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OECD Reviews of Evaluation and Assessment in Education: Portugal 2012

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Foreword

This report for Portugal forms part of the OECD Review on Evaluation and Assessment Frameworks for Improving School Outcomes (see Annex A for further details). The purpose of the Review is to explore how systems of evaluation and assessment can be used to improve the quality, equity and efficiency of school education. The Review looks at the various components of assessment and evaluation frameworks that countries use with the objective of improving student outcomes. These include student assessment, teacher appraisal, school evaluation and system evaluation.

Portugal was one of the countries which opted to participate in the country review strand and host a visit by an external review team. Members of the review team were Paulo Santiago (OECD Secretariat), co-ordinator of the Review; Graham Donaldson (formerly Her Majesty's Senior Chief Inspector of Education in Scotland; United Kingdom); Anne Looney (Chief Executive Officer, Irish National Council for Curriculum and Assessment; Ireland); and Deborah Nusche (OECD Secretariat). This publication is the report from the review team. It provides, from an international perspective, an independent analysis of major issues facing the evaluation and assessment framework in Portugal, current policy initiatives, and possible future approaches. The report serves three purposes: (1) Provide insights and advice to Portuguese education authorities; (2) Help other OECD countries understand the Portuguese approach; and (3) Provide input for the final comparative report of the project.

Portugal's involvement in the OECD Review was co-ordinated by Natércio Afonso, Professor of Education at the Institute of Education, University of Lisbon, from January 2010 until June 2011. From June 2011 on, Luísa Canto e Castro Loura, General-Director of the Office for Education Statistics and Planning (GEPE), Ministry of Education and Science, provided the updated information requested by the OECD.

An important part of Portugal's involvement was the preparation by Portuguese educational authorities of a comprehensive and informative Country Background Report (CBR) on evaluation and assessment policy. The review team is very grateful to the authors of the CBR, and to all those who assisted them for providing an informative document. The CBR is an important output from the OECD project in its own right as well as an important source for the review team. Unless indicated otherwise, the data for this report are taken from the Portuguese Country Background Report. The CBR follows guidelines prepared by the OECD Secretariat and provides extensive information, analysis and discussion in regard to the national context, the organisation of the educational system, the main features of the evaluation and assessment framework and the views of key stakeholders. In this sense, the CBR and this report complement each other and, for a more comprehensive view of evaluation and assessment in Portugal, should be read in conjunction.

The review visit to Portugal took place on 23 February – 2 March 2011. The itinerary is provided in Annex B. The visit was designed by the OECD in collaboration with the

Portuguese authorities. The biographies of the members of the review team are provided in Annex C. It should be noted that a change of government occurred in Portugal in June 2011 during the preparation of this report. The policy changes which occurred in this transition will be noted throughout the report. The designation of the central educational authority was changed from "Ministry of Education" to "Ministry of Education and Science". This report will use mostly the former designation, which prevailed at the time of the visit.

During the review visit, the team held discussions with a wide range of national and local authorities; officials from the Ministry of Education; relevant agencies outside the Ministry of Education which deal with evaluation and assessment issues; teacher unions; parents' organisations; representatives of schools; representatives of school directors; students' organisations; and researchers with an interest in evaluation and assessment issues. The team also visited a range of schools, interacting with school management, teachers and students. The intention was to provide a broad cross-section of information and opinions on evaluation and assessment policies and how their effectiveness can be improved.

The review team wishes to record its grateful appreciation to the many people who gave time from their busy schedules to inform the review team of their views, experiences and knowledge. The meetings were open and provided a wealth of insights. Special words of appreciation are due to the then National Co-ordinator, Natércio Afonso, Professor of Education at the Institute of Education, University of Lisbon, for sharing his expertise and responding to the questions of the review team. We are also very grateful to the Office for Education Statistics and Planning (GEPE), in particular Ms. Isabel Correia from its International Relations Unit, for making perfect arrangements for the review visit and providing excellent support to the team. The courtesy and hospitality extended to us throughout our stay in Portugal made our task as a review team as pleasant and enjoyable as it was stimulating and challenging. The review team also wishes to express its gratitude to Luísa Canto e Castro Loura, General-Director of GEPE, for her assistance following the change of government in June 2011.

The review team is also grateful to colleagues at the OECD, especially to Stefanie Dufaux for preparing the statistical annex to this Country Review report (Annex D) and to Heike-Daniela Herzog for editorial support.

This report is organised in six chapters. Chapter 1 provides the national context, with information on the Portuguese school system, main trends and concerns, and recent developments. Chapter 2 looks at the overall evaluation and assessment framework and analyses how the different components of the framework play together and can be made more coherent to effectively improve student learning. Then Chapters 3 to 6 present each of the components of the evaluation and assessment framework – student assessment, teacher appraisal, school evaluation and system evaluation – in more depth, presenting strengths, challenges and policy recommendations.

The policy recommendations attempt to build on and strengthen reforms that are already underway in Portugal, and the strong commitment to further improvement that was evident among those we met. The suggestions should take into account the difficulties that face any visiting group, no matter how well briefed, in grasping the complexity of Portugal and fully understanding all the issues.

Of course, this report is the responsibility of the review team. While we benefited greatly from the Portuguese CBR and other documents, as well as the many discussions with a wide range of Portuguese personnel, any errors or misinterpretations in this report are our responsibility.

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Acronyms and abbreviations

ANQ	National Agency for Qualification
ANQEP	National Agency for Qualification and Professional Education
CBR	Country Background Report
CCAP	Scientific Council for Teacher Evaluation
CCPFC	Scientific and Pedagogical Council for Continuous Training, Ministry of Education
CEA	Curricular Enrichment Activities
CEF	Education and Training Courses
CNE	National Education Council
DGAE	Directorate General for School Administration, Ministry of Education and Science
DGE	Directorate General for Education, Ministry of Education and Science
DGEEC	Directorate General for Education and Science Statistics, Ministry of Education and Science
DGIDC	Directorate General for Innovation and Curricular Development, Ministry of Education
DGPGF	Directorate General for Planning and Financial Management, Ministry of Education and Science
DGRHE	Directorate General for Human Resources in Education, Ministry of Education
EFA	Adult Education and Training Courses
FENPROF	National Federation of Teacher Unions
FNE	National Federation for Education
GAVE	Office for Educational Evaluation, Ministry of Education
GEPE	Office for Education Statistics and Planning, Ministry of Education
GGF	Financial Management Office, Ministry of Education
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
IEA	International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement
IEP	Individual Educational Programmes
IGE	General Inspectorate of Education, Ministry of Education
IGEC	General Inspectorate of Education and Science, Ministry of Education and Science
MISI	Information System Co-ordinating Office, Ministry of Education
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OTES	Observatory of Student Pathways in Secondary School
PIRLS	Progress in International Reading Literacy Study
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
RVCC	Recognition, Validation and Certification of Competences
SIADAP	Integrated System for the Evaluation of Performance in the Public Administration
SIGO	System for Information and Management of Education and Training Offerings
TALIS	Teaching and Learning International Survey
TIMSS	Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study

Executive summary

Student learning outcomes in Portugal are around or slightly below the OECD average, depending on the skills assessed, and have shown some encouraging improvement in the last decade. Efforts which followed the 1974 Revolution to ensure access to education for all Portuguese resulted in a rapid expansion of enrolment. However, educational attainment remains a challenge. It is the lowest in the OECD area for the working-age population, with 30% of 25- to 64-year-olds having attained at least upper secondary education in 2009 (against an OECD average of 73%). Moreover, the high share of students leaving the education system too early with low skills remains a major problem. A range of reforms have been introduced in education in recent years, including new arrangements for school leadership, student learning standards, teacher appraisal, and initiatives to reduce early dropouts. In this context, the role of evaluation and assessment as key tools to achieve quality and equity in education was reinforced. While there are provisions for evaluation and assessment at student, teacher, school and system levels, challenges remain in strengthening some of the components of the evaluation and assessment framework, in ensuring articulations within the framework to ensure consistency and complementarity, and in establishing improvement-oriented evaluation practices. The review team identified the following priorities in its review of evaluation and assessment policies in Portugal.

Integrating the evaluation and assessment framework, emphasising improvement and developing capacity across the school system

In the last decade, Portugal has come far in developing the foundations of a framework for evaluation and assessment. A range of initiatives clearly communicate that evaluation and assessment are priorities in the school system and reveal a coherent and comprehensive agenda to develop an evaluation culture among school agents. However, at the present time, there is no integrated evaluation and assessment framework – it is not perceived as a coherent whole and it does not visibly connect all the different components. An important initial policy step is to develop a strategic plan or framework document that conceptualises a complete evaluation and assessment framework and articulates ways to achieve the coherence between its different components. The process of developing an effective evaluation and assessment framework should give due attention to: achieving proper articulation between the different evaluation components (*e.g.* teacher appraisal, school evaluation and school development), and ensuring the several elements within an evaluation component are sufficiently linked (*e.g.* school self-evaluation and external school evaluation). Also, it is apparent that the policy initiatives in evaluation and assessment of the last few years have emphasised accountability over improvement. A priority should be to reinforce the improvement function of evaluation and assessment and reflect on the best ways for evaluation and assessment to improve student learning. This involves establishing strategies to strengthen the linkages to classroom practice, where the improvement of student learning takes place. Another

challenge are the limited evaluation and assessment competencies throughout the education system in spite of the considerable national efforts to stimulate an evaluation culture, as well as providing some competency-building learning opportunities. Hence, an area for policy priority is consolidating efforts to improve the capacity for evaluation and assessment.

Strengthening formative student assessment, supporting moderation of student work and fostering collaboration around student learning

From the beginning to the end of schooling, assessment of students is seen as integral to the work of teachers. In general, it can be said that the autonomy in assessment for teachers and for schools is uncontested and widely supported. However, generally there is a traditional approach to the organisation of classrooms in Portugal. Assessment for learning is not systematically used in Portuguese schools. There is little emphasis in assessment practices on providing student feedback and developing teacher-student interactions about student learning. In classroom and schools, the formative seems to be increasingly displaced by the summative and a focus on the generation of summative scores. As a result, Portugal needs a stronger commitment to improving students' achievement through the use of formative assessment to enhance student learning, rather than simply through the use of assessment summatively for recording and reporting learning. Building on the culture of evaluation and the centrality of the teacher in the assessment system in Portugal, greater focus on a culture of feedback on student learning would deliver a number of wins for the system. A further priority should be the strengthening of moderation processes within and across schools to increase the reliability of teacher-based judgments. The objective is to reduce the variations in the ways teachers assess students and set marks so equity of student assessment is improved. Some attention is given to this in the Portuguese system with a checking that the procedures have been followed and the criteria applied correctly. However, this process does not include discussion or analysis of student work, across classes in schools, across schools, nor at national level. Generating and sharing evidence of student learning at the school level might also be the basis for shaping the many meetings of teachers about results and grades towards genuine professional learning communities.

Refocusing teacher appraisal on improvement and strengthening career-progression appraisal

Despite the highly contentious debate about the design and implementation of teacher appraisal, a general consensus appears to have emerged among teachers regarding the need for teachers to be evaluated, receive professional feedback, improve their practice and have their achievements recognised. However, the review team formed the impression that there is still insufficient focus on the improvement function of teacher appraisal. This is due to a range of factors including tensions between the career progression and improvement functions of appraisal, limited opportunities for feedback on teaching practices, and insufficient linkages between teacher appraisal and professional development. In this context, it would be desirable to develop a component of teacher appraisal fully dedicated to developmental appraisal. Such developmental appraisal would benefit from a non-threatening evaluation context, a culture of mutually providing and receiving feedback within the school, simple evaluation instruments, supportive school leadership, opportunities for professional development and close

linkages to school self-evaluation. Also, the teacher appraisal model that has been introduced and adapted since 2007 forms a good basis for summative appraisal of teachers at key stages of their career. Such summative appraisal (or career-progression appraisal) should serve to maintain the principle of career advancement on merit, hold teachers accountable for their practice and complement the regular formative appraisal by providing an account of the ways in which it has contributed to professional development and improvement. The review team recommends the simplification of the 2010 model so as to reduce the administrative and organisational burden on schools, as long the suggested developmental appraisal of teachers is introduced. Also, it would be important to ensure the centrality of teaching standards. These are a key element in any teacher appraisal system as they provide credible reference points for making judgements about teacher competence. Finally, it is suggested giving a greater role in teacher appraisal to the school leadership team, which would provide them with a much-needed opportunity to exercise pedagogical leadership and support improvement of teaching across the school.

Focusing school evaluation on the improvement of learning and teaching and strengthening school self-evaluation

There has been a clear commitment to establish a powerful role for school evaluation within the overall strategy for quality improvement in education. Furthermore, the process of evaluation undertaken by the Inspectorate is well structured and systematic. However, there is insufficient focus on the quality and effectiveness of learning and teaching. The direct observation of learning and teaching in the classroom is not part of the process. As a result, there is not enough emphasis on pedagogical aspects particularly on identifying the main features of effective or high quality teaching. Evaluation frameworks, the criteria and questions governing judgements and the methods employed should all focus much more directly on the quality of learning and teaching and their relationship to student outcomes. Government policy should articulate much more clearly the legitimacy of a focus on learning and teaching and student outcomes for both external evaluation and self-evaluation and that such a focus will be the key concern of wider accountabilities. The Inspectorate should be asked to revise its inspection framework to ensure that the quality of learning lies at the heart of external evaluation, including with direct classroom observation as an evaluation instrument. Also, although the importance of school self-evaluation has been recognised as a policy imperative over at least the last decade, its penetration across the school system remains at an early stage of development. It is clear that schools have only a limited understanding of the contribution which self-evaluation can and should make to improving practice and no clear models have emerged generally. As a result the profile of school self-evaluation needs to be raised and its alignment with external school evaluation needs to be improved.

Raising the profile of system evaluation within the evaluation and assessment framework

The evaluation of the education system as part of the evaluation and assessment framework has received limited policy attention thus far and there is no comprehensive strategic approach to it. As it stands, system evaluation draws mostly on the evaluation of schools complemented with external student assessment (educational progress national tests and national examinations) and a set of indicators on education. Some key information gaps remain such as the unavailability of measures on students'

socio-economic background, the unavailability of analysis of student performance across student groups (*e.g.* by gender, socio-economic or immigrant background), and the limited information on the teaching and learning environment. At the same time, there are challenges in monitoring student outcomes over time and across schools. Also, system-level data are not used to their full potential in analysis which could be useful to inform policy development. Thus, the profile of system evaluation within the evaluation and assessment framework needs to be raised. An initial priority is to broaden the concept of system evaluation as the wide range of system-level information which permits a good understanding of how well student learning objectives are being achieved. It should include a varied set of components such as broad measures of student outcomes; demographic, administrative and contextual data; information systems; and research and analysis to inform planning, intervention and policy development.

Chapter 1

School education in Portugal

School governance in Portugal is fairly centralised. The main lines of action about the curriculum, the educational programmes, national examinations, teacher recruitment and deployment, and the budget distribution are defined centrally by the Ministry of Education and Science. There has been some devolution of responsibilities to municipalities in areas such as curricular enrichment activities, management of the schooling infrastructure, and non-teaching staff resources; as well as some autonomy granted to individual schools in areas such as the hiring of part of the staff (on fixed-term contracts, trainers for vocational courses) and the selection of textbooks. Public schooling is dominant and public schools receive the majority of their funds directly from the State budget. A major handicap for Portugal has been the very low starting point in terms of educational attainment and literacy of its population, prior to the 1974 Revolution. Nevertheless, efforts to ensure access to education for all Portuguese resulted in a rapid expansion of enrolment even if attainment levels remain a challenge. Student learning outcomes in Portugal are around or slightly below the OECD average following some progress in the last decade, depending on the skills assessed. Recent reforms include new arrangements for school leadership, the setting of learning goals, the reorgansation and redeployment of the school network, the generalisation of full day schools and the diversification of educational offerings (in particular through the promotion of vocational/professional programmes).

Main features

The structure of the education system

The school system in Portugal is organised in three sequential levels: pre-primary education (ages 3 to 5), basic education (typical ages 6 to 14) and secondary education (typical ages 15 to 17). Basic education is organised according to three cycles (Grades 1-4; Grades 5-6 and Grades 7-9) (see Figure 1). Compulsory schooling was extended to 12 years for any student enrolled in the 7th Grade or below as of 2009/10.

Figure 1.1 The Portuguese school system

Age	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Grade	Pre-primary education			1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th	12th
Level/ cycle				1st cycle				2nd cycle		3rd cycle			Secondary education		
				Basic education											

Secondary education (Grades 10-12) is organised according to strands, with courses that are either mainly geared to working life or the continuation of studies at higher education level. It currently includes: science-humanities courses, geared towards further study at higher education level, which cover four areas (science and technologies, social and economic sciences, languages and humanities, visual arts); technological courses, geared towards either entering the job market or further study, especially via post secondary technological specialisation courses and higher education courses; specialised artistic courses; and vocational courses, geared towards an initial qualification for pupils, giving priority to their entering the job market while, at the same time, allowing them to study further.

The Portuguese school system also provides opportunities for non-traditional students through a range of alternative offerings under the umbrella of the New Opportunities programme.[1] These provide a second opportunity to those individuals who left school early or are at risk of doing so, as well as those in the labour force who want to acquire further qualifications at the school level. Several training alternatives are available.[2] Education and Training Courses (CEF courses) are targeted at young people (15 years old or above), at risk of leaving school or who have already left the education system before concluding Grade 9, and lead to a vocational qualification (at levels 1, 2 or 3). Adult Education and Training Courses (EFA courses) are targeted at individuals aged 18 or over who need to improve their schooling qualifications. The System of Recognition, Validation and Certification of Competences (RVCC) is intended to formally validate learning gained in different contexts by adults who intend to obtain an academic or vocational certification. This process assesses the knowledge and skills acquired by adults throughout their life and typically includes some training in schools. The Basic Skills Training Programme is intended for people aged 18 or over to acquire basic skills in reading, writing and numeracy so they are able to access EFA or RVCC courses. Modular Training is also offered to individuals aged 18 or over who are in the labour market to gain credit towards a qualification or to complete processes of RVCC. Paths for Completion of Secondary-Level Education is aimed at individuals aged 18 or over who are a few subjects short of completing a secondary qualification. Finally, Learning Courses are professional courses targeted at young individuals who are aged below 25, have completed basic education but not completed secondary education.

In secondary education (Grades 10-12), in the 2009/10 school year, students were distributed as follows: 40.9% in general courses (science-humanities), 3.0% in technological courses, 0.5% in specialised artistic education, 22.2% in vocational courses, 3.6% in learning courses, 0.5% in education and training courses (CEF courses), 8.7% in adult education and training courses (EFA courses), 2.6% in recurrent education, and 18.0% in RVCC processes (Ministry of Education, 2011).

Major characteristics

- **The school network**. The public school network is made up of school clusters and non-grouped schools: the school cluster is an organisational unit with its own administration and management bodies, which comprises several establishments of one or more education levels, possibly including pre-primary education, around a common pedagogical project; the non-grouped school is a single establishment providing one or more levels of education. School clusters are more typical of compulsory education, bringing together establishments covering the entire set or a subset of the three cycles of basic education as well as possibly pre-primary education, but can also include an establishment of secondary education. Non-grouped schools, more typical of post-compulsory education, sometimes solely provide secondary education. In other cases they might include the third cycle of basic education. A school cluster seeks to facilitate the transition between levels and cycles of teaching. It also seeks to overcome the isolation of establishments and prevent social exclusion, to consolidate the pedagogical capacity of the establishments that are part of it and the rational use of its resources. In school clusters, there is a school director and one co-ordinator per establishment within the cluster.
- **Public schooling is dominant**. The great majority of students attend public schools. In the 2009/10 school year, the proportion of students attending public schools was 51.4% in pre-primary education, 85.2% in basic education and 76.4% in secondary education (Ministry of Education, 2011). Private education is mostly self-financed (through attendance fees) but some private schools (about half of them) receive some public funding (in most cases if they fill a gap in public supply as in more remote locations, artistic areas and special education and through family support for disadvantaged families). It is governed by legislation and statutes of its own, which should respect the Education Act. As part of their autonomy, private schools are responsible for the recruitment and evaluation of their teachers and take responsibility for their own quality assurance.
- **Funding**. Public schools receive the funds for the majority of their expenses directly from the State budget. They are able to raise complementary revenue through activities such as services provided to the community and donations.
- **Increasing diversity in the classroom**. In the last decade the number of immigrants has increased considerably, many of whom do not have Portuguese as a mother tongue. This is a development which represents a new challenge to the education system.
- **High degree of inclusion of students with special needs in mainstream schooling**. In the last two decades there has been considerable progress in including students with special needs in mainstream schooling. In 2009, while 2.6% of students in the school system had special educational needs, only 0.2% of

the overall student population attended special schools (Ministry of Education, 2009).

Distribution of responsibilities

School governance is fairly centralised. The main lines of action about the curriculum, the educational programmes, national examinations, teacher recruitment and deployment, and the budget distribution are defined centrally by the Ministry of Education and Science.[3] At the time of the review visit, Ministry services included the Directorate General for Human Resources in Education (DGRHE), the Directorate General for Innovation and Curricular Development (DGIDC), the Financial Management Office (GGF), the Office for Education Statistics and Planning (GEPE), the Information System Co-ordinating Office (MISI), the Office for Educational Evaluation (GAVE), the National Agency for Qualification (ANQ), the Scientific and Pedagogical Council for Continuous Training (CCPFC), and the General Inspectorate of Education (IGE). The CCPFC took responsibility for the accreditation of professional development courses for teachers and the accreditation of the associated providers. The IGE role included controlling the legal conformity of procedures in schools, auditing school management activities, promoting best practices in schools and, in particular, running the National Programme for the External Evaluation of Schools. The ANQ co-ordinated the implementation of vocational education and training policies and managed the National Qualifications System. This included the co-ordination of the alternative offerings under the New Opportunities programme.

At the time of the review visit, five regional education authorities (Regional Directorates for Education: North, Centre, Lisbon and Tagus Valley, Alentejo and Algarve) co-ordinated the implementation of policy within their respective territorial limits. Their tasks included supporting the schools in their activities, planning of the school network, disseminating centrally-dictated guidelines for implementation of specific programmes and collecting information for policy development. In recent years, in the context of decentralising decision making, municipalities have been granted some responsibilities mostly in basic education. These include the provision of curricular enrichment activities in the first cycle of basic education (including the hiring of the associated trainers); management of non-teaching staff resources; social support such as the provision of school meals and transportation; and the management of the school infrastructure in such a way it accommodates full day education.

Following the change of government in June 2011, a major rationalisation of Ministry services was undertaken, leading to a significant restructuring of its organisation. This was done in the context of the Plan for the Reduction and Improvement of Central Administration (*Plano de Redução e Melhoria da Administração Central*, PREMAC). At present, the services of the Ministry of Education and Science – which now combine schooling, higher education and science – include:

- Directorate General for Education (DGE, *Direcção-Geral da Educação*), which includes the former DGIDC.
- Directorate General for School Administration (DGAE, *Direcção-Geral da Administração Escolar*), which includes the former DGRHE and will include, from 2013 on, the services currently provided by Regional Directorates for Education. Regional Directorates will cease to exist as of 1 January 2013.

- Directorate General for Education and Science Statistics (DGEEC, *Direcção-Geral de Estatísticas da Educação e Ciência*), which integrated the statistics function of GEPE as well as the former MISI.
- Directorate General for Planning and Financial Management (DGPGF, *Direcção-Geral de Planeamento e Gestão Financeira*), which integrated the planning function of GEPE and the former GGF.
- Office for Educational Evaluation (GAVE, *Gabinete de Avaliação Educacional*), as before.
- General Inspectorate of Education and Science (IGEC, Inspecção-Geral da Educação e Ciência), which includes the former IGE.

In addition, the National Agency for Qualification (ANQ) became the National Agency for Qualification and Professional Education (ANQEP, *Agência Nacional para a Qualificação e o Ensino Profissional*).

Policy development

The development of educational policies led by the Ministry of Education involves consultations with specific advisory bodies. These include the National Education Council (CNE), which forms views across the whole range of educational issues; the Schools Council, which represents the viewpoint of schools collected through representatives of school directors; and the Scientific Council for Teacher Evaluation (CCAP), an advisory body set up in February 2008 to monitor and provide recommendations on the implementation of teacher evaluation whose membership includes researchers, professional and disciplinary organisations, individual teachers, and individual school directors. Following the change of government in June 2011, both the CNE and the Schools Council remain active while the CCAP ceases to exist.

Other groups which are typically consulted include parents' organisations, the National Association of Portuguese Municipalities, and teachers' professional associations (including disciplinary associations). In matters which relate to teachers' working conditions, it is a legal obligation that teacher unions are consulted. Teacher unions have had an important role in the development of the teaching profession since democracy was re-established in 1974 and continue to be influential. Rates of teacher unionisation are high (around two-thirds of teachers). The organisations which represent the greatest number of teachers are FENPROF (*Federação Nacional dos Sindicatos de Professores*, National Federation of Teacher Unions) and FNE (*Federação Nacional da Educação*, National Federation for Education).

Main trends and concerns

Low starting point and significant quantitative growth

A major handicap for Portugal has been the very low starting point in terms of educational attainment and literacy of its population. A fifth of all 15- to 64-year-olds were illiterate in the mid-1970s and less than 5% had completed upper secondary education (Guichard and Larre, 2006). Two consequences of the low educational attainment have been the difficulty in finding qualified teachers when the education system expanded and the impact parents' education has had on subsequent generations' educational attainment (Guichard and Larre, 2006). This is also part of the legacy of the

dictatorship which ended with the 1974 Revolution, as education was then confined to the élites. Nevertheless, efforts to ensure access to education for all Portuguese resulted in a rapid expansion of enrolment. The proportion of the population that has attained at least upper secondary education grew from 14% for the generation aged 55-64 in 2009 to 48% for the generation aged 25-34 in the same year (OECD, 2011). Lower secondary education is now virtually universal and enrolment rates for 15- to 19-year-olds grew from 68% in 1995 to 84.6% in 2009 (above the OECD average of 82.1%) (OECD, 2011). The coverage of pre-primary education has also increased rapidly and reached a participation rate of 77.2% for children aged 3-4, above the OECD average of 70.1% (OECD, 2011).

Challenges with educational attainment remain

Despite the expansion of the education system, educational attainment remains a challenge. It is the lowest in the OECD area for the working-age population, with 30% of 25- to 64-year-olds having attained at least upper secondary education in 2009 (against an OECD average of 73%, OECD, 2011). The high share of students leaving the education system too early with low skills remains also a major problem. Upper secondary graduation rates reached 63% in 2009 (when only individuals below 25 are considered), well below the OECD average (OECD, 2011). The high proportion of early school leavers is associated with the relatively low appreciation of schooling by large groups of the population likely to result from the parents' low educational attainment and the availability of unskilled jobs (Guichard and Larre, 2006). Upskilling Portugal's population also requires making the educational system more inclusive by allowing all individuals to acquire basic skills (OECD, 2010a). The impact of family background on the probability to dropout is also strongest in Portugal than elsewhere: according to 2005 household data, 98.9% of men aged between 25 and 34 who dropped out before the end of upper secondary school has a low-educated father, more than ten percentage points higher than it is on average across European OECD countries (OECD calculations based on the *2005 EU-SILC Database*, OECD, 2010a).

Student learning outcomes showing some progress and approaching the OECD average

Student learning outcomes in Portugal are around or slightly below the OECD average following some progress in the last decade, depending on the skills assessed. In 2009, achievement levels of Portuguese students in the OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) were not statistically significantly different from the OECD average in reading literacy and were just below the OECD average with statistical significance in mathematics and science (OECD, 2010b). Trend analyses of PISA results have shown some encouraging improvement in student learning outcomes.

In PISA 2009, the main focus was on reading literacy. The performance of Portuguese 15-year-olds in reading was close to the OECD average – only 13 OECD countries scored significantly higher than Portugal. This is the result of a significant improvement since the first PISA study in 2000 (OECD, 2010c) – Portugal is among the seven OECD countries for which performance between 2000 and 2009 increased significantly. The mean score for Portuguese students in PISA 2000 was 470 points, compared to 489 for PISA 2009. In terms of the proficiency levels, at the lower end of the reading literacy proficiency scale, the proportion of students who failed to reach level 2 declined significantly from 26.1% in PISA 2000 to 17.5% in PISA 2009. Portugal raised

the performance of its lowest-achieving students while maintaining the performance level among its highest-achieving students.

The results of Portuguese 15-year-olds in mathematics are below the OECD average – 18 OECD countries significantly outperformed Portugal. However, the PISA 2009 results indicated a rise in test scores in comparison to the PISA in-depth assessment of mathematics in 2003 (OECD, 2010c). In PISA 2009, the average mathematics score was 487 points, 21 points higher than it was in 2003 – representing a statistically significant increase in mathematical literacy. Science results of Portuguese 15-year-olds were also below the OECD average in 2009 – 16 OECD countries scored significantly higher than Portugal and in this assessment area there was also significant improvement in the average scores between 2006 and 2009.

The variation in performance between high- and low-performing students in Portugal was lower than the OECD average in reading in PISA 2009 and a statistical significant decline was observed since 2000 (OECD, 2010d). Variations in student reading performance can mostly be found within schools (OECD, 2010d). Such variation significantly decreased between 2000 and 2009 and remains around the OECD average. The between-school variation of reading performance in Portugal remains lower than the OECD average, which seems to indicate that the specific school a student attends has only a modest impact on how the student performs (OECD, 2010d).

Regarding the PISA relationship between socio-economic background and performance (*i.e.* between the PISA index of economic, social and cultural status and the performance of 15-year-olds), the following indications emerge: *(i)* Portugal is not statistically different from the OECD average in terms of the percentage of variance in student performance explained by student socio-economic background (strength of the socio-economic gradient), but the impact of socio-economic background on learning outcomes tends to be larger than in most OECD countries; and *(ii)* Portugal is significantly below the OECD average in terms of the score point difference associated with one unit increase in the PISA index of economic, social and cultural status (slope of the socio-economic gradient) (OECD, 2010d) – and there was no significant change between 2000 and 2009 in this indicator.

Severe austerity measures as a result of the financial crisis

The current financial crisis is severely affecting Portugal, with a significant impact on the resources available to education. While public spending on education reached 5% of GDP in 2010, it is estimated that such proportion decreased to 4.7% in 2011, and the 2012 State budget plans a further reduction to 3.8% of GDP (Ministry of Finance, 2011). Austerity measures include salary cuts for personnel working in public education (all personnel above a given salary threshold), the freezing of career progression in the public service (including for teachers), posts in school management reduced, regional administration for education downsized, and a major rationalisation of Ministry services which led to a restructuring of its organisation (as described earlier).

Main developments

A major reform of school leadership

New arrangements for school leadership and administration were introduced in 2008 and consist of four main bodies. The General Council is responsible for operational, strategic, planning and monitoring decisions and for the appointment (or dismissal) of the

school director, who is accountable and responsible to the Council. It includes representatives from the teaching and non-teaching staff, parents and/or students (in secondary schools), local authorities and the local community.[4] The school director has executive power in relation to administration and management functions and the option of choosing the immediate team: deputy directors, assistants, school and curricular department co-ordinators and class co-ordinators. The Pedagogical Council acts as a pedagogical supervision and co-ordination and educational guidance body. Finally the Administrative Council takes responsibility for administrative and financial matters. The school director is the president of both the Pedagogical Council and the Administrative Council and is also a member of the General Council.

The new arrangements reflect a profound reform whereby leadership moved from *primus inter pares* arrangements to the figure of school director with well identified authority and responsibilities.[5] Until recently, Portuguese school clusters and non-grouped schools were headed by principals (or presidents of executive councils) who were teachers elected to this position by their peers. Principals were therefore "first among equals". They chaired the executive councils – which had a majority membership of teachers – and functioned largely as administrators, ensuring that the school operated efficiently and complied with legislation.

Setting of learning goals – towards educational standards

The Learning Goals project (*Metas de Aprendizagem*), launched in 2009, is part of the strategy to facilitate the effective implementation of the national curriculum. For each content area and subject in both basic and secondary education, it defines learning standards that students are expected to meet at key stages of their learning (by school year). Learning standards are qualitative statements about competencies and skills that are expected to be demonstrated by students at a given point in their learning. For instance, the Learning Goals for Mathematics in the first cycle of basic education include, among the 37 final learning goals, the following two goals: "The student solves problems in numerical contexts, which involve arithmetic operations" (final goal 17); and "The student identifies, interprets and describes spatial relationships" (final goal 22). For each content area or subject, learning goals are provided for the end of the cycle (final goal) or the end of a given grade (intermediate goal). Learning goals are organised by domains and sub-domains and might contain concrete examples of what is meant for the specific learning goal.

The Learning Goals constitute a curriculum management support tool and are to be used by teachers on a voluntary basis. Given their non-prescriptive nature, they can be adjusted by individual schools. They are designed so they can be used as reference standards for the assessment of students by the teachers. The project is currently being implemented in basic education and will start in secondary education as of 2011/12. In addition to the development of the goals, there are plans to support their implementation in schools through curricular consultancy teams made available to schools. The project also involves providing examples of teaching strategies suitable to reach the learning goals as well as assessment approaches which are adequate to evaluate whether or not learning goals have been achieved.

Setting of national targets

In the context of its commitments with the European Union's Strategic Framework for European Co-operation in Education and Training ("ET 2020") and with the

Organisation of Ibero-American States for Education, Science and Culture's 2021 Educational Goals Project, Portugal established targets for school education through the Education Programme 2015, as of the 2010/11 school year. Targets focus on two main areas, deemed as the most challenging ones in school education: improving the basic competencies of students; and ensuring that all young people aged 18 and younger remain in the education system.

The following targets, to be attained by 2015, were set: reduce the early school leaving rate at the ages of 14, 15 and 16 to levels below 1%, 2% and 4 % respectively; reduce the proportion of students who repeat grades in the first, second and third cycles of basic education and in secondary education to 2%, 5%, 10% and 12% respectively; and increase the proportion of students with a mark above the passing level in each national Portuguese language and mathematics tests in both basic and secondary education by four percentage points, relative to the figures for 2009/10. Indicators were devised to monitor progress towards these targets.

The strategy to achieve the targets involves the direct contribution of schools, and the engagement of the families and the school communities. Schools are requested to embrace the objectives of improving the learning results of students, reducing grade repetition and preventing dropouts in their individual educational project. They are also required to formulate their own targets in accordance with their circumstances (for the same national-level indicators) and to develop initiatives to contribute to the achievement of the targets. The Education Programme 2015 involves monitoring of the targets at the national, municipal and school levels.

Main developments in the first cycle of basic education

In the first cycle of basic education, the Ministry of Education has been developing since 2005 a set of measures aimed at improving teaching and learning conditions. These measures include (Ministry of Education, forthcoming; Matthews *et al.*, 2009):

- *The reorganisation and redeployment of the school network* with the closure of small schools and those with below-average success rates, and the policy of school cluster formation. As a result the number of public schools in continental Portugal has decreased from 14 247 in 1999/2000 to 8 515 in 2009/10 (Ministry of Education, 2011).
- *The generalisation of full day school and provision of curricular enrichment activities* (CEAs). The school day was extended in 2005 to a minimum of eight hours a day comprising, in addition to regular classes, English, study support and curricular enrichment activities which may include sports, art, music, sciences, technology, ICT, connecting school with its surroundings, charitable and voluntary work, and the European dimension of education. CEA teaching staff are new or relatively inexperienced teachers employed on a fixed-term basis by local authorities.
- *Government funding of school meals and transportation.*
- *Programmes for in-service training* for teachers of mathematics, Portuguese language and experimental science teaching.

Other major initiatives

- *The diversification of educational offerings*, in particular through the promotion of vocational/professional programmes. The proportion of students enrolled in non-general programmes in secondary education increased from 27% in 1996/97 to 59% in 2009/10 (Ministry of Education, 2011). The diversification of offerings also relates to alternatives such as adult education and training courses (EFA courses) and education and training courses (CEF courses), as described earlier.
- *Complementing regular classes with student support activities*, where possible provided by the form/subject teacher.
- The re-launch in 2008 of the Educational Territories for Priority Intervention programme aimed at promoting the success of students in disadvantaged areas (covering 104 school clusters in 2009/10).
- Continuing modernisation of the technological infrastructure through the Technological Plan for Education. This involves computers (one computer for two students in early 2011), interactive boards (one per three classrooms), video projectors (one in each classroom), and Internet connections.

Increasing the autonomy of schools

In addition to greater devolution of responsibility to local educational authorities, schools have been granted additional responsibilities in recent years. While levels of school autonomy remain modest compared to other OECD countries (see OECD, 2008), new areas of responsibility include hiring part of the teaching staff (on fixed-term contracts, trainers for vocational courses), the organisation of enrichment curricular activities, curriculum management procedures to fit own circumstances, and the selection of textbooks from a list certified by the Ministry. Schools can opt to be granted more autonomy by signing an autonomy contract with the Ministry of Education. Conditions to be granted an autonomy contract include undertaking a self-evaluation and receiving a positive external school evaluation. These contracts permit the consolidation of autonomy in areas such as pedagogical organisation, curriculum organisation, human resources, school social support and financial management. Only about 30 schools had been granted an autonomy contract by 2010.

Notes

1. The New Opportunities programme, managed by both education and labour central authorities, seeks to expand and provide diversified or complementary training, appropriate for both job market requirements and for the specific characteristics of the unskilled working population.
2. The training alternatives are organised in New Opportunities Centres which are based in public and private schools, in training centres and in firms as part of the New Opportunities programme. Schools which host a New Opportunities Centre involve their regular teaching staff in supplying the alternative offerings.
3. Ministry of Education and Science is the new designation of the central educational authority following the change of government in June 2011. However, the designation "Ministry of Education" which prevailed at the time of the review visit, will be used in some instances throughout this document.
4. It is up to schools to determine the composition of the General Council, provided that two rules are respected: that all interested parties are represented; and that the professional representatives carrying out their duties in school cannot combine to hold a majority of seats in the Council.
5. This is a major departure from the *primus inter pares* arrangements intimately linked to the transition to a democratic regime in 1974. The figure of the school director still brings memories of the "authoritarian" figure leading schools during the dictatorial regime.

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Chapter 2

The evaluation and assessment framework

Evaluation and assessment in Portugal operates at four key levels: (i) system – namely through education indicators, national tests and examinations, and international student surveys; (ii) school – external inspection by the General Inspectorate of Education and school self-evaluation; (iii) teacher – through a national system of teacher performance appraisal; and (iv) student – with instruments ranging from national standardised tests to ongoing daily formative assessment in the classroom. The approach to evaluation and assessment combines central control over policy development and standard setting with a measure of devolved responsibility for the implementation of evaluation and assessment at the school level. The Ministry of Education and Science is responsible for oversight of the entire education system and plays a role in all components of the evaluation and assessment framework. The framework exists in an environment where there is an increasing trend of accountability for all school agents, the commitment to develop an evaluation culture in the education system, and a growing focus on measuring educational performance. Particularly positive characteristics of the framework include the strong political will to strengthen evaluation and assessment in the school system; the existence of common references at the national level; the emergent focus on equity and inclusion among national goals for education; the growing commitment to the use of evidence for policy development; the range of tools provided at the central level to support evaluation and assessment; and the established principle of transparency in monitoring and publishing results. However, considerable challenges exist in building an effective evaluation and assessment framework. These include the incipient development of some key components; missing links between different elements of the framework; the insufficient emphasis on the improvement function of evaluation and assessment; students not placed at the centre of the evaluation and assessment framework; the narrow understanding of the purposes of evaluation and assessment and some reluctance to exercise professional judgment across the system; insufficient competencies for evaluation and assessment; and implementation difficulties of some evaluation and assessment initiatives.

This chapter looks at the overall framework for evaluation and assessment in Portugal, *i.e.* its various components such as student assessment, teacher appraisal, school evaluation and system evaluation, the coherence of the whole as well as the articulation between the different components. Following this overview, the succeeding chapters (3-6) will analyse the issues relevant to each individual component in more depth.

This report differentiates between the terms "assessment", "appraisal" and "evaluation". The term "assessment" is used to refer to judgments on individual student progress and achievement of learning goals. It covers classroom-based assessments as well as large-scale, external tests and examinations. The term "appraisal" is used to refer to judgements on the performance of school-level professionals, *e.g.* teachers. Finally, the term "evaluation" is used to refer to judgments on the effectiveness of schools, school systems and policies.

Context and features

Governance

As in many OECD countries, Portugal does not have a single evaluation and assessment framework that was designed as a whole but instead has a series of components operating at different levels that have developed relatively independently of each other over time. Evaluation and assessment in Portugal operates at four key levels: system, including programme and policy evaluation; school; teacher and student. At each of these levels, evaluation and assessment mechanisms provide a basis for assessing how effectively education is being provided for students in Portugal. They also identify strengths and weaknesses of the system, schools, teachers and students which inform areas for improvement. The framework exists in an environment where there is an increasing trend of accountability for all school agents, the commitment to develop an evaluation culture in the education system, and a growing focus on measuring educational performance.

Portugal's approach to evaluation and assessment combines central control over policy development and standard setting with a measure of devolved responsibility for the implementation of evaluation and assessment at the school level. The Ministry of Education and Science is responsible for oversight of the entire education system and plays a role in all components of the evaluation and assessment framework, including developing the national curriculum, determining career development for teachers and monitoring the performance of schools and the education system. The Ministry also designs, implements and monitors education policies. Some of its services have key functions in the framework. Prominent among these, at the time of the review visit, were the General Inspectorate of Education (IGE) which took responsibility for the external evaluation of schools and contributed to system evaluation. The Office for Educational Evaluation (GAVE) took the leadership in external student assessment while the Information System Co-ordinating Office (MISI) and the Office for Education Statistics and Planning (GEPE) played a role in system evaluation through the development of indicators on education and the respective analysis. The National Agency for Qualification (ANQ) co-ordinated evaluation and assessment activities in the vocational education and training area. As explained in Chapter 1, these units are now part of a major restructuring of the services of the Ministry and their functions now lie within units which are part of the new organisation of the Ministry of Education and Science (see Chapter 1). Schools benefit from some autonomy in the organisation of the various components of evaluation and assessment at the student, teacher and school level. They take most responsibility for student assessment, including the definition of assessment

criteria within national guidelines; they operate the mostly internal teacher appraisal system in agreement with a national framework; and they take responsibility for their self-evaluation.

Main components

In a nutshell, the Portuguese framework for evaluation and assessment can be described as consisting of the following four main components:

- **Student assessment**. Student performance is assessed by a wide range of instruments, ranging from national standardised tests to ongoing daily formative assessment in the classroom. At the national level, full-cohort educational progress national tests are conducted in Grade 4, the results from which are used as key performance measures towards national goals. These are low stakes for schools, teachers and students. Summative assessment is based on a mix of teacher-based classroom assessments and national examinations. The latter take place at the end of both the second and third cycles of basic education (Grades 6 and 9), in Portuguese language and mathematics, and in secondary education in the last year of each subject (Grade 11 or 12). However, teachers hold most responsibility for summative assessment as the weight of national examinations is never dominant for the final mark. In the first cycle of basic education (Grades 1-4), assessment is generally informal and formative, and results are reported in a descriptive and qualitative format. In the second and third cycles (Grades 5-6 and Grades 7-9), the emphasis on formative and internal assessment continues but summative results are reported on an ordinal scale from 1 to 5 and there are external examinations at the end of each of the cycles. The emphasis on formative assessment remains in secondary education, but greater attention is given to both summative and external assessment.
- **Teacher appraisal**. A new national system of teacher performance appraisal was instituted in 2007 in the broader context of the integrated system of performance evaluation for public administration which applies to civil servants. Since then, teacher appraisal has undergone a range of adjustments as a result of the resistance it has faced. By the time the review team visited, a model launched in 2010 was in the process of being implemented. The main features of the model included a two-year appraisal cycle; a national framework defining reference standards, aspects to be appraised, instruments to be used and a five-level classification scheme with a school-level quota system for the top two classifications; a process internal to the school to conduct the appraisal including school-based peer evaluators; and consequences for career progression, contract renewal, monetary rewards and plan for professional development. Subsequently to the review visit and with the change of government in June 2011, a new teacher appraisal model was approved for implementation in 2012/13. The two models follow a similar approach even if there are a few fundamental differences, which are considered in Chapter 4.
- **School evaluation**. There are two main forms of evaluation: school self-evaluation and school external inspection. The latter is the responsibility of the IGE (and now IGEC, following the change of government). A first cycle of external school evaluations was conducted from 2006 to early 2011. It involved, for each school in the system, a sequence of activities comprising a self-reflection by the school, a visit by a team with inspectors and an external member, the

publication of the team's report and, in some cases, an improvement plan for the school. A second cycle of external school evaluations was launched in the 2011/12 school year following a similar approach but with the introduction of the requirement of an improvement plan for each school inspected. A distinguishing feature of external school evaluation is that it does not involve the observation of teaching and learning in the classroom. The precise nature of school self-evaluation varies across schools as the legal requirement to undertake it does not come with a prescribed approach.

- **System evaluation**. A range of tools are used to monitor performance of the education system. Information on student learning outcomes is collected from educational progress national tests in Grade 4 and from national examinations in Grades 6 and 9 and in secondary education. The monitoring system also includes a range of statistics on education based on snap-shot data collected from schools on a standardised format. These are the basis for annual publications with system-level indicators on education. Also, international benchmarks of student performance provided by international student surveys such as PISA have been influential in driving policy development at the system level. In addition, there has been a growing interest in undertaking studies of the impact of policy initiatives and in preparing thematic reports which can inform policy development.

Goals for student learning

Goals for student learning are expressed at different levels. At the system level, governments in office establish priorities for educational policy. For example, the government in office between October 2009 and June 2011 set the following priorities for educational policy:

- Achieve the universal frequency of pre-school, basic and secondary education;
- Expand the opportunities for certified qualification for young people and adults;
- Promote the improvement of the quality of student learning and value public schooling;
- Reinforce the working conditions, resources and autonomy of schools; and
- Value the teaching profession and its work.

Some of these priorities were operationalised through the targets established in the Education Programme 2015 (see Chapter 1). For instance, by 2015, one of three main targets is to reduce the early school leaving rate at the ages of 14, 15 and 16 to levels below 1%, 2% and 4% respectively. The Education Programme 2015 involves monitoring of the targets at the national, municipal and school levels through specifically designed indicators (see Chapter 6).

More recently, the government in office since June 2011 included the following education priorities in its programme:

- Motivate and develop human resources in education;
- Provide stability and promote the teaching profession;
- Develop and consolidate a culture of evaluation at all levels of the education system;

- Rationalise the network of education offers;
- Decentralise the management of the school network;
- Orient the organisation of the Ministry of Education and Science towards results;
- Improve the quality of the learning in the first cycle of basic education;
- Improve educational success in the second and third cycles of basic education; and
- Invest strongly in technical education and professional training.

More specific learning objectives for students are elaborated in common references established at the national level. Until recently, in basic education, the common reference was the National Curriculum of Basic Education. It was revoked in December 2011 on the grounds that "it was not sufficiently clear in the recommendations it proposed" and "many of the ideas it defended were too ambiguous to grant a clear orientation for learning" (Order of the Ministry of Education and Science in Imprensa Nacional Casa da Moeda, 2011). New documents which will clarify the content priorities of national programmes, defining curricular aims, were developed and are currently being discussed with the education community. At present, student learning objectives are guided by national programmes for each subject area and each cycle (see below). The National Curriculum of Basic Education, in place at the time of the review visit, specified the following:

- General competencies to be acquired upon completion of basic education

  These consisted of ten general competencies expressed in statements such as "The student should be able to undertake activities in an autonomous, responsible and creative way" or "The student should be able to co-operate with others in common tasks and projects". Each of the ten competencies was further specified in a small number of suggested "transversal operationalisation" steps and "actions to be developed by each teacher".

- Specific competencies for each subject area, to be acquired at the end of each of the three cycles.

  For instance, in the case of Portuguese language, specific competencies were organised around five domains: "oral comprehension", "oral expression"; "reading", "written expression" and "explicit knowledge of the language". In each of these domains, the specific competencies to be acquired at the end of each cycle were proposed. For instance, in the "explicit knowledge of the language" domain, it was expected that the student mastered "the systematic knowledge of the basic aspects of the structure and use of the Portuguese language" by the end of the third cycle.

- Examples of "learning experiences" that each student, for each subject area, was supposed to undertake through the application of the curriculum.

Fairly detailed national programmes for each subject area and each cycle, which remain in effect, supported the National Curriculum of Basic Education. For instance, the basic education national programme for Portuguese language is 176 pages long. It contains expected learning results (related to the specific competencies), performance descriptors and the corresponding suggested content for each of the five domains mentioned above and each cycle (and sometimes grade year). In addition, the Learning

Goals have been recently introduced as a curriculum management support tool to be used by teachers on a voluntary basis (see Chapter 1).

In secondary education, learning objectives are specified in national programmes for each course and subject and are specific to the particular strand attended by the student. For instance, the national programme for the Portuguese language for Grades 10-12 in the science-humanities strand contains the following elements: goals and objectives of the Portuguese language (16 short statements such as "interpret oral and written texts/speeches, recognising their different purposes and the communication situations in which they are produced"); competencies and the processes to operationalise them divided in four domains (oral comprehension/expression, writing, reading, and operation of the language); contents for the programme per grade and in each of the four domains of competencies; and the sequence for the delivery of the programme.

Strengths

There is a strong political will to strengthen evaluation and assessment in the school system

In the last decade, Portugal has come far in developing the foundations of a framework for evaluation and assessment. National monitoring educational progress tests were launched in 2001, a first cycle of external school evaluations was completed in the period 2006-11, a national system of teacher performance appraisal was launched in 2007 and the availability of national indicators on education has considerably expanded. These developments clearly communicate that evaluation and assessment are priorities in the school system and reveal a coherent and comprehensive agenda to develop an evaluation culture among school agents. The objective has been to get away from a tradition of unexamined classroom practice, limited accountability for student outcomes, and narrow feedback practices.

While there has been some resistance to the implementation of some elements of the evaluation and assessment framework (in particular the teacher appraisal model), the review team formed the view that there is growing support among the school agents for consolidating evaluation and assessment practices at the different levels of the system. Evaluation as part of development and improvement processes is particularly valued. This general acceptance of the need to strengthen the evaluation culture is the result of sustained and consistent evaluation and assessment policies implemented with determination in the last decade. These have done much to stimulate public awareness of assessment and evaluation and convey a strong message about their centrality in educational policy. The rationale is sound and the intentions, as formulated in the legislation, are clear. However, there are still some difficulties in ensuring that what is in the legislation is actually reflected in practices at schools.

A major benefit of the stronger emphasis on evaluation and assessment has been the greater focus on improving student outcomes and achieving student learning objectives. This is reflected in the establishment of targets for educational priorities (*e.g.* the Education Programme 2015), the growing importance of student outcomes for school evaluation and teacher planning, and the new requirements for reporting publicly on student results.

There are some common references to provide the basis for evaluation and assessment

There are some common references to provide the basis for evaluation and assessment. At the system level, governments in office establish priorities for educational policy, which provide the framework for policy development. Education targets to be achieved by 2015 (Education Programme 2015) have also been established with associated indicators to permit the monitoring of their achievement (see Chapter 6). These are important references to shape the evaluation and assessment framework and inform, in particular, system evaluation. However, there are no clear national goals for education with the proper alignment with broader social and economic goals. Statements about the aims for the education system such as its promotion of equity and excellence and its role in developing successful learners and informed citizens are not clearly articulated. This raises challenges in establishing a solid reference point on which to build the evaluation and assessment framework, including a reference against which the evaluation of the overall system can be undertaken.

By contrast, at the level of student learning goals, there is a basis for common expectations of outcomes from schooling. Both in basic and secondary education, there are national programmes for each subject area, study strand and grade. As described earlier, these establish the competencies students need to acquire at the end of each cycle of education and are fairly detailed and prescriptive. Hence, while schools and teachers have some freedom on how to deliver the national curriculum, the national programmes dictate in a fairly detailed way what is to be taught in schools. This limits curriculum innovation in schools and does not encourage collaborative work among teachers on curriculum development/adaptation at the local level. Schools are given a greater degree of autonomy in student assessment, including with the definition of school-level criteria for the assessment of students against the competencies delineated in the national programmes.

There is an emergent focus on equity and inclusion among national goals for education

Even if this is not clearly articulated among the national goals for education, there has been an emergent focus on equity and inclusion in the Portuguese education system. For example, two of the five priorities for educational policy of the government in office between October 2009 and June 2011, were ensuring that young people do not leave the education system before they complete secondary school and expanding educational offerings to fit the needs of a more diverse student population. Similarly, the targets established for the Education Programme 2015 include the reduction of school-leaving rates and the decrease of grade repetition rates. An example of a concrete initiative was the re-launch of the "Educational Territories of Priority Intervention", a programme targeted at disadvantaged schools. The aim of the programme is to provide targeted schools with effective means to improve the educational environment, promote inclusion, prevent dropout, and improve outcomes. It has been implemented in 105 schools clusters with high rates of failure, dropout and absenteeism.

However, equity and inclusion are areas for further policy attention. As pointed out in Chapter 6, little is known about educational disadvantage in the Portuguese education system – no differential analysis is undertaken on student performance across specific groups such as migrant students, students from disadvantaged families or those who live in a remote location. Also, no measures of equity in the education system have been developed so progress towards reducing inequities can be monitored.

There is a growing commitment to the use of evidence for policy development

In Portugal there is a growing understanding of the importance of informing policies and the evaluation and assessment framework with evidence from research. The Ministry commissions a variety of research studies and promotes the evaluation of the implementation of specific policies. An example is the *Study of the Evaluation and Monitoring of Basic and Secondary Education* commissioned to the Lisbon University Institute. This study assesses the implementation of a range of education policy initiatives, including the 2nd Educational Territories of Priority Intervention programme; the National Programme for Teaching Portuguese in the first cycle of basic education; and the in-service Teacher Training Programme in Mathematics for teachers of the first and second cycles of basic education. Other examples include studies about the National Reading Plan, the ICT Competencies Plan and the Schools Portal. The aim of such studies is to determine how well policies are being implemented and to enable the Ministry to draw lessons from such experience to either refine particular measures or to better design future initiatives. These studies lead to a growing collaboration with educational researchers as they are more and more commissioned from research groups located outside the Ministry.

Another prominent example of the growing commitment to evidence-based policy is the guidance provided by the Scientific Council for Teacher Evaluation to the development of teacher appraisal (until it was discontinued in late 2011). This group sought to recognise "good" evaluation practices, to keep abreast of relevant research developments and, as a result, to provide sound advice and recommendations based on evidence. In addition, Portugal engages in major data collections to inform policy analysis. It generates a wealth of data and information on the state of the education system through the education database managed by the Information System Co-ordinating Office (MISI, now part of DGEEC), benchmarks internationally its performance by participating in international student surveys, and maintains relevant information systems such as the Observatory of Student Pathways in Secondary School.

There is also good openness to external views. For example, Portugal participates in international reviews of educational policy, such as the OECD projects on Improving School Leadership, Encouraging Quality in Early Childhood Education and Care, and Evaluation and Assessment Frameworks for Improving School Outcomes. It has hosted OECD Reviews of adult education, early childhood education and care, teacher evaluation, tertiary education and transition from initial education to working life. This is in addition to the participation in a range of international surveys to benchmark the performance of the education system.

There are a range of tools provided at the central level to support evaluation and assessment

There are concerted efforts at the central level to build up a knowledge base, tools and guidelines to assist evaluation and assessment activities. The Ministry develops fairly detailed national programmes to implement the national curriculum, including guidelines for schools to develop student assessment criteria. Similarly the Office for Educational Evaluation (GAVE) develops assessment tools for teachers to use at their own discretion. These include the "intermediate tests" which are made available to teachers for their summative assessment of students and which include central marking (see Chapter 3). Another example are the guidelines for school self-evaluation developed by the General Education Inspectorate (IGE). Further, the Ministry, with the guidance of groups such as the Scientific Council for Teacher Evaluation (CCAP), provides a range of materials to

undertake teacher appraisal such as forms to record teacher performance across a range of dimensions and tools for classroom observation.

The principle of transparency in monitoring and publishing results is established

The evaluation and assessment framework is strengthened by the establishment of significant requirements for public reporting. Portugal collects a wide range of data on education system performance, including through participation in international student surveys, national tests, qualitative studies and inspection reports (see Chapter 6). The Ministry of Education publishes a comprehensive set of educational statistics and has developed one publicly available education database. The Inspectorate also publishes the reports from individual external school evaluations alongside the concerned schools' comments on the evaluation results. In addition, the Inspectorate also publishes its annual report with an overview of the external inspections undertaken as well as the results of a questionnaire collecting the views of schools on the inspections delivered. Also, the results of the national examinations are published at the school level but with the drawback that the simple averages provided do not allow for the appropriate contextualisation of the results (see Chapter 6).

Challenges

The evaluation and assessment framework needs to be completed and made coherent

There is no integrated evaluation and assessment framework

As in many other OECD countries, the different components of evaluation and assessment have developed independently of each other over time and there is currently no policy document on the overall framework for evaluation and assessment in Portugal. At the national level, there are provisions for student assessment, school evaluation, teacher appraisal and system evaluation, but these are not explicitly integrated or aligned (more on this below). The existing framework is not perceived as a coherent whole and it does not visibly connect all the different components.

The evaluation and assessment framework is incomplete

While the initiatives introduced in the last decade have helped to develop an evaluation culture across the education system, the evaluation and assessment is not yet complete. Some key components of a comprehensive evaluation and assessment framework are currently still underdeveloped:

- The formative assessment of students by teachers is underdeveloped as a result of the focus placed on results and a classroom practice dominated by examination and test preparation. The formative seems to be increasingly displaced by the summative and an emphasis on the generation of summative results (see Chapter 3).
- Moderation of marks which reflect the summative assessment of students by teachers across schools is not undertaken. As a result, it is not possible to guarantee that teacher-based marks are fair across schools and reflect a consistent assessment against the national curriculum (see Chapter 3).

- Teacher appraisal is not yet fully implemented. A formal national system for teacher appraisal has been developed with teaching standards, appraisal criteria and instruments, and possible consequences. However, its implementation has proven challenging due to resistance by teachers and some other difficulties (see Chapter 4).
- School self-evaluation is still at an early stage of development and the approaches and competencies to implement school self-evaluation vary across schools. It is not systematically undertaken across schools. Results from TALIS indicate that in 2007/08 about half of Portuguese lower-secondary teachers were in schools that had never conducted a school self-evaluation in the past five years (see Chapter 5).[1]
- The appraisal of school directors is just starting.
- System evaluation has a low profile within the evaluation and assessment framework and has not yet benefitted from an explicit strategic approach. The concept of system evaluation, as the wide range of system-level information which permits a good understanding of how well student learning objectives are being achieved, needs to be broadened (see Chapter 6).

Some articulations within the evaluation and assessment framework are not sufficiently developed

How the different components have to be interrelated in order to generate complementarities, avoid duplication, and prevent inconsistency of objectives is an important aspect of designing the evaluation and assessment framework. The review team noted a number of missing links, or underdeveloped articulations, between different elements of the evaluation and assessment framework in Portugal. These can be grouped into two distinct sets:

1. Within specific components of the evaluation and assessment framework:
   - Linkages between teacher appraisal and teacher professional development

     There are some indications that the provision of professional development for teachers is not systematically linked to teacher appraisal (see Chapter 4).
   - Linkages between school evaluation and school improvement

     The linkages between school evaluation and school improvement are not systematic given that little emphasis is placed on the follow-up to school evaluation results. For example, until 2011/12, schools were not required to develop improvement plans following an evaluation process (either external or internal), with the exception of when the external evaluation identified major weaknesses (see Chapter 5). The new cycle of external inspections, launched in 2011/12, seeks to address this issue by making the improvement plan mandatory for each school inspected.
   - Articulation between school self-evaluation and external school evaluation

     There does not seem to be enough reflection about the relative contributions of self-evaluation and external evaluation (see Chapter 5).

- Moderation processes to ensure the appraisal of teachers is consistent across schools

  This relates to the fact that the extent of externality in teacher appraisal is limited. Teachers are appraised according to local interpretations of standards with risks of lack of coherence of judgments across schools (see Chapter 4).

- Linkages between standardised student testing and student formative assessment

  There is some lack of clarity about what should be the formative uses of educational progress national test results by teachers (and the uses which should be discouraged).

2. Between specific components of the evaluation and assessment framework:

   - Articulation between teacher appraisal, school evaluation and school development

     This relates to a range of aspects such as: school-based teacher appraisal being validated by school evaluation processes; making the focus of school evaluation on teacher effectiveness systematic across schools; and school development processes exploring links to the evaluation of teaching practice. At the present moment, the only link between the external evaluation of schools and teacher appraisal consists of the impact the results of school evaluation have on the size of the quotas of high performing teachers allowed in each school. School evaluation, both external and self-evaluation, typically includes in most countries the monitoring of the effectiveness of the quality of teaching and learning at the school, including the internal processes of quality assurance and classroom observation.

   - Articulation between school evaluation and the appraisal of school directors

     The appraisal of school directors bears no relation to school evaluation when the results of the latter could usefully inform the former given that it reviews the performance of the school led by the director being appraised and includes the assessment of leadership (see Chapter 5).

   - Articulation between school evaluation and student assessment

     To a great extent due to the fact that school evaluation has an insufficient focus on learning and teaching, generally not involving classroom observation and an assessment of teachers' practices, the review team formed the impression that it does not review to the desired extent student assessment practices in schools, including the school-based student assessment criteria.

   - Articulation between school evaluation and system evaluation

     Evaluation at system level could make better use of the information generated by school inspection processes (see Chapter 6).

There is room to strengthen the improvement function of evaluation and assessment

Another important challenge is to find the right balance between the accountability and the improvement functions of evaluation and assessment. It is apparent that the policy

initiatives in evaluation and assessment of the last few years have emphasised accountability over improvement. For instance, the teacher appraisal model currently places greater focus on career progression than professional development (see Chapter 4), the assessment of students is oriented towards summative scores (see Chapter 3), and the publication of examination results introduces important stakes for schools (see Chapter 6).

While transparency of information, high quality data, and the accountability of school agents are essential for a well-functioning evaluation and assessment system, it is important to ensure that the existing data and information are actually used for improvement. This requires securing effective links to classroom practice without which the evaluation and assessment framework is not likely to lead to the improvement of teaching practices and student learning. The review team formed the view that there has been comparatively less reflection on designing mechanisms to ensure that the results of evaluation and assessment activities feed back into classroom practice. Examples include building teachers' capacity for student formative assessment, placing greater emphasis on the improvement function of teacher appraisal, ensuring school evaluation focuses on learning and teaching, developing schools' capacity for self-evaluation, and making sure schools establish an improvement plan as a follow-up to their evaluation (a new requirement from 2011/12). To a great extent, the focus on accountability also results from the strong top-down national vision for evaluation and assessment which constrains the ownership of evaluation and assessment procedures by school agents.

It is unclear that the students are at the centre of the evaluation and assessment framework

An important challenge in the Portuguese school system is that it is unclear that students are at the centre of the evaluation and assessment framework. Teaching, learning and assessment still take place in a somewhat "traditional" setting with the teacher leading his/her classroom, the students typically not involved in the planning and organisation of lessons and assessment concentrating on summative scores. The opportunity given to parents and students to influence student learning is more limited than in other OECD countries. The review team formed the perception that relatively little emphasis is given to the development of students' own capacity to regulate their learning through self- and peer-assessment. Other practices which are developing in Portuguese classrooms but require further strengthening are the communication of learning expectations to students, the opportunities for performance feedback and mechanisms for individualised support. In this regard, the alternative offerings organised by the New Opportunities programme provide good examples of assessment being focused on motivating students, high quality feedback and the active participation of learners. Another good case is the "alternative curriculum path", an individualised programme/curriculum aimed at students in basic education who are at the risk of failing or dropping out of the school system.

Feedback in Portugal tends to be focused on test performance and results rather than on learning. There is a tendency among Portuguese teachers to adopt a more behaviourist approach to pedagogy, and little engagement with constructivist principles (see Chapter 3). Also, collecting the views and perspectives of parents and students to inform school improvement through the systematic use of surveys is not a general practice in Portugal. This includes surveys designed by teachers to collect student views on their teaching. Student views are not a key element for the self-evaluation of teachers and schools.

An obvious case of not placing the student at the centre of the learning concerns the high levels of grade repetition in the country. According to PISA 2009 data, grade repetition in Portugal is among the highest in OECD countries: 35.0% of Portuguese students had repeated one or more grades by age 15 according to themselves (fourth highest figure among the 34 OECD countries, against an OECD average of 13.0%, see Annex D). In addition, 9.5% of lower-secondary and 10% of upper-secondary 15-year-olds repeated a grade in the previous school year according to reports by school principals (second and third highest rates among 29 OECD countries, against averages of 3.2 and 4.5% for the two education levels, see Annex D). This raises important concerns. First, these levels of grade repetition are not compatible with a student centred educational system as it extensively involves branding students a failure at different stages of schooling, including in the very early stages of learning (grade repetition is only banned in Grade 1). Second, it runs counter to the need for teachers to have the highest possible expectations of what children can achieve if they always have the possibility of retention in the back of their minds for children who do not respond well to their teaching (Matthews *et al.*, 2009).

There is wide recognition in educational research that grade repetition is an ineffective intervention for low achievement while it poses risks for equity in terms of bias based on social background (Field *et al.*, 2007; OECD, 2010). Reviews of the research literature by Brophy (2006) and Xia and Kirby (2009) concluded the following about school-imposed grade repetition:

- It improves academic achievement temporarily, but over time, grade repeaters fall further and further behind other low achievers who were promoted.
- It is stressful to students and associated with reduced self-esteem, impairs peer relationships, increases alienation from school, and sharply increases likelihood of eventual dropout.
- It makes classes larger and harder to manage for teachers and creates budgetary and equity problems for schools and school systems.

Research in both the United States and France suggests that social background, independent of school attainment, is an important determinant of repeating. This may be due to behavioural difficulties associated with social background, or because educated parents are in a stronger position to oppose a repetition proposed by the school. Therefore grade repetition may also pose risks for equity in terms of bias based on social background (Field *et al.*, 2007). Also, the costs of repetition for the education budget are substantial given the extra expenditure incurred in the repeated year and the opportunity costs of one year of the student's time. This is exacerbated by the fact that schools have very few incentives to take these large costs into account. In summary, grade repetition is ineffective and costly; this has both efficiency and equity implications (Field *et al.*, 2007).

There is a narrow understanding of the purposes of evaluation and assessment and some reluctance to exercise professional judgment across the system

The review team formed the view that there is a narrow understanding of the purposes and the potential of evaluation and assessment. Evaluation and assessment are still perceived mostly as instruments to hold stakeholders accountable and to "control". This is visible in teacher appraisal for which the discussion about career progression consequences has dominated the discussion about strategies to improve the practice of teachers. Similarly, school inspections are much better established as an evaluation

practice than school self-evaluation, which is not widespread and systematic across the system. Also, student assessment is perceived more as test and measurement rather than learning. The idea that the ultimate objective of evaluation and assessment is to improve students' learning and teachers' teaching is not yet fully matured in the Portuguese evaluation and assessment framework. This translates into a situation whereby the more accountability-oriented elements of the framework are receiving greater attention than processes for improvement, which leads to more limited local engagement in self-assessment activities, incipient practices of evidence-informed inquiry, assessment and evaluation results not used to their potential and support and guidance tools which could be further employed.

Another major feature is the reluctance to exercise professional judgment within schools. This relates to two key aspects. First, there is no tradition of pedagogical leadership in Portuguese schools. Before the reform of school leadership which established the figure of the school director (see Chapter 1), schools worked like collectives of highly autonomous teachers who functioned independently, especially in second and third cycle basic schools and secondary schools, within an organisation which provided the necessary facilities, resources and non-teaching support. The result is that schools tended to be administered rather than led (Santiago *et al.*, 2009). The new arrangements are an important step in instilling and empowering leadership in schools but, given that most new school directors were leading schools under the previous system, traditions are maintained and the exercise of pedagogical leadership remains underdeveloped. For example, even if no regulations prevent it, having school directors visit a classroom and provide informal feedback on a teacher's practice remains a rare practice across the system. Informal dialogues between school leaders and individual teachers about their teaching and learning are not a regular practice in Portuguese schools. This is also expressed in the less significant role of the school director in teacher appraisal (see Chapter 4).

Second, a major challenge in the system has been to develop an "open door" climate among teachers. There is no culture of sharing classroom practice, developmental classroom observation, professional feedback, peer discussion and professional coaching (Santiago *et al.*, 2009). Teachers are hesitant about providing colleagues with feedback on their practices. This was noticeable when the original teacher appraisal model was launched in 2007 on the basis of the then "senior" teachers as evaluators. These expressed their lack of motivation, competences and preparation to carry out the evaluation (Santiago *et al.*, 2009), becoming a major implementation issue. The reluctance to exercise professional judgment is also reflected in the excessive pursuit of objectivity in the implementation of the teacher appraisal model through the development of comprehensive quantitative criteria and recording instruments (Santiago *et al.*, 2009).

There is a need to strengthen competencies for evaluation and assessment throughout the system

The effectiveness of evaluation and assessment relies to a great extent on ensuring that both those who design and undertake evaluation activities as well as those who use their results are in possession of the proper skills and competencies. While there have been considerable national efforts to stimulate an evaluation culture by strengthening assessment and evaluation activities, developing guidelines and materials, as well as providing competency-building learning opportunities in some cases, the review team assesses that there are still limited evaluation and assessment competencies throughout the education system.

There is a need to improve the competencies of school leaders in evaluation and assessment, in particular with regard to ensuring a meaningful school self-evaluation process, and providing pedagogical guidance and coaching to individual teachers. There is no specific initial education to train school leaders or managers in Portugal, nor does the specific career of school leader exist. Most of those currently responsible for schools developed competencies on the job. Others have undertaken specialised training in school administration while in the post (postgraduate courses in higher education institutions or training accredited by the Scientific and Pedagogical Council for Continuous Training). These circumstances lead to limited training and preparation on pedagogical evaluation and human resource management for the role of the school director in school self-evaluation, school improvement, teacher appraisal and teacher career development (Santiago *et al.*, 2009). It is interesting to note that the results of school evaluations carried out by the Inspectorate during the first inspection cycle (2006-11) reveal that, within the domain "delivery of educational service", "supervision of teaching in the classroom" is identified as the greatest limitation (against the other three aspects, "articulation and sequentiality", "differentiation and support" and "coverage of the curriculum and appreciation of learning") (IGE, 2011).

Another case in point concerns the gaps in the development of competencies for teacher appraisal. One of the major obstacles to the implementation of teacher appraisal when it was launched in 2007 was the insufficient expertise developed for teacher appraisal, particularly that of the evaluators whose legitimacy was not recognised by the teachers being evaluated (Santiago *et al.*, 2009). Major investments have now been made to train evaluators and teachers for teacher appraisal (see Chapter 4) but it will take time to build adequate expertise. Other areas in which building capacity is a considerable challenge include: the competencies of teachers for student formative assessment; insufficient focus on skills for student assessment in initial teacher education; the data handling skills of school agents; and analytical capacity for educational planning and policy development at the system level. It is also unclear whether systematic processes are in place to identify best practices within the evaluation and assessment framework and ensure that they are spread and shared across schools. For instance, there is a wide range of approaches to school self-evaluation, which tends not to be documented.

There are challenges in the implementation of some evaluation and assessment initiatives

The implementation of some initiatives has been challenging and has exposed a range of difficulties. Certainly the most prominent example is the introduction of teacher appraisal in 2007. The OECD, in a previous Review (Santiago *et al.*, 2009), documented the challenges faced then, which resulted from putting into operation a comprehensive model in a short time span and the little anticipation by government of the difficulties. There was little experience with and tradition of evaluation, the system was unprepared to undertake large-scale teacher appraisal as a result of the limited professional expertise of those with responsibility to evaluate, a sense of unfairness by those being evaluated emerged, excessive bureaucratic demands on schools were made, and little time was given to implement the model.

It is clear that in Portugal, as in many other countries, there is frequently an implementation gap between the passage of enabling legislation and actual action. In addition to the case of teacher appraisal, it can be said that the implementation of school self-evaluation is underdeveloped and not systematically performed in schools. Similarly, it is unclear if school directors, in the context of new arrangements for school leadership,

are indeed using their executive powers to effectively assume the pedagogical leadership of their schools. Recent reforms, in particular that of teacher appraisal, have also been characterised by some uncertainty, a fragmentation of adaptations, and a top-down emphasis on legislation with no full account of the practicalities of implementation. It is also unclear if the objectives of policy initiatives have been properly communicated with the consequence of not always coming across as adequately connected. It was clear during the review visit that the "big picture" was not commonly understood and the potential of evaluation and assessment to help achieve improvement was not perceived widely across the system.

Policy recommendations

Consolidate the evaluation and assessment framework

Portugal has embarked on an ambitious school reform programme which includes an appropriately strong element of evaluation and assessment. Cultural traditions provide both obstacles and opportunities but there is persuasive evidence that good progress is being made already. There is an emerging evaluation culture in the system and a determination to use the evaluation and assessment framework to help drive the reform agenda. However, the full potential of evaluation and assessment will not be realised until the framework is fully integrated and is perceived as a coherent whole.

To go further, it would be important to develop a strategic plan or framework document that conceptualises a complete evaluation and assessment framework and articulates ways to achieve the coherence between its different components. Voices of key stakeholder groups should be engaged in the development of the plan so as to ensure that it is responsive to broader social and economic needs as well as to the goals of the education system. The plan should essentially constitute a common framework of reference for educational evaluation across the country with the ultimate objective of embedding evaluation as an ongoing and essential part of the professionalism of the actors in the education system.

The plan should establish a clear rationale for evaluation and assessment and a compelling narrative about how evaluation and assessment align with the different elements in the education reform programme. It should describe how each component of the evaluation and assessment framework can produce results that are useful for classroom practice and school improvement activities. The plan could also contribute to clarifying responsibilities of different actors for the different components and allow for better networking and connections between the people working on evaluation and assessment activities.

This reflection should be followed up by improved training and competency descriptions for key people within the evaluation and assessment framework, include strategies to strengthen certain components of the framework and propose ways of establishing better articulations between different evaluation components (see below).

A key principle is to place the students at the centre of the evaluation and assessment framework

Given that the fundamental purpose of the evaluation and assessment framework is to improve the learning of the students, a key principle is to place the students at the centre of the framework. This translates into teaching, learning and assessment approaches which focus on students' authentic learning. There has been considerable progress in the

last few years in the Portuguese education system in focusing attention in student learning with better provisions for individualised support, growing opportunities for differentiated learning, and greater say of students in their learning. However, these approaches need to become more systematic across schools and classrooms. There is a need for strong messages and incentives for teachers to get away from more traditional teaching strategies and engage with more constructivist principles with a focus on motivating students and using assessment for learning and high quality feedback. The intention is to reach a state in which teachers see student motivation as a consequence of their teaching rather than an attribute of the student, taking full responsibility for the learning of the student. Students should be fully engaged with their learning, contributing to the planning and organisation of lessons, having learning expectations communicated to them, assessing their learning and that of their peers, and benefitting from special attention when they fall behind. In addition, it is important to build community and parental involvement and an acceptance of learning and teaching as a shared responsibility.

A particularly important priority for Portugal to ensure evaluation and assessment focus on student learning is to reduce the high rates of grade repetition. There are alternative ways of supporting those with learning difficulties in the classroom. One way is to provide extra teaching time for students who fall behind and adapt teaching to their needs. There can also be short-term, intensive interventions of one-on-one lessons for underperforming students. This can be organised with extra staff such as recovery teachers. The objective of recovery lessons or remediation is to promote accelerated learning so that students catch up to their peers, close the achievement gap as quickly as possible, and continue to learn independently. Another example of intervention is the presence of teaching assistants in the classroom to support the students who fell behind. Approaches also include school prevention with the early identification of learning difficulties and programmes designed in partnership with parents (see Field *et al.*, 2007).

The review team does not recommend an abrupt abolition of grade repetition in the system but rather its gradual elimination as alternative measures to support students with learning difficulties are introduced. The rationale for reducing the application of grade repetition as a pedagogical measure to address learning difficulties will need to be clearly communicated to school agents, in particular teachers and parents, as grade repetition is deeply entrenched in the traditions of the Portuguese education system. There is a misinformed debate in the country whereby the elimination of grade repetition is associated with the lowering of learning standards and poorer student learning. Standards are important, but the standards that truly matter are concrete outcomes for students – not theoretical expectations for the level of students in particular classrooms (Field *et al.*, 2007). Some of the countries making little or no use of grade repetition have exceptionally high standards (*e.g.* the top PISA performers Finland, Korea, Japan).

The sharp reduction of grade repetition has the potential to be a far-reaching reform but one which inevitably needs time to gain support among school agents and work effectively. Its effectiveness will depend on the alternative ways to support those students who fall behind, the preparation of teachers and the ability of the system to cultivate and promote novel pedagogical approaches. The strategy also requires continuing supporting teaching professionals so that they develop their in-classroom techniques to help those who are falling behind.

There should be greater emphasis on the improvement function of evaluation and assessment

Another priority is to reinforce the improvement function of evaluation and assessment and reflect on the best ways for evaluation and assessment to improve student learning. Realising the full potential of the evaluation and assessment framework involves establishing strategies to strengthen the linkages to classroom practice, where the improvement of student learning takes place. Channels which are likely to reinforce such linkages include: an emphasis on teacher appraisal for the continuous improvement of teaching practices; involving teachers in school evaluation, in particular through conceiving school self-evaluation as a collective process with responsibilities for teachers; ensuring that teachers are seen as the main experts not only in instructing but also in assessing their students, so teachers feel the ownership of student assessment and accept it as an integral part of teaching and learning; building teacher capacity for student formative assessment; and ensuring that school evaluation focuses on learning and teaching. In addition, the improvement function of evaluation and assessment could be strengthened by developing schools' capacity for self-evaluation, and reinforcing student assessment for learning. The new requirement of making school improvement plans mandatory as a follow-up to school evaluation, as of 2011/12, is a positive step in this direction.

Build on some key policy levers to effectively implement evaluation and assessment

The strategy to develop an effective evaluation and assessment framework should build on the following key policy levers:

- Articulation of the national goals for education

  For evaluation and assessment to be effective in improving quality across the whole education system it is essential that all school agents have a clear understanding of the national goals for education. This requires the development of goals aligned with broader social and economic objectives, including aims at promoting equity and excellence and the articulation of the ultimate purposes of learning for citizens. There is room to develop clearer expectations and criteria to assess achievement of system objectives. As regards the specific content for student learning, there might be room for schools to exercise more autonomy in adapting the curriculum to their local needs. Also, collaboration among teachers and schools should be enhanced so as to ensure moderation processes and enhance the consistency with which educational standards are achieved.

- The centrality of teaching and learning

  It would be critical to ensure that the evaluation of teaching and learning quality is central to the evaluation framework. Efforts to develop an "open door" climate among teachers should be sustained. Classroom observation should remain a key element of teacher appraisal and it should become an important instrument in external school evaluation. Similarly, the observation of teaching and feedback to individual teachers should be part of school self-evaluation processes. The effectiveness of the evaluation and assessment framework will depend to a great extent on the ability to cultivate a culture of sharing classroom practice, professional feedback and peer learning.

- Communication of rationale for evaluation and assessment

  It should be clearly communicated that the purpose of the evaluation and assessment framework is to improve the educational outcomes of students. As such, it is expected that school agents actively use the results of evaluation and assessment activities to develop improvement or action plans at all levels.

- The importance of school leadership

  The effective operation of evaluation and assessment will depend to a great extent on the way the concept and practice of school leadership gains ground among the new school directors and school councils. It is difficult to envisage either effective teacher appraisal or productive school self-review without strong leadership capacity. It is essential that school directors take direct responsibility for exerting pedagogical leadership and for assuming the quality of education in their schools. Hence, the recruitment, development and support for school leaders is of key importance in creating and sustaining effective evaluation and assessment cultures within schools. Research internationally has shown that school leadership focused on goal-setting, assessment, appraisal and evaluation is positively correlated with teacher and student performance (Pont *et al.*, 2008).

- Promote professional judgment across the system

  There need to be sustained efforts to promote professional judgment across the system. Informal dialogue and spontaneous feedback on professional practice should be encouraged between school management and teachers, and among teachers. Stronger pedagogical leadership, more regular visits to classrooms, opportunities for interactions among teachers, and the realisation that evaluation and assessment entails subjective views and can occur in informal settings, are approaches likely to promote professional judgment across the system.

- Sustain equity dimension in the evaluation and assessment framework

  It is essential that evaluation and assessment contributes to advancing the equity goals of the education system. At the system level, it is imperative to identify educational disadvantage and understand its impact on student performance. Developing equity measures should be a priority. It is also important to ensure that evaluation and assessment are fair to given groups such as cultural minorities and students with special needs.

- Anticipation of implementation difficulties

  The implementation of evaluation and assessment activities requires the recognition of a range of important aspects. First, reaching agreements on the design of evaluation and assessment activities requires time for discussions and consultations with all stakeholders. Second, developing expertise in the system, including training evaluators, is expensive and requires time. Third, conducting evaluation processes induces additional workload for school agents. Fourth, aligning broader school reforms such as professional development opportunities with evaluation and assessment strategies requires more educational resources. It needs to be borne in mind that evaluation and the resulting feedback, reflection and development processes will only work if school agents make it work, however. To a great extent it is the motivated school agent who ensures the successful implementation of reforms in schools. Hence, it is imperative not only to find ways for school agents to identify with the goals and values of evaluation

and assessment practices but also to ensure that such goals and values take account of teacher agency.

Strengthen some of the components of the evaluation and assessment framework

As indicated earlier, there are a number of components that are still underdeveloped in the current evaluation and assessment framework. Teacher appraisal requires further adjustments and the achievement of greater consensus to be implemented in a meaningful way (see Chapter 4). As many studies indicate that classroom teaching is the most important school-level factor impacting on student outcomes (OECD, 2005; Pont *et al.,* 2008), it is essential that the appraisal of teaching practices becomes an integral part of the evaluation and assessment framework. Also, the appraisal of school directors needs further rethinking and considerably more capacity in order to have an authentic impact on school leadership practices. Similarly, more attention needs to be paid to the implementation of school self-evaluation so it is systematically performed in Portuguese schools with the involvement of all schools agents and follow-up which leads to school improvement (see Chapter 5). Other areas which require reinforcement include system evaluation (see Chapter 6), the formative assessment of students by teachers (see Chapter 3) and the moderation of teacher summative assessment across schools (see Chapter 3).

Further develop some articulations within the evaluation and assessment framework

The process of developing an effective evaluation and assessment framework should give due attention to: achieving proper articulation between the different evaluation components (*e.g.* school evaluation and teacher appraisal); and warranting the several elements within an evaluation component are sufficiently linked (*e.g.* school evaluation and school improvement).

For example, as explained in the previous section, there is room to better define the articulations between: school evaluation and the appraisal of school directors (see Chapter 5); school evaluation and student assessment (Chapter 5); school evaluation and system evaluation (see Chapter 6); and school evaluation and teacher appraisal. Regarding the latter articulation, analysis from TALIS (OECD, 2009) suggests that school evaluations can be an essential component of an evaluative framework which can foster and potentially shape teacher appraisal and feedback. Given that the systems of school evaluation and teacher appraisal and feedback have both the objective of maintaining standards and improve student performance, there are likely to be great benefits from the synergies between school evaluation and teacher appraisal. To achieve the greatest impact, the focus of school evaluation should either be linked to or have an effect on the focus of teacher appraisal (OECD, 2009). This indicates that school evaluation should comprise the monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning, possibly include the external validation of school-based processes for teacher appraisal (holding the school director accountable as necessary), and school development processes should explore links to the evaluation of teaching practice (see Chapters 4 and 5). In the context of school self-evaluation, it is also important to ensure the centrality of the evaluation of teaching quality and the feedback to individual teachers.

Examples of linkages within single evaluation components which need to be reinforced include the association between teacher appraisal and teacher professional development (see Chapter 4), the linkages between school evaluation and school improvement (see Chapter 5), the articulation between school self-evaluation and external

school evaluation (see Chapter 5); the moderation processes to ensure the appraisal of teachers is consistent across schools (see Chapter 4), and the linkages between standardised student testing and student formative assessment.

Significantly invest in evaluation and assessment capacity development across the school system

The development of an effective evaluation and assessment framework involves considerable investment in developing competencies and skills for evaluation and assessment at all levels. This is even more the case in systems with little tradition of evaluation and in which there have been a range of initiatives in a short time span. Initiatives in the last decade have advanced at a good pace but, understandably, the time elapsed since they got underway has not yet allowed building the levels of capacity for evaluation and assessment necessary to realise the full potential of the evaluation and assessment framework.

As a result, it is clear that an area of policy priority is consolidating efforts to improve the capacity for evaluation and assessment. Areas in which the review team believes considerable investment should be made are: improving the skills of teachers for formative assessment including engaging students in assessment; enhancing the capacity of teachers to assess against the objectives defined in the national curriculum including promoting collaborative work among teachers around student summative assessment; and improving the data handling skills of school agents. Capacity building through adequate provision of initial teacher education and professional development should be a priority making sure provision is well aligned with the national education reforms. Other strategies involve the provision of support materials; marking guides and exemplars of different student ratings along the lines of what is currently being done by the Learning Goals project; and Internet platforms proposing formative teaching and learning strategies (see Chapters 3 and 6).

Another area which deserves attention relates to skills and competencies for teacher appraisal and school evaluation. The review team formed the impression that these are not sufficiently developed. A more systematic approach to training for teacher appraisal and school evaluation should be developed. There is a need to develop school leader and leadership team capacity in school self-evaluation and teacher appraisal. This could involve training school leaders to implement an authentic evaluation of teaching and learning, feedback and objective setting at their schools, including techniques in teacher classroom observation; strengthening teacher appraisal at schools by preparing the school leader, management teams and lead teachers for their evaluation responsibilities (see Chapters 4 and 5). Teacher appraisal, in particular, should involve a substantial training programme for school leaders and evaluators and entail the broadening of the knowledge, skills and evaluation experience of the respective trainers. Training modules should also be offered to teachers so they know what is expected from them to be recognised as "good" teachers, and to be prepared to make the best use of the feedback received (see Chapter 4 and Santiago *et al.*, 2009).

Another area to explore is building capacity at the system level to ensure an effective use of the results generated by evaluation and assessment activities (see Chapter 6). Finally, there is a need to put in place systematic processes to identify best practices within the evaluation and assessment framework and ensure their dissemination across schools. In this respect, the Inspectorate should have an eminent role in modelling and

disseminating good practice in areas such as school leadership, human resources management, school self-evaluation and teacher appraisal.

Notes

1. TALIS is the OECD's Teaching and Learning International Survey, which was implemented in 2007/08, covering lower secondary education and with the participation of 23 countries (OECD, 2009). The results derived from TALIS are based on self-reports from teachers and principals and therefore represent their opinions, perceptions, beliefs and their accounts of their activities. Further information is available at *www.oecd.org/edu/talis*. TALIS results for Portugal are provided in Annex D.

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Chapter 3

Student assessment

Student performance in Portugal is assessed by a wide range of instruments, ranging from national standardised tests to ongoing daily formative assessment in the classroom. At the national level, full-cohort educational progress national tests are conducted in Grade 4, the results from which are used as key performance measures towards national goals. These are low stakes for schools, teachers and students. Summative assessment is based on a mix of teacher-based classroom assessments and national examinations. The latter take place at the end of both the second and third cycles of basic education (Grades 6 and 9), in Portuguese language and mathematics, and in secondary education in the last year of each subject (Grade 11 or 12). However, teachers hold most responsibility for summative assessment as the weight of national examinations is never dominant for the final mark. In the first cycle of basic education (Grades 1-4), assessment is generally informal and formative and results are reported in a descriptive and qualitative format. In the second and third cycles (Grades 5-6 and Grades 7-9), the emphasis on formative and internal assessment continues but summative results are reported on an ordinal scale from 1 to 5 and there are external examinations at the end of each of the cycles. The emphasis on formative assessment remains in secondary education, but greater attention is given to both summative and external assessment. A major asset is that student assessment is seen as part of the professional role of teachers in Portugal. Other strengths include the external dimension to assessment; the increased focus on data and results; the provisions to meet the needs of a diverse student population; and the assessment innovations associated with the New Opportunities programme. However, considerable challenges exist in building effective student assessment approaches. These include the difficulty in translating formative assessment as a policy priority into effective practice in classrooms; the limitations of moderation of teacher-based assessment within and between schools; assessment being used simultaneously as a controlling mechanism and a learning process; the little use of data for analysis; and the absence of external assessment in some strands of secondary education.

This chapter focuses on the formative (assessment *for* learning) and summative assessment (assessment *of* learning) used to assess student progress and achievement in Portuguese schools within the context of the overall framework for educational evaluation. Student assessment refers to processes in which evidence of learning is collected in a planned and systematic way in order to make a judgement about student learning (EPPI, 2002). This chapter also addresses the context for that assessment, the policy framework within which it takes place, the views of stakeholders on assessment processes and the tensions between the articulated aims of the assessment framework for education, and its application in schools and classrooms.

Context and features

A framework for student assessment

Three purposes are identified for the assessment of students in basic and secondary education in Portugal:

- To support the education process in such a way as to sustain the success of all students and permit the readjustment of school and class curricular projects, particularly with regard to the selection of methodologies and resources, in accordance with the students' educational needs.
- To certify the various forms of learning and competencies acquired by students at the end of each cycle and when they leave basic education, by means of internal and external summative assessments.
- To help improve the quality of the education system, and make it possible to take decisions that will improve it and promote greater confidence on its operation on the part of society (Ministry of Education, forthcoming).

These purposes represent a coherent balance between the professional, regulatory and accountability purposes of assessment found within most modern systems of student assessment. These purposes are supported by a programme of internal (conducted by teachers and schools) and external (conducted by agencies outside schools) assessment supported by the Office for Educational Evaluation (GAVE) in the Ministry.

The framework for assessment is drawn from all the subject areas studied by students in the various cycles of education. Educational progress tests and national examinations also draw on the Common European Framework of Reference for foreign languages, the PISA programme, and international practice on indicators and performance-level descriptors as appropriate.

Currently under development, it is envisaged that the Learning Goals project will also form part of the framework, as these goals for student learning will be supported by appropriate assessment strategies. This project aims to provide the school system with a consistent and coherent set of standards so that student progress can be monitored (Ministry of Education, forthcoming).

This emphasis on coherence is both aspirational and pragmatic in origins. The guiding principles underpinning the education system include an assertion that assessment should be integral to all curriculum development and should have a central role in the regulation of teaching and learning. Such an integrated assessment system is a policy goal shared across many countries. From a pragmatic perspective, the Learning Goals project is also a response to pedagogical, structural and administrative differences between the different

cycles of schooling, especially between the first and the other two cycles of basic education (Fernandes, 2009). A further pragmatic function of a structuring framework is as a response to the extension of compulsory schooling to 12 years and a consequential broadening of the range of educational programmes on offer in the system as the cohort becomes more diverse.

Features of the student assessment system in basic education

In the first cycle (Grades 1-4), assessment is generally informal and formative. Summative tests of educational progress (*provas de aferição*) take place at the end of the cycle in mathematics and in Portuguese language. These are provided and marked for all students by the Ministry but are low stakes for schools, teachers and students (see Chapter 6). All other assessment in this cycle of education is internal and the responsibility of the teachers and the schools. Teachers and schools also agree and publish a set of assessment criteria for each subject in the curriculum. These form the basis of formative and summative assessment. While these are based on national guidelines, schools have some flexibility in the weightings they can assign to different components based, for example, on community or local needs. These criteria are used to support internal summative assessment and school-level decisions about student progress to the next grade (repetition of grades is possible for students who cannot progress, with the exception of Grade 1), or about additional support that may be required. Results are reported in a descriptive and qualitative format.

This emphasis on formative assessment is teacher-focused in orientation. The information provided by this continuous assessment is to assist teachers in the design and management of appropriate curricula, and in connecting the learning to the students' characteristics and the forms of learning and competencies they are required to develop. Formative assessment also serves diagnostic purposes in that it generates useful information for teachers about the learning progress of students and allows for programmes to be differentiated and adjusted to match student learning needs.

The external summative tests of educational progress at the end of the first cycle give rise to system-, school-, class- and student-level data which can be used for school self-evaluation and for teacher planning. These results are reported to parents, teachers and schools (see Chapter 6).

The assessment scenario in the second (Grades 5-6) and third cycles (Grades 7-9) is somewhat different for three reasons. First, summative results are reported in a descriptive manner but an ordinal scale from 1 to 5 is also used. Second, because the curriculum at these stages is organised by subject interdisciplinary categories (in the second cycle) and subjects (in the third cycle), the student is taught by more than one teacher. This means that the class board of teachers is involved in arriving at the internal summative marks. The third particular feature of the second and third cycles is that national examinations are taken by all students at the end of both Grade 6 and Grade 9 in Portuguese language and mathematics. The national examinations for Grade 6 students were introduced in the 2011/12 school year and replace equivalent national educational progress tests which were organised for about a decade.

In both the second and third cycles of basic education, the emphasis on formative and internal assessment continues. Internal summative marks are given, but one of the purposes of that summative assessment is to determine whether the student meets the requirements to take the national examinations in Portuguese language and mathematics. These examinations are marked on a five-level scale and they count for 25% and 30% of

the final classification in each subject respectively in the second and third cycles, with the remaining 75% and 70% coming from the schools' internal assessment.

In summary, internal formative assessment is a strong feature of the basic education system, with a focus on providing information to teachers, schools and students on student performance. Summative assessment is used to inform parents and others agents. In both formative and summative processes, teachers are at the centre, and are the main agents of the assessment process, with the exception of the national examinations at Grades 6 and 9. Teachers and schools have considerable autonomy to define assessment criteria and to design internal tests and tasks (Fernandes, 2009).

Features of the student assessment system in secondary education

The emphasis on formative assessment continues into secondary education, although greater attention is given to both summative and external assessment in this phase than in the earlier cycles. In secondary education, the purpose of assessment is to gauge each student's knowledge, competencies and capabilities and to verify the extent to which s/he has achieved the overall objectives for this level of education and the subjects and other components that comprise it. Of note, education for citizenship and Portuguese culture are cross-cutting themes assessed through all the courses (Ministry of Education, forthcoming).

The programmes on offer in secondary education are diversified into scientific and humanities courses to prepare students for progression into higher education, and technological courses which have a more vocational focus. There are also artistic programmes and professional/vocational courses available (see Chapter 1). This diversification is significant for assessment, in that the programme of national examinations is associated only with the scientific and humanities courses. Students in other courses who wish to progress to higher education have to take the national examinations required as entrance tests for the courses they want to take. The opportunities for non-traditional students under the New Opportunities programme (see Chapter 1) for those who may be at risk of dropping out of school or who wish to complete compulsory education are also significant in that many of these are offered in mainstream public basic and secondary schools. Some of these courses are led by teachers who work or had previously worked in secondary education, and all are associated with the forms and processes of assessment generally associated with the vocational sector.

Formative assessment in secondary education is continuous and systematic and it also serves a diagnostic function similar to assessment in basic education. The objectives of internal and external summative assessment in secondary education are classification and certification. Students are marked three times in each year, on a scale of 1-20 with the third mark in each year determining whether the student will be admitted to the corresponding national examination and which is taken in the final year of each subject. A mark of ten is required to take the national examination. In terms of the final classification of students, the internal summative assessments for which teachers have responsibility carry 70% of the weighting, with the national examination making up the remaining 30%. However, for the purposes of entry to higher education, the balance is different, with the school-based component reduced to 50% and the external examination increased to 50%. As for basic education, the national examinations are the responsibility of the Ministry.

The Ministry also makes a series of optional intermediate tests available for use by schools to support the assessment process – these are available for all levels of education even if with greater prominence in the third cycle of basic education and in secondary education. Their purposes are to give teachers insight into the national standards, to give students a sense of their own progress, and to help students to prepare for external assessments. The tests are centrally marked, and the results returned to schools. A particular emphasis in these intermediate tests has been placed on mathematics and the natural sciences. Access to these is provided on line by the Office for Educational Evaluation (GAVE). Use of these is optional, but widespread. The majority of schools use them as summative assessment instruments.

In summary, in secondary education, the teacher's role in the assessment process is further developed to include the classification and certification process. As in basic education, the teacher appears to be the primary agent in the assessment process, even when national examinations are applied. Of note are the development and spread of intermediate tests and their increasingly summative function, as well as their organisation and marking on an external basis.

Strengths

Assessment is seen as part of the professional role of teachers

From the beginning to the end of schooling, assessment of students is seen as integral to the work of teachers. This is not just the view of the teachers themselves – the review team was struck by how widely this conviction is shared by students, school leaders and parents. While external assessment is available in the form of end of cycle educational progress tests, intermediate tests and national examinations, only in the examinations used for progression to higher education is this external assessment given equal weighting to the assessment of teachers. On all other occasions, the teacher assessment is given greater weighting.

Further, this school-based, teacher-led assessment is based on tasks and tests developed by teachers and schools and informed by assessment criteria that are developed by the pedagogical councils or class boards within each school. Schools have considerable autonomy in the decisions about student progress and certification (Fernandes, 2009).

This apparent autonomy in assessment for teachers and for schools is uncontested and widely supported. While there is an appeals system available for the secondary phase of education, and while it is routinely availed of, the appeals can be made on the basis of a procedural failure only. Substantive assessment judgements cannot be the subject of appeals. This support for the assessment work of teachers is particularly noteworthy given recent controversies around the appraisal of teachers in Portugal discussed elsewhere in this report.

The centrality of teachers in the assessment process, and the support for this teacher agency from inside and outside schools are particular strengths of the Portuguese assessment system. A consequence of that positioning of teachers at the heart of the process is the emphasis on *formative* assessment, an emphasis that is shared in many countries.

The concept of formative assessment is open to a variety of interpretations in assessment policies across the systems of individual countries, including Portugal.

Despite some contestation around meaning, there is a strong commitment at all levels of the Portuguese education system to formative approaches and to maintaining this characteristic feature of the assessment system in any future development. The intermediate tests, though externally set and externally marked, are also designed with teachers' assessment practice in mind – they are designed to give teachers an insight into the national standards, as well as to give feedback to students on their progress.

Student assessment also has an external dimension

One of the challenges faced by any system committed to internal, formative and teacher-led assessment is the need for checks and balances across the system to ensure reliability in the application of standards and criteria and to gather system-wide data for the purposes of evaluating system quality. The provision of end of cycle wholly externally marked educational progress tests at the end of the first cycle, of national examinations at Grades 6 and 9 and of a series of external components for subject-based examinations in the secondary cycle represents a considered attempt to address this challenge. The capacity of the Office for Educational Evaluation (GAVE) in how it approaches and conducts its work is an important feature of the quality processes. The optional but very popular intermediate tests are also significant in this regard; however the growing pressure on GAVE to generate more external tests more often and the shortage of expertise in psychometrics and assessment more generally in the education system should be noted.

Assessment innovations associated with the New Opportunities initiative

There have been a number of recent initiatives, under the umbrella of the New Opportunities programme, to extend the educational provision in schools to students who may have left school, or may be at risk of leaving school, and to adults who might not have completed compulsory education (see Chapter 1). These new programmes have been accompanied by the development of approaches to assessment focused on motivating students, giving high quality feedback, and including the active participation of learners in the assessment process. A key feature of these arrangements and approaches is their location close to the learning process and to the learner. Thus, assessment tends to occur immediately after the completion of a module or portion of a course rather than at the end of a year or cycle. The use of approaches beyond written tests, such as a performance assessment, puts the learner and learning at the centre of the assessment process. The need to use assessment to motivate learners to learn, rather than to simply engage with the assessment or test, is acknowledged as fundamental by those working in this sector. The challenge of this focus is also acknowledged.

Alternative programmes such as the Education and Training Courses feature these approaches to meet the needs of the particular groups of learners accessing this form of provision. In contrast to the assessment system for mainstream schooling which places teachers at the centre of the process, the assessment system for these alternative programmes, which are also internal and conducted by teachers, appear to place the learner at the centre. The progress of the learner is given priority over the gathering of system or school-level data.

A sophisticated information system has been developed to support the work of the New Opportunities Centres. This is more than an administrative tool. It supports the kinds of assessment used, allows for learning to be recorded, monitored and accredited, and provides data for the quality assurances processes used in this form of education. Of note,

in line with the policy in the rest of education, assessment is internal, conducted by teachers and instructors.

These approaches to assessment have been applied in vocational education and training contexts elsewhere in Europe (Green *et al.*, 2000; Tillema, 2003) and seem to be well supported in the settings in which they are now being used in the Portuguese system by the New Opportunities Centres and the National Agency for Qualification (ANQ, and recently recreated as ANQEP). Good assessment design, according to one widely used perspective, draws on three elements: a model of how learners represent knowledge and competence; tasks or situations that allow for performance to be captured or observed; and a means by which inferences can be drawn from evidence gathered from that performance (Pellegrino *et al.*, 2001). The validity and reliability of any assessment depends largely on the quality of the connections between these three elements, and the degree of attention paid to each.

In the system of assessment used in the New Opportunities Centres and in alternative provision more generally, considerable attention has been given to each of these elements in a balance that seems, at least initially, to be having a positive impact on participation and completion. In addition, the attempt to place the learner at the heart of an assessment process that is supported by a robust information system that enables monitoring data to be gathered is noteworthy.

The location of many of the New Opportunities Centres in mainstream secondary schools, or as part of clusters, is a further strength. First, it means that there is some engagement between the students availing of these programmes and secondary school students. Second, it means that, while there can be some tension between the flexibility of the newer programmes and traditional school culture and structures, there is some interaction between teachers working in the two systems with opportunities for professional engagement and exchange. While these opportunities remain to be exploited in full, and the challenges of supporting dialogue within the more individualised culture of schooling are widely acknowledged, they are particular strengths of the New Opportunities programme, and have much to offer the assessment system for all students in schools.

While these developments are relatively new, initial data are beginning to emerge about the value of the initiatives and their positive impact.

Meeting the needs of a diverse student population

In addition to the assessment developments with the New Opportunities programme, particular efforts are made to meet the needs of students whose mother tongue is other than Portuguese. Such students are supported through an initial diagnostic assessment of language proficiency using benchmarks based on the Common European Framework of Reference, and assessment criteria to support progress identified by the school. In national examinations at Grades 6 and 9, taking account of progress, some students are given the option of taking the Portuguese examination as non-mother tongue.

Students with special educational needs are also supported in the system of student assessment by a number of supportive measures. This is in the context of a high degree of inclusion of students with special needs in mainstream schools. Students with special educational needs benefit from Individual Educational Programmes (IEP) and do not participate in the national assessment programme but have personalised targets and assessment criteria associated with their IEP. Test and exam accommodations exist in line

with what students are normally allowed in the classroom but the consistency with which they are administered is unclear. For instance, for students with visual impairment, adapted assessment instruments are available.

In the context of special education, there is a risk that curricula and assessment frameworks may define achievement and progress too narrowly to capture many valuable areas of learning of students with special educational needs. Teachers may not always have the awareness and competencies to ensure adequate and innovative assessment of students with diverse needs and to report accordingly to parents. While in Portugal schools generally have among their staff special education teachers, there are some concerns that regular teachers have not received the preparation (including in their initial teacher education) to adequately respond to the needs of special education students. For instance, they may have insufficient knowledge of formative assessment and/or differentiated teaching to specifically meet the needs of those students. While inclusive assessment practice exists in many schools, the key challenge appears to be to ensure that such good practice is developed consistently in all schools enrolling students with special educational needs.

A focus on data and results

A further strength of the assessment system is the attention paid to data and results at school, regional and national levels, by teachers, parents and students, and by the general public. While this attention can also have negative consequences discussed elsewhere in this chapter, the focus on outcomes and results, and the commitment to collect and monitor data is noteworthy. The work of both the Information System Co-ordinating Office (MISI) and the Office for Education Statistics and Planning (GEPE) (recently integrated in the Directorate General for Education and Science Statistics, DGEEC) in gathering and disseminating system- and school-level data is an important resource for decision makers at every level of the system (see also Chapter 6).

At school level, data on student achievement are gathered and discussed by class boards and pedagogical councils. The review team was struck by the degree to which engagement with data and results was cited by so many teachers and others associated with the work of schools. Such engagement was seen as key to school development and improvement.

While the generation and collation of data are associated with an administrative task for schools, nonetheless, the commitment to data and evidence is admirable and widely regarded as important for school and system improvement (Earl and Katz, 2002; Eurydice, 2009; Levin, 2010).

Challenges

Formative assessment is stronger in policies than in classroom practices with some significant consequences for pedagogy and learning

Finding a balance between formative and summative assessment is a challenge shared by many education systems. It is made more complex by the wide range of understandings of the meaning of the term *formative assessment*, and the difficulty of managing the tensions between a stated commitment at policy and school level to an assessment process focused on students and their learning, and public, parental and political pressure for accountability in the form of scores and rankings (Harlen and James, 1997; Wiliam and Black, 1996; Newton, 2007). This pressure for summative scores, and

a conflation of formative and summative purposes in education policy documents in many countries has also resulted in confusion that in some cases may have hindered sound assessment practice, especially in the development of formative assessment (Harlen and James, 1997; Newton, 2007).

In some cases, and certainly in the case of Portugal, the distinction that has been drawn between formative and summative assessment has been effective in foregrounding the assessment work of teachers and the role of assessment in support of student learning. The emphasis placed on the formative role of assessment in basic and secondary education in Portugal and the centrality of teachers in that process is highlighted in all of the relevant policy documents, and in teacher, student and parent discourse (Ministry of Education, forthcoming).

However, the review team did not find that this formative emphasis was reflected to the same degree in classroom and school practice. On the contrary, in classroom and schools, the formative seems to be increasingly displaced by the summative and a focus on the generation of summative scores. While the attention to results and data is a positive feature of the system in Portugal, an over-emphasis on these may be having a negative impact and undermining the formative role of teachers and assessment so highly valued in policy goals.

Such over-emphasis generated particularly strong views in the course of discussions with the review team. The team heard about an obsessive attention to results, the drive for results skewing the education system, media hype around examination results, classroom practice dominated by examination and test preparation, non-compulsory tests gaining the status of compulsory tests, and the quality of teaching being equated to the quality of results. It is noteworthy that such phenomena are more usually associated with the backwash from high- or medium-stakes *external* assessment, but in the case of Portugal, they seem to be associated with apparently low-stakes assessment where teachers play a central role.

Two further challenges were identified in the course of these discussions, and supported by site visits. The first is that while the majority of marks for any grade are awarded by the teacher, these marks appear to be awarded for the same kinds of activity assessed through the external component. In the secondary cycle in particular, classroom practice over-emphasises preparation for traditional paper-based tests. The second challenge is that while the focus on the teacher as the assessment leader is a strength of the Portuguese system, it seems to have led to an under-emphasis on student and learner agency and an over-reliance on marks and grades in the feedback process to the detriment of rich feedback that can help learners to identify the next steps they need to take.

OECD (2005) defines formative assessment as the frequent assessment of student progress to identify learning needs and adapt teaching. However, there is debate over whether assessment is truly formative unless it involves the student, and unless feedback to the student on his/her progress features in the process (Shepard, 2000). Assessment is not truly formative, it is also suggested, unless the evidence gathered is used to inform subsequent instruction. Feedback in Portugal tends to be focused on test performance and results rather than on learning. This applies to feedback from both internal and external assessment. Such feedback on test scores is an important component of learner feedback, but only in the context of broader evidence of learning and feedback on that learning. The absence of this broader focus reflects a tendency to adopt a more behaviourist approach to pedagogy, and little engagement with constructivist principles.

In the course of the Review, the issue of low levels of student motivation was raised, along with concerns about the ability of some students to learn independently. However, in general, these were presented as attributes of the students, rather than as consequences of practice. Research indicates, however, that these behaviours are often associated with particular approaches to teaching and assessment. If the focus of classroom activity is on the test, rather than on the learning process, then teachers and students may emphasise a performance orientation over a mastery orientation (Dweck, 1986; Middleton and Midgely, 1997). When getting a good mark on a test becomes the goal of classroom activity, ironically, it can be at the price of learning. Pursuing a test performance can work against students' engagement and persistence in learning, self-regulation, learner autonomy, and motivation. It also leads to a transmission style of teaching supplemented by the rehearsal of test performance.

Such an orientation is not surprising given the admission by those working in policy, research and initial and continuing teacher education that assessment and motivation theories are given little attention in the various dimensions of the Portuguese system.

There is further debate among assessment researchers as to whether feedback should also include information for the learner not just on how they have done, but on the steps they need to take to improve or to progress further as agents of their own learning (Butler and Winnie, 1995). The pedagogical implications of interactive feedback have only recently begun to be considered in educational research and debate but are generally recognised as significant but under-emphasised (Black and Wiliam, 2009). In Portugal, these pedagogical implications have yet to be explored at policy or school level; neither are they considered in initial teacher education.

Moderation is focused on procedures rather than on outcomes of learning or shared understandings of standards

One of the challenges faced by all systems of student assessment that rely heavily on the judgement of teachers and schools is maintaining the quality of moderation and improving the processes by which standards across schools are assured to be assessed consistently. Some attention is given to this in the Portuguese system with a system of checks and balances in place once the teacher has scored the test and produced a sheet of results as the outcome of an assessment event (Ministry of Education, forthcoming). There is checking that the procedures have been followed and the criteria applied correctly. However, this process does not include discussion or analysis of student work, across classes in schools, across schools, nor at national level. Examples of what is expected (except in numeric terms, with targets set for acceptable percentages at each classification level) are not available. In first cycle schools, the review team encountered some evidence of such sharing of examples of student work, but little was found in the second or third cycle, and none in the secondary system, nor any concern expressed that it was not available.

Because the moderation is focused on results and on the application of procedure, there is little focus on teacher judgement, and none on the work of students, to arrive at a particular score or mark. Thus, the "product" of learning is seen as a grade or a test score rather than any "real" work (Torrance and Pryor, 1998). An emphasis on results is not without its merits. But such numbers are a *representation* of achievement, and if too much attention is paid to the representation rather than to the real evidence of achievement, then the entire system can become oriented on the "score" rather than on the "game". Earlier in this chapter the model advocated by Pellegrino *et al.* and others for

quality assessment was discussed. The third element of that quality model – an interpretation method for drawing inferences from the evidence gathered – is of note for this discussion. The process by which inferences are drawn is not discussed by teachers, nor is there any consideration of the interpretation involved. This has serious implications for the validity of the internal assessment process – a process which, given its location in schools and the role of teachers in its design, should be highly valid.

This phenomenon goes well beyond the widely documented backwash effect of high-stakes external testing on teacher behaviour. Rather, a combination of internal assessment, published criteria and public interest in results can lead to what Torrance (2007) has described as assessment as learning – a system where the achievement of the criteria becomes the focus of learning, and an over-reliance develops on the accumulation of marks and the documentation of competence and a narrowing of the learning experience for students and teachers.

In Portugal, the focus on clear criteria is an obvious system strength. These are locally developed and shared with students and guardians. But this unwavering focus on clarity and on the procedures by which the criteria are used in schools has led to a lack of attention to the moderation of standards between classes in the same school and between schools. In Portugal, moderation processes focus on results only to ensure comparability of grade distribution, but discussion of what is represented by the grade awarded – examples of student work at each grade – are rarely considered in schools, and never between schools nor with the public at large.

This over-emphasis on what teachers in one school called the "daily proliferation of indicators" may create a sense of security and comfort, but it can also act as a barrier to looking at "real" learning in "real" classrooms. Engagement between teachers may also be reduced to a consideration of procedures and the application of the criteria, rather than any collegial discourse on successful teaching and learning. What emerges from this engagement is an atomised account of teaching and learning, carefully mapped onto criteria and standards. Some of those who discussed this issue with the review team warned that the benchmarks for the new Learning Goals project might suffer the same fate with a focus on the goals themselves being lost in the pressure to measure and report on progress.

Assessment is used as a controlling mechanism as well as a learning process

The autonomy given to schools to specify and publish their own assessment criteria within national guidelines is used by many schools to include criteria for student behaviour and discipline within this framework. Student behaviour was mentioned to the review team as a challenge in a number of schools.

The monitoring and reporting of student behaviour should be part of the day-to-day activity of schools; these tasks form part of an overall student support strategy in any school to ensure, in the first instance, that good behaviour and engagement are rewarded and that poor discipline can be identified early and a speedy intervention made (Task Force on Student Behaviour in Second Level Schools, 2006). However, the inclusion of a rating or mark for discipline or behaviour as part of the teacher-led internal assessment that contributes to the final academic mark is not found in international practice and seems to breach one of the fundamental principles of sound assessment practice to avoid combining achievement in different domains in the same assessment event or process. There is also a risk that it can contribute to some confusion in students about the purpose of assessment in schools and to what has been termed self-level feedback, rather than

feedback focused on the task, or on progress, or on achievement, with consequent implications for student self-efficacy (Stobart, 2001).

It should be noted however, that in none of the meetings during the visit was the inclusion of a non-academic dimension in summative assessment raised as an issue, a challenge or a concern. However, the inclusion of this aspect of student-school engagement in the academic system adds further to the already uncertain messages about assessment and its function discussed above.

Data are gathered, but not subject to interrogation or secondary analysis

The review team was struck, on the one hand, by the commitment to gathering evidence of achievement through marks and scores, but on the other, by the lack of robust interrogation of that data beyond quality assurance checks to ensure that procedures had been followed. Teachers beyond the first cycle seemed reluctant to engage in discussions about the quality of student learning while giving considerable time and commitment to the scores and marks awarded. Such reluctance may be understandable given the lack of professional development opportunities for teachers on assessment and pedagogical issues, and the low priority given to these areas in initial teacher education.

The data on student achievement in tests – whether generated externally or internally – were generally not subject to any secondary analysis. No further investigation was pursued at school or cluster level to monitor the progress of particular groups of students within the cohort, or to check if different rates of progress were apparent over time for different groups of students, in different subject areas for example. This seemed at odds with the policy commitment to an inclusive system and some initiatives to meet the needs of a widening range of learners.

Some strands of secondary education are not supported by external assessment

Since 2006, external assessment has been applied only to the scientific and humanistic courses, and not to technological, professional/vocational, artistic or other specialised courses. Successful completion of these latter courses is not subject to any national assessment, but to local, internal assessment only. Of itself, this should not present any particular challenge to the quality of a system of student assessment. However, in the Portuguese context it gives rise to two concerns. The first is that given the reservations expressed about the quality of moderation in the discussion above, some questions arise about the reliability of assessment that is completely internal. The second is that in light of the fact that external assessment is expanding across the school system (intermediate tests for example), not including some element of external assessment in certain elements of provision in secondary education seems to signal that reliability matters less for these courses and these students – traditionally, students who do not progress to higher education.

Policy recommendations

Develop the quality of feedback to learners to strengthen formative assessment practice

The challenge of ensuring educational initiatives and reforms have an impact on the experiences of students in classrooms is an enduring one in education policy. Education systems tend to focus on change as an end in itself, with a proliferation of initiatives on a conveyor belt of reforms that just keeps moving (Harris, 2011). The challenge to focus on

where it really matters – classrooms – is perennial and global. The temptation to focus on structures, systems, procedures, programmes and resources is a strong one but, while these components of policy are important, changing any or all may not impact on the quality of student learning. Classrooms are hard to reach. A commitment to formative assessment on paper needs to be matched with engagement with formative assessment practices in classrooms and schools.

Building on the culture of evaluation, and the centrality of the teacher in the assessment system in Portugal, greater focus on a culture of feedback on student learning would deliver a number of wins for the system. First, it would serve to highlight the role of the learner in the learning process, and encourage a greater sense of agency and responsibility in learners of all ages in the school system. The lack of such agency was a concern reported by many teachers, school leaders and educational administrators during the review visit. Assessment that is truly formative, which includes formative feedback, allows for the role of learners and their peers in the learning process to be clarified. Traditionally, teachers have been regarded as responsible for establishing where learners are in their learning, where they are going, and what needs to be done to get them there. It is important to flag the role of the learner in all of these processes; learning is a shared responsibility (Black and Wiliam, 2009). This message is as important for learners as it is for teachers.

Second, a greater focus on rich feedback would support classroom and school discussions on the quality and process of student *learning*, to accompany the current widely supported emphasis on marks and *results*. Third, it might go some way towards engaging the public and the media on the outcomes of education beyond a numeric mark. Finally, extending such a focus to external assessment arrangements might usefully counterbalance the drive to add further to external assessment, by developing richer feedback on current external assessment already in place. Those sectors of secondary education without any external assessment at present might serve as a useful developmental space for an approach to rich feedback. This point is discussed further below.

The New Opportunities Centres and the work of the National Agency for Qualification (which recently became ANQEP) offer a starting point for this work as they already provide support for student feedback and encourage learner participation in discussions about progress and achievement in the particular programmes provided under their auspices. Sharing this practice widely across the system would be a useful first step. Improving the theory and practice of student feedback should also be a focus of work in initial teacher education, and an emphasis in continuing professional development.

Use the Learning Goals project to focus on examples of student work to support better moderation and greater teacher professional collaboration around student learning

The Learning Goals project and the intermediate tests offer some potential in developing a focus on feedback for learning and on exemplification of student work in support of that focus. The benchmarks and indicators that are being developed to support the Learning Goals project could be extended to include real examples of student work to illustrate expectations at the different levels, with student and teacher commentary. Reporting on progress towards the Learning Goals might incorporate similar examples, as well as, or even as a replacement for, numeric scores.

The concerns expressed by Portuguese policy makers and those working in system evaluation that the articulation of targets (as proposed in the Education Programme 2015) and reporting on progress had become a matter of routine without inspiring those working in the system to use the targets to support practice are not unique to Portugal. Data are good, but more data is not always better even if it is tempting for all working in education to believe this to be the case (Sahlberg, 2011). A useful distinction can be made between evidence and data and on what is required to work with both. Hargreaves and Shirley express a concern that policies which have "stapled teachers to their spreadsheets, kept them calculating and concentrating on tested achievement gains instead of inspiring animated professional discussion about students and their learning" (2009, p. 92). What is needed, they suggest, is that teachers engage with *evidence* as well as with data.

Work on evidence is already underway in the project promoted by the Office for Educational Evaluation (GAVE) to share good practice in student assessment. However, the Learning Goals project, with its particular emphasis on student learning and the EU key competences, offers a new context in which to develop a focus on showing what students know and can do at each level of education, not just to teachers and education professionals, but to the general public. Suspicions that this new project will simply graft another layer of indicators onto a system already bearing a heavy load would be allayed if a fresh approach were taken to benchmarking using real examples of student work.

The project already offers much to the system in terms of coherence and consistency in connecting the different cycles of the school system. The current aims of the Learning Goals project are focused on providing the school system with a consistent and coherent learning standards supported by indicators (Ministry for Education, forthcoming). Extending those aims, and the project deliverables, to include exemplification and evidence would connect those indicators more closely to practice and to classrooms. It would also give them a public interest.

Generating and sharing such evidence at school level might also be the basis for shaping the many meetings of teachers about results and grades towards genuine professional learning communities which, when they work effectively, can improve the quality of moderation and reduce in-school variation in student outcomes (Harris, 2011). Engaging with evidence might also ensure a better balance across the three strands of quality assessment as described by Pellegrino *et al.* (2001) and cited earlier in this chapter.

Given the particular attention paid to ICT in the education system in recent years, the use of online environments for sharing examples of student work to support engagement with questions of standards and processes of moderation should be explored both from a public access and a cost-effectiveness perspective.

Ensure that assessment is relevant and responsive to students with special educational needs

Special education challenges many common assumptions about student assessment. The presence of students with special educational needs in mainstream classrooms provides opportunities for teachers to be innovative and creative in the design of teaching and assessment approaches. The key challenge is to ensure that rich assessment opportunities are systematically offered to all students with special educational needs regardless of where they go to school. This calls for a better preparation of all teachers to respond to the needs of students with special educational needs, with inclusive assessment further included and developed in both initial education and professional development for

teachers. In the same way, test accommodations for special education students need to become systematic across the school system. The Individual Educational Programmes (IEPs) offer a framework to identify strengths and interests of students with special educational needs and set specific and manageable goals for development. The IEP should bring together the school, parents, student and possibly other agencies around the basic processes of assessing, objective setting, teaching, monitoring, evaluating, reassessing and further planning to support the learning of the student.

New Zealand provides an example of dedicated resources for the assessment of students with special needs. The New Zealand Ministry of Education is supporting innovative approaches to assessment and reporting for diverse students and has launched a project on Assessment for Learners with Special Education Needs, which includes the development of "narrative assessment" exemplars, guidance, and resources. Two key resource documents, *Narrative Assessment: A Guide for Teachers* and *The New Zealand Curriculum Exemplars for Learners with Special Education Needs*, are available to support teachers in maximising learning opportunities and pathways for children with special educational needs within the New Zealand Curriculum (see *http://assessment.tki.org.nz/Assessment-tools-resources/Assessment-tools-for-Learners-with-Special-Education-Needs*) (Nusche *et al.*, 2012).

Consider means of assessing student discipline other than through the inclusion of a mark for student behaviour in the academic mark

The inclusion of student discipline and behaviour in the academic mark as a matter of routine sends confusing signals as to the purpose and focus of assessment in schools. As part of any effort to place a greater emphasis on student learning, this practice might be replaced by other means of recording and reporting on student behaviour at school level, and across the system as a whole as a means of monitoring the well-being and engagement of students at school. Consultation with students on this matter might be useful.

This is not to say that the affective dimensions of learning such as persistence, application to challenging problems, and resilience in the face of failure for example, should be beyond assessment or excluded from feedback. These are learning behaviours and should be part of any system of student assessment. Given that so much of student assessment is internal, including these aspects of learning should be a matter of routine, and should be part of the rich feedback provided to students. Moving away from the inclusion of discipline and behaviour in the award of marks will need careful management and should be seen as part of a set of measures to place a greater focus on learning system-wide while finding more appropriate means to support positive student behaviour in school.

Build on the attention paid to results to generate richer data

The attention paid to results, the strong concern to promote an inclusive education system, and the already robust data collection systems in place offer a unique opportunity to move towards richer data for school and system use. This would align Portugal with some of those countries widely recognised as being at the forefront of education innovation (McKinsey & Company, 2007, 2010). The recent development of mega-clusters has created developmental sites where some approaches to richer data could be developed without incurring the costs associated with whole-system developments. As discussed above, more data does not necessarily deliver better systems. Aiming for a

balance between rich data and evidence would be a useful policy goal. It would further allow for Portugal to develop the system that would best suit its needs and its schools. It would also allow for approaches to be trialled, and for existing expertise within the clusters to be harnessed for local school and community benefit and for national insight.

At several meetings with schools and clusters, teachers and school directors spoke enthusiastically about the data collection systems they had in place but none had moved to anything beyond rudimentary analysis (distribution of scores, comparisons with previous cohorts for example). Yet schools also held data on students' family circumstances, migrant status and socio-economic situations. These data were not connected with academic achievement data so no information was available on differential performance of different groups within the school cohort. For some schools serving poorer communities, this was a source of frustration as their school results were compared with the results of schools drawing from more affluent communities, and the generation of comparison tables by the media resulted in some legal guardians, especially in urban areas, moving their children to what were perceived as "better" schools (see also Chapter 6).

Consultation between GAVE, GEPE (now integrated in DGEEC), teachers, school directors and parents on such an initiative, particularly in clusters where such information platforms might be developed, would be important and would support schools in using the data, along with evidence (see above) to inform the education programme on offer and plan for improvement. The balance between data and evidence is important to restate if Portugal is to avoid the pitfalls experienced by other education systems of burying the education system in continuously collected data (Sahlberg, 2011).

Fernandes (2009) in his evaluation of the Portuguese system concluded that the elements of a high quality student assessment system were in place; what was needed, he suggested, was a better balance between them so that the system might focus more on processes of teaching and learning which he identified as the greater challenge in the system.

Make greater use of external assessment as support for moderation and teacher professional development

The intermediate tests, and the development of some external assessment for the components of secondary education not currently subject to any national examinations offer some opportunities for developmental work by GAVE on modelling richer assessment, reporting and feedback practice for teachers and sharing the assessment expertise developed by that agency over time. Discussions of standards, examples of student work (as discussed above), examples of performance assessment (even if only used on a sample basis) might be shared through the online environment already used to good effect for the dissemination of some tests. The intermediate tests seem to be feeding a drive for data to the detriment of evidence. This drive is also contributing to a number of trends identifiable in the system, more generally found in systems dominated by high- or medium-stakes external assessment. Sharing examples of classroom success in tests with teachers and students, developing and sharing commentaries on examples of work collected in the tests and from teachers in schools might feature in the next phase of development of these tests.

Given that teachers' professional competence in assessment and feedback was identified as a system challenge, providing reliable high quality material as the basis for professional dialogue and collaboration at school level will be important.

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Chapter 4

Teacher appraisal

A new national system of teacher performance appraisal was instituted in 2007 in the broader context of the integrated system of performance evaluation for public administration which applies to civil servants. Since then, teacher appraisal has undergone a range of adjustments as a result of the resistance it has faced. By the time the review team visited, a model launched in 2010 was in the process of being implemented. The main features of the model included a two-year appraisal cycle; a national framework defining reference standards, aspects to be appraised, instruments to be used and a five-level classification scheme with a school-level quota system for the top two classifications; a process internal to the school to conduct the appraisal including school-based peer evaluators; and consequences for career progression, contract renewal, monetary rewards and plan for professional development. Subsequently to the review visit and with the change of government in June 2011, a new teacher appraisal model was approved for implementation in 2012/13. The two models follow a similar approach even if there are a few fundamental differences, which are considered in this chapter. Particularly positive features of teacher appraisal include the political will and growing consensus around the need to strengthen teacher appraisal; some good features such as the principle of career advancement on merit, the account of the school context and the variety of instruments and sources of information used; the development of teaching standards to support teacher appraisal; and the articulations between teacher appraisal and school evaluation. However, the development of teacher appraisal is faced with a number of challenges. These include the insufficient focus on the improvement of teaching practice; the limited externality in teacher appraisal; the tension between school-level teacher appraisal and national-level consequences; the incipient development of competencies for teacher appraisal; and the limited role of school leadership in teacher appraisal.

This chapter looks at approaches to teacher appraisal within the Portuguese evaluation and assessment framework. Teacher appraisal refers to the evaluation of individual teachers to make a judgement about their performance. Teacher appraisal has typically two major purposes. First, it seeks to improve teachers' own practices by identifying strengths and weaknesses for further professional development – the improvement function. Second, it is aimed at ensuring that teachers perform at their best to enhance student learning – the accountability function (Santiago and Benavides, 2009). An overview of the main features of the teaching profession in Portugal is provided in Box 4.1. This chapter draws partly on an OECD Review of Teacher Evaluation in Portugal which was undertaken in 2009 (Santiago *et al.*, 2009).

By the time the review team visited (February-March 2011), a reformed teacher appraisal model launched in 2010 (thereafter referred to as the 2010 model) was in the course of being implemented. However, subsequently to the review visit and with the change of government in June 2011, a new teacher appraisal model was approved (thereafter referred to as the 2011 model). The new model will start operating in 2012/13 following the preparation for implementation by school agents planned for 2011/12. The two models follow a similar approach even if there are a few fundamental differences. In this chapter, the main reference for analysis is the model which was in place during the review visit. However, the chapter also considers the features of the new model and explains how it differs from the previous model. The substantive conclusions, while focussing on the model in place during the review visit, were adjusted to consider the new model.

Context and features

Teacher appraisal procedures

Teacher appraisal in its current form is relatively recent in Portugal. A first version of the current national appraisal model was introduced in 2007 and further amended in 2009 with a view to improving and simplifying the procedures (see Santiago *et al.*, 2009 for a comprehensive analysis). After completion of the first appraisal cycle over the years 2007-09, a revised teacher appraisal model was published in 2010. Subsequently to the review visit, the new government in office since June 2011 approved a new model whose actual implementation will start in 2012/13. While a number of aspects of teacher appraisal were changed in the successive amendments, the current teacher appraisal system maintains the objectives and guiding principles set out in the 2007 model and appraises teachers against similar dimensions and domains of performance.

The regulations regarding teacher appraisal are aligned with the Integrated System for the Evaluation of Performance in the Public Administration (SIADAP), a performance evaluation model introduced in the public sector in 2004. The teacher appraisal model thus reflects a broader trend towards performance appraisal as an instrument for managing human resources in the Portuguese public sector.

Prior to the 1990s, there was no formal or informal system to appraise the performance of individual teachers. A first appraisal model was introduced in 1992 but it remained a largely bureaucratic process "without any content or consequences, with career advancement fundamentally dependent on length of service" (Ministry of Education, forthcoming). The introduction of the new teacher appraisal system in 2007 thus involved an important shift from a system in which progress on the salary scale

depended mostly on length of service towards a model that recognises and rewards merit and excellence.

Objectives

The overarching aims of teacher appraisal have not changed since 2007. The system aims to improve the quality of education provision and students' learning, guide teachers' personal and professional development and acknowledge merit and excellence. To work towards these aims, nine specific objectives were defined in the original version of the national teacher appraisal model launched in 2007:

- Four of the objectives relate to **stimulating development and changing teachers' practices**: *(i)* contribute to the improvement of teachers' pedagogical practices; *(ii)* identify staff training needs; *(iii)* promote co-operative work by teachers, with a view to improving their performance; and *(iv)* promote making each teacher responsible for the exercise of his/her professional activity.
- Two of the objectives relate to **celebrating and rewarding merit and excellence**: *(i)* help attach greater value to teaching work and the teaching profession; and *(ii)* differentiate and reward the best professionals, within the scope of the teaching career advancement system.
- The remaining three objectives relate to the need for **gathering information that facilitates and forms a basis for better management decisions**: *(i)* identify the factors that influence professional output; *(ii)* provide management indicators concerning the teaching staff; and *(iii)* promote a monitoring and supervision process with regard to teaching practices.

It follows from these objectives that teacher appraisal in Portugal combines both summative and formative purposes: it is designed to serve as a basis for career progression and at the same time as a tool to identify teacher professional development needs and stimulate improvement.

Reference standards and regulations

The 2010 teacher appraisal model provided for teachers to be appraised against three types of performance objectives: (1) the performance standards set at the national level; (2) objectives and goals set by individual schools in their educational projects and plans; and (3) optional individual objectives to be submitted to the school director by the evaluatee.

The national standards for teaching performance were developed by the Scientific Council for Teacher Evaluation (CCAP) and adopted by the then Ministry of Education in 2010. The standards refer to four key dimensions and provide a number of domains for each of the key dimensions (Table 4.1). For each of the key dimensions, there are a range of indicators, criteria and performance illustrations.

Table 4.1 Dimensions and domains of teaching performance standards, used in the 2010 teacher appraisal model

Dimension	Domain
Professional, social and ethical aspects	▪ Commitment to the construction of professional knowledge ▪ Commitment to the promotion of students' learning and personal and civic development ▪ Commitment to the peer group and the school
Development of education and learning	▪ Preparation and organisation of teaching activities ▪ Fulfilment of teaching duties ▪ Pedagogical relationship with students ▪ Student learning assessment process
Participation at school and relationship with the education community	▪ Fulfilment of the allocated teaching and non-teaching work ▪ Contribution to achieving the objectives and goals of the education project and of the annual and multiannual activity plans ▪ Participation in the organisational structures with responsibility for educational co-ordination and pedagogical supervision, and in the administration and management bodies ▪ Organisation and evaluation of research, development and educational innovation projects
Lifelong professional development and vocational training	▪ In-service training and professional development

Source: Ministry of Education (forthcoming).

The new 2011 teacher appraisal model establishes that teacher appraisal is to cover the following three dimensions of teachers' work: scientific-pedagogical; participation in school activities and links to the community; and professional development. However, at this stage, it does not plan to use national standards of teaching performance as a reference for teacher appraisal. Instead, it considers the following references:

- Objectives and goals set by individual schools in their educational projects and plans (school level);
- Evaluation parameters established by each school's pedagogical council for each of the three dimensions covered by teacher appraisal (school level); and
- Additional parameters established at the national level to apply only to classroom observation (undertaken by evaluators external to the school), which are yet to be fixed by the Ministry of Education and Science.

Appraisal process and instruments

Performance appraisal is mandatory for all teachers, whether on probation, fixed-term contracts or permanent contracts, at all levels of education from pre-primary through to secondary school. Appraisal is obligatory for access into and advancement in the career and contract renewals. In the 2010 model, teacher appraisal results were also used in competitive recruitment processes and for performance awards. This is no longer the case in the 2011 model. For permanent teachers, performance appraisal was implemented on a two-year cycle in the 2010 model and will now be implemented on a four-year cycle in the 2011 model.

In the 2010 teacher appraisal model, there were four appraisal instruments and information sources that were used in teacher performance appraisal processes:

- **Self-appraisal**. Teachers being appraised were required to submit a self-appraisal report in which they assessed their own performance in relation to national-level standards.
- **Classroom observation**. Classroom observations were mandatory only in a number of specific cases: to gain access to certain career ranks (third and fifth ranks in the 10-rank single career ladder); to obtain the top-two classifications ("excellent" and "very good") awarded in the process of teacher appraisal; and in the probationary year (more on this below). Classroom observations were undertaken by a school-internal "rapporteur" and based on procedures approved by the school's pedagogical council.
- **Evidence of teacher performance in a range of areas**. Other record instruments were drawn up by the school Performance Evaluation Co-ordinating Commission and approved by the pedagogical council. They contained information that was considered relevant to provide evidence of the teacher's performance in relation to the national teaching performance standards and the guidelines set by the Scientific Council for Teacher Evaluation.
- **An overall appraisal form**. It was mandatory for the rapporteur to complete the overall appraisal form that reflected the national dimensions and domains of teacher performance laid down by law.

In addition, the evaluatee also had the option to request an interview after being notified of his/her suggested classification. Such an interview allowed the evaluatee to jointly review the teacher appraisal documents together with the rapporteur.

The new model approved in 2011 seeks to simplify teacher appraisal procedures and it has two components: an appraisal internal to the school covering the three dimensions of teachers' work considered by the model (but not involving classroom observation); and an appraisal external to the school exclusively focussed on the scientific-pedagogic domain, consisting of classroom observation, and only organised when such observation is part of the appraisal of a given teacher. The model relies on the following instruments:

- For the internal appraisal:
  - **Teacher's project**. The teacher has the option to annually prepare a "teacher's project" describing his/her contribution to the school's educational project. This document cannot exceed two pages.
  - **Self-appraisal**. Teachers are required to submit annually a self-appraisal report in which they reflect on their practices in the following areas: teaching; activities promoted; analysis of results obtained; contribution to the objectives and goals set in the educational project of the school; and professional development undertaken and its contribution to their work. The self-evaluation report cannot exceed three pages.
  - **An overall appraisal form**. The internal evaluator records the teacher's performance across the appraisal dimensions in a specific form.

- For the external appraisal:
  - **Classroom observation**. Classroom observations are mandatory only in a number of specific cases: for teachers placed in the second and fourth ranks of the 10-rank single career ladder; to obtain the top classification ("excellent"); in the probationary year; and for teachers who received a classification of "insufficient" in their previous appraisal. Classroom observations, of which a minimum of two are organised, are undertaken by evaluators external to the school.

The mark obtained by a teacher in his/her appraisal is weighted as follows in the 2011 model, across the three domains assessed: professional development – 20%; participation in school activities and links to the community – 20%; and scientific-pedagogical – 60% (if classroom observation takes place, the corresponding mark has a weight of 70% in the overall mark in this domain).

Following the appraisal process, the evaluatee is awarded one of five qualitative classifications: insufficient, regular, good, very good and excellent. Teachers' career advancement is subject to obtaining at least the "good" classification in their appraisal (as well as the access to a permanent position following the probationary period). In addition, advancements to career ranks 5 and 7 are conditional on there being a vacancy in the school, except for teachers having obtained a "very good" or "excellent" classification who can advance to these ranks without having to wait for a vacancy. An important distinction between the 2010 model and the 2011 model is that, in the former, teachers could only obtain a "very good" or "excellent" classification if they requested a classroom observation to be part of their appraisal, while in the latter this is a requirement only to obtain the "excellent" classification. The possibility to award the two highest classifications is limited by a quota system, which is typically fixed at 5% and 20% of evaluated teachers for the "excellent" and "very good" classifications respectively. However, the law provides for the possibility that these quotas are affected by the results of the school's external evaluation (see Chapter 5).

Responsibilities for developing the teacher appraisal system

While the appraisal process itself is largely school-based, a range of national education bodies also play a role in ensuring adequate appraisal processes:

- The **Ministry of Education and Science** provides national regulations, tools and guidelines to implement teacher appraisal, and training for evaluators. In the 2010 teacher appraisal model, it developed the performance standards for teachers, the models for performance appraisal forms, the calendar for appraisals and the standards for self-appraisal reports. In the 2011 teacher appraisal model, it establishes the national-level parameters for classroom observation (external appraisal), and organises the pool of external evaluators in charge of classroom observation.
- The **Scientific Council for Teacher Evaluation** was a consultative body responsible for supervising and monitoring the implementation of teacher appraisal until it ceased its functions in late 2011, following the rationalisation of education services undertaken by the government which took office in June 2011. It provided recommendations and evaluation reports on the process.

- The **General Inspectorate of Education and Science** (formerly the General Inspectorate of Education) is responsible for monitoring schools' implementation of teacher appraisal, within the framework of its competences.
- The **Teacher Evaluation Support Office** is part of the Directorate General for School Administration (DGAE) (previously it was part of the Directorate General for Human Resources in Education) within the Ministry of Education and Science and holds responsibility for providing technical support and advice regarding teacher appraisal to schools. Support at the local level is provided by Regional Directorates for Education, which will be integrated in DGAE in January 2013.

Competencies to undertake teacher appraisal

Both the 2010 and 2011 appraisal models involve more teachers in the appraisal process than the original 2007 model, with a collegiate body within the school in charge of making the decision about the teacher's performance. Each school establishes a Performance Appraisal Co-ordinating Commission to co-ordinate teacher appraisal processes (in the 2011 model, it is called Section for the Appraisal of Teacher Performance and is part of the pedagogical council). The Commission/Section is made up of the president of the pedagogical council (the school director) and three teachers of the pedagogical council (increased to four in the 2011 model). The school director is responsible for ensuring that the schools' appraisal processes are in line with both national regulations and the schools' specificities.

In the 2010 model, each department co-ordinator used to appoint rapporteurs responsible for teacher appraisal within his/her department. The rapporteurs were responsible for proposing that a teacher be appraised and for monitoring his/her professional development process. Together, the Performance Appraisal Co-ordinating Commission and the rapporteur formed the "appraisal jury". In the 2011 model, the Section for the Appraisal of Teacher Performance implements teacher appraisal in the school including the development of the form to record the teacher's performance across the appraisal dimensions, the approval of the marks obtained by each teacher, the award of the qualitative classifications for each appraised teacher ensuring quotas are respected, the appreciation of complaints, and the approval of the professional development plan for teachers with an "insufficient" classification.

Teacher appraisal relies entirely on peer evaluation. All key roles in teacher appraisal, including performance evaluation as well as co-ordination, counselling and pedagogical supervision, are exercised by teachers. In the 2010 model, these roles were typically allocated to teachers in career rank 4 or above, *i.e.* teachers with 20 years or more of professional experience, with preference given to those who had a qualification (post-graduate education) for such specialised functions. Rapporteurs had to be from the same recruitment group (subject area) as the teacher to be appraised and had to have the same or a higher rank in the career ladder. In the 2011 teacher appraisal model, the internal evaluator is the department co-ordinator or a teacher designated by him/her. The external evaluator (for classroom observation) is a teacher external to the school who belongs to a pool of trained external evaluators organised by the Ministry. In both cases, evaluators have to: be from the same subject group as the teacher being appraised; have a qualification or experience in evaluation or pedagogical supervision; and have the same or a higher rank in the career ladder.

In the 2010 model, for teachers on the highest ranks, the rapporteur had to be the department co-ordinator provided that s/he was from the same recruitment group.

Rapporteurs themselves were appraised by the department co-ordinators, and department co-ordinators were appraised by the school directors. In the 2011 model, school directors appraise heads of department and teachers with roles in the management of the school.

The teacher appraisal system requires building the capacity of teachers to undertake effective appraisals of their peers. In order to prepare the implementation of the 2010 model, the then Ministry of Education took a range of initiatives. To enhance capacity at the school level, it entered into a contract with a higher education institution as the managing organisation responsible for launching an in-service training system for teacher appraisal. In the first half of 2011, 50 teachers with a Master's degree in the field of evaluation were identified from Portugal's five educational regions to participate in specialised training on teacher appraisal including classroom observation. In this post-graduate training, particular emphasis was placed on classroom observation, as this was seen as the area that could have the greatest impact on improving teaching and learning. Upon completion of the training, it was expected that this first group of highly qualified teachers would be able to act as multipliers and provide training in teacher appraisal to the rapporteurs in schools who were evaluating their peers. The new 2011 model proposes that the 2011/12 school year is used to appropriately prepare the implementation of the model in 2012/13 and it is expected that a range of training opportunities in teacher appraisal are offered.

Using appraisal results

A number of consequences are attached to teacher appraisal. The appraisal results are used to make decisions about career progression and monetary rewards for teachers (for the 2010 model only) as well as to identify individual professional development needs.

The teacher appraisal model, in both its 2010 and 2011 versions, strengthens the direct relationship between performance appraisal and career progression. The link, as determined by the 2010 model, was as follows (in brackets, the respective rule in the 2011 model) (see career structure in Box 4.1):

- The teacher receives a bonus of one year in the career progression (*i.e.* advances one extra step within a rank) if s/he obtained two consecutive "excellent" classifications or a sequence "excellent" and "very good" (regardless of the order) in two consecutive appraisals [for the 2011 model: the same reward if the teacher obtains the classification of "excellent" in the four-year appraisal cycle].
- The teacher receives a bonus of half a year in the career progression if s/he obtained two consecutive "very good" classifications in the two previous appraisals [for the 2011 model: the same reward if the teacher obtains the classification of "very good" in the four-year appraisal cycle].
- Advancement to ranks 5 and 7 is conditional on there being a vacancy in the school, except for teachers who received a "very good" or "excellent" classification in their performance appraisal [similar for both the 2010 and 2011 models].
- The teacher must have obtained at least the classification "good" in his/her previous two performance appraisals to have the corresponding time s/he worked taken into account for career progression (the "regular" step) [for both the 2010 and 2011 models]. This also applies for the conversion to a permanent post following a probationary period.

- The classifications of "regular" and "insufficient" implied that the respective time the teacher worked was not to be taken into account for career progression [in the 2011 model, for the classification of "regular", the respective time is credited for career progression to the teacher only after the successful completion of a professional development plan; for the "insufficient" classification, there is no credit of the respective time for career progression, a new appraisal is initiated and the teacher must undertake a mandatory professional development plan].

In the 2010 model it was intended to award a monetary performance bonus to tenured teachers who received a "very good" or "excellent" mark in two consecutive or three non-consecutive performance appraisals (the amount of this monetary reward was still to be established). The 2011 model no longer provides for this possibility.

Both the 2010 and 2011 appraisal models aim to attach great value to the development dimension of teacher appraisal. The teacher appraisal process is intended to help identify areas for improvement and prepare individual improvement plans for teachers that should take into account the overall school development plan (Santiago *et al.*, 2009). In the 2010 model, the appraisal jury in each school was not only responsible for conducting teacher appraisal, but also for developing recommendations to improve pedagogical practices in the school. To this end, the jury approved individual training programmes for teachers having obtained a "regular" or "insufficient" classification in their appraisal. In the 2011 model, the Section for the Appraisal of Teacher Performance approves the individual training programme for teachers who obtained an "insufficient" classification in their appraisal. However, in general, the appraisal of teachers does not require the preparation of an individual professional development plan even if it is supposed to influence it.

Box 4.1 The teaching profession in Portugal – Main features

Employment status

Teachers with permanent tenure are civil servants and their employment conditions follow the general rules established for public sector workers. Teachers can secure a permanent post within a non-grouped school or a school cluster or within a pedagogical zone. Qualified teachers can also be hired on fixed-term contracts. In fact, beginning teachers almost always start with a fixed-term contract, with a view to the temporary substitution of teachers, in the context of the recruitment of trainers for vocational/professional areas, and for curricular enrichment activities and projects to combat school failure. Data from TALIS indicate that the proportion of lower secondary education teachers permanently employed stood at 67.6% in 2007/08, the lowest such proportion among the countries analysed.

Recruitment of teachers

Access to permanent positions is determined centrally through a public competition at the national level. Following their application, candidates are ranked on a list on the basis of the nature of their current link with the administration (permanent, temporary, or with no ties in the case of a first placement), the average grade obtained in their initial higher education studies and the length of service. The top candidates are then deployed to schools according to their preferences. This teacher placement model implies that the great majority of new teachers have to apply every year, in the hope of being placed closer to their place of residence. Since 2006/07, schools are allowed to hire contract teachers to meet their extra needs. Schools are responsible for the job offers and define the selection criteria according to national norms.

Box 4.1 The teaching profession in Portugal – Main features *(continued)*

As of the 2009/10 school year, the legally required qualifications to access the profession (through a permanent or a temporary post) consist of a teaching higher education degree with both scientific and pedagogical components. Definite qualified teacher status will only be reached upon the successful completion of a probationary period, which verifies if the teacher has the ability to adapt to the demands of professional performance. The probationary year corresponds to the first year in which the teacher obtains a position on the staff of a school.

Career structure

While there used to be two career categories (teacher and senior teacher) for the period 2007-10, there is currently only one category (that of teacher) with ten ranks. Each rank is associated with a distinct pay index. Each rank has a nominal duration of four years (*i.e.* there are four steps within each rank and, subject to certain conditions, teachers progress one step for each year of work), except for the fifth rank which has a duration of two years. Teachers in the higher ranks are allocated additional specialised functions.

Initial teacher education

Initial teacher education is a requirement to enter the profession. It is provided in (1) universities, which confer qualifications for all levels and areas of education; and (2) teacher education colleges (*Escolas Superiores de Educação*), which qualify pre-primary teachers and teachers for the first and second cycles of basic education. Initial teacher education typically includes the following components: *(i)* personal, social, cultural, scientific, technological or artistic training suited to future teaching; *(ii)* education sciences; *(iii)* teaching practice supervised by the training institution, in co-operation with the school where the teaching practice takes place. There are three major models: the integrated model (combining both disciplinary and pedagogical preparation), the sequential model (disciplinary preparation followed by pedagogical preparation) and the in-service professional model. Each of these models is organised with reference to the legal framework of teacher education and in accordance with the pedagogical autonomy granted to higher education institutions. A reform of initial teacher education was initiated in 2007/08. It essentially entails the reorganisation of the curricula, the extension of the scope of the training to encompass more than one level or cycle of education, mechanisms to provide incentives for quality and innovation, and qualifications by subject area.

Teacher professional development

Teachers in Portugal have access to a variety of professional development activities with more traditional forms, such as courses, modules, single subjects and seminars, coexisting with other forms that are provided in schools, such as training workshops, internship projects and study circles. Levels of participation are similar to the OECD average. In 2007/08, the percentage of lower secondary teachers who undertook some professional development in the 18 months prior to the TALIS survey was 85.8%, slightly below the TALIS average of 88.5%. A variety of providers exist, including: higher education institutions, municipally and inter-municipally-based training centres, made up of schools which are associated for this effect (Schools Association Training Centres, *Centros de Formação de Associação de Escolas*, CFAE), professional and scientific association training centres, and central or regional educational administration services. Two recent developments are particularly noteworthy: professional development activities are no longer automatically associated with career progression; and it was determined that training plans (both individual and school ones) will need to be based on both school developmental needs and individual teacher needs identified through teacher performance appraisal.

Source: Santiago *et al.* (2009) and Ministry of Education (forthcoming).

Strengths

Strong political will and growing consensus around the need to strengthen teacher appraisal

In less than five years since 2007, Portugal has come far in developing a comprehensive framework for teacher appraisal. With the launch of a new system-wide model for teacher appraisal in 2010, the national authorities clearly communicated the need to strengthen teacher appraisal as a priority for the education sector. The government in office since June 2011 confirmed the intention to establish teacher appraisal as a regular practice in the Portuguese school system with the approval of a new model to operate as of 2012/13. This is an ambitious policy given that there is little tradition of pedagogical evaluation in the Portuguese education system. The prevailing culture in Portuguese schools has not been one where school leaders or teacher peers could routinely be involved in the observation of teachers with an evaluative or developmental focus. The systematic introduction of appraisal for all teachers thus constitutes a break with established practice and requires a large culture shift in schools.

The development of a new system for teacher appraisal was needed to address a number of weaknesses in the organisation of the teaching profession in Portugal. It was perceived that the teacher appraisal model in place since the 1990s did not fulfil the aim of improving the quality of teaching and learning. There had not been a well-established system to ensure that teachers' individual development needs were identified and followed up with adequate opportunities for continuous professional learning. In addition, there were few incentives for teachers to improve their practice as career progression was not related to enhanced competence as a teacher (Santiago *et al.*, 2009). The development of meaningful teacher appraisal has the potential to remedy these shortcomings by incentivising, supporting and rewarding high quality teaching, which in turn is likely to improve student learning and raise education performance.

As pointed out by Santiago *et al.* (2009), it took considerable political courage to place teacher appraisal, a highly sensitive policy area, at the heart of school reform. The implementation of the new teacher appraisal approach since 2007 was highly contested and led to a national protest movement by teacher unions (for a more detailed description of the implementation process, see Santiago *et al.*, 2009 and Ministry of Education, forthcoming). However, despite the highly contentious debate about the design and implementation of teacher appraisal, a general consensus appears to have emerged among teachers regarding the need for teachers to be evaluated, receive professional feedback, improve their practice and have their achievements recognised. The recognition of teacher appraisal as a positive and necessary process by most teachers is an important outcome of the process in itself. The OECD review team formed the view that there was indeed wide agreement about the necessity to grow and sustain a formative appraisal and support culture. While there are strong differences in views about the way teacher appraisal should be conducted, the idea and intention of creating an evaluation culture within schools and developing the professional capabilities of teachers appears widely shared.

Teacher appraisal procedures are rooted in some good principles

In a very short period of time, the Portuguese education system has developed a comprehensive teacher appraisal system that includes most domains of teacher performance and a wide range of instruments and data sources. As described in detail by

Santiago *et al.* (2009), the system as developed since 2007 is based on a number of good principles reflecting what has been identified as good teacher appraisal practice internationally:

- **A focus on improvement of teaching practice**. Appropriately teacher appraisal is intended to identify areas of improvement for individual teachers, and lead to the preparation of individual improvement plans (including professional development) which take into account the overall school development plan. While such an objective exists, it is not yet fully reflected in practice (see below). For both the 2010 and 2011 models, professional development plans are only required when the appraisal of a teacher results in a classification of "regular" or "insufficient".
- **The principle of career advancement on merit**. With its consequences on career progression, the teacher appraisal model provides opportunities to recognise and reward teaching competence and performance, which is essential to retain effective teachers in schools as well as to make teaching an attractive career choice (OECD, 2005).
- **A process sensitive to the school context**. Teacher appraisal is organised at the school level, takes account of the school context, and is mostly a process internal to schools. As schools have to respond to different needs depending on local context, it is important that teachers are appraised in relation to reference standards that account for their school's objectives and context. However, as planned in the 2010 model, it is important to establish standards at the national level so what is expected from a quality teacher is the same across schools in the country. The model approved in 2011, with the exception of the optional external classroom observations for which national-level parameters will be established, conceives teacher appraisal as a purely internal process with reference standards defined at the school level. This risks leading to very diverse practices across schools with different understandings of what constitutes quality teaching.
- **Some focus on classroom observation**. As teaching practices and evidence of learning are probably the most relevant sources of information about professional performance, the role given to classroom observation in the teacher appraisal model is appropriate. It is encouraging that at the time of the review visit 40% of teachers had requested a classroom observation (compared to only 16.5% in the first appraisal cycle). It is unfortunate that in the 2011 model, the role of classroom observation is reduced as, with the exception of teachers placed in the second and fourth ranks and those with an "insufficient" classification, it is required only to obtain the top classification of "excellent".
- **The importance of self-reflection**. The increased focus on self-appraisal was a positive element of the revised 2010 teacher appraisal model, as well as the possibility to request an interview with the evaluator after the appraisal process. The perspective of the teacher being evaluated is essential, because it allows evaluatees to express their own views about their performance and reflect on the personal, organisational and institutional factors that had an impact on their teaching. The 2011 model reinforces the importance of self-appraisal but no longer provides for the possibility of a professional formal interaction between the evaluator and the teacher being appraised.

- **Multiple sources of evidence and multiple evaluators**. The teacher appraisal model is comprehensive, includes most domains of teacher performance, a range of sources of data, provides for more than one evaluator and is based strongly on peer review. All these elements contribute to meeting the need for accuracy and fairness in the appraisal process (Isoré, 2009). The 2011 model has the advantage of introducing an element external to the school, which has the potential to provide some consistency of judgment in classroom observation across schools.

There has been a commitment to building teacher appraisal on research evidence

The concern of the Portuguese authorities to build teacher appraisal on research evidence and recognised good practice has been a clear strength of the system. In 2007, the then Ministry of Education set up the Scientific Council for Teacher Evaluation (CCAP) as a consultative body to supervise and monitor the implementation of teacher appraisal. As a result of the recent rationalisation of education services undertaken by the government in office since June 2011, the CCAP ceased its functions in late 2011. The CCAP brought together educational researchers and distinguished teachers and as such was in a good position to recognise good evaluation practices, be informed of relevant research developments and provide evidence-based advice (Santiago *et al.*, 2009).

Since its creation, the CCAP followed the implementation of the first appraisal cycle (2007-09) and issued a range of research-based opinions and recommendations regarding the design and implementation of the system. In July 2010, it published an evaluation report about the first teacher appraisal cycle, drawing from a questionnaire-based survey of school professionals. The report provided a range of qualitative and some quantitative elements to describe the application of the model in 30 schools across Portugal. Its investigation pointed out strengths and weaknesses of the first appraisal model and suggested improvements to ensure that appraisal could be mainstreamed in the regular work of schools.

There is evidence that the results from CCAP's monitoring activities have been taken seriously and contributed to developing the revised 2010 model. The monitoring of the first appraisal cycle has allowed collecting a range of performance appraisal indicators from schools that have informed the standards and guidelines developed for the 2010 model. Based on findings from the first teacher appraisal cycle, the CCAP developed a set of draft standards for teaching performance in June 2010, a revised version of which was adopted by the Ministry of Education in October 2010 (more on this below). The CCAP also developed the Overall Appraisal Form to be used by rapporteurs in the 2010 model to report on the outcomes of the teacher appraisal process for individual teachers.

Teaching standards have been developed to guide the appraisal process

The establishment of teaching standards that provide a clear and concise profile of what teachers are expected to know and be able to do was a very positive development associated with the implementation of the 2010 teacher appraisal model. Prior to 2010, the Ministry of Education had provided key dimensions for teacher appraisal but the expectations for teacher performance were expressed in a rather general way and there were no indicators, criteria or performance illustrations. The framework allowed for diverse interpretations and schools were expected to develop their own forms for teacher appraisal, which proved to be a challenging task for many of them. Given these difficulties, the CCAP engaged in the preparation of a set of more comprehensive teaching standards.

The standards developed for the 2010 model provided indicators of the types of activities that should be considered when judging performance in a particular dimension of teaching practices. They also gave a list of descriptors of teaching practice at five different levels of performance corresponding to the five qualitative classifications ranging from "insufficient" to "excellent". The fact that, at this stage, the 2011 appraisal model does not involve the use of national teaching standards is a source of concern. Teacher appraisal conducted within schools is to be based on references developed within each individual school with the clear risk that standards across schools will differ considerably, leading to diverse interpretations of quality teaching practice.

There are articulations between teacher appraisal and school evaluation

In Portugal, there is a clear intention to articulate teacher appraisal and external school evaluation. The Inspectorate holds responsibility for monitoring the teacher appraisal process, within the framework of its competences – the management of teacher appraisal is one area for inspection in the second cycle of school inspections initiated in 2011 (see Chapter 5). Also, the quotas for "very good" and "excellent" classifications that schools are allowed to award in teacher appraisal will be linked to the classifications schools receive in the external evaluation conducted by the Inspectorate. The articulation between teacher appraisal and school inspection can help ensure that all teachers are indeed appraised as part of school-based processes and that the school director is held accountable for the implementation of effective teacher appraisal practices.

Teacher appraisal is also linked to school self-evaluation and school development. The teacher appraisal process is strongly school-based and objectives set by schools in their education projects and plans are one of the key references guiding the teacher appraisal process. In theory, the appraisal model also emphasises that the professional development of individual teachers should be linked to the overall training plans established by schools to respond to school priorities while at the same time addressing identified professional development needs among the teaching staff. There are, however, challenges in implementing this articulation between teacher professional development and school development (more on this below).

Challenges

There is insufficient focus on the improvement of teaching practice

Despite the intention of the revised teacher appraisal models (both 2010 and 2011) to place greater emphasis on the developmental dimension, the review team formed the impression that, in practice, there was still insufficient focus on the improvement function of teacher appraisal. As described below, this is due to a range of factors including tensions between the career progression and improvement functions of appraisal, limited opportunities for feedback on teaching practices, and insufficient linkages between teacher appraisal and professional development.

Tensions between the improvement and career progression functions of teacher appraisal

Several teachers interviewed by the review team indicated that they perceived the appraisal model to be punitive rather than formative. This is closely linked to the fact that the Portuguese teacher appraisal model (in both its 2010 and 2011 versions) aims to combine developmental appraisal and career-progression appraisal in a single process. As

detailed by Santiago *et al.* (2009), combining these two functions in the same process raises a number of challenges. When teachers are confronted with high-stakes consequences of appraisal on their career and salary, they are likely to be less inclined to reveal weak aspects of their practice and focus on their own potential for development, which in turn jeopardises the improvement function. As such, self-appraisal of teachers (an important instrument in Portugal), might be less meaningful when it is associated with a process with high stakes for teachers. In the schools visited by the review team, there appeared to be an over-emphasis on assigning marks and classifying teachers for career progression, with less attention paid to genuine professional discussions about effective teaching. Hence, despite the policy focus on improving teaching practice, the perception of teacher appraisal in the education sector and society is still more strongly focused on the controlling and accountability aspects.

Teacher appraisal provides few opportunities for feedback on teaching practice

In its current form, the teacher appraisal model does not provide a consistent means to build a school-level professional development culture based on a thorough evaluation of teaching practices. Classroom observations are not a systematic part of the formal appraisal of each teacher – and even less so in the 2011 model – and there is little tradition for school leaders or teacher peers to conduct informal classroom observations with an evaluative focus. In Portugal, according to TALIS results, direct appraisal of classroom teaching received relatively little emphasis in assessing teaching and teachers' work (20th country among 23 TALIS countries according to teachers' perceptions, see Annex D). The Inspectorate does not conduct classroom observation either. Given that classroom observation as part of teacher appraisal is voluntary (with the exception of some specific cases), the teachers most in need of constructive feedback and professional development might not have their teaching practice observed as part of the appraisal process. The fact that the appraisal has high stakes for teachers' careers and salaries might discourage less confident teachers from requesting classroom observations. Teachers who do request classroom observation to be part of their appraisal are informed beforehand of the date of the observation. Hence, their teaching performance on this particular day is unlikely to be an authentic reflection of a regular lesson. Some teachers described to the review team that they spent much time preparing a sophisticated lesson for the observation, which creates extra work for them and reduces the relevance of feedback for their regular teaching practice. In addition, the teacher appraisal process does not generate professional discussions between the teacher being evaluated and the evaluator, especially following the elimination of the optional interview between the two parts by the 2011 model. Finally, the 2011 model introduces two features which might deserve further reflection: *(i)* in the internal evaluation, the scientific-pedagogic expertise of the teacher (one of three dimensions of teacher appraisal) is appraised with no classroom observation; and *(ii)* a teacher can actually move faster in the career structure with no classes observed.

Linkages between teacher appraisal and professional development could be further developed

Another key element in ensuring the effectiveness of the link between appraisal and improvement is whether adequate learning opportunities for teachers are available. Currently, it appears that many schools still struggle to connect the appraisal appropriately to professional development and improvement. The regulations and guidelines regarding teacher appraisal do not provide detailed indications about how the formative dimension of

teacher appraisal should be implemented. It is expected that schools take responsibility for managing whole-school strategies for professional development.

Schools are required to set up school training plans that are then considered by Regional Training Centres when developing the training offer for the region. However, teachers mentioned that the training offered by these centres was often insufficient or inadequate to meet their professional development needs. The review team formed the impression that the overall support and training structure for teachers had not changed enough to equip teachers with expertise on effective and innovative teaching practice necessary to respond to the diverse educational needs of 21st century learners. For example, the curriculum was described by several stakeholders as outdated and not providing guidance regarding principles of effective pedagogy and assessment to maximise learner success. There is also a lack of emphasis nationally on the dissemination of research and expertise on high quality teaching. For teachers to be able to use appraisal results to improve their practice, it is important that expertise on effective teaching practice is readily available and permeates all aspects of education policy.

Teachers expressed a strong need to have better access to professional learning regarding effective pedagogy. While the review team did not have the opportunity to observe any classes, from our discussions with students, teachers and other stakeholders, our impression was that the dominant teaching approach was a traditional one characterised by strong reliance on textbooks and knowledge transmission, and often driven by the preparation for paper-based examinations, which appears to have led to an under-emphasis on inquiry-based teaching and learner agency (Chapter 3). Several teachers interviewed by the review team voiced concern that their traditional teaching approaches appeared to "work" less well with an increasingly international and diverse student body. As compulsory schooling was just extended to 12 years, there will also be much greater diversity in student backgrounds and educational needs among students staying on in secondary education and some teachers expressed that they lacked effective strategies to motivate and engage all their students.

The review team also formed the view that the provision of professional development appears not systematically linked to teacher appraisal. This was certainly the case before the introduction of a formal model of teacher appraisal in Portugal. According to TALIS, in 2007/08, only 26.8% of teachers of lower secondary education reported that the appraisal and/or feedback they received directly led to or involved moderate or large changes in a teacher development or training plan to improve their teaching (ninth lowest figure, against a TALIS average of 37.4%). Also, in 2007/08, only 11.3% of teachers of lower secondary education reported that the appraisal and/or feedback they received led to a moderate or large change in opportunities for professional development activities (fourth lowest figure, against a TALIS average of 23.7%). The situation is likely not to have improved significantly with the introduction of formal teacher appraisal processes. In most cases, the identification of professional development needs is not a requirement of established teacher appraisal practices. In both the 2010 and 2011 models, a professional development plan which results from teacher appraisal is only a requirement for teachers classified as "regular" or "insufficient". Without a clear link to professional development opportunities, the appraisal process is not sufficient to improve teacher performance and, as a result, often becomes a meaningless exercise that encounters mistrust – or at best apathy – on the part of teachers being evaluated (Danielson, 2001; Milanowski and Kimball, 2003; Margo *et al.*, 2008).

The extent of externality in teacher appraisal is limited

Teacher appraisal, according to the 2010 model, was school based and did not involve agents external to the school even if the existence of national standards of teacher performance sought to ensure consistency of appraisals across schools. Teacher appraisal was organised by the school Performance Evaluation and evaluators were teachers based in the school.

The limited extent of externality in teacher appraisal raises a number of challenges. Teachers are appraised according to local judgments and, when no national standards of teacher performance are used, according to local appraisal criteria. Teachers are also entirely dependent on local capacity and willingness to benefit from opportunities to improve their practice and see their professional development recognised. The involvement of some externality in teacher appraisal can provide an element of distance and rigour which can be particularly valuable in validating school-based approaches to teacher appraisal. It can also ensure some consistency of practices across schools and make appraisal fairer for teachers.

The 2011 model is mostly school based but has the merit of introducing an external component, associated with the observation of classes. It is planned to train external evaluators to undertake classroom observation according to national-level parameters, which serves the objective of ensuring greater consistency and fairness in judgment across schools and teachers. However, the internal component of teacher appraisal will be conducted using only internal references and criteria, which risks to bring incoherence of practices across schools.

There is a tension between school-level appraisal and national-level consequences

Since the teaching career, salary scales and competitions for permanent posts are defined at the national level, consequences of a school-based teacher appraisal model go clearly beyond the school. These include progression within the career, chances to access ranks 5 and 7 of the career with no need for a vacancy to be available, chances to access a permanent post upon completion of the probationary period, and chances to get the contract renewed for teachers on fixed-term contracts.

The 2010 model, while a school-based model in terms of its implementation, had the merit to be guided by national standards for teacher performance and used a minimum national core of evaluation items and criteria. The 2011 model provides for a dominant internal appraisal component, which is based on references determined at the school (school educational project; and evaluation parameters established by the pedagogical council for each of the three dimensions of appraisal). This risks a lack of consistency and equity in career progression as a result of different standards applied to teacher appraisal across schools. There is a clear tension between school-level standards for teacher appraisal and national-level consequences of teacher appraisal.

Competencies for teacher appraisal are still underdeveloped

While peer review can be an important source of feedback for teachers to improve their practice, the limited focus on developing the appraisal competencies of evaluators has raised a number of challenges. Most evaluators who undertook teacher appraisal in the implementation of the 2010 model had not been specifically trained for this function. In most schools, the existing expertise regarding teacher appraisal is limited. In particular, for the implementation of the 2010 model, by the time of the review visit, evaluators had

not yet received proper training to appraise teachers in relation to the then recently introduced teaching standards. Hence, the point of reference of the evaluator tended to be his/her own teaching practice rather than a deep understanding of the level of performance that can be achieved by the most effective teachers in relation to the dimensions set out in the teaching standards.

Given the limited experience and expertise regarding teacher appraisal in many schools, there were large variations in the quality and rigour of the process across schools during the implementation of the 2010 model. There was a tendency of evaluators to spend a large amount of time and effort to emulate the standard templates established by the Ministry of Education rather than engaging in reflective discussions. Several of the designated evaluators conveyed to the review team that they felt uncomfortable with their new role. A concern to ensure objectivity and fairness in appraisal had led some schools to develop highly complex procedures that ended up being more time-consuming and bureaucratic than intended. Given the lack of preparedness of many evaluators, there appeared to be a reluctance to exercise professional judgement, which may partly explain the overreliance on matrices, forms and paper-based evaluation. As there were variations in the appraisal capabilities of evaluators, the marks awarded to teachers across different schools were unlikely to be consistent. It will take time to develop the expertise and moderation arrangements to make comparable judgements and award fair marks in teacher appraisal across schools.

The then Ministry of Education recognised this challenge and had taken steps towards organising a structure to provide relevant in-service training for evaluators. However, it will take time to upscale a whole cohort of evaluators to ensure consistently effective practice. Higher education institutions in Portugal have only recently begun to offer Master's degrees related to educational evaluation, and there is only one institution offering a specific programme related to teacher appraisal. While there is political will to ensure a greater focus of initial teacher education on evaluation in education, it is a sensitive and difficult area because higher education institutions are autonomous and have their own culture and focus. As there are not enough individuals with the expertise to provide training, the available offer does not meet the strong demand for training in evaluation. Much of the existing professional development offer comes from private institutions where teachers need to pay to participate.

A related challenge is that, in the models implemented thus far, the evaluators did not have the needed legitimacy in the eyes of evaluatees to be perceived as a credible source of feedback. There are concerns about the objectivity and independence of evaluators who are, in fact, colleagues of the evaluatees and are not necessarily recognised by others as highly effective teachers themselves. While seniority is an important criterion to be selected as evaluator, length of service does not necessarily determine whether a teacher is well placed to evaluate others in a high-stakes context. In addition, in the system of quotas for the highest marks, evaluators might actually be competing with evaluatees for "very good" and "excellent" marks, which provide faster access to career progressions and salary increments. This context of competition undermines the possibility to create a professional culture where there could be genuine discussion and collective learning regarding pedagogical directions and high quality teaching strategies.

School leadership could play a stronger role in fostering teacher appraisal and feedback cultures

Given that teacher appraisal is relatively recent in Portugal, it is not surprising that the process still appears fragmented and *ad-hoc* in many schools, conducted largely to satisfy national requirements rather than an ongoing process that is mainstreamed into the work of the school. While some schools have collaborative structures and regular feedback mechanisms in place, whether such practice exists varies among schools, and largely depends on school leadership. In many schools, educational leadership practices are still incipient. There is no mandatory pre-service training for school leadership and many directors have not had professional development in teacher appraisal and feedback methods, which may reduce their willingness and capacity to engage in observing and guiding their teachers.

A major reform of school leadership policy was implemented in 2008, moving from a *primus inter pares* model to one where the school director is given greater responsibility for management and leadership (see Chapter 1). While the reform has given school leaders much greater powers and responsibilities, school directors do not yet appear to take responsibility for the leadership of pedagogy and for the quality of education at the point of delivery. School leaders interviewed by the review team explained that they had few opportunities to influence teaching quality because they cannot select their own teaching staff. Teachers are hired and allocated to schools in a national process and they are largely regarded as autonomous experts within their classroom. As there is little tradition of pedagogical leadership in Portugal, most school directors adopt an approach where teachers are largely left on their own unless major problems arise. There has not been a culture where school directors or teacher peers could routinely enter another teacher's classroom with a view to observe and provide feedback on the teacher's practice. There appear to be few interactions between teachers and school leadership regarding pedagogical directions and approaches.

The introduction of teacher appraisal could have been a possibility to provide greater leverage to school directors to engage in leading the core business of teaching and learning in their school. But, quite the contrary, the appraisal approach has taken the responsibility for teacher appraisal away from the school leaders. Neither the 2010 model nor the 2011 model grant the director an active role in the actual appraisal process, which appears to further weaken their pedagogical role. While school directors are responsible for ensuring that appraisal is in line with national and school objectives, in practice they play a limited role in the school-based appraisal processes. For example, during the implementation of the 2010 model in the schools visited by the review team, the school leader did not organise group meetings with the rapporteurs in the school so as to determine common approaches to appraisal or discuss the results with a focus on whole-school evaluation of teaching.

There are concerns about the design and implementation of teacher appraisal

While at the national level, a lot of effort has gone into conceptualising a comprehensive model for teacher appraisal, a number of elements have made implementation difficult. There appears to be insufficient ownership of the teacher appraisal model by school professionals. Beyond natural resistance to change in a highly sensitive area, there are a number of factors in operationalising the reforms that have created a sense of instability and frustration among stakeholders.

First, implementation has been rushed without planning for an adequate trial or pilot period. Key aspects of legislation and essential guidelines regarding the different aspects of teacher appraisal were developed only after the model was already in place. For example, the teaching standards were implemented only in 2010, after completion of the first teacher appraisal cycle. As a result of the model being implemented at a fast pace, many changes, adaptations and improvements were made to the model successively, leading to instability of approaches and frustration among professionals. The constant changes of key appraisal elements make it difficult to monitor the impact and effectiveness of different approaches. The new model approved in 2011 provides for a year of preparation before implementation in 2012/13. It is expected that school agents will engage for about a year in training and planning for the effective launch of the new model.

Second, challenges in the implementation of teacher appraisal are not only linked to its pace but also to the limited preparedness of schools. As mentioned above, there is little tradition or culture for ongoing teacher appraisal in Portugal and the capacity of evaluators still needs to be built for teacher appraisal to be effective and fair. In addition, many school directors and teachers felt overwhelmed by the introduction of teacher appraisal as it happened simultaneously to a range of other reforms including curricular changes and a reorganisation of school management structures.

Third, there have been a number of unintended consequences in the implementation of teacher appraisal. For example, while the model had intended to strengthen collaborative practice and peer learning in schools, the quota system for awarding marks has resulted in competition rather than co-operation. In the schools visited by the review team, professionals voiced concerns about the negative impact of teacher appraisal on the school climate and interpersonal relationships. Also, given schools' insecurity regarding teacher appraisal, processes in schools have often become more bureaucratic, paper-based and time-consuming than intended (see above). The model approved in 2011 seeks to address these issues by simplified processes and reducing the paperwork.

Fourth, due to the economic and financial crisis, the government has decided to freeze career and salary progression in the public sector. This undermines the career progression function of teacher appraisal that is so strongly emphasised. This might lead to a lack of motivation among teachers to take the appraisal seriously, including requesting classroom observation, and reduces incentives for teachers to improve their performance.

Policy recommendations

In a very short time span, Portugal has developed an ambitious and comprehensive model for teacher appraisal. To further develop the model with a view to maximise its positive impact on teaching and learning, the OECD review team proposes the following broad approach, which is in line with the suggestions made by the 2009 OECD Review of Teacher Evaluation in Portugal (Santiago *et al.*, 2009):

- Ensure the centrality of teaching standards.
- Refocus teacher appraisal on improvement, by supporting regular formative feedback and adequate professional development opportunities.
- Strengthen the appraisal model for career progression and enhance the capacity of evaluators to make reliable summative judgements.
- Enhance and support the role of school leaders in teacher appraisal.

- Develop longer term planning for the implementation of teacher appraisal, based on evidence from the first two appraisal cycles.

Ensure the centrality of teaching standards

Teaching standards are a key element in any teacher appraisal system as they provide credible reference points for making judgements about teacher competence (see discussion in Isoré, 2009, or Santiago and Benavides, 2009). As noted earlier, a very positive development of the 2010 model was the creation of national standards of teacher performance with a shared understanding of what counts as accomplished teaching to provide the basis for appraising teachers. The teacher appraisal model approved in 2011 has not included thus far national teaching standards among its features, which raises concerns about the lack of a solid reference against which teachers are appraised.

A framework of teaching standards is essential as a reference for teacher appraisal and therefore it should be given priority in the design of any teacher appraisal model. The standards are a key element to ensure that all evaluators across Portugal have a common understanding of different levels of teaching performance and help achieve greater consistency and fairness in evaluators' judgements. Further, the standards strengthen the capacity for educational authorities to effectively assess whether teacher performance meets the needs of school education and whether teachers have attained given levels of competence. They also offer the potential to frame and align the organisation of the key elements of the teaching profession such as initial teacher education, professional development, career advancement and teacher appraisal. This reinforces the effective use of standards as a lever for the improvement of teaching practices.

A reference contribution in this area is Danielson's *Framework for Teaching* (Box 4.2).

Box 4.2 Danielson's Framework for Teaching

Danielson's *Framework* is articulated to provide at the same time "a 'road map' to guide novice teachers through their initial classroom experiences, a structure to held experienced professionals become more effective, and a means to focus improvement efforts". It groups teachers' responsibilities into four major areas further divided into components:

- *Planning and Preparation*: demonstrating knowledge of content and pedagogy; demonstrating knowledge of students; selecting instructional goals; designing coherent instruction; assessing student learning.
- *The Classroom Environment*: creating an environment of respect and rapport; establishing a culture for learning; managing classroom procedures; managing student behaviour and organising physical space.
- *Instruction*: communicating clearly and accurately; using questioning and discussion techniques; engaging students in learning; providing feedback to students; demonstrating flexibility and responsiveness.
- *Professional Responsibilities*: reflecting on teaching; maintaining accurate records; communicating with families; contributing to the school and community; growing and developing professionally; showing professionalism.

Source: Danielson (1996; 2007).

Danielson's framework has influenced a large number of teacher appraisal systems around the world. An example can be found in the *Professional Standards for Teachers in England* (TDA, 2007). These standards cover all aspects grouped into "professional attributes", "professional knowledge and judgment" and "professional skills". Moreover, the standards differentiate in several stages from what can be expected of the newly qualified teacher to the standard expected of excellent and advanced skills teachers. Other examples are provided in Isoré (2009).

Refocus teacher appraisal on improvement

Meaningful teacher appraisal should aim at teacher development and improvement in teaching and learning processes. It can help teachers develop their competencies by recognising strengths on which they can build and identifying weaknesses to be addressed by suitable professional development. To resolve tensions between the improvement function and the career progression function of teacher appraisal, the review team endorses the recommendations made by the 2009 OECD Review (Santiago *et al.*, 2009) to disconnect regular developmental appraisal somewhat from the more formal career-progression appraisal focus. While links between the two aspects should be assured, it is difficult to achieve both aims in a single process conducted only every two years (or every four years, following the approval of the 2011 model).

Embed appraisal for teacher development and improvement in regular school practice

If they are well designed, systems of teacher appraisal and feedback can be powerful levers to increase teacher effectiveness and achieve better student learning outcomes. However, if they are not linked to better classroom teaching and teacher development, teacher appraisal processes may become mere administrative exercises with little impact on education outcomes (Jensen and Reichl, 2011).

As the current model may hamper the improvement function of teacher appraisal (see above), it would be desirable to develop a component of teacher appraisal fully dedicated to developmental appraisal. Such developmental appraisal would benefit from a non-threatening evaluation context, a culture of mutually providing and receiving feedback within the school, simple evaluation instruments, supportive school leadership, opportunities for professional development and close linkages to school self-evaluation (Santiago and Benavides, 2009). It should not be associated with a rating or labelling of teacher performance but should focus on identifying areas for improvement and follow-up with adequate learning opportunities. The point of such formative appraisal is that over time it becomes embedded and mainstreamed in regular school practice. According to Santiago *et al.* (2009, p. 45), "it can be low-key and low-cost, and include self-appraisal, peer evaluation, classroom observation, and structured conversations and regular feedback by the school director and experienced peers."

In the context of whole-school self-evaluation, a distinguishing feature of practices internationally is whether they are seen by school staff as an event or a habit (MacBeath and Dempster, 2008). Once self-evaluation becomes a habit and is fully embedded in schools' daily practice and teachers' thinking, the visit of an external body is neither disruptive nor unwelcome (Nusche *et al.*, 2012). The same can be applied to the appraisal of individual teachers. If teachers develop a culture of ongoing self-appraisal and engage regularly in peer observation and exchange with colleagues, then it will become more

natural and constructive for peers and the school director to enter classrooms and observe teaching practice with an evaluative focus.

Enhance opportunities for teachers to receive feedback on classroom practice

Regular, improvement-oriented appraisal and feedback approaches should involve both peer observation and observation of classroom teaching by the schools' pedagogical leaders. Peer observation can help teachers learn from each other, promote team teaching and build trust and mutual support among colleagues (Jensen and Reichl, 2011). Schools in Portugal are typically organised in departments bringing together several "subject groups". In some schools, the subject groups provide a structure and forum to exchange good practice, share pedagogical directions and welcome new teachers. These subject groups seem well placed to organise teams for peer observation with swapping roles so that each teacher can both observe and be observed. Observation of classroom teaching by a member of the leadership team can further contribute to encouraging self-reflection, providing feedback, developing adequate improvement plans and recognising good teaching (Jensen and Reichl, 2011).

Reinforce the linkages between teacher appraisal, professional development and school development

The linkages between teacher appraisal, professional development and school development need to be reinforced. Teacher appraisal is unlikely to produce effective results if it is not appropriately linked to professional development which, in turn, needs to be associated with school development if the improvement of teaching practices is to meet schools' needs. The results of teacher appraisal need to be more systematically linked to individual professional development plans as is currently the case (where only teachers appraised with "regular" and "insufficient" are provided with such a plan). Schools can learn from the strengths of effective teachers and implement professional development programmes that respond to their weaknesses.

Provide adequate professional development opportunities for teachers

While teachers requesting classroom observations are being appraised regarding the effectiveness of their teaching strategies, it appears that the opportunities for teachers to develop such strategies are limited. To shift the focus towards continuous improvement and reflective practice, the appraisal process needs to be embedded in a more general policy focus on disseminating evidence and expertise on highly effective teaching practice. Innovative, learner-centred teaching needs to be emphasised not only in a biennial feedback through teacher appraisal, but should be encouraged in a coherent way across the curriculum, initial education, induction, mentoring and professional development.

The focus of teacher appraisal should be to contribute to a knowledge-rich teaching profession in which teachers engage actively with new knowledge and benefit from support structures to generate improvement (Santiago and Benavides, 2009). International research has consistently emphasised that professional development is an essential component of successful school development and teacher growth, well-being and success (Day, 1999). Improving schools are able to invest in the development of their staff, and create opportunities for teachers to reflect, collaborate, access new ideas, experiment and share experiences and best practices within the school (Nusche *et al.*, 2011).

There is a need to envisage teachers' learning as something broader than participation in in-service training courses. According to Timperley (2011), the term "professional development" is now often associated with the delivery of some kind of information to teachers in order to influence their practice, whereas "professional learning" refers to a more internal process in which teachers create professional knowledge through interaction with this information in a way that challenges previous assumptions and creates new meanings. Such professional learning cultures need to be supported and sustained by effective pedagogical leadership providing adequate levels of challenge and support to teachers (this will be further explored below).

Connect teacher appraisal to school evaluation processes

To ensure that teacher appraisal processes are indeed conducted in a regular, systematic and coherent way across schools in Portugal, it is important that an external body provides a validation of school-level processes and holds the school director accountable for their effectiveness. To this end, the role of the Inspectorate in Portugal to monitor teacher appraisal processes is a very positive feature that needs to be maintained and strengthened.

To strengthen linkages between teacher appraisal and school improvement, it is also important to include a strong focus on the quality of teaching and learning in school self-evaluation processes. Currently, the focus of teacher appraisal is clearly on individual teacher performance and individual career progression. However, for the school as a whole to improve practices, it would be crucial to establish stronger links between teacher appraisal and school self-evaluation. For example, it would be helpful for evaluators to meet and discuss the outcomes of appraisal processes as well as to share ideas and review appraisal practices. This would allow school professionals to engage in discussions regarding how they want to develop as a teaching body, rather than just as individual teachers. School leadership can play a strong role in encouraging such practices and ensuring that evaluators are allocated time and space for such meetings to take place.

Strengthen the appraisal model for career progression and enhance the capacity of evaluators to make reliable summative judgements

The teacher appraisal model that has been introduced and adapted since 2007 forms a good basis for summative appraisal of teachers at key stages of their career. Such summative appraisal (or career-progression appraisal) should serve to maintain the principle of career advancement on merit, hold teachers accountable for their practice and complement the regular formative appraisal by providing an account of the ways in which it has contributed to professional development and improvement. It can provide incentives for teachers to perform at their best, bring recognition to effective teachers and help recognise and spread good practice more widely. It should also offer possibilities to move on consistently underperforming teachers who have not responded to development opportunities (Jensen and Reichl, 2011).

The review team endorses the recommendation by the 2009 OECD Review (Santiago *et al.*, 2009) to simplify the 2010 model (and previous versions of the model) so as to reduce the administrative and organisational burden on schools, as long as the suggested developmental appraisal of teachers is introduced. As a first step to lighten the model, the Ministry should consider reducing the frequency of appraisals, depending on the career stage of the teacher. This has now been done with the approval of the 2011 model which has a cycle of four years. We would also suggest reconsidering the distribution of

responsibilities for appraisal within schools. In the 2010 model, a high number of people were involved in the appraisal process and the different steps to be taken were perceived as overly bureaucratic. The 2011 model has attempted to address these concerns in particular by reducing the number of instruments and limiting the evidence to be collected by the teacher being evaluated. However, it would be important to keep key features of an effective teacher appraisal model such as meaningful self-evaluation, classroom observation for each teacher appraised, opportunities for teachers to demonstrate their competence in individual portfolios (*e.g.* it is debatable whether limiting the self-appraisal report to three pages allows teachers to cover the wide range of aspects requested in the current 2011 model), and opportunities for professional discussions with evaluators during the appraisal process. More specifically, given the centrality of teaching and learning, a faster progression in the career should not be possible with no observation of classes; and the assessment of the scientific-pedagogic skills of teachers should involve classroom observation.

As will be explained in more detail below, we would suggest giving a greater role in teacher appraisal to the school leadership team, which would provide them with a much-needed opportunity to exercise pedagogical leadership and support improvement of teaching across the school. It would also help define a smaller group of people responsible for summative appraisal to whom professional development in this area should be targeted. This should go in line with a larger distribution of school leadership within schools, where deputy directors and middle leaders can hold specialised functions for areas such as evaluation, appraisal and assessment. To ensure their credibility, it is crucial that individuals with such leadership and evaluation responsibilities have priority in receiving adequate learning opportunities.

Given the high stakes that the formal appraisal is intended to carry for teachers in terms of career and salary progression (defined at the national level), it is essential that the judgements made by evaluators are reliable and fair within and across schools. In addition, given the national-level consequences of teacher appraisal in Portugal, it is essential that teachers are appraised against reference standards of teaching performance which are common across schools. To this end, it is crucial to further invest into building a solid professional development structure with a range of offers to develop the skills of evaluators, including their ability to appraise against national standards of teaching performance. As pointed out by Santiago *et al.* (2009), summative appraisal should include a school-external component to ensure the moderation and fairness of appraisals across schools. The appraisal could be undertaken jointly by a school-based evaluator, together with an accredited evaluator, typically a teacher from another school with expertise in the same subject area as the evaluatee. The active involvement of competent practitioners from another school can help make the process more efficient while at the same time fostering peer learning and knowledge sharing. The 2011 model introduces an external component to teacher appraisal, but limited to the application of classroom observation which is only a part of the appraisal and does not involve all teachers.

Ensure links between developmental appraisal and career-progression appraisal

Developmental appraisal and appraisal for career progression cannot be disconnected from each other. Designing a sound basis for their interface is of major importance. An immediate link is that career-progression appraisal needs to take into account the qualitative assessments produced through developmental appraisal, including the recommendations made for areas of improvement. This might also include an interaction between the external evaluator and internal evaluators in charge of developmental

appraisal. Similarly, results of career-progression appraisals can also inform the professional development of individual teachers and provide useful feedback for the improvement of developmental appraisal internal processes.

Enhance and support the role of school leaders in teacher appraisal

School leaders can play an essential role in making performance improvement a strategic imperative and to promote teacher appraisal as being key to teacher development and broader school policies. Research from different countries indicates that school leadership focused on monitoring teachers, giving feedback, planning teacher professional development and supporting collaborative work cultures can help improve teaching and learning approaches (Pont *et al.*, 2008; Robinson, 2007; Marzano *et al.*, 2005; Leithwood *et al.*, 2006). But school leaders need to be prepared and supported in their educational leadership role in order to develop the necessary competencies and be credible in promoting teacher appraisal and improvement.

The role and function of the school director is a very new one in Portugal and most directors are still inexperienced in providing educational leadership. Prior to the 2008 reform, schools were led by teachers elected by their peers who hardly had any decision making powers and whose role was conceived as a largely administrative one (Ministry of Education, 2007, and Chapter 1). Hence, there is a need to build the capacity and credibility of the new school directors as educational leaders. School directors need to be equipped to focus thoroughly on the quality of teaching and learning and help set up the collaborative and trusting work environment necessary to embed a focus on continuous evaluation and improvement in the everyday work of teachers. The following elements could be part of a national strategy to strengthen the educational leadership role of school directors, with a focus on teacher appraisal and improvement (the following suggestions are based on Pont *et al.*, 2008):

- Redefine school leadership as educational leadership and provide refined statements of the core competencies expected of school directors, with recruitment directly targeted on those competencies (Nusche *et al.*, 2011). Evaluating and supporting teaching quality should be among these core competency areas.
- Develop a national education programme for school leaders targeting different stages of the career such as pre-service education, induction, in-service training as well as coaching and mentoring so as to professionalise leadership practice with a focus on evaluating and improving teaching and learning.
- Distribute leadership among several professionals in the school to reduce the burden on school directors and foster leadership capacity across the school. To this end, offer training related to appraisal and evaluation to a wider group of school staff including deputy principals and members of the leadership team.
- Enhance the performance appraisal of school leaders to provide them with external feedback on their leadership performance, identify areas of needed improvement and target support to improve practice (see Chapter 5). Staff within Regional Directorates (and, as of 2013, within the Directorate General for School Administration) need to be trained in undertaking effective performance reviews of school leaders against relevant core competencies.

- Connect teacher appraisal more closely to school evaluation. External evaluations conducted by the Inspectorate should validate the school level processes in place to appraise teachers and improve performance (the developmental appraisal recommended above), holding the school director accountable. The Inspectorate can also spread good practice and provide advice to school leaders on setting up effective teacher appraisal and peer evaluation practices. Schools should also be encouraged to focus their self-evaluation strongly on teaching and learning quality, which requires the school leader to take stronger pedagogical leadership responsibilities.
- Draw on the expertise of directors from highly effective schools and engage them as change agents working with other schools to build good practice across the system. Support networks and peer learning platforms for school leaders to collaborate beyond their own school borders.

In broader terms, to establish and embed an appraisal and evaluation culture in the mainstream work of schools, the "culture" of school leadership needs to be shifted significantly. It needs to change in a way as to ensure that school directors grasp the new autonomy and responsibility accorded to them to provide effective educational leadership, support continuous improvement of classroom teaching practice and thereby optimise opportunities and outcomes for all learners (Nusche *et al.*, 2011).

Develop longer term planning for the implementation of teacher appraisal, based on evidence from the first two appraisal cycles

This chapter has made a range of suggestions for further development of the teacher appraisal model. However, in further developing the teacher appraisal approach, it is essential to recognise that changes will take time and require long-term planning. Adjustments should be made incrementally so as to build some stability and credibility in the sector. Rather than adding on new elements to the formal teacher appraisal model, the review team recommends strengthening the career-progression appraisal model and focussing attention on reducing excessive formality and administration. In addition, considerable investment on competencies for teacher appraisal should be made along the lines suggested by the 2009 OECD Review (Santiago *et al.*, 2009).

A range of evidence is emerging from the first two teacher appraisal cycles to assist national authorities in this process. The Scientific Council for Teacher Evaluation, while it was in operation, continuously monitored and evaluated the implementation of teacher appraisal. Evidence from the Council's evaluation reports provide valuable insights about strengths and challenges of the previous models. Schools themselves have developed practice-based expertise that should be consolidated and fed into the national strategy. The further development of the model should continue to build on consultation and collaboration with stakeholders, giving teachers and teacher organisations a voice. The model approved in 2011 provides the opportunity during 2011/12 to consolidate the knowledge and experience with teacher appraisal before full implementation in 2012/13.

Alongside adjustments to the career-progression appraisal model, it is of key importance to strengthen and embed developmental appraisal of teachers in the regular functioning of schools. While there is a risk that the current freeze on career progressions in the public sector might undermine the implementation of appraisal and de-motivate staff, this economic context also provides a window of opportunity to focus more fully on

establishing developmental teacher appraisal practices. Creating an appraisal culture in schools is a long-term process that will take time and substantial investment in professional development. It also requires an environment of trust, collaboration and mutual feedback in schools. The key policy implication is to focus strongly on building capacity for educational leadership in schools.

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Chapter 5

School evaluation

There are two main forms of school evaluation in Portugal: school self-evaluation and school external inspection. The latter is the responsibility of the General Inspectorate of Education and Science. A first cycle of external school evaluations was conducted from 2006 to early 2011. It involved, for each school in the system, a sequence of activities comprising a self-reflection by the school, a visit by a team with inspectors and an external member, the publication of the team's report and, in some cases, an improvement plan for the school. A second cycle of external school evaluations was launched in the 2011/12 school year following a similar approach but with the introduction of the requirement of an improvement plan for each school inspected. A distinguishing feature of external school evaluation is that it does not involve the observation of teaching and learning in the classroom. The precise nature of school self-evaluation varies across schools as the legal requirement to undertake it does not come with a prescribed approach. Particularly positive features of school evaluation include the good establishment of external school evaluation; the features of best practice embodied in the external evaluation model; the transparency of the approach; the relationship established between self and external evaluation; the promotion of school leadership in school evaluation; and the evaluation of the inspections themselves. However, the development of school evaluation is faced with a number of challenges. These include the incipient culture of evaluation and improvement; the insufficient focus on learning and teaching; the incipient development of school self-evaluation; the need to build competence in the techniques of evaluation; and the limited impact of school evaluation.

This chapter analyses approaches to school evaluation within an overall approach to developing an evaluation culture in Portugal. School evaluation refers to the evaluation of individual schools as organisations. This chapter covers both internal school evaluation (school self-evaluation) and external school evaluation (inspection).

It should be noted that, in late 2011, the General Inspectorate of Education (IGE) was merged with the General Inspectorate of Science and Higher Education to become the General Inspectorate of Education and Science (IGEC). However, in this chapter, we will mostly refer to IGE, which in the present situation should be interpreted as the part of IGEC with responsibilities for inspection in school education. The analysis in this chapter concentrates on the practices used around the time of the review visit, which were then led by IGE.

Context and features

The need to establish a strong evaluation culture is seen by the Portuguese government as critical to its broader agenda of school reform. It recognises that raising standards, increasing staying-on rates, reducing grade repetition, improving equity and increasing overall efficiency will all be both stimulated and sustained if schools and teachers are constantly reflecting on their goals, approaches and levels of success. School evaluation, encompassing both self-evaluation and external evaluation of schools, has therefore become a key point of focus for education policy in recent years.

The development of school evaluation in Portugal

Throughout the 1990s various projects were set in train in relation to school evaluation. The General Inspectorate of Education (IGE) undertook a programme of external evaluation of schools between 1999 and 2002 and the principle of school evaluation has, since then, become an increasingly important part of the educational landscape. Over the last decade, and particularly following the law of 2002 (Law No. 31/2002) which established the system for evaluating schools and measures introduced by government since 2005, clear requirements for both internal and external school evaluation have been established. However, the role and nature of external evaluation and its relationship to self-evaluation remain a very live area of political and professional debate.

The Inspectorate is part of the Ministry of Education and Science and has a range of responsibilities associated with audit, control, monitoring and evaluation. It has around 200 inspectors, most but not all of whom have a background in education. The 2002 legislation was ultimately taken forward by a working group set up by the Ministry in 2005 to devise evaluation methodology. Thereafter, IGE was charged with undertaking a first cycle of school evaluations to be started in 2006 and completed by early 2011. Initially 500 schools responded to an invitation to participate in the process and criteria were established to ensure that all public schools would be brought in successively over the next five years. Private schools are not subject to external evaluation by the Inspectorate although consideration is being given to their future inclusion in some form. A second cycle of external evaluation began in 2011, thus establishing a four-year inspection cycle.[1]

The external school evaluation model which began in 2006 drew on a number of influences, both national and international. Account was taken of the accumulated experience of recent IGE work, including its "Integrated School Assessments" undertaken

between 1999 and 2002 and its own evaluation of school self-assessment in the period 2004-06. The approach also drew from the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) approach, the work of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) in Scotland, and a variety of information produced by the Standing International Conference of Inspectorates (SICI). Among other features, these influences encouraged a focus on outcomes, the need for contextualised evaluations, the importance of transparency and the promotion of self-evaluation.

Purposes of school evaluation

The school evaluation model implemented during 2006-11 had the following declared purposes:

- to stimulate improvement in the quality of the public education service and students' learning by fostering a systematic questioning in schools of the quality of their practices and outcomes;
- to strengthen schools' capacity to develop within a framework of autonomy and accountability including by the articulation of external evaluation with self-evaluation;
- to make schools accountable for the use of public resources;
- to establish clear consequences arising from the inspection in relation to eligibility for autonomy contracts and the size of quotas for career progression associated with teacher evaluation; and
- to contribute to the regulation of the education system.

The new school evaluation model, implemented as of the 2011/12 school year by the Inspectorate, has the following purposes:

- to promote student results and learning progressions, identifying strengths and priority areas for improvement in the work of schools;
- to increment accountability at all levels, validating self-evaluation practices of schools;
- to foster the participation of the educational community and local society in school activities, offering better public information on the quality of the work of schools; and
- to contribute to the regulation of education, providing policy makers and school administrators with relevant information.

External evaluation through inspection

External school evaluation through inspection involves a team of three or four individuals, comprising two or three IGE inspectors and an external member who is chosen by the Ministry and is usually drawn from a higher education institution. Inspection visits last two or three days depending on the scale of the task, principally whether the focus is a cluster or a single, non-grouped school. Inspections examine how schools monitor their own performance and the steps they take to "guarantee" quality. They look at how schools are managed and led and how they evaluate themselves and seek to bring about improvement.

There is a structured framework for school evaluation. For the 2006-11 cycle, it covered five domains (results; provision of the education service; school organisation and management; leadership; and the capacity to self-regulate and improve the school). Each domain had a number of associated factors totalling 19 in all. In the "leadership" domain for example, the factors covered: vision and strategy; human resource management; openness to innovation; partnerships, protocols and projects. The overall framework was underpinned by a set of 81 questions designed to promote greater consistency in the interpretation of the factors. For example, some of the questions in the "results" domain were: How have school results varied over the last few years? How do the school's results compare to those of other schools? Are risks that students will leave early detected in advance?

The new model introduced in late 2011 covers three domains: results; provision of the education service; and leadership and management. Each domain has a small number of fields for analysis (totalling nine in all) each of which contains a few areas. These are shown in Table 5.1.

Inspection methods focus on a range of instruments. The school provides a view of itself through the "presentation" document, which is supposed to establish linkages to its self-evaluation and cover the domains and fields for analysis used by external school evaluation. In order to establish a context for the inspection and allow a stronger focus on outcomes, inspection teams are given a statistical profile of the school by the Ministry. This profile covers performance data from educational progress national tests and national examinations, statistics on grade repetition, and background data about the demographic and social characteristics of the student population. In addition to the review of the school's "presentation", there is also extensive analysis of documents such as the educational project, the curricular project, the plan of activities, the internal regulations, and the self-evaluation report. Another major instrument are panel interviews with the representatives of the educational community: school management, teaching staff, non-teaching staff, students, parents/guardians, and the municipality, selected according to pre-specified criteria. Triangulation across different sources of evidence is used to promote reliability. A novelty of the new second cycle of inspections is the introduction of questionnaires to students, parents/guardians, teachers, and non-teaching staff on their satisfaction and analysis of the school results. There is also the observation of the school facilities, including the areas for instruction, but there is no direct observation of learning and teaching by the inspection team.

Table 5.1 Domains for school inspection

Domains	Fields for analysis	Areas
Results	Academic results	▪ Progress of contextualised internal student results ▪ Progress of contextualised external student results ▪ Quality of success ▪ Dropouts
	Social results	▪ Participation in school activities and acquisition of responsibilities ▪ Compliance with rules and discipline ▪ Forms of solidarity ▪ Impact of schooling on student pathways
	Community's recognition	▪ Degree of satisfaction of the educational community ▪ Forms of appreciation of student success ▪ Contribution of school to the development of the surrounding community
Provision of the education service	Planning and articulation	▪ Articulated management of the curriculum ▪ Contextualisation of the curriculum and openness to the environment ▪ Use of the information on the students' school career ▪ Coherence between teaching and assessment ▪ Co-operative work among teachers
	Teaching practices	▪ Extent to which the teaching meets students' capacities and learning rhythms ▪ Extent to which the needs of students with special needs are met ▪ Level of requirements and incentives for the improvement of performance ▪ Active and experimental methodologies in teaching and learning ▪ Appreciation of the artistic dimension ▪ Efficiency of the use of educational resources and time dedicated to learning ▪ Supervision of the teaching
	Monitoring and assessment of learning	▪ Diversification of approaches to assessment ▪ Evaluation of criteria and instruments for assessment ▪ Internal monitoring of the development of the curriculum ▪ Effectiveness of measures to provide educational support ▪ Prevention of dropouts
Leadership and management	Leadership	▪ Strategic vision and fostering a sense of belonging to and identification with the school ▪ Appreciation of intermediate leadership ▪ Development of projects, partnerships and innovative solutions ▪ Motivation of people and conflict management ▪ Mobilisation of the resources of the educational community
	Management	▪ Criteria and practices of organisation and resource allocation ▪ Criteria for the formation of groups and classes, the preparation of teacher timetables and the distribution of service ▪ Evaluation of the performance of teachers and management of their competencies ▪ Promotion of professional development ▪ Effectiveness of internal and external information and communication channels
	Self-evaluation and improvement	▪ Coherence between self-evaluation and action for improvement ▪ Use of the results of the external evaluation in the preparation of improvement plans ▪ Involvement and participation of the educational community in the self-evaluation ▪ Continuity and scope of self-evaluation ▪ Impact of self-evaluation in planning, organisation and professional practices

Source: Documentation available on the website of the General Inspectorate of Education (IGE), *www.ige.min-edu.pt*.

In the first cycle of school inspections (2006-11), evaluations were reported on a four-point scale covering "insufficient", "sufficient" "good", and "very good", for each of the five evaluated domains. The new cycle of inspections launched in 2011/12 uses a five-point scale for each of the three evaluated domains, which results from the addition of the category "excellent" to the previous scale. As part of the drive for greater accountability and transparency, the reports of the Inspectorate are made publicly available on the Internet. The model used for the first cycle of inspections divided the reports into five chapters covering an introduction, description of provision, evaluation of outcomes, consideration of key factors, and conclusions. Schools are provided with a draft in advance of publication and have 15 days within which to correct factual errors and to raise any issues or concerns. The report is published on the Internet together with any comments made by the school as part of their "right of reply". In addition, all inspection and self-evaluation (or presentation) instruments are publicly available on the Internet and schools are encouraged to consult them in preparation for inspection. In the first cycle of inspections, schools were also encouraged but not required to establish improvement plans following an inspection. This is one of the major adjustments brought by the new cycle of inspections: as of 2011/12, schools are required to develop an improvement plan to respond to the major challenges identified by school inspection. The improvement plan is to be submitted to educational authorities within the two months which follow the publication of the inspection report. The improvement plan is to contain the actions the school will develop to respond to the priority areas identified by the inspection and is to be published on the website of the school.

The outcomes of inspections have been given added weight by linking evaluation results directly to eligibility for autonomy contracts and to teacher performance quotas (see Chapter 4). Individual autonomy contracts specify the degree of autonomy given to a school, negotiated with the Ministry and influenced by the findings of the external evaluation. Similarly, since 2008, the proportion of "excellent" or "very good" marks that can be given to teachers in a school as part of teacher appraisal can be increased by strong results in the external school evaluation.

Inspections are themselves evaluated and schools complete a questionnaire at the end of the process. Results of these questionnaires suggest a generally positive view of the process although the fact that the exercise is conducted by the Inspectorate itself allows a degree of unreliability in the findings. The 2009 IGE Report, for example, indicates that 86% of schools say that the external evaluation report contributes to their improvement process while 27% of schools do not agree that the evaluations made in the reports are fair.

Role of self-evaluation

Self-evaluation by schools has been a legal requirement since 2002 and an explicit link between external and self-evaluation is integral to the inspection process. The government has decided not to promote or impose any particular approach to self-evaluation, preferring an approach which is based on diversity and organic growth. Some schools bring an external element into their own self-evaluation process by appointing "critical friends" but this remains the exception.

At the start of the inspection, the school is provided with an instrument and asked to provide a document and to make a presentation about itself to a prescribed format. This approach is designed to incentivise and strengthen the link to self-evaluation and provides the inspection team with an early view of such things as the school's development

priorities, its strategic plans and the strength and quality of the evidence which has underpinned its improvement process. A strengthened school evaluation culture is seen as one of the important outcomes of the inspection process.

Wider use of the results of school evaluation

The prime purposes of school evaluation relate to the schools themselves. However, the Inspectorate also publishes an annual overview of the patterns of evaluation findings arising from the sample of schools inspected. These overviews cover the domains in the external evaluation framework and are designed to provide decision makers at different levels with information relevant to policy and management of the system (see Chapter 6).

The evaluation of school leaders

The evaluation of school leadership is given considerable importance in the external evaluation of schools in Portugal. As mentioned above, "leadership and management" is one of the three key domains covered by school inspections under the 2011 model. As a consequence, the quality of leadership and management is one of the elements that are being rated by the Inspectorate and that influences the quotas of merit classifications (very good and excellent) that can be awarded to teachers.

In addition to the evaluation of leadership by the Inspectorate, a new appraisal model for individual school directors has been introduced recently. A transitional regime for the performance appraisal of school directors was introduced in October 2009 and slightly revised in the 2010/11 academic year.[2] With the introduction of the 2009 model, the responsibility for the appraisal of school directors was given to the Regional Directors of Education (as explained earlier, the major rationalisation of Ministry services, which followed the change of government in June 2011, will remove Regional Directorates as of January 2013 and the respective services will be taken up by the Directorate General for School Administration, including the appraisal of school directors). The Regional Directors typically evaluate school directors at the end of the academic year on whether they fulfilled a range of pre-defined objectives. As part of the process, each Regional Director forms an evaluation co-ordination council whose members include three school directors. These councils are in charge of ensuring that the appraisal system is rigorously implemented. They can also issue formal opinions on any challenges faced by the school director being evaluated. The appraisal has a summative function; according to the Ministry of Education (forthcoming), the "only effect of the evaluation of a director's performance should be on his/her advancement in the teaching career".

The introduction of school director appraisal needs to be seen in the context of recent reforms of school leadership in Portugal. As explained earlier, the position of school director did not exist in its current form prior to 2008. Traditionally, school management was developed in a collegial way and there was no one single leader responsible for the school. The majority of schools used to have an executive board rather than a director and the members of a school's executive board were teachers elected by the school's staff and student and parent representatives. The 2008 reform of school autonomy, administration and management introduced the post of school director along with a competitive procedure for recruitment. Also, directors are dispensed from teaching and receive a salary supplement in addition to their basic salary as teachers and may receive an additional performance bonus. They were also given greater responsibility to appoint their staff, in particular the heads of the curricular departments. In this context, the new

appraisal process appears to be a way to balance the greater autonomy of school directors with greater accountability and to ensure individual directors are monitored externally.

Strengths

External school evaluation is becoming well established

There has been, at least since the start of the millennium, a clear commitment on the part of the central government to establish a powerful role for external school evaluation within its overall strategy for quality improvement in education. The approach is one which draws appropriately on international good practice, combining self and external evaluation in ways which both reinforce accountability and stimulate improvement.

The government has been cautious in its approach, seeking to build confidence and consensus rather than being seen as imposing an approach without sufficient preparation. Initial approaches to external evaluation and school self-evaluation were undertaken and analysed before the first formal four-year inspection cycle was initiated in 2006. That cycle is now completed and the second, overlapping cycle has begun. The successful completion of over 2 000 external evaluations using a new inspection model over a four-year period is in itself a significant achievement.

The lack of opposition to the inspection cycle despite the novelty of such an approach is also significant. Indeed, evidence gathered by IGE about the reaction of schools to inspection suggests general acceptance of the approach and interviews undertaken during this Review would also suggest broad acceptance of the utility of external evaluation. None of those interviewed, in schools and more widely, expressed any strong opposition to the principle of external evaluation and comments invariably focused on how it might be improved or linked more directly to other areas of policy.

The external evaluation model embodies a number of features of best practice

The process of evaluation undertaken by the Inspectorate is well structured and systematic. Each stage in the process is clear and the approach builds logically towards the ultimate evaluations. Outcomes for young people figure in the conceptual model of evaluation and are reported on in the evaluation report.

The importance of communicating clearly the basis upon which evaluation judgements will be made has been recognised and built into the model. A set of publicly-available criteria for external inspection has been drawn up with an extensive framework of areas for analysis. Evaluations are made on a straightforward five-point word scale which helps to promote consistency both of judgement and of interpretation by readers. Such an approach allows schools, teachers and other stakeholders to understand what it is inspectors are looking for, thus helping to minimise misunderstanding while at the same time reinforcing the need to focus on areas which are central to school effectiveness. Such clarity also allows schools to prepare in advance evidence for inspection teams which, if taken advantage of, avoids possible suspicion arising from unnecessary misunderstanding and allows the time available for inspection to be used to best effect.

Inspection teams combine full-time inspectors with “outsiders”. Combinations of this kind can provide reassurance to those being inspected about the competence and objectivity of teams by bringing different expertise and perspectives to bear during the inspection process. Full-time inspectors develop techniques of evaluation which are specific to this type of work while the non-inspector member of a team can be selected

for his/her own particular expertise and credibility. Such an approach also develops the skills of the "outside" members who can be used outside the inspection process itself as a wider resource for self-evaluation and as informed points of reference who can spread understanding of the purposes and practices of inspection more generally.

Credible inspection should be based on reliable and relevant evidence rather than opinion. There is an almost inevitable degree of contention about the results of inspection and disagreement can be mitigated through systematic gathering, analysis of and reference to relevant evidence. Commendably, the approach to external evaluation in Portugal is designed to be evidence driven. The provision of a data profile for an inspection team provides outcome information, aids efficiency by allowing the team to focus its attention on key issues and can help to benchmark and contextualise judgements. Similarly, documentation is sought and analysed as a key part of evidence gathering and a sample of stakeholders is interviewed in the course of the inspection. As a result, inspection teams have a wide body of evidence upon which to base their judgements.

Transparency is a feature of the approach

Increasingly, as can be seen from the Standing International Conference of Inspectorates (SICI) website, inspectorates across Europe are embracing transparency as integral to effective external evaluation. Such transparency is seen as fairer to those inspected as well as promoting the integrity, rigour and impact of external evaluation. The approach, procedures and instruments used in inspection are now routinely available on the web and inspection reports themselves are published either in paper form or digitally. Portugal has adopted much of this thinking. The inclusion of outside members of the team is in itself part of an open approach to inspection. The criteria for evaluation and the inspection instruments are publicly available and the inspection team actively encourages the school to examine this documentation in advance. School evaluation reports are published on the web, having first been given to the school in draft form to allow the correction of factual errors and challenge to findings. In addition, schools have a "right of reply" published with the inspection report, a feature of transparency which is much less common in other inspection regimes. This fair and open approach is a real strength of external evaluation in Portugal and is likely to have influenced the generally positive response by schools to the process as a whole.

A relationship has been established between self and external evaluation

A reliance on external evaluation alone can promote a culture of compliance or "gaming" within which schools seek to satisfy the demands of inspection but do not themselves take ownership of or accept responsibility for improvement. Self-evaluation is integral to continuous improvement which is not solely reliant on the impact of external evaluation. However, self-evaluation can also be subject to self delusion where assumptions are not challenged and power relationships in the school community have an undue influence on what is evaluated and the nature of the judgements themselves. A combination of self and external evaluation, as used in Portugal, is an approach which can maximise the benefits of both while counteracting the limitations arising from an over-reliance on the use of only one.

Commendably, Portugal has seen the importance of establishing an evaluation culture within which self-evaluation is a legal expectation and is also promoted by the external evaluation process itself. Self-evaluation existed in some form in all of the schools visited by the review team. It is also a precondition of autonomy contracts. Inspections start with

a presentation by the school which should be a reflection of its evaluation of its own strengths and weaknesses. Evaluation criteria also promote self-evaluation and include a specific field for analysis dedicated to "self-evaluation and improvement", among the nine fields for analysis. In addition, although no single approach to self-evaluation is required, IGE has developed and promoted instruments to help schools to evaluate themselves. Such instruments include associated reading and links to useful international examples of relevant approaches and good practice.

An upper secondary school visited during the Review illustrated a number of positive features of self-evaluation. The school's General Council and the director took clear ownership of the evaluation process and had established a self-evaluation team within the school. A set of criteria had been drawn up, broadly reflecting that used by IGE in external evaluation. An annual focus for evaluation was determined and a report prepared for the school's Pedagogic Council which was designed to guide improvement rather than pass judgement. Although observation of learning and teaching was not undertaken, class-by-class investigations were included but the evidence was not attributed. Conclusions were reached through conventional triangulation methods. There was a strong feeling across the school that this process was effective in helping to drive continuous improvement.

School leadership is promoted in school evaluation

The central importance of high quality leadership is recognised internationally as a key factor in school effectiveness (McKinsey & Company, 2010; OECD, 2009). Recent developments in Portugal have seen the creation of school or cluster directors charged with the pedagogical leadership of a school or a number of schools in a cluster. There is an explicit recognition that the process of self-evaluation is hugely dependent on a director's capacity to stimulate engagement, to mobilise resources and to ensure appropriate training and support. The approach to inspection has, in turn, reinforced the importance of such leadership. Directors are seen as important actors in the course of an inspection, have direct accountability during the self-evaluation and external evaluation processes and have the main responsibility for ensuring that the results of the inspection are communicated and its recommendations taken forward. Inspection criteria relate specifically to leadership with one of the three domains covering "leadership and management", which is divided in three fields for analysis: leadership, management, and self-evaluation and improvement.

Schools benefit from some follow-up

A key test of the impact of external evaluation is what happens next. How far does the process lead to real changes in practice which in turn improve the quality of children's learning and the standards they achieve? In Portugal, at the time of the review visit, there was an expectation that schools which received the lowest marks would be followed up. This was not the responsibility of IGE but the Regional Directors had the responsibility for working with such schools to ensure that an appropriate improvement plan was developed (services provided by the Regional Directorates will be integrated in the Directorate General for School Administration as of 2013). With the implementation of the second cycle model of external evaluations, as of 2011/12, the requirement for each school inspected to prepare an improvement plan to respond to the challenges identified by the inspection has been introduced. The expectation is that each inspected school will be followed up by educational authorities to assess the extent to which its improvement plan is effectively overcoming the shortcomings identified by inspection.

Inspections are themselves evaluated

There has been increasing international recognition that inspection itself should embody the principles of self-evaluation and improvement. Inspectors should "practise what they preach". Again in Portugal this principle has been accepted and put into practice. In addition to being given the published "right of reply" referred to earlier in this chapter, schools are asked to complete a questionnaire at the end of an inspection giving their views on how it was conducted. These evaluations are then collated and published in IGE's annual reports.

A good basis for further development

Taken as a whole, the approach to external and self-evaluation in Portugal has many positive features. The policy direction is clear and explicit expectations have been set for the Inspectorate, for schools and for directors. The processes employed in the evaluation process reflect, at least in part, much of developing international best practice in inspection. As a result, a strong platform has been established upon which future policy and practice can build.

Challenges

There is a need to strengthen a culture of evaluation and improvement

A recurrent theme in the Review was the need to establish a much stronger and more pervasive evaluation culture in Portuguese education. Reactions to practices pre-1974 are seen as having contributed to resistance to anything that can be portrayed as top-down imposition, whether from the national, local or in-school levels. Collegiality is a strong and positive feature of Portuguese schools but needs to be set within a more dynamic climate of leadership, evaluation and accountability. At the same time, long-established traditions of professional autonomy have resulted in attitudes which inhibit challenge or professional learning in relation to teaching practices and student outcomes. Recent moves to strengthen leadership allied to external evaluation, self-evaluation and accountability therefore face considerable challenges in establishing themselves within a culture which apparently places such high value on a teacher's classroom autonomy.

Perhaps the greatest single challenge facing school education in Portugal, therefore, is to establish a powerful and persuasive narrative which aligns policy, strategy and practice around these big strategic issues of leadership, evaluation and improvement. Although policy in Portuguese education has recognised the importance of this more rounded culture, it was clear during the Review that this "big picture" was not commonly understood and the potential of school evaluation, external and internal, to help achieve necessary alignment, was not perceived widely across the system. Policy was too often seen as a set of initiatives which operated in compartments and, partly as a result, necessary synergies were not being realised. The Education Programme 2015 provides an opportunity to re-emphasise the agenda built around a broad and imaginative set of outcomes.

There is an insufficient focus on learning and teaching

Arguably, the most important area for inspection and self-evaluation is what happens at the points where learning itself takes place. Failure to place learning and teaching at the heart of the evaluation process sends ambiguous signals about what matters and means that evaluation judgements can only be based on proxy indicators, the evidence for which

is open to manipulation and misrepresentation. No matter how superficially impressive documentation or reported teaching practices may be, they need to be able to stand the test of direct observation of the quality of teaching and of relationships during the learning process. Similarly, self-evaluation should also consider the quality of learning and teaching and its relationship to learning outcomes as its core activity.

Although the Portuguese approach to inspection has many features of good practice, it focuses too much on documentation and administrative and management processes rather than on the quality and effectiveness of learning and teaching. According to TALIS, in the 2007/08 school year, only 40.8% of teachers of lower secondary education worked in schools where the school principal reported that the direct appraisal of classroom teaching was considered with high or moderate importance in school self-evaluation or external evaluation (the second lowest figure among the TALIS countries surveyed, against a TALIS average of 71.1%, see Annex D). As a result, there is not enough emphasis on pedagogical aspects particularly on identifying the main features of effective or high quality teaching using evidence from international studies and research. For example collaborative research by the Dutch and English inspectorates has been used to develop and test observation protocols to study and measure the quality of teaching in a number of European countries (van de Grift, 2007). Issues of teacher autonomy have made direct observation of teaching a particularly sensitive matter for inspectorates and school leaders. Establishing the importance of such a focus and the accessibility of classrooms to external involvement raises important questions of governance as well as technical issues associated with the criteria for judgement and the transparency of judgements.

The model of inspection which IGE put into practice around the turn of the century included direct observation of classroom practice but, partly as a reaction to difficulties with that approach, that was not included as a feature of the later cycle of inspection which began in 2006. The difficulties associated with such a move should not be underestimated given the strong tradition of teacher autonomy in the classroom which exists in Portugal. These certainly contributed to the inability of including the direct observation of classroom practice in the methodology used by the new cycle of external evaluation, launched in 2011/12. While it was clear from the schools visited in the Review that external access to classrooms remains an issue of contention, a not infrequent criticism of current approaches was the failure to look directly at learning and teaching. It was clear from the visits made to schools during the Review that, with effective leadership, a culture of trust can be established within which the need to ensure consistently high quality learning and teaching is given primacy. It is encouraging, for example, that at the time of the review team visit around 40% of teachers had asked for classroom observation as part of the teacher performance appraisal process which was in place at the time.

School self-evaluation requires to be strengthened

Although the importance of school self-evaluation has been recognised as a policy imperative over at least the last decade, its penetration across the school system remains at an early stage of development. The policy decision not to promote any particular model was designed at least in part to encourage creativity and local ownership but the lack of specificity can also be interpreted as indicating a lower priority to this aspect of school reform. It is clear that schools have only a limited understanding of the contribution which self-evaluation can and should make to improving practice and no clear models have emerged generally. School leaders and key staff lack the confidence and competence to develop bottom-up approaches and as a result, although some form of self-evaluation

can be identified generally, its rigour and impact on practice remains at best very rudimentary. The absence of an evaluation tradition and culture which encourages openness and reflection means that, as with external evaluation, the focus is more on administrative processes rather than the quality of learning and teaching and its impact on outcomes for learners.

The attempt to use external evaluation to promote self-evaluation is well targeted but has not, as yet, proved a sufficient catalyst for adoption of self-evaluation as an integral part of school life. The open promotion of a variety of instruments and approaches requires an initial level of competence and commitment if it is to have real impact. Similarly, the variety of approach makes it difficult to target training and resources in ways which optimise uptake and implementation.

It is also difficult for self-evaluation to flourish in an environment within which leadership is a relatively new concept and processes of strategic planning and outcome analysis are not very systematic. The post of school director is very new in Portugal and it would not be surprising if those appointed were still coming to terms with the implications of their role and have not yet grasped the potential significance of self-evaluation in establishing the kind of culture which will aid them in that role. Although data are available, they tend to be used descriptively and there is insufficient analysis of what the data can say about outcomes and the factors which are of greatest importance locally.

The outcomes of self-evaluation are also very diffuse and lack traction on practice. The extent to which action may or may not be taken is very much at the discretion of individuals, particularly the school director. There is no requirement for a school to give its own account to its community of where it stands currently and what its priorities are for improvement (even if this will partially change in the new cycle of external school evaluation with the requirement for schools to publicise on their website the improvement plan prepared as a response to the latest inspection). The potential of such self-evaluation reporting to engage parents in the work of the school has also not been sufficiently exploited.

There is a need to build competence in the techniques of evaluation

Whether external or internal, good evaluation requires the presence of key technical skills in those involved. There remains a significant challenge in Portugal to establish such skills to the required level both in the Inspectorate and across directors and school staff more generally. As a result, there was little evidence of schools engaging in deep analysis of student outcomes. Those involved need to understand the nature of valid and reliable evidence and to have the capacity to gather that evidence in ways which do not dominate or supplant existing activities of management and teaching. In particular, knowing what data are of greatest value and how to gather and analyse them contrasts with approaches which harvest large quantities of information without being clear about its purpose or priority. The questions which are asked in any evaluation are critical, both in guiding the activity and in signalling what is seen to matter. Again evaluators, in whatever role, need to understand how to generate and pose the right questions for the task in hand. Training for self-evaluation has to date been very limited but should form part of the development programmes for every director.

The impact of external evaluation is limited

Evidence available to the review team suggested that IGE inspection reports are not widely read. In one school, the view was expressed that they were only really for the director and there was a general unfamiliarity with the findings of past inspections. According to TALIS, in the 2007/08 school year, only 55.1% of teachers of lower secondary education worked in schools where the school principal reported that school evaluations had a high or moderate level of influence on the assistance provided to teachers to improve their teaching (the fifth lowest figure among the TALIS countries surveyed, against a TALIS average of 70.3%, see Annex D). Parental groups were generally positive about reports but unsure about their impact. Part of the reason for this lack of impact may have lied in the absence of any clear follow-up by IGE to its inspection findings, except in the most critical cases where the Regional Director ensured that there was an improvement plan, as was characteristic of the first cycle of external evaluation (2006-11). As a result there was a general perception that, while there was no strong antipathy towards inspections, they were not seen as being of great significance. As described earlier, the new inspection cycle launched in 2011/12 introduces the requirement for each school to establish an improvement plan subsequently to an inspection.

At the same time, there are high-stakes consequences arising from their direct implications for teacher appraisal quotas and eligibility for autonomy contracts. There is therefore a degree of ambiguity about the role and purpose of inspections – as an important element in control, on the one hand, and as an encouragement to the school to self-evaluate and take ownership of improvement, on the other. Where evaluation, internal or external, is perceived almost as ritualistic or simply as compliance with external prescription, it is unlikely that it will have any widespread or sustained impact on practice.

There are some issues about the credibility of external evaluators

There were mixed messages about the credibility of IGE inspectors. Some schools were highly positive about their work, while others saw them as remote figures, too distant from the realities of the classroom. Similar dichotomous views exist in many other jurisdictions but, nonetheless, the challenge remains to ensure that those who are engaging in external evaluation are themselves highly credible. That credibility can derive both from personal characteristics and the way in which they carry out the difficult task of inspection but must also derive from perceptions about their closeness to school life and to learning and teaching in modern schools.

There are concerns related to the implementation of school director appraisal

School leadership appraisal, if it is well implemented, holds the potential to make an important contribution to the improvement of school leadership practices and school organisation as a whole (Radinger, forthcoming). The central place given to "leadership and management" in the revised school inspection model as well as the introduction of school director appraisal in Portugal are positive steps towards ensuring that school leaders receive the feedback and support they need to adequately fulfil their new role.

However, there appear to be a number of challenges in the implementation of school director appraisal processes. First, the clear intention that appraisal results shall be used only for summative purposes, namely advancement on the career scale, limits the potential for school leaders to learn from the process and use the results to improve their

own practice. It reduces the focus on identifying strengths they can build on and weaknesses that need to be addressed by suitable professional development. Hence, individual school directors appear to have little opportunity for professional feedback that provides guidance on how they can improve.

Second, given that the post of school director was created only recently, the Portuguese system does not yet have a framework or professional standards for effective educational leadership. Hence, there is no system-wide statement or profile of what school directors are expected to know and be able to do and no uniform performance criteria against which they could be appraised. Currently, the objectives to be reached in a given year are suggested by individual school directors and then negotiated with the responsible Regional Director (and, as of 2013, with DGAE). As a result, it is likely that there is variation in the focus of school director appraisals across schools. While it is important to adapt appraisal processes to local contexts (Ginsberg and Thompson, 1992; Murphy, 2005), for school director appraisal to be effective across the system it would be important that there is a shared understanding of high quality leadership and the level of performance that can be achieved by the most effective school leaders.

Third, the systematic implementation of school director appraisal in all schools was perceived as challenging for the Regional Directorates in terms of logistics and human resources. Each of the five Regional Directors is responsible for a large number of schools and, in addition, also has to appraise the staff at the Regional Directorate and the directors of Regional Training Centres. While the Regional Directors are ultimately responsible for school director appraisal, the actual appraisal process is delegated to local teams. A representative interviewed by the OECD review team described the task of school leadership appraisal as "daunting", especially because Regional Directorates are quite remote from what happens on a daily basis at the school level. Also, appraising school directors is a complex and difficult task that requires competencies the Regional Directorate staff in charge of the process does not necessarily have through prior training. Possibly as a result of both limited time and limited preparation for the task, based on the information gathered through the OECD review team interviews, school director appraisal appeared to rely primarily on the checking of documents and assessment results, and much less on other tools such as observation of school leaders in their daily work, interviews or surveys with stakeholders, peer evaluation or self-evaluation performed by school leaders.

Finally, there were no indications that the appraisal of individual school leaders by the Regional Directorates was connected to the evaluation of school "leadership and management" by the Inspectorate. As a result, there might be a risk that the two processes send conflicting messages regarding effective practice and expected improvement.

Policy recommendations

Evidence about strengths and challenges of school evaluation in Portugal suggests that there is in place an emerging approach to evaluation upon which future policy can build. In most cases, the need is to refine and extend practices which are already in place rather than to seek to establish an entirely fresh direction of travel.

Establish the focus for evaluation as being to improve learning and teaching and student outcomes

Evaluation frameworks, the criteria and questions governing judgements and the methods employed should all focus much more directly on the quality of learning and teaching and their relationship to student outcomes. That will require significant alterations to existing models and instruments and a determined effort to build a culture of openness and reflection around what happens during the learning and teaching process.

Leadership at the level of the Ministry will be essential if an open evaluation culture is to be established. Government policy should articulate much more clearly the legitimacy of a focus on learning and teaching and student outcomes for both external evaluation and self-evaluation and that such a focus will be the key concern of wider accountabilities.

- The Inspectorate, drawing on its previous experience with the "Integrated School Assessments" model, should be asked to revise its inspection framework to ensure that the quality of learning lies at the heart of external evaluation, including with direct classroom observation as an evaluation instrument. New criteria should be developed, engaging leading practitioners from schools and higher education institutions in shaping the factors to be taken into account.
- Current approaches to data gathering and the content of inspection profiles should be reviewed to create a sharper focus on the most important factors, particularly in relation to student outcomes.
- Inspectors should be trained in the evaluation of these new criteria.

Improve the alignment between external and self-evaluation and raise the profile of self-evaluation

Better alignment is needed between policy and practice in both external evaluation and self-evaluation. In particular, there is a need to ensure that the criteria used in both spheres are sufficiently similar as to create a common language about priorities and about the key factors which influence high quality learning and teaching. Lack of clarity about what matters is likely to reinforce current confusion and continue to relegate self-evaluation to something which serves inspection rather than creating a platform for an exchange based on reliable and comparable evidence.

Better alignment between external and self-evaluation would be promoted by:

- recommending the use of the same set of criteria in both external and self-evaluation;
- stressing the importance of learning and teaching and student outcomes for self-evaluation leading to more open discussion of teachers' practice;
- creating a framework for the school presentation during inspection which starts with their evaluation of teaching quality, student outcomes and the steps they are taking to optimise the relationship between the two;
- having a stronger focus on how the school is going about its own self-evaluation and using the results to improve learning;
- using criteria about the quality of teaching to inform discussions in teacher appraisals; and

- requiring schools to publish annual self-evaluation reports showing how they are currently performing and the steps they are taking to bring about improvement.

Improve the acceptability and impact of external inspection

Creating a stronger focus on learning and teaching is likely of itself to improve the impact of inspection. However, a number of other steps need to be taken to reinforce the significance of inspection for the improvement of the school. In particular, the credibility of teams needs to be improved and transparency of reporting used more directly as a driver of improvement.

- The criteria used to select inspectors should be reviewed to ensure that those recruited have the skills and attributes necessary for the strengthened approach to inspection. Thereafter, training of inspectors should also be reviewed to ensure that the appropriate skills and behaviours are being reinforced and developed throughout careers.
- The range of individuals who provide the additional element in inspection teams should be extended. The use of highly credible school directors and leading practitioners in inspection would both heighten the credibility of the team and build capacity in the education system as a whole. Experience elsewhere would suggest that engaging people directly from the field in inspection is a powerful form of professional development both for the individuals and as a resource more widely.
- Consideration should also be given to asking the school to nominate someone to work with the inspection team as already happens successfully in ESTYN, the Welsh Inspectorate. Direct involvement of this nature can help to generate ownership, address misconceptions and ease the process of accessing relevant information quickly and easily.
- Improve the nature of reporting by making reports less technical and more readable to a non-specialist audience. Schools should also be required to be proactive in publicising reports with staff and parents. Local media and elected representatives should be provided with links to reports.
- Introduce more systematic follow-up by the Inspectorate to its inspections. Routine follow-up is a feature of inspection in many inspectorates across Europe and is seen as a means of maintaining momentum for improvement. The Inspectorate has already taken recent steps in this direction through a small programme of monitoring visits to look at self-evaluation and improvement following an external evaluation; and through the requirement for each school to submit an improvement plan to the educational authority following an inspection, which was introduced in the new 2011/12 inspection model. However, a programme of follow-up visits, suitably differentiated on the basis of the original report, would give added impetus and credibility to the overall evaluation process. Sweden offers a good model. After each evaluation all schools are given a "to do" list which is monitored through follow-up evaluations. Furthermore, the schools are provided with rich qualitative and quantitative feedback on a range of aspects (Nusche *et al.*, 2011).

- Inspectors need to be careful about how they frame their recommendations; over-specificity can lead to a cycle of compliance and it is therefore important that they focus on capacity and direction of travel rather than highly specific actions. Analysis of these submissions would allow a programme of follow-up visits to be mounted formally by inspectors between cycles and the results of these visits should also be published.
- An important aspect of providing advice to schools consists of identifying good practice in the school system. Systematic analysis of key features and sharing examples of good practice would be useful, especially for those schools which are identified as facing greater challenges and could support the school self-evaluation process. Overall, it seems that the identification and sharing of good practice is still fairly uncommon in Portugal and the Inspectorate should reinforce its role in this function.

Consider changes to the length of inspections and of the cycle

The greater depth which will come from creating a stronger focus on learning and teaching has implications for the length of inspections. The current two or three days are likely to prove insufficient if the sample of lessons observed is to be meaningful. Moving to a five-year cycle of inspection would release additional resources for greater depth and longer inspections and allow inspection teams to explore learning and teaching more directly. At the same time, more developed follow-up arrangements would have implications for the length of the inspection cycle. Proportionate follow-up visits and short reports on progress would offset any extension to the length of the cycle.

Inspection approaches across Europe are changing with a strengthened emphasis on risk in a number of countries. Moving to differentiated inspection models requires a high level of intelligence about school characteristics and performance. The evaluation culture in Portugal is still developing and inspection has an important role to play in reinforcing that culture and building capacity in all schools. However, at the end of the second cycle of inspection and assuming improved data gathering and analysis it should be possible to look at a less uniform approach.

Improve the articulation between school evaluation and other policy developments

In addition to promoting and building capacity for self-evaluation, external school evaluation has the potential to enhance the policy agenda in a variety of other ways. The proposed stronger focus within external school evaluation on teacher performance is a positive next step. If the standards for teacher appraisal are articulated with the school evaluation framework, then stronger synergies can be created between the two. This approach should be complemented by the use of evaluation evidence in the appraisal of the leadership of school directors which would be significantly enhanced by a stronger link to evidence from external evaluation.

Ensure school leaders receive appropriate feedback on their performance

Strong school leadership capacity is key to effective school self-evaluation and school improvement. Further enhancing the performance appraisal of school directors is one way to contribute to building and enhancing the new role of school directors as educational leaders. Effective school director appraisal should help provide constructive external feedback, identify areas of needed improvement and offer targeted support to improve practice.

In order to strengthen school leadership appraisal, the OECD review team recommends the development of a school leadership framework or standards to provide a credible reference for the appraisal of school directors. Such a framework can help enhance the objectivity and fairness of the appraisal process and avoid complacency among leaders that may perform well but still can improve their practice (Reeves, 2009). Such standards need to be informed by research and express the complexity of what effective school leaders are expected to know and be able to do. At the same time, it is important to recognise the situational nature of school leaders' tasks and allow for standards to be balanced with local ideas (Pashiardis and Brauckmann, 2008; Kimball *et al.*, 2009). The national framework or standards for school leadership should not be seen as a template or checklist against which directors are to be appraised. Rather, they should be a point of departure for reflection on locally relevant criteria in relation to national reference points (for more detail, see Radinger, forthcoming). For school leadership standards to be relevant and "owned" by school directors in Portugal, it is also important that school leadership professionals take the lead or strongly participate in developing them.

Another key element to make school director appraisal effective and useful is to ensure that both evaluators and evaluatees have the necessary competencies. For evaluators at the level of the Regional Directorate (and, as of 2013, DGES), training regarding effective leadership appraisal is important to avoid substantial differences between evaluators in the application of the appraisal system (Kimball *et al.*, 2009), as well as to ensure that they can provide constructive feedback and support for improvement based on shared appraisal criteria. In order to ensure consistency in the evaluation of school leadership across Portugal, it would also be helpful to develop co-operation regarding school leadership evaluation between the Regional Directorates (and, as of 2013, the Directorate General for School Administration) and the national Inspectorate. Moreover, school directors themselves also need to be prepared to use appraisal results for their own professional learning. In particular, it is important for school directors to be knowledgeable about the appraisal process and the expectations they are evaluated against (Radinger, forthcoming). As suggested in Chapter 4, Portugal should consider introducing a training programme for school leaders as part of a broader national strategy to build the capacity and credibility of school directors. Preparation for their own appraisal and effective use of appraisal results should be part of such training.

Notes

1. The implementation of the second cycle of external evaluation had not started by the time the review visit was organised. As a result, the analysis in this chapter concentrates on the practices used during the completed first cycle of school inspections (2006-11). However, the major features of the second cycle are highlighted throughout the chapter.
2. Since the 2010/11 revision, school directors are appraised in relation to the specific system for evaluating middle managers in public administration, but the evaluation continues to be compatible with the statute governing the teaching career. Other than that, the revised model retains the key features and objectives as established in 2009.

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Chapter 6

Education system evaluation

A range of tools are used to monitor performance of the education system. Information on student learning outcomes is collected from educational progress national tests in Grade 4 and from national examinations in Grades 6 and 9 and in secondary education. The monitoring system also includes a range of statistics on education based on snap-shot data collected from schools on a standardised format. These are the basis for annual publications with system-level indicators on education. Also, international benchmarks of student performance provided by international student surveys such as PISA have been influential in driving policy development at the system level. In addition, there has been a growing interest in undertaking studies of the impact of policy initiatives and in preparing thematic reports which can inform policy development. Particularly positive features of system evaluation include the well-established education indicators framework; the new concern for framing system evaluation in relation to educational targets; the existence of student performance data; and the qualitative analysis undertaken in thematic reports. However, system evaluation is faced with a number of challenges. These include the little emphasis on the evaluation of the education system; the lack of measures on students' socio-economic background; the little emphasis on investigating differences of student outcomes across specific groups; the limited information on the teaching and learning environment; and the room to better exploit system-level information.

This chapter looks at system evaluation within the Portuguese evaluation and assessment framework. System evaluation refers to approaches to monitor and evaluate the performance of the education system as a whole. The main aims of system evaluation are to provide accountability information to the public and to improve educational processes and outcomes.

Context and features

Responsibilities for evaluation of the Portuguese education system

The Ministry of Education and Science is responsible for the overall monitoring of the education system. According to the Basic Law on the Education System, the evaluation of the overall system is to be undertaken on a permanent basis and should include the following aspects: educational, pedagogical, psychological, sociological, organisational, economic and financial, administrative and cultural. At present, it includes the collection of annual statistical data from schools, statistical analysis, data management and the development of education indicators. The Ministry also designs assessments to monitor student outcomes at the system level. Further, the Ministry engages in the assessment of the impact of education policy initiatives, mostly through studies commissioned externally. The main Ministry units involved in these areas are the Office for Education Statistics and Planning (GEPE), the Information System Co-ordinating Office (MISI) (both of which have recently been integrated into the Directorate General for Education and Science Statistics, DGEEC) and the Office for Educational Evaluation (GAVE).

The Ministry of Education and Science holds responsibility for providing evidence on the performance of the school system. The goals of system evaluation include: *(i)* promoting the quality, organisation, efficiency and efficacy of the education system; *(ii)* supporting the formulation, development and implementation of educational policies; and *(iii)* ensuring the availability of management information about the education system.

The Ministry also monitors quality in the school system via school inspection, a central element in system evaluation. In fact, the Basic Law on the Education System conceives the evaluation of the education system as mostly drawing on the self and external evaluation of schools. As a result, the Inspectorate assumes special responsibilities in system evaluation on the basis of the overall picture provided by the external evaluation of individual schools. The Inspectorate also takes responsibility for evaluating and auditing the Ministry of Education and Science's departments and units.

In addition, the National Education Council (CNE) reviews the implementation of national education policy and provides independent advice to the government on national education issues. The CNE has the right to initiate reviews, investigate specific themes, report and publish findings on the provision of education in Portugal.

Major tools to monitor performance of the education system

National assessments of student performance

Portugal collects a range of data on education system performance in relation to national curriculum goals. Information on student learning outcomes is collected from educational progress national tests in Grade 4 (*provas de aferição*) and from national examinations in Grades 6 and 9, and in secondary education.[1]

The educational progress tests in basic education take place at the end of the first cycle (Grade 4) in two curricular areas: Portuguese and mathematics. These are full cohort paper based tests covering both public and private schools and with no stakes for students. Their main objective is to assess the progress of students towards achieving the goals defined in the curriculum. These tests are also diagnostic tools made available to schools and teachers to enable them to develop teaching practices which promote the quality of learning. Each school is given information that is broken down by class and teacher with student performance provided by domain of competency in Portuguese language (reading, writing, explicit knowledge of the language), and by thematic area in mathematics (geometry, numbers and calculus, probability and statistics, algebra). Results are reported in individual summary reports for each test. National-level results are provided with overall student performance (percentage of students within each of five categories), performance by domain of competency or thematic area, and performance by test item. Some short considerations are also made about differences *vis-à-vis* the results of the previous year. Results are not published at the school level and no comparisons are made between different student groups or regions of the country.

In basic education, national examinations take place both at the end of the second cycle (Grade 6) and in the last year (Grade 9) in Portuguese (either as a mother or non-mother tongue) and mathematics. The reference standards for the exams are the programmatic contents (learning and competencies) for the second and third cycles of basic education (Grades 5-6 and Grades 7-9, respectively). In secondary education, national examinations take place in the last year of each subject and are based on the respective national programme. They apply to students on scientific/humanistic courses only and cover the Portuguese subject in the general training component, the three-year subject, and both of the two-year subjects in the specific training component. In both basic and secondary education, the results of the examinations represent 30% of the final mark in each subject and are part of a certification process (a student approves a subject if s/he achieves a mark of 3 out of 5 in basic education, and of 10 out of 20 in secondary education). Results are reported by the National Examinations Jury in a single annual report which covers all examinations at both levels of education. For examinations in basic education, average results are provided at the national level and by municipality. Comparisons are made with the previous year's results and with the marks given by teachers in their continuous summative assessment of students. For examinations in secondary education, average results are provided at the national and regional level (higher level of aggregation than municipal level) with a comparison with marks given by teachers. For both educational levels, results are also published at the school level (simple average) and no comparisons are made between different student groups.

Overall marks given by teachers in their summative assessment of students are not reported at the school level but regional-level averages are reported in the areas in which examinations are conducted.

System-level indicators

For the purpose of system-level monitoring, student performance data are complemented by a wide range of demographic, administrative and contextual data. The Ministry, through the Information System Co-ordinating Office (MISI) (as of late 2011, integrated in DGEEC), collects statistical snap-shot data from public schools and private schools which receive public funding. The data collections are conducted in articulation with the schools which take responsibility for entering the original data into their information management computer application. Schools are requested to periodically

send their data in a standardised format to MISI. The dataset includes information on students (type of enrolment; completion; absenteeism; age; gender; marks; student aid such as school meals, assistance for special needs, scholarships), teachers (functions; qualifications; career status; age; gender; areas taught; teaching hours; absenteeism; remuneration), non-teaching staff (qualifications; age; gender; category), schools (financial management) and use of technology (number of computers; Internet connections). Schools have access to their own data on the database managed by MISI through a password-protected electronic platform. The overall system is based on the information management computer applications used by schools. These are produced by computer software companies and schools can choose from among the ones certified by the Ministry.

The Ministry of Education and Science, through the Office for Education Statistics and Planning (GEPE) (as of late 2011, integrated in DGEEC), brings together the basic education statistics described above and publishes reports with system-level indicators on education. The annual *Statistics on Education* covers student enrolment, transition and completion rates (by level and type of education, school type, gender, and region), teachers and non-teaching staff (by level and type of education, school type, gender, region, career status and functions) and number of schools (by level of education, type and region) for a given school year. In turn, the publication *Education in Numbers* provides a subset and simplified version of the same indicators but it includes a time dimension with figures for the previous ten years. Other statistical publications include the *Profile of the Student*, the *Profile of the Teacher*, the *Technological Modernisation of Schools* and *Students as they Exit Secondary Education*. GEPE also makes available an *Education Statistics* web portal giving public access to its statistics.

The Ministry has also the major responsibility for developing international indicators on the basic and secondary education system, as part of the joint UNESCO-OECD-EUROSTAT annual data collection on enrolment, graduation, finance and personnel.

Information systems

In addition to the education database managed by MISI and the schools' individual information management systems, a number of other information systems have been recently developed within the Portuguese education system. An example is the Schools Portal (*www.portaldasescolas.pt*), an online collaborative network for the education community targeted at teachers, students and parents. The Portal provides basic information about each school in the country (location, educational offerings, contacts), digital resources for teachers to use in their classroom (including the possibility for teachers to share their materials), information about policy initiatives and news of interest for education practitioners. Other information systems include the Observatory of Student Pathways in Secondary School (*Observatório de Trajectos dos Estudantes do Ensino Secundário,* OTES) and the System for Information and Management of Education and Training Offerings (*Sistema de Informação e Gestão da Oferta Educativa e Formativa,* SIGO).

Thematic evaluations and policy evaluation

The General Inspectorate of Education (IGE) (as of late 2011, part of the General Inspectorate of Education and Science, IGEC) publishes since 2006 an annual report with an overview of the external school evaluations conducted the respective year – the most recent report is *External Evaluation of Schools 2009-2010*. It provides information at the

system level to inform policy makers. The report gives an overall perspective of school performance across the aspects evaluated, including schools' areas of strength, opportunities and the main challenges they face. It also provides analysis of specific issues such as promoting schools' self-evaluation.

The National Education Council (CNE) publishes reports on a range of themes such as lifelong learning in the national debate on education, indicators of the education system and the motivation of Portuguese youth for training in science and technology. An important contribution is the annual publication of the report *The State of Education*, which provides an analysis of key data on the education system. The first issue, *The State of Education 2010 – School Paths*, offered a more detailed investigation of student pathways in the education system and the second issue, *The State of Education 2011 – The Qualifications of the Portuguese Population*, provided an in-depth examination of the current qualifications of the population. The report also offers advice on how to improve the quality of basic and secondary education. The CNE also makes recommendations for policy development and issues views about policy initiatives. In 2011 these covered areas such as school evaluation, the funding of public schools, education for children aged 0-3 years, the reorganisation of the school network, the Learning Goals programme and the 2015 Education Programme.

The Ministry, through the Office for Education Statistics and Planning (GEPE) (as of late 2011, through DGEEC), commissions evaluations to monitor the implementation of national policies such as the National Reading Plan, and undertakes studies to assist with the implementation of some initiatives such as the ICT Competencies Plan, or the Schools Portal. In addition, GEPE (and now DGEEC) also promotes the preparation of strategic reports. Recent examples include studies on the Internationalisation of the Portuguese Language and Digital Educational Resources. Similarly, the National Agency for Qualification (ANQ) (as of late 2011, ANQEP) devised an overall strategy for monitoring the implementation of the New Opportunities programme, including an extensive external evaluation led by the Portuguese Catholic University (Carneiro *et al.*, 2010).

Participation in international student surveys

Portugal has shown growing interest in international benchmarks of student performance over recent years. It has participated in the OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) of 15-year-old students since its inception in 2000, testing students' knowledge and skills in reading, mathematics and science at the end of lower secondary education. More recently, Portugal has administered tests to younger students by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA), including the Progress in Reading Literacy Skills survey (PIRLS-2011 for 4th-graders) and the Trends in Mathematics and Science Skills survey (TIMSS-2011 for 4th- and 8th-graders). In addition, Portugal participated in 2011 in the European Commission's Survey on Language Competences, which tested students in their final year of lower secondary education in the two most widely taught foreign European languages (English and French). Portugal also regularly participates in the OECD's Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) which provides information on teachers' perceptions of various aspects of the school environment including their profession.

Participation in such assessments provides benchmark information on the education system's performance and also allows monitoring of progress over time, for example via the trend data available for PISA from 2000. Outcome measures offered by participation

in international studies have been among the major indicators of performance in school education in Portugal. The PISA results have been very influential in both driving educational policy deliberations and designing the national student testing system. For instance, PISA has greatly influenced the design of assessment items for educational progress tests and national examinations. In addition, individual schools are encouraged to work with international tests.

Strengths

An Education Indicators Framework is well established

An Education Indicators Framework is in place to assist decision makers analyse the state of the education system, monitor trends over time, and provide information to the general public. The framework includes five core components (students, teachers, non-teaching staff, schools and use of technology) and covers, as main areas, student enrolment and completion, teacher qualifications and working conditions, and school resources. It involves well-established procedures for data collection in close articulation with schools.

Education statistics are widely disseminated. The Indicators Framework is the basis for statistical reporting on the education system in forms such as the annual publications *Statistics on Education* and *Education in Numbers*. The management of the Framework by GEPE and MISI (and, from late 2011, DGEEC) also ensures a way to monitor statistical development needs at all levels of schooling and to prioritise areas for improvement. Regularly updated statistics on education are also available on line at the *Statistics on Education* web portal (*http://estatisticas.gepe.min-edu.pt*). It has been developed as a "one-stop-shop" for information on education statistics. The web portal is open to all audiences and brings together a wide range of information including demographic and contextual information; and statistical information on educational participation and completion.

There is a new concern for framing system evaluation in relation to educational targets

Through the Education Programme 2015, Portugal established achievement targets for its school system to be achieved by 2015 (see Chapter 1). Targets focus on two domains of policy priority: the basic competencies of students; and the motivation of students (grade repetition and dropouts). Following international commitments, especially with the European Union's Strategic Framework for European Co-operation in Education and Training ("ET 2020"), education policy also seeks to ensure that by 2020: there is an improvement in young people's level of basic competencies (measured by PISA results, as proposed by ET 2020); and there is a reduction in the proportion of students who prematurely leave the school system from over 30% to somewhere between 10 and 15%.

The establishment of the targets comes alongside a strategy to monitor results. Annual indicators were developed to monitor progress towards the achievement of the targets: *(i)* early school leaving rates at the ages of 14, 15 and 16; *(ii)* the proportion of students who repeat grades in the first, second and third cycles of basic education and in secondary education; *(iii)* the proportion of students with a mark above the passing level in each national Portuguese language and mathematics tests/examinations in both basic and secondary education. The establishment of targets presents a number of advantages. It provides medium-term goals for the school system and a reference against which the

effectiveness of education policies can be assessed. It also grants greater focus of school agents on the main policy challenges for the school system as well as an opportunity for reflection on strategies to address the challenges. Finally, it strengthens the importance of system-level evaluation and the need to have a strategic approach to it.

Student performance data are part of system monitoring

The national monitoring system for school education is strengthened by the availability of national data on student performance. Since 2001, educational progress national tests provide information on student performance in both Portuguese and mathematics in Grades 4 and 6 (as of 2011/12, the national tests in Grade 6 became national examinations). These data allow the monitoring of the achievement of student learning objectives at the early stages of the school system and inform the debate on educational policy. They have the advantage of being conceived for national monitoring (in addition to their function of assisting teachers in the formative assessment of their students) with no stakes for students and therefore avoid the undesired effects that high-stakes externally-based student tests can produce. Despite the limited use of such data for tracking trends (see below), these are the most comprehensive national indicators available for monitoring student results in basic education and as such play a key role in broadening the national debate beyond results in international assessments. In addition, the publication of national examination results at the end of basic school (Grade 9 in Portuguese and mathematics) and all subjects in secondary education serves as a major indicator of overall quality in Portuguese schools and informs policy development.[2] Student external assessment also has a longitudinal dimension as it assesses students in Portuguese and mathematics in Grades 4, 6 and 9. This grants the possibility of undertaking longitudinal studies of student performance, including the monitoring of student pathways and the estimation of the value added of schools.

The qualitative analysis of thematic reports provides valuable information for system monitoring

Quantitative measures for system monitoring such as those provided by the indicators framework and student performance data are essential for system monitoring but without doubt can only cover a subset of student learning objectives and do not provide the richness of contextualised qualitative analysis. In this sense, it is a strength that external school evaluation is relevant for the monitoring of the school system through reports by the Inspectorate including its annual overview in which an analysis of school performance across a range of qualitative aspects is provided. Such qualitative analyses provide complementary evaluative information which broadens the base of evidence and provides more explanation of the factors which have influenced performance. The same benefit also arises from the reports commissioned by the Ministry, either with a strategic purpose or to evaluate policy implementation.

Similarly, the reports published by the National Education Council (CNE) add considerably to the national information base which informs policy development. An advantage is that the CNE is in a position to provide a unique input for system monitoring and policy development: views and perspectives of a wide range of education stakeholders. Its recommendations are based on a consensus among its diverse membership, therefore informing policy implementation about the areas of agreement and contention. Its thematic reports also allow the education research community to contribute to the development of education policy.

Challenges

There is little emphasis on the evaluation of the education system

The review team formed the impression that the evaluation of the education system as part of the evaluation and assessment framework has received limited policy attention thus far and there is no comprehensive strategic approach to it. As it stands, system evaluation draws mostly on the evaluation of schools complemented with external student assessment (educational progress national tests and national examinations) and a set of indicators on education. A reflection of this is the inexistence of an annual report with an assessment of whether or not the education system is achieving its objectives. Similarly, the way system evaluation has been conceived has not yet allowed in-depth investigations of the factors underlying student performance in Portuguese schools. The current narrow approach to system evaluation does not allow a broad enough assessment of the extent to which student learning objectives are being achieved. Also, there is still a limited use of system-level data to inform policy development and educational planning (see below).

The purpose of system evaluation varies among countries and indeed may evolve over time to adapt to different needs. In general, six major purposes can be distinguished: *(i)* to monitor student outcomes at a given point in time, including differences among different regions within the education system and given student groups (*e.g.* by gender, socio-economic or immigrant background); *(ii)* to monitor changes in student outcomes over time; *(iii)* to monitor the impact of given policy initiatives or educational programmes, such as the introduction of a new curriculum; *(iv)* to monitor demographic, administrative and contextual data which are useful to explain the outcomes of the education system; *(v)* to develop means through which the relevant information is provided to the different agents in the education system; and *(vi)* to use the generated information for analysis, development and implementation of policies. In Portugal, there are challenges in achieving some of these purposes. These are explored below.

There are some key information gaps at the system level

Gaps on measures of student learning

Portugal's efforts to complement the international evidence on student outcomes with national measures of outcomes are commendable. This relates to the development of educational progress national tests in the 4th and 6th Grades (as of 2011/12, only for 4th Grade) which together with national examinations in the 9th Grade (as of 2011/12, also 6th Grade) and secondary education provide comparable information on student outcomes nationwide. However, in basic education, the information generated is limited to the areas of Portuguese and mathematics. Other curricular areas, such as foreign languages, sciences or ICT, are not externally assessed in a way that grants a comprehensive national picture of student mastery of the national curriculum in a broad range of subjects. Also, not including other curricular areas in the national monitoring system risks to signal that they are not as important with potential detrimental effects on the corresponding learning.

The national monitoring system also has a limited coverage of broader outcomes. It is not clear to what extent current national measures of student learning are assessing higher-order thinking skills and cross-curricular competencies given that the current national examinations and educational progress tests closely follow the respective curriculum. Furthermore, there are no measures of civic and citizenship skills and there is

little information about aspects such as creativity, innovation and collaboration as student outcomes.

No measures on students' socio-economic background

While there has been significant progress in strengthening the availability and quality of demographic, administrative and contextual data, a significant gap is the unavailability of measures on students' socio-economic background. Currently the collection of data from schools does not include any information related to socio-economic status at either student or school level. There is also no collection of such information from students during the administration of the national tests. The only information collected concerns aid received by students such as school meals, assistance for special needs and scholarships. The absence of good information about the socio-economic background of students hinders the ability to conduct good research about its impact on student performance, and therefore limits the ability of the system to assess whether it is achieving its equity objectives. Another area which could deserve some attention refers to the first language/language spoken at home by students. Considering the importance of the language of instruction mastery level and the growing number of students whose mother tongue is not Portuguese, it could prove useful to gather such data not only to improve decision making at the school level, but also to determine a national strategy and teachers' guidance for these populations.

Little emphasis on investigating differences of student outcomes across specific groups

The monitoring of equity is not a high priority in the evaluation of the education system. The education system does not provide for specific targets for reducing educational disadvantage for particular groups such as students from lower income families, with a disability, living in a remote area or with an immigrant status. As a result, system evaluation does not include measures to assess whether or not equity objectives are being achieved. This is visible in the unavailability of monitoring of student performance across student groups (*e.g.* by gender, socio-economic or immigrant background) and the incipient analysis of student performance across regions of the country. Also, there are gaps concerning the monitoring of the outcomes for students with special needs, which are not systematically collected.

Limited information on the teaching and learning environment

There is a lack of information on key stakeholders' perceptions of the teaching and learning environment. The information currently available comes from surveys to students, school leaders, teachers and parents administered during international studies (such as PISA or TALIS). For example, there is no collection of information from students on their attitude to learning and assessment during the administration of the national tests. Measures of students' views on their well-being, engagement, motivation and co-operation could be of significant policy and research interest to analyse the association between student performance and many qualitative aspects of school life. Confident and motivated students are more likely to go on to follow further education and to continue learning during their lives. There is some information available on student absences but there are no measures of student engagement, such as social interaction and motivation. An exception are the studies on student pathways in secondary education prepared in the context of the Observatory of Student Pathways in Secondary School

(OTES). Another example of an issue which would deserve to be monitored more closely at the national level is that of bullying. While there are indications that bullying is an issue in Portuguese schools and there is evidence that bullying has detrimental effects on student performance, there is no detailed system-wide information about the issue. Student views on the learning environment could be complemented with teacher and parent views. This could include teachers' views on behaviour and discipline in the classroom and parents' views on their interaction with the school and teachers.

There are challenges in the ability to monitor student outcomes over time and across schools

Currently, there are challenges in monitoring trends in student performance over time. In theory, it is possible to analyse changes over time using the results of each year's educational progress national tests and national examinations. However, this exercise is rendered more difficult because there is no stable, confidential item bank to allow the linking of results across years and the need to create new items makes the degree of difficulty vary somewhat from year to year (all questions and tasks used in the tests are publicly released). This might explain why the analysis of time trends receives so little attention in the reporting of results from national tests and examinations. Also, while there is some potential for undertaking the longitudinal analysis of student performance (*i.e.* for given cohorts of students), for instance using the results of the same students in mathematics and Portuguese in the 4th, 6th and 9th Grades, this option has not been wholly explored thus far.

Another difficulty concerns the comparison of student outcomes across schools. The average results of national examinations (both in the 9th Grade and secondary education and, as of 2011/12, in the 6th Grade) at the school level are publicly disclosed with no account for the socio-economic context of each school (or the characteristics of schools' student population). This can considerably distort considerations about the effectiveness of each school as average results do not reflect the value added by schools to student results. Also, at this stage it is not possible to use aggregated teacher-based student summative assessment (*i.e.* end of term student marks) as measures of school, region and national performance as there are issues of consistency and fairness of marks across teachers (as evidenced by the comparison between results in national examinations and teacher-based marks). Differences across schools and over time may simply show variation in teacher marking practices and not real differences in student performance. This is the case because there are no procedures in place to ensure that assessment by teachers are consistent within and across schools (see Chapter 3).

System-level information is not fully exploited

There have been considerable efforts over the past few years to provide information on the education system, including student outcomes at the system level. Large amounts of data and statistics at the system level are now available in Portugal. A challenge is then to ensure that stakeholders throughout the system make effective use of the available data.

Little analysis to inform educational planning and policy development

It is not clear to the review team that system-level data are used to their full potential in analysis which could be useful to inform policy development. Comprehensive statistical analysis of student outcomes such as an assessment of the factors influencing

student performance or a study about the impact of socio-economic background on student performance does not seem to be available. Also, at the time of the review visit, the Office for Education Statistics and Planning (GEPE) used to put few resources into accomplishing its planning mission through the analysis of the education data it publishes (such planning mission of GEPE was integrated, as of late 2011, into the Directorate General for Planning and Financial Management, DGPGF). It concentrated on the development of statistics and indicators and, in recent years, considerable resources went to the co-ordination of the Technological Plan for Education. No studies analysing student performance were published by GEPE in the past few years, with the exception of some studies on student pathways in secondary education prepared in the context of the Observatory of Student Pathways in Secondary School (OTES). As a result, the extent to which results and analysis of system-level data feed into policy for school improvement is limited. While there is a good concern to assess the implementation of specific policy initiatives, there is considerable less attention to undertake research which could more broadly inform policy development.

Limited use to inform school management

One more area in which improvements are needed is to ensure schools are provided with useful information for their own management. While there are data on teacher resources, student results and student enrolment, it is not currently possible for schools to compare their own data with indicators aggregated to the municipal (or regional) level or for "similar" schools.[3] The Schools Portal has the potential as a platform for schools to benchmark each other but at present has very limited information for each school. Also the feedback of results from educational progress national tests or national examinations to individual schools is limited in the extent to which it allows a school to compare its results (*e.g.* the ability for a school to compare its results with "similar" schools). By contrast, a current good practice is that schools receive a statistical analysis of their profile from the Information System Co-ordinating Office (MISI) (as of late 2011, integrated in DGEEC) in a way to support them in their internal analysis and further planning, which is based on the data schools report for the national education database.

No comprehensive presentation of results of system evaluation for stakeholder use

Another priority is to present data for information of students, teachers, parents and the general public. The Schools Portal is an excellent initiative in this context. However, the information provided is still limited, *e.g.* information about each school is limited to location, education offerings and contacts. It is still not possible in the Portuguese education system to have a good understanding of the contribution of individual schools to student learning. Results of national examinations are published at the school level but in simple averages with no account of the specific circumstances of schools.

Policy recommendations

Raise the profile of system evaluation within the evaluation and assessment framework

The profile of system evaluation within the evaluation and assessment framework needs to be raised. An initial priority is to broaden the concept of system evaluation as the wide range of system-level information which permits a good understanding of how well student learning objectives are being achieved. It should include a varied set of

components such as broad measures of student outcomes; demographic, administrative and contextual data; information systems; and research and analysis to inform planning, intervention and policy development. A strategic approach to system-level evaluation would benefit from clear national objectives and priorities so progress against these can be assessed (see Chapter 2). System-level evaluation should include the production of an annual report with an assessment of whether or not the education system is achieving its objectives. This is an area in which the National Education Council (CNE) would be in a good position to contribute.

Policy needs to be informed by a range of quantitative and qualitative measures. The challenge for system-level evaluation is to ensure that the measures of system performance are broad enough to capture the whole range of student learning objectives. An important consideration is that policy making at the system level needs to be informed by high quality data and evidence, but not driven by the availability of such information. This points to the need to go beyond quantitative measures and to undertake an analysis of the data available. In this context, Portugal could consider ways to more fully exploit the data it collects, including the measures of student outcomes (educational progress tests and examinations). Another key aspect is to develop competencies and build capacity within the Ministry to analyse information available at the system level so better connections to policy development are secured.

Prioritise efforts to meet information needs for national monitoring

A key priority within the evaluation and assessment framework is to develop indicators and measures of system performance that permit a good understanding of how well schooling is being delivered. The emphasis is generally on starting with high level objectives for the education system and then mapping out the feasibility of measurements in each area. Other phases include ensuring systematic collection to agreed definitions of existing information at different levels in the system; promoting data quality improvement; undertaking research to shed light on some of the "gaps" where systematic collection is too costly/not feasible; and developing a long-term strategy to improve measurement tools for future information needs. Below, the major information gaps are highlighted and priorities for data development are suggested.

Develop strategies to monitor a wider range of curricular areas and broader outcomes

The implementation of the full-cohort educational progress tests in the 4th Grade together with the national examinations in the 6th and 9th Grades, offer the possibility to monitor student outcomes in the areas of Portuguese and mathematics. To have reliable national measures of performance across broader curricular areas Portugal could consider introducing sample-based national monitoring surveys. The sample-based surveys test a statistically representative sample of students at target grade levels in a given set of curricular areas. A possible approach is to test a small number of subject areas each year for given grades in three- or four-year cycles with different subject areas every year. Such sample-based surveys would allow the assessment of a broader range of curricula content and allow benchmarking of different regions or specific student groups on an externally validated measure. There are many examples of sample surveys in several OECD countries and the use of such national monitoring surveys is well established in countries such as Australia, Canada, the Netherlands, New Zealand and the United States. Box 6.1 presents the examples of Australia and New Zealand. Sample-based surveys have a number of advantages such as: "stability in measures (allowing robust measurement of

standards over reasonable timeframes), fuller coverage of the curriculum, lack of distortion deriving from 'teaching to the test' and comparatively low cost" (Green and Oates, 2009).

Box 6.1 Sample surveys in Australia and New Zealand

Triennial sample assessments in Australia

The Australian National Assessment Program includes cyclical sample surveys to monitor student outcomes in science, ICT, civics and citizenship. These tests draw on a statistically representative sample of students at target grade levels (equivalent to about 5% of the corresponding population). Each area is an agreed national priority and is tested once every three years. The first survey was run in 2003 for science, in 2004 for civics and citizenship and in 2005 for ICT. Each assessment results in a national report showing student average performance and proportion of students at the set "proficient standard" for each State and Territory, each school sector and for selected student subgroups (*e.g.* Indigenous, socio-economic background) and allows a reporting of progress over time, as each subject is assessed every three years. For both ICT and civics and citizenship, students are assessed in Grades 6 and 10. Scientific literacy is assessed for Grade 6 only. These assessments are designed primarily to monitor national and jurisdictional progress; however participating schools receive their own students' results and the school's results. These can provide useful information to classroom teachers and assist with curriculum planning.

Sources: Santiago *et al.* (2011); *www.acara.edu.au*.

The National Education Monitoring Project (NEMP) in New Zealand

In New Zealand primary schools, progress towards the achievement of national curriculum goals has been measured via the National Education Monitoring Project (NEMP) since 1995. No full-cohort national tests exist. NEMP intends to provide a national picture of student learning outcomes at key stages (Grades 4 and 8) rather than to report on individual students, teachers or schools. NEMP covers all curriculum areas in a four-year cycle. The four cycles are as follows:

(i) Science, visual arts and information skills (graphs, tables, maps, charts, diagrams);

(ii) Language (reading and speaking); aspects of technology and music;

(iii) Mathematics, social studies and information skills (library, research); and

(iv) Language (writing, listening, viewing), health and physical education.

NEMP is conducted every year, but assesses a different set of disciplines (according to the cycles above). Each discipline, therefore, is tested every four years. About 3 000 students from 260 schools are selected randomly each year to take part in the assessments. To cover a broad range of items without overburdening individual students, three different groups of students are created for each subject, with each group being tested on one third of the tasks. The tasks are not necessarily related to particular year levels – many tasks are the same for Grade 4 and Grade 8 students. Each student participates in about four hours of assessment spread over one week. A number of trend tasks are kept constant over the assessment cycles so that longitudinal data can be obtained. The purpose of the NEMP assessments is to identify and report trends in educational performance, to provide information for policy makers, curriculum specialists and educators for planning purposes and to inform the general public on trends in educational achievement.

Sources: Nusche *et al.* (2012); *http://nemp.otago.ac.nz*.

Ensure that national monitoring covers broader outcomes

Consideration should be given to further developing the national educational progress tests and the national examinations to better assess higher-order thinking skills and cross-curricular competencies. In the longer term, Portugal may also wish to use the introduction of sample-based student surveys to obtain trend information and monitor a broader range of student knowledge and skills compared to a full cohort test – to supplement the national monitoring with information on broader student outcomes. For example, in Australia the triennial sample assessments include an assessment of civics and citizenship skills and in New Zealand sample-based tests include an assessment of information skills (see Box 6.1). Similarly, in Finland a survey is used to monitor students' "learning to learn" skills. The Ministry could also consider exploring the development of measures of creativity, collaboration and innovation in the school system.

Develop measures of the socio-economic background of students

An immediate priority for meeting information needs to adequately monitor student outcomes in the Portuguese school system is to strengthen the information on the student socio-economic background, including parental level of education, occupation and income level, immigrant status, and special needs. The quality of socio-economic background data, currently limited to data on the assistance received by individual students in schools (such as school meals), proves inadequate for monitoring educational disadvantage in the system. The approach could consist of collecting information from the student on his or her background at the time of enrolment so it becomes part of the school's records. These data could also be collected during the administration of the national educational progress tests and the national examinations. This would considerably strengthen the potential for the analysis of student results. The Ministry could also consider gathering information on students' linguistic profiles. In particular, it would be useful to begin collecting data on the languages students speak at home and proficiency in their first and second language. More comprehensive data on the linguistic profiles of students would be helpful in designing a language strategy at the national level and making decisions about specific resources and support allocated to second language learners.

Give more prominence to the analysis of differences in student performance between specific groups and monitor the impact of policies targeted at specific groups

The monitoring of student performance across specific groups (*e.g.* by gender, socio-economic or immigrant background) as well as the analysis of student performance across regions of the country needs to be strengthened. The value of the national tests and national examinations in monitoring national progress in discrete areas could be enhanced by reporting the national performance profile by gender and by student background (socio-economic and immigrant status) to allow the tracking of improvement for these key groups over time and permit the investigation of the impact of student background on performance.

Also, there is a need for a much more systematic monitoring of the impact of policies targeted at specific groups. For instance, in the last decade much progress was made in establishing a strategy for the education of students with special needs, as reflected in Law 3/2008. While there has been an external evaluation of the implementation of the

Law (Simeonsson and Sanches Ferreira, 2010), the monitoring of the outcomes of students with special needs should be systematic and continuous.

Improve the information on the teaching and learning environment

There needs to be consideration on how best to include stakeholders' perceptions of the teaching and learning environment in the national monitoring system. Several options exist. There could be a national-level questionnaire to a sample of students, parents, school leaders and teachers in the system to collect views and perspectives about a range of aspects such as attitudes to learning and assessment, perceptions on the implementation of policies, well-being, engagement, satisfaction, etc. Norway introduced a student survey in 2005 and this forms a key part of the national reporting on the education system. In the annual summative report on education in Norway (*The Education Mirror*) there is always a clear presentation and analysis of results from the survey and these feed into the national policy debate (Nusche *et al*., 2011a). This is one way to ensure the systematic inclusion of student perceptions at the political level. Another option is to include a questionnaire to students during the administration of the national educational progress tests. Certainly, the collection of information from students, school leaders and teachers during the administration of international surveys has led to informed analysis of how different reported factors relate to student performance, *e.g.* classroom climate factors such as discipline and student-teacher relations have shown strong correlation with student achievement (*e.g.* OECD, 2004). The use of student and parental surveys could also be encouraged at the school level through the development of a template at the national level to which schools could add issues more related to their specific circumstances.

Explore ways to more reliably track educational outcomes over time and across schools

Enhance the monitoring of changes over time and progress of particular student cohorts

System evaluation in Portugal needs to place greater emphasis on the monitoring of "progress" of students in contrast to achievement levels at a given point in time. To achieve that, it needs to improve its monitoring of both student results over time and the progress of particular student cohorts. First, it would be useful to ensure the comparability of results of educational progress national tests over time by keeping a stable element of items in the tests and releasing only a proportion of the items for use by teachers after the tests. Importantly, there should be a strategic releasing of items distributed at different difficulty levels and a replacement with new items at the same levels of difficulty. With a stable difficulty level for each test from year to year, national tests results would provide a useful indicator on changes in student performance over time – one which will complement the international trend measures. The same approach should be followed for sample-based surveys if these are introduced to monitor a greater set of curricular areas. This would also be the occasion to review and refine the setting of different performance bands (the five performance categories, 1-5) of national tests. With a more stable bank of testing items, it would be possible to set standard performance bands which can be used more meaningfully throughout the system as benchmarks of student performance and improvement.

Second, a more strategic use of the results of national assessments (tests and examinations) could provide indicators on the progress of particular student cohorts through compulsory education in both Portuguese and mathematics. With individual student identification numbers, results from the national assessments could be linked across cohorts to report on the success of a given cohort on national assessments in Grades 4, 6 and 9. Australia provides an example of building in the measure of progress in the design of the national test measurement scale. A set of standardised national tests in literacy and numeracy, the National Assessment Plan – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN), was introduced in 2008. The major feature of the tests is the fact that items are linked on a common scale of difficulty to allow documentation of student progression in each of the core areas (reading, writing, language conventions [spelling, grammar and punctuation]) across the four key educational stages that each student sits the test (Grades 3, 5, 7 and 9). In this way, it is possible to gauge student progress in the national tests on a subsequent grade; for example, it is possible to see how well a student performs on the common NAPLAN reading scale at four different stages of his or her schooling (in Grades 3, 5, 7 and 9) (for further details see Santiago *et al.*, 2011). Taking a more longitudinal approach to analyse student results could provide additional useful information that allows analysing student pathways. This could include looking at how groups of students with different characteristics and academic profiles succeed in later years of education.

Make more meaningful the comparisons across schools

An imperative is to make comparisons of student results across schools and regions more meaningful. Average results of national examinations (in the 9th Grade and secondary education and, as of 2011/12, in the 6th Grade) are published at the school level with no correction for the socio-economic context of the schools. Improving the data on the students' socio-economic background, as suggested earlier, and developing the associated indicators at the school level would permit the comparison of student results for "similar" schools (schools with students from similar backgrounds).

Also, the longitudinal dimension of national student assessment in Portuguese and mathematics (educational progress national tests in the 4th Grade and national examinations in the 6th and 9th Grades) provides some potential for measures of the value added by the school to be developed. This possibility should be explored if the objective is to meaningfully compare the contributions of schools to student learning. In England, schools are expected to meet targets for student expected progress between specified key stages of schooling. Such progress measures are complemented by a statistical indicator of "Contextual Value Added (CVA) score". Such scores show the progress made by students from the end of a key stage to the end of another key stage using their test results. CVA takes into account the varying starting points of each students' test results, and also adjusts for factors which are outside a school's control (such as gender, mobility and levels of deprivation) that have been observed to impact on student results. Several systems in the United States also attempt to measure "adequate yearly growth". Various models have been researched and used in practice. In value-added models, students' actual test scores are often compared to the projected scores, and classroom and school scores that exceed the projected values are considered as positive evidence of instructional effectiveness. In this way, value-added models can be used to identify teachers and schools that have met above expected growth despite various challenging circumstances. It is important to note that value-added models are still under development, and therefore they are prone to error (Koretz, 2008).

Optimise the reporting and use of system-level data

The amount of existing information on schools and system performance offers many opportunities to engage stakeholders in supporting improvements across the school system. While large amounts of data are collected from schools and comparable student results are available, there is room to strengthen the analysis and mobilisation of such information for system monitoring and improvement.

Strengthen the analysis for educational planning and policy development

A priority should be the strengthening of the analysis for educational planning and policy development. It is clear that considerably more analysis and research can be conducted with the available data. The Ministry should foster more analytical studies and innovative research about key issues such as the factors which explain student performance and the impact of the socio-economic background on student results. This would imply the strengthening of the planning function within the Ministry (now in DGPGF) with more resources dedicated to exploring the analytical potential of the education database. The Ministry could also sponsor research undertaken by independent researchers which is deemed useful for educational policy.

Another possibility could be to broaden the activities of the Inspectorate to include thematic national evaluations as a complement to the regular external evaluation of individual schools. These comprehensive reviews of issues such as science education, professional development of teachers, bullying and harassment in schools, and the teaching of Portuguese, would involve reviewing practices across a sample of schools in the country and the production of a national-level report. This would serve to inform the development and implementation of policy and practice. Similarly, the National Education Council (CNE) should also be encouraged to continue producing analytical studies in areas relevant for policy development.

Consolidate the communication of system-level data to stakeholders

Further steps can be taken to more effectively communicate results from the national monitoring system to encourage their use by different stakeholders. At present, information on the education system is dispersed in components such as the education database, reporting on major education indicators (completion, enrolment, profiles of students and teachers), reporting on student assessment results (separate reports with results of educational progress tests and national examinations) and thematic reports on education. No single platform brings together this information and no single report uses all the information to summarise the state of school education in Portugal.

The Schools Portal, currently at an incipient stage of development, has the potential to become the key tool to make accessible the major results from the national monitoring system. It provides a flexible, interactive option for giving different users easy access to data relevant to their interests. It should be an intuitive, easy-to-use system that includes clear documentation on how to interpret the results. Further, the use of different secure access areas for different users could offer the possibility to provide a better adapted set of results to each user's needs. For example, in Australia, the *My School* website makes results from virtually every school in the country available to parents and the public. Developed by the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA), the website, which went live in January 2010, provides a basic profile of each of nearly 10 000 schools, showing how students at the school performed overall and by performance band on literacy and numeracy tests for each grade level tested (Grades 3, 5,

7 and 9), compared to the performance of all schools in Australia and compared to schools serving similar students. It also includes a profile of each school with information on offerings, financial management, enrolment, characteristics of student population and outcomes of secondary education (see Santiago *et al.*, 2011).

The reporting of national test and examination results would benefit considerably from an analytical component to aid interpretation of results and, in the case of average results by schools, as suggested earlier, the addition of contextual data and adjusted measures to show the "value added". Analysis of national test and examination results could go further in clearly explaining exactly what each measures and how much they tell the public about school education. For example, in Sweden, the results from national tests are published each year by the Swedish Education Agency in an annual report (Nusche *et al*., 2011b). Each report includes content analysis of national test results for each subject by different researchers – thus, offering readers a heightened understanding of what the results actually mean and keeping an active link with the research community.

Improve feedback for local monitoring

The Ministry should devise a strategy to optimise the use of system-level data by key stakeholders at the local level. In this context, the Schools Portal could become a powerful tool for school management. It would involve the availability of major indicators for individual schools and the access to information about all schools within a municipality. To encourage the use of such information systems for monitoring progress at the local level, such a system may include some benchmarks set nationally to serve as a springboard for regions and schools to set their own local objectives and targets. Reporting should have a strong focus placed on developing benchmarking analyses which are trusted and valued by school leadership. This means they must be based on reliable data but also that they should facilitate "fair" comparisons between schools ("value-added" or "similar schools" comparisons, as suggested above). Alongside creating more user-friendly and sophisticated forms of benchmarking data, made available at the right time and with more help for non-technical users in interpreting it, effort should also be directed towards increasing the skills of school staff in the use and interpretation of data for the purposes of school improvement.

The Regional Directorates (and, as of 2013, the Directorate General for School Administration, DGAE), could possibly take on a feedback role. As it is meant to be closer to the local level, Regional Directorates (and, as of 2013, DGAE) could use school reporting data as a basis for engaging in meaningful discussions with schools and their leadership.

Notes

1. As noted in Chapter 3, subsequently to the review visit, the new government in office since June 2011 replaced the existing educational progress tests at the end of the second cycle (Grade 6) by a national examination both in Portuguese and mathematics.
2. This will also become the case in 2011/12 for the new national examinations at the end of Grade 6, in Portuguese and mathematics, which replaced the corresponding educational progress tests.
3. The exception concerns the three sets of indicators to monitor, at the school level, the achievement of the education targets defined by the Education Programme 2015 (see previous section). In this case, the school cluster receives data for each of its establishments, the whole cluster, and average data for the corresponding municipality and the whole country.

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Conclusions and recommendations

Education system context

There has been significant progress in educational attainment but challenges remain

A major handicap for Portugal has been the very low starting point in terms of educational attainment and literacy of its population. A fifth of all 15- to 64-year-olds were illiterate in the mid-1970s and less than 5% had completed upper secondary education. Nevertheless, efforts to ensure access to education for all Portuguese resulted in a rapid expansion of enrolment. The proportion of the population that has attained at least upper secondary education grew from 14% for the generation aged 55-64 in 2009 to 48% for the generation aged 25-34 in the same year. Despite the expansion of the education system, educational attainment remains a challenge. It is the lowest in the OECD area for the working-age population, with 30% of 25- to 64-year-olds having attained at least upper secondary education in 2009 (against an OECD average of 73%). Moreover, the high share of students leaving the education system too early with low skills remains a major problem.

Student learning outcomes show some progress

Student learning outcomes in Portugal are around or slightly below the OECD average following some progress in the last decade, depending on the skills assessed. In 2009, achievement levels of Portuguese students in the OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) were not statistically significantly different from the OECD average in reading literacy and were just below the OECD average with statistical significance in mathematics and science. Trend analyses of PISA results have shown some encouraging improvement in student learning outcomes.

A range of education reforms which reinforce the role of evaluation and assessment

A range of reforms have been introduced in education in recent years. New arrangements for school leadership and administration were introduced in 2008. These reflect a profound reform whereby leadership moved from *primus inter pares* arrangements to the figure of school director with well identified authority and responsibilities. The Learning Goals project, launched in 2009, defines learning standards that students are expected to meet at key stages of their learning (by school year). Also, as of the 2010/11 school year, Portugal established targets for school education through the Education Programme 2015, focussing on two main areas, deemed as the most challenging ones in school education: improving the basic competencies of students, and ensuring that all young people aged 18 and younger remain in the education system.

In this context, the role of evaluation and assessment as key tools to achieve quality and equity in education was reinforced.

Austerity measures to respond to the financial crisis affect education

The current financial crisis is severely affecting Portugal, with a significant impact on the resources available to education. While public spending on education reached 5% of GDP in 2010, it is estimated that such proportion decreased to 4.7% in 2011, and the 2012 State budget plans a further reduction to 3.8% of GDP. Austerity measures include salary cuts for all personnel working in public education, the freezing of career progression in the public service (including for teachers), posts in school management reduced, regional administration for education downsized, and a major rationalisation of Ministry services which led to a restructuring of its organisation.

Strengths and challenges

There is strong political will to strengthen the evaluation and assessment framework but it needs to be completed and made more coherent

In the last decade, Portugal has come far in developing the foundations of a framework for evaluation and assessment. National monitoring educational progress tests were launched in 2001, a first cycle of external school evaluations was completed in the period 2006-11, a national system of teacher performance appraisal was launched in 2007 and the availability of national indicators on education has considerably expanded. These developments clearly communicate that evaluation and assessment are priorities in the school system and reveal a coherent and comprehensive agenda to develop an evaluation culture among school agents. The objective has been to get away from a tradition of unexamined classroom practice, limited accountability for student outcomes, and narrow feedback practices. There is growing support among the school agents for consolidating evaluation and assessment practices at the different levels of the system. However, at the present time, there is no integrated evaluation and assessment framework. As in other OECD countries, the different components of evaluation and assessment have developed independently of each other over time and there is currently no policy document on the overall framework for evaluation and assessment in Portugal. At the national level, there are provisions for student assessment, school evaluation, teacher appraisal and system evaluation, but these are not explicitly integrated or aligned. The existing framework is not perceived as a coherent whole and it does not visibly connect all the different components.

There is room to strengthen the improvement function of evaluation and assessment

An important challenge is to find the right balance between the accountability and the improvement functions of evaluation and assessment. It is apparent that the policy initiatives in evaluation and assessment of the last few years have emphasised accountability over improvement. For instance, the teacher appraisal model currently places greater focus on career progression than professional development, the assessment of students is oriented towards summative scores, and the publication of examination

results introduces important stakes for schools. While transparency of information, high quality data, and the accountability of school agents are essential for a well-functioning evaluation and assessment system, it is important to ensure that the existing data and information are actually used for improvement. This requires securing effective links to classroom practice without which the evaluation and assessment framework is not likely to lead to the improvement of teaching practices and student learning. The review team formed the view that there has been comparatively less reflection on designing mechanisms to ensure that the results of evaluation and assessment activities feed back into classroom practice.

It is unclear that the students are at the centre of the evaluation and assessment framework

An important challenge is that it is unclear that students are at the centre of the evaluation and assessment framework. Teaching, learning and assessment still take place in a somewhat "traditional" setting with the teacher leading his/her classroom, the students typically not involved in the planning and organisation of lessons and assessment concentrating on summative scores. The opportunity given to parents and students to influence student learning is more limited than in other OECD countries. The review team formed the perception that relatively little emphasis is given to the development of students' own capacity to regulate their learning through self- and peer-assessment. Other practices which are developing in Portuguese classrooms but require further strengthening are the communication of learning expectations to students, the opportunities for performance feedback and mechanisms for individualised support. An obvious case of not placing the student at the centre of the learning concerns the high levels of grade repetition in the country, considerably above the OECD average. This raises important concerns. First, it is not compatible with a student centred educational system as it extensively involves branding students a failure at different stages of schooling, including in the very early stages of learning. Second, it runs counter to the need for teachers to have the highest possible expectations of what children can achieve if they always have the possibility of retention in the back of their minds for children who do not respond well to their teaching.

There is a need to strengthen competencies for evaluation and assessment

The effectiveness of evaluation and assessment relies to a great extent on ensuring that both those who design and undertake evaluation activities as well as those who use their results are in possession of the proper skills and competencies. While there have been considerable national efforts to stimulate an evaluation culture by strengthening assessment and evaluation activities, developing guidelines and materials, as well as providing competency-building learning opportunities in some cases, the review team assesses that there are still limited evaluation and assessment competencies throughout the education system. For instance, there is a need to improve the competencies of school leaders in evaluation and assessment, in particular with regard to ensuring a meaningful school self-evaluation process, and providing pedagogical guidance and coaching to individual teachers. Another case in point concerns the gaps in the development of competencies for teacher appraisal. One of the major obstacles to the implementation of teacher appraisal when it was launched in 2007 was the insufficient expertise developed for teacher appraisal, particularly that of the evaluators whose legitimacy was not

recognised by the teachers being evaluated. Other areas in which building capacity is a considerable challenge include: the competencies of teachers for student formative assessment; insufficient focus on skills for student assessment in initial teacher education; the data handling skills of school agents; and analytical capacity for educational planning and policy development at the system level.

Assessment is seen as part of the professional role of teachers but approaches to learning and assessment remain markedly traditional

From the beginning to the end of schooling, assessment of students is seen as integral to the work of teachers. This is not just the view of the teachers themselves – the review team was struck by how widely this conviction is shared by students, school leaders, and parents. While external assessment is available in the form of end of cycle educational progress tests, intermediate tests and national examinations, only in the examinations used for progression to higher education is this external assessment given equal weighting to the assessment of teachers. Schools have considerable autonomy in the decisions about student progress and certification. The centrality of teachers in the assessment process, and the support for this teacher agency from inside and outside schools are particular strengths of the Portuguese assessment system. However, generally there is a traditional approach to the organisation of classrooms in Portugal. Assessment for learning is not systematically used in Portuguese schools. There is little emphasis in assessment practices on providing student feedback and developing teacher-student interactions about student learning. In classroom and schools, the formative seems to be increasingly displaced by the summative and a focus on the generation of summative scores. While the attention to results and data is a positive feature of the system in Portugal, an over-emphasis on these may be having a negative impact, and undermining the formative role of teachers and assessment so highly valued in policy goals. The review team heard about an obsessive attention to results, the drive for results skewing the education system, media hype around examination results, classroom practice dominated by examination and test preparation, non-compulsory tests gaining the status of compulsory tests, and the quality of teaching being equated to the quality of results.

Assessment innovations are proposed by the New Opportunities initiative

There have been a number of recent initiatives, under the umbrella of the New Opportunities programme, to extend the educational provision in schools to students who may have left school, or may be at risk of leaving school, and to adults who might not have completed compulsory education. These new programmes have been accompanied by the development of approaches to assessment focused on motivating students, giving high quality feedback, and including the active participation of learners in the assessment process. A key feature of these arrangements and approaches is their location close to the learning process and to the learner. Thus, assessment tends to occur immediately after the completion of a module or portion of a course rather than at the end of a year or cycle. The use of approaches beyond written tests, such as a performance assessment, puts the learner and learning at the centre of the assessment process. The need to use assessment to motivate learners to learn, rather than to simply engage with the assessment or test is acknowledged as fundamental by those working in this sector. While the opportunities remain to be exploited in full, and the challenges of supporting dialogue within the more

individualised culture of schooling are widely acknowledged, they are particular strengths of the New Opportunities programme, and have much to offer the assessment system for all students in schools.

Student assessment has an external dimension but it does not cover some strands of secondary education

One of the challenges faced by any system committed to internal, formative and teacher-led assessment is the need for checks and balances across the system to ensure reliability in the application of standards and criteria and to gather system-wide data for the purposes of evaluating system quality. The provision of end of cycle wholly externally marked educational progress tests at the end of the first cycle, of national examinations at Grades 6 and 9 and of a series of external components for subject-based examinations in the secondary cycle represents a considered attempt to address this challenge. The capacity of the Office for Educational Evaluation (GAVE) in how it approaches and conducts its work is an important feature of the quality processes. However, in secondary education, external assessment is applied only to the scientific and humanistic courses, and not to technological, professional/vocational, artistic or other specialised courses. This gives rise to two concerns. First, there are some questions about the reliability of assessment that is completely internal. Second, in light of the fact that external assessment is expanding across the school system, not including some element of external assessment in certain elements of provision in secondary education seems to signal that reliability matters less for these courses and these students.

Moderation is focused on procedures rather than on outcomes of learning or shared understandings of standards

One of the challenges faced by all systems of student assessment that rely heavily on the judgement of teachers and schools is maintaining the quality of moderation and improving the processes by which standards across schools are assured to be assessed consistently. Some attention is given to this in the Portuguese system with a system of checks and balances in place once the teacher has scored the test and produced a sheet of results as the outcome of an assessment event. There is checking that the procedures have been followed and the criteria applied correctly. However, this process does not include discussion or analysis of student work, across classes in schools, across schools, nor at national level. Examples of what is expected (except in numeric terms, with targets set for acceptable percentages at each classification level) are not available. In first cycle schools, the review team encountered some evidence of such sharing of examples of student work, but little was found in the second or third cycle, and none in the secondary system, nor any concern expressed that it was not available. Because the moderation is focused on results and on the application of procedure, there is little focus on teacher judgement, and none on the work of students, to arrive at a particular score or mark. Thus, the "product" of learning is seen as a grade or a test score rather than any "real" work. This has serious implications for the validity of the internal assessment process – a process which, given its location in schools and the role of teachers in its design, should be highly valid.

There is growing consensus around the need to strengthen teacher appraisal and teaching standards have been developed

In less than five years since 2007, Portugal has come far in developing a comprehensive framework for teacher appraisal. With the launch of a new system-wide model for teacher appraisal in 2010, the national authorities clearly communicated the need to strengthen teacher appraisal as a priority for the education sector. The government in office since June 2011 confirmed the intention to establish teacher appraisal as a regular practice in the Portuguese school system with the approval of a new model to operate as of 2012/13. This is an ambitious policy given that there is little tradition of pedagogical evaluation in the Portuguese education system. Despite the highly contentious debate about the design and implementation of teacher appraisal, a general consensus appears to have emerged among teachers regarding the need for teachers to be evaluated, receive professional feedback, improve their practice and have their achievements recognised. The OECD review team formed the view that there was indeed wide agreement about the necessity to grow and sustain a formative appraisal and support culture. Also, the establishment of teaching standards that provide a clear and concise profile of what teachers are expected to know and be able to do was a very positive development associated with the implementation of the 2010 teacher appraisal model. The fact that, at this stage, the 2011 appraisal model does not involve the use of national teaching standards is a source of concern. Teacher appraisal conducted within schools are to be based on references developed within each individual school with the clear risk that standards across schools will differ considerably.

Teacher appraisal procedures are rooted in some good principles but there is insufficient focus on the improvement of teaching practice

In a very short period of time, the Portuguese education system has developed a comprehensive teacher appraisal system that includes most domains of teacher performance and a wide range of instruments and data sources. The system as developed since 2007 is based on a number of good principles such as the principle of career advancement on merit, the account of the school context, the introduction of classroom observation, the importance of self-reflection and the multiple sources of evidence. However, the review team formed the impression that there is still insufficient focus on the improvement function of teacher appraisal. This is due to a range of factors including tensions between the career progression and improvement functions of appraisal, limited opportunities for feedback on teaching practices, and insufficient linkages between teacher appraisal and professional development. In the schools visited by the review team, there appeared to be an over-emphasis on assigning marks and classifying teachers for career progression, with less attention paid to genuine professional discussions about effective teaching. Also, in its current form, the teacher appraisal model does not provide a consistent means to build a school-level professional development culture based on a thorough evaluation of teaching practices. Classroom observations are not a systematic part of the formal appraisal of each teacher and there is little tradition for school leaders or teacher peers to conduct informal classroom observations with an evaluative focus. The review team also formed the view that the provision of professional development appears not systematically linked to teacher appraisal.

There is a tension between school-level teacher appraisal and national-level consequences

Since the teaching career, salary scales and competitions for permanent posts are defined at the national level, consequences of a school-based teacher appraisal model go clearly beyond the school. These include progression within the career, chances to access ranks 5 and 7 of the career with no need for a vacancy to be available, chances to access a permanent post upon completion of the probationary period, and chances to get the contract renewed for teachers on fixed-term contracts. The 2011 model provides for a dominant internal appraisal component, which is based on references determined at the school (school educational project, and evaluation parameters established by the pedagogical council for each of the three dimensions of appraisal). This risks a lack of consistency and equity in career progression as a result of different standards applied to teacher appraisal across schools. There is a clear tension between school-level standards for teacher appraisal and national-level consequences of teacher appraisal.

School leadership could play a stronger role in fostering teacher appraisal and feedback cultures

Given that teacher appraisal is relatively recent in Portugal, it is not surprising that the process still appears fragmented and *ad-hoc* in many schools, conducted largely to satisfy national requirements rather than an ongoing process that is mainstreamed into the work of the school. While some schools have collaborative structures and regular feedback mechanisms in place, whether such practice exists varies among schools, and largely depends on school leadership. In many schools, educational leadership practices are still incipient. School directors do not yet appear to take responsibility for the leadership of pedagogy and for the quality of education at the point of delivery. School leaders interviewed by the review team explained that they had few opportunities to influence teaching quality because they cannot select their own teaching staff. There also appear to be few interactions between teachers and school leadership regarding pedagogical directions and approaches. The introduction of teacher appraisal could have been a possibility to provide greater leverage to school directors to engage in leading the core business of teaching and learning in their school. But, quite the contrary, the appraisal approach has taken the responsibility for teacher appraisal away from the school leaders. Neither the 2010 model nor the 2011 model grant the director an active role in the actual appraisal process, which appears to further weaken their pedagogical role.

External school evaluation is becoming well established but the culture of evaluation and improvement needs to be strengthened

There has been, at least since the start of the millennium, a clear commitment on the part of the central government to establish a powerful role for external school evaluation within its overall strategy for quality improvement in education. The lack of opposition to the inspection cycle is significant. None of those interviewed, in schools and more widely, expressed any strong opposition to the principle of external evaluation and comments invariably focused on how it might be improved or linked more directly to other areas of policy. At the same time, long-established traditions of professional autonomy have resulted in attitudes which inhibit challenge or professional learning in relation to teaching practices and student outcomes. Recent moves to strengthen

leadership allied to external evaluation, self-evaluation and accountability therefore face considerable challenges in establishing themselves within a culture which apparently places such high value on a teacher's classroom autonomy. Perhaps the greatest single challenge facing school education in Portugal, therefore, is to establish a powerful and persuasive narrative which aligns policy, strategy and practice around these big strategic issues of leadership, evaluation and improvement.

The external school evaluation model embodies a number of features of best practice but there is an insufficient focus on learning and teaching

The process of evaluation undertaken by the Inspectorate is well structured and systematic. Each stage in the process is clear and the approach builds logically towards the ultimate evaluations. A set of publicly-available criteria for external inspection has been drawn up with an extensive framework of areas for analysis. Evaluations are made on a straightforward five-point word scale which helps to promote consistency both of judgement and of interpretation by readers. Inspection teams combine full-time inspectors with "outsiders". The approach is also designed to be evidence driven. The provision of a data profile for an inspection team provides outcome information, aids efficiency by allowing the team to focus its attention on key issues and can help to benchmark and contextualise judgements. Similarly, documentation is sought and analysed as a key part of evidence gathering and a sample of stakeholders is interviewed in the course of the inspection. However, there is insufficient focus on the quality and effectiveness of learning and teaching. The direct observation of learning and teaching in the classroom is not part of the process. As a result, there is not enough emphasis on pedagogical aspects particularly on identifying the main features of effective or high quality teaching.

School self-evaluation requires to be strengthened

Although the importance of school self-evaluation has been recognised as a policy imperative over at least the last decade, its penetration across the school system remains at an early stage of development. The policy decision not to promote any particular model was designed at least in part to encourage creativity and local ownership but the lack of specificity can also be interpreted as indicating a lower priority to this aspect of school reform. It is clear that schools have only a limited understanding of the contribution which self-evaluation can and should make to improving practice and no clear models have emerged generally. School leaders and key staff lack the confidence and competence to develop bottom-up approaches and as a result, although some form of self-evaluation can be identified generally, its rigour and impact on practice remains at best very rudimentary. The absence of an evaluation tradition and culture which encourages openness and reflection means that, as with external evaluation, the focus is more on administrative processes rather than the quality of learning and teaching and its impact on outcomes for learners. The outcomes of self-evaluation are also very diffuse and lack traction on practice. The extent to which action may or may not be taken is very much at the discretion of individuals, particularly the school director. The potential of self-evaluation reporting to engage parents in the work of the school has also not been sufficiently exploited.

The impact of external school evaluation is limited

Evidence available to the review team suggested that the Inspectorate reports are not widely read. In one school, the view was expressed that they were only really for the director and there was a general unfamiliarity with the findings of past inspections. Parental groups were generally positive about reports but unsure about their impact. Part of the reason for this lack of impact may have lied in the absence of any clear follow-up by the Inspectorate to its inspection findings, except in the most critical cases where the then Regional Director ensured that there was an improvement plan, as was characteristic of the first cycle of external evaluation (2006-11). As a result there was a general perception that, while there was no strong antipathy towards inspections, they were not seen as being of great significance.

There are concerns about school leadership appraisal

There appear to be a number of challenges in the implementation of school director appraisal processes. First, the clear intention that appraisal results shall be used only for summative purposes, namely advancement on the career scale, limits the potential for school leaders to learn from the process and use the results to improve their own practice. Second, given that the post of school director was created only recently, the Portuguese system does not yet have a framework or professional standards for effective educational leadership. Hence, there is no system-wide statement or profile of what school directors are expected to know and be able to do and no uniform performance criteria against which they could be appraised. Third, the systematic implementation of school director appraisal in all schools was perceived as challenging for the Regional Directorates in terms of logistics and human resources. Finally, there were no indications that the appraisal of individual school leaders by the Regional Directorates was connected to the evaluation of school "leadership and management" by the Inspectorate. As a result, there might be a risk that the two processes send conflicting messages regarding effective practice and expected improvement.

There is little emphasis on the evaluation of the education system

The review team formed the impression that the evaluation of the education system as part of the evaluation and assessment framework has received limited policy attention thus far and there is no comprehensive strategic approach to it. As it stands, system evaluation draws mostly on the evaluation of schools complemented with external student assessment (educational progress national tests and national examinations) and a set of indicators on education. A reflection of this is the inexistence of an annual report with an assessment of whether or not the education system is achieving its objectives. Similarly, the way system evaluation has been conceived has not yet allowed in-depth investigations of the factors underlying student performance in Portuguese schools. The current narrow approach to system evaluation does not allow a broad enough assessment of the extent to which student learning objectives are being achieved.

An Education Indicators Framework is established but there are key information gaps at the system level

An Education Indicators Framework is in place to assist decision makers analyse the state of the education system, monitor trends over time, and provide information to the general public. The framework includes five core components: students, teachers, non-teaching staff, schools and use of technology. However, some key information gaps remain. A significant gap is the unavailability of measures on students' socio-economic background. Other gaps include the unavailability of analysis of student performance across student groups (*e.g.* by gender, socio-economic or immigrant background), the incipient analysis of student performance across regions of the country and the limited information on the teaching and learning environment.

Student performance data are part of system monitoring but there are challenges in monitoring student outcomes over time and across schools

The national monitoring system for school education is strengthened by the availability of national data on student performance: educational progress national tests and national examinations. These data allow the monitoring of the achievement of student learning objectives and inform the debate on educational policy. However, there are challenges in monitoring student performance over time (as the comparison of assessment results over time is not ensured) and across schools (as there is no account for the socio-economic context of each school).

System-level information is not fully exploited

The review team formed the view that system-level data are not used to their full potential in analysis which could be useful to inform policy development. Comprehensive statistical analysis of student outcomes such as an assessment of the factors influencing student performance or a study about the impact of socio-economic background on student performance does not seem to be available. In addition, there is limited use of system-level data to inform school management and there is no comprehensive presentation of results of system evaluation for stakeholder use.

Policy recommendations

Integrate the evaluation and assessment framework

The full potential of evaluation and assessment will not be realised until the framework is fully integrated and is perceived as a coherent whole. An important initial step is to develop a strategic plan or framework document that conceptualises a complete evaluation and assessment framework and articulates ways to achieve the coherence between its different components. The plan should essentially constitute a common framework of reference for educational evaluation across the country with the ultimate objective of embedding evaluation as an ongoing and essential part of the professionalism of the actors in the education system. The plan should establish a clear rationale for evaluation and assessment and a compelling narrative about how evaluation and assessment align with the different elements in the education reform programme. It

should describe how each component of the evaluation and assessment framework can produce results that are useful for classroom practice and school improvement activities. The plan should include strategies to both strengthen some of the components of the evaluation and assessment framework and to develop articulations across the components.

A key principle is to place the students at the centre of the evaluation and assessment framework

Given that the fundamental purpose of the evaluation and assessment framework is to improve the learning of the students, a key principle is to place the students at the centre of the framework. This translates into teaching, learning and assessment approaches which focus on students' authentic learning. There has been considerable progress in the last few years in the Portuguese education system in focusing attention in student learning with better provisions for individualised support, growing opportunities for differentiated learning, and greater say of students in their learning. However, these approaches need to become more systematic across schools and classrooms. There is a need for strong messages and incentives for teachers to get away from more traditional teaching strategies and engage with more constructivist principles with a focus on motivating students and using assessment for learning and high quality feedback. In addition, it is important to build community and parental involvement and an acceptance of learning and teaching as a shared responsibility. A particularly important priority for Portugal to ensure evaluation and assessment focus on student learning is to reduce the high rates of grade repetition. The review team does not recommend an abrupt abolition of grade repetition in the system but rather its gradual elimination as alternative measures to support students with learning difficulties are introduced.

There should be greater emphasis on the improvement function of evaluation and assessment

A priority is to reinforce the improvement function of evaluation and assessment and reflect on the best ways for evaluation and assessment to improve student learning. Realising the full potential of the evaluation and assessment framework involves establishing strategies to strengthen the linkages to classroom practice, where the improvement of student learning takes place. Channels which are likely to reinforce such linkages include: an emphasis on teacher appraisal for the continuous improvement of teaching practices; involving teachers in school evaluation, in particular through conceiving school self-evaluation as a collective process with responsibilities for teachers; ensuring that teachers are seen as the main experts not only in instructing but also in assessing their students, so teachers feel the ownership of student assessment and accept it as an integral part of teaching and learning; building teacher capacity for student formative assessment; and ensuring that school evaluation focuses on learning and teaching.

Significantly invest in evaluation and assessment capacity development across the school system

It is clear that an area of policy priority is consolidating efforts to improve the capacity for evaluation and assessment. Areas in which the review team believes considerable investment should be made are: improving the skills of teachers for formative assessment including engaging students in assessment; enhancing the capacity

of teachers to assess against the objectives defined in the national curriculum including promoting collaborative work among teachers around student summative assessment; and improving the data handling skills of school agents. Capacity building through adequate provision of initial teacher education and professional development should be a priority making sure provision is well aligned with the national education reforms. Other strategies involve the provision of support materials; marking guides and exemplars of different student ratings along the lines of what is currently being done by the Learning Goals project; and Internet platforms proposing formative teaching and learning strategies. Also, a more systematic approach to training for teacher appraisal and school evaluation should be developed. There is a need to develop school leader and leadership team capacity in school self-evaluation and teacher appraisal. Another area to explore is building capacity at the system level to ensure an effective use of the results generated by evaluation and assessment activities. Finally there is a need to put in place systematic processes to identify best practices within the evaluation and assessment framework and ensure their dissemination across schools.

Develop the quality of feedback to learners to strengthen formative student assessment practice

A commitment to formative assessment on paper needs to be matched with engagement with formative assessment practices in classrooms and schools. Building on the culture of evaluation, and the centrality of the teacher in the assessment system in Portugal, greater focus on a culture of feedback on student learning would deliver a number of wins for the system. First, it would serve to highlight the role of the learner in the learning process, and encourage a greater sense of agency and responsibility in learners of all ages in the school system. Second, a greater focus on rich feedback would support classroom and school discussions on the quality and process of student learning, to accompany the current widely supported emphasis on marks and results. Third, it might go some way towards engaging the public and the media on the outcomes of education beyond a numeric mark. Finally, extending such a focus to external assessment arrangements might usefully counterbalance the drive to add further to external assessment, by developing richer feedback on current external assessment already in place.

Use the Learning Goals project to support moderation of student work and foster greater collaboration around student learning

The Learning Goals project and the intermediate tests offer some potential in developing a focus on feedback for learning and on exemplification of student work in support of that focus. The benchmarks and indicators that are being developed to support the Learning Goals project could be extended to include real examples of student work to illustrate expectations at the different levels, with student and teacher commentary. Generating and sharing such evidence at school level might be the basis for shaping the many meetings of teachers about results and grades towards genuine professional learning communities which, when they work effectively, can improve the quality of moderation and reduce the inconsistency of teacher marking within and between schools.

Ensure the centrality of teaching standards

Teaching standards are a key element in any teacher appraisal system as they provide credible reference points for making judgements about teacher competence. As noted earlier, a very positive development of the 2010 model was the creation of national standards of teacher performance with a shared understanding of what counts as accomplished teaching to provide the basis for appraising teachers. The teacher appraisal model approved in 2011 has not included thus far national teaching standards among its features, which raises concerns about the lack of a solid reference against which teachers are appraised. A framework of teaching standards is essential as a reference for teacher appraisal and therefore it should be given priority in the design of any teacher appraisal model. The standards are a key element to ensure that all evaluators across Portugal have a common understanding of different levels of teaching performance and help achieve greater consistency and fairness in evaluators' judgements.

Refocus teacher appraisal on improvement

Meaningful teacher appraisal should aim at teacher development and improvement in teaching and learning processes. It can help teachers develop their competencies by recognising strengths on which they can build and identifying weaknesses to be addressed by suitable professional development. To resolve tensions between the improvement function and the career progression function of teacher appraisal, the review team recommends to disconnect regular developmental appraisal somewhat from the more formal career-progression appraisal focus. While links between the two aspects should be assured, it is difficult to achieve both aims in a single process conducted only every two years (or every four years, following the approval of the 2011 model). It would be desirable to develop a component of teacher appraisal fully dedicated to developmental appraisal. Such developmental appraisal would benefit from a non-threatening evaluation context, a culture of mutually providing and receiving feedback within the school, simple evaluation instruments, supportive school leadership, opportunities for professional development and close linkages to school self-evaluation. It should not be associated with a rating or labelling of teacher performance but should focus on identifying areas for improvement and follow-up with adequate learning opportunities. Regular, improvement-oriented appraisal and feedback approaches should involve both peer observation and observation of classroom teaching by the schools' pedagogical leaders. The point of such formative appraisal is that over time it becomes embedded and mainstreamed in regular school practice. To ensure that developmental teacher appraisal processes are indeed conducted in a regular, systematic and coherent way across schools in Portugal, it is important that an external body such as the Inspectorate provides a validation of school-level processes and holds the school director accountable for their effectiveness. Also, the linkages between teacher appraisal, professional development and school development need to be reinforced. Teacher appraisal is unlikely to produce effective results if it is not appropriately linked to professional development which, in turn, needs to be associated with school development if the improvement of teaching practices is to meet schools' needs.

Strengthen the appraisal model for career progression

The teacher appraisal model that has been introduced and adapted since 2007 forms a good basis for summative appraisal of teachers at key stages of their career. Such summative appraisal (or career-progression appraisal) should serve to maintain the principle of career advancement on merit, hold teachers accountable for their practice and complement the regular formative appraisal by providing an account of the ways in which it has contributed to professional development and improvement. It can provide incentives for teachers to perform at their best, bring recognition to effective teachers and help recognise and spread good practice more widely. It should also offer possibilities to move on consistently underperforming teachers who have not responded to development opportunities. The review team recommends the strengthening of career-progression appraisal, with the simplification of appraisal procedures vis-à-vis the 2010 model, as long as the suggested developmental appraisal of teachers is introduced. However, it would be important to keep key features of an effective teacher appraisal model such as meaningful self-evaluation, classroom observation for each teacher appraised, opportunities for teachers to demonstrate their competence in individual portfolios, and opportunities for professional discussions with evaluators during the appraisal process. Also, given the high stakes that the formal appraisal is intended to carry for teachers in terms of career and salary progression, it is essential that the judgements made by evaluators are reliable and fair within and across schools. In addition, given the national-level consequences of teacher appraisal in Portugal, it is essential that teachers are appraised against reference standards of teaching performance which are common across schools. To this end, it is crucial to further invest into building a solid professional development structure with a range of offers to develop the skills of evaluators, including their ability to appraise against national standards of teaching performance. Summative appraisal should include a school-external component to ensure the moderation and fairness of appraisals across schools. The appraisal could be undertaken jointly by a school-based evaluator, together with an accredited evaluator, typically a teacher from another school with expertise in the same subject area as the evaluatee.

Enhance and support the role of school leaders in teacher appraisal

School leaders can play an essential role in making performance improvement a strategic imperative and to promote teacher appraisal as being key to teacher development and broader school policies. In Portugal, there is a need to build the capacity and credibility of the new school directors as educational leaders. School directors need to be equipped to focus thoroughly on the quality of teaching and learning and help set up the collaborative and trusting work environment necessary to embed a focus on continuous evaluation and improvement in the everyday work of teachers. It is suggested giving a greater role in teacher appraisal to the school leadership team, which would provide them with a much-needed opportunity to exercise pedagogical leadership and support improvement of teaching across the school. It would also help define a smaller group of people responsible for summative appraisal to whom professional development in this area should be targeted. This should go in line with a larger distribution of school leadership within schools, where deputy directors and middle leaders can hold specialised functions for areas such as evaluation, appraisal and assessment. To ensure their

credibility, it is crucial that individuals with such leadership and evaluation responsibilities have priority in receiving adequate learning opportunities.

Establish the focus for school evaluation as being to improve learning and teaching and student outcomes

Evaluation frameworks, the criteria and questions governing judgements and the methods employed should all focus much more directly on the quality of learning and teaching and their relationship to student outcomes. That will require significant alterations to existing models and instruments and a determined effort to build a culture of openness and reflection around what happens during the learning and teaching process. Government policy should articulate much more clearly the legitimacy of a focus on learning and teaching and student outcomes for both external evaluation and self-evaluation and that such a focus will be the key concern of wider accountabilities. The Inspectorate, drawing on its previous experience with the "Integrated School Assessments" model, should be asked to revise its inspection framework to ensure that the quality of learning lies at the heart of external evaluation, including with direct classroom observation as an evaluation instrument. New criteria should be developed, engaging leading practitioners from schools and higher education institutions in shaping the factors to be taken into account. Also, current approaches to data gathering and the content of inspection profiles should be reviewed to create a sharper focus on the most important factors, particularly in relation to student outcomes.

Improve the alignment between school external and self-evaluation and raise the profile of school self-evaluation

Better alignment is needed between policy and practice in both external evaluation and self-evaluation. In particular, there is a need to ensure that the criteria used in both spheres are sufficiently similar as to create a common language about priorities and about the key factors which influence high quality learning and teaching. Lack of clarity about what matters is likely to reinforce current confusion and continue to relegate self-evaluation to something which serves inspection rather than creating a platform for an exchange based on reliable and comparable evidence.

Improve the acceptability and impact of external school evaluation

Creating a stronger focus on learning and teaching is likely of itself to improve the impact of inspection. However, a number of other steps need to be taken to reinforce the significance of inspection for the improvement of the school. In particular, the credibility of teams needs to be improved and transparency of reporting used more directly as a driver of improvement. Also, a more systematic follow-up by the Inspectorate to its inspections should be introduced. Routine follow-up is a feature of inspection in many inspectorates across Europe and is seen as a means of maintaining momentum for improvement. The Inspectorate should make reports less technical and more readable to a non-specialist audience. Schools should also be required to be proactive in publicising reports with staff and parents.

Ensure school leaders receive appropriate feedback on their performance

Further enhancing the performance appraisal of school directors is one way to contribute to building and enhancing the new role of school directors as educational leaders. Effective school director appraisal should help provide constructive external feedback, identify areas of needed improvement and offer targeted support to improve practice. In order to strengthen school leadership appraisal, the OECD review team recommends the development of a school leadership framework or standards to provide a credible reference for the appraisal of school directors. Another key element to make school director appraisal effective and useful is to ensure that both evaluators and evaluatees have the necessary competencies. School directors themselves need to be prepared to use appraisal results for their own professional learning.

Raise the profile of system evaluation within the evaluation and assessment framework

The profile of system evaluation within the evaluation and assessment framework needs to be raised. An initial priority is to broaden the concept of system evaluation as the wide range of system-level information which permits a good understanding of how well student learning objectives are being achieved. It should include a varied set of components such as broad measures of student outcomes; demographic, administrative and contextual data; information systems; and research and analysis to inform planning, intervention and policy development. A strategic approach to system-level evaluation would benefit from clear national objectives and priorities so progress against these can be assessed. System-level evaluation should include the production of an annual report with an assessment of whether or not the education system is achieving its objectives.

Prioritise efforts to meet information needs for national monitoring

An immediate priority for meeting information needs to adequately monitor student outcomes in the Portuguese school system is to strengthen the information on the student socio-economic background, including parental level of education, occupation and income level, immigrant or minority status, and special needs. Also, to have reliable national measures of performance across broader curricular areas Portugal could consider introducing sample-based national monitoring surveys. Moreover, the monitoring of student performance across specific groups (*e.g.* by gender, socio-economic or immigrant background) as well as the analysis of student performance across regions needs to be strengthened. Finally, there is a need to include stakeholders' perceptions of the teaching and learning environment in the national monitoring system.

Explore ways to more reliably track educational outcomes over time and across schools

System evaluation in Portugal needs to place greater emphasis on the monitoring of "progress" of students in contrast to achievement levels at a given point in time. To achieve that, it needs to improve its monitoring of both student results over time and the progress of particular student cohorts. First, it would be useful to ensure the comparability of results of educational progress national tests over time by keeping a stable element of

items in the tests. Second, a more strategic use of the results of national assessments (tests and examinations) could provide indicators on the progress of particular student cohorts through compulsory education in both Portuguese and mathematics. Another imperative is to make comparisons of student results across schools and regions more meaningful through the correction for the socio-economic context of the schools.

Optimise the reporting and use of system-level data

The amount of existing information on schools and system performance offers many opportunities to engage stakeholders in supporting improvements across the school system. While large amounts of data are collected from schools and comparable student results are available, there is room to strengthen the analysis and mobilisation of such information for system monitoring and improvement. This includes strengthening the analysis for educational planning and policy development; consolidating the communication of system-level data to stakeholders; and improving feedback for local monitoring.

Annex A. The OECD Review on Evaluation and Assessment Frameworks for Improving School Outcomes

The OECD Review on Evaluation and Assessment Frameworks for Improving School Outcomes is designed to respond to the strong interest in evaluation and assessment issues evident at national and international levels. It provides a description of design, implementation and use of assessment and evaluation procedures in countries; analyses strengths and weaknesses of different approaches; and provides recommendations for improvement. The Review looks at the various components of assessment and evaluation frameworks that countries use with the objective of improving student outcomes. These include student assessment, teacher appraisal, school evaluation and system evaluation. The Review focuses on primary and secondary education.[1]

The overall purpose is to explore how systems of evaluation and assessment can be used to improve the quality, equity and efficiency of school education.[2] The overarching policy question is "How can assessment and evaluation policies work together more effectively to improve student outcomes in primary and secondary schools?" The Review further concentrates on five key issues for analysis: *(i)* Designing a systemic framework for evaluation and assessment; *(ii)* Ensuring the effectiveness of evaluation and assessment procedures; *(iii)* Developing competencies for evaluation and for using feedback; *(iv)* Making the best use of evaluation results; and *(v)* Implementing evaluation and assessment policies.

Twenty-three countries are actively engaged in the Review. These cover a wide range of economic and social contexts, and among them they illustrate quite different approaches to evaluation and assessment in school systems. This will allow a comparative perspective on key policy issues. These countries prepare a detailed background report, following a standard set of guidelines. Countries can also opt for a detailed Review, undertaken by a team consisting of members of the OECD Secretariat and external experts. Twelve OECD countries have opted for a Country Review. The final comparative report from the OECD Review, bringing together lessons from all countries, will be completed in 2012.

The project is overseen by the Group of National Experts on Evaluation and Assessment, which was established as a subsidiary body of the OECD Education Policy Committee in order to guide the methods, timing and principles of the Review. More details are available from the website dedicated to the Review: *www.oecd.org/edu/evaluationpolicy*.

Notes

1. The scope of the Review does not include early childhood education and care, apprenticeships within vocational education and training, and adult education.
2. The project's purposes and scope are detailed in OECD 2009 document entitled "OECD Review on Evaluation and Assessment Frameworks for Improving School Outcomes: Design and Implementation Plan for the Review", which is available from the project website *www.oecd.org/edu/evaluationpolicy*.

Annex B. Visit programme

Wednesday, 23 February 2011, Lisbon

09:00 – 10:00	Minister of Education, Ms Isabel Veiga and the Deputy Minister of Education, Mr Alexandre Ventura
10:30 – 11:30	National Agency for Qualification (ANQ)
11:30 – 13:00	Office for Educational Evaluation (GAVE), Ministry of Education
14:00 – 15:00	Office for Education Statistics and Planning (GEPE) and the Information System Co-ordinating Office (MISI), Ministry of Education
15:00 – 16:00	General Directorate of Innovation and Curriculum Development (DGIDC), Ministry of Education
16:00 – 17:00	Scientific Council for Teacher Evaluation (CCAP)
17:00 – 18:15	General Inspectorate of Education (IGE)

Thursday, 24 February 2011, Lisbon

09:00 – 10:00	General Directorate of Human Resources in Education (DGRHE), Ministry of Education
10:00 – 10:45	National Education Council (CNE)
10:45 – 11:30	Schools Council (CE)
11:30 – 12:15	National Association of Teachers (ANP)
12:15 – 13:00	Independent National Confederation of Parents and Guardians (CNIPE)
14:30 – 17:00	Visit to Secondary School D. Luisa de Gusmão, Lisbon School leadership team Meeting with a group of teachers Meeting with a group of students
17:30 – 18:15	National Federation of Education Unions (FNE)
18:15 – 19:00	National Federation of Teachers (FENPROF)

Friday, 25 February 2011, Évora and Almada

09:00 – 11:30	Visit to Basic School of Santa Clara, Évora School leadership team Meeting with a group of teachers Meeting with a group of students
13:00 – 16:30	Visit to Basic School N.1 of Feijó, Almada, including meeting with leadership of school cluster based at Secondary School Romeu Correia, Feijó, Almada. School leadership team Meeting with a group of teachers Meeting with a group of students
17:30 – 18:30	Teachers Disciplinary Associations: Mathematics Teachers' Association (APM) Portuguese Language Teachers' Association (APP) History Teachers' Association (APH) English Language Teachers' Association (APPI) Geography Teachers' Association (APGEO) Biology and Geology Teachers' Association (APBG)

Sunday, 27 February 2011, Lisbon

09:30 – 15:30	Review team meetings

Monday, 28 February 2011, Póvoa de Lanhoso, Braga and Porto

09:00 – 11:30	Visit to Basic School of Santo Emilião, Póvoa de Lanhoso School leadership team Meeting with a group of teachers Meeting with a group of students
12:00 – 12:45	National Platform for Basic and Secondary Levels Students' Associations (PNAEEBS)
12:45 – 15:15	Visit to Secondary School Alberto Sampaio, Braga School leadership team Meeting with a group of teachers Meeting with a group of students
16:00 – 17:00	Regional Directorate of Education for the Northern Region (DREN)
17:00 – 17:45	National Confederation of Parents' Associations (CONFAP)
17:45 – 18:30	Union of Inspectors of Education (SIEE)

Tuesday, 1 March 2011, Porto and Lisbon

09:00 – 09:30	National Association of School Leaders (ANDE),
09:30 – 10:00	National Association of Public Schools and Clusters' Directors (ANDAEP)
10:30 – 13:00	Visit to Basic School Augusto Gil, Porto School leadership team Meeting with a group of teachers Meeting with a group of students
17:00 – 19:00	Review team meetings

Wednesday, 2 March 2011, Lisbon

09:00 – 10:30	Seminar with Researchers - Prof. Jorge Ávila de Lima, University of Azores - Prof. António Neto Mendes, University of Aveiro - Prof. Manuela Terrasêca, University of Oporto, Psychology and Educational Sciences Faculty - Prof. Luís Miguel Carvalho, University of Lisbon, Education Institute - Prof. Fátima Antunes, University of Minho - Prof. António Caetano, Higher Institute of Labour and Business Sciences, Lisbon University Institute - Prof. José Matias Alves, Portuguese Catholic University, Oporto Regional Centre - Prof. Natércio Afonso, University of Lisbon, Education Institute
10:30 – 11:15	Special Needs in Education - Network for Inclusion Project (PRI) - Parents to Parents Information Bank (BIPP) - Portuguese Association for the Disabled People (APD) - Students with special needs
11:15 – 12:00	Meeting with the Schools Associations Training Centres (CFAE) - Ria Formosa CFAE – Faro - Order of Santiago CFAE – Setúbal - Co-operation and Learning Network CFAE – Batalha - Paços de Ferreira, Paredes and Penafiel CFAE - Northeast Alentejo CFAE – Portalegre
12:00 – 12:45	Business and Employers representatives - EDP - Energias de Portugal, Electricity/Energy sector - Confederation of Portuguese Businesses (CIP) - Confederation of Portuguese Farmers (CAP)
14:00 – 15:00	Meeting with Teachers Educators - Prof. Lurdes Serrazina, Lisbon College of Education - Prof. Maria João Cardona, Santarém College of Education - Prof. Henrique Ferreira, Bragança College of Education - Prof. Isabel Barca, University of Minho - Prof. Leonor Santos, Education Institute, University of Lisbon - Prof. João Costa, Social and Human Sciences, New University of Lisbon - Prof. Nilza Costa, University of Aveiro
15:30 – 16:30	Oral report by review team with preliminary conclusions

Annex C. Composition of the review team

Graham Donaldson published his report *Teaching Scotland's Future – A Report of a Review of Teacher Education in Scotland* in January 2011. This Review was undertaken on behalf of the Scottish Government (*www.reviewofteachereducationinscotland.org.uk*). Graham was Her Majesty's Senior Chief Inspector of Education from 2002 to 2010 in Scotland. In that role, he was Chief Executive of HM Inspectorate of Education and Chief Professional Adviser to the Scottish Government on all aspects of education outside the university sector. Graham began his teaching career in 1970 and taught in schools in Glasgow and Dunbartonshire. He worked as a Curriculum Evaluator for the Consultative Committee on the Curriculum. During this period, he was seconded to BP to review links between education and industry. His report, *Industry and Scottish Schools*, was published in 1981. He became an HM Inspector in 1983. Graham is the current President of the Standing International Conference of Inspectorates (SICI) which has 29 member inspectorates from across Europe. Graham was awarded a CB for his services to education in the 2009 Queen's Birthday Honours List.

Anne Looney is Chief Executive of the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment in Dublin (*www.ncca.ie*). Anne is from Dublin. A former post-primary teacher of Religious Education and English, she joined the full-time staff of the NCCA in 1997 and was appointed Chief Executive Officer in 2001. She holds a Doctorate in Education from the Institute of Education of the University of London. She has published on curriculum and assessment policy, school culture and ethos, and religious education and has presented papers in Ireland, north and south, in the United States, Canada, Australia and China on a range of curriculum and assessment themes and on issues of school reform.

Deborah Nusche, a German national, is a Policy Analyst in the OECD Directorate for Education. She is currently working on the OECD Review on Evaluation and Assessment Frameworks for Improving School Outcomes. At the OECD, she previously worked on the Thematic Review of Migrant Education and the Improving School Leadership study. She has led country review visits on migrant education and participated in case study visits on school leadership in several countries. She also co-authored the OECD reports *Closing the Gap for Immigrant Students* (2010) and *Improving School Leadership* (2008). She has previous experience with UNESCO and the World Bank and holds an M.A. in International Affairs from Sciences Po Paris.

Paulo Santiago, a Portuguese national, is a Senior Analyst in the OECD Directorate for Education, where he has been since 2000. He is currently the co-ordinator of the OECD Review on Evaluation and Assessment Frameworks for Improving School Outcomes. He has previously assumed responsibility for two major cross-country reviews, each with the participation of over 20 countries: a review of teacher policy (between 2002 and 2005, leading to the OECD publication *Teachers Matter*) and the thematic review of tertiary education (between 2005 and 2008, leading to the OECD publication *Tertiary Education for the Knowledge Society*). He has also led reviews of teacher policy and tertiary education policy in several countries. He holds a PhD in Economics from Northwestern University, United States, where he also lectured. With a background in the economics of education, he specialises in education policy analysis. He co-ordinated the review and acted as *Rapporteur* for the review team.

Annex D. Comparative indicators on evaluation and assessment

	Portugal	Country average[1]	Portugal's rank[2]
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT Source: Education at a Glance (OECD, 2010a)[3]			
% of population that has attained at least upper secondary education, by age group (excluding ISCED 3C short programmes)[4] (2008)			
Ages 25-64	28	71	30/30
Ages 25-34	47	80	28/30
Ages 35-44	29	75	29/30
Ages 45-54	20	68	30/30
Ages 55-64	13	58	30/30
% of population that has attained tertiary education, by age group (2008)			
Ages 25-64	14	28	=28/31
Ages 25-34	23	35	25/31
Ages 35-44	15	29	=27/31
Ages 45-54	10	25	=30/31
Ages 55-64	8	20	31/31
Upper secondary graduation rates (2008) % of upper secondary graduates (first-time graduation) to the population at the typical age of graduation	63	80	24/26
STUDENT PERFORMANCE			
Mean performance in PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) (15-year-olds) (2009) Source: PISA Results (OECD, 2010d)[3]			
Reading literacy	489	493	22/34
Mathematics literacy	487	496	=25/34
Science literacy	493	501	25/34
SCHOOL SYSTEM EXPENDITURE Source: Education at a Glance (OECD, 2010a)[3]			
Expenditure on primary, secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary institutions as a % of GDP, from public and private sources			
1995	3.6	~	=13/26
2000	3.9	~	=8/29
2007	3.5	3.6	=17/29
Public expenditure on primary, secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education as a % of total public expenditure (2008)[5, 6]	7.8	9.0	=19/29
Total expenditure on primary, secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education from public sources (2007) (%)	99.9	90.3	2/25
Annual expenditure per student by educational institutions, (2007) (US$)[6, 7]			
Primary	5011	6741	21/28
Lower secondary	6497	7598	19/26
Upper secondary	7243	8746	19/26
All secondary	6833	8267	22/28
Change in expenditure per student by educational institutions, primary, secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education, index of change between 1995, 2000 and 2007 (2000 = 100)[6]			
1995	72	88	19/22
2007	109	125	20/27
Current expenditure – composition, primary, secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education (2007)[6, 8]			
Compensation of teachers	81.5	63.8	1/20
Compensation of other staff	11.6	14.9	14/20
Compensation of all staff	93.1	79.2	1/28
Other current expenditure	6.9	20.8	28/28

	Portugal	Country average[1]	Portugal's rank[2]
SCHOOL STAFF NUMBERS			
Ratio of students to teaching staff (2008)[9]			
Primary	11.3	16.4	23/27
Lower Secondary	8.1	13.7	=23/24
Upper Secondary	7.3	13.5	24/24
All Secondary	7.7	13.7	29/29
CHARACTERISTICS OF THE TEACHER WORKFORCE (lower secondary education, 2007/08) Source: TALIS (OECD, 2009b)[10]			
Age distribution of teachers			
Teachers aged under 25 years	0.5	3.0	=20/23
Teachers aged 25-29 years	7.4	12.1	17/23
Teachers aged 30-39 years	40.0	28.0	2/23
Teachers aged 40-49 years	36.3	29.6	5/23
Teachers aged 50-59 years	14.2	23.5	19/23
Teachers aged 60 years and more	1.7	3.9	14/23
Gender distribution of teachers (% of females)	70.7	69.3	10/23
Teachers' educational attainment			
% of teachers who completed an ISCED 5A qualification or higher[4]	95.3	83.7	9/23
Employment status of teachers			
% of teachers permanently employed	67.6	84.5	23/23
TEACHER SALARIES in public institutions, Source: Education at a Glance (OECD, 2010a)[3]			
Annual teacher salaries (2008)[7]			
Primary – starting salary (US$)	21677	28949	25/29
Primary – 15 years experience (US$)	35486	39426	20/29
Primary – top of scale (US$)	55654	48022	8/29
Primary – ratio of salary after 15 years experience to GDP per capita	1.55	1.16	=2/29
Lower secondary – starting salary (US$)	21677	30750	25/29
Lower secondary – 15 years experience (US$)	35486	41927	20/29
Lower secondary – top of scale (US$)	55654	50649	10/29
Lower secondary – ratio of salary after 15 years experience to GDP per capita	1.55	1.22	4/29
Upper secondary – starting salary (US$)	21677	32563	25/28
Upper secondary – 15 years experience (US$)	35486	45850	21/28
Upper secondary – top of scale (US$)	55654	54717	13/28
Upper secondary – ratio of salary after 15 years experience to GDP per capita	1.55	1.29	6/28
Number of years from starting to top salary (lower secondary education) (2008)	31	24	10/27
Decisions on payments for teachers in public schools (2008)[11]			
Criteria for base salary and additional payments awarded to teachers in public institutions			
● Base salary/■ Additional yearly payment /Δ Additional incidental payment			
Years of experience as a teacher	●	●29 ■9 Δ8	
Management responsibilities in addition to teaching duties	■	●12 ■18 Δ7	
Teaching more classes or hours than required by full-time contract	Δ	●2 ■10 Δ17	
Special tasks (career guidance or counselling)	■	●4 ■13 Δ11	
Teaching in a disadvantaged, remote or high cost area (location allowance)	-	●9 ■18 Δ4	
Special activities (*e.g.* sports and drama clubs, homework clubs, summer schools etc.)	-	●1 ■8 Δ12	
Teaching students with special educational needs (in regular schools)	●	●9 ■11 Δ5	
Teaching courses in a particular field		●5 ■8 Δ4	
Holding an initial educational qualification higher than the minimum qualification required to enter the teaching profession	●	●18 ■9 Δ5	
Holding a higher than minimum level of teacher certification or training obtained during professional life	●	●15 ■11 Δ3	
Outstanding performance in teaching	-	●5 ■9 Δ8	
Successful completion of professional development activities	●	●10 ■7 Δ4	
Reaching high scores in the qualification examination	●	●4 ■3 Δ3	
Holding an educational qualification in multiple subjects	-	●3 ■4 Δ3	
Family status (married, number of children)	■	●2 ■8 Δ1	
Age (independent of years of teaching experience)	-	●4 ■3 Δ1	
Other	-	●1 ■8 Δ2	

	Portugal	Country average[1]	Portugal's rank[2]
TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (lower secondary education) Source: TALIS (OECD, 2009b)[10]			
Teacher participation in professional development (2007/08)			
% of teachers who undertook some prof. development in the previous 18 months	85.8	88.5	17/23
Average days of professional development across all teachers	18.5	15.3	7/23
Average days of professional development among those who received some	21.6	17.3	7/23
Average % of professional development days taken that were compulsory	35.1	51.0	20/23
Types of professional development undertaken by teachers (2007/08)			
Courses and workshops	77.0	81.2	16/23
Education conferences and seminars	51.6	48.9	9/23
Qualification programmes	29.5	24.5	7/23
Observation visits to other schools	26.4	27.6	10/23
Professional development network	15.0	40.0	23/23
Individual and collaborative research	47.1	35.4	8/23
Mentoring and peer observation	14.6	34.9	23/23
Reading professional literature	73.3	77.7	15/23
Informal dialogue to improve teaching	94.2	92.6	=8/23
Impact of different types of professional development undertaken by teachers (2007/08)			
% of teachers reporting that the professional development undertaken had a moderate or high impact upon their development as a teacher			
Courses and workshops	82.8	80.6	11/23
Education conferences and seminars	73.0	73.9	16/23
Qualification programmes	87.0	87.2	15/23
Observation visits to other schools	67.4	74.9	19/23
Professional development network	80.7	80.2	14/23
Individual and collaborative research	94.0	89.3	5/23
Mentoring and peer observation	87.6	77.6	4/23
Reading professional literature	78.9	82.8	16/23
Informal dialogue to improve teaching	88.1	86.7	10/23
Teachers' high professional development needs (2007/08)			
% of teachers indicating they have a "high level of need" for professional development in the following areas			
Content and performance standards	9.8	16.0	15/23
Student assessment practices	6.9	15.7	21/23
Classroom management	5.8	13.3	19/23
Subject field	4.8	17.0	21/23
Instructional practices	7.7	17.1	18/23
ICT teaching skills	24.2	24.7	12/23
Teaching special learning needs students	50.0	31.3	2/23
Student discipline and behaviour problems	17.4	21.4	15/23
School management and administration	18.2	9.7	3/23
Teaching in a multicultural setting	17.0	13.9	7/23
Student counselling	8.5	16.7	18/23
TEACHER PERCEPTION OF SELF-EFFICACY (lower secondary education) Source: TALIS (OECD, 2009b)[10]			
% of teachers who "strongly agree" or "agree" with the statement "Teachers feel that they are making a significant educational difference" (2007/08)	89.8	92.3	17/23
% of teachers who "strongly agree" or "agree" with the statement "Teachers feel that when they try really hard, they can make progress with even the most difficult and unmotivated students" (2007/08)	65.0	82.7	23/23
SYSTEM EVALUATION			
Examination regulations, public schools only (2008) Source: Education at a Glance (OECD, 2010a)[3, 12]			
Primary education (Yes/No)			
A standard curriculum or partially standardised curriculum is required	Yes	27/29	
Mandatory national examination is required[13]	No	4/29	
Mandatory national assessment is required[14]	Yes	19/29	
Lower secondary education (Yes/No)			
A standard curriculum or partially standardised curriculum is required	Yes	27/29	
Mandatory national examination is required	Yes	10/28	
Mandatory national assessment is required	No	18/29	

	Portugal	Country average[1]	Portugal's rank[2]
Potential subjects of assessment at national examinations[13] (lower secondary education) (2006) Source: Education at a Glance (OECD, 2008)[3, 12]			
National examinations exist (Yes/No)	Yes	8/25	
Mathematics	Yes	9/9	
Science	No	7/9	
National language or language of instruction	Yes	9/9	
Other subjects	No	8/9	
Compulsory for schools to administer national examinations (Yes/No)	Yes	7/9	
Year/Grade of national examination	9	9.2	
Potential subjects of assessment at national periodical assessments[14] (lower secondary education) (2006) Source: Education at a Glance (OECD, 2008)[3, 12]			
National periodical assessments (Yes/No)	No	14/25	
Mathematics	a	12/13	
Science	a	5/13	
National language or language of instruction	a	12/13	
Other subjects	a	6/12	
Compulsory for school to administer national assessment (Yes/No)	a	10/13	
Year/Grade of national assessment	a		
Possible influence of national examinations (lower secondary education) (2006) Source: Education at a Glance (OECD, 2008)[3] None/Low/Moderate/High[15]			
Performance feedback to the school	None	None:2 Low:1 Moderate:1 High:3	
Performance appraisal of the school management	None	None:4 Low:1 Moderate:1 High:1	
Performance appraisal of individual teachers	None	None:4 Low:2 Moderate:0 H igh:1	
The school budget	None	None:7 Low:1 Moderate:0 High:0	
The provision of another financial reward or sanction	None	None:7 Low:1 Moderate:0 High:0	
The assistance provided to teachers to improve their teaching skills	None	None:3 Low:0 Moderate:3 High:0	
Remuneration and bonuses received by teachers	None	None:7 Low:0 Moderate:0 High:0	
Likelihood of school closure	None	None:7 Low:0 Moderate:1 High:0	
Publication of results (Yes/No)[12]	Yes	9/10	
Publication of tables that compare school performance (Yes/No)	No	2/10	
Possible influence of national periodical assessments (lower secondary education) (2006) Source: Education at a Glance (OECD, 2008)[3] None/Low/Moderate/High[15]			
Performance feedback to the school	a	None:4 Low:1 Moderate:2 High:3	
Performance appraisal of the school management	a	None:6 Low:2 Moderate:1 High:0	
Performance appraisal of individual teachers	a	None:8 Low:1 Moderate:0 High:0	
The school budget	a	None:8 Low:1 Moderate:0 High:0	
The provision of another financial reward or sanction	a	None:9 Low:0 Moderate:0 High:0	
The assistance provided to teachers to improve their teaching skills	a	None:5 Low:1 Moderate:3 High:0	
Remuneration and bonuses received by teachers	a	None:9 Low:1 Moderate:0 High:0	
Likelihood of school closure	a	None:9 Low:0 Moderate:0 High:1	
Publication of results (Yes/No)[12]	a	7/12	
Publication of tables that compare school performance (Yes/No)	a	2/12	
Existence of national tests (2008/09) Source: Eurydice (2009)[16]	Yes	30/35	
Number of national tests (2008/09) (primary and lower secondary education) Source: Eurydice, (2009)[16]			
Compulsory tests	3	2.7	=4/22
Sample tests	-	2.3	-
Optional tests[17]	-	2.3	-
Years of testing	4,6,9		
Number of subjects covered in national tests[18]	2	2 subjects:14 3+ subjects:13	3 subjects:11 Does not apply:5
Main aims of nationally standardised tests (2008/09) (primary and lower secondary education) Source: Eurydice (2009)[12, 16] (Yes/No)			
Taking decisions about the school career of pupils	Yes	17/30	
Monitoring schools and/or the education system	Yes	21/30	
Identifying individual learning needs	No	12/30	
Bodies responsible for setting national tests (2008/09) (primary and lower secondary education) Source: Eurydice (2009)[11, 16] ●Tests for taking decisions about the school career of pupils/■Tests for other purposes/ΔNo national tests			
A unit/agency within the ministry of education without external players	-	●2 ■0 Δ5	
A unit/agency within the ministry of education with external players	●■	●3 ■10 Δ5	
A public body distinct from the ministry, which specialises in education or educational evaluation	-	●11 ■16 Δ5	
A private body or university department	-	●4 ■4 Δ5	

	Portugal	Country average[1]	Portugal's rank[2]
People in charge of administering national tests (2008/09) (primary and lower secondary education) Source: Eurydice (2009)[11, 16]			
●Tests for taking decisions about the school career of pupils/■Tests for other purposes/ΔNo national tests			
Class teachers	-	●10 ■15 Δ5	
Class teachers + external people	-	●1 ■3 Δ5	
Other teachers from the same school	●■	●3 ■3 Δ5	
Other teachers from the same school + external people	-	●1 ■4 Δ5	
External people alone	-	●3 ■5 Δ5	
Persons in charge of marking national tests (2008/09) (primary and lower secondary education) Source: Eurydice (2009)[11, 16]			
●Tests for taking decisions about the school career of pupils/■Tests for other purposes/ΔNo national tests			
Class teachers	-	●7 ■10 Δ5	
Class teachers + external people	-	●4 ■2 Δ5	
Other teachers from the same school	-	●1 ■3 Δ5	
Other teachers from the same school + external persons	-	●0 ■1 Δ5	
External persons alone	●■	●8 ■16 Δ5	
Standardisation of test questions (2008/09) (primary and lower secondary education) Source: Eurydice (2009)[12, 16] (Yes/No)			
Questions are the same for all pupils taking one national test	Yes	19/30	
Questions are not the same for all pupils taking one national test	No	8/30	
Whether test questions are standardised or not varies depending on type of test	No	2/30	
Data not available	No	1/30	
Use of ICT in national testing (2008/09) (primary and lower secondary education) Source: Eurydice (2009)[12, 16] (Yes/No)			
ICT is currently used in national tests	No	11/30	
Use of ICT for on-screen testing	No	3/30	
Use of ICT for marking tests	No	8/30	
Participation of students with special educational needs (SEN) in national testing (2008/09) (primary and lower secondary education) Source: Eurydice (2009)[12, 16] (Yes/No)			
Pupils with SEN may take part in national testing	Yes	27/30	
Participation in national testing for pupils with SEN is compulsory	Yes	12/30	
Participation in national testing for pupils with SEN is optional	No	9/30	
Participation varies depending on type of test, level of education or type of school	No	5/30	
Data not available	No	1/30	
Communication of the results of national tests to local authorities (2008/09) (primary and lower secondary education) Source: Eurydice (2009)[12, 16] (Yes/No)			
Local authorities have access to aggregated results for their own area	No	17/30	
Use of achievement data for accountability (2009) (15-year-olds) Source: PISA Compendium for the school questionnaire (OECD, 2010c)[3]			
% of students in schools where the principal reported that achievement data is used in the following procedures			
Posted publicly	30.1	36.4	22/33
Used in evaluation of the principal's performance	11.7	35.5	28/33
Used in evaluation of teachers' performance	17.1	44.2	29/33
Used in decisions about instructional resource allocation to the school	54.2	32.2	8/33
Tracked over time by an administrative authority	66.3	65.2	19/33

SCHOOL EVALUATION			
Requirements for school evaluations by an inspectorate (lower secondary education) (2006) Source: Education at a Glance (OECD, 2008)[3]		None:4	1 per 3+ years:5
None/1 per 3+ years/1 per 3 years/1 per 2 years/1 per year/1+ per year	1 per 3+ years	1 per 3 years:6 1 per year:1	1 per 2 years:0 1+ per year:1
Possible influence of school evaluation by an inspectorate (lower secondary education) (2006) Source: Education at a Glance (OECD, 2008)[3]			
None/Low/Moderate/High[15]			
Influence on performance feedback			
Performance feedback to the school	High	None:0 Low:1 Moderate:1 High:10	
Performance appraisal of the school management	High	None:0 Low:2 Moderate:3 High:7	
Performance appraisal of individual teachers	a	None:1 Low:5 Moderate:2 High:3	
Financial and other implications			
The school budget	a	None:5 Low:2 Moderate:2 High:1	
The provision of another financial reward or sanction	a	None:4 Low:4 Moderate:0 High:1	

	Portugal	Country average[1]	Portugal's rank[2]
The assistance provided to teachers to improve their teaching skills	Moderate	None:1 Low:2 Moderate:6 High:2	
Remuneration and bonuses received by teachers	None	None:6 Low:1 Moderate:2 High:0	
Likelihood of school closure	a	None:2 Low:3 Moderate:2 High:2	
Publication of results (Yes/No)[12]	Yes	11/13	
Publication of tables that compare school performance (Yes/No)	No	1/12	
Requirements for school self-evaluations (lower secondary education) (2006)			
Source: Education at a Glance (OECD, 2008)[3]		None:6	1 per 3+ years:1
None/1 per 3+ years/1 per 3 years/1 per 2 years/1 per year/1+ per year	1+ per year	1 per 3 years:1	1 per 2 years:0
		1 per year:8	1+ per year:3
Possible influence of school self-evaluations (lower secondary education) (2006)			
Source: Education at a Glance (OECD, 2008)[3]			
None/Low/Moderate/High[15]			
Influence on performance feedback			
Performance feedback to the school	None	None:1 Low:2 Moderate:1 High:8	
Performance appraisal of the school management	None	None:2 Low:2 Moderate:4 High:4	
Performance appraisal of individual teachers	None	None:4 Low:4 Moderate:2 High:2	
Financial and other implications			
The school budget	None	None:5 Low:2 Moderate:2 High:1	
The provision of another financial reward or sanction	None	None:4 Low:4 Moderate:1 High:0	
The assistance provided to teachers to improve their teaching skills	None	None:3 Low:2 Moderate:1 High:5	
Remuneration and bonuses received by teachers	None	None:5 Low:3 Moderate:0 High:1	
Likelihood of school closure	None	None:8 Low:0 Moderate:1 High:0	
Publication of results (Yes/No)[12]	No	4/14	
Publication of tables that compare school performance (Yes/No)	No	1/14	
Frequency and type of school evaluations (lower secondary education) (2007/08)			
Source: TALIS (OECD, 2009b)[10]			
% of teachers working in schools where school evaluations were conducted with the following frequency over the last five years			
Frequency of school self-evaluation			
Never	47.9	20.2	2/23
Once	19.3	16.2	7/23
2-4 times	13.3	18.3	18/23
Once per year	13.0	34.9	20/23
More than once per year	6.4	10.3	14/23
Frequency of external evaluation			
Never	49.1	30.4	6/23
Once	29.9	30.8	12/23
2-4 times	18.2	20.5	15/23
Once per year	2.1	11.4	19/23
More than once per year	0.6	7.0	20/23
No school evaluation from any source	32.8	13.8	3/23
Criteria of school evaluations (lower secondary education) (2007/08)			
Source: TALIS (OECD, 2009b)[10]			
% of teachers whose school principal reported that the following criteria were considered with high or moderate importance in school self-evaluations or external evaluations			
Student test scores	65.9	76.2	17/23
Retention and pass rates of students	94.2	70.8	2/23
Other student learning outcomes	85.2	78.9	6/23
Student feedback on the teaching they receive	73.5	72.7	10/23
Feedback from parents	78.3	77.3	13/23
How well teachers work with the principal and their colleagues	79.8	83.7	17/23
Direct appraisal of classroom teaching	40.8	71.1	22/23
Innovative teaching practices	71.8	76.7	18/23
Relations between teachers and students	88.7	87.1	11/23
Professional development undertaken by teachers	72.7	81.5	20/23
Teachers' classroom management	72.5	80.7	17/23
Teachers' knowledge and understanding of their main subject field(s)	75.4	78.2	17/23
Teachers' knowledge and understanding of instructional practices in their main subject field(s)	78.4	77.5	16/23
Teaching of students with special learning needs	80.7	77.2	11/23
Student discipline and behaviour	80.4	83.6	16/23
Teaching in a multicultural setting	57.9	52.9	8/23
Extra-curricular activities with students (*e.g.* school plays and performances, sporting activities)	83.3	74.5	10/23

	Portugal	Country average[1]	Portugal's rank[2]
Impacts of school evaluations upon schools (lower secondary education) (2007/08) Source: TALIS (OECD, 2009b)[10]			
% of teachers whose school principal reported that school evaluations (external or self-evaluation) had a high or moderate level of influence on the following			
Level of school budget or its distribution within schools	35.8	38.0	11/23
Performance feedback to the school	91.6	81.3	5/23
Performance appraisal of the school management	91.1	78.7	3/23
Performance appraisal of teachers	57.3	71.1	19/23
Assistance provided to teachers to improve their teaching	55.1	70.3	19/23
Teachers' remuneration and bonuses	2.6	26.1	=21/23
Publication of school evaluations (lower secondary education) (2007/08) Source: TALIS (OECD, 2009b)[10]			
% of teachers in schools where school evaluation results were :			
Published; or	63.2	55.3	11/23
Used in school performance tables	23.5	28.7	15/23
Use of student test results in school evaluation (2008/09) (primary and lower secondary education) Source: Eurydice (2009)[12, 16] **(**Yes/No)			
Test results may be used for evaluation	Yes	15/30	
Test results used for external evaluation	No	5/30	
Recommendations or support tools for the use of results during internal evaluation	No	7/30	
Use varies depending on type of test, level of education or type of school	Yes	3/30	
Publication of individual school results in national tests (2008/09) (primary and lower secondary education) Source: Eurydice (2009)[12, 16] (Yes/No)			
Individual school results may be published	No	10/30	
Publication organised, or required of schools, by central/local governments	No	9/30	
Publication at the discretion of schools	No	1/30	
Accountability to parents (2009) (15-year-olds) Source: PISA Compendium for the school questionnaire (OECD, 2010c)[3]			
% of students in schools where principals reported that their school provides parents with information on:			
This child's academic performance relative to other students in the school	36.5	46.1	21/32
This child's academic performance relative to national or regional benchmarks	41.7	46.8	17/33
This child's academic performance of students as a group relative to students in the same grade in other schools	11.5	23.1	24/33
TEACHER APPRAISAL			
Frequency and source of teacher appraisal and feedback (lower secondary education) (2007/08) Source: TALIS (OECD, 2009b)[10]			
% of teachers who reported having received appraisal and/or feedback on their work with the following frequency from the following sources			
Feedback received from the principal			
Never	38.8	22.0	4/23
Less than once every two years	8.4	9.2	9/23
Once every two years	2.5	4.5	17/23
Once per year	16.8	22.8	18/23
Twice per year	6.7	12.3	22/23
3 or more times per year	16.8	17.1	11/23
Monthly	4.5	6.6	=13/23
More than once per month	5.4	5.4	11/23
Feedback received from other teachers or members of the school management team			
Never	31.4	28.6	8/23
Less than once every two years	5.1	6.9	15/23
Once every two years	1.6	2.6	=20/23
Once per year	9.5	13.3	18/23
Twice per year	6.3	9.7	20/23
3 or more times per year	23.5	19.3	6/23
Monthly	11.0	10.4	9/23
More than once per month	11.6	9.1	6/23
Feedback received from an external individual or body (*e.g.* external inspector)			
Never	84.0	50.7	2/23
Less than once every two years	7.7	19.0	19/23
Once every two years	2.0	5.4	19/23
Once per year	4.2	13.2	22/23
Twice per year	0.9	5.4	=22/23
3 or more times per year	0.9	4.3	22/23
Monthly	0.2	1.2	23/23
More than once per month	0.1	0.8	23/23

	Portugal	Country average[1]	Portugal's rank[2]
Criteria for teacher appraisal and feedback (lower secondary education) (2007/08) Source: TALIS (OECD, 2009b)[10]			
% of teachers who reported that the following criteria were considered with high or moderate importance in the appraisal and/or feedback they received			
Student test scores	64.4	65.0	12/23
Retention and pass rates of students	75.2	56.2	3/23
Other student learning outcomes	71.0	68.4	11/23
Student feedback on the teaching they receive	82.7	72.8	6/23
Feedback from parents	73.3	69.1	8/23
How well they work with the principal and their colleagues	80.5	77.5	6/23
Direct appraisal of classroom teaching	55.3	73.5	20/23
Innovative teaching practices	69.4	70.7	13/23
Relations with students	90.9	85.2	5/23
Professional development undertaken	66.4	64.5	10/23
Classroom management	76.4	79.7	14/23
Knowledge and understanding of their main subject field(s)	78.6	80.0	13/23
Knowledge and understanding of instructional practices in their main subject field(s)	78.9	78.2	13/23
Teaching of students with special learning needs	58.2	57.2	11/23
Student discipline and behaviour	80.2	78.2	11/23
Teaching in a multicultural setting	47.9	45.0	10/23
Extra-curricular activities with students (*e.g.* school performances, sporting activities)	72.9	62.3	8/23
Outcomes of teacher appraisal and feedback (lower secondary education) (2007/08) Source: TALIS (OECD, 2009b)[10]			
% of teachers who reported that the appraisal and/or feedback they received let to a modest or large change in the following aspects of their work and careers			
A change in salary	1.7	9.1	=20/23
A financial bonus or another kind of monetary reward	0.6	11.1	22/23
A change in the likelihood of career advancement	6.2	16.2	19/23
Public recognition from the principal and/or their colleagues	26.3	36.4	15/23
Opportunities for professional development activities	11.3	23.7	20/23
Changes in work responsibilities that make the job more attractive	25.3	26.7	9/23
A role in school development initiatives (*e.g.* curriculum development group)	25.3	29.6	12/23
Actions undertaken following the identification of a weakness in a teacher appraisal (lower secondary education) (2007/08) Source: TALIS (OECD, 2009b)[10]			
% of teachers whose school principal reported that the following occurs if an appraisal of teachers' work identifies a specific weakness			
The principal ensures that the outcome is reported to the teacher			
Never	0.5	2.6	=12/23
Sometimes	14.5	9.5	4/23
Most of the time	24.5	25.8	14/23
Always	60.6	62.1	13/23
The principal ensures that measures to remedy the weakness in their teaching are discussed with the teacher			
Never	0.0	1.0	=11/23
Sometimes	16.9	9.4	4/23
Most of the time	26.0	30.7	15/23
Always	57.1	58.9	15/23
The principal, or others in the school, establishes a development or training plan for the teacher to address the weakness in their teaching			
Never	13.6	10.5	7/23
Sometimes	29.4	33.0	16/23
Most of the time	35.6	35.9	10/23
Always	21.3	20.6	9/23
The principal, or others in the school, imposes material sanctions on the teacher (*e.g.* reduced annual increases in pay)			
Never	98.6	86.0	4/23
Sometimes	1.4	11.3	20/23
Most of the time	0.0	1.8	=14/23
Always	0.0	0.9	=14/23
The principal, or others in the school, report the underperformance to another body to take action (*e.g.* governing board, local authority, school inspector)			
Never	63.8	51.0	7/23
Sometimes	32.5	37.3	15/23
Most of the time	1.0	6.8	=20/23
Always	2.7	4.9	12/23

	Portugal	Country average[1]	Portugal's rank[2]
The principal ensures that the teacher has more frequent appraisals of their work			
Never	11.6	9.0	5/23
Sometimes	43.5	34.5	6/23
Most of the time	34.9	41.3	15/23
Always	10.0	15.2	17/23
Teacher perceptions of the appraisal and/or feedback they received (lower secondary education) (2007/08) Source: TALIS (OECD, 2009b)[10]			
% of teachers who reported the following about the appraisal and/or feedback they had received in their school			
Appraisal and/or feedback contained a judgement about the quality of the teacher's work	77.4	74.7	10/23
Appraisal and/or feedback contained suggestions for improving certain aspects of teacher's work	56.1	58.0	16/23
Appraisal and/or feedback was a fair assessment of their work as a teacher in this school			
Strongly disagree	4.2	4.4	10/23
Disagree	14.4	12.4	6/23
Agree	66.7	63.3	=9/23
Strongly agree	14.8	19.9	17/23
Appraisal and/or feedback was helpful in the development of their work as teachers in this school			
Strongly disagree	4.8	5.6	=11/23
Disagree	12.7	15.9	16/23
Agree	68.5	61.8	5/23
Strongly agree	14.0	16.8	15/23
Teacher perceptions of the personal impact of teacher appraisal and feedback (lower secondary education) (2007/08) Source: TALIS (OECD, 2009b)[10]			
% of teachers who reported the following changes following the appraisal and/or feedback they received in their school			
the following personal impact from appraisal and feedback			
Change in their job satisfaction			
A large decrease	3.9	2.5	2/23
A small decrease	5.8	4.8	7/23
No change	42.1	41.2	12/23
A small increase	38.2	37.3	12/23
A large increase	10.1	14.2	16/23
Change in their job security			
A large decrease	2.1	1.5	5/23
A small decrease	2.9	3.0	10/23
No change	77.7	61.9	4/23
A small increase	13.3	21.8	18/23
A large increase	4.0	11.8	22/23
Impact of teacher appraisal and feedback upon teaching (lower secondary education) (2007/08) Source: TALIS (OECD, 2009b)[10]			
% of teachers who reported that the appraisal and/or feedback they received directly led to or involved moderate or large changes in the following			
Classroom management practices	22.4	37.6	20/23
Knowledge or understanding of the teacher's main subject field(s)	18.8	33.9	18/23
Knowledge or understanding of instructional practices	23.0	37.5	=16/23
A development or training plan for teachers to improve their teaching	26.8	37.4	15/23
Teaching of students with special learning needs	21.4	27.2	16/23
Student discipline and behaviour problems	26.9	37.2	=16/23
Teaching of students in a multicultural setting	14.7	21.5	13/23
Emphasis placed by teachers on improving student test scores in their teaching	35.5	41.2	12/23
Teacher appraisal and feedback and school development (lower secondary education) (2007/08) Source: TALIS (OECD, 2009b)[10]			
% of teachers who agree or strongly agree with the following statements about aspects of appraisal and/or feedback in their school			
In this school, the school principal takes steps to alter the monetary reward of the persistently underperforming teacher	22.4	23.1	12/23
In this school, the sustained poor performance of a teacher would be tolerated by the rest of the staff	20.0	33.8	20/23
In this school, teachers will be dismissed because of sustained poor performance	27.2	27.9	14/23
In this school, the principal uses effective methods to determine whether teachers are performing well or badly	57.2	55.4	11/23
In this school, a development or training plan is established for teachers to improve their work as teachers	49.3	59.7	17/23

	Portugal	Country average[1]	Portugal's rank[2]
In this school, the most effective teachers receive the greatest monetary or non-monetary rewards	11.0	26.2	16/23
In this school, if I improve the quality of my teaching I will receive increased monetary or non-monetary rewards	17.8	25.8	13/23
In this school, if I am more innovative in my teaching I will receive increased monetary or non-monetary rewards	17.4	26.0	=13/23
In this school, the review of teacher's work is largely done to fulfil administrative requirements	47.9	44.3	10/23
In this school, the review of teacher's work has little impact upon the way teachers teach in the classroom	55.3	49.8	9/23
Official methods for the individual or collective evaluation of teachers (2006/07) Source: Eurydice (2008) [12, 16]			
Teacher evaluation exists	Yes	30/33	
Teacher inspection on an individual or collective basis	Yes	22/30	
School self-evaluation	Yes	14/30	
Individual evaluation by school heads	Yes	16/30	
Individual evaluation by peers	Yes	5/30	
Methods used to monitor the practice of teachers (2009) (15-year-olds) Source: PISA Compendium for the school questionnaire (OECD, 2010c)[3]			
% of students in schools where the principal reported that the following methods have been used the previous year to monitor the practice of teachers at their school			
Tests of assessments of student achievement	48.5	58.3	25/34
Teacher peer review (of lesson plans, assessment instruments, lessons)	78.4	56.3	12/34
Principal or senior staff observations of lessons	20.3	68.3	=30/34
Observation of classes by inspectors or other persons external to the school	1.5	28.0	33/34
STUDENT ASSESSMENT			
The influence of test results on the school career of pupils (2008/09) (primary and lower secondary education) Source: Eurydice (2009)[11, 16]			
ISCED 1/ ISCED 2[4]			
Award of certificates	ISCED 2	ISCED 1:2 ISCED 2:12	
Streaming	-	ISCED 1:4 ISCED 2:2	
Progression to the next stage of education	-	ISCED 1:1 ISCED 2:2	
No national tests, or no impact on progression	ISCED 1	ISCED 1:29 ISCED 2:22	
Completion requirements for upper secondary programmes Source: Education at a Glance (OECD, 2009a)[3, 11]			
● Final examination /■ Series of examinations during programme /Δ Specified number of course hours and examination / ♦ Specified number of course hours only			
ISCED 3A[4]	m	●21 ■19 Δ19 ♦3	
ISCED 3B	m	●6 ■8 Δ7 ♦0	
ISCED 3C	m	●17 ■18 Δ17 ♦1	
Student grouping by ability (2009) (15-year-olds) Source: PISA Compendium for the school questionnaire (OECD, 2010c)[3]			
% of students in schools where principals reported the following on student grouping by ability			
Student are grouped by ability into different classes			
For all subjects	3.2	9.4	24/33
For some subjects	5.8	37.4	33/33
Not for any subject	87.0	50.4	2/33
Student are grouped by ability within their classes			
For all subjects	5.4	4.5	6/33
For some subjects	20.0	46.4	32/33
Not for any subject	71.9	47.0	2/33
Groups of influence on assessment practices (2009) (15-year-olds) Source: PISA Compendium for the school questionnaire (OECD, 2010c)[3]			
% of students in schools where the principal reported the following groups exert a direct influence on decision making about assessment practices			
Regional or national education authorities (*e.g.* inspectorates)	93.5	56.6	1/33
The school's governing board	95.1	29.6	1/33
Parent groups	17.1	17.3	15/33
Teacher groups (*e.g.* staff association, curriculum committees, trade union)	3.0	58.1	33/33
Student groups (*e.g.* student association, youth organisation	1.2	23.4	32/33
External examination boards	95.1	45.2	2/31

	Portugal	Country average[1]	Portugal's rank[2]
Responsibility for student assessment policies (2009) (15-year-olds) Source: PISA Compendium for the school questionnaire (OECD, 2010c)[3]			
% of students in schools where the principal reported the following groups have considerable responsibility in establishing student assessment policies			
Establishing student assessment policies			
Principals	24.6	63.5	32/33
Teachers	60.2	69.0	25/33
School governing board	38.5	26.5	10/33
Regional or local education authority	8.2	15.5	14/32
National education authority	59.3	24.3	3/33
Frequency of student assessment by method (2009) (15-year-olds) Source: PISA Compendium for the school questionnaire (OECD, 2010c)[3]			
% of students in schools where the principal reported the student assessment methods below are used with the indicated frequency			
Standardised tests			
Never	11.9	23.7	22/33
1-2 times a year	57.6	51.0	12/33
3-5 times a year	21.2	16.5	11/33
Monthly	6.1	4.3	10/33
More than once a month	1.2	3.4	=14/33
Teacher-developed tests			
Never	0.0	2.7	=20/33
1-2 times a year	0.7	6.7	=26/33
3-5 times a year	28.8	30.0	19/33
Monthly	65.0	27.6	1/33
More than once a month	5.1	33.3	32/33
Teachers' judgmental ratings			
Never	0.0	6.6	=28/33
1-2 times a year	1.4	12.0	32/33
3-5 times a year	1.8	22.9	32/33
Monthly	12.4	15.7	24/33
More than once a month	84.1	42.2	2/33
Student portfolios			
Never	12.0	24.1	25/33
1-2 times a year	48.9	34.4	4/33
3-5 times a year	24.5	20.6	11/33
Monthly	5.8	10.4	24/33
More than once a month	5.2	9.3	=15/33
Student assignments/projects/homework			
Never	1.3	1.5	=6/33
1-2 times a year	5.7	12.2	22/33
3-5 times a year	12.7	16.1	19/33
Monthly	13.6	13.6	18/33
More than once a month	66.4	56.5	=10/33
% of students reporting the following on the frequency of homework (2000) (15-year-olds) Source: PISA Student Compendium (Reading) (OECD, 2000) [3]			
Teachers grade homework			
Never	5.2	14.9	22/27
Sometimes	47.3	44.2	11/27
Most of the time	30.4	24.5	=7/27
Always	15.0	13.9	10/27
Teachers make useful comments on homework			
Never	17.8	23.5	21/27
Sometimes	60.6	50.1	2/27
Most of the time	15.6	19.2	18/27
Always	4.3	4.9	16/27
Homework is counted as part of marking			
Never	2.7	13.7	25/27
Sometimes	21.3	33.3	23/27
Most of the time	26.3	25.7	15/27
Always	48.3	24.7	3/27
Use of student assessments (2009) (15-year-olds) Source: PISA Compendium for the school questionnaire (OECD, 2010c)[3]			
% students in schools where the principal reported that assessments of students are used for the following purposes			
To inform the parents about their child's progress	99.0	97.5	13/33

	Portugal	Country average[1]	Portugal's rank[2]
To make decisions about students' retention or promotion	97.2	77.1	5/33
To group students for instructional purposes	22.0	49.8	30/33
To compare the school to district or national performance	47.0	53.0	22/33
To monitor the school's progress from year to year	87.7	76.0	10/33
To make judgements about teachers' effectiveness	34.2	46.9	21/33
To identify aspects of instruction or the curriculum that could be improved	78.8	76.7	19/33
To compare the school with other schools	39.2	45.4	20/33
% of students repeating a grade in the previous school year according to reports by school principals in the following levels (2009) (15-year-olds) Source: PISA Compendium for the school questionnaire (OECD, 2010c)[3]			
ISCED2[4]	9.5	3.2	2/29
ISCED3	10	4.5	3/29
% of students repeating one or more grades according to their own report (2009) (15-year-olds) Source: PISA Volume IV (OECD, 2010e)[3]	35.0	13.0	4/34
Parents' perception of school's monitoring of student progress (2009) (15-year-olds) Source: PISA Compendium for the parent questionnaire (OECD, 2010b)[3]			
% of parents who agree or strongly agree with the following statements[19]			
My child's progress is carefully monitored by the school			
Strongly agree	20.6	18.5	3/8
Agree	67.7	59.4	1/8
Disagree	8.8	17.3	8/8
Strongly disagree	0.9	2.2	8/8
My child's school provides regular and useful information on my child's progress			
Strongly agree	25.9	19.9	2/8
Agree	60.7	54.3	=2/8
Disagree	10.3	19.7	8/8
Strongly disagree	1.7	4.0	8/8
Level of school autonomy regarding the criteria for the internal assessment of pupils (2006/07) (primary and lower secondary education) Source: Eurydice (2008)[12, 16]			
Full/Limited/No autonomy	Full	Full:24 Limited:10 No:0	
School decision-makers involved in determining the criteria for the internal assessment of pupils (2006/07) (primary and lower secondary education) Source: Eurydice (2008)[12, 16]			
School responsibilities involved	Yes	34/34	
School head	No	0/34	
Teachers individually or collectively	No	13/34	
School management body	No	0/34	
Responsibilities vary depending on level of education	Yes	21/34	
School autonomy in preparing the content of examinations for certified qualifications (2006/07) (primary and lower secondary education) Source: Eurydice (2008)[12, 16]			
School responsibility involved/examinations for certified qualifications exist	Yes	24/34	
Full/Limited/No autonomy	Full	Full:5 Limited:0 No:19	
School decision-makers who may be involved in preparing the content of examinations for certified qualifications (ISCED 2)[4] (2006/07) Source: Eurydice (2008)[12, 16]			
School responsibility involved/ examinations for certified qualifications exist	Yes	5/34	
School head	No	0/5	
Teachers individually or collectively	No	1/5	
School management body	No	0/5	
Responsibilities vary depending on level of education	Yes	4/5	

Sources:

Eurydice (2008), *Levels of Autonomy and Responsibilities of Teachers in Europe*, Eurydice, Brussels.
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OECD (2010c), *PISA 2009 Compendium for the school questionnaire*, OECD, *http://pisa2009.acer.edu.au/downloads.php*.
OECD (2010d), *PISA 2009 Results: What Students Know and Can Do, Volume I*, OECD, Paris.
OECD (2010e), *PISA 2009 Results: What Makes a School Successful?: Resources, Policies and Practices, Volume IV*, OECD, Paris.

Data explanation:

m	Data are not available
a	Data are not applicable because the category does not apply
~	Average is not comparable with other levels of education
=	At least one other country has the same rank

The report Eurydice (2009) includes all 32 member countries/education areas of the European Union as well as the members of the European Economic Area (Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway).

TALIS is the OECD's Teaching and Learning International Survey which was implemented for the first time in 2007/08. The data provided concerns 23 countries. The results derived from TALIS are based on self-reports from teachers and principals and therefore represent their opinions, perceptions, beliefs and their accounts of their activities. Further information is available at *www.oecd.org/edu/talis*.

PISA is the OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment, which was undertaken in 2000, 2003, 2006 and 2009. 15-year-old students worldwide are assessed on their literacy in reading, mathematics and science. The study included 27 OECD countries in 2000, 30 in 2003 and 2006, and 34 in 2009. Data used in this appendix can be found at *www.pisa.oecd.org*.

General notes:

1. The country average is calculated as the simple average of all countries for which data are available.
2. "Portugal's rank" indicates the position of Portugal when countries are ranked in descending order from the highest to lowest value on the indicator concerned. For example, on the first indicator "population that has attained at least upper secondary education", for the age group 25-64, the rank 30/30 indicates that Portugal recorded the 30th highest value of the 30 countries that reported relevant data.
3. The column "country average" corresponds to an average across OECD countries.
4. ISCED is the "International Standard Classification of Education" used to describe levels of education (and subcategories).

ISCED 1 - Primary education

Designed to provide a sound basic education in reading, writing and mathematics and a basic understanding of some other subjects. Entry age: between 5 and 7. Duration: 6 years

ISCED 2 - Lower secondary education

Completes provision of basic education, usually in a more subject-oriented way with more specialist teachers. Entry follows 6 years of primary education; duration is 3 years. In some countries, the end of this level marks the end of compulsory education.

ISCED 3 - Upper secondary education

Even stronger subject specialisation than at lower-secondary level, with teachers usually more qualified. Students typically expected to have completed 9 years of education or lower secondary schooling before entry and are generally around the age of 15 or 16.

ISCED 3A - Upper secondary education type A
Prepares students for university-level education at level 5A

ISCED 3B - Upper secondary education type B
For entry to vocationally oriented tertiary education at level 5B

ISECD 3C - Upper secondary education type C
Prepares students for workforce or for post-secondary non tertiary education

ISCED 4 - Post-secondary non-tertiary education

Programmes at this level may be regarded nationally as part of upper secondary or post-secondary education, but in terms of international comparison their status is less clear cut. Programme content may not be much more advanced than in upper secondary, and is certainly lower than at tertiary level. Entry typically requires completion of an upper secondary programme. Duration usually equivalent to between 6 months and 2 years of full-time study.

ISCED 5 - Tertiary education

ISCED 5 is the first stage of tertiary education (the second – ISCED 6 – involves advanced research). At level 5, it is often more useful to distinguish between two subcategories: 5A, which represent longer and more theoretical programmes; and 5B, where programmes are shorter and more practically oriented. Note, though, that as tertiary education differs greatly between countries, the demarcation between these two subcategories is not always clear cut.

ISCED 5A - Tertiary-type A

"Long-stream" programmes that are theory based and aimed at preparing students for further research or to give access to highly skilled professions, such as medicine or architecture. Entry preceded by 13 years of education, students typically required to have completed upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary education. Duration equivalent to at least 3 years of full-time study, but 4 is more usual.

ISCED 5B - Tertiary-type B

"Short-stream" programmes that are more practically oriented or focus on the skills needed for students to directly enter specific occupations. Entry preceded by 13 years of education; students may require mastery of specific subjects studied at levels 3B or 4A. Duration equivalent to at least 2 years of full-time study, but 3 is more usual.

5. Public expenditure includes public subsidies to households for living costs (scholarships and grants to students/ households and students loans), which are not spent on educational institutions.

6. For Portugal, data refers to public institutions only.

7. Expressed in equivalent US$ converted using purchasing power parities.

8. Expenditure on goods and services consumed within the current year which needs to be made recurrently to sustain the production of educational services – refers to current expenditure on schools and post-secondary non-tertiary educational institutions. The individual percentage may not sum to the total due to rounding.

9. Public and private institutions are included. Calculations are based on full-time equivalents. "Teaching staff" refers to professional personnel directly involved in teaching students.

10. The column "country average" corresponds to an average across TALIS countries.

11. The column "country average" indicates the number of countries/systems, in which a given criterion is used, for example, regarding the indicator "Decision on payments for teachers in public schools". In the row "Management responsibilities in addition to teaching duties", ●12 ■18 Δ7 indicates that this criterion is used to determine the base salary in 12 countries/systems, to determine an additional yearly payment in 18 countries/systems and to determine an additional incidental payment in 7 countries/systems.

12. The column "country average" indicates the number of countries for which the indicator applies. For example, for the indicator "mandatory national examination is required" 4/29 means, that 4 countries out of 29 for which data are available report that mandatory national examinations are required in their countries.

13. By "national examination" we mean those tests, which do have formal consequences for students.

14. By "national assessment" we mean those tests, which do not have formal consequences for students.

15. These measures express the degree of influence on the indicator: None: No influence at all, Low: Low level of influence, Moderate: Moderate level of influence, High: High level of influence. The column "country average" indicates the number of countries/systems, in which one of the given criteria is used.

16. For this indicator, the column "country average" refers to Eurydice member countries/areas.

17. "Compulsory tests" have to be taken by all pupils, regardless of the type of school attended, or by all students in public sector schools. "Optional tests" are taken under the authority of schools.

18. Austria, Belgium-Flemish Community, Ireland, Lithuania, Latvia, Sweden, England, Northern Ireland and Scotland apply several tests at the national level each with a distinct number of subjects. Thus, for these countries no exact number of subjects tested can be provided.

19. Results are based on reports from parents of the students who were assessed and reported proportionate to the number of 15-year-olds enrolled in the school.

Source Guide

Participation of countries by source

	PISA (OECD, 2000)	Education at a Glance (OECD, 2008)	Education at a Glance (OECD, 2009a)	TALIS (OECD, 2009b)	Education at a Glance (OECD, 2010a)	PISA Compendium (OECD, 2010b/c) PISA Results 2009 (OECD, 2010d)	Eurydice (2008)	Eurydice (2009)
Australia	●	●	●	●	●	●		
Austria	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Belgium (Flemish Community)		●	●	●	●		●	●
Belgium (French Community)	●	●	●		●	●	●	●
Belgium (German Community)							●	●
Brazil				●				
Bulgaria				●			●	●
Canada	●	●	●		●	●		
Chile					●	●		
Czech Republic	●	●	●		●	●	●	●
Denmark	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Estonia				●		●	●	●
Finland	●	●	●		●	●	●	●
France	●	●	●		●	●	●	●
Germany	●	●	●		●	●	●	●
Greece	●	●	●		●	●	●	●
Hungary	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Iceland	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Ireland	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Israel						●		
Italy	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Japan	●	●	●		●	●		
Korea	●	●	●	●	●	●		
Latvia							●	●
Lichtenstein							●	●
Lithuania				●			●	●
Luxembourg	●	●	●		●	●	●	●
Malaysia				●				
Malta				●			●	●
Mexico	●	●	●	●	●	●		
Netherlands		●	●		●	●	●	●
New Zealand	●	●	●		●	●		
Norway	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Poland	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Portugal	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Romania							●	●
Slovak Republic		●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Slovenia				●		●	●	●
Spain	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Sweden	●	●	●		●	●	●	●
Switzerland	●	●	●		●	●		
Turkey		●	●	●	●	●		
UK - England							●	●
UK - Wales	●	●	●		●	●		●
UK - Norther Ireland							●	●
UK - Scotland							●	●
United States	●	●	●		●	●		

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