

Raising quality of VET in cooperation with employers and higher education

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1. GENERAL POLITICAL CONTEXT. FRAMEWORK FOR THE KNOWLEDGE SOCIETY

- According to the Spanish Constitution of 27 December 1978, Spain is a parliamentary monarchy based on social values, democracy and the rule of law. The regional structure is organized into municipalities, provinces and Autonomous Communities.
- Spain is located in the southwest of Europe and occupies the major part of the Iberian Peninsula. It also includes the archipelagos of the Balearic Islands in the Mediterranean Sea and the Canary Islands in the Atlantic Ocean. In addition, it holds territories in the North coast of Africa, the cities of Ceuta and Melilla. Its total area is 505,990 km², 85% of which is on the Iberian Peninsula. According to the latest census figures, on 1 January 2009, the total number of inhabitants of Spain was 46,745,807.
- During 2006 and the early months of 2007, the Spanish economy was still in the phase of significant growth that it had been registering for a little over a decade, in an international context that was characterized by great vitality. However, due to the international financial crisis, this trend changed in the fourth quarter of 2009 and the Spanish economy shrank by 2.4% compared with the same period in 2008. The annual growth rate for 2009 was -3.6%, as compared to 0.9 in 2008. As far as employment is concerned, during this same period it decreased by 3.9%.

- In Spain, the percentage of young people between the ages of 18 and 24 who had only taken Compulsory Secondary Education was double the average for the EU-27 but, while this amount has fallen in the last five years in the EU, in Spain has remained.
- In Spain, vocational training has not been considered to be a real option for students who are finishing their lower secondary education, but this trend is now changing due to a number of factors, among them the current economic crisis, the number of women taking this type of training and the increased social value placed in VET.
- The public agencies are therefore promoting a policy of education and training that focuses on: a) the development of lifelong learning; b) the promotion of vocation training, both in education and as vocational training for employment; c) the granting of recognition to learning acquired through work experience; d) the development of the National Qualifications and Vocational Training System and e) the implementation of new vocational training diplomas and professional certificates.

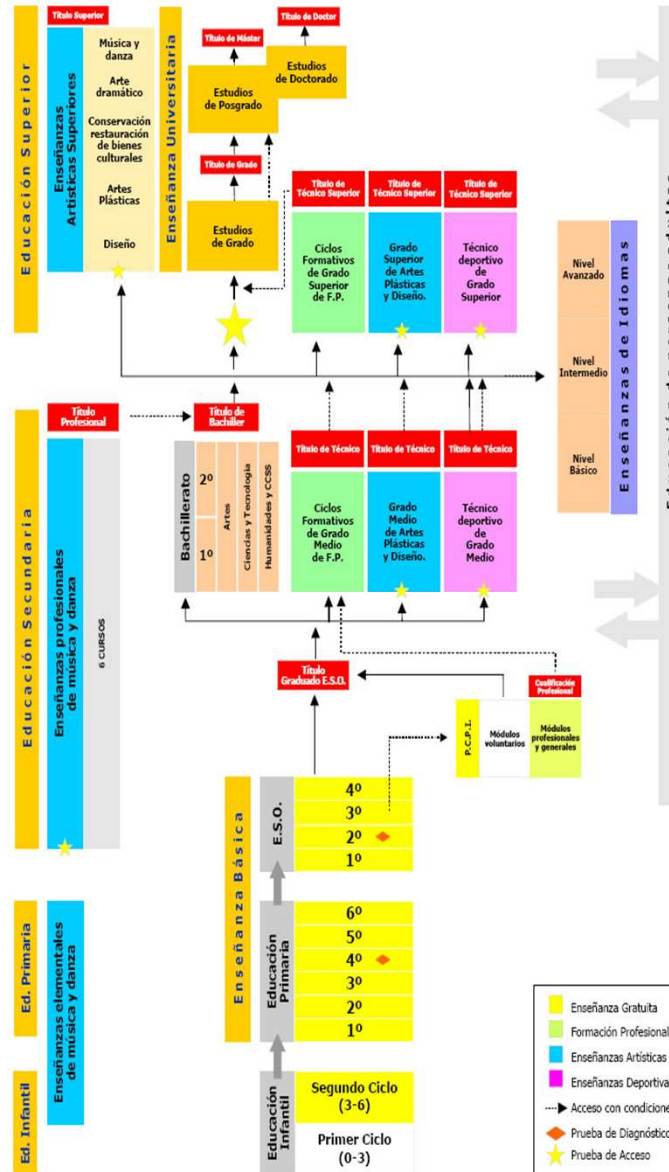
2. POLICY DEVELOPMENT – OBJECTIVES, FRAMEWORKS, MECHANISMS AND PRIORITIES.

- The 2002 Law on Qualifications and Vocational Training was approved with the aim of creating a National Qualifications and Vocational Training System that would bring unity, coherence and efficiency to the planning, organization and administration of this field, making it easier to integrate the different ways of certifying and accrediting competencies and professional qualifications.
- The Ministries of Labour and Education are working together on a three-part objective: a) to increase the attractiveness of VET, b) to enhance the permeability between the education system and the different pathways to training and professional qualifications; and c) to promote lifelong learning.
- It is necessary to act to improve the quality of VET and how society perceives it, and to make intermediate and advanced level VET an attractive alternative by improving its prestige and social recognition. To do this, it is essential to improve the quality of VET programmes and to adapt them to the dynamic and changing needs of the production network.

3. DELIVERING TRAINING IN TIMES OF CRISIS

- After 14 years of continuous growth, the Spanish economy was very badly affected by the international financial crisis. This led to an economic crisis, starting in the second half of 2008. The residential construction sector was overheated and was responsible for more than 40% of the job losses in 2009.
- The key factor in increasing the potential for growth of the Spanish economy lies in improving the level of training of the active population. Dropping out of the job market during this crisis has occurred with greater intensity among those in 16 to 34 age group who have fewer qualifications. This is a group that must continue and complete training in order to cope with the current and future job prospects.

4. EDUCATION SYSTEM



5. LINKS

SPAIN

- <http://www.educacion.gob.es/portada.html>
- www.todofp.es

CANARY ISLANDS

- www.gobiernodecanarias.org/educacion
- <http://www.gobiernodecanarias.org/educacion/dgfp/webDGFPEA/scripts/Default.asp>