Refugee Children and Youth - Education and Training

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

March 2022

1. Is education compulsory in Portugal?

In Portugal, compulsory education ends with obtaining a diploma from the upper secondary level of education (12th grade) or, irrespective of obtaining a diploma, when the student turns 18 years old.

2. When I arrive in Portugal, will I go to school straight away?

Integration into school should take place as quickly as possible, with a progressive introduction into the curriculum. These students must start by attending the teaching activities that the school considers to be suitable for their specificities, guaranteeing they are integrated in a group/class and carry out activities to fulfill the total instruction time outlined in the curriculum matrix of their year of schooling. It is up to schools to decide on measures to support learning and inclusion, namely the subjects to be attended, depending on the knowledge of the specific situation of each student and the teachers´ profile, namely in terms of mastery of foreign languages, in order to facilitate communication with students.

3. If I don't speak Portuguese, how will I be able to follow the school subjects?

Before starting the Portuguese as a Second Language classes, the teachers of the school clusters will collect sociolinguistic data along with a diagnosis of the knowledge of the Portuguese language, aiming at placing the students in terms of linguistic proficiency levels.

The information collected will also be a starting point for the definition of educational measures to be applied in the various education levels.

Within a school context, one of following situations can happen:

a) Progressive integration into the curriculum (the school decides, case by case, and gradually, which subjects to be attended), based on both the student's sociolinguistic profile and school pathway, in order to reinforce learning of the Portuguese language and its development as a vehicle of knowledge for the other subjects, always taking into account the obligation to comply with the total weekly workload defined in the national curriculum matrix.
b) Development of other modalities and/or intervention projects approved by the school.

During the period in which they are not attending the other subjects provided for their year of schooling, students develop a range of learning activities within Portuguese as a Second Language (PLNM), according to this subject's Essential Learning, which includes the approach of Portuguese as a language of access to the curricula of the remaining subjects. Other activities that foster language immersion, interpersonal relationships, inclusion at school and a sense of belonging should also be provided to students, namely tutoring and mentoring, clubs, and school sports.

4. In what year of schooling will I be placed?

If the child or young person has documents proving educational or professional qualifications, the placement in the Portuguese education system is made following the granting of equivalence to the years of schooling completed in the country of origin.

In case there is no information or document about the student's school pathway, the age and the corresponding year of schooling/education cycle should be taken as a reference. Other factors, such as vocational guidance, should also be considered and weighted at the time of the decision - which can be reassessed later, depending on the student's evolution.

5. Will I be integrated into a school class?

Yes, you will. The minors who arrive in Portugal are integrated into a class and begin progressively to attend the same subjects as the other classmates.

6. What options do I have for studying?

There are several options for those who want to study in Portugal and schools provide support in terms of vocational guidance, to help students on their decision.

I. These are educational and training offers for primary and lower secondary education (1st to 9th year of schooling):

      a) General Basic Education;

      b) Education and Training Courses;

      c) Specialised Artistic Courses.

II. These are educational and training offers for upper-secondary education (10th to 12th year of schooling):

      a) Scientific-Humanistic Courses;

      b) Vocational Courses;

      c) Specialised Artistic Courses;

      d) Apprenticeship Courses.

7. Can I choose an educational or training offer and later switch to another?

Yes, you can. It is possible to switch from general education provision to vocational education and vice versa.

8. Can I choose a vocational course right from the start?

Yes, you can, as long as there are offers, both at lower and upper secondary levels, adjusted to different profiles.

However, to be able to choose some of these offers, you must meet the age requirement – be over 15 years old.

9. What offers are there in terms of vocational courses? What is their duration? And what certification do they guarantee?

In order to complete lower secondary (9th grade) and upper secondary (12th grade) education through more practical learning associated to a profession that allows you to continue studying or join the labor market, there are several dual paths certification (school and vocational) aimed at young people, according to the following table:

Course	Features/Definition	Level	Duration	Education and training areas	Pursuit of further studies	Qualifications according to National Qualifications Framework
Education and Training courses	- Courses for young people with the same age or over 15 years old; - Development of social, scientific and vocational skills required for a professional activity; - Preparation for the pursuit of further studies at the upper secondary level and for a qualified integration in labor market.	Upper primary and lower secondary education	1 or 2 years	- Different areas, from industry and technology, to services, trade, and transport, as well as agriculture, environment, and others	Yes - For lower secondary education Yes - For upper secondary education	Level 1 Level 2
Specialised artistic courses (lower secondary education)	- Intended for young people who reveal interest, aptitude or talent for pursuing a school artistic pathway, in which social, scientific and artistic skills are developed; - Subject to entrance tests.	Upper primary and lower secondary education	5 years	Dance / Music	Yes - for upper secondary education	Level 2

Vocational courses	- Intended for young people in the age group 15-18 (by the time they start the course); - Students develop social, scientific and vocational skills necessary for a professional activity; - Preparation for an easier and qualified insertion in labor market.	Upper secondary education	3 years	- Different areas, from industry and technology, to services, trade, and transport, as well as agriculture, environment, and others	Yes - for post secondary and higher education	Level 4
Specialised artistic courses (upper secondary education)	- School pathway for young people from 15 years old (inclusive) and up to 18 years old (when they start the course); - These are double certification courses (with the exception of courses in the area of Music); - Intended for young people who reveal interest, aptitude, or talent for pursuing a school artistic pathway, in which social, scientific and artistic skills are developed; - Subject to entrance tests, with an eliminatory character, in the areas of music and dance.	Upper secondary	3 years	Visual Arts and Audiovisuals, Dance, Music	Yes - for post-secondary and/or higher education	Visual and Audiovisual arts: level 4 Dance: level 4 Music: level 3
Apprenticeship courses (upper secondary education)	- Aimed at young people under the age of 25 years old; - These are double certification	Upper secondary	2800-3700 hours (about 2 and a	- Different areas, from industry and technology, to services,	Yes - for post-secondary and/or higher education	Level 4

		half years)	trade, and others.		
	courses: they allow you to obtain simultaneously a school and vocational certification; - They allow a better insertion in the labor market, boosted by a strong component of training carried out in a company context; - They allow the pursuit of further studies.				

10. If, meanwhile, I turn 18 can I attend any of the aforementioned options?

According to the legislation in force, the enrollment in upper secondary education is only allowed for students over 18 years old who already have had a previous school pathway in the Portuguese education system. This means that if the student enters the education system, and, in the meantime, turns 18 years old, he/she can finish his/her your course, until getting the certification or qualification.

However, when you reach the age of majority it is possible to choose a set of other offers for adults.

From the age of 18, and depending on the profile of the young person, he/she can

→ undergo a process of recognition, validation and certification of competences (RVCC);

→ attend an Adult Education and Training Course (EFA), at primary or secondary level;

→ attend an Apprenticeship Course, developing the necessary skills to carry out a professional activity;

School pathway	Features/Definition	Level	Duration	Pursuit of further studies	Qualification
	- It is aimed at adults (from 18 years old) without the appropriate qualification for insertion or progression in labor market and, mainly, without having concluded basic education (until lower secondary) or	Primary and secondary education	Variable (months or years, depending on profile and availability of the adult, his/her acquired competences, autonomy, training and experience)	Yes	Level 2 Level 3 Level 4

Recognition, validation, and certification of competences (RVCC)	upper secondary education, being particularly suitable for adults with incomplete training paths; - It consists of a process through which the adult demonstrates skills acquired and developed throughout life through formal, non-formal and informal ways, which are subject to validation and certification to get a qualification (school or vocational).				
Education and Training Courses for Adults	- Aimed at those who are 18 years old or more and intend to complete the 4th, 6th or 9th grades of primary and lower secondary education or upper secondary education (12th grade) or wish to obtain a vocational certification; - It allows the development of social, scientific, and professional skills which are necessary for a professional activity.	Primary and secondary education	Variable 1 to 3 years	Yes	Level 2 Level 3 Level 4
	- Aimed at young people under the age of 25; - Being double certification courses, they allow you to simultaneously obtain	Upper secondary education	2800-3700 hours (about two years and a half)	Yes, for post-secondary and/or higher education	Level 4

Apprenticeship courses (upper secondary education)	a school and vocational certification; - They allow a better insertion in labor market, boosted by a strong component of training carried out in a company context; - They allow the pursuit of further studies.				

→ attend upper secondary education in the form of recurrent education, which comprises:

a) Scientific-humanistic courses at upper secondary education in the form of recurrent education:

Training offer organised in a modular system (after working hours) - modules that can be capitalised by subject – which is embodied in the curricular matrices of the Scientific-Humanistic Courses contained in Ministerial Implementing Order no. 242/2012, of 10 August, and comprises courses in Languages and Humanities, Socioeconomic Sciences and Science and Technologies. Accordingly, in the face-to-face modality, students can complete upper secondary education in three academic years.

b) Distance learning recurrent upper-secondary education courses:

It is a training offer that includes courses in Languages and Humanities, Socioeconomic Sciences and Science and Technology, having the curricular matrices of the Scientific-Humanistic Courses of recurrent upper secondary education as a reference.

. This system works in a modular regime, in the form of "b-learning", that is, integrating face-to-face sessions and remote, synchronous and asynchronous sessions. If students choose a non-face-to-face regime, they have the possibility to manage the completion of the modules of the different subjects, being able to anticipate the conclusion of upper secondary education in one or two years.

11. If I follow a vocational school pathway, can I still apply for higher education?

Yes, you can. Upper secondary education offers allow the pursuit of further studies at a higher level.

12. If I choose a vocational school pathway, will I also have Portuguese as a Second Language classes?

Yes, you will. Regarding Education and Training Courses, Vocational Courses and Specialised Artistic Courses, it is planned to reinforce the learning of Portuguese as a Second Language.

As far as adults are concerned there is an offer of Portuguese as a Host Language.

13. What comprises the curriculum of primary and secondary education?

Primary and Lower Secondary Education

Lower primary education Grades 1-4	Upper primary education Grades 5-6	Lower secondary education Grades 7-9
Curriculum components - Portuguese - Maths - Science, Geography, History (Estudo do Meio) - Artistic Education (Arts, Dance, Music) - English - Physical Education - Study Guidance/Tutoring - Complementary Offer - Religion (optional) - Citizenship and Development - ICT	**Curriculum components** **Subjects** **Languages and Social Studies** - Portuguese - English - Portugal History and Geography - Citizenship and Development **Maths and Science** - Maths - Science **Artistic and Technological Education** - Art - Technological Education - Music - ICT - Physical Education - Religion (optional) - Complementary Offer - Study Guidance /Tutoring - Complement to Artistic Education	**Curriculum components** **Subjects** **Languages and Social Studies** - Portuguese **Foreign languages** - English - Foreign Language II **Social and Humanistic Science** - History - Geography - Citizenship and Development - Maths **Science and Physics** - Science - Physics and Chemistry **Artistic and Technological Education** - Art - Complement to Artistic Education - ICT - Physical Education - Religion (optional) - Complementary Offer

Artistic Specialised Courses (Dance/Music)	
Upper primary (Grades 5-6)	**Lower secondary (Grades 7-9)**
Curriculum components **Subjects** **Languages and Social Studies** - Portuguese - English - Portugal History and Geography - Citizenship and development **Maths and Science:** - Maths - Science - Art - Physical Education (there is not the subject: Dance) **Artistic specialised training** - Religion (optional) - Complementary Offer	**Curriculum components** **Subjects** - Portuguese **Foreign languages:** - English - Foreign Language II **Social and Humanistic Science:** - History - Geography - Citizenship and Development - Maths **Science and Physics:** - Science - Physics and Chemistry - Art (optional) - Physical Education (there is not the subject: Dance) **Artistic specialised training** - Religion (optional) - Complementary Offer

Education and Training courses			
Type 1 A (2 years)	**Type 1 B (1 year)**	**Type 2 (2 years)**	**Type 3 (1 year)**
	Entrance conditions		
Under grade 4	**Under grade 6**	**Grades 6 and 7 or attendance of grade 8**	**Grade 8 or attendance of grade 9**
Training components: **Sociocultural (894h)** - Portuguese - Foreign Language - Citizenship and World of Today - ICT - Hygiene, Health, and Safety at work - Physical Education **Science (288h)** - Applied Maths - 1 subject **Technological (480h)** - Short duration training units on technological, technical and practical **Practical (210)** In-service training **1872h (minimum)**	**Training components:** **Sociocultural (345h)** - Portuguese - Foreign Language - Citizenship and World of today - ICT - Hygiene, Health, and Safety at work - Physical Education **Science (90h)** - Applied Maths - 1 subject **Technological (480h)** - Short duration training units on technological, technical and practical **Practical (210)** In-service training **1125h (minimum)**	**Training components:** **Sociocultural (798h)** - Portuguese - Foreign Language - Citizenship and World of today - ICT - Hygiene, Health, and Safety at work - Physical Education **Science(333h)** - Applied Maths - 1 subject **Technological (768h)** - Short duration training units on technological, technical and practical **Practical (210)** In-service training **2109h (minimum)**	**Training components:** **Sociocultural (192h)** - Portuguese - Foreign Language - Citizenship and World of Today - ICT - Hygiene, Health, and Safety at work - Physical Education **Science (66h)** - Applied Maths - 1 subject **Technological (732h)** - Short duration training units on technological, technical and practical **Practical (210)** In-service training **1200h (minimum)**

Upper secondary education			
Scientific-Humanistic courses	**Vocational courses**	**Specialised Artistic courses**	**Apprenticeship courses**
Training components: **General:** - Portuguese - Foreign language I, II or III - Philosophy - Physical Education **Specific:** According to the course specific area of studies - 1 three-year subject - 2 two-year subjects **Options** - 2 yearly subjects (1 within the course area of studies; the other can be related to other areas of studies) - Religion (optional)	**Training components:** **Sociocultural:** (1000h) - Portuguese - Foreign Language I, II or III - Integration Area (Philosophy adapted) - ICT/School Offer - Physical Education **Science:** (500h) - 2/3 subjects within this area **Technological:** (1100h a 1300h) - Short duration training units on technological, technical and practical **In-service training** (600 to 840h) Religion (optional)	**Training components:** **General:** - Portuguese - Foreign language I, II, III - Philosophy - Physical Education (there is not the subject: Dance) **Science:** - 2/4 subjects (within a range of subjects included in artistic training area) **Artistic technical component** - 2/5 subjects (within a range of subjects included in artistic training area) Religion (optional)	**Training components:** **Sociocultural:** (800h) **Languages, Culture and Communication:** - Living in Portuguese - Communicating in English (you can choose another foreign language that proves to better meet the labor market needs with the same goals and competences) - ICT **Citizenship and Society** - The World of Today - Social and Personal Development **Science:** (400h) - Maths and Reality - Other **Technological** (800h to 1000h) - Short duration training units on technological, technical and practical **In-service training** (1100 to 1500h) Apprenticeship Courses provide that, to the total duration of the respective curriculum plans, an extra of up to 90 hours

			can be added, distributed over the three school terms, devoted to reinforcement or skills development organized as follows: • activities of support, tutoring or learning recovery - 30 hours • organisation of crosscurricular projects – 60 hours **Weekly instruction time in minutes:** **1305/1980 – 10th grade** **1350/2250 – 11th grade** **1035/2160 – 12th grade** (one can integrate, depending on the artistic area, Training in Work Context/in service training)