

# ADULT EDUCATION AND OER

## 2015 EU COUNTRY UPDATE: PORTUGAL

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Portugal is a medium-sized Member State, with a population of around 10 million, similar in size to Belgium, Greece, Czech Republic, Hungary and Sweden. The experience of this collection of countries is thus of particular importance.

### **Adult Education**

Portugal has a national open university, the *Universidade Aberta*.<sup>1</sup> Little other activity is well known but Hasan & Laaser<sup>2</sup> report in their incisive 2010 article on *Higher Education Distance Learning in Portugal* that 'Other conventional universities and Polytechnics are starting to offer DL programmes and courses. This includes most of the engineering schools, as well schools of medicine for example, the new programmes at University of Minho and the Universities of Lisbon and Porto. ... University of Coimbra also offers DL courses in selected departments. Among the Polytechnics, Leiria, and Instituto Superior de Gestao Bancaria (ISBG) are particularly active in offering DL programmes.'

There are some virtual school activities but they seem targeted at school-age students not adults. Interestingly in their overview paper Hasan and Laaser commented on these issues (our emphasis):

'The experience with the Decree-Law of 2006 (64/2006, March) that facilitated entry of adults age 23 and over into higher education (commonly known as M23) is that of positive expansion, but so far the DL share has been limited. This may be due to the limited DL offers or because of their more stringent eligibility criteria in DL programmes. Consideration should be given to expanding eligibility to the group below age 23. Development of bridging courses (such as those developed by the Polytechnic of Leiria) could be provided on a national basis. **Online curricula to acquire the necessary qualification to enter HE for those who missed secondary school certificate could be very helpful in expanding the potential pool of DL applicants** [to universities].'

In particular the *Distance Learning School*, originally set up for travelling school-age students, could expand its remit.

### **Copyright**

Copyright law has not been modified since 2008, but the 'educational use' clauses are reasonably broad.

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### **OER in Adult Education**

There is a considerable amount of relevant activity in open access and much grassroots activity in OER, providing a good base to build on for national initiatives.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.uab.pt>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.eurodl.org/?p=archives&year=2010&halfyear=2&article=414>

The international OER and MOOC consortia are not active in Portugal: there is no member of the Open Education Consortium, Coursera or FutureLearn. However since some of these consortia are active in Brazil, there is a useful extra source of Portuguese-language open courses and resources.

The MOOC list reports a few MOOCs from Portugal institutions, in Portuguese.

### **Quality for OER**

A3ES, the *Agency for Evaluation and Accreditation of Higher Education*, is a full member of ENQA.<sup>3</sup> However there is no information on any activities in accreditation of OER.

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.a3es.pt/en>