TourX

National context report

Portugal

TourX CoVE for the Tourism Industry

VET system in Portugal

The information in this topic is based on the website: https://www.anqep.gov.pt/np4EN/53.html.

In Portugal, there are several double certification paths (awarding a school and a professional certification), aimed at young people, to complete basic education (9th year of schooling) and upper-secondary education (12th year of schooling). These paths are associated with a more practical learning experience related to a profession, and which enable to continue learning or to integrate the labor market. These include Professional Courses (PC), Education and Training Courses (ETC) for young people, Specialised Artistic Courses (SAC) and Technological Specialisation Courses (TSC).

ANQEP- National Agency for Qualification and Vocational Education and Training- is a public institute, with the mission to "contribute to the improvement of the qualification levels of young people and adults in Portugal, promoting both a growing demand for school and professional qualifications (double certification) at the non-tertiary level, as well as an offer of initial and lifelong training that is broadly attractive, of quality and relevant to the labour market".

ANQEP has oversight and joint supervision of the Ministries of Education, and of Labour, Solidarity and Social Security, in coordination with the Ministry of Economy and Maritime Affairs.

The courses are run by public or private organizations belonging to the National Qualifications System. They promote qualifications, training and learning for personal development, as well as the educational and professional progression of citizens. The network of entities includes the Qualifica Centers, schools, IEFP vocational training centers and training entities certified by DGERT.

The entities that belong to the National Qualifications System and offer professional and qualification courses are: Qualifica Centres - specialized adult qualification centers which aim to promote lifelong learning and improve the educational and professional qualifications of the population, valuing each person's individual pathways; Schools - a network of public and private educational establishments, including primary and secondary schools, vocational schools and private and cooperative educational establishments. This network of schools offers vocational courses, youth education and training courses, adult education and training courses and certified modular training courses; **IEFP Vocational Training Centres** - A network of training centers directly managed by the Instituto do Emprego e Formação Profissional, I.P., which offers apprenticeship courses, technological specialization courses, adult education and training courses and certified modular training courses; **Training Entities Certified by DGERT**- These **entities** can develop adult education and training courses and certified modular training courses.

The implementation of qualification offers is carried out by a technical-pedagogical team, which is made up of: teachers; trainers; Vocational Aptitude Test Advisor; Artistic Aptitude Test Advisor; Workplace Training Advisor; Workplace Training Tutor; Course Director; Pedagogical Advisor; Qualifica Center Coordinator; Skills Guidance, Recognition and Validation Technician.

The national qualifications system (SNQ) was created in 2007 with the aim of raising the qualification levels of the working population, through school and professional progression, as well as structuring an initial and continuing education and training offer for young people and adults. Within this framework, structuring instruments were created for the organization of qualifications and the capitalization of qualification paths, such as the National Qualifications Framework (QNQ), the National Qualifications Catalogue (CNQ), as well as the National Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (SNC) and the Qualifica Passport, in order to ensure the relevance of learning for personal development and for the modernization of companies and the economy.

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- National Qualifications Framework (NQF): unique reference framework for classifying all qualifications produced in the national education and training system, regardless of the access pathways. The national qualification framework is structured into 8 qualification levels (Anqep, 2024):

Level	Qualifications
Level 1	2nd Cycle of basic education
Level 2	3rd Cycle of basic education obtained in basic education or through double certification paths
Level 3	Upper-secondary education aimed at pursuing higher education studies
Level 4	Upper-secondary education obtained through double certification paths or upper-secondary education aimed at pursuing higher education studies plus a professional traineeship – minimum of 6 months
Level 5	Post-secondary non-higher education qualification with credits to pursue higher education studies
Level 6	Bachelor degree
Level 7	Master degree
Level 8	Doctorate degree

Illustration 1: Qualification levels (Anqep, 2024)

Double certification paths aimed at young people (15-23 years)- https://www.anqep.gov.pt/np4EN/jovens/

There are several double certification paths aimed at young people, to complete basic education (9th year of schooling) and upper-secondary education (12th year of schooling), through a more practical learning experience associated with a profession, and which enables them to continue learning or to integrate the labor market. These include:

- Professional Courses (PC);
  - An upper-secondary education path with double certification, that allows the development of social, scientific and vocational skills necessary for the exercise of a

professional activity. Simultaneously, the upper-secondary level of education is obtained. These courses prepare young people for an easier and more qualified integration in the labour market and enable them to carry out studies at post-secondary level, as well as higher education. The courses have a duration of three years, with a workload between 3100 to 3440 hours. They are organized into four training components:

- Sociocultural training: to contribute to the construction of students' personal, social and cultural identity;
- Scientific Training: to provide scientific training consistent with the qualification to be acquired;
- Technological Training: organised into Short-Term Training Units (STTU), aimed at acquiring and developing a set of technical skills necessary for professional activity;
- Work-based learning: carried out in companies or other organisations, during periods of variable duration throughout or at the end of the training.

These courses culminate with a presentation and defence of a project before a jury, called the Professional Aptitude Test (PAT), in which the skills and knowledge developed during the training are demonstrated.

- These courses are aimed at those who have concluded the 9th year of schooling or equivalent training;
- Certification: students obtain a double certification - upper-secondary education and a professional certification - conferring level 4 qualification of the National Qualifications Framework

- Education and Training Courses (ETC) for young people;
  - Basic education path with double certification. In other words, social, scientific and vocational skills, necessary for the exercise of a professional activity, are developed, whilst, simultaneously, the basic level of education is obtained. The courses have a duration of two years and are divided into four training components: Sociocultural Training; Scientific Training; Technological Training; Work-based learning.
  - Education and Training Courses may be the most suitable for those who have concluded the 2nd cycle of basic education and are 15 years of age or older.
  - At the end of the course, students obtain a double certification – basic education and a professional certification - conferring level 2 qualification of the National Qualifications Framework.
- Specialised Artistic Courses (SAC);
- Technological Specialisation Courses (TSC).

Double certification paths aimed at adult learners (23-66 years)- https://www.anqep.gov.pt/np4EN/adultos/

There are several qualification paths that, throughout life, enable the obtainment of a school certification at basic level (4th, 6th or 9th year of schooling) or at upper-secondary level (12th year of schooling) and/or a professional certification:

- Recognition, Validation and Certification of Competences:
  - Processes through which an adult demonstrates the skills acquired and developed throughout life through formal, non-formal and informal learning, which are subject to validation and certification for the purpose of obtaining a qualification. Completion of this enables the obtainment of a basic education certification (4th, 6th or 9th year of schooling) or an upper-secondary education certification (12th year of schooling). The validation process is carried out at Qualifica Centres.

- o Adult Education and Training Courses:
    - o Flexible training paths, of variable duration, specifically aimed at adults, which enable the development of social, scientific and professional skills necessary for the exercise of a professional activity, whilst simultaneously the basic or upper-secondary level of education is obtained. These courses are organised into different types of training paths: basic education, upper-secondary education, double certification or paths related to the development of professional competences. The curriculum of these courses include: Basic Training; Technological Training; Work-based learning.
    - o Adult Education and Training Courses may be the path indicated for those who are 18 years of age or older.
    - o Completion of an Adult Education and Training Course enables the obtainment of a basic education certification (4th, 6th or 9th year of schooling) or an upper-secondary education certification (12th year of schooling).
- o Certified modular training
- o Organised into Short-Term Training Units (STTU) or Competence Units (CU) in order to promote access to qualifications through flexible and modularised paths. Certified Modular Training can also be developed based on the short and medium-term paths, previously organized and independently certified, available in the National Catalogue of Qualifications. It is aimed at adults aged 18 or over. Certified modular training permits to obtain one or more than one qualification of level 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5 of the National Qualifications Framework which are integrated in the National Catalogue of Qualifications.
- o Upper-Secondary Education Completion Paths:
    - o Created for those who attended upper-secondary education training paths, developed under extinguished study plans, without having completed them. These paths enable the candidate to complete upper-secondary education, through examinations or attendance of Short-Term Training Units, if they lack up to six subjects/year (which can be distributed across all the school years of the study cycle or concentrated in a single year).
    - o It is aimed at adults aged 18 or over. The certification obtained through Upper-Secondary Education Completion Paths corresponds to the 12th year of schooling and confers level 3 or 4 qualification of the National Qualifications Framework
- o Assessment and Certification Commission
    - o Entity to be mobilized whenever an adult has an incomplete qualification path, with partial certifications obtained in more than one education and training pathways or through the process of recognition, validation and certification of competences.
    - o Adults aged 18 and over with incomplete qualification pathways.
    - o Through the Assessment and Certification Commission, a basic level school certification (4th, 6th or 9th year of schooling) or an upper-secondary level school certification (12th year of schooling), a professional certification or both (in this case, it it called double certification) can be obtained, conferring level 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5 qualification of the National Qualifications Framework.
- o Recognition of Foreign Qualifications.

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Market needs in tourism sector in Portugal

The information in this topic is based on the website: https://www.turismodeportugal.pt/pt/Turismo_Portugal/Estrategia/agenda-valorizacao-profissionais-turismo/Paginas/default.aspx and https://tef-project.eu/guides-toolkit#skill .

People are an essential element in the tourism sector, which is why it is essential to invest in people and value professions to attract talent. After the pandemic, this has become an even greater challenge. The Tourism Professions Agenda 2023-2026 is designed to improve employment in the area. The aim is to enhance the value of people and professionals in order to attract workers to tourism, retain talent and create conditions to recover professionals who have already worked in the sector.

In 2022, according to INE data, 286,600 people worked in the accommodation, catering and similar sectors in Portugal. It is expected that over the next 10 years, this will represent more than 19,000 new jobs per year. There is, however, a concern about the shortage of labor, especially in the hotel industry. It is estimated that 50,000 job vacancies remain unfilled in Portugal. In the accommodation and catering sector, 1 in 8 vacancies are expected to remain unfilled and in tourist entertainment 1 in 10 advertisements have no candidates (Agenda Profissões do Turismo, 2023).

INE data indicates that 49% of the tourism population has basic education, 37% has secondary and post-secondary education and only 14% has higher education (INE, 2022). Another difficulty identified in the sector relates to the remuneration practiced in the sector. Data from INE 2021, relating to the average gross monthly earnings per worker by Remuneration Component and Economic Activity, in the sector (accommodation, catering and similar) are below the average earnings in the economy, even for the same level of professional qualification. Data indicates that 27% of workers intend to leave their professional field in the sector due to low salaries, inflexible working hours and difficulty and lack of career progression. The sector's needs relate to: attracting and retaining talent; training and retraining talent; investing in the recognition of tourism professionals and professions; investing in improving the income and benefits of professionals; raising the quality of work; strengthening the work-life balance (Agenda Profissões do Turismo, 2023).

The 5 main challenges identified in the 2027 Tourism Strategy are:

_ Combating seasonality;

_ Valuing heritage and culture;

_ Spread out Demand;

_ Qualifying and valuing human resources;

_ Stimulating innovation and entrepreneurship.

Over the years, it has become difficult to find professionals with the skills and desire to work in the tourism sector. Seasonality and instability of working hours are some of the factors that make the sector less attractive. The TEF project - Tourism Education Future - concluded that the activity of workers with a low level of education will decrease, such as food preparation assistants, cleaners and assistants, among others.

In the study TEF, the following needs were identified:

- Greater schoolwork links in training courses.

- Develop training courses / improve student/staff skills in marketing, including digital marketing, tourism product design, innovation/differentiation of the tourism experience, tourism consumer profiling, sustainability enhancement of tourism products.

- Retraining unemployed senior citizens in the hospitality sector.

- Less turnover of staff and a sustainable strengthening of the sector

In Portugal, a growing trend is for immigrants to take up positions in the tourism sector. However, many of them have difficulty communicating in Portuguese, which is why schools and VETs should offer courses in Hospitality and language courses for immigrants. They should also be trained for a sound understanding of Portuguese culture and nature heritage to fulfill their roles as 'cultural brokers', often expected in tourism. They finally need a particular care in integration into the workforce and local community to provide sustainable strengthening of the sector.

Another market need is to adjust the salaries practiced in the sector. Low salaries have been driving people away from the sector, making it unattractive.

One of the challenges identified for a 10-year strategy is people: promoting employment, qualifying and valuing people and increasing the income of tourism professionals. One of the sector's goals is to double the level of secondary and post-secondary education in tourism.

One of the lines of action defined in Portugal's tourism strategy is "Boosting knowledge":

-Promoting tourism professions and training critical mass adapted to market needs and promoting gender equality and opportunities. Gender deserves particular care - women suffer more difficult working hours, as they often have a double burden – home, family care and work, overall family concerns should be recognized to attract and retain more women (as long as gender roles don't change substantially, which takes a long time...).

-Ensuring the transfer of knowledge from educational institutions and research centers to companies (we need cooperation, double degrees and more training).

- Disseminating knowledge and statistical information about the use and demand of destinations in order to avoid the negative impact of tourism.

-Continuously train entrepreneurs and managers to lead the tourism of the future - technological, inclusive and sustainable.

-Affirming Portugal as a smart (and sustainable) destination.

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