

ApprEnt - National Report – Spain

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Introduction

In recent years, Spain has approved new regulations that aim to implement a new model of active employment policies, embodied in the Spanish Strategy for Employment Activation 2014-16 (EEAE). It is especially important to mention the publication in September 2015 of Act30/2015¹ regulating vocational training for employment which attempts to face the changes needed to modernize the production model and place Spain on a sustainable path of growth thus generating stable and quality employment for all.

Dual training was also reinforced with a new regulation² on certain aspects of the training and apprenticeship contract. Despite the low number of this type of contracts, not more than 1%, there has been a significant increase of 25% since 2014, coinciding with the new regulatory development.

Regional authorities may initiate public calls for validation of non-formal and informal learning, depending on local or sectoral labour market needs. These procedures empower citizens to engage in further learning and acquire full qualifications. Demand for recognition may be driven by company needs, social partner requests or minimum qualification requirements from sectoral regulatory bodies.

Adults with no qualification may have their skills recognised or acquire a formal qualification through training. Key competences tests for advanced VET programmes and professional certificate access have been developed. Online or virtual learning environments and platforms are being developed to ease access to VET programmes.

Reform in 2015 aims to increase CVET quality and improve management of public funds dedicated to training for employment to prevent fraud. This is to be guaranteed through accreditation of VET providers and by offering training leading to formal qualifications. Monitoring training outcomes, including transition to employment, will also support training quality; a common training database is being developed for this. Social partners and regional authorities participate in CVET quality assurance.

¹ Head of State (2015). Ley 30/2015, de 9 de septiembre, por la que se regula el sistema de formación profesional para el empleo en el ámbito laboral [Act 30/2015, of September 9, which regulates the vocational training for employment system in the labour scope]. *Boletín Oficial del Estado*, No 217, 10.9.2015, pp. 79779-79823
<https://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2015/09/10/pdfs/BOE-A-2015-9734.pdf>

² MEYSS (2015a). Orden ESS/41/2015, de 12 de enero, por la que se modifica la Orden ESS/2518/2013, de 26 de diciembre, por la que se regulan los aspectos formativos del contrato para la formación y el aprendizaje [Order ESS/41/2015 of 12 January, amending Order ESS / 2518/2013 of 26 December, by which the training aspects of the training and apprenticeship contract are regulated]. *Boletín Oficial del Estado*, No 21, 24.1.2015, pp. 5212-5216 <http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2015/01/24/pdfs/BOE-A-2015-599.pdf>

Apprenticeship schemes

There are different types of settings and arrangements in which apprenticeship models or perspectives can be identified:

Vocational education and training (VET) system

The Spanish VET system is organized at 'basic' (lower secondary), 'intermediate' (upper secondary) and 'higher' (tertiary) levels.

VET is based on learning outcomes with a strong focus on work-based learning, following ECVET guidelines. The fact that they are taught in schools does not imply the loss of their practical nature, since the setup of VET programmes involves compliance with the required equipment and facilities that make workshops, classrooms and laboratories resemble real workplaces, and in some cases, teachers and students simulate real working environments.

The arrangements for the different VET levels are very similar in many aspects, all last 2.000 hours in two academic years and often take place in the same institutions.

Similarly, all VET studies include a compulsory work placement module (formación en centros de trabajo – FCT) that takes place in a company (students with previous work experience may be exempt). The duration of this module is set in the official curriculum of each training cycle, and varies from 240 hours in basic VET to 400h in the two other VET programmes.

Dual VET or apprenticeship

In recent years, a great effort has been made to introduce and develop alternance training models, dual VET, to promote youth employment and acquisition of a vocational qualification. Various regulations³ have been passed aiming to strengthen the links between companies and

³ Ministry of the Presidency (2012). Real Decreto 1529/2012, de 8 de noviembre, por el que se desarrolla el contrato para la formación y el aprendizaje y se establecen las bases de la formación profesional dual [Royal Decree 1529/2012 which sets the rules for the training and apprenticeship contract and the basis of Dual Vocational Training]. Boletín Oficial del Estado , No 270, 9.9.2012, pp. 78348-78365.

<https://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2012/11/09/pdfs/BOE-A-2012-13846.pdf>

MEYSS (2014). Orden ESS/2518/2013, de 26 de diciembre, por la que se regulan los aspectos formativos del contrato para la formación y el aprendizaje [Order ESS/2518/2013 of 26 December, which regulates the training aspects of the training and apprenticeship contract]. Boletín Oficial del Estado , No 10, 11.1.2014, pp. 1560-1568. <https://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2014/01/11/pdfs/BOE-A-2014-317.pdf>

MEYSS (2015a). Orden ESS/41/2015, de 12 de enero, por la que se modifica la Orden ESS/2518/2013, de 26 de diciembre, por la que se regulan los aspectos formativos del contrato para la formación y el aprendizaje [Order ESS/41/2015 of 12 January, amending the Order ESS / 2518/2013 of 26 December, by which the

VET providers, to bring them to work together and to encourage greater involvement of students in the labour market during their training period.

Due to the improvement and increase of dual projects in intermediate and higher VET programmes the number of students, training centres and companies involved in this kind of VET provision has been growing since 2012-13, though they still are a minority.

In Spain, dual VET is shaped into two forms:

A) Training and apprenticeship contracts

They can be delivered by the education and employment systems. The aim of the training and apprenticeship contract is that workers become professionally qualified through work-linked training schemes which combine work with training.

Workers aged 16-25 can be beneficiaries, although, until the unemployment rate drops below 15%, the age span is extended to 30. At least 25% (first year) or 15% (subsequent years) of the training is devoted to acquiring new skills in a specialised training centre or in the company.

As of January 2016, all training associated with a training and apprenticeship contract must be linked to a VET qualification programme (VET diploma or occupational certificate, see below), so that these workers can receive training leading to Professional Certificates and VET Diplomas within the company itself - if that company complies with the requirements to be accredited as a training centre, which ensures the worker obtains recognition of their training, without having to attend additional training in accredited centres.

The features of the dual modality training within the training and apprenticeship contract scheme within the employment subsystem are:

- the company provides the trainee with a job related to the professional profile of the vocational training qualification and ensures he/she attends the training programmes established for the training activity;
- the company is responsible for monitoring the agreement for the training activity, and the coordination of training and job activities;
- the worker must meet the training access requirements of the qualification;
- the training institution appoints a tutor who is responsible for the planning and monitoring of the learning programme and assessment criteria, and the coordination of the in-company training and development of the learning agreement with, both, the company and the worker;

training aspects of the training and apprenticeship contract are regulated]. Boletín Oficial del Estado , No 21, 24.1.2015, pp. 5212-5216

<http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2015/01/24/pdfs/BOE-A-2015-599.pdf>

- at the end of the apprenticeship training period, the worker is exempt from the compulsory on-the-job training module included in the VET qualifications;
- the minimum contract duration is one year; the maximum three. However, the duration of the contract may vary, depending on the collective agreement of the company and on organizational or production needs. In any case, contract duration may not be less than six months or exceed three years;
- the actual working time, calculated on an annual basis, shall not exceed 75%, during the first year, or 85 %, during the second and third years.

Participating companies sign a training agreement with both the training institution and the worker (student), which is annexed to his/her contract. Those responsible for the training, in the training institution and company are specified in the agreement, as well as the characteristics and contents of the learning programme.

Possible case studies: Universidad Rey Juan Carlos, Universidad Francisco de Vitoria – CETYS, Universidad Politécnica de Madrid (<http://www.alianzafpdual.es/>)

B) A scholarship and learning agreement

Within the education authority dual VET, a training and apprenticeship contract is not compulsory. Regional education authorities can choose instead to use learning agreements between the company, the school and the learner to ensure joint participation of educational institutions and companies. Participating institutions must be authorised by the competent regional education authorities. The learning agreement must comply with the prescribed working and training conditions. Some of its main features are:

- the company will participate in a minimum of 33% of the training hours fixed in the qualification. The maximum share is 85%;
- the duration of the learning programme can be extended from the usual two years to three; □ before starting at the company, students have to attend training in a training centre;
- student assessment is the responsibility of the teachers at school or VET institution, considering the opinion of in-company tutors & trainers and work performance.

The Learning Agreement must comply with the prescribed working and training conditions. Some of its main features are:

- the company will participate in a minimum of 33% of the training hours established in the qualification. The maximum share is 85%;
- the duration of the learning programme can be extended from the usual 2 years to 3;
- before taking part in apprenticeship at the company, students have to attend training in a training centre;

- student assessment is the responsibility of the teachers at school or VET institution, taking into account the opinion of in-company tutors & trainers and work performance.

At present, in the education system, all intermediate and advanced VET-Diploma programmes include a compulsory workplace module amounting to at least 20% of total duration. Dual VET principles in the learning agreement move towards an increase of workplace-training time so that job placements become a real immersion into the working environment allow students to acquired professional qualifications. The conditions and basic requirements for its further development are to be regulated by the education authorities.

Continuing vocational education and training (CVET) programmes in the employment system

Vocational training for employment falls under the remit of the Employment Ministry and the regions. It comprises vocational training for both employed and unemployed people. It is regulated by the Act 30/2015 reforming vocational training for employment. It includes training programmes for professional retraining or for people that left education with no or low qualifications to improve their level of qualification

The Act 30/2015 does not make significant changes to the aims of the system: to support personal development, the upskilling and employability of the workforce, in particular of workers at risk, including supporting accreditation of skills acquired through training and work experience; and to contribute to increased productivity and competitiveness of companies. The key point is the change in governance. The new model leaves the system basically in hands of the government, thus substantially reducing the influence of social partners —both trade unions and employers' associations.

There are two main types of VET programmes, targeting people who do not hold any qualification (partial or full) or need to upskill so as to improve their employability:

- A) Programmes linked to the national catalogue of occupational standards (CNCP) which provide training to obtain an occupational certificate (Certificados de Profesionalidad in Spanish - CdP)

A major milestone in the shaping of vocational education and training in Spain was the Act 5/2002 on qualifications and vocational education and training (Ley Orgánica de las Cualificaciones y la Formación Profesional -LOCFP). Its main objective was the organisation of a comprehensive system of vocational training, qualifications and validation, meeting social and economic demands by different types of provision.

The backbone of VET is the National catalogue of occupational standards (Catálogo Nacional de Cualificaciones Profesionales –CNCP), which comprises the most important occupations of the Spanish sector. The catalogue is arranged in 26 professional branches. Occupational standards, (called *Cualificación Profesional* in the national context), consist of a set of

competence units (UCs) which lay down the expected behaviour of a job holder in the respective occupation. The UCs structure not only serves as a reference to the training programmes certification, but also helps to assess and validate work experience and non-formal or informal learning.

An occupational certificate⁴ is the official certification of a professional qualification granted by the employment authorities. It sets up a professional profile, a set of identifiable professional skills in the production system, recognised and valued in the labour market. Training to obtain an occupational certificate is usually delivered face to face. Since 2015, it is possible to access to many training programmes through virtual learning environments (e-learning platforms).

Occupational certificates programmes are offered by public training centres; private training centres accredited by SEPE⁵ or by the regional labour authorities and also by accredited foundations and intermediate structures created by social partners and NGOs.

CdP training providers must comply with certain requirements on trainers' recruitment, qualifications and professional experience; facilities and technological equipment; and entry criteria for trainees.

There are two ways of obtaining a CdP: through successfully undergoing a training programme or by a validation procedure for the recognition of work experience and non-formal learning which can also be delivered as part of a training and apprenticeship contract

CdP programmes are organised in three levels, being level 1 the most basic and level 3 the most complex. They have a modular structure with learning outcomes, assessment criteria and contents and guidelines for providers which are fully employment-oriented. Besides, each occupational certificate (CdP) includes a compulsory on-the-job training module (módulo de practicas no laborales - MPnL) that is carried out in a real productive setting and whose learning outcomes must be assessed in the workplace.

The total duration of the CdP programmes varies, according to the structure of competences and learning outcomes to be acquired, between 200 and 1.110 hours without reference to a specific academic year. The duration of the on-the job training module depends on the profile

⁴ MEYSS (2013) Orden ESS/1897/2013, de 10 de octubre, por la que se desarrolla el Real Decreto 34/2008, de 18 de enero, por el que se regulan los certificados de profesionalidad y los reales decretos por los que se establecen certificados de profesionalidad dictados en su aplicación [Order ESS/1897/2013, of October 10, developing Royal Decree 34/2008 of 18 January, by which occupational certificates are regulated and the royal decrees setting the aforementioned certificates dictated in its application]. Boletín Oficial del Estado, No 249, 17.10.2013, pp. 84275-84536.

<https://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2013/10/17/pdfs/BOE-A-2013-10861.pdf>

⁵ SEPE has a search engine to look for training centres which provide occupational certificates. SEPE. Búsqueda de Centros Entidades de formación. Especialidades Formativas [Search Training Center. Training courses].

<https://sede.sepe.gob.es/especialidadesformativas/RXBuscadorEFRED/InicioBusquedaTipoCentro.do>

and occupations included in the curriculum of each diploma, and it varies between 5% and 52% of the total workload of the training programme (30-160 hours).

Possible case studies: Although there are 29 universities that appear as registered in SEPE (some of them through their “Fundaciones”, very few offer CdPs. An interesting case study would be Universidad Politécnica de Madrid, which holds at least 64 (<http://www.sepe.sepe.gob>)

B) Training programmes not linked to the national catalogue of occupational standards (diplomas)

VET in the employment system also includes general or specialised training that does not lead to a formal qualification. The curriculum of all VET Diploma programmes contains a workplace module, making up a 20% of the total qualification’s training length. It is a stage of in-company learning which, as a rule, should be taken once passed all the rest of the training modules and it is mandatory to obtain the qualification.

Besides the specific skills (organised in training modules) for an occupation, VET programmes cover other types of skills (such as learning and employment opportunities, entrepreneurship, work organisation, basic health and safety as well as employment regulation, equal opportunities and non-discrimination of people with disabilities and the rights and duties that derive from industrial relations), to ease access to employment or reemployment

Training organised by companies for their employees falls under this category as it normally does not lead to an occupational standards certificate or other official certification.

Higher education institutions offering Permanent Education Programs

Spanish universities have ambitious and well-established programs of continuing or permanent education. They offer non-official degrees of different of length, (some of them of one or two years) and short continuing education courses. In both cases, the aim is to foster employability by designing programs that in some occasions include on-the-job training and incorporating outside professionals to the teaching staff of the programs. These programs are regulated through the University’ internal laws.

Case study: The Complutense University of Madrid has an extensive permanent education program: in 2016-17 we offered 182 different degrees and the 189 short continuing education courses. At present, the University is currently involved in an ongoing project of promoting our permanent education scheme through the creation of a new Permanent Education Center.

The UCM can be considered as a high education VET provider institution since a large proportion of our courses incorporate in their curricula the obligation of a work-based learning. We currently have 67 courses that include this dual design: 4 from the Arts and Humanity area, 17 from Health Sciences, 44 from Social Sciences and 2 in the Computer Science area. As an

example, we can mention or degree of Specialization in Interventions in Anxiety and Stress (<http://pendientedemigracion.ucm.es/info/masteran/experto/epracticass.htm>), in Audio-visual Production (<http://mpa.ccinf.es/index.php/2014-05-05-12-50-26>) or International Commerce (<http://www.ucm-mci.com/>).

Industrial doctorates (Ph.D)

The Spanish State Research Agency (AEI) announces annually the **Torres Quevedo** Aids that aim to hire doctors to develop industrial research projects, experimental development or previous feasibility studies, in order to stimulate demand in the private sector of personnel sufficiently prepared to undertake R&D&I plans and projects, and to help the consolidation of newly created technology companies.

The grants last for three years and the aid must be destined to co-finance the salary and the social insurance of the researchers, being the maximum intensities of the aid:

| | Small Enterprises | Medium Enterprises | Big Enterprises |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| Industrial research projects | 70% | 60% | 50% |
| Feasibility studies | 70% | 60% | 50% |
| Experimental development projects | 45% | 35% | 25% |

Other aids also convened by the AEI are the Industrial **Doctorate Grants**, aim to train doctors in companies by co-financing the employment contracts of research personnel in training who participate in an industrial research project or experimental development that takes place in the company, in which his doctoral thesis will be framed, in order to promote the incorporation of talent in the productive sector to increase the competitiveness of it.

This grants last for four years and the aid also must be destined to co-finance the salary and the social insurance of the researchers, being the maximum intensities of the aid in this case:

| | Small Enterprises | Medium Enterprises | Big Enterprises |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| Industrial research projects | 70% | 60% | 50% |
| Experimental development projects | 45% | 35% | 25% |