



Promoting LLL in HE by implementing innovative practices in RPL-EDUPRO- 2014-1-PL01-KA203-003629

# RPL in Higher Education in Portugal: a contribution to build flexibility

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INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR: THE ROLE OF RPL WITHIN HIGHER EDUCATION  
IN POLAND, UNITED KINGDOM AND PORTUGAL

GDAŃSK, SEPTEMBER 4, 2015

# HE in Portugal – context elements

- The fascist dictatorship regime (1926 – 1974)
- Using education and religion to reach consensus; plus the coercion mechanisms



HE in Portugal was traditionally:

- For the elites only; conservative; rigid; closed to innovation; closed to any form of diversity;

# HE in Portugal – important phases of evolution

1. The democratization of Education after the revolutionary period of 1974 (*Coup D'état*) – 1976
2. The creation of new Universities during the 80s
3. The creation of a network of Polytechnics during the 80s

# HE in Portugal – important phases of evolution

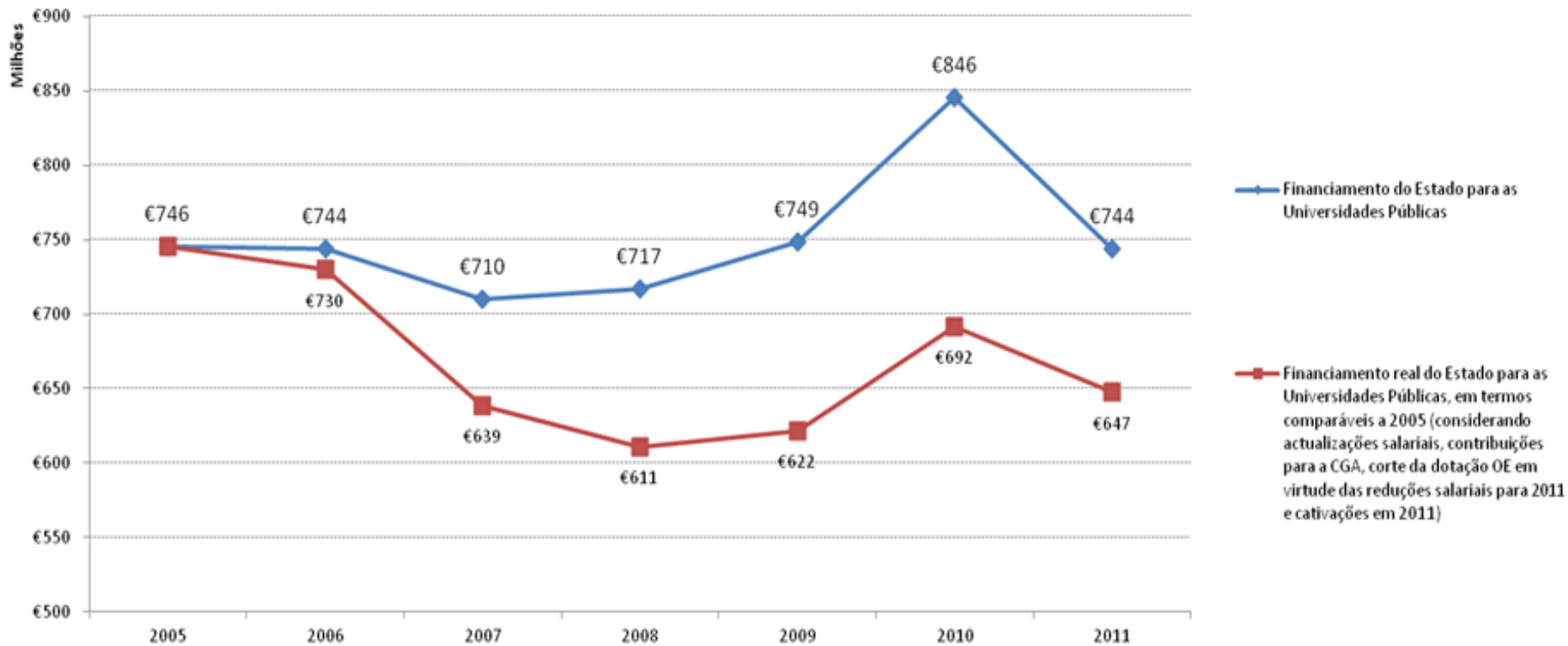
4. Implementing the Bologna process: 2006-2008
  - a. To change the degree's structure and duration
  - b. Re-build **ALL** HE programmes (Bachelor, Master, Integrated Master; PhD) from scratch according to new principles
  - c. New programmes: more optional courses (20-30% of the ECTS); alternatives to traditional investigations and dissertations (internships; project work, professional reports...); etc.
  - d. Revisit tutorials, evaluation practices, pedagogy...
  - e. To build systems for students to accompany learning at distance (moodle applications, etc.)

# HE in Portugal – important phases of evolution

4. Implementing the Bologna process: 2006-2008
  - e. Build a set on new regulations: evaluation procedures; mature students access; creditation procedures; etc., etc.
5. 2007/09 – a New Law that changed **all** HEI management – bodies and functioning
6. A new neoliberal funding policy: from 2005 on, the continuing decrease of State provision to public HEI (at the same time the State keeps funding private HEI)

# HE in Portugal – a note on funding

Evolução da dotação OE para o Orçamento de Funcionamento das Universidades Públicas - 2005 a 2011



# HE in Portugal – a note on funding

- The decrease on funding +
- Negative population growth +
- The funding dependency on new students in HEI... lead...



HEI management to look at Adult Students as an opportunity... thus maybe for the first time the policy concerning access was made easier to adults with little obstacles...

# RPL processes in HE in Portugal



1. In the Access to HE for students with 23 years old or more
2. When Pre-Bologna undergraduates want to come back to HE
3. Every student in HE can ask for creditation of training / professional experience (obtaining ECTS)
4. Students of Post-secondary training programmes – level 5



# RPL processes in HE in Portugal

## 1. In the Access to HE for students with 23 years old or more

- A written test (50%)
- Evaluation of students training and professional experience (30%)
- An individual interview (20%)

### Notes:

- a) Universities offer 30 h courses to help students prepare for the written test
- b) The test can be substituted by the final grade of a 60h course
- c) Applicants can have incomplete secondary studies

# RPL processes in HE in Portugal

## 2. Pre-Bologna graduates that wish to come back to HE (master and PhD programmes)

- Applicants can do it at every moment of the academic year
- Usually begins by informal contacts with the programme director
- Applicants build a portfolio that will determine which ECTS they will obtain; or which courses they should participate in...
- The committee (3) that evaluates the portfolio can ask for additional elements – of adequate nature...
- It is not possible to give ECTS to the final Thesis/ dissertation / internship/ project work / professional report

# RPL processes in HE in Portugal



## 3. Every student in HE can ask for creditation of training / professional experience

- Advisable to begin by informal contacts with programme directors
- Students build a portfolio
- The committee (3) that evaluates the portfolio can ask for additional elements – of adequate nature...
- A maximum of 60 ECTS can be obtained through this process...

# RPL processes in HE in Portugal - **conclusions**

- The importance of good (flexible and simple) internal regulations!
- The importance of **TRUST**
- The meanings of flexibility in Higher Education
- The importance of imagining and building flexible Higher Education systems
- RPL has a limited value *per se*... BUT it can mean an important contribution to build more flexible processes in HE...

Thank you so much for your attention!