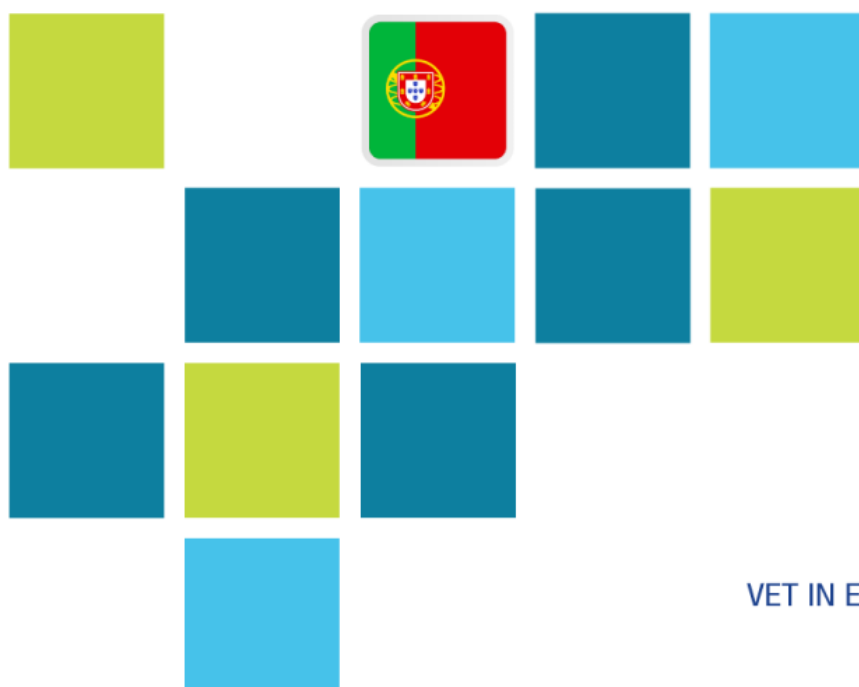




VOCATIONAL EDUCATION
AND TRAINING IN EUROPE

PORTUGAL

SYSTEM DESCRIPTION



VET IN EUROPE 2023

Cite as: Cedefop, & Directorate-General of Employment and Industrial Relations (DGERT). (2023). Vocational education and training in Europe – Portugal: system description. In Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2024). *Vocational education and training in Europe: VET in Europe database – detailed VET system descriptions* [Database]. <https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/vet-in-europe/systems/portugal-u3>

Contributors: João Barbosa (ReferNet Portugal) and Margarida Abreu (Directorate-General for Employment and Industrial Relations). Rita Branco (National Agency for Qualification and Vocational Education and Training), Isabel Ferreira (Institute for Employment and Vocational Training), Joaquim Santos (Directorate-General for Statistics of Education and Science), Miguel Feio (PESSOAS2030 Programme), Tânia Ferreira (Turismo of Portugal Agency), other members of the Portuguese network of ReferNet and Ana Maria Ines Sancha Gonzalo (Cedefop)

© Cedefop and Directorate-General of Employment and Industrial Relations (DGERT) (ReferNet Portugal), 2023

Reproduction is authorised, provided the source is acknowledged

Table of contents

- Chapter 1. Summary of main elements and distinctive features of VET.
- Chapter 2. Main challenges and policy responses.
- Chapter 3. External factors influencing VET.
 - 3.1. Demographics.
 - 3.2. Economics.
 - 3.3. Labour market.
- Chapter 4. Education attainment.
 - 4.1. Share of high, medium and low level qualifications.
 - 4.2. VET learner share of the total VET population.
 - 4.3. VET learners by level.
 - 4.4. Female share.
 - 4.5. Early leavers from education and training.
 - 4.6. Participation in lifelong learning.
 - 4.7. VET learners by age.
- Chapter 5. VET within education and training system.
- Chapter 6. Apprenticeship.
- Chapter 7. VET governance.
- Chapter 8. VET financing mechanisms.
- Chapter 9. Teachers and trainers.
 - 9.1. VET teacher types.
 - 9.2. Continuing professional development of teachers/trainers.
- Chapter 10. Shaping VET qualifications.
 - 10.1. Anticipating skill needs.
 - 10.2. Designing qualifications.
- Chapter 11. Quality assurance.
- Chapter 12. Validation of prior learning.
- Chapter 13. Incentives for learners.
- Chapter 14. Incentives for enterprises to boost their participation in VET provision.
- Chapter 15. Guidance and counselling.
- Vocational education and training system chart.
- VET Programme Types.
 - Education and training programmes for young people (Cursos de educação e formação de jovens, CEF) leading to EQF level 2, ISCED 254.
 - Professional programmes (Cursos profissionais) leading to EQF level 4, ISCED 354.
 - Specialised artistic programmes (Cursos artísticos especializados) leading to EQF level 4, ISCED 344, 354.
 - Specific curriculum programmes (Cursos com planos próprios) leading to EQF level 4, ISCED 354.
 - Apprenticeship programmes (Cursos de aprendizagem). Initial VET programmes leading to EQF level 4, ISCED 354.
 - Technological specialisation programmes (Cursos de especialização tecnológica, CET) leading to EQF level 5, ISCED 454..
 - Higher professional technical programmes (Cursos técnicos superiores profissionais, CTeSP) leading to EQF level 5, ISCED 554..
 - Apprenticeship + programmes (Cursos de aprendizagem +). Initial VET programmes leading to EQF level 5 ([105]), ISCED 454.
- References.

CHAPTER 1.

Summary of main elements and distinctive features of VET

Summary of main elements

The National Qualifications System (SNQ), created in 2007, introduced a new legal and strategic framework for vocational education and training (VET) and lifelong learning (LLL) in Portugal. The main objectives are to raise the citizens qualifications level, to ensure that VET qualifications better match the needs of the labour market and to promote the competitiveness of economy. The 2021 [VET agreement](#), signed between the government and the social partners, created conditions to increase training participation and qualification levels, reinforcing the principle of double certification (educational and professional) and the integration of general, technical and work-based training components.

VET and adult training are the joint responsibility of the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labour, Solidarity and Social Security. Their duties are undertaken by departments that are part of direct state administration, indirect state administration bodies, advisory bodies, and other organisations and entities. The political coordination of the VET system, within the context of the SNQ, is the responsibility of an inter-ministerial commission comprising members from several government departments. Governance of VET also involves the participation of the social partners, i.e., employers and workers' organisations, reinforced by the 2021 VET agreement. They participate in VET advisory or coordinating bodies and as promoters of sectoral VET operators. Main VET programmes include:

- a. at lower secondary level, CEF programmes (ISCED 254; EQF 2) combining school-based and practical training. They target those aged 15+ who completed the first cycle of basic education (four years) and are at risk of early leaving education and training. Progression to upper secondary education is possible;
- b. at upper secondary level, the programmes (ISCEDs 344-354, EQF 4) are:
 - three-year professional programmes; WBL is provided as a traineeship in enterprises or organisations;
 - three-year specialised artistic programmes, including visual arts and audiovisual, and dance;
 - specific curriculum programmes combining elements of general and VET programmes, as schools' autonomy allows them to diversify their education and training provision. WBL takes place as traineeship in companies or other entities for varying durations;
 - apprenticeship programmes are for young people up to age 29. A training contract between the apprentice, the training provider and the enterprise must be signed;
- c. at post-secondary level:
 - technological specialisation programmes (CET, ISCED 454; EQF 5) last from one to one-and-a-half years, leading to a technological specialisation diploma. CET graduates can be accredited up to 90 ECTS points; and [apprenticeship+ programmes](#), since 2022, allow people aged 18 to 29 holding a secondary education to obtain a NQF5 qualification after 1 year of in-company practice.
- d. at tertiary level, two-year short-cycle high professional technical programmes (CTeSP, ISCED 554) are offered by polytechnics. Graduates are credited 120 ECTS points and receive a higher professional technician diploma (not a tertiary education).

Adult learning programmes (EQF 1-4) include:

- a. education and training programmes for adults (EFA, ISCED 100, 254 and 354), aimed at those who want to complete lower or upper secondary education and/or obtain a professional qualification;
- b. certified modular training (ISCED 100, 254; and 354) is based on short- term training units (25-50h), offering them greater flexibility in obtaining a qualification;
- c. RVCC (ISCED 100, 244, 344) enables the certification of competences developed through life, including at least 50 training hours. The two RVCC paths (education and professional) can lead to a basic, upper secondary education, professional or double certification. Adults lacking competences required for a qualification are guided to relevant training programmes to acquire them.

Distinctive features

In Portugal, the VET system has permeability between different VET programmes and between them and general education; double certification for all VET programmes; increased non-tertiary post-secondary training and encouraging lifelong learning; [inclusive schooling](#) for all students; [special higher education entry admission process](#) for double certification holders; [flexible curriculum management](#); decreasing early leaving from education and training.

Key principles of VET provision are the wide range of programmes accessible to young people and adults, the link between VET provision and labour market needs, and flexibility in the type and duration of courses for adults. Accreditation and certification of VET providers, teachers and trainers, and their external evaluation, ensures VET quality.

The SNQ promotes upper secondary education as the minimum level of attainment. It adopted a governance model based on the involvement of different VET providers, sector councils, and social partners, establishing common objectives and instruments. SNQ support tools are:

- a. the eight-level [national qualifications framework](#) (QNQ), designed in line with EQF;
- b. the [national catalogue of qualifications](#) (CNQ), which helps manage and regulate non-tertiary VET qualifications. This aims to develop competence-based qualifications, regulate double certification, aid in designing learning programmes, provide standards for the [RVCC process](#), promote the transparency and efficiency of public funding, and modularise the training offer;
- c. the [Qualifica passport](#), an instrument for guidance and individual record of qualifications and competences;
- d. the [system for anticipating qualification needs](#) (SANQ), evaluates the relevance of qualifications to the labour market and monitors trends in qualified human resources supply;
- e. the National credit system for VET, which allocates credits to VET qualifications.

CHAPTER 2.

Main challenges and policy responses

High on the policy agenda are the following challenges:

- increasing participation in lifelong learning;
- modernising VET provision by introducing new teaching methods and diversified VET programmes;
- strengthening the alignment of VET with labour market needs;
- underlining the principles of inclusion, sustainability and transparency;
- facing the profound transformations caused by digitalisation and the greening of the economy and society;
- upskilling and reskilling vulnerable groups.

The Government continues to focus on the valorisation of double certification modalities addressed to youths, through a modernised, inclusive and quality offer, able to attract more young people to secondary education. At the same time, the government aims to encourage more graduates to pursue further studies, particularly at a higher level.

In adult qualification, the focus continues to be on flexible training paths, more suitable for adults, and leading to effective qualification, i.e., expanding the network of adult education and training providers in cooperation with the *Qualifica* centres to attract more adult learners to VET programmes.

The Government, through the recovery and resilience plan (2021), has identified areas in which policy interventions will focus with a view to modernise VET, including quality assurance, digital and green transition, industrial renewal etc.

[1] Based on Cedefop (2021). *Spotlight on vocational education and training in Portugal*. Luxembourg: Publications Office.

CHAPTER 3.

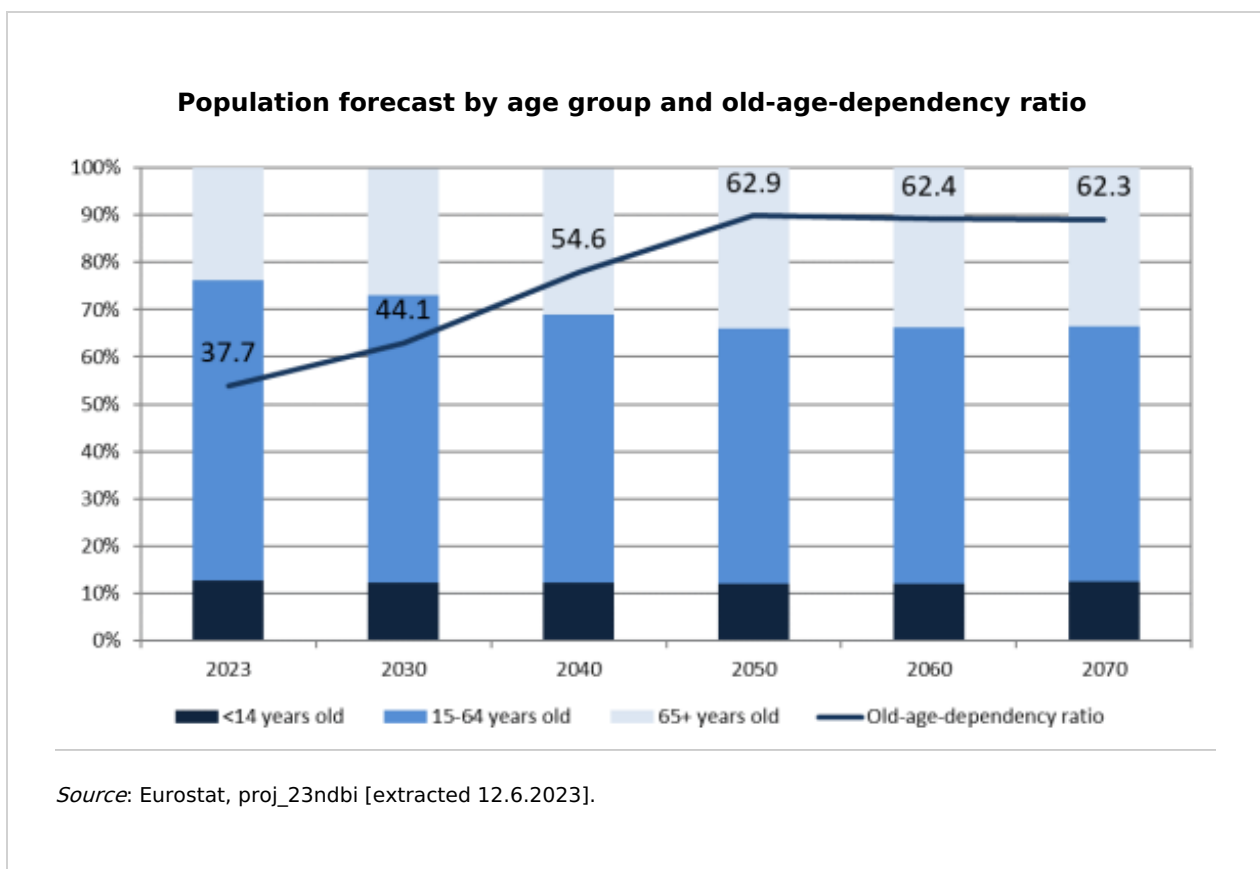
External factors influencing VET

3.1 Demographics

Population in 2022: 10 352 042 (1) . It has increased since 2017 by +0,4% mainly due to immigration (2) .

Population is ageing. According to Eurostat data, Portugal has the second highest proportion of elderly in the EU (3) .

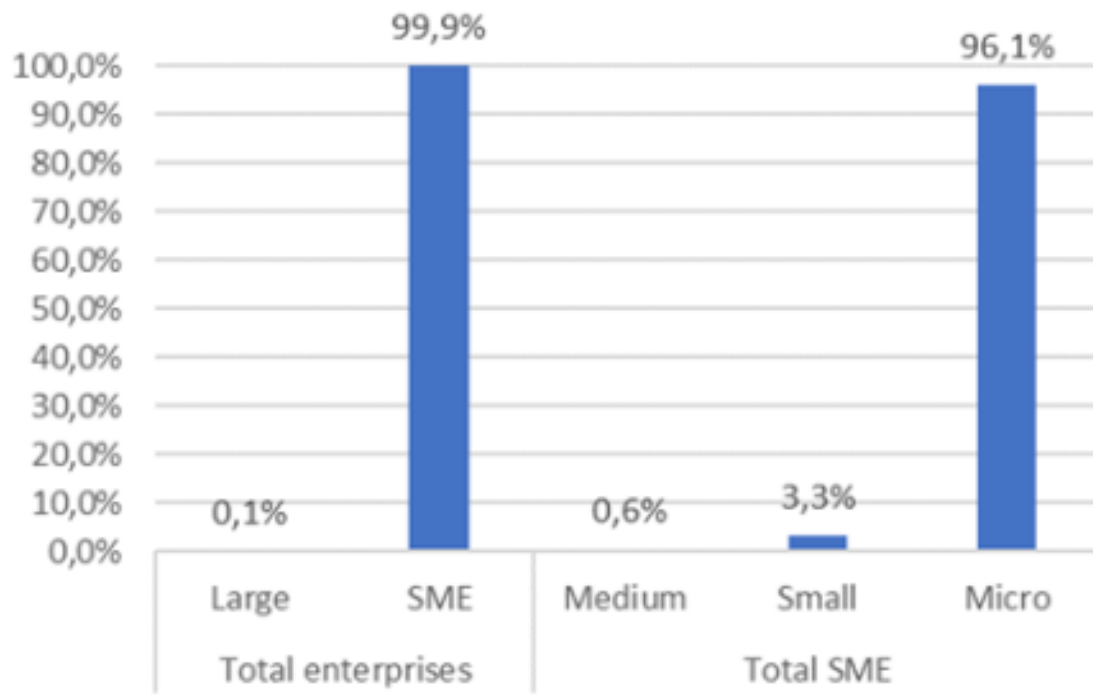
An old-age-dependency ratio is expected to increase from 37.7 in 2023 to 62.3 in 2070 (4) .



3.2 Economics

Most companies are micro and small-sized. In 2021, the share of individual enterprises was 65.1% (5) .

Enterprises by class size (%)



Source: [INE](#) [extracted 18.7.2023].

Main economic sectors of the employed population are (6) :

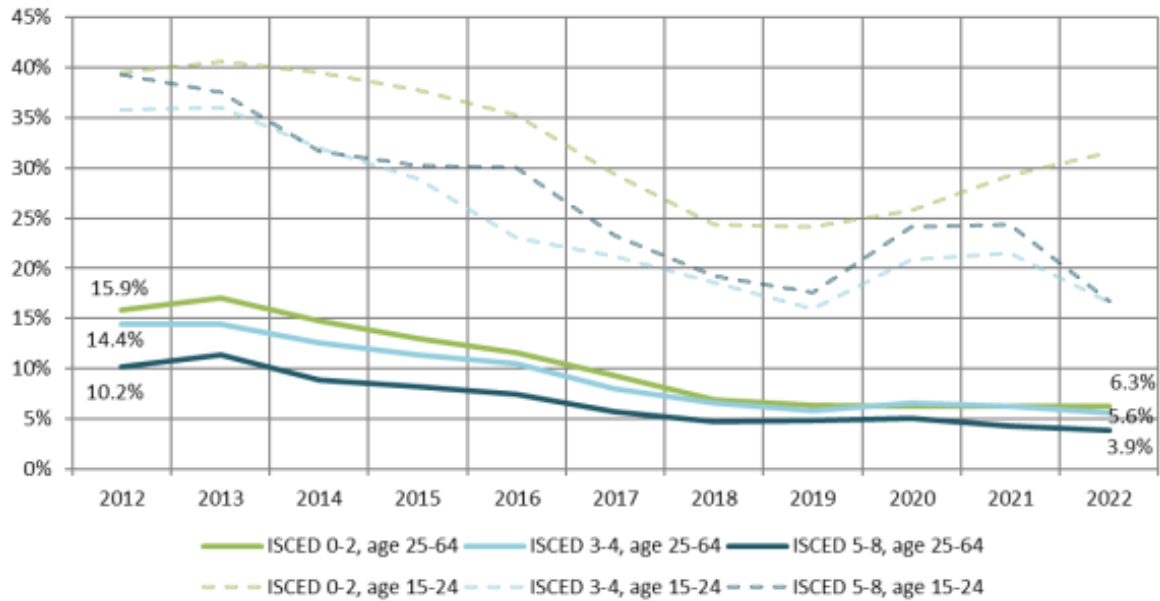
- manufacturing;
- commerce;
- human health and social work activities.

3.3 Labour market

Total unemployment rate (7) in 2022 was 5.1% (8) , lower than the EU average (5.4%). It has fallen by 1.1 percentage points since 2018.

The employment rate (9) in 2022 was 77,6% (10) , it is the highest from 2013 (65,5%) and higher than the EU average (75,5%).

Unemployment rate (aged 15-24 and 25-64) by education attainment level in 2012-22



NB: Data based on ISCED 2011; breaks in time series.

ISCED 0-2 = less than primary, primary and lower secondary education.

ISCED 3-4 = upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education.

ISCED 5-8 = tertiary education.

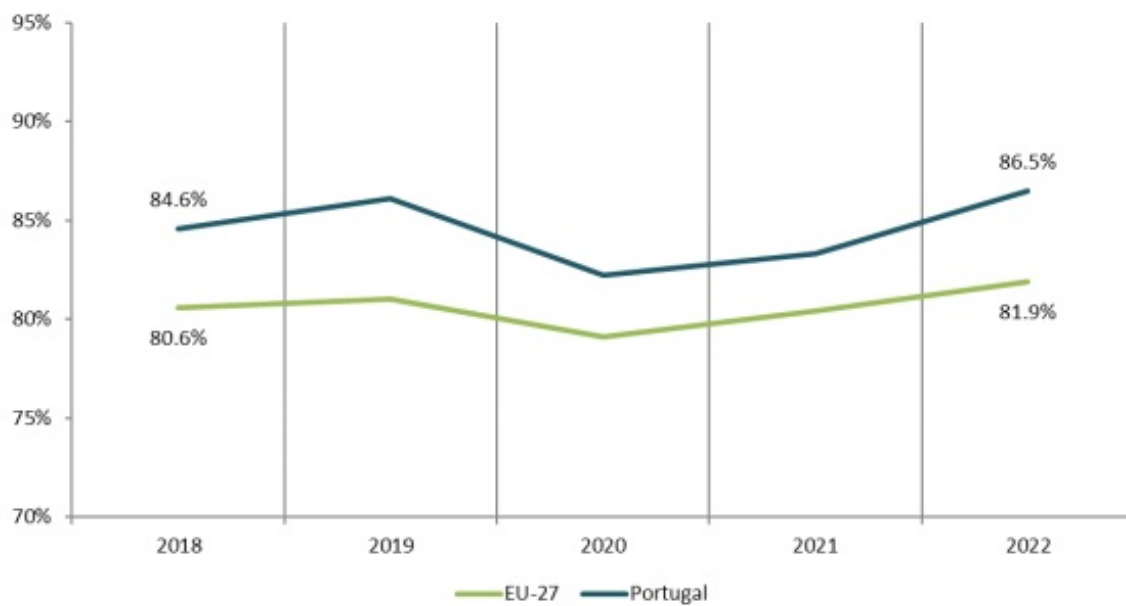
Source: Eurostat,lfsa_urgaed [extracted 12.6.2023].

Youth unemployment (aged 15 to 24) was 19% in 2022 (11) . In this age group, the unemployment rate of upper or post-secondary education graduates was lower than for their peers with a tertiary education qualification. Due to the pandemic crises, the unemployment rate for young (15-24) has increased for all education levels since 2020, especially for those with a tertiary level of education (+6.7 p.p.) (12) .

The employment rate, age 20-34, was 82.7% in 2022 (13) , down 1.6 p.p. from 2018 (84.3%).

Employment rate of recent VET graduates at ISCED levels 3 and 4 increased from 84.6% in 2018 to 86.5% in 2022 (+1.9 p.p.) (14) , higher than the rate for EU27 (81.9% in 2022).

Employment rate of VET graduates (20 to 34 years old, ISCED levels 3 and 4)



NB: Data based on ISCED 2011; breaks in time series.
ISCED 3 4 - upper secondary and post secondary non tertiary education.
Source: Eurostat, edat_ifse_24 [extracted 12.6.2023].

In Portugal, between 2018 and 2023, in the cohort 20-34, employment rate of all graduates decreased 1.6 p.p. (15) , while employment of VET graduates increased 1.9 p.p.

-
- [1] NB: Data for population as of 1 January. Eurostat, tps00001 and proj_19ndbi [extracted 12.6.2023]
 - [2] NB: Data for population as of 1 January. Eurostat, tps00001 and proj_19ndbi [extracted 12.6.2023]
 - [3] Source: [Eurostat](#).
 - [4] Old-age-dependency ratio is defined as the ratio between the number of persons aged 65 and more over the number of working-age persons (15-64). The value is expressed per 100 persons of working age (15-64).
 - [5] INE (2022) *Empresas em Portugal - 2020*.
 - [6] INE (2022). *Employed population by Sex and Economic activity*.
 - [7] Percentage of active population, 25 to 74 years old.
 - [8] Source: Eurostat, une_rt_a [extracted 12.6.2023].
 - [9] Percentage of active population, 20 to 64 years old.
 - [10] Source: Eurostat, ifsa_ergaedn [extracted 18.7.2023].
 - [11] Source: Eurostat, ifsa_urgaed [extracted 18.7.2023]
 - [12] THEMATIC_3] Source: Eurostat, ifsa_urgaed [extracted 12.6.2023]

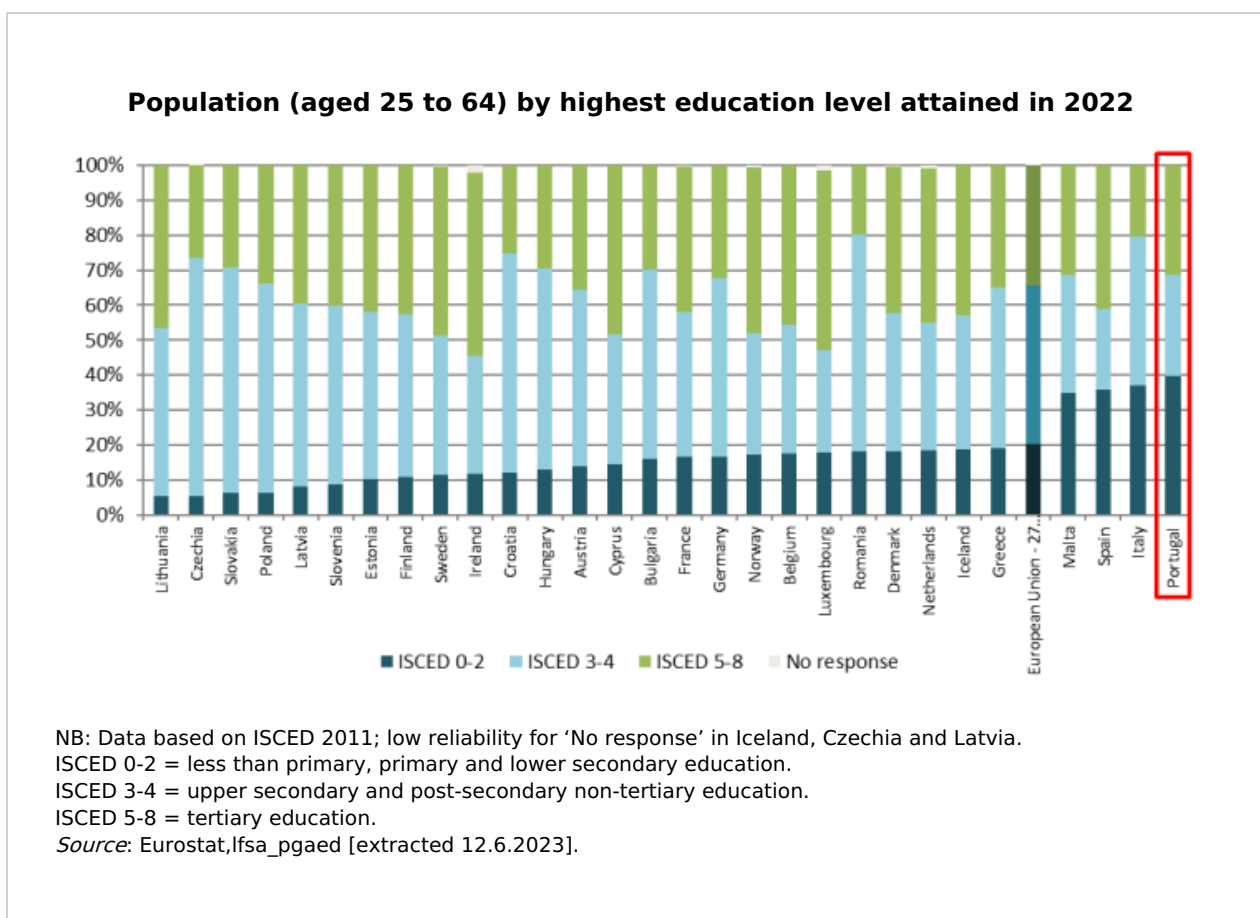
- [13] Source: Eurostat, edat_ifse_24_[extracted 12.6.2023]
- [14] Source: Eurostat, edat_ifse_24_[extracted 12.6.2023]
- [15] NB: Breaks in series. Eurostat, table edat_ifse_24 [extracted 12.6.2023]

CHAPTER 4.

Education attainment

4.1 Share of high, medium and low level qualifications

Education attainment in Portugal is traditionally lower than the EU average, although it has constantly improved in the last decades. The share of people with low-level or no qualification fell from 73.7% in 2005 to 39.7% in 2022 but is still the highest in the EU. The share of those with medium-level qualifications, although significantly increasing, remains lower than the EU. The share of those (25-64) with tertiary education is 31.5% (16) , but for those aged 25 to 34 it is 44,4%, 2.4 p.p. more than in the EU (42%) (17) .



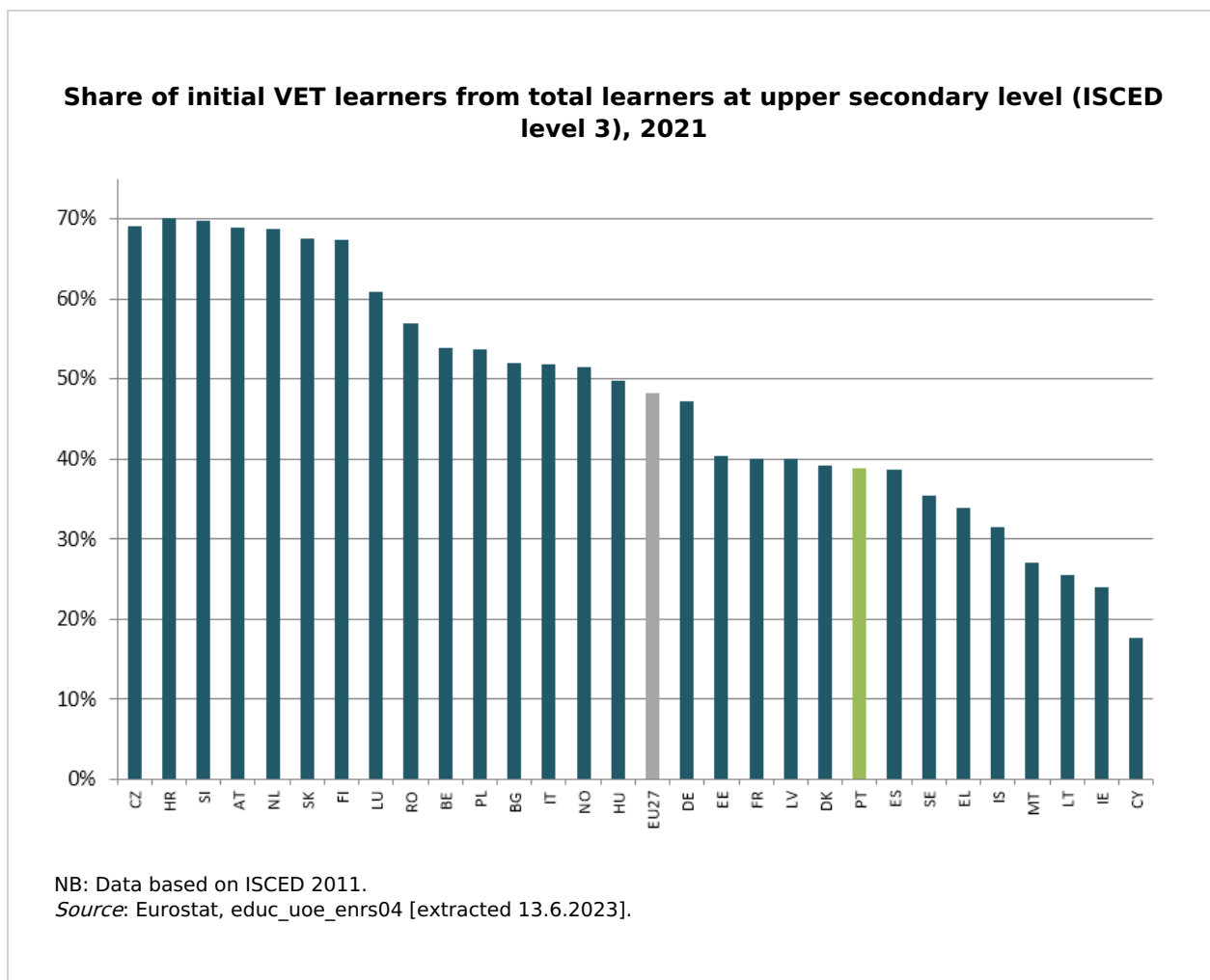
4.3 VET learners by level

Share of learners in VET by level in 2017-21

	2017	2021	Change 2017-21
Lower secondary	8.0%	4.1%	-3.9 pp
Upper secondary	40.7	38.8%	-1.9 pp
Post-secondary	100%	100%	

NB: Data based on ISCED 2011

Source: Eurostat, educ_uae_enrs01, educ_uae_enrs04 and educ_uae_enrs07 [extracted 12.6.2023].



The number of learners in VET at upper secondary level decreases from 39% in 2019 to 38.8% in 2021, far from the EU27 average (48.7% in 2021); it has been drawing attention to the need to adjust training provision to qualifications priorities.

4.4 Female share

The female share (18) is higher in VET for adults and lower in VET for youth.

In VET programmes for adults, the percentage of females (55.8%) is higher than that of males (44.2%). The highest percentage of females is in certified modular training (61.3%) and in adult education and training programmes (57.9%).

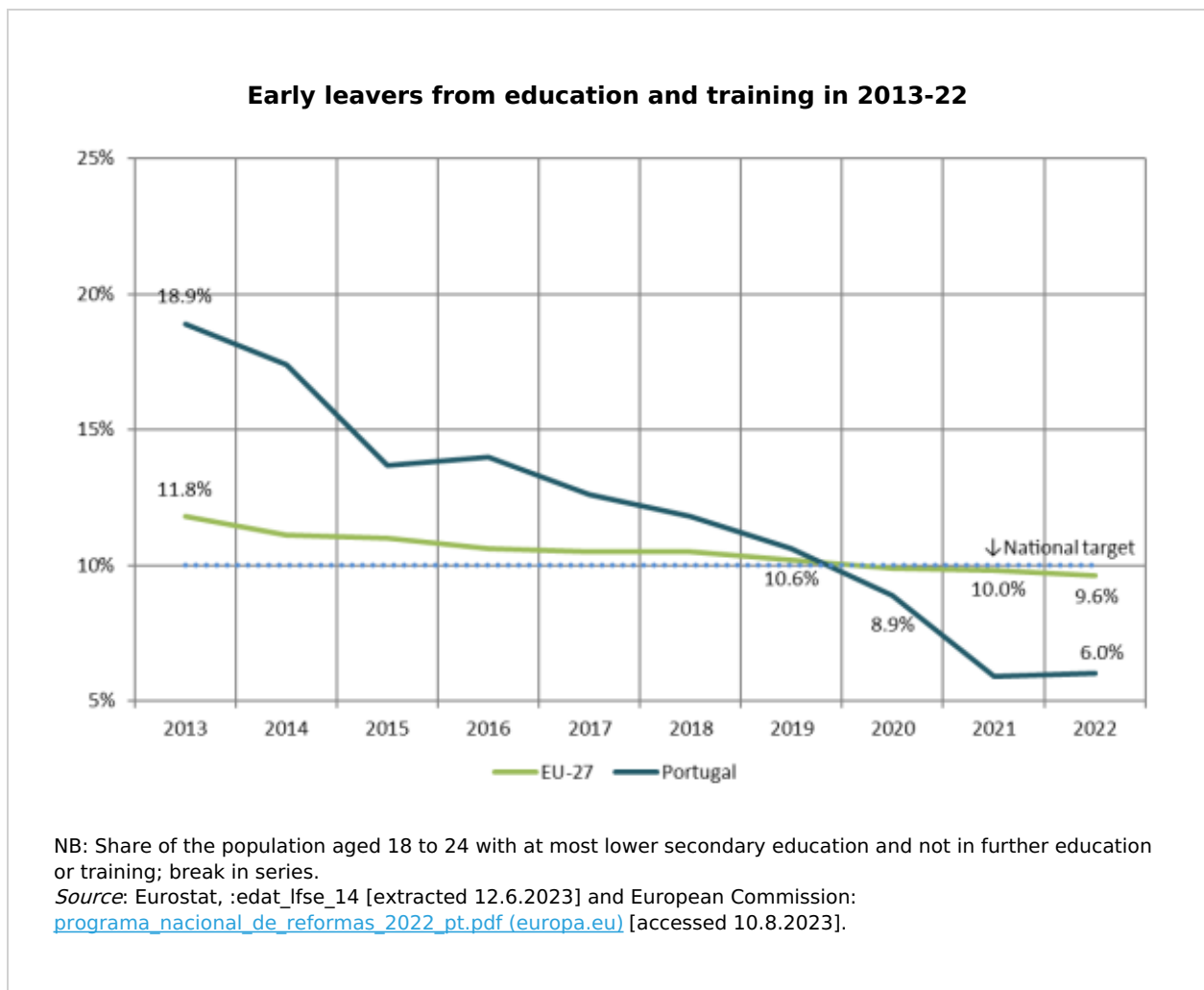
In VET programmes for the young, the percentage of males (60.4%) is higher than that of females (44.2%). Among VET programmes, specialised artistic courses have the highest percentage of female learners (74.7%). The percentage of female learners in apprenticeship programmes is 37.9%, and in professional programmes is 39.6%.

In post-secondary non-tertiary VET, the percentage of females is 37.3%.

In tertiary education, the percentage of females learners is 51.9% (19) .

4.5 Early leavers from education and training

Early leaving from education and training has been steadily falling from 18.9% in 2013 to 6% in 2022. In the first quarter of 2023, it reached an unprecedented percentage of 5.1% (20). These rates remain below the national target for 2020 (10%) and below the EU-27 average of 9.6%.

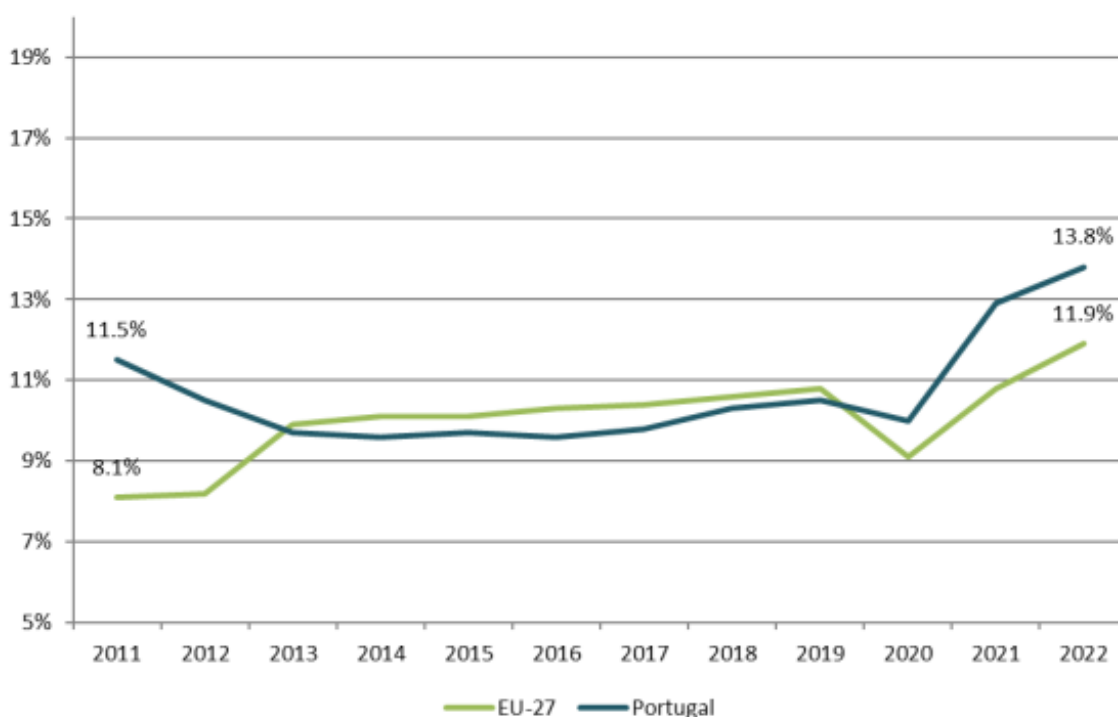


For more information visit [Cedefop project page on tackling early leaving](#) and our interactive toolkits: [Cedefop VET toolkit for tackling early leaving](#) and [Cedefop VET toolkit for empowering NEETs](#).

4.6 Participation in lifelong learning

Lifelong learning offers training opportunities for adults, including adult education and training programmes, certified modular training, and recognition of prior learning (recognition, validation and certification of competences - RVCC).

Participation in lifelong learning in 2011-22



NB: Share of adult population aged 25 to 64 participating in education and training, breaks in series 2021.
 Source: Eurostat, trng_lfse_01 [extracted 12.6.2023].

Participation in lifelong learning decreased during 2011-13 (economic crisis). Since 2014, it has become steady and very close to the EU average. After 2020, it has increased, reaching 13.8% in 2022, higher than EU average (11.9%).

In 2021-22, 38.2% of those enrolled in education and training programmes were undergoing recognition of prior learning (21) ; the education and training programmes for adults (EFA) remain adults' main option (55.2%) (22) which represents an increase of 9.4 p.p. compared 2019-20 (45.8%). Certified modular training also increases from 1.9% in 2019-20 to 2.5% in 2021-22.

[16] Source: Eurostat, lfsa_pgaed [extracted 12.6.2023]

[17] Source: [Pordata](#), [extracted 26.9.2023]

[18] DGEEC (2022). [Estatísticas da educação 2021/2022](#)

[19] Source: [Pordata](#) [extracted 26.9.2023]

[20] Source: [INE](#)

[21] Recognition of prior learning - Recognition, validation and certification of competences process (RVCC). Information available only in Portuguese at: <https://www.anqep.gov.pt/np4/RVCC.html>

[22] DGEEC (2022). [Estatísticas da educação 2021/2022](https://estatisticas-educacao.dgeec.medu.pt/eef/2022/inicio.asp) (<https://estatisticas-educacao.dgeec.medu.pt/eef/2022/inicio.asp>)

CHAPTER 5.

VET within education and training system

The education and training system comprises:

- preschool education (ISCED level 0);
- basic education (9 years) organised into three cycles integrating primary and lower secondary education (ISCED level 1 and 2);
- upper secondary education (ISCED level 3);
- post-secondary non-tertiary education (ISCED level 4);
- tertiary education (ISCED levels 5, 6, 7 and 8).

Early childhood education is optional and covers children from 3 to 6 years old.

Compulsory education lasts 12 school years and starts at the age of 6. It comprises basic education and upper secondary education. Basic education lasts 9 years until age 15 (including some VET programmes). It comprises three cycles; the 4-year first cycle and the 2-year second cycle are considered primary education, while the 3-year third cycle corresponds to lower secondary education.

Secondary education (upper secondary) comprises general and VET programmes (grades 10 to 12). Graduates of these 3-year programmes may access tertiary and post-secondary non-tertiary education.

Horizontal and vertical permeability is an important element of the education and training system, ensuring links not only among different VET programmes, but also between general and vocational education.

The students' profile by the end of compulsory education (23) was introduced in 2017 for programmes under the education ministry's responsibility. The profile defines transversal and interdisciplinary competences that interrelate a set of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values to be achieved by the end of compulsory schooling.

The commitment to an inclusive education where all students, regardless of their personal and social situation, could acquire a level of education and training became a milestone of the education system since 2018. The law establishes (24) the legal framework for inclusive education, the measures to support learning and inclusion, the specific curricular areas as well as the resources to be mobilised to meet the educational needs of each child and young person throughout their school path, in the different education and training offers of compulsory schooling.

Tertiary education is provided by universities and polytechnics. Preconditions to enter tertiary education include successful completion of an upper secondary programme or a similar qualification at the same level (25), admission exams and specific requirements for each study field. Since 2020, besides the general conditions for access to tertiary education, specific access conditions (26) were introduced for upper secondary VET graduates. They consider the score of VET graduates in the final evaluation and aptitude tests, as well as specific tests carried out by each institution to assess if candidates have the necessary knowledge and competences to undertake a particular tertiary education programme. Higher education institutions can also determine a special quota for VET graduates.

Universities and polytechnic schools lead to a first-cycle degree (*licenciatura*) and a second-cycle degree (*mestrado*). They also provide master programmes, integrating the first two cycles

(*mestrado*). Universities provide PhD degrees (*doutoramento*).

Polytechnic institutions also offer short-cycle programmes, called higher professional technical programmes (*cursos técnicos superiores profissionais*, CTeSP). CTeSP graduates acquire a diploma of higher professional technician, at EQF 5 (27) , but not a post-secondary non-tertiary certificate nor a higher education degree (28) .

All VET programmes lead to double certification (education and professional certification):

- at lower secondary level, education and training programmes targeting those aged 15+ who are at risk of early leaving; these programmes are school-based and include practical training (ISCED 254);
- at upper secondary level, there are four types of school-based VET programme combining general or sociocultural training components, science and technological training with work-based learning (WBL) (ISCED 354);
- at post-secondary non-tertiary level, technological specialisation programmes last from 1 to 1.5 years and incorporate WBL (ISCED 454).

At tertiary level, 2-year higher professional technical courses are offered by polytechnics (including internship) (ISCED 554).

The following programmes exist for adult qualifications:

- adult education and training programmes targeting learners who want to complete lower or upper secondary education and/or obtain a professional qualification;
- certified modular training;
- technological specialisation courses;
- recognition of prior learning (recognition, validation and certification of competences (RVCC)).

The two RVCC paths (education and professional) can lead to either a lower or upper secondary education certificate and/or a professional certificate (29) . Candidates can follow the education and professional path simultaneously to acquire a double certification.

-
- [23] [Students' profile by the end of compulsory education](#) [*Perfil dos alunos à saída da escolaridade obrigatória*]
- [24] [Decreto-Lei \(Decree-Law\) n.º 54/2018, de 6 de julho,](#)
- [25] [Deliberação n.º 587/2023, de 7 de junho.](#) It establishes conditions relating to the candidacy of holders of double certification courses at secondary level and specialised artistic courses for bachelor's and integrated master's degrees.
- [26] [Decreto-Lei \(Decree-Law\) n.º 11/2020, de 2 de abril;](#) Article 4 of [Despacho \(Dispatch\) n.º8022-B/2022, de 30 de junho](#)
- [27] [Decree-Law no. 63/2016 of 13 September](#)
- [28] No 2 of the Article 4 of [Decreto-Lei \(Decree-Law\) n.º 65/2018 de 16 de Agosto](#) and the mission of HE institutions is reinforced by No 1 of the Article 2 of [Decreto-Lei n.º 27/2021 de 16 de abril.](#)
- [29] [Portaria \(Ordinance\) n.º 61/2022 de 31 de janeiro](#)

CHAPTER 6.

Apprenticeship

[Apprenticeship programmes](#) are aimed at young people aged up to 29. Programmes include 40% WBL. A training contract between the apprentice and the enterprise (WBL provider) must be signed. Curricula are organised in training components: sociocultural, scientific, technological and practical training in a work environment (WBL).

A double certification including an education and professional certification at EQF level 4, ISCED 354 (Apprenticeship) or EQF level 5 ISCED 454 (Apprenticeship+) is granted upon successful completion of the programme.

Learn more about apprenticeships in the national context from the [European database on apprenticeship schemes](#) by Cedefop.

CHAPTER 7.

VET governance

The central government has overall responsibility for VET. Both vocational education and training, as well as adult education and training are the joint responsibility of the education ministry and labour ministry. The education ministry is responsible for school-based programmes and the labour ministry for apprenticeship programmes, continuing vocational training and carrying out active labour market measures. The higher education ministry for tertiary education.

The national qualifications system (30) (*sistema nacional de qualificações*, SNQ), launched in 2007 and revised in January 2017, is the framework for VET. It integrated the existing qualification subsystems, improved the quality of qualifications and eased access and progression in the labour market.

It is in line with the Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the establishment of the European qualifications' framework for lifelong learning (31) .

The National Qualifications System has a governance model that actively involves the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labour (responsible for its coordination), as well as different VET stakeholders, such as ANQEP (32) , IEFPP (33) , DGE (34) , DGERT (35) , providers, the Sector Councils for Qualification, bodies responsible for funding VET policies and companies that promote the training of their workers. It is a key component of education and training in Portugal, and it has reorganised VET into a single system, with common objectives, structures and tools that support the implementation of the:

- National qualifications framework (*Quadro Nacional de Qualificações*, QNQ);
- National qualifications catalogue (36) : a strategic tool to manage and regulate non-higher VET;
- National credit system for VET (*Sistema nacional de créditos do EFP*);
- System for anticipating qualification needs (*sistema de antecipação de necessidades de qualificações*, SANQ)
- *Qualifica* passport: guidance and registration tool (37) of individuals' qualifications and competences.

Social partners are active in VET. They participate in advisory and social coordination bodies (tripartite composition) and also have a seat on administrations, general councils and monitoring committees of the official bodies responsible for implementing, monitoring and funding VET. On 28 July 2021, an [Agreement for professional training and qualification](#) was signed by the government and the social partners. It is to be a common ground of a tripartite understanding, between the government and the social partners on VET. It aims at framing the regulation and governance of the vocational training system, particularly for continuing training. On 11 January 2022, the ministry of Labour and the National Council for the Social Economy (CNES) signed the [Agreement for vocational training and qualification of the social economy](#). It aims to respond to the training needs and emerging challenges the sector faces, which require continuously updating knowledge and skills, increasing specific training offers, and developing tailor-made continuing training.

[30] [Decreto-Lei \(Decree-Law\) n.º 14/2017, de 26 de janeiro](#)

[31] <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-9620-2017-INIT/en/pdf>

[32] [Agência Nacional para a Qualificação e o Ensino Profissional](#)

[33] [Instituto do Emprego e Formação Profissional:](#)

[34] [Direção-Geral da Educação](#)

- [35] [Direção-Geral do Emprego e das Relações do trabalho](#)
- [37] Quadro Nacional de Qualificações (QNQ).
- [36] [Catálogo Nacional de Qualificações \(CNQ\)](#)
- [37] The [Qualifica Passport](#) is a technological tool for recording qualifications and skills acquired or developed throughout life and for guiding towards learning paths. By capitalising the learning results already achieved and the competences acquired by adult, the Qualifica Passport simulates several possible qualification paths for obtaining new qualifications and/or school and professional progression.

CHAPTER 8.

VET financing mechanisms

VET is almost fully funded through the State budget, the social security budget, European Social Fund (ESF) and the recovery and resilience plan (RRP). Municipalities and the autonomous regions of Madeira and Azores participate in the funding of VET.

In 2021, Portugal spent in education 5.8% (38) of GDP, higher than the EU average (4.8%). Public spending on education increased by 0.5 p.p. between 2020 and 2021, higher than the UE average (9.4%). The share of GDP in education in 2021 increased 1.1 p.p. Spending on secondary education, represented 1.5% of GDP; spending on pre-primary and primary was 1.5%; on lower secondary, 2.7%; on upper secondary represented 1.5% of GDP (39) . On tertiary education, the share of expenditure was 2.8% (40) .

Public expenditure on education, EU27 and Portugal, 2018-21 (%)

	Share of total public expenditure (%)				Share of GDP (%)			
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2018	2019	2020	2021
EU	10.0	10.1	9.4	9.4	4.7	4.7	5.0	4.8
PT	10.3	10.5	9.6	10.1	4.4	4.5	4.7	5.8

Sources:

European Commission (2022). [Education and training monitor 2022](#).

IGeFE (2022). [Relatório de Execução Orçamental de 2021](#)

INE (2023). [Main aggregates of General Government](#)

-
- [38] Instituto de Gestão Financeira da Educação -IGEFE (Institute of Education Financial Management)
- [39] The expenses of these three levels of education refer only to the continent. Expenses for Azores and Madeira not included
- [40] IGeFE (2022) [Relatório de Execução Orçamental de 2021](#), and INE - [Main Aggregates of General Government - 2022](#)

CHAPTER 9.

Teachers and trainers

9.1 VET teacher types

In VET, there are:

- VET teachers;
- school-based trainers (nationally referred as trainers);
- trainers in companies (nationally referred as tutors);
- technicians in guidance, recognition and validation of competences (41) ;
- social and personal mediators.

VET teachers should be graduates of an initial teacher training programme at tertiary level, such as teacher and trainer training and education sciences programmes. Since 2014, new VET teachers also should hold a master's degree (42) . Learners at these programmes should pass knowledge and competences exams and undergo subsequent supervised practice. To become teachers in the public sector, applicants must go through a nationwide public recruitment procedure, based on academic qualifications and work experience. VET teachers usually teach the general/sociocultural and scientific components of VET programmes.

The school-based trainer profession, for those working within the SNQ, is regulated by law (43) . Initial pedagogical training is compulsory, with a minimum duration of 90 hours. It includes 10-hour modules and is flexible and responsive addressing each candidate's needs.

The requirements to become a trainer are:

- an initial pedagogical training certification (44) and a master's degree (EQF level 7); or
- a qualification at least at the same level of the programme they work for; and
- 5 years of proven professional experience in a relevant field.

Trainers can also teach the sociocultural and scientific components of VET programmes, provided that they hold the same qualifications as VET teachers.

Trainers in companies are often employees; enterprises should select them according to their professional and pedagogical competences; there is still no specific regulation for their role. They should work with each learner's individual activity plan; support learners' integration and guidance in the working environment; assess whether they have achieved the expected learning outcomes; and communicate with the VET institution. Each one can be responsible for up to five learners.

Trainers can certify their pedagogical competences acquired through formal, non-formal and informal ways via the recognition, validation and certification of competences of trainers (RVCC-For) process (45) .

Technicians in guidance, recognition and validation of competences work in *Qualifica* centres (46) . They must have a higher education degree and experience in, at least, one of the following areas: education or professional guidance, and methodologies for adults' education and training (47) . They are responsible for hosting RVCC candidates, providing information and guidance, accompanying candidates up to the conclusion of the qualification pathway and for coordinating RVCC processes.

A master's degree is mandatory for those working in career guidance. As most of them are psychologists, they have a one-year internship overseen by the Portuguese Psychologists Association (OPP). For those working in a school setting, it is necessary to hold a specialisation in

Educational Psychology. Additionally, some professionals may have an advanced specialisation in Career Development (48) .

Mediators work in institutions providing EFA programmes/courses (49) . Trainers or guidance professionals, holders of higher education qualifications and training for the role of mediator, or with relevant experience in adult education and training, can fulfil the tasks of a mediator (50) . They are responsible for setting up training groups, accompanying learners and providing personal, social and pedagogical support.

9.2 Continuing professional development of teachers/trainers

VET teachers continuing professional development (CPD) is mandatory for their career progression (51) . CPD can take the form of training courses, workshops, internships and projects accredited by the authority (52) . According to the legislation (53) , CPD includes inclusive education, teacher training on the implementation of curricula of basic and secondary education and digital training. It can be provided by higher education institutions, training centres run by school associations (54) , non-profit scientific associations, the education ministry, and public or accredited private and cooperative associations. To be promoted, teachers should attend at least four-fifths of the total number of hours of compulsory training that is required for each position.

School-based trainer CPD is also ruled by the 2011 legislation (55) . Trainers that want to teach sociocultural and scientific components of VET programmes included in the SNQ are required to hold the same qualifications as teachers.

CPD is provided by IEFP (56) and is based on specific modular standards of competences with flexible duration.

They can be:

- pedagogical modules aiming to improve, deepen or diversify trainers' competences including pedagogical, organisational and ethical issues;
- scientific and/or technological modules aiming to update trainers' knowledge and skills in line with labour market needs;
- operational research modules aiming to improve training standards and methods, that can be implemented in different contexts, including WBL.

Trainer CPD is organised into 10-hour units (or multiples of 10 hours), structured according to each training standard. Seminars, technical meetings, workshops or similar events may have a shorter duration. The operational programme for human capital (*Programa Operacional Capital Humano*, POCH) has supported more than 220 000 training sessions for teachers, particularly in digital skills to respond to the needs of digital transition in education.

For more information visit Cedefop project page on [Teachers' and Trainers' professional development](#) and our interactive toolkits for VET practitioners: [Cedefop VET toolkit for tackling early leaving](#) and [Cedefop VET toolkit for empowering NEETs](#). You may also read [Cedefop/ReferNet country reports on Teachers and Trainers in a Changing World](#) and [Cedefop comparative analysis](#).

[41] Recognition of prior learning - Recognition, validation and certification of competences process (RVCC).

[42] The requirements for general and vocational education teachers are the same.

[43] [Portaria \(Ordinance\) n.º 214/2011, de 30 de maio](#)

[44] This certification can be acquired through the completion of an initial pedagogical training at tertiary level; recognition, validation and certification of pedagogical competences acquired through prior experience; and recognition of an equivalent degree, for example

higher education diploma or certificate including pedagogical training compatible with the skill referential of the position.

- [45] More information at: <https://netforce.iefp.pt/pt-PT/WPG/Home/RVCC>
- [46] *Qualifica centres* target people over 18 years old who are seeking a qualification and, exceptionally, young NEETs; they initiate and develop RVCC. See also general theme 15.
- [47] Portaria (Ordinance) n.º 62/2022, de 31 de Janeiro
- [48] More information at:
https://www.ordemospsicologos.pt/ficheiros/documentos/perfil_psicologos_educaa_aao.pdf
- [49] Adult education and training (EFA) programmes target learners (aged 18 or plus) who want to complete basic or upper secondary education and/or obtain a professional certification, conferring EQF levels 1 to 4.
- [50] [Article 13º from Portaria \(Ordinance\) n.º 86/2022, de 4 de fevereiro](#)
- [51] [Decreto-Lei \(Decree-Law\) n.º 22/2014, de 11 de fevereiro](#)
- [52] Conselho Científico-Pedagógico da Formação Contínua (CCPFC).
<https://dre.pt/application/file/a/158176148>
- [53] [Despacho \(Dispatch\) n.º 779/2019, de 18 de janeiro](#)) modified by [Despacho n.º 2053/2021, de 24 de fevereiro](#)
- [54] Schools association training centres (*Centros de Formação de Associação de Escolas*, CFAE).
- [55] [Portaria \(Ordinance\) n.º 213/2011, de 30 de maio](#)
- [56] Instituto do Emprego e Formação Profissional (Institute for Employment and Vocational Training).

CHAPTER 10.

Shaping VET qualifications

10.1 Anticipating skill needs

The system for anticipating qualification needs (SANQ) was launched in 2015 and is supervised by ANQEP (57) . Its methodology evaluates the relevance of qualifications to the labour market and monitors trends regarding the skills of the human resources supply. Thus, it allows shaping the criteria for defining the network of education and training programmes and its priority thematic areas of focus.

SANQ has been progressively improved due to the diversified data analysed, the contributions of IEFP (58) and an important and representative number of regional and local authorities. Currently, all inter-municipal communities and metropolitan areas in the country collaborate with ANQEP in the process of defining the most relevant and priority qualifications in their territories.

SANQ has the following objectives:

- producing a macro diagnosis (updated every 3 years) on the economic and labour market dynamics that influence the demand for qualifications, in the short and medium-term, allowing an intermediate regional reading (NUTS II);
- making recommendations and proposal of annual guidelines for the prioritisation of qualifications (levels 2, 4 and 5 of the NQF), applicable in the planning of the education and training network at the beginning of each training cycle;
- identifying future qualifications and the need to adjust existing ones, enabling the update of the National Catalogue of Qualifications;
- deepening the diagnosis at regional level in metropolitan areas and intermunicipal communities and conciliation of regional stakeholders in the presentation of a joint proposal for a local network of education and training supply.

Once a year, schools submit, to a central department of the Ministry of Education, their proposals for courses to be developed in the following academic year, according to SANQ priorities.

VET programmes and courses promoted by IEFP's employment and vocational training centres are also influenced by SANQ results. IEFP cooperates with its regional delegations to develop annual lists of thematic priorities (59) to address labour market needs. The list of regional and local priorities for VET 2022-23 identifies the opportunity areas in line with the country economic priorities.

Identifying developments related to skill needs is also the responsibility of the sector councils for qualification (CSQ). These are technical and consultative working groups, coordinated by ANQEP, ensuring the active participation of stakeholders. They propose the inclusion, exclusion and update of the qualifications available in the CNQ.

In 2020, and for the first time, the National Institute for Statistics, in collaboration with ANQEP and DGEEC (60) , launched a survey on the identification of skills needs in enterprises. The survey aimed to identify areas of improvement essential for the development of education, training and employment in Portugal.

See also [Cedefop's skills forecast](#) and [European Skills Index](#).

10.2 Designing qualifications

As a strategic tool of the National qualifications system, the [National qualifications catalogue](#) (CNQ) includes and regulates non-higher qualifications under the responsibility of ANQEP. ANQEP is responsible for designing VET qualifications in cooperation with sectoral councils for qualification (CSQ).

The revised methodology for designing qualifications, implemented in June 2020, is in line with the European recommendations on education and training. It aims to promote transparency and recognition of qualifications at European and international levels. This methodology contributes to the CNQ objectives by organising qualifications into competence units, based on, and described in, learning outcomes and attainment of credit points. Using this methodology, ANQEP has launched a wide range of sectoral studies to identify the needs for qualifications and competences, and to develop qualifications standards to be included in the CNQ.

The CNQ was launched in 2008. Its objectives comprise developing qualifications standards and defining the necessary key competences to foster personal and social development and the competitiveness of the economy, strengthening transparency of qualifications and easing the recognition and validation of competences. CNQ qualifications are structured by certification level and training areas. In July 2023, the CNQ included 392 qualifications in 47 areas of education and training with 8 665 short term training units.

Each CNQ qualification standard is composed of:

- a professional profile, including the work tasks linked to the qualifications and the necessary knowledge and skills to perform them;
- a training standard, defining the content and the competences that a learner should develop to get the double (education and professional) certification. The standard consists of a basic training component (school-based) and a technological training component structured in autonomously certifiable units of 25- to 50-hours duration, promoting flexibility and permeability among different qualifications in the same area of education and training;
- a standard for RVCC (61) , fostering the recognition of prior learning, easing the acquisition of an education and/or a professional certificate.

CSQ (62) are advisory bodies created within the SNQ framework, supporting ANQEP in updating the CNQ. They have as main task the identification of strategic and essential skills and competences for the different sectors of the economy in response to labour market needs. They also ensure the active and regular participation of relevant stakeholders by including representatives of ministries, social partners, enterprise representatives and training providers.

CSQs usually:

- (a) identify the developments in their sector and skill needs;
- (b) suggest specific updates for the CNQ;
- (c) analyse and advise on proposals for updating and revising CNQ received from third parties;
- (d) support the design of qualifications;
- (e) ease cooperation among the different stakeholders of each economic sector.

There are 18 CSQs. The most recent were focusing on the areas of defence and security, economy of the sea.

More information on national qualifications frameworks and the qualifications types can be found in the [NQF online tool](#).

[57] Agência Nacional para a Qualificação e o Ensino Profissional (National Agency for Qualification and VET).

- [58] Instituto do Emprego e Formação Profissional (Institute for Employment and Vocational Training).
- [59] One of the sources used in the preparation of this list are SANQ data.
- [60] Direção-Geral de Estatísticas da Educação e Ciência (Directorate-General for Education and Science Statistics)
- [61] Recognition of prior learning - Recognition, validation and certification of competences process (RVCC).
- [62] [Despacho \(Dispatch\) n.º 6345/2020, de 16 de junho](#)

CHAPTER 11.

Quality assurance

The certification system of vocational education and training providers is regulated by law, which granted the responsibility for the quality certification of training providers to the General Directorate for Employment and Industrial Relations (DGERT) , a central service of the Ministry of Labour, Solidarity and Social Security. It provides the context to certification processes related with regulated professions and professional activities, under the responsibility of sectoral authorities.

The system aims to:

- improve capacity, quality and credibility of the training service of VET providers, mainly private, operating in the scope of the National Qualifications System (66);
- guarantee an appropriate use of the European and national public funds for education and vocational activities.
- The certification is a quality recognition that VET providers can develop at the different stages of the training cycle in the areas of education and training in which they operate. It is a voluntary label, that can be granted to public or private organisations, whose training structure and practices follow the certification standard. VET providers should meet specific legal and quality requirements, which refer to:
 - internal structure and organisation - human resources and infrastructure;
 - development and implementation of training programmes - planning, design, organisation, implementation and assessment;
 - results evaluation and continuous improvement - post-training follow up, annual assessment of results, continuous improvement actions.

Certified VET providers enjoy specific benefits, such as:

- training is considered certified (recognised), under the scope of/within the NQS;
- access to public funding for education and training activities;
- tax benefits for the providers and their clients;
- recognition of the provider's services quality.

The certification process is organised in two main stages, initial certification and certification maintenance.

Initially, the VET provider should define the training project and self-evaluate its structure and practices against the quality requirements. It then submits an electronic request to DGERT for a documentary or audit-based evaluation to assess the provider's pedagogical capacity to deliver the training project.

Once certified, the VET provider can request the extension of the recognition to new areas of education and training, transfer the certification to another VET provider, or even renounce to the recognition.

As certification does not have validity term, DGERT use performance indicators and carries out regular audits to assess compliance of VET provider structure and practices with the quality standard and the results of its training activity, to decide the maintenance of the certification . At the end of June 2023, there were 2 960 certified VET providers.

Another national approach to improving quality assurance in VET, promoted by professional schools and some other VET providers, has been devised using the EQAVET framework. VET providers have been aligning their quality assurance approaches to the EQAVET framework and the overall objective is that, when the quality assurance approach is fully implemented, all VET providers can adopt it and be awarded a quality label based on EQAVET quality criteria and

indicative descriptors. By August 2022, 446 EQAVET labels had been awarded, mainly to public schools with VET programmes.

[65] Direção-Geral do Emprego e das Relações de Trabalho (Directorate-General for Employment and Industrial Relations)

[66] [Portaria \(Ordinance\) n.º 208/2013, de 26 de junho](#)

[67] More information at Cedefop: <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news-and-press/news/portugal-certification-training-providers>

CHAPTER 12.

Validation of prior learning

Recognition of prior learning (recognition, validation and certification of competences process, RVCC) aims to identify the formal, non-formal and informal competences that individuals have developed.

It comprises two paths, education and professional, each based on different set of standards:

- the two key competences standards for adult education and training (school RVCC) - basic and upper secondary education;
- standards for professional RVCC.

The RVCC process also utilises a set of specifically designed evaluation tools. Candidates following the education path can obtain a certificate of basic or upper secondary general education (EQF levels 1 to 3). The professional path leads to a professional certification. Candidates holding the corresponding academic certificate obtain a double certification at EQF levels 2, 4 or 5. Candidates can follow the education and professional paths simultaneously if they wish to acquire a double certification.

Individuals can initiate a RVCC process at a *Qualifica* centre at any time of the year. In July 2023, there are 316 *Qualifica* centres, 9 of which are *Qualifica AP* (Public Administration) (63) supervised by ANQEP spread across the country. The RVCC process is open to candidates who are at least 18 years old. Those up to 23 years old must have at least three years of professional certified experience to be eligible. To complete the RVCC process, learners should participate in at least 50 training hours to acquire the necessary competences. They can also undertake 25-hour training to get ready for the final evaluation. Both RVCC paths mainly involve face-to-face procedures and training, although distance learning is also an option.

A main evaluation tool of the RVCC process is the reflective learning portfolio (*portefólio reflexivo*). This records candidates' competences, displaying a critical evaluation of their knowledge, competences and experience, including all relevant supporting documentation.

Candidates are evaluated by a jury, appointed by a *Qualifica* centre, which certifies their competences. The evaluation can be written, oral or practical or combine these methods to assess the acquired key competences (education path), or professional competences (professional path). Candidates can also obtain a partial certification enabling them to attend the missing training components to acquire full certification. Certifications acquired through the RVCC process are equal to any other, enabling learners to continue their studies.

In 2021/2022 (64) , participation in RVCC processes was 38.2% when compared with all adults enrolled in VET offers.

For more information about validation arrangements, please visit Cedefop's [European database on validation of non-formal and informal learning](#).

[63] [Qualifica AP](#) are only for public administration (*administração pública*)

[64] DGEEC (2022). [Estatísticas da educação 2021/2022](#)

CHAPTER 13.

Incentives for learners

Allowances, grants and scholarships target inactive or unemployed learners. [Demography, Skills and Inclusion Thematic Programme, People 2030](#) (*Programa temático Demografia, Qualificações e Inclusão, Pessoas 2030*) includes financial support for VET learners. Learners receive these financial support incentives through VET providers.

Incentives for VET learners can take the form of:

- professionalisation scholarship: it aims to support learners during the WBL period (subject to attendance);
- study material (*bolsa de material de estudo*): set according to the learner's economic needs and corresponds to a value established by the school social support (*ação social escolar*);
- training grant: awarded to unemployed people who are at least 23 years old. The age limit does not apply to NEETs who are not beneficiaries of a professionalisation scholarship, or to people who are at risk of social exclusion or with disabilities
- travel allowance: covers the cost of travelling by public transport. When learners cannot use public transport, they are entitled to a transport allowance. This is provided when the learner does not receive an accommodation subsidy;
- accommodation allowance: provided to learners living more than 50 km from the premises of the VET provider, or to those that cannot use public transport to reach the premises of the VET provider;
- food/meals allowance: learners receive the same amount as stipulated for public officials whenever the training is equal to or longer than 3 hours;
- social support to learners with dependants: it covers the expenses of taking care of learners' dependents while they are attending training;
- personal accident insurance: expenses for personal accident insurance for young people, unemployed and inactive trainees attending VET programmes or employees who attend training on their own initiative.

VET support for employed adults is carried out by enterprises under the monitoring and evaluation of the operational programme for competitiveness and internationalisation (POCI/COMPETE 2020). IEFP also offers social support programmes if EU funding is not available.

To encourage adults with incomplete qualification paths or with low qualifications (less than upper secondary education) to complete or improve their school and professional qualifications, the *Qualifica Accelerator* aims at stimulating participation and certification through RVCC processes by granting financial support to adults who are in RVCC processes (65) .

[65] Total budget for this measure is EUR 55 million. The goal is to reach 100 000 RVCC certifications, by 2025.

CHAPTER 14.

Incentives for enterprises to boost their participation in VET provision

The most important source of funding for VET programmes and VET providers, including enterprises, is the Operational programme for human capital (*Programa Operacional Capital Humano*, POCH), complemented by some actions of the Operational programme for employment and social inclusion (*Programa Operacional Inclusão Social e Emprego*, POISE).

These operational programmes fall under [Portugal 2020](#), a partnership agreement adopted between Portugal and the European Commission, which brings together the work of the five European structural and investment funds, including ESF. Employers may receive financial support for staff training or to cover costs when training takes place during normal working hours and is carried out by an external VET provider.

The government provides financial support to enterprises that set employment contracts with unemployed people including professional training (66) . Enterprises providing professional training to workers also enjoy exemption from or reduction in employer contributions for social security.

The government launched a strategic programme (67) to ensure the training and requalification of workers, managers and leaders of companies and social economy entities in the digital area. This programme aims to respond to the challenges and opportunities of several business sectors strongly impacted by the digital transition processes, contributing to fostering their digital transformation and improving the productivity and competitiveness of the entities and the country's economy.

[66] More information at: <https://www.iefp.pt/apoios-a-contratacao>

[67] Portaria (Ordinance) n.º 246/2022, de 27 de setembro

CHAPTER 15.

Guidance and counselling

Guidance is provided by professionals at schools (psychology and guidance services), IEFP (68) (public employment services), professional schools and *Qualifica* Centres (69) . The main goals of guidance are to reduce school dropout, improve school engagement, increase the number of students in VET courses, reduce early leaving from education and training, support smooth transitions between school levels and from VET to labour market, support adults to improve education and professional skills, and develop career management skills.

Guidance provided by public services is free of charge.

All public schools provide guidance services to learners from age 5 to the end of compulsory education. School psychology and guidance services mainly focus on the psycho-pedagogical field, fostering school community relationships among learners and teachers, and on lifelong guidance. School psychologists work in an integrated way, cooperating closely with teachers, parents and other stakeholders. They use different activities, including extracurricular ones: study visits, and job placements (70) .

IEFP uses a guidance intervention model for the unemployed that includes two main elements: the profiling system and the personal employment plan (PEP). PEP aims to improve the employability profile of the unemployed and ease their (re)integration into the labour market, either through finding a job or through becoming self-employed or creating an enterprise. IEFP also runs an online guidance platform (71) , which provides information, allows user interaction and career management. Guidance professionals, teachers and parents are also target groups of the platform.

IEFP, also, supervises a network of accredited professional integration offices (*Gabinetes de inserção profissional, GIP*). GIPs support the unemployed to (re)enter labour market.

Qualifica centres provide information, guidance and referral of adults (whether unemployed or not) to qualification pathways, considering labour market needs, skills mismatches and professional opportunities. They also carry out the *Qualifica* programme, aiming to improve the education and training levels of the population and raise employability.

Professional schools (*Escolas Profissionais*), most of them owned by companies, business associations, foundations, cooperatives and trade unions delivery guidance intervention for VET students.

Information aiming the awareness of VET provision, also plays an important role. Vocational fairs, such as *Futurália* and *Qualifica* were held nationwide. They aim to promote education and training programmes at secondary or higher level, enabling young people and families to learn more about VET. Web portals, such as [Worldskills Portugal](#) and [Qualifica](#), also present online information about VET.

Please also see:

- [guidance and outreach Portugal national report](#);
- [Cedefop's labour market intelligence toolkit](#);
- [Cedefop's inventory of lifelong guidance systems and practices](#);
- [National guidance systems](#).

[68] Instituto do Emprego e Formação Profissional (Institute for Employment and Vocational Training).

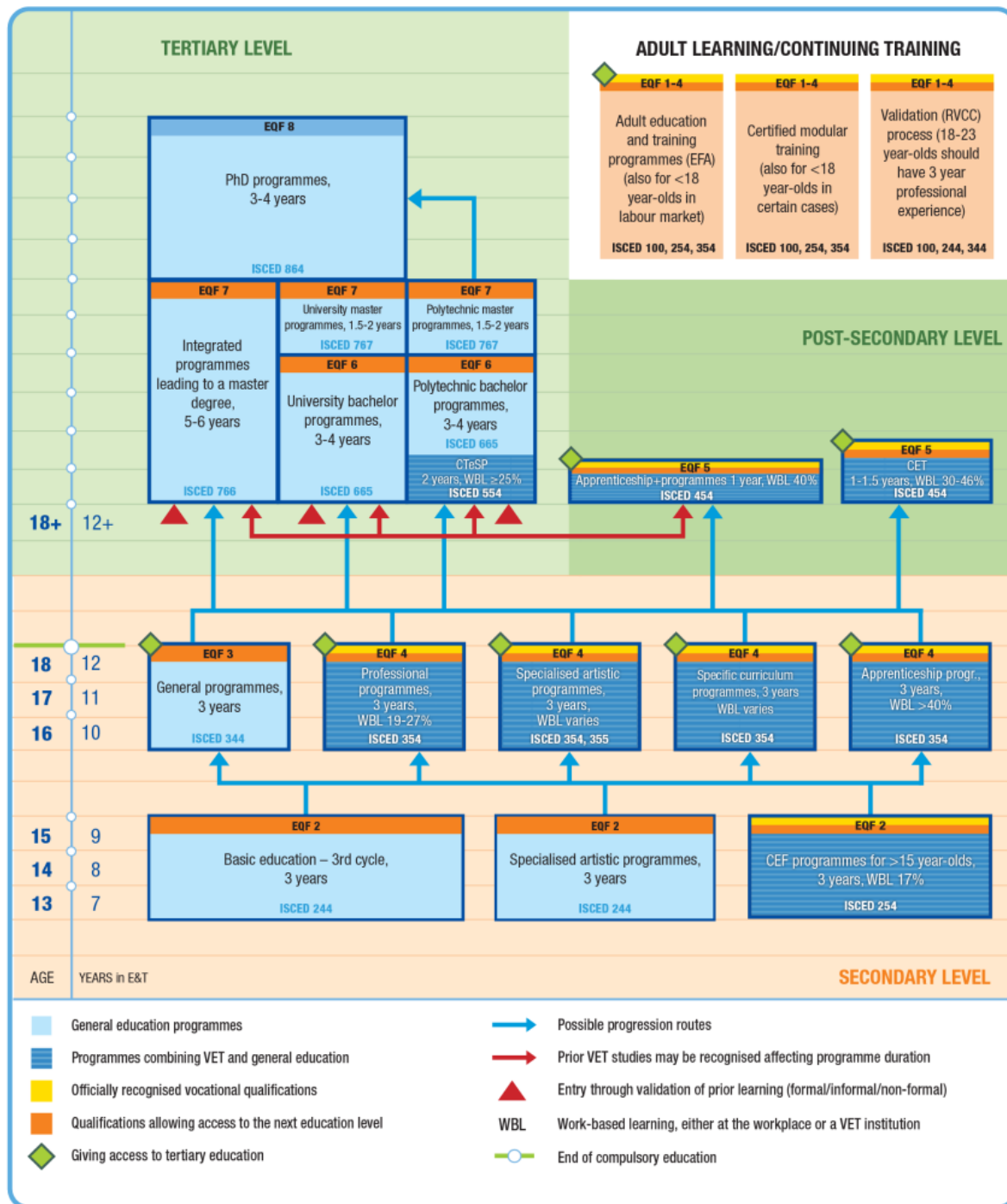
[69] *Qualifica* centres target people over 18 years old who are seeking a qualification and,

exceptionally, young NEETs; they initiate and develop recognition, validation and certification of competences process (RVCC).

[70] Cedefop (2020). [Inventory of lifelong guidance systems and practices - Portugal](#). CareersNet national records.

[71] More information at: <https://iefponline.iefp.pt/IEFP/web/guest/sobre-orientacao-profissional>

Vocational education and training system chart









NB: ISCED-P 2011


Source: Cedefop, & Directorate-General of Employment and Industrial Relations (DGERT). (2023). Vocational education and training in Europe – Portugal: system description. In Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2024). Vocational education and training in Europe: VET in Europe database – detailed VET system descriptions [Database]. www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/vet-in-europe/systems/portugal-u3



VET Programme Types

EQF 2
CEF programmes for >15 year-olds,
3 years,
WBL 17%
ISCED 254

Education and training programmes for young people (Cursos de educação e formação de jovens, CEF) leading to EQF level 2, ISCED 254

EQF level	2	ISCED-P 2011 level	254
Usual entry grade	7	Usual completion grade	9
Usual entry age	15 (minimum)	Usual completion age	18
Length of a programme (years)	3		
Is it part of compulsory education and training?	 In 2009, compulsory education was extended to 12 years of schooling, between the age of 6 and 18 ((72)). 18	Is it part of formal education and training system?	
Is it initial VET?		Is it continuing VET?	
Is it offered free of charge?	 Exempt of fees for learners under compulsory education.	Is it available for adults?	
ECVET or other credits	Depending on the programme, the minimum number of credits is 120 ((73)).		
Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)	CEF programmes comprise four training components: sociocultural, scientific, technological and practical, including a minimum of 210 hours of work-based learning (WBL) in each training cycle.		

Main providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - network of public, private and cooperative schools; - professional schools; - IEFP ((74)) vocational training centres (directly and jointly managed); - accredited training providers; linked with community entities, including local authorities, enterprises or business organisations, other social partners and local or regional associations, set up by protocols aimed at maximising physical structures and human and material resources.
Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies	17%
Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • practical training at school; • in-company practice
Main target groups	The aim of CEF programmes is to reduce the number of early school leavers. Learners must be aged 15 or more and without a lower secondary education qualification.
Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)	Learners must have completed only the first cycle of basic education (4 years) and be at least 15 years old.
Assessment of learning outcomes	Learners' assessment is carried out per subject/area and per training component. Assessment is formative and summative and includes a final test comprising a professional performance presentation in front an external jury, with one or more practical works related to the most relevant knowledge and skills included in the programme profile.
Diplomas/certificates provided	<p>Successful completion of a CEF leads to a double certification: an education certificate (third cycle of lower secondary education) and an operator certificate (<i>Operador</i>) (EQF level 2 ISCED 254).</p> <p>Adults can also obtain this operator certificate through adult education and training programmes</p>
Examples of qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer operator • Electronic operator • Machine operator -CNC tool
Progression opportunities for learners after graduation	Progression is allowed to upper secondary education and to higher level CEF programmes after meeting specific requirements.
Destination of graduates	Information not available
Awards through validation of prior learning	

General education subjects	
	<p>Two of the four training components of CEF programmes is the sociocultural (including Portuguese; foreigner language; ICT) and the scientific (including applied sciences, including mathematics).</p>
Key competences	
	<p>Two of the four training components of CEF programmes is the sociocultural (including Portuguese; foreigner language; ICT) and the scientific (with applied sciences, including mathematics).</p>
Application of learning outcomes approach	<p>The methodology for designing qualifications was launched in April 2021. Qualifications are now structured in units of competence and based on learning outcomes. The process for applying the learning outcomes approach is ongoing.</p>
Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners	<p>4.6% of all VET learners in lower and upper secondary education were in these programmes ((75))</p>







[73] Article 5 of the [Portaria \(Ordinance\) n.º 47/2017, de 1 de fevereiro](#)

[74] Instituto do Emprego e Formação Profissional (Institute for Employment and Vocational Training).



[75] DGEEC (2022). [Estatísticas da educação 2021/2022](#)

EQF 4
Professional programmes,
3 years,
WBL 19-27%
ISCED 354

Professional programmes (Cursos profissionais) leading to EQF level 4, ISCED 354

EQF level	4	ISCED-P 2011 level	354
Usual entry grade	10	Usual completion grade	12
Usual entry age	15	Usual completion age	18
Length of a programme (years)	3 (from 3 100 to 3 440 hours)		
Is it part of compulsory education and training?	 In 2009, compulsory education was extended to 12 years of schooling, between the age of 6 and 18 ((76)). 18	Is it part of formal education and training system?	
Is it initial VET?		Is it continuing VET?	
Is it offered free of charge?	 Exempt of fees for learners under compulsory education.	Is it available for adults?	
ECVET or other credits	Depending on the programme, the minimum number of credit points is 180 ((77)).		
Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)	These programmes combine the following training components: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sociocultural, scientific and technological training (school-based components); • work-based learning (WBL) in the form of a traineeship carried out in enterprises or other organisations. 		
Main providers	Programmes are offered by schools (public and private), Turismo de Portugal schools and cooperative educational establishments.		

Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies	19% - 27%
Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)	The technological training component includes subjects of technological, technical and practical nature provided at school. The work-based component includes in-company practice foreseen in an agreement between the school and the enterprise and has a minimum duration of 600 hours up to a maximum of 840 hours. The learner's work plan, once signed, is considered an integral part of the training contract (different from a labour contract).
Main target groups	These programmes target learners who want to follow a more practical and labour market-oriented programme, but they also allow the continuation of secondary and higher-level studies.
Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)	To enrol in these programmes, learners need to be between 15 and 18 years old (with exceptions foreseen by legislation) and to have completed lower secondary education.
Assessment of learning outcomes	The programme comprises formative and summative assessments and includes a presentation of a project called Proof of professional aptitude (<i>Prova de Aptidão Profissional, PAP</i>) in front of a jury made up of external representatives from the sector of activity.
Diplomas/certificates provided	They lead to a double certification (education and professional certification), corresponding to upper secondary education (12th grade of schooling) and a certificate of technician (<i>Técnico</i>) (EQF level 4 ISCED 354) Adults can also obtain technician certificate through adult education and training programmes
Examples of qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multimedia technician • Automobile mechatronics technician • Environmental and rural tourism technician
Progression opportunities for learners after graduation	Graduates can pursue further studies in technological specialisation programmes, access higher education, upon the fulfilment of requirements foreseen in the regulations, or enter the labour market.
Destination of graduates	In 2020/21 the situation of young people who finished in 2018/2019 ((78)) was: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 46% were working; • 29% are still studying (40% Polytechnic Institute: Higher professional technical programmes - CTeSP; 30% University;19% Polytechnic Institute: Bachelor's degree); • 7% studying and working; • 18% looking for a job.
Awards through validation of prior learning	Information not available

General education subjects	 <p>These programmes include three general education subjects (common for all training fields): Portuguese, foreign languages, physics, physical education, information and communication technologies and integration area (which has a multidisciplinary character).</p>
Key competences	 <p>These programmes include three general education subjects (common for all training fields): Portuguese, foreign languages and physics. All students on professional courses have the opportunity and obligation to develop the areas of competence listed in the Students' Profile by the end of compulsory education ((79)), the reference curriculum document of the Portuguese education system.</p>
Application of learning outcomes approach	<p>The methodology for designing qualifications was launched in April 2021. Qualifications are now structured in units of competence and based on learning outcomes. The process for applying the learning outcomes approach is ongoing.</p>
Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners	<p>79.3% ((80)) of all VET learners in lower and upper secondary education were in these programmes.</p>

[77] Article 6 of the [Portaria \(Ordinance\) n.º 47/2017, de 1 de fevereiro](#)

[78] DGEEC (2021) [Jovens no pós-secundário: Percursos de Inserção Escolar e Profissional](#) ()

[79] Students' profile by the end of compulsory education [Perfil dos alunos à saída da escolaridade obrigatória]

[80] DGEEC (2022). [Estatísticas da educação 2021/2022](#)

EQF 4







Specialised artistic programmes,

3 years,




WBL varies

ISCED 344, 354

Specialised artistic programmes (Cursos artísticos especializados) leading to EQF level 4, ISCED 344, 354

EQF level	4	ISCED-P 2011 level	344, 354
Usual entry grade	10	Usual completion grade	12
Usual entry age	16	Usual completion age	18
Length of a programme (years)	3 (from 2 152 to 3 730 hours according to the training field)		
Is it part of compulsory education and training?	 In 2009, compulsory education was extended to 12 years of schooling, between the age of 6 and 18 ((81)).	Is it part of formal education and training system?	
Is it initial VET?		Is it continuing VET?	
Is it offered free of charge?	 Exempt of fees for learners under compulsory education.	Is it available for adults?	
ECVET or other credits	Depending on the programme, the minimum number of credit points is 180 ((82)).		
Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)	These programmes combine: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • general, scientific and technical-artistic training (school-based components); • work-based learning (WBL) as a traineeship carried out in enterprises or other organisations (Visual Arts and Audio-visuals and Dance). 		
Main providers	Programmes are offered by public, private or cooperative schools.		
Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies	Information not available		

Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)	The technical-artistic component includes practical training at school and in-company practice. It is mandatory only in the third year of the programme (12th year of schooling). It is preferentially performed at the workplace, in workshops, companies or other organisations, through the transmission of know-how, by taking on occasional jobs or via an internship. It can be performed via the simulation of a set of professional activities relevant to the programme profile, developed in similar conditions to a real-world working context, integrated in the school subject of the technical-artistic training component called Project and technologies.
Main target groups	These programmes target learners who want to have a career in the artistic field of their choice and develop their capacities and talent or to take further studies/training in one of the fields.
Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)	Learners must be at least 15 years old and have completed the third cycle of lower secondary education (9th year of schooling).
Assessment of learning outcomes	Assessment is formative and summative, including a final test (<i>Prova de Aptidão Artística</i> , PAA) that comprises a professional performance presentation in front of a jury, with one or more practical assessments related to the most relevant knowledge and skills included in the programme profile.
Diplomas/certificates provided	<p>Successful completion of an art education programme leads to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upper secondary music certificate (12th year of schooling) (<i>certificado de ensino secundário</i>) (EQF level 3 ISCED 344) • Upper secondary certificate (12th year of schooling) (<i>certificado de ensino secundário</i>) and a certificate of technician in the fields of dance, visual arts or audio-visual (<i>Técnico</i>) (EQF level 4 ISCED 354) <p>Adults can also obtain technician certificate through adult education and training programmes</p>
Examples of qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dance • Designer of communication
Progression opportunities for learners after graduation	Progression is possible to technological specialisation programmes (EQF level 5) or higher education (university or polytechnic), provided that learners meet the access requirements.
Destination of graduates	<p>In 2020/21 the situation of young people who finished in 2018/2019 ((83)) was:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 70% are still studying (73% university;21% polytechnic - bachelor's degree); • 14% studying and working; • 11% looking for a job; • 4% were working.

Awards through validation of prior learning	
General education subjects	 These programmes have a general and a scientific training component.
Key competences	 These programmes have a general and a scientific training component.
Application of learning outcomes approach	The methodology for designing qualifications was launched in April 2021. Qualifications are now structured in units of competence and based on learning outcomes. The process for applying the learning outcomes approach is ongoing.
Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners	1.8 % ((84)) of all VET learners in lower and upper secondary education were in these programmes.

[82] Article 6 of [Portaria \(Ordinance\) n.º 47/2017, de 1 de fevereiro](#)

[83] DGEEC (2021) [Jovens no pós-secundário: Percursos de Inserção Escolar e Profissional](#)

[84] DGEEC (2022). [Estatísticas da educação 2021/2022](#)

EQF 4







Specific curriculum programmes,




3 years,

WBL varies

ISCED 354

Specific curriculum programmes (Cursos com planos próprios) leading to EQF level 4, ISCED 354

EQF level	4	ISCED-P 2011 level	354
Usual entry grade	10	Usual completion grade	12
Usual entry age	16	Usual completion age	18
Length of a programme (years)	3 years		
Is it part of compulsory education and training?	 In 2009, compulsory education was extended to 12 years of schooling, between the age of 6 and 18 ((85)).	Is it part of formal education and training system?	
Is it initial VET?		Is it continuing VET?	
Is it offered free of charge?	 Exempt of fees for learners under compulsory education.	Is it available for adults?	
ECVET or other credits	Information not available.		
Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)	These programmes combine: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • general, scientific and technological/artistic-technical (school-based components); • work-based learning (WBL) in the form of a traineeship carried out in enterprises or other organisations. 		
Main providers	Programmes are offered by private and cooperative schools.		
Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies	It varies according to the fields of study and schools.		

Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)	It varies according to the fields of study and schools.
Main target groups	These programmes target young learners.
Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)	Learners must be at least 15 years old and completed the third cycle of lower secondary education (9th year of schooling).
Assessment of learning outcomes	Assessment is formative and summative, including a final test (<i>Prova de Aptidão Profissional</i> or <i>Prova de Aptidão Artística</i>) that comprises a professional performance presentation before a jury, with one or more practical assessments related to the most relevant knowledge and skills included in the programme profile.
Diplomas/certificates provided	<p>Successful completion of a specific curriculum programme leads to a double certification (education and professional certification), corresponding to upper secondary education (12th grade of schooling) and a certificate of technician (<i>Técnico</i>) (EQF level 4 ISCED 354)</p> <p>Adults can also obtain technician certificate through adult education and training programmes</p>
Examples of qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Video technician • Hairdressing and image advice technician • Graphic design technician
Progression opportunities for learners after graduation	Progression is possible to technological specialisation programmes (EQF level 5) or higher education (university or polytechnic), provided that learners meet the access requirements.
Destination of graduates	<p>In 2020/21 the situation of young people who finished in 2018/2019 (86) was:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 70% are still studying (52% university;25% polytechnic - bachelor's degree; 15% polytechnic - Higher professional technical programmes - CTeSP; 7% Technological specialisation programmes - CET); • 15% were working; • 9% studying and working; • 7% looking for a job.
Awards through validation of prior learning	
General education subjects	 These programmes have a general and a scientific training component.
Key competences	 These programmes have a general and a scientific training component.

**Application of learning
outcomes approach**









**Share of learners in
this programme type
compared with the
total number of VET
learners**

2.3% (87) of all VET learners in lower and upper secondary education were in these programmes.

- [86] DGEEC (2021) [Jovens no pós-secundário: Percursos de Inserção Escolar e Profissional](#)
- [87] DGEEC (2022). [Estatísticas da educação 2021/2022](#).

EQF 4
Apprenticeship programmes, 3 years, WBL >40% ISCED 354

Apprenticeship programmes (Cursos de aprendizagem). Initial VET programmes leading to EQF level 4, ISCED 354

EQF level	4	ISCED-P 2011 level	354
Usual entry grade	10	Usual completion grade	12
Usual entry age	16	Usual completion age	18
Length of a programme (years)	3 (maximum of 3 700 hours)		
Is it part of compulsory education and training?	 In 2009, compulsory education was extended to 12 years of schooling, between the age of 6 and 18 ((88)). 18	Is it part of formal education and training system?	
Is it initial VET?		Is it continuing VET?	
Is it offered free of charge?	 Exempt of fees for learners under compulsory education.	Is it available for adults?	 The legislation set the age limit to 29.
ECVET or other credits	Depending on the programme, the minimum of credits is 180 ((89)).		
Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)	These programmes comprise school-based sociocultural, scientific and technological training and WBL in an enterprise.		
Main providers	These programmes are provided by IEFP ((90)) vocational training centres or private providers (e.g. employers' associations, companies, trade unions) under protocols with IEFP.		

Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies	> 40%
Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in-company practice
Main target groups	These programmes target learners up to 29 years old.
Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)	Learners should have successfully completed the 9th year of schooling (the third cycle of basic education/lower secondary education or a CEF programmes).
Assessment of learning outcomes	The assessment is formative and summative. The final evaluation test (<i>Prova de Avaliação Final</i> , PAF) constitutes an integrated set of practical activities at the end of the training programme that helps a jury assess the competences acquired during training.
Diplomas/certificates provided	<p>They lead to a double certification (education and professional certification), corresponding to upper secondary education (12th grade of schooling) and a certificate of technician (<i>Técnico</i>) (EQF level 4 ISCED 354)</p> <p>Adults can also obtain technician certificate through adult education and training programmes</p>
Examples of qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pharmacy assistant technician • Sales technician • Administration technician
Progression opportunities for learners after graduation	<p>After being awarded the double certification, learners can continue their studies at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • post-secondary non-tertiary, or • tertiary education as long as they meet the relevant requirements set by the higher education establishment for the respective field of study.
Destination of graduates	Information not available
Awards through validation of prior learning	Information not available
General education subjects	<p>✓</p> <p>These programmes include sociocultural and scientific training.</p>
Key competences	<p>✓</p> <p>These programmes include sociocultural and scientific training.</p>

Application of learning outcomes approach The methodology for designing qualifications was launched in April 2021. Qualifications are now structured in units of competence and based on learning outcomes. The process for applying the learning outcomes approach is ongoing.

Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners 12.1% (91) of all VET learners in lower and upper secondary education were in these programmes.

[89] Article 6 of the [Portaria \(Ordinance\) n.º 47/2017, de 1 de fevereiro](#)

[90] Instituto do Emprego e Formação Profissional (Institute for Employment and Vocational Training).

[91] DGEEC (2022). [Estatísticas da educação 2021/2022](#)

EQF 5
CET
1-1.5 years,
WBL 31-48%
ISCED 454


Technological specialisation programmes (Cursos de especialização tecnológica, CET) leading to EQF level 5, ISCED 454.



EQF level	5	ISCED-P 2011 level	454
Usual entry grade	12+	Usual entry age	18
Length of a programme (years)	1 to 1.5 years (from 1 225 to 1 575 hours)		
Is it part of compulsory education and training?	✗	Is it part of formal education and training system?	✓
Is it initial VET?	✓	Is it continuing VET?	✗
Is it offered free of charge?	It depends on the training provider. Whenever the training provider applies for public funding the CET programmes are free of charge.		Is it available for adults? ✓

ECVET or other credits Through agreements with higher tertiary institutions CET.

Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance) CET programmes comprise general, scientific and technological training components as well as WBL:

- general and scientific: aims at developing attitudes and behaviours appropriate for higher level qualification professionals, adaptability to the labour and corporate world; and improving, if needed, the scientific knowledge related to the specific technological field of study;
- technological: integrates areas of a technological nature oriented to the understanding of practical activities and to the resolution of problems in the professional practice;
- WBL is carried out in companies or other employment entities. Its objective is the acquisition and development of technical, relational and organisational skills through the execution of activities under guidance, using the techniques, equipment and materials integrated in the processes of producing goods or providing services.

Main providers	These programmes are provided by public, private and cooperative schools, vocational training centres direct or jointly managed by IEFP (92)), technological schools and other training providers certified by the labour ministry.
Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies	31% to 48%
Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • practical training at school • in-company practice
Main target groups	CET programmes are available for young adults (aged 18 or plus) .
Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)	<p>To enter CET programmes learners must have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an upper secondary education or equivalent; hold a level 4 qualification of the NQF/EQF; • have completed all the subjects of the 10th and 11th years of schooling and have been enrolled in the 12th year of schooling or legally equivalent qualification without completing it; • a technological specialisation certificate (93)) or a higher education degree and wishing to have a professional requalification.
Assessment of learning outcomes	To complete a CET programme, learners need to pass formative and summative assessments according to the professional competences that the technological specialisation diploma certifies. A CET graduate needs to be approved in all their training components including the practical part (WBL).
Diplomas/certificates provided	Graduates receive a qualification diploma, EQF level 5 (ISCED 454), and a certificate of specialist (<i>Técnico Especialista</i>).
Examples of qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialist in Energy rehabilitation and infrastructure preservation - Buildings • Physical exercise specialist • Management systems audit specialist
Progression opportunities for learners after graduation	<p>After the graduation, learners can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • continue their studies at tertiary education through a normal or a special admission procedure determined by a broader regulatory framework, provided that they meet the requirements set by each academic institution; • enter the labour market.
Destination of graduates	Information not available
Awards through validation of prior learning	

General education subjects	 <p>These programmes comprise general and scientific training components.</p>
Key competences	 <p>These programmes comprise general and scientific training components.</p>
Application of learning outcomes approach	<p>The methodology for designing qualifications was launched in April 2021. Qualifications are now structured in units of competence and based on learning outcomes. The process for applying the learning outcomes approach is ongoing.</p>
Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners	<p>Information not available</p>

[92] Instituto do Emprego e Formação Profissional (Institute for Employment and Vocational Training).

[93] The first edition of a CET programme awarded a technological specialisation certificate. When the legislation was revised, this certificate was included in the entry requirements so that those who took part in the first edition of the CET would not be excluded from attending another one.

EQF 5 ([99])






CTeSP





2 years,

WBL => 25%

ISCED 554

Higher professional technical programmes (Cursos técnicos superiores profesionales, CTeSP) leading to EQF level 5, ISCED 554.

EQF level	5 ([99])	ISCED-P 2011 level	554 ((94))
Usual entry grade	12+	Usual entry age	19-21 However, there has been an increase in students aged 26+ ((95))
Length of a programme (years)	2 (four academic semesters)		
Is it part of compulsory education and training?		Is it part of formal education and training system?	
Is it initial VET?		Is it continuing VET?	Not applicable
Is it offered free of charge?	 In public higher education the value of the fees is set according to each programme and with a minimum amount corresponding to 1.3 of the national minimum wage and a maximum calculated on the basis of the consumer price index ((96)).	Is it available for adults?	
ECVET or other credits	Graduates are credited 120 ECTS points (practical training lasts at least one semester and grants 30 ECTS points).		
Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)	These programmes comprise school-based general, scientific and technical components, and practical training which takes place through an internship.		
Main providers	These programmes are provided by polytechnic institutions.		

Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies	>= 25%
Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • internship
Main target groups	Programmes are available for young people and adults.
Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)	<p>To enter CTeSP programmes learners must have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an upper secondary qualification (EQF level 3 or 4); • succeeded in the special contest for those who want to attend higher education and are over 23 years old ((97)); • a CET or CTeSP diploma (EQF level 5) or a higher education degree, if they wish a professional requalification.
Assessment of learning outcomes	To complete a CTeSP programme, learners need to succeed in the final examinations of the subjects and achieve the number of ECTS required.
Diplomas/certificates provided	These programmes lead to a diploma of higher professional technician (<i>Técnico Superior Profissional</i>), not a higher education degree.
Examples of qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher professional technician in Aircraft repair and maintenance • Higher professional technician in Social and community intervention • Higher professional technician in Renewable energies
Progression opportunities for learners after graduation	CTeSP graduates can access the first cycle of higher education programmes or integrated master programmes through specific application procedures, leading to a higher education degree.
Destination of graduates	56% go on to study for a bachelor's degree ((98)).
Awards through validation of prior learning	
General education subjects	 <p>These programmes comprise general and scientific training components.</p>
Key competences	 <p>These comprise general and scientific training components.</p>
Application of learning outcomes approach	
Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners	Information not available

- [97] <https://www.dges.gov.pt/pt/pagina/maiores-de-23-anos> and
<https://www.dges.gov.pt/pt/pagina/concurso-especial-para-estudantes-aprovados-nas-provas-especialmente-adequadas-destinadas>
- [98] DGES (2021) Cursos Técnicos Superiores Profissionais [[Relatório 2021](#)]

EQF 5

Apprenticeship+







programmes,

1 year,

WBL >40%

ISCED 454

Apprenticeship + programmes (Cursos de aprendizagem +). Initial VET programmes leading to EQF level 5 ([105]), ISCED 454

EQF level	5	ISCED-P 2011 level	454
Usual entry grade	12	Usual completion grade	13
Usual entry age	18	Usual completion age	The legislation sets the age limit to 29.
Length of a programme (years)	1 (maximum of 3 700 hours)		
Is it part of compulsory education and training?		Is it part of formal education and training system?	
Is it initial VET?		Is it continuing VET?	
Is it offered free of charge?	 Exempt from fees for learners under compulsory education.	Is it available for adults?	 The legislation sets the age limit to 29.
ECVET or other credits	Depending on the programme, the minimum of credits is 95.25 and maximum 113.25 ((99)).		
Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)	These programmes comprise school-based sociocultural, scientific and technological training and WBL in an enterprise.		
Main providers	These programmes are provided by IEFP ((100)) vocational training centres or private providers (e.g. employers' associations, companies, trade unions) under protocols with IEFP.		
Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies	> 40%		

Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in-company practice
Main target groups	<p>These programmes target learners up to 29 years old.</p> <p>They are aimed at those who want to complete lower or upper secondary education and/or obtain a professional qualification.</p>
Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)	Learners should have successfully completed the 12th year of schooling
Assessment of learning outcomes	The assessment is formative and summative
Diplomas/certificates provided	Graduates receive a qualification diploma, EQF level 5 (ISCED 454), and a certificate of specialist (<i>Técnico Especialista</i>).
Examples of qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialist in Energy management and control • Specialist in Cyber security • Specialist in Hotel management and accommodation
Progression opportunities for learners after graduation	After being awarded the double certification, learners can continue to higher education.
Destination of graduates	Information not available
Awards through validation of prior learning	Information not available
General education subjects	<p>✓</p> <p>These programmes include sociocultural and scientific training.</p>
Key competences	<p>✓</p> <p>These programmes include sociocultural and scientific training.</p>
Application of learning outcomes approach	The methodology for designing qualifications was launched in April 2021, in which qualifications are structured in units of competence and based on learning outcomes.
Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners	Information not available

[99] Article 6 of the [Portaria \(Ordinance\) n.º 47/2017, de 1 de fevereiro](#)

[100] Instituto do Emprego e Formação Profissional (Institute for Employment and Vocational Training).