

Curricula update supporting key competences

POLICY DEVELOPMENT**REGULATION/LEGISLATION** **SPAIN**

Timeline

**ID number 28195**

Description

A 2015 Ministerial Decree ECD/65/2015 provides for the revision and update of key competences in curricula. The Decree describes the relationship between competences, content and evaluation criteria for primary, compulsory and secondary education. Implications are that key competences should be integrated into the curriculum (including in VET); they should be defined, explained and well-developed; the selection of content and methodologies should ensure the development of key competences throughout academic life; evaluation criteria should serve as a reference for assessment; and key competences are to be broken down into assessable learning standards that help measuring if they have been achieved.

2015 Approved/Agreed

2019 Legislative process

In early 2019, the government approved a new Education bill (Ley Orgánica 3/2020 known as LOMLOE, in Spanish) that repeals the previous legislation (LOMCE). The parliamentary processing is still in process: following the 2019 elections it was submitted to the parliament by the new government on 3 March 2020).

The bill is committed to promoting autonomous, meaningful and reflective learning. Reading comprehension, oral and written expression, audio-visual communication, information and communication technologies, entrepreneurship, emotional, value and aesthetic education and creativity are emphasised in all education areas. The new legislation also insists on the need to take digital change into account and includes attention to the development of digital competence of students in all education stages, both through specific content and from a transversal perspective.

In November 2019, the acting government approved the first Strategic plan for vocational training of the education system 2019-21. One of its objectives is the incorporation of new contents associated with key competences (languages, digital competence, internationalisation, entrepreneurship, applied creative thinking, innovation in SMEs, ecological transition).

2020 Approved/Agreed

The plan for the modernisation of VET establishes among its strategic areas those of digitalisation, innovation and entrepreneurship, aiming to:

- (a) incorporate a training module on digitalisation in all IVET qualifications to guarantee the relevance of the technician / senior technician skills in line with the demands in the productive sectors (line 3.1);
- (b) offer new qualifications on digital skills in the academic year 2020/21, such as intelligent manufacturing, digitisation of industrial maintenance, cybersecurity in production environments, cybersecurity in IT environments, railway signalling and telecommunications or video games (line 3.4);
- (c) design new qualifications in digital skills (additive manufacturing - 3D; implementation of 5G infrastructures; composite materials; artificial intelligence and big data; electric vehicles; installation and maintenance of electrical infrastructures; BIM (building information modelling) (line 3.5);
- (d) incorporate a final project associated with innovation or entrepreneurship in all IVET qualifications. In the design of the curricula of each degree, the weighting of the competences to be trained will be rescaled. Training focused on creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship will be incorporated, in addition to other soft skills, (such as initiative, responsibility, autonomy, teamwork) (line 4.1);
- (e) introduce guidance on entrepreneurship in the existing guidance module (*Formación y orientación laboral*, FOL) to enable IVET learners develop such skills (line 5.3)

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training is developing a national digital competence plan. The *Educa en digital* programme, already in place, complements this plan and aims to promote the digital transformation of education in Spain in several areas; in addition to providing hardware to bridge the digital divide in access to technology, it also includes addressing the digital training of teaching staff to adapt teaching methodologies to a virtual context. It also involves the implementation of platforms to assist teachers, students, and education authorities through the application of artificial intelligence. By 2020, up to EUR 260 million were budgeted to equip schools with devices and connectivity. Of this, EUR 190 million will come from Red.es, a public entity for the promotion of the information society (jointly financed by FEDER and the European Regional Development Fund, ERDF) and 70 million from the Autonomous Communities. The centres will provide the most vulnerable students, through loans, with devices that facilitate digital education both in person at the centre and at home. This emergency action aims to reach 500 000 devices, which began to be distributed during the first quarter of the 2020/21 academic year and will be reinforced with the actions budgeted for 2021.

A virtual forum -The curriculum under debate-, was held in November 2020, organised by the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, with the aim of promoting debate on the reform of the school curriculum needed to face the challenges of the future. LOMLOE sets the framework for reform of the curriculum towards a more competence-based approach in general education to smooth the transition from secondary education to VET, where a competence-based-approach is already in place. The aim is to move towards a more modern and equitable education system, with greater personalisation of learning. A mailbox for citizen participation has been opened to collect contributions from the education community.

2021 Implementation

An Entrepreneurship education week took place in January 2021, an initiative launched by the high commissioner for Spain as an entrepreneurial nation (*Alto Comisionado para España Nación Emprendedora*), with the collaboration of the Ministry of education and vocational training, universities, and the innovative and educational entrepreneurship sector. The week's objectives include recognising the key role of training and teaching in the quality of innovative entrepreneurship; awakening interest in STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art and mathematics) studies and those facilitating entrepreneurship; bringing innovative entrepreneurship experiences to

education centres; and highlighting the role of social entrepreneurs who lead initiatives with a transformative impact.

Following the approval of the LOMLOE law at the end of 2020, the education ministry carried out several initiatives to adapt the compulsory education and baccalaureate curricula to the new law and its competence-based approach, taking into account the European recommendations regarding key competences for lifelong learning. Similarly, the implementation of the plan for the modernisation of VET continued, with the development of new qualifications related to digitalisation and sustainability.

As part of the *Educa en digital* scheme, Red.es completed the delivery of 96% of the education devices to be used at home (nearly 420 000) once every autonomous government had defined its needs. The Education devices at home scheme (*Puestos Educativos en el Hogar* in Spanish) consists of the provision of a laptop-type device or equivalent, with built-in basic software, security elements configured for education use and an Internet connection. The education device station incorporates the training applications provided by each education authority.

The *Educa en digital* scheme was created in response to the needs of students with difficulties accessing devices and connectivity at home to enable them to continue the school year with their teachers and classmates as a result of the transfer of teaching activity from schools to homes during the health crisis caused by COVID-19.

2022 Implementation

The second edition of the entrepreneurial week took place in January 2022 within the framework of international education day, an initiative by the high commissioner for Spain entrepreneurial nation to bring the educational community and innovative entrepreneurship closer together.

As part of the plan for the modernisation of VET and included in Spain's NIP, entrepreneurship classrooms (resources and support to start up an entrepreneurship project) were to be created throughout the country to promote entrepreneurship and self-employment among learners in vocational training. These entrepreneurial skills are essential in the new socio-economic framework towards which the Spanish economy is directed. Placed in public VET centres, the entrepreneurship classroom are created and managed by the CC.AA. with the funds distributed by the ministry of education and vocational training. A total of 1 327 classrooms were financed, 374 newly created, in addition to the 496 classrooms created with funds from the 2020 financial year and 457 created with funds from the 2021 financial year.

Article 40 of Organic Act 3/2022, of 31 March, on the organisation and integration of vocational training approved by the Senate on 23 March 2022 and published in the Official State Gazette on 1 April 2022, specifies that all VET training cycles are going to have a modular organisation, which integrates the learning outcomes appropriate to the various professional fields and includes, in addition to the professional units associated with a standard of professional competence, a series of professional units associated with employment guidance, entrepreneurship, and transversal competences and for socio-professional maturity. According to the implementation plan (Royal Decree 278/2023), the gradual implementation of grade D offer is planned to start in the academic year 2023-2024, over the following two years.

The catalogue of occupational standards has been updated with new or modifications of existing standards regarding digitalisation and innovation.

Red.es

Thanks to the scheme Connected Schools (*Escuelas Conectadas*), primary and compulsory secondary schools are being provided with ultra-fast broadband Internet access, as well as internal wireless networks at a very high speed.

The first axis of the *Educa en Digital* programme developed in collaboration with educational administrations, undertaking actions to support the digital transformation of the educational system by providing devices, is finished. The programme is

structured around the following axes:

- (a) axis 1: 2020 - 2022. Provision of devices and connectivity: completed phase;
- (b) axis 2: 2022 - 2023. Provision of digital educational resources: phase in development;
- (c) axis 3: teacher training and digital competence. To be developed in following years;
- (d) axis 4: application of AI to personalized education. To be developed in following years.

2023 Implementation

The publication of Royal Decree 659/2023, of 18 July, which developed the organisation of the Spanish VET system by the education ministry has taken steps to modernise vocational training in Spain, ensuring that curricula are aligned with the essential competences for personal development, active citizenship, social inclusion and employment and with the Council recommendation on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning. It is also part of a broader strategy outlined in Organic Act 3/2022.

The updated curricula integrate core competences like literacy, multilingualism, and personal and social skills, ensuring students develop beyond technical expertise. Emphasising transversal skills such as problem-solving, critical thinking, communication, and teamwork, these curricula prepare students for the evolving labour market, making them versatile and attractive to employers.

VET programmes also include sustainability as a key area of competence, providing training in green technologies and practices. This is in line with the growing global demand for workers skilled in sustainable development and environmental responsibility. Specialisation courses have been introduced in areas such as renewable energy and sustainable production, ensuring that students can contribute to Spain's green economy.

Recognising the importance of entrepreneurial skills, the updated curricula encourage students to develop an entrepreneurial mindset. This includes fostering creativity, initiative, and innovation. Through practical projects and partnerships with companies, VET students are exposed to real-world business challenges, helping them cultivate skills for self-employment or entrepreneurial ventures.

2024 Implementation

New training programmes for VET teachers have been implemented, focusing on methodologies that develop students' key competences. The aim is to provide teachers with innovative tools to promote transversal student skills through specific training in digitalisation and sustainability for VET teachers.

The minimum teaching requirements and curricula contents for all VET programmes and diplomas, which are to be common to all Spanish territories and the basis for all the VET programmes curricula taught in Spain, were established in four Royal Decrees for basic (RD 498/2024), intermediate (RD 499/2024) and higher (RD 500/2024) VET diplomas as well as for intermediate and higher specialisation courses (RD 497/2024). These regulations completed the necessary changes for the new VET system implementation in the 2024/25 academic year by facilitating the changes to all existing VET programmes and diplomas and adapting them to the new system organisation. They also established for the educational authorities the requirements that must be met for all VET diplomas and programmes.

Bodies responsible

- Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (until 2023)
- Ministry of Education, Vocational Training and Sports

Target group

Learners

Learners in upper secondary, including apprentices
Young people (15-29 years old)
Adult learners

Entities providing VET

VET providers (all kinds)

Thematic categories

Modernising VET offer and delivery

Modernising VET standards, curricula, programmes and training courses
Developing and updating learning resources and materials
Acquiring key competences

Supporting lifelong learning culture and increasing participation

Promotion strategies and campaigns for VET and lifelong learning

European priorities in VET

VET Recommendation

VET agile in adapting to labour market challenges

VET as a driver for innovation and growth preparing for digital and green transitions and occupations in high demand

Osnabrück Declaration

Sustainability - a green link in VET

Subsystem

IVET

Further reading

[Plan for the modernisation of VET \[Plan de Modernización de la Formación Profesional\]](#)

[First Strategic plan for vocational training \[I Plan Estratégico de Formación Profesional del Sistema Educativo 2019-2022\]](#)

[Organic Act 3/2020, amending Organic Act 2/2006 \[Ley Orgánica 3/2020, de 29 de diciembre, por la que se modifica la Ley Orgánica 2/2006, de 3 de mayo, de Educación\], BOE núm. 340, de 30 de diciembre de 2020\]](#)

[Entrepreneurial nation strategy \[Estrategia Nación Emprendedora\]](#)

[Organic Act 3/2022, of 31 March, on the organisation and integration of Vocational Training \[Ley Orgánica 3/2022, de 31 de marzo, de ordenación e integración de la Formación](#)

Profesional.

Educate in Digital [Educa en Digital]

Royal Decree 659/2023, of July 18, which develops the organisation of the Vocational Training System [Real Decreto 659/2023, de 18 de julio, por el que se desarrolla la ordenación del Sistema de Formación Profesional]

Royal Decree 497/2024 of 21 May, which modifies previous RDs establishing intermediate and higher VET specialisation courses and which establishes their minimum teaching requirements

Royal Decree 498/2024 of 21 May, which modifies previous RDs establishing basic VET diplomas and which establishes their minimum teaching requirements

Royal Decree 499/2024 of 21 May, which modifies previous RDs establishing intermediate VET diplomas and which establishes their minimum teaching requirements

Royal Decree 500/2024 of 21 May, which modifies previous RDs establishing higher VET diplomas and which establishes their minimum teaching requirements

Related policy developments

2024 Implementation

Review of the national catalogue of occupational standards

During the fourth quarter of 2018, the National Institute of Qualifications (INCUAL) carried out a review of the entire national catalogue of occupational standards.

 SPAIN

Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative


Subsystem

IVET CVET

2024 Implementation

Raising employability for ICT and the digital economy

There are multiple initiatives to raise the skills of young people and workers (employed or unemployed) in ICT and the digital economy. Different public bodies are involved, in some cases in partnership with industry.

 SPAIN

Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

IVET CVET

Strategic boost to VET

The new government, in power since June 2018, reorganised the administration. The change of name in the education administration state, now the Education and Vocational Training ministry (previously Education, Culture and Sports), reflects the new strategy to promote VET.

 SPAIN

Type of development

Strategy/Action
plan

Subsystem

IVET CVET

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