



**A bridge to the future**

**European policy for vocational education and training  
2002-10**

**National policy report – Portugal**



## ReferNet Portugal National Policy Report 2010

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This report is one of a set of European country reports on VET policy development prepared within Cedefop's ReferNet network. ReferNet is a European network of national networks providing information and analysis on national VET to Cedefop and disseminating information on European VET and Cedefop work to stakeholders in the EU Member States, Norway and Iceland. The report has been produced by ReferNet Portugal as a contribution to Cedefop's fourth policy report which reviews progress in VET towards the policy goals of the Copenhagen process. The opinions expressed in this national report are not necessarily those of Cedefop

The preparation of this report has been co-financed by the European Union

Refernet Portugal would like to thank Cedefop for their support in developing the reporting process for this report and providing the template

## Foreword

The "Copenhagen process" was launched as the contribution of Vocational Education and Training (VET) to the challenges identified in the Lisbon-Agenda. In the Copenhagen Declaration, approved on 30 November 2002, the ministers responsible for VET in 31 European countries (EU Member States, candidate countries, EFTA-EEA countries), the European social partners and the European Commission agreed on enhanced European cooperation in VET. The policy priorities were further reviewed in the Maastricht Communiqué, (2004) the Helsinki Communiqué (2006) and Bordeaux Communiqué (2008).

This National Policy report for 2010 discusses the progress made in priority areas for Vocational Education and Training as agreed in the Copenhagen process. It provides examples of a range of initiatives to illustrate this progress.

The report follows a common format initiated by Cedefop and its content reflects the requirements of the template designed by Cedefop and structured around the following principle themes:

- Socioeconomic Challenges for Future VET Policy Development;
- Economic Crisis – VET Policies as Recovery Measures;
- Impact and Implications of the Joint Work on European Principles and Tools;
- Strengthening the Links between VET and the Labour Market;
- Addressing Equity, Social Inclusion and Active Citizenship;
- Quality, Excellence and Attractiveness of VET;
- Enhancing Creativity and Innovation;
- Financing VET

The national ReferNet policy reports are one of the main sources that will be used by Cedefop to produce Cedefop's fourth policy report which reviews progress in VET towards the policy goals of the Copenhagen process.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

THEME 1: SOCIOECONOMIC CHALLENGES FOR FUTURE VET POLICY DEVELOPMENT .....	5
1.1 Impact of globalisation on VET .....	5
1.2 Impact of technological progress on VET .....	9
1.3 Impact of demographic change and international migration on VET .....	11
1.4 Impact of greening of economy on VET .....	12
1.5 Other challenges for VET .....	13
THEME 2: ECONOMIC CRISIS – VETPOLICIES AS RECOVERY MEASURES .....	14
2.1 Initiatives for recovery .....	14
THEME 3: IMPACT AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE JOINT WORK ON EUROPEAN PRINCIPLES AND TOOLS .....	18
3.1 Impact of joint work on European principles and tools on national LLL policies and practices and VET developments .....	18
3.2 Promoting geographical mobility of learners/apprentices and teachers/trainers in VET .....	20
THEME 4: STRENGTHENING THE LINKS BETWEEN VET AND THE LABOUR MARKET .....	24
4.1 Identifying and anticipating skill needs .....	24
4.2 Integrating skill needs of the labour market into VET provision .....	26
4.3 Involving labour market actors in VET .....	27
4.4 Promoting workplace learning .....	28
THEME 5: ADDRESSING EQUITY, SOCIAL INCLUSION AND ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP .....	30
5.1 Addressing equity in VET .....	30
5.2 Support services for groups at risk .....	32
5.3 Active citizenship .....	33
THEME 6: QUALITY, EXCELLENCE AND ATTRACTIVENESS OF VET .....	35
6.1 Improving the quality of VET .....	35
6.2 Promoting excellence in VET .....	37
6.3 Higher level qualifications in VET .....	38
6.4 Improving horizontal and vertical permeability of education and training systems .....	39
6.5 Teachers and trainers .....	40
THEME 7: ENHANCING CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION .....	43
7.1 Creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship in VET .....	43
7.2 Improving quality of teaching .....	45
7.3 Innovation-friendly institutions .....	46
7.4 Encouraging partnership .....	47
THEME 8: FINANCING VET .....	49
8.1 Improving efficiency, equity, levels of VET funding .....	49
8.2 Use of Lifelong Learning Programme funds .....	53
8.3 Use of other EU funds .....	54
8.4 Improving VET governance .....	54
THEME 9: PROGRESS IN MODERNISING EUROPEAN VET SYSTEMS IN THE COPENHAGEN PROCESS AND PRIORITIES FOR FUTURE COOPERATION .....	56
9.1 Impact of European cooperation in VET on development of national VET policies .....	56
9.2 Governance, cooperation and ownership of the different actors in the Copenhagen process at European level .....	57
9.3 External dimension of European cooperation in VET .....	59
10. AUTHORS, BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES AND SOURCES .....	61
10.1 Sources, references and websites .....	61
10.2 List of acronyms .....	64

## **THEME 1: SOCIOECONOMIC CHALLENGES FOR FUTURE VET POLICY DEVELOPMENT**

*In 2008, the Bordeaux communiqué emphasised the relevance of global challenges for education and training and underlined the need for a strategic vision for European VET policies.*

*Main challenges include:*

- *globalisation (competition, global trade and foreign investments, social and economic permeability, interdependent financial markets, (intercultural) environments, offshore production);*
- *demographic change and migration;*
- *technological change.*

*VET policies need to take account of these challenges to ensure that VET systems are flexible enough to transform challenges into opportunities.*

*Early responses to these challenges with appropriate policies for education and training will provide a major contribution to securing proper employment for people and their full participation in society. Having the right skills for future labour market needs will help social inclusion as well as competitiveness of our economies.*

*The need for sustainable development and measures to mitigate climate change has become more urgent. Policy-makers by and large acknowledge the need for greener economies, which will provide new jobs, but which will also require new and changing skills.*

### **1.1 Impact of globalisation on VET**

Globalization has imposed significant changes in the labour market connected to the need to increase the competitiveness of both companies and the country. The role and social function of VET have gained importance, triggering several revisions in educational policies and practices. Thus, a vast array of reforms covering different educational levels and the vocational training system was implemented. Several public and private bodies have equally been mobilised in order to increase the impact of these reforms.

The approval of a set of measures aimed at the reform of the vocational training system, whose principles constitute the basis of the National Qualifications System<sup>1</sup>, was reached after a broad consensus achieved between the Government and the majority of the Social Partners in the *Agreement for the Vocational Training Reform*, in March 2007.

The implementation of the National Qualifications System constitutes a firm and decisive response to the challenge of the qualification of the population, through an integrated set of strategic measures in terms of education, training and certification, which aims at generalising the secondary level as a reference goal for the qualification of young people and adults.

The fundamental strategy aims at assuring the relevance of training and learning for personal development and for the modernisation of both companies and the economy, whilst also

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<sup>1</sup> Decree-Law n.° 396/2007, of 31 December

assuring that all the national effort in training is actually yielding results in terms of education and professional progression of the citizens, thus promoting a connection between vocational training and the workplace as a response to the challenges that come from globalization and the internationalization of markets.

### **Governance**

The governance of systems of education and vocational training has been strengthened through improved cooperation between the Ministries of Labour and Social Solidarity, Education, and Science, Technology and Higher Education as well as through the establishment of clear and precise objectives for institutions, thus increasing the involvement of social partners and society in general.

The significant role played in this context by the following organizations is to be stressed:

- the National Qualifications Agency<sup>2</sup>, *ANQ*, responsible to the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity and to the Ministries of Education, is responsible for coordinating and carrying out employment and vocational training policies for both young people and adults, as well as for the development and management of the Recognition, Validation and Certification of Competences System - *RVCC*;
- the National Council for Vocational Training<sup>3</sup> - *CNQP*, a governmental consultation institution, with three divisions, having competences in the areas of conception, formulation and supervision of VET policies;
- the Sector Qualifications Councils<sup>4</sup> - *CNQ*, work as a platform for updating and renovation by bringing together companies, training centres, schools, representatives of the social partners and other participants, thus establishing a connection with the evolution and needs of the economy;
- the New Opportunities Centres develop the processes of recognition, validation and certification of competences and promote the vocational education of adults as well as show them the pathways to take in order to obtain qualifications adequate to their needs.

### **Curricula and Pedagogies**

The implementation of policy measures in this field is based upon a global and transversal approach mobilising all training offers, participants and organisations for the interrelation of different learning environments in order to ease the access to several learning pathways and promote the conditions for “citizenship development, social cohesion and employment”. One of the crucial aims of the Portuguese educational system is to ensure the increase in the number of individuals with an secondary qualification, thus fostering a more effective coordination between education, training and society in order to achieve integration in active life.

The revision of the *curricula* of the basic education legislation was a strategic goal to ensure a basic education level for all citizens, regarded as the beginning of a lifelong learning and training process. One of its particularly relevant measures was the reorganisation of *curricula*, which came to reinforce the link between the three cycles of basic education. The new curricular design was intended not only to address the problem of school dropout and school failure rates, but also the insufficient social competences of students on leaving school, with the

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<sup>2</sup> The NQA, established in 2007, is under the supervision of the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity (MTSS) and the Ministry of Education (ME). Its creation strengthens the coordination and implementation of vocational education and training policies in Portugal.

<sup>3</sup> Having a tripartite composition.

<sup>4</sup> The Sector Qualifications Councils integrate, among other professionals, specialists appointed by the Ministry for the respective activity sector, the trade unions and employers associations representative of the corresponding activity sectors, reference companies, training entities with greater local or regional specialisation and independent experts. These councils may not exceed 10 members each.

main aim of promoting more and better learning for all students. The Basic Education National Curriculum was thus defined to include the competences to be developed and the educational experiences to be provided to all.

The reform of the *curricula* and pedagogies for the secondary school system underwent a major revision in 2007 and 2008 aimed at the acquisition of a solid education and training that would enable young people to pursue educational, vocational or personal goals. The following initiatives should be mentioned: (i) equivalence to the technological training of recurrent education technological courses through accumulative modules; (ii) regulation of the reorientation process of the training path of students through schemes of permeability and equivalence between school subjects; (iii) approval of the organisation, operation and assessment regime of secondary education scientific-humanistic courses; (iv) implementation of the new matrices for the *curricula* of secondary education scientific-humanistic courses; (v) signing of a cooperation protocol for the realisation of an assessment and follow-up study on the implementation of the secondary reform.

The *curricula* of the basic and secondary schools as well as of the VET also include ICT with the objective of responding to the needs of new generations towards the society of knowledge as well as the promotion and dissemination of a culture of initiative and entrepreneurship at all educational levels, with special emphasis on courses at the secondary level.

Other subjects were introduced with the same objective, with particular emphasis on the teaching of English starting from the first cycle of Primary School Education. The curricular revision of Portuguese language, Mathematics and Sciences also deserved special mention.

Arts education in the areas of music, visual and performing arts has also been given greater emphasis whilst education in the area of citizenship has been strengthened in order to promote principles and values of democratic behaviour, environmental protection, social awareness and responsibility.

The vocational educational training opportunities included in the National Catalogue of Qualifications<sup>5</sup> - CNQ has also been revised at *curricula* levels as they were adapted to the market needs as well as to the need for the development of both personal and social competences.

The pedagogical/curricular organization experienced a strong growth with the development of initiative and specific projects, namely (i) the Maths Action Plan, which allows schools to define and apply strategies geared towards attaining increasing degrees of success in this subject matter and in the acquisition of essential competences in this area; (ii) and the National Reading Plan, which aims at creating the conditions for Portuguese people to be able to attain levels of reading competence that will allow them to feel completely capable of dealing with the written word, in any situation in their lives. They are put in place through a group of strategies destined to promote the development of competences in their respective domains.

Regarding the redefinition of guidelines at the level of pedagogical organization for the supply of main competences, it is possible to underline the following: (i) the definition of recuperation, development and accompanying of students with difficulties or running the risk of failure; (ii) the creation of alternative curricular pathways for young people whose normal path would compromise the acquisition of essential competences; (iii) the territorial definition of groups of schools and of schools in need of priority intervention due to the nature of their school

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<sup>5</sup> Ordinance n° 781/2009 of 23 July

population or of the area where they are located, together with the definition of the necessary availability of resources.

### **Teachers and trainers**

The curricular revision demanded the reinforcement of the competences of both teachers and trainers who attended specific training courses that allowed them contact with new methodologies for the development of the *curricula* and thus the acquisition of new pedagogical competences.

Taking into account the challenges teachers and trainers face, significant changes are taking place in crucial areas of the VET system with particular emphasis on the restructuring of the teaching profession, the teacher and trainer training system and the teacher and trainer performance evaluation in order to improve the quality and efficiency of education, learning and teaching practices.

An increase in the training of trainers based on the Trainers Profile – Pedagogical Competences was observed.

Just as previously referred, specific emphasis was given to teacher vocational training in the following areas: mathematics, experimental sciences, the teaching of Portuguese and the use of ITC.

The reinforcing of life-long vocational training of teachers and trainers has been centred on the development of multidisciplinary competences, furthering knowledge, pedagogical practices and guidance and support to learners. Training includes *b-learning* and specific methodologies for training in the work environment. New training references, namely “Towards an active citizenship: intercultural learning”, has been given particular attention due to the existence of multicultural school environments principally in the main suburbs of big urban centres.

### **Training Providers**

The accreditation system aims to contribute to the organization and quality of the vocational training system and improve its usefulness and effectiveness, to ensure the reliability and professionalism of its participants, to contribute to a greater level of demand and selectiveness in the application of available public funds for vocational training as well as to ensure the adequateness of training programmes and clarify training supply through the design of guiding references and a global validation of the generic capacity of the provider.

Presently, there are 1,793 training entities that carry out the quality of training that is recognised by the national system of accreditation.

The reform of the current system of accreditation is under way in the context of the National Qualifications System - SNQ, geared towards the reinforcement of the capacity of the training entities and the regular accompanying of their activity in such a way as to ensure the fulfilment of the guidelines as a guarantee of quality.

Though accreditation is voluntary for the institutions exclusively operating outside the scope of co-financed training, it is however a mandatory condition for access to public financing for training activities or for the development of regulated training. The objective is that all training providers operating in the national training framework may welcome accreditation favourably, given the distinctive effects and promotional advantages it may provide to recognised and accredited providers.



## **Financing**

The priority of the national public policies on education and training led to a rise of more than ten percentage points in the relative weight of the European Social Fund among the array of structural funds which will be allocated to Portugal for the 2007-2013 period. The total public investment (EU and national) is nearly 9,000 million Euros, of which 6,000 million Euros are destined to the development of policy measures on youth and adult qualification in the context of the *New Opportunities Initiative*.

The public funding of vocational training favours:

- training actions developed according to the references foreseen in the National Qualifications Catalogue, which take into account the suitability of the training offer to the qualification needs at sector and territorial level;
- training-action activities as privileged tools in the creation of micro and SME enterprises, mainly implemented by training entities closely linked to companies and workers;
- continuing training actions aimed at companies undergoing innovation, modernisation and reconversion processes, namely micro and SME enterprises;
- initial vocational training with double certification for young people; and
- search for individual training through the RVCC.

The public sector continues to be the main source of financing for the implementation of VET policies for both young people and adults. Financing from the private sector for continuing education, though minimal, has begun to gain more relevance in recent years. However, the economic crisis led to a reduction in this type of investment in 2009.

## **Sectors and Study Fields**

The development of sector studies that had as an objective the anticipation of skills- needs took place mainly between 1996 and 2006 when the Institute for Innovation in Training - INOFOR, Ministry of Labour, carried out a large number of skills-needs analysis based on case studies and scenario building at sector and occupational level. These studies had a large participation from different research teams, from the academic profession and university research centres, to private consultants and experts in the field, and close collaboration from the social partners.

Afterwards, there have been some sporadic experiences of a similar kind at a regional and sector level, namely in the agricultural sector that defined the strategy of qualification in the medium and long term which is adjusted to the predictable evolution of the job market and, more recently, to studies concerning the need for an immigrant workforce.

### **1.2 Impact of technological progress on VET**

With the Lisbon strategy, the European Union recognizes the significant change resulting from globalization and tries to respond to the challenges of the new knowledge-based economy.

The Education Technological Plan<sup>6</sup> - PTE, which began in 2007, aiming at modernising the teaching/learning processes and reinforcing the qualifications and competences of the new generations, assumed as its strategic objective to place the country among the five most advanced countries regarding the technological modernisation of teaching by 2010.

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<sup>6</sup> The Education Technological Plan (PTE) was approved by the Council of Ministers Resolution no. 137/2007, of 18 September.

The ICT Training Programme is an initiative of the Education Technological Plan that was developed in partnership between the Ministry of Labour and the major companies of the Knowledge Economy, with the objective of promoting a professional education of high quality. This initiative allows for quality vocational training for the students of vocational training programmes in reputable companies, gives relevance to the VET and links schools and companies in a major national initiative. With this unprecedented measure, hundreds of students have the opportunity to carry out their school training programmes in Portugal or abroad, making the most of a first contact with some of the most competitive and reputable technological companies at the global level.

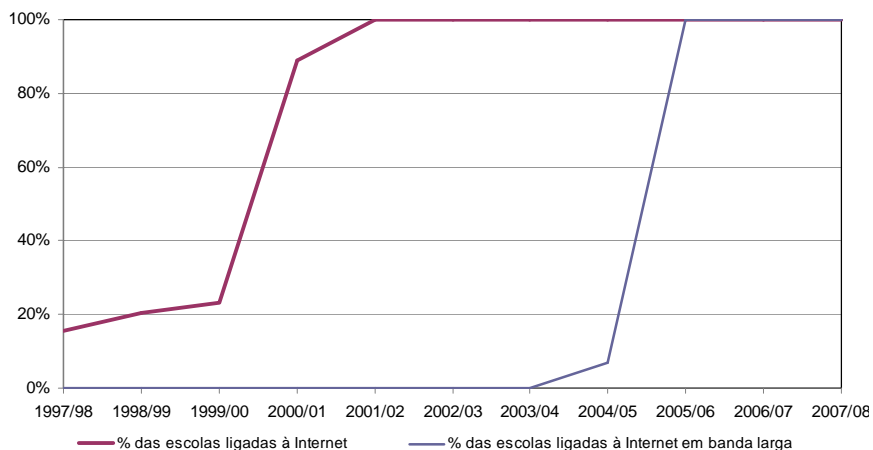
Enrolled in the vocational training of PTE, the ICT academies in schools constitute spaces for vocational training in the technologies, equipment and applications of partner companies. Vocational training takes place in the computer laboratories of schools, with extra curricular schedules, and allows the students who attend them to obtain a triple certification of their competences (school, professional and industrial). The companies *Apple*, *Cisco*, *Linux*, *Microsoft*, *Oracle* and *Sun* have signed protocols for the creation of 30 academies in secondary schools.

In 1997, all the 5th to 12th grade schools in Portugal were connected through ISDN to the Science Technology and Society Network which was enlarged from the previously existing university network to include the entire educational system, the private and public research institutions, all the public libraries in the country and Non-Governmental Organizations - NGO. The process of connecting all public schools to this network through ISDN was concluded at the end of 2001. Since the end of January 2006, all public schools have had access to broadband DSL connection to the Internet through the Science Technology and Society Network.

The programme *e.iniciativas*, launched in 2007, included the initiatives *e.professor* (teachers of pre-school, primary and secondary schools), *e.oportunidades* (trainees enrolled in the New Opportunities programme), *e.escola* (students enrolled in years 5 through year 12), *e.escolinha* (students enrolled in years 1 through 4) and *e.juventude* (members of student unions and youth associations) and aims at promoting the use of computers and connection to the internet through broadband, simplifying the access to the information society. According to data provided by ETP in July 2009, the programme *e.escola* allowed the supply of one million computers, making it possible for 10% of the Portuguese population to use portable equipment and broadband connections.

### Schools Connected to the Internet through Science, Technology and Society Network

Percentage of primary and secondary schools at the end of the stated school year with connections through ISDN and broadband - 1997/98-2007/08



Source: OSPE – Office for Statistics and Planning in Education, FNSC – Foundation for National Scientific Computation.

In the year 2000, the ratio PC/student with Internet connection was 1 per 34, an amount that changed to 1 per 8 in 2007. In 2010 the existence of 1 PC per 2 students has been previewed. The Training and Certification in ICT Competences System<sup>7</sup> contemplates the training of trainers and teachers and intends to promote the generalization of digital and pedagogical competences with recourse to ICT, aiming at the generalization of more innovative teaching practices and, subsequently, the improvement of learning by students. It is still one more objective of this system to recognize and certify ICT competences that teachers may have acquired outside the continuing education for teachers context.

### **1.3 Impact of demographic change and international migration on VET**

The demographic indicators for 2008 reveal that the main recent demographic trends in Portugal have remained unchanged: slower population growth and sustained demographic ageing as a result of the drop in fertility and a higher longevity. In 2008, the ageing index reached 115. The proportion of young people (aged under 15) in the total population maintained the percentage of the previous year (15.3%) and there was a rise in the elderly population (aged 65 or over) from 17.4% in 2007 to 17.6% in 2008. The active-age population (aged between 15 and 64) keeps registering two different tendencies: young adults (aged 15-24) diminished their relative weight in the total population from 11.6% in 2007 to 11.4% in 2008, whereas the population aged between 25 and 64 follows the tendency of the elderly population and rose from 55.6% to 55.7% in the same period.

The Portugal Statistics - INE launched a study at national level on demographic projections of the resident population for the period between 2008 and 2060<sup>8</sup> confirming that the ageing process of the Portuguese population will continue over the next decades. An increase in the ageing index (the number of persons aged 65 or over per hundred persons under 15) and a decrease in the potential support ratio (number of people aged 15-64 per one older person aged 65 or over) is expected. The results highlight a possible decrease in the active population, particularly at younger ages, a fact that will contribute to the ageing of the active population. Until 2060, the percentage of the young population is projected to diminish from the current 15.3% to 11.9%, with a simultaneous decrease of the relative weight of active population from 67.1% to 55.7%, while the elderly population is likely to rise from 17.6% to 32.3%. These projections show that the ageing index, which in 2008 remained at 115 per 100 young people, may reach an index of 271 per hundred youngsters in 2060. Positive net migration will not be enough to offset demographic ageing, either in total or in the active population.

On 31<sup>st</sup> December 2008, there were 436,020 foreign residents holding a residence permit, surpassing the numbers registered in 2007 (401,612) by 8.6% mainly due to the conversion of long-term visas into residence permits, figures that show a continuing positive and sustained evolution. The most representative foreign nationalities in Portugal are Brazilian, Ukrainian, Cape Verdean, Angolan, Romanian, Guinean-Bissau and Moldavian, representing about 71% of the foreign population with regular residence in the country. There is a clear predominance of Brazil, with a decrease in the weight of other traditional Portuguese-speaking communities and the emergence of new migration flows from Eastern Europe (the Ukraine and Moldavia).

Portugal didn't verify any decrease in the number of young and adult population in VET as described below.

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<sup>7</sup> Ordinance no. 731/2009 of 7 July.

<sup>8</sup> *Projeções de População Residente: Portugal – 2008-2060*, published by INE, Lisbon: Portugal, 2009.

The New Opportunities Initiative – Young People has as its central objective to make the vocational training at the secondary level into a true option for young people, trying to avoid failure and school drop-out as well as prevent the entry of young people with low qualifications into the work market. Until 2010 more than 650 thousand young people will be involved in courses that award a double certificate, while the places available in the vocational education pathways correspond to half the amount of places in secondary school which constitutes the target for this objective.

Since 2005 the number of young people enrolled in courses with double certification has increased due to the strong commitment to courses of education and training that are offered in public schools, vocational education centres and private entities, namely vocational schools. The commitment to this type of training has constituted a fundamental option in the fight against school dropout figures. The number of young people who, besides concluding in this way the basic cycle of education, corresponding to mandatory schooling, chose to pursue their studies into the secondary school level is very significant. The weight of young people enrolled in vocational types of schooling at the secondary level has already surpassed 40% of the total of people enrolled at that school level. This percentage comes close to the values registered in the OECD countries and of the national target established for 2010.

In the New Opportunities Initiatives – Adults, the main objective is the raising of the levels of qualification of the adult population and the widening of the possibilities of access to education by employees through the supply of flexible and adjusted qualifications. To qualify one million employees until 2010 (650 thousand through the processes of RVCC and 350 thousand through programmes and other types of education and training) is the defined target for this initiative. From the beginning to the middle of 2009 the number of adults involved in this initiative reached 900,000.

The Reform of Vocational Training foresees the expansion of access and assures that all kinds of training provides school and professional progression and increases the relevance for business modernisation by placing qualification at the centre of the development options.

Vocational programmes in 2006-2007 have decisively contributed to the increase of the number of young people involved in paths of double certification. In the year 2009-2010, 50 thousand new places were created. Thus, in total, the number of places in these programmes has increased to 126,723 in the school year 2009-2010. This number corresponds to an increase of 185%, when compared to the 44,466 young people who attended vocational programmes in 2006-2007.

#### **1.4 Impact of greening of economy on VET**

One of the five structuring measures approved by the Council of Ministers under the Investment and Employment Initiative Programme in March 2009 was the promotion of renewable energies, energy efficiency and energy transport networks. The investment in energy is one of the main areas to combat the global crisis and stimulate economic recovery and the structural modernisation of Portuguese society. According to statistical data published by the European Wind Energy Association, Portugal was the sixth country in the European ranking with the largest wind power capacity installed in 2009.

Projections until 2015, date by when the most significant part of investments in aeolic parks and dams has been programmed, which allows us to estimate that 22,900 of the total new work places to be created under the Green Economy will come from hydro and aeolic energies, according to calculations by the respective industry, and that this sector will be responsible for

the largest portion of employment (around 20 thousand). Regarding investment, 15.5 million Euros are expected for the same period (2007-2010). According to NIS, Portugal has around 42 thousand “green jobs” (encompassing other areas such as water and waste recycling), representing around 3.3 percent of the GNP.

The study “The Macroeconomic Impact in the Energies Sector in Portugal”, published in December 2009 by PARE (Portuguese Association for Renewable Energies), points at an increase in employment creation in this sector. Between 2005 and 2008, an average increase of 9 per cent has already been registered, as compared to the average national rate of 0.3 per cent in terms of national employment. Provisions point at more than 60 thousand direct and indirect jobs in this sector in 2015.

As for renewable energies, a great lack of human resources with training at the intermediate level is noticeable, as well as the need to create new professional profiles even though an increase in education training opportunities for this sector has been noticed in recent times. Higher Education already shows a significant supply in this sector. Since 2008 the supply of Specialised Technological Courses in the area of renewable energies has also increased.

### **1.5 Other challenges for VET**

Overcoming the structural deficit in the qualifications of the Portuguese population and ensuring twelve years of education as a minimum qualification referential for all in the scope of the European goals defined in the Education and Training Programme 2010 will continue to be the Government’s main commitment in this domain. The promotion of LLL continues, namely centred on the achievement of the new cycle goals of the New Opportunities Initiative, with special focus on the process of occupational RVCC (the participation in lifelong learning by adults has to be enlarged including double certification courses for young adults and Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) and training modules for experienced adults) and the Reform of Vocational Training.

One of the major commitments in national VET policy is the development of the training providers’ accreditation system aimed at the identification of vocational training poles of excellence to foster high quality standards in VET pathways.

Also recent national research on VET indicates that some of the most important future challenges are: future skills needs and the relevance of the training provision and the competences achieved; the development of qualifications systems at regional and sector level with the involvement of stakeholders and the recently created Sector Qualifications Councils; the low-skilled young and adults motivations for lifelong learning and the implications for the provision of education and training; the employers’ role in a lifelong learning strategy and the need for targeted policies; competence-based education and training, credit accumulation and transfer; impact assessment of education and training investments.

Finally, a recent study is currently taking place with the aim of designing a skills anticipation system suited to Portugal, which will be subject to implementation in the near future. After a comparative analysis of the methodologies being used internationally and the institutional frameworks supporting them, a combined model of quantitative and qualitative methods is currently being tested and the institutional structure that will need to be developed in Portugal is being discussed. This work is still in progress, though its results are foreseen for the end of 2009.

## **THEME 2: ECONOMIC CRISIS – VET POLICIES AS RECOVERY MEASURES**

*In response to a severe worldwide economic crisis the December 2008 European Council endorsed a European economic recovery programme. It called for an overall fiscal stimulus equivalent to 1.5% of EU-27 GDP, and underlined that priority should be given to structural reform measures.*

*Countries have taken relevant action across a broad spectrum of policy areas, including VET. VET policies play a central role in the efforts to overcome the crisis and balancing out weaknesses of the labour market.*

*To overcome the current economic downturn and recognising the crucial role of education and training in this context, education ministers called for targeted and coordinated action at European level.*

*The aim of the analysis in this section is twofold:*

- *to gain a better overview of the major consequences of the crisis on skills and VET policies - if possible differentiating between short- and medium-term effects (reduce/increase public and/or private expenditure for VET, reduce/increase the willingness of companies to provide work-based training, what groups of population are mainly affected, skills mismatches in specific badly hit sectors, etc.);*
- *to gain an overview of VET-focused policies and measures undertaken by countries to overcome the crisis (making a distinction between measures already planned as part of medium-term reform strategies, and measures which can be considered as a new response to the crisis).*

*This input will update information already collected by the Swedish Presidency (May 2009) and Cedefop via ReferNet. Form and procedure for the update will be clarified with the Presidencies to ensure integration of complementary and up-to-date information*

### **2.1 Initiatives for recovery**

Following the worsening of the global financial and economic crisis and its recessionary effects on the national economy over the last quarter of 2008, Portugal's priority in terms of recession-fighting measures is currently focused on the reinforcement of public investment and the support to private investment and employment. The Investment and Employment Initiative Programme<sup>9</sup>, presented to the Portuguese Parliament on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2009 along with the update of the Stability and Growth Programme – *PEC*, foresees five structural measures covering several projects and activities, which the Council of Ministers approved under the Investment and Employment Initiative – *IIE*, in March 2009<sup>10</sup>. This initiative represents an additional stimulus for the economy of 2,180 million Euros (nearly 1.25% of GDP), of which 1,300 million Euros (0.08% of GDP) is directly financed by the State Budget. The five measures taken are also integrated in the Lisbon Strategy:

- support to employment and reinforcement of social protection schemes;
- special support to economic activity, exports, and SME;
- promotion of renewable energies, energy efficiency and energy transport networks;
- modernisation of public schools; and

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<sup>9</sup> Ordinance n° 130/2009, 30 January

<sup>10</sup> Law no. 10/2009 of 10 March.

- modernisation of technological infrastructures.

The Investment and Employment Initiative comprises a set of employment specific measures, called Employment Initiative 2009, particularly aimed at easing the return to the labour market through employment maintenance and promoting young people's access to employment in order to avoid the reduction of family incomes, as well as to promote qualifications through vocational training actions and enable companies to react better at a time of international economic recovery.

The most important measures in the scope of VET are:

- **Qualification-Employment Programme:**  
Support for the maintenance of employment and increasing qualifications during unusually slow periods of activity in economically feasible companies highly likely to fully recover production capacity.
- **Qualification-Employment Traineeships:**  
Aimed at facilitating the entry into the workplace of every active person over the age of 35 and improving qualifications for new job positions and activities demanding better skills and qualifications. The measure consists of the payment of a 50% compensation for a period of 9 months through *i)* an application from the unemployed person / company or *ii)* an application from companies which will hire and train via their own training programme.
- **Incentives to companies to hire young people, under 35 years old, with secondary or higher education levels:**  
€2,000 payment to support hiring, including a two year exemption from social security contributions when employing young people fulltime and without a temporary contract (employers may opt for a 3 year total exemption from social security contributions).
- **Vocational traineeships:**  
Support the insertion in active life or retraining of the young unemployed, complementing an already existing qualification with a practical course in a working environment; for young graduates in areas with low employability, the placement is preceded by a retraining period provided by companies or higher education institutions specially qualified for that purpose.

In order to support young people's access to employment, the Vocational Traineeships Programme<sup>11</sup> allows:

- the development of 12,000 more vocational traineeships, namely for young graduates in low employability areas, and to support hiring by paying 2,000 Euros to each employer, plus two years of exemption from social security contributions, in return for the recruitment of young people. Employers are expected to assure a net job creation obligation for a period of three years. This measure intends to facilitate the transition into active life by providing vocational traineeships to 37,000 young people in total;
- and financial support to companies that hire young people aged up to 35 seeking their first job, covering nearly 20,000 young people.

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<sup>11</sup> Ordinance no. 129/2009 of 30 January.

In order to accomplish the goal of supporting the return of unemployed workers to employment, in particular the long-term unemployed and those aged 55 or over, the following measures were put forward in 2009:

- the support of hiring with the payment of 2,000 Euros, plus two years of exemption from social security contributions in the recruitment of long-term unemployed people. This measure may benefit 8,000 long-term unemployed.
- the reduction, by 50%, of the social security contributions of fixed-term contract for unemployed people over 55. This measure may benefit 4,000 unemployed.
- the creation of new traineeship qualification-employment programme for unemployed people, regardless of their age, who have accomplished in the previous three years: (1) basic or secondary education (ii) certified modular training with a duration of 250 hours or more (iii) specialised technological courses - CET or (iv) higher education. This programme assures the payment of 60% of the trainees wages during nine months and anticipates benefiting 10,000 unemployed people.
- the support in the creation of 1,600 new companies (and about 3,000 new jobs) by unemployed people through specific credit lines and subsidised to the amount of 100 million Euros.
- the support of the integration of 30,000 unemployed in non-profitable organisations, through a Contract Employment-Insertion, whose objective is the development of socially useful activities (12 months), for unemployed people receiving the Social Integration Benefit, allowing them to approach the labour market and improve their social skills by maintaining contact with other employees and activities. The priority projects are those that provide prior training, particularly in the context of work, integrate social support and are connected to environmental, cultural and urban heritage subjects.
- the extension of the offer of double certification courses, in particular adult education and training (EFA) courses and specialised technological courses (CET), for unemployed people in the regions most affected by unemployment. This measure will only be applied in 2009 and it is estimated it will support 5,000 unemployed.

### **Employment Initiative 2010**

In January 2010 the Portuguese Government approved the Employment Initiative 2010<sup>12</sup> with the purpose of extending for a further year some of the former anti-crisis plan measures and present new support measures. With a total budget of nearly 500 million Euros, this initiative has already come into force and is expected to cover 760,000 people, involving 17 measures aimed at securing employment, and stimulate the insertion of young people into the labour market, create jobs and fight unemployment.

Also, the apprenticeship courses has also been boosted to include 30,000 young people aged between 15 and 25 until 2010. In September 2008, the Institute of Employment and Vocational Training – IEFP, signed cooperation protocols with 51 entities and enterprises, seeking a joint stimulation of the apprenticeship programme. Learning courses have a strategic importance in the framework of education, training and employment policies and they contribute, in a determinant way, to the raising of professional and school qualifications of young people and

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<sup>12</sup> Council of Ministers Resolution no 5/2010, 14 of January



similarly to the reorientation of these groups towards vocational pathways thus, making the most of the development of new professionals, able to respond to the challenges set by an increasingly demanding and competitive market and to the need for intermediate and specialised staff felt by small and medium-sized companies.

## **Two examples of initiatives**

### **Acquiring Qualifications for the Car Industry**

The car industry, because of its relevance at employment level and weight on the GNP, was the object of a specific support plan that aims at encompassing 10,000 workers at risk of unemployment, with a financial volume of 900 million Euros. One of the four strategic lines of the programme is the development of the vocational training of workers in this sector, using periods of reduction or lay off of their activity in the companies.

In July 2009, 4,655 workers from 21 companies in this sector were already involved in the programme.

### **Acquiring Qualifications for the Textile Industry**

The textile and clothing industry is one of the most important industries for the Portuguese economy, representing 12% of Portugal's total exports and 23% of employment in the manufacturing industry. Portugal has around 5 thousand companies working in all sub sectors of the textile and clothing industries, of which the majority are small and medium companies. Textile and clothing companies are mainly found in the North and Central regions, where 97.8% of unemployment in the Portuguese textile sector is concentrated.

This programme is aimed at workers who have lost their jobs and concentrates on facilitating their return to the work market, through orientation and advising measures, vocational training, support to entrepreneurship and recognition and certification of competences. The estimated total cost for this programme is 1,6 million Euros, of which 832,800 Euros will be supported by the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF).

This programme will encompass 1,504 workers who have lost their jobs due to the closure of 49 small and medium-sized companies in the north and centre of the country.

### **THEME 3: IMPACT AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE JOINT WORK ON EUROPEAN PRINCIPLES AND TOOLS**

*The Copenhagen declaration initiated extensive joint work on European principles and tools aiming at increased transparency of qualifications and improved systems for recognition of competences and qualifications. This work has resulted in development of Europass, the European qualifications framework (EQF), the European credit system for VET (ECVET), common European principles and guidelines for validation of non-formal and informal learning, the Council resolution on Strengthening policies, systems and practices in the field of guidance throughout life and the Council resolution on Better integration of lifelong learning guidance into lifelong learning strategies . Formally adopted between 2004 and 2009, all these instruments have now reached the implementation stage.*

*Work on principles and tools is based on a lifelong learning (LLL) perspective. VET is seen as an integral and interlinked part of an overarching education, training and learning system. Transparency and recognition is needed because individuals move between different parts of the education and training system, between education and work, and between sectors and countries. This effort needs to be seen also in the context of European strategic goal to expand mobility for learners, teachers and trainers and to make periods of learning abroad the rule rather than the exception also in the VET sector.*

*The learning outcomes approach, shifting focus to knowledge, skills and competences, has been the common basis for the European tools.*

#### **3.1 Impact of joint work on European principles and tools on national LLL policies and practices and VET developments**

The National Qualifications System - SNQ, has created and developed the necessary measures for the development and implementation of European tools and principles to improve transparency and comparability. Considerable progress has already been made and practical initiatives have been taken. Such initiatives include, namely, the creation of the National Qualifications Framework<sup>13</sup> - QNQ, and the National Qualifications Catalogue - CNQ.

The National Qualifications Framework was prepared with the participation of several ministries, namely the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity and the Ministry of Science and Technology and of Higher Education, and in cooperation with the social partners with seats on the Economic and Social Council – CES. Afterwards, the National Qualification Framework - QNQ was subject to an extensive public consultation process. Currently, technical works, under the coordination of the National Qualifications Agency - ANQ, are being developed to reference the National Qualification Framework - QNQ to the European Qualification Framework – EQF, and ensure their entry into force in October 2010 and introduce a reference in all new qualifications, certificates, diplomas and Europass documents by 2012.

The creation of the National Qualification Catalogue – CNQ, also took European guidelines and recommendations into consideration and reflects the experiences of the more developed countries in terms of the structuring and integration of their own qualification systems, with the aim of improving:

- the production of qualifications and critical skills for competitiveness and modernisation of the economy;

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<sup>13</sup> Ordinance n° 782/2009, 23 July

- coherence, transparency and comparability among the available qualifications at national and international level, namely through the European Qualification Framework – EQF, and the European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training - ECVET;
- flexibility in the acquisition of qualifications and in the construction of a personal pathway for lifelong learning;
- the recognition of qualifications irrespective of the access ways;
- the education and training system quality;
- information and counselling related to training and employment.

With regard to the European tools for the improvement of mobility and transparency of qualifications and skills, Portugal is a promoter of Europass, whose dissemination is done through events, the media, the website of the National Europass Centre and other websites, namely the National Reference Point for Qualifications, as well as through the participation in mobility projects. In 2009, 564,548 Europass CVs and 2,198 Language Passports were completed online in Portuguese. The ECV completed online by citizens residing in Portugal accounted for a total of 435,392 documents.

Portugal is part of the ERA-MORE network (European Network of Mobility Centres), whose national network is composed of 15 Mobility Centres spread around the country. A National Portal has also been set up in close coordination with the European Mobility Portal. It is important to mention Portugal's participation in several workgroups within the European Union, namely in the cluster for the establishment of European guidelines for the validation of non-formal and informal learning, as well as in the European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training – ECVET, and the European Network for Quality Assurance in VET - ENQA-VET.

The National Reference Point for Vocational Qualifications – *PNRQ*, is integrated in the European network created after the European Forum on Transparency of Vocational Qualifications. It is a contact point in Portugal where it is possible to find information on the Education, Training and Skill Certification Systems, aimed at facilitating the mobility of citizens in the European Space. The National Reference Point – PRN, for Vocational Qualifications in Portugal is coordinated by the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity.

### **One example of initiative**

In November 2009 a conference, part of the Lifelong Learning Programme, was organized by the National Qualifications Agency on the theme “Tools for the Transparency, Comparability and Recognition of Qualifications”. A significant number of representatives attended and the National Qualifications Framework and its articulation with the European Qualifications Framework as well as the principles associated with the definition of qualifications that have learning outcomes were widely discussed. This conference had a very significant impact upon the dissemination of the National Qualification Framework - QNQ, the identification of problems regarding its implementation and the drawing up of recommendations. Representatives of the European Commission Consultation Group for the Implementation of the European Qualifications Framework also participated in the proceedings of the conference, which contributed to a wider-ranging debate.

### **3.2 Promoting geographical mobility of learners/apprentices and teachers/trainers in VET**

Mobility constitutes a factor of progress and economic growth. The process of creation and innovation has, in its origin, the broadening of horizons, necessary to overcome and eliminate barriers, create openness, along with a trans-boarder mentality, able to overlap cultural identities, to share values and experiences that promote cultural diversity.

Mobility is the first step to pursue new ideas and experiences. It is this that allows Europe to aim at creativity and innovation in all its aspects, creating added value that will allow it to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world (Lisbon Strategy).

The diversity of mobility offers at national, European and international levels constitutes a source of incentives to attract and maintain highly qualified human resources.

In Portugal, mobility works mainly through training programmes, and there is a significant level of support, both in the national and the international context, destined principally for young people with a tertiary degree. Thus, the main programmes, that aim, among other objectives, to promote mobility, will be referred to here.

#### **INOV Programmes**

There are several programmes supporting vocational traineeships in order to strengthen the connection between qualified young people and the labour market. These traineeships are a privileged way of successfully promoting the transition from the education and training system to an employment situation and aim to stimulate not only young Portuguese professionals' transition into active life and employability, but also the ability for innovation and management of Portuguese companies and their competitiveness. In this sense, mention should be made of the following programmes<sup>14</sup>:

#### **Inov Contacto – International traineeships for young staff**

The INOV Contacto programme is promoted, managed and implemented by the Portuguese Investment and External Trade Agency – AICEP, and aims to support traineeships abroad for the qualification of young workers or employees in key-areas of knowledge, thus providing them with effective competences in crucial innovation areas for the reinforcement of the competitiveness of Portuguese companies.

This measure is intended for young people aged up to 30, holders of a tertiary qualification in critical areas for the internationalisation of the Portuguese economy, with foreign languages fluency and willingness to develop their career abroad.

The traineeship has three sequential phases: a course of international practices, including training in real work context, named by the traineeship in Portugal; traineeship abroad in enterprises and other institutions located in strongly dynamic and innovative geographical areas; and a closing seminar and support to integration.

The trainee's process of competences development comprises support and guidance actions aimed at assuring the maintenance and use of their international qualifications, as well as encouraging the creation of a network that allows the exchange of contacts and experience.

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<sup>14</sup> Three years after the approval of the INOV Contacto programme, the Portuguese Government decided to launch a new stage of these programmes through Ordinance no. 1103/2008 of 2 October, following the Council of Ministers Resolution no. 63/2008 of 7 April with the wording given by the Resolution of the Council of Ministers no. 93/2008 of 5 June.

The traineeship is remunerated with an amount equivalent to the monthly sum of two times the Social Support Index - IAS. In addition, during the traineeship period abroad, a subsidy based on the cost-of-living index applied to each market is provided.

The trainee performance is assessed in all the previous phases and the traineeship will only be concluded after a final report by the trainee is presented.

The increasing participation of enterprises in the INOV Contacto shows that it has now become well recognised and held in high regard not only by the Portuguese business community but also by some of the most prestigious companies and research institutes worldwide. The INOV Contacto Programme led to 578 industrial placements, 15% more than the initial objective of 500 placements. In April 2008, it was launched<sup>15</sup> a new stage boosting the programme where it was established that INOV Contacto should provide an annual average of 550 industrial placements during the next 3 years.

### **INOV Vasco da Gama – International Qualification of Young Entrepreneurs, Managers and Technical staff**

The INOV Vasco da Gama programme is promoted, managed and implemented by the Portuguese Investment and External Trade Agency – AICEP, and aims to support the temporary placement of young entrepreneurs, managers and technical staff from national companies in international reference companies and entities, recognised by their good management practices. This effort towards qualification intends to boost the internationalisation of the Portuguese companies and foster foreign investment in Portugal.

The international qualification plan in strategic areas for Portugal will take 150 young entrepreneurs, managers or technical staff of Portuguese SME abroad to previously chosen best-practice companies for a 3-month period. The aim is to generate new opportunities that may be converted into greater growth and competitiveness of the Portuguese economy both by boosting the internationalization of Portuguese companies and fostering foreign investment in Portugal”.

This programme is aimed at young people aged up to 35 with tertiary qualifications, foreign language fluency, with a minimum of two years work experience, and who are entrepreneurs or staff in Portuguese SME with a recognised internationalisation potential or a designated internationalisation project.

The programme consists of three sequential and mandatory stages (Preparation seminar for 2 days; practical action to be carried out abroad, up to 3 months; closing seminar with the presentation of the final report).

The programme supports the costs with the seminar preparation and closing, a rent allowance during the practical action abroad and roundtrip flights. This programme intends to cover 150 young people annually.

### **INOV-ART – International traineeships for young people with recognised qualifications or skills in the cultural and artistic field**

The INOV-ART programme is promoted, managed and implemented by the Directorate-General for the Arts and aims to support the training of young people with specific qualifications or skills in the art and culture areas through vocational traineeships in referenced entities in the international context of the art and culture sector. The aim is to foster their

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<sup>15</sup> Resolution no. 63/2008

integration and internationalisation as well as foster the professionalization of young people in the fields of culture and the arts through the completion of professional traineeships. A professional traineeship or internship consists of the development of activities supervised by a traineeship supervisor and does not focus primarily on teaching and learning activities, nor on the gaining of an academic degree. Professional internship also means the pursuit of individual projects that are not part of the activity of the placement organisation.

This programme is aimed at young people aged up to 35 with tertiary qualifications in the artistic or cultural areas, specialised artistic training or special skills and/or experience in the area, who are unemployed or looking for a first or new job.

The programme consists of three sequential and mandatory stages (an international practices course; traineeship abroad; closing seminar and support to integration). The traineeships have a minimum length of three months and maximum of nine months.

The traineeship is remunerated with an amount equivalent to the monthly sum of two times the Social Support Index - IAS, a meal allowance and personal accident insurance and, in addition, during the traineeship period abroad, supports costs with roundtrip flights. This programme extends to cover 200 young people annually.

### **INOV *Mundus***

The INOV *Mundus* programme is promoted, managed and implemented by the Portuguese Institute for Development Support - IPAD. This programme aims to provide young graduates with qualifications and integration in national or international, public or private organisations promoting development cooperation actions, through the attendance of vocational traineeships in Portugal or abroad. This programme aims to contribute to new career opportunities, job creation and increase national competitiveness, and is intended to involve 250 young people annually until 2010.

This programme is intended for young graduates aged up to 35, with a tertiary qualification in a relevant area for cooperation, with foreign languages fluency and preferentially with a working experience in a development cooperation organisation, who are unemployed, looking for a first or new job.

The traineeship comprises three mandatory stages: a two-day training seminar undertaken in Portugal; training activities undertaken in Portugal or abroad in selected organisations, either public or private, national or international in the field of cooperation with a maximum 12 month length; a closing seminar.

If the traineeship is carried out in Portugal, it is remunerated with an amount equivalent to the monthly sum of two times the Social Support Index - IAS, a meal allowance and accommodation allowance for 11 months. If the traineeship is carried out abroad, the programme supports a variable monthly allowance, accommodation allowance and costs with roundtrip flights. This programme is intended to cover 250 young people annually.

The operational norms, monitoring and the concession of technical and financial support of the INOV Programmes are defined by joint Ordinance of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, of Labour and Social Solidarity, of Economy and Innovation and of Culture. These programmes are co-financed by the above-mentioned Ministries, notably with the support of the Operational Programme for Human Potential - POPH.

Regarding the national traineeships associated with mobility, the following ones deserve being

mentioned:

- **Youth in Action** – This programme, of the responsibility of the National Agency for the Programme Youth in Action, has as an objective the promotion of the values of citizenship, solidarity and tolerance among young Europeans, involving them in the construction of Europe's future. It makes the most of mobility inside and outside the European frontiers, the non-formal education and the intercultural dialogue, and it encourages the participation of all young people, regardless of their educational, social and cultural background
- **Work Experience in Portugal** – This programme is promoted by the Institute for Employment and Vocational Training – IEFP, working closely with the Directorate-General for Consular Affairs and Portuguese Communities Abroad - DGACCP, aims at complementing and perfecting the qualifications of young Portuguese and luso-descendants residing abroad, through the attendance of an internship in an actual workplace, giving them the opportunity to experience the reality of the Portuguese business world in such a way as to promote and facilitate their professional integration in Portugal or in the country of origin.
- **Leonardo da Vinci Programme (LdV)** - The exchange experiences under this mobility measure contribute to the improvement of the quality of teaching or training administered in the participating entities, to the perfecting of course contents, models and training methodologies and have constituted an added value in the life long learning process of the trainers and those responsible for the training management.

The importance that transnational training programmes have been assuming, by incorporating the formative strategy of the promoting entity, provides a European dimension, incorporating it in the formative pathways of the beneficiaries, simultaneously contributing to the construction of a European system of educational training and of a labour market with a transnational character.

Similarly, the greater transparency resulting from the validation/certification of knowledge and acquired competences by the beneficiaries of the mobility measure also assumes relevance regarding the general improvement of VET systems in the European space as well as the construction of the European labour market.

This measure contributes, thus, in several ways, to the constitution of the European labour market: on the one hand, by providing employment opportunities to national citizens in the host country, either through the contacts established during the internship or due to the competences, namely linguistic, acquired; on the other hand, by stimulating transnational mobility; furthermore, by certifying the competences resulting from the participation in the training programme; at last, by allowing the trans-nationalisation of the VET systems and the establishment of networks to that effect.

Finally, there are national and multinational companies in Portugal with programmes that promote first contacts with the labour market and are committed to the reinforcement and enrichment of its human resources.

## **THEME 4: STRENGTHENING THE LINKS BETWEEN VET AND THE LABOUR MARKET**

*Europe is facing several socioeconomic challenges which accelerate the pace of change in the labour market and skills requirements. To make sure that VET responds adequately, a key priority of European cooperation in VET is to forge better links between VET and the labour market (Bordeaux communiqué). It is essential to involve all labour market actors in VET development, including promoting workplace learning, and encourage closer cooperation.*

*Partnerships between education and training institutions and employers have a particular role to play in improving learners' employability, developing their entrepreneurial potential and make them more familiar with the working world. Greater awareness of trends in the labour market can help to make learning more responsive to future needs and increase students' motivation by providing a clear context for learning. Cooperation with education and training institutions can also help to update skills and ensure professional development of staff<sup>(16)</sup>.*

*In this context, it is necessary to develop systems for early identification and anticipation of skill needs and mismatches to ensure that the skill needs identified are incorporated in VET on time, as advocated in the relaunched Lisbon strategy and the 'New skills for new jobs' initiative.*

### **4.1 Identifying and anticipating skill needs**

Between 1996 and 2006 the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity – MTSS, studied trends in qualifications and identified training needs in 29 sectors. The objective was to enable participants in the systems of employment and vocational education and training to anticipate the skills that would be needed in the future and define the training content that would correspond to trends in jobs and qualifications, as mentioned in Theme 1.

Available vocational profiles and forecasting studies for particular sectors are important points of reference for information on skill needs and constitute a strategic guide of fundamental importance for defining training profiles and designing quality training that meets the needs of the economy and society. They also serve as a useful methodological guide for selecting apprenticeship methods and contexts and were at the basis of the definition of the vocational profiles that integrate the National Qualifications Catalogue - CNQ, drawn up and updated by the National Qualifications Agency – ANQ, in articulation with Sector Councils for Qualification.

These councils are technical and consultative platforms for reflection and discussion and include experts appointed for the respective activity sector, employers associations and trade unions, reputable companies, training providers and schools, among others, thus establishing a connection with the evolution and needs of the economy. As mentioned above, these councils also support the National Qualification Agency – ANQ, in the updating process and development of the National Qualification Catalogue – CNQ, namely in building occupational profiles, their respective training references and their process of recognition, validation and certification of competences.

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<sup>(16)</sup> Conclusions of the Council and Representatives of the Governments of Member States, meeting within the Council, of 12 May 2009 on Enhancing partnerships between education and training institutions and social partners, in particular employers, in the context of lifelong learning. 2941. Education, youth and Culture Council meeting, Brussels (12 May 2009).



The National Qualification Catalogue – CNQ, makes the articulation between the supply of and demand for qualifications and, as a dynamic instrument, it may be updated through the inclusion of new qualifications and the exclusion of others whose demand by young people, adults and the Portuguese business sector no longer justifies its supply. In other words, the NQC tries to match the qualifications and competences covered by the National Qualification System – SNQ, with the operating mode and technology incorporation of the economic activities emerging from the different sectors. The definition of such needs requires not only a strong connection with enterprises and vocational training participants, but also a deep involvement of experts from the several activity sectors, carried out by the Sector Councils for Qualification.

These Councils are implemented and regulated by the NQA. In 2008 sixteen Sector Councils for Qualification were created, covering the sectors of Agricultural and Food Industry, Handicraft and Jewellery, Trade and Marketing, Civil Construction and Urbanism, Culture, Cultural Heritage and Content Production, Energy and Environment, Chemical Industries, Pottery, Glass and Other Materials, Computer Science, Electronics and Telecommunications, Wood, Furniture and Cork Industry, Metallurgy and Metal mechanics, Fashion, Services for Enterprises (financial activities, consultancy, secretariat), Personal Services, Health and Community Services, Transports and Logistics, and Tourism and Leisure. It is also important to mention that the new occupational profiles identified in the Sector Councils for Qualification are subject to public discussion in the Labour and Employment Bulletins, published by the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity - MTSS.

As mentioned above, the anticipation of skill needs is based mainly on sector analysis linked to the development of occupational profiles and qualification standards. The system is developed mostly at trade, sector or local levels. Systematic anticipation of skill needs at national level is not very pronounced yet.

The main methods used vary between quantitative and semi-quantitative approaches, such as surveys among employers, skills audits, and qualitative approaches, namely case studies and finally combined/holistic approaches, such as foresights, shared diagnosis, scenarios (including some proactive approaches to construction of the future), and observatories. Other approaches used include sector studies, *alumni* surveys and monitors, specific branch/type of activity/occupation/field of qualification studies, studies on skills requirements for specific target groups (unemployed, disabled, low/non-qualified, ethnic minorities, foreign workers) and so on.

### **Two examples of initiatives**

- The Portuguese Agricultural Association – CAP, has elaborated a study entitled “Diagnostic of the Needs and Competences in Rural Areas” that has closely analysed human resources and has proceeded to the characterization of the jobs in this sector, in both a quantitative and qualitative perspective. The factors of development that propitiate the dynamic development in this sector were also identified and this led, in turn, to the identification of competences and the construction of strategic vocational profiles.

This study led to the addition of five new vocational profiles in the National Qualifications Catalogue – CNQ, according to the competence needs that were detected which will allow the teaching and training system to adjust in order to respond adequately to the sector needs.

- The Regional Directorate of Professional Training for the Autonomous Region of Madeira published the “Prospective Study of Vocational Profiles for the Reinforcement of Competitiveness and Productivity of the Regional Economy, for the period 2007-2013” This study presents a model of qualifications and competences necessary for the improvement of competitiveness in this region, namely for the mega-cluster “Tourism and Hosting”, as well as guidelines for the development of training offers.

## **4.2 Integrating skill needs of the labour market into VET provision**

The issue of early identification of skills and competence needs is growing in importance. In a rapidly changing economic and social environment, it is important to be able to identify and respond promptly to new and changing skills and competence requirements. Such decisions depend on reliable forecasting and foreseeing information provided by research, which can take on a central role in shaping future oriented education and training, *i.e.*, acquisition of skills and competences needed by the labour market.

In Portugal, the ANQ is responsible for promoting research and innovation as to *curricula*, teaching methods and resources and for developing the dissemination of knowledge by promoting and participating in networks and partnerships on information, experimentation and the transfer of knowledge. The updating of the vocational profiles that are part of the National Qualifications Catalogue – CNQ, that takes into account the skills needed for the socioeconomic development of the country and required by the labour market are carried out through the work of Sector Councils for Qualifications.

The National Qualifications Catalogue – CNQ, is already composed by 254 vocational qualifications from 39 educational and training areas. The following references are defined for each qualification: vocational profile; training reference; and recognition, validation and certification of competences.

Modular training was also introduced in the Portuguese vocational training system in order to follow the changing demands of the labour market in a more flexible manner.

It is not possible to predict the future precisely, but skills are a key part of the infrastructure of the economy, and choices made by policy makers and individuals about investments in education and skills can help to determine the path of economy.

### **One example of initiative**

#### **Programme Training Plan SME**

The objective of this new programme is to promote the capacity of modernization, organizational innovation and management of small and medium enterprises and other entities. It is our aim to support more than 32,000 organizations until 2013 in the North, Centre, Alentejo and the Algarve.

This programme is being developed by some of the main entities representative of activity sectors, namely, *Câmara de Comércio e Indústria do Centro (CEC)* (Chamber of Commerce and Industry), *Associação Industrial Portuguesa (AIP)* (Portuguese Industrial Association), *Associação Empresarial de Portugal (AEP)* (Portuguese Entrepreneurial Association), *Confederação do Comércio e Serviços de Portugal (CCP)* (Portuguese Confederation of Commerce and Services), *Instituto de Apoio às Pequenas e Médias Empresas e ao Investimento (IAPMEI)* (Institute for the Support of Small and Medium Enterprises and Investment),

*Confederação dos Agricultores de Portugal (CAP)* (Portuguese Agricultural Confederation), e *Associação Industrial do Minho (AIMinho)* (Industrial Association of Minho) and, more recently, entities of the social economy. This programme, in progress since 2008, aims at reaching 6,259 SMEs, promoting the necessary training for the qualification of their workers. At the beginning of 2009, 43 projects involving a very diversified group of SME were already being carried out.

<http://www.planotecnologico.pt/InnerPage.aspx?idCat=73&idMasterCat=30&idLang=1&idContent=2589&idLayout=4&site=planotecnologico>

### **4.3 Involving labour market actors in VET**

The legislative framework governing vocational education and training was revised following the Agreement for the Vocational Training Reform, drawn up between the Government and the majority of the social partners. Following this, the National Qualifications System – SNQ, was created in December 2007 and it has reinforced the social partners' participation in vocational education and training, as stated below:

- In the National Vocational Training Council - CNFP and the National Education Council - CNE, the social partners are involved in the general definition of policies and in their pursuance, offering opinions and making recommendations. Within the framework of social dialogue, agreements have been signed in various policy areas, including vocational education and training.
- The social partners also have a seat on the administrations, general councils and monitoring committees of the official bodies responsible for implementing, monitoring and funding vocational training policies: on the National Institute for Employment and Vocational Training Governing Board, the Audit Commission, decentralised advisory boards and individual Vocational Training Centres' advisory boards; on the General Council of the Institute for Management of the European Social Fund; on the Permanent Commission for Supervision of the Human Potential Operational Programme; on the General Council of the ANQ and on the Sector Qualifications Councils, which will be working alongside the ANQ.

Although the social partners' role is essentially consultative and advisory in the bodies in which they are represented, their role in education and training policy goes beyond this. In fact, the social partners are responsible for running various training activities that serve national policies. Apart from all the training provided by the joint-management centres, which they run in conjunction with the Institute for Employment and Vocational Training - IEFP, they also provide training under Integrated Training Plans. These are a structured combination of actions promoted and coordinated by the social partners with a seat on the Standing Committee for Social Dialogue and implemented by them and their associated sector and regional organisations.

The importance of the social partners in the revising and updating of the National Qualification Catalogue – CNQ, through their participation in the Sector Councils for Qualification is to be noticed.

In December 2009, 77 protocols signed by employer entities, the ANQ and the Institute for Employment and Vocational Training - IEFP, having as an objective to promote the qualification of the workers of those companies, were already in place. These companies pledged to give priority to double certification training courses in their training plans, to participate in the exchange of experiences regarding vocational training and the upgrading of

their human resources and to propitiate the necessary conditions for them to participate in RVCC processes.

Participation of associations, companies, local authorities, social partners and employer entities in the development of the VET system also takes place in the New Opportunities Centres – CNO, where adults can recognise, validate and certify know-how and competences resulting from experiences in different contexts of life or get guidance for the appropriate education and/or training.

### **One example of initiative**

#### **Industrial Training Association**

The Industrial Training Association – ITEC, is a vocational training centre that offers qualifying training of levels 3 or 4, with especial predominance for courses which award double certification.

The Industrial Training Association manages a training structure that, through the transference of know-how from the promoting entities (*Volkswagen, Autoeuropa, Siemens, Bosch, Câmara do Comércio Luso-Alemã*) allows the qualification of new workers with competences to respond to the training needs of these same companies and other companies in the sector.

This Association has established protocols and partnerships with several universities and polytechnic institutes, with the Institute for Employment and Vocational Training and with several associations and companies.

One of the commitments of the Industrial Training Association is with educational training in a dual regime, combining theoretical education with practical training in the company. According to its 2008 activities report, within a total of 55 partner companies, 93% of the Association trainees have their practical training in SME. Still in 2009, resorting to the support of the Human Potential Operational Programme - POPH, it has also developed CET (Technological Specialization Programmes), thus significantly increasing their training in technological specialization.

#### **4.4 Promoting workplace learning**

The IVET courses are structured into differentiated pathways, namely vocational courses, apprenticeship courses, education and training courses for young people, specialised art courses, adult education and training courses and technological specialisation courses. These courses qualify students to enter into the labour market or pursuing of studies and all of them have training in the work environment.

The courses where workplace training is most relevant are:

- Apprenticeship courses which are initial vocational training courses aimed at young people and attended in both training centres and workplace, privileging the insertion in the labour market and also enabling the pursuing of studies. These courses have a varying length according to their typology and include the following training components: socio-cultural, scientific-technological and practical (the latter being performed in the workplace and accounting for at least 40% of total course length). The practical component is accompanied by a training facilitator appointed by the organisation responsible for workplace training.

Trainees' assessment is continuous, supported by the systematic appreciation of the activities developed by the trainee within the workplace. The results are formalized in the middle and at the end of the training period through assessment tests.

Throughout the development of the practical workplace training component, technical-pedagogical support, as well as trainee assessment, will be ensured by a training facilitator of the organisation providing support to the dual regime, who will work in collaboration with the programme's coordinator, designated by the coordinating organisation.

- Technological Specialisation Courses – CET, which are post-secondary non-tertiary training courses that prepare individuals for a scientific or technologic specialisation in a specific training area. These courses, besides the general, scientific and technological components, also integrate a workplace training component, that aims at applying knowledge and acquired know-how for practical activities within the respective vocational profile, as well as performing activities under orientation, by means of techniques, equipment and materials included in the production of goods or the rendering of services. It cannot be shorter than 360 hours, but not longer than 720 hours. The training component is developed in partnership between the training organisation and the companies, employer organisations, and business or socio-professional organisations that best fit the specificities of a given training field.

The process of recognition, validation and certification of competences is the most common platform to access to adult education and training courses. These courses have a modular training model, whose structure is based on competence units, training units or both, included in the key-competences reference for adult education and training, as well as in the reference for vocational training included in the National Qualifications Catalogue - CNQ. This model privileges the differentiation between vocational training routes and their contextualization within the social, economic and professional environment of trainees. The courses also may include a practical workplace-based training component, which is compulsory for adults attending a third level course and are not working in the occupation to which the course is leading. The activities developed by trainees during the practical workplace training period must follow an individual plan, subject to an agreement between the training body, the trainee and the organisation responsible for the traineeship. Trainees' orientation and support are shared between the training body, that coordinates, and the organisation responsible for the traineeship. The latter shall appoint a tutor with suitable professional experience.

## **One example of initiative**

### **Youth for SME Innovation Programme**

The Youth for SME Innovation Programme, developed by the Portuguese Entrepreneurial Association - AIP, constituted a benchmark in the policies for the support to integration in the labour market of unemployed graduate young people.

The success of this educational training project can be proven through the dissemination of new competences in management and innovation in 386 SME at the national level, through the placement of 506 young people who contribute to the strategic and competitive development of those enterprises.

More than offering educational training, the Youth for SME Innovation Programme was decisive in the raising of youth employability, with an approximate rate of 70%.

Having in mind the positive results attained, this programme was significantly reinforced at the financial level so as to respond to demand both from employer entities and from graduate young people.

## **THEME 5: ADDRESSING EQUITY, SOCIAL INCLUSION AND ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP**

*The year 2010 is the European Year for combating poverty and social exclusion. The priorities of the European Year include the reducing disadvantages also in education and training, focusing on the specific needs of groups at risk, for example early school-leavers, people with special needs, low skilled people and migrants.*

*The strategic framework Education and Training 2020 calls for education and training policies which will “enable all citizens, irrespective of their personal, social or economic circumstances, to acquire, update and develop over a lifetime both job-specific skills and the key competences needed for their employability and to foster further learning, active citizenship and intercultural dialogue”.*

*Supporting services, including guidance and counselling as well as access to information play a fundamental role for groups at risk.*

### **5.1 Addressing equity in VET**

Portugal has made, in the last few decades, a significant effort in the qualification of its population, even though high rates of early school dropout continue to persist, from which low qualification levels in a large part of the active population have resulted.

This context has led to the adoption of a number of policy measures, from which the New Opportunities Initiative – INO, stands out, which seek to promote the qualification of the population, standardising secondary education with the minimum aim of qualifying young people and adults and ensure that, by 2010, available places in vocational training courses of double certification represent half of the total number of places in terms of secondary education. This framework has, thus, required not only to structure the offer of educational and training courses susceptible to facilitate the involvement of a growing number of people in qualification pathways but also to create conditions that ensure the quality of the training supply.

The increase in the number of available places, the diversification of courses, the improvement of the clarity of what is on offer, curricular innovation, the recognition of competences acquired by way of experience, and the enlarging of the network and profile of the promoters, led to improving the types of training on offer.

A way of ensuring an efficient connection between education and training systems was carried out by the organisation of vocational training supply and by management of the network of education and training institutions.

The aim of diversification in the modalities of secondary level education and training, an emblematic measure of the New Opportunities Initiative in terms of young people, allowed to reverse the tendency to lose secondary school students, as well as to reduce the retention rate and, consequently, to prevent dropouts and thus reduce the number of young people who do not conclude secondary education.

Aiming at this target group, some measures were taken in order to diversify education and training pathways, reinforce the number of available places for VET courses and also develop an information and guidance system in order to provide young people and their families with easier ways of obtaining information regarding the choice of their training paths.

The attendance of secondary level double certification courses by young people has been continually and sustainably growing, as seen in the following table. Vocational courses have decisively contributed to this increase. In school year 2009/2010, 50,000 new places will be created (against 40,000 in 2008/2009), with a total estimate of 126,723 places in 2009/2010. These numbers indicate a growth of 38,000 in available places in relation with 2008/2009 and of 82,257 in relation with 2006/2007, corresponding to a 185% growth in comparison with the 44,466 young people who were attending vocational courses in 2006/2007.

<b>Evolution of the number of young people enrolled in secondary level double certification courses</b>				
<b>Courses</b>	<b>2006/2007</b>	<b>2007/2008</b>	<b>2008/2009</b>	<b>2009/2010</b>
Technological Courses	40,335	23,075	13,096	4,365**
Vocational Courses	<b>44,466</b>	<b>66,494</b>	<b>88,515</b>	<b>126,723</b>
Apprenticeship Courses	18,459	15,931	14,629	18,629**
Education and Training Courses for Young People	6,678	7,941	6,602	3,284
Specialised Artistic Teaching Courses	1,838	1,809	1,809	1,809**
Hotel and Tourism Courses	1,951	(a)	(a)	2,043**
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>113,727</b>	<b>115,250</b>	<b>124,651</b>	<b>156,853</b>

Sources: <http://novasoportunidades.gov.pt>: data from GEPE (2006-2009); SIGO (2009/2010); IEFP (data on apprenticeship courses); (a) This value is included in Vocational Courses; Provisional value. \*\*

Moreover, there was a further increase in the Apprenticeship Courses in 2009/2010 due to the reinforcement of cooperation with companies of different economic sectors. In September 2008, the Institute for Employment and Vocational Training signed cooperation protocols with 51 entities and enterprises, seeking a joint stimulation of the apprenticeship programme.

The established goal of having 50% of students attending double certification courses at secondary level will be reached sooner than expected, already in 2010.

The growth of the double certification courses offer occurred both in secondary schools and vocational schools. In the 2009/2010 school year, the foreseen increase of 14,390 vacancies in vocational schools and of 23,818 in public schools in comparison with 2008/2009 school year reinforces the growth tendency registered since 2006/2007. It is worth mentioning that there are double certification courses on offer in 472 of the 500 schools providing secondary level courses, which corresponds to a 90% coverage rate<sup>17</sup>.

There was also progress regarding some higher education qualifications through the development of Technological Specialisation Courses – *CET*, aiming at increasing the availability of technical and vocational education and widening access to such programmes to new publics. This process has brought a new dynamism to post-secondary education in Portugal, enhancing equity in VET and strengthening the transition between VET and higher education.

<sup>17</sup> Data from the ANQ

## **5.2 Support services for groups at risk**

As for the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity, the Institute for Employment and Vocational Training – IEFP, provides services for groups at risk at national level, including guidance and counselling, special vocational training and support during the transition to the labour market.

Central services, in articulation with the Ministry of Education, are responsible for designing and standardising procedures for the provision of vocational information and guidance. Decentralised services are generally responsible for coordinating, promoting and integrating the guidance activities offered by local units, such as job or training centres.

Integrated guidance activities help individuals from groups at risk, whether young people or adults, develop and manage their careers by encouraging them to acquire the skills needed to find a job or to develop their position in the labour market. Use of vocational guidance services is voluntary and free.

To ensure the widest coverage possible, the IEFP has developed a system for cooperation with other bodies, working and helping to finance their activities through partnership. An example of this is the network of the Occupational Integration Offices – GIP, that aim at supporting young and adult unemployed in the definition and development of their careers in close cooperation with job centres.

The Occupational Integration Offices operate in a range of non-profit organisations, such as councils (local administration), local development associations, labour unions, charities, immigrant support organisations, private sector welfare institutions, employers' organisations, and others that take part in local development projects and work in cooperation with job centres helping young people by providing guidance, organizing practical training and vocational training courses, as well as other issues connected with labour market access.

In the case of people with disabilities, vocational information and assessment/guidance are offered by the IEFP Direct and Joint-Management Vocational Rehabilitation Centres and by other public and private bodies duly accredited by the IEFP.

Other private and public entities develop activities in the area of guidance. One of such organisations is the Institute for Vocational Guidance – IOP, a unit of the University of Lisbon aiming at the research and diffusion of guidance methodologies and instruments. The Faculties of Psychology of Porto and Braga Universities also develop activities in the guidance area. There is also a number of private consortia gathering training/educational entities, human resource agencies and other service/industrial firms which may provide guidance services.

The creation of the Occupational Integration Offices – IOP is included in the employment support plan designed in December 2007 to address an expected increased influx of unemployed people to the Institute for Employment and Vocational Training centres. These offices work in cooperation with the employment centres of each region. They work on the basis of an operating license that is valid for a period of 2 years, after which they need to renew it. IOP are required to aid 120,000 persons in their active job search; place 12,000 people in the labour market; and control the regular reports of nearly 46,000 unemployment benefit recipients. IOP are also responsible for informing people on job availability and carrying out information sessions, as well as for guiding people towards measures that support employment, qualifications and entrepreneurship.



Training for the unemployed and other groups at risk is subject to specific regulations<sup>18</sup>. Most measures aimed at these target groups are run by the IIEFP and organised in partnership with local authorities, non-profit social institutions in the private sector and other agencies (for example, organisations run by the social partners).

### **SPECIAL VOCATIONAL TRAINING**

These special vocational training courses target disadvantaged groups – young people at risk, drug addicts, ex-prisoners, ethnic minorities and other disadvantaged population groups – with a view to help them obtain a basic vocational qualification to facilitate the transition to the labour market.

Special Vocational Training differs from regular vocational training by covering not only training programmes, but also socio-occupational integration, in addition to aiming at population segments with greater training difficulties and integration problems.

In the area of education, qualification and employment, a set of measures and programmes for the promotion, rehabilitation, integration and participation of people with special needs was developed, namely the access to and attendance of VET; the support regime to students with permanent educational special needs who attend higher education (with specific places for those who are physically or mentally handicapped); the creation of accessibility conditions to the training courses designed for the general public; the creation of six new opportunities centres for the development of RVCC processes, with methodologies adapted to the specific needs of these groups.

In terms of immigrants, the Plan for the Integration of Immigrants (PII) includes different measures for improving the access to education and training, namely the suitability of the strategies for academic induction to the specifics of students who are descendents of immigrants, the involvement of socio-cultural mediators in the academic context, the reinforcing of the education offices in the national support centres for immigrants and the application of the RVCC, among others. Regarding the questions of labour, employment and vocational training, the new regime of recognition of foreign higher grades and easier access into Portuguese higher education for students who have attended higher education abroad should be mentioned.

## **5.3 Active citizenship**

Lifelong learning, including VET, and active citizenship are closely related.

As mentioned in other themes of this report, VET *curricula* (IVET and CVET) are organised in training units intended to enlarge students' competences for active citizenship, in such a way as to bring new dimensions to their education:

- a political dimension – participation in the decision-making process and exercise of political power;
- a legal dimension – respect for the rule of law; awareness of and exercising of citizens' rights and responsibilities;
- a cultural dimension – respect for diversity, fundamental democratic values, both a shared and divergent history and heritage, and contributing to peaceful intercultural relations;

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<sup>18</sup> Implementing Order no. 140/93 of 6 July.

- a social and economic dimension – the fight against poverty and exclusion, in particular, considering new forms of work and community development, and corporate social responsibility;
- a European dimension – awareness of the unity and diversity of European culture, learning to live in a European context, knowing about European institutions and European rights;
- a global dimension – recognising and promoting global interdependence and solidarity.

Teacher training, both initial education and continuous education, also includes, among other components, cultural, social and ethical education, in the framework of education for citizenship.

Civil society, through associations, cultural centres and other non-governmental organizations, also develops projects in partnership with schools, namely in the areas of citizenship, human rights and environment.

### **One example of initiative**

Having in mind to contribute to the practice of citizenship by immigrants in Portugal, the guide *Immigration in Portugal – Useful Information* was published and widely divulged in the *media* and public communications in the main areas of immigrant settlements.

This guide is a compilation of information relating to the rights and duties of immigrants who choose Portugal as a receiving country. It is organized in chapters, each referring to a specific area: legal framework, family reunification, access to healthcare, access to education, recognition of qualifications and skills, social security, Portuguese nationality, voluntary return and legal measures for combating racism.

In order to facilitate consultation, each information section has a colour to differentiate it, followed by a number of useful contacts. The last chapter contains all information about the High Commission for Immigration and Intercultural Dialogue and the services provided, as well as its national information network and useful contacts.

This guide is available in the 20 centres for support to the immigrants, spread throughout the country and in consulates and embassies, as well as on the site of the High Commission for Immigration and Intercultural Dialogue - *ACIDI*.

## **THEME 6: QUALITY, EXCELLENCE AND ATTRACTIVENESS OF VET**

*In the Education and training 2010 work programme, Member States agreed to make their education and training systems 'a world quality reference' by 2010. The objective to improve quality and attractiveness of VET systems is one of the pillars of the Copenhagen process.*

*The Council conclusions on Quality assurance in vocational education and training, adopted on 28 May 2004, and the Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Establishment of a European quality assurance reference framework for vocational education and training, adopted on 18 June 2009, are designed to support Member States in promoting and monitoring quality improvement in VET at different levels. The latter provides a common basis for further development of quality principles, reference criteria and indicators. Quality assurance is a prerequisite for common trust between countries or different parts of the education system. Moreover, fostering excellence in vocational education and training is of paramount importance.*

*Teachers and trainers safeguard quality of VET and drive VET reforms. They should receive high quality professional training to foster their continuous development.*

*Individuals should be able to move from one qualification to another. Horizontal and vertical permeability of education and training systems increases the attractiveness of VET.*

### **6.1 Improving the quality of VET**

Portugal has carried out a significant effort to promote the quality and attraction of its education and training system, mainly after 2007 with the creation of the National Qualifications System – SNQ. The quality of the SNQ is essentially ensured through the National Qualifications Catalogue - CNQ, the accreditation of training institutions and the qualification of trainers and other training technicians. Besides these mechanisms, quality patterns are also measured by the periodic assessment of results, as well as through educational and vocational information and guidance and the public financing of vocational training.

The Chart of Quality of the New Opportunities Centres was established to support the quality of the services rendered by these centres, as a tool that promotes the quality of the processes of recognition, validation and certification of competences whilst it clarifies the respective results indicators. This tool seeks to support the New Opportunities Centres in response to the policy aims outlined within the scope of the New Opportunities Initiative.

The main objective of the Chart is the promotion of demand and the clarification of strategies for action and levels of service, thus contributing to the best use of the work processes, to the mobilisation of the teams and to the efficiency of the funding. It was designed to guide the work carried out by the teams of professionals of the New Opportunities Centres and is integrated in the Recognition, Validation and Certification of the Competences System. It has national scope and was developed by the National Qualifications Agency – ANQ, and by the teams of professionals of the New Opportunities Centres.

The success of the work carried out by the New Opportunities Centres is evaluated by a system of indicators of reference for quality, which assumes a dynamic character allowing the introduction of adjustments considered necessary by their own evaluation.

These indicators will allow the achievement of three different aims:

- a) the self-regulation of the national network of the New Opportunities Centres - CNO, by referring to single standards shared by all participants;
- b) the development of the reference system for quality of the New Opportunities Centres, which is to be used both for external and internal evaluation;
- c) the strengthening of the supervision and monitoring capacity of the ANQ in relation to the national network of the New Opportunities Centres, supported by the joint responsibility before the results and quality standards consecrated in the New Opportunities Initiative.

Also the Accreditation System was created in order to ensure quality. It aims at increasing the quality of VET providers and promoting their external recognition, increasing the credibility of the VET system and guaranteeing a better use of public funds for education and training activities. Accreditation is mandatory for those organisations that receive public funds and voluntary for the others.

Accreditation means a formal recognition of the pedagogic capacity of the VET providers and of the quality of their procedures and practices, in the different stages of the training cycle, based on quality standards. To be accredited the providers must show compliance with the standard requirements, proving that their management and pedagogic practices follow the quality criteria implied.

The quality standard describes requirements related to:

- Policy and strategic planning (strategy and projects clearly defined, taking into account territorial or sector context and training needs of the target population).
- Management and human resources (efficient management of training activities, and suitable skilled human resources, showing professional and pedagogic experience).
- Results evaluation and continuous improvement (compromise with assessment and review of their performance, adopting corrective and improvements measures to ensure continuous quality of their practices).
- Rules of conduct and ethic (proper relation with all stakeholders, respecting their rights and interests).
- Specific requirements for developing each stage of the training cycle (diagnosis of training needs, planning and designing of courses and materials, promotion and execution of courses and training evaluation).

The accreditation process begins with an application submitted requesting a technical evaluation followed by documental analysis and sometimes an audit. The renewal process of accreditation implies a self-assessment exercise made by the training organisation, with the definition of an improvement action plan and an indicators scorecard and, in some cases, an audit to confirm the compliance to requirements. At present, audits are conducted almost only for those providers that are undergoing a renewal process and cover 10 % of the universe of accredited providers.

Presently, there are 1,793 training entities carrying out the quality of training that is recognised by the national system of accreditation.

Within a wider reform of the Portuguese VET system, the accreditation process is changing to a certification model, which represents an evolution of the quality assurance tools at national level.

The new certification system aims at recognising the capacity of VET providers regarding different education and vocational themes, and it is an audit-based model. In this model, audits

are the main tool to assess the practices of VET providers, annually covering the universe of all accredited organisations.

Portugal was also a member of the European Quality Assurance in VET - ENQA-VET and as such it has taken part in several important network activities (meetings, general-assemblies, two thematic groups (the indicators and the guidelines) and a peer learning activity about work-based learning).

So, our country, as a member of the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework - EQARF Network, is committed to the implementation of this framework. The Recommendation on the establishment of the EQARF provides a legislative context for the work of the Quality Assurance National Reference Points and the network support for the development of the European quality assurance reference framework - EQARF Network.

Portugal has recently designated its Quality Assurance National Reference Points structure and is in the first phase of setting up an action plan and, eventually, a structure to support its activity.

We intend to implement the EQARF through the dissemination of information and the raising of awareness on crucial issues in relation to the quality assurance of VET among key national stakeholders. The Quality Assurance National Reference Points structure will be a basis for the exchange of information and experience, debate, mutual learning and consensus building regarding Quality Assurance towards European shared objectives.

## **6.2 Promoting excellence in VET**

The creation of centres of excellence from amongst training operators that stand out for the quality of their training activities regarding a more efficient identification of and response by the system to the existing needs as well as for an improvement in the quality standards is defined as a priority in the Agreement for the Vocational Education Training in 2007.

Stimulating the centres of excellence is another objective drawn in the National Vocation and Education Report 2010, at the level of institutions of higher education. These centres aim at organizing and strengthening the structures generating knowledge, technologies, the training of human resources and the rendering of services, aiming at the promotion of sustainable development in strategic sectors.

Their objective is to integrate institutional competences in order to induce the process of sustainable development in each sector, by means of:

- gathering *intelligenza* from researchers, universities, research centres, and entrepreneurial entities that are geared towards the development of the productive chain of each of the sectors;
- promoting conditions for the creation and attraction of new businesses in the different links of the productive chain in such a way as to propitiate its multiplication;
- promoting the creation of the Technological Innovation Network, enlarging collaboration and incorporating new sectors of the market;
- strengthening the internal structure of human resources training;
- developing a nucleus of competitive sector intelligence;
- developing a measurable certification infra-structure in order to ensure the quality, competitiveness and placement of the products and services of the centres both in national and international markets.

In Portugal there is a significant number of private training providers, some of which benefit from public grants. By signing contracts with the public administration, the most important ones are responsible for the technical, administrative and financial management of public funds allocated by the European Social Fund – FSE, and the State budget.

Every year, these training providers offer the most relevant and significant vocational courses, aimed at small and medium enterprises and unemployed young people and adults. Their activity operates under a set of principles and standards of quality assurance required by national legislation. The quality assurance focuses on pedagogic capacity, procedures and practices at each stage of the quality assurance cycle.

In addition there are 12 centres of vocational excellence – the Joint Management Vocational Training Centres – which constitute partnerships between the Public Administration, employers associations and trade unions. These partnerships have a long historical background and have enabled the establishment of a predominant sector network of vocational training centres which complements the public VET network. These centres have administrative and financial autonomy and cover the main economic activities. They are also responsible for validating their own courses and certifying competences.

### **6.3 Higher level qualifications in VET**

The implementation of the Bologna Process in Portugal has included the establishment of key measures to ensure the recognition of the qualifications of Portuguese citizens in the European space, to promote equality of opportunity in access to higher education, to improve participation and completion levels in higher education programmes, and to attract new publics in a context of lifelong learning and improved educational welfare benefits. This process included a comprehensive set of major legislative and policy actions.

New legislation was passed, regulating the creation of post-secondary education programmes (*i.e.*, Technological Specialisation Courses<sup>19</sup> – *CET*), aiming at increasing the availability of technical and vocational education and widening access to such programmes for new publics. This process has brought a new dynamism to post-secondary education in Portugal, in particular in polytechnic institutes. About 5,000 students were enrolled in these programmes in 2007/08 (compared to around 1,000 students in 2005), which represents a significant opening up of higher education in Portugal.

The Technological Specialisation Courses by their nature and objectives are short cycle programmes with the main goal of preparing students for employment, but also providing preparation for, and access to, the first cycle of higher education.

Higher education in Portugal reflects a binary nature, with university education oriented towards the provision of solid academic training, combining the skills and competences of both teaching and research units, while polytechnic education concentrates particularly on professionally driven vocational and advanced technical training. The organisation of the binary system reflects the needs of the increasingly diversified demand for higher education that meets the requirements of those who have completed secondary education and those who are seeking vocational and professional courses and lifelong learning.

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<sup>19</sup> Decree-Law no.88/2006

Under the national legal framework that regulates Technological Specialisation Courses, these are post-secondary training courses that do not have the status of higher education and are characterized by:

- providing high-level technical training;
- conveying high-level knowledge and skills;
- generally not requiring mastery of the underlying scientific principles of the different areas involved;
- conveying skills and knowledge that allow undertaking responsibilities in planning and/or management autonomously or independently.

The TSC programmes include general and scientific training components, technological training components and work-related training components.

Successful completion of the course leads to a diploma in specialised technology (such diploma allows a vocational aptitude certificate, issued under the National System of Vocational Certification) and a Level 4 vocational certificate, and allows trainees to pursue their studies at tertiary education level following an application process. Each tertiary education establishment is responsible for defining which TSC gives access to a particular course. Training received through a TSC grants between 60 and 90 credit units - ECTS that can be transferred to the tertiary education course to which the TSC gives access.

The number of registered Technological Specialization Courses - *CET* has risen to 376, and a larger number of public polytechnic higher education institutions and private and cooperative university higher education institutions can be noticed.

<b>Distribution of <i>CET</i> by type of teaching (tertiary education)</b>			
<b>Type of institution</b>	<b>Type of teaching</b>	<b>Number of <i>CET</i></b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Public</b>	<b>University</b>	34	9%
	<b>Polytechnic</b>	234	62%
	<b>Sub-total</b>	268	71%
<b>Private and Cooperative</b>	<b>University</b>	74	20%
	<b>Polytechnic</b>	34	9%
	<b>Sub-total</b>	108	29%
<b>TOTAL</b>		376	100%

Source: Directorate-General for Higher Education (DGES): <http://www.dges.mctes.pt>. Last update: 28-01-2010.

#### **6.4 Improving horizontal and vertical permeability of education and training systems**

In Portugal, horizontal and vertical permeability is possible within the education and training system (particularly regarding VET).

As to horizontal permeability, there are currently numerous possible combinations of learning pathways where the acquired competences and/or the attained training modules may be considered, particularly among the offers aimed at adults (RVCC processes, EFA courses and Modular Training).

The permeability between general education and double certification alternatives aimed at young people is not so frequent, but it is nevertheless growing.

Within secondary education students can request a redirection of their training route by switching between courses, using the schemes of permeability or equivalence between subjects to that effect. These schemes may involve students of scientific-humanistic courses, technological courses, and artistic expertise in the fields of the visual and the audiovisual arts, including recurrent education, occupational training, as well as education and training courses.

Vertical progression in the vocational and training system is currently easier than before: the principle of double certification in the vocational and training system has widely guaranteed the pursuing of studies and the bridges introduced between secondary, post-secondary and tertiary education have eased vertical progression.

The diversity of mobility offers at national, European and international levels constitute a source of incentives to attract and maintain highly qualified human resources. Consequently, mobility is one of the priorities of the Ministry of Science, Technology and Higher Education, and, therefore, various initiatives have been promoted, such as the creation of a new mobility system that integrates a new legal framework for the reenrolment, change of degrees and transfers, for the simplification of the recognition of foreign diplomas, a specific system of loans with mutual assurance to promote the international mobility of students and, also, the possibility of reaching Higher Education through the capitalization of accumulative units.

## **6.5 Teachers and trainers**

As we mentioned in other themes of this report, there have been a number of changes in crucial areas of the education system in the current educational context, with particular emphasis on the restructuring of the teaching profession, the teacher training system and teacher performance evaluation to improve the quality and efficiency of education, learning and teaching practice.

Within the scope of initial training for teachers, special mention should be made to the following measures:

- the new Legal Framework of the Qualification for Teaching in pre-school, basic and secondary education, the content of which regulates access to teaching, establishes that, from school year 2007/2008 onwards, the qualification for teaching of non-tertiary education teachers shall be attained through the attendance of higher education courses conferring the master degree (courses structured according to the Bologna Process).
- the new policy for teachers initial training particularly values learning outcomes, the adaptation to new teaching demands, the acquisition of knowledge on the subjects taught, research as the foundation of teaching practice, and a school-based initiation to occupational practice. This new legal framework implies the establishment of pluri-annual cooperation protocols between initial training providers and non-tertiary educational establishments.

With a view to improving the quality of teacher training, two measures are worth being referred:

- the reform of the regulation for access to the teaching career in public schools (2007), with the implementation of a probationary year (to be implemented in 2009/2010), the aim of which is to support the vocational development of teachers and help them integrate into schools and participate in their development;



- the reorganisation of the network of Schools Associations Training Centres - CFAE, and changes in the operational action plans of these Centres (for instance, since the second half of 2008, more than 2/3 of the available training programmes began being provided by external providers, mostly higher education institutions and professional associations of teachers), a measure with great impact upon the organisation of the subsystem of continuing training for teachers, more precisely in the role given to training providers.

The implementation of a probationary year<sup>20</sup> will take place during the school year 2009/2010. The rules defined for the probationary period regulate the access to the teaching career, promoting the vocational development of teachers, as well as their integration and participation in school life.

With a minimum length of one school year, the probationary year corresponds to the first year of effective activity as a teacher and it is carried out in the education establishment where the respective teacher develops his/her activity. During this period, the teacher is followed and supported in the didactic, pedagogic and scientific fields by a senior mentor teacher (*professor titular*), appointed by the coordinator of the teaching department, the coordinator of the board of teachers or the school principal, and whose function is to support the conception and follow up of the implementation of an individual work plan for the teacher under probation.

The mentor teacher's functions are considered fundamental for the improvement of the performance of teachers in the beginning of their career. Focused on the school, this process facilitates the integration of new teachers, thus greatly improving the quality of the services rendered by education establishments, simultaneously allowing a stronger connection with the surrounding community and the institution of higher education. This measure is expected to have great impact upon the organisation of the subsystem of continuing training for teachers, more precisely in the role given to training providers.

With regard to the training of trainers (initial and continuing), the legislation in force is currently being altered with the purpose of meeting the recommendations contained in the Council's Conclusions of November 2007 on improving the quality of teachers training, since the activity of trainers in Portugal implies the possession of a Certificate of Professional Aptitude, the awarding of which is based on the Trainers Profile – Pedagogical Competences<sup>21</sup>.

In this context, the activities of the National Centre for the Qualification of Trainers – *CNFF*<sup>22</sup> should be emphasised as a way of promoting information and qualification among this occupational group, for instance through: (i) the organisation of conferences and seminars dealing with themes such as the National Qualifications System, the Evaluation of Learning and Qualifications and Employability; (ii) the development of Distance Training methods (e-learning and b-learning) through the management of an IT integrated platform; and (iii) an the edition of an electronic newsletter.

As to measures for teachers and trainers of the double certification vocational education and training supply aimed at young people and adults, attention should be drawn to the following changes:

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<sup>20</sup> Decree-Law no. 15/2007 of 19 January

<sup>21</sup> Decree -Law no. 15/2007 of 19 January.

<sup>22</sup> The CNQF is the main institution defining the content of trainers' initial training. The CNQF designs and tests training references – programmes and resources – for the initial and continuing training of trainers and other professionals, except teachers, working in the education and training system. After validation and the necessary training of trainers, these references are integrated in the training supply of the Vocational Training Centres network of the IEVT and are also available to all other national training entities operating in the training of trainers. These references take into consideration the training needs of trainers and the strategic priorities defined under the training policy.

- the vocational qualification for teaching and training of these professionals, whose recruitment obeys to the legal norms in force at national level.
- the cooperation between education and vocational training establishments and the CFAE in order to survey training needs and carry out the respective training plans – training may be carried out in companies, for instance under cooperation protocols signed with schools;
- the fundamental role of the pedagogical teams of the CNO as facilitators in the process for the recognition, validation and certification of competences, and also as facilitators in the learning process of EFA courses and Modular Training – this is the purpose of the guiding principles contained in the Quality Charter of the CNO and of the action guidelines regarding training, under the responsibility of ANQ;
- the specialised Training Programmes, developed each year at national and regional level and intended for the pedagogical teams of the CNO and EFA courses, aiming at developing specific vocational skills for individual and team performance, are carried out for a period of time before the beginning of the teaching profession and deal mainly with the sharing of knowledge and good practices – in 2008, several public universities with know-how in adult learning developed a training programme in cooperation with ANQ aimed at the CNO teams.

### **Approaches adopted for the promotion of essential transversal competences**

Regarding teacher training (initial and continuous), the approaches of the new policy for the competences and qualification of teachers stand out, namely multidisciplinary training, ensuring that teachers possess: (1) advanced knowledge of the contents of the subject to be taught; (2) knowledge of pedagogy; (3) competences adequate to guide and support the students; (4) understanding of the social and cultural dimension of education.

New approaches promoting basic competences are being developed for the training of trainers through continuous education, namely learning through b-learning and the development of methodologies and resources for new approaches in training as, for example, training in work context and vocational training as a tool for the facilitation of learning. Attention must be drawn to new training references such as, for example, *Towards an Active Citizenship: Intercultural Learning* (June 2008).

## THEME 7: ENHANCING CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION

*Creativity, innovation and intra-/entrepreneurship are important for economic development and Europe's competitiveness. Research and cutting-edge innovation mostly require high levels of knowledge, skills and competence.*

*VET, fostering creativity and preparing learners for innovation and entrepreneurship should promote acquisition of key competences such as learning to learn, a sense of initiative, realistic assessment of risks, and a quick grasp of opportunity. The knowledge triangle of education-research-innovation illustrates this interrelationship.*

*Partnership between enterprises and education, training and research ensure a close focus on the skills and competences required in the labour market and can be instrumental in incorporating innovation and entrepreneurship in all forms of learning.*

*Broader learning communities, with representatives of the civil society and other stakeholders, to promote creativity and better reconciliation of professional and social needs, and individual well-being should be encouraged.*

*Many related skills and competences have been acquired in the past outside formal settings. Their recognition depends on the availability of learning outcome-based assessment methods. Recognition of these competences is also likely to encourage learners to develop their creativity and capacity for innovation further.*

### 7.1 Creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship in VET

It is commonly agreed that innovation is considered an essential element to respond to the changes and opportunities which global economy imposes. Thus, VET systems have to allow the acquisition of knowledge and specific competences as well as the development of generic transversal skills connected with creativity and innovation.

The *curricula* of the basic and secondary school systems, as well as the VET system, integrate different levels of competences which all trainees develop along their training pathway: key competences, transversal competences and technical or technological competences.

Particular attention has been paid to transversal knowledge, skills and competences at each level of teaching and training, namely to interpersonal and group relationships, learning and working methods, processing of information, communication, identification and conflict resolution, participation in civil life and preservation of environmental, cultural and artistic patrimony.

In this context, the National Education Project for Entrepreneurship, approved in August 2007, seeks to contribute to a continuous development of key competences of students and to the social appropriation of the entrepreneurship spirit in schools and educational communities, providing a multidisciplinary, transversal group of competences (knowledge, skills and competences) that simultaneously involve three dimensions: key competences for entrepreneurship throughout life, curricular competences and participation and civic action in society.

This programme was developed by the Ministry of Education in cooperation with specialised entities, the Business Innovation Centre (BIC) and the Institute of Behavioural Technology (*INTEC*).

In 2007/2008, 99 schools participated in this programme, of which 10 are vocational schools. There are around 4,800 pupils involved, in more than 370 projects.

[http://sitio.dgidec.minedu.pt/PressReleases/Documents/EDITAL\\_emprededorismo.pdf](http://sitio.dgidec.minedu.pt/PressReleases/Documents/EDITAL_emprededorismo.pdf)

All the vocational standards of Initial Vocational and Education Training (IVET) and Continuous Vocational and Education Training (CVET) included in the National Qualifications Catalogue are organized in training units, some of them reflecting transversal competences.

It's also relevant to underline the implementation of the Technological Plan for Education - PTE, with a view to increasing school access to information and communication technologies. Within the PTE different initiatives have been launched:

- the e-school programme, an international application in order to switch schools to broadband Internet. This programme was enlarged to young people with special education needs enabling more than 250 thousand individuals to have access to a computer with Internet connection.
- a number of important enterprises from the ICT sector support the PTE through the establishment of protocols with the Ministry of Education in order to offer traineeships to pupils attending vocational education.
- The ICT Academies programme aims at providing the education community with the possibility of integrating training programmes and academic, vocational and industrial certification in a scholarly context in the technological area. These Academies are promoted by reputable ICT companies (*Apple, Cisco, Linux, Microsoft, Oracle and Sun*).

As mentioned in Theme 1, the recent curricular revision demanded the reinforcement of the competences of both teachers and trainers who attended specific training courses that allowed them contact with new methodologies and new pedagogical competences, namely training on active citizenship and intercultural learning.

### **One example of initiative**

The Portuguese Industrial Association - *AIP*, promoted, in cooperation with the National Qualification Agency, a conference to promote the *Creative Learning - Innovation Marketplace*. This initiative arises from the belief that for achieving levels of world leadership, companies and individuals have to achieve a higher level of skills and development.

It is based on the recognition of existing tools and competences that can lead to better forms of knowledge, using non-formal and informal learning strategies, namely entrepreneurship, and innovation and creativity skills, in order to generate solutions that make us move forward within European multiculturalism.

*Creative Learning - Innovation Marketplace* is a Portuguese initiative, part of a national and European programme, able both to mobilize and integrate new forms and methodologies of learning and to generate knowledge that may contribute to the country's development.

This initiative focuses on three key-themes:

- Business Innovation – the renewal of the Lisbon strategy agenda, under the guidelines of the “New skills for new jobs”;
- Creative Learning – Life Long Learning;

- Changing society – how creativity and innovation are influencing the current social paradigms and their implications on cohesion and social responsibility.

[www.creativelearningconference.com](http://www.creativelearningconference.com) 

## 7.2 Improving quality of teaching

The qualification of the Portuguese population calls for the improvement of the quality of teaching staff qualifications, since learning quality and outcomes are strictly connected with the quality of teachers and trainers.

The new policy of initial teacher training strictly emphasises learning outcomes, the adaptation to new teaching demands, the acquisition of knowledge on the subjects taught, grounding the basis of teaching practice on research and the beginning of practical experience.

As to improving the quality of teachers training, mention should be made to the approval of the legal framework<sup>23</sup> of the qualification for teaching in pre-primary, compulsory and secondary education.

The establishment of a probationary year is also to be mentioned (see theme 6). It will be implemented during school year 2009/2010. The rules defined for the probationary period regulate the access to the teaching career, promoting the vocational development of teachers, as well as their integration and participation in school life.

During the probationary year, the teacher is followed and supported in the didactic, pedagogic and scientific fields by a mentor teacher, whose functions are considered fundamental for the improvement of the performance of teachers in the beginning of their career. This process facilitates the integration of new teachers, thus greatly improving the quality of the services rendered by education establishments, simultaneously allowing a stronger connection with the surrounding community and the university. This measure is expected to have great impact in the organisation of the subsystem of continuing training for teachers, more precisely in the role given to training providers.

With regard to the training of trainers (initial and continuing), the legislation in force is currently being amended with the aim of meeting the recommendations contained in the Council of November 2007 on improving the quality of training for teacher trainers.

Trainers are highly qualified professionals in their occupational area and are expected to complete an initial pedagogical training course for trainers. Working as a trainer requires psycho-social preparation, as well as scientific, technical, technological and practical training.

Continuing training is recognised as a right and a duty for teachers to ensure the furthering and updating of knowledge and vocational skills, as well as professional mobility and career progression. Among the main goals of continuing training, a special emphasis is given to the improvement of the quality of education and learning, incentives to self-training, the practice of research and educational innovation and the adaptation to the needs of the VET system.

Continuing training is provided by:

- tertiary education establishments;
- training centres constituted by schools united for this purpose;

<sup>23</sup> Decree-Law no. 43/2007 of 22 February.

- training centres belonging to professional or scientific bodies;
- central or decentralised education services, in fields considered relevant for the development of the educational system which are not promoted by other institutions;
- other institutions whose intervention is relevant within this area.

### **One example of initiative**

Through the Training and Certification of ICT Competences System, one intends to promote the generalization of the digital and pedagogical competences of teachers, aiming at the generalization of more innovative teaching practices and, consequently, the improvement of students' learning experiences.

With this objective in mind, ICT training courses are made available to all teachers of pre-primary, compulsory and secondary education schools. These courses are modular, sequential and subject oriented, following the best international practices.

This system also has as an objective to recognize and certify ICT competences that teachers may have acquired outside the teachers' continuous education context.

[http://www.portugal.gov.pt/pt/GC17/Governo/Ministerios/ME/Notas/Pages/20090713\\_ME\\_Competencias\\_TIC.aspx](http://www.portugal.gov.pt/pt/GC17/Governo/Ministerios/ME/Notas/Pages/20090713_ME_Competencias_TIC.aspx)

### **7.3 Innovation-friendly institutions**

The Open University (*Universidade Aberta*), a long distance teaching public university, embraces as its basic mission to train students who, for whichever reasons, were not able, at the appropriate time, to enter or complete higher education studies. At the same time, the Open University tries to meet the expectations of all those who, having obtained a university qualification, wish to convert or update it. This means that it tries to answer the expectations of an adult public with life experience and for the most part already pursuing a professional career.

Founded in 1988, the Open University was born out of the reflexive work and technical training carried out during a few years by the Portuguese Long Distance Teaching Institute (*Instituto Português de Ensino à Distância*). Since then, the Open University has developed its work, training teachers and experts, designing, producing and teaching courses according to a philosophy of public service. Its present size is the result of this process: around 9,000 students (in Portugal, Portuguese-speaking African countries and several other parts of the world), 200 teachers (more than half with a PhD), 300 employees in its headquarters and other offices in Lisbon, branches in Coimbra and Porto as well as centres in all capital cities.

The Open University is one of the largest national publishing agencies of pedagogical materials in the areas of languages and European literatures, history, social and political sciences, education sciences, law, European studies, ICT, mathematics, management, and long-distance teaching and training. It published more than 400 works, it has 3500 hours of audiovisual productions and more than 6,000 hours of TV broadcasted programmes produced in its own studios.

[http://www.univ-ab.pt/students/guia/uab\\_plan\\_nac.php](http://www.univ-ab.pt/students/guia/uab_plan_nac.php)

## 7.4 Encouraging partnership

The Knowledge Society Agency - *UMIC* is the Portuguese public agency with the mission of coordinating the policies for the Information Society and mobilizing it through dissemination, qualification and research activities. It was created in January 2005, as a public institute with administrative and financial autonomy, which has presently gained a reinforced relevance since the Portuguese Government Programme for 2005-2009 established a [Technological Plan](#) as the keystone of the Government's economic policy.

The objectives of this plan are:

- to mobilize Portugal for the information society;
- to provide a new stimulus to entrepreneurial innovation;
- to promote scientific and technological development;
- to improve the qualifications of human resources.

Besides, at the end of July 2005 the Government launched the *Connecting Portugal* programme, as an initiative for the mobilization of a social basis of support extended to all regions, citizens, schools, businesses, research centres and associations in order to develop the Information Society and knowledge strategies in Portugal.

This programme is intended to diversify public investment, directing it at the consolidation or reinforcement of ongoing initiatives that have a good chance of success, as well as at filling gaps whenever they are detected, and promoting innovation and the creation of new businesses in specific areas of strategic development. This process will increase the availability and use of new services and contents on the Internet, affecting all sectors of society, with a strong impact on people, on their quality of life and work.

In this hard period of financial and economic adjustments in Portugal, the mobilization of the Information Society is, without any doubt, a great challenge and calls for the contribution of society.

The priorities of the initiative *Connecting Portugal* are the spreading of the progresses accomplished in the area of the use of the ICT in Portugal, in the framework of the international comparisons required by the Lisbon strategy, and the independent, regular and transparent evaluation of the information systems of public services and administration.

### Two examples of initiatives

#### **Information Technology and Knowledge Transfer Workshops (*OTIC*)**

This initiative promotes the creation of knowledge and technology transfer units in the areas of the Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). They operate within institutions of higher education – universities and polytechnic institutes – and mediate between them and enterprises, by detecting opportunities of economic exploitation of knowledge and technology supplied by universities and polytechnic institutes, and by identifying knowledge and technological demand by enterprises with the potential of leading to innovative technological developments to be pursued in collaboration between higher education institutions and enterprises. The final goal is to enhance knowledge based economic and social development. So far, the initiative supports the creation and initial development of 22 new knowledge and technology transfer units.

### **Networks of Competence**

The Networks of Competence initiative promotes the creation of innovation and knowledge networks of enterprises, research centres, technological centres, universities, polytechnic institutes and other higher education institutions, public bodies and enterprise associations, with a scope strongly involving information and communication technologies. They aim at creating partnerships for innovation and knowledge that can contribute to the social and economic development of a region or economic sector by promoting the development of a more competitive economy based on new or better products and services, enhancing the partnerships for collaborative applied research projects and influencing the training of human resources in areas of regional or sector excellence. So far, the Networks of Competence initiative supports the creation and initial development of 9 Networks of Competence.



## THEME 8: FINANCING VET

*Successful implementation of VET strategies requires securing adequate financial resources and ensuring their efficient allocation, equitable distribution and sustainability. Countries and social partners have agreed to improve public and private investment in VET and cost-sharing (Maastricht, Helsinki and Bordeaux communiqués). This may involve:*

- a) implementing institutional reforms (such as budget delegation/devolution, public-private partnerships);*
- b) introducing incentives to improve efficiency of VET systems (such as performance-based funding) or to invest more in VET (tax incentives);*
- c) developing and implementing other co-financing approaches to ensure a balanced share (between public bodies, employers and individuals) of costs and responsibilities for VET (vouchers, learning accounts, training funds, etc.).*

*Priority should also be given to use EU funds for modernising VET.*

### **8.1 Improving efficiency, equity, levels of VET funding**

In Portugal, the cost of the vocational education and training system is covered almost entirely by public funding through contributions from the State budget (*Orçamento de Estado - OE*), the Social Security Budget (*Orçamento da Segurança Social*), by some private companies and the European Social Fund (*Fundo Social Europeu*).

Vocational training provided under the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity – *MTSS*, is financed by funds allocated to the Institute for Employment and Vocational Training – *IEFP*, from the Social Security Budget, comprising contributions paid by employers (23.75 % of the value of gross salaries paid) and by workers (11% of gross salary received). To cover active employment and vocational training policies, the Social Security Budget systematically sets aside 4.7 % of the social security contributions.

Portugal receives substantial support from the European Union to help fund vocational education and training policies in the form of European Social Fund - ESF resources; these are allocated for specific measures under the Operational Programmes that were included within Community Support Frameworks (CSF).

For the current programming period 2007-2013, a greater importance was given to the promotion of human capital stated by the New Opportunities Initiative. The role of the qualification strategy within the National Strategic Reference Framework 2007-2013 (*QREN*) is clearly central, mainly through the Human Potential Operational Programme - *POPH*, an essential instrument for the financing of this initiative.

The main strategic aim of the National Strategic Reference Framework is the qualification of the Portuguese people through an emphasis on knowledge, science, technology and innovation. The achievement of this main strategic aim is ensured with the support of the Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund by the concretisation of all the Operational Programmes during the 2007-2013 period of the Human Potential Agenda, which brings together a set of interventions aimed at promoting academic and vocational qualifications among the Portuguese population and fostering employment and social inclusion, alongside the conditions for the enhancement of gender equality and full citizenship.

The main areas of intervention of the Human Potential Agenda are: initial qualifications, adaptability and lifelong learning, management and vocational improvement, advanced

competitiveness training, support for entrepreneurship and transition to working life, citizenship, social inclusion, and development and promotion of gender equality.

The Institute for the European Social Fund Management – *IGFSE* (Ministry of Labour and Social Security - *MTSS*), is the department responsible at national level for managing, coordinating and supervising activities supported by the ESF.

For training schemes supported under Operational Programmes within the Community Support Frameworks, funding from the Social Security Budget is of particular significance; since the Social Security Budget is the source of public funding that guarantees the national contribution to vocational training schemes run by private bodies.

The State is the main provider of funding for initial vocational training for unemployed people. Financing continuing vocational training for employed people is considered to be the responsibility of employers, though the State may provide financial support and incentives.

#### **FUNDING FOR INITIAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

Under the Basic Law of the Education - *LBSE*, basic education is free. All costs associated with registration, attendance and certification are covered, and some pupils may be eligible for free use of school books and materials as well as free meals and accommodation, depending on the socioeconomic situation of their family. School transport is free for pupils attending basic education.

The initial vocational education and training offered within the education system is essentially funded by the Ministry of Education's budget, through the Human Potential Operational Programme - *POPH* contribution to the funding of training pathways is also significant.

The *POPH* is the programme which implements the thematic agenda for human potential inscribed in the National Strategic Reference Framework - *QREN* and is a funding source which supports, through Line 1 – Initial Qualification, the following courses: apprenticeship system courses, vocational courses, education and training courses for young people and specialized technology courses.

The Initial Qualification (*IVET*) intervention line aims at raising young people's qualifications, promoting their employability and the suitability of their qualifications to the demands of sustainable development, increasing competitiveness and social cohesion in the Portuguese economy.

This intervention requires a direct connection with the goals and strategy of the New Opportunities Initiative regarding young people qualifications, ensuring that the 12<sup>th</sup> grade is the minimum schooling level for everyone and that double certification vocational offers represent half the available positions in education and training courses, allowing for the completion of the secondary level.

The general aim of Priority Line 1 – Initial Qualification (*IVET*) is:

- to fight school failure and school dropout as well as prevent the entry of low-qualified young people into the labour market;
- to promote secondary education as the minimum qualification level for young people;
- to promote double certification courses with vocational qualification and integration purposes and/or the continuation of studies;
- emphasising post-secondary non-tertiary education and level 4 qualification;
- to promote young people's employability;

- to promote equal opportunities for both genders.

## **Funding for continuing vocational education and training and adult learning**

### **Funding for publicly provided CVET**

Public financing for continuing vocational education and training is largely supported by the POPH and is focused on a series of measures intended to help the working population adapt to economic developments and organisational and technological changes and to improve employability, within a context of lifelong learning.

Under the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity, a significant role is played by the Institute for Employment and Vocational Training - *IEFP*, whose training centres organise a substantial proportion of vocational training courses.

As in the case of initial training systems, in systems supported by the ESF public financing comes either from the budget of the body concerned or from the Social Security Budget, depending on whether the system is public or private.

When continuing vocational education and training is organised by enterprises without public support, the enterprises themselves are entirely responsible for covering the cost of the training. Contrary to the practice in some EU countries, there is no tax charged for the specific purpose of funding vocational training. However, enterprises and workers contribute indirectly as the Social Security Budget is a source of financing for vocational training.

Within the National Strategic Reference Framework, the POPH funds the following schemes through priority Line 2: Recognition, Validation and Certification of Competences; adult education and training courses; and modular training.

Priority Line 2 has as a main goal the improvement of the qualifications of the adult active population, employed and unemployed, thus contributing to the development of competences that are fundamental for the economic and entrepreneurial modernization and for the adaptability of the workers.

Similarly to Line 1, this priority Line is also included in the strategy of the New Opportunities Initiative, as a consequence of the need to give a new opportunity to those adults who are already in the labour market without having completed the 9<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> grade.

The general aim of Priority Line 2 – Adaptability and Lifelong Learning is:

- to raise the qualification levels of the active population – whether employed or unemployed – considering secondary education level as a reference for qualification;
- to increase access to training offers through modular training and tailored training offers;
- to ensure the capitalisation of short-term training carried out within a given training pathway with a view to achieving qualifications suited to a given job opportunity;
- to expand and consolidate the System for Recognition, Validation and Certification of Competences;
- to diversify learning opportunities and develop new methodologies for lifelong learning;
- to promote equal opportunities for both genders.

The main goal of Priority Line 2 – Adaptability and Lifelong Learning is to improve the qualifications of the active adult population – employed and unemployed – thus contributing to the development of fundamental competences for the modernisation of economy and enterprises

and the adaptability of workers. As for Line 1, this priority line is also included in the strategy of the New Opportunities Initiative, which aims at giving a new opportunity to those adults who are already integrated in the labour market without having completed the 9<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> grade.

### **Funding for CVET in enterprises**

The Human Potential Operational Programme - POPH, the programme which implements the thematic agenda for human potential inscribed in the National Strategic Reference Framework - *QREN*, funds Continuous Vocational Education and Training (CVET) in enterprises, particularly through Priority Line 3 – Vocational Management and Further Training.

The general goal of this Priority Line is the development of a set of training activities linked to organisational modernisation processes and productive restructuring and reconversion that promote the capacity of companies and other entities (including public administration) for innovation, management and development as a fundamental condition for modernising the productive sector, improving the quality of employment and increasing competitiveness.

This approach intends to stress the importance of investing in the field of continuing training, taking into account the need to stimulate the development of a training culture on the part of companies and workers.

The support to the development of strategic and specialized training for management and innovation in Public Administration is also one of the priorities of this line.

### **Funding for training of unemployed people and other groups excluded from the labour market**

Training for the unemployed and other groups at risk is subject to specific regulations<sup>24</sup>. Most measures aimed at these target groups are run by the Institute for Employment and Vocational Training – *IEFP*, and organised in partnership with local authorities, non-profit social organisations in the private sector and other agencies (for example, organisations run by social partners).

As in the case of the vocational education and training system, this type of training is usually financed by the ESF and from public funding drawn from the budgets of individual bodies or the Social Security Budget, depending on whether the training offered is public or private.

### **General funding arrangements and mechanisms**

With regard to basic and secondary education, support from the Students Social Aid – *ASE*, comprises programmes that support (for all students of the 1<sup>st</sup> education cycle) cost-shared meals for all students and free for the most disadvantaged.

In addition to these supports, Students Social Aid includes economic support to students with low incomes for the purchase of schoolbooks and other school materials, as well as costs with extra-curricular activities (for instance, study visits), besides providing favourable conditions for accommodation in school housing facilities (cost support according to household income).

The school pass 4\_18@escola.tp, intended for students aged between 4 and 18, also allows a 50% discount for travel on public transports between home and school. This measure aims to provide social support to families regarding the travel expenses of their children.

With regard to higher education, the POPH also provides support to scholarships and programmes for university students through Priority Line 4 - Advanced training.

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<sup>24</sup> Implementing Order no. 140/93 of 6 July.

Following the school welfare policy in force, the School Welfare Services of Higher Education establishments (universities and polytechnics) were assigned conditions and competences, which allow them the provision of direct social support to socially disadvantaged, displaced and disabled students, as well as indirect support to all students. Direct social support consists of the granting of scholarships and emergency aid; indirect assistance is provided through access to housing, meals and health services in areas such as diagnosis and prevention, as well as support for the practice of cultural activities and sports.

In accordance with Decree-Law no. 309-A/2007 of 7 September, a specific system of loans for higher education students and students with scholarships was created. This system gives students the opportunity to obtain from banks a funding for their studies on better conditions. These loans are granted without the need for prior property guarantees and sureties and benefit from a minimum interest rate that may be further reduced for students with the best school performance. These loans are repayable over a period between 6 to 10 years after graduation, with at least an additional one-year interest-only period. The amount may vary between 1,000 and 5,000 Euros per course year, with a maximum amount of 25,000 Euros (for 5-year degree programmes).

Training activities are entitled to State support via tax cuts. The taxpayer and respective dependants may deduce 30% of education and training expenses up to 681,60 Euros. School fees, travel, accommodation and meal expenses are deductible, as well as kindergarten and school fees, among others, as long as the respective educational establishments belong to the National Educational System.

## **8.2 Use of Lifelong Learning Programme funds**

Throughout the years Portugal has witnessed, namely through the Leonardo da Vinci Programme, an increase in initiatives that complement and support vocational educational training measures.

In the years 2008 and 2009 a total of 119 projects contemplating 1864 participants were funded through this mobility programme. Total funding rose to 6,820,746.57 Euros.

Mobilities which were funded were distributed by different target groups according to the following list:

• Initial vocational training – FPI	753 participants	2,033,023.43 Euros
• People in the labour market – PMT	923 participants	4,488,401.02 Euros
• Professionals in VET – PEFP	188 participants	299,322.12 Euros

Taking into account the level of project execution to date, the highest percentage of financed projects by target group and by area are as follows:

- FPI– hotel and restaurant industry (15%); secretarial (16%); graphic design (10%) and computers (10%).
- PMT– graphic and industrial design (10%); environmental protection (18%); social work and counselling (7%).
- PEFP – vocational education and training (51%); sciences (12%) (*data* just from 2008 since mobilities of this target group have not taken place in 2009/10 yet).

In 2009, and still regarding the Leonardo da Vinci Programme, there was a programme of Dissemination of Mobility Programmes integrated in the Information /Promotion measure targeted at state schools that award double certification. This initiative started with meetings directed at the articulation with Regional Directorates of Education – DRE, and it involved 174 schools, allowing them direct contact with 253 representatives from those educational institutions.

In 2009, information and dissemination materials were elaborated (Newsletter, publications, brochures, leaflets, among others).

As to the Projects for Transference of Innovation, a total of 15 projects received funding, amounting to 3,872,281.00 Euros.

In 2008, the approved projects were mainly in the areas of education and vocational training in industrial context, environment and food safety, health and rehabilitation, and civil responsibility.

Regarding projects financed in 2009, there was a great variety of areas developed in education and vocational training, such as: VET, training of trainers, teacher training and the teaching of science; environmental education; economy and administration; maintenance and installation of machines and equipment; work in mechanics and metal, textiles and clothing; shoe industry; foreign languages; social competences and professional life; programmes that help people find jobs.

The strong point of this investment has been the benefit it has brought to those who carried out the mobility experience and to the institutions to which they belong. Benefits are transversal to all participants and all areas. They include the raising of personal, professional, technical and linguistic competences, having as background the development of intercultural competences, the opening to the exterior and the internationalisation of the organizations.

As for the programme of Transference of Innovation, the contribution of the financed projects and the products that are developed as a response to sector needs felt by the different partners as well as the stimulus for entrepreneurship, initiative, cooperation, innovation and shared learning is to be noticed.

The weakness of this support comes, above all, from the lack of structuring strategies that can develop into national initiatives which are catalysts of the experiences obtained abroad and, simultaneously, of their dissemination and the dissemination of the results of the financed projects, in such a way as to contribute seriously to becoming a support to the development of systems and do not stay circumscribed to the institutions directly involved.

### **8.3 Use of other EU funds**

N.A.

### **8.4 Improving VET governance**

The effectiveness and quality assurance of VET provision and VET institutions are at the core of several measures and new policy orientations recently introduced by the most important governmental initiatives taking place: the New Opportunities Initiative (2005-2010) and the Vocational Training Reform, launched in 2007. The principle of double certification finally

entered into initial and continuing VET. The idea was to apply the double certification principle to all Initial Vocational Education and Training (IVET), adult education and a major part of Continuous Vocational Education and Training (CVET), especially that financed by public funds.

The most important implications of these initiatives are of quantitative nature, given the considerable increase in the supply and demand of training over the last years. On the qualitative side, a new institutional framework has emerged, bringing in new and strategic participants to the regulation and the quality of the VET provision and anticipating a renewed and reinforced participation of social partners. New principles concerning training quality and effectiveness have also been introduced: more empowered training providers; improved indicators and evaluation procedures on outcomes and impacts of training investments; increased attention on students assessment and learning outcomes; and strengthened monitoring and sharing practices on the quality of learning processes, especially on the RVCC process.

Mention should be made to the importance of specific training investments for adaptability, restructuring processes at local and sector levels, and emergent and growing economic activities. Companies have a major role in this strategy, especially through their involvement in Accreditation Prior Learning – APL processes and modular training. The institutional framework and the financing model were considered to be a real impediment to that involvement.

New decentralization mechanisms of schools and other training providers improved evaluation and accreditation procedures, more and better training for the new education professionals involved, and the development of local partnerships seem to be the most critical challenges for the governance of VET systems.

## **THEME 9: PROGRESS IN MODERNISING EUROPEAN VET SYSTEMS IN THE COPENHAGEN PROCESS AND PRIORITIES FOR FUTURE COOPERATION**

*Cooperation between Member States, the European Commission and social partners in the Copenhagen process has been based on the open method of coordination, and has relied on voluntary contributions from Member States and stakeholders.*

*Countries have defined common objectives and priorities for their national VET policies and reforms, evaluated progress and exchanged good practices to learn from one another. At the same time, responsibility for political decisions has remained at national level.*

*The Copenhagen process also has an external dimension, to open European VET systems to the outside world, to foster the mobility of learners, apprentices and teachers and trainers and exchange experiences with other countries.*

### **9.1 Impact of European cooperation in VET on development of national VET policies**

The principles and tools developed in the context of the Copenhagen process and “Education and Training 2010” reinforced the “European dimension” of education and training in Portugal.

Some of the recent European initiatives such as EQF, ECVET and EQARF already have implications on the organization of VET systems and either the New Opportunities Initiative (2005-2010) or The Professional Training Reform (2007) incorporate principles that come from the European cooperation which aim at combating low qualifications and promote the development of higher qualifications, thus responding to the massive and urgent need to improve the educational levels and the vocational qualifications of young people and adults and, furthermore, develop the validation of non-formal and informal learning.

The vocational training policies that have as their strategic objectives to raise the qualification levels of young people and adults are privileging the types of training which award a double certification. This principle of double certification is already improving the appeal of VET, both at the initial training level and at the lifelong learning and came to guarantee and facilitate a great deal further studies, the bridges among teaching levels, and facilitate vertical progression. Moreover, the expansion and consolidation of the RVCC System is important in the context of the current VET policy, from the widening of the standard of key competences to the secondary level (already under way), to the incorporation of new professional profiles in the National Qualifications Catalogue, to the expansion of the Centres for New Opportunities. The question of accessibility to VET is in great part dependent on this type of mechanism.

In horizontal mobility, countless combinations of learning pathways with recognition of acquired competences and/or training modules taken are possible, particularly among the training offers that are directed towards adults.

In the middle of 2007, the proposal for the creation of the National Qualifications Framework - QNQ was prepared with the participation of several ministries, namely the Ministries of Labour and Social Solidarity, Education, and Science, Technology and Higher Education, and in cooperation with the social partners in the Economic and Social Council - CES. Afterwards the National Qualifications Framework was subject to an extensive public consultation process.

The creation of the *National Qualifications Catalogue* took European guidelines and recommendations into consideration and it reflects the experiences of the more developed



countries in terms of the structuring and integration of their own qualification systems, with the aim of improving:

- production of qualifications and critical skills for competitiveness and modernisation of the economy;
- coherence, transparency and comparability among the available qualifications at national and international level, namely through the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and the European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET);
- flexibility in the acquisition of qualifications and in the construction of a personal pathway for lifelong learning;
- recognition of qualifications independent of the means of access;
- education and training system quality;
- information and counselling related to training and employment.

The quality of the National Qualifications System is essentially assured through the National Qualifications Catalogue, the accreditation of training institutions and the qualification of trainers and other training technicians. Besides these mechanisms, quality patterns are also measured by the periodic assessment of results, as well as through educational and vocational information and guidance and the public financing of vocational training,

On the one hand, the Directorate-General for Employment and Industrial Relations – DGERT, has developed the Certification System for Training Providers: presently, out of 4,587 registered training institutions in Portugal, nearly 1,793 are accredited training providers (a mandatory condition for access to public financing for training activities). The quality assurance of external accredited training providers is ensured by the compliance with the requirements established in the quality referential, which are supervised by a technical team. On the other hand, the system that governs trainer qualification is assured by the National Centre for the Qualification of Trainers, which seeks to provide permanent and updated training constantly adjusted to new points of reference and training needs.

The Basic Law of Education System – LBSE currently imposes an evaluation process: “the education system must be subject to continuing evaluation considering educational and pedagogical, psychological and sociological, economic and financial aspects, as well as its organisational structure and the political-administrative and cultural features”. The monitoring of the educational system is carried out through the evaluation of national and international statistics and through the General Inspectorate for Education and its external evaluation processes in schools<sup>25</sup>; through exams and evaluations to students that allow the collection of relevant data on their performance level, thus supporting decision-making processes on the implementation of policies aimed at developing and adjusting *curricula* to the attainment of the necessary degree for the acquisition of key-competences; and through the performance assessment of teachers and other staff within the educational system.

## **9.2 Governance, cooperation and ownership of the different actors in the Copenhagen process at European level**

With regard to the European tools for the improvement of mobility and transparency of qualifications and skills, Portugal is a promoter of Europass, whose dissemination is done through events, the media, the website of the National Europass Centre and other websites,

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<sup>25</sup> Law 31/2002 of 20 December approved the evaluation system of the pre-primary, basic and secondary education levels by defining the general guidelines for self-assessment and external assessment.

namely the National Reference Point for Qualifications, as well as through the participation in mobility projects.

In 2008, 422,772 Europass CV and 2,614 Language Passports were completed online in Portuguese. The ECV completed online by citizens residing in Portugal accounted for a total of 435,392 documents.

[http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/Statistics/4\\_Annual\\_activity\\_by\\_country\\_and\\_language/2008/Europass\\_Statistic\\_Reports\\_Year\\_Locale\\_2008\\_pt\\_PT.PDF](http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/Statistics/4_Annual_activity_by_country_and_language/2008/Europass_Statistic_Reports_Year_Locale_2008_pt_PT.PDF)).

Portugal is part of the ERA-MORE network (European Network of Mobility Centres), whose national network is composed of 15 Mobility Centres spread around the country. A National Portal has also been set up in close cooperation with the European Mobility Portal<sup>26</sup>. It is important to mention Portugal's participation in several workgroups within the European Union, namely in the cluster for the establishment of European guidelines for the validation of non-formal and informal learning, as well as in the European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET) and the European Network for Quality Assurance in VET (ENQA-VET).

In the context of WP Education and Training 2010 the cluster "*Teachers and Trainers*" had been established. In 2005 a sub-cluster of countries, including Portugal, interested in working together on policies concerning VET teachers and trainers was established: the "Focus Group on VET teachers and trainers." The members of the group had a strong background in VET.

Between 2006 and 2009 this sub-cluster met several times a year and organised four Peer Learning Activities (PLA). The second PLA in this series took place on 14-17 January 2008 in Lisbon to discuss the theme of "Validation of non-formal and informal learning for VET teachers and trainers". This PLA was hosted by the Institute of Employment and Vocational Training - IEFPP, in cooperation with the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity - MTSS.

The main objective of the PLA was to support peer learning across the participating countries in terms of:

- debating the different approaches to validation of non-formal and informal learning and their success factors;
- reflecting on how these methodologies could be transferred to the context of teachers and trainers in the different national settings;
- formulating proposals to support policy learning in the development of validation of non-formal and informal learning for teachers and trainers.

These themes were addressed through a range of activities including two site visits (to Portuguese centres for the validation of non-formal and informal learning), presentations, workshops and discussions that provided:

- insights into the Portuguese system for the validation of non-formal and informal learning;
- an overview of other countries' experiences in validating non-formal and informal learning, with a focus on VET teachers and trainers;
- discussions on methodologies for the identification and assessment of learning outcomes acquired through non-formal and informal learning. The quality assurance criteria for these assessment procedures were also examined;

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<sup>26</sup> See <http://europa.eu.int/eracareers>.

- an opportunity to identify approaches and methods that could be transferred to the context of VET teachers and trainers.

### **Example of initiative**

Almost all European training systems are going through a process of change to adapt to the demands and needs of companies that are being put under high pressure to be able to deal with a globalising world. Especially SME have to make enormous efforts to keep their HR updated and to keep their businesses competitive. This is the reason why VET providers need to redirect themselves from traditional training methods towards learning approaches in which the actual problem situations of companies can become the pedagogical basis of their learning.

In order to support these learning processes, it is necessary to promote the ease of learning through facilitators, able to stimulate learning more than providing teaching. Facilitation makes informal learning intentional and structured in terms of learning objectives, learning time and support. Facilitation raises the quality of non-formal learning and can lead to further formal learning or validation processes (e.g. certification).

It is in this particular context that 13 European organisations with responsibilities and positive intervention in the VET field decided, with the support of the European Commission through the Long Life Learning Programme, to work together and develop the RESYFAC – Reference System for Facilitators of Learning.

Portugal was integrated into this project through the Vocational Training Centre for Trade, during the period between 2008 and 2010.

The general aim of the project is to contribute to the recognition/transparency of qualifications of facilitators of learning in the European space and consequently to contribute to a sounder and effective mobility of these professionals in the European space through the setting up of a Reference System at the European level which will be the basis of a future ECVET System for Facilitators of Learning.

In 2009 the Vocational Training Centre for Trade also organised a *Peer Review* on VET, within Leonardo da Vinci Peer Review Extended II Project.

Peer Review had as an objective to divulge and promote the discussion about the results of two previous projects, Peer Review in Initial VET and Peer Review Extended, and of the European Peer Review methodology as an element of the Common Quality Assurance Framework (CQAF).

### **9.3 External dimension of European cooperation in VET**

Regarding VET, cooperation projects developed between Portugal and regions/countries beyond its borders take place mainly with Portuguese-speaking countries, namely Cape Verde, Angola, Mozambique, Sao Tome and Principe and East-Timor.

Cooperation with these countries involved, among others:

- the restructuring of curricular plans;
- the elaboration of pedagogical manuals;

- the technical and pedagogical training of trainers;
- the revision of professional courses, adjusting them to the economic context;
- the technical and financial cooperation with national organizations responsible for professional training, in such a way as to reinforce the technical and operational skills, namely at the level of conception, execution, accompanying and evaluation of training;
- the support for the construction, recuperation and acquisition of equipment for professional training centres;
- the support for the creation of self employment and entrepreneurship.

Besides the cooperation in the above-mentioned domains, Directorate General for Employment and Industrial Relations – DGERT is coordinating a cooperation action with Cape Verde in the revision of the national qualification system and the respective legal framework in the areas of definition of professional training policy measures, of accreditation of the training and financing entities.

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## Useful Websites

Institution / Service	Internet address
National Qualifications Agency	<a href="http://www.anq.gov.pt">http://www.anq.gov.pt</a>
Directorate-General for Innovation and Curriculum Development	<a href="http://www.dgidc.min-edu.pt">http://www.dgidc.min-edu.pt</a>
Directorate-General for Employment and Industrial Relations	<a href="http://www.dgert.mtss.gov.pt">http://www.dgert.mtss.gov.pt</a>
Directorate-General for Higher Education	<a href="http://www.dges.mctes.pt">http://www.dges.mctes.pt</a>
Office for Education Statistics and Planning	<a href="http://www.gepe.min-edu.pt">http://www.gepe.min-edu.pt</a>
Strategy and Planning Office	<a href="http://www.gep.mtss.gov.pt">http://www.gep.mtss.gov.pt</a>
Planning, Strategy, Assessment and International Relations Office	<a href="http://www.estatisticas.gpeari.mctes.pt">http://www.estatisticas.gpeari.mctes.pt</a>
Office of the Coordinator of the Lisbon Strategy and the Technology Plan	<a href="http://www.estrategiadelisboa.pt">http://www.estrategiadelisboa.pt</a>
New Opportunities Initiative	<a href="http://www.novasoportunidades.gov.pt">http://www.novasoportunidades.gov.pt</a>
Institute for Employment and Vocational Training	<a href="http://www.iefp.pt">http://www.iefp.pt</a>
Institute for the Management of the European Social Fund	<a href="http://www.igfse.pt">http://www.igfse.pt</a>
Statistics Portugal	<a href="http://www.ine.pt">http://www.ine.pt</a>
Ministry of Science, Technology and Higher Education	<a href="http://www.mctes.pt">http://www.mctes.pt</a>
Ministry of Education	<a href="http://www.min-edu.pt">http://www.min-edu.pt</a>
Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity	<a href="http://www.mtss.gov.pt">http://www.mtss.gov.pt</a>
Human Potential Operational Programme	<a href="http://www.poph.qren.pt">http://www.poph.qren.pt</a>
National Strategic Reference Framework	<a href="http://www.qren.pt">http://www.qren.pt</a>

## 10.2 List of acronyms

<b>AICEP</b>	Portuguese Investment and External Trade Agency <i>Agência para o Investimento e Comércio Externo de Portugal</i>
<b>ANQ</b>	National Qualifications Agency <i>Agência Nacional para a Qualificação</i>
<b>ASE</b>	Students Social Action <i>Acção Social Escolar</i>
<b>CAP</b>	Pedagogical Skills Certificate <i>Certificado de Aptidão Pedagógica</i>
<b>CES</b>	Economic and Social Council <i>Conselho Económico e Social</i>
<b>CET</b>	Technological Specialisation Courses <i>Cursos de Especialização Tecnológica</i>
<b>CFAE</b>	Training Centre for Schools Association <i>Centro de Formação de Associação de Escolas</i>
<b>CNFP</b>	National Vocational Training Council <i>Conselho Nacional da Formação Profissional</i>



<b>CNO</b>	New Opportunities Centres <i>Centros Novas Oportunidades</i>
<b>CNQ</b>	National Qualifications Catalogue <i>Catálogo Nacional de Qualificações</i>
<b>CNQF</b>	National Centre for the Qualification of Trainers <i>Centro Nacional de Qualificação de Formadores</i>
<b>CPCS</b>	Permanent Committee for Social Dialogue <i>Comissão Permanente de Concertação Social</i>
<b>CSQ</b>	Sectoral Council for Qualifications <i>Conselhos Sectoriais para a Qualificação</i>
<b>DGERT</b>	Directorate-General for Employment and Industrial Relations <i>Direcção-Deral do Emprego e das Relações de Trabalho</i>
<b>DGIDC</b>	Directorate-General for Innovation and Curriculum Development <i>Direcção-Geral de Inovação e do Desenvolvimento Curricular</i>
<b>DRE</b>	Regional Directorates for Education <i>Direcções Regionais de Educação</i>
<b>EFA</b>	Adult education and training courses <i>Cursos de educação e formação de adultos</i>
<b>GIP</b>	Offices for Occupational Integration <i>Gabinetes de Inserção Profissional</i>
<b>GPEARI</b>	Office of Strategy, Evaluation and International Relations <i>Gabinete de Planeamento, Estratégia, Avaliação e Relações Internacionais</i>
<b>IAS</b>	Social support index <i>Indexante dos Apoios Sociais</i>
<b>IEFP</b>	Institute for Employment and Vocational Training <i>Instituto do Emprego e Formação Profissional</i>
<b>IGFSE</b>	Institute for Management of the European Social Fund <i>Instituto de Gestão do Fundo Social Europeu</i>
<b>IIE</b>	Initiative for Investment and Employment <i>Iniciativa Investimento Emprego</i>
<b>INE</b>	Statistics Portugal <i>Instituto Nacional de Estatística</i>
<b>IOP</b>	Institute for Professional Guidance <i>Instituto de Orientação Profissional</i>
<b>IPAD</b>	Portuguese Institute for Development Support <i>Instituto Português de Apoio ao Desenvolvimento</i>
<b>LBSE</b>	Basic Law of the Education System <i>Lei de Bases do Sistema Educativo</i>
<b>MCTES</b>	Ministry of Science, Technology and Higher Education <i>Ministério da Ciência, Tecnologia e Ensino Superior</i>
<b>ME</b>	Ministry of Education <i>Ministério da Educação</i>
<b>MEI</b>	Ministry of the Economy and Innovation <i>Ministério da Economia e da Inovação</i>
<b>MTSS</b>	Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity <i>Ministério do Trabalho e da Solidariedade Social</i>
<b>OCES</b>	Observatory for Science and Higher Education <i>Observatório da Ciência e do Ensino Superior</i>
<b>OD</b>	Observatory on Inequalities

	<i>Observatório das Desigualdades</i>
<b>OE</b>	State Budget <i>Orçamento de Estado</i>
<b>OEFP</b>	Employment and Vocational Training Observatory <i>Observatório do Emprego e Formação Profissional</i>
<b>OSS</b>	Social Security Budget <i>Orçamento da Segurança Social</i>
<b>PIF</b>	Integrated Training Plans <i>Planos Integrados de Formação</i>
<b>PII</b>	Plan for the Integration of Immigrants <i>Plano para a Integração dos Imigrantes</i>
<b>POPH</b>	Human Potential Operational Programme <i>Programa Operacional Potencial Humano</i>
<b>PTE</b>	Technological Plan for Education <i>Plano Tecnológico de Educação</i>
<b>QNQ</b>	National Qualifications Framework <i>Quadro Nacional de Qualificações</i>
<b>QREN</b>	National Strategic Reference Framework <i>Quadro de Referência Estratégico Nacional</i>
<b>RVCC</b>	Recognition, Validation and Certification of Competences <i>Reconhecimento, Validação e Certificação de Competências</i>
<b>SIGO</b>	Information and Management System of the Education and Training offer <i>Sistema de Informação e Gestão da Oferta Educativa e Formativa</i>
<b>SNQ</b>	National Qualifications System <i>Sistema Nacional de Qualificações</i>
<b>SPO</b>	Psychology and Guidance Services <i>Serviços de Psicologia e Orientação</i>
<b>UFCD</b>	Short-Term Training Units <i>Unidades de Formação de Curta Duração</i>