

INVOLVE PROJECT: DESK RESEARCH SPAIN

Authors: Pablo Sanz de Miguel, Joan Antoni Serra and Marc Caballero



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Glossary

Bachillerato: Upper Secondary Education Courses

CCOO: Workers' Commissions (Comisiones Obreras)

CEOE: Spanish Confederation of Employers' Organizations (Confederación Española de Organizaciones Empresariales)

CGFP: General Council on Vocational Education and Training (Consejo General de Formación Profesional)

CNCP: National Catalogue of Professional Qualifications (Catálogo Nacional de Cualificaciones Profesionales)

CRN: National Centres of Reference (Centros de Referencia Nacional)

CVET: Vocational Training for Employment (Formación Profesional para el Empleo)

Dual VET: Dual Vocational Education and Training (Formación Profesional dual)

ESO: Secondary Compulsory Education (Educación Secundaria Obligatoria)

ESPECA: Regional Employment Public Services (Servicios Públicos de Empleo Autonómicos)

FEDEA: Applied Economy Research Foundation (Fundación de Estudios de Economía Aplicada)

FPB: Basic Vocational Education and Training (Formación Profesional Básica)

FPGM: Upper Secondary Vocational Education and Training (Formación Profesional de Grado Medio)

FPGS: Higher Vocational Education and Training (Formación Profesional de Grado Superior)

FTC: Training on-the-job module (Formación en Centros de Trabajo)

IES: Secondary Education Institutions (Instituto de Educación Secundaria)

INCUAL: National Institution of Qualifications (Instituto Nacional de las Cualificaciones)

IPREM: Public Income Index (Indicador Público de Renta de Efectos Múltiples)

ITC: Information and Communication Technologies (Tecnologías de la Información y la Comunicación)

IVET: Initial Vocational Education and Training (Formación Profesional Inicial)

LOGSE: Organic Law on the General Organisation of the Education System (Ley Orgánica General del Sistema Educativo)

PP: Popular Party (Partido Popular)

PSOE: Spanish Socialist Workers' Party (Partido Socialista Obrero Español)

RIPR: Research and Innovation Project Reports (Proyectos de Investigación e Innovación)

RD: Royal Decree (Real Decreto)

SEPE: Public Employment Service (Servicio Público de Empleo Estatal)

SME: Small and Medium Enterprises (Pequeña y Mediana Empresas, PYME)

UGT: General Union of Workers (Unión General de Trabajadores)

UP: Podemos and United Left (Unidas Podemos)

VET: Vocational Education and Training (Formación Profesional)

Introduction

The topic of dual vocational education and training (VET) has gained growing relevance in recent years (Rauner and Smith, 2010; Rauner et al., 2010; Cedefop, 2016; Eurofound, 2018). Several European countries have implemented apprenticeship or ‘dual system’ VET, which combines workplace learning in an enterprise with classroom teaching in an educational institution. This model is considered particularly pertinent in times of high youth unemployment, as it can facilitate smooth transitions to employment or deal with the problem of skills mismatch.

Given a growing number of countries are implementing apprenticeships or dual VET schemes under very diverse institutional contexts and education/training traditions, the question of terminology and definitions deserves particular attention. According to Markowitsch and Wittig (2020), the traditional concept of apprenticeship has been modified in two main ways. First, its key pedagogical principle (the master-apprentice relationship) has been replaced by the principle of ‘duality’, understood as combination of classroom teaching and in-company training. Second, a shift is observed towards a broader and more flexible interpretation of the purpose of apprenticeship. This shift is a result of apprenticeships now only having one criterion: the employment status of the apprentice; where apprenticeship programmes entail a formal labour contract between the learner and the employer, and the learner has the formal status of ‘apprentice’ as defined by labour law (Markowitsch and Wittig, 2020).

In search of a common terminology or conceptual framework which can support international comparisons between apprenticeships or dual VET programmes, scholars have proposed some common definitions based on the main characteristics of the provision of learning. In this sense, Rauner and Smith (2010) explain that dual vocational education and training is based on the theoretical learning argument that occupations can ultimately be learned only in real-life work processes. This means that the development of holistic professional competence requires: the duality of theoretical instruction and practical learning on-the-job; plus the synergy between the two, enacted by the cooperation between learning venues (schools/training centres and companies). In practice the duality of vocational learning exists in two basic types. First, the dual VET or apprenticeship system, where classroom teaching and learning on the job alternate at relatively short intervals so that an immediate systematic reflection of the work experience is made possible. Second, alternating VET, where relatively long phases of full-time school-based vocational education are followed by a phase, usually shorter, of on-the-job learning.

This report is part of the EU funded INVOLVE project.¹ The report provides an overview of the main scientific and political debates regarding vocational education and training (VET), with a particular focus on dual VET in Spain, including a detailed analysis of its main institutional characteristics. The Spanish traditional Initial VET (IVET) system can be labelled as an alternating IVET or a school-based system, where in-company learning only represents 25% of total training and follows a long phase of full-time and school-based VET training. Under this system, IVET students lack the status of ‘apprentices’ according to labour legislation. Since the academic year 2012–2013, this system coexists with a dual VET scheme, which was regulated through a Royal Decree in November 2012 (RD 1529/2012). Compared to the alternating IVET system, the dual VET model is based on greater collaboration and involvement from the company participating in the IVET system. The dual VET model also aims to encourage the active participation of the company in the learners’ training process, and make closer links between the company and the training centre. This kind of apprenticeship programme requires that a minimum of 33% of the vocational training takes place in a company. Following this framework, the report will explore and compare alternating IVET (traditional IVET) and dual VET systems in force since 2012.

¹ INVOLVE – Involving social partners in dual VET governance: exploring the contribution of social partners in the design, renewal and implementation of dual VET (VS/2020/0145). For further details, updates and country reports, see <https://involveproject.eu>

The report is structured as follows. The first section summarises the state of the art of scientific literature on VET. The second section analyses the drivers and enabling factors which explain the development of dual VET in Spain by analysing the main policy debates on dual VET. The third section provides data on the incidence and significance of dual VET in Spain, showing that it is still a minor VET scheme, although it is growing annually. The fourth section analyses the main institutional and governance features of alternating VET (traditional IVET) systems and dual VET. The fifth section summarises recent studies analysing the labour insertion of dual VET student graduates. The report finishes with a section providing some summary conclusions.

Box 1. Main concepts

Initial Vocational Education and Training (IVET): General or vocational education and training carried out in the initial education system.

Vocational Training for Employment subsystem (CVET): Education or training after initial education and training – or after entry into working life – aimed at helping workers to improve or update their qualifications.

Dual VET or apprenticeship system: Classroom teaching and learning on-the-job alternate at relatively short intervals so that an immediate systematic reflection of the work experience is made possible. This modality is normally based on a formal contract between an employer and a learner, where the learner has a specific status as ‘apprentice’ as defined by labour law. In Spain, this is the traditional IVET system

Alternating VET: a VET system where relatively long phases of full-time school-based vocational education are followed by a phase, usually shorter, of on-the-job learning.

1. State of the art of scientific literature on IVET and dual VET

In Spain, Vocational Education and Training (VET) is a relatively new research area. Research on VET was scarce until the 1980s and 1990s, when it started to grow in parallel with the institutionalisation of VET through the enactment of new laws (in particular, the Organic Law on the General Organisation of the Education System, LOGSE law, in 1990) and social pacts which aimed to modernise and enhance the status of this educational pathway.

Although research on VET has continuously grown since then, recent studies offer quite a negative assessment. According to a study commissioned by the Bankia Foundation and the Bertelsmann Foundation (Echeverría and Martínez, 2019) which has analysed the state of research into VET from 2005 to 2017, research on Spanish-based VET features a lack of defined research lines, very low scientific production, underdeveloped theory and an overrepresentation of descriptive analysis (Echeverría and Martínez, 2019). After revising the scientific results focused on Initial VET (IVET) which were produced from 2005 to 2017, the study only found 54 doctoral theses (PhD thesis), 174 articles in Spanish scientific journals, and 32 research and innovation project reports (RIPRs) which met the quality criteria for inclusion in the study's analysis. The study also classified VET production into four main areas: **IVET Structure**, **Educational Environment**, **Workplace Environment**, and **Dual Vocational Education and Training** (Dual VET). In the following paragraphs, the state of the art of the scientific literature on VET is analysed following these four main areas.

IVET structure, which covers all the publications analysing historical background, socioeconomic context and policy reforms that contribute to the configuration of the IVET system; this is the area prioritised by Spain-based VET researchers. Publications on the IVET structure constitute around 30% of the scientific production in terms of reports and articles, but only 19% of PhD theses (Echeverría and Martínez, 2019). Research articles on this area show the late configuration of the IVET system, which was not formally institutionalised and connected to the general education system until 1970 (Merino, 2009; Dávila et al., 2014). This line of research explains the later formalisation of IVET in the education system due to several factors such as the academic bias of the Spanish education system, the weakness of the industrial development (concentration on certain zones, which were those with a better network of vocational schools) or the underdeveloped Spanish Welfare State (Merino, 2009; Dávila et al., 2014). In this historical context, the marginal state role in VET provision was to some extent compensated for by other actors. In this sense, several publications have studied the key role played by the church – particularly during the Franco dictatorship (Dávila et al., 2014, 2016) – as well as the roles played by trade unions and labour organisations in the late 19th century and during the Spanish second republic (Monés i Pujol Busquets, 2010).

This line of research has also traced the evolution of IVET education reforms and analysed the main institutional characteristics of the Spanish IVET model. Generally, publications have described the Spanish IVET system as historically weak, with a lower status compared to university studies, and poorly connected to the labour market (Merino, 2009). In this context, research shows the iterative efforts of policy makers to address and tackle the weakness and problems of the Spanish VET system. For instance, it is commonly argued that the Organic Law on the General Organisation of the Education System, known as LOGSE (LOGSE, 1990), was specifically aimed at enhancing the social status of IVET studies (Homs, 2007). LOGSE enhanced the social status of IVET studies by removing the option of gaining admittance to an intermediate level of the IVET cycle (ISCED 3) for those who did not have the secondary compulsory education degree (ESO). The problem of the poor connection between the IVET system and the labour market has been also tackled through several reforms. For instance, the Organic Law 5/2002, of 19 June, on Qualifications and Vocational Education and Training, aimed to promote a better match between vocational education, the training sector and the productive system. This was made by creating a National Catalogue of Professional Qualifications (CNCP) and a technical body (INCUAL), in charge of identifying and updating the qualifications. More recently, the

Organic Law for the Improvement of Educational Quality has also supported the adaptation of the IVET system by establishing a model of IVET closer to dual VET or apprenticeship systems, and by emphasising the provision of technical services (vocational education and training centres) to small businesses (Brunet and Böcker, 2017).

Nevertheless, several authors have highlighted, from a more critical approach: either the paradoxes and contradictions of IVET reforms (for instance, between school integration and segregation) (Merino, 2013); or the existing cleavages around IVET policies (training done in schools vs. in other establishments; formal education vs. non-formal education; IVET vs. university, etc.) which make the system unstable and contingent on the power relationships of several actors (Martínez García, 2016).

Educational Environment is the second most popular research area in terms of academic articles (28%) and the most important in terms of PhD theses (41%). It embraces publications studying the teaching and learning processes that occur in the educational environment. For instance, the learning styles of IVET students in different fields such as IVET health studies or foreign languages within IVET courses (Rodríguez and Rodríguez, 2014; Corpas, 2017). It also covers the publications analysing the teaching centres. These publications either identify the most important needs of VET centres (Barbero, 2017) or analyse their organisational components (Lucena et al., 2013).

Workplace environment receives a similar amount of attention as educational environment, narrowly being the most important research area in terms of the articles (29%) and the second most important in terms of PhD theses (39%) (Echeverría and Martínez, 2019). Under this area, issues relating to IVET graduates' integration into employment has been one of the most important research topics. Studies on this issue have relied either on longitudinal national surveys conducted by the Spanish Statistical Institute (for instance, the ETEFIL survey) or on ad-hoc representative surveys. Two questions are usually raised in this line of research. First, the question regarding how IVET qualifications match with the jobs that IVET learners finally obtain. In relation to this matter, some studies have shown that IVET learners do not tend to work in a professional family that matches the specialisation of the IVET courses. For instance, Sala et al. (2010) or Planas (2012) showed, based on data from the ETEFIL survey, that only around 30% of IVET graduates worked within the professional family associated with their studies according to the National Catalogue of Professional Qualifications (CNCP). However, other studies (Merino et al., 2011), also relying on the ETEFIL survey, show that more than half of VET graduates work within an occupation level that matches their qualification level. Regarding graduates from higher level IVET programmes, 40% work within an occupation level that match with their qualification level and 56% work within an occupation level of a lower qualification (Merino et al., 2011). Second, this line of research questions to what extent IVET guarantees access to the labour market. Generally, studies have shown that IVET learners have a better labour market performance than secondary compulsory education graduates and general upper secondary education graduates. For instance, Merino et al. (2011) showed that the 'significant occupation rate'² was 88% for technical IVET graduates and 89% for higher level IVET graduates. The 'significant occupation rate' was higher for IVET learners, whether technical or higher, than for secondary compulsory education graduates (76%) and general upper secondary education graduates (76%). Similarly, the study conducted by CIREM (2011) in Catalonia showed that 70% of technical IVET graduates and 84% of higher IVET graduates were working in the year 2010 compared to 49% of secondary compulsory education graduates and 73% of general upper secondary education graduates. Similar outcomes were found at national level (CIREM, 2011). However, other studies (Salvà-Mut et al., 2017) show that at the higher education level, opting for a university education rather than a higher VET diploma translates into better wages and decreased mismatch between job and education. In addition, longer working hours are

² According to EFETIF, significant occupation rate is understood as a labour contract with 20 weekly hours or more.

observed in the case of those with VET diplomas (Salvà-Mut et al., 2017). More recent studies addressing the performance of the IVET (dual) Spanish system are reviewed in Section 5.

Finally, Echeverría and Martínez, (2019) find that there is practically no research into **Dual VET** published in peer reviewed journals or conducted through PhD studies. However, an important proportion of the recent reports on IVET have focused on this specific topic. This is partly explained due to the novelty of this VET modality, which entered into force in the academic year 2012–2013. It is also worth noting that since 2019 several articles researching dual VET have been published.

Research on Spanish dual VET has focused on three analytical aspects. First, the defining regulatory and governance features of the emerging system have been analysed, generally through a comparison with the traditional European dual VET system and, in particular, the German model (Agraso et al., 2015; Homs, 2016; Echeverría, 2016; Martín Artiles et al., 2020), but also the Danish model (Sanz de Miguel, 2017) and the Swiss model (Oswald-Egg and Renold, 2014). From a methodological perspective, this research has relied on desk research of normative/legislative documents and, in some cases, qualitative interviews or focus groups. This research has highlighted the specificities of the Spanish system in terms of:

- The training logic, which is mainly school-based (as opposed to the German work or firm-based logic), because VET is currently proposed by schools, rather than companies (Otero et al., 2016; Marhuenda Fluixá et al., 2017; Jansen and Pineda-Herrero, 2019).
- The proportion of in-company training, which is much lower than in traditional dual VET systems (30%).
- The regulation of the relationship between company and apprentices, with labour contracts being only a minor option for companies.
- The low degree of participation of social partners and other stakeholders, such as the chamber of commerce, in its governance and regulation (Sanz de Miguel, 2017; Martín Artiles et al., 2020).
- Its fragmented regulatory framework, with significant disparities between the legislative regimes of Spain's Autonomous Communities (Sanz de Miguel, 2017).
- The key role played by German multinationals, private foundations (Bertelsmann Foundation) and company initiatives (for example, the Alliance for Dual Training) in the development of the Spanish dual VET (Martín Artiles et al., 2020).

Second, research has analysed the discourse of social partners on dual VET. In relation to this, some research has highlighted how the development and implementation of dual VET through unilateral government regulations (Royal Decrees) has broken down previous consensus on VET and triggered very critical trade union discourse (Marhuenda Fluixá et al., 2017; Sanz de Miguel, 2017; Barrientos et al., 2019).

Third, research has studied the school-to-work transition of dual VET students, showing that this VET modality generally offers better outcomes compared to traditional VET studies (Martín Artiles et al., 2020) (see Section 5 for more detail).

2. Policy debates

2.1 Policy debates

National policy and industrial relations' debates

Dual VET is a topic which has attracted a lot of attention during policy and social partners' debates. In these debates, a key aspect has been the ongoing references to an idealised 'German dual VET model' and the excellence that it could bring to Spain (Martín Artiles et al., 2020).

Although rhetorical references to the German model can be identified in the policy discourses of different political parties and social partners, the debates on dual VET are still polarised to some extent. At **policy level**, the first controversial topic concerns the role that companies should play. In Spain, the implementation of Dual Vet radically alters institutional and cultural traditions of IVET provision, historically characterised by its 'state-centre or school-based approach' and the limited role played by companies in the training process. Since Dual Vet was implemented in 2012, some left-wing political parties (Podemos and United Left) have been critical of the greater role to be played by companies under this model. In their view, this can create inequalities in access to training. In contrast, centre right-wing and centre left-wing political parties have supported dual VET, precisely because it gives companies a more prominent role in the training process, thus contributing to a reduction in skills mismatch. These disagreements between political parties relate to the distribution of costs and responsibilities between the companies and the state, as well as on the degree of autonomy that companies may have to design training content.

The second key disputed topic is the status of apprenticeships, and the extent to which it should be regulated through apprenticeship contracts or internship/traineeship agreements. This is a key aspect considering that, compared to internship/traineeship agreements, apprenticeship contracts are covered by labour legislation and collective bargaining regulation and, accordingly, have higher costs for the employers. In this sense, several political parties on the left and centre-left have stated that dual VET is creating precariousness among young workers instead of enhancing their qualifications or improving their transition towards good quality jobs.

Third, permeability within the system is discussed. The IVET system has been usually criticised for being too rigid and lacking appropriate transition pathways between different qualification levels. This debate is particularly focused on how to support transition pathways for those young people who have not obtained a secondary compulsory education degree. There is no political consensus on this topic. In 2013, the Popular Party created an alternative entry pathway to IVET programmes at intermediate level (ISCED 3) where students were not required to have a compulsory secondary education (ESO). Currently, the coalition government (PSOE and Podemos) has approved a law which will cancel this 2013 reform, instead proposing a new entry pathway which returns to requiring compulsory secondary education but also adds some curricula adaptation for students with special education needs.

Finally, there are critical debates regarding the degree of decentralisation of dual VET and the distribution of competences between central and Autonomous Communities' governments. As explained in detail in Section 4, dual VET legislation is fragmented at regional level, and disparities exist between the legislative regimes of Spain's Autonomous Communities. This decentralisation was promoted by regulation established by the Popular Party in 2012, which led to a higher degree of autonomy for the Autonomous Community governments to implement the dual VET system in their own territories. Nevertheless, this aspect, which has been criticised in scientific publications (Sanz de Miguel, 2017), has been barely discussed. Indeed, the problem of decentralisation has been on the table during the recent debates of the new Law of Education promoted by the left-centre coalition government (PSOE and Podemos). The proposal of the government to extend the proportion of the IVET curricula to be adapted by the Autonomous Communities to their territory has been strongly rejected by centre-right national political parties (PP and Ciudadanos).

At **industrial relations level**, it is worth noting, first, that the introduction of dual VET has been assessed as breaking down the social partners' consensus on training policies (Marhuenda-Fluixá et al., 2017). A consensus which had been built since the 1990s through the development of several bipartite and tripartite agreements, which were even concluded in periods characterised by the crisis of corporatism practices (Espina, 1999). However, the introduction of dual VET was implemented unilaterally by the Popular Party government in 2012 and social partners disagreed on several topics. Moreover, trade unions are developing a very critical discourse on dual VET which may challenge its legitimacy and social acceptance. They represent dual VET as part of deregulatory policies implemented by the Popular Party during the crisis years (2011–2013).

Social partners disagree on the status of apprenticeships. Trade unions propose an integrated labour pathway, to be regulated through a reformed training and apprenticeship contract. In contrast, employer organisations argue for flexible contractual relationships aimed at incentivising companies to take part in dual VET; in particular, proposing so-called 'scholarships pathways' based on internship agreements (Sanz de Miguel, 2017). However, this is not a position shared by all the employer organisations and, recently, the main employer organisation at national level (CEOE) has supported regulating a labour pathway based on the training and apprenticeship contract. Some companies also raise concerns about problems resulting from existing regulation which allows Autonomous Communities to regulate either the labour or scholarship path bring to fair competition. Related to this, there are debates on: the role played by companies in the provision and evaluation of training and the financial contribution they should provide; and the regulation of selection procedures for the students who will take part in dual VET. In relation to this latter point, trade unions make the criticism that companies use the IVET system as a source of recruitment and training for their future workers without economically contributing to the system. In contrast, employers stress the cost of participating in the programme which, in practice, limits the opportunities of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to take part in the programme. Finally, it is worth noting that trade unions claim that sectoral collective bargaining should play a key role in regulating some aspects of dual VET (in particular, the apprenticeship contract).

Influence of EU policies

Europeanisation has played an important rhetorical and operative role in the implementation of dual VET. According to Artiles et al. (2020:79–80), the Spanish government is using the following instruments to implement the Europeanisation of dual VET:

- Funding provided by the European Social Fund.
- 100% reduction in social security contributions for contracts covered by the Youth Guarantee Programme for companies with fewer than 250 workers and 75% reduction for the rest.
- Erasmus programme to promote mobility and cooperation between European regions.

2.2 Drivers

Proposals of dual VET in Spain have been presented as a means to solve several structural problems related to the labour market insertion of young people (youth unemployment), the polarisation of educational outcomes or the failure of the educational system (high drop-out rate, etc.).

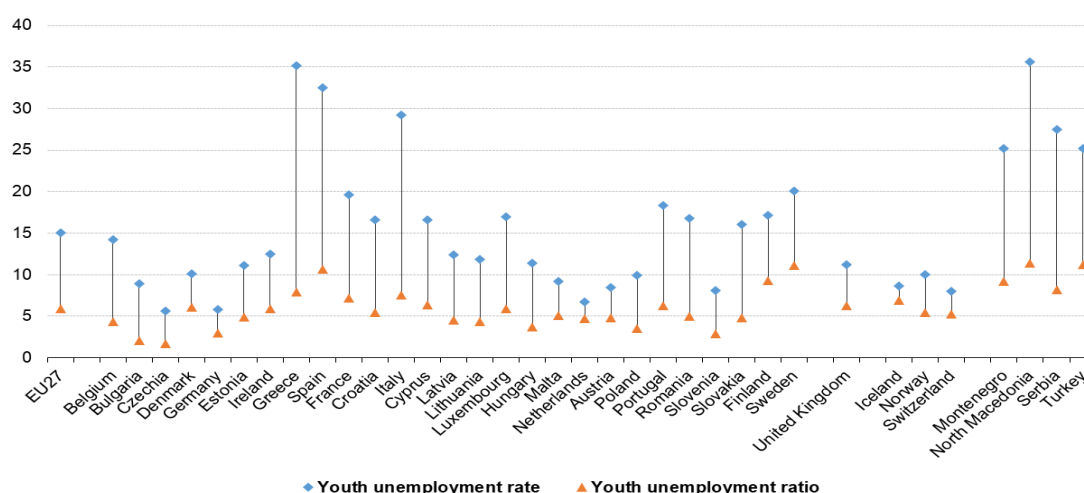
In Spain, **youth unemployment** was one of the most important structural labour market problems which fostered the enactment of dual VET in 2012. Before the onset of the financial crisis (2008–2013), youth employment rates in Spain grew steadily for more than a decade. Accordingly, the Spanish economy appeared to be on its way to bridging the gap with the leading European countries. However, since the start of the crisis (2008–2013), the trends reversed (Dolado et al., 2013). Indeed, Spain was one of the EU countries where unemployment grew faster during the financial crisis. In its aftermath, youth unemployment reached peaks above 50% in 2012, 2013 and 2014. In this context, the government saw dual VET as a remedy to youth unemployment

(dual VET was approved in 2012), given that dual VET can provide qualifications that better match the demands of the labour market (OECD, 2020).

Nevertheless, it is worth noting that in 2019, Spain still recorded the second-highest youth unemployment rate in Europe, just behind Greece. Furthermore, the ratio between youth unemployment rates and adult unemployment rates was one of the highest in the EU27 (see Figure 1 below).

Figure 1. Youth employment rates and ratios (2019)

Youth unemployment rates and ratios, 2019, persons aged 15-24 (%)



Source: Eurostat (lfsa_urgan), (yth_empl_140)

eurostat

The **polarisation of educational outcomes** appears as the second key driver explaining the development of dual VET. Spain has one of the highest rates of third level (university) graduation among 25–34 year-olds in Europe. However, the proportion of young adults (25–34 years) with upper secondary and post-secondary degrees (i.e. vocational education degrees) is much lower than the EU average. At the same time, in 2019, 30% of the Spanish population aged 25–34 only had lower secondary education, according to Eurostat data. Indeed, one of the most worrying problems in Spain is the high share of young people who dropout of education early, plus the low proportion of school dropouts that return to education or vocational education and training. In Spain, the early leaver rate fell from 28.2% in 2010 to 17.3% in 2019, although, the rate is still the highest in Europe according to Eurostat data. Dual VET should play a major role in reducing the proportion of early leavers and increasing the proportion of young people with upper secondary and post-secondary degrees.

3. Significance of dual VET system

Since the launch of Dual VET programmes in academic year 2012/2013, this modality has experienced a continuous growth in terms of centres, programmes and students. According to the research carried out by the Applied Economy Research Foundation (FEDEA), working from the baseline of the initial 2012 figures, the number of centres, programmes and students has almost multiplied by five.

The following table shows this evolution through the data provided by the Ministry of Education (EducaBase, www.estadisticas.mecd.gov.es) between the academic years 2015–2016 and 2018–2019. Where this data was published in July 2020 and 2015–2016 was the first academic year with data available on Dual VET.

Table 1. Evolution of Centres, Programmes and students in Dual VET (Spain 2015 –2019)

| | Centres | | Programmes | | Students | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| | <i>Year 2015–2016</i> | <i>Year 2018–2019</i> | <i>Year 2015–2016</i> | <i>Year 2018–2019</i> | <i>Year 2015–2016</i> | <i>Year 2018–2019</i> |
| Basic VET (FPB) | 15 | 52 | 15 | 63 | n.d | 512 |
| Upper secondary VET (FPGM) | 309 | 627 | 464 | 1052 | 3923 | 9428 |
| Higher VET (FPGS) | 365 | 697 | 721 | 1526 | 8328 | 16400 |
| TOTAL | 516 | 991 | 1185 | 2641 | 12251 | 26340 |

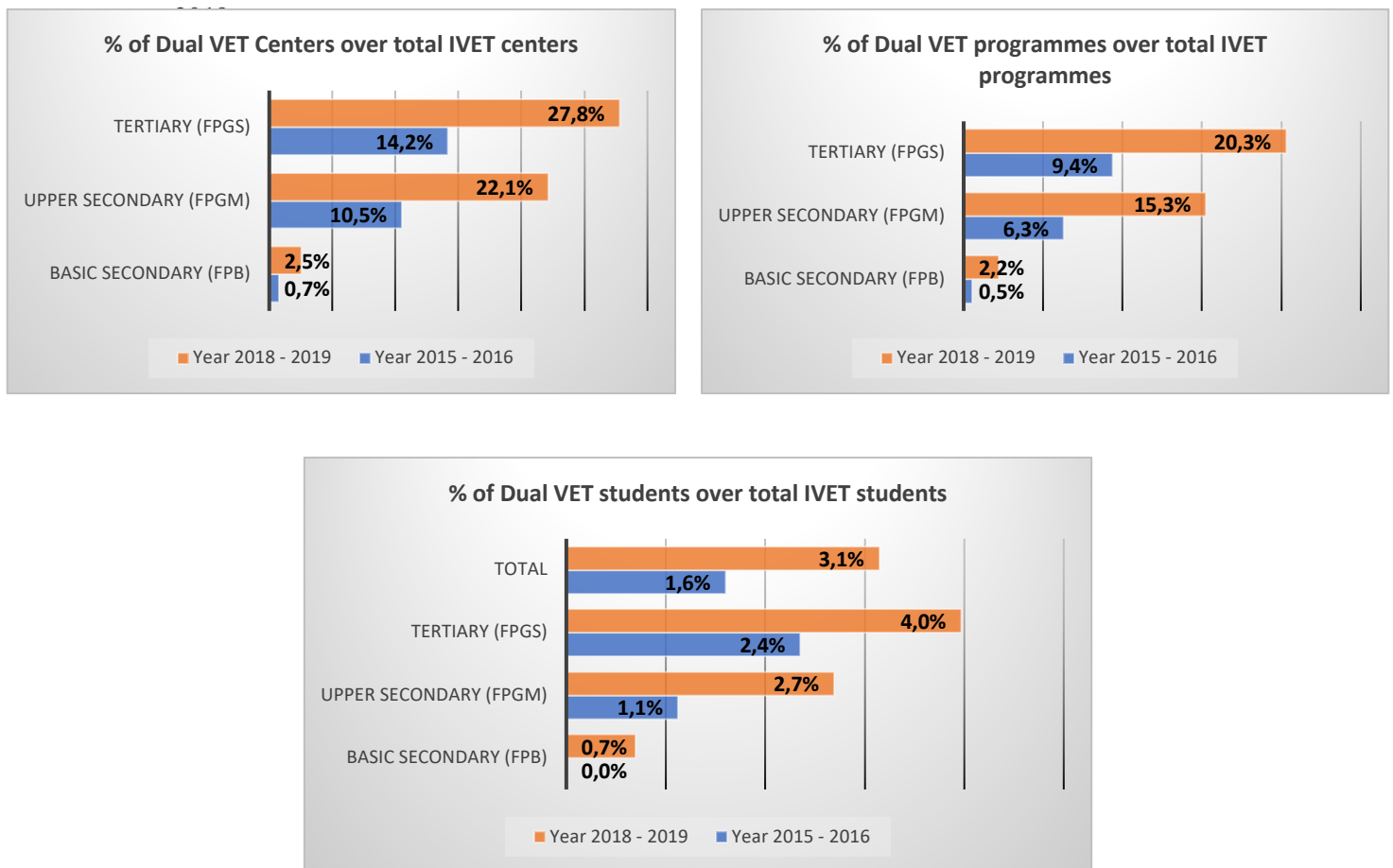
Source: Ministry of Education

The Ministry of Education does not provide data on the companies involved in Dual VET Programmes. However, according to the data provided by the Dualiza programme of the Fundación Bankia, approximately 9,900 companies took part in these training programmes.

Nevertheless, those figures are still quite small when compared with all the programmes and students in the Spanish Initial VET system. In academic year 2018–2019, only 3.1% of the students in the IVET system were on Dual programmes, which represented 17.9% of the total IVET programmes. Two main issues must be highlighted:

- The proportion of Dual VET has nearly doubled between the academic years 2015–2016 and 2018–2019 in all respects (percentage of centres, programmes and students).
- The proportions are not homogeneous when split into educational levels. The proportion of Dual VET students in Higher VET (FPGS) is 4.0%, while it is only 0.7% in basic VET. The same distribution applied to programmes. The percentage of Dual VET programmes in Higher VET (FPGS) is 20.3%, which is 10 times higher than that in basic VET (FPB) at 2.2%, while the upper secondary (FPGM) proportion of Dual VET is much closer at 15.3%.

Figure 2. % of Dual VET Centres, Programmes and students over total IVET (Spain 2015)



Source: Ministry of Education

As shown in Figure 3 below, Dual VET system programmes cover most economic sectors and occupations, with a special focus on management and business administration (13% of Dual VET programmes), electricity and electronics (10%), ICT (10%), transport (8%) and manufacturing (8%). Nevertheless, the main sectoral focus of Dual VET programmes depends on the educational level they cover.

For basic Dual VET (FPB) programmes, the main sectors covered are:

- Farming (16%)
- Manufacturing (16%)
- Electricity and electronics (13%)

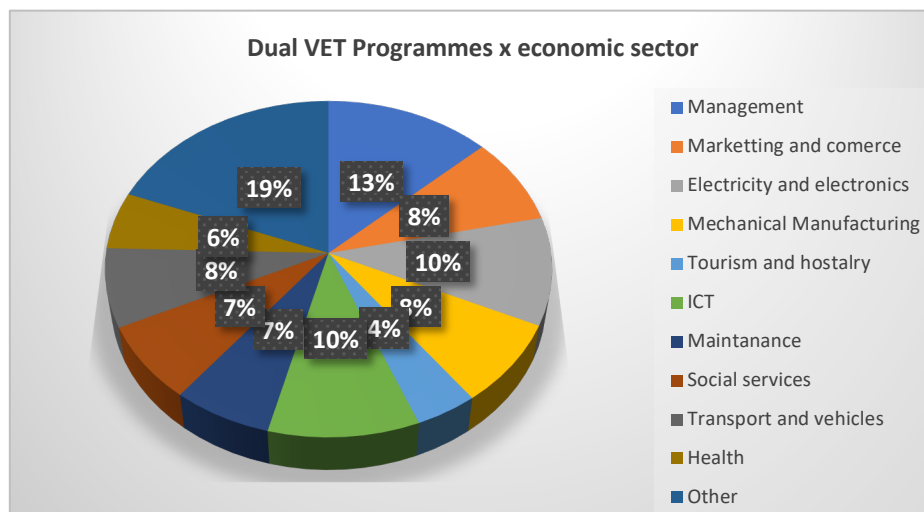
For intermediate Dual VET (FPGM), the main sectors covered are:

- Management (13%)
- Transport and vehicles (13%)
- Electricity and electronics (9%)

For Upper Dual VET (FPGS), the main sectors covered are:

- ICT (14%)
- Management (13%)
- Electricity and electronics (9%)

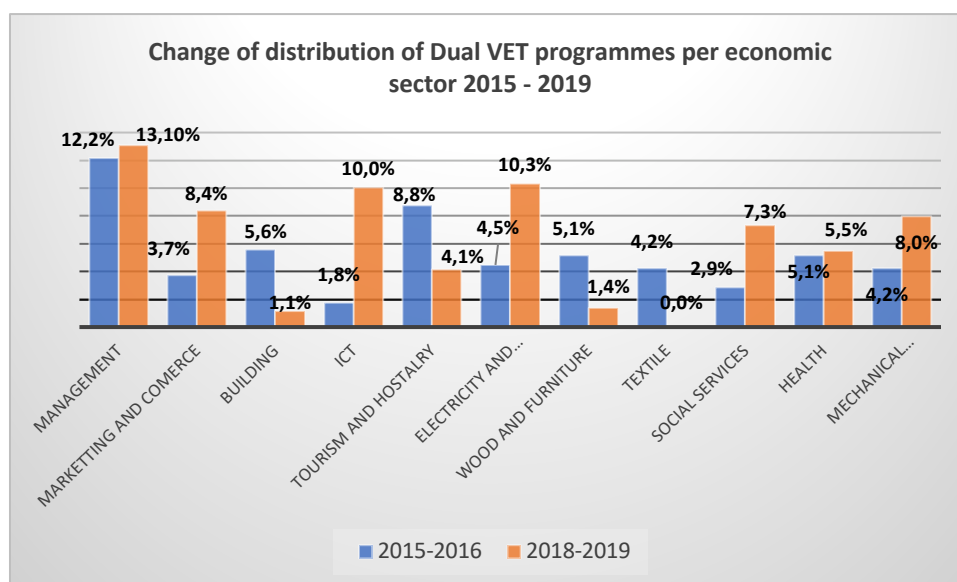
Figure 3. % of Dual VET Programmes per economic sector (Spain 2018–2019)



Source: Ministry of Education

This distribution per economic sector has changed during the last 5 years. As shown in Figure 4 below, the offer for some economic sectors has nearly disappeared: from 4.2% to 0.0% in the textile sector; from 5.1% to 1.4% in the wood and furniture sector; and from 5.6% to 1.1% in the building sector. Those are traditional sectors in the Spanish economy which have been suffering long lasting crises (wood and furniture, textile) or have been very affected by the 2007–2013 economic crisis (building), and have not been able to recover pre-crisis activity levels.

Figure 4. Change of distribution of VET Programmes per economic sector (Spain 2015–2019)



Source: Ministry of Education

On the other hand, some economic sectors have increased the proportion of Dual VET programmes on offer: electricity and electronics more than doubled from 4.5% to 10.3%; marketing and commerce (from 3.7% to 8.4%), social services increased from 2.9% to 7.3%. In particular, the proportion of programmes related to Information and Communication

Technologies (ICT) has increased dramatically from 1.8% to 10%. Some sectors, such as management and business administration or health, keep their proportion with low variation.

To sum up, a shift in training focus has been identified: from mature industrial sectors in crisis; to services. The exception for this trend seems to be mechanical manufacturing, an industrial subsector which has grown from 4.2% to 8%, and tourism and hostelry, a service subsector which has reduced from 8.8% to 4.1% (as per Figure 4 above).

4. Main institutional and governance features of alternating VET systems and dual VET systems

4.1 Regulatory framework and recent reforms regarding alternating VET formal education systems and dual VET systems.

In Spain, the VET system is regulated through a great variety of pieces of legislation, each one addressing different VET subsystems (employment and initial training) and programmes (alternating and dual VET) at both national and regional level. Although some political attempts have been made to integrate and improve coordination between different training subsystems and between central and regional public administration, VET regulation is still highly fragmented.

Two main different subsystems exist in the Spanish VET system, each regulated by different legislation and managed by different administrative bodies: first, the Vocational Training for Employment subsystem (CVET); and second, the Initial Vocational Training subsystem (IVET).

The CVET subsystem is regulated by the Royal Decree 395/2007, which establishes the subsystem of Vocational Training for Employment that integrates the training of the employed and unemployed in a common training context. This regulation eliminates the traditional division between vocational training and life-long learning. The Royal Decree 395/2007 establishes the four initiatives that can be formulated within this subsystem: demand training; supply training; training in employment or alternating training; and support actions. The Decree also establishes the Professional Certificates that officially recognise professional competences. Professional Certificates were regulated in 2008 (RD 34/2008). These competences must be linked to the units of competence defined in the National Catalogue of Professional Qualifications (CNCP). Each certificate can include one or more units of competence. The CVET system was reformed in 2015 through the Royal Decree 4/2015, of 22 March 2015, later transformed into the Law 4/2015. A key aspect of this reform was related to the governance of the CVET system and, in particular, the role played by the social partners. The reform excluded social partners from the management of the training funds and also partly from the commissioning and supply of the training courses. Their role is now officially limited to detecting training needs to assist other bodies, such as regional governments. They also contribute to the design of a multiannual strategic plan. Supply-side training is mostly based on criteria from the CNCP. The market has been opened up, with public and private training centres officially recognised by Public Employment Service (SEPE) and now these centres are able to compete with the social partners to offer courses.

The IVET subsystem is managed by the Ministry of Education and is under the remit of the Autonomous Communities' administrations. The IVET subsystem is regulated by the Royal Decree 1538/2006, of 15 December, which establishes the general organisation of vocational training in the education system. However, the model regulated by means of this Royal Decree coexist with the Organic Law on the General Organisation of the Education System, known as LOGSE (LOGSE, 1990). The LOGSE introduced a compulsory 'Training on-the-job' module for all students which started to be in force in 1993 and is still in course (Marhuenda Fluixá et al., 2017). Therefore, the Spanish IVET traditional system can be labelled as an alternating VET model, where a relatively long phase of full-time school-based vocational education (15 months) is followed by a smaller phase of on-the-job learning (3 months).

In 2012, the government regulated a dual integrated training model by means of the Royal Decree 1529/2012, of 8 November. The Royal Decree 1529/2012 aims to develop a dual integrated training model based on greater collaboration and involvement of companies in the IVET system. It also aims to promote active participation from companies in the process of training learners and to make closer links between companies and training centre. This kind of apprenticeship programmes requires that a minimum of 33% of the vocational training takes place in a company. Additionally, classroom teaching and training on-the-job is alternated. Indeed, the Royal Decree 1529/2012 sets out two options for dual VET (Sancha and Gutiérrez, 2019):

- Training and apprenticeship contracts, in which the learning can be part of education or employment systems. These training and apprenticeship contracts are a type of labour contract directed at young people aged 16–30 years.
- Dual VET projects offered within the IVET system and implemented by the regions. Students can be hired with the training and apprenticeship contracts or receive a grant, the amount of which is not prescribed, from the company or a range of other bodies (institutions, foundations or regional public administrations).

The Royal Decree 1529/2012 has given new impetus to the development of dual integrated training schemes in Spain. However, the Royal Decree does not establish a unique model of dual vocational training. Rather, it provides a general framework that can include different dual integrated training schemes. Consequently, it has been observed that Autonomous Communities that have already regulated dual integrated training schemes have developed different models through regional regulations (Sanz de Miguel, 2017).

4.2 Main institutional arrangements in alternating and dual VET

4.2.1 Development and renovation of curricula for VET

Since the Organic Law 5/2002, of 19 June, on Qualifications and Vocational Education and Training was approved, the main mechanism to define vocational qualifications for both the IVET (including alternating and dual VET) and the CVET systems is the National Catalogue of Professional Qualification (CNCP). The General Council on Vocational Education and Training (CGFP)³ and, in particular, the National Institution of Qualifications (INCUAL),⁴ are in charge of identifying and updating the qualifications of the CNCP. They follow a demand driven approach that aims to identify the most significant qualifications demanded in the productive system.

The methodology for developing the standards is quite participative. It involves employers, trade unions and administrations at both central and regional level. The methodology works as follows. Professional qualifications are designed by working groups comprising experts in the professional field and in vocational training. There are 26 working groups, i.e., one working group for each professional family. The working groups are proposed by the General Council on Vocational Education and Training (CGFP) and are directed by the INCUAL. The first step of the working group is to design and describe the unit of competence. The unit of competence is the minimum aggregate of competences that can be recognised. Units of competence are expressed as professional outcomes. Then the unit of competence is associated with a training module that includes learning outcomes and assessment criteria. Once the units of competence and learning modules have been established, the INCUAL classify and control the outcomes. After that, the Council of Ministers can approve the qualification to be included in the CNCP, Qualifications must be updated at least every five years.

According to the Royal Decree 1538/2006, IVET programme curricula are organised into two kinds of professional modules. First, the professional modules containing fields of theoretical and practical knowledge. Second, the training modules at the company level that must be followed once the learner has successfully completed the professional module. Students under dual VET schemes do not have to undertake the company level training modules.

When analysing the institutional mechanisms for the development and renovation of curricula and diplomas of VET, attention also has to be drawn to the distribution of competence between the Central government and the Autonomous Communities. The law establishes that IVET

³ Consultative coordination body that involves Public Administrations at national and regional level, as well as the social partners.

⁴ Technical body that has the mandate of developing and updating the CNCP.

programmes diplomas are approved by central government, after consulting with the Autonomous Communities. The IVET diplomas approved by government contain the minimum curricula requirements. These centrally-approved curricula define 55% of the IVET learning time in the Autonomous Communities that have their own language, and 65% in the remaining Autonomous Communities. Each Autonomous Community has its own regional education administration which establishes the IVET curricula adapted to its territory (45% or 35% of the learning time). The regional education administration must take into consideration the socioeconomic reality of the territory when they establish the curricula; whilst at the same time, acknowledging the CNCPE as a reference point and respecting the minimum curricula requirements established by central government.

In terms of the development and renovation of curricula for VET, there are no differences between alternating IVET and dual VET. The dual VET projects that are currently being implemented are based on the same existing programmes and degrees of the IVET system. Dual IVET projects are only a different route to acquiring the same IVET degrees. Indeed, dual IVET learners and alternating IVET learners can coexist within the same course and classroom; that is courses and classrooms can integrate learners from both dual and alternating IVET systems.

4.2.2 Delivering of education and training

There are important differences in the delivery of education and training for dual VET and alternating IVET. Differences in terms of: what concerns the actors involved and the roles they play; and the proportion of time devoted to in-company training.

Alternating IVET

The Organic Law 4/2011, of 11th of March, established a network of training centres for the provision of IVET and CVET training that include:

- Integrated Training Centres, which can be public or private, but are funded with public resources by means of an agreement (*concertados*). These centres, initially regulated with the Organic Law 5/2002, of 19th of June, on Qualifications and Vocational Education and Training, can provide all kinds of VET training offers. Accordingly, they are qualified to provide IVET programme diplomas and professional certificates. They also can recognise competences acquired informally in the labour market. The goal of the Integrated Training Centres is to create a space of cooperation and interaction between the VET system, the productive system and the social partners. Currently, there are 107 Integrated Training Centres distributed across the Spanish territory.
- Secondary Education Institutions (IES) that provide IVET as well as compulsory secondary education (ESO) and upper secondary education courses (Bachillerato). Most of these centres are public, although there are also agreements with private schools funded with public resources.
- National Centres of Reference (CRN), which were regulated through the Royal Decree 229/2008, of 15th of February. The goals of CRN are to design and implement innovative and experimental actions in the VET field. These actions should promote the improvement and innovation of VET content. These centres do not provide IVET cycle diplomas.
- Centres of the National Employment System and private centres authorised by the National Employment System. These training centres provide training within the CVET system.

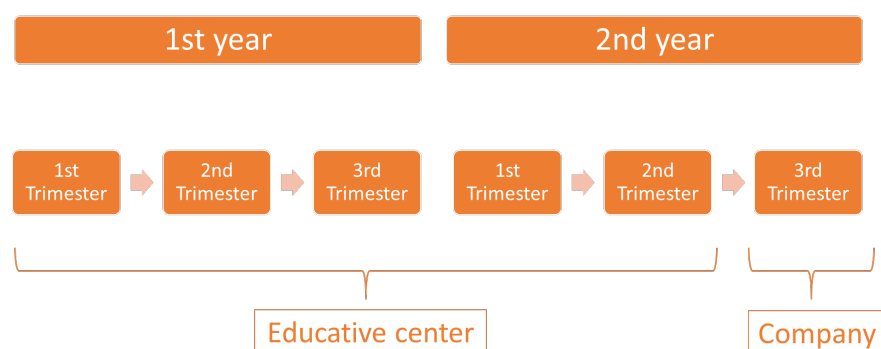
Bearing this list of training centres in mind, it can be pointed out that most of the IVET diplomas are delivered by Secondary Education Institutions (IES). Where IES can be public or private with

the latter funded with public resources by means of an agreement. The delivery of the IVET diplomas by Integrated Training Centres is still almost insignificant.

Social partners do not play any role in the delivery of education within the alternating IVET system.

In relation to **companies**, in cooperation with the training centres (mainly IES), they implement the ‘Training on-the-job’ module (FTC). As shown in Figure 5 below, this module is followed once the learner has successfully completed the professional module. After that, the learner can start the training module at the company; that is, the 25% of the IVET training time which has to take place in the company premises. During this company-based module, the learner is not located in any specific job. Rather, the learner moves around different occupations, according to the training plan designed by their designated tutors. The learner will have a designated tutor from the education centre and a designated tutor from the company. These tutors design the training programme, coordinate its development, set the dates of the visits, evaluate performance and issue the appropriate reports.

Figure 5. Theoretical and in-company training in alternating IVET



Dual VET

Dual VET regulation set up five types of training provision modalities:

- Training taking place exclusively in the education centre, which is the modality chosen by 4% of the Dual VET Programmes (Statistics of the Ministry of Education, 2019).
- Training with the participation of the company (providing facilities, experts, machine, etc) which accounts for 28% of the Dual VET Programmes (Statistics of the Ministry of Education, 2019).
- Training carried out by a certified authorised company and located in a combination of the company and the education centre, which accounts for 11% of the Dual VET Programmes (Statistics of the Ministry of Education, 2019).
- Training exclusively in the company, which accounts for less than 1% of the Dual VET Programmes (Statistics of the Ministry of Education, 2019).
- Training process shared between the education centre and the company, where the company is assigned to the centre in order to provide the training with the corresponding authorisation by the educational or labour public service. This option is by far the most prevalent, representing 57% of all the dual VET programmes (Statistics of the Ministry of Education, 2019).

For the modalities where training centres and companies cooperate in the provision of training (95% of all existing programmes), the cooperation is regulated through collaboration agreements that can be concluded between: Regional Education Departments and companies; Regional Education Departments and education centres; or education centres and companies. This

agreement details the training activities to be carried out (in both the education centre and the company), the learning outcomes and how these will be evaluated. The student will have a designated tutor from the education centre and a designated tutor from the company, both of whom will be in charge of the coordination and monitoring of the training programme, in both the education centre and the company.

In most of the cases, dual VET is proposed by schools, rather than companies (Marhuenda Fluixá et al., 2017; Otero et al., 2016). Thus, the school must select the companies with which it will sign a collaboration agreement for the training of apprentices. However, in some Autonomous Communities, the Regional Ministry of Education directly provides schools with contacts of companies that have shown interest in carrying out Dual VET programmes.

In all the dual VET modalities, regulation requires that a minimum of 33% of the vocational training takes place in a company. However, there are differences between Autonomous Communities. For instance, in the Basque Country, regional regulation sets that minimum at 40%.

Regional differences are also identified in relation to how the principle of duality is implemented. In some Autonomous Communities such as Madrid, there is a ‘dual VET’ programme consisting of a one-year phase of full-time school based vocational education, followed by a phase of equal duration (one year) of in-company training. However, this has been criticised for effectively having the same logic as alternating VET. In other Autonomous Communities, classroom teaching and learning on the job alternate at relatively short intervals (on a daily or weekly basis). This is, for instance, the case of the Basque Country in the second and/or third year of dual VET diplomas.

4.2.3 Evaluation of students’ training outcomes

In alternating VET, the responsibility for assessing educational outcomes from the IVET system is with the teachers of the education-training centres, under the supervision of the Educational Inspectorate. The ‘Training on-the-job’ module, carried out in companies, is also evaluated by a teacher from the education-training centre. The company tutor must also submit a non-binding report evaluating the professional competence of the learner; and this report must be taken into consideration by the education-centre teacher carrying out the evaluation process.

Similarly, in dual VET, the main responsibility for assessing educational outcomes is with the teachers of the education-training centres. The evaluation of the in-company training also relies on the education-centre teacher, who must take into account the contributions of the evaluation done by the company trainers and the results of the activities developed at the company.

4.2.4 Regulation of working and employment conditions for apprenticeships or internships

In alternating VET, the relationship between the learner and the company is not regulated by a labour contract. It is regulated by an agreement between the company and the education centre. Thus, the learner does not receive any payment from the company. The learner is covered by a scholarship insurance that protects them against labour and commuting accidents. Some Autonomous Communities also cover learners’ expenditures related to commuting or food.

In dual VET, the regulation of the learner-company relationship is not prescribed and can take different forms. Indeed, the Royal Decree 1529/2012 contemplates **two paths: a scholarship pathway and a labour pathway**. With the scholarship path, pupils can receive a grant from the company or a range of other entities (institutions, foundations or public administrations); the grant amount is not prescribed. Each Autonomous Community determines the minimum amount of the grant, either by setting an amount or by taking a percentage of the minimum wage. The learner must register with Social Security. The company must inform the workers’ legal representative about the incorporation of the learner in the company and the

activities he/she will carry out during the training at the company. The labour modality is regulated by means of a training and apprenticeship contract. This is a labour contract directed at young people aged 16–25 years. With this contract, the effective working time cannot be higher than 75% during the first year, and 85% during the second and third year, of the maximum working time established in collective bargaining. Wages are defined in the contract and cannot be lower than the statutory minimum wage. The training content (at least 25% during the first year and 15% during the second and third year) of the contract must be followed in a training centre or an education centre.

Existing regulation has led to important differences among Autonomous Communities in terms of the regulation of apprenticeship working conditions in dual VET. In some Autonomous Communities (for example, Aragón, Balearic Islands), it is mandatory to apply the training and apprenticeship contract (based on the Spanish minimum wage,). In other regions, (for example, Catalonia, Basque Country), companies can either rely on a training and apprenticeship contract or an internship grant (based on the IPREM indicator, which was set at €537.84 in 2019). Finally, there are some regions where there are no regulations obliging companies to pay the apprentices, although some regulations outline the possibility (non-mandatory) of an internship grant (for example, Cantabria or Extremadura).

4.2.5. Monitoring and evaluation of VET systems

In Spain, the main institutions that have formal competences to evaluate VET systems are the General Council on Vocational Education and Training (CGFP) and the National Institute of Vocational Qualifications (INCUAL).

The CGFP is regulated by the Law 19/1997. This law regulated the CGFP as a consultative coordination body that involves public administrations at national and regional level, as well as the social partners. It belongs to the Ministry of Employment. Its main mission is to advise the government on vocational training issues. Originally, its main goal was to elaborate and propose the National Program of Vocational Training to the government. However, the last plan was enacted for the period 1998–2002. Its main goals are:

- Monitor professional qualifications and their evolution
- Set up vocational qualifications
- Recognise (*acreditar*) vocational qualifications
- Develop the integration of vocational qualifications

As far as the INCUAL is concerned, it monitors qualitative and quantitative changes in the labour market through a Professional Observatory that publishes ‘Sectoral Reports’. The last Sectoral Report was published in July 2014. These reports provide information on: the evolution of employees and work centres; the significance of the economic activities of the professional families; and the evolution of vocational qualifications within each professional family. Currently, the government and the social partners are discussing how to reform the Professional Observatory with a view to strengthening its role.

Finally, attention should be drawn to the National Institute of Education Evaluation, created in 1990 with the LOGSE. The National Institute of Education Evaluation is integrated within the Ministry of Education. Its mission is:

- Coordinate general evaluation policies of the education system and conduct general evaluations of the system, together with the different Education Administrations.
- Coordinate the participation of the Spanish State in international evaluations; participate in the development of international education indicators and monitor European Union initiatives on education.
- Develop the National System of Indicators on Education; and develop research and evaluation studies on the education system.

Beyond international evaluations, such as PISA, the National Institute of Education Evaluation also conducts its own evaluations. The most important evaluation tool designed by the Institute is the National System of Indicators on Education. The first version appeared in 2000. It contained 30 indicators focused on 5 sections: the educational context, the human and financial resources, schooling, educational process and educational outcomes. Successive revisions of the system carried out in 2002 and 2004 increased the number of indicators. The last edition of the National System of Indicators on Education was published in 2020. It contains 18 indicators. The indicators provide information on the whole education system, including IVET programmes. However, most of the indicators do not provide separate information on the IVET system. Rather, information on IVET education is integrated within the data for post-secondary education (intermediate IVET cycles) or the tertiary education (high level IVET cycles). Separate information on the IVET system is mainly available in terms of the number of learners, schooling rates and educational outcomes.

4.2.6 Main institutional differences between alternating VET and dual VET

As outlined in previous sections, and summarised in Table 2 below, the main differences between dual and alternating VET apply to: the regulation of the relationship between the learner and the company; the training content (higher proportion of in-company training in dual VET); and the role played by the companies.

Table 2. Institutional differences between alternating and dual VET

| | Alternating VET | Dual Vet |
|---|---|---|
| Regulation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - General regulation of VET system: Royal Decree 1538/2006 - General regulation of Education system: Organic Law LOGSE | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Specific regulation to develop dual VET: Royal Decree 1529/2012 - Regional regulations to implement dual VET programmes in each Autonomous Community |
| Relationship between learner-company-education centre | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Relationship between the learner and the company is a scholarly relationship and it is not regulated by a labour contract. - It is regulated by an agreement between the company and the education centre. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Relationship of the learners with the company is a labour relationship defined by: a labour contract, a training and apprenticeship contract, or a grant agreement. - Relationship between company and education centre is regulated by an internship agreement. |
| Training content | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The company-based training module is 25% of the total IVET programme training time. - This module lasts three months and must be taken at the end of the programme. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A minimum of 33% of the training takes place in a company. - Classroom teaching and training on-the-job is alternated (the frequency and duration is not specified at national level). |
| Role of Companies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Companies offer work experience that complements the learners' classroom training. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Companies and education centres collaborate to design and deliver the training programmes for the learners. |

4.3 Funding and financial arrangements

In Spain, the education system is mainly financed by the government, based on funds collected via taxes. The main government bodies financing IVET are the Ministry of Education and the Autonomous Communities, the latter by means of their education departments.

Public education centres providing IVET are created and financed by the Autonomous Communities. In addition, to ensure equity and equal opportunities, there are private centres partly financed by the State through educational agreements (*centros concertados*).

For the learners, technical or intermediate IVET programmes as well as non-university education is free. This also applies to the aforementioned private centres partly financed by the State through educational agreements (*centros concertados*). Nevertheless, families have to pay for school materials and complementary services (transport, food, etc.). In the higher IVET programmes, learners have to pay for enrolment. The price varies from region to region since it is established by the Autonomous Communities. This pricing variation for higher VET is common to alternating and dual VET.

In alternating VET, companies do not pay learners during the training on-the-job phase. This phase is not understood as a labour relationship but as a scholar relationship. Besides, it is worth noting that companies can receive a small subsidy from the Autonomous Community that varies from region to region.

In dual VET, companies in several regions have to pay the apprentice, either through a grant or a contract. However, companies hiring apprentices benefit from a 100% reduction in social security contributions. In relation to grants, some Autonomous Communities have established financial aid that provides grants or subsidies for companies to cover the social security costs of learners. Furthermore, company tutors may receive a bonus from the Autonomous Community. Finally, most Autonomous Communities fund the costs of developing the dual VET projects.

Within the CVET system, companies providing training for their workers can receive discounts on their social security contributions. In addition, companies have an annual training credit, which is the amount for which they can receive a discount on the training quota every year. The yearly training credit available to each company is a fixed percentage of the amount paid for the training quota in the previous year.

4.4 Social partners' role in the governance of VET

A key defining feature of Spanish VET governance is related to the division of education and VET competences between the central state and the Autonomous Communities. Spain is a decentralised political system with seventeen so-called Autonomous Communities, all of which have policy competences in education and VET policies. At central state level, the Ministry of Education is in charge of developing proposals and implementing government policies on education, IVET and universities. The Autonomous Communities are responsible for the implementation of basic state standards and the regulation of non-basic aspects of the education system, as well as for the administration of the education system in their territories. In addition, there are functions that are shared between the Ministry of Education and the regional education authorities: decisions on educational policies that affect the system as a whole and educational planning in general; specific aspects regarding the exchange of information for educational statistics; the implementation of educational research; the general regulation and lifelong learning for teaching staff; and the register of educational institutions. Besides, the CVET system is under the responsibility of the Ministry of Employment, and is managed by the National Employment System. The National Employment System comprises the State Employment Public Service (*Servicio Público de Empleo Estatal*, SEPE) and the Regional Employment Public Services (*Servicios Públicos de Empleo Autonómicos*, ESPECA), which are both in charge of implementing active labour market policies. Competences of CVET system are also divided between central and regional level.

Bearing this decentralised context in mind, Table 3 below summarises the social partners' roles in dual VET within the main institutional arrangements analysed under Section 4.2. As shown, social partners are only partly and formally involved in the development and updating of VET curricula, and the evaluation and monitoring of the system. They are not involved in the delivery of education, the evaluation of student training outcomes and the regulation of working conditions for apprenticeships or internships.

Table 3. Social partners' roles in main institutional arrangements of dual VET

| | Involvement. Yes/no | Type of involvement |
|--|---|---|
| Development and updating of curricula for VET | Yes | Social partners appoint experts involved in the working groups of INQUAL, who are mandated to design and update qualifications. |
| Evaluation and monitoring of the system | Yes | Partly involved. They are represented in the General Council on Vocational Education and Training (CGFP), which is mandated to monitor professional qualifications and their evolution. |
| Delivery of education | No | |
| Evaluation of student training outcomes | No | |
| Regulation of working conditions for apprenticeships or internships | No (There are some exceptions related to company collective agreements concluded in big companies) | |
| Enforcement of working and training conditions for apprenticeships or internships | Yes, partially (Trade unions) | Work councils enforce working conditions for apprenticeships. |

Source: own elaboration

In order to further analyse social partners' integration in dual VET governance, the report

mobilises the distinction made by Emmenegger and Seitzl (2020) between three VET governance levels:

- Political-strategic level: where stakeholders make decisions on long-term system developments which are in need of political legitimisation.
- Technical-strategic level: equally concerned with long-term system developments, but involves technical specialists as decisions require expert knowledge.
- Technical-operational level: focused on efficient policy implementation on the ground.

Social partners who meet legal representative criteria (CCOO and UGT on the employee side; CEOE on the employer side) are formally involved at both *political-strategic* and *technical* levels in both IVET and CVET systems. At *political-strategic* level social partners together with national and regional administrations are represented in the General Council on Vocational Education and Training (CGFP). CGFP is the main consultative coordination body for IVET policies, and therefore discusses and adopts strategic goals for IVET system. The same applies to the CVET system, where social partners are represented in the General Council of the National Employment System. Nevertheless, social partners' formal representation in these bodies has not always determined or favoured social dialogue on VET policies. In this sense, it should be noted that dual VET regulation was designed and implemented in the absence of social dialogue. Moreover, trade unions have been very critical on this. Recently, a new Social Dialogue Round Table for Vocational Training has been created, where social partners are discussing a new national law on VET which will also address reforming dual VET.

Social partners are also involved at *political-strategic* level at a regional level, where Regional Councils on Vocational Education and Training exist. Moreover, it is worth noting that in some Autonomous Communities (for example, Catalonia and Valencia), there are reform processes underway regarding VET systems. In these processes, the social partners have been consulted.

At *technical-strategic* level, social partners play a role in the National Institute of Vocational Qualifications (INCUAL). The employer organisation and trade unions contribute towards appointing the technical experts who define and update the National Catalogue of Qualifications within the INQUAL body. It is also worth mentioning that trade unions and employer organisations participate in the regional Sectoral Education Boards.

In contrast, the formal role played by social partners at *technical-operational* level is less developed and it is not clearly defined in the regulation. Social partners are neither involved in the definition of training content at company level nor in the evaluation of student training outcomes. However, different cooperation initiatives are developed at regional/local level, mainly between: different local administrations or training centres; and employer organisations or chambers of commerce. Thus, in some provinces, education centres are collaborating with regional or provincial employer organisations. In other cases, collaboration takes place between education centres and companies at an individual level, without the mediation of employer organisations. There are also examples where: the local administration collaborates in the implementation of dual VET projects with centres and companies; and cases where some Autonomous Communities have collaboration agreements with chambers of commerce to find companies, or with companies and employer organisations (regional or sectoral) to promote dual VET. As for the trade unions or bodies representing workers within the company (work councils, workers' delegates or trade union section), their participation at this level seems to be irrelevant. This is an aspect that the current regulation has not helped to reverse, as it does not confer any function on trade unions or other bodies representing workers (Sanz de Miguel, 2017).

Table 4. Main actors in VET governance. Spain

| | National level | Social partners | Regional level (Autonomous Communities) |
|------------------------------|--|---|--|
| Political-strategic | Ministry of Education | | Regional Education Ministry |
| | Ministry of Employment | | Regional Labour Ministry |
| | The General Council on Vocational Education and Training | | |
| | | Regional Councils on Vocational Education and Training | |
| Technical-strategic | Ministry of Education. National Institute of Education Evaluation | | Education office (regional government) |
| | Ministry of Employment | | Labour office (regional government) |
| | National Institution of Qualifications (INQUAL) | Specialists appointed by social partners | |
| Technical-operational | | Chambers of Commerce, regional and local sectoral employer organisations, work councils | Education office (regional government), Training centre, IES |

5. School-to-work transition of dual VET students

At the national level, there are no studies providing evidence regarding the impact of dual VET on labour market insertion. However, some organisations provide figures on the labour market insertion of dual VET graduates. This is the case of Alliance for Dual Training (Alianza para la FP dual) which indicates that the rate of labour market insertion at the national level is 70%.

At the regional level, there are some studies, especially in Catalonia, where annual reports are published on the labour market insertion of VET students. In this Autonomous Community, the regional government carries out annual surveys which provides data on the labour insertion of VET graduates. The results show that the labour market insertion of dual VET graduates is 68.6% within nine months of graduation, while it is 56% within nine months of graduation for those graduating from traditional IVET (Direcció General de Formació Professional Inicial i Ensenyaments de Règim Especial, 2019). Some studies have been carried out in other Autonomous Communities, such as Madrid and Andalusia. In Madrid, a study was carried out by surveying a sample of 118 dual VET graduates (Bentolila and Jansen, 2019). The most notable result is that dual VET graduates work for more days, tend to work longer hours and tend to have better contracts than graduates of traditional IVET studies. In the case of Andalusia, a study was conducted on the implementation of dual VET in 2017, based on the monitoring carried out by the regional government of Andalusia (Confederación de Empresarios de Andalucía, 2017). In that study, it indicates that labour market insertion of dual VET graduates is around 80%. In the case of the Basque Country, the institution that manages several VET centres (HEUTEL), has conducted several studies, based on surveys that ask the training centres about the employment situation of their graduates. In the latest study published for the 2019–2020 academic year, the degree of labour market insertion of dual VET graduates was estimated at 77%.

In addition to these studies, some regional departments of education provide data on the degree of labour market insertion of both dual VET graduates and graduates from traditional IVET. These are internal data available to the Autonomous Communities. These data are provided through press releases in the media, but without the presentation of reports where these data can be consulted in more detail. In this sense, some examples are:

- In the Basque Country, the degree of labour market insertion of IVET students enrolled in 2019 was 91% ([El Diario](#), 2020).
- In Navarra, 58.8% of dual IVET students were inserted into the labour market at the end of the 2018–19 academic year ([Noticias de Navarra](#), 2020).
- In Galicia, 91% of IVET graduates were inserted into the labour market, while for alternating-based IVET it was 85% ([ABC](#), 2019).

6. Conclusions

The report shows that in Spain, although Vocational Education and Training (VET) is a relatively new research area, it is becoming increasingly important in parallel with the growing importance given to VET training paths by transnational institutions and different national stakeholders. Compared to those countries where dual VET has been fully institutionalised since the mid-20th century (Germany, Denmark, Austria, etc.), the Spanish IVET system was not formally institutionalised and connected to the general education system until 1970. This was due to several factors such as the academic bias of the Spanish education system, the weakness of the industry system and the underdeveloped Spanish Welfare State (Merino, 2009; Dávila et al., 2014).

It is generally argued that, although the IVET system has improved its performance in recent years, it is still poorly connected to the labour market, due to the minor role played by companies. Interestingly, there has been political and academic consensus that IVET should be promoted and reformed in order to tackle some structural problems such as the high youth unemployment and, in particular, the polarisation of education outcomes (for example: a comparatively high proportion of early leavers and young people who only have lower secondary education; in tandem with a high proportion of people with tertiary education). With this aim, the Spanish government introduced a dual VET model in 2012. However, the dual VET model still has a minor role within the general Spanish IVET system. In 2018–2019, only 3.1% of the students in the IVET system were on dual programmes, and those dual programmes only represented 17.9% of the total IVET programmes.

Compared to the traditional IVET system (classified as an alternating VET model), the dual VET system has increased the duration of in-company training time (from 25% to a minimum of 33%) and has enhanced the role played by companies in the provision of training. However, dual VET regulation at national level has not modified the previous regulation on the role of companies, employer organisations and trade unions in: the evaluation of training outcomes; and the process of defining and updating vocational qualifications. Moreover, the model has been widely criticised for giving freedom to regional governments to establish critical aspects of the dual VET system, such as the formal relationship between the employer and the learner. In this context, the regional implementation of dual VET promotes cross-regional differences. For example, in some regions, learners are recognised as apprentices with apprenticeship contracts covered by labour law, whereas in other regions learners have, at most, the status of interns through a grant contract.

The lack of definition in national regulation on dual VET is likely to be addressed by a new policy reform which is currently being formally discussed with the social partners. The general governance approach and, in particular, the role played by companies and social partners are key aspects to be discussed. These aspects appear to be essential in order to tackle the lack of consensus among social partners around dual VET. The role that social partners actually play in dual VET, as well as the role that they would like to play in the future, will be explored in detail in the next phase of the INVOLVE project through fieldwork and scenario development techniques.

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