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Eva D. Oliveira received her PhD in Organizational Behavior and in Human Resources Management; she is an assistant professor at the School of Economics and Management, Catholic University of Portugal. Currently, she is leading an ongoing internal project related to skills development among students in order to promote their employability and entrepreneurship.

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Abstract

Employability via competences and curricular innovation

More than 50 percent of Portuguese unemployed university graduates are out of work for more than six months (OECD 2009), while the OECD average is 42 percent. This suggests that universities need to do more to improve graduates' chances in the labour market, and in many ways, the Bologna reform provided European Union universities with an opportunity to tackle this issue. This paper describes the outcomes of the Bologna process at the Faculty of Management and Economics (Catholic University of Portugal) which started in 2005. Undergraduate degrees' length was shortened to 3 years, and strategies were implemented to improve graduates' employability. The main strategy was the competency-based approach of curricula development, and the creation of three courses dealing specifically with transferable skills development: critical thinking, communication and team work and systemic thinking.