



# Discussing RPL in Portugal

1. THE NATIONAL SYSTEM OF RECOGNITION,  
VALIDATION AND CERTIFICATION OF COMPETENCES

# Principles that inspired the building of the RVCC system

Two different forms of RPL within the system

1. Directed to School certification
2. Directed to Professional certification (Professional Framework built by the Portuguese Institute for Employment and Professional Training)

# Principles that inspired the building of the RVCC system

- ▶ The strategic document for adult education – 1998
- ▶ National agency for Adult Education – 2000
- ▶ Low qualification of Portuguese workers: a high % of active adult without compulsory education
- ▶ High % of low qualified adults, but still performing professional functions of some / high responsibility and complexity (19% of the active population back then)



Contexts of learning

- ▶ An issue of social justice

# Building the RVCC national system

- ▶ The national framework of competences levels B and S, for adults over 18 years old, equivalent to formal diplomas

(B = basic school. B1= 4<sup>th</sup>; B2 = 6<sup>th</sup> ; B3 = 9<sup>th</sup> grade)

(S = secondary, 12<sup>th</sup> grade)

- ▶ Scientific areas for B level: mathematics for life; Language and communication; Citizenship and employability; and ICT
- ▶ Scientific areas for S level: Citizenship and “professionalism”; Culture, Language and Communication; Society, technology and science

# Building the RVCC national system

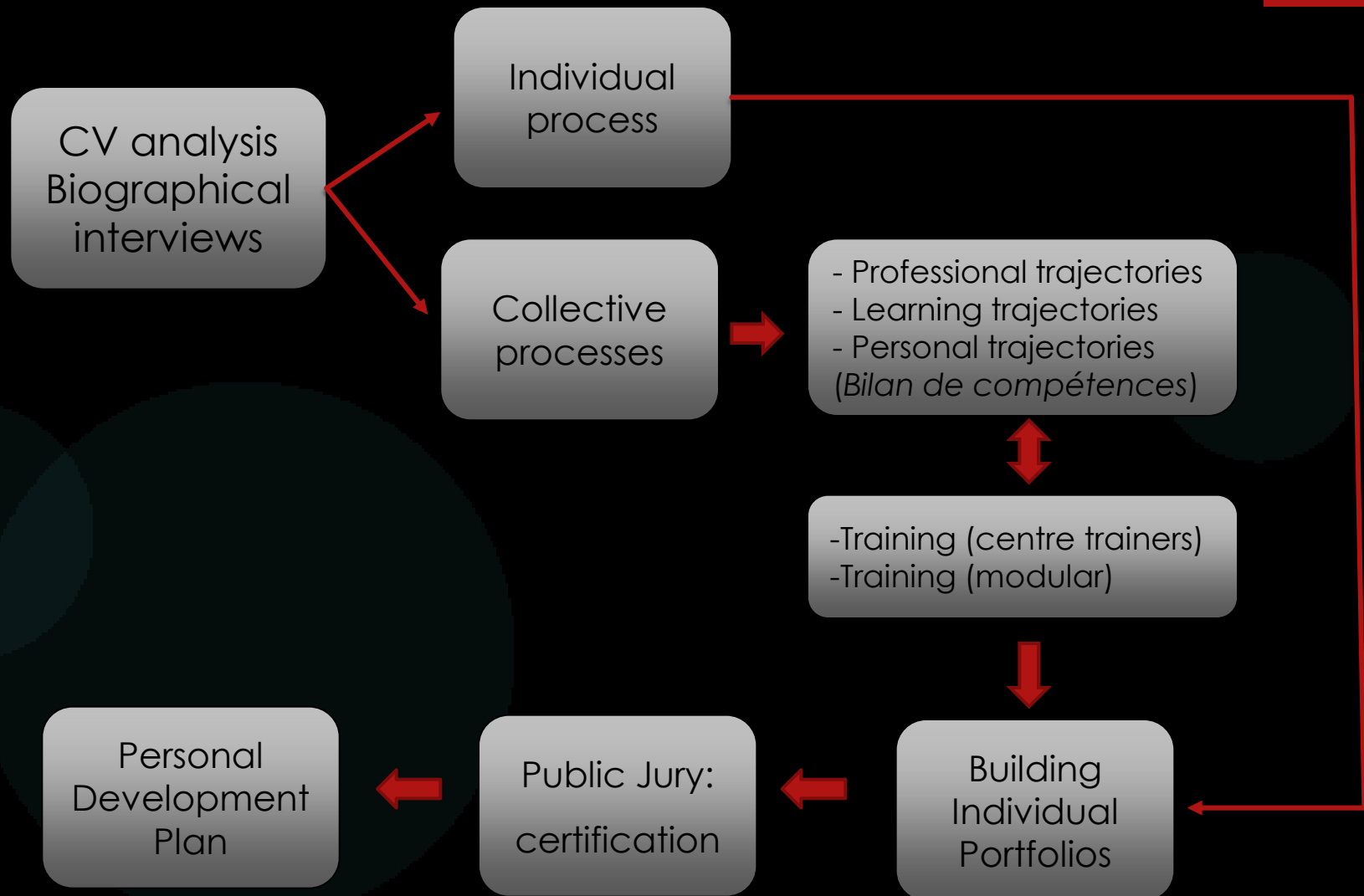
## Building a national network of RPL centres:

- ▶ 2001: first 6 experimental centre
- ▶ 2002/ January 2006: 84 centres
- ▶ These centres were promoted in civil society organisations, city halls, employment centres, etc. – **not allowed in schools** – that proved to be able to build processes based on adult education principles and methods (among other factors, such as infrastructures quality, partnerships, etc.)

# RPL centres: teams

- ▶ 1 Director
  - ▶ 1 Team's coordinator
  - ▶ 1 Administrative
  - ▶ 1 Financial administrative
  - ▶ 1 Diagnosis technician
  - ▶ RPL Professionals: 3 for B level; 2 for S level
  - ▶ Trainers: 2 for B level; 3 for S level
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- ▶ The external evaluator: did not belong to the centres; in each region there was a set of accredited people who did that function

# RPL centres: processes ("our processes")



# RPL centres: processes

- ▶ The importance of workplace RPL processes
- ▶ The importance of semantics

School / teachers / classes, etc. *versus* Centres / persons / working sessions, etc.

- ▶ Flexibility of functioning hours; flexibility of time for RPL processes, etc.
- ▶ RPL: not as a “plan” B for getting a formal diploma – the importance of public perceptions



# The RVCC national system: 2007-2011

2006: The new opportunities programme:

- ▶ “Massify to qualify”: in 2 years, from 84 to 480 centres (many opened under dubious conditions...)
- ▶ RPL centres or (fast) Training Centres?
- ▶ Most centres in schools
- ▶ Difficulties in control; in regulating the system, etc.
- ▶ Progressive public discredit: fast certifying; confusion on the nature of processes; RPL versus traditional school methods, etc.

# The RVCC national system: 2007-2011

- ▶ RPL was transformed into a battle terrain polarised by two leading political parties (or Government party/ opposition)
- ▶ The academia embarked / was dragged into this mined debate
- ▶ Spaces for critique were labelled as party political battle
- ▶ New government: RPL to CQEP (counselling and vocational training for young adults / kids from the professional school system)



# Discussing RPL in Portugal

## 2. RPL IN HIGHER EDUCATION

# RPL in Higher Education

- ▶ A direct consequence of the implementation of the Bologna processes
- ▶ Under a new Law, HEI had to build new certification forms
- ▶ HEI are autonomous to build their own, different RPL processes

# RPL in Higher Education: the UAlg processes

Students can ask accreditation to ECTS from:

1. Learning from other Portuguese HEI
2. Learning from other European HEI
3. Professional experience, non-formal learning, etc.

# RPL in Higher Education: the UAlg processes

Professional experience, non-formal learning:

- ▶ Students should build a **portfolio** that would show their experience, projects they have been involved in; or other elements organised by the applicant.

# RPL in Higher Education: the UAlg processes

Professional experience, non-formal learning: What follows?  
The Portfolio is evaluated by the

