

University of Coimbra granted Word Heritage status – UNESCO



The University of Coimbra, one of the most relevant educational institutions in Portugal and abroad, was granted today UNESCO's World Heritage status, during the 37th session of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee (WHC).

Because the University of Coimbra spreads through many areas of Coimbra city, UNESCO's World Heritage status includes the city of Coimbra, one of Europe's oldest university cities. It is the 15th Portugal sites being inscribed on the World Heritage List. Portugal nominated the site for the World Heritage List in 2004.

Founded by King D. Dinis of Portugal (1261-1325), and established by Papal Bull of Nicholas IV on the 9th August 1290, the University of Coimbra is Portugal's oldest and largest university and one of the oldest universities in continuous operation in the world.

The University of Coimbra is home to the Joanine Library [Biblioteca Joanina] established in the 18th century and considered one of the most beautiful university libraries in the world. The library holds over 250,000 books dating from the 12th to the 19th centuries, dealing mainly with civil and canon law, theology and philosophy.

Coimbra city boasts the largest botanical gardens of Portugal and one of the most beautiful in Europe. The garden, dedicated to the study and protection of plants and wild life, was established in the 18th century.

The University of Coimbra is also among the major science and technology hubs for applied and fundamental research in Portugal, home to one of the most powerful supercomputers in the country.

With approximately 20,000 students, the University of Coimbra, hosts one of the largest communities of international students in Portugal, being the most cosmopolitan Portuguese university. Every year, the university welcomes more than 1,600 international students.

The University currently consists of eight faculties – Letters, Law, Medicine, Sciences and Technology, Pharmacy, Economics, Psychology & Education and Sports Sciences & Physical Education.

Notable alumni include Portuguese Nobel Prize in Medicine Egas Moniz; Portuguese statesman António de Oliveira Salazar; 16th century epic poet Luiz de Camões; famous 16th century mathematician Pedro Nunes; German Christopher Clavius, the main architect of the modern Gregorian calendar, and Aristides de Sousa Mendes, The Righteous Among Nations.