

Research articles

Traineeships in vocational education: what the laws of Brazil and Portugal tell us

O estágio na educação profissional: o que nos diz as legislações do Brasil e de Portugal

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Abstract

The objective of this article is to analyze comparatively the Brazilian and Portuguese legislations that regulate internship in vocational education. It adopts a qualitative approach of documentary research, with analysis of current laws, structured in ten analytical categories and systematized in summary framework. The results show that Portugal guarantees universal remuneration to trainees through public funding, while Brazil restricts this right to non-compulsory internships. However, Brazilian law further details the rights of students and integrates the internship into the pedagogical project of the course. Although both recognize the internship as a relevant stage of transition to work, limits to its consolidation as an emancipatory pedagogical practice persist. It is concluded that there are divergences and convergences between the two cases, and that the strengthening of the role of educational institutions and pedagogical supervision is central for the internship to effectively contribute to integral training.

Keywords: vocational education; supervised traineeship; comparative legislation; comprehensive training.

Resumo

O objetivo do presente artigo consiste em analisar comparativamente as legislações brasileira e portuguesa que regulamentam o estágio na educação profissional. Adota abordagem qualitativa de pesquisa documental, com análise de leis vigentes, estruturada em dez categorias analíticas e sistematizada em quadro-síntese. Os resultados evidenciam que Portugal assegura remuneração universal aos estagiários via financiamento público, enquanto o Brasil restringe esse direito aos estágios não obrigatórios. Contudo, a lei brasileira detalha mais os direitos dos estudantes e integra o estágio ao projeto pedagógico do curso. Embora ambos reconheçam o estágio como etapa relevante de transição para o trabalho, persistem limites à sua consolidação como prática pedagógica emancipatória. Conclui-se que existem divergências e convergências entre os dois casos, e que o fortalecimento do papel das instituições de ensino e da supervisão pedagógica é central para que o estágio contribua efetivamente para a formação integral.

Palavras-chave: educação profissional; estágio supervisionado; legislação comparada; formação integral.

INTRODUCTION

The supervised curricular internship is a relevant component of professional education, enabling the articulation between scientific, technical and social knowledge in real work contexts. It is a learning space in which the student experiences concrete situations of future professional performance, favoring reflection on work, the profession and its social insertion.

For the internship to fulfill its formative function, it is essential to have legal frameworks that ensure its pedagogical character, define institutional responsibilities and protect the rights of students. Legislation should act as a mediation between school, student and the world of work, and may strengthen or weaken the educational potential of this experience.

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Data availability:

The research data is available in the body of the article. Study conducted at Universidade da Madeira (UMa), Funchal, Portugal.



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Comparative analysis of legislation regulating traineeships in vocational education in different national contexts allows the identification of advances, gaps and challenges, contributing to the review of public policies and institutional practices. The absence of consistent guidelines or excessive emphasis on technical-operational aspects can compromise the formative character of the internship, limiting it to simple job insertion.

In Brazil, the internship is regulated by Law No. 11.788/2008 (Brasil, 2008), which defines it as a supervised school educational act, applicable to professional education. In Portugal, the legal framework is linked to the legal regime for professional internships not subsidised by the State (Decree-Law No 66/2011, Portugal, 2011) and to the regulation of Professional Courses, which recognises Training in the Workplace (FCT) as a compulsory curricular component for professional certification at level 4 (Order No 235-A/2018).

It should be noted that the concepts of vocational education take on different configurations in the two countries. In Brazil, vocational education englobes high school, higher education and postgraduate education and articulates to the dimensions of work, science and technology, being called Vocational and Technological Education (PTE). In Portugal, it falls within the scope of Vocational Education and Training (VET), predominantly integrated into secondary education. These designations are not treated here as synonyms, but as contextual references for the analysis of the supervised professional traineeship – which is training experience carried out within the working environment.

Both Integrated High School in Brazil and Vocational Secondary Education in Portugal are formative pathways that articulate general education and vocational training, and are often sought as an access route to Higher Education. In both contexts, middle/secondary vocational education is also conceived as an instrument for economic development and social inclusion, with students from less well-off socio-economic backgrounds as a priority audience – which is why the comparison was chosen.

Thus, the objective that determined the constitution of this article is to analyze comparatively the Brazilian and Portuguese legislations related to internship in professional education, focusing on its formative and pedagogical dimension. It is intended to identify convergences and divergences regarding the definition, supervision, rights and duties associated with the internship, as well as reflect on the contribution of these regulations to the consolidation of the internship as an integral, critical and emancipatory training stage.

METHOD

This study adopted a qualitative approach, based on documentary research, with the aim of comparatively analyzing Brazilian and Portuguese legislation on internship in vocational education. The choice of this approach is justified by the nature of the object of study, which requires the recovery, analysis and systematic interpretation of legal documents on the subject.

Documentary research procedures

The documentary research, the central stage of this study, consisted of the survey, selection and analysis of the legal rules in force on internships in Brazil and Portugal until 2024. The focus was on official documents of a normative nature (laws, decrees, ordinances), which are primary sources for analysis.

To ensure timeliness and relevance, the following documentary selection criteria have been established: Documents in force and of a national nature; specific legislation on traineeships or regulating traineeships as an integral part of vocational education; Documents detailing rights, duties and procedures related to the traineeship activity.

The documentary sources analysed were: In Brazil: Law No 11 788 of 25 September 2008 (known as the 'Traineeship Law'), the main regulatory framework for the sport in the country; in Portugal: the analysis was based on two existing and complementary pieces of legislation: Decree-Law No 66/2011 of 1 June 2011 laying down the legal arrangements for professional traineeships not subsidised by the State, with a view to supplementing training and facilitating integration into the labour market; and Ordinance No. 235-A/2018, of August 23, which establishes the organization and functioning of Professional Courses in Secondary

Education, regulating Training in Work Context (FCT) as an essential curricular component for professional certification level 4.

Analysis and comparison process

The analysis of the legal documents was guided by analytical categories constructed from the objectives of the study. Ten main categories have been established: 1. Structure and offer of vocational education in each country; 2. Existence and scope of specific legislation on traineeships; 3. Concept and purpose of the traineeship presented in the laws; 4. Planning and formalisation of the traineeship process; 5. Institutional oversight process; 6. Evaluation and monitoring process; 7. Duties and rights of the actors involved (student, educational institution, grantor); 8. remuneration; 9. Incorporation of the traineeship as a formative and pedagogical stage (as opposed to a purely technical or work-related vision) and; 10. Predominant normative approach. It was thus possible, at the end of the study, to present a comparative analysis indicating convergences and divergences in the legislative approaches of the two countries, serving as an empirical basis for the discussions and conclusions presented.

The comparative analysis was carried out by systematically comparing the legal provisions of each country in relation to each category. For each of the ten analytical categories, the articles or items specific to Brazilian and Portuguese legislation were identified, extracting the concepts, definitions, rights, duties and procedures provided. This extraction allowed the construction of Chart 1, which summarises the similarities and differences between the two countries in a structured way. In the interpretation of the data, it was considered not only the legal text itself, but also the political-educational context of each country and the specialized literature on internship and vocational education.

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Contemporary society is marked by economic, social and technological transformations that redefine labor relations and impose new demands on the training of workers. In this context, Professional Education is consolidated as a priority in educational public policies, both in Brazil and Portugal, especially since the 1990s, when both countries significantly expanded the offer of this modality (Vieira et al., 2018).

Vocational education is characterized as a teaching modality focused on training for the world of work, which articulates scientific, technological, cultural and social knowledge, with a view to the integral formation of students. It is a broad educational field, ranging from professional qualification courses and mid-level technicians to undergraduate and postgraduate technological courses. It is therefore not restricted to technical courses, even if these are the most socially visible (Albuquerque; Moraes, 2020).

This expanded conception of vocational training requires understanding vocational education as a space of articulation between education and work, in a logic that overcomes the dichotomy between propaedeutic training and vocational training. This understanding is shared by Brazilian and Portuguese studies that defend integral education as a structuring principle of vocational education (Frigotto et al., 2005; Almeida, 2016; Barbosa, 2023).

In professional education, one should seek a formation of the human being who will act in the world of work, being this subject stimulated to reflect, act, be active and transform their reality. Their training process should include values related to culture, science and technology, not just “doing” work. For this, it is necessary to understand that we are talking about work as an educational principle.

Work as an educational principle does not represent training for this labour market, for the purchase and sale of life force, nor does it represent training for the exercise of certain restricted and limited trades, characteristics of a mechanistic formation that contributes to the subjugation of the proletariat and the crystallization of hegemony in an unequal class system (Campos; Carneiro, 2021, p. 8).

In this sense, the internship can be perceived as the first opportunity to experience the conception of work as an educational principle. After all, the internship is the first access to the

Chart 1. Comparative analysis of legislation on traineeships in vocational education: Brazil vs. Portugal.

Analytical axis	Brazil	Portugal	Convergence/ Divergence
Structure and provision of vocational education	Integrated into basic and higher education systems, with public and private offer, regulated by general and specific educational legislation of the EPT.	Organized within the scope of the Professional Courses and the dual training system, with strong articulation between schools and companies.	Divergent
Existence and scope of traineeship legislation	General Traineeship Law (Law No. 11.788/2008), applicable to all levels and modalities of education.	Fragmented legislation, with specific regulations for Vocational Education, such as Ordinance No. 235-A/2018.	Divergent
Concept and purpose of the traineeship	Supervised educational act, integrated into the pedagogical project of the course, with formative purpose.	Training in Work Context (FCT) as a curricular component focused on qualification and professional insertion.	Partially convergent
Planning and formalisation	Activity plan and end-of-commitment as mandatory pedagogical and legal tools.	FCT curricular plan with objectives, competences and activities formalized by protocol.	Convergent
Institutional supervision	Shared supervision between the mentor and supervisor of the granting party.	Accompaniment by tutor of the granting authority, with articulation with the guiding teacher.	Convergent
Evaluation and monitoring	Mandatory periodic reports, without evaluative criteria explained in the legislation.	Intermediate and final reports required, also without normative pedagogical parameters.	Convergent
Rights and duties of the actors involved	Normative detail of the rights of the trainee (journey, recess, insurance), with implicit duties.	Emphasis on the duties of the trainee (assignment, obedience, care of goods), with basic guarantees.	Divergent
Remuneration	Mandatory only for non-compulsory traineeships; value defined by agreement between the parties.	Compulsory state-funded training grant for all trainees.	Divergent
Pedagogical incorporation of the traineeship	Emphasis on the educational and formative dimension, associated with the pedagogical project and student protection.	Functional and professional emphasis, geared towards employability and certification.	Divergent
Predominant normative approach	Pedagogical and regulatory centrality, with prevention of misuse of the internship as an employment relationship.	Professionalising centrality, aligned with active labour market policies.	Divergent

Source: Own elaboration, based on Law No. 11.788/2008 (Brasil, 2008) and Ordinance No. 235-A/2018 (Portugal, 2018).

world of work, the initial moment of construction of a professional identity, where technical skills need to be intertwined and developed with the values and worldview of the student, in order to enable him to reflect critically on his professional choice, his human existence and how all this can impact the society in which he is inserted.

The structure of vocational education in Brazil

As already explained, the discussion on vocational education in Brazil will be carried out on the basis of the Law on Guidelines and Bases for National Education (LDB – Law No 9.394/1996), which establishes, in Article 39, Vocational and Technological Education as one that ‘in fulfilment of the objectives of national education, integrates the different levels and modalities of education and the dimensions of work, science and technology’ (Brasil, 1996). The regulation of supply is detailed in Decree No. 5.154/2004, which defines the three levels of EPT:

1. Initial and Continuing Training (FIC): “[...] initial and continuing training courses for workers” aimed at “[...] qualification, requalification and re-professionalisation” (Brasil, 2004, Art. 1, I), accessible regardless of prior education.
2. Medium-level technical vocational education: according to the LDB, this stage covers ‘medium-level technical vocational education courses’ (Brasil, 1996, Art. 39, §2, II), offered in integrated, concurrent or subsequent modalities, according to the articulation with High School.
3. Technological Vocational Education: comprises “[...] undergraduate and postgraduate technological vocational education courses” (Brasil, 1996, Art. 39, §2, III), including higher technology courses (technologists).

The organization of the technical and technological offer is structured according to the 13 Technological Axis defined by the National Catalogue of Technical Courses (CNCT), whose objectives are curricular articulation and formative permeability. This configuration gives the EPT an integrative character, since it is not organized as a parallel system, but as a constitutive part of Brazilian educational policy. In this perspective, vocational training is conceived in an articulated way to general education, seeking to overcome the historical separation between propaedeutic education and work education.

Thus, the structure of Professional Education in Brazil is characterized by the articulation between education and work, by the diversity of offers and training paths and by integration into the broader educational system. It is guided by legal and pedagogical principles aimed at the professional qualification and comprehensive training of students.

The structure of vocational education in Portugal

In Portugal, vocational education is part of the national education system and is predominantly organized in secondary education, assuming a strategic role in the qualification of young people and in the articulation between education and the world of work. Unlike the Brazilian context, Portuguese vocational education is not configured as a transversal modality at all levels of education, but as a specific route of training in secondary education, regulated by a set of legal norms.

The Professional Education offer is structured in two main levels, as detailed in Ordinance no. 235-A/2018, of August 23:

1. Vocational secondary education: The Professional Courses (CP) are “[...] secondary education courses, which confer a double certification – school and professional” (Portugal, 2018, Art. 3(a)). They have a duration of 3100 hours, organised into the following training components:
 - Socio-cultural training: subjects of Portuguese language, foreign language, integration area, information and communication technologies and physical education, totaling 1000 hours.
 - Scientific training: Two to three subjects in the course area, with 500 hours.
 - Technical Training: three to four specific technical disciplines, with 1180 hours.
 - Work-Based Training (WCF): compulsory internship of 420 hours, ‘aimed at the application and development of the skills acquired during the training’ (Portugal, 2018, Art. 7(1)).

2. Higher Vocational Education: This level consists of the Professional Higher Technical Courses (CTSP), regulated by Decree-Law No. 63/2016, of 13 September. These courses, taught in polytechnic higher education institutions, have a duration of 4 semesters (120 ECTS) and confer a diploma of professional superior technician, corresponding to level 5 of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). The traineeship is a structuring element, with 'a work-based training component, namely in the form of a traineeship, with a minimum duration of 30 ECTS' (Portugal, 2016, Article 8(2)), which is equivalent to 750 hours.

A central aspect of the Portuguese system is the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), established by Decree-Law No 396/2007 of 31 December 2007 and aligned with the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). This instrument organises qualifications at eight levels, ensuring their comparability and transparency at European level, with dual certification of Professional Courses falling under level 4 and CTSPs falling under level 5.

Thus, the structure of vocational education in Portugal is characterized by a specific normative organization, strongly anchored in secondary education and articulated to the National Qualifications System. It is oriented towards professional certification and employability, while integrating into the national education system through its own and updated legal diplomas.

Finally, in Portugal, VET is conceived as a strategic axis for the qualification of the young and adult population, with a strong emphasis on the connection to the labour market through mandatory practical components (FCT and internship), within an updated regulatory framework and articulated with European policies.

SUPERVISED CURRICULAR STAGE

The curricular component supervised internship is a fundamental moment in the formation of Professional Education, by articulating the theoretical knowledge constructed in the school environment with the practice in real work contexts. According to Pimenta and Lima (2012), the internship integrates the student's training process as a space for critical analysis of professional performance, overcoming the conception of mere practical application. It is thus pedagogical and social in nature, as it contributes to the construction of professional identity and the development of technical and transversal skills.

The specialized literature emphasizes that the internship is not limited to the fulfillment of a curricular requirement, but constitutes a privileged space for learning, mediation and reflection on professional practice (Araújo; Frigotto, 2015; Aroeira; Pimenta, 2018; Barbosa, 2023; Cruz; Carneiro; Barreto, 2022; Pacheco; Masetto, 2007; Silva; Sales, 2012). This conception aligns with the perspective of work as an educational principle, a conceptual basis that guides integral training in EPT, as it enables the student to experience, reflect and critically intervene in the work reality.

Considering the centrality of the internship in vocational training, in this topic, it is analyzed comparatively the Brazilian and Portuguese legislations that regulate this formative stage, with the aim of identifying convergences, divergences and gaps in their pedagogical conception, supervision, remuneration and articulation with the training project of the courses.

The internship in Brazilian legislation

Even considering that EPT establishes a direct relationship with the world of work and has as one of its epistemological bases work as an educational principle, in Brazil (Brasil, 2007), there is no specific legislation for internship in this type of teaching. Therefore, in this topic, the discussion turns to the Brazilian legislation that regulates any and all internship process, whether in the EPT or in any other teaching modality, which include courses in which one has internship as a mandatory curricular stage.

In Brazil, traineeships are regulated by Law No 11 788 of 25 September 2008, known as the 'Traineeship Law'. This legislation applies to all levels of education, including vocational and technological education (VET), and defines internship as a 'supervised educational act, developed in the working environment, aimed at preparing for productive work' (Brasil, 2008, Art. 1). This definition represents an advance in explicitly recognizing the pedagogical character of the internship, distancing it from the notion of employment relationship.

The law lays down two types of traineeship: Compulsory and non-compulsory. The mandatory internship is the one provided for in the pedagogical project of the course as a requirement for obtaining the diploma, while the non-compulsory one is configured as an optional activity, added to the regular workload (Brasil, 2008, Art. 2). Among the main advances in legislation, the following stand out:

- o Pedagogical supervision: requires the appointment of a guiding teacher by the educational institution and a supervisor by the granting party, responsible for monitoring the activities of the trainee (Art. 7 and 9).
- o Work plan and end-of-commitment: determines the elaboration of a plan of activities linked to the pedagogical project of the course and the conclusion of an agreement between the educational institution, the granting party and the student (Art. 3).
- o Labour protections: sets a daily limit (maximum 6 hours per day for Higher Education and 4 hours for High School), personal accident insurance and the granting of paid recess after one year of internship (Arts. 10 and 13).

This law also improved the relationship of legal certainty for the relationship between the three parties: company, educational institution and trainee, each party with a specific chapter detailing duties and rights.

However, there are relevant gaps in the legislation, especially as regards remuneration, which is compulsory only for non-compulsory traineeships. The absence of remuneration in the curricular internships may exclude low-income students – a priority public of the EPT –, which runs counter to the principles of full education and socio-economic inclusion. Another weakness concerns the absence of clear mechanisms of articulation between institutional supervisor and company supervisor, as well as parameters for the formative evaluation of the traineeship.

Among the advances of the 2008 legislation, from the point of view of contributing to the internship that is constituted as a formative stage, we highlight the definition of the number of trainees per company, the requirement of supervisor with training or experience in the area, the limit of trainees per supervisor and the obligation of insurance and recess.

Traineeship in Portuguese legislation

In Portugal, the internship assumes its own characteristics in the field of vocational education, being directly associated with the Training in Work Context (FCT), compulsory curricular component of the Professional Courses. The FCT is regulated by Ordinance no. 235-A/2018, which defines its organization, workload and guiding principles, establishing that this component is indispensable for the completion of the course and for obtaining the Diploma of Professional Qualification level 4 of the National Qualifications Framework.

The Training in Work Context integrates the curriculum of the Professional Courses as a structured space of practical learning, and must be articulated with the exit professional profile and with the references defined in the National Catalogue of Qualifications (Portugal, 2017). It is carried out in entities outside the school, through formalized protocols that involve systematic pedagogical monitoring and joint evaluation between the educational institution and the host entity.

In addition to the FCT, the legal regime for professional internships not subsidised by the State is defined by Decree-Law No 66/2011, which lays down general principles applicable to internship experiences in Portugal. Although this diploma is not restricted to the educational system, it constitutes the normative framework that disciplines the insertion of trainees in real work contexts. It therefore reinforces the need for clear definition of training objectives, duration, supervision and rights of trainees.

Among the main features of the current Portuguese legislation, the following stand out:

- o Remuneration provided by the State: unlike Brazil, Portuguese legislation provides for the award of a training grant to all trainees, corresponding to 30% of the national minimum wage, paid by the Ministry of Education. This measure aims to reduce economic barriers and ensure universal access to the internship experience.

- o Explicit pedagogical integration: FCT must be included in the curriculum of the course, with clear definition of objectives, skills to be developed, activities to be carried out and evaluation criteria, ensuring its articulation with theoretical training.
- o Shared supervision: the law provides for the role of guardian in the host entity and of the school's supervising teacher, both of whom are responsible for the pedagogical monitoring and assessment of the trainee.
- o Protection scheme and rights: trainees are entitled to occupational accident insurance, time limits and occupational safety and health conditions on a similar basis to workers.

However, the Portuguese legislation also has limitations. Although it guarantees remuneration, it does not sufficiently detail the mechanisms of continuous pedagogical articulation between school and company, nor does it deepen the reflective and critical dimension of the internship, and is sometimes restricted to a logic of immediate professional integration.

Brazil-Portugal comparative analysis: convergences and distinctions

The comparative analysis of the Brazilian and Portuguese legislations that regulate internship in the field of Vocational Education shows relevant convergences, associated with common concerns with the practical training of students, as well as significant divergences, which reflect different public policy options, pedagogical conceptions and socio-economic contexts. Despite the time differences and the fact that the Portuguese legislation is specific to vocational education, while the Brazilian one is more comprehensive, it is possible to identify elements that favour – or limit – the implementation of the traineeship as a formative and pedagogical stage.

Among the main convergences, we highlight, first of all, the recognition of the internship as a training component. Both systems move away from the concept of internship as a mere employment relationship, integrating it into the educational process. In Brazil, internship is defined as a supervised school educational act, while in Portugal, Training in Work Context (FCT) is recognized as an essential element of Professional Courses, reinforcing the articulation between theory and practice.

Another convergence refers to the requirement of planning and formalization instruments. The two legislations determine the obligation of documents that organize the internship, such as activity plans, terms of commitment or protocols, with definition of objectives, competences, duration and responsibilities. These instruments aim to ensure pedagogical coherence and legal certainty for all parties involved.

Shared supervision is also a common point. In both countries, a mentor of the educational institution and a supervisor or guardian of the grantor are expected to act, although with different levels of detail regarding the responsibilities and the articulation between these agents. Similarly, the two legislations provide for the use of reports as tools for monitoring and validating the traineeship, although they do not specify pedagogical criteria for their preparation, delegating this function to educational institutions.

There is also convergence regarding the guarantee of basic protections for trainees, such as limitation of the day, accident insurance and safety conditions at work, accompanied by a concern with the legal certainty of companies. In the Portuguese case, this concern is expressed more explicitly in the emphasis on the duties of the trainee, such as attendance, punctuality and care for the assets of the host entity.

As far as the differences are concerned, the most significant concern remuneration. In Portugal, all trainees are entitled to a state-funded training grant. In Brazil, in turn, remuneration is compulsory only in non-compulsory internships, and curricular internships are dependent on institutional agreements. This difference reveals different public policy options, with greater concern for equity in the Portuguese case. Another relevant divergence relates to the pedagogical approach. The Brazilian legislation emphasizes the internship as an integral part of the pedagogical project of the course, with greater detail of the rights of the trainee and concern for their protection. The Portuguese legislation privileges professional integration and certification, giving the FCT a more professional and oriented character for the transition to the labour market.

Also noteworthy is the difference in normative specificity. Portugal has its own regulations for vocational education, while Brazil adopts a general law applicable to all levels and modalities of education, which may limit the adequacy to the particularities of Vocational and Technological Education. Finally, both legislations have shortcomings with regard to continuous pedagogical follow-up in the workplace, which may undermine the training potential of the traineeship. Chart 1 provides a summary of the comparative analysis of legislation in the two countries considering the 10 categories set out in the methodology.

The convergences reveal a common understanding of internship as an interface between school and work, but the divergences highlight different challenges. In Brazil, it is necessary to overcome the precariousness and lack of remuneration in mandatory internships, as well as to strengthen the continuous pedagogical articulation between supervisory agents. In Portugal, the challenge focuses on deepening the critical dimension of the traineeship, avoiding its reduction to a mere market adaptation tool, and on ensuring effective supervision in the workplace. In both contexts, greater pedagogical articulations and specific training of supervisors are needed.

CONCLUSION

This comparative study showed that Brazil and Portugal adopt different but complementary approaches in the regulation of internship in vocational education. Portugal privileges the material guarantee, ensuring universal remuneration financed by the State and a structured curricular integration through Training in Work Context (FCT). Brazil, in turn, emphasizes the pedagogical dimension of the internship, integrating it into the training project of the courses and presenting greater detail in the legal protection of the trainee.

The main divergences – concerning pay, normative specificity and pedagogical or vocational focus – reflect different policy options and educational priorities. The convergences identified, such as the recognition of internship as a training component, the requirement for planning tools, shared supervision and basic protections for students, reveal a common understanding of internship as an interface between school education and the world of work.

Despite these advances, both legislations have gaps that limit the consolidation of the internship as an integral formative stage. In Brazil, the absence of remuneration in compulsory internships can exclude low-income students, undermining the principle of equity. In Portugal, the strong emphasis on certification and professional insertion can obscure the critical and reflective dimension of the formative experience.

For the strengthening of the internship as a space of critical and emancipatory training, it is recommended: in Brazil, the revision of the funding model, ensuring remuneration in all internships; in Portugal, the strengthening of direct pedagogical supervision in the workplace and the explicitation of training objectives that go beyond immediate employability; in both countries, the definition of national guidelines for the training of supervisors and for the formative assessment of the traineeship, considering not only technical skills, but also ethical, social and critical development.

It is understood that the regulation of traineeships in vocational education should transcend purely technical or bureaucratic approaches and explicitly affirm work as an educational principle. Although Brazilian and Portuguese legislation recognize internship as an educational act, the tension between the logic of critical learning and the logic of preparation for the market persists. Strengthening the role of educational institutions and pedagogical supervision is thus an essential condition for the internship to effectively contribute to the comprehensive, inclusive and socially referenced training of vocational education students.

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Authors contribution

TKGC: Conceptualization (idealization of the study, definition of questions and objectives), Methodology (methodological design of the research), Conducting the research, Writing (drafting the original manuscript), Making requested adjustments. LR: Project administration, Resources (provision of materials, equipment, and software), Review (critical review of the original manuscript and approval of the version to be submitted), Scientific Supervision.

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