

## National report for Portugal

By Cristina Ponte, Nelson Vieira, Tomás Patrocínio

Contribution to the European report:

Stald, G. and Haddon, L. (2008) *Cross-Cultural Contexts of Research: Factors Influencing the Study of Children and the Internet in Europe*. A report for the EC Safer Internet Plus Programme, 2008.

### Universities and Disciplines

There are 15 public Universities in Portugal, and some private ones. Almost all public Universities have Media and Communication Studies at graduate or post-graduate levels (the ones in bold here below).

1. **Universidade do Minho**
2. **Universidade de Trás-os-Montes e Alto Douro**
3. **Universidade do Porto**
4. **Universidade de Aveiro**
5. **Universidade de Coimbra**
6. **Universidade da Beira Interior**
7. **Universidade de Lisboa**
8. **Universidade Nova de Lisboa**
9. **Universidade Técnica de Lisboa**
10. **Instituto Superior de Ciências do Trabalho e Empresa (ISCTE)**
11. Universidade de Évora
12. **Universidade do Algarve**
13. **Universidade da Madeira**
14. Universidade dos Açores
15. Universidade Aberta

Media and Communication Studies exist as subjects both at graduate and post graduate levels. They are present in several public Universities (see 1), in private Universities and in public and private Polytechnic Institutes, a total of more than 50 Programmes.

The first graduation in Communication in Portugal was in 1979, at FCSH-Universidade Nova de Lisboa. The initial name was Social Communication and it was oriented towards Journalism and Public Relations. In 1985, the name changed to Sciences of Communication, in order to cover a broader field (Cinema, TV, Arts, Cultural Criticism). The main focus has always been on textual and visual analysis (Semiotics, Rhetoric, Pragmatics, Image and Representation...) or on macro analysis rather than on production or reception studies.

In the second half of the 80s and in the beginning of 1990, the number of graduations in Communication rose sharply. This coincided with a period when several changes affected the media and Portuguese society: new markets, economic expansion, privatisation of newspapers and broadcasting, new private TV and radio channels, the beginning of the online media.

Journalism, Public Relations and Marketing caught the attention of hundreds of students and for years both public and private schools hardly covered the students' demand.

Although the area is included in Social Sciences subjects, in the majority of public Universities most Media and Communication syllabus are closer to the Humanities (Semiotics, Rhetorics, Philosophy of Communication, Pragmatics, Visual Arts). This is probably resulted from the influence by the first graduation and post graduation programmes at Universidade Nova de Lisboa.

At the Universidade de Aveiro, founded more recently, there are both graduate and postgraduate programmes in Communication and IT. They are mainly oriented towards organizational communication, networks and communication environments, with special attention given to virtual worlds, such as Second Life.

Looking at the curricula in different public Universities, one finds that subjects clearly oriented to media reception are sparse: Media, Publics and Citizenship (1), Reception Studies (3); Publics and Audiences (1).

In the first cycle of public universities and polytechnics there are 73 courses related to the area of Computer Science or ICT, both strictly technical, as well as, ICT and society approaches. One cannot identify courses on ICTs and society and/or New media and/or IT Studies, as specific subjects. In some courses there are themes that cover that area, namely in 24 universities' BAs and in 38 polytechnics' BAs. As such, some reflections concerning the use of ICTs are delivered to students but not in a systematic way.

In the 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle we can identify 108 MA courses on ICTs. Of these, 49 are at universities, and 4 at polytechnics are society related. But there are only two specific Masters programmes related to ICTs and Society: at ISCTE (Communication, Culture and ICT) and at Oporto (Computer Science, Communication and New Media).

Teacher training is mostly conducted at the Polytechnics, where there are also some graduate programmes in communication. Before the Bologna system had been adopted, more programmes included Educational Technology. However, following the Bologna reform, the reduction in the curricula affected mostly contents related to ICT: these contents almost disappeared in the current teacher training programmes. Therefore, the majority of future teachers are not trained in Media Education nor have they studied the relationship between ICTs and society.

Following an Internet search for this report, references to Media literacy were found only in the Universidade do Algarve's Programme; Media Education appears only in 3 Programmes, two of them in public Polytechnics (Portalegre, Setúbal).

### **National Data Collected**

National statistics are collected by INE (Portuguese Official Statistics Department) and also by UMIC (Knowledge Society Agency). Data on children and the Internet are not collected specifically, however, the INE is planning to start with 8 year olds.

There are no data on the Internet and children below 15, but the need for statistics below this age is now under consideration by the INE. In the last few years, OBERCOM (The Observatory for the Media) has presented and commented annually on the national statistics from INE. There are no regularly repeated studies at a national level.

However, the study promoted by the HBSC – Health Behaviour in School-Aged Children, developed in Portugal since 1998, presents the same questions about Internet's use by adolescents at different points in time as longitudinal data. Data are available from 1998, 2002 and 2006. Data are also available for 20 EU Kids Online countries, with the exception of Cyprus.

### **Institutional processes in applying to conduct research**

Permission for research topics is not usually needed but there are some areas where it is. In areas such as Clinic Psychology, Justice, and Medicine, research in schools needs to be submitted and approved (the aims of the Project, methodology and tools...) by the Ministry of Education (ME). Public schools are not allowed to authorize research by themselves, even if conducted by academics and research centres. Research with children also requires parental informed consent, when children are below the age of 15. Proposals do not need to go through ethics committees or a general stage as such. Only academic proposals such as PhD plans need to be submitted and approved by the Scientific Commission of the University Department before starting.

## **Pressures to conduct research**

The importance of research is stressed for academic progress. This is relatively recent and follows international evaluation criteria. There are general policies from the Ministry of Science and universities, supporting and stimulating partnership between universities and Industry. Collaborations are particularly visible in IT, Management, Economics and Human Resources, but not so much in Media Studies or Education.

## **Factors influencing the orientation of research**

Approaches from industry mostly occur at universities placed in strategic industrial areas (such as Aveiro and Minho), in the fields of IT, Economics and Management. However, some new signs should be mentioned. A Portuguese ISP (SAPO.PT) collaborated with a Research centre (CIES) in an online survey oriented to children and showed interest in researching children's uses of social networking (SAPO.PT is a member of the EU Kids Online advisory board).

The PT Foundation, in connection with this ISP, supported the first sociological research on children and the Internet based on a representative survey. This work is available in the EU Kids Online data repository. However, they refused the financial support to follow-up the research, saying it was not needed at the moment.

As far as we know, mass media industries, including Public Service Broadcasting, have never approached Universities to conduct academic research.

Government Ministries have asked Education Departments to conduct evaluations of National Plans/Initiatives, namely the introduction of ICT in schools. The focus of this research has been placed on teacher training and implementation of IT in the academic curricula and classrooms, in a kind of top-down model that did not include all the dimensions of media literacy.

According to Manuel Jacinto Sarmento (Institute of Child Studies at Universidade do Minho, the main institute that deals with childhood issues), at the local level, there has been a demand for research from the local authorities. The main agenda has been dominated by the social area (the child care system). Some national demand for research also includes public policies around children at social risk, such as child labour or children dropping out of school, two relevant social problems in Portugal. In these agendas, there is some support from private entities, besides public and European funding.

It seems that the focus for research on children is closer to issues regarding the transition from pre-modern to modern times, than to the issues concerning a contemporary late modern society, such as the use of IT by children and its impact in their everyday life. In the 1990s, the FCT (National Research Council) called for research on the Internet society in Portugal, as part of a European Research Project. Some research from that period was part of broader European Projects with financial support from European entities. National programmes on ICT and uses do not seem to be on the FCT's agenda at the moment. There is a focus on digital media production and contents (namely promoting research involving Portuguese and US Universities, such as MIT and the University of Texas, at Austin).

There is no call for research specifically on children and media. Recently, a Project focused on children and media uses, presented by CIES/ISCTE and a follow up of a previous study, was not approved by FCT. However, the ERC (the Communication Regulatory Entity, similar to Ofcom in the UK) invited Research Centres to conduct research on Portuguese Media Audiences. The accepted Project included Internet uses among children and their parents (see below). Some universities approach industry with suggestions for research, but in general industry is not very open to supporting research on areas such as media in everyday life and informal uses. There is nothing similar to the Digital World Research Centre in the UK.

The University of Aveiro has developed a strategy to approach industry, which is oriented towards the conception of new products and contents, prototypes and product design, including games oriented to young children, according to Oscar Mealha, coordinator of the Department.

### **National Research Traditions**

Social Science and Education Studies rose mostly in the 1980s. The social Sciences were slightly restricted under the political dictatorship that ended in 1974. Quantitative research is now well established in the Social Sciences, and Portugal participates in the European Social Values study and in similar programmes. Quantitative research, as the dominant framework, may be considered stronger in Psychology and Sociology rather than in Education Studies. It is not usual in the Humanities, which mostly influences Communication and Media Studies. There is an established tradition of qualitative research within Education since the 1990s. In-depth interviews and participant observation at schools are the usual methods, mainly focused on organisational/institutional factors and on teachers.

Also, in Education, evaluation studies requested by the Government have mixed qualitative with quantitative methods to evaluate the use of ICTs in the classrooms or its impact in schools. The sociology of childhood, a recent area of research in Portugal, has conducted qualitative research focused on children's practices and cultures. This happened particularly in the Oporto (Manuela Ferreira) and Minho Universities (Manuel Jacinto Sarmiento and his colleagues). Childhood studies combining both quantitative and qualitative research are quite recent (from the end of the 1990s).

There have been studies of the mass media since the 1980s, according to José Paquete de Oliveira, one of the pioneers of this field. Portuguese participation in international research projects was the starting point for research on the mass media in Portugal, in the 1980s. The first study of the mass media focused on mainstream newspapers and it was part of a European project. Also, in the 1980s another international comparative project focused on the Mediterranean TV systems.

Media research as a part of post-graduate Programmes in the Universities (MPhil, PhD) started in the 1990s. Some post-graduate research has been conducted on TV, quality newspapers and online media, with almost no research on radio. Studying newspaper contents has been more frequent than broadcasting, due to the difficulties in accessing the broadcasting archives. Media content analyses and media production analyses have been more frequent than audience/reception studies. In this area, some recent qualitative and quantitative research has been conducted, focused on social minorities: immigrants, women, children and young people. Interpersonal communication has been developed since the end of the 1990s, at the Aveiro University, with a focus on interpersonal mediated communication in corporations. A focus on the new ways of communication promoted by the web 2.0 in organisations is a development of this trend, at that University. Studies on the Internet and society started in the middle of the 1990s, at ISCTE. The first Research report on the uses of mobile phones in the Portuguese society was published in 2007: PORTUGAL MÓVEL – Utilização do Telemóvel e Transformação da Vida Social (Mobile Portugal – Uses of Mobile Phone and changes in the social life), OBERCOM.

### **Sources of Funding for Research**

The funding of Research Projects within the social sciences generally comes from FCT (the National Science Foundation/Research Agency). Research Projects by research centres accredited by the FCT need to have a team composed of at least 3 researchers with PhDs, and are submitted to international panels of juries. Other ways of funding the research include contracts with the Government, to assess the impact of public policies (applied studies). FCT is the main financial source for research in social sciences and Education, also supporting individual PhD scholarships. Some Portuguese PhD studies in the data repository received this support.

There is no tradition of commercial companies funding research on social sciences and education. The Gulbenkian Foundation is the main sponsor at an institutional level; it has funded some studies on Education and the Social Sciences. Gulbenkian also finances the diffusion of scientific results by making them publicly available (books, Conferences) and funding travel expenses for participation in international Conferences. At a national level, this pattern shows the relative absence of public and private funding for research projects on children and the Internet conducted by multidisciplinary teams and with representative samples. Research in this area has been mostly conducted by single researchers as part of their MPhil and PhD degrees, some receiving individual grants from FCT. There is only one study that was financed by a private Company (the PT Foundation).

### **Political initiatives influencing research**

This is an overview of main documents and events, based on official sites:

1996: The Mission for the Information Society (MSI) was created under the Ministry of Science and Technology to prepare the Green Paper on the Information Society, approved by the Council of Ministers in 1997, with proposals for short, medium and long term policies.

The proposed strategies led to the National Initiative for the Information Society, structured around four main themes: school (IT in education); enterprises (electronic business); local and regional public administration (open administration); knowledge (libraries, museums, databases, R&D institutions).

1998-1999: The White Paper of the Scientific and Technological Development in Portugal (1999-2006) consisted of a catalogue of “opportunities and needs for the technological and scientific development in Portugal”.

2000: The Operational Program for the Information Society (POSI) was based on the White Paper to benefit from the Community Support Framework III (2000-2006). Also, in 2000, the Government created a Statistics Information System and the Inter-ministerial Commission for Information Society, to monitor the Information Society developments and policies.

The Internet Initiative, approved by the Government also in 2000, established as a strategic priority “the rapid increase in the use of the Internet at schools, households, enterprises and public administration”.

2001: the Government approved the legislation to create the Basic Skills Diploma in Information Technology. The process of recognising basic competencies in ICTs and the associated certificate was based on a network of accredited entities of varied nature, most of which could also provide training in ICTs. The ICTs competencies’ recognition system included intermediate and higher levels of competencies and e-learning.

2002: the Innovation and Knowledge Mission Unit (UMIC) was established “to define and coordinate the policies, to prepare the national action plans, initiatives and programmes for the Information Society and e-Government”.

2003: The UMIC presented the National Broadband Initiative which was approved by the Government with the purpose of “intensifying the use and access to broadband in Portugal, contributing, on the one hand, to the increase of the productivity levels and the competitiveness of the national economy and, on the other, to a greater social cohesion.”

Also in 2003, two action plans were approved by the Government: the Information Society Action Plan and the e-Government Action Plan. These two action plans intended to contribute “not only to the rapid overcome of the Portuguese setbacks in this area, but also to make it possible for Portugal to become part of the group of leading European countries in the accomplishment of the goals set by the Lisbon Strategy and e-Europe 2005 Action Plan”.

2004: The Future 2010 - Operational Programme for the Knowledge Society, known as the "Knowledge and Innovation" initiative, aimed at "fostering the development of a true knowledge society in Portugal".

The Strategy for the Information and Knowledge Society 2005-2006 was an update on the Information Society Strategy adopted in 2003. The objective of this new strategy was to improve the Information and Knowledge Society in Portugal in order "to contribute to the country's development, aiming at improving public services, reducing bureaucracy, increasing productivity and fostering innovation". UMIC was renamed Knowledge Society Agency and became a permanent Government agency.

2005 - The Portuguese Government elected in February launched a "Technological Plan", a "wide-ranging effort to promote the development of the Portuguese Information Society and improve the country's competitiveness and growth". Often named the "Technological Shock", the Plan is presented as "the central piece of the Government's economic policy". It aims at "mobilising enterprises, families and institutions for overcoming the modernization challenges the country has been facing during the last years". The Technological Plan, which is closely related to the Lisbon Strategy, is "an agenda for the mobilisation of the Portuguese society, indicating a development and competitiveness strategy based on three lines: (i) Knowledge – to qualify the Portuguese for the knowledge society; (ii) Technology – to overcome the scientific and technological gap; (iii) Innovation – to adapt the productive factories to the challenges of globalization". It contains 112 measures oriented to upgrade the Portuguese technological gap in the European context.

As part of this Technological Plan, Ligar Portugal ("Connect Portugal") is a new action programme for the Information and Knowledge Society, as "a response to the new challenges presented by the European Commission". It argues that it is essential "to stimulate the perception of the Portuguese citizens regarding the relevance of the ICT, making it easier for them to use computers and the Internet, namely by promoting, wherever necessary, mediators to combat info-exclusion". One of its strategic lines is "to assure safety and privacy in the use of the Internet, more specifically, to ensure that everyone, in particular families, has means of protection against the risks that may arise when using the Internet". There is no specific reference to children.

2007 - The Portuguese government guaranteed access to computers and broadband for more than half a million people, through reduced prices. The programme targets three main social groups – students (15+), teachers and workers in training.

### **Comment**

Despite this wealth of Government political initiatives since the 1990s, there is no information regarding an assessment the impact of the measures taken. Each new document seems to ignore the past ones. They could be considered too optimistic and affected by a certain technological determinism when one compares these initiatives with the real rate of ICT penetration in Portuguese society. The statistical information presented by INE/UMIC<sup>1</sup> in a 2007 report reveals that the percentage of Internet users in the total population (16 to 74 years) was 40%. The site stresses that "Internet penetration is one of the highest in the European Union among people with secondary (81%) and higher (90%) level education, which places Portugal, respectively, at 5<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> position among the 27 Member States." However, only 25% of the population falls under these levels of education.

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<sup>1</sup> The statistical information presented is based on the data collected in the annual Survey on ICT Usage in Households and by Individuals, carried out by the Portuguese National Statistical Institute (INE) in collaboration with the Knowledge Society Agency (UMIC). This survey operation falls within the development of Information Society statistics framework and follows Eurostat's methodological guidelines.

The main legal principles (freedom of speech, protection of minors, etc.) remain unchanged in Portugal. Legislation on new technologies have existed since 1985 regulating issues of safety, copyright, e-commerce, etc. concerning the protection of citizens (children, young people and adults) and do not differ from other EU countries as they are based on European policies.

Law 41/2004, of 18 August, transposed to the national legal order Directive 2002/58/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, of 12 July, concerning the processing of personal data and the protection of privacy in the electronic communications sector.

According to a cybercrime expert at the Investigation Police Department (“Polícia Judiciária”), “this law protects not only the citizen that obeys the law but also the one that doesn’t obey it”. This is due to the fact that “if a victim of a crime committed on the Internet asks for help, authorities won’t have the necessary tools to compel ISP’s to keep technical registers for a certain period of time, which allows them to determine the origin of communication and identify its authors”. Law 41/2004 obliges operators to delete these records, consequently, “criminals are better protected than victims”, he considers. “To obtain data about someone who publishes and updates images of child sexual abuse on the Internet, it will be necessary to go through a bureaucratic procedure, for example, to send a lawsuit to the Public Prosecutor Office, so it can promote the secrecy breach of telecommunications near the Judge of the Higher Court, once these data is understood as a component of an electronic communication.”

“Other problems result from the penal framework of the previous Penal Code. Some magistrates understood it as not having to overrule the request of technical records because the penal framework didn’t allow such data to be provided under the confidentiality of the communication act”, he comments.

The new Criminal Code and Criminal Code Process started to take effect on the 15th September 2007. Regarding child protection, new crimes were created, as minor pornography, the use of minor prostitution and genital mutilation is now expressly covered. Also, in case of crimes committed against persons under 16, if the legal tutor of this person does not want to present charges, the person can present charges from the moment he/she completes 16 years until the age of 18 years and 6 months. Regarding sexual crimes against minors, it is established that the crime does not prescribe before the minor completes 23 years of age.

In 1997, 5th to 12th grade schools in Portugal were connected through ISDN to the Science Technology and Society Network, which was enlarged from the previously existing university network to include all the education system, the private and public research institutions, all the public libraries in the country and solidarity institutions. In October 2001 Internet connections reached all post-elementary schools and 97 % of elementary schools.

2004-2005: The main goal of the “School, Broadband Connection” initiative was to make broadband connections available to all public schools by the end of 2005 (<https://escolas.internet.gov.pt/>). In February 2004, the Portuguese Government launched an international public tender for the supply of voice and broadband Internet services to a universe of approx. 9.000 schools, including all public basic and secondary schools (kindergartens and pre-school not included).

Another initiative is “Navigating schools”, whose aim was “the creation of a new concept of access and knowledge-sharing in schools to develop new learning processes in basic and secondary schools”.

This project was structured in terms of three milestones:

“1) New Infrastructures: creation of wireless telecommunication networks (WIFI) in schools supported by computer laptops and Tablets PCs;

- 2) New ways of building knowledge: Using ICT applications new ways of learning and teaching can be developed. This supports the sharing of experiences and knowledge in classrooms for both teachers and students, consequently raising competences in schools;
- 3) New Capacities and competences: Training teachers to use these infrastructures, ICT applications and Contents thus contributing to raise the quality of education in schools and in local communities (*children bring the parents to the internet world*)”.

In 2004/2005, more than 180.000 students attended the new compulsory subject of ICT in the 9th and 10th grades (ages 15-16).

In 2006, all public schools in Portugal had access to a broadband DSL connection to the Internet through the Science Technology and Society Network.

Launched in 2006, the Programme “Schools, Teachers and Laptop PCs” has allowed the equipping of more than 1,000 ICT classrooms each with 14 PCs. 26,000 laptop PCs have been distributed. In 2006/07, the ratio of pupils for each internet-equipped PC was 13:1, down from 16:1 a year earlier.

In addition, 32 specialist ICT courses have been established involving 16 higher education establishments in 11 locations.

One of the aims of Connect Portugal is to multiply the number of computers in schools, to reach an average of 5 students per computer by 2010. This Programme stresses that “the transformation of the school environment, creating virtual work environments for students and providing all the necessary study materials in electronic format, simplifying the monitoring of students by parents and teachers, and the active participation in national and international learning projects, is an opportunity that is important to promote, thus assuring the qualification of the Portuguese citizens along the best international practices, and encouraging the involvement of every family in the modernisation of Portugal”.

2007-2010: To guide the implementation and monitoring of policies of the Education Technology Plan, several objectives were set clear for the period 2007-2010:

- “To reach a ratio of two students per computer with Internet connection in 2010 (Kit Technological School project);
- To ensure in all schools the access to the Internet on high-speed broadband of at least 48 Mbps in 2010 (High Speed Broadband Internet project). For this, the Ministry of Education launched an international tender, which was published on TED supplement to the Official Journal of the European Union. This tender involves a budget of 14.5 million Euros for the acquisition of services and data communications, Internet services, leasing of terminal equipment, housing servers and interconnection between logic arrays of public basic schools;
- To ensure that, by 2010, teachers and students use ICT in at least 25% of classes (Internet in the Classroom project);
- To generalise the use of electronic media, providing e-mail addresses to 100% of students and teachers in 2010;
- To certificate 50% of students in ICTs by 2010.”

According to information provided by the Office for Education Statistics and Planning (GEPE), from the Ministry of Education, “the number of computers connected to the Internet in schools grew 22% between 2005/2006 and 2006/2007. In 2006/2007, the number of students per computer with Internet access in all basic and secondary schools was 11.7%.

### Comment

It is clear that in these documents, the dominant discourse is focused on technologies in a top-down process that places children as relatively passive recipients of knowledge passed on by their teachers and “natural promoters” of the info-inclusion of their parents, in a perfect world where conflicts and tensions between different uses and generations are ignored. The



classroom is the only social space associated to use, and these are oriented to “learning and teaching”. There is no reference to the needs of Media Education from the perspective of media production by children. Internet literacy in a broader social frame continues to be absent from the curricula in 2008.

Training in information and communications technology has been expanding, specifically for basic and secondary school teachers and for the general public. IT training for teachers and other school agents is foreseen in the Operational Programme for Education (PRODEP III), in place between 2000 and 2006. All teachers of basic and secondary education (150.000) were expected to be trained, whereas 7% had specialised training in order to assume new educational functions. Continuous training from 2000 until 2006 lasted 83 hours on average, whereas specialised training lasted an average of 250 hours. Teacher qualification courses were available to 30.000 teachers whose initial training hadn't comprised IT skills.

However, in the last 5 years only about 25% to 30% of teaching staff attended training courses in technology. In 2006, training benchmarks were set for different teacher profiles, “in an attempt to better suit the investment in training to the needs of teachers and to create the necessary basis for the creation of plans for continuing training. “

In 2007, IT training was considered a priority and was developed according to the CRIE<sup>2</sup> benchmarks. In this context, the programme of training and certification of ICT competences “Training Pro” was launched in the 1st Quarter of 2008, inserted in the Education Technology Plan.

There are two projects linked to the training of teachers:

- (1) ICT Skills – Aims to generalise the training and certification of ICT skills and to promote the use of ICT in education and management;
- (2) ICT Academy - To provide the Educative Community the opportunity to integrate training programmes and certification of industry.

Within the scope of the *Safer Internet* programme, from the European Commission, the Directorate-General of Innovation and Curricular Development/CRIE Programme, from the Ministry of Education, developed, in 2004, the Seguranet project, for the “promotion of a critical and safer use of the Internet near the students from basic and secondary schools”.

The training of trainers in Security on the Internet is being developed in the *b-Learning* form, and in the *Moodle* platform (<http://moodle.crie.min-edu.pt/>), in liaison with the Centres of Competence and with the ICT Centres of Regional Support (CTAR). It involves 360 trainees at the moment (May 2008).

According to the last data available for December 2007, Seguranet received 4.900 visitors and more than 25.000 pages were consulted online, which might be considered reduced in its impact. It involved 15% of the Portuguese schools in 2008, associated with the Project in a volunteer basis.

The *Safe Internet Project (Internet Segura)*, which has been launched in July 2007, is the result of an application to the Safer Internet plus Programme, a consortium made up of Portuguese entities: UMIC, the Directorate-General of Innovation and Curricular Development/CRIE Program, the Foundation for National Scientific Computing (FCCN) and Microsoft Portugal. It is the Portuguese Awareness Node.

Two contributions from this consortium are already available:

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<sup>2</sup> CRIE (Computers, Networks and Internet at School) (<http://www.crie.min-edu.pt/>) is a team from the Directorate-General of Innovation and Curricular Development (DGIDC), of the Ministry of Education. The CRIE's mission is the conception, development and evaluation of initiatives concerned with the computers, networks and Internet use at schools and in the learning process.

(1) The <http://www.internetsegura.pt> portal, “designed for extending information on how to use the Internet in a safe and sensible manner to the general public”. There is an “Internet Security Guide” available at the portal;

(2) The <http://linhaalerta.internetsegura.pt/>, an Alert Line where any person can expose Internet content that is likely to be considered illegal to the authorities. On 25th October 2007, Linha Alerta became member of the international association INHOPE.

Since its activation in the end of July 2007, Linha Alerta received 212,385 visitors (on average, 4,800 visits per month), and registered 1,226 denunciations, but only 300 of them were sent to the national authorities or to the international partners of INHOPE.

From these 300 occurrences (256 of child pornography, 33 related to racist and xenophobic content, and 11 related to violence), 37 were located in Portugal.

Furthermore, 20 Portuguese schools were involved in the European Safer Internet Day 2008, a relatively small number of schools suggesting that they are not yet involved enough in this initiative and its meaning.

### **Comment**

The Portuguese Government has not regarded itself as being responsible for Internet safety (compared with industry, school, and parents). Until now no organised consideration has been given to this matter. In general, the issue of Internet safety among children has not been highlighted. The focus at Governmental level has been on the promotion of the pedagogical advantages of new technologies and “to sell” the idea of its contribution to learning.

An emphasis is put on the social and economic appropriation of ICT as a critical element on the government's Technological Plan for the development of Portuguese society and as a strategy meant to promote development and competitiveness in Portugal. Therefore, less positive messages on risks tend to be avoided. For instance, the international TV spot prepared for the Safer Internet Day was considered “too violent” by the Portuguese Awareness Node and was not exhibited on the public Portuguese channels (just one private channel presented it, translated from Spanish).

Two programmes for youth training in IT have been developed by the Ministry of Youth and Sport:

(1) The Millennium Generation Programme aimed “to ensure access to ICT to 200,000 young Portuguese, between 2001 and 2003, by their training and certification in these matters, especially for the development of multimedia and Internet content. Currently, the programme in place is the Millennium Generation 3.0, which is the result of an initiative of the Secretary of State for Youth and Sport, to train a minimum of 25,000 young people;

(2) The Inforjovem Programme offers basic training activities in IT, as well as training of monitors. There is a network of close to 200 Inforjovem Centres all over the country, which covers 60% of all municipalities. By December 2000, the programme had involved more than 300.000 young people. Its coordination belongs to the Foundation for the Dissemination of Information Technology (FDTI).

The most recent initiative in Portugal is the DADUS project, which was launched in January 2008. This project is the practical expression of a protocol signed by CNPD – Portuguese Data Protection Authority and the Ministry of Education, and its aim is “to sensitize the school population to the data protection and privacy questions, to promote a responsible use of technologies, and to develop the civic consciousness of young people”. “This project is directed to pupils from 5<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> grade, and will be implemented in public schools of the continent”, in a volunteer basis.

CNPD intends to extend this project to the Azores and Madeira regions, as well as to the private and co-operative education. The DADUS project has two main components: the curricular one, through the availability of thematic contents (for example, Internet social networking, the use of e-mail, the universe of mobile phones, and the treatment of personal

data); and the extra-curricular, “through the creation of a blog for direct interaction with pupils” (sic).

### **Particular debates and concerns about children**

The debate around the commercialisation of childhood has come mostly from Marketing Studies focused on the potential of children as consumers and it may be seen in the business oriented press or in the Economy pages of newspapers. Recently, the international Project Media Smart started to be implemented in some Portuguese classrooms (7-11 years old), based on the volunteer decision of teachers. Materials have been adapted to the Portuguese society and the Project announces that it will be evaluated by external consultants. The Law Faculty at the University of Coimbra has for some years had a post-graduate course focused on Children's Rights, based on the juridical perspective. A focus on children's participatory rights is much more recent, and it is now emerging in some Universities, namely at University of Minho and Universidade Católica (Oporto). At the Governmental level, there is an intervention of the National Commission for Child Protection. Some NGOs (APSI, DECO) have presented analysis on the safety of urban spaces and equipments, trying to promote new public policies. One of the most visible ones focused on children's safety in public transport, which received considerable media attention in 2005. There is some academic research on the ways children experience the spaces in which they live.

### **Case Studies**

In 2006, the Communication Regulatory Authority (ERC) invited university research centres to study Portuguese mainstream media audiences. Only two research centres linked to Universities rose to this challenge. An application for this study (presented by ISCTE) was mainly based on a representative national survey that would cover the +15 years old. Cristina Ponte was invited to present a proposal focused on children, and extended questions to new media, risks and parental mediation. Final results were presented in October 2008, in a public event. Decisions on methodology were led by the research team. The representative national survey included young people (15-17 yrs old) among the interviews and it was mainly focused on access, uses, and attitudes involving the media (print media, radio, TV, Internet). It included questions about parental mediation about TV and Internet, to be answered by respondents who were parents with children below 15 years old (0-5; 6-10; 10-14). In this way, from the national survey, it is possible to characterise young people's media access and use, comparing with older people, as well as to have information about parental regulation of youngsters. Specific questionnaires oriented to children (9-14) and their parents were applied in the Metropolitan area of Lisbon, the region with higher level of Internet penetration. The proposal was based on the model used by Sonia Livingstone in *Young People, New Media* (YPNM) considering the household as the unit of analysis. Information from children and their parents was collected separately but analysed together. Two special self-completions questionnaires were designed, for children and parents. The questions included new media and uses now available to the children.

In 11 public schools that agreed to participate in this study, children were informed about the aims of the research and the conditions (privacy and anonymity of the data) and gave their consent, as well as their parents. Outside the classrooms, with the researchers nearby, they answered the self-completion questionnaires (15-20 minutes). Each child had a code number and received an envelope with the questionnaire for their parents, with the same code. Children had to bring back the questionnaire answered by their parents. 810 questionnaires were collected from children. The choice of the ages of children (9-14 year old) was based on previous experience of research with children, which showed that 9 year-olds could answer self-completion questionnaires, with support from the researcher if needed. Since both are self-completion questionnaires, they were not too long: the number of questions is 37 in the children's and 40 in the parents'. The questions were oriented by the aim of the whole study (Access and use of media by children) with particular attention to the media environment, parental regulation, risk perception and media literacy. The choice of questions aimed to include data from children's activities and media environments; relationship with TV, computers and Internet. Parental questionnaires present parallel questions and included also personal computer skills, regulation and considerations about

media use by children. The SES, age and gender of the child and parent were included in both questionnaires. Choices were made to assure some degree of comparability with the results found in other studies, namely *Young People, New Media*. The survey of the latter was conducted in a relatively similar moment on what concerns new media and Internet penetration at national level. This project was funded by the ERC