

## VET in Spain



Initial VET is the responsibility of the education authorities. Continuing training is the responsibility of education and employment authorities sharing the same consultation bodies but having their own respective governance and objectives.

Employment authorities are responsible for VET programmes addressing companies' and workers' (employed and unemployed) skills needs, employment-training schemes and the regulation of apprenticeships contracts.

The General Council for Vocational Training is the national government advisory body on VET policy; it comprises representatives of national and regional public authorities, employers' organisations and trade unions. Stakeholders collaborate in the design of occupational standards in all sectors of the economy and are involved in VET qualifications design.

Initial VET offers upper secondary (basic and intermediate) and higher VET qualifications as part of the education system. Programmes last two years (2 000 hours) and 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, to learners aged 15 or 16. They allow students at risk of leaving education without qualifications to develop their 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, in some cases, also attain the compulsory secondary qualification opening up the general education path;
- intermediate programmes can begin at age 16, after compulsory education. These 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;
- at tertiary level, higher programmes (ISCED 554) lead to an advanced technician qualification (such as logistics coordinator). 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 studies to acquire occupation-specific and digital skills in line with the emerging needs of the economy.

In dual VET delivery (apprenticeship contracts or other alternance schemes) programme duration may be up to three years with a minimum of 33% of training spent at the company.

Specific training programmes in arts and design and in sports are offered (4% of the VET population in 2019/20).

Adults can enrol in the same VET programmes as young people. Those older than 16 can also attend VET programmes leading to a professional certificate corresponding to an occupational profile. Programmes are delivered by authorised VET providers and may include an apprenticeship contract. No 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. Level 2 (ISCED 351) and level 3 (ISCED 453) programmes are also accessible to those having completed, respectively, compulsory and upper secondary, or

equivalent, level studies. Duration varies according to the learning outcomes at each level (from 180 to 1 110 hours); access to the next level is possible in limited professional fields. All three levels comprise a compulsory on-the-job training module, of variable duration.

The Spanish VET system is modular, allowing recognition and transfer of (units of) competences gained in one VET programme to another, shortening its duration. Units of competences may also be acquired through validation of prior learning. Training is offered by accredited public and private institutions.

Non-formal VET includes a wide range of courses, designed for different needs and skill profiles, allowing upskilling or re-skilling. It may be financed through public funds (mainly from company and worker contributions to social security). Publicly funded programmes (specialties) not linked to the national register (CNCP) are included in a catalogue of training specialties of the State Public Employment Service and providers have to be registered as such.

### Distinctive features of VET

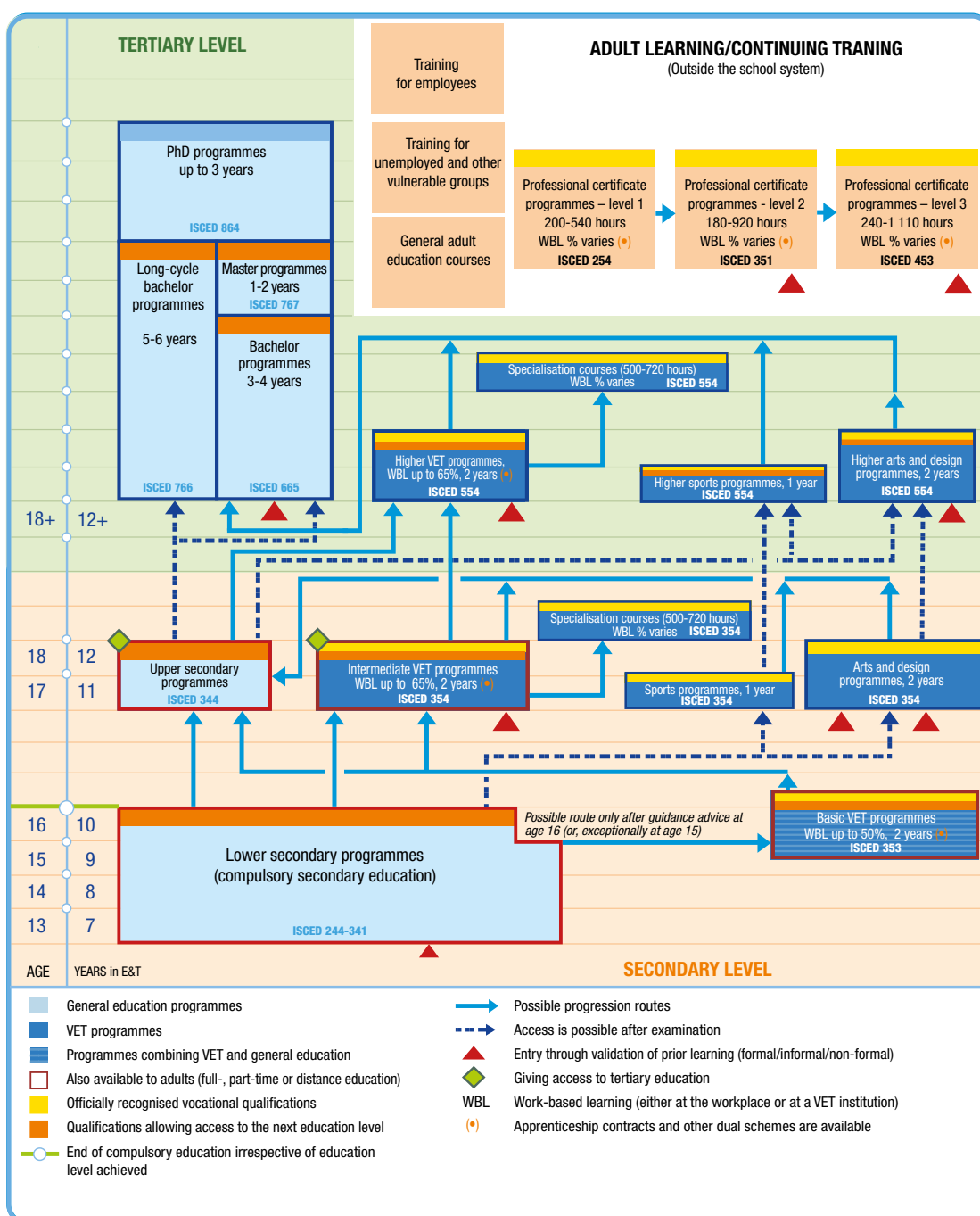
The national system for qualifications and vocational training is the umbrella for VET programmes in and outside the education system, leading to qualifications awarded by the education authorities. VET and professional certificate programmes take as reference the occupational standards of the national catalogue (*Catálogo Nacional de Cualificaciones Profesionales*, CNCP), allowing mutual recognition of some parts of the training (modules).

VET programmes are modularised, allowing partial certification and re-engagement from a lifelong learning perspective, and include compulsory workplace learning at the end of, or during, studies. Learners need to pass all modules to obtain the relevant qualification. VET programmes using online or virtual learning environments and platforms are increasing to ease access to VET.

Adults may have their skills recognised or acquire a formal qualification through training. There are common regulations for validating skills acquired through non-formal and informal learning and work experience. These procedures empower citizens to engage in further learning and acquire full qualifications. Regional authorities can initiate public calls for validation of non-formal and informal learning depending on company needs, social partner requests or minimum qualification requirements from sectoral regulatory bodies. Key competences tests have been developed for higher VET programmes and professional certificate access.

### Challenges and policy responses

Vocational Training is at the core of policy measures in the education, labour and economic spheres. The strategic plan for the modernisation of vocational training, presented in 2020, aims to improve VET standards and make VET more attractive to young people by introducing flexible learning paths in secondary ed-



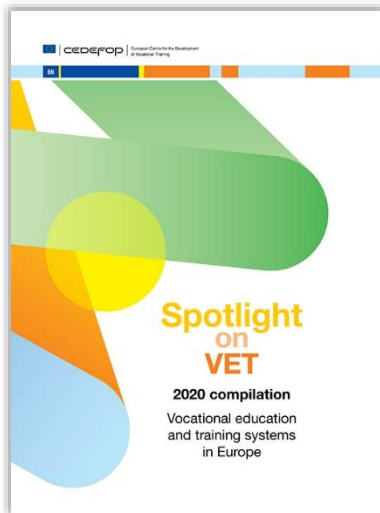
NB: ISCED-P 2011. The Spanish education system is not referenced to EQF levels.  
Source: Cedefop and ReferNet Spain, 2020.

education and VET programmes and upgrading and developing new programmes to meet the demands of the future of work.

The reform of vocational training for employment within the labour sphere (2015) aimed to increase continuing VET quality and improve management of public funds. It gave rise to ensuring the accreditation of VET providers offering training leading to formal qualifications and the implementation of the register of training specialties, introducing better monitoring of training outcomes and fostering transition to employment. Social part-

ners and regional authorities are involved in continuous quality assurance of VET.

Current VET policy focuses on the modernisation and continuous updating of vocational training to ensure learning opportunities for the entire population through a unified, flexible, and easily accessible VET system; improving qualification levels and employability; driving innovation and entrepreneurship in VET; enhancing dual VET; and assessing the VET system to improve its quality and efficiency.



**Publication:**

Spotlight on VET – 2020 compilation:  
vocational education and training systems in Europe.

**Access the full publication at:**

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/publications/4189>

**Please cite this chapter as:**

Cedefop (2021). VET in Spain. In: Cedefop (2021). *Spotlight on VET – 2020 compilation: vocational education and training systems in Europe*. Luxembourg: Publications Office. pp. 68-69.

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/publications/4189>

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