

Portugal: Technological Specialization Courses (TSC)

Introduction

Title: Technological Specialization Courses (TSC)

Country: Portugal

Type of tool: Non-superior post-secondary courses that issue a level 5 qualification (NQF).

Target group: People who have secondary degree of education (or equivalent), with a level 4 qualification (NQF), who had obtained approval in subjects of the 10th or 11th schooling year, who have been enrolled in 12th schooling year or who have a diploma of technological specialization of a higher education degree (or diploma) and wish to receive a professional re-qualification.

Potential transferability: Technological Specialization Courses are based on professional referentials that describe the knowledge, skills and competences to be developed by candidates enrolled in TSC. Transferability/Scalability is possible due to these referentials.

Organisation and description of the tool

TSC have a duration between 1200 and 1500 hours (one year), composed by **general and scientific training component** (to develop attitudes and behaviours suited to professionals with higher levels of qualification, adaptability to the labour market/companies and improve knowledge in science and technology – 15% of the curricula), **technological training component** (practical activities connected to technological domains and resolution of problems in working environment – 85% of the curricula) and **work based learning** (with a duration between 360 and 720 hours, where candidates can apply their knowledge and skills in practical activities of the professional profile under orientation, using techniques, equipment and materials that are part of the production or service provision processes).

TSCs are **non-higher post-secondary training** aimed at conferring level 5 professional qualification.

The approval in a CET confers a diploma of technological specialization.

The training plan of a CET integrates the components of general and scientific training, technological training and training in a work context.

Implementation

The **general and scientific** training component aims at developing appropriate attitudes and behaviours for professionals with a high level of professional qualification and adaptability to the world of work and enterprise and to perfect, where necessary, knowledge of the scientific domains that underpin technologies training area.

The **technological** training component integrates areas of a technological nature oriented to the understanding of practical activities and to the resolution of problems from the scope of professional practice.

Implementation

1. The training component in the context of work aims to apply the knowledge acquired to the practical activities of the respective professional profile and contemplates the execution of activities under orientation, using the techniques, equipments and materials that are integrated in the production processes of goods or services.
2. Training in the context of work can adopt different modalities of practical training in real working situation, namely internships.
3. Training in a work context is developed in partnership with the employment market.

Young people or adults who have one of the following qualifications may attend this training: a) Secondary education; b) 10th and 11th full years and enrolment in the 12th year; c) Level 3 professional qualification (structure of training levels laid down in Council Decision No 85/368/EEC of 16 July 1985) and level 4 of the National Qualifications Framework; d) Diploma of Technological Specialization or a degree of higher education that intends its professional requalification.

The certification consists of obtaining a **Level 5 qualification** and **Diploma of Technological Specialization**.

Individuals, who are not in their 12th year at the time of entry into the course, attend an additional training plan that gives them recognition of the secondary level of education.

Those who hold a Technological Specialization Diploma may compete for certain higher education courses, through a special competition, in establishments that recognize the credits obtained in the attended CET.

The CET have a duration between 1200 and 1560 hours, which corresponds to a year or a year and a half of training.

Description of the target group

People who have secondary degree of education (or equivalent), with a level 4 qualification (NQF), who had obtained approval in subjects of the 10th or 11th schooling year, who have been enrolled in 12th schooling year or who have a diploma of technological specialization of a higher education degree (or diploma) and wish to receive a professional re-qualification.

Policy context

The Government Programme has chosen as one of its fundamental objectives to promote the country's competitiveness with **social cohesion**, which requires the qualification of human capital, since this is in fact the determining factor of progress, especially in the context of knowledge and lifelong learning. For Portugal, this commitment is particularly relevant, given the low levels of schooling and professional qualification that still continue to characterize the majority of our working age population, despite progress in this area in recent decades. Increasing the skills and qualifications of the Portuguese dignifies teaching, promotes the creation of new opportunities and promotes both the growth of people and, therefore, the socio-cultural and economic growth of the Country, by enabling a qualified human resources competitiveness with social cohesion. In order to overcome this enormous challenge, Portugal must be able to better qualify its young people, in particular by combating the high rates of early school leaving (which means that today only about half of our young people between the ages of 20 and 24 have successfully completed secondary education) and giving new opportunities to adults, promoting their school recovery and professional requalification.

In the development of this purpose, the **knowledge** side must be reconciled, through education and training, with the component of **qualified professional insertion**. In this

Policy context

context, with a view to access to higher education and equal opportunities and with a view to bringing more young people and adults into the vocational education and training system, the Government has, among its programmatic commitments, expanded the provision of training throughout the life and for new publics and involve the institutions of higher education in the expansion of post-secondary education, in the dual perspective of articulation between the secondary and higher levels of teaching and crediting, for the purpose of pursuing higher studies, the training obtained in the courses of post-secondary specialization. As part of the «**New Opportunities**» initiative, as part of the National Employment Plan, the Government has set the minimum training benchmark for all young people in the 12th year of schooling, increasing the frequency in technological and vocational courses for at least half of young people in secondary education. The aim is not only to increase the educational levels of the new generations, but also to ensure that they do not enter the labour market without prior professional qualification aimed at the deficit professional profiles. By giving effect to these commitments, this decree-law promotes a profound reorganization of technological specialization courses in terms of access, training structure and conditions of entry into higher education for its graduates.

In this way, the training and learning components - in the technical, scientific and cultural fields - are added to the ever changing and demanding labour market. The implementation of these measures involves the **promotion of partnerships** between educational and training establishments, including secondary schools, vocational training centres, technological schools and higher education institutions, as well as the business environment and operators in the labour market, aiming to direct the learning to an effective professional insertion and also to ensure the recognition of those learning for the purpose of pursuing studies in higher education.

Impact for assesses

There is still no impact assessment of the technological specialization courses, but it can be said that in view of its curricular design and qualification level will be a response to the job market.

Link

<https://www.dges.gov.pt/pt/pagina/cursos-de-especializacao-tecnologica-cet>

Personal comments

The Technological Specialization Course (CET) is a non-higher post-secondary training that aims to qualify for level 5 of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). They are a response to the lack of specialization of some qualification areas.

Interviewee

Diana Silva – Trainer in ATEC – Escola de Formação (see also video interview).