

Apprenticeship programmes

Cursos de aprendizagem

 Portugal

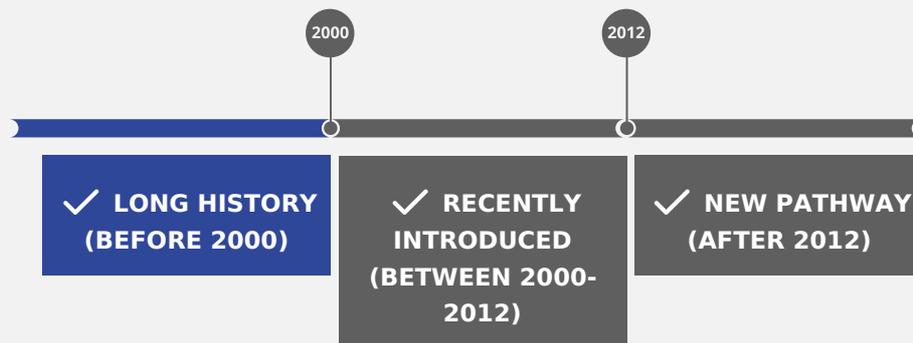
Reference year 2023

Content updates and contributors

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① SCHEME HISTORY

Q1. When was the scheme introduced?



Pilot projects were implemented from 1980 to 1984 and the legal regime was introduced in 1984 by the [Decreto-Lei \(Decree-Law\) n.º 102/84, de 29 de março](#) (see Q4 on the country fiche).

See the country fiche for detailed evolution of the scheme.

Q2. How did the apprenticeship scheme originate?



✓ TRADITIONAL CRAFTSMANSHIP (MASTER-APPRENTICE RELATION) TO PREPARE APPRENTICES FOR THE OCCUPATION



✓ SCHOOL-BASED VET TRACK BY INCLUDING MORE WORK-BASED LEARNING TO SUPPLY SKILLED WORKFORCE TO MATCH LABOUR MARKET NEEDS



✓ EX-NOVO



✓ OTHER

The scheme was inspired by the German dual system and the involvement of the social partners, some big companies and business associations.

2 BENEFICIARIES

Q3. Does the legal basis define the minimum and maximum age limits for enrolment of the target group of this scheme?



✓ MINIMUM AND MAXIMUM AGE LIMITS DEFINED



✓ MINIMUM AGE LIMITS DEFINED ONLY



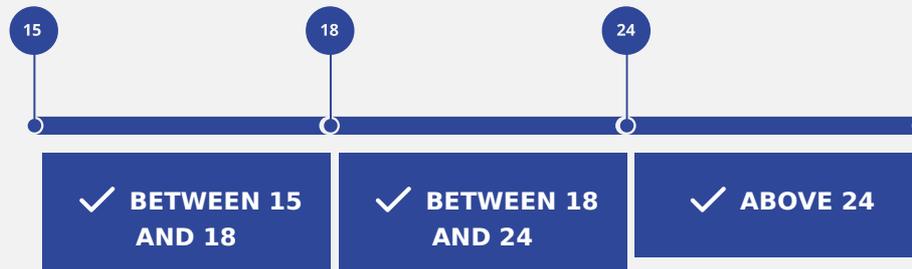
✓ OTHER

In upper secondary apprenticeship programmes, minimum age is not formally set. Trainees (apprentices) have to have completed lower secondary education (9th year of schooling, corresponding to basic education) or a legally equivalent qualification. They should also be 29 years old maximum.

In post-secondary apprenticeship+ programmes, trainees (apprentices) have to be

between 18 (minimum) and 29 years old (maximum). Exceptions are foreseen for the maximum age, in the case of vulnerable groups, beneficiaries covered by labour market policies or who are trained to cover specific sectoral needs.

Q4. What is the average age of learners in practice?



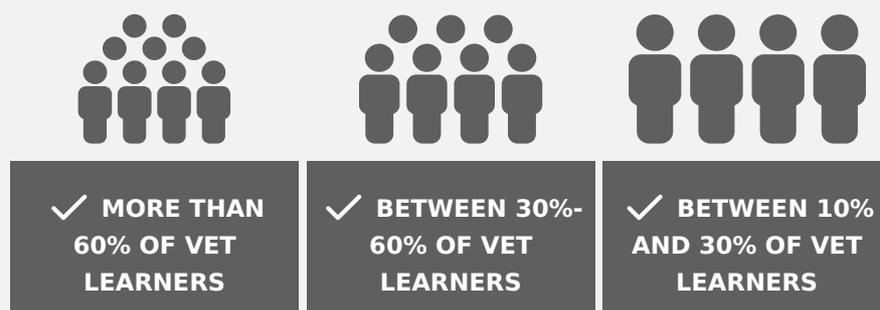
Apprenticeship programmes (upper secondary): there is no information available about the average age of learners, but they range between 15 and 29 years old.
Apprenticeship+ programmes (post-secondary): there is no information available since these programmes were just introduced.

Q5. How many learners are enrolled in this scheme?

In, 2020-21 there were 18 688 learners attending apprenticeship programmes at upper-secondary level.
There are no data available on apprenticeship+ programmes, since these programmes only were created in 2022.

Source: Direção-Geral de Estatísticas da Educação (DGEEC) - [Estatísticas da Educação 2020-2021](#), p. 95

Q6. What is the share of apprentices enrolled in this scheme in relation to all VET students for the corresponding educational level(s)?





✓ LESS THAN
10% OF VET
LEARNERS

In 2020-2021, the share of trainees enrolled in apprenticeship programmes in relation to all VET programmes was 13.65%.

Number of learners who attended all VET offers at upper secondary education:

- Specialised art programmes – visual and audio-visual arts – 2 374
- Specialised art programmes – dance – 68
- Specialised art programmes – music – 220
- Professional programmes – 115 135
- Education and training programmes for young people – 440
- Apprenticeship programmes – 18 688

There are no data available on apprenticeship+ programmes, since these programmes only were created in 2022.

Source: Direção-Geral de Estatísticas da Educação (DGEEC), [Estatísticas da Educação 2020-2021](#), p. 95 .

3 QUALIFICATIONS

Q7. Are the qualifications included in the National Qualification Framework (NQF)?

✓ YES	✓ NO	✓ THERE IS NO NQF

Apprenticeship programmes award qualifications at level 4 of the QNQ/EQF.
Apprenticeship+ programmes award qualifications at level 5 of the QNQ/EQF

Q8. Is the scheme included in the ISCED 2011 mapping?



✓ YES

✓ NO

Apprenticeship programmes at upper-secondary level award ISCED 3 ISCED 354, according to [Deliberação \(Deliberation\) n.º 343/2017, de 2 de maio - 52.ª Deliberação da Secção Permanente de Coordenação Estatística - Versão Portuguesa e Implementação da Classificação Internacional Tipo de Educação 2011 \(ISCED/CITE 2011\)](#): 'Upper secondary education - apprenticeship programmes ISCED 3 ISCED 354' (Ensino secundário - Cursos de aprendizagem)

Since apprenticeship+ programmes at post-secondary level were created only in 2022, they are not included in ISCED 2011. However, it can be assumed that they award ISCED 4 ISCED 454 level, by analogy with technological specialization programmes which are post-secondary (non-tertiary) and award level 5 of NQF/EQF too [[Deliberação \(Deliberation\) n.º 343/2017, de 2 de maio - 52.ª Deliberação da Secção Permanente de Coordenação Estatística - Versão Portuguesa e Implementação da Classificação Internacional Tipo de Educação 2011 \(ISCED/CITE 2011\)](#)]. 'Post-secondary education non-tertiary - technological specialization programmes ISCED 4 ISCED 454' (Ensino pós-secundário não superior — Curso de Especialização Tecnológica ISCED 4 ISCED 454)

Q9. Are the qualifications offered only through apprenticeships?

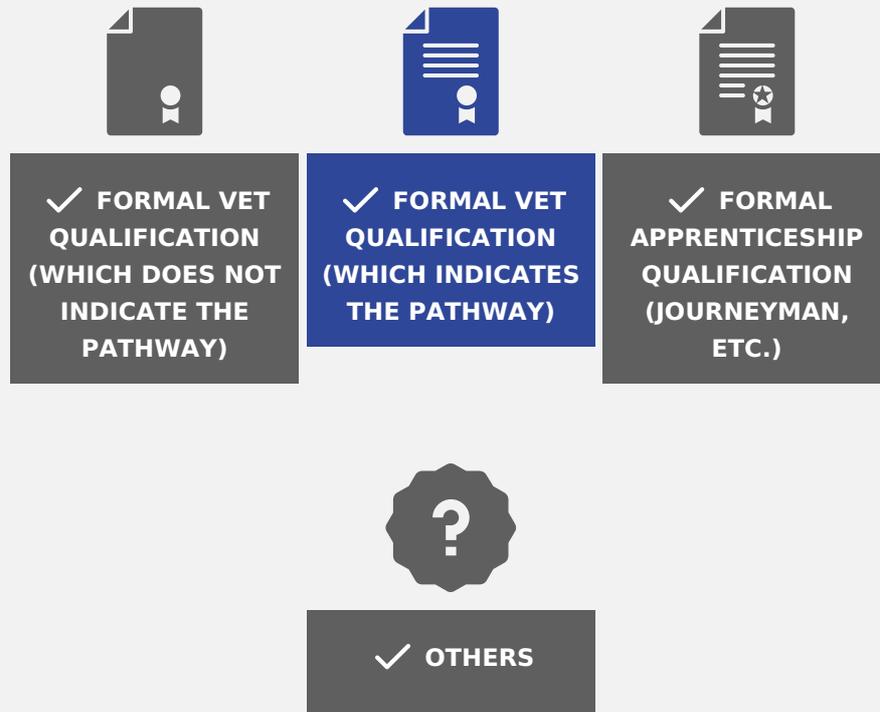


✓ QUALIFICATIONS CAN ONLY BE OBTAINED THROUGH THIS APPRENTICESHIP SCHEME

✓ THE SAME QUALIFICATIONS CAN BE ACHIEVED ALSO THROUGH OTHER SCHEMES (I.E. SCHOOL-BASED VET)

Qualifications linked with apprenticeship programmes at upper-secondary level can be obtained through school-based professional programmes (cursos profissionais) too. Qualifications linked with apprenticeship+ programmes (post-secondary level) can be obtained through technological specialization programmes too.

Q10. Which is the type of qualification obtained through the apprenticeship scheme?



Apprenticeship programmes, award a double certification, i.e. an education certificate (upper secondary level/12th year of schooling) and a vocational qualification (level 4 of the QNQ/EQF).

Apprenticeship+ programmes also award a double certification (but not a degree) and a vocational qualification (level 5 of the QNQ/EQF).

Q11. Does the scheme provide direct access to higher education?



All apprenticeship graduates (apprenticeship programmes and apprenticeship+ programmes) can continue studies in higher education through special access contests, under the terms of the legislation in force.

Q12. What is the typical duration of the apprenticeship programme?

Total duration of apprenticeship programmes ranges from 3 000 to 4 000 hours, split in three periods, distributed to the following training components:

- Sociocultural -700 to 800 hours.
- Scientific - 200 to 400 hours.
- Technological - 1000 to 1300 hours.
- Work-based - 1 100 to 1 500

Total duration of apprenticeship+ programmes ranges from 1 325 to 1 675 distributed to the following training components:

- Sociocultural and scientific -125 to 175 hours.
- Technological - 700 to 850 hours.
- Work-based - 500 to 850 [1]

[1][Portaria \(Ordinance\) nº 70/2022, de 2 de fevereiro.](#)

4 GOVERNANCE

Q13. Is there any organization at the national level with roles in co-ordinating the scheme?

YES NO

Apprenticeship is coordinated by the IEFP (Instituto de Emprego e Formação Profissional), the Public Employment Service, traditionally responsible for CVET, apprenticeship programmes and active labour market policies.

Q14. What is the role of chambers, employers' and employees' representatives, sectoral councils (if existent), in shaping apprenticeship content, as per regulation?

ROLE IN DESIGNING QUALIFICATION ROLE IN DESIGNING CURRICULA OTHER



✓ NO ROLE

The qualifications references/standards (structured in short duration training units), that are part of the curricula, are validated by employers' and employees' representatives in the Sectoral Councils for Qualifications (see Q16).

Q15. What is the role of chambers, employers' and employees' representatives in implementing the apprenticeship scheme, as per regulation?



✓ ROLE IN FINAL ASSESSMENT OF APPRENTICES



✓ ROLE IN ACCREDITATION OF COMPANIES



✓ ROLE IN MONITORING OF THE IN-COMPANY TRAINING



✓ OTHER



✓ NO ROLE

Employers' associations or trade unions have a significant role in the implementation of apprenticeship programmes, as they can set up apprenticeship training centres, which they manage with a great autonomy, under protocols of collaboration with the IEFP (protocol centres).

Individual companies also have an important role in on-the-job training, which represents a very significant part of the training, considering that apprenticeship is a dual training modality (training centre and company). For that purpose, they have to appoint a tutor, who has the responsibility to evaluate learner performance in the on-the-job training.

Q16. What are the main roles of key state actors?

- Ministry of Labour, Solidarity and Social Security (MTSSS) – responsible for the political coordination of the apprenticeship programmes.
- Employment Public Service (IEFP – Instituto de Emprego e Formação Profissional) – public body responsible for the coordination, implementation follow-up and evaluation of the apprenticeship programmes. It also manages a network of training centres, designated direct management centres
- National Agency for Qualification and VET (ANQEP – Agência Nacional para a Qualificação e o Ensino Profissional) - public body responsible for developing the curricula/standards (in coordination with IEFP), since it is responsible for the updating and management of the National Qualifications Catalogue (Catálogo Nacional de Qualificações - CNQ).
- Sectoral Councils for Qualification (Conselhos Setoriais para a Qualificação) – advisory bodies that support the National Agency for Qualification and VET in updating the National Qualifications Catalogue (CNQ), whose main task is to identify strategic and essential qualifications for the different sectors of the economy as a response to the challenges of the labour market.
- VET providers - responsible for providing sociocultural, scientific and technological training, coordinating work-based learning and assessing learners. These providers may be: IEFP direct managed centres; protocol centres (established and managed by employer/sectoral associations or unions, under protocol with IEFP); certified private training entities or public entities selected by IEFP. Other providers, such as public, private or cooperative schools, higher education establishments or other public and private entities, may participate as partners for qualification, under partnership protocols, with a view to optimizing resources and sharing experiences.
- Alternation support entities (ASE) – public or private employers (companies or other) that assure work-based training, under the coordination of the VET providers.
- National Apprenticeship Committee – advisory body responsible for monitoring the execution and evaluation of apprenticeship programmes. It includes representatives of IEFP, social partners (employers’ associations and unions), ANQEP, governmental areas of education and professional training and other bodies, entities or renowned personalities. The composition, competences and organization and functioning model are defined by joint order of the Government members responsible for the areas of education and professional training and in consultation with the social partners.

5 TRAINING AT THE WORKPLACE

Q17. Is it compulsory to alternate training between two learning venues (school and company)?



The Work-based (workplace) component is a mandatory part of the apprenticeship and apprenticeship+ programmes (1 100-1 500 and 500-850 hours respectively).

Q18. Is the in-company training defined as minimum share of the apprenticeship scheme duration?



✓ YES,
EQUIVALENT OR
MORE THAN 50%
OF SCHEME
DURATION



✓ YES, BETWEEN
20% AND 50% OF
THE SCHEME
DURATION



✓ YES, LESS
THAN 20% OF THE
SCHEME DURATION



✓ NO, NO
MINIMUM SHARE IS
COMPULSORY

In apprenticeship programmes, in-company training may vary from 36.7% to 37.5%, since, according to the legislation, the mandatory in-company training ranges from a minimum of 1 100 hours to a maximum of 1 500 hours [1] while the total duration extends from 3 000 to 4 000 hours.

In apprenticeship+ programmes, in-company training may vary from 37.7% to 47.8% since, according to the legislation, the mandatory in-company training ranges from a minimum of 500 hours to a maximum of 850 hours [1] while the total duration extends from 1 325 to 1675 hours.

[1] [Portaria \(Ordinance\) nº 70/2022, de 2 de fevereiro.](#)

Q19. Is there a distinction between the training time and working time for the period spent at workplace, as per regulation?



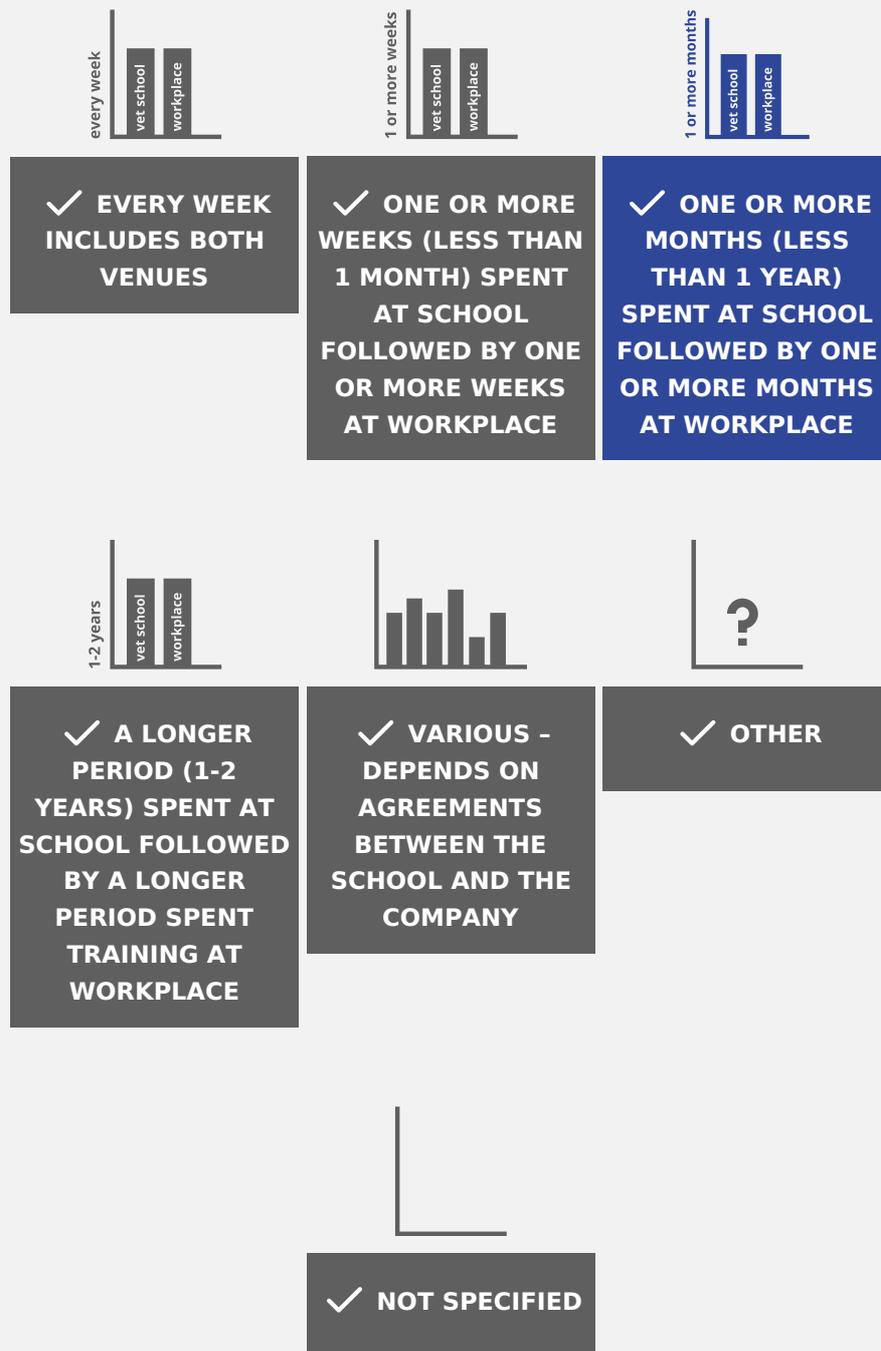
✓ YES, THE
LEGAL FRAMEWORK
MAKES THIS
DISTINCTION



✓ NO, THE LEGAL
FRAMEWORK
MAKES NO
DISTINCTION

There is no distinction regarding the time spent at the workplace. There is only a distinction between the school-based components (sociocultural, scientific and technological training) provided by a VET provider and the work-based training component provided by an employer (company or other).

Q20. What is the form of alternation of training between workplace (company) and school?



In apprenticeships programmes, work-based training takes place as a block at the end of each of the three training periods in which the programmes are organized. In apprenticeship+ programmes, work-based training usually takes place throughout the training process. However, it also can occur at the end of the training path.

Q21. What is the basis for the training offered?



✓ THE SCHEME IS IMPLEMENTED VIA A SPECIFIC APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMME



✓ THE SCHEME IS IMPLEMENTED ON THE BASIS OF THE SCHOOL-BASED VET PROGRAMME



✓ THE SCHEME IS IMPLEMENTED BASED ON THE VET STANDARDS (VALID GENERALLY FOR ALL VET SCHEMES)



✓ OTHER

All VET programmes (including apprenticeships, school-based VET for young people and adult education and training courses) share the same referentials in what refers to the technological/professional competences (technological component), which are included in the National Qualifications Catalogue.

They differ, in what refers to the workplace component, in the duration, in the articulation between training in centre/school and training in company and in the training contents. These contents are defined by the companies. However, they should be closely linked with the competences integrated in the referentials.

Therefore, apprenticeship is implemented on the basis of the common referentials, but its programmes have their own specificities, based on the dual system, especially in relation to the workplace component. The workplace component is unique to the characteristics of dual learning.

The standards for the apprenticeship programmes are included in the National Qualifications Catalogue ([Catálogo Nacional de Qualificações, CNQ](#)), as all VET programmes standards.

Q22. Is the company hosting apprentices required by regulation to follow a training plan at the workplace?



✓ YES, THE TRAINING PLAN IS BASED ON THE NATIONAL/SECTORAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE IN-COMPANY TRAINING



✓ YES, THE TRAINING PLAN IS AGREED AT THE LEVEL OF SCHOOL AND COMPANY



✓ NO, IS NOT REQUIRED FORMALLY

There is an agreement between the training provider and the employer (company or other). Workplace training is based on an individual activity plan which sets the competencies to be acquired and/or consolidated and the professional activities to be performed by the trainee (apprentice).

Q23. What are the requirements on companies to provide placements, as per regulation?



✓ HAVE TO PROVIDE A SUITABLE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT



✓ HAVE TO PROVIDE A MENTOR / TUTOR / TRAINER



✓ OTHER

Employers (companies or other) should meet certain formal and substantive requirements to be able to provide workplace training in the context of apprenticeship programmes.

The formal requirements are:

- To be regularly constituted and duly registered.
- To have their situation regularized in terms of taxes, contributions to Social Security and refunds within the scope of public funding.
- To have not been convicted of violating the legislation on child labour and discrimination at work and employment, namely on the basis of gender, as well as for illegal dismissal of pregnant, puerperal or breastfeeding women.

The substantive requirements are:

- To have a working environment, health and safety conditions and technical, human and material means capable of ensuring the necessary and appropriate professional training to qualify for a profession.
- To have qualified workers in the profession object of training in work context.

The selection of an employer (company or other) to provide workplace training is up to the training provider. An agreement between them may be concluded, which refers to a joint effort to provide work-based learning in the context of the apprenticeship

programme. According to the agreement, employers are asked to appoint an in-company trainer (tutor) and to agree, together with the training provider, on a plan of activities guiding the learning to be carried out or to be consolidated by the trainee (apprentice) during the period in which the practical training takes place. (www.iefp.pt/modalidades-de-formacao?tab=cursos-de-aprendizagem (anexo 22-22. Minuta de Acordo EAA)

An activity plan and evaluation plan also exist:

(www.iefp.pt/modalidades-de-formacao?tab=cursos-de-aprendizagem (Anexo 6 - Plano Individual de atividades - avaliação (FPCT)))

Q24. What are the formal requirements regarding workplace trainers/mentors/tutors? What is their profile?

During training at workplace, trainees (apprentices) are guided and accompanied by a tutor designated by the company/employer (alternation support entity).

The tutor has to be an experienced worker in the qualification being acquired or in a related area and has, namely, the following tasks/attribution:

- Participating in the elaboration of WBL trainee´s individual plan of activities.
- Assuring the necessary logistical and material conditions, in order to provide the trainee (apprentice) with the acquisition/consolidation of skills in the work environment, to develop interpersonal relationships and to facilitate their integration and adaptation to professional contexts.
- Collaborating with the pedagogical responsible of the VET provider, whenever deemed necessary or required by him.

Q25. Are there any sanctions on companies that do not provide training to apprentices at the workplace?



✓ YES

✓ NO

Termination of the agreement with the employer (company or other) is foreseen, and eventually the employers are removed from the list of institutions that may provide in-company training for the apprenticeship scheme.

6 CONTRACT AND COMPENSATION

Q26. What is the status of the learner?



✓ ONLY STUDENT



✓ ONLY EMPLOYEE



✓ APPRENTICE IS A SPECIFIC STATUS (STUDENT AND EMPLOYEE COMBINED)



✓ OTHER

The learner has the status of trainee. The status of trainee is laid down in the [Decreto-Lei \(Decree-Law\) nº 242/88 de 7 de julho](#).

Q27. Is there any written arrangement between the learner and company, required as per regulation?



✓ YES



✓ NO

The legislation of apprenticeship programmes [1] mentions that a training contract needs to be signed between the trainee (apprentice) (or legal representative for underage trainees) and the training provider. By signing this contract, the provider assumes the responsibility to deliver the agreed training (applies also to the workplace component) and the trainee (apprentice) commits to attend training and perform all the activities included in the programme curriculum. The training contract sets the location, the number of hours and the schedule of the training, the duties of the provider, the duties and the rights of the trainee (apprentice), including the amounts of social support (allowance) to be awarded, if it is the case, personal accident insurance, under the responsibility of the training provider, and vacation time.

The employer responsible for the workplace training does not sign the training contract. However, a cooperation agreement may be concluded between the provider and the company, to jointly carry out learning courses regarding the practical (work-based) learning, as part of the apprenticeship programme. It refers to commitments by the company side to provide an in-company tutor and to agree with the VET provider on the

training to be carried out at the workplace.

[1] <https://files.dre.pt/1s/2022/02/02300/0001200031.pdf>

Q28. What is the nature of the written arrangement?



✓ APPRENTICESHIPS
ARE AN ORDINARY
EMPLOYMENT
CONTRACT



✓ APPRENTICESHIPS
ARE A SPECIFIC
TYPE OF CONTRACT



✓ ANOTHER TYPE
OF FORMAL
AGREEMENT, NOT A
CONTRACT

The regulation of the apprenticeship programme [1] mentions that the training contract does not generate or entitle subordinate work relationships and is terminated at the end of the training programme for which it was concluded.

It also mentions that the daily workload and the number of hours the trainee (apprentice) can work are those practiced at the company. It also specifies that, under agreement of the trainee or the legal representative, training on weekly rest days is possible, if it is advantageous for learning and also if it applies to the company's workers.

In case the trainee (apprentice) is underaged, all acts must be made known to their legal representative and, if applicable, obtain their consent, [2].

[1] <https://files.dre.pt/1s/2022/02/02300/0001200031.pdf>

[2] IIEFP, [Apprenticeship Programmes, Specific Regulation 2022](#)

Q29. Where is the contract or the formal agreement registered?



✓ AT THE
SCHOOL



✓ AT THE
MINISTRY OF
EMPLOYMENT



✓ AT THE
CHAMBERS



✓ AT THE
MINISTRY OF
EDUCATION



✓ OTHER

Q30. Do apprentices receive a wage or allowance?



✓ YES, ALL
APPRENTICES
RECEIVE A WAGE
(TAXABLE INCOME)



✓ YES, ALL
APPRENTICES
RECEIVE AN
ALLOWANCE (NOT
A FORM OF
TAXABLE INCOME)



✓ APPRENTICES
RECEIVE A
REIMBURSEMENT
OF EXPENSES



✓ NO FORM OF
COMPENSATION IS
FORESEEN BY LAW

Apprentices do not receive reimbursement from participating companies. The training contract sets the amounts of social support (allowance) to be awarded to the apprentice, if it is the case. It also sets apprentices rights for personal accident insurance, under the responsibility of the training provider.

Q31. How is the apprentice wage (taxable income) set?



✓ BY LAW
(APPLYING FOR ALL)



✓ BY CROSS-SECTORAL COLLECTIVE AGREEMENTS AT NATIONAL OR LOCAL LEVEL



✓ BY SECTORAL COLLECTIVE AGREEMENTS AT NATIONAL OR LOCAL LEVEL



✓ BY FIRM-LEVEL COLLECTIVE AGREEMENTS OR INDIVIDUAL AGREEMENTS BETWEEN APPRENTICE AND COMPANY



✓ OTHER

Trainees (apprentice) do not receive a wage.

7 FINANCING AND INCENTIVES

Q32. Who covers the cost of the wage or allowance of the apprentice?



✓ EMPLOYERS



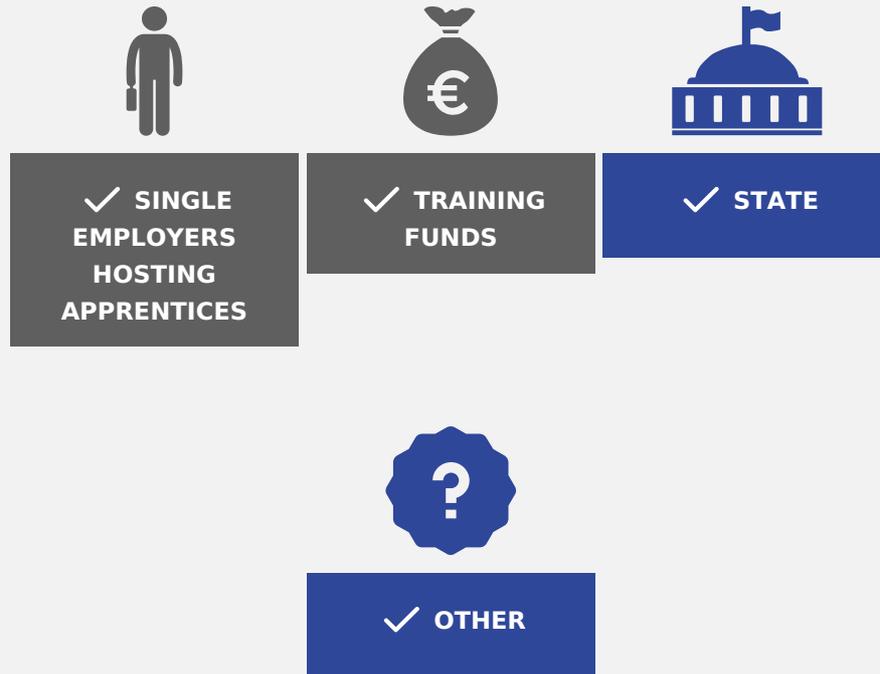
✓ STATE



✓ OTHER

The [Human Capital Operational Programme](#), approved by the European Commission's decision from 12th December 2014, aiming to contribute to an intelligent, sustainable and inclusive growth and to the economic, social and territorial cohesion.

Q33. What are the sources of financing of the direct costs for the in-company training part of the apprenticeship scheme?



Social Security budget and ESF support.

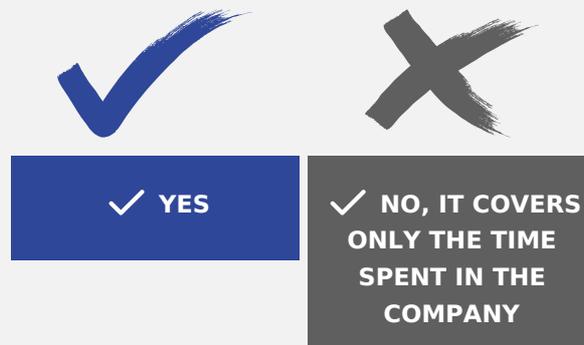
Q34. Are there any financial incentives for companies that offer apprenticeship places?



Employers do not contribute to trainee (apprentice) remuneration and do not receive incentives to participate in the scheme.

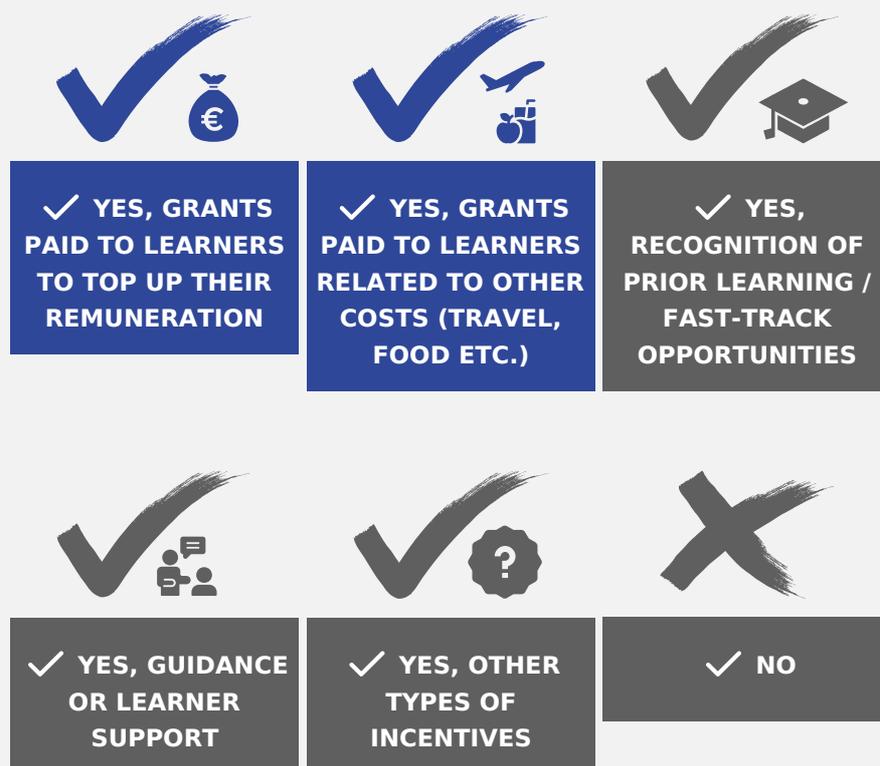
For more information on how this scheme is financed, see also Cedefop's Database on

Q35. Does the wage or allowance of the apprentice cover both the time spent at school and in the company?



There is no difference between the time spent at school and at the employer (company or other).

Q36. Are there any incentives for learners?



Social support (see Q31) may include:

- study support/material scholarship (bolsas para material de estudo) at the beginning of each training period, if learners are from disadvantaged families;
- professionalization scholarship (bolsa de profissionalização) payed monthly and equivalent to 10% of the Social support index (Indexante dos Apoios Sociais - IAS) (1)
- meals (subsídio de refeição);

- accommodation (alojamento);
- welcome for children, if the learners are parents (acolhimento);
- transportation (transporte).

Social support is funded by the Operational Programme for Human Capital (POCH, strand 3 – apprenticeship, LLL qualification and strengthening employability).

The value of the social support is based in the IAS index, updated annually (the indexing reference of social support).

Sources:

- Guia de Apoios Sociais at __; <http://www.iefp.pt/modalidades-de-formacao?tab=collapse12>(Instrumentos de Apoio > Guia de Apoios Sociais)
- Indexante dos apoios sociais (IAS): Portaria (Ordinance) n.º 298/2022, de 16 de dezembro.
- Portaria (Ordinance) n.º 19/2018, de 17 de janeiro (the fourth modification to the Portaria n.º 60-A/2015, de 2 de março.
- IEFP Apprenticeship Programmes Specific Regulation 2022