

Template 3: Educational System per Partner Country

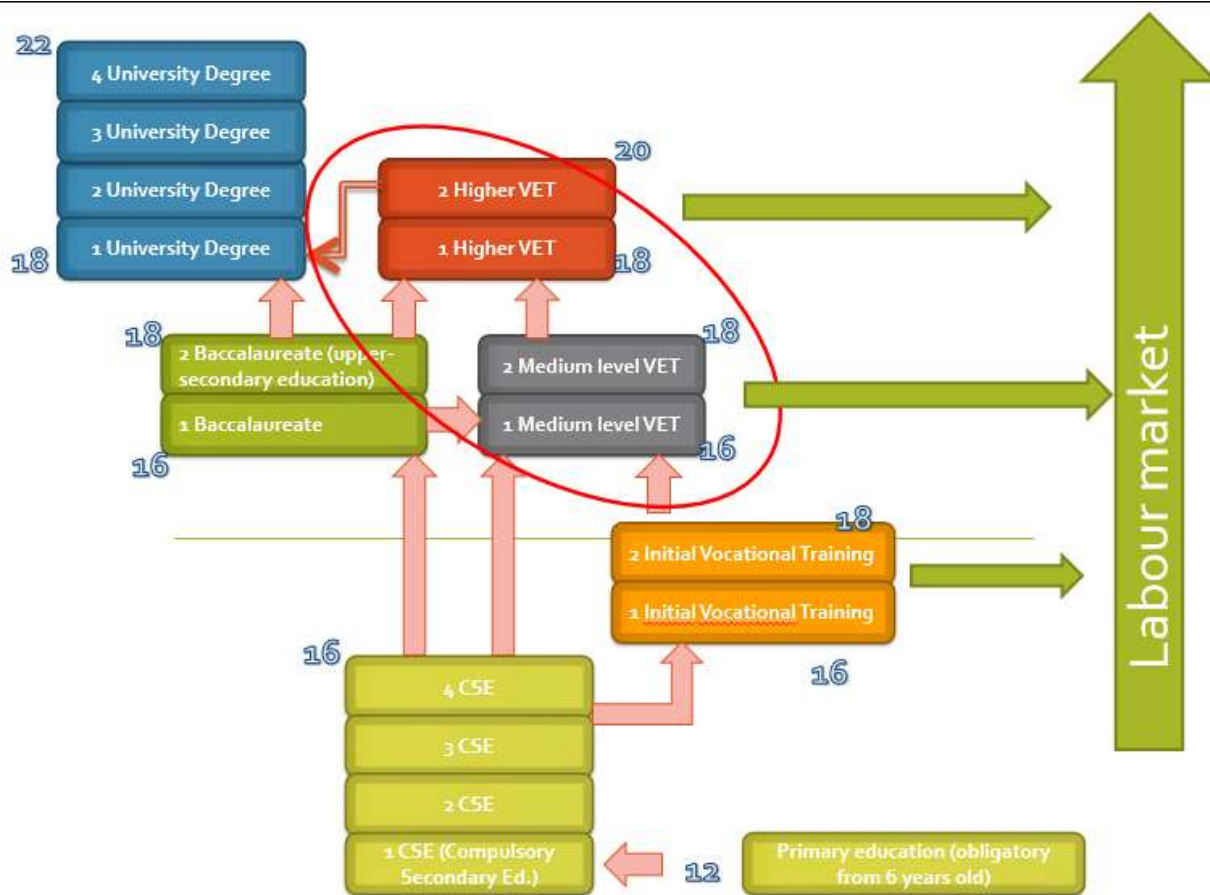
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Country:	Spain (ES)

Structure of the Educational System

- Scheme of the National Educational System

The education system in Spain is organized in different stages (some of them obligatory).

- Pre-primary education (0-6 years old). It can be divided in 2 cycles: from 0-3 (which is voluntary and for pay) and from 3-6 (which is also voluntary and free of pay in public schools, although there is the option of private schools).
- Primary education (6-12 years old). It is obligatory and free of pay. It lasts 6 academic years.
- Obligatory Secondary Education (ESO). As the name says, it is obligatory and lasts 4 academic years (normally students start at 12 and finish at 16 years old). From the current academic year (2015-2016), it is divided in 2 cycles: one of three courses and the last one can be done following different models: that oriented to those who wish to continue to upper secondary education (Bachillerato) and that one addressed to those who wish to continue to medium vocational training.
- After completing the Obligatory Secondary Education, there are 2 different pathways:
 - o Upper secondary education (Bachillerato, normally between 16-18 years old) which can lead to university or to higher VET programmes (both are considered as “higher education”, level 5 or above according to EQF).
 - o Medium Vocational Training (equivalent to level 3 in the EQF). After completing this level of vocational training, the student can continue to higher VET.
- For those who do not complete the Obligatory Secondary Education (passing all the exams), there is another option (obligatory in fact) which is Initial Vocational Training (level 2 in EQF). To access IVT the student has to be between 15-17 years old and the first cycle of ESO has to be completed (up the third year). Besides, the access to IVT has to be based on a proposal from the teachers of the students to his/her parents. After completing one year, the student would be graduated in IVT and also in ESO.
- Higher education. As it has been said, higher education includes university and higher VET. To access university (level 6 and above according to EQF), it is necessary to complete 2 years of upper secondary education (Bachillerato) or a Higher VET programme, which also lasts 2 academic years and can be accessed after completing upper secondary education or after completing 2 years of Medium VET. In the first case, students are normally 18 years old when starting university. In the second case they are normally 20. Higher education also includes Higher Education in Arts and Music.



Graphic: Description of the Spanish educational system. Author: HETEL

Functioning of the National Educational System

Brief description regarding the functioning of the National Educational System.

Some aspects to take into account:

- Compulsory Education;
- Grade Levels / EQF Levels / Duration / Ages;
- Modalities to conclude each Grade Level;
- Legal organizations.

Education in Spain is regulated from November 2013 by the LOMCE (Organic Law for the Improvement of Quality in Education).

The compulsory education in Spain goes from 6 (primary education) to 16 (obligatory secondary education, ESO) years old.

There are different levels:

- Pre-primary education (0-6 years old), equivalent to EQF 0
- Primary education (6-12 years old), equivalent to EQF 1
- Obligatory secondary education (ESO) (12-16 years old), equivalent to EQF2 when completed. Something new from this academic course 2015-2016 is that after the third year, students have the possibility to choose a 4th year addressed to upper secondary education – university or a 4th year of Initial Vocational Training (IVT) which leads to a double title, in IVT and in ESO.
- Upper secondary education (16-18 years old). It is voluntary and Equivalent to level 4 of EQF after completing it. It can be done through 2 modalities: bachillerato (described above) or Medium VET.
- Higher Education (from 18 years old in advance).
 - o Higher VET (18-20 years old), equivalent to EQF5. It can be accessed after completing bachillerato or Medium VET.
 - o University and higher education in arts and music (from 18 years old in advance), equivalent to level 6 EQF and beyond. It can be accessed after completing bachillerato and passing an exam organised by each autonomous community (there are different exams depending on the region) or it can be accessed after completing higher VET.

Regarding the authorities responsible for the education system in Spain, this is supported and regulated by the Spanish central government, together with the governments of each of the 17 autonomous communities existing in Spain according to its territorial division. There are 3 categories of schools:

- Public schools, free of pay (except for administrative costs when enrolling).
- Privately run schools but funded or co-funded by the State (what is known as educación concertada). In this case, there can be a monthly fee to attend, an enrolment fee or both, depending on the case.
- Purely private schools. There is for pay (there is an enrolment fee and might be a monthly fee, depending on the case).

Vocational Education and Training

Brief description regarding the national VET system, focused on Youths.

Some aspects to take into account:

- Modalities / Grade Levels / EQF Levels / Duration / Ages;
- Legal organizations.

The VET system in Spain is divided in 2 subsystems:

- Formal VET, dependent of the Spanish Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport and the Autonomous Communities.
- Informal VET (VET for employment). It is addressed to unemployed and to active/working employees. It is dependent of the Spanish Ministry of Employment and Social Security and the Autonomous Communities.

Within Formal VET there are 3 different levels:

- Initial VET (IVET), corresponding to level EQF 2. It lasts one academic year and is accessible for youngsters among 15-17 years old after completing the 3rd year of Obligatory Secondary Education. From 2015, those graduating in IVET also obtain the certificate in Obligatory Secondary Education (ESO).
- Medium VET (MVET), corresponding to level EQF 4. The student only obtains a certificate after completing the 2 years of the course. It is accessible after graduating in IVET or in ESO (normally starting at 16 and finishing at 18 years old).
- Higher VET (HMET), corresponding to level EQF 5, is considered higher education. The student only obtains the certificate after completing the 2 years of the course. It is accessible after completing Upper Secondary Education (MVET or baccalaureate).

There are currently 150 possible VET degrees, organised in 26 professional groups. In the MVET and HMET levels, there are different modalities of attendance:

- In person classes, provided in VET centres.
- Distance learning, provided by VET centres but where the student don't need to go to the centre.

In all levels and modalities there is a compulsory (with some exceptions) period of apprenticeship in companies. They are carried within the academic calendar (normally between March and June) although the concrete calendar depends on the centre and the agreement with the company. The duration of the apprenticeship depends on the level of VET.

- For IVET, the duration is at least 12% of the total duration of the course (240 hours).
- For MVET and HMET can be between 350 and 700 hours. Normally it lasts 400 hours and they take place during the second year, between March and June.

It is important to highlight that from 2012, a dual VET system is being implemented in Spain. This implementation is being carried out in a different way depending on the Autonomous Community. The Spanish Government has marked the objectives to reach with the implementation of dual VET but each Spanish region has autonomy to reach those objectives in the way they decide.

Regarding informal VET (VET for employment), its mission is to train and qualify people to be able to access a job or to update their professional competences and knowledge. It includes labour market incorporation actions and lifelong learning actions offered by companies to their employees. There are 3 types:

- Scheduled training provided by companies to their employees.
- Training provision from public administration addressed to active workers, which includes sectoral training programmes and transversal training programmes along with professional qualification and recognition programmes.
- Training provision from public administration to unemployed, which includes programmes addressed to fulfil the employment demands detected by the public employment services, specific training programmes and training programmes with the commitment from the company to hire the attendee when completed.

From 01/01/2016, informal VET can be provided following an in person modality, distance learning or a mix of both.

The training offered by informal VET is also structured according to 26 professional groups and is divided in modules, divided again in units of competence. When completing different units of competence there is the possibility to obtain a professional certificate, an official instrument recognised in any Spanish region which recognises the corresponding professional competences. These certificates are issued by the National Public Employment Service (SEPE) or by the Autonomous Communities.