

PORTUGAL
Summary
**Country Report on the Vocational Education and
Training system, REFERNET Cedefop**

and

**Summary report on Vocational Education and
Training (VET) for learners with Special
Educational Needs (SEN)**



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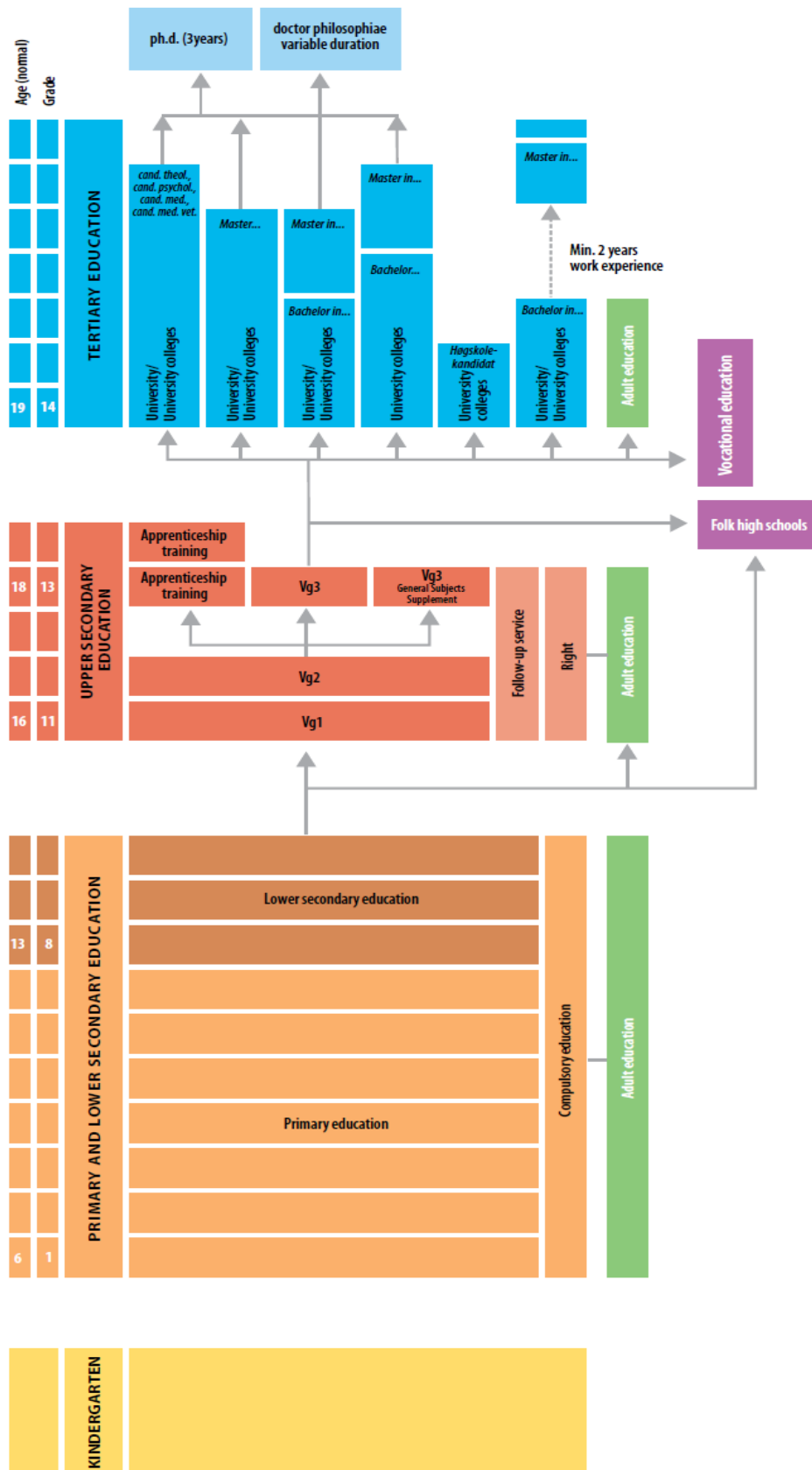
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1 VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYSTEM

1.1 Diagram of the education and training system





1.2 Definitions

Initial education and training [*Ensino e formação inicial*]

Initial training [*formação inicial*] as an activity of certified education and training aimed at the acquisition of knowledge, competences and skills indispensable for the initiation of one or several qualified occupations. Initial training comprises double certification initial training [*formação inicial de dupla certificação*], which is the initial training included in the National Qualifications Catalogue (CNQ) and developed by accredited training providers or recognised educational establishments.

Vocational education and training [*Ensino e formação profissional*]

Technical education is synonymous with vocational education, just as vocational education is used alongside vocational training. Vocational education or training is used as a generic term covering many different types of education and training, including IVET and CVET. The commonly accepted definition of vocational education or training states that VET aims to prepare young and adult trainees or workers for performing an occupation. The legislation creating the National Qualifications System (SNQ) states that “vocational education and training” or “vocational training” are training activities that aim to provide individuals with skills for the performance of one or more occupational activities.

Alternance training [*Formação em alternância*]

Alternance training is regarded as a synonym of *apprenticeship* [*aprendizagem*]. The applicable legislation clarifies the concept by defining it as an educational or training activity, combining training periods in an educational institution or training centre and practical training sequences in the workplace. Apprenticeship courses are aimed at young people, carried out in alternance training schemes, which privilege entry into the labour market and the continuation of further studies. These courses are a double certification training alternative and simultaneously confer an ISCED level 3 vocational qualification and the upper secondary academic qualification.

1.3 Objectives and priorities of the national policy development areas of VET

Some of the areas where there have been debates are:

- Agreement for the Vocational Training Reform (2007), National Qualifications System (Sistema Nacional de Qualificações – SNQ) (2007), and Tripartite Agreement for a New System for the Regulation of Industrial Relations, Employment Policies and Social Protection in Portugal (2008): Set of measures aimed at the reform of the vocational training system.
- The legal framework of the qualification for teaching in pre-primary, compulsory and upper secondary education (Regime Jurídico de Habilitação Profissional para a Docência): Initial teacher training strictly values 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 start of occupational practice. It is implemented during school year 2009/2010 the probationary year created by Decree-Law no. 15/2007.

Trends:

- Technological Plan for Education (PTE/ *Plano Tecnológico da Educação*) has been implemented, with a view to increase school access to information and communication technologies. For example: 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.

- Introducing *Short-Term Training Units* (UFCD/ *Unidades de Formação de Curta Duração*), learning units, autonomously certifiable and capitalisable, for the attainment of one or more qualifications.

Major challenges:

- Urgent need to ensure a significant increase in the number of individuals with access to training
- Need to ensure a quality investment in training, focusing resources in the most crucial training areas with regard to the workers' adaptability and the competitiveness and needs of enterprises.
- On-going revision process of the education system's management mechanisms that aims to improve the way in which schools are run and how teachers work.
- Greater emphasis on school autonomy, something that is associated with the importance placed upon the creation of an evaluation culture regarding all aspects of the education system.

1.4 Institutional and legislative framework for IVET

Government: The education and training system is centrally administered regarding the definition of major policy lines and curricular, teaching and financial guidelines.

- Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity (MTSS) is responsible, namely, for what concerns IVET and CVET. The National Vocational Training Council (CNFP) is an advisory body under the supervision of the ME and the MTSS. The Directorate-General for Employment and Industrial Relations (DGERT) is responsible for the preparation of political, legislative and regulatory measures as regards employment and initial and continuing vocational and education training; The Institute for Employment and Vocational Training (IEFP) is the national public employment service responsible for implementing active employment policies.
- The Ministry of Education (ME) is responsible for the definition, coordination, implementation and assessment of the national policy as regards the education system. The Council for National Education (*Conselho Nacional de Educação*) and the The Schools' Council (*Conselho das Escolas*) as the advisory body. The Directorate-General for Innovation and Curriculum Development (DGIDC) supports the definition of policies concerning teaching methods and components and ensures the implementation of those policies by defining study plans, objectives and essential curricular content.

National qualifications agency (ANQ) The ANQ aims to coordinate the implementation of policies on vocational and education training for young people and adults and to set up and manage the system for the recognition, validation and certification of skills. **Social partners** have an active participation in vocational education and training policies, namely a major recent contribution in the development of the National Qualifications System.

IVET Institutions: initial education and training is centrally administered regarding the definition of major policy lines and curricular, teaching and financial guidelines. Likewise, the Autonomous Regions of Azores and Madeira have their own assignments, although they are subordinated to the main national guidelines.



Policies:

- *Basic Law of the Education System (LBSE)*: which established the general framework governing the entire system in 1986 and revised in the 2001.
- The reform of upper secondary education (*Decree-Law no.74/2004 of March 26, together with respective changes and amendments: Amendment no. 44/2004 of May 25; Decree-Law no. 24/2006 of February 6; Amendment no. 23/2006 of April 7; Decree-Law no. 272/2007 of July 26*): intended to implement the reorganisation and management of curricula and learning assessment.
- *Implementing Order no. 29/2008 of June 5, which introduced changes to Implementing Order no. 36/2007 of October 8* in order to regulate the reorientation of training pathways for students of upper secondary education.

1.5 Types of teacher and trainer occupations in VET

	Teachers	Trainers	Tutors
INITIAL TRAINING	Compulsory possession of a master degree certificate obtained in tertiary institutions.	Compulsory possession of a trainer CAP (Pedagogical Skills Certificate), obtained in certified bodies and valid for 5 years. There are no certificates for specialised training sectors. Only in exceptional cases it is possible to obtain a CAP (Pedagogical Skills Certificate) on the basis of the working experience of the trainer	No compulsory attendance of initial specific training, although they ideally should have the trainer's CAP
OTHER ACCESS REQUIREMENTS	One compulsory traineeship year for verification of global skills for teaching	Not applicable	Not applicable
WORKPLACE	Public education establishments; Private and cooperative education establishments; specialised artistic education establishments; vocational schools; technological schools; vocational training and rehabilitation centres; certified training bodies; public, private or cooperative education establishments	Vocational schools; technological schools; vocational training and rehabilitation centres; certified training bodies	Enterprises or organization responsible for workplace training

1.6 Systems and mechanisms for the anticipation of skill needs

The institutional framework of the skills needs anticipation policy is under the responsibility of both the MTSS and the Ministry of Education (ME), namely through the development and management of the CNQ under the responsibility of the ANQ, which intends to improve the relevance and quality of vocational education and training and decisively contribute to the experience of a full citizenship, the competitiveness of enterprises and employability.

The development and updating of the CNQ (National Qualifications Catalogue) is done in cooperation with the CSQ (Sectoral Council for Qualifications), technical and consultative platforms for reflection and discussion, consisting of experts nominated by employers associations and trade unions, reference companies, training institutions, among others, to identify the skills essential to individual development and competitiveness and modernization of the business sector. The qualifications that make up the catalogue are subject to comprehensive evaluation and approval at least every two years by the National Council of Vocational Training, whose tripartite membership includes representatives of



the government and employer associations and unions with seats on the Permanent Committee for Social Dialogue (CPCS).

1.7 Practices to match VET provision with skill needs

The curriculum is determined at national level each school provides courses from the list of courses proposed nationally.

The double certification training offer also constitutes a practice to match VET provision with skill needs since it aims to qualify the population with the secondary level of education and training and do it within the framework of double certification (both academic and vocational).

1.8. Guidance and counselling for learning, career and employment in IVET

The Psychology and Guidance Services (*Serviços de Psicologia e Orientação – SPO*) provide access to specialized educational support services that ensure an individual or group pedagogic intervention which supports young people in their choices along the school path, facilitating the identification of their own life-project construction. Each SPO is responsible for a particular geographical area, which may include several schools. Both school guidance specialists and teachers/head of class play a fundamental role in the pupils follow up, clarifying possible paths, articulating with other socio-educational support services and proposing and signing protocols between schools and different services, enterprises and other community agents at the local level.

1.9 Funding for initial vocational education and training

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 – OSS*) and the European Social Fund (ESF). The initial vocational education and training offered within the education system is essentially funded by the ME's budget, though the 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, the following courses: apprenticeship system courses, vocational courses, education and training courses for youth and specialized technology courses.

1.10 References

Cedefop Refernet Portugal (2009): VET in Europe. Country Report Thessaloniki: Cedefop.



2 VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (VET) FOR LEARNERS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

2.1 Population

The definition relates to the target group of the VET project but learners in Portugal should be older than 15.

2.2 Organisation and Provision of VET programmes

2.2.1 IVET system options for SEN learners: lower and upper secondary levels, apprenticeship training and other youth programmes

The Portuguese vocational education and training system is based upon a set of principles that aim to guarantee the right to education and training and ensure equal opportunities of access and achievement.

The system comprises pre-primary, basic, secondary, post-secondary non-tertiary and tertiary education.

Basic and secondary education is universal, compulsory and free, and lasts for twelve academic years, beginning at the age of 6 and ending at the age of 18 (in accordance with Law n.º 85/2009 of 27 August, for students that began school in 2009/2010). It comprises three sequential and progressive cycles of basic education that last for nine years and lead to a diploma certifying completion of basic education, plus a single cycle of secondary education that lasts for three years.

Secondary education can be completed either by studying general courses in the sciences and humanities with a view to pursuing studies at a higher level, or by following a vocational pathway – vocational courses, apprenticeships, education and training courses, specialised art courses, technology courses, adult-education courses; these qualify students to enter the labour market but also allow them to continue their studies.

Post-secondary non-tertiary education comprises specialised technology courses (CET), which prepare and qualify students for work and successful completion of which leads to a diploma in specialised technology. These courses are divided into credit units which can be transferred to the tertiary education courses to which they give access.

As a result of Portugal's adhesion to the Bologna Process (Decree-law n.º 74/2006 of 24 March), tertiary education has undergone a significant restructuring, as regards both curriculum content and the assessment system and awarding of degrees. The usual age of entry into this level of education is 18.

Since 1985, the Portuguese system has been structured on the basis of five training levels (ISCED). These levels have achieved public visibility and are recognised and accepted by most actors in vocational education and training systems, as well as by the social partners and enterprises.

A comprehensive national qualifications framework (*Quadro Nacional de Qualificações – QNQ*) has been in force since October 2010 as a single reference for classifying all the qualifications obtainable in Portuguese education and training. Established by the Decree Law No 396/2007, the framework (including eight levels and level descriptors of learning outcomes) was published in July 2009 (Portaria No 782/2009). Higher education qualifications have been included in the more detailed framework of higher education qualifications (FHEQ-Portugal), which is part of the national qualifications framework.

Portugal has referenced its national qualifications levels according to the EQF and self certified according to the QF-EHEA in June 2011.



In 2011, in Portugal, there were 353.876 learners aged older than 15 in VET pathways, of which 12.529 (3,5%) were SEN learners in rehabilitation VET pathways.

2.2.2 Different types of educational/VET settings

Learners with SEN can choose any mainstream educational/VET pathway, with support teachers and/or technical adaptations. Given the large number of young people leaving school (with and without SEN), there are Education and Training Courses (CEF) for young people aimed at compensating for skills deficits, through the acquisition of educational, professional, social and relational skills, allowing them to enter an increasingly demanding and competitive labour market. These courses are aimed at young, first-time or new jobseekers, between 15 and 23, who are at risk of leaving school or have already left school, that hold academic qualifications ranging from the 6th grade of basic education, or lower, up to secondary education.

Successful participation in these courses leads to the award of a professional qualification at level 1, 2 or 3. These levels are associated with school progression and equivalent to 6th, 9th, and 12th grade. The CEF for young people have a curriculum structure aimed at professional skills, which includes four training components: socio-cultural; scientific; technological and practices in the workplace context. An extra 6 months of practice in the workplace can be carried out, in some special situations, when the training area or the learner's characteristics justify it.

Special educational/VET settings addressed to learners with SEN who are older than 15 (there is no upper age limit) can be found in three VET pathways:

- A. Pathway based on the CNQ - National Catalogue of Qualifications (www.catalogo.anqep.gov.pt/), with courses lasting 2.900 hours;
- B. Pathway based on the adapted CNQ with courses lasting 3.600 hours;
- C. Individualised pathways based on courses not integrated in the CNQ, with a maximum of 2.900 hours.

Special educational/VET has a curriculum structure aimed at professional skills, which includes four training components: skills for integration; basic education; technological skills and practices in the workplace context.

The public and private sectors are both free to develop all the VET pathways, but legal certification is needed to develop a VET pathway.

2.2.3 The curricula of VET programmes, the assessment procedures, types of qualifications and assessment criteria (e.g. flexibility on curricula composition and individual adaptations, diplomas etc.)

In the Catálogo Nacional de Qualificações (National Catalogue of Qualifications - CNQ) there are 22 courses adapted to learners with SEN that allow double certification of EQF, level 2.

These adapted courses, amounting to 3.600 hours, are divided into Training for Integration (200h); Basic Education (600h), Technological Training (1.600h) and Practices in a job context (1.200h).

The content itself is always the same but the teaching methods and method of evaluation are changed according to the characteristics of the learner with SEN. In "Guia Metodológico para o acesso de pessoas com deficiência e incapacidades ao processo de reconhecimento, validação e certificação de competências – nível básico" (published in 2009) specific adaptations can be found for learners with sight and hearing limitations,



intellectual limitations, mental illnesses, **neuromusculoskeletal and movement-related limitations** and voice and speech limitations.

In addition to the adapted courses, there are special educational/VET individualised pathways in which the curricula are extra flexible and specific courses can be created using Units of Short Term Training (UFCD) from the CNQ that can be adapted to each SEN learner.

2.3 VET programmes and employment

2.3.1 Strategies and practices used to match the local labour market needs with the skills acquired by learners in the course of the VET programmes

When submitted for legal approval, VET courses must be based on a study of local labour market needs. VET programmes must be adapted to local / regional job market characteristics.

Elements of VET published in the CNQ were predominantly created by professional associations that work in the specific area. As they are the experts in that area, they can match labour market needs with the curricula of the programmes.

Teachers can also adapt programmes to the labour context in the way they teach, for instance by choosing relevant study visits for their VET learners.

Finally, and most importantly, all VET programmes for people with SEN usually include practical training in the workplace context. This training, and teacher-employer meetings, helps adjust the VET programmes in order to provide learners with the right working and social skills.

2.4 Data (relating to learners with SEN aged between 14 and 25 years old and enrolled in VET programmes in the academic year 2010/2011 and relating to their transition to employment)

2.4.1 Data on the number of learners with SEN aged between 14 and 25 years old who are enrolled in VET programmes, at national and/or local level.

In 2011, there were 353.876 learners aged older than 15 in VET pathways in Portugal, 12.529 (3,5%) of whom were SEN learners in rehabilitation VET pathways. Of these SEN learners, 50% were aged between 15 and 25 years old.

Of the SEN learners in rehabilitation VET pathways, 58% were men and 42% women.

2.4.2 Data on how many of these learners are enrolled in mainstream VET programmes, how many are enrolled in special units within mainstream VET settings and how many are enrolled in special VET programmes.

In 2003, basic education SEN students accounted for 7% of all students. According to a national questionnaire sent by the Ministry of Education to some schools in 2011, they accounted for 4.5% of all students, so we can assume that the percentage of learners enrolled in mainstream VET programmes is similar to these figures.

The percentage of SEN learners in special VET pathways is 3.5% of all VET learners.

2.4.3 Data on the number and percentage of learners with SEN aged between 14 and 25 who are enrolled in VET programmes, in comparison with the number and percentage of the general youth population of the same age enrolled in VET programmes, at national and/or local level

According to the 2011 Census, there are 10.561.614 inhabitants in Portugal, 10.8% of whom are older than 15 but younger than 25.



In the same year, there were 341.347 SEN learners in regular VET pathways, 25% of whom are aged between 15 and 25. That represents 7.5% of all Portuguese youth doing VET pathways.

In 2011, there were 12.529 SEN learners in special VET pathways, 50% of whom are aged between 15 and 25. That represents 0.5% of all Portuguese youth (15 to 25 years old) doing VET pathways and at least 15% of all Portuguese youth with disabilities.

2.4.4 Brief definition and explanation of “drop out”. Data concerning the drop out rate of learners with SEN aged between 14 and 25 who are enrolled in VET programmes, in comparison with the drop out rate of the general youth population, at national and/or local level.

In Portugal, “drop out” rates refer to all learners that leave their courses without completing them. These rates are very high for regular school when compared with the EU-27 average. Local “drop out” rates of SEN students in special VET programmes are around 10%.

This is lower than the drop out rate in basic education because students have more practical curricula, which usually includes practical training in the labour market context that facilitates the transition from learning to working.

2.4.5 Data on the transition rate of learners with SEN from VET to employment in comparison with the transition rate of the general youth population from VET to employment at national and/or local level

According to a National study conducted in 2003, approximately 22% of learners with SEN in special VET programmes find a job (CRPG, 2003, Os impactos do FSE na Reabilitação Profissional de Pessoas com Deficiência em Portugal).

In Portugal the unemployment rate for all youth aged between 15-25 years old is 35% (INE, Boletim Estatístico, Abr. 2012).

2.5 Legislation and policy

2.5.1 Brief description of existing legislation

In Portugal, the legislative framework governing vocational education and training is based on the Comprehensive Law on the Education System – LBSE (Law n.º 46/86 revised by the Law n.º 115/97), which established the general framework governing the entire system.

In 2001, the scope of the legislative framework changed: guidelines were established for setting up and managing basic education curricula and for assessing learning. Revising the legislation governing basic education reflected one of the Government’s strategic objectives: this level of education is seen as the beginning of lifelong education and training.

In 2004, under the reform of secondary education, guiding principles were established for the organisation and management of curricula and for the assessment and certification of courses at secondary education level.

The legislative framework governing vocational education and training (Decree-Law n.º 401/91), which has been in force since 1991, was completely revised in 2007. The Decree-Law n.º 396/2007 set up the National Qualifications System – SNQ (*Sistema Nacional de Qualificações*). This system brings together vocational training within the education system and vocational training in the labour market under a new institutional framework, providing them with shared objectives and instruments.



In 2008, this system introduced (Decree n.º 13456/2008, from 14 May and later Directive n.º 781/2009, from 23 July) the new National Qualifications Catalogue – CNQ (*Catálogo Nacional de Qualificações*) to serve as an instrument for the strategic management of qualifications and to regulate all dual certification training. In 2009 (Directive n.º 782/2009, from 23 July) it introduced a new National Qualifications Framework – NQF (*Quadro Nacional de Qualificações*), which defines the structure of levels based on the European Qualifications Framework (EQF).

The National Qualifications Catalogue (CNQ) is an instrument for the strategic management of lower level qualifications. It is an integral part of the National Qualifications System (Decree-Law 396/2007 of 31 December).

The National Qualifications Catalogue is organised according to education and training areas, in accordance with the National Classification of Education and Training Areas (Ministerial Order 256/2005 of 16 March).

This instrument is available on the following site: www.catalogo.anq.gov.pt. As of May 2012 it covers 263 vocational qualifications, plus 22 vocational qualifications adapted to SEN learners, from 39 educational and training areas.

2.5.2 Main objectives and priorities of the national/regional policy relating to VET for learners with SEN and the transition from VET to employment

“In light of the latest international standards and guidelines, including the Convention on the Rights of Persons with disabilities, fundamental principles of disability policy govern practice in the present XVII Constitutional Government, the rights of people with impairments and disabilities are asserted and the creation of practical measures ensures respect for their inherent dignity, as well as non-discrimination and equal opportunities.” (Decree-Law 290/2009, 12 October)

Practical measures for the transition from VET to employment are job matching, follow up programmes for employed people with SEN, work adaptations and sheltered work.

The main objective is to raise the employability of SEN learners by allowing them the opportunity to enter labour market just like all citizens.

2.5.3 Roles and responsibilities within the institutional framework

The government played a very important role in creating the 1st Action Plan for the Integration of Persons with Impairments and Disabilities (PAIPDI) back in 2006 and later the Decree-Law 290/2009, 12 October that brings together all support measures for VET learners with SEN.

The Ministry of Economy and Employment (particularly the IEFP – Vocational Educational Training Institute) and the Ministry of Education are key partners.

The National Agency for Qualification and Vocational Education and Training (ANQEP) is another key body, which published the National Catalogue of Qualifications and raised awareness of this tool for the strategic management of qualifications (except higher education qualifications). It is integrated into the National Qualifications System.

The Catalogue, which includes 22 adapted courses for SEN learners, aims to promote and facilitate access to double qualification certification for young people and adults through: I) modularising the training offer – defining courses organised in units of short-term training (25 and/or 50 hours and up to 100 hours for SEN learners) and II) providing reference frameworks for Recognition, Validation and Certification of Competences (RVCC) processes. It presents examples of how a global training reference framework from the CNQ is organised; Units of Short Term Training (UFCD) basic training component; Units of



Short Term Training (UFCD) from the technological training component and a Reference Framework for Vocational RVCC. Managed by the ANQEP, the catalogue is an open tool and is permanently updated. The National Catalogue of Qualifications is established in compliance with the implementation of the European Qualifications Framework - EQF Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2008 on the establishment of the EQF for Lifelong Learning (2008/C 111/01)] and with the National Qualifications Framework.

Using the above guidelines, schools and private institutions implement VET programmes for learners with and without SEN.

2.5.4 The actors involved in improving standards and evaluating the VET programmes on offer for learners with SEN, relating to the job market

All the partners are involved in improving standards and evaluating the VET programmes on offer for learners with SEN. In relation to the job market in particular, IEPF has a major role as a result of Decree-Law 290/2009, 12 October.

6. VET teachers, trainers and other professionals

2.6. VET teachers, trainers and other professionals

2.6.1 Information on the VET staff (teachers, trainers, career counsellors, transition officers etc.)

VET teachers and regular school teachers need the same academic qualifications - a master degree (following the Bologna process). Trainers need to have completed a specific VET course that provides them with a Pedagogic Certificate (CAP - Certificados de Aptidão Pedagógica de Formador or CCP - Certificado de Competências Pedagógicas de Formador) and at least the same academic grade that learners will achieve in the end of the VET course. Careers counsellors and Transition officers usually have at least a bachelor degree.

All of them must have 35 hours per year of in service training.

2.6.2 Information on the careers/employment guidance and counselling services offered to learners with SEN who are enrolled in VET programmes

In the VET adapted curricula for SEN learners, there are specific thematic UFCD (Units of Short Term Training) that focus on careers/employment guidance and counselling, for example, “entrepreneurship” or “active job search”.

In addition, in the VET adapted curricula for SEN learners, one third of the time is spent doing practical training in the labour market context. The firms where this training takes place are usually chosen by the participants themselves, who actively participate in all steps of searching for a placement. In so doing, they are training for their future job search.

If, following completion of their VET programme, learners can't find a job, there is the possibility of an extra 6 month programme on job searching.

2.7 Funding

SEN learners receive a professional scholarship of up to €200 depending on their family income and if they have already been employed.

SEN learners also receive payment for daily meals (around €4/day) and for transport expenses from home to the VET centre.



There are incentives for companies that employ people with legally recognised disabilities, provided by the Ministry of Economy and Employment, through IEFP.

Supported Employment

Supported employment, whereby people work in a particular occupation or do another socially useful activity, aims to develop personal and professional skills in order to facilitate the transition of people with impairments and disabilities into normal work, wherever possible. Supported employment can be developed through: Stages of insertion; Insertion-Employment Contracts; Protected Job Centres, and; Protected Job Enclave in the regular labour market.

Award of Merit

This is a symbolic award, which is a testimony of appreciation and a way of honouring each year the employers who excel in the professional integration of people with impairments and disabilities. It is also awarded to persons with disabilities and impairments that have distinguished themselves in creating self-employment.