

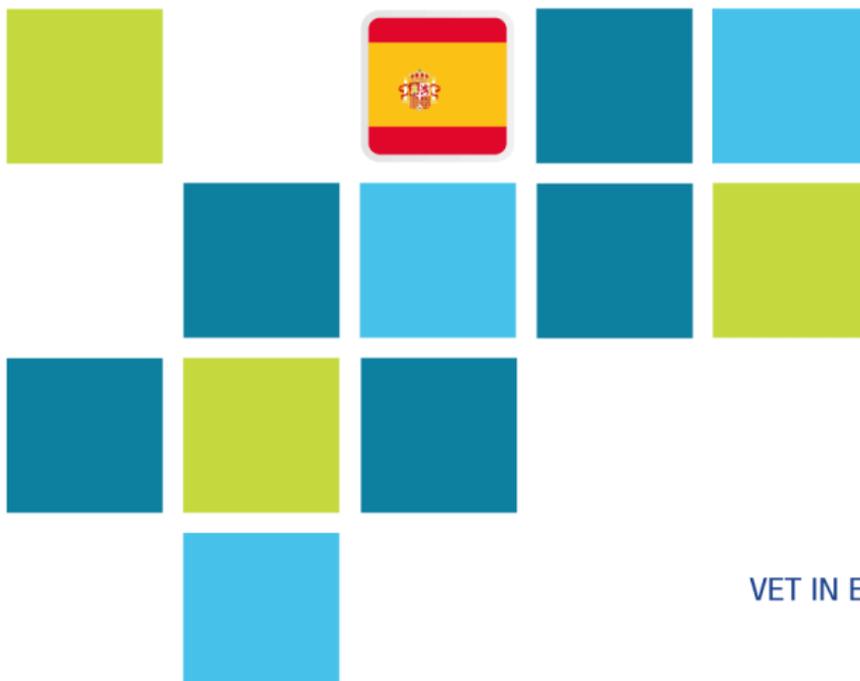
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VOCATIONAL EDUCATION  
AND TRAINING IN EUROPE

# SPAIN

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## SYSTEM DESCRIPTION



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  - Professional certificate programmes - level 3 (certificado profesional - nivel 3).
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## CHAPTER 1.

# Summary of main elements and distinctive features of VET

### Summary of main elements

Vocational education and training (VET) is the responsibility of the education authorities. Labour authorities are responsible for VET within active labour market policies (training programmes addressing companies' and employed and unemployed skills needs, employment-training schemes and the regulation of apprenticeship contracts). They share the same consultation bodies but keep their respective governance and objectives. VET system is governed by [Organic Law 3/2022](#), which organises VET offer in training itineraries, from 'micro-trainings' to full qualifications. Gradual implementation is planned from 2023/24.

The General Council for Vocational Training advises the government on VET policy. It comprises representatives of national and regional authorities, employers' organisations and trade unions. Stakeholders collaborate in the design of occupational standards and are involved in VET qualification design.

Initial VET offers upper secondary (basic and intermediate) and higher VET qualifications as part of the education system. All programmes include work-based learning in a company and at a VET school:

- [basic programmes](#) (ISCED 353) are available in the last year of compulsory education. They allow students at risk of dropping out to develop basic skills, prepare for an occupation (such as agro-gardening) and obtain a basic VET qualification. Students may move on to upper secondary VET and attain the compulsory secondary qualification, opening up the general education path;
- [intermediate programmes](#) lead to technician qualifications at ISCED 354 (such as cookery and gastronomy). Access to higher VET in the same field of study is possible, via an admission procedure;
- [higher programmes](#) (ISCED 554) lead to an advanced technician qualification (such as logistics coordinator) at the tertiary level. Graduates can progress to bachelor programmes through an admission procedure.

Graduates from intermediate and higher VET programmes can enrol in short [specialisation courses](#) in the same field of study to acquire occupation-specific and digital skills in line with the emerging needs of the economy.

All IVET programmes allow learners to spend time in a real working environment. The Organic Law 3/2022 law introduced two schemes (*régimen general y régimen intensivo*) including social security contributions for apprentices and a paid contractual relationship if training in the workplace exceeds 35% of the programme duration (*régimen intensivo*). There are specific training programmes in arts and design and in sports (4% of the VET population in 2021/22).

Adults can enrol in the same IVET programmes as young people or enter a vocational programme leading to a professional certificate corresponding to an occupational profile, organised on three levels. Learners can move from one level to the next in the same field. Levels 2 and 3 programmes require having completed, respectively, compulsory or upper secondary, or equivalent, education. Duration varies according to the learning outcomes. All three level programmes include work-based learning and can be taken as apprenticeships. Only authorised public and private VET providers can deliver programmes leading to formal vocational qualifications.

Adults may also have their skills recognised through [validation](#).

Non-formal VET includes a wide range of schemes designed for different needs and skill profiles, allowing upskilling or reskilling. VET within active labour market policies is financed through public funds (mainly from company and worker contributions to social security). Publicly funded programmes, not linked to the national catalogue of occupational standards, are included in a [catalogue of training specialities](#) of the State public employment service (SEPE); providers need to be registered accordingly.

## **Distinctive features**

The national system for qualifications and vocational training is the umbrella for VET programmes leading to qualifications awarded by the education authorities: VET diplomas and professional certificates. They are based on the learning outcomes of the national catalogue of occupational standards, allowing mutual recognition of some parts of the training (modules) and the transfer of (units of) competences between different VET programmes, shortening their duration. Organic Law 3/2022 sets out a single, modular and flexible offer for formal VET in five ascending grades (A, B, C, D and E), ranging from smaller units or micro-training (grade A), professional certificates (level C), to VET diploma programmes and specialisation courses (grades D and E), and three levels of competence.

Modularisation allows the accumulation of learning outcomes towards (partial) certification and re-engagement from a lifelong learning perspective. Besides occupational skills, programmes include training in transversal competences, entrepreneurship, and socio-professional maturity, easing school-work transitions and career development, as well as compulsory workplace learning. Programmes can be taken in-person or through virtual learning platforms, making VET more accessible.

Occupational standards and programmes are regularly updated, and new specialisation courses are developed to address emerging needs.

Skills validation procedures empower citizens to engage in further learning and acquire full qualifications. The process is coordinated at different levels, with regional authorities playing an essential role in policy implementation and social partners participating in qualification designing and system's governance.

Upskilling and reskilling measures are essential to active labour market policies responding to current and future needs, with extensive social partner involvement in management. Vocational Training for Employment aims to train workers for the qualified and updated performance of different occupations, allowing access to employment and promoting active participation in social, cultural and economic life.

## CHAPTER 2.

# Main challenges and policy responses

Spain has an ageing workforce that includes many low-skilled adults. Technological developments and global changes pressure businesses and people to upskill and reskill. The share of the labour force with intermediate skills is low compared to the EU average, a risk for the country's future development as skills demand forecasts point to the need to increase this share.

Recent policy initiatives have focused on boosting VET attractiveness, improving and expanding apprenticeship, and making the VET system more responsive to the labour market. This has resulted in a new VET framework reflected in Organic Law 3/2022. This law on VET seeks to unify the two previous sub-systems of VET qualifications, reduce regional disparities, and create more opportunities for young people and adults, employed and unemployed. It facilitates lifelong learning through different training pathways and enhances work-based learning by further involving employers.

The law on VET also reinforces validation procedures to enable individuals underqualified for their jobs to demonstrate and capitalise on the skills acquired through work experience. A new comprehensive guidance system is underway. New measures also focus on teachers, reinforcing their digital competence and setting the framework for digital competence in teaching. Other measures seek to modernise infrastructures, particularly in the digital domain, and to bring VET provision closer to citizens.

Training at work, that is, VET within active labour market policies aims to provide upskilling and reskilling programmes, outside the national catalogue of occupational standards, designed for the lifelong training of every working person, whether employed or unemployed, with the goal of improving their professional qualifications and employment opportunities. A future specific regulation on training at work is under discussion.

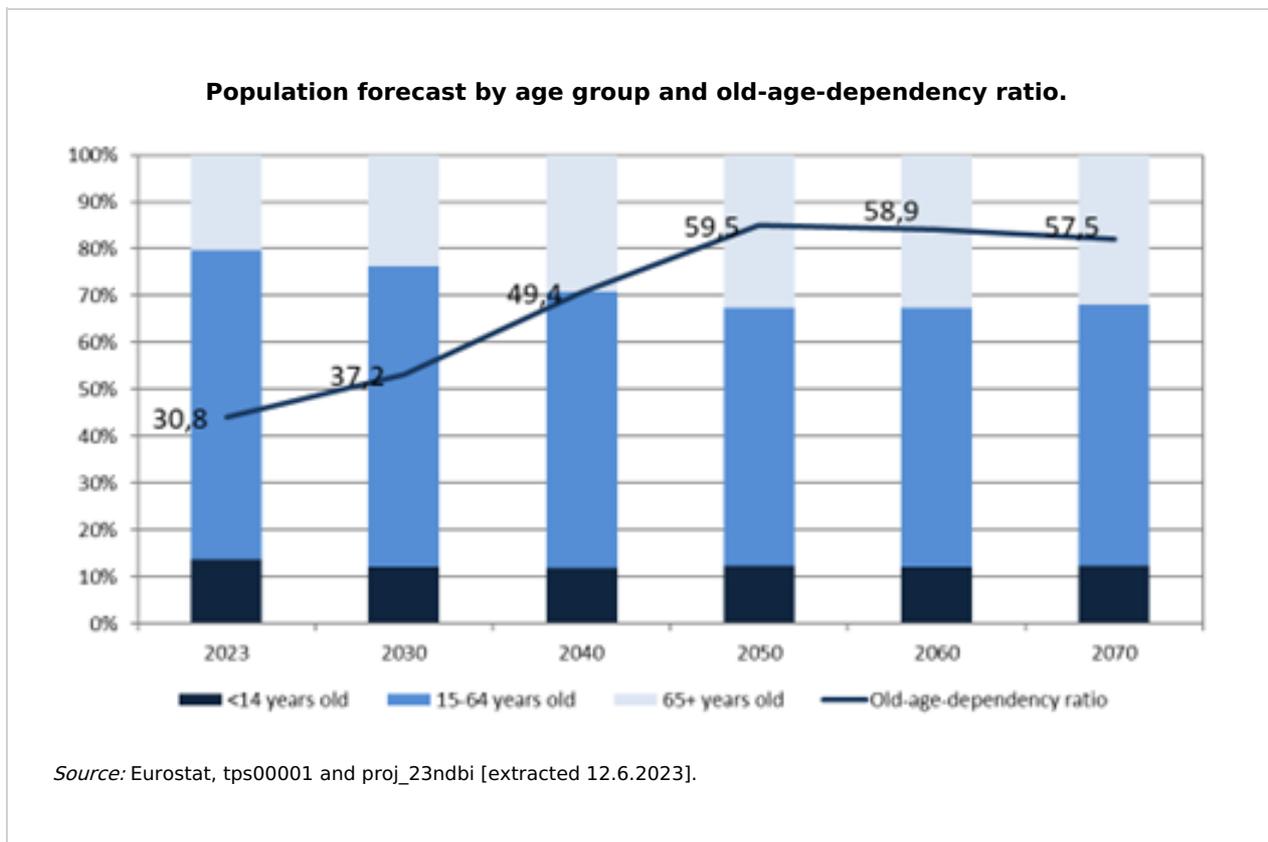
## CHAPTER 3.

# External factors influencing VET

## 3.1 Demographics

Population in 2023: 48 085 361 (1). It has increased slightly in 2023, continuing the upward trend of the last 5 years (+3.1% since 2018) (2). This growth can be attributed to positive net migration since 2016, with 6.1 million foreigners residing in Spain, representing 12.7% of the population, while those born abroad are almost 8.2 million.

As in many other EU countries, the population is ageing. The old-age-dependency ratio in Spain is expected to increase from 30.8 in 2023 to 57.5 in 2070 (3).



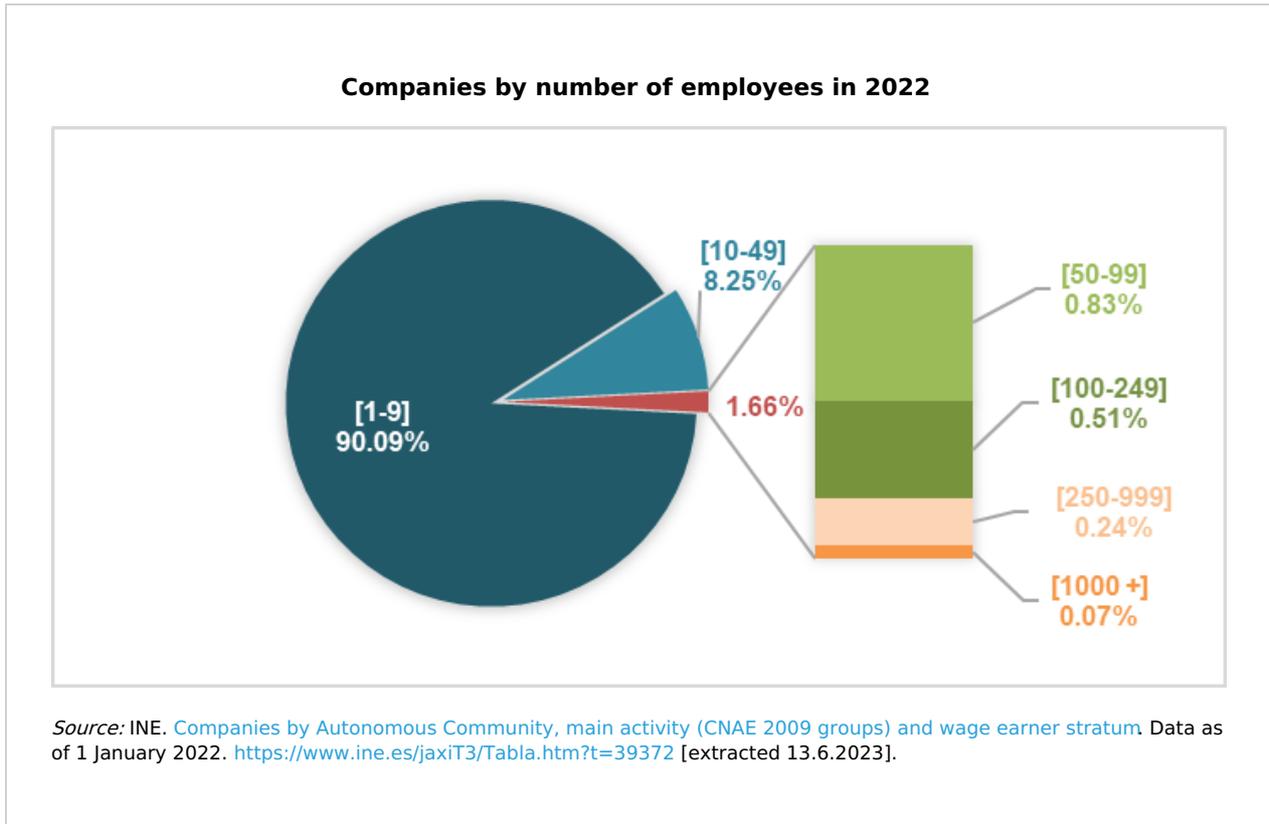
Demographic changes have an impact on VET. [Medium-term forecasts](#) indicate a need for people qualified through VET as an important share of job openings will mainly come from the replacement of workers retiring or changing occupations and not so many due to new occupations.

According to the constitution, Spanish is the official language of the State. Other languages, such as Basque, Catalan, Galician, or Valencian are also official in the respective Autonomous Communities. Regional authorities ensure education in the official languages. Some VET providers also offer bilingual VET programmes in a foreign language.

## 3.2 Economics

In 2022, most companies were micro companies with fewer than 10 employees (90.09%). Adding in

companies without employees, 98.34% of businesses have fewer than 50 employees or none.



Spain was the 15th largest economy in the world in 2022 (4).

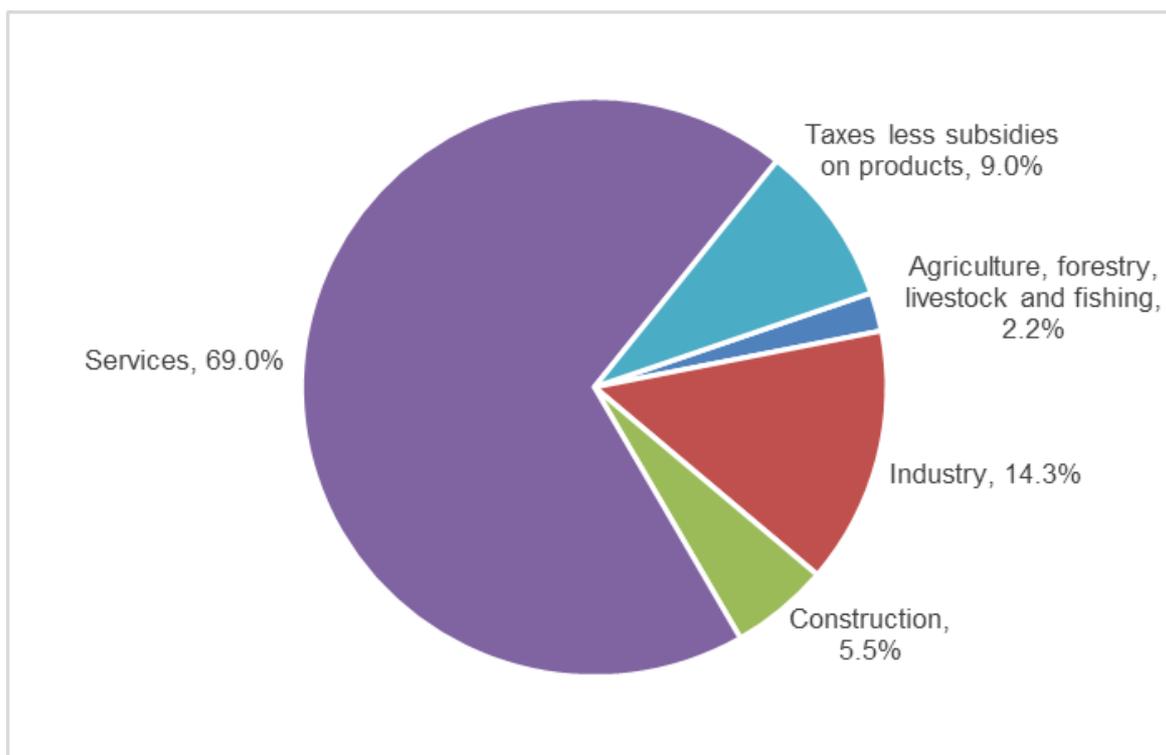
The Spanish economy shows an increasing evolution towards a service economy, representing around 69% in terms of GDP and 71% in terms of employment. Among its activities, those related to tourism, education and health stand out.

The country's secondary economic activities account for 14.3% of GDP and 13.6% of employment. The automotive sector and the pharmaceutical industry are the most important industrial sectors.

Construction remains a strong driver of the Spanish economy, accounting for 5.5% of GDP value and 5.5% of employment.

The primary sector represents only 2.2% of the country's total economic activity, but 3.8% of employment, with the olive and wine sectors, and organic production prominent (5).

### GDPmp according to components 2023QII (%) (supply approach)



Source: INE. GDP mp Supply (Current prices). 2023QII. [extracted 5.10.2023].

Most small businesses are in the services sector, especially in trade. In contrast, most large companies operate in the industrial sector. Many are major international players in infrastructure development, renewable energy, tourism, banking, insurance, the textile industry, health technology, aeronautics, agri-food, and automotive industries.

After the strong impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, employment is recovering significantly, reaching 20.5 million people in work by the first quarter of 2023, 1.1 million more than at the start of the pandemic (February 2020). The stability of employment benefits in particular women and young people, who suffered the most in previous crises. Behind these good results are the protective effect of the regulatory measures taken by the government to support the economy and employment throughout 2020 and 2021 and the transformation of the labour market.

Following an agreement among Spain's government, trade unions and employers' associations, the [labour code was amended](#) to limit the use of temporary contracts and establish new measures for Spain's temporary lay-off schemes (*expedientes de regulación temporal de empleo - ERTE*). Permanent contract is now the ordinary system used in the labour market. Only two types of temporary contracts are currently available: structural (due to production circumstances and for substituting another worker with a job reservation) and training.

### Employees by economic activity in 2022

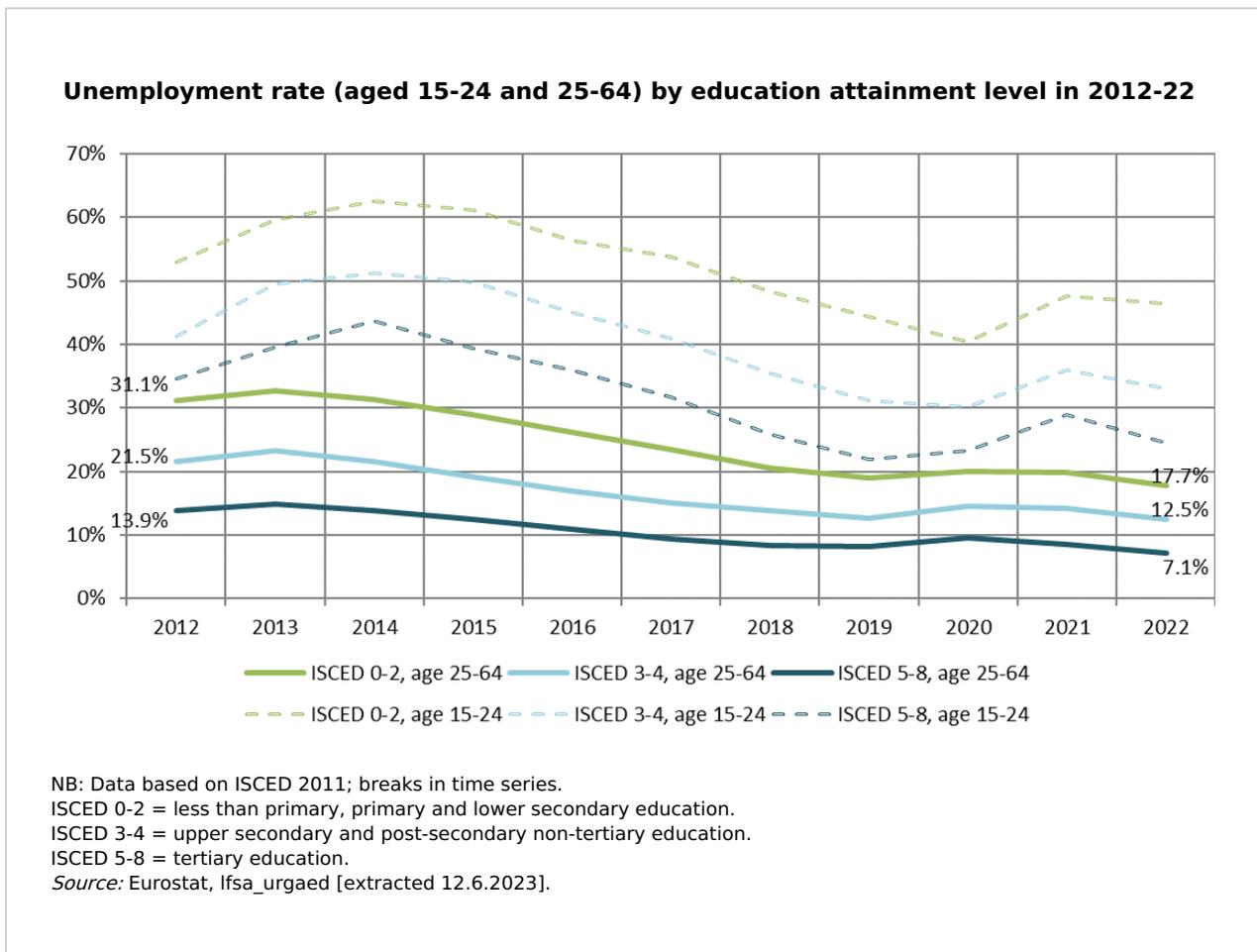
Employed	%	Variation
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>3,1%</b>
Agriculture	3,8	-3,5%
Industry	13,6	2,6%
Construction	6,5	0,0%
Services	76,1	3,6%

### 3.3 Labour market

A limited number of occupations/professions is regulated.

For some jobs, it is necessary to hold a certificate of professional competence (CAP, *certificado de aptitud profesional*), such as electrical and gas technicians. Regional authorities are responsible for issuing certificates of professional competence, which can be obtained by accrediting a full vocational qualification (VET diploma or professional certificate) or partial qualification (units of competence, UCs); a test follows specific training in some. Training providers in such cases must be recognised or certified by the authority in charge.

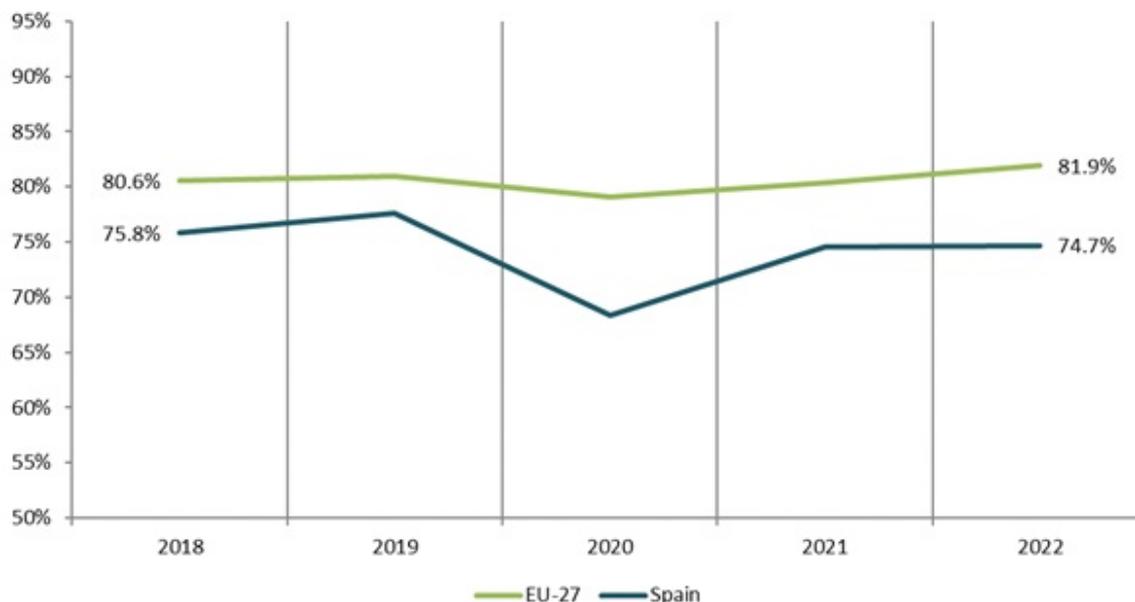
The total unemployment rate (6) was 11.7% in 2022 (5.4% in EU-27), a fall of 2.2 percentage points since 2018. For the first time in 15 years, the number of unemployed fell below the 2.8 million mark (7).



Young people, along with low-skilled workers (unemployment rates of 29.8% and 17.7%, respectively in 2022), are the most affected by the negative impact of the crisis. The employment of young VET graduates (between 20 and 34 years old) has been growing steadily in recent years until the COVID-19 pandemic crisis and had not yet recovered pre-crisis levels in 2022.

The employment rate of 20-34 year old VET graduates fell from 75.8% in 2018 to 74.7% in 2022. However, the increase in employment of VET graduates is above the average increase in employment in the EU-27 after the Covid-19 pandemic.

### Employment rate of VET graduates (20 to 34 years old, ISCED levels 3 and 4)



NB: Data based on ISCED 2011; breaks in time series.  
ISCED 3-4 = upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education.  
Source: Eurostat, edat\_lfse\_24 [extracted 12.6.2023].

The level of education is a decisive factor in the situation of the population in the labour market: the higher the level of education, the more advantageous the situation on the labour market, and vice versa. This characteristic is more marked among young people than among adults, so the level of education is more important for young people. Young people with low qualifications have a significantly higher unemployment rates, are more vulnerable to adverse situations, and are more likely to fall into long-term unemployment.

[1] NB: Provisional population data as of 1 January 2023. Eurostat table tps00001 [extracted 11.7.2023].

[2] NB: Provisional population data as of 1 January 2023. Eurostat table tps00001 [extracted 11.7.2023].

[3] Old-age-dependency ratio is defined as the ratio between the number of persons aged 65 and more over the number of working-age persons (15-64). The value is expressed per 100 persons of working age (15-64). Source: Eurostat, tps00001 and proj\_23ndbi [extracted 12.6.2023].

[4] Based on data from the [World Bank \(GDP - current US\\$\)](#).

[5] INE [GDP mp Supply \(Current prices\)](#). Extracted:04.10.2023.

[6] Percentage of active population, 25 to 74 years old.

[7] Eurostat table une\_rt\_a [extracted 12.6.2023].

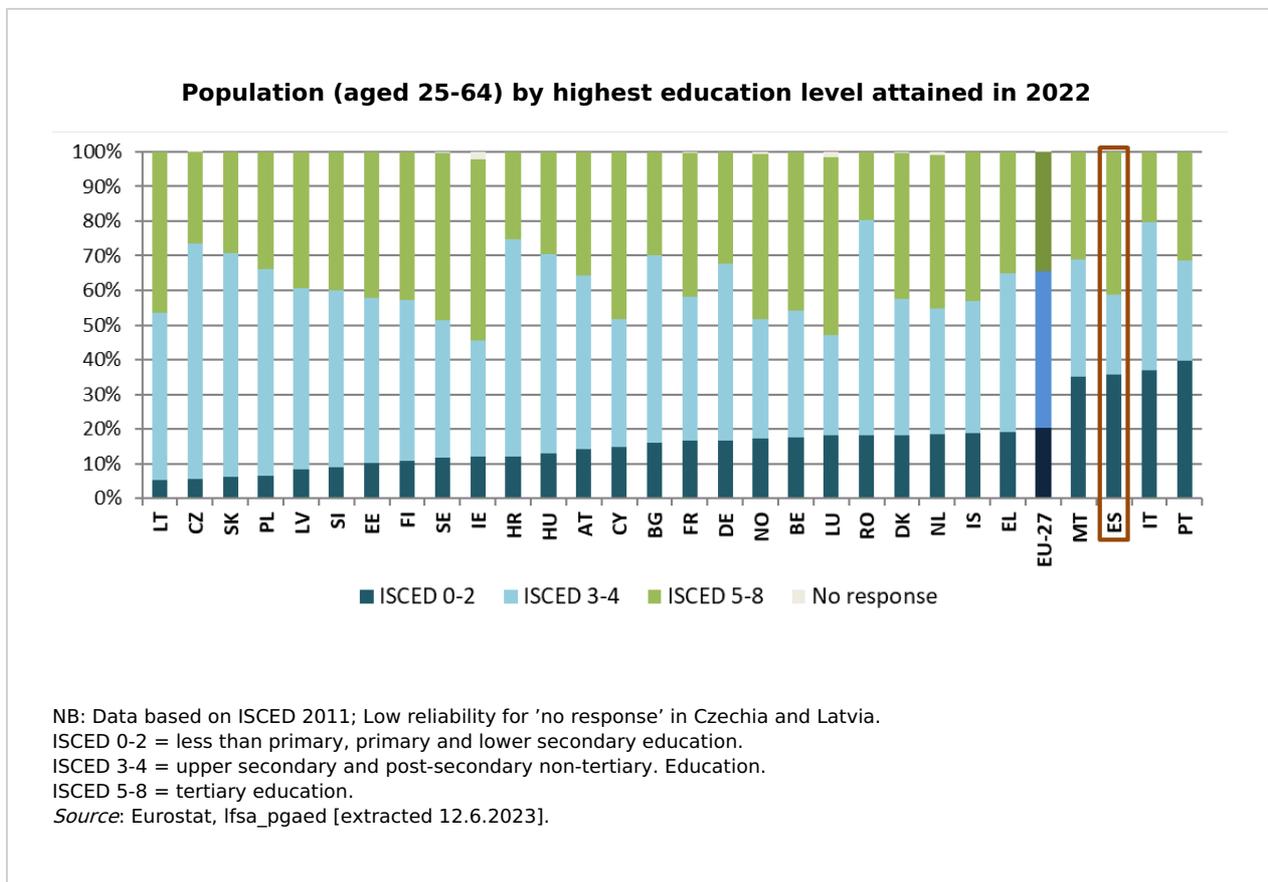
## CHAPTER 4.

# Education attainment

### 4.1 Share of high, medium and low level qualifications

In 2022, the share of the adult population aged 25 to 64 with high-level qualifications (ISCED 5-8) was higher in Spain (41.1%) than in the EU-27 (34.2%). In contrast, the share of those with medium-level qualifications (ISCED 3-4) was the lowest (23.1%) in the EU-27, while the share of those with low or no qualifications was 41.1%, one of the highest in the EU (8).

So far in this century, there has been a significant change in the educational level of the population aged 25-64. In this period, the share of people with less than upper secondary education has decreased by 25.5 percentage points (p.p.) (from 61.5 % to 36.1 %). Over the last five years, the percentage of the adult population with less than upper secondary education has decreased, -5.6 p.p., while that with tertiary education has increased, +5.0 p.p.



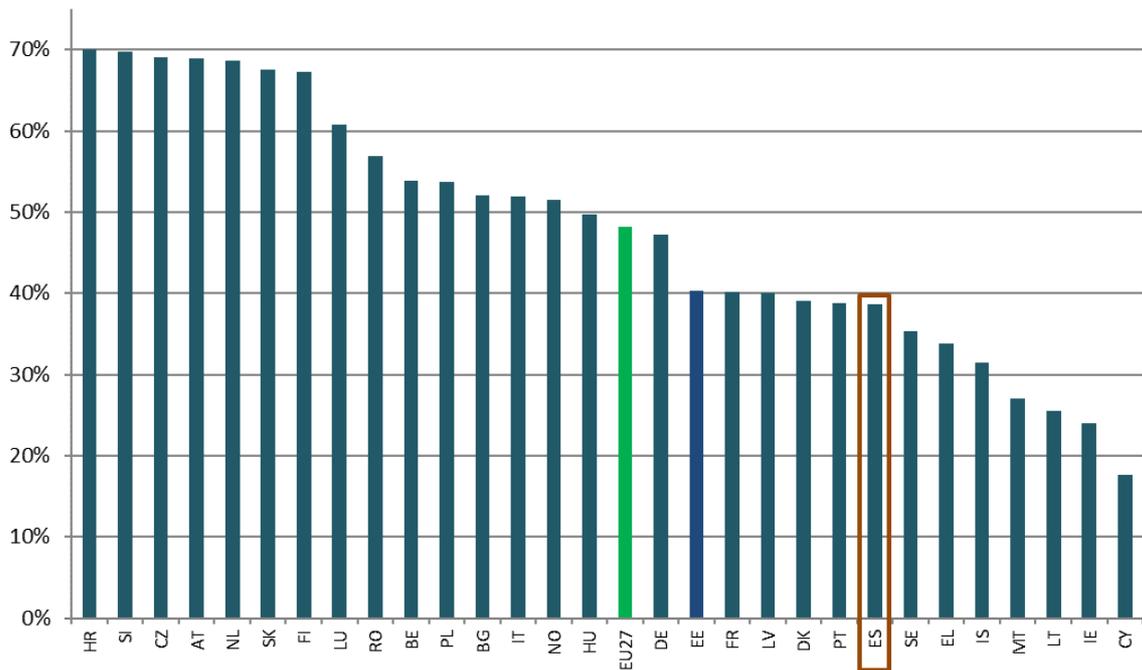
### 4.3 VET learners by level

#### Share of learners in VET by level in 2021

lower secondary	upper secondary	post-secondary
1.9%	36.6%	100.0%

Source: Eurostat, educ\_uoe\_enrs01, educ\_uoe\_enrs04 and educ\_uoe\_enrs07 [extracted 13.6.2023].

### Share of initial VET learners from total learners at upper secondary level (ISCED level 3), 2021



NB: Data based on ISCED 2011.  
 Source: Eurostat, educ\_uoe\_enrs04 [extracted 1.11.2023].

## 4.4 Female share

There are considerably more males in IVET programmes at all three levels: only 29.5% are women in basic VET (ISCED 353), and 45.1% and 48.9%, respectively in intermediate and higher VET. There are also significant differences between professional branches.

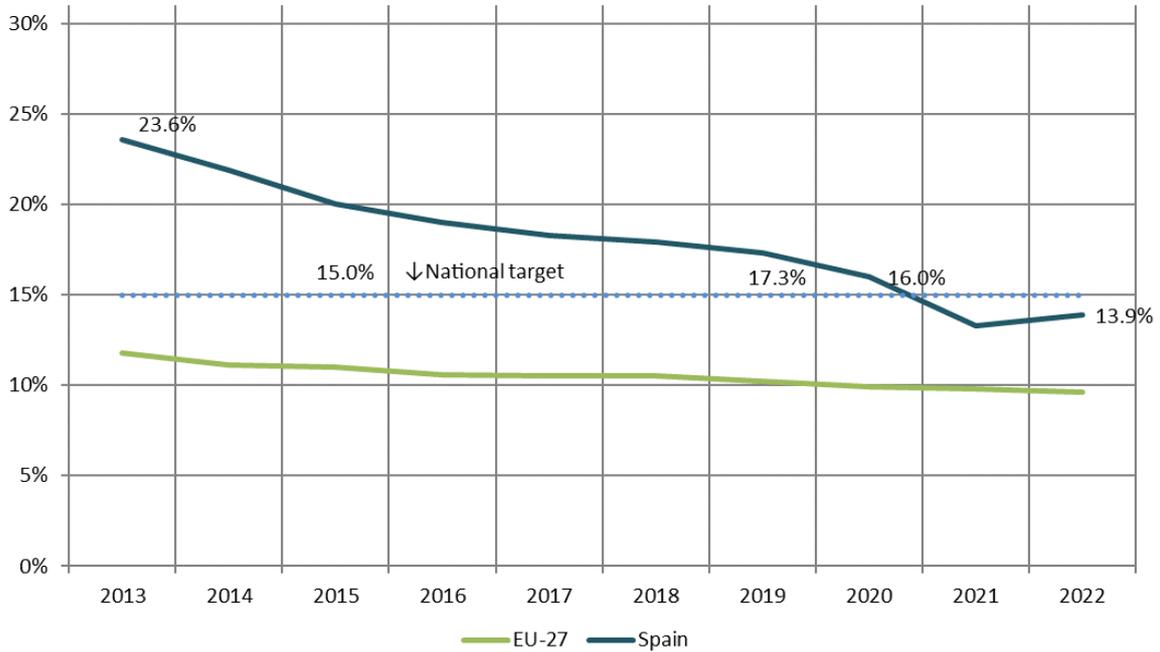
Female students generally prefer pathways in personal image, sociocultural and community services, textile and clothing, and health. They are also the clear majority in distance learning: they represent 65.7% at intermediate level and 61.7% at higher level VET in the [2021/22 school year](#). Male students opt for installation and maintenance, vehicle transport and maintenance, electricity and electronics, and metal working.

## 4.5 Early leavers from education and training

The early school leavers (ESL) rate in Spain has decreased by 9.7 percentage points (p.p.) since 2013, falling from 23.6% to 13.9% in 2022, the second lowest figure in the historical series. In this last year, there was a slight increase of 0.6 p. p. from 2021, following two years of significant declines due to the pandemic (1.2 and 2.7 p. p. in 2020 and 2021, respectively). It remains higher than the European Union average of 9.6% in 2022.

There is still a significant difference between males (16.5%) and females (11.2%), with a gap of 5.3 p.p. The ESL rate for the foreign population is more than double, at 30.3%. There are also significant differences in ESL between the Autonomous Communities; three are below the EU-27 average in 2023, and two are very close to it (around 1 p.p difference or less). High rates of early school leaving in Spain put many young people and adults in a weak position in the labour market.

### Early leavers from education and training in 2013-22



NB: Share of the population aged 18 to 24 with at most lower secondary education and not in further education or training.

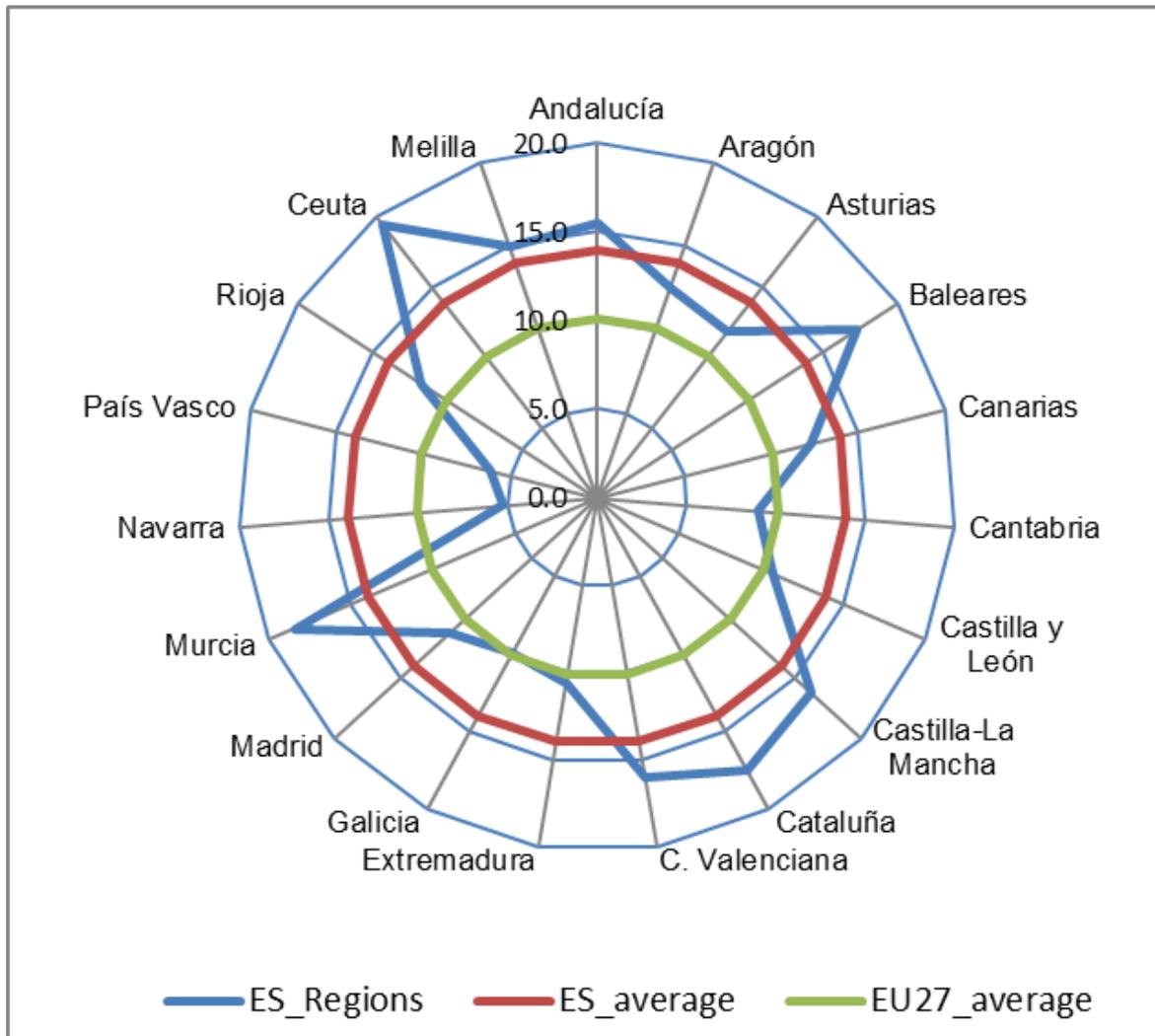
Source: Eurostat, edat\_lfse\_14 [extracted 12.6.2023 ] and European Commission [extracted 12.6.2023].

In 2022, 12.7% of young people aged 15 to 29 were neither studying nor working, a figure 1.4 points lower than the previous year. Considering the level of education attained, the percentage is 9.9% for young people with upper secondary or higher education and 17.0% for those with less than upper secondary education (compulsory education or lower), a difference of 7.2 points between the two levels of education.

On the other hand, the employment rate for recent IVET graduates (20-34-year-olds) stood in 2022 at 74.7% below the EU-27 average (81.9%).

Unemployment correlates with educational attainment. Since 2013, learner dropout from schools, among the 18-24 age group without at least a medium-level qualification (upper secondary), has been a major concern for education and labour authorities. Basic VET programmes, introduced in 2014, aim to offer an attractive option for learners to remain in or return to education and training.

## Early leavers from education and training in the EU-27 and Spanish regions in 2022



NB: Data from small sample sizes with possible strong sampling errors.

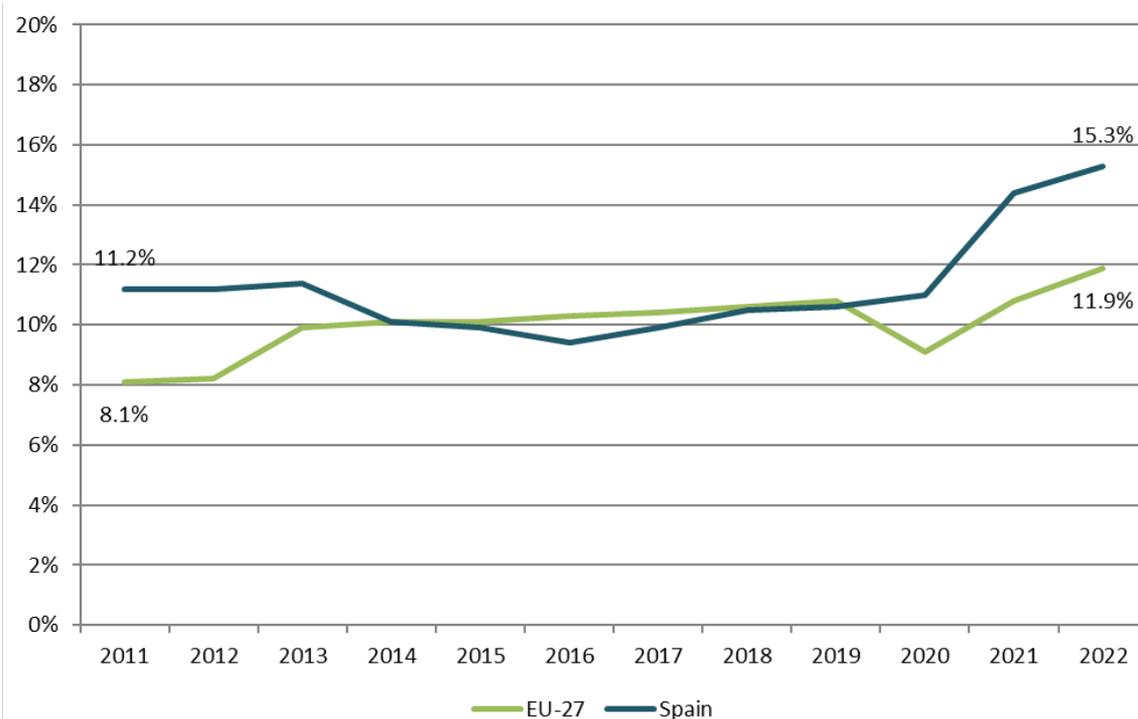
Source: Prepared by ReferNet Spain from [Exploitation of the educational variables of the Active Population Survey \(INE\)](#). Ministry of Education and Vocational Training. [extracted 12.7.2024].

For more information visit [Cedefop project page on tackling early leaving](#) and our interactive toolkits: [Cedefop VET toolkit for tackling early leaving](#) and [Cedefop VET toolkit for empowering NEETs](#).

## 4.6 Participation in lifelong learning

Lifelong learning offers training opportunities for adults, including early leavers from education.

**Participation in lifelong learning in 2011-22**

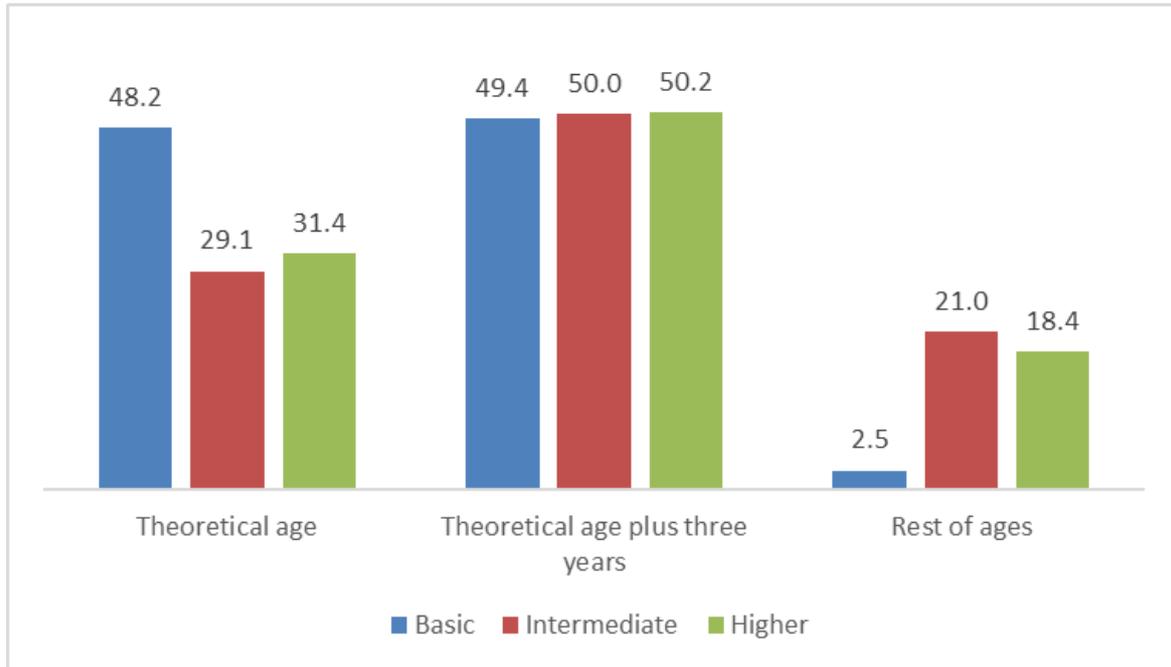


NB: Share of adult population aged 25 to 64 participating in education and training; break in series 2021.  
Source: Eurostat, trng\_lfse\_01 [extracted 12.6.2023].

The share of people in lifelong learning aged 25 to 64 in 2022 is 15.3%, above the European average (11.9% in 2022).

## 4.7 VET learners by age

**Share of IVET students by age and VET level in 2021/22**



*N.B.* Theoretical ages are those established by law and regulation for the entry and ending of a cycle of education. Theoretical ages may differ significantly from the typical ages.

*Source:* Elaborated by ReferNet Spain from [Statistics of non-university education/vocational training](#). Ministry of Education and Vocational Training. [extracted 29.7.2024].

In formal education, 2-year VET programmes are offered at all three levels to school-age learners; programmes are also accessible to adults (see figure above):

- lower secondary basic VET (ISCED 353) programmes target learners over 15, mostly at risk of dropping out; In 2021/22, approximately 48.2% of the learners were within the theoretical age range, while 51.9% were older (17-21 years old.);
- upper secondary intermediate VET (ISCED 354) programmes are for learners aged 17 to 18. Over 29.1% of learners were in the theoretical age range; half were up to 25 (50.0%) and 21.0% were 26 or older in 2021/22;
- higher VET (ISCED 554) programmes are for learners 18-19. The age distribution in 2021/22 shows that 31.4% were at the theoretical age, 50.2% were at most 25 years old, and 18.4% were 26 or older.

These data reflect a trend to re-engage in education and training to upskill for employment.

[8] Eurostat, lfsa\_pgaed [Extracted on 12.6.2023].

## CHAPTER 5.

# VET within education and training system

The Spanish education and training system includes:

- early childhood education (ISCED 0);
- primary education (ISCED 1), 6 years (6-12);
- compulsory lower secondary education (ISCED 2), 4 years (12-16);
- post-compulsory upper secondary programmes (ISCED 3) (9);
- higher VET programmes (ISCED 5);
- higher education academic programmes (ISCED 6, 7, 8);
- professional certificates (levels 1 to 3).

Compulsory education includes 6 years in primary (6-12) and 4 years in lower secondary (years 12-16). The age of 16 is the end of compulsory education, irrespective of the level of education achieved, but lower secondary education learners can stay on until age 18 in some cases, to achieve the end of lower secondary certificate (*ESO* diploma).

Formal general and vocational programmes are regulated by the [Ministry of Education and Vocational Training](#) (*Ministerio de Educación y Formación Profesional - MEFP*) (hereafter education ministry). IVET programmes are offered at three levels:

- lower secondary basic VET (ISCED 353) programmes target learners over 15;
- upper secondary intermediate VET (ISCED 354) programmes for learners aged 17 to 18;
- higher VET (ISCED 554) programmes for learners 18-19.

IVET programmes are mostly school-based at basic level; at intermediate and higher VET, more flexible learning forms are also possible (distance learning).

Professional certificates are official qualifications that certify a person's ability to perform the duties of a specific job as outlined in the [national catalogue of occupational standards](#) (CNCP). Individuals over the age of 16 can obtain these certificates through training or by validating non-formal and informal learning related to one or more occupational standards listed in the CNCP, or units of competences included in an occupational standard. Professional certificate programmes facilitate lifelong learning for all citizens through open, flexible, and accessible modular training.

[Organic Law no. 3/2022](#), also known as the Organic Law on VET, rearranges the VET offer into five ascending grades (A, B, C, D and E), ranging from smaller units or micro-training (grade A) (*acreditación parcial de competencia*) to VET programmes and specialisation courses (grades D and E) and three levels (1 to 3) of knowledge, initiative, autonomy, responsibility and complexity. In-company training is foreseen for the programmes leading to professional certificates (grade C) and VET diplomas (grade D). Workplace learning at the end of, or during, studies is compulsory in grades C and D and, in some cases, grade E. Learners will need to pass all modules to obtain the relevant qualification. Its implementation is scheduled from 2023/24 over 4 years.

### IVET

Following the [2013 education reform](#), basic VET programmes (ISCED 353) have been available since 2014 in the education system for learners at age 15, in parallel to general secondary programmes. The education team recommend these programmes to learners for whom they offer best option to complete their training and/or avoid early leaving, as well as to those at risk of dropping out early. Learners follow a 2-year programme to acquire a basic vocational qualification (VET diploma) and ESO diploma, which ends compulsory education. Direct access to intermediate VET is possible.

Formal VET programmes run on two other levels: upper secondary intermediate VET (ISCED 354) and tertiary higher VET (ISCED 554). These deliver full VET qualifications (VET diplomas) that have academic

and professional validity.

Programmes run in public and private VET institutions and [integrated vocational training centres](#). IVET programmes are modularised and include compulsory workplace learning at the end of, or during, studies. Learners need to pass all modules to obtain the relevant qualification. However, modularisation allows partial certification (units of competences) and re-engagement from a lifelong learning perspective.

Graduates from intermediate and higher IVET programmes can enrol in specialisation courses (*cursos de especialización*), in the same field of studies to acquire occupation-specific and digital skills in line with the emerging needs of the economy.

Artistic, sports and foreign language education have their own organisation and are considered 'specialised education'. Specific training programmes in arts and design and in sports are offered at ISCED levels 354 and 554 in schools, specialised according to the field of studies and level of education concerned. Foreign language education is organised according to the [European Framework for learning, teaching and assessment of languages](#) (CERF).

## CVET

Continuing vocational education and training (CVET) includes different types of programmes, which are organised by the education, employment and local authorities:

- a. the education authorities provide training to improve basic skills or to obtain a formal adult qualification;
- b. the employment authorities organise vocational training linked to active labour market policies (ALMP) and on-the-job training. These training measures are aimed at both employed and unemployed people. The aim is to improve the employability of the active population;
- c. local authorities are responsible for the provision of non-formal education and, in some cases, formal education when agreements are signed with the education authorities.

Learners over 16 can enrol in formal continuing VET programmes provided by public and private entities and [integrated vocational training centres](#). These programmes are available in face-to-face and distance learning formats and lead to state-recognised professional certificates. Learning that cannot occur through simulation (due to specific equipment or machinery) must be completed in traditional learning settings. All final assessments are face-to-face.

Employment authorities continue to have responsibility over vocational training in the framework of active labour market policies, referred to as training for employment in the labour scope (*formación para el empleo en el ámbito laboral*), until a new regulatory framework is developed.

A wide range of training activities are available for the unemployed, aiming to improve their employability and ease their integration into the labour market. Other training activities are primarily aimed at employed workers, although unemployed workers can also participate (up to a limit).

Training provisions for both employed and unemployed workers are integrated in the continuing vocational training system for employment (*sistema de formación profesional para el empleo en el ámbito laboral*); they offer training courses included in the [catalogue of training specialities](#) of the State public employment service (SEPE), financed with public funds through different schemes at State and regional level.

There are [other smaller training-employment schemes](#) as well as training for civil servants, military personnel, seafarers, and prison inmates. Further ad-hoc training activities may be carried out by other public authorities within their line of work.

## Common characteristics of IVET and CVET qualifications

Both types of formal qualifications, VET diplomas and professional certificates, are expressed in learning outcomes (*resultados de aprendizaje o realizaciones profesionales*) and are modular in nature. They are based on occupational standards listed in the [national catalogue of occupational standards](#) (*Catálogo Nacional de Cualificaciones Profesionales* - CNCP).

### Learning forms in formal IVET:

- school-based (full or part-time);
- dual VET (see [apprenticeship](#) contracts or learning agreements);

- face-to-face;
- distance learning.

The share of WBL varies from 50% to 65% depending on the level. Practical training takes place in school workshops, laboratories, simulations; a compulsory practical placement in a company (of average 400 hours, depending on the level) is included in all VET programmes/levels.

When the programme is delivered in dual mode (i.e., combining periods in an education institution or training centre and in the workplace), it may take the form of an apprenticeship contract (*contrato para la formación y el aprendizaje*) for learners aged 16 to 24, or a learning agreement. The programme duration may be extended from an initial 2 years to 3; in-company practical training accounts for between 33% and 85% of the learning hours fixed in the qualification.

Dual VET without a contract requires a learning agreement to be signed between the company, the school and the learner. Participants have student status (no age limit applies) and may receive a grant, depending on the region. The agreement must comply with the prescribed working and training conditions set in the qualification, defining the duration of the learning programme (2 or 3 years) and the company's involvement (minimum of 33% of the training hours fixed in the qualification, with a maximum share of 85%).

### VET learners and their share by level in dual and distance learning, 2021/22

201/22	Total learners	% Dual	% Distance
Basic VET	75 276	1.2	-
Intermediate VET	420 227	3.8	12.6
Higher VET	531 864	5.4	23.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 027 367</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>17.4</b>

Source: Elaborated by ReferNet Spain from [Statistics of non-university education](#). Ministry of Education and Vocational Training.

### Learning forms in formal CVET:

- face-to-face learning;
- distance learning through virtual learning environments (e-learning platforms) or blended learning (since 2015);
- dual VET ([apprenticeship](#) contracts).

In continuing VET programmes to acquire State-recognised professional certificates (*certificados profesionales*), classroom-based learning in a training centre (workshops, laboratories, simulations, etc.) is combined with a compulsory practical placement in a company, of variable length depending on the programme content. Their modularisation allows partial certification (units of competences).

When the programme is delivered through a dual VET/apprenticeship contract (*contrato para la formación y el aprendizaje*) the classroom-based learning covers at least 25% of working hours in the first year and 15% in the second and third year.

### Adult learning

Adult training provision is large and diverse, including literacy processes and basic education, training targeting integration into the labour market, and leisure activities. It comprises different types of provision and programmes offered by education and local authorities.

The education authorities offer specific programmes of basic education for adults (10); basic VET (ISCED 353) and intermediate VET (ISCED 354) programmes are also accessible to adults.

All post-compulsory education programmes are open to adults, including higher VET ISCED 554 programmes. These may or may not include flexible attendance arrangements to combine learning with personal and professional life.

[Aula Mentor](#) is an open and flexible online training scheme promoted by the education ministry, made up of more than 200 courses in different areas, organised through collaboration agreements (11) mainly with public institutions. The Organisation of Ibero-American States for Education, Science and Culture (OEI) works with Aula Mentor, so this training is available in several countries in Central America.

Programmes are not free of charge, but they are accessible to most of the population due to their low cost: students' fees cover the cost of tutors, the rest is covered by the education ministry. For quality assurance purposes, students must carry out all activities and pass exams. Upon successful completion, they obtain a certificate of achievement issued by the education ministry, which has no academic value, but may be valued in the labour market (12).

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- [9] There are two main orientations, a general academic route and intermediate level VET. Other programmes in arts or sports are also included at this level but with a low share of students.
- [10] Primary and secondary education.
- [11] Agreements made between the education ministry and the institution issuing the relevant certificate and lending the training material.
- [12] For example, the [Cisco Certified Network Associate-CCNA](#).

## CHAPTER 6.

# Apprenticeship

### Dual VET

Dual VET is an alternance training scheme which combines work and learning. It was introduced by [Royal Decree of 1529/2012](#) and modified by the [Organic Law on VET](#). The modification expanded the dual principle to considering not only the time spent in the company, but also the quality of the time spent in the workplace and the learning outcomes addressed during that time. The regulation also emphasises shared responsibility between VET centres and the surrounding enterprises, to work together to deliver the curriculum.

The Organic Law on VET sets two dual regimes, depending on the time spent in a company, the percentage of the curriculum learned and performed at work, and the status of the person in training:

- a. general regime: with in-company time of 25-35% of the training's programme total duration, the company's commitment to participate in up to 20% of the curriculum content and learning outcomes, and no labour relationship required;
- b. intensive regime: with in-company training from 35% of the total duration and the company's collaboration with the training centre in developing more than 30% of the curriculum. The learner must be hired by a company (or several if needed to cover the whole qualification) under the terms determined by labour legislation.

There is a transition period until December 31, 2028, for the current scholarship system to change into a training contract.

General and intensive VET programmes lead to the same qualifications, and VET learners from both regimes could be mixed in the same classroom.

Apprenticeship training must be linked to programmes leading to state-recognised qualifications. Training not linked to VET qualifications can be accepted if it complements the apprentice's qualification programme.

The training and apprenticeship contract was modified by [Royal Decree Law No 32/2021](#), which now has two modalities:

- a. [Contract for the dual training](#) (*contrato de formación en alternancia*): this can last between 3 months and 2 years and be used for training processes in VET programmes, university studies or the catalogue of training specialities of the national employment system (\*The national employment system comprises the set of structures, measures and actions necessary to promote and develop employment policy. It comprises the State Public employment service and the public employment services of the autonomous communities). It must include the collaboration agreement between the training centre and the company. The effective working day must not exceed 65% in the first year or 85% in the second year; remuneration may not be less than 60% in the first year or 75% in the second year or less than the minimum wage proportional to the working day. It allows several companies to participate in a contract for the same training programme.
- b. [Training contract for the professional practice](#) (*contrato formativo para la obtención de la práctica profesional adecuada al nivel de estudios*): this may be signed up to 3 years after obtaining the qualification (5 years in the case of individuals with disabilities), for a duration of between 6 months and 1 year. The remuneration will be according to the collective agreement for that job, and there must be a practical training plan and tutorial follow-up. At the end of the contract, the employee is entitled to work experience content certification.

Training and apprenticeship contract regulations set different [incentives for companies](#) and [apprentices](#), in the form of reduced employer social security contributions, or additional bonuses to fund the costs of in-company tutors, as well as other incentives when apprentices become permanent staff.

Dual VET has been operating in intermediate and higher VET programmes since its launch. Despite its

steady growth over the last four years, dual VET still represents a small minority at all levels of education compared to school-based VET.

#### Number of learners in Dual VET (2021/22)

2021/22	Total learners	Learners in Dual VET	% Dual
Basic VET	75 276	871	1.2%
Intermediate VET	420 227	15 787	3.8%
Higher VET	531 864	28 955	5.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 027 367</b>	<b>45 613</b>	<b>4.4%</b>

Source: MEFP (2021). [Estadística del alumnado de formación profesional 2021/22. Nota resumen](#) [Statistics on vocational training students 2021/22. Summary note].

The [alliance for dual training](#) (*Alianza para la FP Dual*) is a private initiative and an active State-wide network of institutions, research centres and companies, in place since 2015; it has been supporting implementation of dual VET in some regions, especially in IVET programmes.

The [alliance for vocational training](#) (*Alianza por la Formación Profesional*) is an initiative of the education ministry launched in May 2021 to establish synergies among public authorities, companies, third sector entities and social partners, to promote vocational training and turn VET into a lever for growth.

Learn more about apprenticeships in the national context from the [European database on apprenticeship schemes](#) by Cedefop.

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[13] The national employment system comprises the set of structures, measures and actions necessary to promote and develop employment policy. It comprises the State Public employment service and the public employment services of the autonomous communities.

# CHAPTER 7.

## VET governance

### Legislation

The VET system is governed by [Organic Law 3/2022](#) on the organisation and integration of vocational training (Organic Law on VET hereafter), repealing Organic Law 5/2002 of 19 June 2002 on Qualifications and Vocational Training. Organic Law on VET establishes a single, modular and flexible offer of formal vocational training from a lifelong learning perspective aimed at students and workers (both employed and unemployed). Royal Decree 278/2023, of 11 April, sets the schedule for the gradual implementation of the VET system outlined in Organic Act 3/2022. The implementation will commence in the academic year 2023/24 and is projected to be fully operational within 4 years. Royal Decree 659/2023, of 18 July, develops Organic Act 3/2022, comprising the training programmes included in initial and continuing VET to enable skilling, upskilling and reskilling.

The first programmes adapted to Organic Law on VET will start in the academic year 2023/24. Its complete rollout will last 4 years.

As part of the education system, VET is also regulated by the [Organic Law 3/2020](#) (known as LOMLOE) that modifies the 2006 Education Act. Although the LOMLOE came into force in January 2021, it is being implemented in stages concluding in the 2023/24 academic year.

Training at work, that is, VET within active labour market policies is regulated by [Act 30/2015](#) and by Article 33 of [Law 3/2023, of February 28, on Employment](#). Training at work covers all labour-related training initiatives not linked to the national catalogue of occupational standards. These upskilling and reskilling programmes are designed for the lifelong training of every working person, whether employed or unemployed, with the goal of improving their professional qualifications and employment opportunities. A future specific regulation on training at work is under discussion.

[Royal Decree 2/2020](#) restructured ministerial departments, with the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training taking over the management of vocational training for employment associated with the national system of occupational standards, i.e. programmes leading to the acquisition of professional certificates; they were under the ministries responsible for labour and employment policies.

### Governance

Vocational education and training in Spain is a shared responsibility among the State, the autonomous communities and municipalities, the VET centres and the social partners, at different levels and responsibilities.

The [Ministry of Education and Vocational Training](#) (MEFP in its Spanish acronym) is in charge of proposing and executing government policies on education and VET and the general organisation of the Spanish VET system, including establishing the learning outcomes of the core IVET curriculum. MEFP's competences guarantee the homogeneity and basic unity of the education system and assure equality for all citizens regarding education and lifelong learning.

The [Ministry of Labour and Social Economy](#) sets the policies for vocational training under its remit. The aim is to (up)skill and retrain the unemployed and employed population, and to support employability matching skills with the needs of the local economy.

The autonomous communities are responsible for the design, implementation and management of education and active employment policies in their territorial areas, according to State regulations. They can shape IVET curricula based on local/territorial needs (between 45 and 55%, depending on whether or not they have a joint official language).

Local authorities are responsible for education building conservation, maintenance, and monitoring. By delegation from the regional departments, some may manage certain education services to promote greater efficiency, coordination, and social control in the use of resources.

Training institutions, within the framework established by State and autonomous community regulations,

have the autonomy to draw up, approve and implement their education project, their management plan, and their organisational and operational rules.

The social partners play an active role in designing qualifications and governing the system, particularly in the context of active labour market policies.

### **Implementation - advisory bodies**

#### Main bodies involved in education:

- at state level, the [general council for vocational training](#) (*Consejo General de la Formación Profesional, CGFP*) is the Government advisory body on VET policy. CGFP comprises representatives of education and employment authorities (at national and regional levels) as well as social partners (employer organisations and trade unions);
- the [state education council](#) (*Consejo Escolar del Estado*) advises the Ministry of Education on various aspects of the education system and includes representatives from all parties most directly related to the education sector;
- the sectoral education conference (*Conferencia Sectorial de Educación*), made up of the Minister for Education and the relevant councillors of each region to coordinate education at national and regional levels;
- the sectoral conference of the system of qualifications and vocational training for employment (*Conferencia Sectorial del Sistema de Cualificaciones y Formación Profesional para el Empleo*), established in November 2020. It is the cooperation body between the State and regional authorities to coordinate policies on accreditable vocational training for employment based on the national catalogue of occupational standards. It responds to the new distribution of powers between the education and labour ministries.

#### Main bodies involved in vocational training for employment:

- The Sectoral Conference on Employment and Labour Affairs (*Conferencia Sectorial de Empleo y Asuntos Laborales*) is the body for collaboration, coordination, and cooperation between the State and the Autonomous Communities in employment matters, particularly in preparing plans to implement the European Employment Strategy. Active labour market policies are agreed upon within its framework.
- the General Council for the National Employment System (*Consejo General del Sistema Nacional de Empleo*) is the main consultative and participatory body for public authorities and social partners. For VET issues in particular for, it carries out its functions through the training for employment State commission (*Comisión Estatal de Formación para el Empleo*);
- the [State Foundation for Training in Employment](#) (*Fundación Estatal para la Formación en el Empleo, Fundae*) is a public body comprising the State general administration, the regions and the most representative business and trade union organisations. It provides technical support to the State public employment service (SEPE), and to the labour ministry in the strategic development of the continuing vocational training system for employment (*sistema de formación profesional para el empleo en el ámbito laboral*);
- [joint sectoral structures](#) comprise the representative business and union organisations in each relevant sector (13) public and private institutions authorised and accredited for this purpose by the competent administration. Public centres are designated as follows:
  - secondary education institutions (*institutos de educación secundaria, IES*), when they provide compulsory secondary education (*educación secundaria obligatoria, ESO*), baccalaureate and vocational training;
  - vocational training institutions (*centro de formación profesional*) when they only provide vocational training programmes;

. Their main task is to anticipate training needs and propose sectoral training based on their knowledge of the real productive environment.

### **VET providers offering State-recognised vocational qualifications**

Different types of institutions and bodies may offer vocational training leading to State-recognised vocational qualifications associated with the national catalogue of occupational standards.

All schools in the State, regardless of ownership and source of funding, must meet a series of minimum requirements regarding the academic qualifications of teachers, learner-teacher ratios, teaching and sports facilities, and the number of school places.

The institutions and bodies that can provide vocational training must be included in the regional administrative registry and in the [State registry of centres](#). They can be:

- [integrated vocational training centres](#) (*centros integrados de formación profesional*, CIFP). These are centres specialising in vocational training leading to the award of VET qualifications (VET diplomas or professional certificates). Their training offer is entirely vocational training;
- [national reference centres](#) (*centros de referencia nacional*). These are public centres that carry out innovation and experimentation actions regarding VET, specialising in the different productive sectors;
- public or private bodies with which the competent administrations sign agreements or establish any other form of collaboration, including institutions considered as second-chance centres;
- public or private companies which, with their own or outsourced resources, carry out training actions for their own workers;
- business organisations and trade unions, as well as other bodies fulfilling the requirements set in VET subsidising schemes;
- any institution that is authorised by its autonomous community (associated centres).

### **VET providers offering non-formal training programmes**

Companies carrying out training activities (not leading to a State-recognised qualification) for their staff can hire external training providers or provide the training themselves. [Public funding](#) for such activities comes mainly from business and worker contributions, collected and distributed countrywide.

A wide variety of CVET providers offer different types of upskilling and reskilling activities for the employed and unemployed. These courses can be subsidised by public funds, thus at no cost for learners. They may comprise schemes with a sectoral or cross-sectoral approach for the (un)employed, as well as public employment services' training schemes for the unemployed.

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[13] They were redefined by Act 30/2015 in replacement of the joint sectoral commissions in place since 1993.

## CHAPTER 8.

# VET financing mechanisms

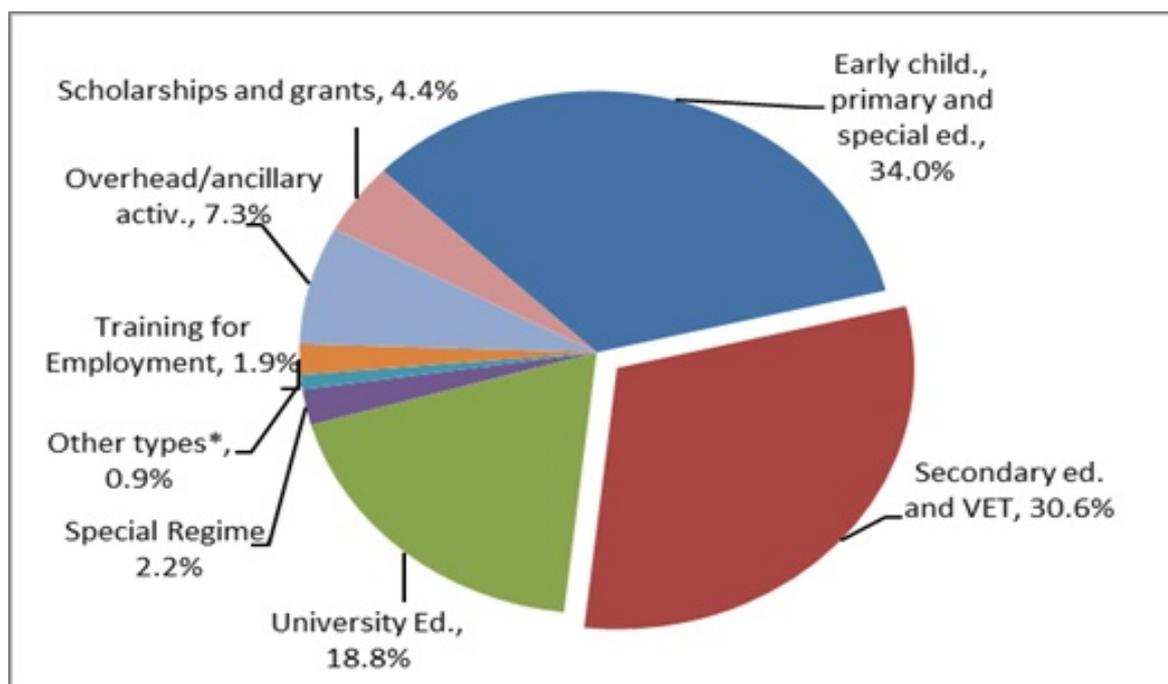
The total public expenditure on education in 2021, including all public administrations and public universities, was EUR 59 657.2 million, marking an 8.1% increase compared to 2020. Excluding the financial chapters, in line with to international methodology, the total expenditure would be EUR 59 425.4 million, with an 8.1% increase over the previous year.

Formal VET is mostly State financed. The largest share of funding on VET comes from public sources, mainly from education and employment authorities at state, regional and local levels.

The share of public expenditure on education in terms of GDP share stands at 4.94% in 2021, the same as in 2020. In terms of the distribution of public expenditure on the different educational activities, secondary education and vocational training account for 30.6% of total public spending on education.

Private funding in IVET supplements public expenditure and covers expenses such as books and school materials, meals, transport, or extracurricular activities. In private non-grant-aided schools, families must pay for registration and tuition fees.

**Distribution (%) of public expenditure on education by activity 2021(\*\*)**



NB: Provisional data.

(\*): Specialised education, adult education and other types.

(\*\*): For the calculation of this distribution, adjustment and undistributed by activity items have been excluded.

Source: MEFP (2023). [Nota: Estadística del Gasto Público en Educación. Resultados provisionales Año 2021](#) [Note: Statistics of public expenditure on education: 2023 interim results]

The government announced in July 2020 the Plan for the modernisation of vocational training ([Plan de](#)

[modernización de la formación profesional](#)) which aimed at boosting VET in Spain, guaranteeing quality training and skills for all.

This modernisation plan is based on the concept of a single vocational training system, laid down later in [Organic Law 3/2022](#) on VET, and encompasses 11 strategic areas with the aim of creating an ecosystem for economic revival based on a commitment to human capital and talent. It has a budget of EUR 1 500 million, the largest VET plan Spain has ever had, which has been increased with funds from the European Union's recovery plan. The [national recovery plan](#), in its component 20 'Strategic plan for the promotion of VET', echoes the goals set in the Plan for the modernisation of vocational training allocating an estimated total investment of EUR 2 076 million.

In initial VET, most VET providers are public or publicly funded; 30% of learners attend a private VET centre (not receiving public funds).

CVET, in the vocational training for employment system, can be delivered by private or public providers. In some cases, they can apply for public funds to cover expenses, with a cost limit per hour/per participant for each course included in the catalogue of training specialities. In these cases, VET providers must be listed in the State register of training entities.

The main funding source for vocational training as part of ALMPs comes mostly from the State budget, through the training levy that all private companies and workers must pay as part of the social security contribution. This is calculated by multiplying by 0.70% company contributions for common contingencies; 0.60% is provided by the company and the remaining 0.10%, by the worker. Other contributions come from SEPE and the regions.

Since 2020, with the redistribution of ministerial powers between the education and labour ministries, the education authorities receive a share of this funding to provide training linked to the catalogue of occupational standards (CNCP), targeting (un)employed workers.

Funding for State-wide training schemes for the employed, not linked to the CNCP, is managed by the [State Foundation for Training in Employment](#) (*Fundae*) together with the State Public Employment Service (SEPE). At regional level, training schemes are managed by the regional employment authorities. The National Institute of Public Administration (INAP) manages training for civil servants.

## Vocational training for employment -2020-21 comparison

	BUDGET		PARTICIPANTS	
	2020	2021	2020	2021
<b>TRAINING PROVISION EMPLOYED WORKERS</b>				
<b>Target group:</b> Unemployed and employed workers <b>Managing entities:</b> Regions & SEPE (with the collaboration of FUNDAE)	334,119,710	586,201,540	No data	No data
<b>Target group:</b> PUBLIC EMPLOYEES <b>Managing entities:</b> INAP	60,749,230	6,488,530	No data	No data
<b>TRAINING PROVISION UNEMPLOYED WORKERS</b>				
<b>Target group:</b> Unemployed and employed workers <b>Managing entities:</b> Regions & SEPE	499,616,721	146,889,170	92,354*	35,442*
<b>TRAINING PROGRAMMED BY COMPANIES/ INDIVIDUAL TRAINING LEAVE (PIF)</b>				
<b>Target group:</b> EMPLOYED <b>Managing entities:</b> SEPE (management of training by companies) <b>Training modality:</b> TRAINING SCHEMES WITHIN COMPANIES	442,391,060	488,800,080	3,858,171 of which 4,317 PIF	4,841,385 of which 4,337 PIF
<b>ALTERNANCE TRAINING</b>				
<b>Target group:</b> UNEMPLOYED PEOPLE <b>Managing entities:</b> Regions & SEPE <b>Training modality:</b> TRAINING AS PART OF TRAINING CONTRACTS	16,020,257	17,984,131	32,468	19,483
Training modality: EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING SCHEMES	216,559,730	626,143,450	13,329	14,064
	<b>1,569,456,708</b>	<b>1,872,506,901</b>	<b>3,996,322</b>	<b>4,910,374</b>

\* Does not include information from all the Autonomous Communities: data from Catalonia and the Basque Country are missing.

Source: SEPE (2023) Annual Report 2022. Executive Summary.

These funds are allocated to different funding schemes, providing training free of charge for the unemployed and employees:

- **training organised by companies** for their employees (*formación programada por la empresa*), through bonuses or discounts on social security contributions;
- **subsidised training schemes** through open calls for proposals, such as sectoral and cross-sectoral training programmes for the (self-)employed workers, including those working in the social economy (cooperatives) (*planes de formación intersectoriales, sectoriales, autónomos, y economía social*);
- **subsidised training schemes for the unemployed**, including 'training plans' (*planes de formación*) to meet needs identified by the public employment services and specific training programmes. Funds are allocated through open calls for proposals.
- other training initiatives, such as **individual training leave** (*permisos individuales de formación*, PIF), **alternance training** (*formación en alternancia*), civil servant training, training in prisons, among others. The way in which these initiatives are funded varies.

Moreover, by means of the national recovery plan, additional funding is now available to meet workforce challenges. The national recovery plan, in its component 23 'New public policies for a dynamic, resilient and inclusive labour market', sets the challenge and objective of promoting, within the framework of social dialogue, the reform of the Spanish labour market, giving a boost to ALMPs focused on training workers in the areas of greatest need for the country's economy.

The national recovery plan enables a wide range of investments in projects related to youth and women's employment, as well as digital and green skills acquisition or territorial projects for rebalancing and equity, for example.

The overall 2022 budget earmarked for training primarily for employed workers amounts to EUR 1 406 million.

## CHAPTER 9.

# Teachers and trainers

## 9.1 VET teacher types

The [2006 Education Act](#) (LOE), together with the [Act 3/2020](#) (LOMLOE) amending certain aspects, regulate State-wide requirements for teaching staff, initial and continuing professional development (CPD), and the conditions for recognition, support and value of VET teachers. The same requirements apply for all secondary non-university education.

The main categories of VET teachers and trainers are:

### **In formal IVET and CVET:**

- secondary school teachers;
- technical vocational teachers (to be phased out);
- when necessary, experts in different professional sectors and in-company trainers (trainers/tutors involved in practical training modules at workplaces) can participate in training delivery.

With the publication of the [Organic Law on VET](#), all technical vocational teachers with a university degree (or equivalent) will become part of the body of secondary education teachers, according to [Royal Decree 800/2022](#) of 4 October. For those VET programmes with no university degree of reference - such as aesthetics, catering services, graphic production, hairdressing, machining and machine maintenance, manufacture and installation of carpentry and furniture, pattern and dressmaking, motor vehicle maintenance, and welding-, a new teaching body called 'teachers specialising in specific sectors of VET' is to be set.

### **In non-formal continuing training:**

- trainers/instructors, teaching theoretical technical content;
- in-company trainers/tutors.

### **Formal requirements for VET teachers/trainers in formal IVET/CVET:**

IVET teachers must:

- hold a university degree (ISCED 6);
- hold a master's degree (university master's degree in teacher training);
- undergo an internship at an education centre;
- in public education, teachers have the status of civil servants, and need to pass a complex selection process to acquire such condition.

For teaching staff in CVET programmes leading to a professional certificate, each certificate regulation sets the academic and teaching qualifications and experience that trainers must meet for each training module. Trainers must generally hold a higher qualification than the one they are delivering, at least 1 year of experience, and some [teaching qualification](#).

In-company trainers or tutors, involved in the on-the-job training modules at workplaces and in dual VET, can participate in training delivery when needed.

There are no official regulations setting requirements in terms of teaching qualifications for such tutors. Their role is to guide the learner/apprentice learning process and to monitor and assess them while in the company.

The in-company tutor in charge of apprenticeships with contract for alternance training must have the appropriate training or experience for such tasks and is responsible for monitoring the individual training plan in the company, as provided for in the cooperation agreement with the training centre

### **Formal requirements for trainers/instructors in continuing training**

Requirements for trainers/instructors depend on the type of training to be provided. In the case of training specialities not linked to the CNCP, requirements for trainers are set in terms of qualifications, professional experience and teaching competence.

## 9.2 Continuing professional development of teachers/trainers

Continuing professional development (CPD) is a right and a professional duty. Their participation is voluntary and encouraged with different economic and career incentives.

Education acts ([LOE](#) and [LOMLOE](#)) set a series of guidelines for CPD. The education authorities are responsible for planning, organising and recognising continuing professional development within their scope, providing teachers with a wide range of activities. The education ministry, through the [National Institute for Education Technologies and Teacher Training](#) (INTEF), offers permanent State-wide training programmes via agreements with other institutions. Autonomous regions, at regional level, also offer continuing professional training for teachers.

Regional education authorities devise their own territorial CPD plans. These are developed with due regard for the demands expressed by schools, gathered by the training and resource centres, as well as national and European policies. The needs of teachers are also considered, either on their own initiative, as in the case of specific training needs, or through the action of school CPD coordinators, who usually inform the training and resource centres.

Teachers' continuing professional development is associated with career and wage progression. A grading system considers training and work experience for regional and national mobility, and financial benefits (supplement for lifelong learning every 6 years worked cumulatively).

The National Institute of Education Technologies and Teacher Training develops interactive and multimedia digital education resources (including professional training) in collaboration with the regions, to support social networking, integration of ICT in non-university education, and teachers' digital skills. The digital competence passport allows teachers to measure and monitor ICT skills development.

[National reference centres](#) (CRNs) play a key role in teacher and trainer continuing professional development activities. They offer training courses that aim to improve methodological and technical skills and support innovation in priority areas. The main beneficiaries are VET teachers, in-company trainers and other experts.

To improve the quality of the training offer, the national reference centres develop guidelines and reference guides for teaching and training staff on how best to teach and assess learning outcomes.

For more information visit Cedefop project page on [Teachers' and Trainers' professional development](#) and our interactive toolkits for VET practitioners: [Cedefop VET toolkit for tackling early leaving](#) and [Cedefop VET toolkit for empowering NEETs](#). You may also read [Cedefop/ReferNet country reports on Teachers and Trainers in a Changing World](#) and [Cedefop comparative analysis](#).

## CHAPTER 10.

# Shaping VET qualifications

## 10.1 Anticipating skill needs

Skills anticipation in Spain takes place at different levels and in different bodies, involving substantial stakeholder/social partner engagement. Labour market and skills analysis is primarily based on data from:

- labour force survey (LFS) statistics;
- administrative data on employment;
- registered unemployment data collected by employment authorities;
- ad hoc surveys carried out by public or other institutions; these may take a sectoral or more general approach;
- the alert network of the professional observatory of the National Qualifications Institute.

These sources are used to monitor the labour market and quantify past trends to provide insight into how employment is changing.

Education and employment authorities, at national and regional levels, have their own services for monitoring labour market trends and qualifications evolution. Regular graduate tracking measures are established at regional level, without a structural approach at national level.

State-wide institutions monitor skill needs and trends:

- the [national institute of qualifications \(INCUAL\)](#) has its own [observatory](#). It monitors needs for new occupational standards in all 26 professional branches and updates the national catalogue, in cooperation with sectoral and territorial observatories;
- the [State public employment service](#) has an [Observatory of Occupations](#). It publishes reports on existing and future training needs, job offer profiles and labour market evolution and trends. It also publishes sectoral studies, using quantitative and qualitative techniques and constantly updated social and occupational indicators;
- the [national reference centres \(CRNs\)](#) as centres of innovation and experimentation in productive sectors, address changes in the demand for qualification. They liaise with business and union organisations and universities and establish benchmarks for common use within the network.

See also national forecast and [identification of training needs reports](#) produced by the State Public Employment Service (SEPE) and [Cedefop's skills forecast](#).

## 10.2 Designing qualifications

The Ministry of Education and Vocational Training is responsible for the whole VET qualification system and for establishing and updating formal IVET qualifications (basic, intermediate, and higher VET diplomas and specialisation courses) and professional certificates. The Ministry of Labour and Social Economy, through the State Public Employment Service (SEPE), is responsible for the main upskilling and reskilling schemes and programmes for workers, not linked to the national VET qualification system.

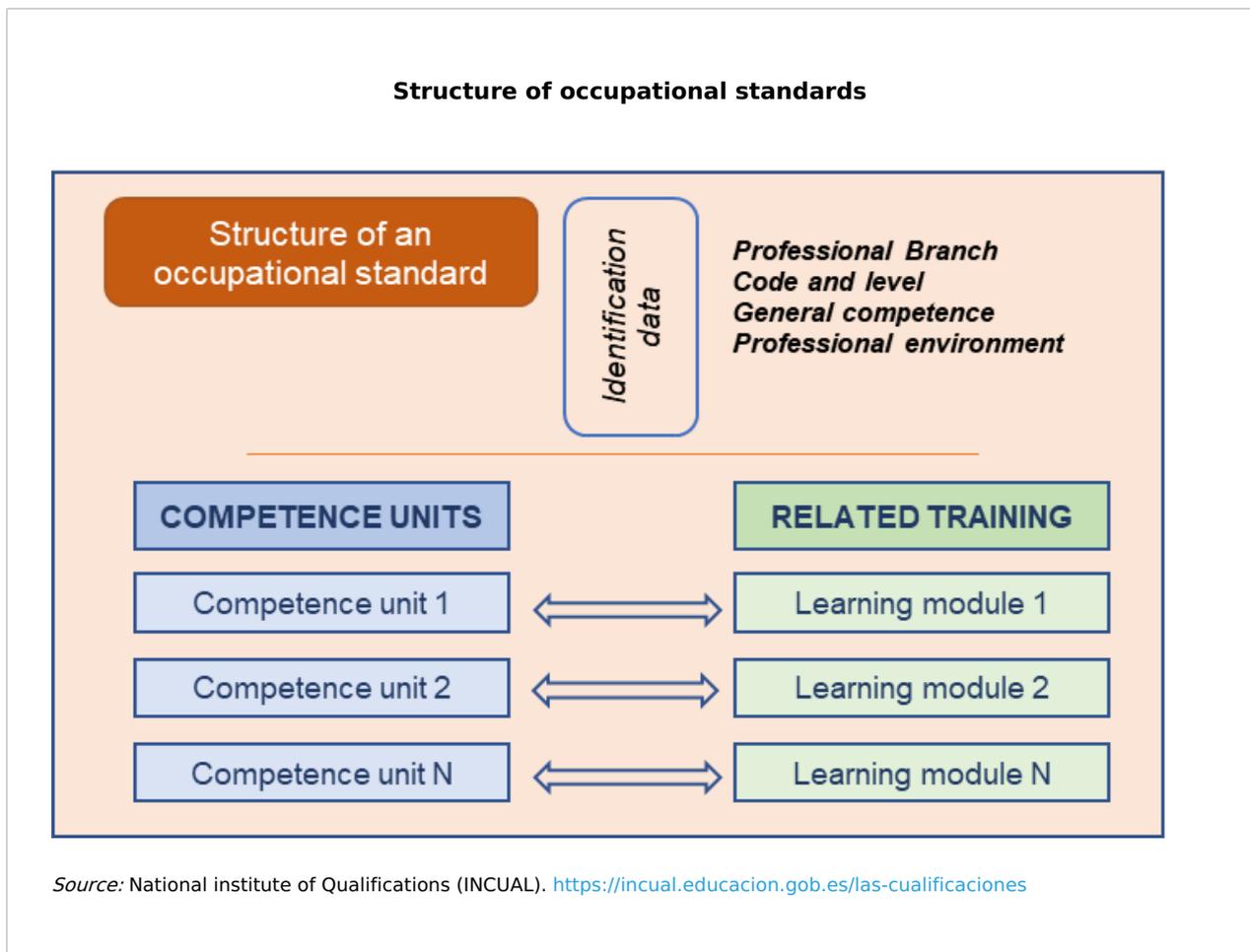
Stakeholders are involved in designing and updating VET qualifications in line with labour market needs and in curricula design, through their participation in different governance bodies and working groups. Occupational standards are developed in all sectors of the economy, making up the national register (*Catálogo Nacional de Cualificaciones Profesionales* - CNCP) and are used as reference for designing and updating VET programmes and qualifications.

### **Occupational standards**

The backbone of VET is the [national catalogue of occupational standards \(CNCP\)](#), which comprises the most important occupations organised in 26 sector branches. It currently has 756 occupational standards on three levels, according to the degree of complexity, autonomy and responsibility necessary to carry out

a work activity.

Occupational standards (referred to as *cualificación profesional* in the national context), consist of a set of units of competence. (UCs) reflecting the expected performance of a job holder in the respective occupation. A unit of competence is defined as 'the minimum set of professional skills that can be partially recognised and certified'. Each unit of competence is associated to a learning module, which describes the necessary learning (knowledge, skills and competences) required to achieve that unit. The learning specifications are expressed as capacities (learning outcomes) and their related assessment criteria, as well as the contents leading to the achievement of those capacities. The capacities to be completed in a real working environment are also identified.



Occupational standards are used by education authorities to design VET qualifications (VET diplomas and professional certificates):

- VET diplomas comprise several occupational standards, which may include all or some of their units of competence (UCs);
- a single occupational standard is used for each professional certificate, with a few exceptions.

The Government establishes the equivalences and recognition between VET diplomas and professional certificates through units of competence. Annexes of the royal decrees establishing the VET qualifications regulate the correspondence between the units of competence and the learning modules that can be validated, a key element for the recognition between a professional certificate and a VET qualification.

The [Organic Law on VET](#) rearranges the VET offer into five ascending grades, from A to E. Grade A will be the shortest offer of the new national vocational training system and lead to a partial competence accreditation on the achieved learning outcomes. Passing all the partial accreditations of competence of a module leads to obtaining the corresponding certificate of competence or grade B of training, referring to

a professional module included in the national catalogue of occupational standards. Grade C brings together several modules and will lead to the award of a professional certificate. Grade D will correspond to the vocational training diploma programmes (basic, intermediate, and higher levels) and grade E will consist of medium and higher-level specialisation courses (Table below).

### Types of programmes and grades foreseen in Organic Law No 3/2022 on VET

Level of competence	Grade A	Grade B	Grade C	Grade D	Grade E
1	Partial competence accreditation	Certificate of professional competence	Professional certificate level 1	Basic VET/ Basic technician diploma	
2	Partial competence accreditation	Certificate of professional competence	Professional certificate level 2	Intermediate VET/ Technician diploma	Technician/ Specialist
3	Partial competence accreditation	Certificate of professional competence	Professional certificate level 3	Higher VET/ Higher technician diploma	Higher technician/ Professional master

Source: Cedefop (2023). *Vocational education and training in Spain: short description*.

The [national institute of qualifications \(INCUAL\)](#) is responsible for defining, drawing up and updating the national catalogue of occupational standards (CNCP) and the corresponding units of competence and learning modules, in cooperation with the member organisations of the general council for vocational education and training. Regions have an active role in the development of some professional branches according to their productive context; this is the case for Galicia in the maritime and fishing industry or for País Vasco in metalworking, for example.

Experts from the 26 [professional branches](#), covering both the productive and training sectors, work together to define occupational standards expressed in units of assessable competences, corresponding to the reference professional profiles in the production system. A unit of competence is then described in terms of the professional tasks that skilled workers do. Each unit is associated with a competence level (1 to 3) according to the criteria of knowledge, initiative, autonomy, and complexity of tasks.

Updating and reviewing all vocational qualifications is continuous and starts with standards older than 5 years or when the changes in the production sectors make it advisable to update before 5 years. This process involves all parties, including experts from companies and VET institutions, as well as an external validation of the revised occupational standards based on current labour market needs analysis in terms of skills supply and demand in all sectors and professional branches. INCUAL collects information through various channels using qualitative and quantitative approaches; VET qualifications are updated accordingly. New occupational standards are created based on identified emerging professional profiles.

[National reference centres \(CRN\)](#) are in charge of planning and carrying out activities for innovation, experimentation and training, which serve as a point of reference for the whole national system of qualifications and vocational training for developing VET.

### VET diplomas

These are based on the occupational standards included in the CNCP. They are offered at basic, intermediate and higher levels, have an academic and professional value, and signify both an education level and the professional qualification obtained. They are accessible to learners enrolled on basic, intermediate and higher VET programmes.

A working group of educational and technological experts, drawn from the related productive sector and different regions, designs and draws up each IVET programme. Educational experts are usually teachers or trainers in the same professional field. Several consultation rounds take place before a VET qualification is approved by the Government and all interested groups and institutions can express their considerations. All main advisory bodies are involved in the process:

- the sectoral education conference;
- the General Council for Vocational Training (CGFP);
- the national education council;

- when other authorities have responsibilities in the occupation or professional fields to which the curriculum of the diploma programmes refers, their favourable report is a prerequisite for approval and publication in the official gazette (*BOE*).

IVET programmes, defined according to learning outcomes, are approved by royal decrees for 55-65% of national curricula, ensuring the validity and the consistency of qualifications nationally. Between 45 and 35% of the curricula contents are settled at regional level, according to the socioeconomic characteristics of the immediate environment. These royal decrees also establish the facilities, equipment requirements for VET providers, assessment criteria and teacher requirements for each VET diploma programme.

Currently, VET diploma programmes consist of different modules: some are linked to occupational standards (the occupations covered by the diploma) while others ease access to employment such as business and entrepreneurship (*Empresa e iniciativa emprendedora*) or career information and guidance modules (*Formación y orientación laboral, FOL*). Personal and social skills are also covered transversely in all modules making up the curriculum of VET programmes in the education system. This modular configuration will change with the implementation of the Organic Law on VET.

Since 2020, specialisation courses to complement VET diplomas have also been developed. These are training programmes of between 300 and 900 hours, with the possibility of exceeding the maximum duration if necessary. These courses complement the skills of those who already have a VET qualification and want to specialise in emerging sectors with a high level of employability. The education ministry is developing these courses in collaboration with the most relevant companies in the sectors involved.

Starting in 2015, VET diploma programmes are being updated and adapted to the requirements of the productive sectors, including and reinforcing the eight key competences in a cross-curricular way.

### **Professional certificates**

Professional certificates (*certificados profesionales*) are State-recognised vocational qualifications issued by the employment authorities until 2020, and by the education authorities thereafter.

A common curriculum is set for each, regardless of the region and irrespective of the type of training programme (full-time, e-learning), based on the standards set in the national catalogue of occupational standards (CNCP). Whenever an occupational standard or unit of competence changes or is updated, the relevant professional certificate programme is also reviewed and changed accordingly.

Professional certificate programmes are organised on three levels, level 1 being 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. Each professional certificate also includes a compulsory on-the-job training module (*módulo de formación práctica en centros de trabajo*) whose learning outcomes must be assessed in the workplace. The total duration of the professional certificate programmes varies, according to the structure of competences and learning outcomes to be acquired, without reference to a specific academic year. The duration of the on-the-job training module depends on the profile and occupations included in the curriculum of each certificate, ranging from 5% to 52% of the total workload of the training programme.

Currently, the Spanish VET system comprises 585 professional certificates, 174 VET diplomas, and 21 specialisation courses. All VET diplomas include the Europass supplement.

Spain published its qualifications framework for lifelong learning (known as MECU) in April 2022 which details the description of the levels not included, except for level 5A, in the Spanish framework of qualifications for higher education (*MECES*), regulated in 2011. MECU must still pass the 'compatibility certification' process with the European qualification's framework for lifelong learning, which entails the evaluation of this regulation by international experts.

To adapt training programmes to the target audience, employed or unemployed workers, the workload of the training modules (*Módulos formativos*) associated with units of competence (*UCs*) lasting 90 hours or more is split into shorter training units (*unidad formativa, UF*), with a minimum of 30 hours, based on an analysis of the competences with which they are associated.

Before their publication in the official gazette, all professional certificates undergo consultation with education and employment bodies: the general council for vocational training (CGFP), the training for employment State commission and the sectoral conference on labour affairs.

Professional certificates have a double effect: they set out training programmes and award a vocational

qualification. As the unit of competence is the minimum unit to be certified, it is possible to gain partial credits for a professional certificate.

Professional certificate programmes can be delivered face-to-face or as blended learning, according to the nature of the content or the need to use certain equipment or machinery. Learning which cannot take place via simulation must be completed in traditional learning settings, as must all final assessments.

Holding a professional certificate indicates the ability to work in a particular field, in line with the classification of occupations, and guarantees the necessary vocational training, although it does not regulate professional activities (this is done by the relevant body in that profession).

More information on national qualifications frameworks and the qualification types can be found in the [NQF online tool](#).

## CHAPTER 11.

# Quality assurance

Education authorities establish, with previous consent of the general council for vocational education and training, the basic quality indicators and requirements for education and training based on the national catalogue of occupational standards (CNCP). The general organisation of vocational training in the education system and the requirements for VET centres are set per legislation.

The [State register of non-university teaching centres \(RCD\)](#) lists all VET centres operating in the education sector.

The education system subscribes to a process of [quality assurance](#) covering all aspects of education activities. Two differentiated means are used:

- inspection of the education system (including VET) organised between the State and regional education authorities;
- evaluation of the education system, including assessment of school performance and teaching staff performance.

Quality assurance in VET is threefold:

- state-level;
- regional level, by the Autonomous Communities;
- local level, by education institutions.

Since 2000, the [National Institute for Educational Evaluation \(INEE\)](#), in collaboration with the regions, uses statistical indicators to run annual assessments; the results drawn are used for policy decision making. The process is in line with the European quality assurance reference framework (EQAVET).

At the end of each year, schools evaluate results obtained to see if they are satisfactory and if the training offered is aligned with local socio-economic needs.

Training entities offering CVET programmes leading to a professional certificate must comply with the requirements established in the royal decree regulating each professional certificate (training infrastructure, human resources) and establish a training project for the delivery of the programme; additional requirements apply for e-learning courses.

The quality of the education system is guaranteed through the requirement conditions for schools and teachers; the curriculum design and development; the compulsory evaluation procedures; the supervision of centres and services by educational inspections; and the use of state-wide educational indicators.

[Organic law on VET](#) includes the obligation to have a mechanism for the evaluation and quality of the system and, for the first time, the commitment to a periodic report on the state of vocational training. This report is to be drawn up by the State, in collaboration with the autonomous communities, and submitted to the general council for vocational training and the state education council. A biennial report will be published on the state of the VET system. Every four years, the report must include a study on the supply of training cycles and their adequacy to student demand, the employability rate of VET learners and the present and future human capital needs of the public and private sectors.

The purpose of the evaluation of the VET system shall be:

- a. the identification, description, and analysis of the relevant elements for the quality of the offer and execution of vocational training programmes and actions, the accreditation of competences and vocational guidance.
- b. the provision of evidence to enable informed decisions to be taken to improve the functioning of the system and the results it achieves.

Creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurship are among the principles and objectives of the Spanish VET education system. In this sense, education authorities, at different levels, may foster quality, research,

and innovation in VET through grants and prizes to training providers with projects promoting improvement of technological, methodological, and training processes and encouraging cooperation with the business world.

On the other hand, as regards vocational training in ALMPs, the [State Public Employment Service \(SEPE\)](#) as coordinator of the national employment system, conducts annual assessments of the training schemes as part of the [annual monitoring plan of the entire employment training subsystem](#). This monitoring is carried out with the cooperation of the regions' employment services and the [State Foundation for Training in Employment](#) (Fundae). It is based on a system of indicators and focuses on quality, impact, effectiveness, and efficiency. Some of the evaluation indicators are referenced to the European quality assurance in vocational education and training (EQAVET) reference framework guidelines.

## CHAPTER 12.

# Validation of prior learning

The process for validation of prior learning (VPL) is regulated by Royal Decree 1224/2009 and amended by [Royal Decree 143/2021](#). The aim is to support skills creation to (re)enter the labour market, especially for early leavers and adults with low or no qualifications.

Validation of prior learning allows workers to have their skills recognised either to find a job, move between workplaces or progress in their careers. The framework covers the whole spectrum of professional skills included in the national catalogue of occupational standards (CNCP).

It is one of the major policies implemented in recent years and one of the main measures included in the plan for the modernisation of vocational training and in the [Organic Law on VET](#). It is aimed at the nearly 10.5 million people in Spain who still do not have a vocational qualification or who do not have their vocational competences formally recognised.

The [National Institute of Qualifications](#) (INCUAL) ensures the maintenance and update of the national catalogue of occupational standards (CNCP). INCUAL uses a set of quality criteria to guarantee the reliability, objectivity, and technical rigor of the validation process.

With the amendment published in 2021, individuals can now apply, at any time, to have their skills validated. Regions are responsible for guidance services and quality assurance of the validation process as well as for the registration of units of competence (UCs) validated. UCs are individually assessed and certified and can be accumulated towards a full VET qualification. These procedures empower citizens to engage in further learning and acquire full qualifications.

The process begins with an initial counselling stage led by an advisor who draws up a guidance report on the applicant. The assessment phase takes place through the analysis of the indicated report, the documentation provided by the candidate and different methods to verify the skills acquired in the workplace. Finally, the results of the assessment are transferred to a state registry.

To participate, candidates must have a minimum of 3 years of experience related to the competence being validated, with a minimum of 2 000 working hours or 300 hours of training. For level 1 units of competence, which cover a smaller set of relatively simple work activities with limited theoretical knowledge and practical skills, 2 years of experience with a minimum of 1 200 hours worked or 200 hours of training are required. All participants receive a training plan drawn up by the assessment committee with guidelines on further training to obtain a full IVET diploma or a professional certificate in the competence validated.

[VET education centres, integrated VET centres and national reference centres](#) can carry out these activities. Other venues for this procedure may also be authorised by the competent authorities.

Between 2010 and 2020, under the initial procedure, around 300 000 people were able to validate their skills. After the amendment, the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training set the goal of validating the skills of more than three million people in 4 years, with an initial budget, approved in 2021, of almost EUR 852.5 million.

The Organic Law on VET envisages a model of vocational training and validation of prior learning based on training itineraries, facilitating progression from a lifelong perspective and structured on a double scale:

- a. [five ascending grades](#) (A, B, C, D and E) describing the training provision organised according to the CNCP;
- b. three levels of professional competence (1 to 3), following the criteria of knowledge, initiative, autonomy and complexity of the tasks, set in the CNCP.

A [national network of organisations](#) promotes an online accreditation system to value and accredit the skills acquired by volunteers during their volunteering experience.

Adults who wish to obtain the end of basic education (ESO) and end of general upper secondary (*Bachillerato*) certificates or IVET qualifications (at all three levels, basic, intermediate and higher VET

diplomas) without having to complete the corresponding studies, can take the relevant examinations; these are periodically organised by the education authorities.

For more information about validation arrangements, please visit Cedefop's [European database on validation of non-formal and informal learning](#).

## CHAPTER 13.

# Incentives for learners

### Scholarships and grants for IVET learners

The [plan for the modernisation of vocational training](#), launched in mid-2020, projects the creation of 200 000 new VET student places in four years. These new places will help to cover the increasing demand that these studies are undergoing.

There are three types of financial incentive to begin or pursue a programme of studies which are valid throughout the country:

- a. financial support based on the applicant's socio-economic circumstances;
- b. grants based on the applicant's socio-economic circumstances and academic achievement;
- c. awards aimed at students with high academic achievement.

Eligibility requirements, as well as household income and capital thresholds, are updated annually.

IVET learners can apply for [scholarships and grants](#), distributed through annual calls published by the education ministry and the regions. Since 2018, the budget allocation for learners' financial support has been increasing; changes have been introduced to reinforce its role as an essential instrument to achieve equity in education, reduce dropout for economic reasons and, most recently, to alleviate the consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic.

According to the different national/regional calls, learners can apply for various financial supports: school canteen, compensatory allowances, mobility, complementary Erasmus grants, textbooks, work placements abroad, residence, transport, or exemption from fees. There are also some grants for special education needs.

### International internships

VET mobility projects aim to increase the employability of young VET graduates, as well as language proficiency, soft skills and professional competences.

Erasmus+ is the main programme that enables VET students and teachers to experience learning abroad. Other national and regional schemes also support student and staff mobility but are on a much smaller scale.

### Incentives for continuing VET learners

Public authorities (at different levels) promote participation in continuing VET with various supporting and [funding schemes](#) addressing diverse target groups. Private agents (like companies, social partners, NGOs, and other actors) may also carry out initiatives to encourage worker upskilling and reskilling.

### Incentives for the employed

The 2012 labour reform and the 2015 employment authority VET reform ([Act 30/2015](#)) laid down different incentives for workers such as the training account, linked to workers' social security number, and the 'training voucher' for workers to choose their training and provider; neither of these incentives has yet been implemented at State level, though some regions are piloting some initiatives.

Workers have the right to 20 hours of annual training related to the company's activity; these hours can be accumulated over a period of 5 years. However, this right, in place since 2012, has not yet been fully developed through other legal provisions. Provisions laid down in Act 30/2015 are currently in place within the training for employment system, such as the individual training leave or the subsidised training schemes.

Recently, under the national recovery plan, in the framework of 'new public policies for a dynamic, resilient and inclusive economy', SEPE is testing a new way of financing (through [microcredits](#)) digital training that is highly demanded by companies and productive sectors. The aim is to give learners

autonomy and flexibility in choosing a training programme, to test the usefulness and agility of offering these microcredits to people who need training without having to wait for specific calls for applications, and to identify the level of demand and the effectiveness of certain training or accreditations.

### **Individual training leave for the employed**

Employees can participate in training run by their companies or in other training schemes. They can also request an individual training leave (*Permiso Individual de Formación, PIF*) from their companies to improve their skills at no cost to the company. Employees have the right to 200 working hours for educational purposes, with company agreement. The company is reimbursed for the employee's salary by the [State Foundation for Training in Employment \(Fundae\)](#) and the employee receives his/her salary during the training leave. The purpose of individual training leaves is to provide workers wishing to improve their personal and professional skills with the opportunity to attend training courses leading to officially recognised qualifications (such as a secondary education certificate, a VET diploma, a university diploma, a language certificate.). Employees can also use this type of leave to undergo the procedure to validate prior learning acquired through work experience or non-formal education.

In 2022, the number of individual training leaves was 5 036, 16.3% more than in 2021. Of these, 53% were women and 47% men with the 36-45 age group being the most numerous. Around 77% of PIFs were for the purpose of obtaining a university degree, 11% for IVET programmes and 2.5% for professional certificate programmes. Individual training leaves completed in the year have involved close to 360 thousand hours with an average duration of 71.7 hours.

### **Subsidised training schemes**

Employed workers (and unemployed up to a limit) can participate, free of charge, in [subsidised training programmes](#), which can have a sectoral or cross-sectoral approach, or address specific training needs (for example, digital skills). State or regional authorities launch public calls for proposals for the granting of public subsidies to authorised training providers.

The competent authorities at the state or regional level publish [calls for proposals for training programmes](#) for employed workers with a sectoral or cross-sectoral approach, including workers in the social economy (cooperatives) (*planes de formación intersectoriales, sectoriales, autónomos, y economía social*). These open calls are launched according to the specific needs of the competent authorities and sometimes cover more than one year of implementation. This training offer aims to respond to the skills needs not covered by the training provided by private companies for their workers (publicly funded through discounts in Social Security contributions).

At national level, these funding schemes, together with funding training within companies, are managed by Fundae.

During 2022, a variety of these funding schemes were running:

- a. call for proposals to train workers in professional skills related to technological changes and digital transformation, issued in 2018, and a new call was published in 2021.
- b. call for proposals for the training of workers according to sectoral needs, issued in 2019;
- c. call for proposals for training workers involved in activities related to social dialogue and collective bargaining.

The State public employment service is also in charge of implementing training schemes for the exclusive territorial scope of Ceuta and Melilla, aimed primarily at people in employment. Within the framework of the recovery plan, component 23 'New public policies for a dynamic, resilient and inclusive labour market', some other funding schemes have been put in place to upskills and reskills the labour force and support companies in their digital and green transitions. SEPE, with Fundae's support, released the following calls for subsidies:

- a. aimed primarily at people employed in the tourism sector (in 2021 and 2023);
- b. for the execution of state-level training schemes, aimed at the requalification of workers who have been or are included in temporary layoff plans (ERTE in Spanish), for the 2022 and 2023 budget years;
- c. to support the coverage of vacancies in strategic sectors of national interest through the financing of training including commitments to hire unemployed workers for the 2022 and 2023 budget years.

Public-private and public-public collaboration between the State public employment service (SEPE) and the

State Foundation for Employment Training (Fundae), and companies and other entities belonging to the State public sector, provide workers with an important [pool of free-of- training resources](#) in the field of Information Technologies (*Digitalízate*). These resources help improve their employability and guarantee the right to lifelong learning, while contributing to the digital transformation, the modernisation of the productive fabric, the reduction of the digital divide and boosting access to employment.

The Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, being responsible for proposing and executing the government's policy on education and vocational training in the education system and for employment since 2020, is also developing various [financing schemes](#) for the training and requalification of the active population. Specifically, the education ministry has issued calls for training for the qualification and requalification of the active population, primarily related to occupational standards in strategic sectors and improving skills for the ecological transition, and for the financing of training activities related to the national catalogue of occupational standards.

### **Incentives for the unemployed**

Unemployed workers may also take part in some of the different training schemes within the training for employment system. Participants can request, if necessary, reimbursement for travel, accommodation and meal expenses during the training period. In some cases, they can also apply for financial aid for other issues, particularly if they have family responsibilities.

The main objective of these training initiatives is the integration or re-integration into the labour market of unemployed workers, who can receive grants and allowances for their participation in the training actions.

Authorities schedule these schemes considering the qualification needs and the job offers identified. At the same time, the competent authorities try to promote agreements with public or private companies, with the aim of favouring professional internships.

Unemployed workers can also participate in the financing schemes under the education ministry.

### **Incentives for dual VET learners and apprentices**

The introduction of a dual system in VET offers young people an insight into the labour market. Based on first preliminary data - available from training centres or regional authorities - the employment rate of dual VET learners is usually higher than in traditional school-based programmes.

[Training and apprenticeship contracts](#) are offered in formal IVET and CVET. They target mostly unemployed people who lack formal qualifications and have seen positive results since the 2012 labour reform.

This type of contract was updated in 2021. Hired apprentices benefit from a 100% reduction in social security contributions, full social protection, unemployment benefits and training (effective working time may not exceed 65% of the maximum working day in the first year or 85% in the second). The training programme may lead to a full qualification (professional certificate) or partial certification of a set of units of competence towards a professional certificate, or a VET diploma, or it may also be a training programme from the [catalogue of training specialities](#) of the national employment system.

### **Supporting VET provider capacity**

IVET programmes are offered by both State-funded centres and private centres. One in four learners attends a private centre. To ensure equity and equality of opportunities, private education centres may receive funds to offer teaching free of charge (these are called publicly funded private centres). Increased funding (14) supports creation of more free VET places in these centres.

The [first strategic plan for vocational training](#) and the [plan for the modernisation of vocational training](#) of the education ministry aim to boost VET through targeted measures (initiatives to encourage research and innovation projects between VET centres and companies and institutions, setting up networks of centres of excellence, or increasing the participation of VET teachers and students in European mobility projects); a budget of EUR 1 500 million is earmarked over 4 years. Through different educational programmes of territorial cooperation with the autonomous regions, the education ministry allocates different budget items to the regions to implement VET policies in their territories.

Since the 2013 education reform (LOMCE Act), education centres have greater autonomy in using the funds from the State budget to improve their training offer. They may run actions to test how to tailor their training offer to local needs/skills (pilot projects, new work plans or forms of organisation, and increased

hours devoted to certain subjects) (15).

Training providers under the employment authority can apply competitively for funding (with financial incentives or subsidies depending on the type of initiative) to carry out training actions in the regional or State calls for proposal published annually (see also VET financing mechanisms). Training is funded based on cost per participant/hour, which differs by delivery mode (e-learning or face-to-face).

Providers applying to these subsidies need to be in the register of training entities and deliver specialities included in the catalogue of training specialities. The training specialities catalogue thus steers VET provision by providers and trainers and act as a reference for PES counsellors and private companies to shape their training offer.

National reference centres, running innovative and experimental training activities, schedule training courses which, due to the need for special equipment and facilities, are not offered by the usual network of vocational training centres.

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[14] On average, EUR 64 000 per group.

[15] Results are assessed by the centres themselves, the inspection services, the regional education authorities and by the National Institute of educational evaluation (INEE) and must be publicly available.

## CHAPTER 14.

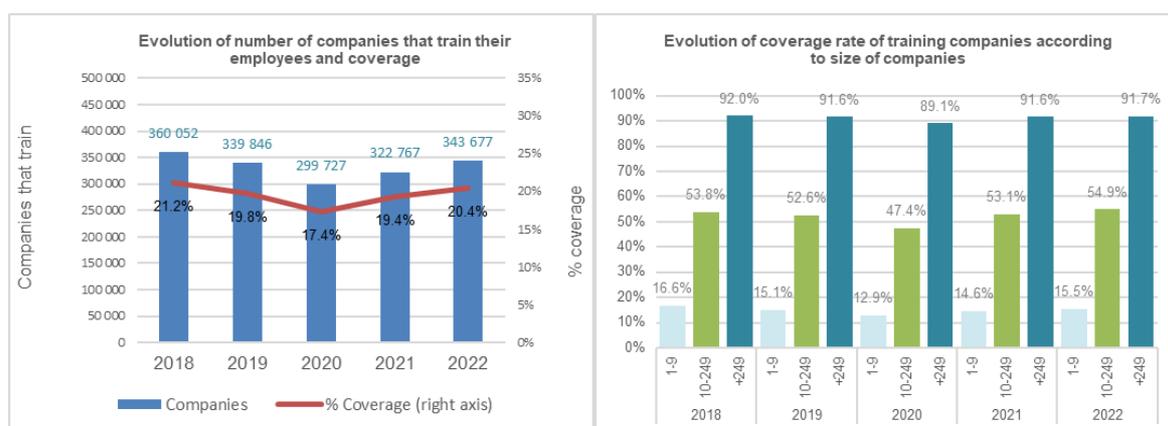
# Incentives for enterprises to boost their participation in VET provision

### Financial incentives

Companies providing training to their employees can receive discounts on their social security contributions. The yearly training credit (the amount for which they can receive a discount) available to each company is calculated by applying a fixed percentage to the training quota amount in the previous year. This percentage ranges from 100% (businesses with six to nine employees) to 50% (big companies with more than 250 employees). Companies with fewer than six employees receive a minimum credit (EUR 420). Businesses with more than 10 employees have an obligation to finance part of the training cost, which varies depending on the size of the company: 10% for companies with 10-49 employees, up to 40% for large companies.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, various urgent measures were taken to maintain company and learner participation (a drop of 12% and 16.6% respectively were observed in 2020) in upskilling and reskilling programmes.

**Coverage rate of training companies (\*) 2018-22**



NB: (\*) percentage of companies that provide training for their workers with respect to the total number of companies registered in the General Treasury of Social Security paying the vocational training levy.

Source: Fundae (2022). [Key findings 2022](#).

In 2022, the number of companies providing training to their employees increased by 6.5%, around 21 000 more companies than in 2021. The segment of companies with 10 to 49 employees saw the largest relative increase, adding 6 095 new training companies.

The coverage rate, i.e., the percentage of companies providing training with respect to the total number of companies paying the vocational training levy, rose one point compared to the previous year and stood at 20.4%. Although the figures are close to pre-pandemic results, they have not yet been totally exceeded.

More than 5.327 million participants (over 3 158 million workers, as they can participate more than once) received in company training financed through this scheme, 10% more than in 2021. The training

coverage rate (16) stands at 38.7%, the highest since the start of this system.

Employers who take on apprentices can benefit from a reduction in corporate contributions. Businesses with less than 250 workers can enjoy a 100% reduction, while those with more than 250 workers can get a 75% reduction. If the apprenticeship contract is converted into a permanent one, the company can receive incentives of EUR 1 500 (EUR 1 800 for women), with the condition that the apprentice/new employee remains on the payroll for at least 3 years.

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[16] the percentage of participants concerning the employed population, not including the public sector and concerning the unemployed according to the 2021 LFS (annual average).

## CHAPTER 15.

# Guidance and counselling

Career guidance and counselling are provided at different stages by various services and actors. The purpose of career guidance is to provide information to help individuals enter the workforce, obtain recognition for their skills, and progress in their lifelong learning journey. Education and employment authorities, the local administration, and social partners participate in organising the services, with the state administration being responsible for the cooperation and coordination between all the entities involved.

The LOMLOE Act supports the development of a comprehensive guidance system. It specifies that the education authorities, in collaboration with employment authorities, shall promote vocational career guidance in adult learning as well as guarantee a sufficient training offer with an inclusive and non-sexist perspective in both IVET and CVET.

The [Organic Law on VET](#), not yet completely rolled out, lays down a vocational career guidance system, defining its mission, objectives, aims and provisions:

- customised support and advice for learners (young people and adults, employed or unemployed), companies, VET organisations and institutions;
- encompassing the whole spectrum of vocational training provision and processes for validation of competences for all types of qualification offered in the new VET system;
- supporting the adjustment between existing skills and those in demand in the labour market; it establishes training itineraries so individuals can acquire the desired professional competences.

Education legislation assigns the immediate responsibility for guidance to teachers, as part of students' general education and training. State education centres offer professional guidance services for students and parents. The focus is placed on preventing early school leaving, addressing diversity and promoting career management skills, while maintaining the perspective of lifelong learning.

To support and widen guidance and counselling services in schools, regional education authorities have diverse strategies and resources tailored to specific labour market needs.

The education ministry has been developing and broadening a series of actions such as a new State-wide organisation of information and career guidance services, career guidance digital platforms, and projects for dissemination of vocational training and guidance. It has also launched a new web portal on guidance for VET practitioners.

### **Information and guidance tools**

All IVET programmes contain at least one vocational module, sometimes several, related to guidance, labour relations and the development of entrepreneurial culture, although these issues are also treated in a cross-curricular manner.

All VET students and trainees have to undertake an on-the-job training module that is carried out in a real productive setting. This module enables them to gain work experience and put their skills into practice, as well as learn about the organisation of productive processes or services and labour relations, guided by education and workplace tutors.

The education ministry promotes VET through its dedicated web portal ([www.todofp.es](http://www.todofp.es)), comprising all those national, regional and international information elements related to vocational training, its academic organisation, processes for validation of prior learning, professional certificates, and national reference centres, as well as information on teacher upskilling and career guidance. It also has dedicated sections on [Europass supplements](#), labour market information, and VET competitions such as [SpainSkills](#), [EuropeSkills](#) and [WorldSkills](#).

Regional education authorities also have web sections directly linked to/from the web portal and implement measures to boost VET enrolment in their territories.

A [web portal](#) for career guidance practitioners is in place since 2021, gathering relevant and up-to-date

information material (resources, publications, programmes) and good practices, as well as an agenda with the announcement of events of interest for professionals in the sector. It presents career guidance services in the different Autonomous Communities and reference organisations, European and international guidance networks.

The [Service for Internationalisation of Education](#) (SEPIE), as the Spanish Erasmus+ national agency for education and training, also supports information services to promote learning opportunities abroad.

As part of the employment activation strategies, the [common employment services portfolio](#) offers career guidance services to advise unemployed and employed workers on training and employment opportunities, as well as on the recognition and validation of their skills. All public employment services must comply with [protocols](#) and quality criteria for the provision of guidance services.

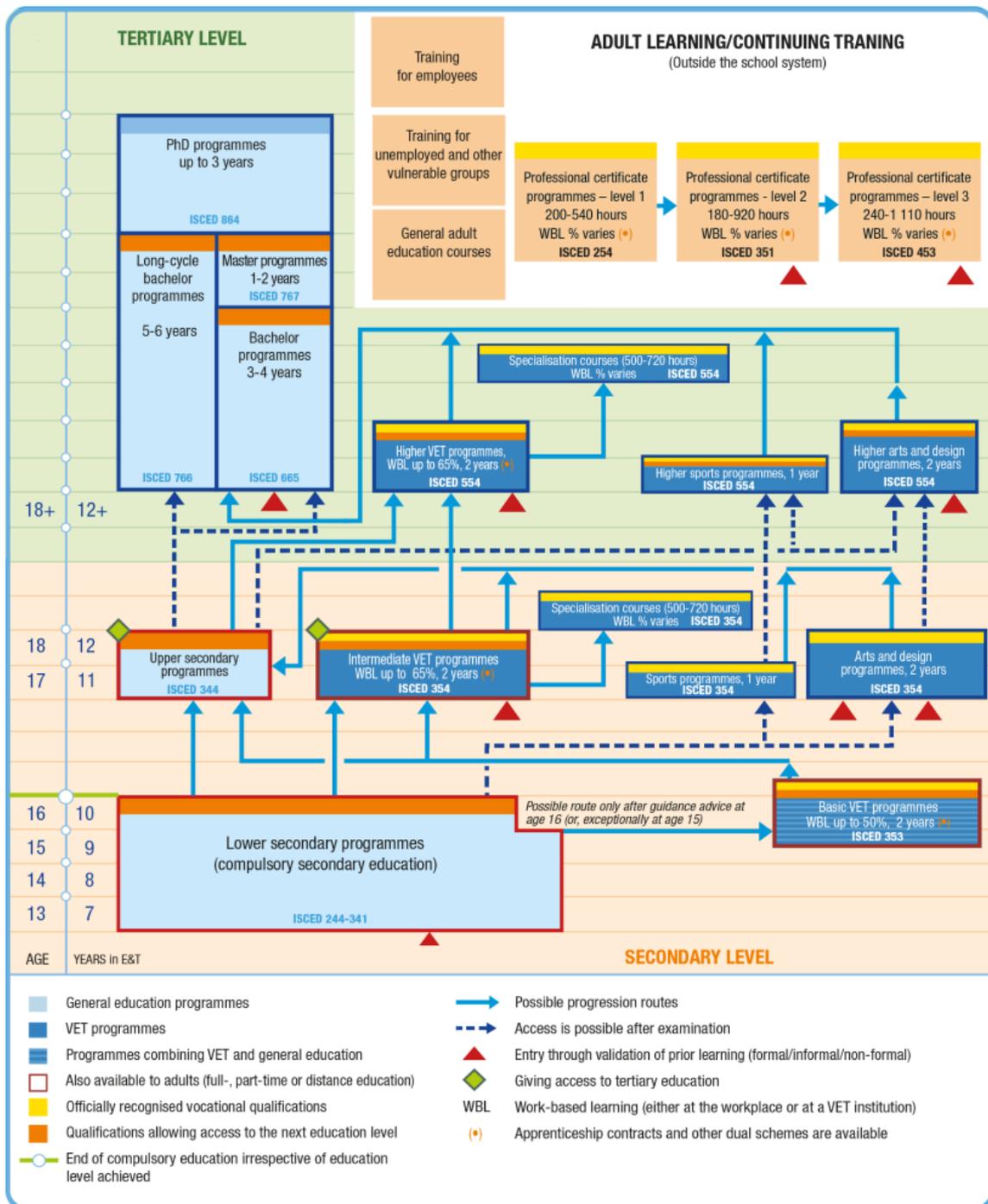
Within the national recovery plan framework, a network of 20 public centres for guidance, entrepreneurship, accompaniment and innovation for employment ([COE Network](#)) has been set up. These centres serve as spaces for innovation and experimentation to strengthen and integrate equal opportunities in the design, development, and evolution of public policies to support employment activation. They are responsible for designing innovative initiatives and implementing experimental projects related to career guidance and job prospecting and mediation.

Additionally, the EURES network in Spain provides information and guidance to jobseekers and employers through personalised contact and counselling, as well as job brokerage in the framework of European mobility.

Please see also:

- [guidance and outreach Spain national report](#);
- [inventory of lifelong guidance systems and practices - Spain](#);
- [Cedefop's labour market intelligence toolkit](#).

# Vocational education and training system chart



NB: ISCED-P 2011. The Spanish education system is not referenced to EQF levels.

Source: Cedefop, & State Foundation for Training in Employment (Fundae). (2023). Vocational education and training in Europe – Spain: system description. In Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2024). Vocational education and training in Europe: VET in Europe database – detailed VET system descriptions [Database]. [www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/vet-in-europe/systems/spain-u3](http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/vet-in-europe/systems/spain-u3)

# VET Programme Types

Basic VET programmes

WBL up to 50%,  
2 years

ISCED 353

## Basic VET programmes (FP Básica, Título profesional básico) ISCED 353

<b>EQF level</b>	The Spanish education system is not referenced to EQF levels.	<b>ISCED-P 2011 level</b>	353
<b>Usual entry grade</b>	10 (17)	<b>Usual completion grade</b>	12
<b>Usual entry age</b>	15. Possible route only after guidance advice at age 16 (or, exceptionally at age 15)	<b>Usual completion age</b>	18
<b>Length of a programme (years)</b>	2		
<b>Is it part of compulsory education and training?</b>	 <p>Compulsory education in Spain includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6 years in primary school (learners aged 6 to 12);</li> <li>• 4 years in lower secondary education (ESO in Spanish) (learners aged 12 to 16).</li> </ul> <p>Basic VET programmes are an alternative option offered to learners who have not completed lower secondary to stay in education and training.</p>	<b>Is it part of formal education and training system?</b>	
<b>Is it initial VET?</b>		<b>Is it continuing VET?</b>	 <p>Education authorities, in addition to compulsory education, can also offer basic VET to people who are over 17 and do not have a VET or a secondary qualification.</p>

Is it offered free of charge? 

Is it available for adults? 

Education authorities, in addition to compulsory education, can also offer basic VET to people who are over 17 and do not have a VET or a secondary qualification.

**ECVET or other credits** VET programmes are based on learning outcomes with a strong focus on work-based learning, following ECVET guidelines.

**Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)**

- School-based learning (face-to-face), including work-based learning at workshops, labs, simulations/full-time (young people); or on a part-time modular basis (adults) (18) ;
- work placement module (*formación en centros de trabajo, FCT*) compulsory training module of 240 hours;
- dual VET (with or without an apprenticeship contract). Just over 1% of basic VET learners were enrolled in these programmes in the dual modality in 2021/22.

#### Enrolments in IVET, 2021/22

2021/22	Total learners	% Dual	% Distance
Basic VET	75 276	1.16%	-
Intermediate VET	420 227	3.76%	12.61%
Higher VET	531 864	5.44%	23.58%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 027 367</b>	<b>4.44%</b>	<b>17.36%</b>

Source: Prepared by ReferNet Spain from [Statistics of non-university education](#). Ministry of Education and Vocational Training.

**Main providers** Main education authority VET providers include:

- public, publicly funded private and private institutions approved by the competent education authority;
- in some cases, integrated training centres, which are public and provide both initial vocational training within the education system, and vocational training for employment.

Public, publicly funded private and private centres are the main providers of education authority VET programmes; one in four learners attended a private centre in 2021/22.

**Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies** Up to 50%

**Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)**

- practical training at school (workshops, labs, simulations);
- work placement module (*formación en centros de trabajo, FCT*) of 240 hours at a workplace;
- dual VET (apprenticeships):
  - training and apprenticeship contracts;
  - dual VET projects offered within the education system and implemented by the regions (based on learning agreements between the VET provider and the company).

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**Main target groups**

- Learners over 15
- Adults (under specific conditions)

Basic VET programmes were first developed to prevent early leaving from education and training. They allow people to complete compulsory education and gain a basic VET qualification (VET diploma, in the national context or *Título profesional básico*).

In 2021/22, approximately 48.2% of the learners were within the theoretical age range, while 51.9% were older (17-21 years old).

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**Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)**

Requirements for basic VET are:

- to be between 15 and 17 years old by the end of the year they start these studies;
- to have finished the first cycle of secondary compulsory education (3 years) or, exceptionally, have finished the second course of secondary compulsory education;
- to be recommended by teaching staff and have consent of parents (or self if he/she is emancipated).

Education authorities, in addition to compulsory education, can also offer basic VET to people who are over 17 and do not have a VET or a secondary qualification.

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**Assessment of learning outcomes**

Basic VET programmes run in a 2-year programme of 2 000 hours (equivalent to 2 full-time academic years, up to 3 when taken as a dual programme), of theoretical and practical training, of which a minimum of 240 hours are completed in workplaces as part of the compulsory work placement module (*formación en centros de trabajo - FCT*); students with previous work experience may be exempt.

These programmes are made up of different vocational modules, which are expressed in terms of content, evaluation criteria and learning outcomes, considering professional, personal, social and lifelong learning skills.

They comprise modules linked to units of competence of the national catalogue of occupational standards, and modules related to acquiring lifelong learning skills, such as Spanish language, foreign language, social sciences, mathematics and science, both applied to the personal and learning context in a professional field; there is also a specific module in a workplace environment.

Assessment has a continuous, formative nature and is carried out in modules. Progression to the following year depends on the result of the assessment. Marks are expressed in numbers from one to 10, where five or over is a pass.

The work placement module is expressed in terms of passed/failed. Those who obtain recognition of their professional competence acquired through work experience or non-formal training may be totally or partially exempt from the work placement module.

As a result of the assessment process, the relevant decisions on student progression are taken by the teaching team as a whole at the end of each year.

Completion of a VET programme requires a pass grade in all the modules, and students may take the same programme up to a maximum of 4 years.

<b>Diplomas/certificates provided</b>	<p>Basic VET programmes lead to a basic VET diploma (<i>Título profesional básico</i>) that has academic and professional validity.</p> <p>Students who finish basic VET will obtain the lower secondary education diploma (<i>título ESO</i>) directly if the teaching staff considers they have achieved the objectives and necessary skills of ESO level.</p>																												
<b>Examples of qualifications</b>	<p>Basic level applicator of phytosanitary pesticides (19) /sector: Agriculture (<i>aplicador/a de nivel básico de plaguicidas de uso fitosanitario/ Familia Profesional: Agraria</i>)</p>																												
<b>Progression opportunities for learners after graduation</b>	<p>Holders of a basic VET diploma may</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• enter the labour market, or</li> <li>• enrol directly in intermediate VET programmes (ISCED 354), or</li> <li>• obtain the lower secondary compulsory education diploma (<i>ESO</i> diploma) if the teaching staff considers they have achieved the objectives and necessary skills of ESO level, opening up access to upper secondary general education programmes</li> </ul>																												
<b>Destination of graduates</b>	<p>Of the 2019/20 graduates, 62.8% continued to an Intermediate VET programme in the following academic year. If we consider those who joined any programme in the education system, this percentage will increase to 65.0%. In the second year after graduation, the percentage drops to 51.7%, and in the third year, to 33.9%.</p> <p><b>Share of Basic VET graduates (2019/20) pursuing further studies (%).</b></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="464 954 1423 1435"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>1<sup>st</sup> year</th> <th>2<sup>nd</sup> year</th> <th>3<sup>rd</sup> year</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td><b>Total</b></td> <td>65.0</td> <td>51.7</td> <td>33.9</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Basic VET programmes</b></td> <td>0.1</td> <td>0.1</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Intermediate VET programmes</b></td> <td>62.8</td> <td>49.6</td> <td>23.1</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Upper secondary general education (baccalaureate) programmes</b></td> <td>1.2</td> <td>1.0</td> <td>0.7</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Higher VET programmes</b></td> <td>0.0</td> <td>0.1</td> <td>9.2</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Other programmes</b></td> <td>1.0</td> <td>0.9</td> <td>0.9</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><i>Source: MEFP (2024). <a href="#">Seguimiento Educativo Posterior de los Graduados en Formación Profesional</a>. [Post-Educational Monitoring Statistics of Graduates in Vocational Training].</i></p>		1 <sup>st</sup> year	2 <sup>nd</sup> year	3 <sup>rd</sup> year	<b>Total</b>	65.0	51.7	33.9	<b>Basic VET programmes</b>	0.1	0.1	0	<b>Intermediate VET programmes</b>	62.8	49.6	23.1	<b>Upper secondary general education (baccalaureate) programmes</b>	1.2	1.0	0.7	<b>Higher VET programmes</b>	0.0	0.1	9.2	<b>Other programmes</b>	1.0	0.9	0.9
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<b>Awards through validation of prior learning</b>	<p></p> <p>VET diplomas, established by decrees, are composed of a set of occupational standards (20) , each of which includes a set of units of competence (UCs). UC is the minimum set of professional skills that can be partially recognised and certified.</p> <p>Units of competence acquired either in the VET system or through validation of non-formal learning are individually assessed and certified and may be accumulated towards a full qualification.</p>																												

**General education subjects**



Basic VET programmes are made up of vocational modules (which vary in length, with theoretical and practical contents corresponding to the different professional fields) and lifelong learning skills:

- learning modules linked to units of competence of the national catalogue of occupational standards (CNCP);
- a work placement vocational module to be completed in a workplace;
- modules for the acquisition of lifelong learning skills (Spanish, other official and/or foreign language, social sciences, mathematics and sciences);
- all basic VET programmes include cross-curricular skills like teamwork, occupational risk prevention, entrepreneurship, business activity and work orientation of students.

**Key competences**



Since 2015, VET diploma programmes are being updated and adapted to the requirements of the productive sectors, including and reinforcing the eight key competences in a cross curricular way.

Basic VET programmes are made up of vocational modules which vary in length, with theoretical and practical contents corresponding to the different professional fields, and also include lifelong learning skills.

All basic VET programmes (21) include cross-curricular skills:

- teamwork, health and safety at work; entrepreneurship, business and career counselling;
- respect for the environment and promotion of physical activity and a healthy diet;
- skills related to reading comprehension, oral and written expression, ICT and civic and constitutional education.

**Application of learning outcomes approach**



VET diploma programmes (established by royal decrees) are based on learning outcomes with a strong focus on work-based learning, following ECVET guidelines. National curricula account for 55-65%, the remaining 45-35% of the programme curricula are settled at regional level aligned to local socioeconomic characteristics.

**Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners**

7.12%

**Share of students according to VET level programme, 2021/22**

Basic VET	Interm. VET	Higher VET	Arts & Design	Higher Arts & Design	Sports	Higher Sports	Total
75 276	420 227	531 864	3 411	14 810	10 221	839	1 056 648
7.12%	39.77%	50.34%	0.32%	1.40%	0.97%	0.08%	100.00%

Source: Elaborated by ReferNet Spain from [Statistics of non-university education](#). Ministry of Education and Vocational Training.

[18] And, in exceptional cases, workers over 16 unable to attend a regular school regime or elite

athletes.

- [19] The list of VET diplomas offered in IVET is available (in Spanish) from the education ministry's official website on guidance and VET: [TodoFP.es](http://TodoFP.es).
- [20] 756 standards in 26 sector branches are listed in the national catalogue of occupational/professional standards (*Catálogo Nacional de Cualificaciones Profesionales* - CNCP).
- [21] Made up of vocational modules which vary in length, with theoretical and practical contents corresponding to the different professional fields, lifelong learning skills are also included.

## Intermediate VET programmes

WBL up to 65%,

2 years

ISCED 354

### Intermediate VET programmes (FP de grado medio - Título de Técnico), ISCED 354.

<b>EQF level</b>	The Spanish education system is not referenced to EQF levels.	<b>ISCED-P 2011 level</b>	354
<b>Usual entry grade</b>	11	<b>Usual completion grade</b>	13
<b>Usual entry age</b>	16	<b>Usual completion age</b>	18
<b>Length of a programme (years)</b>	2 3 (when combined with a training and apprenticeship contract)		
<b>Is it part of compulsory education and training?</b>		<b>Is it part of formal education and training system?</b>	
<b>Is it initial VET?</b>		<b>Is it continuing VET?</b>	
<b>Is it offered free of charge?</b>		<b>Is it available for adults?</b>	
<b>ECVET or other credits</b>	VET programmes are based on learning outcomes with a strong focus on work-based learning, following ECVET guidelines.		

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**Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)**

- School-based learning (face-to-face), including work-based learning at workshops, labs, simulations, etc./full-time (young people); or on a part time modular basis (adults);
- distance learning (adults); exceptionally, workers over 16 unable to attend a regular school regime or elite athletes;
- dual VET (with or without a training and apprenticeship contract);
- work placement module (*formación en centros de trabajo, FCT*), compulsory training module of 400 hours.

Intermediate VET programmes run in a 2-year programme of 2 000 hours of theoretical and practical training, of which a minimum of 400 hours are completed in workplaces as part of the compulsory work placement module (*formación en centros de trabajo - FCT*); students with previous work experience may be exempt.

In 2021/22, 12.61% of learners enrolled in intermediate VET followed the programme in the distance learning mode and 3.76% were enrolled in the dual.

**Enrolments in IVET, 2021/22**

<b>2021/22</b>	<b>Total learners</b>	<b>% Dual</b>	<b>% Distance</b>
Basic VET	75 276	1.16%	-
Intermediate VET	420 227	3.76%	12.61%
Higher VET	531 864	5.44%	23.58%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 027 367</b>	<b>4.44%</b>	<b>17.36%</b>

*Source:* Prepared by ReferNet Spain from [Statistics of non-university education](#). Ministry of Education and Vocational Training.

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**Main providers**

Main education authority VET providers include:

- public, publicly funded private and private institutions approved by the competent education authority;
- integrated training centres, which are public and provide both initial vocational training within the education system, and vocational training for employment;
- occasionally, national reference centres, which are public institutions specialised in the different professional branches, in charge of carrying out innovation and experimentation initiatives in the area of vocational training.

Public, publicly funded private and private centres are the main providers of education authority VET programmes; 31.5% attended private centres in 2021/22.

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**Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies**

Up to 65%

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**Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)**

- practical training at school (workshops, labs, simulations, etc.);
- work placement module (*formación en centros de trabajo, FCT*), compulsory training module of 400 hours at a workplace (students with previous work experience may be exempt);
- dual VET (apprenticeships);
  - training and apprenticeship contracts;
  - dual VET projects offered within the education system and implemented by the regions (based on learning agreements between the VET provider, the learner and the company).

<p><b>Main target groups</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• learners over 16;</li> <li>• adults.</li> </ul> <p>In the 2021/22 academic year, 29.1% of learners were within the theoretical age range. Half of the learners were older, with 50.0% being between the theoretical age range up to 25 years old, and 21.0% being 26 or older.</p>
<p><b>Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)</b></p>	<p>Intermediate VET is accessible to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• holders of the lower secondary compulsory education diploma (<i>ESO</i> diploma);</li> <li>• graduates from basic VET (ISCED 353) programmes;</li> <li>• young people over 17 and adults, through validation of prior learning (formal/informal/non-formal).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Assessment of learning outcomes</b></p>	<p>IVET programmes last 2 000 hours, the equivalent to 2 full-time academic years, up to 3 when taken as a dual programme. Assessment has a continuous, formative nature and is carried out by professional modules.</p> <p>Assessment takes as reference the objectives, expressed in learning outcomes, and the evaluation criteria of each of the vocational modules, as well as the general objectives established (by legislation) for each VET programme.</p> <p>Completion of a training programme requires a pass grade in all the vocational modules.</p> <p>The work placement vocational module is expressed in terms of passed/failed.</p>
<p><b>Diplomas/certificates provided</b></p>	<p>Intermediate VET programmes lead to a VET diploma with academic and professional validity (<i>Título de Técnico</i>) at ISCED level 354 allowing access to higher VET (ISCED 554) studies at tertiary level.</p>
<p><b>Examples of qualifications</b></p>	<p>Aquaculture (22) / sector: Maritime and fishing industry (<i>Cultivos Acuícolas / Familia Profesional: Marítimo pesquera</i>)</p>
<p><b>Progression opportunities for learners after graduation</b></p>	<p> Holders of an intermediate VET diploma may</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• enter the labour market;</li> <li>• enrol directly onto higher VET programmes (ISCED 554);</li> <li>• return to upper secondary general education programmes (23) if they wish, but this is an unusual option.</li> </ul>

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**Destination of graduates** Of the 2019/20 graduates, 54.8% followed a higher VET programme in the next three years.

In the year immediately after graduation, 47.0% of the Intermediate VET graduates entered a Higher VET programme, and 3.2% enrolled in another Intermediate VET programme. Considering all graduates who entered any educational programme, this percentage increases to 51.8%. 46.2% enrolled in a Higher VET programme in the second year, while 20.8% did so in the third year. Additionally, 5.3% of the graduates were studying at a university in the third year after graduation.

**Share of Intermediate VET graduates (2019/20) pursuing further studies (%)**

	1 <sup>st</sup> year	2 <sup>nd</sup> year	3 <sup>rd</sup> year
<b>Total</b>	51.8	51.0	29.5
<b>Intermediate VET programmes</b>	3.2	3.2	2.2
<b>Upper secondary general education (baccalaureate) programmes</b>	0.5	0.4	0.3
<b>Higher VET programmes</b>	47.0	46.2	20.8
<b>Higher education</b>	0.3	0.5	5.3
<b>Other programmes</b>	0.8	0.6	0.9

*Source:* MEFP (2024). [Seguimiento Educativo Posterior de los Graduados en Formación Profesional](#). [Post-Educational Monitoring Statistics of Graduates in Vocational Training].

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**Awards through validation of prior learning**



VET diplomas, established by decrees, are composed of a set of occupational standards (24); each of which includes a set of units of competence (UCs). UC is the minimum set of professional skills that can be partially recognised and certified.

Units of competence acquired either in the VET system or through validation of non-formal learning are individually assessed and certified and may be accumulated towards a full qualification in IVET and CVET.

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**General education subjects**

Intermediate VET programmes are made up of vocational modules (which vary in length, with theoretical and practical contents corresponding to the different professional fields) and lifelong learning skills:

- vocational modules, specific to each professional field, linked to the national catalogue of professional standards (CNCP);
- a work placement vocational module, to be completed in a workplace;
- one or more vocational modules related to employment guidance and labour relations and entrepreneurship;
- voluntary subjects, such as communication in Spanish, joint official and/or foreign language; applied mathematics;
- where appropriate, any subject related to professional field easing access to higher VET programmes.

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**Key competences**

Key competences to be taken as a reference:

- information processing and digital competence;
- competence in linguistic communication;
- mathematical competence;
- competence in knowledge and interaction with the physical world;
- social and civic competence.

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**Application of learning outcomes approach**

VET diploma programmes (established by royal decrees) are based on learning outcomes with a strong focus on work-based learning, following ECVET guidelines. National curricula account for 55-65%; the remaining 45-35% of the programme curricula are settled at regional level aligned to local socioeconomic characteristics.

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**Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners**

39.77%

**Share of students according to VET level programme, 2021/22**

Basic VET	Interm. VET	Higher VET	Arts & Design	Higher Arts & Design	Sports	Higher Sports	Total
75	420	531	3 411	14 810	10 221	839	1 056
276	227	864					648
7.12%	39.77%	50.34%	0.32%	1.40%	0.97%	0.08%	100.00%

Source: Elaborated by ReferNet Spain from [Statistics of non-university education](#). Ministry of Education and Vocational Training.

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- [22] The list of VET diplomas offered in IVET is available (in Spanish) from the education ministry's official website on guidance and VET: [TodoFP.es](http://TodoFP.es). Europass supplements for Intermediate VET Diplomas are available at <https://www.todofp.es/orientacion-profesional/quieroestudiarotrabajareneuropa/movilidad.html>
- [23] Leading to *Bachillerato*, the end of upper secondary education diploma, necessary to access tertiary level academic studies.
- [24] 756 standards in 26 sector branches are currently listed in the national catalogue of occupational standards ([Catálogo Nacional de Cualificaciones Profesionales](#) - CNCP).

Arts and design programmes,  
2 years

Sports programmes,  
1 year

ISCED 354

<b>Specialisation courses (Cursos de Especialización), ISCED 354</b>			
<b>EQF level</b>	The Spanish education system is not referenced to EQF levels		<b>ISCED-P 2011 level</b> 354
<b>Usual entry grade</b>	Not applicable		<b>Usual completion grade</b> Not applicable
<b>Usual entry age</b>	18		<b>Usual completion age</b> Not applicable
<b>Length of a programme (years)</b>	Variable, depending on the content. 300-650 hours		
<b>Is it part of compulsory education and training?</b>	✗		<b>Is it part of formal education and training system?</b> ✓
<b>Is it initial VET?</b>	✓		<b>Is it continuing VET?</b> ✓
<b>Is it offered free of charge?</b>	✓		<b>Is it available for adults?</b> ✓
<b>ECVET or other credits</b>	VET programmes are based on learning outcomes with a strong focus on work-based learning, following ECVET guidelines.		
<b>Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• school-based learning (face-to-face), including work-based learning at workshops, labs, simulations, etc./full-time or on a part time modular basis;</li> <li>• in some programmes, work placement module (<i>formación en centros de trabajo, FCT</i>) compulsory training module of variable duration.</li> </ul> <p>These programmes started in 2020/21 only in the face-to-face modality.</p>		
<b>Main providers</b>	<p>Main education authority VET providers include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• public, publicly funded private and private institutions approved by the competent education authority;</li> <li>• integrated training centres, which are public and provide both IVET and CVET programmes;</li> </ul> <p>Public, publicly funded private and private centres are the main providers of education authority VET programmes. Programmes started in 2020/21. 100% of learners attended public centres.</p>		
<b>Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies</b>	Varies		

<b>Work-based learning type</b> (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• practical training at school (workshops, labs, simulations, etc.);</li> <li>• work placement module (<i>formación en centros de trabajo, FCT</i>), compulsory training module of variable duration at a workplace (students with previous work experience may be exempt);</li> </ul>
<b>Main target groups</b>	Intermediate VET graduates in the same field of studies
<b>Entry requirements for learners</b> (qualification/education level, age)	Holding an intermediate VET diploma in specific areas depending on the specialisation programme
<b>Assessment of learning outcomes</b>	<p>Assessment takes as reference the objectives, expressed in learning outcomes, and the evaluation criteria of each of the vocational modules, as well as the general objectives established (by legislation) for each VET specialisation programme.</p> <p>Completion of a training programme requires a pass grade in all the vocational modules.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• marks are expressed in whole numbers from one to 10; only a five or over is considered a pass;</li> <li>• the work placement vocational module, however, is expressed in terms of passed/failed.</li> </ul> <p>Assessment has a continuous, formative nature and is carried out by vocational modules.</p>
<b>Examples of qualifications</b>	<p><i>Técnico instalador en infraestructuras de redes 5G</i> / Technician in 5G network infrastructure installation.</p> <p><i>Técnico de mantenimiento de vehículos eléctricos</i> / Electric vehicle maintenance technician</p>
<b>Progression opportunities for learners after graduation</b>	<p>Holders of an intermediate VET diploma may</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• enter the labour market;</li> <li>• enrol directly onto higher VET programmes (ISCED 554);</li> </ul>
<b>Destination of graduates</b>	Information not available
<b>Awards through validation of prior learning</b>	<p></p> <p>VET certifications, established by decrees, are composed of a set of professional, personal, and social competences that can be partially recognised and certified.</p> <p>Units of competence acquired either in the VET system or through validation of non-formal learning are individually assessed and certified and may be accumulated towards a full qualification in IVET and CVET.</p>
<b>General education subjects</b>	<p></p> <p>Specialisation VET programmes are made up of vocational modules (which vary in length, with theoretical and practical contents corresponding to the different professional fields) and lifelong learning skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• vocational modules, specific to each professional field, linked to the national catalogue of occupational standards (CNCP);</li> <li>• in some cases, a work placement vocational module, to be completed in a workplace;</li> </ul>

<b>Key competences</b>													
<b>Application of learning outcomes approach</b>	 VET programmes are based on learning outcomes with a strong focus on work-based learning, following ECVET guidelines.												
<b>Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners</b>	not available These programmes started to be implemented in 2020/21 (see Table below).												
	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th><b>Specialisation courses for:</b></th> <th><b>2020/21</b></th> <th><b>2021/22</b></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Intermediate level VET graduates</td> <td>117</td> <td>529</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Higher level VET graduates</td> <td>961</td> <td>2 156</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Total</b></td> <td><b>1 078</b></td> <td><b>2 685</b></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><i>Source:</i> Students of specialisation courses. <a href="#">Statistics of non-university education</a>. Ministry of Education and Vocational Training. [extracted 29.7.2024].</p>	<b>Specialisation courses for:</b>	<b>2020/21</b>	<b>2021/22</b>	Intermediate level VET graduates	117	529	Higher level VET graduates	961	2 156	<b>Total</b>	<b>1 078</b>	<b>2 685</b>
<b>Specialisation courses for:</b>	<b>2020/21</b>	<b>2021/22</b>											
Intermediate level VET graduates	117	529											
Higher level VET graduates	961	2 156											
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 078</b>	<b>2 685</b>											

[25] 756 standards in 26 sector branches are currently listed in the national catalogue of occupational/professional standards ([Catálogo Nacional de Cualificaciones Profesionales](#) - CNCP).

Higher VET programmes

WBL up to 65%,

2 years

ISCED 554

**Arts and design or sports programmes (Grado Medio de Artes Plásticas y Diseño o Grado Medio de Enseñanzas Deportivas), ISCED 354.**

<b>EQF level</b>	The Spanish education system is not referenced to EQF levels.	<b>ISCED-P 2011 level</b>	354
<b>Usual entry grade</b>	11	<b>Usual completion grade</b>	13 (for arts and design programmes) 12 (for sports programmes)
<b>Usual entry age</b>	17	<b>Usual completion age</b>	19 (for arts and design programmes) 18 (for sports programmes)
<b>Length of a programme (years)</b>	2 (arts and design programmes) 1 (sports programmes)		
<b>Is it part of compulsory education and training?</b>	 Compulsory education in Spain includes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6 years in primary school (learners aged 6 to 12);</li> <li>• 4 years in lower secondary education (ESO in Spanish) (learners aged 12 to 16).</li> </ul>		<b>Is it part of formal education and training system?</b> 
<b>Is it initial VET?</b>		<b>Is it continuing VET?</b>	Information not available
<b>Is it offered free of charge?</b>		<b>Is it available for adults?</b>	
<b>ECVET or other credits</b>	VET programmes are based on learning outcomes with a strong focus on work-based learning, following ECVET guidelines.		
<b>Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)</b>	These programmes are offered in schools that are specialised according to the type and level of education in artistic or sports fields and can only be taken face-to-face.		

<b>Main providers</b>	<p>Main education authority VET providers include public, publicly funded private and private institutions approved by the competent education authority.</p> <p>Both types of programmes are offered by specialised providers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• schools of plastic arts and design: public or private centres authorised by the competent education administration;</li> <li>• sport programmes: these do not have a specific denomination: public or private centres authorised by the competent education administration, whether they are integrated in the IVET centres or in sports federations' centres.</li> </ul>
<b>Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies</b>	Information not available
<b>Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)</b>	These programmes are offered in schools that are specialised according to the type and level of education in artistic or sports fields and can only be taken face-to-face.
<b>Main target groups</b>	Learners over 16
<b>Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)</b>	<p><b>Arts and design programmes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• holding a lower secondary education (ESO) or equivalent qualification and passing a specific test to prove knowledge and skills necessary to take advantage of these programmes;</li> <li>• exemption from the test is possible in certain cases: i.e. holding a baccalaureate in arts, Bachelor of fine arts, architecture or technical engineering in industrial design, intermediate or higher-level VET diploma in plastic arts and design of a professional family related to the teachings to pursue, at least 1 year of related work experience;</li> <li>• learners not fulfilling entry requirements may sit an entry exam which consists of two parts: a general part dealing with the basic skills of compulsory secondary education; and a specific part, to assess the artistic knowledge and the necessary skills to take advantage of these programmes.</li> </ul> <p><b>Sports programmes:</b></p> <p>These are organised in two cycles called initial or first level and final or second level.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• entry requirements for the initial cycle of sports education include holding the diploma of lower secondary education or equivalent; for the final cycle of sports education, it is necessary to have passed the initial cycle in the corresponding sports specialty;</li> <li>• it may also be required to pass a specific exam, or to accredit a sporting merit. High-level or high-performance athletes are exempt;</li> <li>• learners with at least 17 years and lacking the lower secondary qualification may sit an exam in relation to lower secondary education curriculum.</li> </ul> <p>Entry through validation of prior learning is possible in the arts and design/sports programmes.</p>

<b>Assessment of learning outcomes</b>	<p>Assessment is continuous and considers the progress and the academic maturity of the students, in relation to the general objectives and the professional competences of the programme.</p> <p>The evaluation is carried out by module, taking as reference their objectives expressed in terms of skills and competences and their respective assessment criteria.</p> <p>The results of the final evaluation of each module are expressed in terms of grades according to a numerical scale from 0 to 10. Marks equal to or greater than five are considered positive and the rest negative.</p> <p>The results of the evaluation of the practical training, are expressed in terms of 'apt / not apt'.</p>
<b>Diplomas/certificates provided</b>	<p>Arts and design or sports programmes lead to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technician diploma in arts and design (<i>Título de Técnico/a de Artes Plásticas y Diseño</i>);</li> <li>• Technician diploma in the corresponding sport (<i>Título de Técnico/a deportivo/a que corresponda</i>).</li> </ul>
<b>Examples of qualifications</b>	<p>Plastic arts and design in ceramic decoration (<i>Artes Plásticas y Diseño en Decoración cerámica</i>).</p> <p>Snowboard.</p>
<b>Progression opportunities for learners after graduation</b>	<p>Holders of an ISCED level 354 diploma in sports or in arts and design programmes have different progression opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• students who finish plastic arts and design or sports programmes have direct access to the general education 2-year programme leading to baccalaureate (<i>Bachillerato</i>);</li> <li>• students holding the diploma of plastic arts and design technician, and at least 18 years old, are able to enter, by passing a test, the higher plastic arts and design programmes;</li> <li>• students holding the diploma of sports technician can access the higher sports programmes, being at least 18 years old, and after passing a specific test of the modality or sport specialty;</li> <li>• enter the labour market.</li> </ul>
<b>Destination of graduates</b>	<p>Information not available</p>
<b>Awards through validation of prior learning</b>	<p>Arts and design or sports programmes, established by decrees, are composed of a set of occupational standards (25), each of which includes a set of units of competence (UCs). UC is the minimum set of professional skills that can be partially recognised and certified.</p> <p>Units of competence acquired either in the VET system or through validation of non-formal learning are individually assessed and certified and may be accumulated towards a full qualification in IVET and CVET.</p>
<b>General education subjects</b>	<p>✗</p>
<b>Key competences</b>	<p>✗</p>

**Application of learning outcomes approach**



VET diploma programmes (established by royal decrees) are based on learning outcomes with a strong focus on work-based learning, following ECVET guidelines.

National curricula account for 55-65%, the remaining 45-35% of the programme curricula are settled at regional level aligned to local socioeconomic characteristics.

**Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners**

0.32% for Arts & Design, 0.97% for Sports

**Share of students according to VET level programme, 2021/22**

Basic VET	Interm. VET	Higher VET	Arts & Design	Higher Arts & Design	Sports	Higher Sports	Total
75 276	420 227	531 864	3 411	14 810	10 221	839	1 056 648
7.12%	39.77%	50.34%	0.32%	1.40%	0.97%	0.08%	100.00%

*Source:* Elaborated by ReferNet Spain from [Statistics of non-university education](#). Ministry of Education and Vocational Training.

- [26] The list of VET diplomas offered in IVET is available (in Spanish) from the education ministry's official website on guidance and VET, MECD. [TodoFP.es](#):
- [27] 756 standards in 26 sector branches are currently listed in the national catalogue of occupational standards ([Catálogo Nacional de Cualificaciones Profesionales](#) - CNCP).

Higher arts and design programmes,

2 years

Higher sports programmes,

1 year

ISCED 554

### Higher VET programmes (FP de grado superior - Título de Técnico Superior), ISCED 554

<b>EQF level</b>	The Spanish education system is not referenced to EQF levels.	<b>ISCED-P 2011 level</b>	554
<b>Usual entry grade</b>	13	<b>Usual completion grade</b>	15
<b>Usual entry age</b>	18	<b>Usual completion age</b>	20
<b>Length of a programme (years)</b>	2 3 (when combined with a training and apprenticeship contract)		
<b>Is it part of compulsory education and training?</b>		<b>Is it part of formal education and training system?</b>	
<b>Is it initial VET?</b>		<b>Is it continuing VET?</b>	
<b>Is it offered free of charge?</b>		<b>Is it available for adults?</b>	Not applicable (learners are over 18)

**ECVET or other credits** VET programmes are based on learning outcomes with a strong focus on work-based learning. Higher level VET programmes under Act 2/2006 (LOE) have 120 ECTS credits.

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**Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)**

- School-based learning (face-to-face), including work-based learning at workshops, labs, simulations, etc /full-time or on a part time modular basis;
- distance learning;
- dual VET (with or without training and apprenticeship contract);
- work placement module (*formación en centros de trabajo, FCT*), compulsory training module of 400 hours.

Higher VET programmes run in a 2-year programme of 2 000 hours of theoretical and practical training, of which a minimum of 400 hours are completed in workplaces as part of the compulsory work placement module (*formación en centros de trabajo - FCT*); students with previous work experience may be exempt.

In 2019/20, 17% of all learners enrolled in higher VET programmes followed distance learning courses and 4.5% in the dual mode.

**Enrolments in IVET, 2021/22**

<b>2021/22</b>	<b>Total learners</b>	<b>% Dual</b>	<b>% Distance</b>
Basic VET	75 276	1.16%	-
Intermediate VET	420 227	3.76%	12.61%
Higher VET	531 864	5.44%	23.58%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 027 367</b>	<b>4.44%</b>	<b>17.36%</b>

*Source:* Prepared by ReferNet Spain from [Statistics of non-university education](#). Ministry of Education and Vocational Training.

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**Main providers**

Main education authority VET providers include:

- public, publicly funded private and private institutions approved by the competent education authority;
- integrated training centres, which are public and provide both initial vocational training within the education system, and vocational training for employment;
- national reference centres, which are public institutions specialised in the different professional branches, in charge of carrying out innovation and experimentation initiatives in vocational training.

Public, publicly funded private and private centres are the main providers of education authority VET programmes; one in four learners attends private centres.

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**Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies**

Up to 65%

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**Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)**

- practical training at school (workshops, labs, simulations, etc.);
- work placement module (*formación en centros de trabajo, FCT*), compulsory training module of 400 hours at a workplace (students with previous work experience may be exempt);
- dual VET (apprenticeships):
  - training and apprenticeship contracts;
  - dual VET projects offered within the education system and implemented by the regions (based on learning agreements between the VET provider, the learner and the company).

<b>Main target groups</b>	Learners over 18  The age distribution in 2021/22 shows that 31.4% were at the theoretical age, 50.2% were at most 25 years old, and 18.4% were 26 or older.
<b>Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)</b>	Higher VET is accessible to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• holders of the <i>Bachillerato</i> diploma (the end of upper secondary education diploma), which allows access to tertiary-level academic or vocational studies;</li> <li>• graduates from intermediate VET (ISCED 354) programmes;</li> <li>• learners over 18, through validation of prior learning (formal/informal/non-formal).</li> </ul>
<b>Assessment of learning outcomes</b>	Higher level VET programmes run in a 2-year programme of 2 000 hours, (equivalent to 2 full-time academic years, up to 3 when taken as a dual programme), of theoretical and practical training, of which a minimum of 400 hours are completed in workplaces. These programmes are made up of different vocational modules, which are expressed in terms of content, evaluation criteria and learning outcomes, considering professional, personal, social and lifelong learning skills. They comprise: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• vocational modules specific to each programme which must include the units of competence and the social and personal skills aimed to be achieved;</li> <li>• a work placement module. Those who get recognition of their professional competence acquired through work experience or non-formal training may be totally or partially exempt from the work placement module;</li> <li>• one or more modules on vocational training and guidance and business and entrepreneurial initiative.</li> <li>• a project.</li> </ul> <p>Assessment has a continuous, formative nature and is carried out by modules. Progression to the following year depends on the result of the assessment. Marks are expressed in numbers from one to 10, with five or over considered as a pass.</p> <p>The work placement vocational module is expressed in terms of passed/failed. Those who get recognition of their professional competence acquired through work experience or non-formal training may be totally or partially exempt from the work placement module.</p> <p>As a result of the assessment process, the relevant decisions on student progression are taken collegially by the teaching team at the end of each year.</p> <p>Completion of a VET programme requires a pass grade in all the modules, and students may take the same programme up to a maximum of 4 years.</p>
<b>Diplomas/certificates provided</b>	Higher VET programmes lead to a VET diploma ( <i>título de Técnico Superior</i> ) at ISCED level 554 allowing access to academic studies at tertiary level bachelor programmes (programmes offered at ISCED levels 665 and 766) through an admission procedure.
<b>Examples of qualifications</b>	Travel agencies and event organisation / sector: hospitality and tourism industry ( <i>Agencias de Viajes y Gestion de Eventos / Familia Profesional: hostelería y turismo</i> ) (26).
<b>Progression opportunities for learners after graduation</b>	Holders of a higher VET diploma may <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• enter the labour market;</li> <li>• access academic programmes offered at ISCED level 665 (bachelor programmes 3 to 4 years).</li> </ul>

**Destination of graduates**

Of the 2019/20 graduates, 27.6% of the higher VET graduates entered a university programme in the year immediately after graduation, and 9.9% enrolled in another higher VET programme. Considering all graduates who entered any educational programme, this percentage increases to 34.0% in the first year. In the second year, 34.3% were in any training programme, with 22.6% attending university studies. In the third year from graduation, 22.5% followed a university programme and 5.3% a higher VET one.

**Share of Higher VET graduates 2019/20 pursuing further studies (%)**

	1st year	2nd year	3rd year
<b>Total</b>	34,0	34,3	30,3
<b>Intermediate VET programmes</b>	0,9	1,1	0,9
<b>Upper secondary general education (baccalaureate) programmes</b>	0,1	0,0	0,0
<b>Higher VET programmes</b>	9,9	8,7	5,3
<b>Specialisation course</b>	0,3	0,2	0,2
<b>Higher education</b>	20,9	22,6	22,5
<b>Other programmes</b>	2,1	1,6	1,4

Source: MEFP (2024). [Seguimiento Educativo Posterior de los Graduados en Formación Profesional](#). [Post-Educational Monitoring Statistics of Graduates in Vocational Training].].

**Awards through validation of prior learning**

VET diplomas, established by decrees, are composed of a set of occupational standards (27); each of which includes a set of units of competence (UCs). UC is the minimum set of professional skills that can be partially recognised and certified.

Units of competence acquired either in the VET system or through validation of non-formal learning are individually assessed and certified and may be accumulated towards a full qualification in IVET and CVET.

**General education subjects**

Higher VET programmes are made up of vocational modules which vary in length, with theoretical and practical contents corresponding to the different professional fields, and also include lifelong learning skills.

- vocational modules, specific to each professional field, linked to national catalogue of occupational standards (CNCP);
- a work placement vocational module, to be completed in a workplace;
- vocational modules related to career guidance, business and entrepreneurial initiative;
- a project module.

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**Key competences**

Key competences to be taken as a reference:

- information processing and digital competence;
- competence in linguistic communication;
- competence in knowledge and interaction with the physical world;
- social and civic competence.

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**Application of learning outcomes approach**

VET diploma programmes (established by royal decrees) are based on learning outcomes with a strong focus on work-based learning, following ECVET guidelines.

National curricula account for 55-65%, the remaining 45-35% of the programme curricula are settled at regional level aligned to local socioeconomic characteristics.

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**Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners**

48.53%

**Share of students according to VET level programme, 2021/22**

Basic VET	Interm. VET	Higher VET	Arts & Design	Higher Arts & Design	Sports	Higher Sports	Total
75	420	531	3 411	14 810	10 221	839	1 056
276	227	864					648
7.12%	39.77%	50.34%	0.32%	1.40%	0.97%	0.08%	100.00%

*Source:* Elaborated by ReferNet Spain from [Statistics of non-university education](#). Ministry of Education and Vocational Training.

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[28] 756 standards in 26 sector branches are currently listed in the national catalogue of occupational standards ([Catálogo Nacional de Cualificaciones Profesionales](#) - CNCP).

Professional certificate  
programmes - level 1  
200-540 hours  
WBL % vary  
ISCED 254

## Specialisation courses (Cursos de Especialización), ISCED 554

<b>EQF level</b>	The Spanish education system is not referenced to EQF levels		<b>ISCED-P 2011 level</b>	554
<b>Usual entry grade</b>	Not applicable		<b>Usual completion grade</b>	Not applicable
<b>Usual entry age</b>	20		<b>Usual completion age</b>	Not applicable
<b>Length of a programme (years)</b>	Variable, depending on the content between 500-720 hours			
<b>Is it part of compulsory education and training?</b>	✗		<b>Is it part of formal education and training system?</b>	✓
<b>Is it initial VET?</b>	✗		<b>Is it continuing VET?</b>	✓
<b>Is it offered free of charge?</b>	✓		<b>Is it available for adults?</b>	✓
<b>ECVET or other credits</b>	VET programmes are based on learning outcomes with a strong focus on work-based learning, following ECVET guidelines.			
<b>Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• school-based learning (face-to-face), including work-based learning at workshops, labs, simulations, etc./full-time or on a part time modular basis;</li> <li>• In some programmes, work placement module (<i>formación en centros de trabajo, FCT</i>), compulsory training module of variable duration.</li> </ul> <p>These programmes started in 2020/21 only in the face-to-face modality.</p>			
<b>Main providers</b>	<p>Main education authority VET providers include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• public, publicly funded private and private institutions approved by the competent education authority;</li> <li>• integrated training centres, which are public and provide both IVET and CVET programmes;</li> </ul> <p>Public, publicly funded private and private centres are the main providers of education authority VET programmes. Programmes started in 2020/21. 100% of learners attended public centres.</p>			
<b>Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies</b>	Varies			

<b>Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• practical training at school (workshops, labs, simulations, etc.);</li> <li>• work placement module (<i>formación en centros de trabajo, FCT</i>) - compulsory training module of variable duration at a workplace (students with previous work experience may be exempt);</li> </ul>
<b>Main target groups</b>	Higher VET graduates in the same field of studies
<b>Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)</b>	Holding a higher VET diploma in the same field of studies depending on the specialisation programme
<b>Assessment of learning outcomes</b>	<p>Assessment takes as reference the objectives, expressed in learning outcomes, and the evaluation criteria of each of the vocational modules, as well as the general objectives established (by legislation) for each VET specialisation programme.</p> <p>Completion of a training programme requires a pass grade in all the vocational modules.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• marks are expressed in whole numbers from one to 10; only a five or over is considered a pass;</li> <li>• the work placement vocational module, however, is expressed in terms of passed/failed.</li> </ul> <p>Assessment has a continuous, formative nature and is carried out by vocational modules.</p>
<b>Examples of qualifications</b>	<p>Expert in cell cultures / <i>Expertos en cultivos celulares</i></p> <p>Audio scriptwriter-description for audiovisual works and live shows and events / <i>Guionista de proyectos de audio-descripción de obras audiovisuales y espectáculos en vivo y eventos</i></p>
<b>Progression opportunities for learners after graduation</b>	<p>Holders of a higher VET diploma may</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• enter the labour market;</li> <li>• access academic programmes offered at ISCED level 665 (Bachelor programmes 3 to 4 years).</li> </ul>
<b>Destination of graduates</b>	Information not available
<b>Awards through validation of prior learning</b>	<p>✓</p> <p>VET certifications, established by decrees, are composed of a set of professional, personal, and social competences that can be partially recognised and certified.</p>
<b>General education subjects</b>	<p>✗</p> <p>Specialisation VET programmes are made up of vocational modules (which vary in length, with theoretical and practical contents corresponding to the different professional fields) and lifelong learning skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• vocational modules, specific to each professional field, linked to the national catalogue of professional standards (CNCP);</li> <li>• in some cases, a work placement vocational module, to be completed in a workplace;</li> </ul>
<b>Key competences</b>	✗

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**Application of learning outcomes approach**

VET programmes are based on learning outcomes with a strong focus on work-based learning, following ECVET guidelines.

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**Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners**

not available

These programmes started to be implemented in 2020/21 (see Table below).

<b>Specialisation courses for:</b>	<b>2020/21</b>	<b>2021/22</b>
Intermediate level VET graduates	100	529
Higher level VET graduates	920	2 156
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 020</b>	<b>2 685</b>

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*Source:* Students of specialisation courses. Advanced data. Statistics of non-university education. Ministry of Education and Vocational Training. [extracted 9.7.2021]. <https://www.educacionyfp.gob.es/servicios-al-ciudadano/estadisticas/no-universitaria/alumnado/matriculado/series.html>

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- [29] IVET diploma programmes may include one or several occupational standards.
- [30] The smallest unit that can be certified is the unit of competence (*unidad de competencia*, UC).
- [31] Professional certificate programmes are modular; the minimum unit that can be assessed and certified is the unit of competence (partial certificate).
- [32] Professional certificates are modular in nature, composed of a set of modules (unit of competence - UCs), defined at national level. Professional certificates are listed in the national catalogue of occupational standards (CNCP) structured by professional branches.

Professional certificate  
 programmes - level 2  
 180-920 hours  
 WBL % vary  
 ISCED 351

### Higher sports or higher arts and design programmes (Grado Superior de Enseñanzas Deportivas o Grado Superior de Artes Plásticas y Diseño) ISCED 554 diploma

<b>EQF level</b>	The Spanish education system is not referenced to EQF levels.	<b>ISCED-P 2011 level</b>	554
<b>Usual entry grade</b>	13 (for arts and design programmes) 12 (for sports programmes)	<b>Usual completion grade</b>	15 (for arts and design programmes) 13 (for sports programmes)
<b>Usual entry age</b>	18 (for arts and design programmes) 18 (for sports programmes)	<b>Usual completion age</b>	20 (for arts and design programmes) 18 (for sports programmes)
<b>Length of a programme (years)</b>	2 (arts and design programmes) 1 (sports programmes)		
<b>Is it part of compulsory education and training?</b>	 Compulsory education in Spain includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6 years in primary school (learners aged 6 to 12);</li> <li>• 4 years in lower secondary education (ESO in Spanish) (learners aged 12 to 16).</li> </ul>	<b>Is it part of formal education and training system?</b>	
<b>Is it initial VET?</b>		<b>Is it continuing VET?</b>	Information not available
<b>Is it offered free of charge?</b>	Information not available	<b>Is it available for adults?</b>	Not applicable (learners are already over 18)
<b>ECVET or other credits</b>	VET programmes are based on learning outcomes with a strong focus on work-based learning, following ECVET guidelines.		

<b>Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)</b>	These programmes are offered in schools that are specialised according to the type and level of education in artistic or sports fields and can only be taken face-to-face.
<b>Main providers</b>	Main education authority VET providers include public, publicly funded private and private institutions approved by the competent education authority.
<b>Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies</b>	Information not available
<b>Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)</b>	These programmes are offered in schools that are specialised according to the type and level of education in artistic or sports fields.
<b>Main target groups</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• learners over 18 (for arts and design programmes);</li> <li>• learners over 18 (for sports programmes).</li> </ul>
<b>Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)</b>	<p><b>Arts and design ISCED 554 programmes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to gain access to higher-level VET in arts and design, it is necessary to hold the upper secondary qualification (baccalaureate) or equivalent, and pass a specific test to prove knowledge and skills necessary to take advantage of these programmes;</li> <li>• exemption from the test is possible in certain cases: Higher-level VET diploma of plastic arts and design of a professional branch related to the programme to undertake or equivalent; Baccalaureate in arts, Bachelor of Fine Arts, architecture or technical engineering in industrial design, Higher title of conservation and restoration of cultural property;</li> <li>• in absence of previous requirements, be 19 years old and passing an entry test or be 18 and hold an intermediate level VET diploma in arts and design;</li> <li>• the entry test has two parts: general part dealing with the knowledge and basic skills of the common subjects of the baccalaureate; and a specific part to assess the artistic knowledge and the necessary skills to take advantage of these programmes.</li> </ul> <p><b>Sports programmes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• upper secondary education qualification (baccalaureate) or equivalent for academic purposes;</li> <li>• sports technician diploma in the corresponding modality or sports;</li> <li>• the baccalaureate diploma can be substituted by passing a test in which maturity is demonstrated in relation to the objectives of the baccalaureate. To take this test, learners have to be 19 years old or 18 years with a diploma at intermediate level VET in physical and sports activities sector branch;</li> <li>• this test can be substituted by the common part of the test of access to higher level VET programmes;</li> <li>• in addition to the general requirements, each modality may require other conditions, such as accreditation of certain sporting merits or passing of a specific test of the modality or sport specialty.</li> </ul>

<b>Assessment of learning outcomes</b>	<p>Assessment is continuous and considers the progress and the academic maturity of the students, in relation to the general objectives and the professional competences of the programme.</p> <p>The evaluation is carried out by module, taking as reference their objectives expressed in terms of skills and competences and their respective assessment criteria.</p> <p>The results of the final evaluation of each module are expressed in terms of grades according to a numerical scale from 0 to 10. Qualifications equal to or greater than five are considered positive and the rest are negative.</p> <p>The results of the evaluation of the practical training are expressed in terms of 'apt / not apt'.</p>
<b>Diplomas/certificates provided</b>	<p>Higher technician diploma plastic arts and design (<i>Título de Técnico Superior de Artes Plásticas y Diseño</i>);</p> <p>Higher technician diploma in the modality or sports specialty (<i>Título de técnico deportivo superior en la modalidad o especialidad deportiva</i>).</p>
<b>Examples of qualifications</b>	<p>Modelling and moulding ceramics, judo and self-defence.</p>
<b>Progression opportunities for learners after graduation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• access to higher education;</li> <li>• labour market.</li> </ul>
<b>Destination of graduates</b>	<p>Information not available</p>
<b>Awards through validation of prior learning</b>	<p>Arts and design or sports programmes, established by decrees, are composed of a set of occupational standards (28), each of which includes a set of units of competence (UCs). UC is the minimum set of professional skills that can be partially recognised and certified.</p> <p>Units of competence acquired either in the VET system or through validation of non-formal learning are individually assessed and certified and may be accumulated towards a full qualification in IVET and CVET.</p>
<b>General education subjects</b>	
<b>Key competences</b>	
<b>Application of learning outcomes approach</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"></p> <p>VET diploma programmes (established by royal decrees) are based on learning outcomes with a strong focus on work-based learning, following ECVET guidelines.</p> <p>National curricula account for 55-65%, the remaining 45-35% of the programme curricula are settled at regional level aligned to local socioeconomic characteristics.</p>

Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners

1.6%

**Share of students according to VET level programme, 2021/22**

Basic VET	Interm. VET	Higher VET	Arts & Design	Higher Arts & Design	Sports	Higher Sports	Total
75 276	420 227	531 864	3 411	14 810	10 221	839	1 056 648
7.12%	39.77%	50.34%	0.32%	1.40%	0.97%	0.08%	100.00%

Source: Elaborated by ReferNet Spain from [Statistics of non-university education](#). Ministry of Education and Vocational Training.

- [33] IVET programmes include several occupational standards, in whole or in part.
- [34] The smallest unit that can be certified is the unit of competence (*unidad de competencia*, UC).
- [35] Professional certificate programmes are modular; the minimum unit that can be assessed and certified is the unit of competence (partial certificate).
- [36] Professional certificates programmes are modular, composed of a set of modules (linked to units of competence, UCs), defined at national level. Professional certificates are listed in the national catalogue of occupational standards (CNCP) structured by professional branches.

Professional certificate programmes - level 3

240-1 110 hours

WBL % vary

ISCED 453

## Professional certificate programmes - level 1 (certificado profesional - nivel 1)

<b>EQF level</b>	The Spanish VET system is not referenced to EQF levels.	<b>ISCED-P 2011 level</b>	254
<b>Usual entry grade</b>	Not applicable	<b>Usual completion grade</b>	Not applicable
<b>Usual entry age</b>	Not applicable	<b>Usual completion age</b>	Not applicable
<b>Length of a programme (years)</b>	<p>Not applicable</p> <p>Duration of professional certificate programmes level 1 currently range from 200 to 540 hours, according to the structure of competences and learning outcomes to be acquired, without reference to a specific academic year.</p> <p>Professional certificate programmes are organised as modules (from 30 to 240 hours), which can be individually assessed and certified (accumulated) to obtain the corresponding certification.</p>		
<b>Is it part of compulsory education and training?</b>	<p></p> <p>Professional certificate programmes are accessible to learners over 16.</p>	<b>Is it part of formal education and training system?</b>	
<b>Is it initial VET?</b>	<p></p>	<b>Is it continuing VET?</b>	
<b>Is it offered free of charge?</b>		<b>Is it available for adults?</b>	

**ECVET or other credits** These programmes are not referenced to ECVET.

<b>Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School-based learning (face-to-face), including work-based learning at workshops, labs, simulations, etc.;</li> <li>• through virtual learning environments (e-learning platforms, complemented with face-to-face learning).</li> </ul> <p>The regulation specifies which professional certificate programmes can be delivered online, how many hours have to be face-to-face, the requirements for the accreditation of e-learning platforms and tutors, as well as the evaluation and assessment procedures to ensure that e-learning training programmes meet the quality criteria set for traditional school-based VET programmes;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• apprenticeships: the purpose of the apprenticeship contract (<i>contrato para la formación y el aprendizaje</i>) is the professional qualification of the workers, in a regime of alternating paid work activity in a company, with training activity.</li> </ul>
<b>Main providers</b>	<p>Training centres, educational institutions, companies or independent professionals that comply with a series of requirements established by the regulations in force.</p> <p>Professional certificate programme providers must comply with specific requirements regarding the recruitment, qualifications and professional experience of trainers, facilities and technological equipment, and entry criteria for trainees, and be authorised by the competent authority (at the state or regional level).</p> <p>Professional certificate training centres are listed in an <a href="#">online search engine tool</a> run by SEPE.</p>
<b>Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies</b>	Varies
<b>Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• practical training in the training centre;</li> <li>• compulsory on-the-job training module (<i>módulo de formación práctica en centros de trabajo</i>);</li> <li>• training and apprenticeship contracts.</li> </ul> <p>The learning outcomes of the on-the-job module must be assessed at the workplace.</p> <p>The duration of the on-the-job training module depends on the profile and occupations included in the curriculum of each diploma, currently ranging from 5% to 52% of the total workload of the training programme.</p>
<b>Main target groups</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• young people over 16;</li> <li>• adults.</li> </ul>
<b>Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)</b>	<p>Learners must be at least 16 years old.</p> <p>No other formal access requirements apply for entering level 1 professional certificate programmes (ISCED 254) and learners can move on to the next level in the same field.</p>

<b>Assessment of learning outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To obtain a professional certificate, learners must successfully complete all the training modules (units of competence, UCs) of that certificate;</li> <li>• in addition to this training pathway, all or several of the units of competence included in each certificate can be assessed and certified (accumulated) by taking part in one of the national or regional calls for validation and accreditation of non-formal learning;</li> <li>• the learning outcomes to be assessed in each module are related to knowledge as well as practical skills and abilities set in the assessment criteria of each module.</li> </ul> <p>The regulation specifies which professional certificate programmes can be delivered online, how many hours have to be face-to-face, the requirements for the accreditation of e-learning platforms and tutors, as well as the evaluation and assessment procedures to ensure that e-learning training programmes meet the quality criteria set for traditional school-based VET programmes (29) .</p>
<b>Diplomas/certificates provided</b>	<p>Professional certificates are based on occupational standards listed in the <a href="#">national catalogue of occupational standards</a> (CNCP) and they are modular in nature (30) . Each professional certificate corresponds to a single occupational standard with a few exceptions where one occupational standard has given rise to two professional certificate programmes.</p> <p>Units of competence (being the minimum unit to be certified) can be accumulated towards a professional certificate. The modular structure of professional certificates serves a double purpose: to tailor training programmes to a specific job profile and to serve as a guide for skills assessment, as units of competence acquired outside the school system can be recognised and exempted when enrolling in a formal vocational training programme, thus shortening its duration.</p> <p>Professional certificates were developed and updated by the State public employment service (SEPE), with the cooperation of the national reference centres; they were issued by the employment authorities (published in the official gazette). From 2020, the education ministry becomes responsible for professional certificate programmes.</p> <p>Professional certificates have a double effect: they set out training programmes and award a vocational qualification.</p>
<b>Examples of qualifications</b>	<p>Professional certificate level 1 - Basic operations in accommodation (HOTA0108) / Hospitality and tourism sector branch</p> <p><i>Operaciones básicas de pisos en alojamientos / Familia Profesional: hostelería y turismo</i></p>
<b>Progression opportunities for learners after graduation</b>	<p>Holders of a professional certificate level 1 may</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• enter the labour market;</li> <li>• may move on to the next professional certificate level in limited professional fields;</li> <li>• accumulate (partial) (31) or full professional certificate certificates towards the acquisition of a VET diploma (through training or validation of prior learning).</li> </ul>
<b>Destination of graduates</b>	<p>Information not available</p>

<b>Awards through validation of prior learning</b>	✓	<p>Full or partial (32) qualifications (professional certificates) may be obtained through validation of non-formal and informal learning. Individuals can apply, at any time, to public authorities to have their skills validated.</p> <p>The validation process is carried out for each UC making up the professional certificate programme.</p>	
<b>General education subjects</b>	✗		
<b>Key competences</b>	✗		
<b>Application of learning outcomes approach</b>	✓	VET programmes are based on learning outcomes with a strong focus on work-based learning, following ECVET guidelines.	
<b>Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners</b>	22.65% of all professional certificates issued in 2020.		
	<b>Professional certificate level</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>%</b>
	Level 1	24 450	20%
	Level 2	72 870	59%
	Level 3	25 462	21%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>122 782</b>	<b>100%</b>
	<i>Source:</i> Data provided by SEPE at 8.7.2021.		

Specialisation courses for

Higher VET graduates

WBL varies

500-720 hours

ISCED 554

## Professional certificate programmes - level 2 (certificado profesional - nivel 2)

<b>EQF level</b>	The Spanish education system is not referenced to EQF levels.	<b>ISCED-P 2011 level</b>	351
<b>Usual entry grade</b>	Not applicable	<b>Usual completion grade</b>	Not applicable
<b>Usual entry age</b>	Not available	<b>Usual completion age</b>	Not applicable
<b>Length of a programme (years)</b>	Not applicable Duration of professional certificate programmes level 2 currently range from 180 to 920 hours, according to the structure of competences and learning outcomes to be acquired, without reference to a specific academic year.  Professional certificate programmes are organised by modules (from 30 to 430 hours), which can be individually assessed and certified (accumulated) to obtain the corresponding certification.		
<b>Is it part of compulsory education and training?</b>	 Professional certificate programmes are accessible to learners over 16	<b>Is it part of formal education and training system?</b>	
<b>Is it initial VET?</b>		<b>Is it continuing VET?</b>	
<b>Is it offered free of charge?</b>		<b>Is it available for adults?</b>	

**ECVET or other credits** These programmes are not referenced to ECVET.

<b>Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School-based learning (face-to-face learning) including work-based learning at workshops, labs, simulations, etc.;</li> <li>• through virtual learning environments (e-learning platforms, complemented with face-to-face learning). The regulation specifies which professional certificate programmes can be delivered online, how many hours must be face-to-face, the requirements for the accreditation of e-learning platforms and tutors, as well as the evaluation and assessment procedures to ensure that e-learning training programmes meet the quality criteria set for traditional school-based VET programmes.</li> <li>• apprenticeships: the purpose of the apprenticeship contract (<i>contrato para la formación y el aprendizaje</i>) is the professional qualification of the workers, in a regime of alternating paid work activity in a company, with training activity.</li> </ul>
<b>Main providers</b>	<p>Training centres, educational institutions, companies or independent professionals that comply with a series of requirements established by the regulations in force.</p> <p>Professional certificate programme providers must comply with specific requirements on the recruitment, qualifications and professional experience of trainers; on facilities and technological equipment; and on entry criteria for trainees, and be authorised by the competent authority (at the state or regional level).</p>
<b>Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies</b>	Varies
<b>Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• practical training in the training centre;</li> <li>• compulsory on-the-job training module (<i>módulo de formación práctica en centros de trabajo</i>);</li> <li>• training and apprenticeship contracts.</li> </ul> <p>The learning outcomes of the on-the-job module must be assessed at the workplace.</p> <p>The duration of the on-the-job training module depends on the profile and occupations included in the curriculum of each diploma, ranging from 5% to 52% of the total workload of the training programme.</p>
<b>Main target groups</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• young people over 16;</li> <li>• adults.</li> </ul>
<b>Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)</b>	<p>Learners must fulfil one of the following conditions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• hold the lower secondary education diploma (ESO);</li> <li>• fulfil the academic requirement for enrolling in an intermediate VET programme (ISCED 354) or have passed the corresponding entrance exams regulated by the education administrations;</li> <li>• hold a level 1 professional certificate of the same sector branch and area;</li> <li>• hold a level 2 professional certificate in another sector</li> <li>• have passed the university entrance exams for over 25s and/or over 45s;</li> <li>• have the necessary key skills to successfully complete the training programme (have taken a key competence test in Spanish literacy and maths).</li> </ul>

<b>Assessment of learning outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To obtain a professional certificate, learners must successfully complete all the training modules (units of competence, UCs) of that certificate;</li> <li>• in addition to this training pathway, all or several of the units of competence included in each certificate can be assessed and certified (accumulated) through the validation and accreditation of non-formal learning;</li> <li>• the learning outcomes to be assessed in each module are related to knowledge as well as practical skills and abilities set in the assessment criteria of each module.</li> </ul> <p>The regulation specifies which professional certificate programmes can be delivered online, how many hours must be face-to-face, the requirements for the accreditation of e-learning platforms and tutors, as well as the evaluation and assessment procedures to ensure that e-learning training programmes meet the quality criteria set for traditional school-based VET programmes (33).</p>
<b>Diplomas/certificates provided</b>	<p>Professional certificates are based on occupational standards listed in the <a href="#">national catalogue of occupational standards</a> (CNCP) and they are modular in nature (34). Each professional certificate corresponds to a single occupational standard with a few exceptions where one occupational standard has given rise to two professional certificate programmes.</p> <p>Units of competence (being the minimum unit to be certified) could be accumulated towards a professional certificate. The modular structure of professional certificates serves a double purpose: to tailor training programmes to a specific job profile and to serve as a guide for skills assessment, as units of competence acquired outside the school system can be recognised and exempted when enrolling in a formal vocational training programme, thus shortening its duration.</p> <p>Professional certificates were developed and updated by the State public employment service (SEPE), with the cooperation of the national reference centres; they were issued by the employment authorities (published in the official gazette). From 2020, the education ministry becomes responsible for professional certificate programmes. These certificates are recognised by the education and labour authorities.</p> <p>Professional certificates have a double effect: they set out training programmes and award a vocational qualification.</p>
<b>Examples of qualifications</b>	<p>Professional certificate level 2 - Assistance to rail transport passengers (HOTT0112) / Hospitality and tourism sector branch.</p> <p><i>Atención a pasajeros en transporte ferroviario/ Familia Profesional: hostelería y turismo.</i></p>
<b>Progression opportunities for learners after graduation</b>	<p>Holders of a professional certificate level 2 may</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• enter the labour market;</li> <li>• move on to the next professional certificate level in limited professional fields;</li> <li>• accumulate partial (35) or full professional certificates towards the acquisition of a VET diploma (through training or validation of prior learning).</li> </ul>
<b>Destination of graduates</b>	<p>Information not available</p>

<p><b>Awards through validation of prior learning</b></p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>Full or partial (36) qualifications (professional certificates) may be obtained through validation of non-formal and informal learning. Individuals can apply, at any time, to public authorities to have their skills validated.</p> <p>The validation process is carried out for each UC making up the professional certificate programme.</p>															
<p><b>General education subjects</b></p>	<p>✗</p>																
<p><b>Key competences</b></p>	<p>✗</p>																
<p><b>Application of learning outcomes approach</b></p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>VET programmes are based on learning outcomes with a strong focus on work-based learning, following ECVET guidelines.</p>															
<p><b>Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners</b></p>	<p>59% of all professional certificates issued in 2020.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="470 728 869 761">Professional certificate level</th> <th data-bbox="1077 728 1157 761">2020</th> <th data-bbox="1268 728 1308 761">%</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="470 795 566 828">Level 1</td> <td data-bbox="1077 795 1173 828">24 450</td> <td data-bbox="1268 795 1332 828">20%</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="470 862 566 896">Level 2</td> <td data-bbox="1077 862 1173 896">72 870</td> <td data-bbox="1268 862 1332 896">59%</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="470 929 566 963">Level 3</td> <td data-bbox="1077 929 1173 963">25 462</td> <td data-bbox="1268 929 1332 963">21%</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="470 985 550 1019"><b>Total</b></td> <td data-bbox="1077 985 1189 1019"><b>122 782</b></td> <td data-bbox="1268 985 1348 1019"><b>100%</b></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Professional certificate level	2020	%	Level 1	24 450	20%	Level 2	72 870	59%	Level 3	25 462	21%	<b>Total</b>	<b>122 782</b>	<b>100%</b>
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	<p><i>Source: Data provided by SEPE [extracted 8.7.2021].</i></p>																

Specialisation courses for  
Intermediate VET graduates<sup>a</sup>  
WBL varies  
500-720 hours  
ISCED 354

**Professional certificate programmes - level 3 (certificado profesional - nivel 3)**

<b>ISCED-P 2011 level</b>	453	<b>Usual entry grade</b>	Not applicable
<b>Usual completion grade</b>	Not applicable	<b>Usual entry age</b>	Not applicable
<b>Length of a programme (years)</b>	<p>Not applicable</p> <p>Duration of professional certificate programmes level 3 ranges from 240 to 1 110 hours, according to the structure of competences and learning outcomes to be acquired, without reference to a specific academic year.</p> <p>Professional certificate programmes are organised by modules (from 30 to 360 hours), which can be individually assessed and certified (accumulated) to obtain the corresponding certification.</p>		
<b>Is it part of compulsory education and training?</b>	<p></p> <p>Professional certificate programmes are accessible to learners over 16.</p>	<b>Is it part of formal education and training system?</b>	<p></p>
<b>Is it initial VET?</b>	<p></p>	<b>Is it continuing VET?</b>	<p></p>
<b>Is it offered free of charge?</b>	<p></p>	<b>Is it available for adults?</b>	<p></p>

**ECVET or other credits** These programmes are not referenced to ECVET.

<b>Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School-based learning (face-to-face learning) including work-based learning at workshops, labs, simulations, etc;</li> <li>• through virtual learning environments (e-learning platforms, complemented with face-to-face learning).</li> </ul> <p>The regulation specifies which professional certificate programmes can be delivered online, how many hours must be face-to-face, the requirements for the accreditation of e-learning platforms and tutors, as well as the evaluation and assessment procedures to ensure that e-learning training programmes meet the quality criteria set for traditional school-based VET programmes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• apprenticeships: the purpose of the apprenticeship contract (<i>contrato para la formación y el aprendizaje</i>) is the professional qualification of the workers, in a regime of alternating paid work activity in a company, with training activity.</li> </ul>
<b>Main providers</b>	<p>Training centres, educational institutions, companies or independent professionals that comply with a series of requirements established by the regulations in force.</p> <p>Professional certificate programme providers must comply with specific requirements regarding the recruitment, qualifications and professional experience of trainers, facilities and technological equipment, entry criteria for trainees, and be authorised by the competent authority (at the state or regional level).</p>
<b>Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies</b>	Varies
<b>Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• practical training in the training centre;</li> <li>• compulsory on-the-job training module (<i>módulo de formación práctica en centros de trabajo</i>);</li> <li>• training and apprenticeship contracts;</li> </ul> <p>The learning outcomes of the on-the-job module must be assessed at the workplace.</p> <p>The duration of the on-the-job training module depends on the profile and occupations included in the curriculum of each diploma, currently ranging from 5% to 52% of the total workload of the training programme.</p>
<b>Main target groups</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• young people over 16;</li> <li>• adults.</li> </ul>
<b>Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)</b>	<p>Learners must fulfil one of the following conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• hold the upper secondary baccalaureate diploma (<i>Bachillerato</i>);</li> <li>• fulfil the academic requirement for enrolling in a higher VET programme (ISCED 554) or have passed the corresponding entrance exams regulated by the education administrations;</li> <li>• hold a level 2 professional certificate of the same sector branch and area;</li> <li>• hold a level 3 professional certificate in another sector;</li> <li>• have passed the university entrance exams for over 25s and/or over 45s;</li> <li>• have the necessary key skills to successfully complete the training programme (have taken a key competence test in Spanish literacy and maths; depending on the professional certificate programme, learners may also take an English language test).</li> </ul>

<b>Assessment of learning outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To obtain a professional certificate, learners must successfully complete all the training modules (units of competence - UCs) of that certificate;</li> <li>• in addition to this training pathway, all or several of the units of competence included in each certificate can be assessed and certified (accumulated) through the validation and accreditation of non-formal learning;</li> <li>• the learning outcomes to be assessed in each module are related to knowledge as well as practical skills and abilities set in the assessment criteria of each module.</li> </ul> <p>The regulation specifies which professional certificate programmes can be delivered online, how many hours must be face-to-face, the requirements for the accreditation of e-learning platforms and tutors, as well as the evaluation and assessment procedures to ensure that e-learning training programmes meet the quality criteria set for traditional school-based VET programmes.</p>
<b>Diplomas/certificates provided</b>	<p>Professional certificates are modular and based on the occupational standards listed in the <a href="#">national catalogue of occupational standards</a> (CNCP). Each professional certificate corresponds to a single occupational standard (exceptionally, a few occupational standards have given rise to two professional certificate programmes).</p> <p>Competences units (being the minimum unit to be certified) could be accumulated towards a professional certificate. The modular structure of professional certificates serves a double purpose: to tailor training programmes to a specific job profile and to serve as a guide for skills assessment, as units of competence acquired outside the school system can be recognised and exempted when enrolling in a formal vocational training programme, thus shortening its duration.</p> <p>Professional certificates were developed and updated by the State public employment service (SEPE), with the cooperation of the national reference centres; they were issued by the employment authorities (published in the official gazette). From 2020, the education ministry becomes responsible for professional certificate programmes.</p> <p>Professional certificates have a double effect: they set out training programmes and award a vocational qualification.</p> <p>These certificates are recognised by the education and labour authorities.</p>
<b>Examples of qualifications</b>	<p>Professional certificate level 3 - Process management in restaurant and catering services (HOTR0409) / Hospitality and tourism sector branch</p> <p><i>Gestión de procesos de servicio en restauración / Familia Profesional: hostelería y turismo</i></p>
<b>Progression opportunities for learners after graduation</b>	<p>Holders of a professional certificate level 3 may</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• enter the labour market;</li> <li>• accumulate (partial) or full professional certificate certificates towards the acquisition of a VET diploma (through training or validation of prior learning).</li> </ul>
<b>Destination of graduates</b>	<p>Information not available</p>

<b>Awards through validation of prior learning</b>		Full or partial qualifications (professional certificates) may be obtained through validation of non-formal and informal learning. Individuals can apply, at any time, to public authorities to have their skills validated. The validation process is carried out for each unit of competence making up the professional certificate programme.
<b>General education subjects</b>		
<b>Key competences</b>		
<b>Application of learning outcomes approach</b>		VET programmes are based on learning outcomes with a strong focus on work-based learning, following ECVET guidelines.
<b>Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners</b>	21% of all professional certificates issued in 2020	
	<b>Professional certificate levels</b>	<b>2020</b>
		<b>%</b>
	Level 1	24 450
	Level 2	72 870
	Level 3	25 462
	<b>Total</b>	<b>122 782</b>
		<b>100%</b>
	<i>Source: Data provided by SEPE at 8.7.2021.</i>	