

The Portuguese Qualification Framework – does it in fact make a difference?

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NQF creation

within the Reform of the Portuguese Education and Training System – (build up) creation of the National Qualifications System (NQS) - 2007

Main objectives (to which the development of the NQS and NQF was expected to contribute):

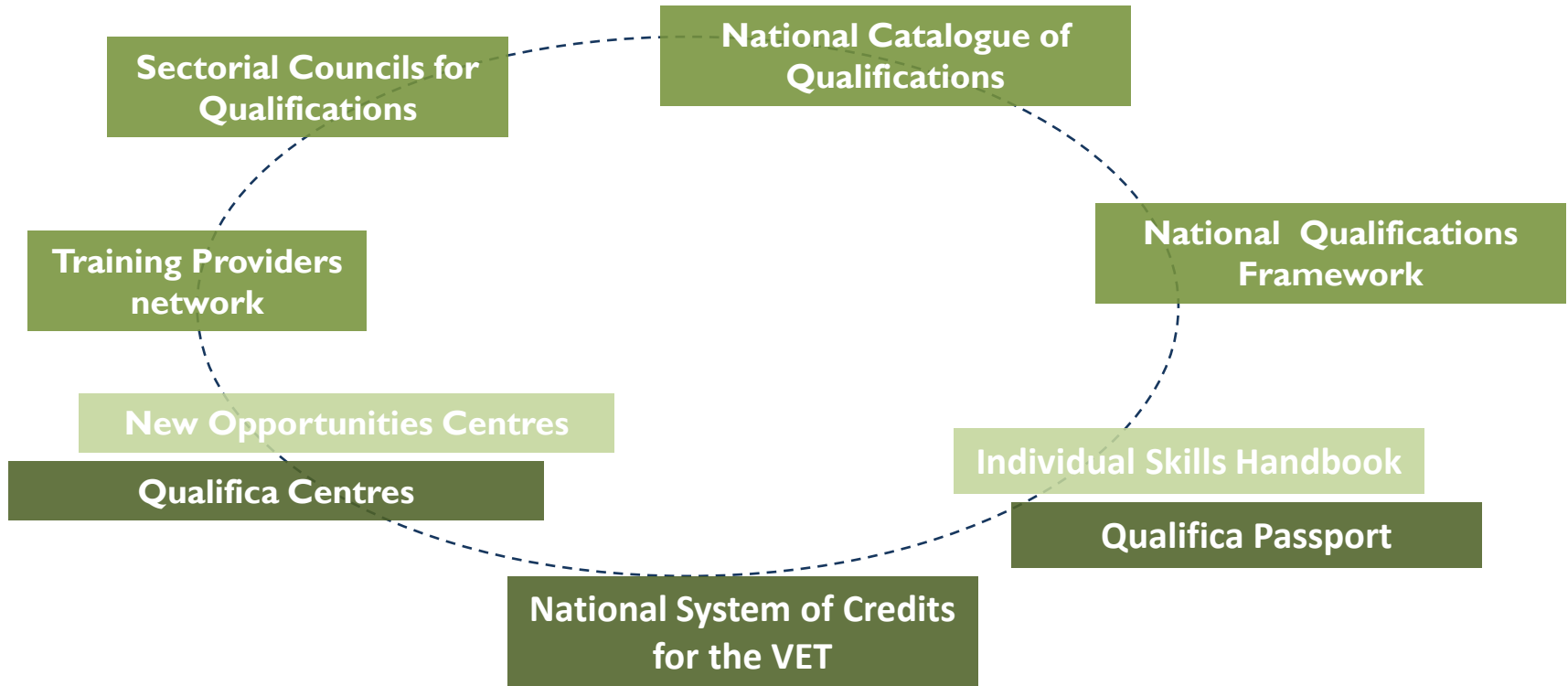
- To strengthen the integration between training within the education system and training within the labour market – reinforce the double certification principle;
- To build certification mechanisms for school and professional competences acquired through informal and non-formal learning;
- To promote VET flexibility - short modular units, that can be certified independently;
- To strengthen the permeability between general education pathways and VET;
- To make training provision relevant for economy and social cohesion (offer in line with needs of LM);
- Legibility and comparability of national qualifications.

Raising qualifications levels (young people and adults) and establish upper-secondary level as the minimum level of qualification (compulsory education)

The National Qualifications System (NQS) – 2007 and 2017

STRUCTURES

INSTRUMENTS



2007

2017

2007 and 2017

The National Qualifications Framework (NQF)

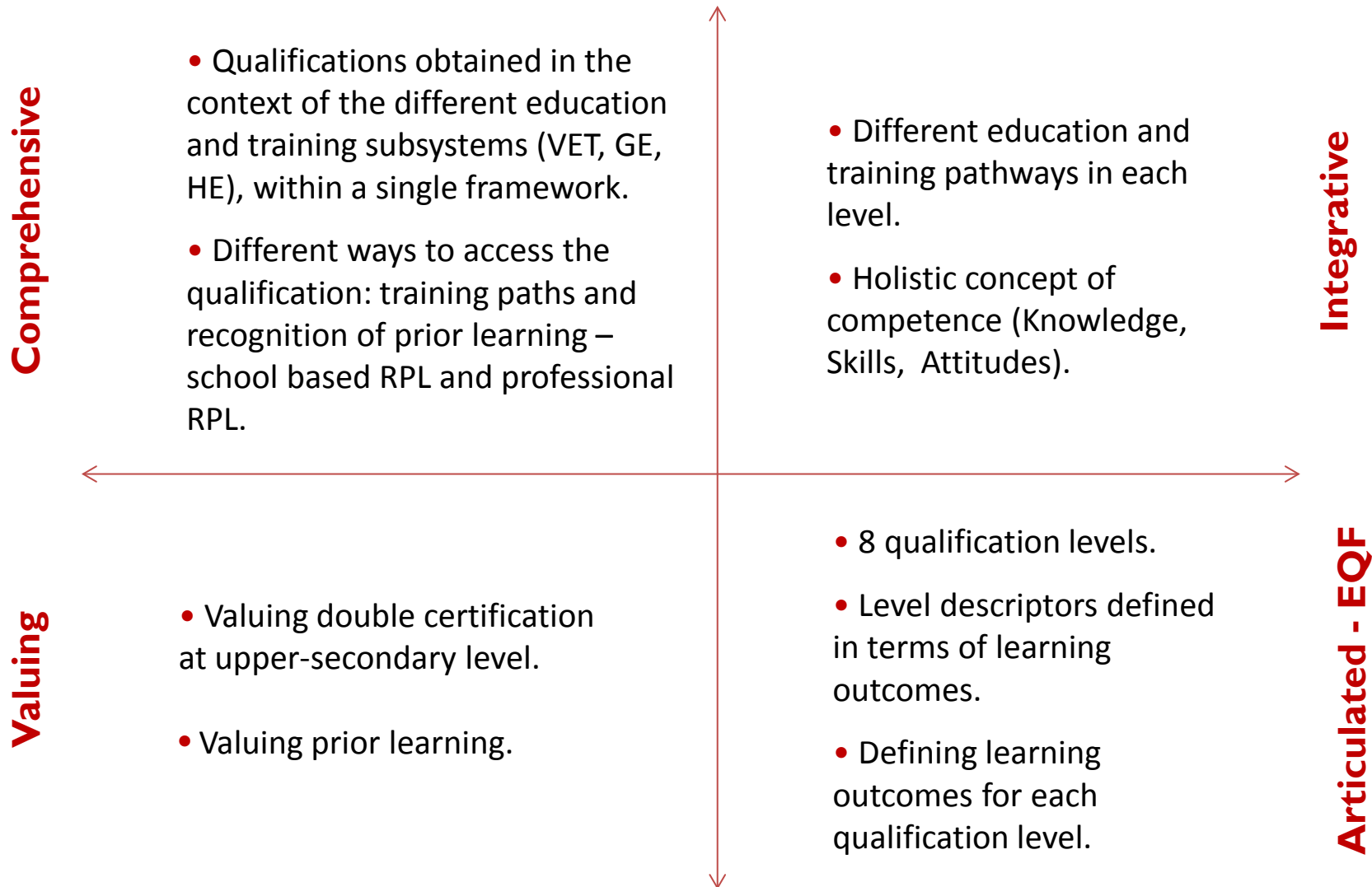
- proposed by the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity, and the Ministry of Science and Higher Education.
- public consultation (August-September 2007) of all the instruments for the VET reform including NQF.
- created in December 2007, based in EQF principles (established by Decree-Law nº 396/2007, 31st December).
- regulated by Ministerial Order nº 782/2009, 23rd July.
- in force since the 1st October 2010.

The NQF – main objectives

- a) Integrating the qualifications obtained in the context of the different education and training subsystems (education, vocational training, higher education), within a single classification framework;
- b) Improving the legibility, transparency and comparability of qualifications;
- c) Improving the access, progression and quality of national qualifications;
- d) Defining learning outcomes for each qualification level;
- e) Ensuring coordination with the EQF, specifically in using the EQF as an instrument of reference for comparing the qualification levels of the different qualifications systems.

(Art.2º, Ministerial Order nº 782/2009, 23rd July)

The NQF - main features



The NQF and EQF

| NQF Level | Qualifications | EQF Level |
|-----------|--|-----------|
| Level 1 | 2 nd cycle of basic education | Level 1 |
| Level 2 | 3 rd cycle of basic education (lower secondary education) obtained in basic education or via double certification paths (VET) | Level 2 |
| Level 3 | Upper secondary education obtained via general education or RPL (General SLQ) | Level 3 |
| Level 4 | Upper secondary education obtained via double certification paths (VET) or RPL (Vocational SLQ) | Level 4 |
| Level 5 | Post-secondary non-higher education qualification with credits to pursue higher level studies | Level 5 |
| Level 6 | Bachelor degree | Level 6 |
| Level 7 | Master degree | Level 7 |
| Level 8 | Doctorate degree | Level 8 |

In summary, nowadays:

- The legal framework is in place
- Qualifications have been assigned to levels
- Quality assurance arrangements have been implemented

In which areas is NQF making more difference?

Visibility

- NQF levels are mentioned in all certificates and diplomas (IVET, CVET and VNFIL - non-higher education).
- (some) Certificates and diplomas include the NQF and EQF levels.
- VET database contains NQF and EQF levels (namely the National Catalogue of Qualifications).
- Access to financial support and to professional internships takes the framework into consideration.

Legibility

- NQF level descriptors are more clear and accessible to end-users
- NQF makes non-formal and informal learning more legible

In which areas is NQF making more difference?

Transparency

- Use of LO to describe and classify qualification – way of harmonising approaches, concepts and practices, but there are differences across subsystems.
- NQF level descriptors are used to support the review and renewal of qualifications.
- The use of “attitude” as a LO descriptor domain caused a redirection of attention to soft skills.

Involvement

- Stakeholders involvement
 - Referencing process (steering committee and WG: ANQEP + bodies involved in the qualifications regulation and quality assurance in ET).
 - Sectors initiative to design qualifications in terms of LO.
 - The role of SCQ in the design of qualifications.
 - Assessment of learning acquired in non-formal and informal settings.

In which areas is NQF expected to make more difference in the future?

Teachers /Trainers - pedagogical innovation

Transparency

As a “bridge” ...

Raise awareness of key new concepts (LO) among different stakeholders

Designing curricula and assessment methods based on LO

To the training that took place outside the NCQ (via credit systems)

NQF

Indication of the the NQF and EQF level in all the certificates

General Portal

Qualifica Passport

Visibility

Thank you for your attention!

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