

1 June 2026
WORLD CHILDREN'S DAY

IN THREE DECADES, THE PROPORTION OF CHILDREN (UP TO 17 YEARS OLD) IN THE TOTAL POPULATION HAS FALLEN FROM 25% TO 15%

Between 1990 and 2024, the proportion of children in the total population decreased from 25.2% to 15.5%. Over the same period, the number of live births per thousand women of childbearing age fell from 46.5 to 37.9 and the average age of women at the birth of their first child increased from 24.9 to 30.3 years.

In 2024, 95.7% of 6-year-olds had completed the vaccination plan for measles, mumps and rubella. In the same year, 3.6% of the children were unable to access dental consultations or treatment when needed and 4.5% had some limitation in performing activities considered usual for their age due to long-standing health problems.

In 2025, the proportion of children receiving formal childcare was 57.6% amongst children aged up to 3 old and 43.8% amongst children aged 4 and over.

The number of students enrolled in non-tertiary education in the 2023/2024 school year decreased by 19.5% compared to 1990/1991, with the pre-primary gross enrolment rate rising from 50.7% to 100.6%. In 2022, 76.8% of 15-year-old students had a minimum level of proficiency in reading and 70.2% in mathematics, reflecting, in both cases, a reduction compared to 2012.

The at-risk-of-poverty rate for children up to 17 years old remained higher than that observed for the general population, reaching 17.6% in 2024. In that year, the risk of poverty affected more than a third of the population living in single-parent households and 26.7% in the case of large families.

In 2025, 20.8% of the population in households with children lived in a situation of insufficient housing space (5.7% in households without children) and 10.2% lived in a severe housing deprivation condition (2.5% in households without children).

In 2024, one fifth of children lived in households that were unable to afford at least one week of holiday a year away from home, and a tenth of children were unable to participate regularly in an extracurricular or leisure activity.

The number of beneficiaries, descendants or equivalent, of the family allowance for children and young people per 100 individuals under 25 years of age was, in 2024, higher in the municipalities of the inner mainland.

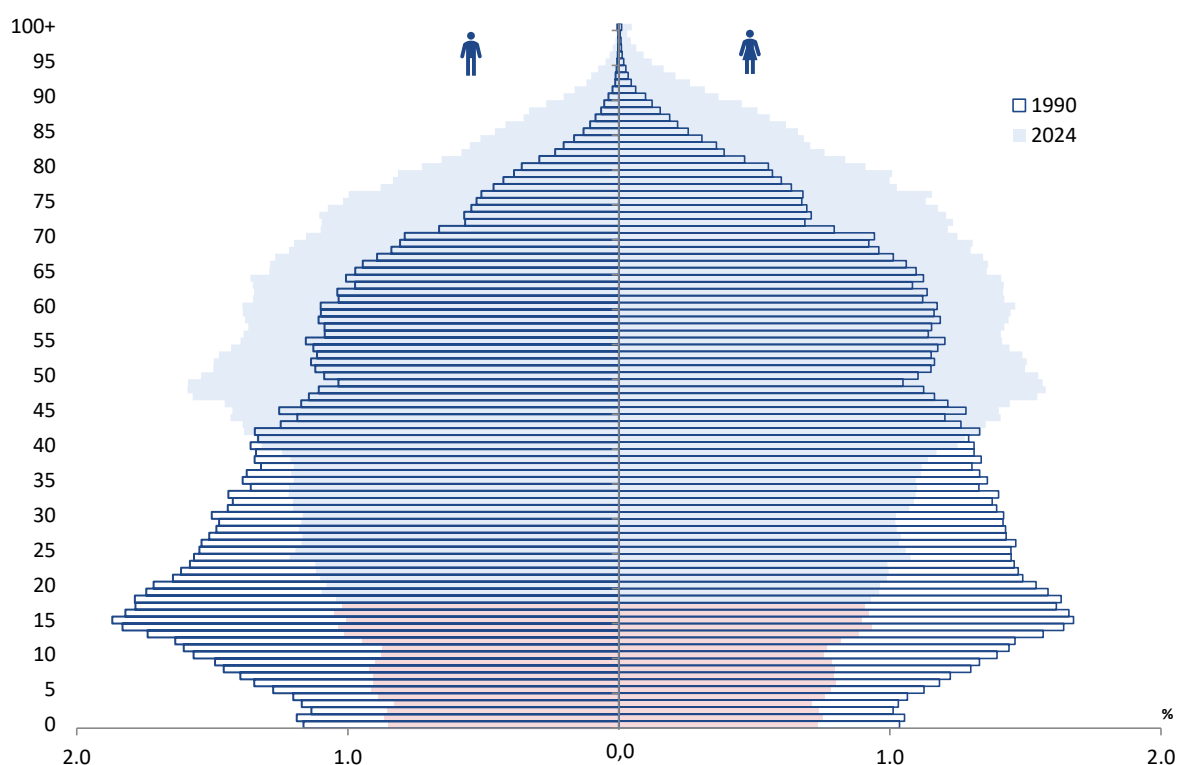
In 2025, 3,307 crimes against children were recorded, corresponding to the highest number of reports recorded by the police authorities since 2014, highlighting the crimes of domestic violence against minors and sexual abuse of children, adolescents and minors who are dependent or in a particularly vulnerable situation with, respectively, 33.9% and 28.6% of the total.

DEMOGRAPHY

In 1990, the year in which Portugal ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the **number of children** (aged 0 to 17) was 2,511,856, representing 25.2% of the country's resident population; in 2024, this figure was **1,670,500** (841,356 fewer children than in 1990), representing **15.5%**

The reduction of children in the resident population is visible in the narrowing of the base of the age pyramid from 1990 to 2024, due to the decrease in birth rates, and in the enlargement of the top, with the increase in the proportion of elderly people, given the increase in life expectancy

It is projected that by 2100 the number of children will decrease to 1,191,168 (14.3%)¹

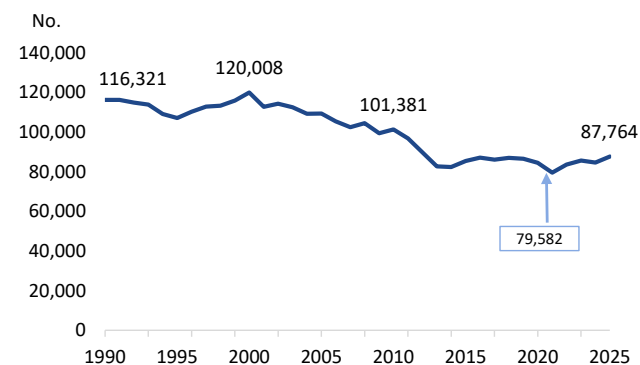


Source: Statistics Portugal, [Resident population estimates](#).

¹ [Resident population projections \(2018-2080 projections\), Central scenario.](#)

In 2025, the **number of live births** to mothers living in Portugal was **87,764**, 28,557 (-24.6%) less live births than in 1990

In 1990, Portugal recorded a **general fertility rate of 46.5** live births per thousand women aged 15 to 49; in 2024, this figure was **37.9** live births per thousand women of childbearing age

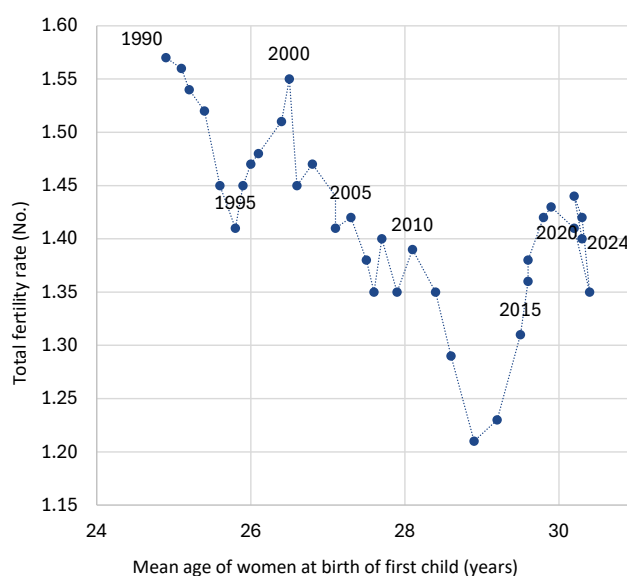


Source: Statistics Portugal, [Live births](#).

Since 1982, Portugal does not ensure the fertility replacement-level, with the country, for the first time that year, recording a **total fertility rate (TFR)** below 2.1 children per woman of childbearing age (women aged 15 to 49)

In 1990, on average, a woman had 1.57 children, and in 2024, **1.40 children**

At the same time, there has been a **postponement of motherhood**: in 1990, the mean age of women at the birth of the first child was 24.9 years, and in 2024 it was **30.3 years**

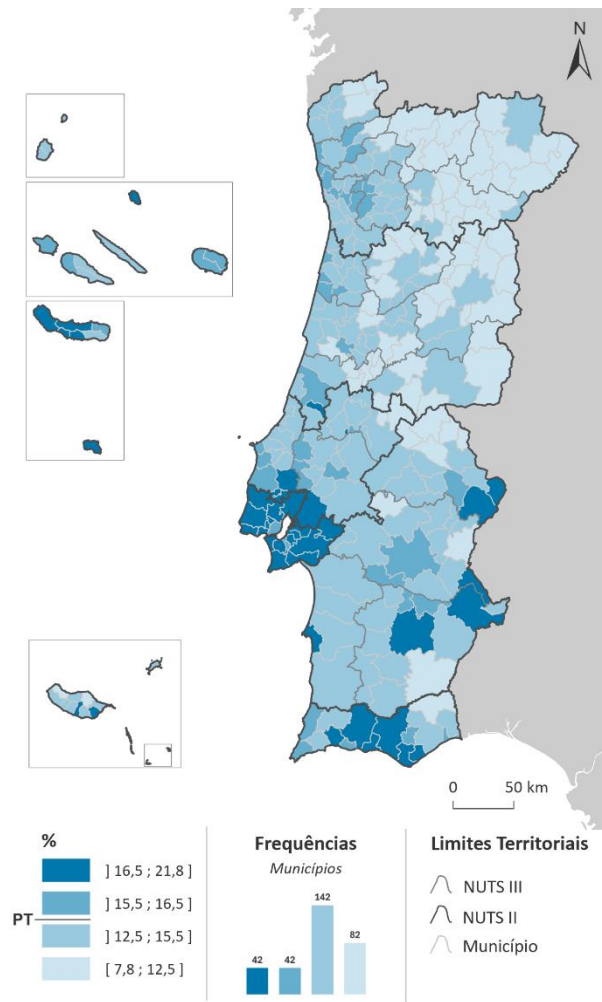


Source: Statistics Portugal, Demographic indicators ([mean age](#), [total fertility rate](#)).

In 2024, the **proportion of children in the total resident population** (15.5%) was higher than the national value in 84 of the 308 municipalities in the country, concentrated, above all, in Grande Lisboa, Península de Setúbal, Algarve and Região Autónoma dos Açores

Ribeira Grande, in Região Autónoma dos Açores, stood out as the municipality with the highest proportion of children (21.8%), followed by Lagoa (19.3%), also in Região Autónoma dos Açores, and Montijo (19.2%), in Península de Setúbal

220 municipalities showed a proportion of children below the national figure, with the municipalities of Almeida and Alcoutim (7.8%) standing out, in Centro and in Algarve, respectively



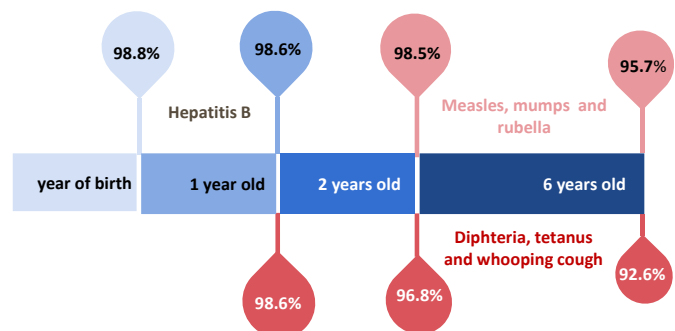
Source: Statistics Portugal, [Resident population estimates](#).

HEALTH

Hepatitis B **vaccination coverage** reached, in 2024, close to **99%** of children who had completed 1 year of age

92.6% of children aged 6 years old have completed the vaccination plan for **diphtheria, tetanus and whooping cough** ...

... and **95.7%** in the case of vaccination for **measles, epidemic mumps and rubella**, reflecting lower vaccination coverage as age advances



Source: Statistics Portugal (vaccination coverage at [1 year](#), [6 years](#) and [11 years](#) of age).

Vaccination coverage against **human papilloma virus (HPV)** infections was, in 2024, higher for female children aged 11 and 12

In 2024

92.4% of children up to 15 years of age had a **good or very good health status**

4.5% had some **limitation in performing activities** considered usual for their age due to long-standing health problems

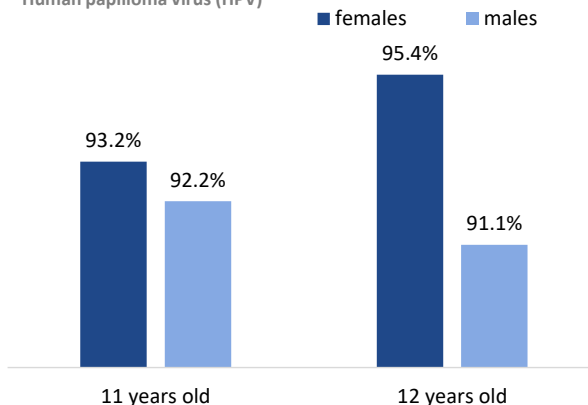
Some children were unable to meet a **need for consultation or treatment**

3.6% dental medicine

1.8% non-dental medicine

Source: Statistics Portugal, [Survey on Income and Living Conditions \(health, limitation, medical, dentist\)](#).

Human papilloma virus (HPV)



Source: Statistics Portugal (vaccination coverage at [11 years](#) and 12 years of age).

FORMAL CHILDCARE

In 2024, the proportion of children up to 12 years old receiving formal childcare was

- **57.9%** in children up to 3 years old
- **46.0%** in children aged 4 and over
- **51.6%** in children not at-risk-of-poverty
- **39.3%** in children at-risk-of-poverty

For **5.3%** of children up to 12 years old, the formal childcare they needed was not met; in **46.9%** of cases due to lack of financial capacity

Source: Statistics Portugal, [Survey on Income and Living Conditions \(care, motives\)](#).

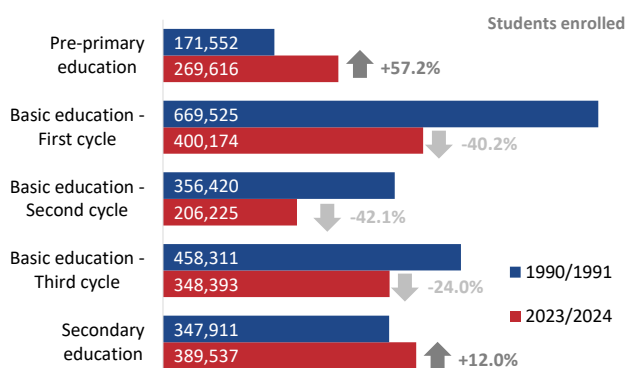
EDUCAÇÃO

In the 2023/2024 school, more than 1.6 million students were **enrolled in non-tertiary education**² (389.8 thousand fewer than in the 1990/1991 school year, representing a decrease of 19.5%)

In this period, increases were observed only in the following education levels:

secondary: 41.6 thousand more students (+12.0%)

pre-primary: 98.1 thousand more students (+57.2%), which leads to a gross enrolment rate in pre-primary of 100.6% in the 2023/2024 school year (50.7% in 1990/1991)



Gross enrolment rate in pre-primary education

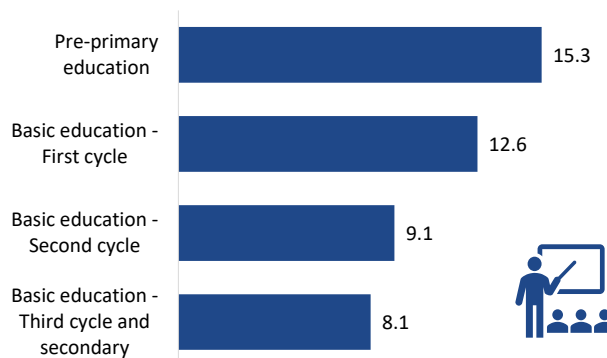
50.7%

100.6%



Source: Directorate-General for Education and Science Statistics ([students](#), [rate](#)).

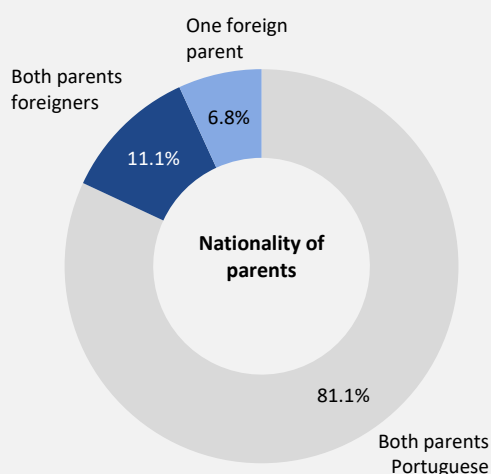
In 2023/2024 there were, on average, **15.3 students per teacher in pre-primary education**, a figure that decreases with the level of education, being 8.1 students per teacher in basic education – 3rd cycle and secondary education



Source: [Directorate-General for Education and Science Statistics](#).

² Considering students enrolled in the levels of education from pre-school to secondary education, post-secondary non-tertiary education is left out of the analysis.

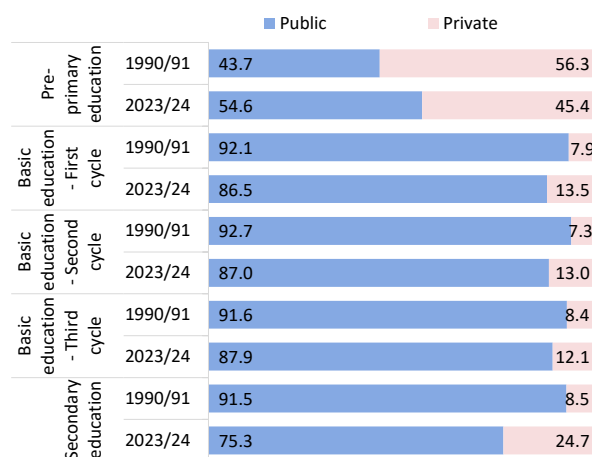
Considering only students³ in Mainland Portugal in the 2023/2024 school year, 81.1% both parents were Portuguese, 11.1% had both foreign parents, while for 6.8% one of the parents was a foreigner



Source: [Directorate-General for Education and Science Statistics](#).

In more than three decades, the **public provision of pre-primary education** has come to cover more than half (**54.6%**) of the students enrolled at that level of education (43.7% in 1990/1991)

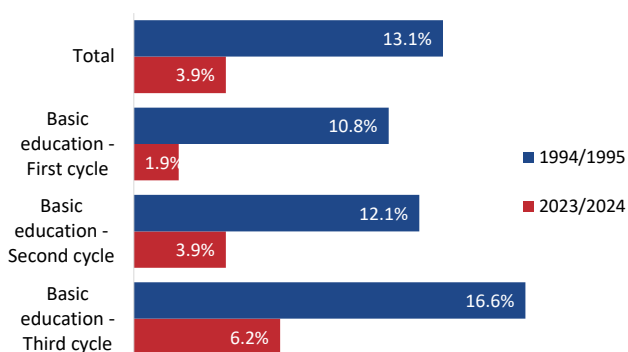
In **secondary education**, the weight of students enrolled in private educational institutions increased, from 8.5% in 1990/1991 to 24.7% in 2023/2024



Source: [Directorate-General for Education and Science Statistics](#).

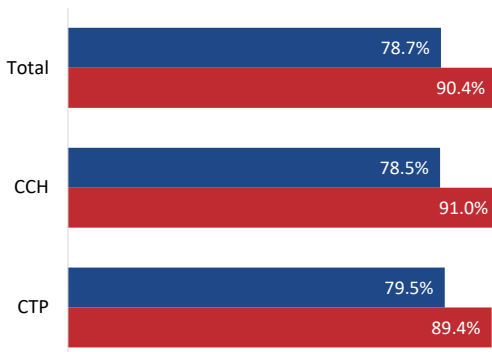
³ According to the publication "[School Profile of Students Children of Parents with Foreign Nationality 2023/2024](#)", by DGEEC, the data presented in this analysis concern children enrolled in pre-primary education and students enrolled at the primary and secondary education levels in educational programs aimed at young people, in the following modalities: general education, specialized artistic courses (in an integrated regime), scientific-humanistic courses, professional courses, education and training courses, courses with their own plans, alternative curricular paths and integrated education and training program.

The **retention/desistance rate for all basic education** decreased from 13.1% in the 1994/1995 school year to 3.9% in 2023/2024, a trend observed at all levels of education, particularly in the 3rd cycle (-10.4 pp)



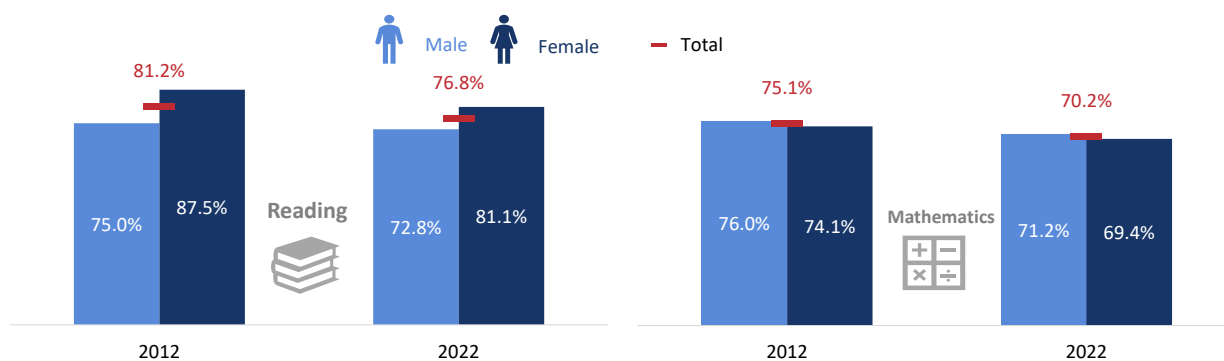
Source: Directorate-General for Education and Science Statistics ([retention](#), [transition](#)).

The **rate of transition/completion of secondary education** went from 78.7% to 90.4% in the same period, an increase that is registered both in general/scientific-humanistic courses (CCH) and in technological/professional courses (CTP)



In 2022, 76.8% of 15-year-old students had a minimum level of proficiency in **reading** (-4.4 pp than in 2012; 81.2%) and 70.2% in **mathematics** (-4.9 pp; 75.1%)

Girls stand out in reading skills, with very similar proportions to boys in mathematics



Source: [OECD, PISA](#)

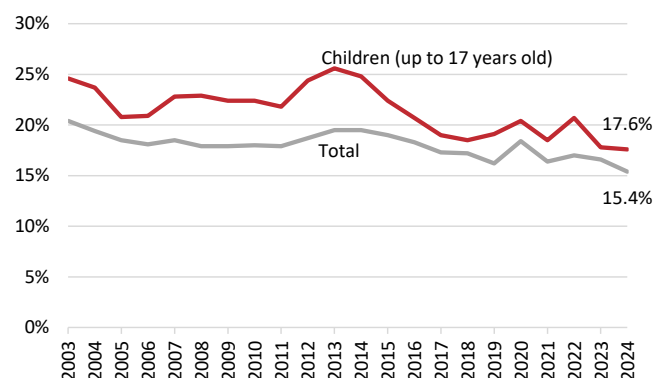
RISK OF POVERTY

The redistributive function of the State has made it possible to reduce the incidence of poverty among children (up to 17 years old) ...



Source: Statistics Portugal, Survey on Income and Living Conditions ([before pensions and social transfers](#), [after social transfers](#)).

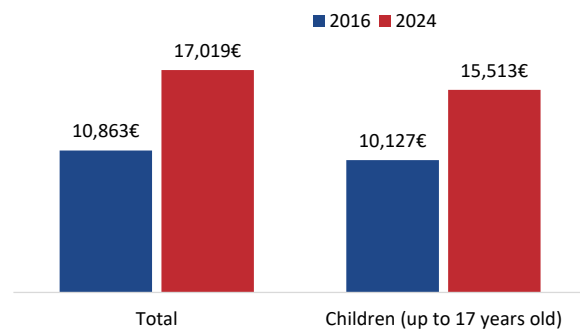
... even so, the at-risk-of-poverty rate for children up to 17 years of age remains higher than that observed for the general population



In 2024, the general population lived with an average annual net monetary income per equivalent adult of €17,019, above that observed for the population up to 17 years old: **€15,513**

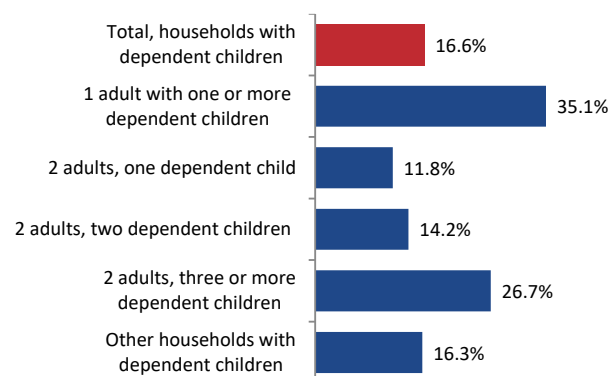
Between 2016 and 2024, the increase was more pronounced for the general population than for children

Source: Statistics Portugal, [Survey on Income and Living Conditions](#).



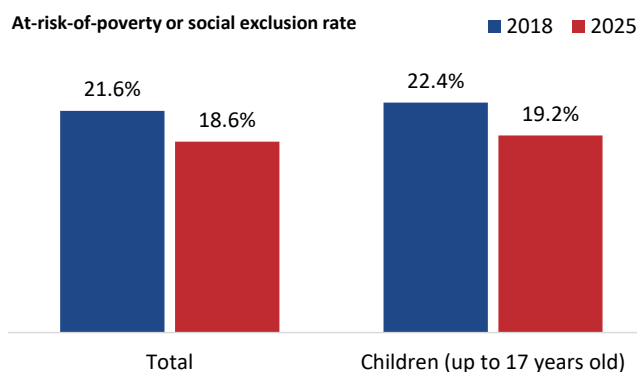
In 2024, the risk of poverty affected more than a third of the population living in single-parent households (consisting of only one adult with one or more children): **35.1%**

The incidence of poverty was also for those in large families (consisting of two adults with three or more children): **26.7%**



Source: Statistics Portugal, [Survey on Income and Living Conditions](#).

The proportion of individuals **at-risk-of-poverty or social exclusion**⁴ was, in 2025, higher for children up to 17 years of age than for the general population



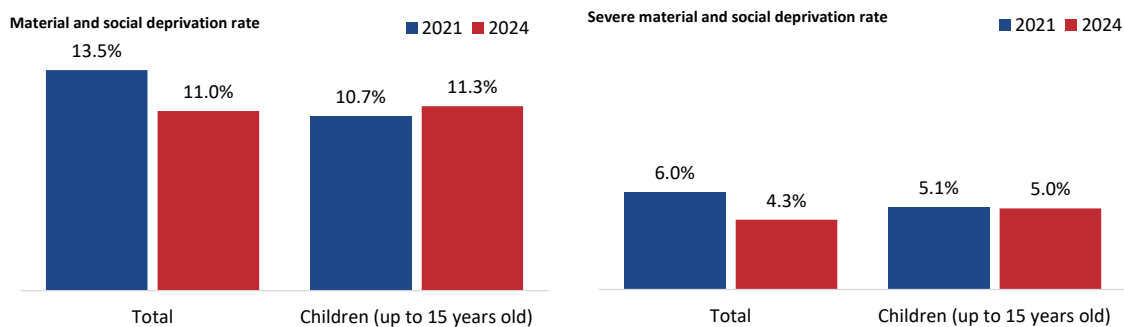
Source: Statistics Portugal, [Survey on Income and Living Conditions](#).

MATERIAL AND SOCIAL DEPRIVATION

In 2024, **11.3%** of children up to the age of 15 lived in households in **material and social deprivation**⁵

In 2021, the indicator was 10.7%

Between 2021 and 2024, the condition of **severe material and social deprivation**⁶ of children, despite having decreased slightly, has worsened considerably in relation to the condition of the general population



Source: Statistics Portugal, [Survey on Income and Living Conditions](#).

⁴ Individuals at risk of poverty or living in households with very low per capita work intensity (according to the Europe 2030 definition) or in a situation of severe material and social deprivation.

⁵ Individuals for whom at least five of a list of thirteen difficulties listed in www.ine.pt are verified.

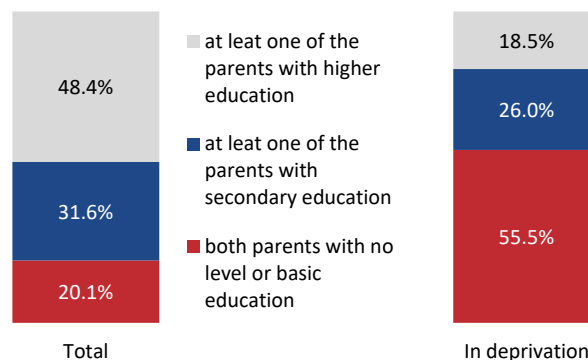
⁶ Individuals for whom there at least seven of the thirteen difficulties considered in the rate of material and social deprivation are verified.

The level of education of the parents is one of the characteristics that most distinguishes **children in material and social deprivation**:

in 2024, **48.4%** of children up to the age of 15 had at least one parent with higher education, a proportion that drops to **18.5%** if only children in condition of deprivation are considered

on the other hand, **20.1%** of the children had both parents with a low level of education, a proportion that increases to **55.5%** if those in condition of deprivation are considered

Material and social deprivation

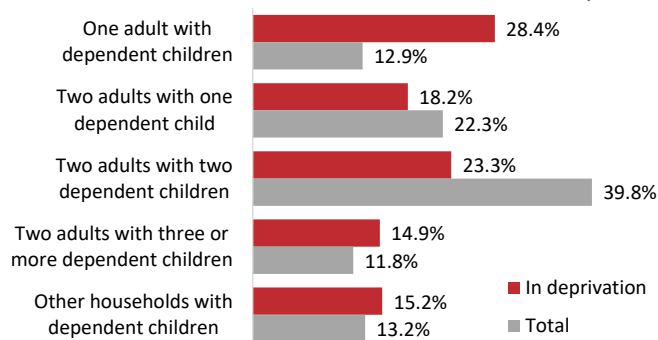


Source: Statistics Portugal, [Survey on Income and Living Conditions \(deprivation, severe\)](#).

In 2024, of the total number of children up to the age of 15 in **material and social deprivation**, **28.4%** lived in single-parent families (with only one adult and with one or more children), more than double the percentage of **12.9%** of children up to 15 years old who lived in single-parent families

The percentage of children up to 15 years old living in families with three or more children (**large families**) was also higher if they were in material and social deprivation: **14.9%**, compared to the percentage of children up to the age of 15 in general living in large families (**11.8%**)

Material and social deprivation



Source: Statistics Portugal, [Survey on Income and Living Conditions](#).

In 2024, of the total number of children up to 15 years old:

- 20.6%** lived in households without the ability to pay for at least one **week of vacation** a year, away from home, for all children up to the age of 15
- 9.8%** were unable to participate regularly in **extracurricular or leisure activities**
- 4.3%** could not participate in **non-free school trips and activities**
- 3.3%** could not **invite friends** over from time to time to play and eat together
- 2.7%** had no possibility of **replacing used clothes** with new clothes
- 2.3%** did not have an **appropriate space to study** and do their homework
- 0.9%** were unable to **celebrate special occasions**

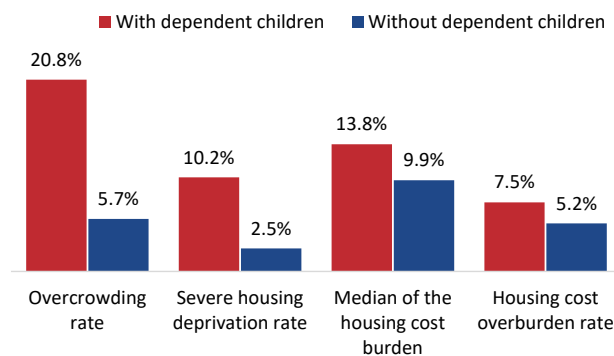
Source: Statistics Portugal, [Survey on Income and Living Conditions](#).

HOUSING DEPRIVATION

The housing conditions, both physical and financial, of families with dependent children are more unfavourable than for other families. This conclusion is more evident in the indicators associated with the physical conditions of housing: the **rates of overcrowding** and **severe housing deprivation** in families with children were about four times those of households without children

In 2025

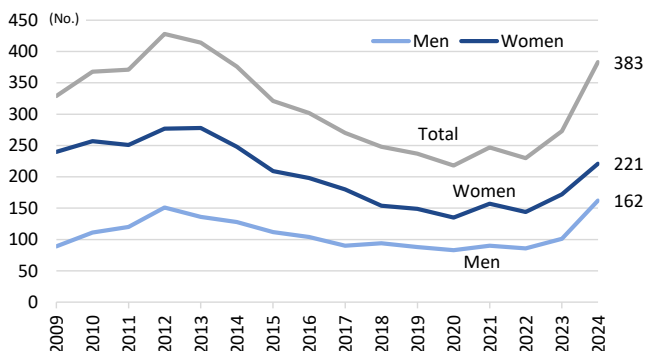
- **20.8%** of those in families with children lived in a situation of insufficient housing space (compared to 5.7% in families without children)
- **10.2%** lived in a condition of severe housing deprivation (2.5% in families without children)



Source: Statistics Portugal, Survey on Income and Living Conditions ([overcrowding](#), [severe deprivation](#), [median burden](#), [overburden](#)).

SOCIAL PROTECTION

Women benefit more from **adoption leave** than men



Source: [Institute of Social Security Informatics](#).

In 2024, **84,642** live births were born to mothers living in Portugal

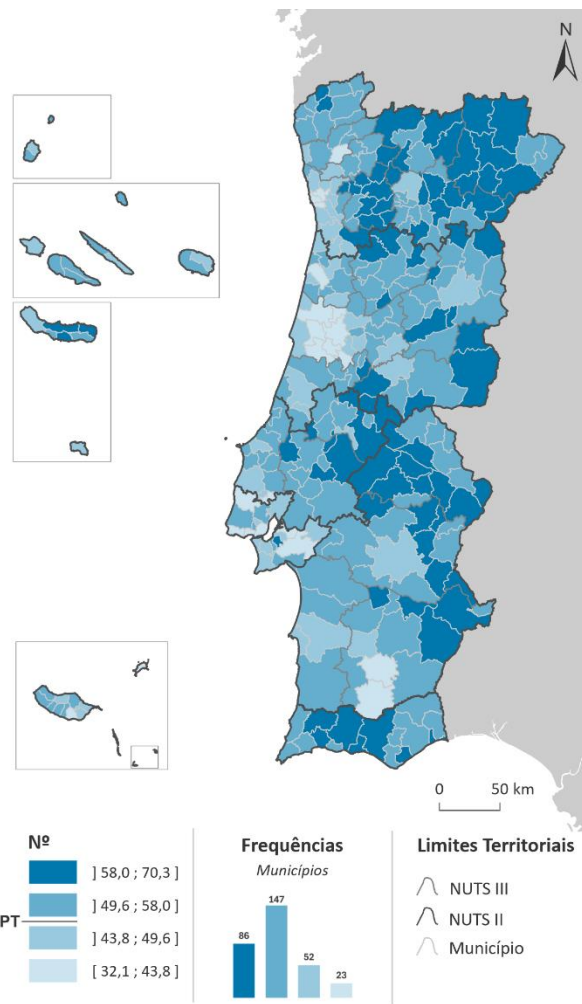
In that year, **Social Security's** initial parental leave benefited **177,172** people

- **48%** male; **41.9** days on average
- **52%** female; **108.4** days on average

Source: Institute of Social Security Informatics ([beneficiaries](#), [duration](#)).

The number of beneficiaries, descendants or equivalent, of the **family allowance** for children and young people per 100 individuals under 25 years of age was, in 2024, higher in municipalities in the inner mainland municipalities

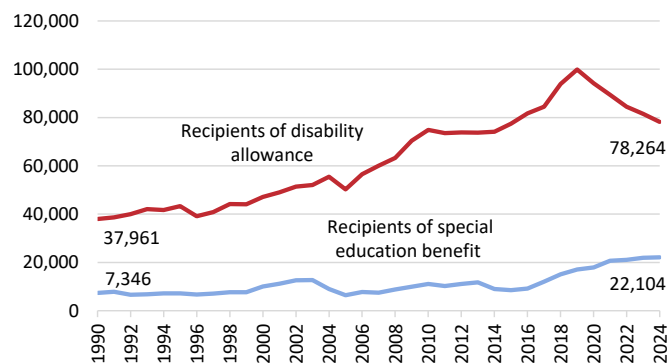
It should be noted that, according to the legislation in force, households with incomes above 2.5 IAS (Social Support Index) are excluded from the right to family allowance



Source: [Institute of Social Security Informatics](#). Statistics Portugal, [Resident population estimates](#).

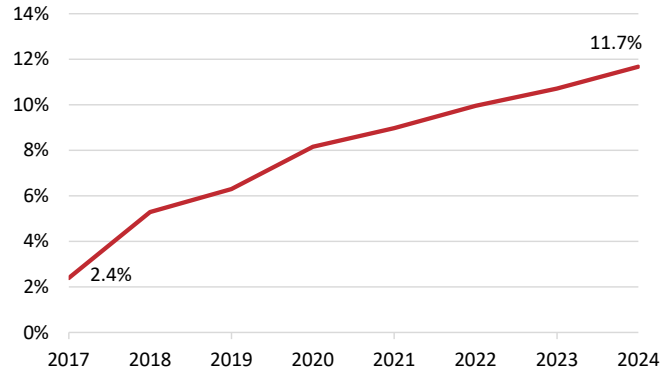
In 2024, the number of beneficiaries of **disability allowance** (benefit added to the family allowance for children and young people in case of disability), intended to support disabled children and young people, namely in attending appropriate establishments, was **78,264**, more than doubling compared to 1990

The increase was even more significant in the universe of beneficiaries of the **special education subsidy**, which tripled between 1990 and 2024, to **22,104** beneficiaries



Source: Institute of Social Security Informatics ([disability allowance](#), [special education benefit](#)).

In recent years, the proportion of children and young people (up to 24 years old) in the total number of beneficiaries of the social security **benefit for inclusion** has increased steadily, to **11.7%** of the total beneficiaries in 2024



Source: [Institute of Social Security Informatics](#).

VIOLENCE AND JUSTICE

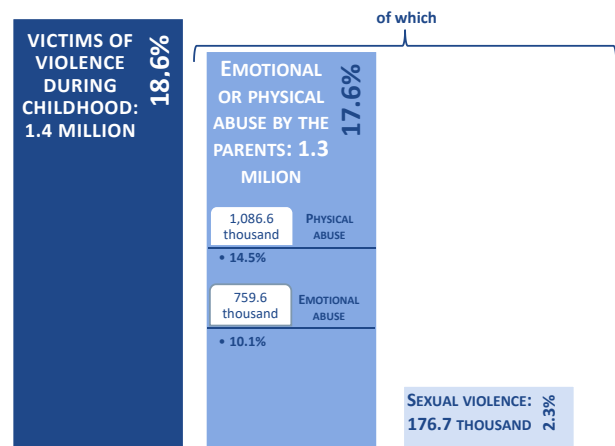
In 2022, more than 1.4 million people aged 18 to 74 (18.6%) reported having suffered some type of **violence in childhood** (up to the age of 15)

More than 1.3 million people (17.6%) with both parents⁷ have experienced, in childhood, some type of **emotional or physical abuse by their parents**:

more than 759 thousand (10.1%) experienced **emotional abuse**

about 1.1 million (14.5%) experienced **physical abuse**

Women (19.4%), as well as those with health limitations (27.1% of those severely limited) have higher proportions of violence in childhood



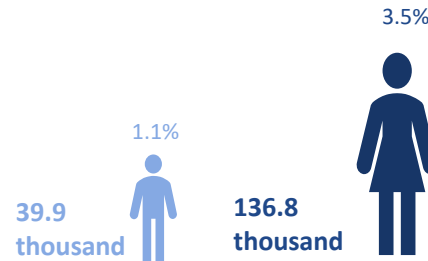
Source: Statistics Portugal, [Survey on Safety in Public and Private Spaces](#).

More than 176 thousand (2.3%) were victims of **sexual abuse by someone in childhood**

⁷ Father and mother understood in the broad sense, comprising the people that the respondents consider as father/mother, including stepmother, adoptive mother, stepfather and adoptive parents, as well as other people that they consider as a mother or father figure.

As for victims of **sexual abuse in childhood** (2.3%), prevalence is higher for women:

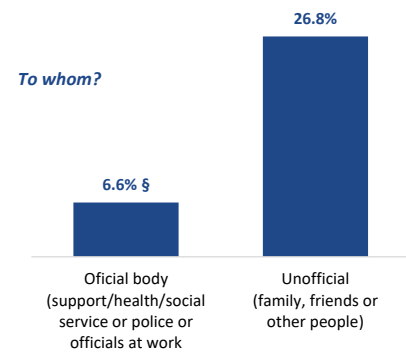
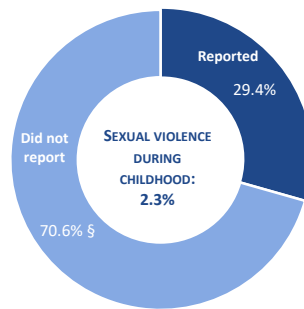
3.5% of women were victims of this type of violence (136.8 thousand), which compares with 1.1% for men (39.9 thousand)



The aggressors of sexual violence identified were essentially men, by 3.3% of women and 0.9% of men

Source: Statistics Portugal, [Survey on Safety in Public and Private Spaces](#).

Victims of **sexual violence in childhood** remained silent about their experiences: only 29.4% spoke to someone or some organizations about what happened



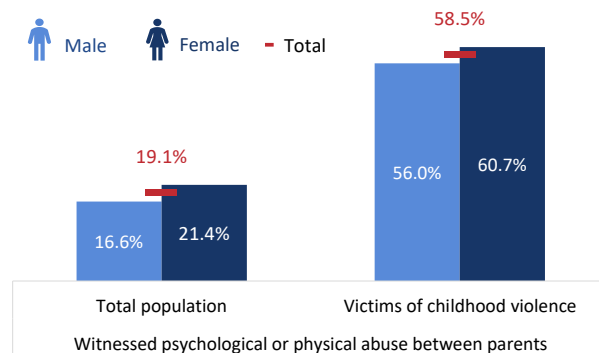
And when they talked about the situations they experienced ...

... family and friends were mostly chosen for these reports (26.8%)

Source: Statistics Portugal, [Survey on Safety in Public and Private Spaces](#).
§ Estimation with reduced reliability.

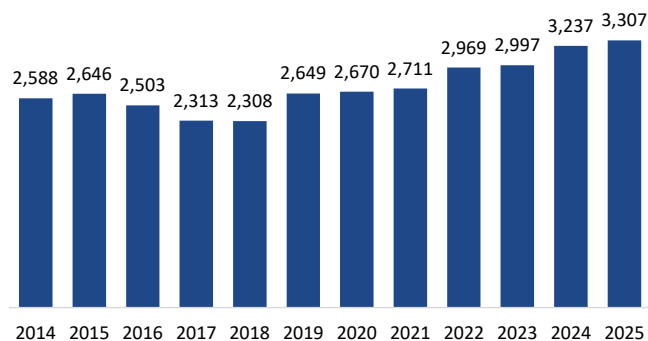
Family context of violence between parents was common for most victims of violence in childhood:

58.5% witnessed situations of physical or psychological violence between parents, which compares with 19.1% in the total population



Source: Statistics Portugal, [Survey on Safety in Public and Private Spaces](#).

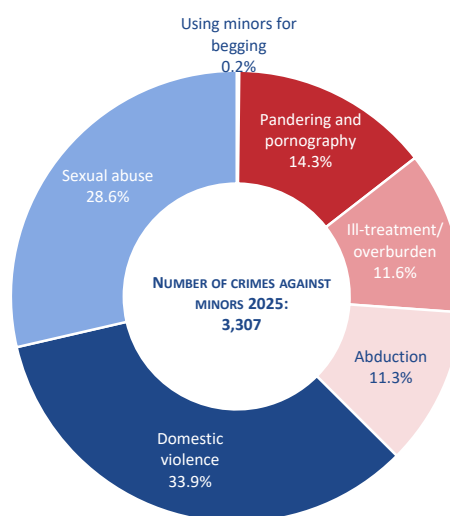
In 2025, the number of **crimes registered against minors**⁸ continued to increase, to 3,307, which corresponds to the highest number of reports recorded by police authorities since 2014



Source: [Directorate-General for Justice Policy](#).

Crimes of **domestic violence against minors** (1,122 reports) and **sexual abuse of children, adolescents and minors** who are dependent or in a particularly vulnerable situation (946 reports) were the most represented in crime against minors in 2025: 33.9% and 28.6%, respectively

In the 2014-2025 period, the **crime of domestic violence against minors** was the one that registered the highest increase in the set of these crimes (from 19.4% to 33.9%)

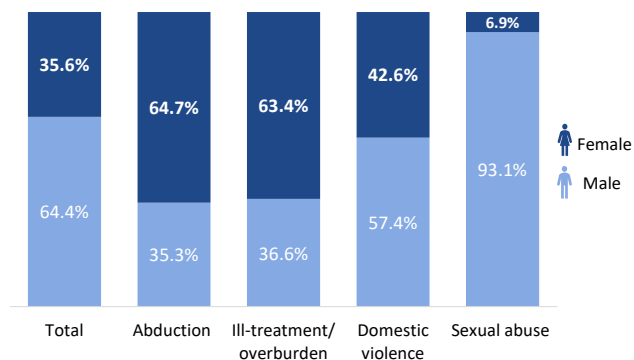


Source: [Directorate-General for Justice Policy](#).

⁸ Crimes against minors refer to crimes recorded by the police authorities in which the minor is part of the type of crime. For this purpose, a set of crimes was selected to measure the number of occurrences in which the victims are minors: domestic violence against minors; ill-treatment or overburden of minors; sexual abuse of children, adolescents, dependent minors or minors in vulnerable situations; pandering and pornography of minors; abduction of minors; and use of minors in begging.

Overall, **crimes against minors** were committed predominantly by men:

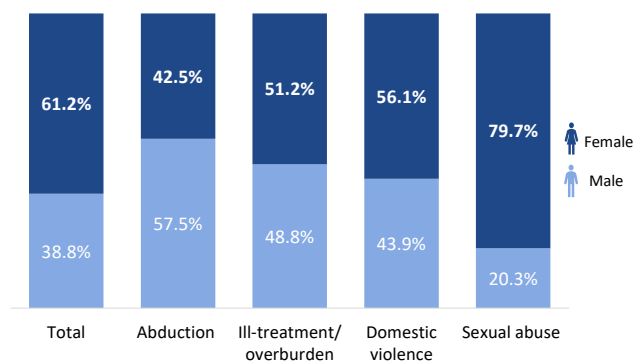
in 2025, **64.4% of the agents/suspects identified were men**, specially in sexual abuse (93.1%) and domestic violence (57.4%) crimes



Source: [Directorate-General for Justice Policy](#).

On the other hand, ...

... **more than half of the injured/offended persons identified in crimes against minors were female** (61.2%), particularly in crimes of sexual abuse, in which 79.7% of the injured/offended persons were female, and domestic violence crimes (56.1%)



Source: [Directorate-General for Justice Policy](#).

TECHNICAL NOTE

VITAL STATISTICS

Data on live births are obtained from a statistical operation of direct and exhaustive collection of information on live births that occurred in Portuguese territory using facts that are subject to compulsory civil registration (births) in the Sistema Integrado do Registo e Identificação Civil (SIRIC).

In addition to administrative information obtained from Civil Register Offices, Statistics Portugal also collects an additional set of variables identified as statistically relevant and which are included in data collection instruments.

Data are recorded and sent electronically, in compliance with the requirements set out by Statistics Portugal and laid down in liaison with the Instituto de Registos e Notariado, IP (IRN) and the Instituto de Gestão Financeira e Equipamentos da Justiça, IP (IGFEJ).

RESIDENT POPULATION ESTIMATES

Resident population estimates adopt the cohort component method, rely on the census concept of resident population, and are calculated by sex and age, up to the geographic breakdown level of municipality. Their calculation is based on the natural and migration demographic components and relies on information from other statistical operations of Statistics Portugal: live births, deaths, emigration, and immigration estimates.

Regarding live births and deaths, the information relies on the so-called vital statistics, using, for statistical purposes, facts that are subject to compulsory civil registration – live births and deaths.

Migration flows, not being subject to direct registration in Portugal, are obtained from information from other statistical operations of Statistics Portugal – Outbound Migration Survey and Labour Force Survey – which are sources for estimating annual migration flows. Additionally, the results of the most recent population census and administrative information are used, namely that produced by the former Portuguese Immigration and Borders Service, now designated Agency for Integration, Migration and Asylum (AIMA).

VACCINATION STATISTICS

Statistical information on [vaccination coverage](#) is based on administrative data from the Directorate-General for Health.

ANNUAL SCHOOL CENSUS

The statistical operation [Annual School Census](#), under the responsibility of the Directorate-General for Education and Science Statistics (DGEEC), aims to collect information from all public and private institutions of Mainland Portugal, on students enrolled and their achievement, teaching and non-teaching staff. For most of indicators in the statistical area of education covered in this Press Release, DGECC compiled data from the autonomous regions, under the responsibility of the Regional Secretariat for Education, Science and Technology (Região Autónoma da Madeira) and the Regional Secretariat for Education, Culture and Sport (Região Autónoma dos Açores).

For more information, please see data available on the [Directorate-General for Education and Science Statistics](#) website.

PISA

PISA is an international OECD program that, through three-year assessment cycles, measures the ability of 15-year-old students to apply their fundamental literacies to solve everyday problems.

SURVEY ON LIVING CONDITIONS AND INCOME

The [Survey on Living Conditions and Income](#) is carried out annually with a representative sample of households living in Portugal, with the aim of disseminating statistical indicators on income distribution, material deprivation, housing deprivation and other population-based indicators on the health status and other living conditions of families. In this context, the survey is part of the harmonised programme of European statistics on the income and living conditions of private households, EU-SILC. Since 2022, it has been gradually integrating administrative-based tax data that contribute to the calculation of income distribution. To learn more, see the last disclosure that took place on [December 11, 2025](#).

On March 6, 2025, a press release was published on the topic of [Children's Health and Material Deprivation](#), which is collected every 3 years.

STATISTICS ON SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFICIARIES AND BENEFITS

Statistical information on recipients and processed amounts of social benefits is obtained based on administrative data from the Institute of Informatics of Social Security.



SURVEY ON SAFETY IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SPACES

The [Survey on Safety in Public and Private Spaces](#) (ISEPP) is a sample survey carried out in all European Union Member States, following the methodology and model questionnaire defined within the framework of the European Statistical System. This statistical operation aims to contribute to the consolidation of a European statistical information system on gender-based violence and domestic violence. In Portugal, the survey, carried out by the Statistics Portugal (INE) in 2022, was aimed at men and women aged 18 to 74 years old living in the national territory.

The main results of ISEPP were disseminated in the Press Releases published on [30 October 2023](#) and [19 December 2023](#) and in a [publication](#) on violence during childhood. Since this is a five-year statistical operation, the first edition of which was in 2022, the next edition is scheduled for 2027.

RECORDED CRIME STATISTICS

[Recorded Crime Statistics](#), which are under the responsibility of the Directorate-General for Justice Policy (DGPJ), refer to administrative-based statistical information on crimes reported or known by the police authorities, agents/suspects and identified offended people. Regarding the information covered in this Press Release, the data recorded by the police authorities concern to crimes in which the minor is part of the type of crime.

For more information, please see the data available on the [Justice Statistics website](#).