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Author: Filipa Mendes Cunha

Supervision: Fernanda Ferreira, ReferNet coordinator

Validated by: Fernando José, ReferNet National Representative

Reviewed by Cedefop

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More information on the survey at: <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/events-and-projects/projects/opinion-survey-vocational-education-and-training-europe>

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Introduction

High quality vocational education and training (VET) can contribute to decrease unemployment, improve labour market integration and fight social exclusion. VET programmes are often seen as more flexible ways of learning better adapted to the labour market needs, providing a better match between education and employers necessities.

In 2011 the European Commission Eurobarometer (European Commission, 2011) provided the study 'Attitudes towards vocational education and training' which, in an attempt to adapt the new VET strategies, made possible to understand the opinion and perceptions of European citizens regarding VET programmes, as well as the benefits, impacts and conditioning factors that influence them. Despite its relevance and pioneering nature, the results were limited due to not making a comparison with general education and only focusing on the permeability and satisfaction of citizens with their participation.

Some independent studies have been produced by different countries trying to understand individuals' perceptions about VET, but to this day, none have been conducted on a broader scale. To fill this gap, Cedefop launched the 'European public opinion survey on vocational education and training' (Cedefop, 2017a) in 2016. This study was the first to be conducted concerning opinions on VET in European member states, which benefits from a broad, in-depth analysis, and allows a more detailed comparison between countries. It aims at analysing the understanding of, and attitudes towards vocational education in Europe. With a total of 35,646 respondents across the European Union (EU) aged 15 and over from different economic and social groups, the survey covers EU28. The individuals were interviewed in their mother tongue through a face-to-face methodology. Due to the particularities of each national education offer, it was defined that VET would be perceived as programmes designed to give participants the practical and technical skills, know-how and understanding necessary for employment in a particular occupation or trade... which takes place at upper secondary education at 16-18 years old (Cedefop, 2017a).

The following chapters are organised by providing a general background of VET in Portugal and how the offer is structured, followed by an analysis of the awareness and knowledge, attractiveness and access, experience and satisfaction, outcomes and effectiveness and main conclusions.

General background of VET

Vocational education in Portugal was established in the mid-1940s, being reformed in 1948 with the purpose of adjusting the school programmes to the needs of economic development and to promote the qualification of Portuguese labour force. A new reform was established in 1970-1973 to face the rapid demographic, economic and social transformations that led to an increasing search for education. The main objective was to, by increasing access possibilities, guarantee the democratisation of education and promote economic and social development (Cardim, 2000).

In an unexpected overturn, the vocational education was discontinued in the post-revolutionary period, in 1974, due to the accentuated difference between vocational and general education. This resulted in a discriminatory social differentiation and social stigmatisation since access to more qualified and prestigious professions, and other levels of education, were limited.

With this background of inequalities, it was only in the end of the 1980s, that emerged the apprenticeship system (work-linked training), after the settlement of Institute for Employment and Professional Training (*Instituto do Emprego e Formação Profissional* – IEFP), that the Portuguese government begun to incorporate the practical component of professional training into the mainstream education.

In 1998, another programme with practical training started to be provided by setting up professional schools ⁽¹⁾, based on public-private partnerships and co-financed by the ESF. This process was essential for the affirmation of professional programmes as an alternative school path. These schools were private but state dependent, so the government was still committed to create public professional schools to address local needs.

The structure of vocational learning changed in the 21st century starting with the openness of the professional programmes to public upper secondary schools. This was a crucial step that contributed to an increase in their visibility and made them more accessible a wider public. Later, the 2007 reform of professional training that paved the way to the National Qualifications System ([Sistema Nacional de Qualificações](#)), who had a fundamental role at establishing a balanced relationship between VET within the educational system and VET in the labour market. Currently, students can either choose the general education, which would give them access to higher education, or the vocational education,

(¹) [Decreto-Lei \(Decree-Law\) nº 4/98, de 8 de janeiro](#).

giving them the opportunity to either have faster labour market integration or proceeding to further education.

A wide range of VET options

Nowadays, education and training programmes can be provided by private or public schools, vocational training and rehabilitation centres, poles of excellence that are created from training providers and other entities with certified training structures. An important feature of the Portuguese VET system is the fact that it is not rigid, offering a multiplicity of paths. Learners can tailor their plan, choosing different VET programmes as they go by. Thereby, an individual who chooses vocational education at any level may, filling certain prerequisites, proceed to any other training programmes and ending by entering higher education. This possibility of reorientation of training journey was established since 2004 – that started to be applied to the entire exiting offer – and ensures the permeability between programmes with affinity of study plans in order to facilitate to students the exchange of its training programme and the continuation of studies in another offer ⁽²⁾.

Revised in 2009, compulsory education is now of 12 years and comprises the ages of 6 to 18 years. The system is organised in two stages – basic and secondary education.

Basic education is arranged in 3 cycles:

- (a) the first cycle comprises the years of schooling from 1st to 4th and it corresponds to primary education;
- (b) the second cycle refers to the 5th and 6th years of schooling, and;
- (c) the third cycle offers from 7th to 9th years and constitutes the low-secondary education.

VET programmes at the basic education weren't very common until 2004. In this year, Portuguese government implemented VET for younger people called Education and training programmes for young people (*Cursos de Educação e Formação de Jovens – CEF*), which targeted students under 15 years old at risk of early leaving at the 2nd or 3rd cycle. Whether in basic or secondary education, this offer is organised into training stages from type 1 to type 7, whose access is related to the education and professional qualification learners' have already achieved. For basic education involves types 2 and 3, which grant double certification.

⁽²⁾ [Decreto-Lei \(Decree-Law\) nº 74/2004 de 26 de Março](#)

Later in 2012 were introduced the Vocational programmes in basic education (*Cursos Vocacionais no Ensino Básico*), targeting students with 13 or more years who had at least two retentions. The main objective was to develop the levels of educational success and allow students to have contact with vocational education promptly, preventing early school leaving. The Portuguese government decided to extinguish these programmes this academic year, both in basic and secondary education, as it considers that it promotes an early diversion of young people to VET. Learners who were enrolled in this offer will complete their studies and will be progressively integrated into other offers.

There are also Specialised art programmes, organised between music and dance areas, and Professional programmes, aimed at students with the 2nd cycle complete. Regarding the Professional programmes, it is important to point out that these are very specific programmes and that represent residual values, which are why they have not been accounted for.

VET in basic education awards double certification (educational and professional).

Table 1. Organisation of basic education including VET

Cycles	Years of schooling	Age level	ISCED 2011-P level	QNQ levels
1st cycle	1st – 4th	6 – 10	100	-
2nd cycle	5th – 6th	10 – 12	100	1
3rd cycle	7th– 9 th	12 – 15	244 254	2

Source: ReferNet, VET in Portugal 2016.

Secondary education (upper secondary) comprises 3 years – 10th, 11th and 12th – and general education offers education in the fields of science and humanities. Vocational educational has here a broader range of choices: Professional programmes, Education and training programmes for young people (CEF), Apprenticeship programmes, Specialised art programmes and Vocational programmes in secondary education that, as previously mentioned, were recently discontinued. Vocational education and training at secondary level allows learners to obtain double certification at all types of VET programmes.

Professional programmes aim to develop learners' professional and personal skills and provide them with the opportunity to pursue their studies, whether in post-secondary or higher education. These programmes have a closer relationship with the labour market, giving students a more practical component of education.

Education and training programmes for young adults (CEF) are more focused on students at risk of early leaving and respond to the market needs. This offer includes types 4, 5, 6, 7 and the complementary programme that gives access to type 5. In this way, its main objective is to improve the integration of these students into the labour market through a more flexible learning programme that meets their interests and the needs of the market.

Apprenticeship programmes consist of a type of training with a structure of ‘alternance’, which means that there is the possibility of rotating practical training in the company environment with the theoretical training.

Specialised art programmes are divided into three areas: visual and audio-visual arts – of double certification – music and dance. The main target of these programmes are students that intend to develop their artistic skills and obtain a training of excellence that allows them to pursue a profession in an artistic field.

Table 2. Organisation of secondary education including VET

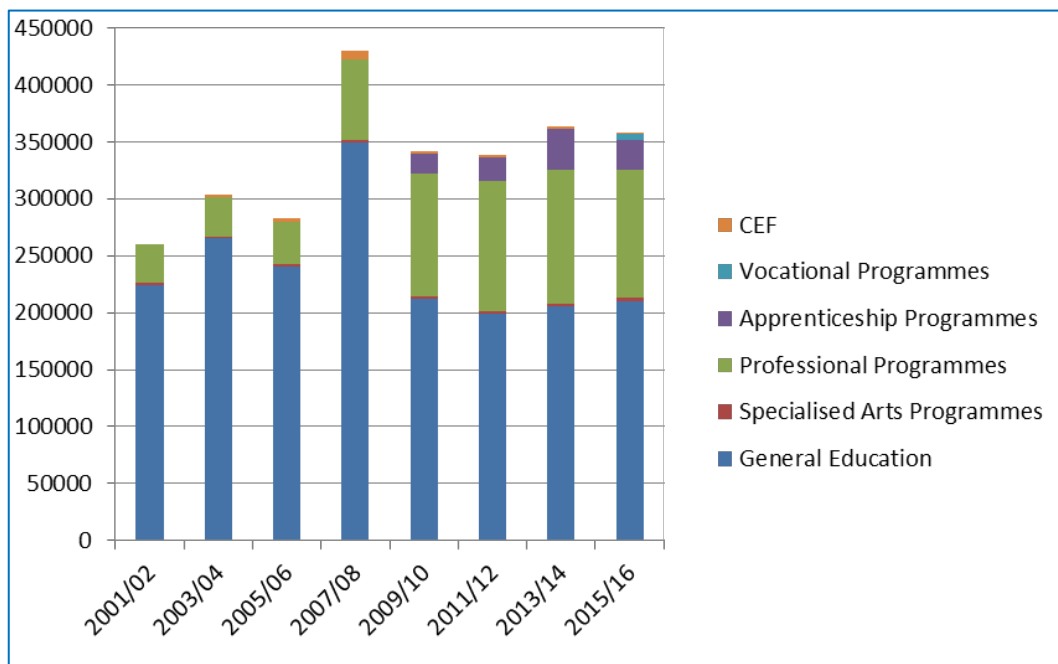
Type of path	Years of schooling	Age	ISCED level	QNQ levels
Science and humanities programmes (cursos científico-humanísticos)*	10th-12th	16-18	344	3
Professional programmes (cursos profissionais)	10th-12th	15-18	354	4
Education and training programmes for young people (cursos de educação e formação de jovens – CEF)	10th-12th	15-18	351 354	4
Apprenticeship programmes (cursos de aprendizagem)	10th-12th	15-24	354	4
Specialised art programmes (cursos artísticos especializados)	10th-12th	16-18	344 345	4

The VET panorama

Although Portugal has no data regarding VET opinions, there are very developed studies and data collection regarding VET and general education frequency analysis (see Graphic 1). Directorate-General of Education and science statistics (DGEEC; DSEE, 2016) has annually presented a detailed report (*Estatísticas da*

educação) about the number of students distributed by the different education offerings, including data on educational attainment. The National Agency for Qualification and Vocational Education (ANQEP, 2011) presented in 2011 a report which, also using longitudinal analysis, was focused on VET and its evolution over the years.

Graphic 1. Distribution of students and their choices of educational path at secondary level



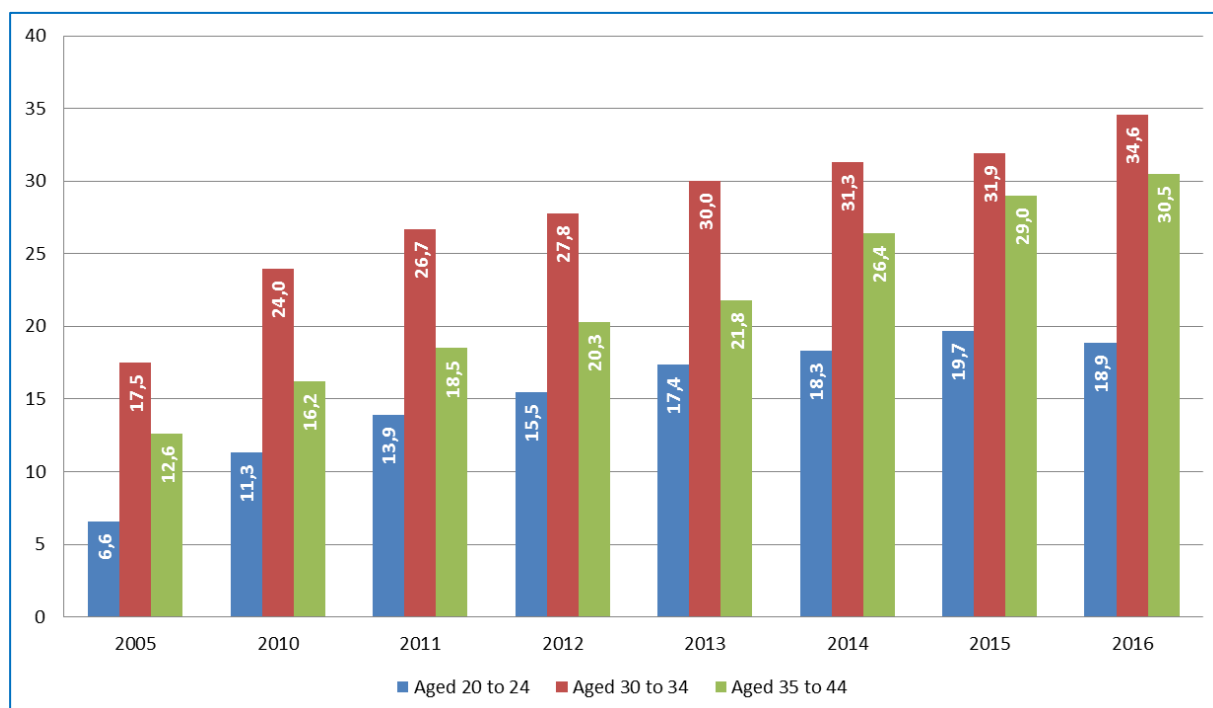
Source: Compilation of data based on information collected from DGEEC and ANQEP.

While general education is still a more common student's educational path, a new pattern began to emerge in which professional programmes began to be provided by the secondary school. Consequently, the number of learners choosing VET has increased since 2007. The most attractive programmes are the ones that provide a greater practical component – professional and apprenticeship programmes, as shown by the most recent statistics (DGEEC; DSEE, 2016).

The importance of VET in Portugal lies strongly on two characteristics of our country: educational attainment and early leaving rate. Comparatively to other EU countries, Portugal has low educational attainment of the population– but there have been improvements since the beginning of the 21st century (see Graphic 2). Given Europe 2020 Strategy (Council of the European Union, 2009) benchmarks for education, the share of 30-34 years old with tertiary education target has not yet been reached. Portugal still lags behind the 40% goal,

presenting in the last year 34,6%. About low and secondary education, Portugal is at 27th place, with a percentage of only 23% of the total individuals finishing secondary and non-tertiary education against 46% of the European average (Eurostat, 2017a).

Graphic 2. Population by educational attainment level, sex and age

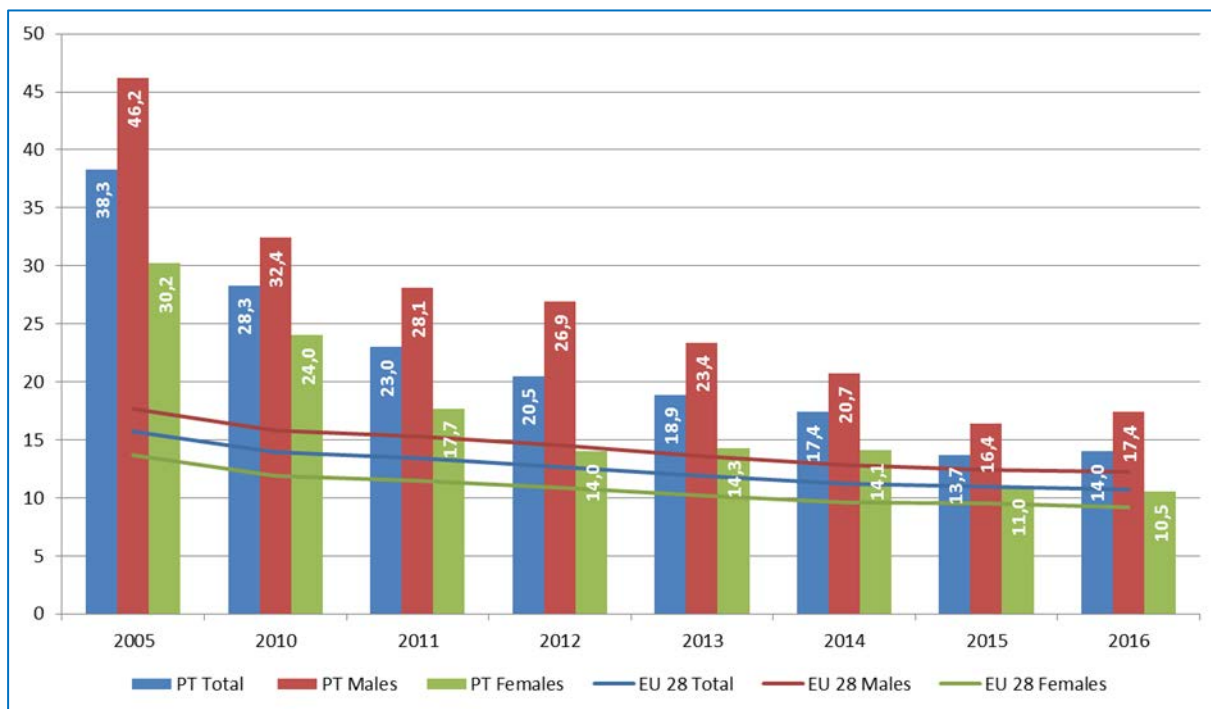


Source: Eurostat 2017

According to Eurostat (Eurostat, 2017b), in 2016, Portugal was the 4th country with the highest early school leaving rate before finishing secondary education, keeping a very high position since 1992, but it is important to note that, once again, great progress has been made (see Graphic 3). The European Union presents an early school leaving rate of 10,7%, very close to the benchmark of 10% defined by Europe 2020 Strategy (Council of the European Union, 2009), while Portugal has 14%.

It is important to mention that Portugal shares an interesting particularity: a significant gender gap. Although this tendency is frequent in the majority of Member States, Portugal is one of the countries where this difference is two times larger: men have a dropout rate of 17,4% while women are very close to the target, presenting only 10,7%.

Graphic 3. Early leavers from education and training by sex and labour status



Source: Eurostat 2017

These two characteristics of the Portuguese population – low levels of educational attainment and high levels of early school leavers – have an important impact not only on the country’s external competitiveness, but also in a better functioning society. With an increase in the level of educational attainment and a reduction in early school leaving, social cohesion levels will increase, labour market integration of different social stratifications will be facilitated and unemployment and social exclusion can be fought – VET is an important element to provide an appropriate response.

As the VET offer grows and begins to have a wider public, both of these characteristics started to improve. The education attainment level of the population with 30 to 34 years-old, although it’s still not enough to reach the target, it can be seen that there have been significant improvements, rising 17,1% in 11 years. With the early school leaving the improvement is also visible, dropping from 38,3% in 2005 to 14% in 2016.

Portugal has concentrated many of its efforts on producing preventive policies that are capable of reducing the early school leaving and raising the qualification level of the population. Examples of programmes aimed at this two aspects are the ‘National programme for promoting school success’ (*Programa nacional de promoção do sucesso escolar*), additional and personalized support to students, reinforcement of school social action, ‘Qualifica programme’

(*Programa qualifica*), 'Territorial policies to fight early school leaving' (*Políticas de Combate ao abandono escolar*), the 'Reinforcement and enhancement of vocational education' (*Reforço e Valorização do Ensino Profissional*) and the 'New opportunities programme' (*Programa novas oportunidades*) (Álvares et al., 2014; DGE, 2016).

People's opinions on VET

Portugal had 1,315 individuals interviewed face-to-face by Cedefop in Portuguese. With 82% of them being involved in general education and 17% in vocational education, does seem a balanced approach. The data presented by DGEEC and ANQEP presents a different reality from the one provided by the Cedefop survey. As discussed above, at the secondary education level, both Portuguese organisations claim that the distribution is organised in a proportion of 60 to 40% between general and vocational education, respectively. Also, in a previous Cedefop study in 2014 (Cedefop, 2017b), it was estimated that 46% of secondary education Portuguese students were enrolled in IVET. These discrepancies may be explained by the selection of different samples, with a particular focus on the ages, which in the Cedefop Opinion Survey include individuals aged 15 to 55+.

CHAPTER 1.

Awareness and knowledge

VET is a well-known educational path as 71% of the individuals state that they have heard of VET and knew what it is and only 7% stated that they have never heard of it, with no significant differences between the students enrolled in VET or general education.

There is a greater perception that VET begins before entering the labour market (82%) than as a continuous professional development in adult life (69%). Perhaps because of this association of VET with schooling in youth, the perception that it occurs in the school environment is 82% and less in the workplace with 63% might be the explanation for such results. As in Europe, VET is associated with preparation for a specific occupation, with 89% of respondents sharing this opinion, which is justified by the approximation of VET programmes to the labour market needs. According to the data from the survey, in Portugal VET is more related to personal development (87%) than to the European average (79%). A very interesting data in the study is the fact that the provision of VET at post-secondary, or tertiary level, is not very well known to the public, where 49% argue that VET does not develop in university and only 36% say yes.

The information disseminated on VET differs if the students are in general education or already in VET. According to data from the survey, learners who are or have participated in vocational and education training programmes show that they are more likely to receive information about VET (71%), while students in general education are in a different situation – 65% did not receive any information about VET provision. These data demonstrate that the promotion initiatives to spread the knowledge about VET programmes are not having the effects needed. It is necessary, thus, to create adjustments concerning provision of information to general education students.

Portugal has concentrated many of its efforts on dissemination activities on VET, trying to improve student's awareness of the existing offers and the possibility that they can choose VET at any time on their educational path. The 'Youth guarantee' (*Garantia jovem*) has contributed to create awareness and disseminate information about VET targeting young people. Although its principal focus is on intervening and fighting youth unemployment, aiming to provide all young people under 30 years old with an opportunity for education and training.

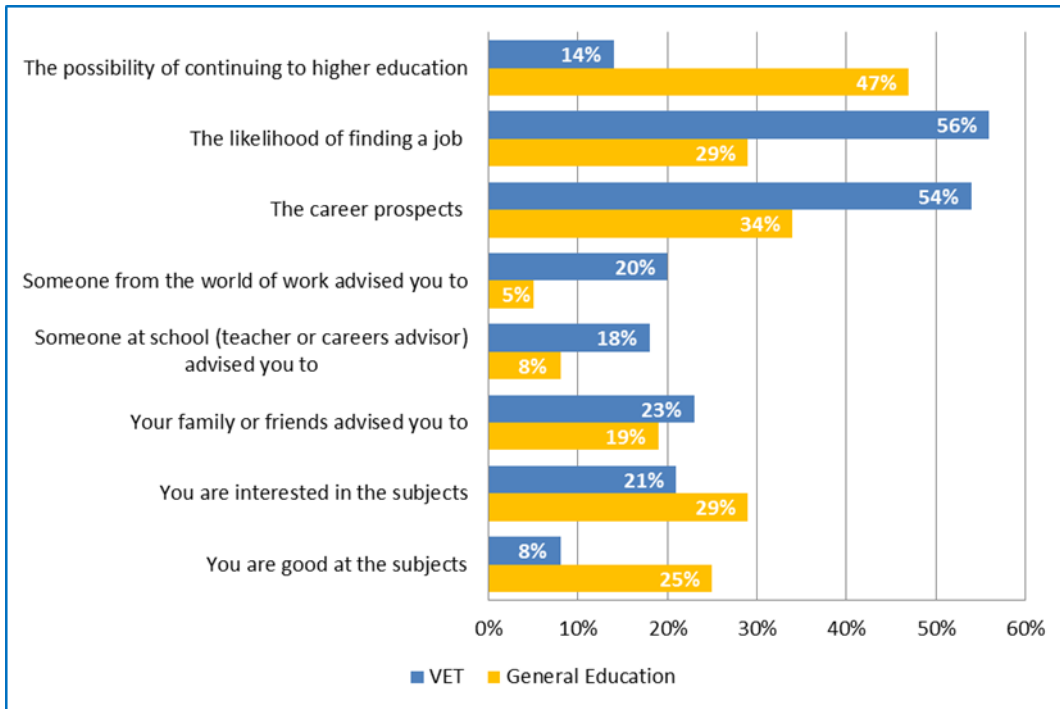
To support and disseminate information among individuals currently outside the labour market, IEFP has vocational integration offices (*Gabinetes de inserção*

profissional – GIP) that disclose measures to support VET programmes and entrepreneurship and community programmes in VET. The schools vocational and professional orientation offices (*Gabinetes de orientação vocacional e profissional* – GO) consists of a personalised service area with a school counsellor who disseminates information about educational paths and gives support in their choice.

Another example of this effort, is the presence of different VET programmes at *Futurália* – the largest education and training fair at national level. This used to cover only general education, but VET offers were also introduced. *Futurália* has now a comprehensive exhibition of all areas of qualification such as higher or vocational education and postgraduate studies. Learners can, therefore, understand and clarify their doubts about the different offers of education, be more and more informed in relation to the VET programmes. Since its establishment, Portugal also participates in EuroSkills and WorldSkills with the best learners that received an award at national fairs, e.g. *Futurália*. This initiative has as one of its objectives to value the social status of VET, favouring its recognition, encouraging young people to obtain a professional qualification and disseminate the national VET offer.

Regarding the factors that influenced the choices of student's educational path (see Graphic 4) they, once again, differ depending on whether the student is enrolled in VET or general education. The possibility to continue to higher education (47%), career prospects (34%), interest in the subjects (29%) and being good at them (25%) are the most important factors when choosing general education. For VET learners, the most determinant aspects are the likelihood of finding a job (56%) and career prospects (54%). This illustrates that students who choose this educational path seek out exactly what VET programmes offer: proximity to the labour market, which allows them to be more easily integrated. This rapid integration is confirmed since 39,6% of all VET learners are active in the labour market even before finishing their programme and 31,2% immediately after the end (DGEEC, 2016).

Graphic 4. Factors that influenced decision on education path



Source: Cedefop 2017

Social groups in which students are integrated play a large role in the choices they make for secondary education. Although 15% of students enrolled in general education were advised against taking vocational education and training by their families and friends, 23% of students who chose VET programmes were also encouraged by their families. This shows that the role of VET is changing and more and more this educational path is seen as a valid pathway that allows students to obtain an appropriate and valuable education.

CHAPTER 2.

Attractiveness and access

The perception of VET programmes, in the whole sample surveyed, shows a positive image with 70% of students of general education and VET stating it. This perception is slightly more positive than the European average, which presents 68% of all students considering a positive image of VET.

Most students consider that VET is aimed for students who have more difficulties in their educational path since 75% consider it to be easier to finish than general education and 73% agree that students with lower school performance are led towards VET, with very similar perceptions between general education and VET students.

The data that at first sight could be considered contradictory from the conclusions above is the fact that 83% of students from general education and 72% of VET learners consider that general education has a more positive image than VET – but this does not necessarily mean that VET has a negative image. It may actually indicate that the contents lectured at VET programmes are more suited to the learner's skills and more appropriate to the educational path they intend to follow. To reinforce this idea, when it comes to the level of difficulty in transferability of VET learners to general education the data follows in the same direction. Only 36% of students enrolled in general education believe there is no difficulty while 46% agree that there are more challenges. Likewise, VET learners who find it easy to switch from VET to general education account for only 42%. Concerning the possibility of pursuing higher education, VET students consider it to be easier (62%) than general education students (57%).

It is recognised that a VET background does not present such a prestigious image as general education students, this happens because as (a) analysed previously, a general education path is more associated with the pursuit of studies for higher education, and because (b) socially the most prestigious occupations comes from a deep investment in the academic field – and the Cedefop study confirmed this reality. Although 85% of all students consider that VET allows individuals to acquire the skills that employers need, the conclusions differ when issues related to the prestige associated with the occupation (like high salaries and social reputation), which VET enables to develop, are addressed. For the respondents, only 46% of general education students agree that VET leads to well-paid jobs, against 65% of the VET learners. As far as

reputation is concerned, 55% of all survey respondents consider that VET learners achieve occupations that are highly regarded in the country.

For both groups, vocational education and training allows a faster integration into the labour market – 59% for general and 64% for VET learners. In fact, these data should fluctuate since there are programmes that have a much faster integration rate in the labour market than others. Students also have the opportunity to participate in programmes to study abroad, like Erasmus: 56% for general education and 64% for VET.

Finally, as expected, with regard to investment priorities, VET learners would prioritise the type of education in which they were involved (68%), against 43% of general education choosing to invest on general education.

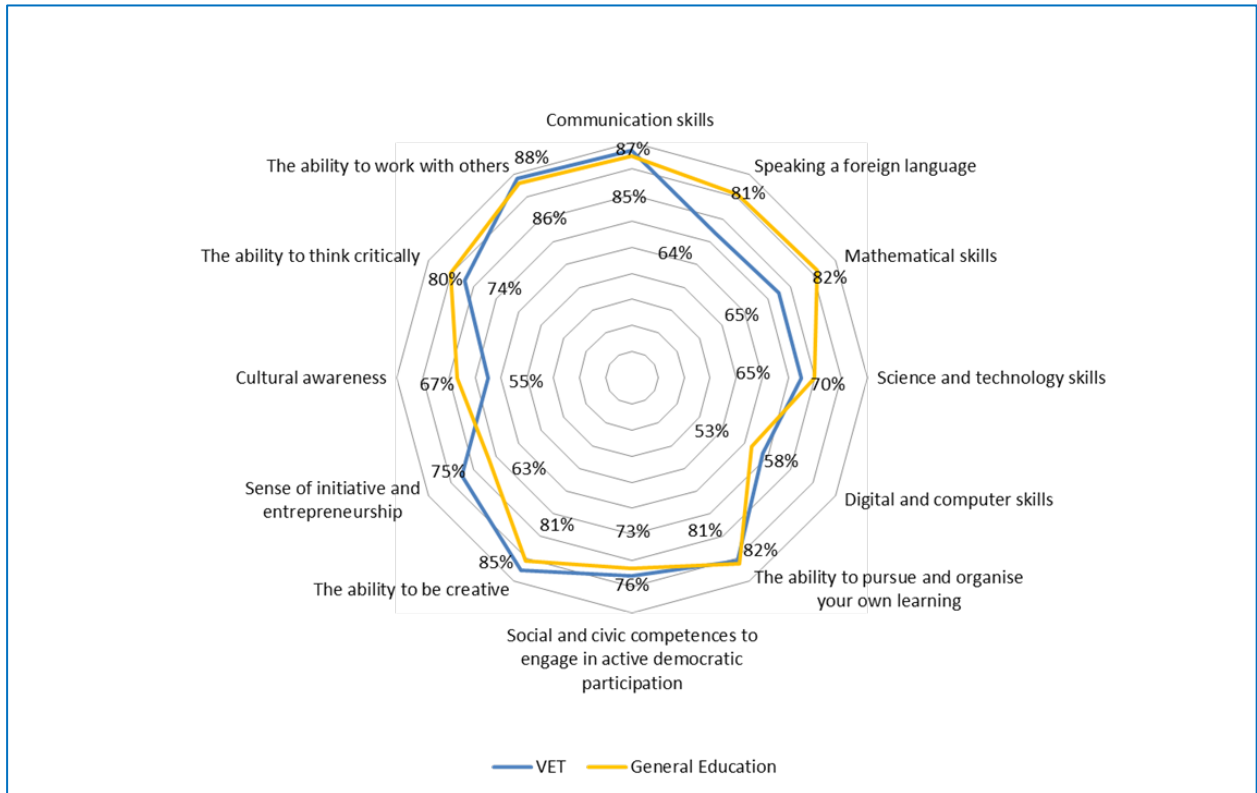
CHAPTER 3.

Experience and satisfaction

Regarding where the experiences take place, there is a difference between general education and VET learners. For students enrolled in general education, 96% of their experience was provided in a school environment and only 3% had training at work context. On the other hand, 51% of the individuals enrolled in VET had their training only in school context while 47% had part of their training in work-related context. Although 30% had a smaller part of their education in work context, the difference between VET and general education students is significant. These data confirm what would be expected – VET programmes are more focused on a quick integration into the labour market and therefore have a more practical component in their programmes.

For the development of skills (see Graphic 5), Portugal presents a panorama very similar to the European Union, with the particularity that the Portuguese students consider to have developed with more intensity the skills approached. Vocational education and training participants, compared to general education ones, claim to have developed skills in greater depth such as communication skills (87%), digital and computer skills (58%), social and civic competences to engage in active democratic participation (76%), ability to be creative (85%), sense of initiative and entrepreneurship (75%) and ability to work with others (88%).

Graphic 5. Skills developed when students were at secondary education



Source: Cedefop, 2017

Creativity, sense of entrepreneurship and initiative are skills more associated with labour market. Their greater projection in VET programmes can be explained by the fact that these are, as already mentioned, strongly directed towards the integration and maintenance of individuals in the labour market. Entrepreneurship has been central to many policies of the Portuguese government with the aim of reducing unemployment in an attempt to empower the population to create their own jobs. As VET programmes are strongly associated with labour market integration and unemployment reduction, these data make perfect sense and translate success into the empowerment and transmission of knowledge and skills to individuals that are later useful in their labour force. The programme's content itself can also explain the highest percentages for this skills, as well as communication and digital skills and social and civic competencies referred to by the VET learners – all VET offer include technology and sociocultural areas that develop skills related to citizenship and society.

General education students consider that they develop more skills in the field of science and languages, such as speaking a foreign language (81%), mathematical skills (82%), science and technology skills (82%) and the ability to

think critically (80%). Again, it is considered that these data can be related to the programmes that compose the offers, strongly linked with sciences. The cultural awareness – appreciation of music, performing arts, literature and visual arts – is more developed by general education students (67%) than VET (55%). This may or may not be linked to the social and demographic groups from which students come from (the higher social groups are usually associated with more developed levels of cultural capital), but the available data does not allow to draw such conclusions.

The majority of respondents are satisfied with their experiences in all parameters analysed, with Portugal having a total satisfaction rate of 81,5%. Vocational education and training students develop more work-related skills (86%) than general education students (75%). This data, once again, translates the proximity of VET programmes to the labour market and its needs, more effectively preparing its students for the occupations they will take in the future. General education students are slightly more satisfied with general skills developed (88%). Either for the equipment that was available and for the quality of teaching, both sample groups are satisfied, without great differences between them. These data are very similar to those presented by EU28.

CHAPTER 4.

Outcomes and effectiveness

Both groups in the sample consider that VET is an important instrument in reducing unemployment (77%), social exclusion (82%) and strengthening the Portuguese economy (83%), an idea similar to the one shared by EU. Students are satisfied with their professional career with a difference between those of general education, with 79%, and those in VET, with 62%. These data are in agreement with those found by DGEEC, which concluded that 85,4% of the students who had finished their secondary studies in VET programmes consider it an advantage for their integration process in the labour market. Of those who were already working, 51% were satisfied and 26% were very satisfied with their profession (DGEEC, 2016).

As discussed above, students who choose to follow a path at general education are the ones that mostly pursue further education (62%). In contrast, only 36% of VET learners went on to further education. This data follows the same line as previous analyses and EU values. As for work-related training, Portuguese inquires have a participation rate lower than the European average: only 24% of VET learners and 13% of general education. Again both of this data are inconclusive because it is not possible to see whether the perspective given is at long-term, including a large percentage of adult individuals, or whether it is a short-term perspective – focused on the immediate moment following the completion of their educational path – including a higher percentage of younger respondents. In a long-term perspective, the National Institute of Statistics (Instituto Nacional de Estatística – INE) concludes that lifelong learning grew from 30,9% to 50,2% between 2007 and 2016 (INE, 2017), giving a different overview to Cedefop data.

Concerning the difficulties experiences when entering the labour market, the data is, again, inconclusive. Of the individuals currently working, unemployed or retired, 50% of VET says they did not struggle and 58% of general education shares the same opinion. The causes of difficulties among VET learners also do not allow concrete conclusions to be drawn, since 46% of who said they felt difficulties, the majority (22%) stated it was because of unspecified reasons, while only 16% claimed they had little work experience, 7% because of lack of qualifications and another 7% felt that their skills were considered too low. Most students found employment between one and six months (25% of VET and 30% of general education). The remaining percentages are very similar between the

groups sample with 13% finding it before the end of their main studies and 15% in less than one month. The only difference among the groups is that VET learners hold the higher percentage, more 5% than general education students, of not having found a job yet (12%).

CHAPTER 5.

Main conclusions and further research needs

Portuguese population has a strong knowledge of the existing VET programmes, although VET learners' have access to more information than the others. Overall, VET programmes have a positive image, though not as much as general education. It is important to emphasise, however, that the perceptions of what VET programmes consist of are changing for both the learners' and the social groups in which they are integrated, and that it is moving towards a point of greater acceptance and appreciation of the VET provision. Portugal should thus continue, improve and adapt the policies it has developed to further disseminate and change perceptions of VET supply.

VET programmes have a large part of their training developed in work environment, allowing them to be strongly linked to the labour market, have a rapid integration into working life and develop skills crucial to the market. They are also associated with students who have difficulties pursuing their studies because they have more adapted programmes that meet their interests and are therefore understood as a crucial instrument for strengthening the economy and fighting unemployment and social exclusion.

The data also determines that learners are satisfied (with an average of 80%) with their educational paths and acquired skills as well as later on with the professional career they developed.

Some suggestions can be made regarding future study developments. The selection of the sample is not, in the case of Portugal, ideal for the Portuguese reality. Given the number of respondents and the age distribution of the sample, some of the conclusions are not possible to produce. Having a sample with a wide range of ages makes it impossible to conclude about the perceptions and experiences of younger and older generations. Respondents were in contact with different structures of VET programmes and different social conceptions that may have led to a different opinion on some key points. It is also important that the sample allows for a deeper analysis of the socio-economic backgrounds of individuals, to analyse if there are patterns in the distribution of students between the two offers in terms of socio-demographic variables.

A longitudinal and detailed study on this theme would be fundamental to follow the evolution in the perceptions and experiences of the individuals,

providing at the same time essential data for the development and updating of VET policies.

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