



Candidate Form Educating Cities' Award

Please fill in the particulars of the experience that you wish to propose.

Title of the experience in the original language

Programa Municipal de Potenciação do Sucesso Escolar (PMPSE)

Title in English

Municipal Programme to Enhance School Success (MPESS)

Educating City

Pombal

Country

Portugal

Ages (age group or groups to which the experience is addressed)

(0-3) ☐
(19-25) ☐
All ☐

(4-6) ☒
(26-40) ☐

(7-12) ☒
(41-65) ☐

(13-18) ☐
(+65) ☐

Starting year

2014/2015

Year of completion

2018

Motivation and summary: (reasons that led to set up the experience, brief explanation of the main ideas and educational focus of the experience).

Maximum length: 3,000 characters, including spaces

In 1970, one in four Portuguese over the age of ten could not read or write. With the last census in 2011, it was ascertained that one in twenty people were illiterate, elderly for the most part. Nevertheless, considering the evolution of education in Europe, Portugal is still below average in many indicators: in 2014 only 43% of its population between 25 and 64 years old had completed high school education, very different from the 87% in Germany and 57% in Spain. Focusing on the younger generation, the indicators are more encouraging. The outcome of international tests, such as PISA, in which fifteen year-old Portuguese students were evaluated have been improving and the OECD's average in Maths has been achieved. Notwithstanding, the reading and science areas remain substandard and Portugal maintains one of the highest



retention rates. Generally, in the first grade, an educational deficit of at-risk students may be noted. Therefore, it is essential to anticipate and streamline procedures through adequate intervention/compensation measures so as to have a better understanding of Portuguese students' achievements.

The diversification of social problems, as well as their complexity, are challenging the local authorities and forcing them to improve their methods and approaches.

Due to the integration in the educational network, the local authorities are closer to the school organization, accomplishing an important role of external and internal evaluation and contributing with significant financial investments to enable more means and pedagogical resources.

As a result, it is acknowledged that the most relevant action to be undertaken by different partners is to develop a local educational project. A well-prepared generation should have at their disposal all the tools to learn, grow and navigate.

From the year of 2013, the commitment has been to implement innovative and articulated projects, diagnose and repair action strategies, taking particular attention to the phenomena of exclusion and promote social cohesion.

The cooperation and coordination between various local entities and the municipal services in the areas of planning and management, education, social services, sports, youth, culture and environment set higher goals to this municipality. It has already gone beyond the schools network's reorganization and upgrading. From now on, the focus relies on improving school success, inducing well-being and anticipating means to support the families and the educational community.

These are the foundations of a social and educational policy which have recently been complemented with the following measures:

- Assignment of free school transport to the compulsory education students'.
- Increase of the school social services financial support, which already endures 1.8 times the amount legally defined per student;
- Supporting the families in the purchase of textbooks and other school supplies;



- Distinguish school merit at all educational levels.

Objectives (drafted specifically)

Maximum length: 1,000 characters, including spaces

The beacon system of students at-risk of failure or dropout is organized in four analysis axes—Student/Family/School/Territory, and has the following short to long-term goals:

- Raise primary school students' competences, ensuring the compliance with the compulsory education of 12 years;
- Promote equal opportunities, enhance school success in order to have a smarter and sustainable growth by:
 - Strengthening the local authority's social role in promoting measures to fight against indiscipline and absenteeism;
 - Supporting students with special educational needs, promoting their inclusion by providing the necessary technical support;
 - Reinforcing the school's social services in sustenance, school transportation, family support, extracurricular activities promotion and health provision;
- Reinforce institutional partnerships in the community and with school groups;
- Assure children's personal fulfilment through their personalities' development, character formation and citizenship education.

Methodology (description of the specific phases and actions, current status of the experience and entities involved in its development)

Maximum length: 3,000 characters, including spaces

The municipal programme to enhance school success has been promoting an integrated intersectional intervention. In the school year of 2014/2015, seven hundred and twelve first and third graders were screened for eyesight and hearing, psychomotor and cognitive skills and attention and memory tests. These were conducted in thirty-two schools by municipality's mediators with the support of fifty teachers, who had received specific training given by Coimbra and Aveiro Universities' professors, fully supported by the municipality.

The training model for school success is based on the following principles:



- The mediation methodology focuses on students who constitute "risk cases" to educational achievement, for whom is defined an individual intervention plan;
- The intervention model is complementary to both school and classroom, being strongly articulated with families, teachers, school coordinators, and Psychology and Orientation Services psychologists', health professionals from Pombal's Community Care Unit and the Child and Youth Protection Commission.
- The mediation is provided by a multidisciplinary team of technicians hired by the municipality, with training in different areas - basic education, psychology, psychomotor, nutrition, social education, sociology and education sciences;
- The training is focused on the promotion of non-cognitive skills, which are believed to be a prerequisite for success in school;
- The intervention is carried out based on a high and frequent contact, stability in affective relationship between technician / agent / student / family and a continued intervention that allows measuring concrete data by monitoring quantitative results in all periods and at the end of each school year.

Until the school year 2017/2018, the municipality technicians will be accompanying the school progress of the referenced children, providing means and resources so the students have equal opportunities to achieve school success, regardless their socioeconomic and family situation, based on a tutoring model.

In the year of 2014/2015, almost all of the first and third grade students were screened:

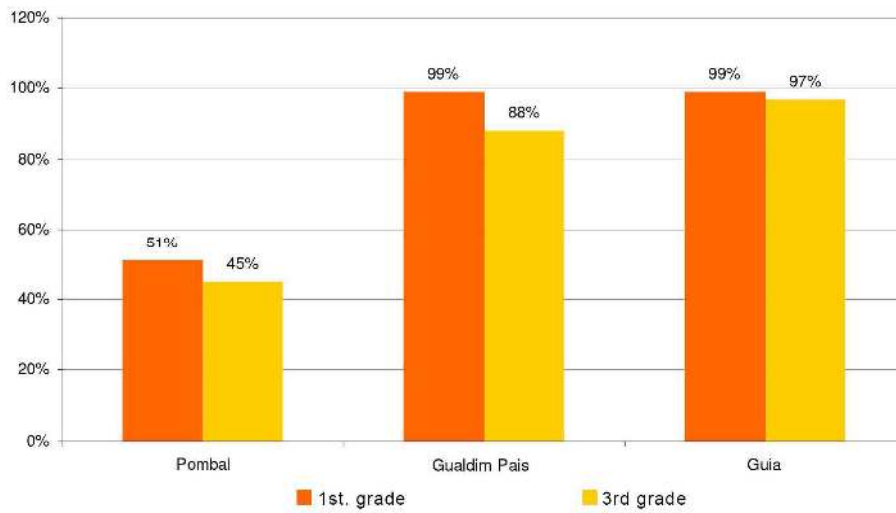


Figure 1 Adherence to the beacon process by School Grouping and grade - 2014/2015

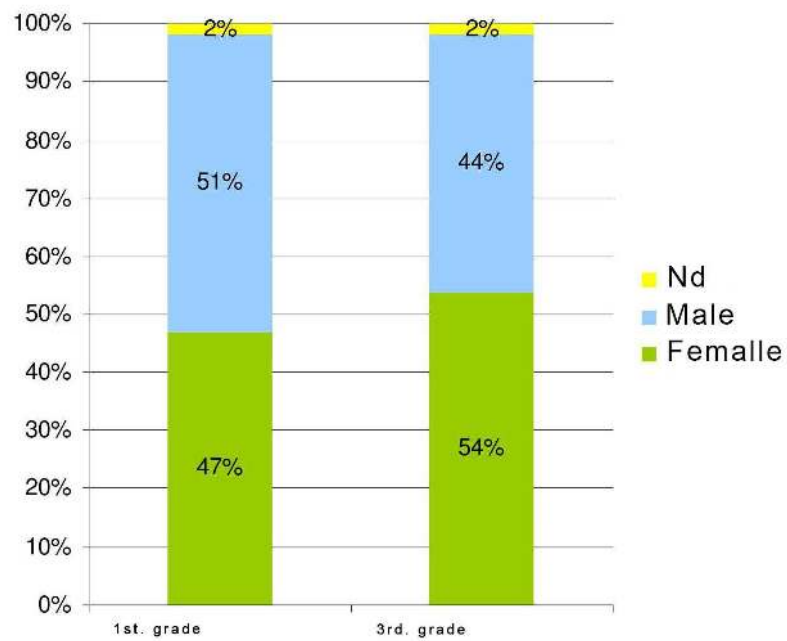


Figure 2 Screened students' distribution by gender - 2014/2015

During the referencing process, several warnings were issued in the health domain, mainly in eyesight and hearing.

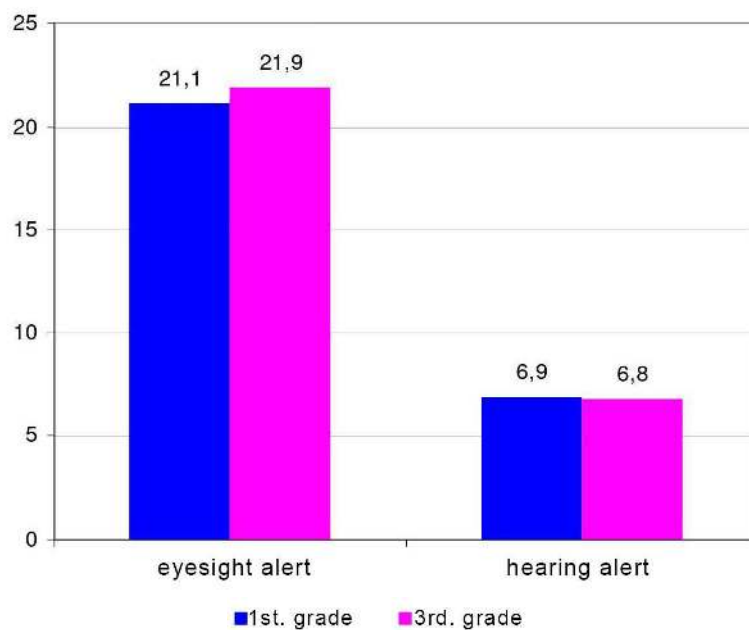


Figure 3 Signalling/Screening alerts in the health domain - 2014/2015

Some of the teachers' reported vulnerabilities were also cleared and crossed with surveys that were put through separately to children and their families, especially in hyperactive behaviour, attention deficit, impulsive behaviours and slow working with need of support.

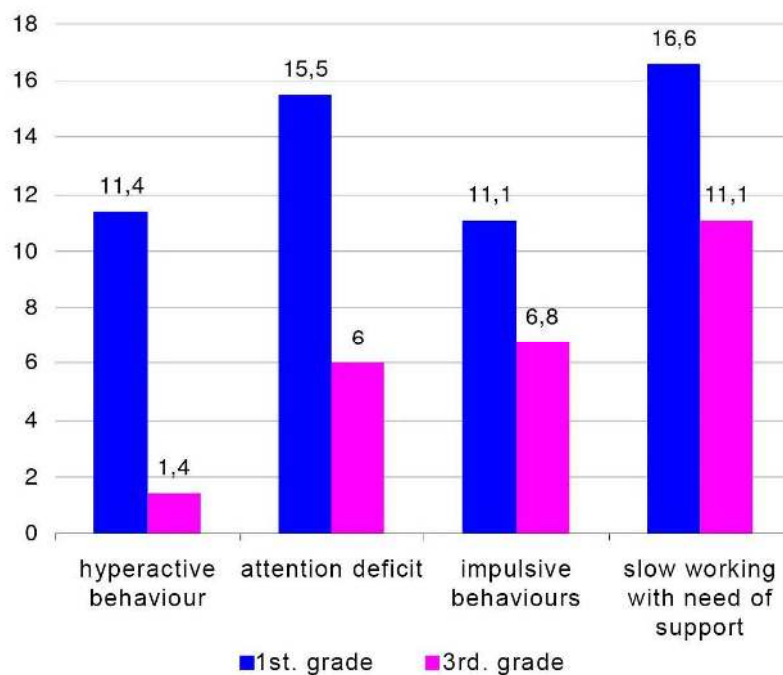


Figure 4 Additional data identified in signalling - Perception of vulnerabilities

Context (brief description of the city: number of inhabitants; population by age groups; main economic sectors, etc. Description of the area(s) in which it is applied and the population to which it is addressed).

Maximum length: 2,000 characters, including spaces

The municipality of Pombal is located in the country's coast with an area of 626Km².

Pombal is crossed by Portugal's main roads and lies approximately 150km from the cities of Lisbon and Oporto.

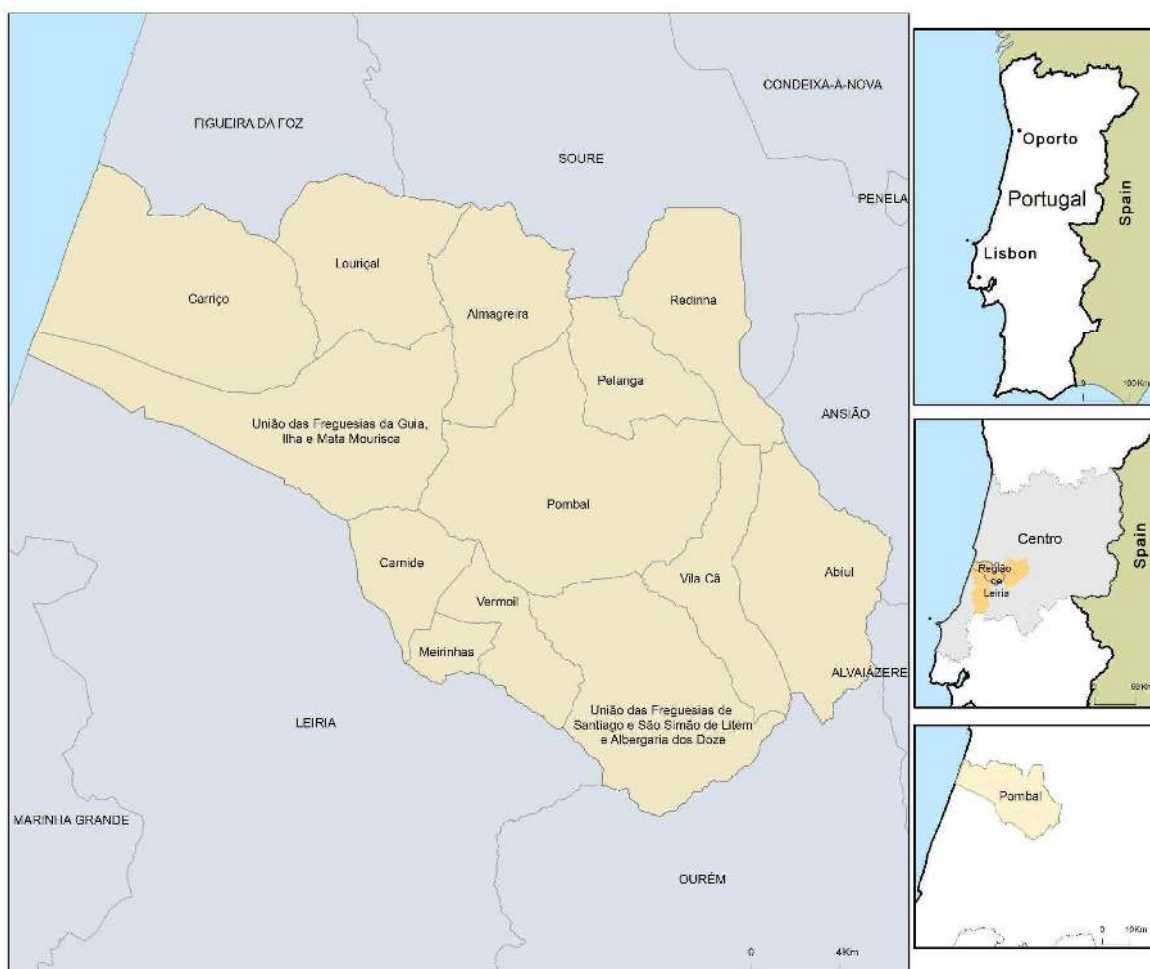


Figure 5 Pombal's location

This privileged location has enabled it to benefit from an area of high growth and national development.

Important industrial concentrations are based in the municipality, related to food processing, metallurgical, exploitation of minerals and more recently recycling and waste recovery.

According to the 2011 census, the population of the municipality of Pombal was of 55,217 inhabitants, which corresponds to a population density of 88.2 inhabitants / km².

Regarding the population's distribution by age groups, the age pyramid of the county shows the population's proportions, in particular among young and old - inactive population - and adults - working population.

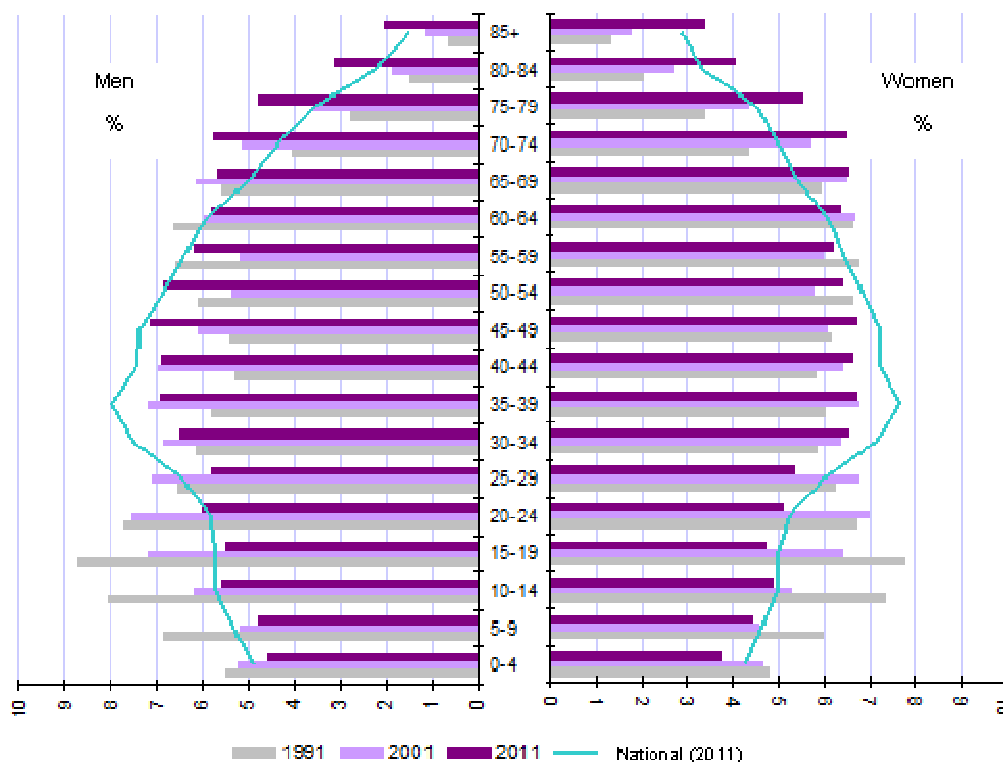


Figure 6 Age pyramid of Pombal when compared to the national average in 1991, 2001 and 2011

Considering the population in school age, a decreasing number of individuals in the age groups under twenty years can be discerned, against the substantial increase of adults and elderly population.

This negative growth rate reaches its peak in the age group 15-19 years, with a decrease of a thousand individuals over the last decade. At the same time, the decrease of both the fertility and birth rates, over 17%, has an impact on reducing the population of pre-school age.

Moreover, this county's inhabitants had a relatively low level of education when compared to the national averages back in 2011.

Thus, 50% of the district's council were people with education below the sixth grade.

	Illiterate	1st. Cycle (Primary School) [6 to 10 years]	2nd. Cycle (Primary School) [10 to 12 years]	3rd. Cycle (Secondary School) [12 to 15 years]	Secondary School [15 to 18 years]	Post- secondary non-tertiary education	Tertiary education
Portugal	18,81	25,40	13,23	16,31	13,49	0,83	11,93
Region	20,36	25,38	12,98	16,82	13,38	0,97	10,11
Pombal	25,42	28,00	12,10	15,11	11,69	0,83	6,85

Table 1 Inhabitants' education in the country, region and Pombal in 2011

Source: Census 2011, INE

When taking a look over the inhabitants with the ninth grade or higher, the county is below the region's and the country's result, with only 7% of the population having graduated.

Assessment (changes in relation to the initial situation, strengths, weaknesses and future proposals).

Maximum length: 3,000 characters, including spaces

Taking into account the work developed in all the parishes of the county, it is possible to assess results, make some critical thinking and anticipate new measures to the MPES.

Firstly, the strengths:

- Scientific and academic support to the project from the Universities of Coimbra and Aveiro;
- Applied methodology;
- Coverage rate of establishments in primary school is 100%;
- Existence of an organized service of family support to pre-school and primary education;
- Increased supply of curricular enrichment activities;
- Extension of the working period of an increasing number of pre-school and primary education establishments, in order to suit the families needs;



- Presence of an educational equipment covering various levels of education;
- Reasonable/good general condition of education's equipments;
- Opening of the "School" to the community;
- Dropout tendly reducing.

Some weaknesses may be considered:

- Increased emigration, causing a decrease in the school-age population;
- Existing classes made up with more than one grade;
- Staying for too many hours at school;
- Lacking of specialized professionals in supporting students with Special Educational Needs (e.g. psychology, speech therapy);
- Inadequate response by some schools to the new socioeconomic families' context;
- Lack of parenting skills;
- Decreased financial capacity of families;
- Significant rates of persistent dropout in high school education.

Opportunities

- Decentralization of new competences in the field of education to local authorities;
- Implementation of a set of inter-municipal programs to prevent failure and dropout and to avoid the social exclusion phenomenon- CENTRO 2020 / CIMRL;
- Municipality's development of integrated and intergenerational projects to improve school success with the community's support, including schools, associations, healthcare services, private social solidarity institutions, Senior University, School Library Network, and others;
- Programs' early implementation to promote school health, such as *Like Saúde* – addiction prevention, *Mininutris* – food education, *Sobe* – oral health;
- Dynamic educational community;
- Articulated social network;

- Project's development aiming for ethnic minorities in Pombal's primary school where there is a significant gypsy community;
- Adjustment of social responses to the county's geographical features, demographic trends and the current social and educational policies, through the support and reinforcement of school social services.

Website of the experience

<http://educa.cm-pombal.pt>; www.cm-pombal.pt

Attached Additional documentation (may be required by interested persons)

Video ☐ Dossier ☐ Publications ☐ Photographs ☒

Others _____

CONTACT INFORMATION

(Only ONE person. The contact person must be able to provide the information required)

Mr ☒ Ms ☐

Name and surname(s):

Luís Diogo de Paiva Morão Alves Mateus (mayor)

Organization or Institution

- Name in original language:

Câmara Municipal de Pombal

- English translation:

Pombal Town Hall

Department or Section

- Name in original language:

Divisão de Educação e Ação Social

- English translation:

Education and Social Services Division

Post or Office

- Name in original language

Presidente de Câmara



- English translation

Mayor

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