ETF meeting | Harnessing youth employability in the Western Balkans
5th April
Why? The policy challenge in Portugal

- Still half of the adult population (aged 25-64) have not completed upper-secondary education (53% in 2016, Eurostat).
- Only 33% of the aged 25-34 have completed secondary education (OECD 2016).
- Almost 500,000 people are illiterate (2011 Census).
Why? The policy challenge in Portugal

- Significant problems in basic skills (literacy, numeracy and digital skills).

- Facing obstacles to get in the labour market and to achieve full social integration.

- The less qualified tend not to participate in Life Long Learning (LLL) activities (the low-skills trap).
What? The Qualifica Programme

▪ **Main objectives**
  ▪ Raise the qualification level of adults and their employability;
  ▪ Increase digital and functional literacy;
  ▪ Better align the training provision with labour market needs;
  ▪ Facilitate tailored training pathways that lead to raising the qualification level of adults (better combining Recognition, Validation and Certification of Competences – RVCC- with adult education and training).

▪ **Target groups**
  ▪ Less qualified adults;
  ▪ Unemployed people;
  ▪ Young NEET.
The Qualifica Programme

- **Goals until 2020**
  - 300 Qualifica Centres in 2017;
  - 50% of the active population with upper secondary education;
  - 15% of adults in LLL activities;
  - 600,000 adults involved by 2020.
- Presently, the network encompasses **310 Qualifica Centres**
The Qualifica Centres

- Play a key role in motivating adults for LLL and in the local networks for qualification (employers, ET providers, municipalities).
- Provide information and guidance to adults (18 or over and NEET) to:
  - RVCC processes (including at least 50 hours of complementary training)
  - or education and training pathways,
  - both for academic and/or professional, levels 1 to 4 of the NQF
- Implement RVCC processes that allow adults to certify prior learning acquired in formal, non-formal and informal contexts.
Key stakeholders of the Qualifica

- A diversified network of Qualifica Centres: Public Employment Services and VET Centres, Public Schools and Professional Schools, other organizations

- Increasing local engagement with community associations, municipalities, ET providers and employers.
Key tools of the Qualifica


An online tool for LLL guidance using credit accumulation and transfer - ongoing developments based on the National Credit System for VET
Qualifica main results – 2017 – 2022 (January)

- 723,919 enrolments in Qualifica centres
- 87% (632,102) of them (enrolments) have already had their skills assessed (Lifelong Guidance and referral)
- Adults were predominantly (477,521) oriented to ET pathways (tailored learning offer)
- More than 150,000 adults are in RVCC processes and around 47% (72,146) attained a certification
Intervention stages of a Qualifica Centre

(step 1) – Assessing Skills
(step 2) – Tailored learning offer
(step 3) – Validation and Recognition
Coherence within the National Qualifications System (NQS)

The NQF, in force since 2010 and referenced to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), is a unique reference tool to classify all qualifications produced in the national education and training system, regardless of the access pathways (general education, VET, RVCC, higher education). Regarding RVCC, NQF levels 1 to 4 are only granted in the case of a full certification.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NQF Level</th>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>EQF Level</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level 1</td>
<td>2nd cycle of basic education obtained via general education, VET pathways or RVCC</td>
<td>Level 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 2</td>
<td>3rd cycle of basic education (lower-secondary education) obtained via general education, VET pathways or RVCC</td>
<td>Level 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Level 3</td>
<td>Upper-secondary education obtained via general education, VET pathways or RVCC</td>
<td>Level 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 4</td>
<td>Upper-secondary education obtained via general education, VET pathways or RVCC</td>
<td>Level 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Level 5</td>
<td>Post-secondary non-higher education qualification with credits to pursue higher education studies</td>
<td>Level 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Level 6</td>
<td>Bachelor degree</td>
<td>Level 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Level 7</td>
<td>Master degree</td>
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<tr>
<td>Level 8</td>
<td>Doctorate degree</td>
<td>Level 8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Strengths and challenges in Adult Education, in general

- **Strengths**
  - increasing recognition on the importance of raising skill levels;
  - the positive effects of RVCC on the individual (self-esteem; motivation towards future learning);
  - return on skills and employability (especially when associated with training).

- **Challenges:**
  - achieving wide consensus regarding AE as a policy priority;
  - reducing the reliance on EU funds;
  - improving the social value/recognition of diplomas obtained via RVCC;
  - increasing the engagement of stakeholders, especially employers;
  - raising awareness on the benefits of learning so as to go beyond motivational barriers.
Thank you!

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