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STATISTICS PORTUGAL



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press release

DIÍSTAQUE

World Children's Day | June 1

May 30, 2025

1,675,610 CHILDREN (UP TO 17 YEARS OLD) LIVING IN PORTUGAL IN 2023, 15.7% OF THE TOTAL

In this press release, Statistics Portugal (INE) and the Portuguese Committee for UNICEF present some official statistical indicators that allow us to characterize the reality of children in Portugal.

Between 1990 and 2023, the proportion of children in the total population went from 25.2% to 15.7%. In the same period, the number of live births per thousand women at childbearing age decreased from 46.5 to 38.8 and the mean age of women at birth of their first child changed from 24.9 to 30.2 years.

Vaccination coverage against human papillomavirus (HPV) infections was, in 2023, higher for female children aged 11 and 12 years. In 2024, 3.6% of children could not meet a need for dental consultation or treatment and 4.5% had some limitation in carrying out activities considered usual for their age due to prolonged health problems.

The number of students enrolled in non-higher education in the 2022/2023 academic year decreased by 19.9% compared to 1990/1991, with the gross enrolment rate in pre-primary education rising from 50.7% to 99.4%. 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 of age remained higher than that observed for the general population, reaching 17.8% in 2023. In that year, the risk of poverty affected almost a third of people living in single-parent households and about 28% of those in large families.

In 2024, one fifth of children lived in households without the ability to pay for at least one week of holiday per year, away from home, and one tenth of children were unable to participate regularly in an extracurricular or leisure activity.

Data from recent years show that women benefit more from adoption leave than men. In 2024, 47% of the beneficiaries of initial Social Security parental leave were male with an average duration of 38.8 days; in the case of female beneficiaries, the average duration was 109.2 days.

In 2022, 18.6% of people aged 18 to 74 reported having experienced some type of violence during childhood (up to 15 years old). 3.5% of women were victims of sexual abuse in childhood, which compares with 1.1% of men. In 2024, 3,237 crimes against minors were recorded, corresponding to the highest number of reports recorded by police authorities since 2014.

Demography

In 1990, the year 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 2023, this figure was **1,675,610** (836,246 fewer children than in 1990), representing **15.7%**

The reduction of children in the resident population is visible in the narrowing of the base of the age pyramid from 1990 to 2023, 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 2080 the number of children will decrease to 1,221,379 (14.9%)¹

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



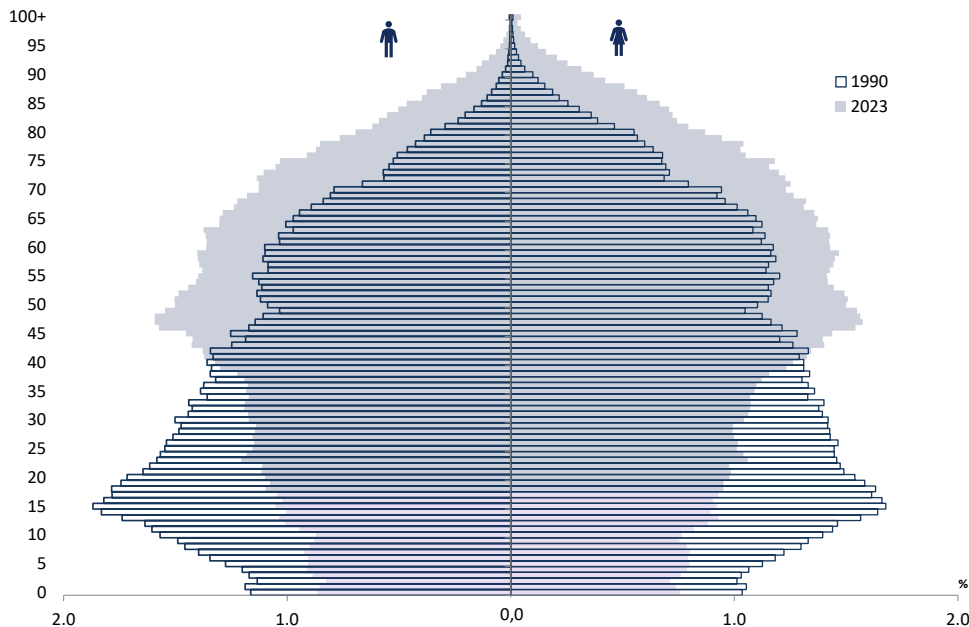
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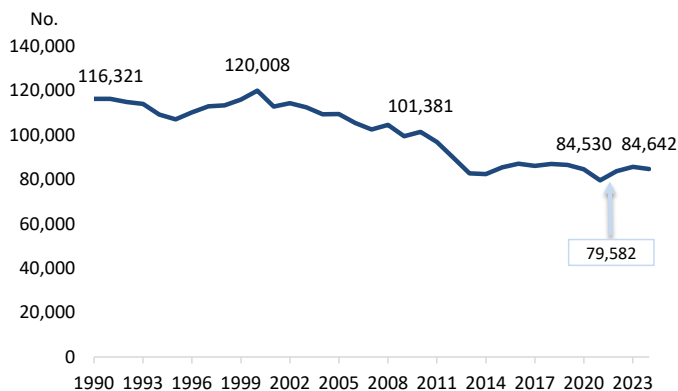
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Source: [Statistics Portugal, Resident population estimates.](#)

In 2024, the **number of live births** born to mothers residing in Portugal was **84,642**, 31,679 (-27.2%) less live births than in 1990

In 1990, Portugal registered a **general fertility rate** of 46.5 live births per thousand women aged 15 to 49; in 2023, this figure was **38.8** live births per thousand women at childbearing age

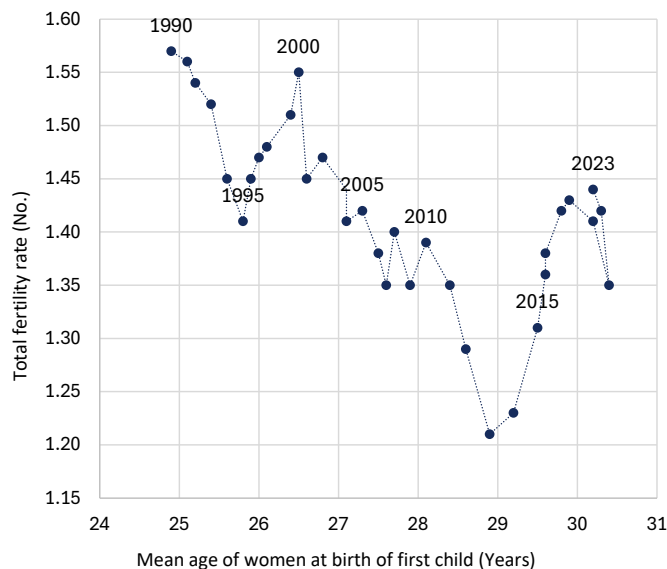


Source: Statistics Portugal, [Live births.](#)

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

In 1990, on average, a woman had 1.57 children, and in 2023, **1.44 children**

At the same time, there has been a **postponement of motherhood**: in 1990, the mean age of women at birth of their first child was 24.9 years, and in 2023 it was **30.2 years**



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



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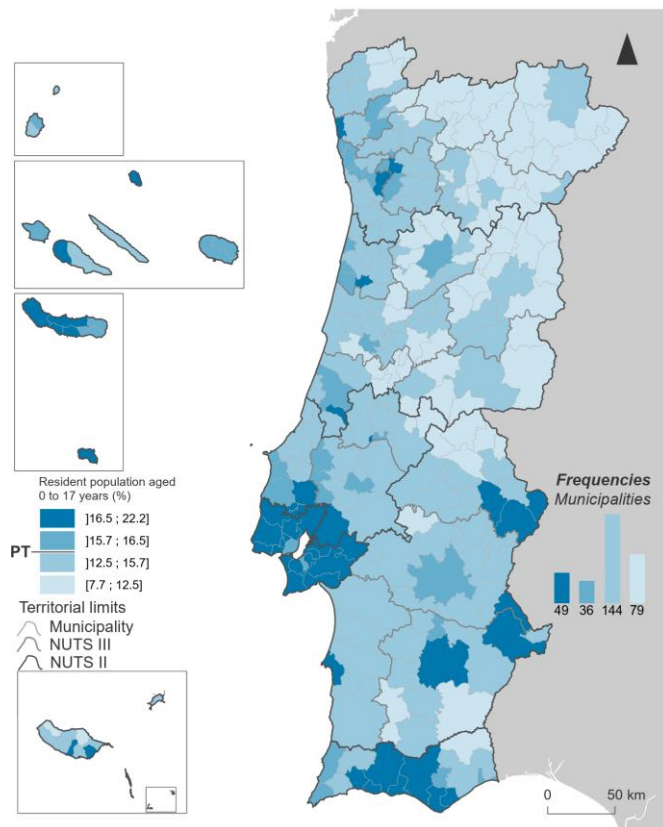
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In 2023, the **proportion of children in the total resident population** (15.7%) was higher than the national value in 85 of the 308 municipalities in the country, mainly concentrated in Grande Lisboa, Península de Setúbal, Algarve and Região Autónoma dos Açores

Ribeira Grande, in the Região Autónoma dos Açores, stood out as the municipality with the highest weight of children (22.2%), followed by Lagoa, also in the Região Autónoma dos Açores (19.7%), and Montijo (19.5%), in the Península de Setúbal

217 municipalities had a proportion of children below the national value, especially the municipalities of Oleiros (7.7%) and Almeida (7.9%), both in the Centro region



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

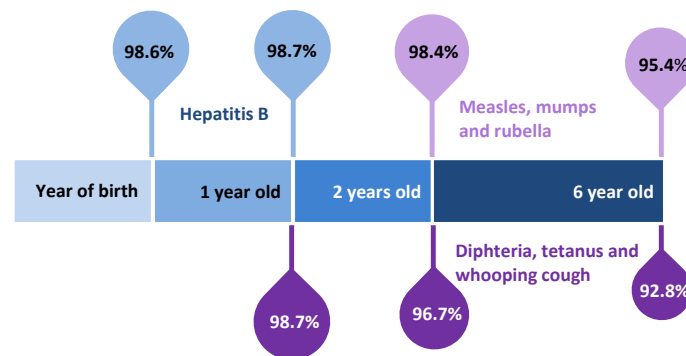
Health

Hepatitis B **vaccination coverage** reached, in 2023, close to **99%** of children who had completed 1 year of age

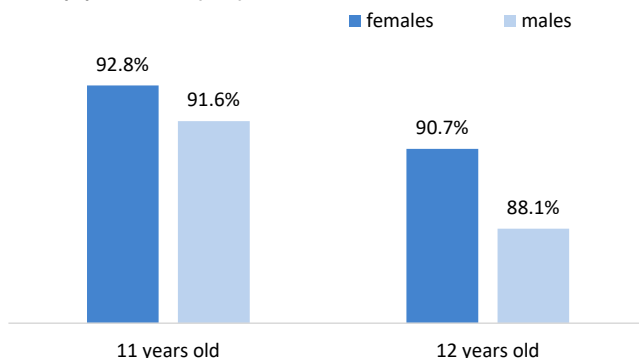
92.8% of children aged 6 years have complied with the vaccination plan for **diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis**, reflecting lower vaccination coverage as age advances ...

... This is also observed in the case of vaccination for **measles, epidemic mumps and rubella**

Vaccination coverage against **human papillomavirus (HPV)** infections was, in 2023, higher for female children aged 11 and 12



Human papilloma virus (HPV)



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



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In 2024

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

4.5% had some **limitation in performing activities** considered usual for their age due to long lasting 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 \(health, limitation, medical, dentist\)](#).

Formal follow-up care

In 2024, the proportion of children up to 12 years old receiving formal follow-up care was

1. **57.9%** in children up to 3 years old
2. **46.0%** in children aged 4 and over
3. **51.6%** in children not at risk of poverty
4. **39.3%** in children at risk of poverty

For **5.3%** of children up to 12 years old, the formal follow-up care 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 \(care, motives\)](#).

Education

In the 2022/2023 school year, more than 1.6 million students were **enrolled in non-tertiary education**² (398.3 thousand fewer than in the 1990/1991 school year, representing a decrease of 19.9%)

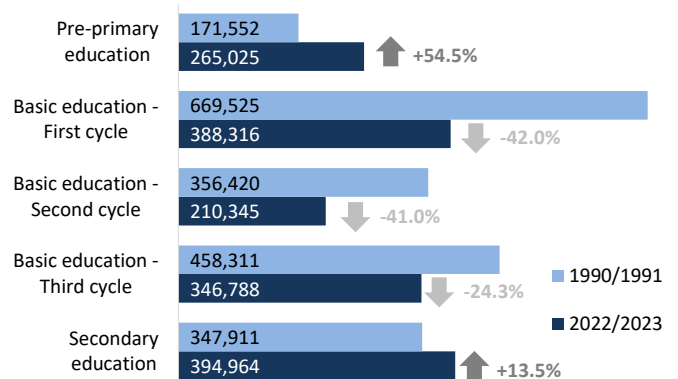
In this period, increases were observed only in the following education levels:

secondary: 47.1 thousand more students (+13.5%)

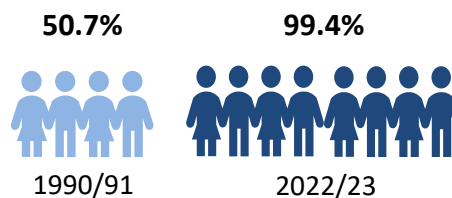
pre-primary: 93.5 thousand more students (+54.5%), which leads to a gross enrolment rate in pre-primary education of 99.4% in the 2022/2023 school year (50.7% in 1990/1991)

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

Students enrolled



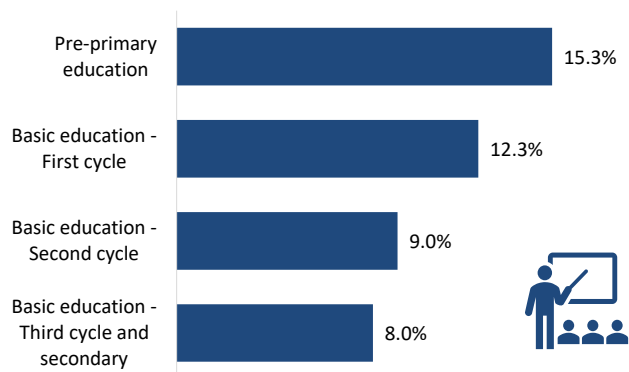
Gross enrolment rate in pre-primary education



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

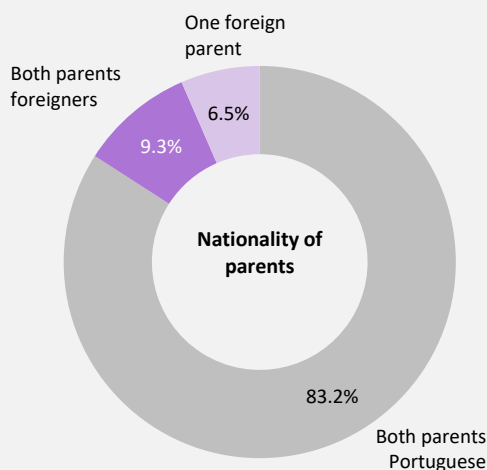


In 2022/2023 there were, on average, **15.3 students per teacher in pre-primary education**, a value that decreases with the level of education, being 8.0 students per teacher in basic education – 3rd cycle and secondary education



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

Considering only students³ in Mainland Portugal in the 2022/2023 school year, for 83.2% both parents were Portuguese, 9.3% had foreign parents, while for 6.5% one of the parents was a foreigner

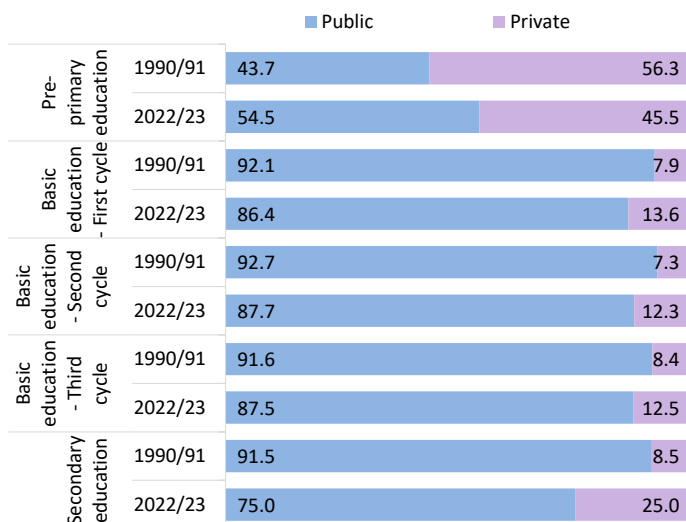


Source: [Directorate-General for Education and Science Statistics](#).

In more than three decades, the **public provision of pre-primary education** has come to cover more than half (**54.5%**) 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 25.0% in 2022/2023

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



³ According to the publication "[School Profile of Students Children of Parents with Foreign Nationality 2022/2023](#)", 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.



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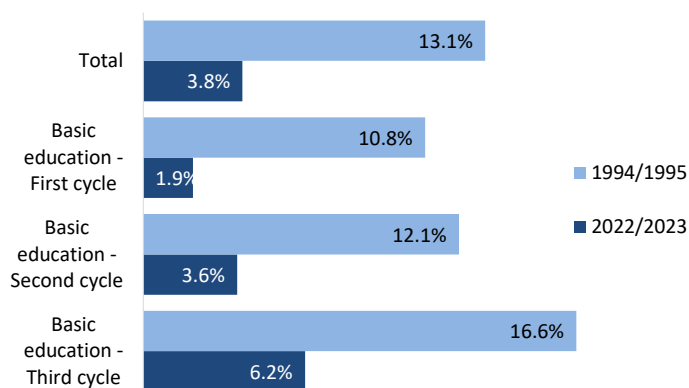


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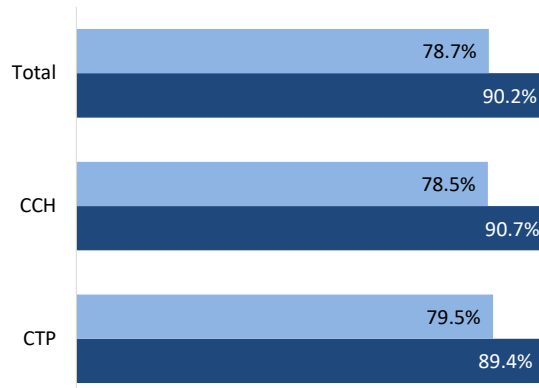
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The **retention/desistance rate for all basic education** decreased from 13.1% in the 1994/1995 school year to 3.8% in 2022/2023, a trend observed at all levels of education, particularly in the 3rd cycle (-10.4 p.p.)



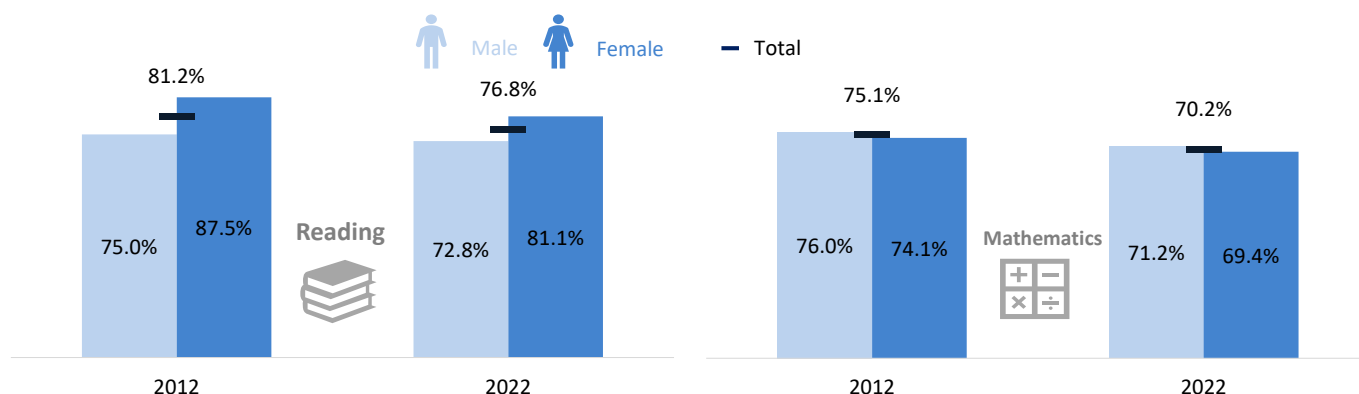
The **rate of transition/completion of secondary education** went from 78.7% to 90.2% in the same period, an increase that is registered both in general/scientific-humanistic courses (CCH) and in technological/professional courses (CTP)



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

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

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



Source: [OECD, PISA](#).



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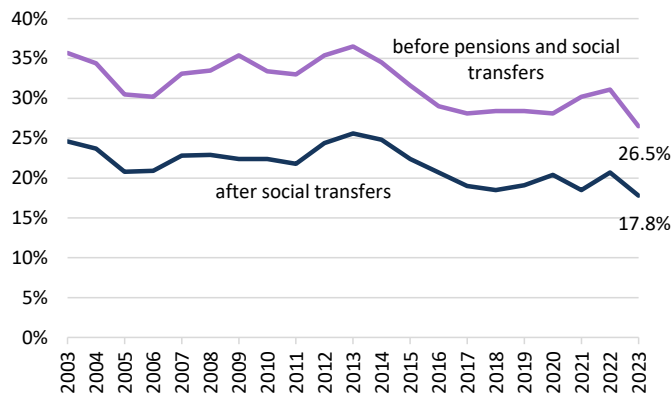
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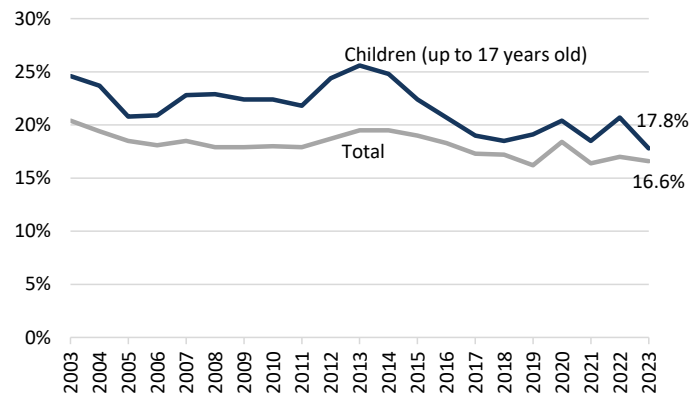
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Risk of poverty

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

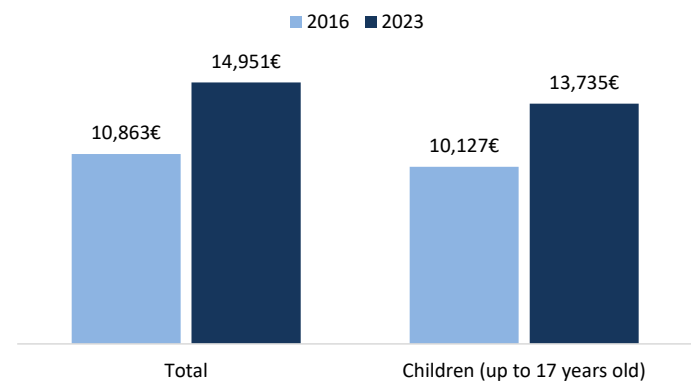


... however, the at-risk-of-poverty rate for children up to 17 years of age remains higher than that observed for the general population



In 2023, the general population lived with an average annual net monetary income per equivalent adult of €14,951, above that observed for the population up to 17 years old: **€13,735**

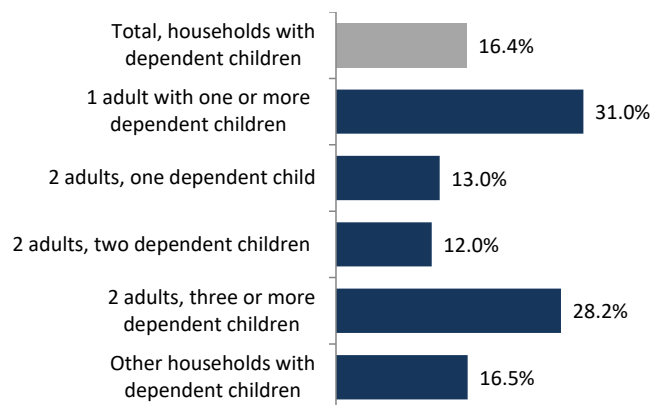
Between 2016 and 2023, the increase was more pronounced for the general population than for children



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

In 2023, the risk of poverty affected almost a third of people living in single-parent households (consisting of only one adult with one or more children): **31.0%**

The incidence of poverty was also high for those in large families (consisting of two adults with three or more children): **28.2%**



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



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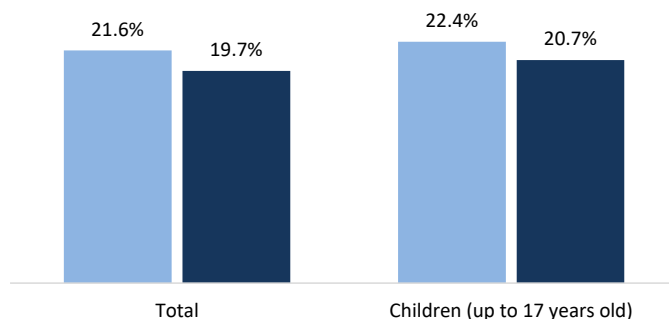
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The proportion of individuals **at-risk-of-poverty or social exclusion**⁴ was, in 2024, higher for children up to 17 years of age than for the general population, with a greater difference compared to 2018

At risk of poverty or social exclusion rate

■ 2018 ■ 2024



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

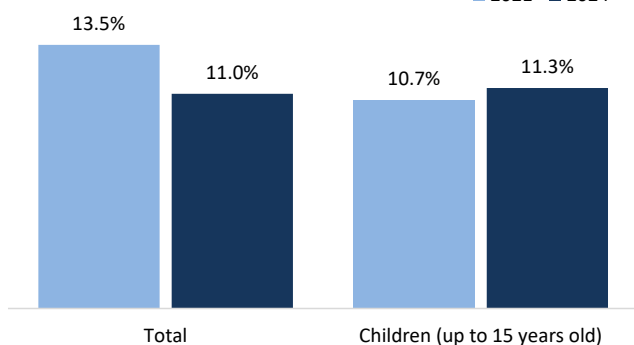
Material and social deprivation

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%

Material and social deprivation rate

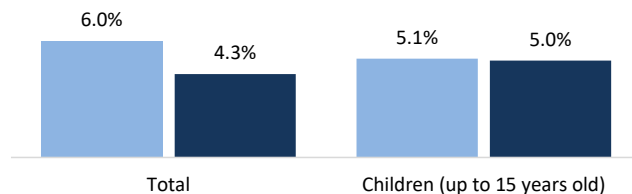
■ 2021 ■ 2024



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

Severe material and social deprivation rate

■ 2021 ■ 2024



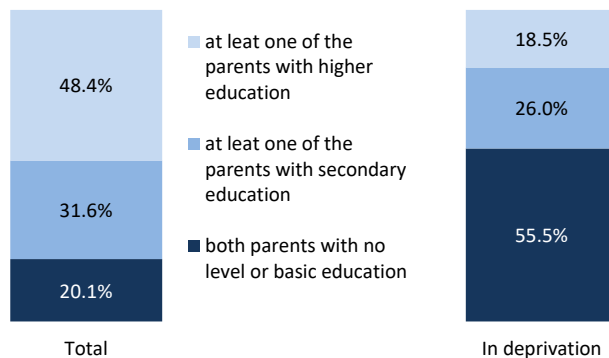
Source: Statistics Portugal, [Survey on Income and Living Conditions](#).

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

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 \(deprivation, severe\)](#).

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.

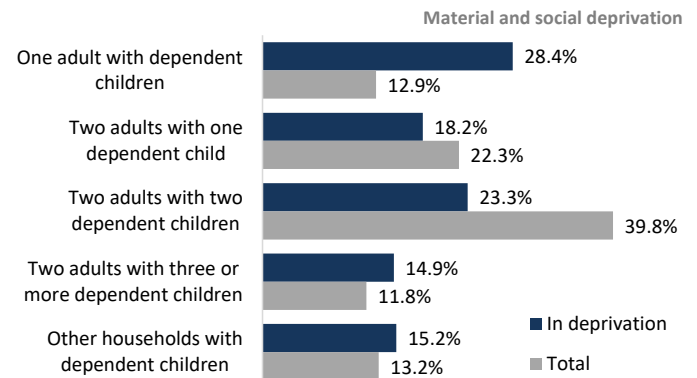
⁵ Individuals for whom at least five of a list of thirteen difficulties listed in www.ine.pt are verified.

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



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

The percentage of children up to the age of 15 living in families with 3 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%**)



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

In 2024

- 20,6%** of children 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%** of children were unable to participate regularly in **extracurricular or leisure activities**
- 4,3%** of children could not participate in **non-free school trips and activities**
- 3,3%** of children could not **invite friends** over from time to time to play and eat together
- 2,7%** of children had no possibility of **replacing used clothes** with new clothes
- 2,3%** of children did not have an **appropriate space to study** and do their homework
- 0,9%** of children were unable to **celebrate special occasions**

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

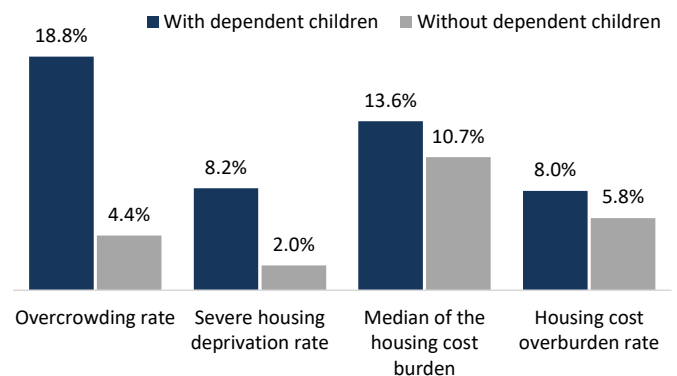
Housing deprivation

Both the **rate of overcrowding**⁷ and the **rate of severe deprivation of housing conditions**⁸ mainly affect people living in families with children

In 2024

18.8% of those in families with children lived in a situation of insufficient housing space (compared to 4.4% in families without children)

8.2% lived in severe conditions of housing deprivation (2.0% in households without children)



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

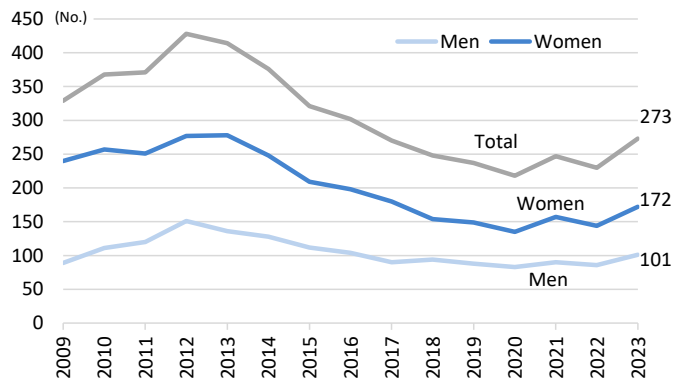
⁷ Proportion of the population living in dwellings where the number of habitable rooms (≥ 4 m²) is insufficient for the number and demographic profile of the members of the household.

⁸ Proportion of the population living in overcrowded accommodation and with at least one of the following problems: a) lack of bath or shower facilities and flushing toilets inside the accommodation; b) ceiling that allows water to pass through, moisture on the walls or rotting of the windows or floor; c) insufficient natural light on a sunny day.



Social protection

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



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

In 2023, there were **85,699** births with mothers living in Portugal

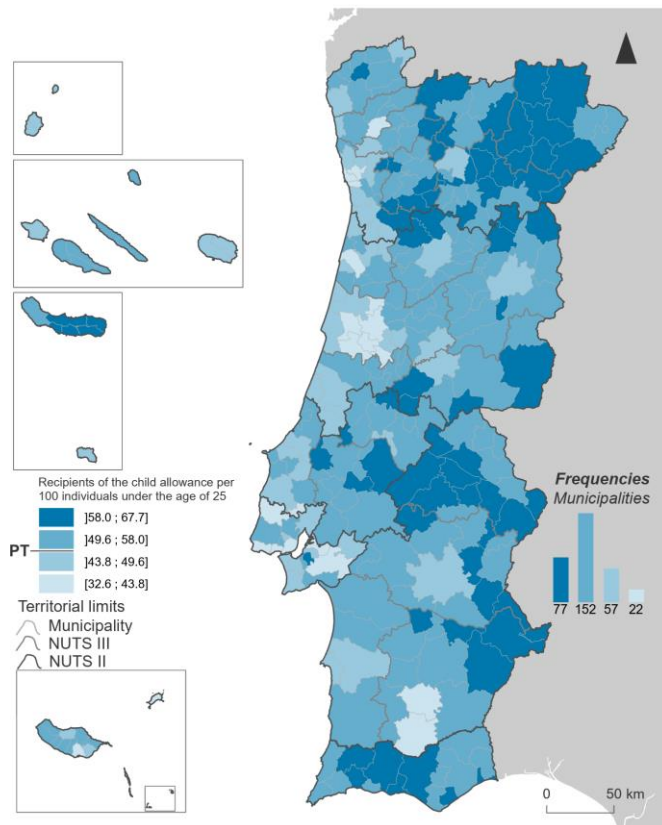
In that year, **Social Security's** initial parental leave benefited **175,171** people

47% male; 38.8 days on average

53% female; 109.2 days on average

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

The number of beneficiaries, descendants or equivalent, of the **child/family allowance** per 100 individuals under 25 years of age was, in 2023, higher in the inner mainland municipalities

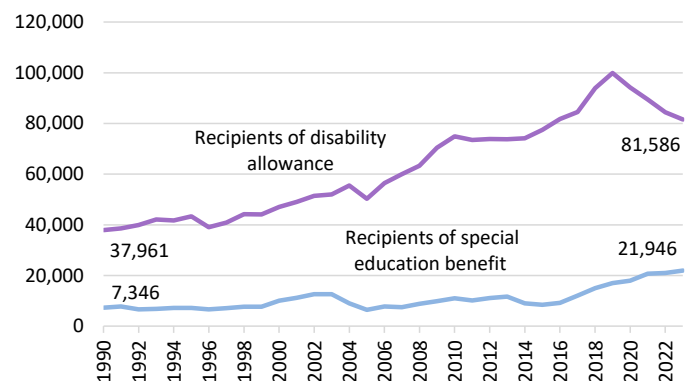


Source: [Institute of Social Security Informatics](#), Statistics Portugal, [Resident population estimates](#).

In 2023, the number of beneficiaries of **disability allowances** (allowances added to the family allowance for children and young people due to their disability), intended to support disabled children and young people, namely in attending appropriate establishments, was **81,586**, more than doubling compared to 1990

The increase was even more significant in the universe of beneficiaries of the **special education benefit**, which tripled between 1990 and 2023 to **21,946** recipients

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





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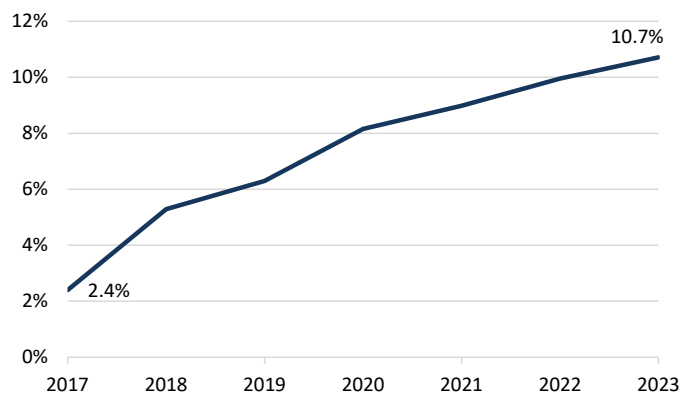


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In recent years, the proportion of children and young people (up to 24 years old) in the total number of beneficiaries of the **social benefit for social security inclusion** has increased steadily to **10.7%** of the total beneficiaries in 2023



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 experienced some type of **violence during childhood** (up to the age of 15)

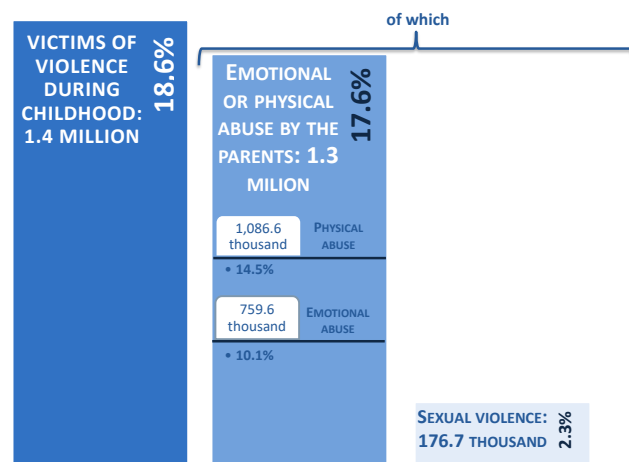
More than 1.3 million people (17.6%) with both parents⁹ have experienced some kind of **emotional or physical abuse from their parents**:

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

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

More than 176 thousand (2.3%) have been victims of **sexual abuse** by someone during childhood

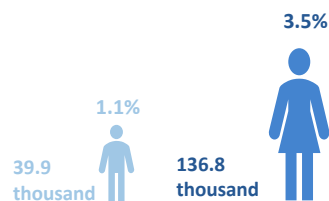
Women (19.4%), as well as those with health limitations (27.1% of those severely limited), have higher proportions of violence in childhood



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

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

3.5% of women were victims of this type of violence (136.8 thousand), compared to 1.1% of men (39.9 thousand)

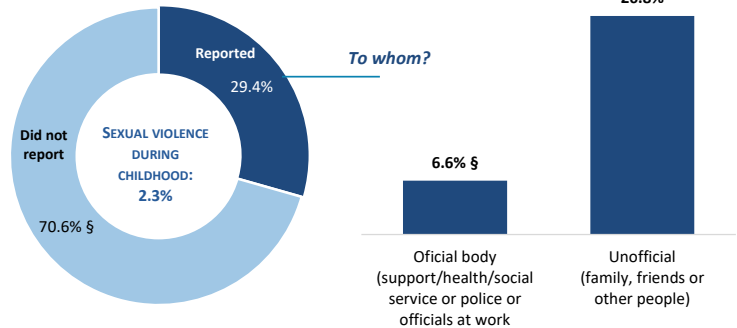


Source: Statistics Portugal, [Survey on Safety in Public and Private Spaces](#).

⁹ Father and mother understood in a comprehensive sense, comprising the people the respondents consider to be their father/mother, including stepmother, adoptive mother, stepfather and adoptive father, as well as other people they consider to be maternal or paternal figures.



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



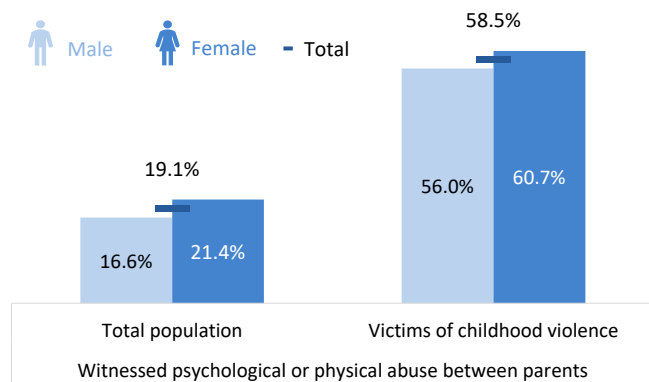
And when they talked about the situations they experienced ...

... 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.

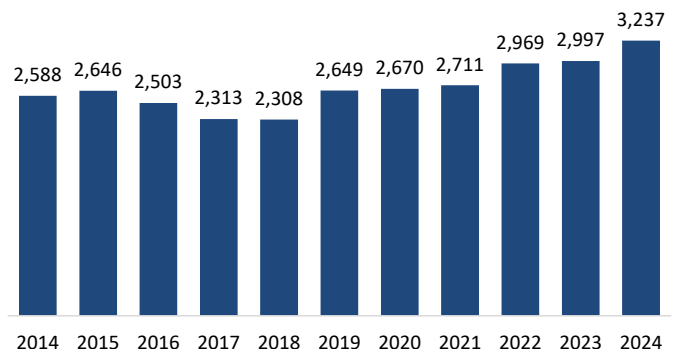
Family context of violence between parents was common for most victims of violence during childhood:

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 2024, **3,237 crimes against minors**¹⁰ were recorded, corresponding to the highest number of reports recorded by police authorities since 2014



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

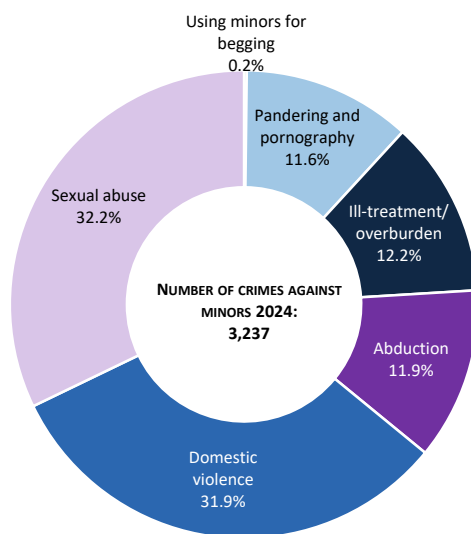
¹⁰ Crimes against minors refer to crimes recorded by the police authorities in which the minor is part of the type of crime. For this purpose, a set of crimes was selected to measure the number of occurrences in which the victims are minors: domestic violence against minors; ill-treatment or overburden of minors; sexual abuse of children, adolescents and dependent minors or minors in vulnerable situations; pandering and pornography of minors; abduction of minors; and use of minors in begging.



The **crimes of sexual abuse of children, adolescents and minors** who are dependent or in a particularly vulnerable situation (1,041 reports) and **domestic violence against minors** (1,033 reports) were among the most represented in crimes against minors in 2024: 32.2% and 31.9%, respectively

In the 2014-2024 period, the **crime of sexual abuse** was the one with the highest share in all crimes against minors and **domestic violence against minors** the one that registered the highest increase in the set of these crimes (from 19.4% to 31.9%)

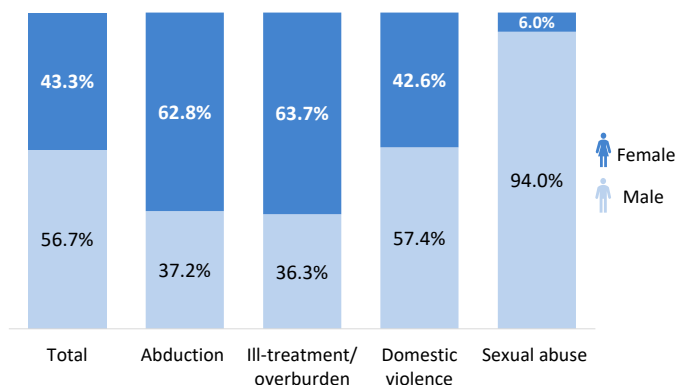
Source: [Directorate-General for Justice Policy](#).



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

in 2024, **56.7% of the agents/suspects identified were men**, especially in sexual abuse (94.0%) and domestic violence (57.4%) crimes

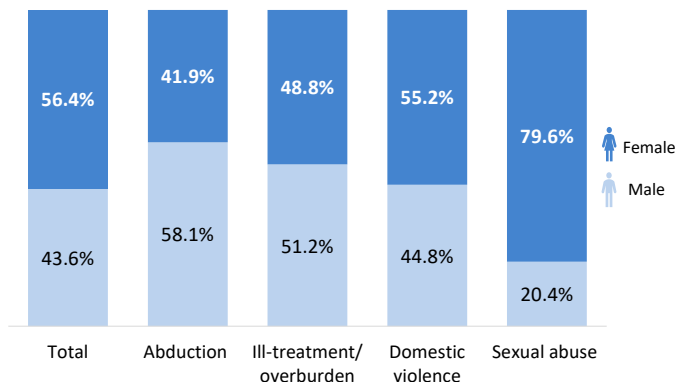
Source: [Directorate-General for Justice Policy](#).



On the other hand ...

... **more than half of the offended persons identified in crimes against minors were female** (56.4%), particularly in crimes of sexual abuse, in which 79.6% of the offended persons were female, and domestic violence crimes (55.2%)

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





INSTITUTO NACIONAL DE ESTATÍSTICA
STATISTICS PORTUGAL



para todas as crianças

press release

DIÍSTAQUE

TECHINICAL 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).

Annual School Census

The statistical operation [Annual School Census](#), under the responsibility of the Directorate-General for Education and Science Statistics (DGECC), 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.

Vaccination Statistics

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

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 3, 2024](#).

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

WORLD CHILDREN'S DAY



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.

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 portal](#) website.