

Education and territorial development strategies: the case of the Northern Region of Portugal.

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The aim of this work is to explore and recap the educational territorial mosaic that is emerging in the Northern Region of Portugal. It is a contribution to the Regional Spatial Planning Programme of this region (PROT-Norte). The PROT is a multidimensional document that covers different areas of diagnostic analysis, with the aim of building a territorial model and designing strategies and agendas for the transformation of the territory. One of the dimensions taken into account in this modelling is that of education (Ramos & Marques, 2023). The PROT must propose place-based policies (Barca, McCann, & Rodríguez-Pose, 2012). These policies have the potential to promote socio-economic change at regional local level and form the basis of the European Union's territorial cohesion policy. It is therefore useful to characterise the educational territorial mosaic of the northern region as a starting point for the construction of territorially rooted public policy proposals.

Methodologically, a database has been created with indicators such as: direct routes to success, retention and dropout rates in basic education, the population aged 18-24 with a third cycle of basic education that is not in the education system, the population aged 25-44 without secondary education, among others. The indicators were then categorised and mapped. Finally, profiles were identified and the territorial mosaic was extracted using multiple correspondence analyses.

In terms of education, the northern region shows a diversity of education and training contexts. The larger urban centres tend to have more diversified supply and demand and better indicators of educational attainment. Nevertheless, there are weaknesses in these areas and there is a great diversity of educational contexts within the municipalities. The less densely populated areas have less favourable contexts, with less diversity of supply and demand and less favourable indicators of educational attainment.

The territorial mosaic that emerges from this analysis supports the option of place-based education policies that prioritise and provide quality education for all pupils – educational equity – and that create the necessary conditions for pupils' performance to be free from the constraints imposed by the diversity of local and family socio-economic contexts – educational justice.

References:

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