



Conclusions of Spanish Stakeholders debate

ORIOLO HOMS, NOTUS (SPAIN)

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The current status of implementation of apprenticeship programs in Spain is in a pilot phase of transition from a schoolbased system to another with greater involvement of training in companies.

The Spanish IVET model can therefore be summarised as a mainly schoolbased dual VET scheme, or alternating duality model (according to the conceptual framework of this study in which a relatively long phase of fulltime school-based vocational education is followed by a short phase of on-the-job learning, allowing learners to practice in the company what they have learned in the training centre. The module FCT is an essential feature of the system, and all students of initial vocational training courses benefit from a stay in the business environment, allowing them to have a first contact with the professional workplace before graduation.

In both IVET cycles – the intermediate and the higher level VET – the so-called 'training on-the-job'-module (*formación en el centro de trabajo*, FCT) is generalised. This module accounts for 400 hours and must be followed at the end of the programs. It is organised in cooperation with companies and adds a company-based training element.

More recent initiatives aim at strengthening work-based elements and allowing for more apprenticeship-like models to evolve. In 2012, the government regulated a dual integrated training model (according to the conceptual framework of this study) through a Royal-decree. This decree aims to develop a model based on greater cooperation and involvement of the companies in the IVET system. It aims to favour active participation of the company in the training process of the learners and to strengthen the links between the company and the training centre. Under this new regulation it is required that a minimum of 33% of the vocational training takes place in the company. Regulation of the relationship between the learners and the company is not prescribed and can

take different forms. The real decree stipulates two paths: a scholarships path and an employment path. With the scholarship path, pupils can receive a grant, the amount of which is not prescribed, from the company, from institutions, foundations or public administrations. The employment path is regulated with a training and apprenticeship contract and is addressed to young people aged 16-30 years old. In the Vocational Training of Employment sub-system the effective working time cannot be higher than 75% during the first year and 85% during the second and third year of the working time established in collective bargaining. Wages for the contract are set up in collective bargaining and cannot be lower than the minimum wage. The training content of the contract (at least 25% during the first year and 15% during the second and third year) must be followed in a training centre or an educative centre.

Under the Spanish system of training, this new model has started its implementation mainly in the regions of Basque Country, Catalonia and Madrid.

After several years of experimentation, ongoing experiences allow to obtain some first conclusions on the introduction in Spain of a model with a larger share of the training company.

The findings of the study are based on affirming that while the flexibility of the regulatory framework has been positive so far to facilitate experimentation in search of the most appropriate methods for the Spanish socio-economic context, it is time to draw conclusions and to open a debate enabling a consensus among all stakeholders the best ways to develop the principle that certain skills it is best to be learned in the company, and others that it is better to be learned in a training center, a principle which is at the base of apprenticeship models of other European countries.

There is broad consensus among key stakeholders that apprenticeship systems can provide an additional means of vocational training in Spain and need to be developed, but it's not, at this time, an objective to generalize for all Spanish VET system.

Bearing these trends in mind, the national government needs to carry out comprehensive research and evaluation to pinpoint the most successful experiences. That evaluation would allow the government to identify those governance and financing structures that prove to be more efficient. Furthermore, it should shed light on which sectors should be prioritised. In a further step, the outcomes of the evaluation should be discussed within the national parliament and with the social partners and, based on that debate, a new regulation should be approved.

The new regulation should provide a more consistent legal framework, regulating at national level, issues such as the relationship of the learner and the company (with a labour contract) and the training courses that can be provided with the dual integrated training/apprenticeship system. Besides this, functions and responsibilities should be allocated following the subsidiary

principle thus allowing regional actors to implement the system with some degree of autonomy.

In addition, some provision should be made for sectoral collective bargaining to negotiate certain issues such as the working conditions of the learners, skills development of trainers in the companies or coordination between the training centre and the company. Employees' representatives at the workplace should be strengthened, and monitor if the companies are respecting the working training conditions.

Furthermore, a national plan of dual integrated training/apprenticeship should be agreed with the social partners. This plan should pinpoint strategic sectors to develop dual integrated training/apprenticeship and goals to be achieved that could be monitored with indicators.

At the same time, the traditional IVET system has to be reinforced to increase the quality of training in companies and fostering relations between training centres and companies.

The feasibility of this vision depends essentially on a cultural change in the management of human resources in companies, in the involvement of economic and social agents as well as the national and regional political will to promote its implementation and development.

To foster change, the following key measures, which were discussed and agreed on among the stakeholders during the second workshop organized in the framework of the project, could be implemented:

- ✓ measure 1: evaluation and achieving a comprehensive agreement for the promotion of dual integrated training/apprenticeship. In 2016, after four years of piloting the new model for dual integrated training, an assessment of the situation should be carried out. This should include the objectives achieved and the difficulties encountered. The results of the evaluation should initiate a review of the current regulation with the participation of the main actors: state, regional communities and economic and social partners, with the intention of reaching a global agreement around reforms to make and achieve goals, to be implemented in 2017. This measure would both meet the need to reinforce research and evaluation and to ensure that the most promising features of the traditional system and the pilots of dual integrated training model are further elaborated.
- ✓ measure 2: fiscal incentives for companies participating in the dual integrated training/apprenticeship as an incentive measure to encourage companies, especially medium and small sized enterprises, to participate in the dual integrated training/apprenticeship and promote cultural change in the management of skilled human resources, it would be appropriate to provide tax incentives for companies to improve investment in training for those companies that take part in such an initiative. This measure addresses both the challenge of financing the

system beyond the existing resources and the challenges related to the small business structure in Spain.

- ✓ measure 3: reform RD 1529/2012. In view of the results of the assessment it would be advisable to introduce some reforms in the legal regulation. Some of the areas for improvement could include: relate better the apprenticeship and training contract with training programs to ensure the achievement of qualifications and diplomas; regulate through sectoral collective agreements the working conditions for the training period in the company; issue a regulation for the training of company tutors. This measure would support the consistency of the legal framework.

- ✓ measure 4: campaign to promote dual vocational training. In addition to the other proposed measures it would be appropriate to conduct a campaign for dual dual integrated training/apprenticeship, with the involvement of economic and social partners and Autonomous Communities to raise awareness of the dual pathway and its positive impact on the inclusion of young people in employment. This campaign should target both the general population and companies to highlight the business benefits of cooperation with vocational training. The social partners have a special role to play in such a campaign.