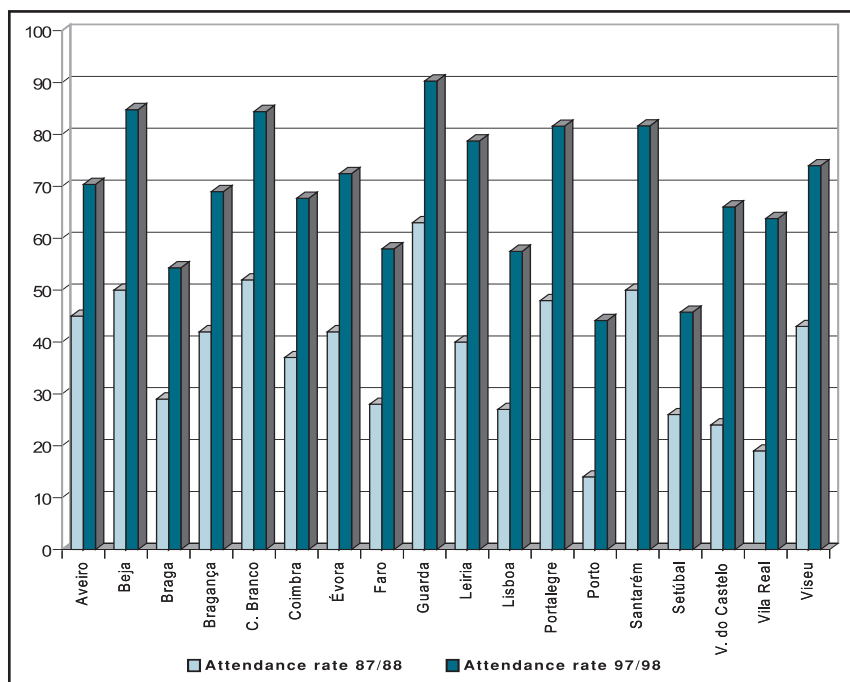


- d) *Children from migrant families, minority ethnic groups and gipsy families:* Children from ethnic minorities often run the risk of suffering social exclusion and failing at school because their families, as a whole, (1) are engaged in the least qualified work and lowest paid jobs, (2) are often unemployed or in precarious employment unable to avail themselves of social security benefits, (3) live in rundown neighbourhoods which are breeding grounds for social and school exclusion. To facilitate the social and personal integration of migrants two offices have been created: the **Alto Comissário para a Imigração e Minorias Étnicas**, and **Secretariado Entreculturas** (the Inter-cultures Secretariat), an institution which reports to the Ministry of Education and whose function is to promote and coordinate the development of inter-cultural educational projects.
- e) *Children from socially excluded families.* In addition, due to recent social changes and the increase in the number of socially excluded citizens, some other support programmes, namely the Guaranteed Minimum Income Programme, are being implemented.

Given that pre-school attendance is not compulsory various *constraints* influence access on an equal basis, such as:

- the structure of the education system itself since it is only now that the pre-school education network has started to be defined with rigour and is still unable to provide 100% cover. It is necessary to correct distortions introduced long ago in the network;
- the demographic characteristics of the country with very high density areas around the big cities and sparsely populated areas in the countryside;
- cultural aspects causing lack of awareness and information concerning the long-term benefits of pre-school education.

**Table 17: Evolution of pre-school education attendance rate, per district, 1987/88 to 1997/98**

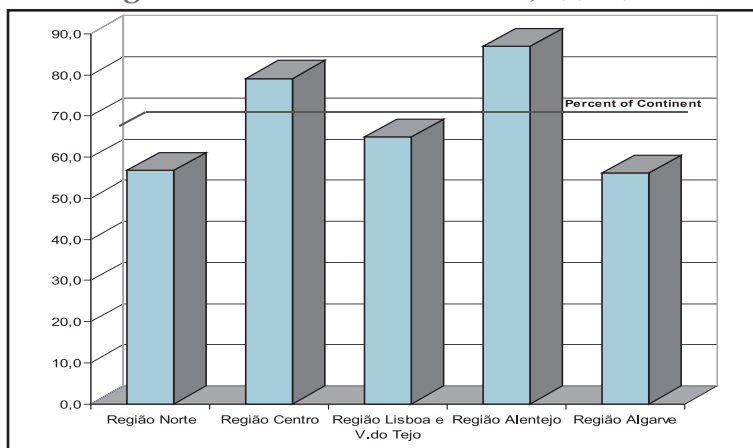


Source: DAPP, Ministério da Educação, 1998

## 2. Provision and demand for the various types of ECEC

In 1997, pre-school provision covered 64.5% of children residing in Continental Portugal. Many educational contexts, especially those located in highly populated urban centres have waiting lists. No data is available as to (1) the number of children awaiting enrolment in each context, (2) the number of children who do not attend an educational context because families fail to take the initiative to enrol them, (3) or other reasons for non-enrolment. It is known, however, that enrolment figures for five-year-old children show a tendency towards universal access.

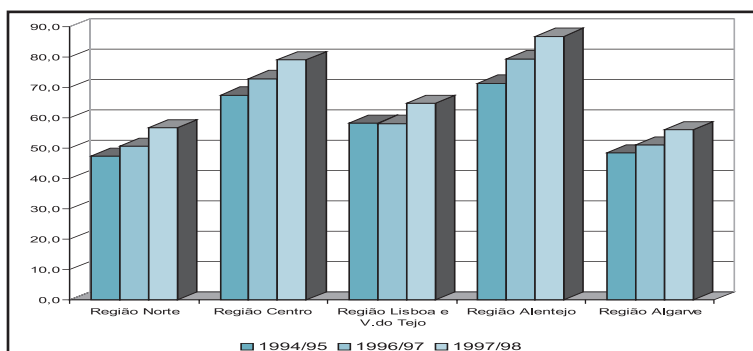
**Table 18: Percent pre-school education attendance rate, per Regional Education Directorates, 1997/98**



Source: DAPP, Ministério da Educação, 1998

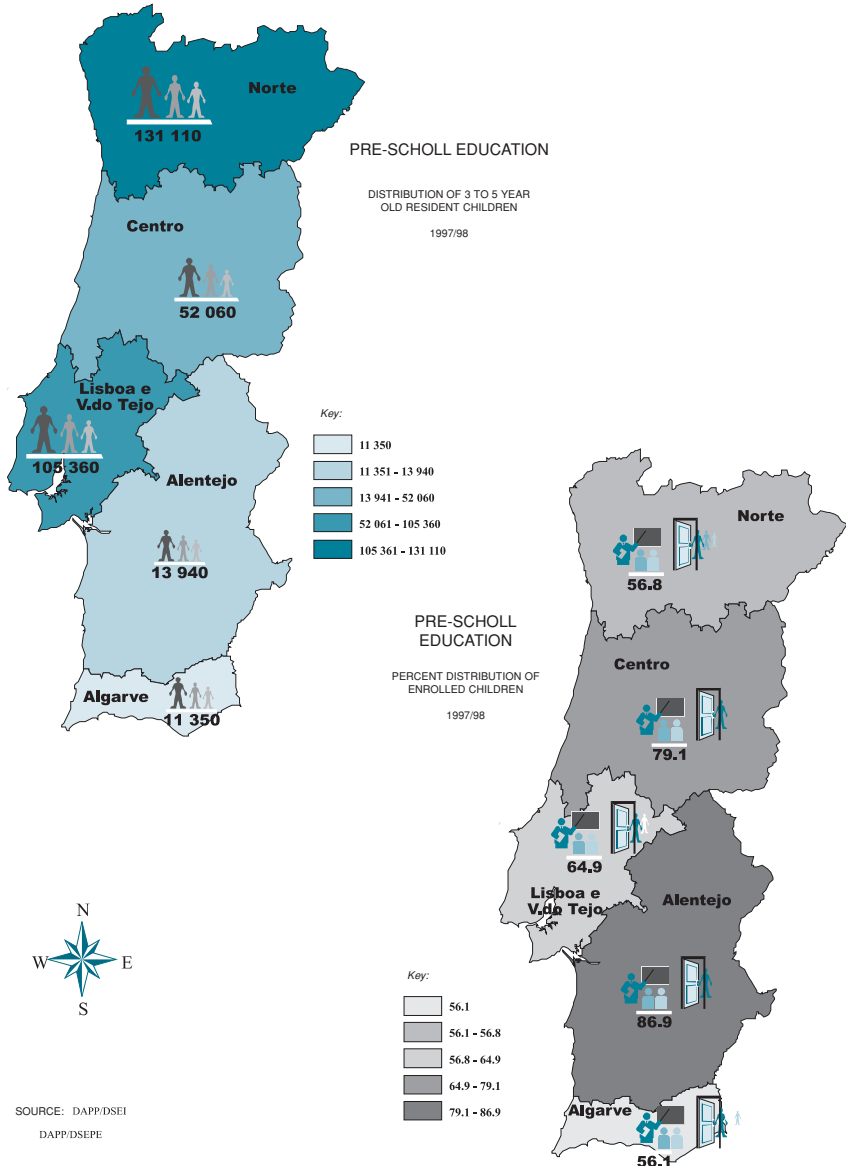
Data related to attendance of the pre-school education network (Table 19) shows that from 1994, the year preceding the launching of the Plan for the Expansion and Development of the Pre-School Education Network, to 1997/98 a consistent increase in the pre-school education population in all areas covered by the Regional Education Directorates.

**Table 19: Percent evolution of pre-school education attendance, 1994/95, 1996/97, 1997/98**



Source: DAPP, Ministério da Educação, 1998

Table 20 and 20 A: Three to five year old children residing in Portugal



Tables 20 and 20 A show the number of three to five year old children residing in Portugal in each Regional Education Directorate, as well as the percentage of children who attended pre-school educational contexts. An analysis of the data shown in the maps indicates that highest attendance was achieved in the Alentejo Region (86.9%) followed in decreasing order by the Centre Region (79.1%), Lisbon and the Tagus Valley Region (64.9%), the North (56.8%) and, finally, the Algarve (56.1%).

As mentioned in Section I, point 9 the existing situation is a consequence of:

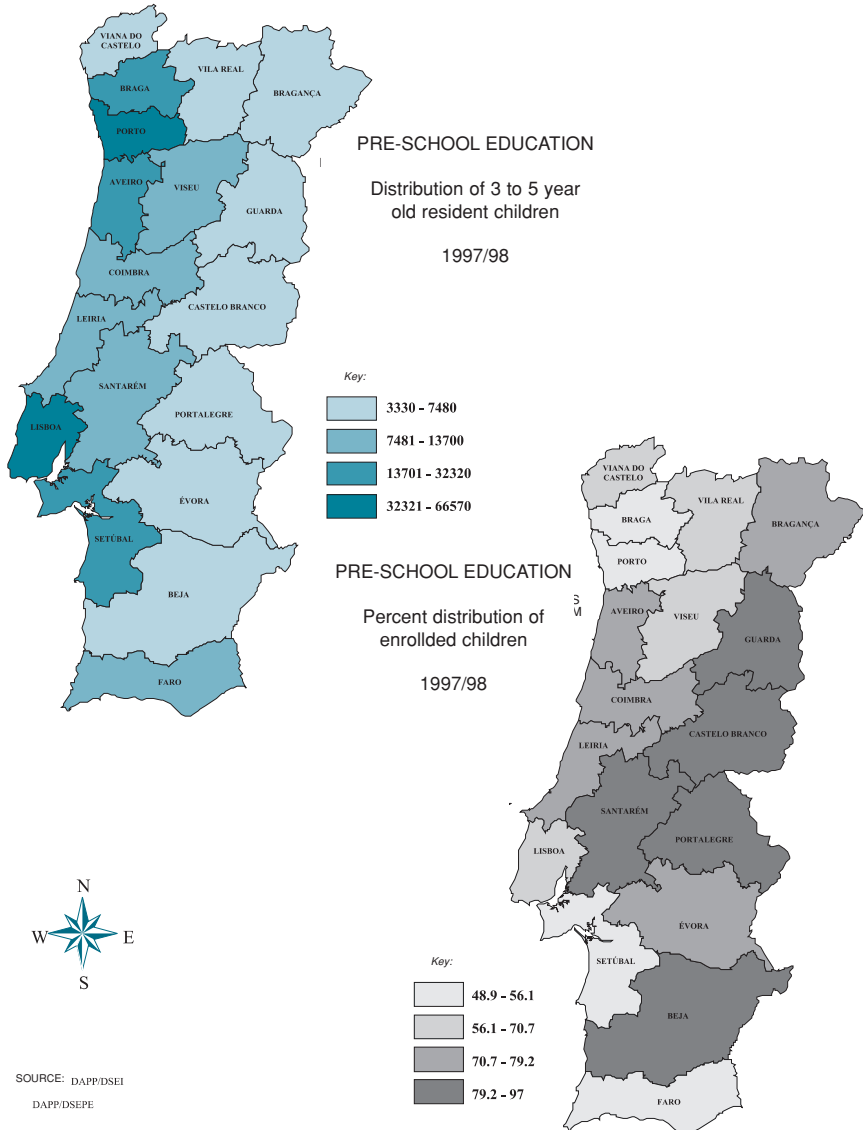
- 1) the demographic structure of the country, characterised by a strong concentration of the country and of the population in the large coastal urban centres with a corresponding desertification of the interior;
- 2) the difficulty with the establishment of a balanced network is also rooted in the geographical and social characteristics of the regions, of which the Algarve is a glaring example;
- 3) the historical distortions of the pre-school education network, which results in schools located where no children live and vice versa. Often, the will of local government has contributed to the disequilibrium of provision.

Tables 21 and 21 A show the same statistical data at the level of Districts.

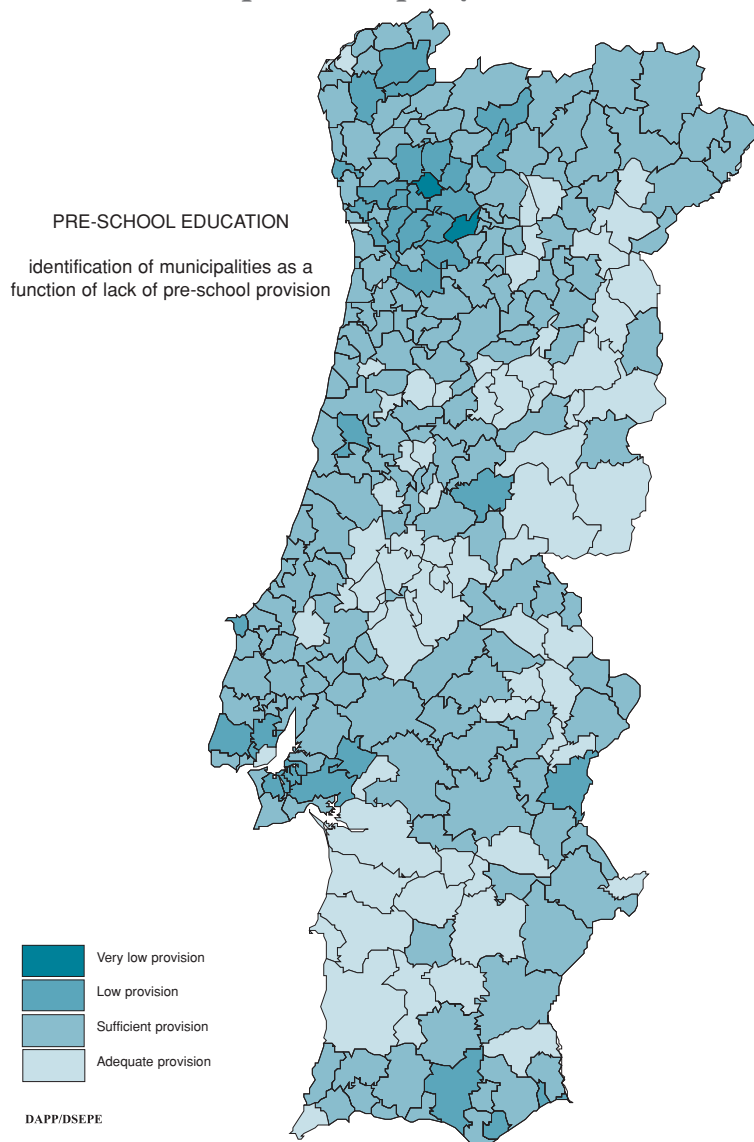
Table 22, through a more refined analysis carried out at the municipal level, shows the more severe cases in the deprived areas of the pre-school education network. At the same level of analysis this table shows the rate of attendance in Continental Portugal.

At the same level of analysis, Table 23 breaks down per municipality the attendance rate of the network.

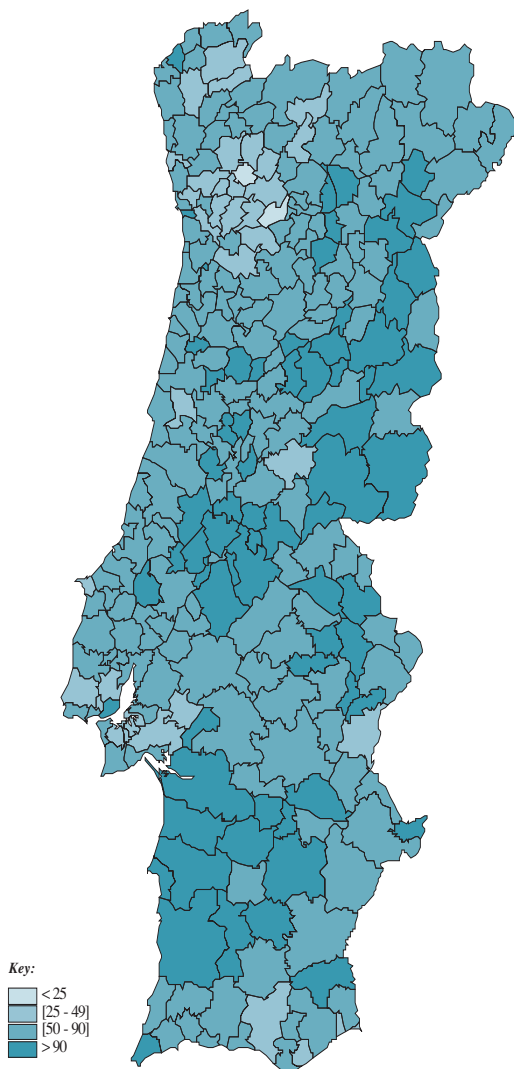
Tables 21 and 21 A: 3 to 5 year old children residing in Portugal



**Table 22: Deprived areas of the pre-school education network, per municipality**



**Table 23: Pre-school attendance rate, per municipality — 1997/98**



SOURCE: DAPP  
05/06/98



### 3. Programme and strategies for intervention

Parents can enrol their children in educational contexts belonging to the public and private networks. In order to enable parents to enrol their children in either network irrespective of their financial means, the following guidelines have been established:

- Contexts of the *public network* offer educational and family support components. The educational component is free of charge. Meals and timetable extensions are charged according to parent's income,
- Contexts of the private network:
  - a) Jardins de Infância run by IPSS's - in Private Institutions for Social Solidarity fees are charged for the educational component except for five-year-old children. It is estimated that by the year 2000/01 all children will be covered. Costs incurred with the family support component are shared between the State and parents according to their income;
  - b) Private profit-making contexts - the State, through the Ministry of Education negotiates with the owners of private and cooperative context contracts for the provision of the family support component.

The aim of this policy is to give stimulus to initiatives leading to the expansion of the national pre-school education network, giving equal opportunity of access and attendance to all children and, on the other hand, extend support to families who opt to send their children to private contexts in full respect of their choice.

Please see Section III - C, point 4 - Strategies for the promotion, innovation and educational quality.



## Section III

### Policy Approaches

#### A — Regulations

##### 1. Extent of regulation

The Ministry of Education is the only institution responsible for regulating the provision of educational and social support services in all pre-school educational contexts. This arrangement is especially advantageous (Formosinho, 1997, pp 35). Common rules extended to all types of provision can be divided according to their nature as follows:

- *Structural*: general norms, responsibility for the system, articulation with basic education;
- *Financial*: direct grants and families' contributions;
- *Organizational*: pedagogical and cultural activities, timetables and operation;
- *Pedagogical*: curricula and qualifications of staff.

Such principles are described in the Framework Law for Pre-school Education, articles 5 (strategic role of the State), article 8 (Pedagogical and Technical responsibilities), article 11 (Pedagogical Directives), article 18 (Staffing), article 19 (Pedagogical and Cultural Training), articles 20 and 21 (Evaluation and Inspection).

##### 2. Entities responsible for ECEC regulations

The State is responsible for the definition of general norms concerning pre-school education in relation to its organizational, pedagogical and technical components and ensuring their application through follow-up, evaluation and inspection. The State is responsible for:

- The definition of rules leading to the coordination of activities within pre-school educational contexts;

- The definition of curricular objectives and guidance;
- The definition of qualification requirements of teaching and non-teaching staff;
- The definition of training requirements and ensure that training takes place;
- The definition of rules for evaluating the quality of the provision;
- Follow-up and inspection.

In Portugal, particularly since 1995, the Government has adopted clear intervention policies to ensure the expansion and quality improvement of the national pre-school education network. According to legislation approved in 1997 the strategic role and responsibilities of the State are:

- To create a public pre-school education network and widen the provision of services in accordance with population needs;
- To support the setting-up of pre-school educational contexts by entities other than the State whenever State provision is insufficient.

Intervention in ECEC is regulated through the legal mechanisms at the disposal of the two Ministries responsible for the provision of care or education to children, that is the Ministry of Labour and Solidarity and the Ministry of Education. Other Ministries, such as the Ministries of Health and Justice, and the Ministry for Equipment, Planning and Land Administration can introduce legislation that, in some cases, is particularly relevant for ECEC.

Common concerns at all official levels are (1) the introduction of norms producing common and coherent approaches in educational practices safeguarding for differences in face-to-face tuition and the need for on-going dialogue; and, whenever possible, (2) to try to bring all involved in education, at all levels, to participate in the education of children.

Given the need to meet the requirements of local populations, local government structures are recognised in law as the main partners of state institutions in the promotion of good practice in ECEC. The

conditions under which such partnerships are to be developed are set in government diplomas and joint protocols specifically drawn up between the parties. The State is obliged to ensure that the necessary financial resources are available to meet the requirements. The State may also enter into agreements and protocols with other partners, namely:

- private and cooperative educational contexts;
- IPSSs - Private Institutions of Social Solidarity;
- other non-profit institutions which carry out educational activities.

Responsibility for the regulation of ECEC falls mainly on the State, given its independent authority and its central, regional and local levels of operation, as described in Section 1, point 9. The types of educational provision described in this Report are all legally recognised and are therefore subject to regulations established in accordance with the complexity of the pedagogical tasks which the various types of educational contexts propose to develop.

Regulatory standards are clearly child-focused in accordance with the prescriptions contained in the Framework Law of the Educational System which, in all circumstances, puts the child, as future citizen, in first place. This Law appeals clearly to the participation of local structures, parents associations, residents associations, civic organizations and other collective or individual entities in the education process of children.

The general orienting principles in Education are based on shared participation in the educational process.

Regulatory standards are valid for the whole Portuguese educational system although variations can be introduced to meet special regional requirements.

### 3. Evaluation and enforcement of regulatory standards

There are other mechanisms in place to guarantee the safety and well being of children, as for instance, quality control of educational provision.

Quality should be guaranteed, primarily, in the school by the Pedagogical Director together with teachers and parents. Parents Associations and the pedagogical councils of the educational contexts themselves are officially recognised as assessors as well promoters of the efficiency of the educational services provided. At a higher level quality control supervision is under the authority of institutions such as the Inspector- General of Education, the Inspector-General of the Ministry of Labour and Solidarity, the Regional Services of the Ministry of Education, the Regional Services of the Ministry of Labour and Solidarity, and local government services.

#### 4. Information gathering and sharing

##### **Evaluation audits - Inspector General for Education**

The **Inspecção Geral de Educação - IGE** (The Inspector-General for Education) is responsible for the development of school performance evaluation mechanisms, which are adapted to meet the diverse nature of educational contexts and specific problems. Such mechanisms have a double function: they feed information to a central observatory which monitors and evaluates the quality of the provision, and promote the development in each school and Jardim de Infância of self-appraisal approaches of pedagogical practice as well as critical appraisal towards the likely effects of educational policies defined either centrally or locally.

In accordance with these aims, the Inspector General has carried out school evaluation and audit projects to identify the main quality objectives of pre-school provision as follows:

- planning of educational activity;
- administrative organization;
- organization of the educational environment;
- content development as described in curriculum guidelines;
- children observation practices;
- pedagogical relation;
- resource management.

Specific objectives together with observation criteria measured on four point quality scales were set in all the above activity areas.

Evaluations are carried out by an inspector on a national random sample of Jardins de Infância and are considered to be a form of external evaluation included in in-service training programmes. The evaluative nature of the inspection process involves teachers in the discussion of the information gathered. The aim is to get individual Jardins de Infância to improve their own Educational Projects i.e. their underlying philosophy, and the management or educational practices of staff vis-à-vis the aims of the various curricular components, children's needs and the expectations of the local communities.

Within such a framework it is natural that curricular projects differ between schools. Audits assess the quality of the "implemented curriculum" as well as the quality of the "achieved curriculum" and of the learning experiences. In this context, curriculum should be understood in its wider aspects including available resources and their management. Thus, the aim of the Pedagogical Audit Project carried out by the Inspector-General of Education is to contribute to the quality control process of the educational provision offered by the Portuguese Jardins de Infância through a form of external evaluation based on joint diagnostic/improvement practices.

Quality control in education is also applied to the organization and operation of educational contexts as well as to the results achieved. These aspects of quality control make the implementation of adequate information systems imperative not only on a national scale but also in each Jardim de Infância. Quality control is also directed towards the development and strengthening of the educational contexts themselves in such areas of their operation as self-analysis, planning and decision making leading them towards functional autonomy.

#### *Focus of inspection*

Inspection is focused on technical assistance requirements and

compliance with standards. Criteria applied are based on fair and reasonable expectations. The aim of inspection is to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the operation and operational conditions of the Jardins de Infância.

*Integrated evaluations: population and evaluation models*

The number of Jardins de Infância inspected by the Inspector General of Education varies according to whether "brief evaluations" or "long evaluations" are carried out. In all cases evaluations take place on a random sample of the Jardins de Infância population and it is estimated that the entire population will be inspected every three or four years. Long evaluations take three to five days depending on the number of children attending the educational undergoing inspection. Brief evaluations take one day.

Regulatory standards are focused on the child and the educational process as well as on resources and installations so that the quality of pre-school provision can be assessed. The evaluation model is applied nationally and evaluation guidelines are obligatory reviewed every three years.

*Training of inspectors*

Inspectors are required to hold a first degree although some hold Master degrees. Field inspectors are experienced professionals who must receive one year's specific training prior to starting a career as inspectors. Training includes a theoretical component and an in-service practical component.

*Sanctions and application procedures*

Inspectors do not apply disciplinary sanctions directly. As a consequence of the disciplinary reports they are asked to submit (Fact Finding Reports, Inquiry Reports and Disciplinary Reports) they may propose to their superiors application of sanctions in accordance with the Disciplinary Statutes for Central, Regional and Local Administration and Agents. Depending on the type of sanctions being recommended, final decisions on their application are made either by the Inspector-



General of Education, or his/her immediate superior, i.e. the Regional Education Director or the or the Minister of Education. The number of disciplinary proceedings in Jardins de Infância is minimal.

### *Information gathering*

Teachers, providers and inspectors all have access to the same type of information and criteria. All regulatory dispositions concerning the operation and quality of the provision in terms of premises and teaching staff are made available to the inspectors. All parents and guardians have access to the evaluations pertaining to their children or charges. Equally, all teachers have access to all the information contained in their personal files. However, in Portugal, the reports prepared by the Inspector General of Education are not made available to the public.

### *The role of private institutions*

Within the Portuguese educational system private Jardins de Infância enjoy great pedagogical autonomy. Many pre-school contexts have adopted their own pedagogical approaches introducing great diversity in the system. Private providers have a very important role to play in pedagogical innovation but they do not play any regulatory role.

## **B — Staff**

### **1. ECEC staff: duties and training required**

Up to 1997/98 early childhood teacher training first degree courses were 3 years long. Further training on specialised subjects such as special education needs training and other types leading to Higher Education Specialised Diplomas equivalent to BA Honours Degrees could be taken as an option.

In 1997, Decree-Law 115/97 of 19 September introduced legislation making it compulsory for early childhood teachers to hold a Licenciatura (BA with Honours).

## Chilcare for children from 0 to 3 years of age

**Table 24: ECEC staff: posts, qualifications and job descriptions**  
**Children from 0 to 3 years of age: creche and mini-creche**

| Posts                   | Required qualifications                                    | Length of training | Job description  |
|-------------------------|--|--------------------|--|
| Technical Director*     | Early childhood training course or nursing training course | BA. 4 years        | To promote collaboration with the Health and other Services; to promote articulation with the families or the guardians of the children; to promote and access the quality of the service in order to contribute to the global development of the child; to ensure staff are sensitive towards their tasks promoting their updating and continuous training. |
| Early childhood teacher | Early childhood training course                            | BA. 4 years        | To fulfil the children's basic needs taking into account the components underlying the development of the "self", i.e. sensory, motor, affective.  |
| Auxiliary technical     | Compulsory education                                       | 6 to 9 years       | To provide support to the early childhood teacher.   |
| Auxiliary worker        | Compulsory education                                       | 6 to 9 years       | To care for child hygiene and provide cleaning services.   |

Source: DEB, 1999

\*Technical Directors must have a minimum of three years experience with childhood educational programmes.

## From 3 to 6 year old children

**Table 25: ECEC staff: posts, qualifications and job descriptions  
3 to 6 year old children: Jardim de Infância**

| Posts                   | Required qualifications                                | Lenght of training                    | Job description   |
|-------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|---|
| Pedagogic Director      | Early childhood training course                        | BA 4 years                            | To supervise the implementation of the educational project of the context; to coordinate educational activities; ensuring compliance with curriculum guidelines, as well as cultural activities; to provide technical guidance to all members of staff; To decide the hours of opening and timetable. |
| Early childhood teacher | Early childhood training course                        | BA 4 years                            | To develop educational activities in the classroom and cooperate in the implementation of the educational project of the context.   |
| Educational Auxiliary   | Compulsory education                                   | 6 to 9 years                          | To provide support services to teaching staff.  |
| Cultural organizer      | Compulsory education or vocational course<br>Degree in | 6 to 9 years<br>"A" level<br>BS or BA | To look after children during non-teaching activity periods providing cultural entertainment (play activities, games, etc.).  |
| Psychologist            | Psychology<br>Degree in                                | Hon. 5 years                          | To be part of the pedagogical team and provide assistance in specific cases.  |
| Social worker           | social work  | BA 4 years                            | To be part of the pedagogical team and provide assistance in specific cases.  |
| Health worker           | Nursing course   | HNC<br>3 years                        | To be part of the pedagogical team and provide assistance in specific cases.  |

Source: DEB, 1999