

Developing Innovative and Attractive CVET programmes in industrial shoe production

Country report on recognition of prior learning (RPL) - Portugal

IO 2

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1 Introduction

Nobody would deny that it's a waste of time and de-motivating if people who acquired already some knowledge, skills and competences during their educational or working life have to re-acquire those when changing the educational track. However, how to measure and assure the equivalence of these prior knowledge, skills and competences and the requirements of the new track?

A wide number of mechanisms have been developed in the recent years by different stakeholders in different countries. This national report sketches briefly the most relevant respective successful ones in Portugal.

The Recognition of Prior Learning, in Portugal allows the "Recognition, validation and certification of competences (RVCC)" acquired and developed throughout life by adults, in non-formal and informal contexts, with a view to obtaining a school (basic or secondary level), professional or dual qualification certification.

This process is developed within the framework of the national network of specific centers - QUALIFICA Centers - promoted by the Employment Centers / Employment and Vocational Training Centers of the IEFP, IP network. The Professional and Educational RVCC processes constitute the main attribution of these structures, along with the attribution of providing candidates with training/education orientation processes.

This report aims at describing mechanisms and examples following a pragmatic approach, envisaging answers to leading questions such as:

- Has the mechanism real benefit for both the learner and the educational provider?
- How is the quality assured? That the prior learning outcomes (LO) are really comparable to the new requirements?
- Who is responsible for the process of RPL? How are articulations between the providers of the new track and the institution being in charge for RPL?
- Which of the mechanisms detected fit best the DIA-CVET project aims in terms of RPL (to develop, pilot and evaluate CVET-profiles in industrial shoe production)?
- Which of the mechanisms are, according to national laws and regulations, legally applicable for CVET on European Qualification Framework level 5 or 6?

This report together with correspondent Romanian and German ones will be subject of a comparative analysis, focused on the questions above listed, and will be the basis for the drafted RPL mechanisms to be applied within DIA-CVET project piloting phase (IO6), when choosing the beneficiaries.

2 Recognition of prior learning in Portugal

Before 2016, Portugal was one of the countries with the weakest levels of school qualification in adult population. At that time, the existence of 62.6% of the adult population, whose level schooling does not exceed 6 years, drew a worrying social framework, in the context of European Union as the National Study of Literacy can describe (Benavente, 1996). According to this study "Portugal had very low levels of literacy, but probably even lower levels of certification. People learn at work, in social life, in civic life. It was important that this knowledge was credited for the purposes of certification, of obtaining diplomas.

The realization of this reality had led, several years ago, to consider the need to recognize and validate competences acquired based on life experience and work, with a view, on the one hand, to help adults to design their professional and personal development path and, on the other hand, legitimize and socially certify these competences in terms of employability.

In this way, any person, throughout life, could see their skills assessed and complete them for the purpose of obtaining a diploma, being able to resume, at any moment, education / training process, according to his/her personal project and professional.

It was then necessary to articulate education and training professional development, offering integrated responses, in which the learning of key-competences or cross-cutting links with the learning of professional specific skills, so that professional development takes place closely linked to the personal and social development. This was based on a partnership approach between the **Ministries Education** and **Work and Solidarity**, combining efforts in the search for flexible and diversified solutions that combine these two dimensions in an integrated vision of people in permanent training/education.

In this context, the recognition of prior learning has assumed, in recent years, as the return of the bet on the qualification of Portuguese adult population, promoting investment in bringing hundreds of thousands of people together qualification, namely through the promotion of the recognition of competences and learning and the adequacy of training paths to the profiles and individuals' needs.

The Recognition of Prior Learning, in Portugal called "Recognition, validation and certification of competences (RVCC)" is a process that allows the recognition, validation and certification of competences (RVCC) acquired and developed throughout life by adults, in non-formal and informal contexts, with a view to obtaining a school (basic or secondary level), professional or dual qualification certification.

Moreover in 2022, a new possibility of RVCC has arrived for active population with level 4 EQF willing to progress to level 5.

In fact, the new regulation of RPL in Portugal focuses on encouraging people who have left incomplete routes so that, using different paths, they can complete their paths and to see their training completed, as well as in the deepening of recognition responses, validation and certification of competences (RVCC) under the QUALIFICA Program. RVCC is particularly suitable for adults who, having formal qualifications, have acquired significant and relevant experience and skills in a variety of contexts throughout life. The RVCC is also a particularly suitable access pathway for adults with non-continuous paths of formation, which makes it possible to value the individual path of acquisition of knowledge and development of skills and qualification needs of each person, encouraging the completion of incomplete courses, in the case of a that does not require minimum

schooling for access. The RVCC is still one of the qualification modalities that has historically contributed the most to the number of total certifications that result in the effective increase in the level of non-tertiary qualification of adults and, consequently, to raise the skill base of that population.

In addition to the intention to reinforce the flexible nature of this modality and to emphasize the need to adapt the process to the adults' profile, this ordinance also makes it possible to obtaining a level 5 qualification from the National Qualifications Framework through the RVCC, until now only possible up to level 4.

This process is developed within the framework of the national network of QUALIFICA Centers promoted by the Employment Centers / Employment and Vocational Training Centers of the IEFP, IP network. The Professional and Educational RVCC processes constitute the main attribution of these structures, along with the attribution of provide candidates with orientation processes.

2.1 Objectives of recognition of prior learning in Portugal (RVCC)

The objectives of RVCC are:

- to increase the level of professional and educational qualifications of Portuguese adult population.
- to improve the employability levels of the active population.
- to encourage lifelong learning by valuing all the lessons learned.

2.2 Target-group

- adults aged 18 years and over with a qualification level of the NQF below level 5 and who, throughout their lives, have learned and acquired relevant skills in different contexts.
- adult persons aged 18 years and over with an EQF qualification level above level 5 seeking to obtain a professional qualification.
- adults aged up to 23 years, inclusive, they can only be recipients of RVCC if they prove to have at least three years of professional experience, except in situations authorized by ANQEP, I.P., namely when specific publics are concerned or are in a situation of social vulnerability.

RVCC candidate must demonstrate:

- Ability to analyze and reflect on the life experiences that allowed him to acquire knowledge and develop skills;
- Ability to transfer knowledge and skills to other contexts, namely social and professional, distinct from those in which he/she acquired them;
- A high degree of autonomy and motivation for learning and commitment with the process, throughout its different phases, with the aim of completing the qualification;
- Have a set of professional or life experiences relevant to the process at which you want to apply.
- After registering at a QUALIFICA Centre, the candidate's profile is evaluated by part of the center's team for the purpose of verifying eligibility for the process and its respective positioning, considering the aspects mentioned in the previous number and having

underlying the certification objectives of each candidate and the requirements contained in the methodological guidelines defined by ANQEP, I.P.

Adults can obtain basic education through recurrent education, completion of an adult education and training courses (EFA – Education and Training of Adults), through a process of Recognition, Validation and Certification of Competencies (RVCC), or through certified modular training. (FMC). The system also provides a training offer linked to literacy – the training program in basic skills (FCB).

Adults can obtain secondary education through attending an adult education and training (EFA) course, through a process of Recognition, Validation and Certification of Competencies (RVCC), through certified modular training (FM) or through other pathways to secondary education completion

2.3 Legal framework

- Ordinance No. 232/2016, of 29 August, which regulates the creation and organization and operation of QUALIFICA Centers.
- Ordinance No. 60-C/2015, of 2 March, amended by Ordinance No. 181-A/2015, of 19 June, no. 190-A/2015, of June 26th and 148/2016, of May 23rd, which publishes the specific regulation of the domain of Human Capital that applies to the processes of Recognition, Validation and Certification of Competences (RVCC).
- Ordinance No. 61/2022 January 31 EDUCATION AND WORK, SOLIDARITY AND SOCIAL SECURITY regulates the recognition, validation and certification of competences within the scope of the QUALIFICA Program.

2.4 National Authorities involved and responsible for the processes

The National Agency for Qualification and Vocational Education, I.P. (ANQEP, I.P.) is a public institute integrated in the indirect administration of the State, with administrative, financial and pedagogical autonomy. It 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 Digital Transition.

ANQEP mission is to contribute to the improvement of the qualification levels of young people and adults in Portugal, promoting both a growing demand for educational and professional qualifications (double certification), at the non-higher level, as well as an offer of initial and long-term training. Of life that is broadly attractive, of good quality and relevant to the labor market (Decree-Law no. 36/2012, of 15 February).

Within the scope of the National Qualifications System, ANQEP I.P. has the following attributions:

- To design and permanently update the National Qualifications Catalog, an instrument that regulates non-higher level dual certification qualifications;
- **To regulate and boost** the offer of dual certification education and professional training aimed at young people and adults, the offer of specialized artistic education and **the system of recognition, validation and certification of competences (RVCC), in the school and professional scope, aimed at adults;**
- To promote and guarantee the necessary information and guidance devices, the complementarity and flexibility of the education and vocational training systems and the

quality of the aforementioned offers, in articulation with the other entities responsible for these matters;

- To coordinate the design of pathways, curriculum development and specific methodologies for dual certification professional education and training aimed at young people and adults and RVCC processes;
- To participate in the development of references for initial and continuous training of teachers, trainers and other professionals involved in the qualification of young people and adults;
- To contribute to the international comparability of qualifications and mobility between education and vocational training systems for young people and adults, through mechanisms of representation and cooperation at European and international level.

2.5 Promotors of RVCC processes

The RVCC is developed by centers specialized in adult qualification, hereinafter referred to as by «Qualifies Centers», under the terms of the applicable regulations. They can be as follow:

- IEFP, I.P. Employment and Vocational Training Centers;
- IEFP, I.P. participatory management professional training centers;
- Groups of schools or non-grouped schools of public primary and secondary education;
- Other entities with significant territorial or sectoral expression.

QUALIFICA CENTRES

Qualifica Centers - Professional and School RVCC created under the Legislation Ordinance No. 232/2016, of 29 August (Regulates the creation and organization and functioning of Qualifica Centers).

The Qualifica Centers are responsible for:

- Information, guidance and referral of candidates, namely for vocational education and training offers, based on the different qualification modalities and seeking to adapt existing offers to the profiles, needs, motivations and expectations of candidates and the dynamics of the labor market;
- Recognition, validation and certification of skills developed by adults throughout their lives by formal, informal and non-formal ways, in the school environment, professional or dual certification, based on the references of the National Qualifications Catalogue;
- The development of information and dissemination actions aimed at young people and adults, companies and others employers, about education and training offers available professionals and on the relevance of lifelong learning;
- Stimulating and participating in partnership territorially based networks that contribute, in the context of education and professional training, to a more integrated and consistent, in the identification of needs concrete qualifications and in the organization of responses useful for the populations, namely that they facilitate the signaling and identification of young people who are outside the education and training system and promote its path towards adequate qualification responses;
- Monitoring the path of candidates referred to qualification offers.

The Qualifica Centers support the National Agency for Qualification and Vocational Education, I. P. (ANQEP, I. P.), with regard to their specific competences' definition of network structuring criteria and implementation of monitoring mechanisms and monitoring of education and training offers.

Qualifica Centers can be created by **public or private entities**, hereinafter referred to as promoter entities, namely groups of schools or non-grouped schools of public primary and secondary education, professional training centers directly managed or participated in the network of the Employment and Professional, Training Institute I. P. (IEFP, I. P.), companies and associations or other entities with significant territorial or sectoral expression and installed technical capacity, depending on the sectors and audiences to which they are addressed, namely because they are part of the public network contracted for at least five years.

Authorization for the creation and operation of Qualifica Centers is the responsibility of the board of directors of ANQEP, I. P., and takes into account, in particular, the qualification needs of the population, the coverage ensured by the existing network and the ability to respond of the promoting entity to needs not covered by the network of existing centers.

The dimension and territorial coverage of the network of Qualifica centers are defined by ANQEP, I.P., with reference to the Territorial Unit Nomenclature, NUT III, and it is also responsible for managing and regulating the network, as well as its operating model.

3 Main mechanisms of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) in Portugal

QUALIFICA Program

Revitalize adult education and training while central pillar of the qualifications system, ensuring the continuity of learning policies throughout life and the permanent improvement of the quality of the processes and learning outcomes is a policy priority of national scope. With the objective of relaunching this priority, the Government developed the QUALIFICA Program, which constitutes an integrated training strategy and qualification of adults.

The QUALIFICA Program is based on in the triple integration of:

- means made available by the different actors, with coordination between the ministerial areas of education, labor and higher education, whether in the formulation of instruments, and in their operationalization in the field;
- various responses and instruments, that combine adult education and qualifying professional training with recognition, validation and competence certification;
- responses, from the perspective of training, favoring the coherence and unity of the network and the portfolio of training paths, which must be customized.

One of the differentiating points of the QUALIFICA Program is the bet on training paths that lead to an effective qualification, as opposed to single training, with little added value from the point of view of qualification and improving the employability of adults.

Thus, the Government is creating a credit system, Diário da República, 1st series — No. 165 — August 29, 2016 3007 aligned with the modular structure of the training offer already that allows for the coherent capitalization of training units, greater mobility and flexibility in the training paths, preserving the value of certifications and allowing for better readability and recognition of the vocational education and training system by the various actors, namely employers.

One of the fundamental axes for the realization of the QUALIFICA Program involves the activation of a national network of centers specialized in education and training of adults, geared towards assistance, advice, guidance and referral to paths of learning, based on the real needs of existing qualifications in different territories and sectors economic. In this sense, this ordinance creates the **QUALIFICA Centers** already described before.

QUALIFICA PASSPORT

In addition to the credit system, the Qualifica Passport is another central instrument for valuing and facilitating individual training paths that allows not only register the qualifications obtained (in a logic of curriculum or notebook), but also to identify the missing skills to complete a given training course, in order to enable the construction of training trajectories best suited to the needs of each individual, among the different possible trajectories.

The Qualifica Passport is a technological instrument for recording qualifications and skills acquired or developed throughout an adult's life and for guiding learning paths.

From the capitalization of the learning results already achieved and the skills acquired by the adult, the Qualifica Passport simulates several possible qualification paths for obtaining new qualifications and/or educational and professional progression.

As a priority of the National Qualifications System to increase the qualification level of adults, the Qualifica Passport prioritizes proposals for completion and/or increase in the qualification of adults, as well as for the qualification of dual certification. Qualification pathways are suggested based on the highest possible capitalization of training units already certified and credits already obtained by the adult in previous training.

The Qualifica Passport is structured in 5 stages:

1. Registration - The first step of the Passport consists of providing data regarding your personal identification and qualifications completed or in progress within the scope of the National Qualifications Catalog and also other professional training not included in the Catalogue, registered by training entities or employers.
2. Diagnosis - The second stage of the Qualifica Passport construction is called "Diagnosis". This stage intends to gather information, based on the exploration of a personal dimension that allows identifying their motivations, expectations and interests, among other aspects, for the search for a certain qualification. This instrument is based on the adult's life history, regarding their school, training, professional and social path. It thus constitutes the starting point for the construction of a portfolio of vocational development, being therefore a dynamic and reflective activity.
3. Possible Paths - Based on the previous steps, in this third step, possible paths to the conclusion and/or obtaining of a qualification are identified. The suggested paths, according to the teaching and training modalities, are organized according to the qualifications the individual can obtain and the school progression to be achieved.
4. Path Selection - Depending on the path selected, the individual will have access to the identification of the Competency Units (UC) and/or Short-Term Training Units (UFCD) that the individual has already certified and the credit points that can capitalize as well as the UC/UFCD and points of credit needed to obtain for the completion of that qualification.
5. Research of the Educational and Training Offer - In this area the individual will have access to more detailed information about each of the possible routes, namely the education and training entities where he/she can find this training offer, as well as the places and dates of the actions, having as a reference his/her place of residence and the search date.

This document can be updated and edited as needed.

REFERENTIAL OF COMPETENCES

RVCC is developed based on competence references:

- School/education
- Professionals.

RVCC can also be developed based on school and professionals competence referential, providing in this case, to double certification, allowing the achievement of level 2 or 4 qualifications integrated into the CNQ.

The school RVCC is based on references of school-level competences primary and secondary, intended for adults, and integrated into the CNQ.

The professional RVCC is based on the references of professional competences that are part of the CNQ qualifications.

Obtaining level 5 qualifications requires the mobilization of the reference integrated in the CNQ.

The dual certification RVCC allows the capitalization of professional skills demonstrated by the adult for the purposes of recognition, validation and certification of school competences that integrate the respective reference, as well as the capitalization of the schools competences for the purposes of recognition, validation and certification of professional skills, in accordance with the guidelines to be made available by ANQEP, I. P.

RVCC may be also developed based on the units of competence that integrate the short and medium duration courses listed in the CNQ.

3.1 RPL process

3.1.1 General view

The recognition of competences consists of the identification of skills developed over the course of life, in formal, non-formal and informal contexts, through the development of specific activities and the application of a set of assessment instruments suitable, through which the candidate evidences the previously carried out learning, namely through the construction of a reflective portfolio and documentary.

In the processes of recognition, validation and certification of school competences, the portfolio is a instrument of a reflective nature, in which organize evidence of skills acquired by the candidate throughout life, which aggregates documents of a biographical and curricular nature, in order to allow the validation of the same against the competence--key.

In the processes of recognition, validation and professional skills certification, the portfolio aggregates documents and other supporting evidence intended to demonstrate competences and prove the execution of professional achievements, and may also have a reflective dimension depending on the candidate's profile, in order to allow their validation against the reference of professional competences.

The validation of competences comprises the self-assessment by the candidate and the assessment carried out by the guidance, recognition and validation technician competences and by the trainers or teachers of the different areas, formalized in a meeting called and chaired by the coordinator of the QUALIFICA Center.

The meeting referred to in the previous number is drawn up minutes thereof, including, in particular, the date and place of the meeting, the members present, the matters considered, the deliberations taken and the result of the respective evaluations.

The process of recognition, validation and certification of competences must be registered in standardized instruments, based on a model defined by the ANQEP, I.P.

The portfolio, in paper or electronic form, must include a copy of all instruments mobilized during the process of recognition, validation and certification of competences, as well as the reports that support the validation of competences.

The Qualifica Center archives the minutes and records the recognition and validation of the candidate's competences

3.1.2 The intervention, centered and oriented to the individual, in the following fundamental stages

Reception - The reception consists of the attendance, the registration and in the clarification of the candidates about the mission and the scope of intervention of the Qualifica Center.

Diagnosis - The diagnosis consists of analyzing the candidate's profile, namely through clarification sessions, curricular analysis, assessment of the respective life course and professional experience, consideration of your motivations, needs and expectations, application of diagnostic tests, conducting individual and collective interviews or using other appropriate strategies, depending on whether young or adult.

Information and guidance -The information and guidance process aims to provide the candidate with support in the identification of individual education and professional training projects and make available the necessary information that allows the choose the answer that best suits your profile and that contributes to realistically making possible the paths of further studies and/or market integration of work.

Routing - The referral to an offer of education, professional training or dual certification is the result of an agreement between the QUALIFICA Center's team and the candidate, based on prior process diagnosis and/or guidance.

Training - Candidates must attend complementary training, namely in the development of the process of recognition, validation and certification of competences, ensured by the trainers or teachers of the QUALIFICA Center team or by other training entities to which candidates are referred. The minimum number of hours of additional training that candidates must attend is 50 hours.

Recognition of competences - consists in the identification of the competences developed by the adult throughout life, in formal, non-formal and informal contexts, having as support a competency framework. For the purposes of recognition of school and professional skills, the adult prepares a reflective and documental portfolio that, in a structured way, aggregates documents of biographical and curricular nature, through which the evidence is unequivocally explained acquired skills and professional experience. Within the scope of the competence recognition process, in addition to the mobilization of the assessment instruments provided by ANQEP, I. P., the Qualifica Center team can also mobilize other assessment instruments considered necessary, depending on the candidate profile. Adult must actively participate in the recognition process, being responsible for defending your process, provide additional evidence if necessary and be able to carry out a self-assessment of its competences.

Validation of competences - consists of the verification and evaluation of the competences of the candidates against the competences defined in the respective referential. For the purposes of the provisions of the previous number, the use of instruments of assessment specifically designed for this purpose, according to the respective benchmarks. The validation referred to in the previous numbers is formalized in a validation session convened and chaired by the coordinator of the Qualifica Center, with the presence of members of the team involved in the respective process, and from which minutes are drawn up.

Certification of competences - The certification of validated competences, requires the presentation of the candidate before a certification jury, made up of in accordance with the provisions of the following article, which call from the promoting entity of the Qualifica Center. The decision of the jury regarding certification of competences is based on the candidate's performance in a certification test, combined with the analysis of the portfolio and of the evaluation instruments applied during the stage of recognition and validation of competences. In the certification of school skills, the test certification consists of the presentation, before the jury, of an exhibition and reflection subordinated to an integrative theme worked within the scope of the portfolio that evidence knowledge and skills of the different areas of key competences of the respective referential. In the certification of professional skills, the certification test consists of an eminently practical demonstration, before the jury, of the skills held in the within the framework of professional competences. The certification of competences can be total or partial, the latter occurring whenever the assumptions mentioned below are not verified. Obtaining a full school certification it is always verified that the candidate:

- At the basic level, certify all units of competence listed in the key competence framework the level at which it is proposed;
- At secondary level, certify at least two competencies in each competency unit of each key competence area.

Obtaining a full professional certification depends on the certification of all units of competence, identified in the competence framework professionals concerned. The methodological guidelines and regulatory standards relating to the competence certification stage are prepared and published by ANQEP, I. P. The Qualifica Center files a copy and/or record of the certification test carried out by the candidate.

3.1.3 Jury for certification

The certification jury is made up of the following elements:

- A trainer or teacher from each of the areas of key competences and the guidance, recognition and validation of competences technician who accompanied the candidate process, when it comes to school certification;
- Two trainers with adequate technical qualification in the area of education and training of the target reference and at least five years of professional experience, the trainer who accompanied the candidate's process, a representative of business associations or entities employers and a representative of trade unions of the economic activity sectors in that area, when it is professional certification.

3.1.4 Certificates and diplomas

Certification is proven by issuing a certificate of qualifications and a diploma of qualification, when applicable, to be issued by the promoting entity of the Qualifica Center, through SIGO, in accordance with the current models.

The certificates and diplomas mentioned in paragraph above, issued by promoters that are not groupings of schools or non-grouped schools of the public basic and secondary education, management centers direct or participated in the network of IEFP, I. P., establishment private or cooperative education, with pedagogical autonomy or professional schools, need to be approved by one of these entities, provided that they are promoters of a Qualifies Center.

For the purposes of the previous number, the promoting entities without the competence to approve certificates and diplomas must sign a protocol, according to the model available in the SIGO, with an entity with competence approval, according to proximity criteria geographic.

The registration of competences and qualifications is carried out in the Qualifica Passport

3.2 Quality control of RPL processes

The monitoring and evaluation of the operation and activity of the Qualification Centers is the responsibility of ANQEP, I. P.

The functioning, results and impacts resulting from the activity of the Qualifica Centers network may be subject to regular external evaluation, to be contracted with entities of recognized merit and scientific competence.

3.3 RPL professional

What is it?

Adults can obtain basic education through recurrent education, completion of an adult education and training (EFA) course, through a process of Recognition, Validation and Certification of Competencies (RVCC), or through certified modular training. (FM). The system also provides a training offer linked to literacy – the training program in basic skills (FCB).

Adults can obtain secondary education through attending an adult education and training (EFA) course, through a process of Recognition, Validation and Certification of Competencies (RVCC), through certified modular training (FM) or through other pathways to secondary education completion (DL357). What is the Professional RVCC process?

The Recognition, Validation and Certification of Professional Competences (RVCC Professional) is a process that allows obtaining a professional certification based on the demonstration of lifelong learning and competences acquired through professional experience or in other contexts.

There are RVCC Professional processes for various professional outputs from the National Qualifications Catalogue <https://catalogo.anqep.gov.pt/>

The same candidate can simultaneously develop a process of School and Professional RVCC (Dual Certification RVCC).

The certification obtained through this modality is equivalent to that awarded in the other qualification modalities.

To whom?

For adults who want to increase their professional qualifications. In the case of candidates aged 23 or under, it is mandatory that they have at least three years of professional experience, duly proven in accordance with the law.

How does it work?

For adults who want to increase their professional qualifications. In the case of candidates aged 23 or under, it is mandatory that they have at least three years of professional experience, duly attested under the law. The process takes place over a series of sessions, during which the

candidate will have the opportunity to demonstrate the skills acquired throughout life. This demonstration is carried out with the support of specialized technicians who accompany the candidates throughout the course and based on the application of specific assessment techniques and instruments.

These processes comprise two steps:

- Recognition and Validation that allows the identification of skills held by the adult, through the application of a set of methodologies and specific instruments;
- Certification, which consists of taking a test that allows the candidate to demonstrate validated skills.

Candidates will have the opportunity to attend at least 50 hours of additional training that will help to acquire missing skills or reinforce some learning.

The demonstrated competences are compared against the respective competence benchmark, according to the professional career that the candidate is developing:

- Professional RVCC - Reference of professional competences by professional exit (National Qualifications Catalog)

What kind of certification is possible to acquire?

The result of the comparison between the competences demonstrated by the candidate and those foreseen in the respective RVCC referential allows determining the certification to be awarded, which may correspond to all or part of the foreseen competences.

Thus, the completion of an RVCC process in which all units of competence have been certified assigns:

- Certificate of Qualifications, if the candidate does not yet have the schooling associated with the respective qualification level (Level 2 - 9th year; Level 4 - 12th year);
- Qualification Diploma, level 2 or level 4, if the candidate already has the schooling associated with the respective qualification level;

In the event that the candidate obtains a partial certification, a Certificate of Qualifications is also issued, which contains only the validated competence units and a Personal Qualification Plan (PPQ) that identifies the training units that must be attended to obtain full certification.

Where?

The RVCC processes are developed in Qualifica Centers promoted by the IEFP or by other entities of the national network.

3.4 RPL educational (school)

What is the School RVCC process?

The Recognition, Validation and Certification of School Competencies (RVCC school) is a process that allows obtaining a school certification based on the demonstration of lifelong learning and skills acquired through professional experience or in other contexts.

There are primary and secondary school RVCC processes.

The same candidate can simultaneously develop a process of School and Professional RVCC (Dual Certification RVCC).

The certification obtained through this modality is equivalent to that awarded in the other qualification modalities and allows the continuation of studies.

To whom?

For adults who want to improve their school qualifications. In the case of candidates aged 23 or under, it is mandatory that they have at least three years of professional experience, duly proven in accordance with the law.

How does it work?

The process takes place over a series of sessions, during which the candidate will have the opportunity to demonstrate the skills acquired throughout life. This demonstration is carried out with the support of specialized technicians who accompany the candidates throughout the course and based on the application of specific assessment techniques and instruments.

These processes comprise two steps:

- Recognition and Validation that allows the identification of skills held by the adult, through the application of a set of methodologies and specific instruments;
- Certification, which consists of taking a test that allows the candidate to demonstrate validated skills.

Candidates will have the opportunity to attend at least 50 hours of additional training that will help to acquire missing skills or reinforce some learning.

The demonstrated competences are compared against the respective competence benchmark, according to the RVCC process that the candidate is developing:

- Basic-Level School RVCC - Basic-Level Key Competence Framework
<https://catalogo.anqep.gov.pt/qualificacoesNivelBasico>
- Secondary Level School RVCC - Secondary Level Key Competences Framework
<https://catalogo.anqep.gov.pt/qualificacoesNivelSecundario>

What certification is possible to obtain?

The result of the comparison between the competences demonstrated by the candidate and those foreseen in the respective RVCC referential allows determining the certification to be awarded, which may correspond to all or part of the foreseen competences.

- Thus, the completion of an RVCC process in which all units of competence have been certified assigns:
- diploma equivalent to the 1st, 2nd or 3rd cycles of basic education, in the case of basic level school RVCC;
- diploma equivalent to secondary level, in the case of secondary school RVCC.

In case the candidate obtains a partial certification, a Certificate of Qualifications is issued, which includes the validated competence units and a Personal Qualification Plan (PPQ) that identifies the training units that must be attended to obtain full certification.

Where?

The RVCC processes are developed in Qualifica Centers promoted by the IEFP or by other entities of the national network.

Consult the contacts of the Qualifica Centers of the IEFP, IP network, or of the national network of Qualifica Centers.

3.5 Strengths and weaknesses

RPL in Portugal, also called RVCC (Recognition, Validation and Certification of Competences) is a well structured process based on a PROGRAM (Qualifica Program) and developed Referentials, implemented by well-trained teams (Qualifica Centres), with interventions reported in Qualifica Passport.

One of the weaknesses was the tied range of level of EQF qualifications possible to apply – from 1 to 4 – which now will be extended to level 5 EQF. With the new regulation in force in February 2022, the level is extended to 5.

The program is flexible and dedicated to a wide range of target-group, mainly adults in labour market.

4 Which of these mechanisms can be put in place on CVET-levels 5 or 6 respective in-line with the national regulations for these levels?

According to the legislation, the mechanism of recognition of prior learning targets part of national system of qualifications from 1 to 5, not including level 6. It's feasible to apply to level 5 professional RPL.

5 References

Ordinance No. 232/2016, of 29 August, which regulates the creation and organization and operation of QUALIFICA Centers.

Ordinance No. 60-C/2015, of 2 March, amended by Ordinance No. 181-A/2015, of 19 June, no. 190-A/2015, of June 26th and 148/2016, of May 23rd

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ANQEP IP website

IEFP website