

## Extended school day and extracurricular activities offer: policy designs in European countries

## Ampliação da jornada escolar e oferta de atividades extracurriculares: desenhos de políticas em países europeus

## Extensión de la jornada escolar y oferta de actividades extraescolares: diseños de políticas en países europeos

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### ABSTRACT

The article aims to analyze and compare extended school day and extracurricular activities policy designs in European countries. After mapping the policies of the 37 countries that make up the European Commission's Eurydice Network, 6 countries were selected for comparative analysis: Germany, Austria, Spain, France, Italy and Portugal. The comparative study focused on types of extension and political instruments in order to characterize policy designs. Four types of extensions in the school day were found: extracurricular activities that complement and/or are articulated with the school curriculum; supervised care before the school day; supervised care at lunch; supervised after-school care. The comparative research identified several policy designs, with similarities and differences among European countries, highlighting both analogous political choices and different options and strategies related to the way the State regulates, finances and provides extended school day and extracurricular-activity policies.

**Keywords:** Extended school day. Extracurricular activities. Policy Design.

### RESUMO

O artigo tem como objetivo analisar e comparar desenhos de políticas de ampliação da jornada escolar e de oferta de atividades extracurriculares em países europeus. Após mapear as políticas dos 37 países que compõem a Rede Eurydice da Comissão Europeia, 6 países foram selecionados para a análise comparada: Alemanha, Áustria, Espanha, França, Itália e Portugal. O estudo comparado focalizou tipos de extensão e instrumentos políticos, de modo a caracterizar os desenhos das políticas. Quatro tipos de extensão na jornada escolar foram encontrados: atividades

extracurriculares que complementam e/ou se articulam ao currículo escolar; cuidados supervisionados antes da jornada escolar; cuidados supervisionados no almoço; cuidados supervisionados depois da jornada escolar. A investigação comparada identificou vários desenhos de políticas, com similaridades e diferenças entre os países europeus, evidenciando tanto escolhas políticas análogas como opções e estratégias distintas relacionadas à forma como o Estado regula, financia e provisiona as políticas de ampliação da jornada escolar e a oferta de atividades extracurriculares.

**Palavras-chave:** Jornada escolar integral. Atividades extracurriculares. Desenho de políticas.

## RESUMEN

El artículo tiene como objetivo analizar y comparar diseños de políticas de extensión de la jornada escolar y de oferta de actividades extraescolares en países europeos. Tras mapear las políticas de los 37 países que forman parte de la Red Eurydice de la Comisión Europea, se seleccionaron 6 países para el análisis comparativo: Alemania, Austria, España, Francia, Italia y Portugal. El estudio comparativo se centró en los tipos de extensión e instrumentos políticos, con el fin de caracterizar los diseños de políticas. Se encontraron cuatro tipos de extensión en la jornada escolar: actividades extraescolares que complementan y/o se articulan con el currículo escolar; cuidado supervisado antes de la jornada escolar; cuidado supervisado durante el almuerzo; cuidado supervisado después de la jornada escolar. La investigación comparativa identificó varios diseños de políticas, con similitudes y diferencias entre los países europeos, destacando tanto decisiones políticas análogas como distintas opciones y estrategias relacionadas con la forma en que el Estado regula, financia y provisiona las políticas de extensión de la jornada escolar y la oferta de actividades extraescolares.

**Palabras clave:** Extensión de la jornada escolar, Actividades extraescolares, Diseño de políticas.

## INTRODUCTION

The concept of the school day is closely associated with formal teaching time, the compulsory curriculum and compulsory education. However, the continuous movements involving the conceptions of education, school and curriculum have led to constant transformations both in the organization of the school day and in the extension of the school day and/or in the time students spend at school or in articulation with it through extracurricular activities. These movements change the social function of the school and outline new objectives and characteristics for the educational action. Thus, extending the student's time at school does not necessarily mean compulsorily extending the school day; this will depend on how each country defines the school day and the extension of the school day/student's time at school and, consequently, on how public policies in the area are formulated and implemented.

As part of formal education, curricular activities refer to those activities officially provided for by competent laws. The meaning of curriculum is associated with a regulated selection of what should be taught and learned in a given schooling period and involves a series of historical, political, social and cultural elements (Gimeno Sacristán, 2010). That is, the notions of what a curriculum is and what it is compulsory are socially constructed and change over time, depending on each society or country, according to the conceptions of school and education at a given historical moment.

When a country defines what is curricular, it also establishes the meaning of extracurricular activities, that is, activities that do not fit into the school curriculum and which students can also take part.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (Unesco, 2016) glossary conceptualizes extracurricular activities as

A range of activities organized outside of the regular school day, curriculum or course intended to meet learners' interests. These activities can help learners become more involved in their school or community and can help them to develop social and soft skills and to promote wellbeing. These activities can include athletics, sport, voluntary work, photography, drama, music, etc.

This type of activity tends to contribute to improving student learning, offering more opportunities for student training, promoting equity and supporting families in managing work and school hours (Radinger & Boeskens, 2021). These activities favor the development of children, adolescents and young people in the most different aspects: educational, social and psychological (Eccles et al., 2003; Fischer & Theis, 2014).

In view of the continuous transformations in the social function of the school and in its curriculum, the extracurricular activity offer may take place in the school setting itself, within the education system or outside it, under the responsibility of institutions, agents and settings within the scope of the called non-formal education (Trilla, 1998), integrated and/or complementary to school. In some countries, social-educational institutions play important roles in assisting children in the compulsory education phase, in parallel, integrated or even within the education systems. In some contexts, the social-educational functions of these institutions are linked to the history, conceptions and areas of action of education and social pedagogy (Fermoso, 1994), and the relationships between school and non-formal education/social-educational institutions are close.

The extension of the student's time at school also implies the extension of care with the students, highlighting what Pereyra (2005) called "care time", associated with women's participation in the labor market, equality and equity policies, increased social vulnerability and the provision of institutionalized and safe care for children and youth. This time of care is, therefore, a way of reconciling the school day with the families' work day.

Having exposed these initial conceptual elements, we point out that the time students spend at school have been used as an indicator by international organizations to measure results in the field of education. However, to answer the question "how much time do students spend at school", the The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, for example, considers only formal teaching time, and excludes time devoted to extracurricular activities or supervised time before and after school (OECD, 2021), although they may have an impact on student training and the very education systems. In the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) reports of the European Commission, the comparative analyzes focus on the "[...] minimum instruction time recommended for the compulsory education curriculum [...]", that is, the time allocated to extracurricular activities is also not considered. Nevertheless, the European agency informs that

[...] in some countries, schools may be required to make available an additional tuition load, but students are free to decide whether they take advantage of it. This additional workload is often offered in the form of programs aimed at disadvantaged students or underperforming. (Comissão Europeia, 2018, p. 5)

The theme organizing and extending the school day has been part of the political and investigative agenda of many countries in the international scenario, even resulting in comparative research (Tenti Fanfani, 2010; Radinger & Boeskens, 2021). In recent decades, certain convergence has been found among countries regarding formulating and implementing policies that extend students' time at school, in part, a result of globalization processes and the construction of specific agendas for education (Dale, 2004), which does not mean standardization or uniformity in terms of construction of alternatives, due to considerable weight of the historical, social and cultural processes of each country (Escolano Benito, 2000).

The fact is that, in the European scenario, specifically, many countries have been formulating and implementing policies to extend the school day and/or the student's time at school and/or to offer extracurricular activities, in an integrated and/or complementary way to the school institution, which can generate different policy designs (Howlett & Mukherjee, 2014). In this context, we question: what are these policies and their main characteristics? Given the above, the study aims to analyze and compare policy designs for extending the school day and extracurricular activity offer in European countries.

This article is structured as follows: first some studies on policies to extend the school day and/or extracurricular activity offers in the European context are summarized; subsequently methodological procedures of the research are presented; after mapping policies in European countries, policy designs from six countries are systematized, focusing on: types of extension and policy instruments; lastly, in the final considerations, contributions of the research to the area were highlighted.

## CONTEXTUALIZING THE INVESTIGATION

The literature review has indicated studies that mention policies to extend the school day/student's time at school and/or to offer extracurricular activities in the European context. Following, some papers are briefly summarized to contextualize the investigation.

In the European case, beyond the limits of the school day, several countries have traditionally offered extracurricular activities, but it was only at the beginning of the millennium that specific policies and practices began to receive special attention (Fisher et al, 2014). In many countries, the extended school day is related to equity and provides students with the conditions to holistically meet their needs (Radinger & Boeskens, 2021). The idea of the extended school is not new, but the most recent scenario has brought reconfigurations and new objectives to this type of offer (Wilkin et al., 2003).

Through the German Institute for International Research in Education, Radisch and Klieme (2005) published lectures and discussions during the Conference *Full time offers in school: international experiences and empirical research*, held on December 1 and 2, 2003, in Berlin, among which this study highlights: Pulkkinen (2005), Slenning (2005) and Testu (2005).

Pulkkinen (2005) presented information about the *integrated school day* in Finland. According to the author, the Finnish school, traditionally, had a day concentrated in the morning (as well as the German education system), with the offer of extracurricular activities after the school day, such as the so-called *clubs*. However, the offer of these activities has decreased in the country due to the economic crisis. In 1998, this type of service reached about 10% of children under 10 years old, while Sweden and Denmark served 64% and 62%, respectively. The author mentions that, in 2002, the MUKAVA Project (whose acronym mentions the responsibility of adults for children) was created, which had, among its objectives: to reduce the amount of time children spend without adult supervision, and to invest in social-emotional and psychological development of children. According to the author, the offer of extracurricular or supervised activities at the school itself, that is, "integrated": does not require public transportation; makes use of the existing facilities at the school; makes families' lives easier.

In turn, Slenning (2005) reports important historical aspects of how the "Recreation Centers" were consolidated in Sweden, especially from the 1970s, initially as part of social assistance and, currently, as part of the country's education system. Significant changes (in terms of curriculum, organization, planning and professionals) took place in the 1990s to integrate "teaching" and "care".

Testu (2005), who was also present at the Berlin Conference, mentioned the so-called *Local Education Projects* implemented in France to offer artistic, cultural and sports activities to students outside school hours, organized through partnerships with local authorities. According to the

author, both activities carried out at school and those developed outside school can contribute to the child's development; there is no single way to do this, but it is necessary to find a way to better articulate the interests of children and the needs of adults.

Regarding the German case, Pfeifer and Holtappels (2008) refer to *all-day schools* as a way of caring for and teaching children throughout the day and not only from 8 am to 1 pm (part-time school day). The authors analyze the combination between the full-time school model and a new model of teaching work, which generates positive results for students, especially those of lower socioeconomic status.

By developing a state of the art on the school day in the international context, Tenti Fanfani (2010) presents some cases from Latin American countries (Chile, Argentina, Uruguay and Venezuela) and from European countries (Germany, Spain, Finland and France). In addition to the compulsory school day, the study mentions some ways used by countries to extend the student's time at school. In Spain, the author refers to complementary activities (*actividades complementarias*) and extracurricular activities (*actividades extraescolares*). In Germany, he contextualizes the emergence of *all-day schools* and mentions *Horte*, a social-educational institution which, historically, serves children from 6 to 10 years old after school hours.

In a survey for the OECD, Radinger and Boeskens (2021) present case studies from six countries, including Austria, Denmark and Portugal. According to the authors, the selected countries can provide valuable lessons to other nations in terms of extended school day format. In Portugal and Austria, the extension of the school day acts as a social benefit for families; in the case of Denmark, extended school day is a strategy to improve student development and learning. However, in all cases, equity plays an important role. In common, in the three countries, the reforms sought to focus on certain stages of schooling or age groups.

Plantenga and Remery (2013) conducted a study for the European Commission on the so-called "care services for school-age children". The European Commission, for the purposes of comparison among member countries, defined as "formal child care" all institutionalized formal arrangements, public or private. Based on data from 2009, the report characterizes the time children up to the age of entering compulsory education until 12 years old (*primary education*) remain under formal care, which includes, indistinctly, the compulsory school day and the so-called *out-of-school services*. According to the authors, considering that the education offer (compulsory school day) differs between countries, "care" services help to reduce possible inequalities between countries.

Hagemann, Jarauscha and Allemann-Guionda (2014) point out that investment in this type of service, involving education and care, is of interest to: children (learning, development, socialization, opportunities, etc.); families (articulation between working hours and school hours, for example); society in general; and especially women (providing support, particularly for single and working women).

The mentioned studies show that the extended school day and the extracurricular activity offer are on the political-educational agenda of many European countries, highlighting the relevance of comparative research in the area.

## METHODOLOGICAL DESIGN

In general, primary education in European countries varies between 4 and 7 years; children generally start school between the ages of 5 and 7 and the school year has an average of 807 hours (OECD, 2021). Countries have a school week of 4 to 6 days, with a prevalence of 5 days. Classes generally start between 8 am and 9 am, and the compulsory school day, linked to formal teaching time has, on average, between 5 and 6 hours/class. This time is condensed mostly in the morning period or divided by a more or less long meal period, to be carried out inside or outside school so

that the student's compulsory school day takes place in the morning and in the afternoon (European Commission, 2022).

In addition to the compulsory curriculum, countries can define strategies for extending the school day/student's time at school/offering of extracurricular activities. Several of these strategies are mentioned in the education systems' reports of European countries, and in this study they are called "policies".

Hagemann, Allemann-Guionda and Jarausch (2014, p. 4) conceptualize the time policy of childcare and schooling as the "policy implemented by the State and by different social and political actors that determine the structure of the education and care system". In fact, the State actions in terms of education and care are the result of different actors and sectors (education, work, assistance/social service, gender, culture, etc.), however, in this paper, the analyzed data stem only from education systems, some of which mention actions from other sectors, integrated or not with the school.

Muller and Surel (2002, p. 13-20) explain that public policy is a social construct that materializes through three rubrics, namely: "a public policy builds a normative framework for action [...]; a public policy as an expression of public power [...]; a public policy constitutes a local order". The document analysis focused on "[...] the set of concrete measures that constitute the "visible" substance of policy. [...] It implies, primarily, taking awareness of the normative character of every public action program. This means that every government policy will be defined, first of all, as a set of goals to be achieved."

The guidelines around the school day are part of the normative-legal order of the countries and, in the education systems' reports, there is usually information on extracurricular activities and supervised care before, during and after school.

Thus, this paper results from the analysis of the official reports available on the European Commission's Eurydice Network website. The network aims to systematize educational information from 37 European countries. The education system is presented in chapters in the official language of the country and, additionally, in English (when not referring to the official language). The document analysis was based on information about primary education<sup>1</sup> available in Chapter 5 (European Commission, 2022), legislation and materials made available by bodies and websites of the investigated countries.

The study was grounded on the methodological contribution by Ferrer (2002) for the development of the classic phases of the comparative method. Initially, the policies of the European countries that make up the Eurydice Network are systematized. Then, six countries were selected for description and comparison of policy designs (Howlett & Mukherjee, 2014), focusing on types of extension and policy instruments (Howlett et al., 2013).

## MAPPING POLICIES

For standardization purposes, the education systems' reports of the 37 countries in English were analyzed. The document research carried out on the Eurydice Network sought terms that could identify, firstly, the existence of strategies to extend the school day and/or offer of extracurricular activities, as systematized in Table 1.

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<sup>1</sup> Level 1 (primary education) of the International Standard Classification of Education of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (Unesco, 2012).

**Table 1:** Extended school day and/or extracurricular activity policies in European countries

Germany	Austria	Belgium	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Cyprus	Croatia	Slovenia	Spain
<i>All-day school Before and after lessons Outside lesson time Outside compulsory time Outside school Extra supervision Extracurricular offers Extracurricular activities After-school centres</i>	<i>All-day school Afternoon care Leisure section in the afternoon</i>	<i>Out-of-school care Outside teaching periods Out-of-school care - before classes Out of school care - after classes Childcare provision Outside lessons Private after-school tutoring</i>	<i>Activities before lessons Extra-curricular activities Extended day programme</i>	<i>All-day school</i>	<i>Extended shift Whole-day shift Extracurricular activities Extracurricular programmes After school care Full-day classes</i>	<i>Extended school stay Extracurricular activities After school classes Activities before classes After-school activities Morning care Before and after school care Extended basic school programme</i>	<i>Outside the school day After school hours School services and facilities out of school hours Extracurricular activities Breakfast before the lessons</i>

Estonia	Finland	France	Greece	Netherlands	Hungary	Iceland	Italy
<i>Extracurricular activities Activities of hobby groups Long day groups</i>	<i>Morning and afternoon activities</i>	<i>Extra-curricular activities Territorial education project</i>	<i>All-day primary school All-day schooling programme Non-compulsory all-day programme Early arrival classes Optional morning time zone</i>	<i>Out-of-school care Lunchtime supervision After-school care</i>	<i>Extracurricular lessons Day care sessions Day care activities Full-time education Full-time school Afternoon day care Afternoon tutoring</i>	<i>Extended stay outside of daily teaching hours Before lessons After lessons Extracurricular activities</i>	<i>Out-of-hours reception of pupils before or after school timetable</i>

Latvia	Liechtenstein	Lithuania	Luxembourg	Republic of North Macedonia	Malta	Montenegro	Norway
<i>Prolonged day groups</i>	<i>Day care centre Day care provisions Supplementary child care services outside of schools Out-of-home supervision and care Lunch and childcare before and after lessons Day schools Nursery/after school care Lessons and care supervision Whole day programme</i>	<i>Extended day group</i>	<i>Plan for extracurricular education Non-formal activities Extracurricular education Extracurricular childcare</i>	<i>Before and after class care Extended stay</i>	<i>Out-of-hours provision (before and after lessons) After-school-hours service Before school hours' service Breakfast Club</i>	<i>Before-school care After-school care</i>	<i>Day-care facilities before and after school hours</i>

Poland	Portugal	Czechia	Romania	Serbia	Sweden	Switzerland	Türkiye
<i>After-school activities</i>	<i>Extracurricular activities Curriculum enrichment activities</i>	<i>Extracurricular activities and services Out-of-hours provision</i>	<i>School after School Programmes Educative, recreational and leisure time activities School extension</i>	<i>Full-day classes Extended day Free time activities</i>	<i>Leisure-time centre School-age childcare Before and after school day</i>	<i>Comprehensive block teaching Day-care centre Day nurseries Supervised midday meals</i>	<i>Full-day time organization</i>

Fonte: European Commission (2022).

Out of the 37 countries participating in the Eurydice Network, information on extending the school day and/or extracurricular activity offer was found in reports from 32 countries. In Ireland<sup>2</sup>, in general, students go to school from 8:50 am to 2:30 pm, and information is clear that “there is no state provision of activities before or after the school day” (European Commission, 2022). The reports were unclear in this matter about four countries: Albania, which offers two shifts in case of crowded schools; Bulgaria, which has between 22 and 27 hours of school day in primary education; Denmark<sup>3</sup>, whose shift goes from 8 am to 4 pm; Slovakia, which has a school day from 8 am to 12:40/1:35 pm and which, exceptionally, uses shifts.

Given the research scope of this paper, six policy designs for extending the school day and/or extracurricular activity offers are presented, focusing on the types of extension and the policy instruments for their implementation.

## POLICY DESIGNS

Policy design refers to arrangements, alternatives, solutions, instruments and activities designed and put into practice to solve a certain public problem (Howlett & Mukherjee, 2014). In this paper, it is interesting to systematize the way the countries have been extending the school day and offering extracurricular activities and supervised care times. The alternatives and arrangements can vary both among countries and within the same country, resulting in different policy designs. This is due to the levels of education systems’ administrative and pedagogical decentralization, which includes the levels of school autonomy. Therefore, without aiming at generalizations, based on the Eurydice Network reports and on official documents and websites for the description and comparison of some policy designs, 6 European countries were selected: 3 Western European countries (Germany, Austria and France) and 3 countries in Southern Europe (Spain, Italy and Portugal). First, the designs are characterized so that the extensions promoted in the school day are identified; then, the policy instruments used to implement the policies are focused.

### All-day school in Germany

In Germany, there are primary schools that generally open from 7:30 am to 1:30 pm (part-time school day), and from 8 am to 4 pm (full day), the latter called *all-day schools*. These schools articulate curricular activities with learning support activities, homework supervision and recreational activities, and aim to develop students’ cognitive, social and motivational skills. According to Fischer and Theis (2014), in 2003, the German states began to receive federal

<sup>2</sup> Document research outside the Eurydice Network identified that the Department of Children and Youth Affairs and the Department of Education in Ireland, in 2017, published an Action Plan on after-school care to create a specific policy for the country (Ireland, 2017).

<sup>3</sup> Outside the Eurydice Network, in the literature review and document analysis, information that the country offers an *after-school program* at school and through the actions of municipalities were found.



investment through the program “Future for Education and Care”, which enabled the dissemination of all-day schools.

All-day schools must have at least 3 days of 7 hours duration and can operate in three ways: 1) all students are required to use the full-time offer; 2) part of the students (some classes, for example) stay in school full time; 3) open model, that is, voluntarily, students decide whether to participate in activities through prior registration. The federal government plays an important role in the extension of all-day schools in the country, but the German states build their own policies and have been expanding this type of offer for 6- to 10-year-old children.

It is important to mention that the country also has an *all-day* offer integrated with social educational institutions (after-school centers - *Horte*), generally located close to schools. Services are also offered before school (early care), from 6 am to 8 am, and after school (late care), from 4 pm to 6 pm to assist families who need this support.

### All-day school in Austria

In Austria, part-day schools usually run from 8 am to 12 pm and all-day schools from 8 am to 4 pm. In all-day schools, there are times and activities including “learning” and “leisure” and this articulation aims to: minimize failure rates, reduce the payment of tutoring (school tutoring, for example), and increase job opportunities for families (articulating school day and work day). This type of offer has been legally provided since the 1990s, and the country's goal is to expand through more investments. For Geppert, Bauer-Hofmann and Hopmann (2012), in the country, the all-day school is an adequate strategy to ensure equal opportunities for students.

There are two types of all-day schools: 1) open school model, in which instructional and assistance/leisure activities are organized consecutively, morning and afternoon, respectively; 2) All-day school (*Ganztagschule*) - instructional and assistance/leisure activities overlap, and student participation becomes compulsory.

In Austria, there can also be supervised care: before the compulsory school day (from 7 am to 8 am, for example); supervised lunch (from 1 pm to 2 pm); activities after the school day (from 2 pm to 3 pm).

### Offer of Extracurricular Activities and Complementary Services in Spain

In Spain, the school day at primary school has a 5-hour day, with a 30-minute recess, and takes place in two formats: continuous day (*jornada continua*) and split day (*jornada partida*). The continuous school day usually starts at 9:00 am and finishes at 2:00 pm; the split school day starts at 9 am and finishes at 4 pm (with a 2-hour lunch).

The offer of extracurricular activities at school has been regulated since the 1990s (España, 1996), when the country began to encourage schools to remain open and extend the student's time at school. Extracurricular activities in the country are related to languages, sports and arts, usually take place at the end of the compulsory school day (4 pm to 6 pm), and aim to expand the training possibilities of students in different areas. Most extracurricular activities are managed by parent associations. The focus of policy in the country is the use of the school during non-school hours, but partnerships can be established with the local government for the use of non-school settings (Parente, 2020).

In addition, the country offers family and work reconciliation services (*servicios de conciliación familiar y laboral*), supervised social educational time (lunch service and supervision before and after school). In many schools, this service takes place between 7:30 am and 9 am (Program Early risers – *Programa Madrugadores*); lunch services (from 12 pm to 2 pm on split days, and from 2 pm to 4 pm on continuous days); and after the school day, from 4 pm to 6 pm.

### Complementary pedagogical activities and Territorial Educational Project in France

In France, the compulsory school day must have 9 periods (half day) with a maximum of 3 hours and 30 minutes, admitting 8 periods (with Wednesday off). Students are required to work 24 hours a week. Thus, an example of a French school day could be: from 8:30 am to 11:30 am and from 1:30 pm to 3:45 pm. The student stays at school until 4.30 pm, comprising, in addition to the compulsory school day, a period of complementary pedagogical activities (*activités pédagogiques complémentaires*) or extracurricular activities (*activités périscolaires*). Testu (2005) highlights the necessary articulation between school times and the biological and psychological rhythm of students and, precisely for this reason, the country has put the effectiveness of the education system in question.

Complementary pedagogical activities are offered by the teachers and are not mandatory for students. There are also financial subsidies from the central government to municipalities for the development of the so-called Territorial Education Project (*Projet Éducatif Territorial*), which provides for the offer of cultural, sports and artistic activities and partnership with different local institutional actors.

In addition, the country has the so-called Plan Wednesday (*Plan Mercredi*), which aims to offer extracurricular activities on Wednesday.

As an example, Paris offers the following services: from 11:30 am to 1:30 pm supervised activities are provided during lunch; from 3 pm to 4:30 pm, complementary pedagogical activities and/or extracurricular activities are offered (Tuesdays and Fridays); from 4:30 pm to 6 pm supervised study services are offered, usually to help with homework; extracurricular activities on Wednesday afternoons from 1:30 pm to 6 pm. There are also activities offered in leisure centers<sup>4</sup>.

### Scuola a Tempo Pieno in Italy

In Italy, the education system coexists with four types of weekly compulsory school hours: 24 hours, 27 hours, 30 hours and 40 hours. Thus, it is possible to have classes only in the morning, finishing at 1 pm, for example; to have classes after lunch on certain days of the week or have classes every day after lunch. In this full-time school units (*tempo pieno*), the school day is 40 hours a week, 8 hours a day, from 8 am to 4 pm, for example, including lunch (Itália, 2009).

The *Scuola a Tempo Pieno* has its origins in the 1960s, with embryonic experiences, but it has officially existed since the 1970s, with the aim of enriching the students' training (Trevisanello, 2021). Considering the 2016/2017 school year, 39.1% of students enrolled in the first year of primary school attended *tempo pieno*. Nevertheless, there are many regional differences in the country in relation to this type of offer's scope (Triani, 2017).

In addition to the *Scuola a Tempo Pieno*, the school may or may not include out-of-school welcoming activities (*accoglienza extrascolastica*), before or after the compulsory school day (*prima or dopo le lezioni, pre-scuola or post-scuola*). Before-school activities take place before the school day (from 7:30 am to 8:30 am, for example) and after-school activities usually last one hour and can take place after the morning school day (1 pm to 2 pm, for example) or after the afternoon school day (4:30 pm to 5:30 pm).

### Full-Time School and Support for Families in Portugal

In Portugal, in the first cycle of Basic Education, the first two years have a school day of between 22.5 and 25 hours per week; the third and fourth years between 24.5 and 27 hours per week. Classes usually start at 9 am and finish at 4 pm. In the first cycle of Basic Education, an additional hour is offered for curriculum enrichment activities (CEA). Generally, activities take place

<sup>4</sup> Information available on: [https://www.paris.fr/pages/activites-a-l-ecole-2073/#les-ateliers-bleus-en-elementaire\\_3](https://www.paris.fr/pages/activites-a-l-ecole-2073/#les-ateliers-bleus-en-elementaire_3)  
Access on: Oct. 10, 2022.

between 4:30 pm and 5:30 pm. Lunch break lasts between 1 hour and 1 hour and 30 minutes. According to Pires (2019), in the 2017/2018 school year, 85.9% of students in the 1st basic cycle participated in CEA.

In 2005, the country began to implement some actions that form part of the so-called Full Time School (*Escola a Tempo Inteiro*), including the transfer of funds to municipalities to offer curriculum enrichment. The CEA aim at the students' full development, reinforcing their free time through cultural, civic, physical, sporting and artistic enrichment activities. Schools are required to offer CEA, but attendance is optional for students.

In addition to the CEA, in response to social demands, the country offers a service called the Family Support Component (FSC). It is supervised social-educational time with educational and recreational activities, promoted by municipalities, parents' associations or private institutions of social solidarity (Portugal, 2015). These services should take place preferably in non-school settings, but also happen at schools. In general, they are open from 8 am to 9 am (welcoming) and from 5 pm to 7 pm (extension).

## COMPARING POLICY DESIGNS

As highlighted, in general, the compulsory school day in primary education in European countries is 5 to 6 hours, which can be divided into two periods (morning and afternoon with a break for lunch/meal) or concentrated in one period (generally in the morning).

Based on the reports of the educational systems and the characterization of the policy designs of the six European countries, it was verified that the extension of the student's time at school and/or supervised time occurs through four types of extension: extracurricular activities that complement and/or are linked to the school curriculum; supervised care before the school day, between 1 and 2 hours before the beginning of the compulsory school day; supervised care at lunch, between 1 and 2 hours; supervised care after the school day, between 1 and 4.5 hours after the compulsory school day<sup>5</sup>.

To offer these alternatives and materialize public policies, in each country, certain policy instruments are defined, constructed, and used. According to Howlett, Hamesh and Perl (2013, p. 130, our translation), the formulation of a policy “[...] involves the effort to combine potential policy instruments with public problems”.

The authors refer to four policy instruments: information, authority, treasury and organization. In this paper, the comparative analysis of policies focused on three policy instruments: 1) authority: how the State has regulated policies; 2) treasury: how policies are funded; 3) organization: how policies are provided.

### Authority: policy regulation

Public policies can be regulated in different ways depending on the purposes and areas of State action (Howlett et al., 2013). The comparative analysis showed that, in the six countries, there are regulations by the State, that is, the establishment of guidelines and regulations for extending the school day and offering extracurricular activities but with certain specificities, some of which are illustrated below based on the Eurydice Network reports and official documents/websites of the countries.

Germany has recently passed a law establishing the right to “comprehensive care” for all children from the 2026/2027 school year, to be implemented gradually. As in the German country, Austria has also regulated this type of service and this has reverberated in the need for new

<sup>5</sup> In this analysis, the free Wednesday afternoon related to France is included.

professionals (*free-time teachers*), which resulted in the creation of specific training programs aimed at this purpose.

In Germany and Austria, specific formats of all-day schools were defined nationally, in a more closed model, with extracurricular activities integrated into the school curriculum, or in an open model, on demand, both with a significant margin of autonomy from the federal states and the schools. In Italy, schools have broad autonomy for many decisions of the school day and schedule, based on alternatives previously defined by the central government. However, these decisions depend on the availability of facilities and services managed by local governments to provide “care times” before, during and after school.

As for extracurricular activities, in Spain and France, a small part of teaching hours is allocated to extracurricular activities, free of charge for students. In Portugal, on the other hand, the Ministry of Education offers a set of programmatic guidelines for curricular enrichment activities in terms of content, hours and professional profile.

Depending on the country, regulations may occur in central or local governments. In general, local governments have taken great responsibility in the so-called care times; in turn, schools have been offered autonomy in deciding on the type of extracurricular activity offer or even whether they will offer them.

It is important to mention Fernández Enguita's (2001) warnings about extracurricular activities, since the student's socioeconomic condition, the school location, the training of those responsible for the activities, among other aspects, are elements that can produce differences in access or quality of the offer. From this perspective, regulation (definitions on guidelines, objectives, formats, professionals, locations, investments, etc.) can be a way to mitigate inequalities and invest in equity.

### **Treasury: policy financing**

Treasury-based policy instruments are those that involve financial transfers from the government, serving as incentives for political actors to implement certain public policies (Howlett et al., 2013). In the six countries, this type of instrument is identified, and characterized with some specificities.

In the analyzed countries, extending students' time at school is in the political agenda and, for this, there has been government investment. According to data from the Eurydice Network, Austria, for example, will invest 750 million euros by 2025 to extend and improve all-day schools. The German federal government is investing 3.5 billion euros in infrastructure and equipment together with the states<sup>6</sup>. Berlin, for example, one of the 16 German states, in 2019, defined free after-school care for the first two years of primary education, as well as free school meals in the first six years of school<sup>7</sup>. In France, since the School-Rhythm Reform in 2013, there is a transfer of resources to municipalities to enrich extracurricular activities<sup>8</sup>. In Portugal, to implement the Curriculum Enrichment Activities, the central government transfers resources to the promoting entities (grouping of schools, for example), according to the number of enrollments (Portugal, 2015).

In general, extracurricular activities, care services before and after school and lunch are paid by families, however, these are small amounts to cover only the costs of services, and always

<sup>6</sup> Information available on: <https://www.bmbf.de/bmbf/de/bildung/bildung-im-schulalter/ganztaegige-bildungs-und-betreuungsangebote/gute-bildung.html> Accessed on: Oct. 10, 2022.

<sup>7</sup> Information available on: <https://www.berlin.de/sen/bjf/en/education-in-berlin/primary-school/#allday> Accessed on: Oct. 10, 2022.

<sup>8</sup> Information available on: <https://www.gouvernement.fr/action/une-nouvelle-organisation-du-temps-scolaire> Accessed on: Oct. 10, 2022.

consider the economic situation of families. Thus, the regulation of these fees is also an incentive from the State, ensuring the children's stay at school and support for families that need these services.

For this reason, state subsidies are granted for families, which ensures important levels of equity in access to activities. Such subsidies are commonly based on socioeconomic criteria. To illustrate, in Castilla y Leon, one of Spain's Autonomous Communities, the lunch service can be 50 to 100% free based on specific criteria, including family income and students from large families<sup>9</sup>. In Italy, mention can be made of the *Comune* of Vittorio Veneto, which, through a public call, announces the criteria for assistance to families interested in *doposcuola*, including family income and number of children<sup>10</sup>.

### Organization: provision of policies

Organization-based policy instruments refer to how governments act, directly or indirectly (Howlett et al., 2013). In the six countries, the comparative analysis showed that the most commonly used strategy has been the extension of the school day and the extracurricular activity offer within the school, which means that there has been an extension of the social function of the school environment. These policies aim to offer students, in the school environment itself, one or more days of the week, extracurricular activity, supervised time and/or school meals, ensuring social-educational care and support for families.

If, on the one hand, the extended school day/extracurricular activity offer in the school itself signals the benefits of making the most of the resources already available, it is also necessary to consider arguments that warn about the risks of overflowing the school (Nóvoa, 2009), as well as dissemination of the “school form” and the schooling of free time and extracurricular activities (Pires, 2019).

This scenario is consistent with the idea that the school acts as a “center” and students and families can receive support that encompasses different dimensions. Its main premise is the argument that schooling is only possible if the basic needs of students are satisfied. It also comprehends the idea that the school needs to act in an integrated manner with other sectors to build more effective responses to social demands (Wilkin et al., 2003).

Therefore, in addition to direct provision at the school itself, it is possible to visualize relationships between education systems and schools with other sectors, government levels and civil society to ensure more time for education and institutionalized care. There are many possible arrangements in the policy designs of the six countries. In Spain, parents' associations play a central role in managing extracurricular activities; while food services are managed by local governments. In France, complementary activities at school are added to the activities that make up the Territorial Educational Project, under the management of the municipalities. In Portugal, the Parish Councils (*Juntas da Freguesia*), local executive bodies, have great responsibility in offering curriculum enrichment activities and school welcoming and extension services. However, the country also has services from non-profit social organizations, as is the case in the country's capital, Lisbon<sup>11</sup>. The situation is similar in Italy: local governments play an important role in managing lunch services and offering extracurricular activities, but the latter can be provided through cooperatives, for example.

<sup>9</sup> Information available on:

<https://www.tramitacastillayleon.jcyl.es/web/jcyl/AdministracionElectronica/es/Plantilla100Detalle/1251181050732/Servicio/1209383392824/Propuesta> Accessed on: Oct. 4, 2022.

<sup>10</sup> Information available on: <https://www.comune.vittorio>

[veneto.tv.it/home/news/avvisi/a2022/m07/doposcuola.html#](https://www.comune.vittorio.veneto.tv.it/home/news/avvisi/a2022/m07/doposcuola.html#) Accessed on: Oct. 10, 2022.

<sup>11</sup> To illustrate, it is possible to verify the list of partner entities and executors of the Curriculum Enrichment Activities (CEA) and the Family Support Component (FSC) in Lisbon. Available on:

<https://www.lisboa.pt/cidade/educacao/apoios/atividades-de-enriquecimento-curricular> Accessed on: Oct. 10, 2022.

Thus, in addition to the direct provision of the State to the public schools themselves, it is also possible to find policies to extend the school day and/or extracurricular activity offer in social-educational institutions, which can occur in a complementary way or in an integrated way to the school, although the analysis of the Eurydice Network data has indicated its residual character. In general, the extracurricular activity offer in social-educational institutions takes place in countries that, historically, had already been offering this type of service, such as Germany and Austria. However, research on official websites showed the presence of social-educational institutions in other countries.

## **CONCLUSION**

This paper aimed to analyze and compare policy designs for extended school days and extracurricular activity offers in European countries. The research showed that the theme is on the political-educational agenda of European countries, which was verified in the guidelines of the respective educational systems.

The investigation proved that the extension of the school day, including times of education and care, stems from social-educational demands associated to the claims of full development of individuals in compulsory education age through the promotion of social-educational opportunities and non-parental supervised time, institutionalized and safe. Through these policies, countries expect contributions to the development, learning and performance of students, reflecting on the quality of their own education systems.

The research also showed that, due to these objectives, these policies demand important decisions regarding the social functions of the school, its curriculum and the physical, human, material and pedagogical resources for this social-educational offer to materialize, as well as decisions around relationships with other institutional actors and social policies. That is, the implementation of this type of policy leads to reflections on the role of the State in ensuring the rights of the population during the period of compulsory education and in promoting greater social equity, either within the education system or through other social policies, articulated and/or complementary to the school, conducted directly by the school institution or by other social-educational institutions or environments.

The systematization and comparison of policies that extend the school day and/or that promote the offer of extracurricular activities help to visualize the different possibilities and arrangements in the formulation and implementation of public policies. The paper privileged the mapping of policies and, specifically, the comparison between policy designs, focusing on types of extensions and policy instruments for their implementation.

Comparative research identified several policy designs, with similarities and differences between European countries, highlighting both analogous policy choices and different options and strategies characterized by certain policy instruments, that is, by the way the State regulates, finances and provides for policies of extended school day and offer of extracurricular activities.

The comparative analysis indicated that, in European countries, the State's action in relation to primary education is well outlined, which provided concrete conditions to identify the objective boundaries between the so-called compulsory curriculum and extracurricular activities. The very structure of the Eurydice Network reports allows the visualization of what emerges as “extra” and “before and after school”, establishing clear limits between what is compulsory and for everyone, the responsibility of the State, and what can be optional, for some, by free choice of families, due to focusing actions, with or without state subsidy, with equalizing objectives.

The comparative exercise, among its objectives, has precisely the function of highlighting possibilities and alternatives regarding the same object of study. These results are expected to provide new empirical and methodological elements to researchers and policymakers regarding the

formulation, implementation and analysis of public policies for the area in the international scenario.

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