



## Brazil

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### Principles and general objectives of education

The Constitution enacted in October 1988 is based on the principles of civil rights and dignity of the individual. Article 3, Title I, sets as major goals for the Republic the construction of a free, just and mutually co-operative society, the guarantee of national development, the elimination of poverty and social exclusion, and the reduction of social and regional imbalances.

Education is regarded in the Constitution as “a right that belongs to everybody; the duty of the State and of families, promoted and stimulated with the co-operation of society, with a view to the full development of the individual for the exercise of citizenship and preparation for work”.

According to the National Education Guidelines and Framework Law (*Lei de Diretrizes e Bases da Educação—LDB*) of 1996 “national education, inspired by the principles of freedom and by the ideals of human solidarity, has the purpose of:

- understanding individual rights and responsibilities, as well as those of citizens, the State and other community groups;
- respecting the dignity and fundamental freedoms of human beings; strengthening national unity and international solidarity;
- preparing individuals and the society to master scientific and technological resources which will allow the use of the existing possibilities for common welfare;
- protecting, disseminating and expanding the cultural heritage;
- condemning any unequal treatment resulting from philosophical, political or religious beliefs, social, class or racial prejudices.”

### Current educational priorities and concerns

The profile of Brazilian education has undergone major changes during the past two decades. Illiteracy has dropped substantially, enrolment have risen considerably at all educational levels and the population’s average number of years of schooling has increased steadily. However, the overall picture of education in the country is still quite unsatisfactory with regard to qualitative and some quantitative indicators.

Beyond what it reflects in terms of regional inequalities and racial or sexual differences, the picture of uneven school attendance reveals extremely high levels of poverty. Regardless of the increase in the rate of years of schooling over the past



decades, census data reflect a close relationship between income indicators and the country's educational situation.

This situation can be seen to be even more serious when viewed from the perspective of an analysis of population figures by level of schooling. Though it is true that considerable progress has been made in terms of the first phase of primary school (Grades I-IV), it is also true that indicators for other educational levels are still disappointing. In 1990, only 19% of the country's population had completed primary school, 13% secondary school, and 8% higher studies.

However, educational development in recent years has a positive side. A comparison between schooling levels and overall initial enrolment over the past twenty years suggests that the structure of the education system has changed entirely. Basic education, which in 1970 accounted for nearly 90% of total enrolment, has become less predominant and a steady expansion has occurred at other educational levels. Thus, in 1994 basic education represented 72% of total enrolment; pre-school education, 13%; high school, 10%; and higher education, nearly 4%.

In line with the commitment made in Jomtien during the 1990 Conference on Education for All, the Ministry of Education drafted, within its sphere of action, the Education for All Ten-year Plan. This Plan was prepared to serve as an instrument to promote equality and to correct educational disparities among different regions and social classes. The Plan considers teachers as the main agents for a policy focused on education quality. Three lines of action are to be simultaneously taken in order to boost the teaching profession. These concern career formation, working conditions and qualification. Pre-school education plays a predominant part in the Ten-year Plan, as a basic strategy for the protection of the constitutional rights of children up to the age of 6.

Educational policy focuses on: elaboration of pedagogic and curricular proposals; pre- and in-service training for education professionals; educational opportunities for poor children; and reduction in the percentage of illiterates and undereducated youths and adults, by offering education to these groups at certain times and places (which may include their working environments) and by means of new educational technology, particularly distance education.

The National Education Guidelines and Framework Law (LDB) No. 9.394, approved on 20 December 1996, contains new features and a large number of measures that are changing the Brazilian educational panorama. The most innovative features are:

- Decentralization and autonomy for schools, which will be responsible for drafting and implementing their pedagogic proposals and managing their personnel and material and financial resources.
- Decentralization and autonomy for universities. Higher education institutions are allowed to: shorten course duration for students who have attained extraordinary achievement; enrol non-regular students in courses that are not full, after a selection process; provide certificates to students who have



completed at least six interrelated course subjects; and offer serial or by-credit courses on a full-time or part-time basis or in the form of distance education.

- Decentralization and autonomy of school systems. The Law states that the Union, the states and the municipalities must organize their respective school systems in a collaborative way, and determines their respective administrative responsibilities.
- Enhancement of the teaching profession. The Law establishes higher standards of training for the exercise of the teaching profession than those currently accepted. It also requires the association of theory with practice, including the possibility of on-the-job training. It incorporates the participation of teachers in the drafting and implementation of schools teaching programmes and establishes the enhancement of education professionals via: continuing vocational training; minimum professional salary-floor levels; time reserved for studies, planning and evaluation as payable work hours, etc.

The law has created mechanisms that are indispensable for improving the quality of teaching: it requires the curricula in primary and secondary education to have a common national basis; it increases the length and number of teaching days; it includes the evaluation of courses and institutions, which increases its scope beyond the evaluation of pupil performance and states that national procedures for assessment at primary, secondary and higher levels shall be guaranteed. The LDB also provides for instruments and mechanisms that give value to the learning process such as: continuous and partial progression; the concepts of classification and re-classification that allow learners to progress in their studies according to their level of achievement and evidence of learning; providing remedial classes in parallel to the school year for pupils who have unsatisfactory achievement results, and the chance to accelerate study for pupils who are behind in school. These mechanisms have expanded the possibilities for success at school and run counter to the 'culture of repetition' that is still predominant in Brazil.

The LDB organizes school education at two levels: basic education (comprising early childhood, primary and secondary education) and higher education. It allows vocational education to be integrated with these levels although it permits this area, in the form of skill training, to be introduced into secondary schools or in partnership with specialised technical colleges. Other types of education such as special education and indigenous education were also given their own identities within the new form of organisation.

The National Fund for Primary Education Development and for Enhancing the Value of the Teaching Profession (FUNDEF) was created by Constitutional Amendment No. 14 of 1996 and implemented on 1 January 1998. Given its importance, this reform deserves a prominent place as a paradigm of the new focus of public education policies, as it affects the following three variables:

- It links the decentralization of primary education and the sharing of responsibilities between states and municipalities to the redistribution of funds according to the number of students served by the respective educational networks;



- It guarantees a minimum amount per student as a mechanism to reduce regional and intra-state inequalities, thereby promoting a fairer distribution of public funds earmarked for the development of primary education;
- It allocates at least 60% of the funds to teachers' salaries, encourages the adoption of career plans, and stimulates investment in teacher training.

In 1998, its first year in operation, FUNDEF redistributed an impressive volume of financial resources—13.3 billion *reais* (R\$). The states, which account for 59.3% of enrolments in public primary education, were allocated R\$8.2 billion (or 61.6%), while the municipalities, which served 40.7% of the students, received R\$5.1 billion (38.4%). According to estimates for 1999, the share of municipalities should increase to 43%, as a reflection of the accelerated process of municipalization of primary education. It should therefore be noted that FUNDEF has ensured a well balanced distribution of funds among states and municipalities, thereby correcting the existing distortions. In 1999, FUNDEF funds amounted to about R\$15.2 billion. In 2003, the FUNDEF resources reached a total of R\$25.2 billion, which represented an increase of 10% in relation to the previous year.

FUNDEF consolidated responsibilities and jurisdictions among the three levels of government and, above all, defined appropriate criteria for sharing funds earmarked for the education system between states and municipalities, according to the number of students actually enrolled in the system.

The establishment of FUNDEF contributed to eliminate many of the problems related to the sharing and allocation of educational funds. The resources that are regularly redistributed through the Fund—according to a schedule publicly announced—are deposited in a specific account, thus enhancing the planning capacity of states and municipalities and facilitating the inspection of how they are being used by public authorities. In addition, the constitutional amendment that created FUNDEF also requires that Councils made up of representatives of the society be set up at different governmental levels, for the purpose of inspecting how its funds are being used.

Special mention must be made of the positive effect of the Fund in terms of increasing the enrolment rate in elementary schools. The criterion adopted for redistributing the funds—based on the number of pupils enrolled in the municipal and state-managed school networks—encouraged schools to ensure the enrolment of all school age children. As a result, there was an increase of 6% in the total enrolment in public elementary schools between 1997 and 1998. In absolute figures, the number of pupils grew from 30.5 million in 1997 to 32.4 million in 1998. The highest increases in the enrolment rate in 1998 were registered in the north-east region (12.1%) and in the north region (7.7%), where enrolment rates were the lowest in the country. These are clear signs of a gradual reduction of regional disparities.

The rapid municipalization of the primary school system is another phenomenon brought about by FUNDEF. Between 1997 and 1998, enrolments in the municipal school networks grew by 21.5%, from 12.4 to 15.1 million pupils. In the same period, enrolments in state-managed schools dropped by 4.6%, from 18.1 to 17.3 million pupils. The highest increases in enrolment rates in municipal schools



were registered in the north (40.2%) and the north-east region (22.1%) (National Institute for Educational Studies and Research, 1999).

The Ministry is also striving to create the conditions that will ensure changes in the institutional structure; in the syllabus; in forms of management; in learning-teaching processes; and in mechanisms of communication with the community in order to integrate it into the school life and to ensure its participation in the debates concerning education.

The National Curricular Parameters (NCPs) for primary education have been established. A core curriculum was defined for Grades I-IV including Portuguese language, mathematics, science, history and geography. The NCPs innovate by proposing the systematic study of certain subjects, such as ethics, sexual orientation, environment, health, economic studies and ethnic plurality, all grouped under the heading Harmonious Social and Ethical Relations. These topics are being integrated into the core subjects by using the concept of transversality, i.e. seeking to permeate the core subjects with the new issues.

Finally, it is felt that society as a whole must have an active role if the quality of public education is to be rescued, particularly in the case of primary education. The Ministry's objective is to encourage community's involvement by stimulating its direct supervision of the institution's performance.

A programme called *Wake up, Brazil! It's Time for School!* was implemented to mobilize the public by creating partnerships to support government or private efforts to: equip the schools, refurbish their facilities, and collaborate with school management. The partnerships established under this programme have raised about R\$15 million in the form of donations of materials, equipment and funding for programme activities. Worth mentioning are: video equipment, five computer laboratories, 200 personal computers, and 40,000 copies of encyclopedias (for an equivalent of R\$1 million).

The National Education Plan approved in 2001 is the main reference point for Education for All in the first decade of the twenty-first century. Resulting from the joint effort of the Ministry of Education and state and municipal education secretariats, and from discussions with organizations in the civil society, the plan sets down concrete aims to be achieved in the next ten. The states, the Federal District and the municipalities must develop corresponding ten-year plans, supported by the respective long-term financial planning programmes. Overall, the Plan has as the following objectives:

- an overall rise in the population's level of education;
- improving quality of education at all levels;
- reducing social and regional inequalities with respect to access to and staying in basic education; and
- democratizing the management of public education.



The new Plan also establishes a clear order in educational priorities:

- a guarantee of eight years of compulsory primary education for all children aged 7-14, ensuring their admission to and remaining in this level of education until the end of it;
- a guarantee of primary education to all those who did not have access to it at the appropriate age or who did not complete it;
- broadening the scope of the other levels of education, early childhood education, secondary education and higher education;
- acknowledging the value of teachers;
- development of information and evaluation systems at all levels and types of education, as vital instruments for the management of the education system and for the improvement of teaching.

To raise the quality of education and increase pupils' school performance, the Federal Government, in partnership with Brazilian universities, is currently developing a large-scale national programme of initial and in-service teacher training using various teaching resources, including distance learning. The Federal Government is encouraging and supporting those states and municipalities that are trying to extend the length of primary education from 8 to 9 years, thus implementing what was laid down in the General Law of Education and in the National Education Plan.

In order to increase the provision of the early childhood education and secondary education, to promote the improved quality of basic education and extend the length of primary education, the Federal Government is also working on the development of a new fund, i.e. the Fund for the Maintenance and Development of Basic Education (FUNDEB), to finance the whole of basic education in an equitable way and replace the present FUNDEF, which provides resources only for primary education.

In an attempt to carry out the necessary expansion of higher education in Brazil, the Federal Government plans to introduce a wide-ranging reform of the higher education system. The present system was created more than 30 years ago and no longer meets current needs. In order to create a higher education reform plan that will effectively represent the wishes of society and the academic community, public and regional hearings are being organised in which the different stakeholders have the chance to state their points of view about the directions of the reform.

A series of actions has been put in place with the aim of reducing the inequalities in access to education that have developed over time. An ambitious project to offer all illiterates a chance to study is being developed by the Federal Government, which is transferring resources to state and municipal governments, universities and public organizations that have experience in teaching adults to read and write, in order to train teachers and promote literacy courses.



Finally, draft laws to create affirmative action programmes for the inclusion of Afro-Brazilians and indigenous peoples within higher education have been sent to the national Congress and programmes for bilingual indigenous school education and the inclusion of pupils with special educational needs within mainstream classes are under way.

## Laws and other basic regulations concerning education

In addition to the Constitution of 1988, the **National Education Guidelines and Framework Law (*Lei de Diretrizes e Bases da Educação—LDB*) No. 9.394**, approved on 20 December 1996, lays down aims and objectives, means and powers of educational actions.

The **Decree No. 2.208**, issued on 17 April 1997, creates additional opportunities for vocational training and makes the different training modalities more flexible. It views vocational training as a process linked to education, work, science and technology in order to promote the continuing development of capacities for a productive life. The Decree establishes three levels of vocational training: (a) basic, included in the non-formal education mode and designed to prepare or retrain workers according to their level of schooling for the exercise of professions demanded by the labour market; (b) technical, organized independently from general secondary education and offered sequentially or simultaneously to it; and (c) technological, at the post-secondary level, structured to cater to all economic sectors.

The **Law No. 10.861** of 14 April 2004 established the National System of Higher Education Evaluation (SINAES), which aims to ensure the existence of a national process for evaluating higher education courses and the academic performance of students.

The chapter on Education in the Constitution guarantees compulsory and free primary education for all, including those who did not have the opportunity to access school at the proper age. It also guarantees a gradual shift to a free and compulsory secondary education.

## Administration and management of the education system

The responsibility for public education is primarily, but not necessarily, divided as follows: (a) primary education: the states, the Federal District and the municipalities; (b) secondary education: the states and the Federal District for those matters that lie within their purview; (c) technical, technological and higher education: the Union and the states. The private sector can be involved at all educational levels, upon government's approval and evaluation. The structure of the education system and the related responsibilities are shown in the table below.

## Structure of the education system and educational authorities

General Title	Specific Title	Nomenclature/ International Educational Classification	Duration/ Grades	Cohort/ Ideal Age	Authority
Basic Education	Early Childhood Education	Nursery Education	4 years	0 - 3	Municipalities & Federal District
		Pre-school	3 years	4 - 6	
	Primary Education (compulsory)	Primary Education	1st grade	7	Municipalities, States & Federal District
			2nd grade	8	
			3rd grade	9	
			4th grade	10	
		Lower Secondary School	5th grade	11	
			6th grade	12	
			7th grade	13	
	Secondary Education	Upper Secondary Education	8th grade	14	
			1st grade (or 9th grade)	15	
2nd grade (or 10th grade)			16		
		3rd grade (or 11th grade)	17	States & Federal District	
Higher Education	Undergraduate	1st and 2nd cycles	Variable	18 - 24	Federal Government
	Postgraduate Master's Doctorate	3rd cycle	Variable	Variable	

Source: Ministry of Education, 2004.

The municipalities must offer free early childhood and primary education in their school systems and must regulate the provision of early childhood education in private crèches and pre-school institutions. The states must offer free primary and secondary education in their systems and must regulate the provision of private education. The Federal District is responsible for the provision of early childhood, primary and secondary education. To same extent, the Federal Government must offer free higher education in its institutions and regulate the provision of the private sector.

The Union, represented by the **Ministry of Education and Sports (MES)**, with the collaboration of the **National Council for Education** (a consultative and deliberative body), is charged with: the co-ordination of the drafting of National Education Plans; the provision of technical and financial assistance to the states, the Federal District and the municipalities for the development of their school systems; and the priority attention to be given to compulsory schooling. In addition, the Ministry supports a network of federal schools, including universities, institutions of higher learning, technical and agritechnical schools and technological education centers. It also supervises the private higher education network.

The **Secretariats of Education** in each state are responsible for administering the network of schools belonging to those states and to the Federal District, as well as for the supervision of the private network. At the state level, standards are set by the State Education Councils.





The administration of schools supported by the municipalities is under the responsibility of the **Secretariat of Municipal Education** or a similar agency. Upon delegation from the state education councils, municipal education councils may take on standard-setting functions.

The administrative, educational and disciplinary organization of each school is regulated by its respective by-laws, approved by each system's standards body. A very important aspect which must be considered within each system is the dynamics of its functioning. Educational activities and units are regulated and co-ordinated by a standards-setting body and managed by a central executive body. From the legal point of view, there is no distinction regarding the validity and the rights ensuing from studies in public schools, whether federal, state or municipal, and those in the authorized and recognized private schools.

At the federal level, policy decisions are made by the Ministry of Education and Sports, assisted by the National Council for Education, which comprises the Basic Education and the Higher Education Chambers, each with twelve counsellors chosen and appointed by the President of the Republic. The situation in the states and the Federal District is similar. The administration is handled by the state education secretariats and the normative functions by the state education councils and by the education councils of the Federal District. At the municipal level, more and more municipal education secretariats and councils are being created. Overall, the country has twenty-seven state education systems and about 5,600 autonomous municipal education systems.

Other governmental or non-governmental organizations are also involved in education, either through agreements specially signed for this purpose or through joint activities with specific objectives.

The Ministries of **Labour** and **Education** work together to define vocational training policy, which is executed by: the technical and agritechnical schools; the Federal Centers for Technological Education (CEFET); the National Service for Industrial Apprenticeship (SENAI); and agencies in the areas of commerce, transportation and rural-zone activities (SENAC, SENAT and SENAR, respectively).

The **Ministry of Health** takes part in educational programmes by promoting constant vaccination campaigns, as well as by increasing awareness regarding hygiene and disease prevention in schools. Together with the Ministry of Education and Sports, the Ministry of Health promotes human resource development policies for the health sector, to be implemented by the states.

The **military ministries** have their own primary (beginning in the Grade V) and secondary schools. They are open to the general public and are designed to provide proper training for students who, at a more advanced level, might want to follow a military career. The military ministries also support military academies providing higher education for each branch of the armed forces.

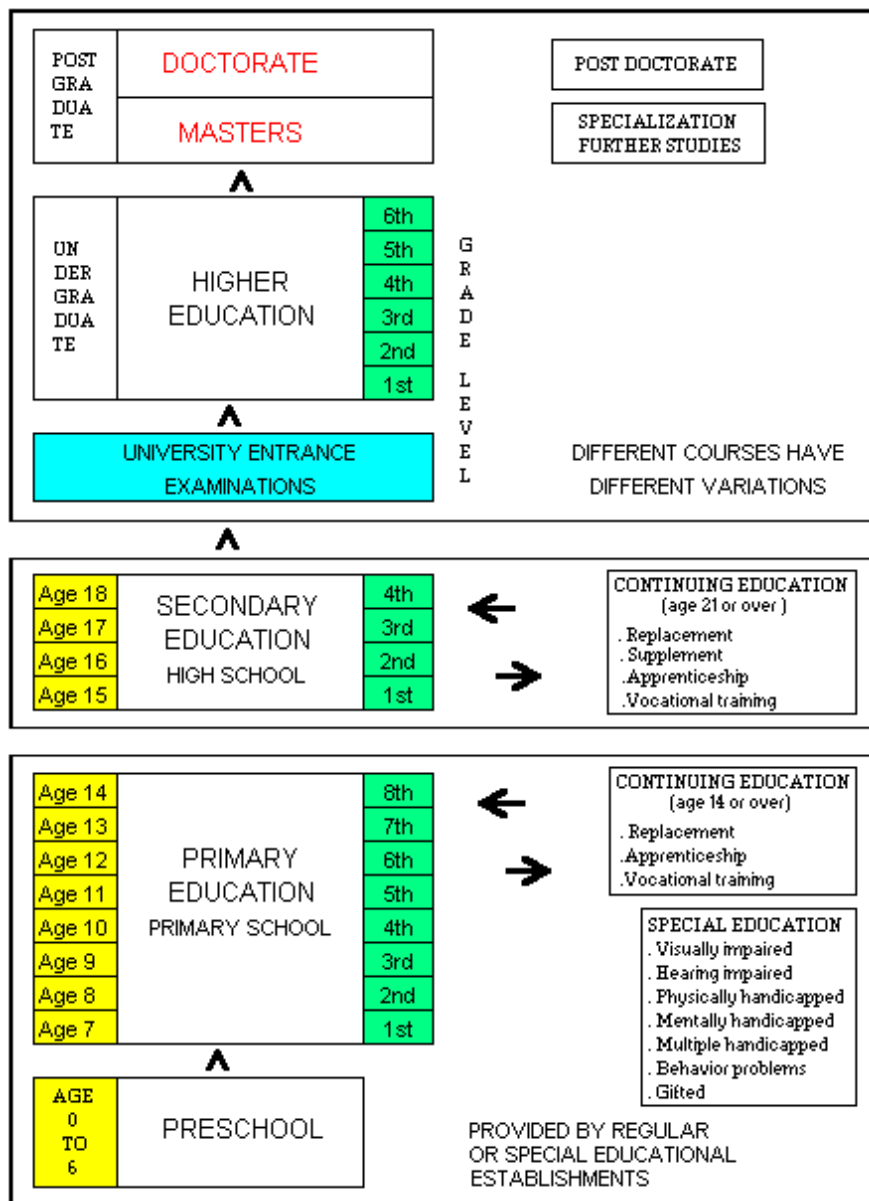
The **Ministry of Communications** contributes to educational activities by sponsoring the transmission of educational programmes via radio and television to the



remotest areas of the country, in order to increase and improve teachers' professional skills.

## Structure and organization of the education system

### Brazil: structure of the education system



### Pre-school education

Pre-school education (early childhood education) is not compulsory and is offered in two types of institutions: day-care centres or equivalent institutions for children up to the age of 3; and pre-primary schools for children aged 4-6 years.



## Primary education

Primary education is compulsory for all children between the ages of 7 and 14 years, and lasts eight years divided into two four-year cycles. Depending on the internal norms of each school system, enrolment in primary education may also take place at the age of 6.

## Secondary education

General secondary education lasts three years, while technical secondary education lasts three or four years—depending on the vocational certification considered. Early childhood, primary and secondary education are considered part of the basic education programme.

Higher education is organized in two levels: undergraduate and post-graduate studies. The latter may be understood *lato sensu* (refresher courses, further education, or specialization courses) or *stricto sensu* (master's and doctoral programmes). Higher education establishments include both colleges and universities. High-level training of professionals for one or more professions or careers is mainly provided by colleges. In addition to the high-level training of professionals, universities must also promote basic and applied research, as well as provide services to the community in the form of courses and other extension activities. Undergraduate programmes take four to six years of study. At the post-graduate level, studies last two to four years in the case of master's degree courses, and four to six years in the case of doctoral degree courses.

The regular school year is not tied to the calendar year, and must include 200 days of actual work at all educational levels, excluding periods earmarked for examinations.

## The financing of education

Brazil's education system is financed by funds both from the public sector (through direct and indirect administration agencies at the federal, state and municipal levels of government) and the private sector, which charges tuition fees. The Federal Constitution lays down that states and municipalities are obliged to spend on education at least 25% of income from the tax revenues, 60% of which must go to primary education, the minimum percentage is 18% of tax revenue.

The following are the most important public sources of education financing at the governments' levels:

### *The (Federal) Union:*

- Budgetary funds raised by federal tax revenues. According to Article 212 of the Federal Constitution, the Union shall spend at least 18% of the total tax revenues collected each fiscal year on the maintenance and development of education.



- Funds raised by the “Education Salary” tax, earmarked for primary education. This social contribution totals 2.5% of the total payroll in the case of commercial and industrial businesses. These resources are sent to central government in the form of a Federal Quota and to the states, Federal District and municipalities in the form of a State and Municipal Quota on the basis of 1/3 and 2/3 respectively.
- Other funds from various sources, and particularly the Emergency Social Fund.

*States:*

- Regular budget funds from state tax revenues. According to Article 212 of the Federal Constitution, at least 25% of state tax revenues must be spent on the maintenance and development of education. The constitutions of some states earmark percentages that are higher than the floor established by the Federal Constitution.
- The Share for the States Fund (SSF), from federal block grant transfers to the states. Of the total, 25% must be spent on education.
- Funds from the states’ quota of the social contribution for education, equaling two-thirds of the total collected in the state; these funds must be spent on primary education.
- Other funds from several sources, particularly those from the quota of the social contribution for education under the administrative responsibility of the Ministry of Education and Sports, and subsequently transferred to the states.

*Municipalities:*

- Ordinary budget funds from municipal tax revenues. According to Article 212 of the Federal Constitution, 25% of the revenues at the municipal level must also be spent on the maintenance and development of education. Several municipalities, particularly state capitals, earmark proportions that are higher than the minimum established by the Constitution.
- The Share for the Municipalities Fund (SMF), from federal block grant transfers; 25% of these transferred funds must be spent on education.
- Other funds from various sources, particularly those from the quota of the social contribution for education under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education and of the state education secretariats, transferred to the municipalities.

In 1995, the different levels of government earmarked approximately R\$27.8 billion (representing 4.5% of the Gross Domestic Product estimated at R\$631.6 billion) for the financing of the various education programmes. An additional R\$750 million, collected by the three major national services for vocational training, should be added



to this figure, raising the total from tax revenues and social contributions to R\$28.6 billion, or 4.6% of the GDP.

An analysis of the funding provided at each level of government, reveals that the states have the largest share of the public education financing (approximately 50%), followed by the municipalities, which account for approximately 28%, and the Union (approximately 21%).

Primary education receives the largest portion of investments (approximately 36%), followed by higher education (25%). Secondary education (5%) and pre-school (4%) are the segments of regular education which absorb the smallest part of public investments. When investments are examined for each level of government, these percentages change: the states spend significantly more than the average on primary education, while the municipalities spend more than the average on pre-school education. At the federal level, however, the largest proportion of total expenditure goes to the maintenance of the higher education network.

Finally, it is possible to estimate private investments based on the average costs for each educational level. Thus, considering an average cost of R\$350 for primary education, R\$750 for secondary education, and R\$2,500 for higher education, total private expenditure can be roughly estimated as being about 20% of the total public investments—approximately R\$5 billion or 0.87% of the GDP in 1995. Therefore, if one considers both public and private expenditure, total educational expenditure in 1995 equalled 5.5% of the GDP.

## The educational process

Historically, the definition of educational programmes has been a duty of the states. In recent years these programmes have taken the form of curricular proposals that were not compulsory but were designed with the aim of helping schools to organize their teaching programmes. Until 1995 there was no national frame of reference in Brazil to guide the preparation of curriculum proposals.

In 1995 the Ministry of Education began a broad reform of the curriculum at all levels of education. After wide consultation and debates that involved directors of the education system, teachers in general and specialists in educational issues, the curriculum of the four first grades of primary school was modified, along with the institution of a large-scale training programme for teachers in order to apply it. The second stage involved creating new parameters for a complete reform of the whole system of teacher training. Currently (2001), the primary sector, early childhood, secondary and adult education all have national curricular guidelines laid down by resolutions of the National Education Council. In the case of indigenous education only the basic guidelines for a curriculum were established.

In the period 1995-1998, one of the Ministry of Education's priorities was to generate reference points for the primary school curriculum, organizing ideas that were already being used in curriculum reforms of the states and municipalities. In elaborating these documents, procedures were followed that sought to guarantee the democratic and participatory spirit that should be characteristic of Brazil's basic



education. Teams of educators (university teachers, researchers and experienced classroom teachers) wrote preliminary papers. They carried out studies of the curricula of other countries, analyzed proposals from the Brazilian states and from some of the municipalities, and studied contemporary theoretical patterns concerning the curriculum, teaching, learning and evaluation. Preliminary papers were sent for appraisal by university lecturers and classroom teachers, researchers and experts working in the pedagogical teams of Secretariats of Education, who provided their criticisms and suggestions.

For each area and theme proposed, a special document was written which, starting from an analysis of the teaching in this area or theme, and of its importance in the primary school child's learning, presents a proposal set out in terms of objectives, content, evaluation and teaching guidelines. These items are developed by cycles, each corresponding to two years of primary schooling.

In order to provide for the demands of the different sectors and types of basic education, the following documents were produced: National Curriculum Parameters (PCN) for primary education; National Curricular Guidelines for early childhood education; National Curricular Guidelines for adult education; and National Curriculum Guidelines for indigenous education.

These documents may also be used by state and municipal secretariats of education in the process of constructing or revising their proposals, which are adapted according to the needs and characteristics of their region. National curriculum guidelines do not include lists of content to be compulsorily covered. Thus, in this item, the guidelines present a synthesis of the perspective of each subject/area of knowledge in primary education, which allows secretariats of education, schools and teachers to revise the subject content taught, to choose more important topics, etc. Although the introduction of new subjects has not been suggested, the curriculum guidelines include, in their education proposal, under the title of “Cross-curricular Themes”, the approach to social problems with regard to ethics, health education, the environment, cultural plurality, sex education, work and consumption. These are not new areas, but rather a group of themes that are seen crossing over area boundaries and permeating the concept of the area itself, its aims, its content and the orientation of its teaching.

In the context of basic education, the LDB describes the construction of the curricula in primary and secondary education “with a Common National Base which is complemented in each education system and teaching establishment, by a differentiated section answering the regional and local characteristics of the society, culture and economic life of the target group.” (Article 26). The Common National Base has two dimensions: (i) that of preparation for further studies, which means the objective of the learning process must be the construction of basic competencies and abilities, and not the accumulation of pre-established schema with set answers; and (ii) that of preparation for work, which highlights knowledge as an instrument for solving concrete problems related to various social contexts and practices.

Article 26 of the LDB also sets down that this Common National Base “must include study of Portuguese language and mathematics, knowledge of the physical and natural world and the realities of society and politics, especially of Brazil, art



education [...] in order to promote pupils' cultural development and physical education, included in the school's teaching programme." In the organization of the curriculum, the National Common Base comprises 75% of the minimum time of 2,400 hours, lasting at least through three year-long grades. The remaining 25% make up the diversified part, devised by the schools and based on local and regional socio-economic characteristics or on the interests of the school community. The diversified part should be organically integrated with the Common National Base by its context and by complementation, diversification, enrichment and explanation, among other forms of integration.

The Ministry of Education has also defined the new curriculum for secondary education with the aim of eliminating the existing practice of fragmented teaching based on accumulating information. Instead, school knowledge will have to be put into a context and to make sense to pupils. Reasoning and the ability to understand will be more important than memorization. This curriculum, compulsory for all schools, is described in the National Curriculum Guidelines for Secondary Education, formulated by the National Education Council after consulting the proposal submitted by the Ministry. The Ministry has also produced the National Curriculum Parameters for Secondary Education (PCNEM), together with advice and recommendations to support the work of classroom teachers. The reform of the curriculum of the new secondary education is based on three main principles: (i) flexibility in providing for different people and situations and the permanent changes that are typical of the world of the information society; (ii) diversity guaranteeing attention to the needs of different groups in different areas and situations; (iii) contextualization which, guaranteeing a common base, diversifies careers and allows the establishment of meanings that give meaning to learning and what is learned.

### Pre-primary education

Pedagogical guidelines for pre-school education are defined at the national level and complemented by the states and municipalities, which formulate their own educational and curricular proposals.

The objectives of pre-school education proposed in the national policy are as follows:

- to provide suitable conditions for the child's physical, emotional, cognitive and social development;
- to promote the application of children's experiences and knowledge, encouraging their interest in the process of the transformation of nature and in the dynamics of social life;
- to play a role in ensuring that the child's social interaction and relations will reflect the values of solidarity, freedom, co-operation and respect.

Pre-school education guidelines and curricula take into account the child's level of development and the cultural and social diversity of the target population. In 1998, there was an important federal initiative aimed at creating the curricular requirements for early childhood education. The requirements were planned to give



guidelines for consideration on a national basis with regard to aims, content and teaching guidance for instructors working directly with children from 0 to 6 years, taking into account their teaching styles and the cultural differences within Brazil. This was the result of a wide-ranging national debate involving teachers and members of other professions who deal directly with children.

Data from the 1999 School Census show a total of 831,978 children enrolled in day-care centres, mainly in municipality-run institutions (10,031 institutions serving 522,703 children); 8,297 private institutions served 292,174 children. The provision for this age group is very low, considering that there are more than 13 million children in the age group entitled to day-care services (0-3 years). Furthermore, only about 10% of the group served by day-care centres live in rural areas.

In 1994, of a total of 9.9 million children between the ages of 4 and 6 years, 48% were in pre-schools, compared to 28.6% in 1985. Eighty-one per cent of children between the ages of 5 and 6 from families whose per capita income is above two minimum wages (MW) were in pre-schools, compared to only 37% of children belonging to poor families. In 1999, more than 4.2 million children were enrolled in pre-school (of whom: 87.1% in urban areas; 62.8% in municipality-run institutions; and 23% in the private sector).

In terms of type of institution, pre-school programmes are basically run by the municipalities. Between 1988 and 1998, the participation of municipalities increased from 39.1% to 66.3%. In state-run institutions, on the other hand, there was a drop from 25.9% to 9.6%. This growing municipalization, as in the case of day-care programmes and literacy classes, results from the legislation that makes municipalities responsible for early childhood education (National Institute for Educational Studies and Research, 1999).

## Primary education

As mentioned, primary education is compulsory for all children aged 7-14 and is provided free of charge in public establishments. The curriculum at this level of education is structured around a common core defining nationwide subjects. However, there is also a flexible component that is established by the normative bodies of the teaching facilities (according to their needs and possibilities) in order to respond to local peculiarities, to the work plans of the facilities and the individual differences of the pupils.

In accordance with the LDB, primary education in Brazil aims to achieve the basic training of the citizen by means of: (i) developing the capacity for learning, having in mind the acquisition of knowledge, abilities and the forming of attitudes and values; (ii) developing the ability to learn, taking as basic means the full mastery of reading, writing and calculating; (iii) understanding the natural and social environment, the political system, technology, arts and the values on which society is founded; and (iv) strengthening family links and the ties of human solidarity and mutual tolerance on which social life is based.





The curriculum is established on the basis of subjects determined at the national and regional levels. Each school is responsible for adopting the most appropriate teaching methods (activities, areas of study or subjects), as well as for the arrangements required for their relationship, their order, and the sequence of their respective contents. The common core encompasses: communications and expression (Portuguese); social studies (history and geography); and science (mathematics, physical and biological sciences). Physical education, artistic education, health programmes and preparation for work are compulsory, while religious education is optional. Primary schools should provide a minimum of 800 class hours per year.

With the implementation of National Curricular Standards, two new subjects have been introduced: social life and ethics. Through these subjects the education system will systematically address issues such as ethics, sexual education, the environment, health, economic studies and ethnic plurality.

The organization of the curriculum contemplates the inclusion of different options according to the school's work plan. The division into semesters is permitted, provided that the relationship, order and sequence of studies are ensured. The provision of remedial studies for pupils with low performance, in order to give them a chance to pass the courses, is mandatory. In order to provide this service, teaching facilities may function between regular teaching periods (summer school). In addition to remedial studies, summer programmes may offer intensive courses in areas of studies or activities that would normally require a semester of teaching.

It is also possible for the school to adopt criteria allowing progressive advancements of pupils, taking into account both the age and performance. At the seventh grade, the institution may allow a student to pass on to the next grade, despite one or two incomplete subjects, areas of study or activities carried over from the previous grade, provided that the curricular sequence is preserved and that the school's bylaws are followed.

Some examples of weekly lesson timetables in individual states are presented below:

**Acre. Basic education: weekly lesson timetable**

Discipline	Number of weekly hours in each grade							
	First cycle				Second cycle			
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII
Portuguese language	5	5	5	5	4	4	4	4
Mathematics	5	5	5	5	4	4	4	4
History and geography	4	4	4	4	–	–	–	–
History	–	–	–	–	3	3	3	3
Geography	–	–	–	–	3	3	3	3
Sciences	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3
Religious education	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Physical education	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Art education	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Foreign language	–	–	–	–	2	2	2	2
<b>Total weekly hours</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>22</b>

Source: Information provided to the UNESCO Office in Brazil by the State Education Department of Acre, May 2002.

The school year consists of forty weeks.

**Amazonas. Basic education: weekly lesson timetable (day schools)**

Curricular component	Number of weekly hours in each grade							
	First cycle				Second cycle			
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII
<u>National component:</u>								
Portuguese language	10	10	9	9	5	5	5	5
Geography	1	1	1	1	3	3	3	3
History	1	1	1	1	3	3	3	3
Mathematics	5	5	6	6	5	5	5	5
Natural sciences	1	1	1	1	3	3	3	3
Religious education (*)	–	–	–	–	1	1	1	1
Art education (*)	–	–	–	–	1	1	1	1
Physical education	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
<u>Diversified component:</u>								
Modern foreign language	–	–	–	–	2	2	2	2
<b>Total weekly hours</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>

Source: Information provided to the UNESCO Office in Brazil by the State Department for Education and

Educational Quality of Amazonas, May 2002. The school year consists of forty weeks.

(\*) In Grades I–IV, religious education (optional) and art education are taught using an interdisciplinary approach.

History and geography of Amazonas, as well as basic knowledge of the regional economy, are integrated into history and geography.

## Espírito Santo. Basic education: typical weekly lesson timetable

Knowledge area	Number of weekly hours in each grade							
	First cycle				Second cycle			
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII
Portuguese language	*	*	5	5	5	5	5	5
Mathematics			5	5	5	5	5	5
Sciences			3	3	3	3	3	3
Geography			3	3	2	2	2	2
History			2	2	2	2	2	2
Art education			1	1	1	1	1	1
Physical education			1	1	1	1	1	1
Religious education			1	1	1	1	1	1
Foreign language			–	–	1	1	1	1
<b>Total weekly hours</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>21</b>

Source: Information provided to the UNESCO Office in Brazil by the State Education Department of Espírito Santo,

May 2002. The school year consists of forty weeks.

(\*) In the first two grades an inter-disciplinary approach is applied. Cross-curricular themes are integrated into

the knowledge areas and include: health; sexuality, social and family life; environment; work; science and technology, culture; and languages.

## Federal District. Basic education: weekly lesson timetable (day schools)

Curricular component	Number of weekly periods in each grade							
	First cycle				Second cycle			
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII
<b>National component:</b>								
Portuguese language	*	*	*	*	5	5	5	5
Mathematics					5	5	5	5
Geography					3	3	3	3
History					3	3	3	3
Natural sciences					4	4	4	4
Art education					2	2	2	2
Physical education					3	3	3	3
<b>Diversified component:</b>								
Modern foreign language					2	2	2	2
Religious education					1	1	1	1
Option decided by the school					1	1	1	1
Option decided by the school					1	1	1	1
<b>Total weekly periods</b>					<b>30</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>30</b>

Source: Information provided to the UNESCO Office in Brazil by the State Education Department of the Federal District,

May 2002. Each teaching period lasts 50 minutes. The school year consists of forty weeks.

(\*) In the first cycle of basic education an inter-disciplinary approach is applied. Pupils receive twenty-five hours of instruction per week.

## Goiás. Basic education: weekly lesson timetable

Curricular component	Number of weekly periods in each grade							
	First cycle				Second cycle			
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII
<u>National component:</u>								
Portuguese language	*	*	*	*	5	5	5	5
Mathematics					5	5	5	5
Sciences					3	3	3	3
Geography					3	3	3	3
History					3	3	3	3
Art education					2	2	2	2
Physical education					2	2	2	2
<u>Diversified component:</u>								
Modern foreign language					2	2	2	2
Religious education					1	1	1	1
<b>Total weekly periods</b>					<b>26</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>26</b>

Source: Information provided to the UNESCO Office in Brazil by the State Education Department of Goiás, May 2002.

Each teaching period lasts 50 minutes. The school year consists of forty weeks.

(\*) In the first cycle of basic education an inter-disciplinary approach is applied. Pupils receive a minimum of 800 hours of instruction per year, which can increase to 840–880 hours if the school offers religious education and foreign language teaching (forty hours per year each).

Cross-curricular themes are integrated into the curricular components and include: ethics; health; environment; sexuality, work and consumption; cultural plurality, and local themes.

## Maranhão. Basic education: weekly lesson timetable (urban schools)

Curricular component	Number of weekly periods in each grade							
	First cycle				Second cycle			
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII
<u>National component:</u>								
Portuguese language	6	6	6	6	5	5	5	5
Mathematics	6	6	6	6	4	4	4	4
Sciences	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3
Geography	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
History	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Art education	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Physical education	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Religious education	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
<u>Diversified component:</u>								
Modern foreign language					2	2	2	2
Ethics and civics					2	2	2	2
<b>Total weekly periods</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>

Source: Information provided to the UNESCO Office in Brazil by the State Department of Human Development of Maranhão,

May 2002. Each teaching period lasts 48 minutes in Grades I–IV and 50 minutes in Grades V–VIII. The school year consists of forty weeks.

Note: Urban schools equipped with computer laboratories can offer 'introduction to informatics' instead of 'ethics and civics' in Grades VII and VIII.

Rural schools offer 'economy of the primary sector' instead of 'ethics and civics' in Grades VII and VIII.

**Mato Grosso do Sul. Basic education: weekly lesson timetable (day schools)**

Knowledge area	Number of weekly periods in each grade							
	First cycle				Second cycle			
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII
Portuguese language	*	*	*	*	5	5	5	5
Mathematics					4	4	4	4
Sciences					3	3	3	3
History					3	3	3	3
Geography					3	3	3	3
Art education					2	2	2	2
Religious education					1	1	1	1
Physical education					2	2	2	2
Modern foreign language	-	-	-	-	2	2	2	2
<b>Total weekly periods</b>					<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>

*Source:* Information provided to the UNESCO Office in Brazil by the State Education Department of Mato Grosso do Sul, May 2002.

The school year consists of forty weeks. Each teaching period lasts 50 minutes.

(\*) In the first cycle of basic education an inter-disciplinary approach is applied; pupils receive a minimum of 800 hours of instruction per year.

**Paraíba. Basic education: weekly lesson timetable (day schools)**

Knowledge area	Number of weekly periods in each grade							
	First cycle				Second cycle			
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII
<u>National component:</u>								
Portuguese language	*	*	*	*	5	5	5	5
Mother language (for indigenous groups)					...	...	...	...
Art education					2	2	2	2
Physical education					3	3	3	3
Mathematics					5	5	5	5
Sciences					3	3	3	3
Geography					4	4	4	4
History					4	4	4	4
<u>Diversified component:</u>								
Foreign language					2	2	2	2
Option decided by the school					1	1	1	1
<b>Total weekly periods</b>					<b>29</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>29</b>
Religious education (optional)					1	1	1	1

*Source:* Information provided to the UNESCO Office in Brazil by the State Department for Education and Culture of Paraíba, May 2002.

Each teaching period lasts 45 minutes. The school year consists of forty-one weeks.

(\*) In the first cycle of basic education an inter-disciplinary approach is applied. Pupils receive a minimum of 800 hours of instruction per year.

Cross-curricular themes are integrated into the knowledge areas and include: health; environment; ethics; cultural plurality, and sexuality.

**Paraná. Basic education: typical weekly lesson timetable (day schools)**

Curricular component	Number of weekly periods in each grade							
	First cycle				Second cycle			
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII
<u>National component:</u>								
Portuguese language	*	*	*	*	4	4	4	4
Art education					1	1	1	1
Physical education					2	2	2	2
Mathematics					5	5	5	5
Sciences					2	2	2	2
History					2	2	2	2
Geography					2	2	2	2
<u>Diversified component:</u>								
Modern foreign language					2	2	2	2
Options decided by the school (**)					4	4	4	4
<b>Total weekly periods</b>					<b>24</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>24</b>

*Source:* Information provided to the UNESCO Office in Brazil by the State Education Department of Paraná, May 2002.

The school year consists of forty weeks. Each teaching period lasts 50 minutes.

(\*) In the first cycle of basic education an inter-disciplinary approach is applied and pupils receive 800 hours of instruction per year.

(\*\*) Options offered by schools are aimed at complementing core subjects according to local and regional conditions.

**Rondônia. Basic education: weekly lesson timetable (day schools)**

Curricular component	Number of weekly hours in each grade							
	First cycle				Second cycle			
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII
<u>National component:</u>								
Portuguese language	*	*	*	*	4	4	4	4
Mathematics					4	4	4	4
Sciences					3	3	3	3
Geography					2	2	2	2
History					2	2	2	2
Art education					1	1	1	1
Religious education					1	1	1	1
Physical education					1	1	1	1
<u>Diversified component:</u>								
Modern foreign language					1	1	1	1
Option decided by the school					1	1	1	1
<b>Total weekly hours</b>					<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>

*Source:* Information provided to the UNESCO Office in Brazil by the State Education Department of Rondônia, May 2002.

The school year consists of forty weeks.

(\*) In the first cycle of basic education an inter-disciplinary approach is applied. Pupils receive a minimum of 800 hours of instruction per year.

**Santa Catarina. Basic education: weekly lesson timetable (day schools)**

Curricular component	Number of weekly periods in each grade							
	First cycle				Second cycle			
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII
<u>National component:</u>								
Portuguese language	*	*	*	*	4	4	4	4
Mathematics					4	4	4	4
Sciences					3	3	3	3
History					3	3	3	3
Geography					3	3	3	3
Physical education					3	3	3	3
Art education					2	2	2	2
Religious education					1	1	1	1
<u>Diversified component:</u>								
Modern foreign language					3	3	3	3
<b>Total weekly periods</b>					<b>26</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>26</b>

*Source:* Information provided to the UNESCO Office in Brazil by the State Department for Education and Sports of Santa Catarina, May 2002.

The school year consists of forty weeks. Each teaching period lasts 48 minutes.

(\*) In the first cycle of basic education an inter-disciplinary approach is applied and pupils receive 800 hours of instruction per year. Religious education is not compulsory.

**São Paulo. Basic education: weekly lesson timetable (day schools)**

Curricular component	Recommended time allocation (in %)				Number of weekly hours in each grade			
	First cycle (*)				Second cycle			
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII
<u>National component:</u>								
Portuguese language	35	35	30	30	5	5	5	5
Mathematics	30	30	35	35	5	5	5	5
History and geography	10	10	10	10	3	3	3	3
Sciences	10	10	10	10	2	2	2	2
Art education and physical education	15	15	15	15	3	3	3	3
<u>Diversified component:</u>								
Modern foreign language					2	2	2	2
<b>Total weekly hours</b>					<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>

*Source:* Information provided to the UNESCO Office in Brazil by the State Education Department of São Paulo, May 2002.

The school year consists of forty weeks.

(\*) In the first cycle of basic education pupils receive a minimum of 800 hours of instruction per year.

## Tocantins. Basic education: weekly lesson timetable (day schools)

Curricular component	Number of weekly periods in each grade							
	First cycle				Second cycle (**)			
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII
<u>National component:</u>								
Portuguese language	*	*	*	*	5	5	5	5
Mathematics					5	5	5	5
Social studies					–	–	–	–
Sciences					–	–	–	–
Physical & biological sciences	–	–	–	–	3	3	3	3
History	–	–	–	–	2	2	2	2
Geography	–	–	–	–	2	2	2	2
Art education					1	1	1	1
Religious education					1	1	1	1
Physical education					3	3	3	3
<u>Diversified component:</u>								
Modern foreign language	–	–	–	–	2	2	2	2
Option decided by the school	–	–	–	–	1	1	1	1
<b>Total weekly periods</b>					<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>

Source: Information provided to the UNESCO Office in Brazil by the State Department for Education and Culture, May 2002.

The school year consists of forty weeks. Each teaching period lasts 48 minutes.

(\*) In the first cycle of basic education an inter-disciplinary approach is applied and pupils receive 800 hours of instruction per year. Health education and environmental education are included under sciences. History of Tocantins, geography of Tocantins and citizenship education are included under social studies. Religious education is optional. Cross-curricular themes include among others road safety education, consumer education, drug abuse prevention, accident prevention and work safety education.

(\*\*) In the second cycle of basic education, history includes history of Tocantins and citizenship education, which can also be taught under Portuguese language. Geography includes geography of Tocantins. Physical and biological sciences also include health education. Environmental education is integrated into geography and physical & biological sciences.

In 1994, the 31.2 million pupils enrolled at the primary level were predominantly concentrated in the south-east (39%) and north-east (31%) regions, followed by the south (14%), north (9%) and center-west (7%). The absolute majority of pupils (88.4%) attended public schools in urban areas (82.5%). This is a result of the intense urbanization process undergone by the country over recent decades and the growing participation of the public sector in the provision of education. The private sector accounted for only 11.6% of the places available in schools and its participation has been decreasing since the early 1970s. Of a total of 27.4 million children between 7 and 14 years of age, more than 96% attend school, whereas this figure was only 81.8% in 1985. Notwithstanding, 97% of children aged 7-14 whose family's per capita income exceeds two MW, attend primary school, compared to only 75% of children from poor families despite the increasing universalization of education.

In 1999, there were more than 36 million pupils enrolled at the primary level (about 90% in the public sector). The net enrolment ratio was estimated at 95%, while the gross enrolment ratio was 130.5%.





Of the total number of primary school teaching positions (approximately 1.3 million), 86.3% are in the public network, over 70% in urban schools and only 20.4% in rural schools. With regard to the distribution of primary schools, over 70% of the 194,487 schools nationwide are in rural areas, although they account for only 17.5% of the demand for primary education. Rural schools are particularly concentrated in the north-east (50%), not only due to this region's socioeconomic characteristics, but also because of a lack of proper planning for expanded facilities.

It is important to stress that several states are reorganizing their school network and promoting a core system for rural schools, particularly in the south and southeast regions. The reorganization of the public network is thus considered imperative and pressing, particularly in the north-east, where the recent trend towards the urbanization of the economy has not been accompanied by an adequate restructuring of the education network.

Concerning the transition rates, substantial improvements in the progression, repetition and drop-out rates have been noted at the primary level. Progression rates increased from 55% in 1984 to 62% in 1992, accompanied by a reasonable drop in the average repetition and drop-out rates which reached 33% and 5%, respectively, in 1992. In 1999, the aggregated progression, repetition and drop-out rates were 74%, 21% and 5%, respectively.

This is a very significant trend, as several studies indicate that the high repetition rate is one of Brazil's most serious educational problems, because pupils spend, on average, five years in school before dropping out, and it takes an average of 11.2 years to complete the eight-year compulsory education programme. Despite the improvements in drop-out rates, advancement and repetition rates for the first year of primary education are still a matter of concern. Only 51% of pupils advance to the next grade and 44% repeat Grade I.

High repetition rates in Grade V spring from a particular feature of the Brazilian education system. The eight-year primary education programme was instituted not by integrating but rather by juxtaposing two previous levels of education, which were and remain quite different: the old primary school with one teacher, and the old secondary school with subjects taught by different teachers. This divergence in the pedagogical and curricular organization of the two levels of primary education causes problems of adaptation in Grade V that are reflected in higher repetition rates (National Institute for Educational Studies and Research, 1999).

One of the most harmful consequences of the high repetition rate is their clear effect on the marked rates of grade/age distortion at every grade of primary school. In spite of the slight decrease in all grades in the period 1984-1994, the figures still indicate a dramatic situation:

- over 63% of primary school pupils are older than the appropriate age group for that grade;
- although the south and southeast regions are below the national average, their repetition rates are still quite high, at approximately 42% and 54%, respectively;



- the north and northeast regions have higher rates than the national average (77.6% and 80%, respectively).

In order to reverse this situation, some states and municipalities have begun to implement programmes to speed up the pupils' stay in schools, with the objective of promoting improvements in school performance indicators over the medium term. These are extremely important initiatives, since a survey carried out in 1995 by the Ministry of Education through the National System for the Evaluation of Primary Education (SAEB), shows that the greater the age/grade distortion the worse the performance of students in Portuguese and mathematics will be, both at the primary and secondary levels. Therefore, repeating a grade seems to add nothing to the teaching/learning process.

The pupil to teacher ratio oscillated at around 22 pupils per teacher between 1975 and 1999, with a minimum of 21.8 in 1975 and a maximum of 25.6 in 1980. The most recent national average (1999) is 24.2 pupils per teacher. The variation between urban and rural education is small, the urban average being slightly higher, which is normal in the context of Brazil's dispersed rural population (National Institute for Educational Studies and Research, 2001).

Data from the 2003 School Census indicate the existence of 2,079 schools operating in indigenous territories, attending about 150,000 pupils. These schools employ about 7,000 teachers, 85% of them indigenous people. There are 993 schools directly linked to State Secretariats of Education. The rest, mainly those in the states of Mato Grosso, Grosso do Sul, Amazonas, Pará, Paraná, Bahia and Paraíba, are maintained by the Secretariats of Education of 165 municipalities. There are also some schools linked to special projects such as the Eletronorte projects and to some religious bodies. These schools appear in the School Census as 'private schools'.

## **Secondary education**

While not yet compulsory, secondary education is also provided free of charge in public schools. A student who has completed primary education can access secondary education without an entrance examination. Secondary education aims to give the student the training necessary to develop his/her potential as an element of self-fulfilment, preparation for the work force and for the conscious exercise of citizenship.

Vocational technical education is offered simultaneously and in conjunction with general secondary education. In order to respond to the need for vocational training in the areas of services, industry and agriculture, the Ministry of Education supports a network of vocational education schools which have accumulated great expertise in vocational training, thus forming an asset that can form the foundation for expansion efforts.

The curriculum is ordered into year-long grades, but the schools can choose a system of organization by semester and enrolment by subjects. Portuguese and Brazilian literature, social studies (history and geography), sciences (physics, chemistry and biology), mathematics, one foreign language, arts, health programmes and physical education are the subjects in the core curricula for secondary schools.

Subjects in the optional differentiated curricula correspond to the technical courses to which they belong, and which are divided (in accordance with the economy sectors) into primary, secondary and tertiary studies, in addition to the teacher training course. Some examples of weekly lesson timetables in individual states are shown below:

**Paraíba. General secondary education: weekly lesson timetable (day schools)**

Knowledge area	Number of weekly periods in each form		
	I	II	III
<b>National component:</b>			
Portuguese language	5	5	5
Art education	1	–	–
Physical education	2	2	2
Biology	3	3	3
Physics	3	3	3
Chemistry	3	3	3
Mathematics	4	5	5
Geography	3	3	3
History	3	3	3
<b>Diversified component:</b>			
Foreign language	2	2	2
Option decided by the school	1	1	1
<b>Total weekly periods</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>30</b>

*Source:* Information provided to the UNESCO Office in Brazil by the State Department for Education and Culture of Paraíba, May 2002.

Each teaching period lasts 45 minutes. The school year consists of forty-one weeks.

**Santa Catarina. General secondary education: weekly lesson timetable for day schools**

Discipline	Number of weekly periods in each form		
	I	II	III
<b>National component:</b>			
Portuguese language and literature	3	4	3
Foreign language	2	2	2
Mathematics	3	4	3
Art education	1	1	1
Physical education	2	2	2
Chemistry	2	2	3
Physics	2	2	3
Biology	2	2	2
History	2	2	2
Geography	2	2	2
<b>Diversified component:</b>			
Philosophy	2	1	1
Sociology	2	1	1
<b>Total weekly periods</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>

*Source:* Information provided to the UNESCO Office in Brazil by the State Department for Education and Sports of Santa Catarina, May 2002.

The school year consists of forty weeks. Each teaching period lasts 48 minutes. Schools may offer a second foreign language as an optional, extra-curricular subject.



General secondary education usually requires 2,200 hours of actual school work during the three-year course of studies. The technical branch of secondary education comprises three or four grades lasting one year each (depending on the vocational certification in question) including a minimum course load of effective school work:

- primary sector technicians: a minimum of 2,900 hours, of which at least 1,200 must be vocational courses, to be complemented by practical skills work (curricular training);
- secondary sector technicians: a minimum of 2,900 hours, of which at least 1,200 must be vocational courses, to be complemented by professional practice work;
- tertiary sector technicians: a minimum of 2,200 hours, of which at least 900 must be vocational courses.

In addition to courses and subjects, technical and teacher training courses include a mandatory supervised internship. Class hours/credits correspond to no less than one school semester, and comprise social, professional and cultural learning activities. These are taught by involving the student in real-life domestic and workplace scenarios, under the school's responsibility.

Vocational schools establish partnerships with business, which in turn create opportunities for students to develop practical professional skills in the workplace as a part of their training. In turn, the schools offer refresher courses and further education to the employees of these businesses.

The schools are responsible for the evaluation system, structured on basic principles which are mandatory for all levels of education, and which comprise performance assessments expressed in grades in which quantitative aspects have a greater importance than those which are qualitative. At the end of the technical and teacher training programmes, students may take the university entrance examination to enrol into colleges.

Schools are responsible for issuing the secondary education certificates (secondary school level) and the diplomas of technical courses. Individuals graduating from vocational courses are called technicians, assistant technicians or primary school teachers, depending on their areas of specialization.

In an endeavour to evaluate the new educational model for vocational education, the first Vocational Education Census was carried out in 1999. Information was given to the census by schools and institutions offering basic, technical and technological courses, including therefore federal, state and municipal vocational schools and private teaching establishments. Information was given to the census by 3,948 institutions offering vocational education in accordance with Law No. 9,394/96 and Decree No. 2,208/99. The majority of the institutions were private (67%) and among the public bodies, most were state-run (20%). The municipal system was responsible for 9%, and 4% were federal. In these vocational education courses, 2,800,000 students were enrolled, with the majority of these (71.5%) concentrated at the basic level. The technical and technological levels accounted for 25.1% and 3.4%



of enrolments, respectively. By sector of activity, it was found that courses in the service sector have the greatest number of enrolments. About a third of enrolments were concentrated in Information Technology and business courses.

The Secretariat for Secondary Education and Technology (SEMTEC) which includes the Directorate for Vocational and Technological Education (DEPT) is responsible for co-ordinating, guiding and supervising activities concerning the development and reinforcement of vocational and technological education, which is organised currently in an immense network at various levels, in the following way:

- secondary and vocational classes, including federal, state-level municipal and private systems;
- system S, which includes National Services for Apprenticeship and Social Service maintained by *parafiscal* [a type of taxation parallel to the normal tax system] contributions from the private sector Senai/Sesi (industry), Senac/Sesc (business and service, except for banking); Senar (agriculture); Senat/Sest (wheeled transport); Sebrae (all sectors dealing with provision for micro and small firms; Senacoop (recently create, including co-operatives providing services);
- public and private universities that offer extension and community services as well as undergraduate and postgraduate courses;
- schools and centres maintained by trades unions;
- schools and foundations maintained by business groups (in addition to contributions to System S or using exemptions from part of the contribution to the System);
- Religious, community and educational NGOs;
- normal or free vocational courses concentrated in urban centres and those that are starting up distance learning (by mail, Internet or satellite).

SEMTEC is responsible for supervising Federal Institutions for Educational Technology, which consists of a network of 139 schools. Vocational courses provide training for middle-level technical workers in production industries who are relatively autonomous, usually needing supervision from a higher-level colleague. There are 7,459 courses, 4,620 (about 65%) of them in private establishments. According to the replies of these institutions to the 2003 School Census, there are more than 900 different names of courses. Of all of the courses offered in Brazil, 86% are concentrated in the southeast and southern regions. Of the 589,383 students enrolled in vocational education, 174,073 (29.5%), attend vocational courses in the area of health, according to data from the 2003 School Census. Of the overall total of students in the 20 areas of vocational education, 324,985 study in private institutions, 165,266 in state institutions; 79,484 in federal colleges and 19,648 in municipal ones. The other areas with large numbers of students are industry (109,559), management (87,407), computing (82,969) and agriculture (39,135). During the period 2000-2002, the number of enrolments in technological courses rose from 63,046 to 81,348, a growth of 29%. The number of those successfully completing the courses has risen from 10,674 in 1999 to 12,673, an increase of 18.7%.

In 1994, the number of initial enrolments in secondary education reached approximately five million, showing an increase of over one million students in relation to 1991. This trend is certainly caused by the improvement in levels of

education over the past decade. Of a total of 9.6 million youths between the ages of 15 and 17 years, more than 77% are within the education system, versus 59.2% in 1985. Eighty per cent of the young people aged 15-17 from families whose per capita income is above two MW have access to education, whereas only approximately 40% of those from poor families are at school.

From the regional point of view, the distribution of initial enrolment is largely concentrated in the south-east region (51.1%), followed by the north-east (2.1%), south (15.7%) and north (6.2%). The State of Sao Paulo currently accounts for over one third of the total numbers of enrolment at this level of education.

Evening schools, which account for almost 60% of total enrolment, predominate in every region of the country and show a trend towards expansion in the three public networks (federal, state and municipal). Although decreasing since the end of the 1980s, private evening schools are still quite important, accounting for more than 33% of total enrolment. Undoubtedly, the predominance of evening schools is due to the very design of the system's structure, since usually schools operate primary education courses in the day and secondary education courses in the evening shift.

The profile of enrolment distribution is similar to the configuration of the 14.7 thousand school facilities, basically located in urban areas, made up of 69% public and 31% private establishments. Larger size (over 250 students) state facilities predominate (42.8%), absorbing 80% of the demand. This profile of distribution of facilities is relatively homogeneous in all the country's regions. As to the distribution of 320,000 teaching positions, there is a balance in the proportional participation of the public (72.8%) and the private sectors (27.2%).

The transition rates show a slight decrease in the aggregated progression and ascension rates and an increase in the repetition rates. The average repetition rate in Form I is as high as 42%, while the average progression rate for the same form is only 52% (1992). There is, however, a progressive improvement in the drop-out rates for all the forms.

### Secondary education. Graduating students by type of administration, 1980-1993

Total General		Type of Administration							
		Federal	%	State	%	Municipal	%	Private	%
1980	541,350	16,370	3.0	203,986	37.7	18,720	3.5	302,274	55.8
1984	585,193	17,835	3.0	273,127	46.7	23,360	4.0	270,871	46.3
1987	605,504	14,230	2.4	311,690	51.5	25,115	4.1	254,469	42.0
1990	658,725	19,797	3.0	356,813	54.2	29,070	4.4	253,045	38.4
1993	851,428	16,663	2.0	559,595	65.7	42,681	5.0	232,489	27.3

Source: MEC/SEDIAE/SEEC.

In the period 1990-1999 enrolments at this level more than doubled, rising from 3.5 million to more than 7.8 million. The public system already provides 84.2%



of secondary enrolments, absorbing the impact of the growth that took place in the 1990s. The private sector, on the other hand, has been reducing its relative participation at this level. This phenomenon has been especially marked in the last twenty years. As a result, the proportion of secondary pupils attending private schools fell from 46.5% in 1980 to 15.8% in 1999. There has also been a reduction in absolute terms since the private sector, with 1,310,921 students enrolled at secondary level in 1980, accounted for 1,224,364 students in 1999. In the same year, the aggregated progression, repetition and drop-out rates were 77%, 17% and 6%, respectively.

### **Assessing learning achievement nationwide**

The Ministry of Education is doing its utmost to institutionalize a process for the global evaluation of the education system, thus providing greater guidance in terms of the objectives, the performance, and, above all, the quality of the system.

A National System for the Evaluation of Basic Education (SAEB) has been created, and three national surveys were held—in 1990, 1993, 1995 and 1997. The objectives of the original proposal were broadened in 1995 to include secondary education and the private education system. More accurate techniques to measure performance and students' proficiency levels were adopted, making it possible for skills scales to be built. New tools for data surveys on socioeconomic, cultural traits and students' study habits were incorporated. All the twenty-seven units of the Brazilian Federation participated in the 1995 survey.

The SAEB, one of the principal sources of producing information concerning primary education across the country, provides data on the level of performance and the acquisition of skills by the pupil (on the basis of the school, the socioeconomic and the cultural context) in terms of the skills in reading and interpretation of texts, problem-solving and the use of mathematical concepts.

In 1995, tests were given to a selected sample of 95,000 pupils of public and private schools in Grades IV and VIII of primary education and in Forms II and III of secondary education. The research had different focal points, such as: structural and sociopolitical aspects of the school and the school organization; psychological, pedagogical, and technical aspects, including the instruments for the evaluation of pupils; teacher-student relations; class dynamics; and the resources used in the learning process. In addition to the pupils, 3,400 directors, 7,000 teachers and 3,600 schools were also studied. The results can be utilized by educational administrators, researchers and teachers, and will also be available on the Internet. The analysis of the results will assist actions which aim to correct the distortions identified and to improve teaching.

The main results of the 1997 SAEB confirm tendencies identified in earlier surveys, the more important ones being as follows:

- Heterogeneity of education systems: there are great differences among schools, both in terms of infrastructure and available pedagogic resources, and with regard to the progress made by students. One can note considerably different averages in proficiency levels between regions, educational networks, urban and rural areas, as well as within each state.



- Disharmony between the proposed curriculum and the performance of the students: the results confirm the scant effectiveness of the proposed or indicated curriculum. Few students showed a performance that comes close to what is desirable as far as the curricular proposal is concerned. For the whole of the subjects evaluated, data point to the wide gap that seemingly exists between what is proposed in the curricula and what the students are actually capable of learning and achieving. In general, students' performance falls short of what is recommended for the stage of education they are attending. This trend becomes especially pronounced in the second cycle of primary education and at the secondary level.
- The age/grade gap impacts negatively on the students' progress: the performance of students older than the age recommended for their grade tends to be inferior to that of students of the proper age. Based on this, it may be stated that failing a student, rather than giving a new opportunity for him/her to learn, eventually becomes a hurdle in the path of his/her development.
- The association between the student's performance and the teachers' qualification: the higher the teachers' qualification, the higher the average performance of students. However, it is most surprising to find that the average proficiency of students with teachers who have higher education but lack teacher training is higher than that of students whose teachers have gone through regular teacher training courses but are not college graduates. This phenomenon is common to all the grades and subjects evaluated.
- The parents' educational level bears an influence on the student's performance: one notices a growing tendency in the average proficiency of students in accordance with the father's or mother's level of education, which shows the influence of socio-economic factors in the learning process (National Institute for Educational Studies and Research, 1999).

The National Examination for Courses of Study, established in 1995, is another element of the evaluation process. Its purpose is to provide information to be used in decision-making and in the design of activities to improve undergraduate courses. The examination is meant to complement broader assessments of institutions and courses at the higher education level; such assessments analyze the determining factors that affect the quality and efficiency of teaching, research and extension activities. All students who are completing their undergraduate studies will sit the examination.

The results will play a complementary role, and must be associated with more sweeping sets of data that are used in the evaluation process and that ensure the formulation of suitable policies for the education sector. The Programme for the Institutional Assessment of Brazilian Universities (PAUIB); the Programme for the Assessment of Undergraduate Courses by the Commission of Education Experts; the Secretariat for Higher Education (SESU); and the System of Statistics in Education (SEEC) are examples of other channels for the production of qualitative and quantitative indicators that, when studied in conjunction with the information related to the examination, should offer substantive input for broader contextual analyses.



## Higher education

The objectives of higher education are: the development of the sciences, arts and letters; the training of professionals at a higher level; and research. These objectives are achieved through teaching, research and extension activities, encompassing undergraduate and post-graduate studies and/or specialization, further training, master's and doctoral studies. Higher education is provided by private and public institutions of higher learning. From the legal point of view, there is no difference in the degrees granted by these categories of institutions.

By the end of the 1990s the higher education network was comprised of 851 institutions, of which 127 (15%) are universities (59 private), 87 (10%) are federations of integrated schools and colleges (84 private), and 637 (75 %) are isolated institutions (633 private). In 1998, the overall rate of tertiary-level enrolment reached 15.5%; the net enrolment ratio was only 7.6%. Between 1992 and 2002 Brazil's higher education institutions (IES) underwent a rapid and surprising period of growth, especially in the private sector, as shown in the tables below:

### H.E. Institutions (IES)

	1992	2002	Δ (%)
Number of IES	893	1,637	83.31
Number of public IES	227	195	-12.16
Number of private IES	665	1442	114.9
Percentage of public institutions	25.4%	11.9%	-53.15
Percentage of private institutions	74.6%	88.1%	18.10

Source: Secretaria de Educação Superior 2004.

### Students Enrolled in IES

	1992	2002	Δ (%)
Numbers Enrolled in Public IES	629,662	1,051,655	67
Numbers Enrolled in Private IES	906,126	2,428,258	168
Percentage Enrolled in Public IES	41%	30.2%	-26.34
Percentage Enrolled in Private IES	59%	69.8%	18.30

Source: Secretaria de Educação Superior 2004.

### Teaching Staff in IES

	1992	2002	Δ (%)
Numbers of Teachers in Public IES	72,242	84,006	16.3%
Numbers of Teachers in Private IES	62,161	143,838	131.4%
Percentage of Teachers in Public IES	53.8%	36.9%	-31.41
Percentage of Teachers in Private IES	46.2%	63.1%	36.58

Source: Secretaria de Educação Superior 2004.

Public higher education is free, supported by government funds and offered predominantly in the daytime (although enrolment in night courses has expanded significantly). Private institutions charge tuition fees and offer predominantly night courses. In addition to the funds earmarked for their support and operation, the federal government provides financial assistance programmes to the public institutions,



through support to projects to improve the quality of teaching—support for undergraduate and extension programmes, as well as institutional assessment projects.

One million of the 1.7 million undergraduate students are enrolled in universities. There is a strong concentration of enrolment in the area of applied social sciences, which includes law, administration and economics, followed by the area of human sciences, where the predominant courses are psychology and teacher training (at the licence level). Private higher education institutions hold the absolute predominance in the area of applied social sciences, while there is a relative balance between public and private offerings in the other areas, with the exception of agrarian sciences, where public education is predominant.

The Ministry of Education and Sports is the agency responsible for the national higher education policy; its role as co-ordinator includes the implementation and supervision of the activities. Higher education institutions—universities, federations of schools, integrated colleges and isolated schools—are certified, evaluated and recognized by the Executive branch. Their functioning depends on a favourable decision of the National Council for Education in the case of private institutions and those supported by the federal government, and of the state education councils—when the institutions are maintained by the state and municipal governments.

The ideal model for an institution of higher learning is the university, characterized by flexibility, universality of fields of knowledge and the development of research associated with teaching. Nevertheless, the major challenge facing the university is the task of placing the issues of teaching, research and extension, and, above all, the profile of undergraduate offerings, within the framework of its own pedagogical programme.

A draft bill was prepared by the Ministry of Education and Sports in conjunction with representatives of various sectors, to define the autonomy of universities and other institutions of higher learning. The text of the bill establishes that universities shall enjoy “didactic-scientific autonomy and autonomy in terms of financial and assets management.”

The didactic-scientific autonomy will be implemented by allowing the institution to set its own teaching, scientific, technological, artistic and cultural goals; to define its own projects and lines of research; and to organize its own courses and educational programmes. Administrative autonomy encompasses the capacity to define the internal organization of the institution in the most convenient way, as well as general administrative policies, the elaboration of its statutes and regulations, the process used to appoint its leaders and to define its staff and career requirements. Financial management and assets autonomy consists in proposing and implementing its own budget, while obeying the financial constraints imposed by the body that supports the university, whether it be public or private.

Evaluations are essential in terms of the basic institutional mandate, not just for the institutions being assessed, but also in the case of all the bodies in the national system of education. Such evaluations will greatly influence any policies and guidelines to be set forth. In compliance with Law No. 9.131/95, the MEC has



instituted the National System for the Evaluation of Courses, designed to provide additional support for the periodic evaluation of institutions and undergraduate courses in higher education institutions by using broad procedures and criteria that will encourage an increase of the quality and the efficiency of teaching, research and extension activities.

Among other evaluation procedures and criteria, examinations will be held each year on the basis of the minimal curricular content required for each course. The results obtained by students taking these exams will also serve as a parameter for the evaluation of the institution. As to the master's and doctoral programmes, systematic evaluation has already been in place for twenty years. The periodic assessments gauge the ranking of the courses, that are graded A to E, with A standing for academic excellence.

The Foundation for the Co-ordination of the Enhancement of Staff in Higher Education (CAPES), created primarily to co-ordinate efforts that seek to improve the quality of teaching staff in higher education institutes, operates a system to monitor and evaluate the graduate courses in Brazil. Master's and doctoral degree courses are assessed by committees of specialists, on the basis of information contained in standardized forms provided to CAPES annually by the institutions themselves, as well as information in the reports on the consultants periodic visits. In 1996, CAPES concluded its evaluation of 1,128 master's degree courses and 598 doctoral degree courses. Forty-two evaluation committees met to examine the performance of these courses for the 1994-95 biennium. The purpose of such efforts is to guarantee the necessary conditions for the effective consolidation of different, complementary assessment procedures, as indispensable mechanisms for the review and supervision of education policies at every level.

The assessment of universities' performance is a means to review and enhance their academic and social programmes, while encouraging a constant improvement in the quality and the pertinence of the activities implemented. The institutional assessment indicators encompass teaching, academic production, extension activities and university administration, all considered to be key areas. Additional indicators may be added within the framework of each institution, to cover aspects such as quality of life on campus, interaction with the local community or with the scientific community. In the 1994-95 period fifty-five universities participated in the Programme for the Institutional Evaluation of Brazilian Universities (PAIUB). Ninety universities participated in the 1995-96 evaluation.

In order to improve the evaluation system for higher education, the government has set up the National System of Higher Education Evaluation (SINAES), instituted by Law No. 10,861 of 2004; its aim is to ensure the existence of a national process for evaluating higher education courses and the academic performance of students. The law is based on the need to promote the improved quality of higher education, guiding the increase of places, the permanent improvement of its institutional efficiency and effectiveness both academically and socially, and especially increasing its social commitments and responsibilities.

The system referred to is founded on external evaluation carried out by a committee of specialists, and the guided self-evaluation of institutions carried out by



the teaching establishments themselves. The quality of undergraduate courses will be checked by means of the Evaluation of Teaching Situations (ACE) performed by visits from committees of specialists in the respective areas of knowledge. The process will link evaluation and regulation by a process of identifying the merits and worth of institutions both public and private, being guided by the measure in which “public mission” of higher education has been achieved. One of the aims that must be emphasised is the institution’s social responsibility as well as the public nature of all the events, data and results of the evaluation procedures, based on judgments of academic quality. The results of these evaluations will form the basic frame of reference for the processes of regulation and supervision that must be implemented in order to carry out the state’s regulatory function.

The National Committee for the Evaluation of Higher Education (CONAES) is the national organ for co-ordinating and supervising the SINAES and its main task is to evaluate the dynamics, procedures and mechanisms of institutional evaluation of courses and student performance, to establish directives for the organisation and nomination of evaluation committees and to make recommendations, formulate proposals for developing higher education institutions based on the results of evaluation, to link with state education systems in order to decide on common actions and criteria for the evaluation and supervision of higher education, to submit to the Minister of State for Education every year a report on courses in which students were given the National Examination of Student Performance (ENAD). The SINAES is one of the pillars of higher education reform and as such is an integral and indissoluble part of other pillars such as university autonomy and finance.

## Special education

The Ministry of Education and Sports is responsible for the co-ordination, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of activities within the sphere of national policies for special education. Such policies address the needs of persons with disabilities, with specific behaviour patterns (problem behaviour) and special skills (gifted persons). All these people are, as a group, generically named persons with special needs. The services range from nursery-level programmes to those at the highest educational levels. They are conceived and developed in line with general principles that provide guidelines for educational activities. Furthermore, they also follow the specific tenets of standardization, individualization and integration.

According to the 2000 Demographic Census carried out by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE), disabled people make up 14.5% of the Brazilian population. That is, about 24.6 million people in the country have at least one of the handicaps listed in the Census questionnaire. More than two million of those with at least one handicap are in the age group 12-20 years.

Special education is handled in a decentralized and co-participatory way, in conjunction with state and municipal authorities, as well as non-governmental organizations. Federal activities are supplementary in nature. There are, however, two institutions at the federal level: the Benjamin Constant Institute (for the blind) and the National Institute for the Education of the Hearing Impaired. These institutions offer educational services and training for the labour market; they also provide technical



assistance to the state education systems and organizations that are active in such areas, particularly human resources training programmes.

At the state level, the secretariats of education have programmes designed specifically to promote educational opportunities tailored for students with special needs. Co-operative arrangements involving establishments that offer higher education are being developed at all three levels of government in order to provide for the integration of special-education students or to provide the proper training for professionals.

Special educational services are available in every state in Brazil, but especially in the state capitals and the largest municipalities in the country.

Despite the efforts to promote their integration into regular schools, most students (55%) are still registered in specialized institutions. The northern region shows larger numbers of students with special needs in standard programmes. The greatest share of specialized services are concentrated in the south, south-east and mid-west regions.

Students are enrolled into special programmes after screening on a case-by-case basis by a multidisciplinary team. Such screening can be carried out at the pre-school level or in primary schools at any grade level.

The basic curriculum draws on the primary education syllabus and is structured around a common core of courses determined at the national level. The content is adapted and adjusted in accordance with the requirements of the students, and is also partially diversified to reflect local possibilities and needs. The care provided is offered on a preferential basis (depending on the needs of each student) in schools that form part of the ordinary education system or in specialized institutions, both public and private.

Care at the pre-school level (age group 4-6 years) is available in nineteen units of the federation. Such assistance is provided in the public and private school systems in an integrated or exclusive manner. In the case of the Brazilian college entrance examinations (a pre-requisite for higher education), tests are tailored to fit the needs of the disabled person. Despite the efforts of the government, the number of students with special needs who reach the universities is still negligible, because they not only have to pass the entrance exam, but also still face great difficulties during their studies.

Most children with physical disabilities, as well as gifted children, are integrated into the regular school system without any major constraint. Gifted children attend ordinary classes in the regular system quite easily. There are, therefore, no special schools in the country for their basic education, although resource rooms are available to enrich and enhance the curriculum. Children with mental handicaps are either integrated into the regular school system beginning in nursery school or else are sent to special schools. The programmes for these pupils usually involves partial integration, by providing special classes in the regular systems and/or by providing exclusive education in special public and private schools.



The educational programmes vary after the student reaches the age of 14, depending on educational attainments and his/her potential. When students are not in a position to continue their primary education, they enrol into educational workshops under the Education for the Workplace programme. These workshops offer pre-vocational activities complemented by other academic, sports and social activities.

Many students, however, do participate in internships or courses offered by public or private companies in their communities, such as the National Service for Industrial Apprenticeship (SENAI), the National Service for Commercial Apprenticeship (SENAC), and other organizations offering Education for the Workplace programmes. Those students who are not capable of entering the labour market, develop semi-vocational activities in production units supervised by secretariats of education.

In 1998, government action was concentrated on enhancing pedagogical practices in special education. The result was the publication of the document *Curricular adaptations*, which defines a strategy for assisting students with special needs and orients the educational system in the process of constructing 'education in diversity'. In the same year, the government re-encouraged the provision of training programmes for the educational community and stepped up its actions in universities to ensure a greater involvement of teacher training professionals in issues related to disabilities.

In 1998, there were about 337,000 students enrolled in special education at the basic education level, distributed as follows: 53.8% with mental disabilities; 12.6% with multiple disabilities; 12.6% with hearing problems; 4.9% with physical disabilities; 4.6% with visual problems; and 2.7% with typical behavioural problems. Only 0.4% were highly skilled or exceptionally gifted, and 8.5% had some other kind of disability (National Institute for Educational Studies and Research, 1999). In 2003, the enrolment of students with special educational needs in the stages and type of basic education rose to more than 504,000 students.

Of the 5,507 municipalities in Brazil, 2,739 (or 49.1%) were already offering special education in 1998. Regional differences are enormous. In the north-east only 21.7% of all municipalities offered special educational programmes, whereas the percentage was 58.1% in the south, 48.6% in the south-east, 42.5% in the north, and 42.8% in the mid-west regions.

As for type of institution, 43.9% of all special education schools in 1999 were state-owned, 29.3% were municipal, 26.7% were private and 0.1% were managed by the federal administration. Enrolments were distributed as follows: 56.1% in private schools, 28.1% in state-run schools, 15.5% in municipal schools and 0.3% in federal schools. In this regard, special mention must be made of the fact that the 56.1% private provision can be mainly explained by the inaction of the government in this area for many years. In 1999, provision by level of teaching showed the following pattern: 91,136 children in early childhood education; 142,702 in primary education; 1,142 in secondary education; 9,178 in adult education. Provision for 67,196 learners is classified as 'other'. Between 1988 and 1999 there was a growth in enrolments of pupils with special needs. The greatest growth took place in municipal and private schools. In 1988 the municipal system had about 11,000 pupils; in 1999 it enrolled

almost 49,000, an increase of 325%. In the private sector the increase was 151%. Individual state systems showed a growth far lower than the national average. (National Institute for Educational Studies and Research, 2001).

In 2003, the enrolment of students with special educational needs in the stages and type of basic education rose amounted to more than 504,000 students, as shown in the table below:

### Enrolments of pupils with special educational needs by sector and type of provision (2003)

Type of Provision	Enrolled in Public Sector	Percentage Share in Public Sector	Enrolled in Private Sector	Percentage Share in Private Sector	Total	Percentage Share of Types of Provision
In Mainstream Classes in Mainstream Schools	137,185	94.5%	7,955	5.5%	145,141	28.8%
In Special classes or in Special schools	139,076	38.8%	219,823	61.2%	358,898	71.2%
<b>Total Enrolment</b>	<b>276,261</b>	<b>54.8%</b>	<b>227,778</b>	<b>45.2%</b>	<b>504,039</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: School Census MEC/INEP 2003.

Between 1998 and 2003, the country significantly increased the participation of special needs pupils in classes with other pupils in ordinary classes in ordinary schools: from 13% of enrolments in 1998 (43,923 pupils) to 28.8% in 2003 (145,141 pupils). In spite of this progress, the Government is aware of the challenges inherent in the process of change: there is resistance to be overcome in the country arising from fear, ignorance and prejudice; there are towns and schools that are not making a complete change; there are barriers that cause the pupil with special educational needs to fail to reach the highest levels of education – 91.5% of those enrolled are in the initial stages: early childhood education, literacy classes and primary education (both for children and for adults). In addition, in many of Brazil's 5,560 municipalities, pupils with special needs are not enrolled in school. In 1998, only 49% of them had enrolled at least once; in 2003 the number was 71%. The role of central Government in providing special education has resulted in little over 50% of enrolments, while the School Census shows that about 85% of Brazilian public schools are maintained by public money.

## Private education

As mentioned, in 1994 the majority of pupils (88.4%) attended public primary schools in urban areas. The private sector accounted for only 11.6% of the places available in primary schools (about 10% in 1999) and its participation has been decreasing since the early 1970s.

The public network now accounts for 82.4% of secondary education enrolments, absorbing the impact of the expansion witnessed in the 1990s. On the



other hand, the private network has seen a reduction in its participation at this level of education. This phenomenon has been greatly intensified over the last two decades. In fact, the proportion of secondary school students attending private institutions fell from 46.5% in 1980 to 17.6% in 1998. There was also a reduction in absolute terms, since the figure of 1,310,921 high school students enrolled in private schools in 1980 dropped to 1,226,641 in 1998 (National Institute for Educational Studies and Research, 1999).

As far as special education is concerned, private schools accounts for 46.9% of total enrolment (*ibid.*).

## Means of instruction, equipment and infrastructure

The school systems of the states, municipalities and of the Federal District are directly responsible for the instructional resources, equipment and infrastructure of their schools. Federal higher education institutions, technical and agri-technical schools and federal technological education centres are under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education.

In addition, the Ministry, through the National Educational Development Fund (FNDE), develops programmes which facilitate the acquisition of material by the units of the Federation, in order to enhance the teaching-learning process at the primary level. The following programmes can be mentioned:

- Financing of the Annual Work Plan: through the presentation of an Annual Work Plan (PTA) by the units of the federation, the federal government finances the construction and enlargement of schools, the acquisition of furniture and equipment, and of school and teaching materials.
- Programme of Technical Assistance: through this programme funds are allocated to state and municipal secretariats of education for the acquisition of television sets, videocassette recorders, parabolic antennas, and a box of videotapes for larger schools.
- Programme of Production and Distribution of Educational Radio and Television Programmes.

As far as the National Textbook Programme is concerned, the following aspects deserve mention:

- the expansion of the coverage to benefit children in Grades V-VIII; thus, all the Grades I-VIII pupils in public primary schools are being covered simultaneously for the very first time; in 1996, 110 million textbooks were distributed compared to 60 million in 1995;
- the operation set up by the Student Aid Foundation (FAE) to ensure that textbooks will have reached all the schools across the country by the beginning of the school year.





In 2000, almost 110 million textbooks were distributed for use in the 2001 school year, benefiting about 32 million pupils in 170,000 public schools. The latest innovation in the programme is the distribution of Portuguese language dictionaries to pupils in the first grades of primary school, in addition to teaching material already distributed by the Ministry of Education. In 2005 about 128 million copies will be given out to 31.9 million pupils, representing an investment of R\$620 million. The main social impact this programme produces is in terms of the providing all pupils enrolled in primary education with the materials they need for their schoolwork, so that the pupil, having access to this material, has more chance of succeeding in school. Another important effect concerns the arrival of book before the start of the school year, which definitely reduces the chances of dropping out and truancy because pupils start the term with the necessary materials when classes begin. Bearing in mind that the book is an essential instrument for learning, after 2006 the programme will be extended to secondary education, starting with the distribution of mathematics and Portuguese textbooks in the states of the North and Northeast.

The National Programme for School Meals, already fully decentralized, covers some 36.5 million children at the primary and early childhood levels and provides funds to states and municipalities to permit them to provide one meal per day. In June 2003 the Federal Government approved the extension of school meal funding to pupils enrolled in crèches in the public or charity systems. Provision is made in the same way and with the same conditions specified for pupils in pre-school and primary education, so that if teaching in crèches is not interrupted and stops only at weekends and on national holidays, the money covers a provision of 259 school days. As for the *per capita* amount, the sum of R\$0.18 per day was established, since children in crèches need more attention, mainly in the area of nutrition, since this is a phase of intense human development and growth. Also in 2003, special provision was implemented for pupils in indigenous schools.

The National Information Technology Programme in Education (*ProInfo*) is basically aimed at democratizing access to modern information and telecommunications technologies. Teacher trainers have been trained through specialization courses offered by universities and in-service teachers have been trained at the Educational Technology Centres (NTEs). These Centres are decentralized facilities that provide technical and pedagogic support and operate as high-level focal points for teacher training activities, providing technical support and taking care of the maintenance of the hardware and software installed in the schools. The central node of the Proinfo is the Educational Technology Experimentation Centre at the Ministry of Education. The numbers involved in the programme up to the year 2000 are impressive: 244 NTEs set up over the whole of Brazil; 31,870 computers provided, of which 25,030 for 2,477 schools and 6,840 for the NTEs; 1,419 'multiplier' teachers and 21,977 teachers trained; and 2.5 million pupils having benefited from the programme. (National Institute for Educational Studies and Research, 2001). The table below summarizes the achievements of *ProInfo*:

## ProInfo Programme

BREAKDOWN	INITIAL TARGETS	REACHED BY 2003
Schools Attended	6,000	4,638
NTE implanted	200	326
Multipliers Trained	1,000	2,169
Teachers Trained	25,000	258,560
Technicians Trained	6,000	10,087
Managers Trained	No initial forecast	9,085
Computers Installed	105,000	53,895

Source: Secretaria de Educação a Distância 2004.

In 2003 the Ministry of Education launched the Digital Interactive *TV Escola* with 100% Brazilian low-cost technology. This is a distance-learning instrument that brings the media together by satellite. Because of its flexibility, Digital Interactive TV can carry and store information, teaching materials and instructions and send and receive requests and suggestions, thus opening up a new perspective of interactivity with its clients and contributing to improving of the quality of education. It is worth noting that a pilot project is being inaugurated in seven Brazilian states: Acre, Amazonas, Ceará, Espírito Santo, Goiás, Mato Grosso do Sul, and Rio Grande do Sul. *TV Escola* provides 15 hours of high-quality educational programmes, re-transmitting videos from Brazil and the rest of the world. The programmes are repeated to give schools different times to record the programmes. At weekends the Open School goes on the air – a special selection that aims to meet the interests and needs of the community.

The National School Transport Programme's aim is to contribute financially to municipalities to help the daily transport of pupils in public primary schools who live in rural areas and thus enable them to reach school and to stay in school, and it also provides a service for pupils with special needs. The Programme's budget has risen from R\$51 million to R\$246 million. In addition to this, R\$5 million has been earmarked for NGOs that run specialised primary schools. This measure comprises provision for 5,359 municipalities with 3,219,975 pupils, 1,123,746 of them in the state public system and 2,096,229 in the municipal public system.

## Adult and non-formal education

Illiteracy in Brazil today is clearly a circumscribed phenomenon. On the one hand, the southeast region shows an illiteracy rate of 5.36% for people aged 15+ out of a total population of 43,155,676. On the other hand, according to 1991 data, the northeast region shows an illiteracy rate of 37.6% for the same age group out of a total population of 25,752,993.

The current dynamism of the production system, having introduced new techniques, now demands workers with a certain level of education. The government

has been encouraging companies to become involved in the efforts to reduce illiteracy and foster schooling for their workers in their own workplace. The Ministry of Education and Sports provides the educational supplies for the teachers and students. A prize called Education for Quality at Work was created as part of this programme.

Regular courses are carried out at night (in the classroom), targeting young people and adults who work during the day and who have not had access to education or dropped out from school. There are also supplementary courses (in the classroom time) targeting literate young people and adults who wish to conclude their primary or secondary education. The services offered, which can be tailored to the student's needs on request, are provided at supplementary education centres. The course content is usually presented in the form of handouts. The procedures for evaluation and advancement are similar to those used in the regular courses and involve the use of tests and examinations.

Government attention to youth and adult education (*Educação de jovens e adultos*—EJA) was consolidated in 1997 with the publication of three crucially important documents: *Proposta curricular para a educação de jovens e adultos* [A proposed curriculum for youth and adult education], *Elementos para uma avaliação diagnóstica de níveis e conteúdos de alfabetismo adulto* [Elements for a diagnostic evaluation of the levels and contents of adult literacy], and *Manual de Orientação para a implantação do programa de educação de jovens e adultos do ensino fundamental* [Manual for the implementation of the youth and adult primary education programme]. Produced in partnership with a wide range of organizations, municipal and state education secretariats and universities, these publications form part of a set of didactic and support material for EJA students and teachers.

Set up in 2003, the “Literate Brazil” programme is an attempt to strengthen partnerships between government and organised civil society, on behalf of young people and adults who have not had access to education, and which are acting together to mobilise society in favour of literacy training. Seeing illiteracy as the result of social inequality in Brazil, and seeing education as an important element in overcoming this inequality, it is hoped to be able to ensure the right of access on the part of young people and adults to the first stage of literacy instruction, which should then extend to direct access to the whole of basic education.

The programme includes setting up joint actions between the Federal Government, states, municipalities, universities, private enterprise, NGOs, international organs and other institutions as a way of training, organising and empowering the nation's efforts in literacy teaching and schooling as the basic rights of every citizen, independent of age. Linking the programme to adult education is an attempt to strengthen policies that promote the continuity of participation/presence of the young person and adult in the education system after the initial stage of learning to read and write. The aim of the programme is to reach the 16 million illiterate Brazilians aged 15 or over, by 2006. In 2003 MEC approved 190 projects working with 1,966,165 young people and adults, spending a total of about R\$176 million.

Among the adult education programmes, “Making a School” aims is to support and broaden education systems to provide adult education in those pockets of poverty where the majority of young people and adults who did not finish primary



education are found. From 2004 onward a strong link will be created between the “Making a School” and the “Literate Brazil” programmes. MEC will provide technical and financial help to state and municipal governments to enable the continuity of schooling for young people and adults finishing the first phase of schooling. To this end the “Making a School” programme was extended in 2004. It now serves 1,790,119 students in the municipalities that were participating in 2003 as well as more than 13,869 literacy students enrolled in the “Literate Brazil” programme in 307 municipalities that did not previously belong to the scheme. Thus the two programmes are linked and plan joint actions at the three levels of government to give technical and financial support to state and municipal governments in broadening the provision of places for literacy students to continue their education. In 2003, “Making a School” served a total of 2,015 municipalities in 23 states, working with 1,549,004 young people and adults and investing more than R\$387 million. In 2004, 2,322 municipalities in 26 states will be supported, with 1,920,998 students and an investment of R\$420 million. The money represents R\$250.00 per student enrolled in adult education, according to School Census data for the previous year.

Data relating to illiteracy in Brazil show that the population without or with less than one year of schooling is highly concentrated in the age group 40-49 (13% in 1999), and especially in the age group 50+ (29.6%). In 1999, the illiteracy rate at the national level was estimated at 13.3%. In 1991, year of the most recent nation-wide data, only 11.9% of the white population was illiterate, compared to 27.8% of mulattos and 31.5% of blacks.

## Teaching staff

According to available information, in 1994 there were 5,415 establishments offering teaching certificate courses for teaching in pre-schools and in Grades I-IV of primary education. Enrolment in teaching certificate programmes represents 15.5% of enrolment in secondary school, with 790,200 students, showing a rate of growth of 6.3% compared with the previous year.

For the period 1988-1993, the number of teaching certificate graduates from secondary school showed an increase of 14.5%, with 141,581 students graduating in 1993. This increase, however, was mainly in the north and southeast regions. In the remaining regions of the country, the growth was negative or irregular.

At the higher education level, an analysis of data concerning the number of institutions shows a decline, from 918 to 851 units between 1990 and 1994. The number of establishments which offer certification also decreased from 532 to 504, during the same period, as a consequence of the merging of several establishments, which became new universities.

The required qualifications for teaching at the different educational levels, as determined by Law No. 5692/71, are as follows:

- Primary education (Grades I-IV): specific certification from secondary school;



- Primary education (Grades V-VIII): specific certification from higher education at the level of undergraduate studies, represented by a teaching certificate obtained in a short course;
- Primary and secondary education: specific certification from higher education at the level of undergraduate studies, corresponding to a full teaching certificate.

Teachers referred to in item (a) may obtain qualification to teach in Grades V and VI by means of additional studies of a duration and minimum content determined by the concerned education councils. Teachers referred to in item (b) may teach up to Form II of secondary education after additional correspondence studies for at least one academic year.

Programmes for primary education teaching certificates and for additional studies are available at universities and higher education institutions offering full-time courses. In smaller communities, such programmes may be offered by departments, centres, schools, institutes and other types of establishments created or adapted for this purpose, if they have been authorized and recognized by the competent authorities. Secondary education teachers must obtain a qualification through a higher education level course, corresponding to a teaching degree, which means a mastery of content in the specialized area, in addition to mastery of teaching materials.

Teacher training in specialized technical areas of instruction follows two schemes:

- Scheme I, for holders of higher education diplomas related to the intended area of certification, subject to completing training in teaching methodologies (structure and functioning of secondary school teaching; psychology of education; didactic and practice of teaching);
- Scheme II, for holders of secondary education technical diplomas related to the intended area of certification, subject to completion of courses related to the intended area, in addition to the training in teaching methodologies required in Scheme I.

In accordance with the National Education Guidelines and Framework Law (LDB) of 1996, training for primary education teachers will be at the higher education level (universities and higher education institutions). Training at the secondary level will be permitted for teaching in pre-schools and in the initial years of primary education. The LDB also establishes that teacher training, with the exception of higher education, must include teaching practice for at least 300 hours, and that the training of secondary school teachers will be at the undergraduate level, preferably in master's and doctoral programmes.

The figures on the teaching staff at various educational levels presented below, refer to the number of positions and not to the number of teachers, as one person may occupy more than one teaching position.



In 1994, at the pre-school level there were 274,500 teaching positions, of which 72.8% were filled by teachers with teaching certificates (12.5% by teachers with degrees in higher education, and 60.3% by teachers with teaching certificates from secondary schools). The remaining positions were filled as follows: 0.9% by teachers with a higher education degree, although without a teaching certificate; 2.6% by teachers with completed secondary education; 11.3% by teachers with completed primary education; and 12.5% by teachers who had not completed primary education. In 1999, about 22% of teachers had a higher education degree.

At the primary level, there were 1.4 million teaching positions in 1994, of which 79.7% were filled by teachers with teaching certificates (40% with secondary school teaching certificates, and 39.7% with teaching certificates from higher education schools). Among the teachers without specific teaching certification, 7.9% had incomplete certification or training in other areas of higher education; 1.7% had incomplete secondary school teaching certificates; 2.6% had completed secondary education; and 3.3% had completed primary education. A further 5.1% of teachers did not complete primary education.

Of a total of 320,000 teaching positions at the secondary level in 1994, 73.7% of teachers had higher education teaching certificates. Among the non-certified, 8% were trained in other areas in higher education; 10% had completed and 0.1% had not completed secondary education; 0.3% had completed and 0.1% had not completed primary education.

At the higher education level, there were 141,400 teaching positions at the undergraduate programme level filled by professors with the following qualifications: 15.1% with doctorates; 23.7% with master's degrees; 35.6% with undergraduate specializations; 25.4% with bachelor's degrees; and 0.19% without a completed bachelor's degree.

Teacher workload in public education (pre-school, primary or secondary school) is defined in conformance with the relevant legislation—i.e. teaching statutes or juridical staff rules. The contracts are generally established for teaching positions of twenty, twenty-five or thirty hours weekly, including out-of-class work.

As a single professor may exercise more than one teaching position, the number of weekly working hours can vary from twenty to sixty, these being performed in one or more teaching institutions, by means of a single contract, or one with several employers. Furthermore, at the higher education level the number of working hours is determined according to the contract between the professor and the relevant institution, with the public sector setting such contracts in the modalities of: part-time (twenty hours), full-time (forty hours), or exclusive commitment. Depending on the policy of each establishment, working hours may encompass (in varying proportions) teaching, extension courses, and research activities.

Teachers' salaries at the pre-school, primary and secondary levels exhibit substantial variations, depending on the location, the administrative status, the working regulations, the number of working hours, and the formal qualifications of the teacher. Nevertheless, there are no salary differences due to gender discrimination.

Data collected in June 1996 showed that, for teaching positions involving twenty teaching hours per week in public state schools, monthly salaries ranged from R\$63.21 (teachers with secondary school diplomas, starting positions in the State of Acre) to R\$1,259.86 (teachers with master's degrees, at the end of their career, in the Federal District). In national terms, the 1997 Teacher Census gives an average salary of R\$425.60 for grades 1-4 teachers. The teachers are equally divided between those earning R\$400.00 or less and those earning more than this (48.6%). Analysing these figures by administrative authority, we find the following results: federal public sector teachers receive, on average, R\$1,257.32 per month; those in the private sector, R\$587.74; those in the state public sector, R\$517.84; and those in the municipal public system, R\$303.51. The variation in the salary scales of grades 5-8 teachers, by administrative authority, follows a very similar pattern, although the average salary is very much higher (R\$605.41) and shows less difference between average salaries in the state system (R\$599.71) and those in the municipalities (R\$502.06). Again the highest average salary is paid in the small network of the federal public sector (R\$1,384.88) which is well above the average private sector salary (R\$765.17).

The improvements brought about by FUNDEF in the distribution of financial resources for education also produced better trained and paid teachers, as a direct result of the obligation imposed on states and municipalities to allocate at least 60% of the funds to the salaries paid to teachers. A survey carried out by the Ministry of Education showed that the average salary paid to teachers in public schools increased by 12.9% between December 1997 and August 1998. Data show that the average salary gains were higher in municipal networks (18.4%), as compared to state-level networks (7.7%). From the regional point of view, the highest average increase was registered in the municipal school network of the north-east region (49.6%).

The tables below show the average teacher salary according to the Teacher Census of 1997:

**Primary education teachers (Grades I-IV). Average wages in R\$ by type of institution (1997)**

Brazil and Regions	Average wages (in R\$) by type of institution				
	Total	Federal	State	Municipal	Private
Brazil	425.60	1,257.32	517.84	303.51	587.74
North	360.77	1,308.34	462.67	226.53	499.54
North-east	231.17	771.23	343.58	163.88	287.45
South-east	613.97	1,380.75	618.34	537.27	774.61
South	460.12	962.80	512.94	397.98	678.57
Mid-west	447.55	1,135.90	550.97	300.85	541.11

Source: National Institute for Educational Studies and Research, 1999; (average exchange rate in 1997: US\$ 1 = R\$ 1.20).

**Primary education teachers (Grades V-VIII). Average wages in R\$ by type of institution (1997)**

Brazil and Regions	Average wages (in R\$) by type of institution				
	Total	Federal	State	Municipal	Private
Brazil	605.41	1,384.88	599.71	502.06	765.62
North	586.37	1,294.16	592.12	412.72	740.95
North-east	372.41	1,148.47	409.51	277.73	394.04
South-east	738.54	1,486.88	694.50	718.08	949.86
South	594.44	1,532.53	589.05	492.90	772.86
Mid-west	584.20	1,133.11	583.72	421.64	735.17

*Source:* National Institute for Educational Studies and Research, 1999; (average exchange rate in 1997: US\$ 1 = R\$ 1.20).

As regards in-service training opportunities and refresher courses, the SAEB data indicate that in the last five years 64.6% of teachers participated in courses related to their subject or field of study, and 54% attended courses on teaching methodologies. In both cases, teachers with higher levels of education had greater access to training.

The objective of the National Network of Research and Development Centres in Education is to increase provision of training opportunities for teachers. Made up of federal and state universities and teacher training institutions, it works in combination with public teaching systems to develop in-service training in the following areas: literacy and writing skills, mathematical and scientific education, human and social sciences, art and physical education, management technologies and educational evaluation.

In addition to projects for continuing education and training, financed annually through the National Fund for the Development of Education (FNDE), the Ministry has also implemented the Television School Programme. This system of distance education uses alternative instructional technologies and methodologies. It seeks to enlarge the access to formal education, as well as to develop permanent educational and training programmes on a national scale for teachers and administrators in the public education network, providing conditions for introducing improvements into the curriculum and the teaching-learning processes. For teacher training in specific topics, the Television School Programme uses the programme A Leap into the Future, a set of series which has already shown significant results:





Themes covered by series of programmes	No. of teachers trained
Education for youth and adults	33,505
Literacy	44,385
Primary education	43,500
Special education	39,666
Pre-school education	41,433

Although teacher education programmes offer a certification in school administration, such training is not necessarily a requirement for assuming the administration of a school. The 1993 SAEB survey drew the following profile of directors of primary schools: they were predominantly women (83.1%), with an average age of around 35 years; they had worked an average of 15.2 years in the area of education, of which 6.2 years in administrative positions and 3.5 years as directors of the schools where they were interviewed; more than half of them (53.6%) held a higher education degree and 5.3% had attended only primary school; the great majority of principals (74%) did not hold a degree in school administration; slightly more than half of the directors (51.1%) participated in training courses on school administration in the previous five years.

## Educational research and information

The production of technical and scientific knowledge in the field of education (graduate level programmes in universities and research institutions) is co-ordinated and monitored by the Ministry of Education and Sports. The National Institute for Educational Studies and Research (INEP), under the Secretariat of Evaluation and Educational Information, functions as a centre for reference and dissemination of information on Brazilian education. Its activities include the on-going search for quality in technical/scientific production and the wide dissemination of information. As an agent for promoting change and innovation, the Institute has become a place of permanent interaction and communication between those who produce information and those who are responsible for policy formulation and the administration of education.

In 1995, the Ministry of Education and Sports established the Secretariat of Evaluation and Educational Information (SEDIAE), taking into account the need to define information policies and strategies, and to organize an informational infrastructure, especially in the area of evaluation and educational statistics.

As a strategic and essential resource for the integration of the diverse segments which are active in education, and for providing assistance to the leading agents in the processes of change, information presupposes the existence of the necessary policies for its production, organization and dissemination. The basic concern is to have available, and make accessible, information of high quality, integrity, and precision; information that must be up-to-date, easily understandable, and of general value for the field in question.



The Ministry has attached priority to the production of information in the area of evaluation and statistical data, through the restructuring, in 1995, of the National System of Evaluation of Basic Education (SAEB), and through the implementation of the Integrated System of Educational Information. This system has, as its basic data source, the Educational Census which has been restructured to permit greater speed in the systematization, verification and production of statistical information, educational indicators, and results of the evaluations of undergraduate courses.

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## Web resources

Ministério da Educação [Ministry of Education]: <http://portal.mec.gov.br/> [In Portuguese. Last checked: October 2007.]

Secretarias Estaduais de Educação [links to State Secretariats of Education]: <http://portal.mec.gov.br/index.php?option=content&task=view&id=414&Itemid=569> [In Portuguese. Last checked: October 2007.]

Conselho de Reitores das Universidades Brasileiras [Council of Rectors]: <http://www.crub.org.br/> [In Portuguese. Last checked: October 2007.]

National Council of Education: <http://portal.mec.gov.br/cne/> [In Portuguese. Last checked: October 2007.]

National Institute for Educational Studies and Research: <http://www.inep.gov.br/> [In Portuguese; some information in English and Spanish. Last checked: October 2007.]

*For updated links, consult the Web page of the International Bureau of Education of UNESCO: <http://www.ibe.unesco.org/links.htm>*