

Competence-based qualifications in specific sectors

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

PRACTICAL MEASURE/INITIATIVE

 PORTUGAL

Timeline

| | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| 2015 Implementation | 2016 Implementation | 2017 Implementation |
| 2018 Implementation | 2019 Implementation | 2020 Implementation |
| 2021 Implementation | 2022 Implementation | 2023 Implementation |
| 2024 Implementation | 2025 Implementation | |

ID number 28502

Background

One of the main objectives of the National catalogue of qualifications (CNQ) was to involve enterprises from the tourism and commerce and services sectors in the design and review of qualifications based on learning outcomes. Emphasis was placed on communication and information technology.

Description

In 2014, the Portuguese confederation of tourism (CTP) commissioned the project Competence-based qualifications for the tourism sector. It aimed to develop qualification standards based on a diagnosis of skills needs in the tourism sector.

In 2015, the Commerce and Services Confederation of Portugal (CCP) launched the study Strategic training programme on trade and services 2014-20. This analysed qualifications and skills dynamics and trends in the sector of commerce and services.

In 2018, the Confederation of Portuguese Farmers (CAP) launched a study supporting the definition of qualifications for the rural world. The study has two outputs, a diagnosis of skills and qualifications needs for the rural world and a proposal for mapping skills and qualifications for the agricultural sector. The study was concluded in 2020.

These initiatives were led by the National Agency for Qualifications and VET (ANQEP) and employers' confederations; other stakeholders in these sectors were also involved. The newly developed qualifications put emphasis on digital and foreign language competences. Some other social and transversal competences were designed for learning outcomes.

The project ALL-ECOM aimed to address the challenge of competences imbalance within the commerce and services sector by improving learners' e-commerce competences through the integration of new technologies into the qualifications. The project was completed in 2018.

2015 Implementation

2016 Implementation

2017 Implementation

2018 Implementation

2019 Implementation

2020 Implementation

Beginning of the complete updating of the CNQ. In this scope, the Diagnosis Studies of every Education and Training Area took place.

2021 Implementation

The update of CNQ continued as planned.

2022 Implementation

In 2022, the ANQEP began a process to completely update the national catalogue of qualifications (CNQ), to create a catalogue more focused on skills and learning outcomes, and less on training contents, more readable for all audiences, allowing greater flexibility in the training offer and encouraging a more dynamic demand for qualifications. In 2022, all education and training areas included in the CNQ were subject to diagnosis studies of qualification and competence needs, at sectoral level, followed by the design of the respective competence standards, training standards and assessment instruments that support the recognition, validation and certification of professional skills (Professional RVCC).

2023 Implementation

In 2023, 21 Sectoral Council (SC) meetings were held. The SCs are advisory bodies that support the National Agency for Qualification and Vocational Education (ANQEP) in updating the CNQ. Their main tasks are to identify strategic and essential qualifications for the different sectors of the economy, in response to the challenges of the labour market.

CNQ integrated 41 short and medium-term pathways. These short and medium-term pathways were created to enable a faster response to the need for professional updating and retraining, and can capitalise on the achievement of a qualification.

2024 Implementation

In 2024, the work of designing qualifications (competence standards and respective competence assessment tools for professional RVCC) was finalised as part of the international call launched in 2021 to carry out studies to diagnose skills and competence needs and update the National Catalogue of Qualifications (CNQ). ANQEP was in the process of harmonising the competence standards and the respective assessment tools for qualifications in the 21 sectors.

The CNQ comprised 45 short and medium-term pathways.

2025 Implementation

ANQEP continued the process of harmonising the competence standards and assessment tools across the 21 sectors. Based on this process, new qualifications were being added to the National Catalogue of Qualifications.

By 2025, the CNQ comprised 46 short- and medium-term pathways. Designed to address sectoral labour market needs, these pathways typically consist of no more than 350 hours and are independently certified and capitalisable. They were

established under the Agreement on Vocational Training and Qualifications. They are gradually being described in terms of specific learning outcomes.

Bodies responsible

- Portuguese Confederation of Tourism (CTP)
- Commerce and Services Confederation of Portugal (CCP)
- Confederation of Portuguese Farmers (CAP)
- National Agency for Qualification and Vocational Education and Training (ANQEP)

Target group

Learners

Learners in upper secondary, including apprentices
Adult learners

Other stakeholders

Social partners (employer organisations and trade unions)

Thematic categories

Governance of VET and lifelong learning

Engaging VET stakeholders and strengthening partnerships in VET

Modernising VET offer and delivery

Modernising VET standards, curricula, programmes and training courses

Using learning-outcome-based approaches and modularisation

Acquiring key competences

Subsystem

IVET CVET

Further reading

[Dispatch \[Despacho\] No 7728/2019, of 2 September 2019](#)

[ALL-ECOM Project](#)

Related policy developments

2025 Implementation

Qualifica Indústria programme

It consists of financial support for upskilling and reskilling training plans of workers of SME businesses in industries experiencing reduced orders or less turnover. A budget allocation of EUR 10 million covers salary costs and sector-specific training.

Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

CVET

2025 Implementation

Sectoral and regional training programmes

The programmes of the tourism sector are developed by the tourism schools of Portugal, in partnership with municipalities as agents closer to local realities and mobilisers of the strategic change that it is intended to achieve.

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Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

CVET

2025 Implementation

VET agreement

The VET agreement is to be a common ground of a tripartite understanding, between the government and the social partners, in the following areas of intervention:

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Type of development

Strategy/Action
plan

Subsystem

CVET

2025 Implementation

Recognition, validation and certification of competences (RVCC)

Ordinance No 232/2016 consolidated the rules of RVCC, introduced *Qualifica* centres, described a simple process of creating and authorising them, strengthened the teams of professionals in these centres and expanded the network.

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Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2025 Implementation**Introducing the learning outcomes approach to VET**

In 2015, the National Agency for Qualification and VET (ANQEP) introduced a new methodology for designing qualifications based on learning outcomes. It applies to VET qualifications at levels 2, 4 and 5 of the NQF.

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Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

IVET CVET

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