

The Spanish Employment activation strategies

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

STRATEGY/ACTION PLAN

 SPAIN

Timeline



ID number 28183

Background

Active labour market policies are agreed (since 2013) in the framework of the sectoral conference on labour affairs, the general instrument for coordination and cooperation between the central Government and the regions in employment policies.

The framework, coordination and implementation of these policies are based on three instruments: the Spanish strategy for employment activation, the annual plans for employment policy (*plan anual de política de empleo*, PAPE) and the information system for public employment services (Royal Legislative Decree 3/2015).

Objectives

The 2017-20 Spanish employment activation strategy includes projects and measures to rationalise the unemployment protection system, to develop a set of tools, infrastructures and information systems necessary for the modernisation of the national employment system, and to enhance its efficiency and effectiveness. These include measures aimed at strengthening and developing management and evaluation systems, and particularly at improving the management system and support for the Youth guarantee initiative. The main objectives influencing VET are to:

- (a) promote the activation and improvement of the employability of young people;
- (b) promote employment as the main instrument of social inclusion and the insertion of the long-term unemployed and those over 55 years of age;
- (c) promote a training offer according to the needs of the productive system;
- (d) improve the performance of the public employment services (PES);
- (e) approach activation policies from a perspective that takes into account their sectoral and local dimensions.

Description

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. The strategy takes into account recommendations made to Spain both within the framework of the National reform programme and by the European Network of Public Employment Services (SPE-UE Network). The strategy covers dual and alternance training, regarded as key elements for qualification, employability and competitiveness, and personal and professional development. It offers the framework for the different measures that are developed in the active employment policies scope, to ensure effective equal opportunities.

At the end of 2018, new measures were approved according to which practical training placements for intermediate and higher-level VET and university students can take place not only in companies but also in institutions or entities included in training programmes. During their placement, learners are to be covered by the Social Security system (with exception of unemployment allowances) even if they are not remunerated. The Decree also lowers to 25 years the age limit for entering training and apprenticeship contracts (a measure triggered by the reduction in unemployment to below 15%).

Employment policy plans (PAPE) are adopted annually. The degree of compliance with the objectives set in these annual plans affects the distribution of State-level labour funds to the Autonomous Communities.

The measures of the Spanish employment activation strategy aim at easing access into the labour market and up-skilling and reskilling of the population to stay in it.

2017 Approved/Agreed

2018 Approved/Agreed

2019 Implementation

At the end of 2019, the fifth Seminar on good practices and mutual learning in the national employment system was held as part of the Programme of good practices and mutual learning agreed by the Sectoral Conference on Employment and Labour Affairs within the framework of the strategy. The objective is to promote a systematised and formalised dialogue among the public employment services that make up the national employment system for the exchange of information and learning that aims to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of their management processes.

The development of the annual employment policy plans is based on the joint work with the regions; the evaluation outcomes of the European network of public employment services are also considered. As part of this process, the set of indications included in the 2019 PAPE, approved in March, has been simplified and rationalised.

2020 Implementation

The Council of Ministers approved the annual employment policy plan for 2020 in October. The Autonomous Communities and the State Public Employment Service proposed a total of 696 different services and programmes for inclusion in the 2020 plan for the six axes.

The indicators of the annual employment policy plan 2020 were adjusted to the new strategic framework proposed, although it continues to respond to the monitoring and evaluation model established by the Spanish employment activation strategy 2017-20. The 2020 plan takes into account the outcome of the second evaluation carried out by the European Public Services Network.

In accordance with the provisions of the current Employment Act and following the completion of the Spanish employment activation strategy 2017-20, a new strategy is being drawn up. To this end, at the Sectoral Conference on Employment and Labour Affairs, it was agreed to set up strategic working groups, with the participation of both the Autonomous Communities and the social partners.

These groups' lines of work are based on the vision of promoting the strategic objectives of the employment activation policy within the framework of governance

and cohesion of the national employment system; with a people- and companies-centred approach, geared towards measurable outcomes; consistent with innovation and sustainability and supported by the improvement of skills and PES' digital transformation; with special emphasis on the guidance and counselling of people in their employment pathways and the reskilling of workers. Based on the work of these groups and following its consideration in social dialogue processes, the draft Royal Decree that will regulate the new Spanish employment activation strategy 2021-24 is in the pipeline.

2021 Implementation

The new Spanish active employment support strategy 2021-24 was approved at the end of 2021 (Royal Decree 1069/2021). Developed together with the social partners, it includes an analysis of the situation and trends in the labour market, the strategic and structural actions and objectives on state employment activation policies, the budgetary and financing frameworks and the management criteria of funds. The strategy's yearly objectives for Spain and each Autonomous Community are specified in the annual plan for employment policies (*Plan Anual de Política de Empleo, PAPE*). The annual plan for 2021 includes the indicators for assessing the degree of performance. The strategy is part of the work of the National recovery and resilience plan (under reform 5: Modernisation of active employment policies, included in component 23: *New public policies for a dynamic, resilient and inclusive labour market*).

Considering the recommendations made to Spain in the framework of the European Semester (2019/20 and 2020/21), the strategy sets the following priority objectives for reforming employment policies:

- (a) adoption of the necessary measures to make active employment policies more effective;
- (b) strengthening of prospecting and guidance mechanisms;
- (c) financial support for active employment policies.

For groups such as young people, the long-term unemployed and other disadvantaged groups such as refugees, migrants, the Roma, people with disabilities or those in highly vulnerable situations, active employment policies contribute to equal opportunities for access to employment, acting on the causes of lower employability such as mismatches in qualifications, difficulties in acquiring professional experience or in finding and maintaining a job.

This new strategy comprises 27 new measures, including:

- (a) developing a common frame of reference for guidance and counselling services;
- (b) promoting a competence-based management approach to employment and training services and programmes;
- (c) launching the new network of centres for guidance, entrepreneurship, support and innovation for employment (COE);
- (d) support programmes and systematic analysis for sectors and territories facing productive transformation processes;
- (e) strengthening the capacities of the SEPE's Occupations Observatory for skill needs detection, analysis and anticipation in the labour market;
- (f) designing the integrated model for the evaluation and monitoring of active employment policies;
- (g) diversifying the forms of delivery (face-to-face or digital) of the common portfolio services;
- (h) promoting lifelong learning in the national employment system.

On vocational training for employment within the labour ministry remit, the strategy aims to encourage open and multiannual public training calls and public platforms for lifelong learning. It will regulate the necessary adaptation and digital transformation of entities providing non-formal CVET. It will also include a commitment to boost active employment policies, optimise economic resources, enhance governance, and improve operational coordination.

Annual plans for employment policy will continue to be drawn up following the new strategy framework.

2022 Implementation

The Spanish employment activation strategy is operational and runs smoothly as one of the coordination and reference instruments in the framework of the Public Employment Services.

As every year, the strategy's 2022 objectives for Spain and each Autonomous Community were specified in the annual plan for employment policies (*Plan Anual de Política de Empleo*, PAPE) which was published in May. The plan, which describes the services and programmes included in active employment policies, is integrated into the work of the National recovery and resilience plan under reform 5: Modernisation of active employment policies, included in component 23: New public policies for a dynamic, resilient and inclusive labour market. The PAPE (Annual plan for employment policy) is included in Spain's NIP as one of the Strategic and Legal frameworks that will guide the implementation of the planned measures for VET.

2023 Completed

The Spanish employment activation strategy was operational and ran smoothly as one of the coordination and reference instruments in the framework of the Public Employment Services. Act 3/2023, of 28 February, on Employment, defined the concept of employment activation strategies in Article 31. According to the new law, vocational education and training lies outside the scope of these employment activation strategies.

Bodies responsible

- Ministry of Labour and Social Economy
- State Public Employment Service (SEPE)

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

Trainers

Guidance practitioners

Entities providing VET

Companies

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)

VET providers (all kinds)

Thematic categories

Governance of VET and lifelong learning

Coordinating VET and other policies

Optimising VET funding

Engaging VET stakeholders and strengthening partnerships in VET

Establishing and developing skills intelligence systems

Modernising VET offer and delivery

Diversifying modes of learning: face-to-face, digital and/or blended learning; adaptable/flexible training formats

Acquiring key competences

Integrating digital skills and competences in VET curricula and programmes

Reinforcing work-based learning, including apprenticeships

Supporting lifelong learning culture and increasing participation

Financial and non-financial incentives to learners, providers and companies

Providing for individuals' re- and upskilling needs

Lifelong guidance

Ensuring equal opportunities and inclusiveness in education and training

Subsystem

IVET CVET

Further reading

[Royal Decree-Law 28/2018 for the revaluation of public pensions and other urgent measures in social, labour and employment matters](#)

[Law establishing dual VET](#)

[2017-20 Spanish Employment Activation Strategy](#)

[Active employment policies 2015 - 19](#)

[The 2020 annual plan for employment policy](#)

[Royal Decree 3/2015, of 23 October, approving the revised text of the Employment Act](#)

[Royal Decree 1069/2021, of 4 December, which approves the 2021-24 Spanish strategy for active employment support](#)

[The 2021 annual plan for employment policy](#)

[National recovery and resilience plan \(executive summary\).](#)

[Resolution of April 26, 2022, on the Agreement of the Council of Ministers of April 19, 2022, which approves the Annual Employment Policy Plan for 2022](#)

[Law 3/2023 of 28 February on Employment](#)

Related policy developments

2022 Completed

Catalogue of training specialities

A training speciality consists of 'the grouping of professional competences, contents, and technical specifications that respond to a set of work activities framed in a phase of the production process and related functions, or to the acquisition of transversal competences necessary in a profesio

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Type of development

Regulation/Legislation

Subsystem

CVET

2025 Implementation

New approach to training needs anticipation

In order to set out Law 30/2015, with the change of government in 2018, a new approach started to develop, which seeks all major stakeholders to work together:

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Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

CVET

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:

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Type of development

Regulation/Legislation


Subsystem

CVET

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.

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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

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Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative


Subsystem

CVET

2025 Implementation

Integrated career guidance system

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.

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Type of development

Strategy/Action
plan


Subsystem

IVET 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.

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Type of development

Strategy/Action
plan

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2025 Completed

The Dual VET reform

Dual VET is being developed in cooperation with the Autonomous Communities.

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Type of development

Strategy/Action
plan

Subsystem

IVET CVET

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<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/timeline-vet-policies-europe/search/28183>