

Integrated career guidance system

POLICY DEVELOPMENT**STRATEGY/ACTION PLAN** **SPAIN**

Timeline

**ID number 28188**

Background

In guidance under education authorities, emphasis is being put on preventing early school leaving and fostering career management skills, while keeping to the lifelong learning perspective.

Description

In the education system, the process towards an integrated vocational guidance system was initiated in 2018. A working group was set within the General Council for Vocational Training, with the aim of laying down basic principles and legal provisions. In guidance under employment authorities, the Action plan for youth employment (2019-21) foresees the hiring of 3 000 professional counsellors by the regional PES to provide guidance services in connection to the common services portfolio. The offer will cover information, career guidance, motivation, advice, diagnosis, definition of professional profile and skills, design and management of individual learning pathways, and job search. Young immigrants will receive comprehensive assistance in their labour market integration. The Action plan was prepared in consultation with a range of stakeholders. It will be evaluated after 18 months of operation.

2018 Design

2019 Design

Organic Act 5/2002 foresaw the design and development of an integrated system of professional guidance – educational and labour – but it has not yet been developed. The working group on information and career guidance set up by the general council for vocational training (CGFP in Spanish) has been working in 2019 on the analysis of how career guidance works in the education and labour systems. The reason for this is that active employment policies, as well as education policies, including vocational guidance services, are the responsibility of the Autonomous Communities. The group has also worked in preparing proposals on the general bases for the articulation of the integrated guidance system, its recipients, objectives and purposes, principles, content and types of intervention, training and competence profile of the counsellor. This

report was presented to the CGFP in May 2019 and a second report on the competences of the career guidance counsellors was approved at the end of 2019. A first joint training workshop for career guidance professionals in an integrated system took place in March 2020.

Career guidance activities, as one of the services included in the common employment services portfolio, are monitored by the national employment system and the reports and data collected confirm overall compliance in all regions with both the degree of implementation of activities and protocols.

In line with the European Union's recommendations on active employment policies in the framework of the Europe 2020 strategy, and the OECD and World Bank reports on good practice in guidance, the State Public Employment Service (SEPE) is developing a prototype of a digital guidance support tool, related to the profiling of job seekers. The main objective of the project is to provide guidance counsellors with a support tool that, based on individual data and using SEPE's statistical information, provides them with information on how the characteristics of the demand and the services received by the applicant affect the improvement of their employability, including also recommendations for services.

Order TMS/941/2019, of 6 September, distributed additional subsidies territorially in the area of active employment policies, including funds for the implementation of the Action plan for youth employment 2019-21 and the Triennial plan for preventing and reducing long-term unemployment. These funds were intended to strengthen the network of staff dedicated to career guidance for employment and job prospecting, as mentioned in both plans.

In the Action plan for youth employment 2019-21, career guidance is one of the axes on which the plan is organised. Measure 4 provides that through the Spanish Youth Institute (INJUVE) and with the support of the State Public Employment Service, the network of youth information centres and the Spanish youth institute (SIJ-INJUVE network) are to be reinforced with 110 youth mediators, in order to cater for and facilitate young people access to services and schemes offered by the national employment system. This action will count with the participation of a great variety of youth organisations (youth associations, youth unions, migrant and neighbourhood associations). The coordination and programming of activities is to be carried out by INJUVE in collaboration with the Public Employment Services and the aforementioned entities and associations. These youth mediators will work in cooperation with the PES and local employment agencies, establishing cooperation channels with the 3 000 professional counsellors hired for the ORIENTAJOVEN programme.

At both State and regional levels, the recruitment of the counsellors was under way.

The Triennial plan for preventing and reducing long-term unemployment (Reincorpora-T) also considers different measures within its career guidance axis, aimed at improving the services for support, employability for all long-term unemployed, and improving their possibilities for achieving employment.

2020 Design

In the plan for the modernisation of VET (2019-2023), presented by the President of the Government in July 2020, guidance is one of the strategic areas. The aim is to reinforce vocational guidance tools on the *Todofp.es* platform through its expansion, and to foster vocational guidance.

The Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, in collaboration with the Ministry of Labour and Social Economy and other stakeholders, was designing a plan for the development of the integrated vocational guidance system. At the third Meeting for guidance in Spain, held as a virtual event, representatives of various entities linked to vocational, academic and employment guidance discussed and elaborated recommendations for the design and implementation of such a plan.

The closure of education centres due to the coronavirus during the months of March to June 2020, also affected academic and vocational guidance. In response, both groups

of counsellors and institutions used new or existing platforms to share online guidance resources with teachers as well as with learners, to help them 'self-guide' in making decisions about their academic and professional future.

SEPE has developed a digital guidance support tool, SEND@, related to the profiling of job seekers, which was tested in 2020. The main objective of SEND@ is to provide career guidance practitioners with a support tool that, based on individual data and using SEPE's statistical information, offers information on how the characteristics of the demand and the services received by the applicants affect the improvement of their employability, also including recommendations for services. SEND@ was tested in the regional PES and is in the process of total implementation.

Career guidance was reinforced in the Spanish Public Employment Services through actions foreseen in the action plan for youth employment and the three-year plan to prevent and reduce long-term unemployment 2019-2021 (Reincorpora-T). As part of this effort, the recruitment of 3 000 career guidance practitioners for the national and regional PES was almost completed, representing an 82% increase in the previous guidance staff. The Orienta 3 000 network was tasked with personalised diagnoses, the development of employment and training itineraries, the coordination of actions carried out by different specialised agents, market prospecting tasks, and the attraction of job offers.

In addition to this strengthened workforce, several regional PES created new roles among career guidance staff to liaise better with other services: EURES tutors; Youth guarantee specialist; tutors and staff specialised in caring for women victims of gender violence; specialists for reception plans for people receiving a minimum guaranteed income (*renta garantizada de ciudadanía*); or specialists for the labour reception of migrants.

Several actions took place at regional level: organisation of job fairs, creation of protocols for caring for women victims of gender violence (by women's institutes or general directorates for women), and creation of protocols with social services for beneficiaries of different incomes.

All the career guidance staff have received initial training on tools and procedures: company prospecting activities, specific training on equal opportunities, identification and elimination of gender biases and any other personal or social circumstance, including training from a perspective of attention to vulnerable people in the labour market.

The situation generated by COVID-19, and the state of alarm since mid-March, led to the revision and redrafting of the 2020 activity plans of the regional PES in line with the labour crisis generated and the possibilities for action. With the technical assistance of the World Bank, identification of good practices began in June 2020: a series of interviews carried out with the regional PES identified 17 good practices on vocational guidance (from a total 33 in different areas). The shared learning will take material form in a national (March 2021) good practices' day and an international day later on in the year.

Career guidance measures are foreseen in the new Spanish Employment Activation Strategy, and are being prepared.

2021 Legislative process

A new draft Organic Act on VET was in the pipeline, addressing the challenge of establishing a career guidance and counselling system within VET to help everyone make informed training decisions, both before finishing compulsory schooling and throughout working life. It encompasses training and the procedure for validating skills acquired through work experience. The draft Organic Act on VET defines the system's mission, objectives, aims and conditions of provision. Career guidance services should be customised to the needs of individuals, companies, organisations and institutions, and offer adequate support and training itineraries to those in need to adjust their professional competences to the needs of the economy.

The draft Organic Act also foresees the creation of a General vocational guidance strategy for the vocational training system, seeking complementarity with other structures, services, and resources, and offering to guarantee the coverage, quality, efficiency, and equity of the guidance.

Since March, a new career guidance portal has been in place; the education ministry manages it through the General Secretariat for Vocational Training, which is a member of the Euroguidance network. The portal brings together in one place resources for guidance practitioners, information on vocational programmes offered in the education and employment remits, career guidance in the Autonomous Communities and examples of good practice submitted by guidance counsellors for sharing among the guidance community. The creation of the portal is part of the plan for the modernisation of VET, specifically through the expansion of vocational guidance tools on the existing *TodoFP* platform.

The Territorial cooperation programme of personal and family support and guidance units for educationally vulnerable students (*Programa de Cooperación Territorial de Unidades de Acompañamiento y Orientación personal y familiar del alumnado educativamente vulnerable*) has been set up. This programme is an innovative measure to prevent school failure and to promote learning and student success at school through cooperation with other professionals and complementing education and vocational guidance ordinary measures. It is aimed at learners in primary education, compulsory secondary education (including basic vocational training) and post-compulsory baccalaureate and intermediate VET programmes. It is being implemented in publicly funded schools from 2021/22 to 2023/24. The programme is funded by the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training and the national recovery and resilience plan (component 21: modernisation and digitalisation of the education system and the European Union under the Recovery and Resilience Facility - RRF).

In the first half of 2021, EUR 29 616 800 was approved to finance this programme within the framework of component 21 of the RRF. The objective is for the regions to set up 618 personal support and guidance units in 2021, 804 in 2022 and 1 148 in 2023. The regional authorities have released several public calls for this purpose.

Different initiatives were developed this year to promote employment, beginning with the full implementation of Send@, a common infrastructure to help in the individualised diagnosis and creation of individual employment and training itineraries, with the support of the national employment system's vocational guidance practitioners. This infrastructure was designed to evolve to include all types of jobseekers and as a tool to support guidance and job transitions. An impact study was carried out between July and December in cooperation with the OECD, comparing two groups of 500 guidance practitioners. One group used the application after receiving training, and the other did not. Following the completion of this study, the application was expected to be extended to all guidance practitioners within the national employment system in 2022.

Another significant initiative was the creation of a network of public centres for guidance, entrepreneurship, support and innovation for employment (COE), targeting the unemployed and entrepreneurs. These centres are conceived as spaces for innovation and experimentation to strengthen and integrate equal opportunities in the design, development and evolution of public policies supporting activation for employment. The COE network intends to support the national employment system to enhance preventive mechanisms against unemployment, improve employability and favour transition into employment, as well as to promote entrepreneurial culture and improve the assistance and services provided to entrepreneurs at the start of their business initiative. This initiative is part of the 2021-24 Spanish employment activation strategy. It also responds to component 23 of the Recovery and Resilience Facility: Public policies for a dynamic, resilient and inclusive labour market. The measure has a budget of EUR 90 million for 2021-23 for the creation of 20 centres in each of the Autonomous Communities, plus Ceuta and Melilla and one State centre.

Guidance is also one of the pillars of the 2021-27 Youth guarantee plus plan. It comprises enhancing channels to provide advice and make available complementary digital systems for training and for the search and selection of job vacancies. The

Youth guarantee plus plan foresees special attention to young people with family responsibilities, especially women, entrepreneurs, migrants, NEETs, the LGTBI community and people with disabilities, as well as a new system for the evaluation of the quality of guidance services in terms of insertion and improved employability, in which the COEs will play a priority role.

In addition, the plan envisages promoting the professional stability and career development of guidance practitioners.

2022 Approved/Agreed

The Organic Act on VET (Organic Act 3/2022 of 31 March on the organisation and integration of vocational training) was published, setting out Spain's integrated career guidance system and emphasising the importance of guidance in improving employability and lifelong learning. Title VII of this law outlines the organisation of career guidance, with the government being responsible for developing a general strategy to ensure its coverage, quality, efficiency and equity while complementing other structures and resources.

Vocational training centres guarantee career guidance services through teaching and training staff with a guidance profile. Within the framework of their respective competences, the education authorities have to ensure the provision of guidance in each vocational training centre.

Career guidance can be delivered in person, online or in combination with digital platforms, with a protocol that can be adapted to the different types of users.

The effective implementation of the foreseen career guidance system requires the regulatory development of Organic Act 3/2022.

In the educational sphere, 100 vocational guidance units (*Unidades de orientación profesional—UOP*) have been set up and incorporated into the network of classrooms of the education ministry's open training programme '*Aula Mentor*' to deliver a specific vocational guidance service.

The UOPs aim to:

- (a) provide information and advice on training opportunities and itineraries to improve qualifications, facilitating access to those resources that best meet the training needs of the people assisted;
- (b) provide guidance and carry out registration and accompaniment tasks in the procedures for the accreditation of competences acquired through work experience or other non-formal and informal training.

A budget of EUR 2 850 million has been allocated to this project, divided into 100 modules of EUR 28 500 euros each.

In the labour sphere, the General Directorate of the State Public Employment Service has signed the qualification of 19 public centres for guidance, entrepreneurship, support and innovation for employment (COEs) once compliance with the requirements established in the protocol approved in 2021 were verified. The 19 COEs are in Andalusia, Asturias, Aragon, Balearic Islands, Canary Islands, Cantabria, Castilla-La Mancha, Castilla y León, Extremadura, Galicia, Madrid, Murcia, Navarra, Basque Country, La Rioja, Valencia, Ceuta, Melilla and at state level. The autonomous communities have approved the annual work programmes for each of the planned 20 centres prior to approval from SEPE, which is enabling the actions of the COE Network to be carried out.

2023 Implementation

Royal Decree 659/2023, of 18 July, developed the organisation of the Spanish VET system by the education ministry. It states that the main goal of career guidance of the vocational training system is the personal and professional development of people,

regardless of their age, sex, origin, personal or work situation, socioeconomic or cultural level.

This career guidance system allows for flexible training itineraries based on the national catalogue of vocational training offers and their connections with other higher education options.

By the end of 2023, 100 career guidance units (UOPs) were serving citizens throughout the country, and work continued to develop the national guidance strategy.

2024 Implementation

As part of the Royal Decree 659/2023, career counsellors continued to help VET learners identify suitable WBL placements, ensuring that they are aligned with their career goals. In addition, VET centres worked closely with companies to match students with appropriate work-based learning opportunities based on their skills and interests.

Another measure to ensure guidance actions to suit VET students' career goals and boost their employability was the incorporation into the curriculum of all vocational training diplomas (grade D), of the professional module 'Personal itinerary for employability', which includes the development of transversal skills for entrepreneurship. The incorporation of this module to basic VET diplomas and, therefore, the development of students' skills on the labour market, professional guidance and employability is adapted to the flexible new VET system.

The results of the 100 career guidance units (UPOs) implementation since 2023 with a budget of EUR 2.85 million are: 19 290 people assisted; 850 collective orientation and information activities; 11 710 people referred to the procedure for professional skills validation.

These information and career guidance units provide advice on training and professional itineraries and accreditation of professional competencies acquired through work experience and other non-formal training channels. This resource is provided for local entities and non-profit organisations to facilitate access to vocational guidance services. In particular, to people living in towns of less than 10 000 inhabitants.

The education ministry continued working on improving general access for individuals to vocational guidance tools, beginning with the redesign of the TodoFP platform including new professional guidance tools accessible to the general public: advice on training itineraries, information on the links between occupations and training of the reference system, Guidance for labour market access, resources for studying or working abroad, academic and professional guidance resources, educational system equivalency tool, guidance on accreditation of work experience. A dedicated space for guidance on the skills validation process was created.

Alongside these digital developments, the ministry supported direct assistance to the public through a mailbox dedicated to vocational training-related queries. It includes topics such as skills validation, training opportunities or internationalisation, with an average of 10 000 queries per year.

The new Technical Committee for Vocational Guidance, a territorial cooperation body in charge of developing the general strategy for vocational guidance of the vocational training system, paid special attention to the definition of the principles of the guidance model to be developed and the instruments and resources to be generated in support of the guidance action.

2025 Implementation

Royal Decree 69/2025, of 4 February, outlined the key components and management tools of the national VET system. One of these tools is the State vocational training register (*Registro estatal de formación profesional*), which allows citizens to download

a report of their certified, up-to-date training record.

It also created a Modular vocational training catalogue (*Catálogo modular de formación profesional*) linked to professional skills and training programmes that are designed as cumulative modules. This makes it easier for guidance counsellors to tailor flexible, personalised pathways, allowing those receiving guidance to build progressive pathways.

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)
Young people not in employment, education or training (NEETs)
Learners with migrant background, including refugees
Learners at risk of early leaving or/and early leavers
Learners with disabilities
Adult learners
Older workers and employees (55 - 64 years old)
Unemployed and jobseekers
Persons in employment, including those at risk of unemployment
Low-skilled/qualified persons
Learners from other groups at risk of exclusion (minorities, people with fewer opportunities due to geographical location or social-economic disadvantaged position)

Education professionals

Teachers
Trainers
School leaders
Adult educators
Guidance practitioners

Entities providing VET

VET providers (all kinds)

Other

All types of groups are included, as this PD targets everyone. Entrepreneurs, LGTBI

Thematic categories

Governance of VET and lifelong learning

Optimising VET funding

Supporting lifelong learning culture and increasing participation

Providing for individuals' re- and upskilling needs
Lifelong guidance
Ensuring equal opportunities and inclusiveness in education and training

European priorities in VET

VET Recommendation

VET as an attractive choice based on modern and digitalised provision of training and skills

Osnabrück Declaration

Establishing a new lifelong learning culture - relevance of continuing VET and digitalisation

Subsystem

IVET CVET

Further reading

[Plan for the modernisation of VET](#)

[Euroguidance Spain](#)

[Territorial cooperation programme of personal and family support and guidance units for educationally vulnerable learners](#)

[Functions of the network of public centres for guidance, entrepreneurship, support and innovation for employment \(COEs\) \[Funciones de la red de centros publicos de orientacion, emprendimiento, acompanamiento e innovacion para el empleo \(COE\)\].](#)

[Grants for the creation of Vocational Guidance Units \(UOP\) under the Mentor Classroom Programme](#)

[Qualifications of guidance, entrepreneurship, support and innovation centres for employment](#)

[Royal Decree 69/2025](#)

[Report on the status of the vocational training system](#)

Related policy developments

2020 Completed

The common employment services portfolio and protocols

Reference guides developing the common employment services portfolio were approved and published in 2018. These reference guides, developed jointly with the regions, comprise protocols for:

 SPAIN

Type of development

Regulation/Legislation

Subsystem

2021 Completed

Action plan for youth employment

The Action plan for youth employment (2019-21) includes initiatives in relation to vocational training aimed at enabling young people under 30 years of age to acquire competences or professional experience, upgrade their qualifications and increase their employability.

 SPAIN

Type of development

Strategy/Action
plan

Subsystem

CVET

2021 Completed

Triennial plan for preventing and reducing long-term unemployment

The Reincorpora-T plan 2019-2021, approved in April, aimed at the long-term unemployed, is one of the measures implemented to contribute to the development of a new, more inclusive production model and is committed to intelligent, sustainable and inclusive growth as set out in the Europe 2020 Str

 SPAIN

Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

CVET

2025 Implementation

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

2023 Completed

The Spanish Employment activation strategies

Employment authorities have reflected the policy priority given to dual VET and apprenticeships, including them as structural objectives in the 2017-20 Spanish employment activation strategy approved in December 2017.

 SPAIN

Type of development

Strategy/Action
plan

Subsystem

IVET CVET

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