

Ages At Which Children Are Legally Entitled To Carry Out Certain Acts

Portugal		
Acts	Age	Observations
1. Majority a. civil majority b. penal majority	18 16-21	A child comes of age at 18. Special criminal system for young people. Young person is defined here as an offender who, when the offense is committed, is between the ages of 16 and 21. Principles and rules closely related to minors' right to rehabilitation. The measures do not entail loss of civil, occupational or political rights.
c. penal minority	16	
2. Emancipation	16	Minors are declared of full age, as of right, when they marry (see 3b).
3. Marriage a. without consent of appropriate authority b. with parental consent c. with consent of the appropriate authority	18 16 16	Equality between the sexes. Under 16 years may not marry without parental consent. If parents withhold consent, the court may consent in their place if there are serious grounds for doing so, if the minor is physically and mentally mature enough, and if there are good reasons which justify marriage. The interested parties have the right of appeal.
4. Work a. full time b. part-time c. apprenticeship	16 16 14-24	Only children who have completed compulsory education except where their legal representatives object in writing. After compulsory education possibility of training up to age 25.
5. Residence	16/18	Emancipation/majority
6. Contracts a. without parental consent b. with parental consent	- -	In addition to employment contracts, contracts relating to daily life which do not entail the expenditure of large sums or alienation of property representing large sums. Only contracts which are not prohibited by law on account of child's age.
7. Will	16/18	Emancipation/majority.
8. Purchase of certain products a. alcohol b. tobacco	16/- -	Legal restrictions on purchase may have lapsed. /Consumption prohibited in schools. Consumption prohibited in establishments catering children under age 16.
9. Religion (refuse or change)	16	According to the children's degree of maturity, parents must take into account of their opinions and grant them a degree of independence in organizing their own lives. The Constitution also establishes the sanctity of freedom of conscience, religion and worship; some regard this as taking precedence.
10. Adoption (refuse to agree to adoption)	14	Full adoption/simple adoption.
11. Name (refuse to change name)	16/18	Emancipation/majority.
12. Nationality	16/18	Naturalization: resident children of full age and treated as being of full age. Acquisition: children of full age who lost it while they lacked legal capacity.
13. Medical matters (refuse to allow doctor to inform parents)	-	As under religion (9). In addition, the Code of Medical Ethics requires doctors as far as possible to respect the options of

Ages At Which Children Are Legally Entitled To Carry Out Certain Acts

		children and those lacking legal capacity and to act, at all times and in all conscience, in such a way as to safeguard these patients' interests.
14. Recognition of a child	16	Children do not need parental consent.
15. Personal matters (give his opinion)	14	Hearing of children: -no age-limit- the commissions for the protection of minors (official non-judicial institutions with the aim of preventing or ending situations liable to affect the physical and moral integrity of the child) must, before the application of measures and when it is possible, ask the child for his/her opinion. -14 years- conflicts over the exercise of parental authority; adoption (when those adopting another child are their own parents); their own guardianship.
16. Legal proceedings (*) a. take part in court decision regarding him b. request court appointment of legal representative other than parents c. inform court of self-concerning matters	-/16/16/18 - -	16: request to convene the family council/children treated as being of full age/children of full age; cancellation of legal transactions conducted by them before they come of age. No age limit: special curator to accept or refuse certain gifts No age limit: request for notification of parents concerning acceptance or rejection of inheritance, legacy or donation.
17. Army a. enlist in armed forces b. active national service	17/18 17/20	Volunteers authorized by their parents/children of full age. Volunteers authorized by their parents/children of full age.
18. Savings accounts a. deposits b. withdrawals	- 15	No age limit. Children do not need parental authorization.
19. Passport	10/16/18	Individual passport - 10 years: request by parents/children treated as being of full age/children of full age.
20. Participation in the functioning of the school system	12/15	12 years: educational council 15 years: school council

Source: Council of Europe (1998). *Ages at which children are legally entitled to carry out a series of acts in Council of Europe member countries*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

(*)**Legal Proceedings:** In conformity with the provisions of the Organization for the Guardianship of Minors, the process of guardianship can be initiated at the request of the child (no age-limit) when the child is a victim of ill-treatment or if he/she finds himself/herself in a situation liable to endanger his/her health, security, education or moral conduct or even if there is abuse of authority in the family or in the institutions in which the child has been placed.