary Lendings of Social Security*, authored and published by the Documentation and Information Center of Social Security, Lisbon, 1986.

<sup>9</sup>In Portugal, *public* agencies or institutions are government controlled and directed; *private* agencies or institutions are nongovernment ones that may nevertheless be regulated and supported by the government to some extent.

<sup>10</sup>The IPSS are a group of private, nonprofit, publicly cosponsored institutions (such as associations of residents, parish centers) that constitute a counterpart to the Social Security system. The IPSS were licensed in 1979, when defined agreements of cooperation were established between the MWSS and the institutions. The MWSS determines the conditions of existence of IPSS institutions and gives them technical and financial support. It also has the right to verify whether the institutions are obeying the conditions of the agreement.

<sup>11</sup>The autarchy is a local authority, with political and administrative power.

<sup>12</sup>In Portugal's rural areas, Casas do Povo are cultural, social, and recreational activity centers that can also act with social welfare purposes.

<sup>13</sup>Some other references are Projecto Alcácer (1982); Campos (1982); and Almeida, Lemos, & Gonçalves (1982).

<sup>14</sup>Year 2 has been cofinanced by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation and the National Junta of Scientific and Technological Research.

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