



BUILDRES Project

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EU COUNTRIES DESK RESEARCH

Partner organisation: Hexagonale

Research on: Portugal

Country overview, healthcare services and financial & social benefits

Portugal's demographic and family context reflects one of the lowest fertility rates in the European Union, with a population of approximately 10.3 million and a total fertility rate fluctuating around 1.4 children per woman in recent years, remaining below replacement level. The average age at first childbirth is around 31–32 years, reflecting delayed parenthood associated with extended education, labour market insecurity and housing constraints. Population ageing is pronounced, with a growing proportion of people aged 65+, creating long-term pressures on pension systems and intergenerational support structures. Although Portugal has implemented family-friendly reforms, economic uncertainty and work–life balance challenges continue to influence reproductive decisions and the timing of pregnancy.

Pregnancy and maternal healthcare services are delivered through Portugal's universal public healthcare system, the Serviço Nacional de Saúde (SNS). All residents are entitled to prenatal, childbirth and postnatal care largely free of charge at the point of service. Prenatal care includes routine medical consultations, laboratory tests and ultrasound examinations, coordinated through primary healthcare centres and public hospitals. Childbirth in public maternity hospitals is covered by the SNS, and postnatal follow-up includes maternal health checks and structured paediatric monitoring for newborns. Portugal has achieved strong maternal and infant health indicators, supported by high vaccination coverage and early childhood health surveillance programmes. Access to medically assisted reproduction is also regulated and available through public and private sectors under defined eligibility criteria.

Parental leave and employment protections in Portugal are governed by labour law and administered through the social security system (Segurança Social). Parents are entitled to an initial parental leave of 120 or 150 days, compensated at 100% (for 120 days) or 80% (for 150 days) of reference earnings, with bonus days granted if both parents share leave. Fathers are entitled to a mandatory paternity leave period, taken shortly after birth, in addition to optional days. Mothers are required to take a minimum compulsory leave immediately following childbirth to protect maternal recovery. Parents may also access extended parental leave (at lower compensation levels), breastfeeding leave, and flexible working arrangements to reconcile childcare and employment. These provisions aim to encourage shared caregiving responsibilities while safeguarding job security.

Financial and social benefits for families are administered by Segurança Social and include a range of income-tested and universal supports. The Family Allowance for Children and Young People (Abono de Família) provides monthly payments based on household income and the child's age. Additional supplements exist for single-parent households and families with disabled children. A Prenatal



Family Allowance is available from the 13th week of pregnancy for eligible families, offering early financial assistance before childbirth. Low-income households may qualify for social insertion income (Rendimento Social de Inserção) and housing support, while childcare subsidies and tax deductions further reduce the economic burden of raising children.

Overall, Portugal's framework combines universal maternal healthcare, income-related parental leave, and means-tested child benefits to support pregnancy and early parenthood. While public health coverage ensures broad access to maternity services, demographic ageing and persistent economic challenges continue to shape fertility trends and influence family planning decisions.

Name of the organisation	APAMCM
Short Description (Around 300 characters)	Supports women facing health challenges during pregnancy and motherhood, particularly those dealing with breast cancer. Provides counselling, peer support and guidance on maternal health rights.
Country	Portugal
Mail	info@apamcm.org
Phone	21 758 5648
Website	https://apamcm.org/
Address	Av. Almirante Reis, 75, Cave -2 Dta 1150-012 Lisboa
Name of the organisation	Ajuda de Mãe
Short Description (Around 300 characters)	A national organisation dedicated to supporting pregnant women and young mothers in vulnerable situations. Offers counselling, baby supplies, parenting education, psychosocial support and housing assistance.
Country	Portugal
Mail	ajudademae@ajudademae.pt
Phone	213 827 850
Website	https://ajudademae.pt/
Address	Rua do Arco do Carvalhão, nº 282/1350 – 026 Lisboa
Name of the organisation	APAV – Associação Portuguesa de Apoio à Vítima
Short Description (Around 300 characters)	Provides confidential support for victims of domestic violence, including pregnant women and mothers. Offers psychological counselling, legal advice and emergency assistance.
Country	Portugal
Mail	apav.sede@apav.pt
Phone	21 358 79 00
Website	https://apav.pt/
Address	Rua José Estêvão, 135 A, Pisos 1/2 1150 – 201 LISBOA
Name of the organisation	Associação Portuguesa pelos Direitos da Mulher na Gravidez e Parto (APDMGP)
Short Description (Around 300 characters)	Advocates for respectful maternity care and informed birth choices. Promotes women’s rights during pregnancy and childbirth and provides information on maternal healthcare options.
Country	Portugal
Mail	geral@associacaogravidezparto.pt
Phone	351 932523953
Website	https://associacaogravidezparto.pt/
Address	
Name of the organisation	Apoio à Vida



Short Description (Around 300 characters)	A nationwide network offering counselling and social support to pregnant women and families experiencing financial or emotional difficulties.
Country	Portugal
Mail	escoladetalentos@apoioavida.pt
Phone	912 30 10 10
Website	https://www.apoioavida.pt/
Address	Estrada da Ameixoeira 129 1750-014 Lisboa