Technical and Vocational Education and Training:
Issues, Concerns and Prospects 32

Fernando Marhuenda-Fluixá *Editor*

The School-Based Vocational Education and Training System in Spain

Achievements and Controversies

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Foreword

The present handbook, edited by Fernando Marhuenda-Fluixá, is an exceptional milestone in the landscape of vocational education and training (VET) research. First, a systematic knowledge about the past, present and possible future of the VET system in Spain is rare and scattered. This situation has changed with the advent of this handbook. Second, anyone who used to consider VET in Spain as unstructured and without traditions now will be convinced of the opposite. The actual situation is that VET in Spain is differentiated; it is a diverse landscape with varied provincial manifestations and a long-standing tradition characterised by changes and flexibilisation on the one hand and centralisation and control on the other. Below, I highlight some insights to illustrate the richness of this handbook.

In the first chapter 'VET system and its subsystems face to face the labour market. Strengths, weaknesses and challenges of VET in Spain', the author, Fernando Marhuenda-Fluixá, demonstrates that the VET system in Spain is not in crisis within the meaning of a declining demand. It is rather under development and in progress. The number of participants is increasing, conservatives and social democrats are finding a consensus about VET and these developments are grounded in a long development history. In the second chapter 'Building up a VET system: Formal VET', the authors, Óscar Mas-Torelló und Patricia Olmos-Rueda, describe the continuous development of the VET system through its reforms – in 1955, 1970, 1990, 2006, 2011, 2013, 2014 and 2015 – in relation to the European integration process. Within these reforms, topics like competencies, lifelong learning and the qualification framework have been addressed as well as work orientation, which started with the alternance training scheme as early as 1984, continued with workplace training in 2011 and expanded with the dual VET in 2012/2013. VET is a dynamic sector in Spain.

The authors Laura Rego-Agraso, Eva M. Barreira Cerqueiras and Antonio F. Rial Sánchez wrote the third chapter of this book: 'Continuing vocational education and training in Spain: Current organisation and challenges'. This chapter deals with CVET's dependence on public funding and the labour market's structure, which mainly comprises self-employed workers and SMEs. This is why the percentage of companies providing CVET is lower than the percentage of trained people compared

with the EU-28 mean. A development in this sector are the newer, stricter political regulations which are not producing the expected major effects, such as a better integration between IVET and CVET, but a problematic side effect, such as the decrease of companies providing CVET.

'Accreditation of learning and vocational qualifications' and their development within the Spanish non-formal system is the subject of the fourth chapter written by María José Chisvert-Tarazona. The legislative fundamentals were set up in 2002/2003 and actualised in 2009 and 2015. The author discusses the phases of the procedure for validation and accreditation (processing, counselling, evaluation and accreditation and registration). In addition, she analyses the strengths (introduction of basic competences and a larger number of qualifications on the first level) and identifies the overall weaknesses (neoliberal orientation and a lack of humanist orientation).

In the fifth chapter, 'The education of VET teachers and trainers', the authors, Alicia Ros-Garrido and Fernando Marhuenda-Fluixá, discover a major problem concerning school-based VET, which is not only its form but also teachers' academic background, which is not vocational but rather academic. Teaching being an academic career helps in reproducing the ongoing distance between education and work, despite the abovementioned efforts (alternance training scheme, workplace training referred to in previous chapters) to close the gap. The problem facing the other side, the non-formal VET, is just the opposite: experience is often the substitute for a proper education and good qualifications. Crossing the boundary between these two very distinguished groups seems to be impossible nowadays.

In the sixth chapter, 'The planning and organisation of VET: research on VET networks in Andalusia', the authors, Ángela Martín-Gutiérrez and Juan Antonio Morales-Lozano, analyse the relationship (collaboration) of the government, VET schools, employers, social agents/institutions and unions in Andalusia. The focus hereby is on the management teams of VET schools. The authors develop a typology to characterise four different levels of maturity in this collaboration (from administrative schools to support or network schools). This perspective on the meso-level, the institutional level, is refreshing within VET research, which is mainly focussed either on the macro system level or on the micro individual competence level.

In the seventh chapter, 'The role of work- and school-based supervisors in bridging educational and workplace contexts in Catalonia', the authors, Ana Inés Renta Davids, José Miguel Jiménez González and Manel Fandos Garrido, continue the topic of collaboration with reference to VET in Catalonia. The actions of school-based and work-based supervisors are identified with in-depth analysis and grouped into four main categories (coordination, cooperation, co-construction and barriers). A comparable analysis within the context of dual VET in, for example, Germany or Switzerland is still missing.

In the eighth chapter, 'The production of disqualified youth through basic vocational education and training provision. Examples from Valencia', the authors, Míriam Abiétar and Almudena Navas, analyse the transition path of youth after the completion of basic vocational education and training. The authors clearly prove

that this programme increases societal segregation and limits the area of labour and social life of the youth.

The ninth chapter, 'The promotion of educational success in intermediate VET level: the case of the Balearic islands', written by Francesca Salvà-Mut, Antoni Cerdà-Navarro and Jaume Sureda-Negre, focuses on the low completion of intermediate-level studies in relation to a high dropout rate. The authors analyse student engagement (understood as behavioural and academic engagement, affective engagement and cognitive engagement) and identify the main characteristics of engagement's erosion and its triggers.

In the chapter 'Continuing training in the autonomous region of Galicia: Perspectives and new challenges', the authors, Eva M. Barreira Cerqueiras, Laura Rego-Agraso and Antonio F. Rial Sánchez, describe the special socio-economic conditions in Galicia and how CVET could and should relate to these conditions. However, the involvement of the unions and employers in the decision-making process has been reduced. Faced with such a mindset, it is perhaps less surprising that an assessment culture or culture of final evaluation is not established. As remedies, the authors argue for more participation and decentralisation.

In the eleventh and final chapter, the authors, Fernando Marhuenda-Fluixá, María José Chisvert-Tarazona and Davinia Palomares-Montero, analyse a recent development in Spain: the implementation of dual VET. The authors remind readers that work-based learning has a long tradition in Spain and ask, therefore, what the added value of dual VET is. Empirically, the authors show that dual VET is implemented differently and, hence, already increases the existing variety within the VET system. Dual VET in countries like Germany or Switzerland is company-based and driven by business. In Spain, a new gestalt has arisen: school-based, dual VET driven by schools. The authors conclude, 'Dual VET has been a good idea badly implemented in Spain'.

The present insights, which are just some examples, demonstrate another point which must be added to the two points at the beginning: even if the VET system in Spain is the focus, the discussion and empirical research conducted are relevant beyond the geographical territory. The handbook reflects, as the title indicates, an intensive case study about a school-based vocational education and training system with a long tradition. The handbook may also foster bridging time and experience, as most of the articles were jointly written by emerging researchers together with senior researchers. The book itself is, therefore, a metaphor of the VET system in Spain and it demonstrates that the VET system in Spain is on the move, as is its related research community.

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Preface

There is not a great array of literature on vocational education and training in Spain. There is not much literature neither in Spanish nor certainly in English. Among the latter are the reports published by Cedefop (Sancha and Gutiérrez 2016; *Servicio Público de Empleo Estatal* 2016; Cantero and Sancha 2014) but also other volumes such as the one by Milolaza (2014). Among the former are one on the history of vocational education (Martínez 2002), some about its political developments (De Asís 2003; Luzón and Torres 2013) or VET professionals (Ferrández et al. 2000) as well as a couple of overviews on achievements and challenges (Homs 2009; Marhuenda 2012).

I started researching on VET in year 1990 with my PhD (Marhuenda 1994). I participated in several research projects, regional, national and European, where VET was the context and the objects varied: transitions into work (Martínez and Marhuenda, 1998; Navas and Marhuenda 2013), work experience and work placements (Marhuenda 2000; Marhuenda et al. 2001; Marhuenda 2018), modularisation of VET (Marhuenda 2002), vocational identities (Martínez 2003) as well as on basic VET (Molpeceres 2004), connectivity (Marhuenda 2009), employability (Córdoba and Martínez 2011) or the tensions surrounding VET (Marhuenda 2017). Most of my academic and research work has been around vocational education and training, particularly on its connections to workplace learning, adult learning and social inclusion.

Vocational education and training in Spain has not been paid sufficient attention by scholars, and this is not but a reflection of the lack of interest it suffered in terms of policymaking as well. This trend, however, has changed pretty much in the past 25 years. We can identify a few research groups that have made VET their object of study. The first one was established almost four decades ago, *Colectivo de Investigación en Formación Ocupacional* (CIFO[1]) at the *Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona* and with further connections in other universities, such as the *Universitat Rovira i Virgili* in Tarragona as well as the *Universidad de Sevilla* and the *Universidad de Santiago de Compostela*. Authors of Chaps. 2, 3, 6, 7 and 10 are either members

[1] http://grupsderecerca.uab.cat/cifo

of this group or researchers who have stayed with professors in the group while working on their PhDs, most of which have been defended in the past few years.

In the *Universitat de València*, I myself have coordinated another small research group, *Transiciones entre formación y empleo en contextos de Vulnerabilidad Social* (*Transicions*[2]), in which authors of Chaps. 1, 4, 5, 8 and 11 are and have been involved in different ways. The remaining chapter has been written by colleagues from the University of the Balearic Islands (Chap. 9). All of the authors are pedagogues. All of them hold a PhD in either Education or Sociology, and research upon VET is one of their main areas of interest, and in some cases the only one.

All throughout the country, there is no periodical journal, neither academic nor professional, devoted exclusively to VET, and educational journals have hardly edited monographs on vocational education (AAVV 1990, 1997, 2003, 2006, 2012, 2016, 2017). The academic community of scholars studying and researching vocational education is not too large, but there is a young generation who has started changing that trend, and I am very happy to have them contributing to this volume, where many of them publish a chapter.

In the meantime, it seems that vocational education has been able to develop without the need to rely upon research, and that has been particularly the case of VET in the Basque country, famous all over the country for it has kept a steady improvement along the years even if it is hard to find any academic who has researched VET in that region (García-Montero 2015; López de Guereñu 2018). Nonetheless, one may consider that VET has been part of a 'nation strategy' both in the case of the Basque country as well as in Catalonia (Valiente 2015a, b), where the link between the qualification of the workforce and economic development has been closer than in any other region. There are no other regions in Spain where this effort is so clear, perhaps with the exception of Navarra.

We can find more research upon VET in other regions. In the book, we will find examples and references to particularities of vocational education in different regions in Spain, like Galicia, Andalusia, the Balearic Islands, Valencia and Catalonia, the regions where most of the authors live, work and research. Regional data and problems will be used to illustrate nationwide structures and challenges of vocational education.

The first part of the book, 'VET in Spain: subsystems, governance and actors', has five chapters. The first one covers an explanation of the development of the three subsystems to facilitate better understanding of the complexities and rich challenges of the VET panorama in the country. Chapters 2 and 3 explain in detail two of those subsystems, the initial formal VET and the continuing VET provision; Chap. 4 details the most recent development in the system, the display of the accreditation of vocational qualifications; and Chap. 5 provides detailed explanation of the education of VET teachers and vocational trainers. All chapters in this part have the aim to describe the system and also to comment upon it, upon well informed analyses and commentaries written by authors who have conducted research upon these

[2] https://www.uv.es/uvweb/servicio-investigacion/es/educacion/grupo-1285949713867.html?p2=GIUV2013-093

issues. This part provides an overview of the landscape of VET in Spain, and it will be useful for the purpose of comparative research, also to get in-depth analysis of current socio-historical and political developments of VET.

Part II of the book gives an account on the most recent research conducted by scholars across the country, and it is full of references and relations to research upon VET everywhere in the world, with European research playing a significant role. Most of that research is either part of PhD collaborative work or of publicly funded research projects. All of the chapters focus on different issues, from initial to continuing VET, from basic to higher VET qualifications, from traditional work-based learning to the recent introduction of a dual type of VET. All of them give an empirical account, and, interestingly, the contributions also show the variety of regional specificities of VET in Spain. Such a display of research, without being exhaustive of all that is done, sets the scene of which are the main issues being currently debated at micro, meso- and macro level; and research here illustrates some of the main challenges that the system faces and what are the tensions to which the VET community of institutions and practitioners are confronted.

The reader might want to see other chapters that this book has not been able to offer. There is a clear gap in a missing chapter on the non-formal training subsystem. However, this has not been possible due to the lack of data that have not been recorded in any official, systematic way, as if it was not considered relevant. The contribution of this subsystem has been great along the past decades in offering a formative pathway for people whose access back to the education system was not allowed due to the entry requirements. In this sense, specific populations, among which people with disabilities outstand, have benefited from such training measures. Many institutions have taken part of this subsystem, of very different kind (municipalities, unions, employer federations, NGOs, companies), and they constitute nowadays a parallel network of which little is known for the precariousness embedded in this training subsystem, lacking the stability and certainties that characterise the formal VET system.

Another gap is that of vocational guidance, an area which lacks a chapter in this book. However, vocational guidance is a practice in need of great development, as it has been overwhelmed by academic guidance. There is little vocational guidance offered within the school system, and that out of the school system has not been systematic and has lacked a stable network of institutions and professionals, and there is hardly any record on its role, value and needs, other than that collected by institutions who have strongly favoured it, like that of *Fundación Forem* or authors like Consuelo Vélaz de Medrano (2013) or Benito Echeverría (2008), as well as others like María Luisa Rodríguez or María Teresa Padilla.

I cannot finish this Preface without thanking the generous reviewers of different chapters of this volume. Reviewing is a task most of us undertake and that sometimes we enjoy for what we learn from the texts we have to read and assess, though it often means an extra duty we have to add to our other commitments. Reviewing is sometimes painful, whenever texts need considerable improvement. All chapters in this book have gone through at least four reviews, including the publisher, external reviewers as well as the editor, most of them scholars in different parts of Europe

and all of them with a long-term expertise and research on VET in international contexts.

I would like to start thanking the only written contribution of this volume that has been produced by a non-Spanish scholar Michael Gessler, Professor at the University of Bremen and Board Member of the Vocational Education and Training Network of the European Educational Research Association (VETNET) as well as Lead Convenor of the International Research Network in Vocational Education and Training (IRNVET). Michael has been kind enough to write a foreword for this book. Professor Gessler has been generous in reading all chapters and commenting, out of his expertise, upon the particularities of the Spanish VET system. His point of view constitutes a relevant feedback and introduction for the chapters of this book.

Among other reviewers, I would like to mention the work of Andreas Saniter (*Institut Technik und Bildung*, University of Bremen, Germany), Gabriele Molzerberger (*Bergische Universität Wuppertal*, Germany), Graham Attwell (*Pontydysgu*, Wales-Spain), Jeroen Ostenk (University of Inholland, Netherlands), Johanna Lasonen (University of South Florida, USA), Jörg Markowitz (*3s Unternehmensberatung*, Wien, Austria), Lázaro Moreno (University of Stockholm, Sweden), Lorenzo Bonoli (*Eidgenösschiches Hochschulinstitut für Berufsbildung*, Bern, Switzerland), Ludger Deitmer (*Institut Technik und Bildung* University of Bremen, Germany), Marja-Leena Stenström (Finnish Institute for Educational Research – University of Jyväskylä, Finland), Markus Weil (*Fachhochschule Nordwestschweiz*, Basel, Switzerland) and Thomas Deissinger (*Universität Konstanz*, Germany). Other reviewers remain anonymous. Their generous and altruist effort, time and commitment have greatly contributed to the quality of this book, as some of the authors acknowledge in their chapters. Thank you for this often invisible yet highly valuable work. Thank you also to the authors who have shared their expertise and to those who have taken reviews and criticisms rigorously in order to improve their contributions and to make their messages much clearer.

Thanks also to Mary Jane Curry, Professor at the University of Rochester, NY, USA, where I enjoyed a research stay in Autumn 2016 when I started working on this book.[3]

A final word to thank the support from the publisher staff at Springer, Lawrence Liu and Lay Peng Ang, who assisted me all throughout the process and made it smooth.

Valencia, Spain Fernando Marhuenda-Fluixá

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Series Editors Introduction

Work is a major feature of most people's lives. Not only does it provide individuals with the means to meet basic needs, such as food, clothing and shelter, but also the type of work undertaken by individuals and groups has a major impact on their self-identity, social status and standard of living. Technical and vocational education and training (TVET), or vocational education and training (VET) as it is sometimes called, is concerned with 'applied learning': that is, with the acquisition of knowledge and skills for the world of work to increase opportunities for productive work, sustainable livelihoods, personal empowerment and socio-economic development.

This Springer book series on TVET seeks to provide comprehensive information about many cutting-edge aspects of skills development for employability. The series showcases best and innovative approaches to TVET and seeks to create an effective bridge between research, policy and practice. It is an ongoing project which commenced in 2005. Publications in this Springer book series provide a comprehensive picture of current issues, concerns and prospects in TVET worldwide. This edited volume by Fernando Marhuenda Fluixá on ***The School-Based VET System in Spain*** is the 32nd volume to be published in this long-standing book series.

This book consists of 11 chapters written by eminent researchers and practitioners with an intimate knowledge of the VET system in Spain. Each contributor examines the various reforms, areas for improvement and controversies concerning vocational education and training and its relationship to the changing world of work. Important topics examined include the relationship of the VET system in Spain to the labour market, the interrelationship between formal and informal aspects of VET, accreditation of learning and vocational qualifications, the education and training of VET teachers and trainers, VET as a means to promoting access and equity in education and society, the contribution of VET to addressing the ongoing problem of youth unemployment, the role of work and school-based supervisors in bridging educational and workplace contexts, lifelong learning and VET and current key issues and controversies concerning the reform, strengthening and upgrading of VET in Spain, within the overall European context.

This important book is a true milestone in the field of vocational education and training research, with particular reference to Spain, a country about which there is

a paucity of reliable, well-researched and up-to-date information available on key aspects of vocational education and training. This book brings together, for the first time, comprehensive and reliable data which is of great importance to researchers, policymakers and practitioners as they navigate the future of VET in Spain.

This is an important, cutting edge volume on a topic that is of great importance to researchers, policymakers and practitioners throughout the world. I have no doubt that this book will be widely read and that it will have an important impact on policy and practice in the area of vocational education and training, not just in Spain but further afield, in other countries in Europe, that are keen to learn about VET in Spain.

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Rupert Maclean

Contents

Part I
VET in Spain: Subsystems, Governance and Actors

Chapter 1
The VET System, Its Subsystems and Their Links with the Labour Market: Strengths, Weaknesses and Challenges of VET in Spain

Fernando Marhuenda-Fluixá

Abstract This chapter provides the reader with the historical and political background to understand the rest of the book, and it also focuses on the key issues affecting VET in Spain in recent times while assessing the quality of VET rather positively. I explain the parallel development of three different subsystems and their approaches and efforts to reintegrate them. I also show conflicts over control upon VET governance and the role of national and regional governments as well as employers and union representatives in the design of qualifications. Transitions between education and employment, careers guidance and the connections of VET to social policies are also addressed.

Keywords Educational policy · History of education · Education-work relations · Transitions · Governance

1.1 Introduction

This book is about vocational education and, to a lesser extent, vocational training in Spain. By doing so, it includes the most recent research conducted on VET by Spanish scholars. The country is officially the Kingdom of Spain, a parliamentary constitutional monarchy since 1978, after 40 years of a Dictatorship that followed a coup d'état which, on its turn, finished a Republic which lasted from 1931 to 1939, the last 3 years of which in the middle of a civil war after that *coup*. Nowadays, there

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are approximately 45 million inhabitants in the country, of which more than 22 million form the active population, almost 19 million being employed and more than 3.5 million unemployed.

In 1986 Spain joined the European Union (at the time still known as the European Communities), which was part of the political effort of modernization, affecting all domains of everyday life, from family to religion or from economy to education. This political change implied not only a change in terms of internationalization at a time when globalization was starting to become a dominant feature of societies, but was also part of a huge internal development that meant a move out of a highly centralized power (mandated in each of the 50 provinces) into a decentralized regional division, where 17 regions named autonomous communities (and two autonomous cities, those of Ceuta and Melilla, both located in Northern Africa) have achieved political autonomy in most areas of legislation, as well. Three of these regions (the Basque country, Navarra and Cataluña) claim a historical legitimation for their autonomy. This is remarkable, for Vocational Education is highly respected and promoted in all three of them.

The changes referred above can be summarized in the following axis around which VET developments search for a stable position:

First, the struggles over education between conservative and social democrat ideas, that have also had VET in its scope, where the technical and professional dimensions of VET sometimes compete with the fostering of a citizenship where the notion of work is at its core. Furthermore, conservatives and social democrats have different expectations about the future direction of the productive model and the industrial development in the country. These disputes have an impact upon VET, though the model as a whole has remained largely untouched since the consensus agreed around the turn of the century.

Second, there is a never-ending debate between centralization of and decentralization of education, and vocational education is also part of it. The regions claim their right to have a major say in designing their own curricula, while the Spanish Government has to cover for nationwide recognition and the setting of minimum common standards. Even those regions that enjoy most decentralized powers, like Catalonia and the Basque country, rely upon statewide curricula to implement their own VET policies.

Third, the balance between the Department of Education and the social actors, unions and employers. VET has reached far more consensus than collective bargaining along the country, and it has brought more concertation than conflict, except in the case of CVET, as explained in Chap. 3.

Fourth, it is relevant to understand that formal vocational education in Spain started developing right after the first oil crisis, in 1973, whose effects merged with the political crisis through which the country shifted from a dictatorship in 1975 to a democracy in 1977. It was then that an agreement was reached to allow the birth of this democracy at a time of cyclical financial crisis – the so-called *Pactos de la Moncloa*, an overall agreement between employers and unions and all political parties. This agreement linked economic progress to political advancement, and it has marked the direction of the Spanish democracy along the past 40 years.

Vocational Education, as part of the education system, is ruled by a central legislation, as the qualifications it awards have a nation-wide recognition and the regula-

tions behind them apply all over the country. Almost all regions, and not only the three mentioned above, have partial control over the mandated curriculum, with less than two thirds being ruled by the Central Government. This is the case for primary, secondary and the academic post-16 education. However, when it comes to vocational education, most regions rely upon the Department of Education of the Spanish Government. It takes a huge effort to design the curricula for a vocational offer which is much larger than that of academic education: while there are only four academic post-16 choices, the offer of vocational ones consists of over 150 different qualifications organized around 26 different occupational areas.[1] The amount of students enrolled in each vocational degree is also much smaller than the enrolment in post-compulsory academic choices. Therefore regions do not make the effort to produce their own vocational curricula.

As shown in Chap. 2, the current vocational education system was firmly established in 1990 (LOGSE), evolving from the foundations set in 1970 (LGE), which had made a school-based system out of it. Three main features changed in 1990: first, the upgrading of the entry requirements, as vocational education became an equal option to the post-16 academic pathway, hence ceasing to play the role of compensatory education. Second, the introduction of a compulsory module of work placements (FCT) that was to be performed in real companies by students, not apprentices. Third, the decentralization of the system, which allowed for regional adaptations, impulses and reforms that have been as varied as the regions.

1.2 Three Parallel VET Subsystems Struggling Towards Mutual Recognition

In the previous paragraph, I have referred to formal vocational education, the one which is part of the education system, delivered in vocational schools, taught by teachers and which will be addressed in most chapters in this book. The late development of vocational education in the country can be explained by several factors: first, the slow process of industrialization of the country, whose economy strongly relied upon agriculture until the first third of the twentieth century; second, the late start of the population growth by the end of the nineteenth century; and, third, the civil war in the 1930s and the protectionism and isolationism that followed it. As a result of this, Spanish vocational education often lacks the reference to its 'technical' feature which is widespread in other countries.

Access to formal vocational education between 1970 and 1990 demanded no GCSE (GESO). Since 1990, however, access requirements were upgraded and as demanding as access to the Baccalaureate, the academic post-compulsory choice. Such a restriction contributed to the improvement of the quality and prestige of VET, as well as to its further specialization. Formal VET is divided into two levels,

[1] http://todofp.es/dam/jcr:7d9bb80f-db71-47df-a82d-b2e15489c6d5/configuracion-actual-del-catalogo-de-titulos-de-formacion-profesional-logos-pdf.pdf

Table 1.1 Own elaboration, upon data from Riviére et al. (1988), MEC (2006) and MECD (2016)

	School year				
Students[a]	1975/1976	1985/1986	1995/1996	2005/2006	2015/2016
VET	305,254	738,340	722,723	498,679	767,528
Baccalaureate	818,393	1,238,874	1,310,341	640,975	694,224

[a]In school years 1975/1976 and 1985/1996, VET lasted 2 + 3 years and the baccalaureate 3 + 1 years. After the reform in the 1990s, VET lasts between 1 and 2 years (according to lower or higher level of qualification), while the baccalaureate lasts 2 years. However, in school year 1995/1996, both systems still coexisted

as explained in Chap. 2, the second of which gives access to University studies. Such access has been legally possible since 1990, but it became a real option after the reform was introduced in 2011, which allowed direct access for students who had finished their CFGS. The consequence of this has been a change in the profile in many University degrees, who now welcome many VET graduates.

In the past decades, vocational education has increased its offer, but it has only been recently that a similar amount of youth attends the vocational pathway as the academic one at the post-compulsory level. Data on enrolment in post-compulsory[2] education are shown in Table 1.1.

Such a development also has several reasons: the first one, families, young people and society as a whole held the hope in the 1970s that education would be academic and not vocational, with work being a better alternative to vocational education, because of its lack of tradition. Such a belief has changed as the prestige of VET has increased along these decades, starting 1984 with the choice for VET students to enjoy work placements in companies. Second, the school system had an academic orientation and both infrastructures as well as teachers were easier (and cheaper in terms of resources) to manage by the educational administration in the academic pathways. Third, VET was understood in the 1970s as a second chance for those who had failed in compulsory education. The voluntary work placements of VET students in their fifth year after 1984 (through the so-called alternance training scheme) together with the increased level in the entry requirements improved the esteem of VET in society, and it came accompanied by the effort taken by the Department of Education to increase the VET offer as well as to improve its specialization (Marhuenda 1994). Third, demographic development has also had a strong impact, after the baby-boom generation of the 1960s and early 1970s was replaced. The school system regained registration again partly through the arrival of immigrant population from South America and North and South-Sahel African countries as well as Eastern European countries, who represented 530,954 in school year 2005/2006 and 715,409 in school year 2015/2016 (MECD 2016, 9). More than half of students of migrant origin attended a VET qualification level, as immigration was

[2] I refer here to post-compulsory and not post-16 because in school years 1975/1976 and 1985/1996, compulsory education finished at the age of 14, which changed after the reform in the 1990s, when it moved to 16.

caused mainly by economic reasons, and the search for qualified work has a value that academic higher education does not have.

Chapters 2 and 5 as well as all chapters in Part II in the book except Chap. 10 refer to formal vocational education and hence explain in detail the Spanish vocational education system.

But vocational education was only part of the offer. A second one was that of vocational training (FPO, employment training or vocational adult education, as it is called in other contexts), which had started in the 1960s, promoted by the Department of Labour. That decade implied a strong inner migration from rural areas to the cities. This movement had two manifestations, the first one being people from rural areas moving into the main cities of each province, while the second one meant moving from villages into the large and growing cities in the country; Madrid, Barcelona, Valencia, Bilbao and Seville being the main receivers nation-wide. These migrants were young adults who had already work experience and working habits, but whose occupation, learned on-the-job, was not useful in urban areas. The Department of Labour promoted then short training courses in specific occupational areas addressed to these young adults, often illiterate, who had to learn a new trade but who were willing and needed to work and make a living. Training centres were set up in all main cities of each province, and they played a major role for a decade and a half.

In the early 1980s, the country had changed dramatically, unemployment and particularly youth unemployment was very high, and the network of centres of the Department of Labour was used to deliver training. Large amounts of money were also invested in funding private training offer, most of it subsidized, because there was a payment for the unemployed people attending training courses. However, the dynamics of this training had not changed: it consisted of training delivery, where assistance was encouraged, but there was no assessment of learning and, therefore, no qualification provided once the training had finished. The role it played was different to that of the 1960s, though the infrastructure remained the same: from being a measure to qualify the workforce, it turned into a policy towards social cohesion and linked to unemployment subsidies. In 1986 Spain accessed the European Communities, large sums of money from the European Social Fund were invested in more training offer, which in fact implied the opening of a training market. Private institutions were competing with public institutions at the time, but new actors joined this market, varying from municipalities to employer federations, trade unions, non-governmental organizations and even institutions who specialized in applying for external and international funds in order to develop their own network of training locations, trainers and resources. Training became a business of its own.

By the end of the 1980s, vocational training had become a market in parallel to the vocational education provided within the education system. It offered initial vocational training, short-term, without acknowledgement nor qualification, but practice-oriented. Unemployed young and adult people attended this training offer as this was a means to earn the dole, while attendance to vocational education schools reported no immediate benefit, other than learning and the qualification. Young people who had left the education system without successfully completing compulsory education had in vocational training an alternative choice, which turned

into the only one once the 1990 reform was passed and declared access to vocational education ISCED 3-4 which restricted to those who had achieved their GESO. Nonetheless, also students registered in post-compulsory and university education could attend and benefit from this training offer (and the subsidy behind it) insofar one was also registered as unemployed.

In opposition to formal vocational education, which budget comes through the Department of Education, vocational training has several sources of funding which may overlap and which have diversified along the years. The first being the Department of Labour through the vocational training quote[3] which is a small percentage of every labour contract, but already in the mid 1980s in competition with other sources like the European Social Fund (through national, regional or local governments) as well as saving banks in their social provision against unemployment, also through own funding sources, sometimes even related to social welfare. A diversification in funding sources comes together with a clustering of requirements and legal conditions, each of them set by every funding mechanism. This has resulted along the years in a wide array of vocational training offer which is not recognizable, not officially known, not recorded by public institutions, not registered in any institutional terms, lacking supervision or evaluation (Marhuenda 2009). That is the reason why there is no specific chapter about it in this book, because there is no way to gather all that information, which cannot be fully traced, not even in basic statistical terms. This training market still exists nowadays.

Chapters 4 and 5 in the book cover the complexities of the accreditation of prior learning when it comes to all the non-formal training provision provided within this subsystem along the years, as well as the education required to trainers within this subsystem, significantly loose with regard to that of vocational teachers.

The third subsystem was only developed in the early 1990s, and it is an impulse driven by economic reasons rather than by a strong belief in the training culture. Both employers and trade unions noticed the rise in the training market in terms of vocational training for the unemployed, the subsystem I have just referred to above. Both employers and trade unions had joined this market too. And it was then that they realized that the funding of almost all vocational training since the mid-1960s and until the entry in the European Communities had been paid by them, as it came out of the vocational training quote that comes out of every labour agreement signed in the country and which represents around 0.70% of the gross wage.

It was then, in 1993, that both employers and unions reached an agreement, together with the Department of Labour, to reinvest that quote into themselves, in what was known as the First National Agreement on Continuing Vocational Education. Continuing education for all working sectors was born then, and it has evolved ever since in a third parallel vocational training subsystem. In opposition to the two previous ones, this cannot be considered initial vocational training, as it is offered to an adult population who is not only active but also employed. Continuing training is intended to update the skills of the workforce to comply with new

[3] http://www.seg-social.es/Internet_1/Trabajadores/CotizacionRecaudaci10777/Regimenes/RegimenGeneraldelaS10957/InformacionGeneral/index.htm

requirements of the labour market, be it due to changes in labour organization, in technologies of work or in competencies needed to increase competitiveness or productivity. But continuing training is also aimed to satisfy the needs for further education of the workforce, insofar it is to some extent related to its professional development but also to the personal growth of the worker's needs or interest.

Chapters 3 and 10 in the book cover this subsystem in in-depth detail, and they explain the basis, the features and the developments within the subsystem.

Therefore, along the past five decades Spain has seen the rise of three different subsystems of vocational education and training and it was by the turn of the century that the country decided it was time to bring them closer, to facilitate recognition of each other, to make better use of all resources, material, financial and personal, invested in vocational education: to make all vocational education and training offer a valuable investment in terms of qualification, useful for individual workers, for all of the active population, as well as responsive to the needs of the productive system and to improve the nation's economy. Since 2002 all centrifugal forces in terms of VET had to be reset and the move has been done towards a unified VET system in which centripetal forces take over and readdress the historical trend: a law was passed in the Spanish Parliament ruling vocational education and vocational training, both initial and continuing, the Law on Vocational Qualifications and Education. This has been the only law on education that has gathered consensus around it and which has not been contested by employers nor trade unions either. Given that Spain has passed four laws on the education system since 1990 and three laws on university governance, the law on VET can be considered both exceptional and unique. Unifying or even approaching the subsystems is not an easy work, but it is indeed an arena demanding the attention of politicians, practitioners and researchers.

1.3 Conflict over the Control of VET

The history of the three subsystems explained above entails the struggle over the power of VET and the control of the different institutions, regulations and funding mechanisms. The Departments of Education and Labour have held a constant and balanced fight over vocational education and training at national and regional level. This struggle has been subject to the interest of the political parties holding control over national and regional governments, but it has been also a question of the model of VET and what could the society in general and the productive system in particular expect from VET in terms of appropriate qualifications to satisfy the demands of local and economic growth.

On the side of the Department of Education, the key issue has been to retain control over the accreditation of qualifications, in order to guarantee their official value nation-wide. Qualifications are therefore linked to requirements in terms of education and training locations, resources, teachers and trainers as well as education or training hours. It is the mandated curriculum which rules, like elsewhere in

the education system in Spain, the awarding of the qualifications, and these are published in the Official Bulleting of the State and registered in the National Catalogue of Vocational Qualifications (CNCP). Chapter 4 provides a good account of this Catalogue and its use.

The Department of Labour, on its own side, is in favour of major flexibility of the training provision in order to be able to provide quick replies to the needs expressed by employers and the industry. Its major claim is that the long term taken by a mandated curriculum to be designed and implemented make it outdated by the time the first cohorts come out of the system. It also claims that a system functioning as civil service does not allow the ability to hire, relocate or dispose of the teaching workforce that is no longer useful in terms of what the market demands.

These struggles are not just typical of Spain but of many other countries and are not attributable to the current changing context but could also be found along history (Molzberger and Wahle 2015; Marhuenda 2017). In the case of Spain, however, there are two sources of obstacles (Marhuenda 2012). The first one being the involvement of the two administrations of education and labour, which hold different models and that also search for control over the budget on vocational education and training. A struggle that is held at each governmental level (national, regional and sometimes also municipal) and for which attempts have been made in order to solve it through an institution able to mediate among both of them. That institution has been the National Institute of Qualifications (INCUAL), which was first set in the mid-1990s and which after shifting from one department into another was finally allocated to the Department of Education as it was responsible for awarding qualifications. Nevertheless, we can now find regional qualification institutions in almost all regions, and they are dependent of different administrations according to decisions taken at the regional level.

The work of such an institute, which is explained in more detail in Chap. 7, is not simply conducted by the administrations. A lesson well learned in the late 1980s, which gave birth to the reform in 1990, was to get employer associations and federations as well as trade union representatives involved in the design and development of the curriculum and the training delivery of vocational education. This had already happened through the sectoral commissions which agreed on the qualification levels and the occupational profiles of each occupational domain. These commissions took control over the curriculum, in an exercise of devolution of power to those who have the expertise, something extraordinary in a country used to take all decisions on education within the offices of the department of education. One may complain about the slow pace of updating the qualifications, but since 1990 no one can dare to say that vocational education is away of the needs of the labour market, for the main actors in the labour market have been invited and called to define their needs and to decide how to provide appropriate answers to them. As a matter of fact, since 1990, employers and trade unions are the ones who decide both the structure and the content of the VET curriculum of any VET qualification, with the educational administration assisting them in this process.

The work of those committees set up the basis for the duty of INCUAL in order to define the qualifications for the non-formal vocational training offer, be it for the

unemployed or for active employed workers, the two non-formal subsystems to which I referred in the previous section of this chapter.

Hence, we can also find relevant institutions set up to give an expert opinion in whatever reforms are introduced related to VET. The clearest one is the National Council on Vocational Education and Training (CGFP), where employers, trade unions, regional and national Departments of Labour and Education are represented and come together to have their democratic say upon VET policies. Again, like in the case of INCUAL (which depends of this Council), such participatory councils have been also reproduced at regional level. This being said, the National Council on Vocational Education and Training has not gathered to a single meeting between 2010 and the end of October 2018!

This sometimes results in complex situations, not always easy to understand. That is the case of my own region, Valencia, which has happened to start in 2017 at least two parallel processes of reconsidering vocational education and training policies, one by the General School Council and the second one by the Directorate General on Vocational Education and Special Training: different directorates of the Department of Education struggle to have an impact while practitioners and some researchers wonder why the designed authorized actors, those of the Regional Council for Vocational Education and Training, have not been called once and that Council is forced to remain silent. All of these take place in a highly bureaucratized administration, not only at the national level but indeed at the regional level.

1.4 Qualifications and Actors in the Vocational Education *System* and the Training and Labour *Markets*[4]

The productive system in Spain is not so different, regarding the size of the companies, from the European average. It entails a large amount of micro-companies, more than half of which have no employees. In 2017, the fabric of the productive system is as follows (Table 1.2):

Table 1.2 Size of Spanish companies in 2017, by number of employees and their share in the total amount of registered workers

	Micro	Small	Medium	SME	Large	
No employees	1–9	10–49	50–249	0–249	>250	Total workforce
1.821.901	131.2141	120.397	20.485	3.274.924	4196	3.279.120
55.6%	40%	3.7%	0.6%	99.9%	0.1%	

Source: Ministerio de Economía, Industria y Competitividad. (2017, 1).

[4] I use here italics in order to stress that formal vocational education is structured as a system, while non-formal vocational education takes the shape of a market, hence submitted to different rationales, as I explain in the text.

In terms of vocational education and training, as we have seen in the previous section, structure, funding and practice are so scattered that we have a highly ruled vocational education system coexisting with a highly deregulated vocational training market, even if both sometimes share institutions, resources, trainers and trainees.

The best example for this is probably the introduction of a dual modality of formal vocational education in the system (see Chap. 11) that has ignored the already existing apprenticeship system as long as 1980, with the approval of the Statute of Workers, which set up the basis for labour relations in modern democratic Spain.

Indeed, I have mentioned apprenticeship. Like in other countries, apprenticeship was the entry-level job for young people willing to access the industry in those areas where it had developed, often related to national companies, like the national airline (Iberia), railway (Renfe) or car (SEAT) companies. But as the vocational education system was rooted to the school in 1970, traditional apprenticeships were called to disappear. However, the Statue of Workers made room for them as a proper way to have access to the labour market with the aim to achieve professional knowledge and qualification. We have always had apprenticeships in Spain. Nevertheless, they have been disconnected from the educational system, and it has been the Department of Labour that has ruled and controlled them.

Perhaps that control has not been as effective as it should have, as there are no data at all on the qualifications to which apprenticeships have led (CCOO 2017), covering around 1% of the contracts without huge variations between the 1990s and year 2006 (Gómez, Contreras and Gracia 2009). *Apprenticeships*, as well as *training* and *practice* contracts (the three different legal figures that have been used along the past three and a half decades), have not accomplished their legal aims. Instead, they have been used as cheap labour, with no emphasis on providing a qualification, on retaining apprentices once they had improved their abilities and knowledge, without giving them a career prospect. Apprenticeships in Spain have not been considered as a training mechanism generally speaking (Coscubiela and Rojo 2012) and they have not been used for their original purpose (López and Cueto 2017).

Therefore, apprenticeships in Spain do not have any relevant impact upon training nor qualification. Nevertheless, national and regional governments since 2012 have fostered or supported the introduction of a dual modality which is promoted, managed and led by the education system and not the labour market and which does not necessarily imply nor require a labour relation, hence under the role of students instead of being considered trainees or apprentices.

To what extent can we speak about a training culture among Spanish companies? This is a question that is addressed in several chapters in this book, namely, all those that have FCT as an object of study (Chaps. 2 and 7). The issue was also raised by the Cedefop (2015) in a research report where data from Spain were compared to those of other countries.

Nevertheless, as Chap. 6 points out, the vocational education system and its network of schools is struggling to reverse this situation. There are nowadays three kinds of vocational education schools, two of which intend to play a role in the economic and local development of their region. These are named Integrated schools

(CIFP, 162 scattered throughout the country[5]) and are currently offering both vocational education as well as vocational training, hence serving the needs of different kinds of population (traditionally separated audiences of both vocational educational system and vocational training market) and keeping close contact with employers both as partners as well as customers whose demands schools are ready to listen to. The connection with the productive fabric and the involvement of these schools in their context make them institutions which demand an autonomy that the education system is not used to allowing and which implies entrepreneurial as well as innovative practices by teachers and students. There are also the national reference VET schools (CRN, 49 in the whole country[6]), highly specialized in an occupational domain and that have also close contact with the employers in that sector. It is worth noting that CRN are promoted not only by the Department of Education but also by the Department of Labour, and the last ones were approved in 2013.

The third kind of VET schools, however, are ordinary VET schools which share buildings with secondary compulsory education and with the post-compulsory academic paths. This means that these schools are more used to follow the traditional behaviour of the educational administration, which has been mainly driven by an academic, not a vocational drift.

This being said, over the past four decades, a multitude of actors has taken part in the delivery of vocational training to young and adult people, students and workers, unemployed and employees; and employers and trade unions, municipalities, NGOs and private providers have been part of those developments. Qualification policies have been designed and implemented with the agreement of the administrations of Education and Labour but with the relevant input of employer and union representatives. They have developed their own network of training institutions, sometimes parallel to vocational schools and sometimes in relation and close cooperation to them. They have fostered a flexible body of vocational trainers who have specialized in this role and who have been trained and even accredited towards this aim, as is described in Chap. 5. Several forms of light training have also been provided, by the Chambers of Commerce, to workers in charge of vocational students during their work placements (FCT). Vocational education teachers have had the chance to work in their occupational fields as well as to be in contact with their respective industries in order to plan and assess learning in those work placements.

While this cooperation happened in the field of practice, both in formal vocational education and in non-formal vocational training, as explained in Chap. 6, a similar dialogue was being held in the domain of policy-making, employer and union representatives, administration representatives and teacher representatives, all of them have been involved since the late 1980s in consultative committees like the CGFP established in 1986 as well as in technical committees that have resulted in legislation, the key one being the 2002 Law on Qualifications and Vocational Education and later in 2009 the Decree on Accreditation of knowledge acquired

[5] Source: http://todofp.es/sobre-fp/informacion-general/centros-integrados/nuevos-centros.html

[6] Source: http://www.todofp.es/dam/jcr:a43ff405-b7b0-4bcf-b4e4-f7dc9720df40/crnfpenero-2013-pdf.pdf

through experience, as well as in relevant technical tools, like the National Catalogue on Vocational Qualifications. Chapter 4 describes and discusses these tools and their limited impact.

The time when employers complained that vocational policies were not responsive to their needs has long ago passed, as they have been and are nowadays active part of the design and development of vocational curricula, both formal and non-formal, as well as co-responsible of their delivery, be it through FCT, Dual VET or through their own institutions and networks.

This is a panorama of close cooperation that has been the rule in the system and which has no way backwards, despite the misuse and abuse that has been made of continuing vocational education, to which there is reference in Chap. 3. The record of bad practice around the management of Continuing VET, which has been addressed in a couple of occasions along the past 25 years, was shifted radically in 2015, through the new Law ruling vocational training for employment and which meant the withdrawal of employers and unions from the management of continuing training, in favour of its privatization and the increase of the market conditions for VET planning and delivery. The implications of such a legislative change are relevant for they are a breakdown in the consensus around the principle of participation of all agents involved. Such a measure is hard to understand, particularly given that it also comes at a time when formal vocational education is demanding the involvement of those actors in the planning and delivery of dual VET. Dismissing relevant actors from the management of CVET while demanding their cooperation with initial VET has impacts upon the commitment of actors, as Chaps. 3, 6, 7, 10 and 11 discuss.

1.5 Transitions Between Education and Work, Guidance and Careers

With the large numbers of unemployment, as well as the large number of youth unemployment in the country, transition from education into work has been a relevant issue of study, reaching a peak over 50% youth unemployment in 2013. Chapters 8 and 9 take it as their object and they look at it from the confronting perspectives of success and failure; and data on unemployment are shown in Table 1.3.

Both the data as well as the evolution of unemployment show developments in huge contrast with European averages and trends. Even if the crisis in 2008 had a severe impact upon the labour market, like elsewhere, the evolution in the precedent decades was also variable and not easy to explain (Serrano and Soler 2015). It is worth highlighting the decade between 1996 to 2006, when unemployment decreased significantly based upon the increase in tourism and construction. However, lowering youth unemployment contributed along that decade to the increase of early school leaving, as young people left their studies as they were attracted by low qualified employment chances (CES 2009).

Table 1.3 Unemployment in Spain

Year	1975	1985	1995	2005	2015
Unemployment	3.7%	21.5%	22.8%	8.7%	21.2%
Youth unemployment	10%	38.8%	>40%	18.62%	46.24%

Own elaboration
Source: https://elpais.com/elpais/2015/11/18/media/1447871942_778264.html
Sources: I had to refer to several sources here, for desegregation of data has been difficult. I have used the following three: García (2011, 4), Cachón (1997, 54–55) and INE (http://www.ine.es/jaxiT3/Tabla.htm?t=4247). Data are estimated for the different consideration of what is youth unemployment along these decades as well as variations in age range

Taking these figures into consideration, it is clear that what has been a problem all throughout the history of recent democratic Spain is the difficult transitions from education into work for young people. First, we can see a combined process of displacement and overqualification. Some have blamed the system of vocational education, without taking into account that far more students were attending Baccalaureates and higher education than VET. Furthermore, it has not been considered that the labour market itself was making use of the hiring mechanisms and regulations in order to employ a workforce whose skills did not match the requirements of the workplace, in some cases due to overqualification, in some others for the lack of qualification required for the workplace, which in certain regions and sectors was interpreted as an invitation to leave school early (Homs 2009; Fernández Enguita et al. 2010; VVAA 2010).

The fact is that the only known vocational education offer, the only one relatively stable, is that of the education system, school-based VET; while all the non-formal vocational training offer is subject to changes in terms of sectors, training providers, places available as well as the very calendar of the training offer. There is a lack of joint, coordinated and proper advanced planning; and this is twofold. On the side of formal VET, the offer is stable but slow to adapt to demands of the productive system. On the side of non-formal vocational training, the offer is provided in such a short-term that it is often inefficient in terms of responding to the demands of the market as well as it is not easy to have it addressed to the population which might make the most out of it. Furthermore, due to the different funding sources, there are huge variations in the months in which the offer is made available, often the offers overlap and they are not even known until almost the beginning of the training sessions. Public advertising is also a factor against the efficient functioning of the guidance process which, in the end, is very weak as it lacks the mechanisms to provide a good service: information on the trends in the market so that young people can plan a career, as well as information about the offer in the short and medium term so that people may plan their transition.

I speak of a guidance process and not system because there is no systematic career guidance in the country, no stable structure behind it. As explained above, guidance is mainly of academic nature, and it has often supported the idea of families and society that young people should keep studying and making progress towards university. More importantly, vocational education is far more complex

than academic education and the offer is much wider, resulting in an imbalance between choices. This happens in a country[7] where mobility has always been low and emancipation from parents' home happens at a much later age than in most European countries (Benedicto 2017). Furthermore, if we add the lack of publicly available information on the vocational training provision, the result is that most guidance happens only within the educational system and is addressed towards the educational system itself.

It is impossible to provide good guidance into vocational training provision and into the world of work when there are no stable professionals devoted to these tasks and where there are no public institutions which are supporting such a role, other than some municipalities or some trade unions. Even these institutions and the professionals working in them, who have the will and determination to conduct such a practice, lack resources as well as specific training and, what is more relevant, they have to work with last-minute information, all of which hinders effective guidance (Chisvert 2014). Guidance professionals lack appropriate structure and they are often entering the unemployment, whenever the funding for guidance is delayed or neglected, as it is not guaranteed for its lack of development, even if it was conceived as such in the 2002 Law.

1.6 Successful and Effective VET

'The end of VET as we know it' is the name of the congress called by the Swiss Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training in 2019.[8] If such a question can be raised in a country famous for its long and well established dual system, think of the questions we can make about VET in Spain: it could be *vocational education without work?* or *vocational education without career prospects?*, given the disconnections between VET and the labour market which do not necessarily mean lack of responsiveness of the VET subsystems, as I have tried to explain in the pages above and as the authors of the different chapters will explain.

Instead, looking back to look ahead, there are good reasons to be satisfied about the current status of VET, particularly of formal VET, school-based VET. Let me point to them.

Since the mid-1980s, a consensus around the value of vocational education and training and the need to improve its worth has grown in Spain (UCEV 2015). This consensus is established upon a previous development of the system: VET had taken the form of remedial education by the application of the Law approved in 1970. However, in 1984 VET students started to take work experience in real companies as a voluntary module after completion of the vocational curriculum. Companies started then to acknowledge the quality of VET, and its prestige grew thanks to the

[7] http://www.cje.org/en/our-work/empleo/actividades-y-campanas-del-cje/observatorio-joven-de-emancipacion/

[8] https://www.sfivet.swiss/vet-congress-2019

quality work of these students. Towards the end of the 1980s, sectoral committees were promoted by the Department of Education of the Spanish Government to which employer and union representatives were also invited, in an immense attempt to review and adapt all of the VET curricula towards the needs of the labour market. Such an attempt to devolve the control upon curriculum design to the social agents had never happened before to such a massive extent, and it had a relevant positive impact: first, establishing different competency levels as well as grouping all occupations within 26 professional branches, and, second, designing the curriculum upon the selection of the relevant professional competencies and as the result of agreement within those sectoral committees.

The efforts taken resulted in further agreements: in 1993, as Continuing Vocational Education was agreed for the first time between unions and employers, the First National Plan on VET was approved, then renewed in 1996. It was in 2002 that the only law on education that has not been contested in the past 40 years in the country was approved, the Law on Qualifications and Vocational Education. This is a unique case, considering that all education laws except this one have been either replaced or reformed by the political parties in the government. Since the early 1980s, education is still one of the main arenas for ideological dispute between conservatives and social democrats. Even though, they have been able to agree upon VET. Furthermore, the 2002 Law gained the esteem of all employer confederations and the largest trade unions, with hardly any social contestation. We can certainly talk about a wide consensus.

Nowadays one can still find traces of the myths about the 'pains' of Vocational Education in Spain. However, these are not but myths, as the quality of VET is without a doubt for almost three decades now. The consensus around VET has been altered by two measures developed by the Conservative party in Government between Winter 2011 and Spring 2018 the early 2012: on the one side, the incorporation of basic vocational education *within* compulsory schooling, and not after it, therefore prior to achieving the GESO (Marhuenda 2015) and, secondly, the introduction of a schooled dual VET (see Chap. 11) that was not demanded by social actors.

Employers, trade unions, VET teachers and the chambers are quite satisfied with current VET and they want to see improvements in non-formal and continuing vocational training. They have agreed on the qualifications, their definition, design and level. They feel responsible for vocational education and they have been working towards the integration of the three subsystems. Of course, there is room for reform and improvement potential, within the limits set by the 2002 law. Social recognition of VET can improve, but it has run a long way since the early 1980s. After the implementation of the 1990 reform, entry into the labour market for VET qualified workers has been significantly faster, easier and better than for university graduates (Cachón 1997; Monreal 2002; Homs 2009; Generalitat de Catalunya 2017), long before the erratic introduction of the dual type of VET.

VET in Spain functions indeed well, by no means worse than the post-16 academic path. It would be great if VET in Spain could keep on evolving upon the basis set up in the past decades and to the full achievement of the pillars established in the Law in 2002. Development and improvement rather than reform and change would make VET even better.

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Chapter 2
Building Up a VET System: Formal VET

Patricia Olmos-Rueda and Óscar Mas-Torelló

Abstract Vocational education and training (VET) has been influenced by the changing social context and labour market. VET has been forced to adapt to new labour scenarios and to seek how to develop needed competencies for working in professional settings and preparing for this changing labour market. According to these social and labour changes and its new requirements, in Spain, since the middle of the twentieth century, there have been changes and reforms of formal VET with the main purpose of improving its quality, social recognition, accessibility, etc. This chapter provides an overview of Spanish formal VET system and its evolution until nowadays through a complete description of the laws that have influenced VET, listing its characteristics, objectives, structure, levels and curriculum or programmes and focusing on the need of working on a collaborative model among all social agents on VET for its success transformation and development.

Keywords VET evolution · VET structure · VET characteristics · Social agents · Training in workplace

2.1 Introduction[1]

Adapted from *Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte* (MECD)[2] and Cedefop (2014, adapted from European Training Foundation, 1997), VET is understood as the set of training actions that aim to develop needed competencies

[1] The information in this section was obtained partially from the website of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport of the Government of Spain. *Todo FP*. Retrieved 2017 and 2018 from http://www.todofp.es

[2] Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport of the Government of Spain. *LOMCE. Formación Profesional.* Retrieved 2017 and 2018 from https://www.mecd.gob.es/educacion/mc/lomce/fp.html

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for working in professional settings and preparing themselves for the changing labour market, enabling their steps through regulated and non-regulated education system and their personal development.

In Spain, since the middle of the twentieth century, there have been various partial changes and reforms of VET (curriculum and/or organization), with the main purpose of improving the quality.

These changes have often been conditioned and/or supported by the European Union (EU), which Spain joined in 1986. Each state member is responsible of its education policies (including VET) although some current situations and future challenges set off the need of agree different aspects among all of them. According to Paredes (2014), the *Ley General de Educación* (General Education Act - LGE) of 1970 already featured a certain proximity to European approaches, especially regarding:

- "Integration of VET in the education system" (p. 7).
- Time spent on the curriculum is similar for both technical knowledge and general knowledge.
- Incorporation of the possibility of doing external in-company work placements (voluntary basis).

In 1990, LOGSE (General Organic Law of the Educational System) was the first educational law related to VET within the framework of a Spain now a member of the EU. After, the Ley Orgánica de las Cualificaciones y de la *Formación Profesional* (Qualifications and Vocational Training Act) was passed in 2002 as a specific VET law. In parallel, the Copenhagen Process was approved to raise, among other aspects, the quality of VET in Europe. There would later be further recommendations, declarations and announcements (European Qualifications Framework [EQF] 2008; European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training [EQARF – EQAVET] 2009; European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training [ECVET] 2009; Bruges Communiqué 2010; European Parliament resolution on European cooperation in vocational education and training to support the Europe 2020 strategy 2011; Riga Conclusions 2015; among others), in order to improve the overall quality of existing European vocational training systems.[3]

2.2 First Steps and Evolution of Spanish VET

The beginning of Spanish VET goes back to 1955 when the industrial sector emerged and the first VET law (The Industrial VET law) was promulgated as a consequence of new labour and productive requirements. During this period time, VET was characterized by the close relation between factory and VET within a

[3] Based mainly on information from the website of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport of the Government of Spain. *Todo FP*. Retrieved 2017 and 2018 from http://www.todofp.es

framework of VET apprenticeships. However, it is not until 1970 that Spanish VET became an education option integrated in the educational system.

In 1970 an educational reform came up with the LGE (General Educational Law) as a consequence of demands of an updated educational, social, political and labour Spanish context. VET was understood as an educational chance for students and not a parallel and marginal pathway. The article 40.1 of the LGE established that "VET has to recruit students for developing their elected profession and continuing their comprehensive training and that VET has to be closely linked to the workplace".

Within the framework of LGE, the VET system (regulated by the *Decreto 995/1974, de 14 de marzo, sobre Ordenación de la Formación Profesional*) was involved in the Educational System and it articulated in levels. The first one (FPI) was the vocational pathway for the students – the main option for all those who did not finish their compulsory studies. It aimed to provide a minimum knowledge base to the performance of a job; hence it had a compensatory feature. The second one (FPII) aimed to specialize and improve professional training in order to gain access to a workplace. Likewise, within the LGE framework, it is worth noting this improved VET system considered the students' experience in the workplace on a trial basis. It could be understood like the first step to link companies and VET even though it was very strongly academic education.

This was the first attempt to improve Spanish VET, but it is worth highlighting that if something has characterized Spanish VET since its origin, it has been its low social value and recognition – VET has been characterized for being a parallel and marginalized educational pathway characterized by its lack of coordination with the workplace and work agents and also by its lack of capacity for answering to real work demands – and LGE did not change this VET social perception. According to Menéndez (2013), LGE perpetuated the conception of VET studies of second category (specially the first level FPI). In other words, VET was considered the educational alternative for school leavers without option for accessing the academic pathway (baccalaureate as the only entry gate into university). Neither society nor educational agents and companies conceived VET as a worthy option. For example, at the end of compulsory studies, successful students were guided for taking baccalaureate studies, the direct way for accessing university. Likewise, companies were not enough involved with VET schools.

This VET model was in force until 1990 when a new educational law came up (LOGSE , General Organic Law of the Educational System) as a consequence of the access of Spain to European Union and in accordance with the new social, educational, economic and political requirements that this European framework implied to the Spanish context. Within this new framework, the 1970s VET model is obsolete and a change is needed. In this regard, LOGSE could be considered one of the most relevant VET reforms. In terms of authors as Marhuenda-Fluixá et al. (2015), Menéndez (2013) and Rial and Rego (2011), LOGSE is the beginning of the modernization of the Spanish VET system and of a new regulated VET model that recognizes VET as a worthy educational itinerary at the end of compulsory school.

As we can see later in this chapter, this VET model was characterized by a modular structure that aimed to answer European new requirements and be closely linked

to labour demands and contexts. To this end, VET system was organized according to the European qualification VET Levels, specifically Levels 2 and 3 – CFGM (formative cycle of medium level) and CFGS (formative cycle of higher level), respectively, organized according to professional families – and training in the workplace (FCT[4]) became a compulsory VET component, one of the most relevant component because it required coordination between both VET school and work contexts. Likewise, an alternative itinerary for early school leavers – all those who do not have the Certificate of Compulsory Secondary Education – was taken into account in terms of basic VET programmes named Social Guarantee Schemes (PGS), related to Level 1 VET; as we are going to explain later, these programmes have evolved significantly in the last years. All these elements were a strength of the VET model in LOGSE as well as the mandatory of achieving Compulsory Secondary Education Certificate to access to VET system – VET stopped being a parallel and marginalized educational pathway and began to be a worthy option.

Although this 1990s model meant an important change for Spanish VET, it embedded some weaknesses such as the lack of bridges among the academic itineraries, the breaking between both 2 and 3 VET Levels, the lack of a real commitment and coordination between companies and training centres or the development of basic skills or key competencies, to name the main ones. These weaknesses led towards the necessity of rethinking VET and the relations among education, VET and work (Casal et al. 2003; Menéndez 2013).

In order to answer the above needs, two national plans of VET were designed between 1993 and 2002. The first one (PNFP) was from 1993 to 1998 and the second one (NPNFP) was from 1988 to 2002, when another reform came up with the *Ley Orgánica 5/2002, de 19 de junio, de las Cualificaciones y de la Formación Profesional* (LOCFP, Organic law of qualification and VET). It aimed to integrate all formal and non-formal VET supply as well as CVET like a unique system in order to consolidate VET as a strategic axis for social and labour inclusion, providing people with marketed and non-marketed benefits that support a well-functioning productive system, the promotion and guarantee of equal opportunities to access the job market as well as active social participation (MECD 2011; Olmos-Rueda 2017; Rial and Rego 2011). LOCFP worked for adapting VET to the European context and its requirements, and bringing VET and the Spanish job market much closer together.

Working in line with this new scenario, in 2006 a new educational law (LOE; Organic law of Education) was promulgated. This new legal framework was focused on working towards the qualification improvement of people at risk of social and labour exclusion emphasizing VET as a training model based on competencies, and making VET more flexible and adaptable to make it accessible for all those people that want to improve their labour competencies and work qualification. Within the framework of LOE, the concept of lifelong learning emerges as a key strategy for answering the social and labour requirements of the changing society (Pérez and Rahona 2009), as well as the efforts for improving the education of young people at

[4] Editor's note: See Chap. 7 for further information on the work placements and the developments of FCT along the past 25 years.

risk of social, labour and educational exclusion. To this end, Social Guarantee Schemes (PGS) were replaced by the Initial Vocational Qualification Programmes (PCPI) addressed to the same kind of young people without Certificate of Compulsory Secondary Education but with relevant differences in its curriculum organization and structure in order to contribute not only to the improvement of the education of young people at risk of social, labour and educational exclusion equipping them with a Level 1 VET, as Marhuenda et al. (2015) claim, but also improving the social image of these basic VET programmes. In other words, PCPI became second chance training programmes for vulnerable young people and contributed to their participation in society (Field et al. 2012; Olmos-Rueda and Mas-Torelló 2013; Abiétar-López et al. 2017).

Focusing our attention on the main relevant differences among PGS, PCPI, and FPB, we can point the law framework, students' profile, structure and certification. Regarding the *law framework*, PGS were regulated by LOGSE (1990), PCPI were regulated by LOE (2006) and FPB were regulated by LOMCE (2013) and Real Decreto 127/2014. According to these laws and other authors as Palomares and López (2012), in regard with *students' profile*, PGS were addressed to unemployed young people aged 16–25 without any academic certification, PCPI were addressed to young people from 16 years old without the Certificate of Compulsory Secondary Education and exceptionally, young people aged 15, and FPB are addressed to young people, who are proposed by teaching staff or progenitors, that have passed the first cycle of Compulsory Secondary Education and are from 15 years old or not older than 17 year at the time of inscription or throughout the course. Regarding the *structure* of these programmes, PGS were structured into one academic year while PCPI and FPB are structured into two academic years. Finally, in regard with *certification*, PGS only gave access to a certificate of PGS, PCPI gave access to a professional accreditation and the opportunity to get a certificate of Compulsory Secondary Education, and FPB gave access to medium-level formative cycle (CFGM, level 2) and, like PCPI, to the opportunity of getting a Compulsory Secondary certificate.

As we can see above, these basic VET programmes have evolved improving their social image through the improvement not only of the students' requirements for accessing to these but also the opportunities that these programmes offer to young people, who are enrolled in them, to continue in formal VET programmes or to access to the job market.

In 2008, the financial crisis started, and its impact on Spanish employment was severe with unqualified workers, unskilled young people being particularly badly affected – data of young people's unemployment were near 50% (INE 2009). Given the seriousness of this unemployment situation, VET turns again into the way for palliating early school leaving and improving labour situation through the improvement of qualification. According to CEDEFOP (2009, p. 15), 'VET has an important role in increasing and sustaining labour-market participation but this can be considered as a narrow form of social inclusion'.

In 2011, the LES (Law of Sustainable Economy) and its Complementary Organic Law were promulgated whose aim was to make more attractive and competitive VET through more flexible access to VET studies, connecting VET to other opportuni-

Table 2.1 Evolution of students' enrolment in VET

	2005–2006	2008–2009	2011–2012	2012–2013	2015–2016	2016–2017 (provisional data)
Level 1 VET	44,927	54,914	84,217	84,009	61,909	69,299
Level 2 VET	230,174	249,506	302,455	317,365	327,134	317,966
Level 3 VET	217,255	223,098	280,495	300,321	314,607	328,319

Source of data: Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport of the Government of Spain. Retrieved 2017 from https://www.mecd.gob.es/servicios-al-ciudadano-mecd/estadisticas/educacion/no-universitaria/alumnado/matriculado.html
According to RD 1147/2011 and RD 127/2014: Level 1 (FPB) is ISCED 3.5.3, Level 2 (CFGM) is ISCED 3B and Level 3 (CFGS) is ISCED 5B

Table 2.2 Students' enrolment in VET and academic programmes

	Baccalaureate	Level 1 VET	Level 2 VET	Level 3 VET
2015–2016	644,165	61,909	327,134	314,607
2016–2017 (provisional data)	642,280	69,299	317,966	328,319

Source of data: Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport of the Government of Spain. Retrieved 2017 from https://www.mecd.gob.es/servicios-al-ciudadano-mecd/estadisticas/educacion/no-universitaria/alumnado/matriculado.html

ties – it allowed students to design their own itineraries, and renewing VET supply according to the productive system (MECD 2011; Menéndez 2013; Rial and Rego 2011); according to Descy and Tessaring (2002, p. 7), a more attractive VET depends on its social position and the labour possibilities that this offers. However, it was lived for a short period of time as a consequence of the change of the Spanish Government in 2015, when a new VET law came up (*Ley 30/2015, de 9 de septiembre, por la que se regula el Sistema de Formación Profesional para el empleo en el ámbito laboral*) – this law was not an educational law like LOMCE (2013) as we can see later.

As we have seen till here, in our Spanish context, VET has been influenced by different laws. Some of those have been specific laws of VET and others have been general education laws. However, in one way or another, all of them have worked to improve VET recognition.

Currently, it is possible to state that VET is gaining social recognition. Students' enrolment in VET has increased considerably since 2007 until nowadays, as we can see in Table 2.1; although VET has improved its social recognition, VET continues being a second option, as we can see in Table 2.2 (MECD 2016a, b).

This current trend of VET enrolment is in accordance with the tendency of VET enrolment during the 1980s and 1990s. For example, in 1985–1986, the percentage of students' enrolment in VET was of 33.6% against 66.4% of students who were enrolled in Baccalaureate (Rivière et al. 1988). In the same way, in 1995–1996, the percentage of students' enrolment in VET was of 35.86% against 64.14% of students who were enrolled in Baccalaureate (Murillo 1997).

Likewise, although data of Spanish VET enrolment have improved in the last years, these are lower than the European VET enrolment average (MECD 2016a). It is due to the fact that VET in the Spanish context is not still an alternative educa-

tional pathway, like in other European contexts, because academic pathway continues being the prior academic itinerary.

It is possible to think that the social value of VET in the Spanish context is still poor. Not always, but VET continues being undervalued by a section of the Spanish society (e.g., families as one of the most significant one) and considered as a second choice to the academic pathway. It is obvious that Spanish VET needs to be revalued to improve its social image. To this end, some interesting initiative promoting by entities like Fundación Bertelsmann[5] are currently working on, improving the links between VET and the job market, which need to be stronger (Descy and Tessaring 2002; MECD 2016a; Pérez and Rahona 2009), and emphasizing Dual VET.

The Educational Law that was promulgated in 2013 in the Spanish context (LOMCE, Organic Law for the improvement of education quality) wants to work in the way of VET improvement according to OECD 2012 suggestions (OECD 2014, 2015) such as clearer pathways for learners, modern VET itineraries, development of basic skills, more flexible VET, better guidance processes, encouraging of learning in the workplace supported by Dual VET, internationalize Level 3 VET, to name a few (Gomendio 2015). It is worth noting here one of the changes that this law means to VET Level 1, which current name is Basic VET (FPB[6]) –from PCPI to FPB–. VET Level 1 is integrated in the last year of compulsory secondary education in Spain, this is the lower secondary educational level like the professional alternative for students although, to be critical of this law, the fact of this pathway could be meant like the alternative for students at risk of dropout, makes us to reflect and ask ourselves, in accordance with Menéndez (2013) and Marhuenda-Fluixá et al. (2017), if this does not mean a step back for the future of VET. The consideration of a professional pathway for students during their compulsory education is interesting and it could be potential resources for tackling early school leaving and risk of exclusion (Cutanda 2014). Nevertheless, the fact of considering it as the alternative path for students with more difficulties to follow academic itineraries could flip the good image of VET and turn it again into a 'marginal' itinerary.

The future of VET depends on many factors. The systematic reforms, which have been pursued, have contributed to the improvement of Spanish VET, but some challenges have still to be resolved (Field et al. 2012), and one of these challenges is the importance to emphasize the commitment of social, educational and economic agents and its involvement in VET and in its future.

[5] *Fundación Bertelsmann. Formación professional dual.* Retrieved 2018 from https://www.fundacionbertelsmann.org/de/home/formacion-profesional-dual/

[6] Editor's note: See Chap. 8 for further information on Basic VET.

2.3 Current Characteristics of Formal VET[7]

As explained in previous sections, formal VET has evolved along with changes in society. Among other, all of the aforesaid modifications have configured formal VET as we know it today within the Spanish educational context, and taking into consideration relevant features such as structure, goals, duration, in and out ways to CFGM and CFGS, to name a few (see in more detail in next sections).

In Spain, the current structure of formal VET is formed by 26 vocational families (LOE certificates), each including different certificates of Level 1, 2 and 3 (more than 150 in total), with a few exceptions (based on website of the Ministry of Education and VET of the Government of Spain).[8]

2.3.1 Formal VET Objectives

According to LOMCE (2013), among others, the main objectives of formal VET are linked to students' train to work in a professional field, to facilitate their permanence in the training context and to make possible their adaptation to labour changes.

However, if we focus our attention on students, the main purposes of formal VET are, among other aspects (LOMCE 2013), to acquire the professional competencies, to work safely, to know the labour sector, to understand the labour law, to know the processes for finding employment and to motivate for the lifelong learning.

2.3.2 Formal VET: Level 2 (CFGM) and Level 3 (CFGS)

These training programmes (in Catalonia) are structured into one or two academic years with a duration of 1400 or 2000 hours, respectively, this training period being divided between the school and the workplace (based on website of the Ministry of Education of the Government of Catalonia[9]).

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[7] The information in this section was partially obtained from *Todo FP* the official website of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport of the Government of Spain (Retrieved 2017 and 2018 from http://www.todofp.es), and *Ministry of Education of the Government of Catalonia*, *Estudiar a Catalunya* and *Ensenyaments Professionals* the official websites of the Government of Catalonia (Retrieved 2017 and 2018 from http://ensenyament.gencat.cat, http://queestudiar.ngencat.cat/es/estudis/fp and http://xtec.gencat.cat/ca/curriculum/professionals)

[8] Source of data: *La FP actual. Todo FP.* Website of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport of the Government of Spain. Retrieved 2018 from http://todofp.es/sobre-fp/informacion-general/sistema-educativo-fp/fp-actual.html

[9] Source of data: *Información general. Estudiar a Catalunya.* Website of the Government of Catalonia (Retrieved November, 2018 from http://queestudiar.gencat.cat/es/estudis/fp/info-general/)

The formative cycles are structured into several types of modules in the Spanish context (adapted from *Real Decreto 1147/2011* (article 22, 23, 24 and 25), *Decret 284/2011(article 11)* and the curriculum of Formative Cycles[10]):

- 'Vocational modules that are common' to all formative cycles: 'Formación en centros de trabajo' (training in the workplace, FCT) module that will be explained in Sect. 2.3.2.1 and Chap. 7, 'empresa e iniciativa emprendedora' (enterprise and entrepreneurial initiative, EIE) module (which works, among other aspects, on such matters as entrepreneurship, innovation, company start-up, and management) and 'formación y orientación laboral' (employment training and guidance, FOL) module (which works, among other aspects, on finding employment, the labour world, labour legislation and the prevention of occupational hazards)
- Vocational modules that enable the acquisition of competence units of the National Vocational Qualifications Catalogue
- Other vocational modules (optional) that are not related to competence units
- "Project module" (only in CFGS),[11] that is taken at the end of the formative cycle. The students have to show that they have achieved the general objectives and have acquired the different competencies of the Formative Cycle

Although there are multiple ways for accessing CFGM, the priority (for the 2017–2018 academic year to Catalonia) is to pass *Educación Secundaria Obligatoria* (Compulsory Secondary Education) (83%), to have passed an entrance course or test (10.3%) or to come from another Formative Cycle (3.1%).[12] Likewise, passing a CFGM grants entrance to *Bachillerato* (Baccalaureate), a CFGS and/or employment.

CFGS can be accessed in different ways, although the main means of entrance (for the 2017–2018 academic year to Catalonia) are by passing Baccalaureate (45.9% of enrolled students) via a specific entrance course or test (25.7%) or from another Formative Cycle (24.2%).[13] Likewise, passing a CFGS grants access to certain university degree courses and/or employment.

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[10] *Todo FP. The curriculum of Formative Cycles,* official website of the Ministry of Education and VET of the Government of Spain (Retrieved 2018 from http://todofp.es/que-como-y-donde-estudiar/que-estudiar/ciclos.html)

[11] In CFGM, a similar module (named summarized module or similar) is optional; this condition depends on the curriculum of the formative cycle and/or the Autonomous Community (administrative regions) where it runs (e.g., in Catalonia this summarized module is compulsory, *Decret 284/2011*).

[12] Data available for the 2017–2018 academic year corresponding to Catalonia, provided by the Ministry of Education of the Government of Catalonia (last update 09-10-2018). Retrieved 2018 from http://ensenyament.gencat.cat/ca/departament/estadistiques/indicadors/sistema-educatiu/escolaritzacio/regim-general-presencial-semipresencial/

[13] Data available for the 2017–2018 academic year corresponding to Catalonia, provided by the Ministry of Education of the Government of Catalonia (last update 09-10-2018). Retrieved 2018 from http://ensenyament.gencat.cat/ca/departament/estadistiques/indicadors/sistema-educatiu/escolaritzacio/regim-general-presencial-semipresencial/

Most formative cycles are taken in face-to-face format, but there is another alternative remote, for which the number of enrolled students has increased in recent years. According to data from the MECD,[14] on CFGM and CFGS, 101 certificates are offered remotely, for which there has been a rise from 10,951 enrolled students in 2007–2008 to 57,931 in 2015–2016. In Catalonia, in the academic year 2017–2018 (first semester), according to data from the Ministry of Education of the Government of Catalonia,[15] on CFGM and CFGS, there has been an enrolled 22,444 students in remote format.

2.3.2.1 Training in the Workplace (FCT)

The compulsory and evaluable work placement, named training in the workplace module (FCT), is defined as 'simple alternation', because it combines in-company training (without academic recognition of the time of activity spent on the workplace) and training at the vocational school (*Resolució ENS1024/2012*) (for more details, see Chap. 7).

2.3.2.2 Dual VET

Although this modality has been widely implanted in other contexts, in Spain the foundations are based on *Real Decreto 1529/2012* and the LOMCE (2013), so its implantation is still in process (Pineda et al. 2017).

According to *Resolució ENS1024/2012*, the 'alternation with dual training modality' in the formative cycles develops its training activities in both vocational school and workplace (both training activities receive academic recognition) (for more details regarding Spanish Dual VET implementation, see Chap. 11). This situation is logical, as Tejada states (2005, p. 24) 'the very definition of vocational competence associated to experience and to the certain context fosters displacement of training itself towards the labour system'.

2.3.3 Basic VET Program (VET Level 1)

In Spain, these Level 1 VET programmes (FPB) are integrated in the education system. The duration of these programmes (FPB) is 2000 hours (two academic years), with an FCT that must be of a minimum duration of 240 hours (if this type

[14] Source of data: *La FP actual. Todo FP.* Website of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport of the Government of Spain. Retrieved 2018 from http://todofp.es/sobre-fp/informacion-general/sistema-educativo-fp/fp-actual.html

[15] Data available for the 2017–2018 academic year corresponding to Catalonia, provided by the Ministry of Education of the Government of Catalonia. (last update 13-09-2018). Retrieved from http://ensenyament.gencat.cat/ca/departament/estadistiques/indicadors/sistema-educatiu/escolaritzacio/alumnes-distancia/

of program is run using the dual training modality, this can be extended to 3 years) (*Real Decreto 127/2014*).

These training programmes are structured into several types of modules, which are 'constituted by theoretical-practical knowledge areas whose purpose is the acquisition of vocational, personal and social competencies and permanent lifelong learning competencies' (Real Decreto 127/2014 article 4). According to Real Decreto 127/2014, article 9, these modules are:

- Modules that enable the acquisition of competence units of the National Vocational Qualifications Catalogue
- Other vocational modules (optional) that are not related to competencies linked to this professional profile
- Modules related to general knowledge and competences for lifelong learning ('applied sciences' and 'communication and society')
- 'Training in the workplace modules' (FCT)

Access to these programmes, its exits routes and possible certifications are mentioned in Sect. 2.2.

2.4 The Role of Social Agents in the Evolution and Change of Spanish VET

As we have seen, Spanish VET has been changing according to social and labour changes and its new requirements; the efforts to update VET qualification, mainly according to local territory demands (Olmos-Rueda and Mas-Torelló 2017; Rego et al. 2017), or to design a Dual VET model are some examples of these VET changes and tendencies through the different reforms that have been pursued. Every one of these Reforms have tended to adapt VET to new social and labour frameworks based on competencies and to awareness-raising on VET as a smart choice; that is, as an attractive choice with the capacity to respond to labour market needs and personal expectations, as Thyssen (2017) says.

Evolution and change of Spanish VET requires to sustain the participation, collaboration, co-responsibility and consensus of all the social agents (employers and unions, teachers, students, policymakers, public administration, chambers of commerce, etc.) on VET policy in different levels – national government, autonomous communities and regional and local government – working on and toward the same objectives (Bassols and Salvans 2016; Field et al. 2012; Rego et al. 2015; Scandurra 2016; Valiente et al. 2015). That is, it requires to take into consideration the role that social agents have to have in order to make possible a viable, attractive and flexible VET system.

Within this VET framework, there is the necessity to assume a common responsibility between companies – and/or employers – and education agents or that companies/employers, unions, teachers and administration work on a common model that can really adapt to social and labour market needs.

Till nowadays, Spanish VET system has evolved out of the consensus among the social agents although, sometimes, this consensus seems to be at risk, as in the case of current Dual VET model that has been designed by the Administration without the other social agents, as Marhuenda-Fluixá et al. (2017) say.

Companies/employers have a role on formal VET system. They are the setting for training on the workplace (FCT). Companies provide a workplace where students can train their competencies. To this aim, employers should design working plans that students have to develop during their stage in the company and under the supervision of the company tutor. It is worth highlighting the need to link companies/employers to the schools through the figure of the tutors. Both tutors , the academic tutor in the school and the company tutor in the workplace, are responsible of students' education process. They have the responsibility to design students' working plan on both scenarios, schools and workplace, to identify which competencies they have to acquire and develop and to plan students' assessment. In short, the development of both tutors' role requires a strong coordination in order to achieve a positive impact on students' learning, their motivation, their access to the job market, etc. Nevertheless, sometimes, this coordination is lacking, becoming clear that it needs to be improved (Mas Torelló et al. 2012; Olmos-Rueda and Mas-Torelló 2017) because, as Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Services (n.d., p. 107) says, a collaborative training model between companies and schools means advantages for companies such as good standing, decrease in training costs, flexible organization, adaptation to local or regional requirements, to name a few.

One example of success collaboration model among social agents on VET is the Alliance for Dual Vocational Training in Catalonia (Bassols and Salvans 2016). It is a network of companies, schools and institutions committed to work on and develop a high-quality Dual VET system in Spain. For example, the members of this Alliance contribute to define which elements need to be developed, modified or improved and also develop tools for supporting company tutors in their training function such as is the Handbook for Company Tutors in Dual VET (Caballero and Lozano 2016).

Other example of Catalan initiatives towards VET transformation according to a collaborative, integrated and Dual VET model is the implementation of the *Llei 10/2015, del 19 de juny, de Formació i Qualificació Professionals* (Law of training and professional qualification of Catalonia). The Steering Committee of this law is integrated by the Government of Catalonia, business organizations, unions, local administration and Chambers of Commerce.

Other example is the case of Basque Dual VET (Astigarra Echeverría et al. 2017; Rego et al. 2015) that since the 1990s has worked on the development of a collaborative VET model between companies/employers and the Administration of Basque Autonomous Community although not always with success because of the lack of involvement by the companies/employers. Currently, Basque Administration manages VET system in collaboration with four VET organizations – IVAC (Basque high school of VET knowledge), TKNIKA (Centre of applied research and innovation of VET), IDEATK (Basque high school of creativity applied to VET) and CVFP (Basque council of VET) – and develops good initiatives like ETHAZI model in VET (Astigarra Echeverría et al. 2017) or the last Basque VET Plan that leads VET

transformation towards an international and proactive model before labour market and companies' needs, capable of training higher qualified professionals, working on network and focusing on active entrepreneurship (*Departamento de Educación, Política Lingüística y Cultura -Gobierno Vasco-, 2014*).

As we can see, a collaborative model among all social agents on VET is key for its success transformation and development. Every social agent has to develop its role according to the others, especially companies and schools. Both schools and companies have to share their training role in order to develop qualified apprenticeships and working together for this purpose with the support of Administration, – in all its levels, national, regional, and local – and the other social agents (Scandurra 2016; Valiente et al. 2015).

2.5 Suggestions for Conclusions

As we have seen above, although VET system has acquired relevance in the latest years, it is still a challenge for the Spanish context.

As Field et al. (2012) claim, the main strengths of the VET system that are possible to point are the engagement of social agents in the VET system, the reforms that has been pursued according to new social and labour requirement, the improvement of VET as a pathway and the pathways through it, connection with other pathways. Also, it has to be taken into consideration the consensus between national government, autonomous communities in the regions of Spain, employers and unions on VET policy – with the exception of the current Dual VET model – and the use of basic VET programmes as a second choice for engagement or re-engagement of young people at risk of dropping out of the school.

Despite progress on VET, changes are still needed. According to Riga conclusions (2015), the main challenges of Spanish VET are the improvement of its attractiveness and accessibility. VET tends to make itself visible to society and transform itself into a smart choice.

An overview of main challenges on Spanish VET makes us focus our attention on competencies and employability, VET recognition, transference of learning, VET pathways, especially Dual VET, VET resources, requirements for VET teachers, trainers or VET groups, to name a few (Bassols and Salvans 2016; Field et al. 2012; Marhuenda 2012; Olmos-Rueda and Mas-Torelló 2017; Scandurra 2016; Valiente et al. 2015; Wolter and Mühlemann 2015).

According to these challenges, it is possible to conclude that:

- VET system has to focus the attention not only on complex competencies within specifically professional frameworks, also on basic skills that are key competencies for employability (to name a few, instrumental, adaptive or participative skills/competencies).
- Linked to the above challenge, some VET groups are object of concern for VET system, especially all those are in vulnerable situation and at risk of exclusion

(early leavers, unemployed and employees over 40, etc.). Data show once again how low qualification and low employability are the main cause of this risk situation and point out the need to work on VET improvement.

- In a system where developing practical vocational skills is a key issue, it is interesting to see how there is no requirement for VET teachers and trainers to have worked in their vocational field although they do need to be qualified in that field. VET teachers and trainers need to improve their professional profile, especially their psycho-pedagogical background.
- Despite enrolment in VET is growing the model requires to be checked. A governance on VET and institutional engagement, participation of all social agents involved on VET policy or the development of an evaluation process with the collaboration of all social agents in order to promote the improvement of schools are needed.
- Linked to above challenge, there is a good predisposition of collaboration between training contexts and work contexts, but it is not enough. Dual VET is a good initiative although, as we said before, it has to be improved. For example, a minimum critical mass of involved companies and schools is required, it is necessary to take into consideration the profile of companies in our context characterized for being small or micro enterprises and study their main difficulties for participating in VET; the role of company tutor has to change, it has to be recognized and supported providing them with tools and resources like training as well as the coordination between both company tutor and educational tutor. It is highlighting the necessity to improve both tutors' psychological and pedagogical training.
- Orientation processes need reform in order to recognize VET as an attractive pathway. In accordance with some research (Cedefop 2016; Mas Torelló et al. 2017), wrong orientation and/or a students' inadequate orientation is one of the reasons for dropping out VET pathways or for not considering VET as a choice. For example, as Cedefop (2016, p. 97) claims, many students choose VET tracks because they think it is the alternative option to the academic pathway that they are not able to continue because of their grades.
- Promoting lifelong learning through VET. The continuous changes in the socio-economic context make it essential that strategies for lifelong learning have been developed and VET becomes one of these strategies (Lindell and Abrahamsson 2002). VET is linked to both contexts of education and work, and it contributes not only to individual development of students but at the same time also to the labour market opportunities for these students. That is, VET makes possible to prepare people for a changing labour market that requires their continuous adaptation.
- Flexibility and adaptability of VET pathways are required (e-learning, accreditation processes, recognition of qualification, etc.) as well as a major offer of VET studies, new VET certification more in accordance with needs of the job market.

These challenges lead Spanish research approaches and make VET research as the tool for tackling these challenges in order to answer many questions about our

VET system. Questions like what we should know; that is, what is missing and which practices have to be implemented and guided via action-based research (prospective on future VET research concerns) require continue researching. But, in sum, maybe the main VET challenge, question and research purpose should be how to make get VET more valued and visible to the society.

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Chapter 3
Continuing Vocational Education and Training in Spain: Current Organization and Challenges

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Abstract Traditionally, in Spain, continuing vocational education and training (hereinafter CVET) is conceived as an educational process aimed at the workforce as a whole, including initiatives aimed at both active workers and those seeking employment. Therefore, it refers to what is known in Spain as *Vocational Training for Employment* (in Spanish, *Formación para el Empleo*, FPE), which differs from initial vocational training (*Formación Profesional Inicial*), which is taught in ordinary professional and secondary schools in cooperation with companies. In this chapter we will analyse partway the FPE system in Spain, focusing especially on CVET aimed to employees. Previously, in order to contextualize this reality, a synthetic socio-economic approach of the Spanish labour market is introduced. In this way, it will be clearer and easier to understand the main characteristics of the CVET in the territory we are highlighting. It's intended to introduce CVET in Spain from a double perspective, legal organization and management on the one hand and results of different investigations and statistical approaches on another, to obtain a more realistic picture of the situation.

Finally, the new challenges for CVET in Spain are explained, paying special attention, among other issues, to social responsibility, to development and to the population at risk.

Keywords Lifelong learning · Continuing vocational education and training (CVET) · Labour market · Spain

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3.1 Introduction

In Spain there is a system aimed at training the active population as a whole, including actions designed for both the employed and the unemployed. This system is known as *Vocational Training for Employment* (in Spanish, *Formación para el Empleo*, FPE), and it differs from the initial vocational education and training established within the education system, which is generally developed in vocational and secondary schools in collaboration with companies.

In this chapter we will try to approach CVET in Spain from a double perspective: a theoretical-legislative and a practical one, with the aim of introducing this specific reality and its implications in relation to socio-economic and human development. First of all, we will briefly present some of the elements that characterize the Spanish labour market and how such factors are affecting CVET reality. Later, we will analyse more specifically and from a structural point of view how this training is organized—norms and regulations that build the official framework for the development of training inside companies. Next, we will try to make explicit the results of different studies on the subject that show, in practice, how this structural and normative dimension is translated into daily training actions. More specifically, we will mention the different conceptions and modalities of continuing education and training in Spain and the satisfaction level of workers with it (Aragón et al. 2003; Barreira Cerqueiras 2015; García Ruiz 2006), among other interesting data.

Finally, we will address some of the needs of the Spanish CVET model that represent challenges that make their role problematic in relation to, and among other issues, corporate social responsibility, the so-called Sustainable Development Goals—hereinafter SDG—proposed by the United Nations (UN 2015) or its answer to the growing social inequalities that riddle Spanish society nowadays.

3.2 A Concise Socio-economic Approach to the Spanish Labour Market: Factors That Contextualize and Have Influence on CVET

The specific socio-economic situation in Spain strongly determines how companies understand training actions aimed at their workers, the importance of the qualification of human resources and even their role in society as agents that must contribute to generate wealth and social welfare through remunerated employment and professional development of the active population.

The unemployment rate in Spain is currently (3Q17) at 16.38% (Statistics National Institute 2017a), confirming a downward trend in this figure since it peaked at 26.09% in 2013. However, the number of unemployed people in Spain is close to four million (Idem), although there are big differences between autonomous

communities.[1] At the same time, it is worth mentioning that the most vulnerable groups in relation to unemployment (Statistics National Institute 2017a) are women (19.04%) and young people under 25 (39.53%). The latter are usually harmed *by the importance given by employers in their hiring decisions to work experience* (García 2011, p. 3), beyond the education level achieved by individuals.

In relation to this analysis, the secondary qualification rate—professional or academic—among the Spain's adult population (25–64 years old) is also very low compared to other European countries.[2] In sociological terms, this means that either part of the population can't achieve such qualifications or that they don't consider it as an essential step when it comes to entering the labour market. Probably because vocational education and training in Spain has been traditionally considered as a type of training aimed, almost exclusively, to those students with low qualifications, therefore the reputation of this training was affected. In addition, there is a tendency, even today, within the Spanish business community to value more the professional experience of the future worker than their certified professional qualification in terms of access to employment. This happens mainly in those positions that do not require a high qualification. From this situation, it is possible to expect that participation in CVET is also lower than in other European countries that value more IVET, although, as we will see later, this is not exactly the case.

Other peculiar phenomena to the Spanish labour market affecting the continuing training system have to do, for instance, with the high rate of university graduates—well above the EU average—which contributes in part to the coexistence in the Spanish labour market of situations such as *overqualification* (Villar 2014; Ramos 2017) and *underemployment* (Acosta-Ballesteros et al. 2016), as well as the migration of the most qualified population to other contexts, what is known as *brain drain* (Santos Ortega 2013). The high proportion of people with university qualifications in the country can be related to a high rate of participation in CVET because, as a research within European adults from 25 to 64 years old (CEDEFOP 2014, p. 19) has recently shown, *the highly qualified* (*those that have completed tertiary education*) *participate far more in lifelong learning than the low qualified* (*those that have at most lower secondary education*).

On the other hand, another of the key characteristics of the Spanish labour market is the trend to the temporary nature of the new contracts. A reality probably related to the predominant economic activities (Statistics National Institute 2016a): commercial activities—retail and wholesale trade—and automotive, manufacturing, hospitality and social and health services. As we see, it concerns professional sec-

[1] Although Andalusia, Extremadura and the autonomous city of Melilla have unemployment rates of more than 24%, in the autonomous community of Navarre and the Basque Country, they do not reach 12% in this same period (Statistics National Institute 2017a).

[2] According to the OECD, proportion of the Spanish adult population (25–64 years old) with an upper secondary degree (academic or vocational) stands at 23%. This situation differs from the EU-28 average in which 42% of the adult population has finished an upper secondary programme. These figures place Spain behind countries such as Greece and Ireland, among others, and show an even greater distance with countries such as Italy, Austria, Germany and Denmark, where more than 40% of the adult population has achieved an upper secondary vocational programme.

tors that, because of their characteristics, make a broad use of part-time hiring.[3] Another of the specific features of the Spanish market is the large share of small and medium enterprises (SMEs), which make up the majority of the labour market. According to the Statistics National Institute (2017b), 95.5% of companies are micro-companies (with fewer than 10 employees), and 55.5% of these are self-employed workers without employees. This reality will also influence the participation of workers in CVET because those who work for a large company are more likely to participate in continuing education, to the detriment of those who work in a micro-company or are self-employed. As indicated by CEDEFOP (2014), there is a general trend across the EU-28 that the attendance of employees at CVET increases with the size of the company and this is applied both to courses and to other forms of continuing education and training.

Finally, it is important to mention that the underground economy represents in Spain, according to some estimates (Mauleón and Sardá 2014, cited in Mauleón 2014), almost a quarter of the volume of the official economy (23% in the year 2012). This situation is not uncommon in other southern European countries but extremely different to the main economic situation in the north of Europe (Idem). Mauleón (2014) also indicates that this situation may be due to a confluence of several factors: the predominant type of activity in the economy, a high tax pressure, high unemployment rates, excessive bureaucratic regulation and also other elements such as *the level of general morality*, *showed for example in the degree of corruption* (Idem., p. 56).

3.3 What About CVET in Spain? Different Conceptions in Theory and in Practice

At present in Spain, Vocational Training for Employment is undergoing significant changes in its structure and organization. Since 2013, Labour Authorities have begun to change the composition of this training system and also its regulations, so we will present the organizational reality of CVET, explaining some of the recent changes.

The constant overlapping of new regulations is also one of the elements that we should consider as defining the training initiatives aimed at workers in Spain. Such a confusing legal habit is making managing the system in a stable and predictable way difficult, as well as making more difficult the social perception of its real usefulness. Since the publication of the Law of Qualifications and Vocational

[3] According to the Public Employment Service (SEPE 2017), only 8.52% of all new contracts made in 2016 in Spain had an indefinite duration. That implies that the rest (91.48%) were temporary contracts. These figures on new hiring remain relatively stable since 2007, when temporary hiring reached 88.8% of new contracts (Idem). In 2013 it reached 92.33% and currently (2016) stands at 91.42% (Idem). In relation to the total employed population, more than a quarter (26.1%) are related to their employer under a temporary contract (Statistics National Institute 2016b).

Education and Training in 2002, new regulations on CVET have regularly appeared.[4] This cascade of new regulations on CVET means that the companies' training managers must be constantly updated. Although the legal changes aim to reduce the bureaucracy of training management, in some investigations (Pineda and Sarramona 2006; Vega Estrella 2015) companies point out that management is complex and this may hinder companies' involvement in CVET, especially SMEs. In fact, some of these SMEs indicate that the bureaucratic management of the training is entrusted to other companies (Pineda and Sarramona 2006), because they do not know about the legal norms and they fear not being able to comply with all the requirements legally established.

The Public Employment Service and the National Foundation for Training and Employment identified several deficiencies and difficulties in the development of training, which policymakers used to justify some of the legislative changes. For example, these institutions mention the poor coordination of the training system; deficiencies in strategic planning and in the information system; limitations in the assessment, monitoring and control plans; lack of generalization and accessibility of the training on offer; or the limited development of specific training programmes, among other needs. Under these premises, three new law provisions[5] have been passed with the aim of creating a new configuration of the CVET.

In the same way, as in all educational systems, the structural dimension that the legislation envisions has a huge influence on the practical context through the combination of the relational, cultural, procedural and contextual dimensions (González 2003). This implies that attention must also be paid to the real configuration of continuing education and training, based on different studies and research reports that aspire to approach and explain their development and social representation.

3.3.1 CVET in Spain Through Recent Legislative Changes and Their Organizational Consequences

One of the essential principles of Spain's CVET model is that the training actions within the FPE system are aimed at workers, to enable them to improve their skills and professional qualifications and even to acquire new ones (Art. 3, Royal Decree 694/2017). In this way, the concept of *lifelong learning* prevailing in the European

[4] We can highlight the Royal Decree 1046/2003 that regulates the CVET system; Employment Law 56/2003; the IV National Continuing Education and Training Agreement (Resolution of March 3rd, 2006); the Royal Decree 395/2007 that regulates the FPE system; the Royal Decree-Law 4/2015 for the urgent reform of the FPE system; Law 30/2015 that regulates the FPE System; or the Royal Decree 694/2017 by which Law 30/2015 is developed.

[5] In chronological order, we are referring to Royal Decree-Law 4/2015, of March 22nd, for the urgent reform of Training System for Employment (BOE, No. 70, 03/23/2015); Law 30/2015, of September 9th, which regulates Training System for Employment (BOE, No. 217, 09/10/2015); and Royal Decree 694/2017, of July 3rd, that develops Law 30/2015, of September 9th, which regulates Training System for Employment (BOE, No. 159, 07/05/2017).

labour market and training policies is materialized. The current legislation denominates *training initiatives* to each of the training modalities aimed at attending both individual needs and productive system goals (Art. 8.1, Law 30/2015). All these so-called training initiatives make up the entire FPE system in Spain and refer, among others, to the training actions programmed by companies for their workers, the training activities offered by public administrations aimed at both employed and unemployed workers and other actions such as those known as *Individual Training Leave* (ITL, in Spanish, *Permisos Individuales de Formación*, *PIF*[6]) and apprentice processes and other training programmes not financed by public funds, but developed by private agencies and aimed at achieving *professional qualification certificates*.

To clarify who the agents responsible for providing CVET in Spain are, it is necessary to indicate that there is great diversity. In addition to the companies or private training agencies registered at the so-called State Register of Training Agencies (in Spanish, *Registro Estatal de Entidades de Formación* or *Red de Entidades de Formación*), training can also be organized by Public Administrations through their own Public Vocational Schools, National Reference Schools, and Integrated Vocational Training Schools—the National Employment System or even public universities.

The planning of the CVET takes place over a multi-year scenario, which means that government institutions open a space for the strategic planning of the future training actions with the goal of responding to the previously expressed training needs of workers. In this planning process, the Administration—assuming the direction of the entire process—collaborates with different social agents such as employers' associations, trade unions and, more recently, training companies, the Freelance Workers' Association and the Social Economy.

In essence, the Labour Authorities draw up a training programme based on the analysis of all relevant aspects of the Spanish productive and educational processes and the economy trends and evolution. At the same time, close attention is paid to the sectors that are undergoing key changes or that are creating new jobs and economic growth, to the cross-cutting professional skills that deserve priority attention, to the goals and indicators for the assessment of the correct development of the training process and, last but not least, to the estimation of financial resources needed to keep the system up and running. However, the ability of the aforementioned social agents to participate in the decision-making process has greatly decreased over the last few years, being therefore safe to assume that they are nowadays simply consultative stakeholders. This situation has occurred since the publication of Law 30/2015, due to its introduction which states that *social agents stop participating in the management of funds and in the training management as they did to date*, *leaving this role to the organizations that provide vocational training […]*.

However, when the system of CVET in Spain first regulated in 1992 with the signing of the first National Continuing Training Agreements (in Spanish, *Acuerdos*

[6] As stated in Art. 21 of the TAS Order 2307/2007, of July 27th, *Individual Training Leaves* (ITLs) are authorizations given by the company to an employee to carry out a paid training action aimed at achieving an officially recognized degree.

Nacionales de Formación Continua, *ANFC*), the Public Administration—the agency that today determines how CVET funds are managed—was not a signatory part (Hernández Carrera 2013). The first *ANFC* was an agreement reached between trade unions and employers' associations, and until the year 2000 and the signature of the third *ANFC*, the Administration was not incorporated into the decision-making process to manage the financial resources that fund CVET programmes. Along with these new agreements was created the so-called Tripartite Foundation for Training and Employment (in Spanish, *Fundación Tripartita para la Formación y el Empleo*, *FTFE*), which included the former Continuing Education and Training Foundation (*Fundación para la Formación Continua*, *FORCEM*) created by the first *ANFC*. This Foundation is responsible, with the Public Employment Service, for the management of the training and also for their assessment, monitoring and control. Another of its functions has to do with the development of research, prospection and dissemination activities, as well as organizing national and international events related to training.

While the FORCEM board was composed of the most representative business and trade union organizations (CEOE, CEPYME, UGT, CCOO and CIG), the FTFE's board of trustees is comprised of the aforementioned union and business organizations and also of the representatives of the National Public Administration—through the Secretary of State for Employment—and of the autonomous communities. The current National Foundation for Training and Employment (in Spanish, *Fundación Estatal para la Formación y el Empleo*, *FUNDAE*) has a board made up of these same agencies already mentioned and also by representatives of the Public Employment Service, under the Ministry of Employment and Social Security. For some researchers, such as Hernández Carrera (2013), all these changes in the composition of the Foundation have been implemented to ensure the government's control of the funds allocated to training programmes, but also with an interventionist view to promoting greater liberalization in the training sector.

In relation to that, another aspect of the Spanish model of CVET that must be highlighted is defined in the regulations as *reinforcement of the ability to control and penalize* (Article 18, Law 30/2015), and it is related to the need, detected by the Labour Authorities, to reinforce the instruments and resources designed to penalize the infractions of the regulations that may be committed by the agents involved in the training. This provision is materialized by the establishment of a Special Unit dependent on the Labour Inspectorate, which annually runs an inspection programmes and updates the specific penalties. This increase in the government monitoring and control of public resources for in-company training is accompanied by measures to centralize to a further extent the management of the entire FPE system. This type of policy is considered by the European Commission (2016) as a significant reduction in the role that the associations of companies and unions have been playing in the ongoing training process up to now. The more their role decreases, the more that of the government increases.

The desire of Labour Authorities to control this process may correspond partly to the fact that CVET in recent years has been a context in which fraudulent or corrupt practices have regularly occurred. Various social agents such as companies and pub-

lic authorities have been involved in these scandals, affairs that have been the subject of huge attention by mass media. However, some authors (Hernández Carrera 2013; Vega Estrella 2015) warn that the fraudulent use of state funding for training in companies—especially in relation to what was previously known as *on-demand training*[7]—seems to describe the Spanish reality only partially. They argue that these situations are exaggerated as a strategy to bring an end to the social agents' involvement in the management of training initiatives for employed and unemployed workers (Hernández Carrera 2013).

Trade unions and employers' associations are therefore the agents in charge of the management of the training programmes; planning, execution and diffusion of the CVET actions being some of their main tasks. However, in light of the recent legislation, private training agencies have also become agents to be considered—at the same level as trade unions and business associations—with a voice in the designing and planning of training actions. This situation has been identified as an attempt to *privatize* training for employed (CVET) and unemployed workers (Manzanares Núñez and López Romito 2014), because these training companies, with this new legal framework, are in a position to act as a lobby against the Public Administration. This new arena would allow them to influence in a certain way the planning of training actions and guide it towards those sectors, contents or specific programmes that allow them to obtain higher profit margins, regardless of the real needs or deficiencies manifested by workers and companies. As we mentioned before, those new regulations open the door for the Freelance Associations and Social Economy Associations to be involved in the planning and design of the training programmes. These groups had not yet been included in the process and undoubtedly, they should have been considered sooner as official negotiators regarding continuing education and training, given the characteristics of the Spanish labour market.

On the other hand, the current legislation addresses the need to create an *integrated information system* that can act as a centralized space where data and relevant information of all training activities in the country can be collected. With the aim of organizing this informational system, several transparency and control bodies have been created, such as the *Training Account*, the *State Record of Training Agencies* and the *Catalogue of Training Qualifications*. Between these bodies, one of the most interesting is the *Training Account*, associated with the Social Security affiliation number of every worker. It is a body that shows the training and profes-

[7] In a previous Spanish legislation, *on-demand training* used to be explained as training actions linked to the specific needs of companies and employees (it included training actions developed within companies and the *Individual Training Leaves*). Therefore, companies themselves were responsible for its planning and management. This *on-demand training* was financed through tax exemptions in the companies' contributions to social security. On the other hand, the so-called offered training referred to those training actions that were planned and developed by the Public Administration, diverse social agents or private training companies. They were aimed at both employed and unemployed workers and they were financed through public grants. Currently, this difference between *on-demand training* and *offered training* is no longer reflected in the new regulations. However, the specific training actions included in each of these categories are still being developed under other names.

sional profile of the person and in which it is possible to check his or her educational record and the professional skills acquired during the training processes the worker has participated in. However, currently this *Training Account* has not yet been launched.

The *Catalogue of Training Qualifications*—called Index of Training specializations in the Royal Decree 395/2007 and in Art. 7 of TAS Order 718/2008—includes the training offer developed in the FPE system, the requirements that both trainers and trainees should meet, as well as the equipment and facilities required for each qualification programme. However, companies do not have the obligation of including training actions carried out by their workers in this Catalogue, which limits in a certain way, the consulting and integrating purpose of all the training actions that, in principle, is what this body intended to achieve. Anyway, this Catalogue must be updated periodically with new specialties and include changes that may have some impact on the labour market or on training actions. Finally, the *State Record of Training Agencies* intends, at least initially, to include all organizations that provide training aimed at offering qualification certificates associated with the Training Catalogue—these organizations being known as *accredited agencies*—as well as those that provide training not associated to the Catalogue—*registered agencies*. This last group includes the companies that plan and develop the professional training. This *State Record of Training Agencies* is managed by the Labour Authorities, its responsibility being the inclusion and maintenance of the different organizations.

Regarding the financing of CVET within companies, it is worth mentioning that in the Spanish context, public and private financing coexist. However, it seems clear that the main agent in providing funds for training in companies is the public sector—specifically, through the Labour Authorities—once an extensive regulation and incentive procedures for training have been established over time. These regulations have led to the creation of different channels through which companies can either directly finance their training actions or obtain considerable tax benefits for developing such actions. Specifically, regulations mention four ways of funding CVET (Art. 7, Royal Decree-Law 4/2015 and Art. 6, Law 30/2015): bonuses for corporate contributions to Social Security; subsidies under an open and competitive basis applied to the training offered to employed and unemployed workers; public procurement for fund management of the FPE system; direct grants to people interested in carrying out training actions—transportation aid, work-life balance initiatives, etc.—and finally a state budget that funds the training carried out through the public network of training schools. More specifically, we can notice in Table 3.1 the Spanish budgets applied in 2015 to exclusively support the financing of CVET by the Labour Authorities—training for the unemployed is not included in Table 3.1, although is part of the FPE system.

On the other hand, public funds allocated to CVET are obtained from the vocational training tax system paid by both workers and companies and are completed with the contributions of the Public Employment Service, funds from the autonomous communities and other European organizations such as the European Social Fund (ESF). In Table 3.2 we can see the different contributions to maintenance of

Table 3.1 Application of the CVET budget in 2015 (€)

Application of the CVET budget in 2015	
Ceuta and Melilla Training Subsidy	111,400,510
Training actions National Calls	188,568,860
Bonuses to companies involved in training actions (corporate contributions to Social Security) and other CVET actions in companies	605,000,000
National	31,038,690
Training actions aimed to public workers	53,421,360
Total	989,429,420

Source: FUNDAE (2016)

Table 3.2 2015 income to support the *FPE system* in Spain (€)

Contributions to the FPE system	2015 incomes
Vocational training tax (paid by workers and companies)	1,848,392,650
Contribution of public administrations (including national budget, public employment service budget and funds from the autonomous communities)	134,052,680
European Social Fund (ESF)	100,000,000
Total	2,082,445,330

Source: FUNDAE (2016)

the entire FPE system—including CVET and training for the unemployed—and the income obtained in 2015.

One of the most characteristic ways of public funding of the CVET system in Spain is the bonus received by companies in their Social Security contributions for having developed training actions. This modality does not have an open and competitive basis and is aimed exclusively at funding both training actions offered by companies to their workers and *Individual Training Leaves*. This includes what is known as *training credit* and *private joint financing*. *Training credit* is defined as an amount that is made available to companies from Public Administrations as a bonus in Social Security contributions, as we have already mentioned. The amount that the company can save for carrying out training actions depends on the number of workers and on the amount already paid by the company itself in the previous year in relation to the Vocational training tax. *Private joint financing* of CVET is also required depending on the size of the company (number of employees) and implies that companies contribute to the training process of their workers with their own resources. As an estimated example according to Law 48/2015 of General State Budgets for 2016, Spanish companies with between six and nine employees would have 100% of their CVET funded. The public bonus of CVET is progressively reduced in an inversely proportional way to the number of employees of the company, up to a limit of 50% of the cost of the training in those companies with 250 or more employees. In short, big companies would only have to contribute with their own resources up to 50% of the cost of continuing education and training, the other 50% being deducted from their contributions to Social Security through the *training credit*. This means that one of the main incentives for developing CVET

among Spanish companies may be the fact that they are funded by Public Administration, either completely or to a very large degree. In other words, many Spanish companies—especially SMEs—seem to invest in its human capital because of the existence of joint financing training policies (Barreira Cerqueiras 2015). This can be seen from the evolution of the participation of the Spanish companies in training since the 80s and 90s until today (FORCEM 1998 and Alba-Ramírez 1994, cited in Barreira Cerqueiras 2015), which has been progressively increased as the Labour Authorities have encouraged the CVET system with public funds. However, there are also other elements that influence the decision of companies to train workers or not, such as the size of the company, the level of internationalization, the support of human resources management or the presence of innovative processes (García Moreno et al. 2007).

At the same time, other perspectives such as that expressed by Villar (2014, p. 68) show that there is not enough evidence on the usefulness of public financing of CVET actions to improve labour productivity or that such government funded training actions *increase the employability in a statistically significant way*. Nevertheless, there is empirical evidence that the CVET of employees can be a sustainable competitive advantage for companies in relation to the investment made (García Moreno et al. 2007, p. 3694), always depending on its proper planning, financing, organization and management. As a function of that, Spanish companies could probably invest more (and better) on training actions for their workers, thus avoiding complete dependence on public financing. This would enable them to identify the training actions that suited them most, and to adapt them to their real needs—previously and rigorously detected—and not simply to carry them out to obtain tax exemptions, without deepening the analysis of their real effectiveness.

3.3.2 Funding and Volumes of Spanish CVET in Recent Years

From a theoretical point of view, it is possible to conceptualize and assess CVET under divergent approaches and socio-economic stances that would condition the aims and development of the entire system. We can establish for example, a possible classification—not strictly rigorous or composed by closed categories—of these perspectives from the point of view of the specialized literature. In the first place, there are some authors that approach CVET from an economic and strategical perspective that puts the centre of attention on the company's relation between cost and efficiency. Therefore, training is needed almost exclusively to achieve higher productivity rates (Zwick 2002; Albert et al. 2007; Mato Díaz 2010; Medina Domínguez 2011; Eichhorst et al. 2015; Elhert 2017). Another perspective, however, studies CVET from a holistic point of view and focuses on the benefits of lifelong education for the whole society. These authors conceive lifelong learning as a process whose importance goes well beyond improving business productivity and the quality of CVET as a factor that must be given pre-eminence over any restrictively economistic obsession (De la Torre Prados 2000; García Ruiz 2006; Bermejo Campos 2006;

Pineda Herrero 2007; Tejada Fernández and Ferrández Lafuente 2007; López Noguero 2008; Rubio Herráez 2008; Alonso Rodríguez 2010 and, more recently, Barreira Cerqueiras 2015). Next, we intend to take both perspectives into consideration in order to analyse the impact and incidence of CVET in Spain.

As it has been indicated, the increasingly precarious Spanish labour market—and the media and social perspectives that try to show this reality as 'normal'— has a substantial impact on the CVET attitudes inside Spanish companies, as well as on other indicators related to labour rights, that must be respected, also, by these companies. That is why we consider continuing education and training, not only as a need linked to the improvement of business productivity but also as a labour right associated with professional and individual development. However, only 22.7% of the companies registered with the Social Security Treasury in 2016 have developed FPE initiatives aimed at employees (FUNDAE 2017a) and only an amount of 7.124 *Individual Training Leaves* have been authorized across the country. Assuming that each company authorized one ITL,[8] this would include only 0.44% of all Spanish companies. In addition, since 2013 the number of companies that provide CVET follows a downward trend: while in year (2013) this figure stood at 30%, it dropped to 29.7% in 2014 and to 27.4% in 2015. Finally, in 2016 only 22.7% of Spanish companies had provided any training (Idem) to the people they employed. These figures enable us to see that, although a large part of the CVET initiatives—or the entire process, depending on the size of the company—is financed by the Public Administration, there is still a large number of Spanish companies that choose not to develop any training programme, and also that there exists a tendency to do so less and less according to available data on their involvement. This is strikingly different to what happens in the EU-28, where *in 2010 it is estimated that two thirds* (*66%*) *of companies provided CVET to the people they employed* and *this marked an increase compared to 2005 when the participation was 60%* (Eurostat 2018a, b). It is also fair to recognize that among the EU Member States, the proportion of companies that provided such training in 2010 is highly different. Eurostat's own data show that these figures can go from 22% in Poland up to 91% in Denmark and 97% in Norway (Idem).

This reality in Spain cannot be isolated from the growing precariousness in the labour market that has been mentioned above, because when decreasing unemployment, promoting labour rights and improving the general conditions of employees is not a real social priority, it seems very difficult to show actual interest in their training or to seriously consider increasing the productivity of companies through CVET. Furthermore, despite the fact that the biggest part of the Spanish labour market is composed of self-employed workers and SMEs, in relation to CVET they have the lowest coverage rate (FUNDAE 2017a). In 2016, only 18.5% of micro-

[8] According to data from the National Foundation for Training and Employment (Fundae 2016), the total number of companies registered in the Social Security Treasury and from which the percentage of involvement of continuous training is calculated as 1,620,132. Taking this fact into account, we can assume that each company authorizes one of the registered ITLs to obtain a possible estimation of the impact of these ITLs throughout the Spanish labour market.

Table 3.3 Evolution of the participation of Spanish companies in training (financed by public administrations) (%)

Size of the companies/year	2013	2014	2015	2016
Micro-sized companies (1–9 employees)	26	25.7	23.4	18.5
Small-sized companies (10–49 employees)	58.3	58.8	55.6	51.2
Medium-sized enterprises (50–249 employees)	82	83.4	83.3	81.2
Big corporations (250 or more employees)	93.4	93.7	92.9	93

Source: Own elaboration based on FUNDAE (2017b)

sized companies (1–9 employees) had been involved in CVET actions, those figures being 51.2% for small-sized companies (10–49 employees), 81.2% for medium-sized enterprises (50–249 employees) and 93% for large corporations (250 or more employees). If we analyse the evolution suffered since 2013, we can see how the micro-sized companies are reducing their participation in CVET radically in a relatively short time (see Table 3.3): while in 2013, 26% of the Spanish micro-companies participated in the CVET, in 2016 only 18.5% of them did so. This decrease in participation in CVET also affects small companies because while in 2013 58.3% of them participated in CVET, in 2016 only 51.2% did so. However, medium and large companies remain more stable in relation to their participation in CVET, and this participation is much higher than in smaller companies. In fact, in medium and large companies, participation in CVET varies from 81.2% up to 93.7% over the years.

Regarding the economic sector, more than half of the employed workers involved in training actions in Spain are located in what is known as *other services*[9]—51.4% of the employed in 2016 were placed in this category—followed by industry (19.2%), trade (15.9%) and hotel industry (7.3%), as researched by FUNDAE (2017a). However, the construction and agriculture sectors obtain the lowest results in terms of number of people involved in training actions—4.9% and 1.3%, respectively, in 2016.

In relation to the number of employees involved in training actions organized by companies, the percentage in relation to the total number of employed workers in Spain stands at 30.9% in 2016 (FUNDAE 2017a), which is equivalent to a total of 3,766,997 people. This means that, despite the budgetary restrictions experienced, the number of trained employees involved in CVET actions has been increasing progressively since 2008 to the present (Idem). If we compare these figures with those obtained by Eurostat (2018b) about participants in CVET courses, we observe that in the EU-28 this number is higher (49.4%) than in Spain, but the differences are not as evident as in the case of the percentage of companies providing CVET.

With regard to the type of working individuals at whom the Spanish CVET system is aimed, Adecco (2014) shows that the biggest part of the training actions are

[9]As settled by the National Foundation for Training and Employment (Fundae) (2016, p. 7), the *other services* category includes professional activities such as *health and social services*, *education*, *financial consultancy*, *real estate activities*, *transport and communications* and *sociocultural activities*.

aimed at workers and technical personnel, followed by the middle management and administrative staff and, lastly, CEOs.

In relation to the financing of CVET, it is necessary to point out that, unlike public financing—managed on the publicity principle and, therefore, publicly known—private financing (contributions of companies to the development of CVET) is more difficult to register and, therefore, count in an exact way. However, according to FUNDAE (2017a), the Public Administration invested a total of 1.166 million euros in 2016 to finance CVET. In the same year companies invested a total of 694.6 million euros according to another FUNDAE report (2017b). By these data, Spanish companies financed 37.3% of the total cost of CVET in 2016, while the Public Administration financed the remaining 62.7%.[10]

Regarding the national investment in CVET in the period 2008–2016, it is worth noting that that budget peaked in 2010 with a total of 1.545 billion euros aimed at the training of employed people (FUNDAE 2017a). However, that budget had decreased to 951 million euros by 2012, remaining at similar figures in 2013 and 2014 and not recovering partially until 2015 and 2016—with a public investment of 1.069 and 1.166 billion euros, respectively. This partial recovery was due to the inclusion in the budget of funds from the Youth Guarantee Programme promoted by virtue of the European Council Recommendation (2013/C 120/01).

However, if we analyse in detail the budgetary development in the period we have mentioned, we can verify that, despite the limitations experienced in public investment since 2012, the categories most badly affected have been the funding via the national and autonomous training calls and public worker training programmes. Meanwhile, the funds allocated to company bonuses have continued growing from 2008 to the present from 431.4 million euros in 2008 to 610 million euros in 2016 (Idem). In relation to this, there has also been a reduction of private investment in CVET actions for employed workers in our country: according to Adecco (2014), around 60% of Spanish companies have reduced their investment in training actions. In spite of this, the strategic importance they give to the training of their employees is high, as has been demonstrated by several studies (Aragón et al. 2003; García Ruiz 2006 and Barreira Cerqueiras 2015).

3.3.3 Contents and Pedagogies of CVET in Spain

Regarding the content of the training offered by companies, FUNDAE (2017a) also gives a general overview that agrees partially with the findings reached by other research carried out at regional level (Barreira Cerqueiras 2015). Thus, it is possible to see how most of the training activities developed in 2016 are linked to

[10] At this point, it should be taken into account that the salaries of workers, who are involved in training during the working day, are recorded as part of the private financing of the CVET. We are referring to the proportion of the workers' salary equivalent to the hours of the day in which they are involved in training.

Administration and Management (26.1%), followed by *Safety and Environment* (20.2%) and *Trade and Marketing* (10.9%). In fourth place (9.3%) we can find those actions classified as *complementary training*, which includes, among other initiatives, language teaching or different legal processes linked to the professional sector.

In relation to the nature of the training actions in Spain, face-to-face training is the modality that stands out above other types—such as blended learning or e-learning—because, according to Randstad research (2014), 97% of all approached companies indicate this type of training as the most common. This reality is in line with the conclusions of another study (Barreira Cerqueiras 2015) focused specifically in one region of Spain (Galicia). This preference for in-person training as a predominant modality may be related to the increasing importance of monitoring and control processes carried out by the Public Administration. However, off-site training is also present in the continuing education, but to a much smaller degree.

On the other hand, Spanish companies in general say that they perceive training as a strategical tool to improve competitiveness (Adecco 2014). Although, many of them lack specialized training managers specifically responsible for training planning and management inside the company. This is evidenced by the same study when it remarks that *1 out of 3 internal training managers* (*within companies*) *does not have real training to manage talent and internal knowledge* (Idem., p. 3). This may explain in part the fact that the Spanish companies are increasing the outsourcing of training actions, *direct teaching [...] and taxes bonus management*, *being the most hired out services* (Idem., p. 4), especially in the industrial sector (Randstad 2014). Precisely in relation to the presence of specialized training managers inside companies, it is necessary to mention the SMEs reality, because the Spanish labour market is made up almost entirely of them. Inside these Spanish micro and small companies, 36% of employees say they offer training to their peers at least once a month, according to the results of the PIAAC study (2013, cited in European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP) 2015). Similarly, 15% say that this happens on a daily basis, which matches the reality described in Europe by this study. It is confirmed that providing training to other colleagues is a common practice in the European companies, whereas it is less common to have external trainers hired by the company specifically for this purpose.

This analysis cannot overlook another issue of great importance in relation to CVET: the assessment on whether investment in training has a real impact on productivity, adaptability and quality in the company. At a general level, it has been verified that the execution of this return assessment is one of the most deficient elements of the training process developed by Spanish companies (Adecco 2014 and Barreira Cerqueiras 2015). Deficiencies are observed in several aspects, such as the methods and instruments used for this purpose, which are reduced to satisfaction surveys aimed solely at the employees involved, the issues to be assessed—trainer, instructional materials or training spaces—or the timing of the assessment process—done exclusively at the end of the training programmes. Precisely in relation to the level of satisfaction of employees with the training actions in which they have participated, it should be mentioned that Spanish employees rate training activities

organized and carried out by their companies on average at a 6 (on a scale from 0 to 10) (Ministry of Employment and Social Security (MESS) 2010). This indicates that they are moderately satisfied with it. However, if we compare it with the level of satisfaction of European employees, *only 28% of workers in Spain say they are very satisfied with the training received*, *compared to 94% of Europeans* (Observatorio Cegos 2013, cited in Perdiguero and García-Reche 2014, p. 104). More specifically, we can see that, for example, the percentage of satisfaction of Spanish workers with the CVET is higher for those with the higher educational achievements; therefore, university graduate employees are enjoying the highest levels of satisfaction. Taking into account the size of the company and the productive sector, the workers of the largest companies are the most satisfied, as well as those whose fields of professional activity are health and social activities sectors.

3.4 New Challenges for CVET in the Spanish Context: Integration, Social Responsibility, Development and At-Risk Population

As we have seen until now, CVET in Spain is currently under a changing but stricter regulation, where social agencies no longer have the real capacity to decide on the budget, giving this responsibility up to the Labour Authorities. Social dialogue has given way to build a more technocratic perspective, but in which micro and small companies are reducing their participation in CVET year after year. Therefore, there are challenges that must be addressed from the point of view of CVET that come from the data we have analysed in the previous sections. Among these challenges, we can find the need to apply with determination what in the Spanish legislation is called the *integration principle* of the different systems of vocational and educational training; the need to link CVET with corporate social responsibility, with the aim to encourage companies to invest more and better in human resources or the urgent attention to the groups at risk in relation to employment, given the potential of CVET for them.

First of all, a specific key aspect that still needs to be addressed to a greater extent is what is known as the *integration of Vocational Training systems*. This so-called integration principle has to do with the creation of different but recognized paths to achieve a professional qualification. It is about connecting different training systems between them, so that the person can move from one training system to another—for example from the educational system to the FPE system and vice versa—throughout their life. Under this common framework all the completed training—and also their professional experience—could be considered complementary when it comes to accomplishing a professional qualification. This common national training framework should include the Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL), but is linked to other training systems (IVT and CVET). Nowadays it seems that it is necessary to promote in an easier way the transitions from one to another and favour achieving a professional qualification.

It was said that this is a key aspect which still needs to be approached, because CVET actions do not have the National Catalogue of Qualifications—an instrument created by the II National Vocational Training Programme (1998–2002) back in 1998—as an essential reference in their planning and management. Therefore, it does not provide employees with the *qualification certificates* that formally accredit the achievement of a certain level of skills. In other words, *qualification certificates have not yet reached the business sector*, *where they are still largely unheard of* (Adecco 2014, p. 6). What has hitherto been used as proof of the training received by workers inside companies is an ordinary certificate or diploma that certifies the completion of such training programmes (Barreira Cerqueiras 2015). However, this does not imply a special recognition by Educational or Labour Authorities. This situation still occurs, even though the so-called integration principle is constantly mentioned in the Spanish training regulations. Meanwhile, its effective development seems, apparently, an eternally unresolved matter.

On the other hand, the increase of the participation of companies in CVET seems a need of the Spanish labour market, especially the micro and small companies which are the vast majority. This low participation in the CVET may be associated partially with the low incidence that Corporate Social Responsibility (hereinafter CSR) also has in these companies and in the Spanish labour market in general. The development of CSR in Spain began very late, not only because of the specific labour market characteristics—with predominance of SMEs, as we have mentioned before—or because of the slow internationalization of Spanish companies, but also, and above all, *due to the lack of knowledge and information about CSR in the business context* (Aragón and Rocha 2004, in Celma et al. 2014, p. 84). In this way, the development of CVET from the CSR perspective has been insignificant and—like the CVET model as a whole—has had to be promoted by the Public Administration, usually following indications from different national and international organizations. In fact, it is the European Union itself that recommends that Spain should pay more attention to the improvement of CVET from the point of view of employers (Perdiguero and García-Reche 2014). According to Celma et al. (2014), institutions such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the UN have designed nine areas of action that establish the *quality of work*, CVET programmes inside companies being among such prescribed actions.

Based on these contributions, the Spanish Labour Authorities have tried to promote CSR in public and private organizations, publishing what is known as the *Spanish Strategy 2014–2020 for Corporate Social Responsibility* (MESS 2014). This document justifies the need for CSR and proposes ten lines of action with specific measures aimed at companies, organizations and public administrations. One of the most interesting such lines is undoubtedly that which focuses on *the responsible management of human resources and the promotion of employment* (MESS 2014, p. 40). Among the measures proposed, it highlights the need to train employees in the fields of human and labour rights. However, according to Celma et al. (2014), there is no solid empirical evidence that enables us to analyse training actions from the CSR approach in Spanish companies, because most studies spot-

light only the company's perspective, ignoring how the employees understand this reality. Given this situation, it seems that big companies are the only ones that carry out programmes for the management of workers from the CSR approach (MESS 2014; Perdiguero and García-Reche 2014), although the main managers of SMEs, according to Murillo Bonvehí (2008), answer affirmatively to the question of whether they carry out CSR actions in their companies. However, according to the Forética Report (2011, cited in Silos et al. 2015, p. 22), *only 4% of Spanish SMEs have advanced policies and tools in relation to CSR*, *compared to 54% of the medium and large companies*. Nonetheless, there are certain signs of optimism despite everything, regarding the SME progress in relation to CSR, since *out of the 105 companies certified in Spain by the SGE 21 Social Responsibility Standard*, *more than half* (*58*) *are SMEs* (Idem).

On the one hand, it is possible to use CSR actions as a framework to study CVET in the companies by making reference to the paradigm of sustainable human development (United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) 2016). This paradigm aspires to redefine our societies and obviously that includes a requirement to companies to get involved in the construction of a fairer and more equitable reality for everyone. Under this definition of development (Remacha 2017, p. 6) companies are urged *to adopt their own social responsibility practices*, *related to decent employment*, *empowerment of women*, *investment in research and development*, *environmental protection*, *transparency and responsibility*. All these issues are modern-day challenges that must be collectively addressed with the goal of achieving *the future we want* and that is presented in the UN Resolution approved in July 2012.

However, these institutional perspectives on development and its consequences are currently being questioned nowadays, especially in relation to the importance given to economic growth, which for some authors is the root of the problem (Linz et al. 2007; Taibo 2009; Latouche 2012) while for others must be an element necessarily conditioned to scrupulous respect for the human and environmental rights from companies (Martínez Rodríguez 2013; Rodríguez Fernández 2014 and Felber 2015, among others). Accommodating CVET in this reality is complex, even if we analyse the matter from an institutional perspective in relation to development. It seems necessary to introduce substantial changes in the way Spanish companies understand the training of employees as a whole and, above all, how they understand their role in society as a source not only of economic benefits but also of social welfare opportunities.

CVET planned from the perspective of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) (UN 2015) implies, therefore, the need to develop training processes within companies from a triple perspective: environmental, social and economic. This can be translated, for example, into specific training actions designed to reduce the environmental impact of production—waste treatment, development of sustainable ways of production, etc.—gender equality training and equality plans, safer research and more efficient production processes.[11] Particularly with regard to women, the

[11] The Sustainable Development Goals Fund (SDGF) (2016) analyses cases of companies oriented towards the SDGs that launch training actions that precisely have to do with the examples previously shown.

public debate on the adoption of special measures aimed at them from CVET, has been relatively heated since the 1970s in several European countries, including France and Spain (Mazur 2001). However, CVET has yet to be considered as an important tool to try and reduce the wage gap or gender-based discrimination, among other marginalizing realities. In fact, the training reality in any of its modalities reflects the discrimination suffered by women in the labour market (Mariño Fernández 2009; Rial Sánchez et al. 2011) and CVET is not an exception. As can be seen from the recent figures of CVET activities involvement showed by FUNDAE (2017a, p. 5), *the percentage of women who participate in CVET actions is still below the actual role they represent in the whole salaried population* (*44%* vs. *46%*) *and men are comparatively more involved in training actions in relation to their specific representation in the entire labour market* (*56%* vs. *54%*).

On the other hand, among at-risk population groups in relation to access to employment, nowadays in Spain, we must mention young people. The connection between this dramatic situation with the CVET is complex, given that in a situation of high rate of global unemployment in the national context, companies can choose workers from a large cohort of available candidates with more experience—and, therefore, necessarily belonging to another age group. This shows that, both in a Galician (Rego-Agraso 2013) and Spanish (García 2011) context, companies prefer accumulated experience to any official qualification achieved by the candidate when applying for a job in their company. Therefore, considering the high rate of youth unemployment—39.53% according to the Statistics National Institute (2017a)—the access of this segment of population to CVET is also greatly hampered. This can be seen in the data gathered by FUNDAE (2017a), which indicates that only 5.2% of the people who carried out a CVET action in 2016 were between 16 and 25 years old.

In this sense, international organizations such as the ILO (2004) and the UN (2011) emphasize the need to raise awareness among employers, about the essentiality of their contribution to the improvement of social welfare through various channels, underscoring the environmental field and the labour conditions. More specifically, companies must adjust their contractual relationships with their employees to a rigorous respect of labour rights, as well as promoting decent and non-discriminatory working conditions. The Spanish labour market, however, seems to be a reality that moves in the opposite direction to the UN proposals in relation to SDGs. In fact, regarding job insecurity (see Sect. 3.2), there is a high rate of temporary employment in the new contracts carried out annually, which shows that many employers probably use the different temporary contract modalities—for example, contracts limited to a specific project, contracts due to production circumstances or even training contract modality—in an irregular way. They ignore the fact that the contract modality that regulates labour relations in Spain is the indefinite contract. Temporary contracts must be reserved for very specific situations, and it is doubtful that those situations can actually account for more than 90% of the new contracts signed each year.

This situation leads to a high non-voluntary labour turnover rate that has serious consequences for employees and also for the entire labour market. Among other consequences, union trade representation is difficult to achieve in companies with

high worker turnover rate (Fernández Rodríguez et al. 2015) because there is no stable workforce in the company. In fact, according to Serrano Pascual and Waddington (2000, p. 33), *young workers in precarious employment with high rates of labour turnover do not join trade unions because they do not think that trade unions can make a difference at their workplace*. Training of employees in this context remains a reality highly conditioned by the predominant business culture in our country, which tends to prioritize the increase of profit margins in the short term.

Therefore, the challenges that CVET faces in Spain could be classified according to their operational range: the management of the CVET system itself and the effective development of the rights of workers to lifelong learning and specific training actions in the companies associated with the SDGs. Among them, we can include equity and non-discrimination, improvement of working conditions, employees' involvement in the business decision-making process (Longoni et al. 2014) or the need to improve communication and coordination between companies and employees regarding training actions.

3.5 Conclusion

According to Bauman (2000), the functioning of postmodern society can be explained as a liquid that changes shape with each slight movement of its container. The situation of many individuals is reduced, therefore, to a vital uncertainty that limits their opportunities for development in an ever-increasingly changing world. It is possible to link this analysis to the *risk society* described by Beck (2008). The solid constructions of the past when work was a permanent and stable reality in the western world are changing towards a concept of employment as a delocalized good, mostly temporary and associated with precariousness (Standing 2011). Spain represents one of the examples of this reality. This tendency to increasing precarity in the labour market has been mentioned in recent studies (e.g. Candil Moreno, 2016 and Echaves and Echaves 2017), and it must be closely linked to *the progressive deregulation of the vocational training system*, according to Marhuenda et al. (2016, p. 57).

CVET seeks, in the first place, to promote employees' adaptability to the technological and social changes that influence business productivity nowadays. This implies that the workforce must be understood as an important corporative asset that must be valued and recognized. From the current holistic paradigms that defend the need and effectiveness of CVET, it does not seem possible to understand human resources only as *resources*—interchangeable and dispensable. Conversely, business organizations must necessarily consider workforce as a basic element for their economic development, and also as one of the ways to materialize their responsibility with society.

However, the situation of CVET in Spain presents several special features that condition the perspective we have been elaborating on and tends to associate training with activities that companies carry out fundamentally motivated by tax exemp-

tions. As it has been mentioned, the investment of the average Spanish company on training is usually highly conditioned by the public funding policies of training (Barreira Cerqueiras 2015). This situation, where private investment in training is relatively low, differs from the European average, standing Spain well below it in the number of companies involved in training actions and in private investment in training (Clemente et al. 2013). However, this is not the case regarding the number of employees who are trained each year and also regarding the number of training hours, whose figures are closer to European averages (Idem). On the other hand, Spanish policies are encouraging CVET in SMEs—that make up the majority of the Spanish labour market. However, large companies are still the ones that care more about the training of their employees, also because they have greater *access* to the public funding system, especially those belonging to the industrial and service sectors, as we have previously mentioned.

On the other hand, after the 2015 FPE system reform, the influence of trade unions and business associations on the decision-making and management of training has been considerably reduced, being effectively the planning and development of continuing and occupational training initiatives in government hands (European Commission 2016). Having said this, it is worth mentioning that the participation of different social agents in the management of training is today a topic of discussion in Europe. However, it seems a reality with a certain tradition in other countries such as Germany (Hensen-Reifgens and Hippach-Schneider 2014) and Finland (Koukku et al. 2014) and also positively valued by part of the specialized literature (Hernández Carrera 2013; Vega Estrella 2015 and Barreira Cerqueiras 2015). In this way, reducing the involvement of social agents in this process can only be seen as a step back in the management and planning of CVET, even more so if the target is to promote the participation of trade unions and business associations in these actions. However, increasing governmental control of training actions is also associated with the detection of fraud practices committed by certain organizations in relation to training, a reality that is probably emphasized in a biased way (Hernández Carrera 2013) but that has yet to be properly analysed. All this leads in the end to the impossibility of assessing the real impact of CVET on the labour market as a whole.

As we saw, companies that specialize in CVET Training are considered in Spain as social agents that can be involved in the design and planning of continuing education. This situation does not happen in other countries that surround Spain, despite this outsourcing being even more frequent than in Spain—as is the case in Germany, for example (National Foundation for Training in Employment 2011). The inclusion of this lobby as an interested party in relation to training policies may cause some distortions in training planning, given that the promotion of some contents and specific programmes may be associated with the commercial interests of companies and not so much with the real needs verified by employers and trade unions. Similarly, the Public Employment Service reroutes a large part of the training offered to unemployed people to these companies with explicit for-profit aims, thus benefiting from liberalization processes in the training sector. It would be important, therefore, to pay attention to the evolution of CVET in light of this new situation and to study more specifically the role that these companies play in the functioning of the entire system.

Regarding employees, after this analysis we can see that factors such as age, sex or the position occupied in the company can condition their access to CVET. This means that training opportunities are not available to the same extent to certain groups that are more vulnerable in relation to the labour market—women, young people, non-stable or low-skilled workers—which makes professional updating and development more difficult for them. At the same time, Spanish companies should be more focused on the development of their social responsibility, not only from the point of view of its verification through strategic action plans, but also by promoting the effective development of SDGs. Facing the current labour market situation, companies should give much more importance to qualifications and training processes and consider them strategies to improve productivity and efficiency.

In view of all the issues presented above, Veira's (1992) perspective is still valid when he states that training inside companies must be a process characterized by continuity, standardization and progressiveness when it comes to determining the goals to be achieved. This implies that the interests of both workers and corporations must be taken into account and made complementary and compatible. This is what Aragón et al. (2003) have shown recently, stating that it is necessary to combine the personal and professional development of workers with business success. Each of these facts constitutes an essential part of the integration of companies in society as organizations that are socially responsible and involved in the construction of a reality not only more prosperous, but also fairer and more equitable.

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Chapter 4
Accreditation of Learning and Vocational Qualifications

María José Chisvert-Tarazona

Abstract This chapter deals with professional qualification accreditation processes. We focus on the recognition of work experience and non-formal training paths recently developed in Spain. The chapter aims to provide a comprehensive view of the accreditation procedures and to what extent their promotion has changed the panorama and the set of rules that regulate the VET system. The author looks at the ways formal elements of the procedure are structured, their explicit functions, the rules and relations upheld by legislation, as well as the recognition of learning through the analysis of governance management. The findings are framed within European, Spanish and local legislation with regard to the accreditation of professional qualifications. The discussion focuses on the roles of the agents who take part in this procedure and on the conditions for its implementation.

Keywords Validation · Competences · Vulnerable groups · Social inclusion · Evaluation system

4.1 Introduction

The new socio-political and economic contexts of Western society are interpreted from the point of view of transformation and uncertainty (Bauman 1999; Beck 2006; Morin et al. 2002). Current technological progress has great impact on production processes. In this environment, the constant updating of skills, knowledge

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and competences has become a key factor of economic growth and individual welfare (OEDC 2001; Ottersten 2004; Werquin 2007). The emergence of new qualifications, the progressive specialisation, instability, unemployment and mobility, as well as the frequent changes of activity during the working life, seem to require the visibility of learning attained.

The validation and accreditation of skills acquired through non-formal and informal education is a procedure aimed at bringing visibility to skills, knowledge, competences and professional qualifications. Cedefop (2008, 2012) and the European Council (2012) define this evaluation system as the public, formal certification defined over time on the work capacity demonstrated by citizens. Validation and accreditation is a project of special interest in countries, professional fields and population sectors where a large number of the subjects have no formal qualification but have professional competences. This is the case of Spain and Portugal.

The goal to convert Europe into a knowledge-based economy led to significant efforts by the European Union (EU) to dignify VET and promote access to it throughout life and to facilitate the transition of vulnerable groups into the labour market. The importance of establishing systems for the recognition and accreditation of learning attained in informal and non-formal spaces has been considered as a key issue in the policy of lifelong learning in Europe (European Commission 2004, 2010; Official Journal of the EU 2015). The Third Global Report on Adult Learning and Education (GRALE III), UNESCO (2016), analyses the results of the Global Observatory of Recognition, Validation and Accreditation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning: 71% of a sample of 133 countries had a political framework to recognise, validate and accredit non-formal and informal learning. The last European inventory on the validation of informal and non-formal learning (Cedefop 2016) still brings to the fore how some EU countries are lagging behind in the recognition of education and learning. In this report, it is generally considered that the efforts made in Spain are not enough to reach out to all possible beneficiaries and give them validation opportunities in line with the needs of the job market. An increase in funds is also required to promote the level of qualifications as an employment policy measure. The Committee of the Regions considers that the proposed measures cannot be sufficiently implemented by the states (Official Journal of the EU 2015). This opinion announces policy recommendations intended for the creation of a pan-European strategy that would limit the decision-making of states, regions and local authorities.

Current changes in the economic and labour world push the educational system towards a new, more complex situation, which requires spaces for reflection and debate. In the present context, construal of the curriculum is based on two dominant discourses: the neoliberal and the more humanist standpoints. The first one is focused on favouring the development of professional competences that are required in the labour market; and the second includes the integral development of the human being in professional training. The validation and accreditation of competences, also called Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), reflected the debate on lifelong learning policy, oscillating between social and economic perspectives. Different international bodies take positions poles apart in this debate. While the UNESCO

uses a discourse which claims the social importance of learning "for being yourself", the OECD is in favour of supporting economic improvement (Duvekot 2014). The current trend in the EU, after getting through a major socioeconomic crisis, tends to give priority to the validation and accreditation of professionalising competences meeting the demands of the labour market. The accreditation system in Spain also has this neoliberal stance.

It is increasingly evident that learning does not take place exclusively in regulated learning environments. In this system for evaluation and accreditation of learning and vocational qualifications, there is no concern about how learning has been accessed (Souto-Otero 2012; Tejada 2007). This new emphasis on products introduces a common language, allowing verifying the attainment of qualifications according to their content and the competences that provide proof of the occupational profile. It does not concentrate on the methods and processes of acquisition.

Institutional discourse in Spain presents the procedure for validation and accreditation as a certification proposal that allows for a rigorous approach to the inequalities associated with the processes of regulated training. We agree with the institutional discourse when it highlights that the procedure is intended to mitigate the effect of high unemployment rates, the high percentage of early school leaving, the increasingly precarious training and labour transitions, as well as the large number of male and female workers without certified qualifications (Chisvert-Tarazona et al. 2015). However, if the discourse that is introduced in the norm – and in which social equity is claimed – is not transferred to the practice of the procedure, people at risk of exclusion may find this to be a new obstacle.

This chapter aims to provide a comprehensive view on the accreditation procedures and how their promotion has introduced a new dimension in the VET system in Spain. For this purpose, the implementation processes of Royal Decree 1224/2009 (BOE 2009) are detailed in depth, as the regulation that legislates the recognition of professional competences acquired through non-formal means of education and work experience, by pointing out the pros and cons of the process.

Due to the structure of the chapter, the second section describes each of the phases in the Spanish procedure for evaluation and accreditation of competences and discusses its implementation. The third section will bring to the fore three good practices in the procedure and the fourth section concludes by giving the author's view on the current accreditation system.

4.2 Debates on the Accreditation System in Spain: Description and Main Features

In Spain, the process for the validation and accreditation of non-formal and informal learning is marked by the recent development of vocational training in the non-formal system. It benefits from the European institutional discourse being transferred entirely to the Spanish educational and labour administration. The *National Institute*

of Qualifications (INCUAL)[1] thus defines as a relevant action something benefitting the people by raising the qualification level, extending the training options, officially recognising skills and improving job-finding and mobility. Some of the benefits for business referred to by this Institute were facilitating processes for selecting and promoting their staff, extending their preparation and motivation and improving the quality level of production processes. A validation and accreditation procedure complying with the "(...) principle of equal opportunities between women and men and the principle of equal treatment and non-discrimination shall be applied transversally to all activities" (Cedefop 2016, p. 2).

Organic Act 5/2002 of 19 June, on Qualifications and Vocational Training (BOE 2002) was promulgated for the purpose of creating the National System of Professional Qualifications. It is the only education law that builds on social consultation and in which there is consensus for approval between the government and the opposition. Article 8 was expressly devoted to the recognition, evaluation, accreditation and registration of professional qualifications. This work was entrusted to the Government after consulting the General Council of Vocational Training. This regulation brings the legitimacy of consensus, of the political pact, to the procedure. Its development has however frequently been delayed by the misgivings of the participating agents, as well as limited by the dearth of resources allocated to its implementation along with the lack of interest of regional government.

The approval of Royal Decree 1224/2009 (BOE 2009) determines the exceptional procedure in force in the field of education and employment concerning the evaluation and accreditation of professional competences acquired by means of work experience or non-formal training pathways. Central government is responsible for managing the national validation system through the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Employment.

This procedure is consolidated and revitalised in Law 30/2015 (BOE 2015), which regulates Vocational Training for Employment, as its objectives include the promotion of the accreditation of professional skills attained by means of non-formal training or labour experience.

A description of the validation and accreditation procedure in the Spanish context is now provided. We present the phases in the procedure for the validation and accreditation of competences in Spain: processing, counselling, evaluation, accreditation and registration. We end up by discussing this procedure, where we try to point out a broad gap between the rule and the practice which is heightening the difficulties for its implementation.

4.2.1 Processing Phase: Access to the System

The government education and employment departments implement the calls for access to the procedure for validation and accreditation of competences. The Administration that has promoted the development of calls to a greater extent is

[1] Available at INCUAL: incual.mecd.es

the Education Ministry, with 64.21% of the qualifications that were convened until 2016. Since the beginning of the procedure both administrations have made the regional calls together only in regions such as the Basque Country or the Canary Islands.

The regional calls made since 2009 reveal an unequal participation of the autonomous communities. If 2011 was the year in which the calls were generalised in most of the communities, this trend was paralysed in 2012 when the implementation of calls was limited to six territories due to austerity measures. In spite of this, as of 2013, there has been a recovery with an increasing number of qualifications called for each year. Currently, except for the Community of Madrid and Ceuta and Melilla, most of the regions have opened calls on a regular basis and the volume of qualifications available to be accredited for the population has tended to be systematically extended every year. Especially prominent is the case of Galicia, specifically handled in two chapters of this publication. In practice, the new nature of this procedure has enabled authorities to assign scant resources and delay its implementation. As the present Director of the INCUAL put this, in many cases, the resources were available in the autonomous communities, but no use was made of them (Carballo 2018). The budget allocated in Spain in 2014 came to 5,605,000 € (Cedefop 2016), an unquestionably relevant sum. The strategy used by different autonomous communities has been to keep the procedure "on the shelf", that is, not to disclose its existence. In fact, the few calls have made this effort flag. This makes us doubt as to the existence of a genuine wish to accredit the professional competences acquired in non-formal and informal education contexts, perhaps due to the distrust of certain regional governments on the political advantages of a procedure which could give rise to union claims from workers. We could come up against the recognition of professional skills by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Employment, and the lack of recognition by the companies in which such competences are employed.

These regional public calls may be accessed by people who meet a set of conditions relating to nationality and minimum age, as well as proof of work experience and/or related professional training. The number of years of professional experience and hours of training that will allow the enrolment option is also stipulated according to the level of qualification. When consulting the application forms, the competences that can be accredited in Spain require evidence in the learning contexts that the norm has considered suitable: accreditation of years of working experience and/or certification of vocational training performed in non-formal contexts are requested. Access to the system thus involves limitations that could bypass professional skills obtained in other environments. There are contexts that can only be included exceptionally. This is the case of irregular work, meaning productive activities that infringe tax or labour legislation of the Ministry of Employment in Spain; as well as of unpaid work, which fits into an informal economy that does not pass through the market filter. The norm acknowledges these facts when it stipulates that people over 25 who do not have documentary justification may present some "proof admitted in fact" of their work experience or non-formal learning by means of a provisional registration. The insufficient number of places in the calls

nevertheless hinders the admission of professional and training records without plausible evidence. Most calls have a limited number of vacancies, and this is the reason why many applicants who meet the requirements might not proceed to the next phase of the procedure. This manner of implementing the procedure undermines the philosophy involved in its design: filters are established hindering access to accreditation for people who could have the competences to be validated. And it is precisely the most vulnerable groups who undergo most difficulties in compiling prior accreditation. While calls with a limited number of applications continue to be implemented this will mean upholding a system which does not accredit the persons with professional competences, but those who as well as having these can vouch for this to a greater extent, acting as a competitive system.

Another relevant question is to consider what qualifications are likely to appear in the calls at the autonomous communities. Only the professional qualifications available in the National Catalogue of Professional Qualifications (CNCP)[2] will be eligible for accreditation, and these qualifications respond to a greater extent to competency levels corresponding to medium qualification – and, to a lesser extent, low qualification – jobs. The difficulties in updating this catalogue are also to be highlighted, due to an excessive protectionism of the formal VET degrees and due to the lack of resources available in the INCUAL, the Institute that designs the qualifications.

On the other hand, the scant resources allocated to the procedure have required the introduction of criteria aimed at choosing which qualifications should be offered in future calls. One of the criteria was to prioritise the call for professional qualifications/certificates corresponding to regulated professions, in which the accreditation and certification of the qualification is urgent to guarantee the maintenance of the job. Proof of this is that up to 2016, a total of 92,591 people have obtained accreditation in regulated sectors as Health and Sociocultural and Community Services (Observal 2016), representing 71% of the accreditations. Some examples of these qualifications are social healthcare for persons at home or healthcare transport.

Having said that, participants partially finance the procedure by paying fees that are stipulated by each autonomous community. These fees may seem token sums, affordable by a good deal of people. In some regions, they include measures to facilitate access by groups with no resources such as reduction or elimination of fees for the unemployed or those with very low income. They are nevertheless measures that have not become widespread in all regions.

After detailing the procedure, this will now be examined from the perspective of the applicant, who must meet certain conditions: for the qualification to be available in the CNCP, for the accreditation to be convened, for this regional call to be made available, for there to be sufficient number of places to respond to all the applications, and for the accreditations to be considered suitable in respect of the context in which they were obtained. These issues refer to administrative management and the availability of resources and can become the main obstacle to accessing a validation and accreditation of skills in non-formal and informal education areas.

[2] CNCP available at http://incual.mecd.es/web/extranet/cualificaciones

It is important to be aware that failure to admit them for processing does not necessarily mean that participants do not have professional skills. In many cases, the reason for this non-admission is that there are not enough resources to keep all the applicants who fit into the profile in the procedure. This is a very serious matter, since a procedure that was created with the intention of fostering social justice becomes in practice a procedure accrediting a few and discrediting others who deserve certification due to limitations of technical-administrative management and availability of financing.

Faced with these administrative management problems perhaps we should ask ourselves: Are administrative issues forcing the evaluation of skills into the background? At what point does the evaluation of learning begin to be a concern in the system? No doubt, too late. The answer to this question should nonetheless be "from the beginning". The participant in the system must know what he or she can expect from the system and how and on what they are going to evaluate him or her. In the processing phase, evaluation should be a matter of concern for the professional guidance service. This service is included in regulations as optional and prior to the start of the procedure. At present, the offer of professional guidance or not depends on the willingness and possibilities of the institutions in which the evaluation, validation and accreditation of competences are implemented. There is little availability of professionals whose job is to advise those people who request it, about the nature and phases of the procedure, the conditions of access, and their rights and obligations; as well as to pilot the first stages of analysis of the feasibility of accreditation. At the beginning of the system's design, there was an important debate about the obligatory nature – or not – of this service to allow people's access to the procedure. Finally, the service was reduced to an optional instrument of support. Including guidance as an open and permanent service would have become a good instrument to make the system of validation and accreditation of competences known among the population and guarantee proximity to citizens, humanising the system.

In spite of all this, it is to be emphasised that the system has invested in the processing phase, improving and speeding it up. The majority of the autonomous communities have incorporated software and hardware to make this possible. This phase can nevertheless only be considered successful when each person wishing to prove their competences can do so within a reasonable time and within their territorial scope. Current reality is far from this claim. In spite of everything, the lack of awareness of the procedure by the population and companies has led to slow growth, perhaps excessively slow and lacking any great expectations on the part of the population and the companies. Its scant dissemination has especially harmed the most vulnerable groups, who hardly become aware of the procedure and access requirements.

4.2.2 Counselling

Once people have accessed the system, counselling is offered. In this phase, the advisors guide and support the applicants with the screen applications in the regional calls to enable the final completion of the *competence folder*.[3] These tasks are carried out through interviews over a period of several months. Its duration depends on the qualification and the contributions of the person who is evaluated as well as on the evaluation culture of the region and institution in which the procedure is performed. If the professional guidance were maintained during the processing phase, the work of the advisors would undoubtedly benefit from greater agility and the improvement in the quality of the contributions.

The profile of the person performing the guidance requires extensive knowledge about the qualification that is subject to evaluation so that the degree is consistent with the professional competences required. Advisors' training is essential to be able to access a position in the system. It is aimed at completing the advisors' knowledge in the area of counselling and guidance even if its content and duration are determined in each autonomous community.

Although advisors cannot also act as evaluators in the same call for validation, they have an indirect participation in the evaluation. This participation is specified in a written report addressed to the evaluation committee. If the report is positive, it will be transferred to the evaluation committee together with the documentation provided. If the report is negative, training will be recommended for the candidate, who will ultimately decide whether or not to continue in the process.

In this report, the advisor presents the skills of the candidate according to each unit of competence requested and assesses their suitability to participate in the process and the professional skills that they consider sufficiently justified. It is a non-binding report. However, this evaluation exercise limits the space of trust generated with the applicant for accreditation, especially when there is no guidance service in the procedure. This advice is highly contaminated with evaluation functions and in many regions lacks sufficient training.

4.2.3 Evaluation

The evaluation and accreditation take the CNCP as curricular reference.

Cedefop (2016) notes that in Spain the portfolio is the procedure most used by applicants to provide evidence of their work experience and formal or non-formal training. The portfolio explicitly appears in the procedure through the preparation of a folder of competences that is attached to the request and that is to be improved

[3] The procedure introduces in its rules that the competence folder must include self-assessment of competences; personal, professional and training history; as well as the evidence corroborating this.

throughout the process. Observation in the workplace, simulations, standardised tests of professional competence or the professional interview are other methods proposed by the system.

The evaluation committee analyses the report prepared by the advisor and the documentation provided in the folder of competences. This committee is ready to introduce other methods according to the nature of the unit of competence, the characteristics of the applicant and the evaluation criteria included in the evidence guides. Although it originated with the aim of benefiting adaptation to diversity, including this power in the evaluation exercise has inevitably brought in distortions by juxtaposing realities such as the scarcity of resources or the necessary transparency of the evaluation exercise. Again, practice has corrupted theory.

The Procedure Handbook published by INCUAL (2010) is the main tool that supports the Evaluation Committee in the validation procedure. This document consists of a set of guidelines for the candidate, the advisor and the evaluator; it also incorporates self-questionnaires about the units of competence and the evidence guides related to each qualification.

Two evaluative points are evidenced before issuing a final opinion: (1) one aimed at determining the value of evidence of indirect competence; and (2) one intended to continue expanding the folder of competences. It is worth noticing that it is not essential for a candidate's request to go through both. If the committee considers that the candidate's contributions are far from the criteria of the evaluation, it will not require new evidence. Non-admission can therefore be based on a value judgement that exclusively involves evidence provided in the processing and counselling phases. In order to obtain a positive opinion, nevertheless, there is need for a comparison and provision of new evidence. It is hard to understand the reasons why a file that has reached this stage could be questioned without trying to incorporate new evidence to ensure the adequacy of rejection or the negative evaluation report. The proposal to go further in the evaluation of competences when little evidence is available is reasonable in an evaluation process intended to reveal non-formal and informal learning. It is true that Eraut et al. (1996) alert of the dangers of allocating excessive resources to evaluation. The dismissal of evaluative instruments that allow access to direct evidence when the evidence shown is poor is however surprising.

In fact, the certification of competences obtained to date shows that the evaluation procedure has not been put to the test. It was made clear in the section on the processing phase that in most cases the system convenes a smaller volume of vacancies than the number of people who meet the access profile. This situation has minimised the debate on competence assessment.

4.2.4 Accreditation and Registration Phase

From 2007 to 2016, a total number of 130,394 people achieved full or partial accreditation of a qualification in Spain (Observal 2016). In the period from 2014 to 2016, the number of people involved in the validation and accreditation of

competence processes was around 25,000 each year (Cedefop 2016). This was similar to previous years. Nonetheless, these are very low figures compared with the intention to generalise the certification of qualifications and even lower if one takes into account the need to significantly raise average qualifications in Spain, to respond to the requirements of Europe 2020 and an increasingly demanding job market. According to data from the third quarter of the Active Population Survey in Spain, conducted by the National Institute of Statistics (INE), the people who achieved full or partial accreditation represent 0.57% of the active population (INE 2017). The figures for the Active Population Survey for the second quarter of 2018 show that 63.32% of the population over 16 years of age do not have professionalising training, which vouches for the weakness of the implementation of this policy.

The procedure of validation and accreditation of professional qualifications obtained in non-formal or informal environments only allows access to the Professional Certificate.

As the final phase of the procedure, this certification and accreditation involve differences between formal and informal systems. It evidences the distance between academic learning and learning acquired by means of professional experience or Vocational Training for Employment. In order to obtain a Technician or Higher Technician Degree, the citizen will have to comply with the prerequisites to access the corresponding formal VET, set forth in Organic Education Act 2/2006 (BOE 2006). Non-compliance with these requirements leads to accreditation by means of the professional certificate. Table 4.1 displays the similarities and differences between the two certification formulas.

Table 4.1 Similarities and differences between the vocational training certificate (FP) and the professional certificate

Dimension	Vocational training degree	Professional certificate
Professional scope	The professional field that includes training for several professional qualifications belonging to a professional family	The professional profile that groups training with regard to a qualification
What it is	An instrument to accredit the qualification and competences that the CNCP has as reference	
Administration	Educational	Employment
How it is structured	Regulated professional education. It is structured in three levels, basic vocational training, intermediate and higher level, depending on the professional qualification achieved	Vocational training for employment
How it is obtained	By passing the different subjects	Successfully completing the training modules or through the procedure for the evaluation and accreditation of competences acquired by means of work experience or non-formal training pathways

Our own work

It is again the education administration that has better conditions to opt for the certification. Regulations nevertheless outline real options to move from the Professional Certificate to the Vocational Training qualification. The system allows a partial accreditation from the minimum unit with significance in employment: the unit of competence. If you have all the units of competence that make up a Professional Certificate, you will obtain your certification directly. The suspiciousness of non-formal and informal learning is clear. This learning may be certified, but obtaining the degree requires having the compulsory formal education certified. It is true that some bridges have been built to structure both training systems, but it is surprising that the system for validating and accrediting competences has not considered evaluating the basic competences proper to compulsory formal education.

Practice limits the implementation of the rule. It is time to ask whether the rule is able to include within its scope some of the significant practices experimentally developed over the last few years. These could lead us to questioning the current sense of the system for validating and accrediting competences. One might wonder what is worth being evaluated through this system, who is subject to the procedure and whether this leadership could be shared by other agents with little responsibility under the present regulation. These issues will be dealt with in the following section.

4.3 Discussing the Procedure: Conceptual and Practical Questions

If we ask about what is evaluated in the Spanish procedure for validation and accreditation of competences, the regulation makes it quite clear: professional competences. Before the approval of the norm, Bernad and Marhuenda (2008) already considered that the certification, validation and accreditation of learning outcomes in the labour market would be less accessible to people of a lower social status, those who are more vulnerable, less educated and with less formal accreditation. There is a need to create plausible itineraries for qualifications so that the individuals who do not fit into the traditional formal system can find a place in the qualification system of the country.

In Spain, the procedure for validating and accrediting competences could mitigate the effects of the high percentage of school failure and school dropout currently being found if this included the certification of basic competences usually acquired in compulsory primary and secondary education. It is important to remember that these competences are the substrate of professional competences. Portugal's validation and accreditation system could act as background, since a decade ago this country also had a low level of school certification and of professional qualification. From 2006 to 2011, the Portuguese system prioritised the evaluation of basic competences, which allowed approximately 425,000 completed school certification processes (Capucha 2014). This shows that adult education was a public policy able to

foster a great social movement in search of qualifications. The fact that less educated adults were in Portugal the ones who became more involved in these educational and training practices reveals and is materialised as a reduction of inequalities and social cohesion as the adult population had access to lifelong learning processes (Abrantes and Anibal 2014).

Furthermore, if we ask who is subject to this procedure, we can see that the discourse of making visible what is taught and learned throughout life leads to a clear "exposure" of the person submitting to evaluation. Duvekot (2014) alerts about a deep and invisible mechanism that increases the role of individuals in their acquisition of knowledge, skills and abilities and in their learning process, proportionally reducing the responsibility of the state: a state which has allowed the creation of a system responding to business logic instead of more social policies which would guarantee the widespread implementation of the system and were sensitive to access of the groups with greatest difficulties. Such policies would compulsorily include the professional guidance service in the system as an aspect intended to make the device comprehensible, to humanise this and ensure outreach to the population.

The role of social agents is also relevant. Business and trade union organisations, present on the General Council of Vocational Training, have taken part in designing the norm from different logical standpoints. Trade union organisations considered that if the procedure was consolidated in all areas, levels of qualification and sectors, this would enable making the professional competences available visible and would improve its regulation in collective agreements (UGT-PV 2015). These are the parties who have spread the procedure most. Business employers' associations nevertheless had doubts about its implementation precisely for the same reason put forward by the trade unions. This circumstance has not benefited the participation of companies, practically absent from the procedure.

I would like to explain two business practices implementing measures in the benefit of improvements to the system: one of these, the *Federico Ozanam Foundation*, joins the procedure by offering its workers professional guidance for facilitating the certification of their competences; the other, Mercadona S.A., an organisation which politically forces access of its workers to the system in exchange for co-financing the procedure.

The case of the *Federico Ozanam Foundation,*[4] a non-profit organisation that belongs to the social economy, vindicates the access of vulnerable groups to the system and exemplifies how an enterprise can participate in the procedure. In 2012, it had around 80 geriatric nursing assistants that required accreditation in the "Social and health care for dependents in social institutions" qualification, if they wanted to keep their job. The staff of the employment department had participated in training

[4] I came to know this experience, thanks to my participation in a work group coordinated by the Spanish Federations of third sector companies Faedei and Aeress. This group had the purpose to make accreditation procedures accessible to staff in Work Integration Companies. It was within this framework that, with the support of the research project funded by the Spanish Government "Educational processes, accompaniment, qualification and personal development in work integration companies: innovation in social inclusion through employment" (ref. EDU2013-45919-R), a handbook was written towards this aim (Guillera-Marco and Chisvert-Tarazona 2018).

conducted by the Agency of Professional Qualifications of Aragon, so they had sufficient knowledge about the system of validation and accreditation of competences. They carried out a process of supporting, counselling and guidance for their workers for months. They helped to understand the procedure, gave advice on the collection of the documents needed and prepared them for evaluation tests (normally an interview). This practice proves that the validation of prior learning should be regarded as a process rather than a result (Diedrich 2013). The results of the process were excellent. More than 90% of the workforce that required accreditation obtained it through this procedure, without the need to carry out vocational training. The workforce provided evidence of their previous professional and training experience. In parallel, some people responsible for the elderly were accredited as counsellors and evaluators, expanding their interface with the validation and accreditation system. This experience also reverts to the job counselling service offered by the institution, which transfers the opportunity for the users to be accredited for the competences that they attained in non-formal and informal learning contexts.

The case of *Mercadona S.A.*[5] also provides proof of the business initiative in the procedure. This organisation valued the accreditation of the certification of qualifications among its employees and decided to participate in the procedure. For this purpose, the company negotiated a call with the Department of Education and Employment, exclusively intended for the company's staff. The proposal aimed to enable the employees of this company to complete the procedure of evaluation and accreditation of competences. The approval of the application in 2012 opened up the possibility to certify the professional experience of the company's employees lacking an accredited professional qualification. Already in that year, this initiative benefited 50 professionals from the food chain that were able to accredit their qualification in Assembly and Maintenance of Refrigeration Installations. This company participated in the financing of the procedure, providing resources for the training of counsellors and evaluators in this qualification. It was the first initiative led by a company to benefit the accreditation of its workers. This experience has subsequently been reproduced by this and other companies.

These business practices, not very common in the Spanish setting, could be extended if regional authorities were to favour them in their tax policies. Some caution should nevertheless be used if measures and systems to be led by companies are promoted. Some authors consider that the instruments associated with learning will soon define and control assessment practices and curriculum (Leney et al. 2008; Guo and Shan 2013).

[5] Mercadona is a supermarket company with Spanish capital and is based in Valencia. It works in the food, personal hygiene, home care and pet care sectors. Currently, the company can be found in 50 provinces of the 17 autonomous communities with more than 1600 supermarkets.

4.4 Discussion of the Competence Accreditation System in Spain

In Spain, the procedure of validation and accreditation of competences was expected to play an important role in increasing transparency and mobility in the labour market, as well as in fostering motivation for lifelong learning. This system nevertheless still requires updates and adaptation to the needs of society and of the labour market (Carro 2015). It is important to be aware of the challenges ahead, which are connected with an understanding of the accreditation process as an inclusion space in a way similar to the one proposed by UNESCO.

The spatial decentralisation of the systems and the ambiguity of state regulations have created major differences in the development of the norm in each different region. These circumstances reveal different political willingness in each community in the availability and use of resources, in the criteria for choice of the qualifications convened, in the weight of the different stakeholders in the procedure or even in the duration and content of the programme for training advisors and evaluators. The coordination and arrangement of common objectives on the different levels of education planning – local and county, autonomous community and regional, national and supra-national – is of vital importance (Rego-Agraso et al. 2017), something which could doubtlessly be improved in the procedure.

Another drawback to be settled is to guarantee the transition between the system for validation and accreditation of competences and the subsystems of professional training. The good results in pilot experiences prior to the implementation of the system in such communities as the Canary Islands (Cabrera and Córdoba 2011) have not been consolidated. Bridges become blurred in practice. The little stability of the structures of both systems does not guarantee the availability of professional training, especially of Professional Training for Employment, or of validation and accreditation of a qualification when this is requested by the population.

This procedure of validation and accreditation requires the ongoing expansion of its curricular references. It is important to include new qualifications and update the ones that are available. We point out two areas of great benefit for the most vulnerable groups: (1) the introduction of basic competences, which are of special interest to those people without certification in mandatory regulated training, and (2) the introduction of a larger number of professional qualifications on the first level of qualification, unquestionably the most neglected one in the CNCP (Chisvert-Tarazona et al. 2015). A third area pending in need of development is that of qualification levels IV and V, in which access from non-formal or informal spaces is undoubtedly more complex but whose incorporation could bring wide recognition to these learning environments (Tejada 2007).

Another challenge for the procedure is to generalise the system, making this accessible to the whole population with basic and professional competences in its development and practical application. In order to produce a shift in the current situation, there is a need to extend the procedure calls until they match the requests in each qualification and territory and to disseminate the procedure and bring it closer

to the citizens by means of stable professional guidance services that invest in relations of proximity.

But the administrative management of the procedure should not force into the background conceptual and theoretical challenges such as the analysis of the evaluation of learning. Its summative, finalistic, commercialised sense, where the accreditation and certification have an instrumental value as merchandise to be accumulated in order to improve the credentials in the labour market (Bernad and Marhuenda 2008), should be turned into a space for reflection of the professional project and life of the individuals who access the procedure.

It is essential to be aware that the exercise of individual responsibility does not release the state or companies from their responsibility. If we focus on the learning outcomes and ignore the teaching and training processes, it is easy to transfer the responsibility for their learning to each individual. This neoliberal positioning has to be reformulated, keeping the state as guarantor of social justice in the access and benefits of the procedure, adding to the transitions required to keep moving forward.

Perhaps one should take into consideration that above all this accreditation system is a process of social construction that requires concentration and agreement, with an attentive insight in the contextual aspects. This would mean trying to tip the balance towards inclusion by humanising the process. This nevertheless contrasts with the scant conviction of the Spanish labour and education administration in the implementation of the processes of accreditation of qualifications. The insufficient resources allocated to the calls, the dissemination of the procedure, the training of professionals for its development and the update of the CNCP are proof of this.

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Chapter 5
The Education of VET Teachers and Trainers

Alicia Ros-Garrido and Fernando Marhuenda-Fluixá

Abstract In this chapter, we describe the processes and curricula of initial education of VET teachers and trainers, its features and requirements, describing the differences between formal VET teachers and non-formal vocational trainers. We introduce the initial education required to become formal VET teachers and non-formal vocational trainers in the past three decades in Spain, with particular attention to their technical and pedagogical background. We then briefly explain the continuing education chances addressed to these teachers and trainers. We finish the chapter by pointing to the challenges of the education of VET teachers and trainers, while we suggest that VET teachers have to struggle to integrate their experience as teachers with professional practice.

Keywords Teacher education · Pedagogical background · Technical knowledge · Professional experience · Pedagogical training

5.1 Introduction

The professionalization of teachers in Spain goes back to the modernization of the educational system in 1970. It is only then that primary school teachers were required to attend university. The same law ruling that, LGE, established the requirements for secondary education teachers, VET teachers included. During the 1980s and 1990s, there was a debate on two contradictory trends, in the middle of the struggle between decentralization and recentralization of educational decisions and school autonomy: one in line with the professionalization of teachers and the

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opposite speaking about the proletarization of teachers as a result of the increasing demands in terms of bureaucratic work and increasing control over their work.

It is nowadays completely out of doubt that good teaching requires both technical as well as pedagogical competence. Appropriate performance of teaching or training demands an understanding of teaching as professional practice (Imbernón 2015; Marcelo 2009; Vaillant 2009), where initial education is a relevant first step towards a career where lifelong learning also becomes a necessary component (González-Sanmamed 2009; Fernández Enguita 2003).

In this chapter, we will describe the systems of initial education of VET teachers and trainers, its features and requirements, describing the different requirements and features for formal VET teachers and non-formal VET trainers. We will then briefly explain the continuing education offer addressed to these teachers and trainers. We will end the chapter pointing to the challenges of the education of VET teachers and trainers.

Let us start by providing a picture of vocational education teachers. We can only provide information about formal VET teachers (Ministerio de Educación, Cultura & Deporte 2017), as there is no official record of data about non-formal vocational trainers.

- There has been an increase in the number of VET teachers: while in school year 2006–2007, there were 21,519, by school year 2016–2017, there were 29,969. In the same period of time, teachers in the academic secondary pathways (4 years of compulsory school plus 2 years of the baccalaureates) moved from 170,144 to 179,245.
- As opposed to what happens in the rest of the non-university school system, there are more male VET teachers (56.1%) than women (43.9%).
- VET teachers are older than the rest of teachers in the school system: 77.6% are over 40 years, while the proportion is of 76% for secondary school teachers and 61.2% for primary teachers.
- Among VET teachers, there are two different bodies, with different wages as well as entry requirements. Technical teachers (with no requirement of master studies and, for certain occupational sectors, even no requirement of university studies at all) and secondary teachers (with the need to have a university degree of master or equivalent).
- Regarding the distribution of teachers among different occupational sectors, data from the Department of Education (Ministerio de Educación 2011) showed a picture, in the first map ever of Spanish VET, where one can clearly identify relevant weaknesses of the VET system, related to the cost, planning, funding, involvement and commitment of both the education and the productive system, the administration and employers. More than half of VET teachers were employed in two occupational sectors (management and administration and computing) and in the cross-sectoral field (Introduction to the world of work, FOL). Eight occupational sectors gathered only 1/6th of all VET teachers (tourism, personal care, mechanical production, maintenance, clinical diagnostic, health, electrical and automatic systems), while the remaining third was employed in the remaining occupational sectors.

VET teachers can work either in public or in private schools; and a pedagogical accreditation to be employed is a requirement in both cases.

Access in the public system requires also taking a competitive exam and only those who pass it are able to work in the public schools. Once the exam is passed, two possibilities are open: The first one, there is a second competitive phase where some teachers can become civil servants according not only to their marks in the exam but also to a varied set of merits (among which degrees, languages and mainly experience as teachers are the most relevant ones). Those who pass the exam but cannot get a position as civil servant (only a limited number is available every year) enter a pool of possible teachers that are then listed, again according to their merits, and that are called to teach in schools where there are vacancies or to substitute teachers under leave. Even if their working conditions are similar, their wages are lower than those of civil servants.

Private VET schools hire teachers according to their own criteria, as any private company, provided they have the pedagogical accreditation. Teachers in private schools have more teaching hours, worse working conditions and less wages than their colleagues in the public service.

5.2 VET Teachers and Trainers

Before getting into any further detail, we want to clarify the different status, background and working conditions of VET teachers and vocational trainers. The preceding chapters have shown the three different subsystems within VET, and in the current chapter, we will refer to formal VET teachers and to non-formal vocational trainers. They work in different subsystems, have different roles and different backgrounds and requirements too; all of which result in different professional identities.

Regarding formal VET teachers, two words are used in Spanish to refer to teachers, *maestro*, which applies for pre-school and primary school teachers, and *profesor*, which is used for all secondary teachers. The Spanish word for trainers is that of *formador*, which entails a non-academic character and an occupational orientation. Only teachers work in schools, while trainers work in educational institutions out of schools. For in-company trainers, those in charge of VET students in their FCT module, the word we use in Spanish is *tutor* or *instructor*; we will not refer to these in this chapter, and they are not required any specific pedagogical training, even if the Chambers have provided short induction courses in the past two decades (Cámaras 2000).

VET teachers belong to two different bodies according to their access into the system, and this implies differential wages and social prestige: they can be secondary school teachers or technical VET teachers. Since 2006, it is required to have a university bachelor degree prior to a master degree to become a secondary or VET school teacher. However, teachers who joined the system before 2006 do not necessarily have a university degree, as a vocational qualification sufficed in the past, and the equivalence among categories is specified in the Royal Decree RD 276/2007.

The weight of these requirements upon vocational identities of teachers, according to Tejada (2018), vary upon educational background, contract, professional competencies and profile, initial and continuing training. The latter is the dimension around which this chapter is focused, even though referring to social and structural dimensions and not to the individual nor biographical ones.

Economic, political, social, cultural and administrative transformations challenge professional identities of teachers (Vaillant 2009), and we will try to pay attention to them. The education of VET teachers should be directed towards the formation of a professional identity (González-Sanmamed 2009) even if most master degrees do rather play a bureaucratic role not a professional one (Marcelo 2009).

As opposed to all other teachers within the system, VET teachers have a double identity, one as teachers and one as professionals. Tejada (2018) has studied the education of VET teachers (and vocational trainers), and he points to the relatively low relevance of initial pedagogical education as professional experience as teacher increases, in ways similar to the successive, sequential and non-integrated model that Bolívar (2007) defined for secondary teachers, whose professional identity does not have an initial bias bur is rather constructed along professional life.

There are indeed teachers who run their own business out of school, some also work as trainers towards the acquisition of a professional accreditation,[1] but there are no statistics nor data, be they official or not, to provide an accurate picture of this situation.

5.3 Initial Education of VET Teachers and Trainers

In this section, we introduce the initial education required to formal VET teachers and non-formal vocational trainers in the past decades in Spain, looking at both their technical and pedagogical background. In historical perspective, we may see that even if there is much room for improvement, the steps taken in the past two decades have meant the establishment of an initial education system for VET teachers where there was previously none.

5.3.1 Technical and Professional Education

In this section, we will refer first to the academic and/or professional background of teachers and trainers in the different VET subsystems, what is required of them in terms of specialization in the occupational field for which they intend to be trained to become teachers.

[1] See Chap. 4 for further detail on professional accreditation.

5.3.1.1 Teachers Within the Formal Education System: VET and Basic VET Teachers

The first regulation of initial education of post-compulsory academic and VET teachers was set up in 1971, and it was laid in the hands of University Educational Science Institutes. This short-term course was a requirement that varied according to each university. However, it mainly consisted in a series of lectures on pedagogical and psychological issues related to education, then followed by a visit to a classroom. There was no assessment of learning, but just a certificate of attendance to the lectures which led to obtaining the accreditation to become a teacher.

It was only by 1993 that this situation changed, with two main features: First, the regulation of a minimum length of the training, which consisted then in 30 h of socio-pedagogical training, 30 h of psychological training and 30 h of placement within a school. This 90 h training was reinforced through the introduction of the assessment of learning, which then turned into an obligation for students. However, this course was a possibility and not an obligation for VET teachers. It was only in 2006, that the Education Law (LOE) introduced the same requirements for all teachers in the educational system, both in the academic and in the vocational pathways at the post-compulsory level. This law established the need for university graduates and engineers to achieve a postgraduate master embedding mainly pedagogical contents. This is so ruled by articles 95 and 100 of LOE,[2] and it has not been amended in the further 2013 Law (LOMCE), which did not change anything related to teacher education.

Therefore, by 2007, with the Bologna process under development, a Royal Decree 276/2007 was passed ruling the procedure to acquire and have access to the education system as a certified teacher in any of its possible bodies, among which Technical VET teacher was included.

5.3.1.2 Trainers Within the Non-formal Vocational Training System: Training Towards Vocational Qualifications

In a parallel move, it was only in 2008 that legislation was approved in order to set a common standard and introduce the requirement for VT trainers of having both technical and occupational competence in the professional field as well as some form of pedagogical competence. At the same time, this legislation (Royal Decree 34/2008) specifies the possibilities to hire as trainers to renowned professionals, as well as it opens room for new modes of training like e-learning, tele-training as well as blended learning. All of these, however, have to be acknowledged by each of the occupational qualifications, which are the ones where trainers' requirements are established.

[2] The most recent and highly controversial LOMCE, passed in December 9th 2013, has not altered any point of Title III of the previous one, which comprised everything related to teachers.

For the weird yet legal chance to offer non-formal VT out of the Spanish National Catalogue of Vocational Qualifications, the requirements for the trainers are defined by each institution and in accordance to the funding mechanisms of the training provided. For the marginal dimension of such training, we will not cover this in the chapter.

5.3.2 Pedagogical and Didactic Education

In this section, we will refer to the specific training that VET teachers and trainers receive in order to become teachers or trainers, an offer that they can only access once they have achieved a previous professional qualification, that we have seen in the previous section.

The pedagogical education of VET teachers is only a recent requirement in Spain, even if there are differences according to the VET subsystem (Basic VET, formal VET and non-formal vocational training). It also varies according to the background and initial education of teachers and trainers. Below, we will provide information on the general features of such an education, its requirements and organization. We close the section with a comparison among them, focusing upon content and length of this education.

5.3.2.1 The Master for Secondary Education Teachers

Given that the teaching profession is one of the few that have an overarching European regulation, like architects and doctors, this is gathered in the Department of Education Order ECI/3858/2007, further specified in the Royal Decree 1393/2007. Here, we find the specification of the modules that this postgraduate course offers in order to achieve the corresponding professional accreditation to become a VET teacher. Being a master course, this is always provided by a university. The structure is the same for lower and upper secondary school teachers, and the content varies according to the possibilities of each university entitled to offer it.

This master course basically comprises a course of 60 ECTS, which in Spanish terms turns out to be 600 h, and there are three different modules: generic and both compulsory modules, specific and therefore optional modules, master thesis and placement in a VET school.

There are three generic subjects, one on psychology, both developmental and educational psychology, a second one on the sociology of education and a third one on pedagogical and organizational dimensions of secondary and VET schools.

Regarding the specific modules, the structure is the same be these a part of compulsory secondary schools or of any kind of vocational school, and they are distributed in three subjects: The first one being on the disciplinary dimensions of the subject(s) to be taught, the second one referred to innovation and research upon educational practice, and the third one, which is the most relevant subject in the whole master, about the didactic of the subject(s).

5.3.2.2 The Pedagogical Accreditation of VET Trainers

In certain formal VET occupations, people with a high-level vocational qualification may become a trainer within the formal VET system. Given that such a qualification, even if awarded by the Department of Education, does not qualify for university level, such people are not entitled to take the master for VET teachers. Even if they work within the formal VET system, they are considered as trainers or technical assistants, not as teachers, as they do not have a university degree.

For them, the Department of Education has devised a parallel way to achieve a pedagogical qualification, through a regulation that was first passed din 2011, through the Order EDU/2465/2011 later modified by the Order ECD/1058/2013[3] and every region has enforced it with different enthusiasm, in some like Valencia possible only since 2016.

This is a chance for trainers in the formal VET system that are already working; therefore, it is rather a form of continuing training than initial one, though it is addressed to achieve the requirement demanded by regulations, among which a B1 level in a foreign language, according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, this being another requirement whose achievement has been postponed several times by the administration.

The length of this course is of 60 ECTS, and it consists of three different modules, a general one, a specific one and a practical one.

5.3.2.3 The Vocational Qualification in 'Teaching and Training in Non-formal Vocational Training'

Vocational trainers in non-formal VT used to be required only professional experience in the vocational field until recently. As late as 2008, a requirement was passed for all vocational trainers to have a vocational accreditation as 'vocational trainer' or as 'trainer in the non-formal vocational training system'. These are both vocational qualifications acknowledged and registered in the National Catalogue of Vocational Qualifications, the latter replacing the former, which had been first established in 1997 by Royal Decree 1646/1997 and was then renewed by Royal Decree 1697/2011, later updated by the Royal Decree 625/2013. Such a vocational qualification is required for all vocational trainers except those who hold a university degree as teachers, pedagogues and psycho-pedagogues or those who hold the master as secondary teachers or the former pedagogical accreditation for secondary teachers. Any of these requirements, however, can be also replaced by a professional experience as trainer of up to 600 h in the last 10 years.

As a matter of fact, this entitles most vocational trainers to remain as such even if they lack any proper education or qualification, by means of experience.

[3] The latter one only widens the deadlines in order for these trainers to acquire the requirements on qualification, language and pedagogical training.

To enter such a vocational qualification and to achieve it become something relatively easy, as it is offered by public and private institutions, in both face-to-face and distance or blended modes (where only the placement cannot be online). Neither universities nor VET schools within the education system teach towards such an accreditation. The course lasts 380 h, therefore an equivalent to 38 credits, and it consists of 5 training modules plus a sixth one for the placement.

5.3.3 A Comparison of the Initial Pedagogical Education of VET Teachers and Trainers

Until very recently, as we have seen, the education required for vocational teachers could be less than that demanded for the academic pathways at both the compulsory and the post-compulsory level. The education system, which welcomed VET within it in 1970, acknowledged its particularities and the specificity of its vocational profiles even allowing to hire specialists with no pedagogical background.

In Fig. 5.1, we can observe how modules in each of the three pedagogical courses compare to each other: When it comes to formal VET, these are the modules of the master as secondary school teacher on the one hand and the pedagogical course for technical VET teacher on another, for those teachers who do not have a university degree. In the case of VT trainers, the course is defined by the vocational qualification on Teaching in the Non-Formal Vocational Training System.

University degrees are only required in the first of all three cases. The vocational qualification has a level 3 qualification, equivalent to higher VET, even if access can be guaranteed through a variety of means that make it available to a wide range of population.

Even if the access requirements to these courses are different, and taking into account that they try to provide a minimum common pedagogical education, we will see in Fig. 5.1 the differences in terms of duration of each of the modules,

Formal Vocational Education						Non-formal Vocational Training	
University Master as Secondary School Teacher (university graduates)			Pedagogical Course for Technical Vocational Teachers (no university graduates)			Vocational qualification: 'Trainer in the Non-Formal Vocational System'	
	Modules	Hours		Modules	Hours	Modules	Hours
Generic	-Educational and developmental pscyhology -Didactics and school organization -Sociology of education	120	Generic	-Educational and developmental pscyhology -Didactics and school organization -Sociology of education	100-160	-Educational planning -Selection, preparation, adaptation and use of teaching resources in vocational training -Teaching and coaching in vocational training -Evaluation of teaching and learning processes in vocational training -Vocational guidance and quality assurance in vocational training	60 90 100 60 30
Specific	-Subject-area knowledge -Subject specific didactics -Innovation and educational research	240	Specific	-Vocational guidance -Teaching and instruction - Innovation and educational research	150-220		
Placement in the field (including Master Thesis)		160	Placement in the field (including a final essay)		150-220	Placement in the field	40
Total: 60 ECTS			Total: 60 credits			Total: 38 credits	

Fig. 5.1 Pedagogical education of formal VET teachers and non-formal vocational trainers

which brings us to consider that the main difference regards the length of placements.

5.4 Continuing Training of VET Teachers

Continuing training is very recent in Spain.[4] The continuing education of teachers has not been an exception, but it entails certain particularities. The origin of continuing education among formal VET teachers goes back to the 1970s, when teachers working in the education system were required to take further education in order to adapt their ideas and methods to the new principles of the system approved in the LGE. The same effort was taken in the mid 1980s and early 1990s, making of further education a tool to expand the principles and approaches to education of the reform passed by LOGSE. Fortunately, the structures develop to take such efforts have been then used to promote the continuing education of teachers beyond those efforts closer to propaganda than to education themselves, and there has been an increasing specialization and professionalization of continuing education for VET teachers that has had a much larger impact upon general secondary teachers and primary teachers than upon VET teachers, for reasons due to costs and organization of further education.

Continuing training is nowadays a demand upon teachers, who are invited to take part in further education courses, which ends up turning in complementary wages related to these actions. This requirement is also a demand by many VET teachers, willing to be responsive to the demands of the labour market (Sola et al. 2012).

It is a right and an obligation of VET teachers, as stated by LOE (art. 102.1), and it is the responsibility of the Educational Administration and the schools to guarantee that right. However, in the case of public schools, continuing training is used as a means for either promotion or wage supplements, which in a way distorts the value of continuing education. In private schools as well as in the case of non-formal VET trainers, further education also suffers those distortions, but it is also considered as a contribution for career development, school improvement as well as the development of one's employability (Martín 2016) because it is taken into account among selection criteria of schools and training private providers. In summary, there is no rule that forces VET teachers (any school teacher, as a matter of fact) to enroll into continuing training: there are economic and promotion incentives, but no requirement.

In this section, we will comment on the different ways in which continuing education is portrayed, taking into account that in the case of formal VET, it is managed and delivered by the regional administrations of education. Every region has its own network of Continuing Training and Educational Support for Teachers, a network set up in the late 1980s and early 1990s around the approval of the LOGSE and that

[4] Editor's note: see Chap. 3 for further information on the continuing vocational education and training system.

has evolved later according to the own educational mandates of each of the regional governments. In the case of the region of Valencia, for instance, these were ruled in 1997 (Decree 231/1997) and more recently in 2012 (Order 64/2012). Each of the centres of this network is in charge of planning annually a training provision to satisfy the demands of the schools under its jurisdiction, and in every region, there is usually one such centre which focuses specifically upon VET qualifications (as well as post-compulsory teachings in the areas of arts and sports). Such planning attempts to address the demands of school teachers but always under the umbrella of the strategic plans devised by the educational administration of regional governments. They are, for instance, in charge of the Pedagogical Course for Technical Vocational Teachers.

The types of training they provide take the shape of courses, in-service courses, day conferences, permanent seminars, working groups, networks to expand good practices as well as placements for VET teachers in companies.

We will briefly explain this latter one, with the example of the Valencian region, where there is a yearly call for VET teachers to be up to 50 h in a company of their choice. In the last call, published in early 2017,[5] 54 teachers applied for it, out of which 43 were able to enjoy such placements.

A final paragraph gives a brief input on the chances for continuing education of trainers of the non-formal vocational training system. There is a state-wide programme that should provide a yearly plan for the technical improvement of trainers in different types of vocational training such as workshop schools, trade schools and employment workshops, as well as for trainers working for accredited training institutions, trainers in the continuing training system or trainers in VET schools. The Public Employment System is the agency in charge of such provision, delivered at regional level. Nevertheless, our own research conducted in 2013 (Ros-Garrido 2014) and 2017 has shown that there has been no such offer since 2012.

In a recent study by García de Fez and Solbes (2016), continuing education of teachers has a positive impact upon their professionalization, and this is particularly the case when the principal motivates and supports such a policy among the staff. Marcelo (2009) has also shown how schools can facilitate specific programmes for novel teachers who join them in a whole-school effort, even if the payback of such an effort has to overcome the access and selection procedures the administration sets for public schools, which may hinder the establishment of school teams. An evidence of the lack of stronger support for further education of VET teachers is the lack of systematic evaluation of such programmes and the lack of a long-term design and implementation that addresses the needs of teachers in different domains, such as teaching methodologies, update of technical knowledge or closing the gap between the demands of the labour market and the possibilities of teachers and

[5] That Call, launched in January 2017, demanded from VET teachers the following information: clear statement of aims of the placement, features of the company, choice of the company, planned activities, relation of the placement to vocational competencies in the vocational qualifications and advantages of the companies. http://www.ceice.gva.es/ca/web/formacion-profesorado/estancias-formativas-en-empresas

schools to be responsive to them. Florido et al. (2014) have suggested a specific proposal for teachers in the occupational sector of tourism, in the strong belief that increasing the professionalization of teachers is beneficial for them, the schools, students and society as a whole. Tejada (2018) also defends the need to provide specific plans to support the needs for organizational improvement and staff development. Proposals such as this can be part of the so called 'self-educated organization' as suggested by Buck (2005) which confronts a school with both internal and external demands. Buck also holds that principals must go through further education as well, while the educational administration could show greater commitment towards continuing education.

No matter how much continuing education has increased in the past three decades, it is an area needed of improvement and employers and other social actors of the labour market cannot neglect their role in contributing to both the content and the organization of such an education.

5.5 The Education of VET Teachers and Vocational Trainers: Looking Ahead

The education of VET teachers has not received the same attention as that of the rest of teachers in Spain until recently. The existence of two bodies of teachers with differential academic background has been a burden for quite a long time, even if recent legal developments have ended with such differentiation and no VET teachers will access the system without a master degree, while those already within the system have to receive further education to adapt their qualification.

As we explained in Sect. 5.2 of this chapter, it has not been until 2007 that initial education of secondary school teachers achieved the level of master studies and it became then a requirement for all VET teachers. Therefore, the current situation can be positively assessed, as has been declared by Manso and Martín (2014) or González-Sanmamed (2009). However, this does not mean that there is no room for improvement. As Ruiz-Corbella and García-Blanco (2016) have shown, there has been a lack of planning by the regional educational administrations which has resulted in several vocational qualifications lacking specific initial education for their teachers. This problem is closely related to the lack of proper planning for the offer of VET qualifications, for investment in VET as well as for the lack of adaptation of the VET school system to changes in the curricular offer that cannot take the same periods of time than those in the academic pathways.

Valle and Manso (2011) retake the old demand set by Franci (1997) to point to the need to reinforce the pedagogical dimension of initial education, often hidden under the subject-specific content replacing its didactics, as well as in mechanisms that are able to guarantee the quality of schools where students take their placements.

When referring to continuing education of VET teachers, the chance of enjoying placements in companies seems very appropriate, yet very limited and therefore available only for a few chosen ones. Some have shown (Barrientos and Navío 2015) that VET teachers able to combine their experience as teachers with professional practice bring in a relevant input to their students. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development ([OECD] 2011) had also suggested such possibility as a means to have an updated knowledge of the industry. A similar claim for bringing school to work closer in his regard has been done elsewhere around the world (Ibarrola 2009). In fact, Tejada (2018) assumes that professional experience is the key for professional development.

More than a decade ago, Buck (2005, 25) concluded that future VET teachers 'must get much more involved in real working life, both theirs as well as that of their pupils'. He expressed this need of contact with actual teaching practice in this way: 'The larger the demand –both on the side of pupils, to increase their individual capacity, as well as by the VET school, transformed in a self-educated organization- of a didactic competence mainly acquired through practical situations (in the classroom, the school or the regional context), the more limited will result the initial education acquired' (Buck 2005, 33). Therefore, the relevance of continuing education.

We must look at all agents involved in the teaching and training processes. In this sense, the role of in-company tutors of students in their placements[6] is a relevant issue that we have not been able to cover in the chapter. Their pedagogical training to accomplish their role (Leidner 2003; Marhuenda 2002; Marhuenda and Ros-Garrido 2015) is very limited, and it has been laid in hands of the Chambers of Commerce, which have done an impressive yet limited effort affected by the lack of an appropriate training culture in the country as well as have been negatively affected whenever there was an economic crisis.

A final consideration in terms of the education of VET teachers is the need to take into account the increasing variety of learners' needs among those who attend VET schools, like students with disabilities or young adults with a record of early school leaving and hence scarce academic habits, unemployed people and middle-aged women who seek in VET a way to increase their qualification and prospects for starting a career, or migrant people with limited knowledge of the language, among others. The audience of VET schools has changed while no relevant effort has been taken by the educational administration to react to this. The return of adult people to VET in search of an accredited qualification and new possibilities for employment has caused the increase of the VET offer and the need for qualified VET teachers. The scarcity of offer has caused the introduction of selection procedures (Martínez-García 2016). In the short term, there is a need to increase both offer and teachers, as well as to consider which vocational qualifications will be demanded. However, due to the consideration of teaching as a public service and therefore positions offered as civil servants, the risk of stabilizing staff for professions which demand might decrease is a risk.

[6] Editor's note: see Chap. 7 in this book.

If we turn now to the non-formal vocational training system, we want also to comment on the education of its trainers. The recent requirement for them to show a pedagogical accreditation has been a relevant step in order to improve the quality of vocational training as well as one more step to bring it closer to the formal VET system. As we have seen, this has not been done without allowing most trainers who were already in the system to remain in it through their experience and without any further qualification. The effects of such a measure will be visible, therefore, once a new generation of trainers enters the system. But we have already seen elsewhere[7] how delinquent the administrations have been to gather data of the non-formal vocational training system to allow for its proper evaluation and planning.

However, we have moved from the absence of regulation to a very strict control nowadays, where some regional administrations, like is the case of Valencia, hold a registry of trainers out of which any institution should hire their own ones. Even though it was first established in 2001, it has only now become a public pool[8] where all vocational qualifications are covered, even if only for the training funded by the regional administration, not for all other non-formal training provision.

París (2013) and París et al. (2014) conducted a study on initial education and requirements of non-formal vocational trainers in several countries. It is worth noting that, for the Spanish case, they identified a similar proportion of secondary school teachers, pedagogues and psychologists among trainers, together with people with other backgrounds. These authors dare to suggest a university degree for vocational trainers too. Ros-Garrido (2014), however, holds that certain occupational families do not need such a degree but a vocational qualification. Marcelo (2009) reminds us about the accreditation of vocational competences as a way to protect a professional body, and links such demands to the will to increase professional prestige as well as wages.

Perhaps the answer to this dilemma lies in the demand of vocational education and training and the market value of vocational qualifications and accreditations, be they provided by the formal or the non-formal subsystems, and how they are perceived by society as a whole and the labour market (Cuadra and Moreno 2005). The requirements for initial and continuing training shown in this chapter point in the direction to improve VET teachers and trainers training and their professional competence and prestige.

Research conducted by Ros-Garrido (2014) and Ros-Garrido et al. (2017) showed that trainers in the non-formal subsystem focus upon the needs of learners and their implicit theories vary according to these. Similar conclusions have been reached by Barrios (2015), showing the impact of initial background upon such theories and beliefs. It might be advisable to employ continuing training to review one's implicit theories, as suggested by Imbernón (2004).

To what extent does the education of VET teachers and trainers respond to the features, demands and needs of VET nowadays? The answer to this question is for sure related to other dimensions of educational policy such as the profiles of VET

[7] Editor's note: see Chap. 1 in this book.

[8] http://www.servef.gva.es/web/centros-formacion-servef/personal-docente

students, the update of VET schools (buildings and resources), the development and involvement of the actors in the labour market as well as the responsiveness of the education and labour administration to rule conditions to become and remain as VET teachers and non-formal vocational trainers, respectively. We cannot neglect the own interest of VET teachers regarding their expectations and needs regarding their professional development.

In a claim similar to others in this book, more involvement on the side of employers is expected also in the field of the further education of VET teachers if they want VET to be more responsive to their demands. This is particularly relevant in the specific occupational component of teachers' education, without neglecting its possible role in terms of pedagogical innovation. The teaching profession as a whole is trying to adapt to changes in society, and this is reflected also in labour relations (Imbernón 2004) or social prestige, staff development practices or the global trend towards the assessment of teachers' performance (Vaillant 2009). Bolívar (2017) refers to the trend towards a wider professionalization of teachers relying upon more soft skills. This is also the claim by Marcelo (2009) or Hargreaves (2003), to become catalysts of transformation. Could this be the case for VET teachers and vocational trainers?

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Orden ECD/1058/2013, de 7 de junio, por la que se modifica la Orden EDU/2645/2011, de 23 de septiembre, por la que se establece la formación equivalente a la formación pedagógica y didáctica exigida para aquellas personas que, estando en posesión de una titulación declarada equivalente a efectos de docencia, no pueden realizar los estudios de máster.

Real Decreto 276/2007, de 23 de febrero, por el que se aprueba el Reglamento de ingreso, accesos y adquisición de nuevas especialidades en los cuerpos docentes a que se refiere la Ley Orgánica 2/2006, de 3 de mayo, de Educación, y se regula el régimen transitorio de ingreso a que se refiere la disposición transitoria decimoséptima de la citada ley.

Orden ECI/3858/2007, de 27 de diciembre, por la que se establecen los requisitos para la verificación de los títulos universitarios oficiales que habiliten para el ejercicio de las profesiones de Profesor de Educación Secundaria Obligatoria y Bachillerato, Formación Profesional y Enseñanzas de Idiomas.

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Regional Legislation

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Orden 65/2012, de 26 de octubre, de la Conselleria de Educación, Formación y Empleo, que establece el modelo de formación permanente del profesorado y el diseño, reconocimiento y registro de las actividades formativas. [2012/10009].

Resolución de 27 de octubre de 2016, de la Dirección General de Centros y Personal Docente, por la que se determinan las universidades públicas de la Comunitat Valenciana que ofertarán la formación pedagógica y didáctica conducente a la obtención de la certificación oficial que acredite estar en posesión de la formación equivalente a la exigida en el artículo 100 de la Ley Orgánica 2/2006, de 3 de mayo, de Educación, para aquellas personas que, por razones derivadas de su titulación no puedan acceder a los estudios de máster que habilite para el ejercicio de las profesiones de profesor de educación secundaria obligatoria y bachillerato, formación profesional y enseñanzas de idiomas. [2016/9156].

Resolución de 23 de enero de 2017, de la Secretaría Autonómica de Educación e Investigación, por la que se convoca la realización de estancias de formación para el profesorado con atribución docente en Formación Profesional y de enseñanzas artísticas profesionales y deportivas en empresas, organizaciones o instituciones ubicadas en el ámbito territorial de la Comunitat Valenciana o en el resto del territorio español, durante el año 2017. [2017/875].

Resolución de 26 de abril de 2017, del director general del Servicio Valenciano de Empleo y Formación, por la que se regula transitoriamente, el procedimiento de gestión del fichero de expertos docentes para impartir cursos de formación profesional, en los centros de formación de titularidad de la Generalitat Valenciana.

Part II
Challenges in VET: Research Upon Tensions Within the System

Chapter 6
The Planning and Organization of VET: Research on VET Networks in Andalusia

Ángela Martín-Gutiérrez and Juan Antonio Morales-Lozano

Abstract VET schools have a social commitment with the education of citizens and with their professional qualification. This commitment requires a close and dynamic relationship of collaboration to establish the objectives as well as it requires the involvement of their agents in planning and management. This chapter provides an opportunity to understand the characteristics of the collaboration and the potential internal and external relationships and prospective partnerships from the perspective of members of the management teams. Our research emphasizes the need for their development both from the internal action of the schools, with the management of their government teams, and from the involvement of the community to the formation of the new generations.

Keywords Community relations · Collaboration · Educational community · Education management · Educational relations

6.1 Educational Collaboration and Community Relations

Collaboration emerges as a philosophical ideal because of the difficulty involved in the construction of a framework lying in its interpretation and definition (Corrie 1995). Currently considered a spontaneous, voluntary, contextualized, intentional and planned process (Sánchez and García 2005), which serves as a tool that is able to change the education and benefit those involved, assuming a sum of capabilities to achieve common goals (Epstein 2014). Antúnez (1998) stated that collaboration goes through five degrees of consolidation: promoting and enhancing mutual

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understanding, undertaking improvement and compliance, sharing resources, participating in joint projects, and establishing networks.

As Gairín (2000) states, inter and intra-institutional collaboration are paramount when considering education as a social project that transcends the educational framework and is committed to society as a collective construction.

This chapter focuses its attention on external collaboration as it pursues the possibility of integral development of individuals through contact with different contexts and realities (González 2014). As shown in Fig. 6.1, the network of interactions between different institutions/agents (formal, informal, and non-formal) is of a different nature, i.e., the relationship arrows are dissimilar. There are differences in the strength (thickness of the arrow), durability (continuous or discontinuous arrow), and direction of collaborative relationships depending on the needs and goals of those involved (Martín and Morales 2013). We will try to characterize the main collaborative relationships.

Partnerships with the community that stand out the most in the literature are those between educational institutions and families (Comellas 2009; González 2014). The benefits of this collaboration highlight the increased academic performance of students (Salimbeni 2011), their personal and professional development (Gareau and Sawatzky 2005), and expectations for further study (Prew 2009). From this point of view, families turn out to be important links that contribute to improving educational institutions and community development (Shatkin and Gershberg 2007).

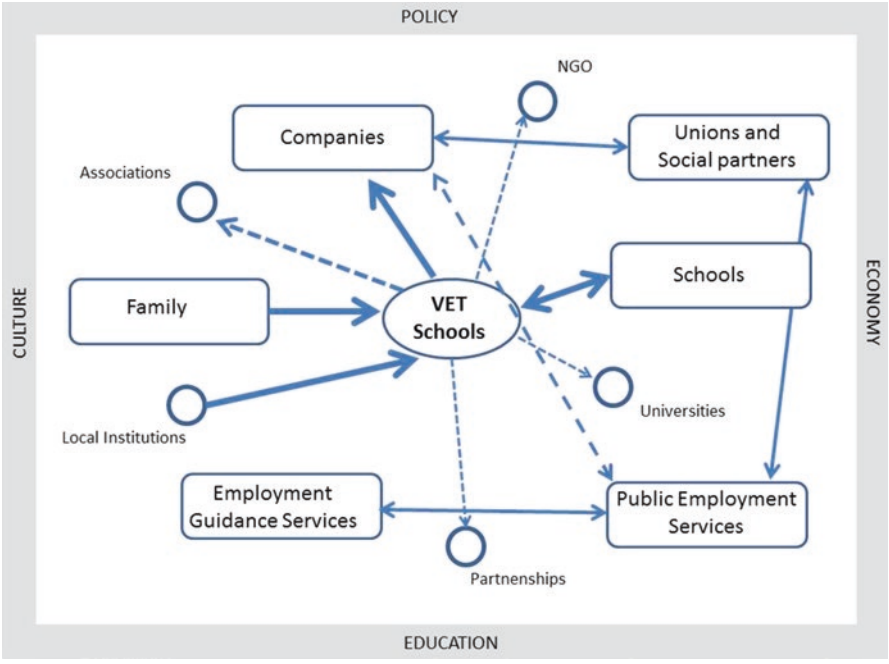


Fig. 6.1 Relational map of entities/agents with which schools have relationships

Another well-commented collaboration is between VET schools and companies, as relationships between the two have been the subject of discussion and reflection (Jackson 2010). These take place in companies where students do internships in companies (FCT) (Grytnes et al. 2017), followed by those private and public companies that have relationships in order to provide resources, training, infrastructure, etc. (Sukarieh and Tannock 2009). Although most researchers support academic-professional integration, they recognize the benefits and implementation of an integrated curriculum, but also consider it problematic (Nkhangweleni 2013). The poor link between these two agents is mainly due to the lack of government policies and subsidies at the education, business, and economic level (Nkhangweleni 2013), the shortage of platforms that facilitate relationships (Smith and Betts 2000), insufficient initiatives encouraged by VET institutions, and the poor response from business agents.

It is essential that education and business agents come together to reflect and discuss the possibility of a relationship and its goals (Baker and Henson 2010); as well as promote strategies, research and development of companies and VET schools (Dacre Pool and Sewell 2007). As Olazarán et al. (2013) claim, there must be agreements between these agents to cooperate, given that these favor students acquiring skills for employment, something that becomes vital for a competitive economy and technical change.

On the other hand, we can also highlight relationships with unions and social partners, with the public employment services and employment guidance services. The former have a crucial role in developing VET-employment policies because they can help identify current skill needs in companies and allocation of these training programs; and ensure that qualifications are universally recognized (Haolader et al. 2017) and help/support learning in schools and dual systems (Nielsen 2011). However, the reality reflects how there are few links between VET schools and unions because of the involvement of the latter (ETF 2013).

Public employment services have undergone a reform process since its beginning up until the current economic crisis, so it is necessary to bet on active policies that help foster new employment. Laval and Dardot (2013) consider that agents must be the ones to maintain a close relationship with VET schools from the beginning of student training until just before the end of studies: they can manage both work sessions with teachers of the schools to report on the status of each of the professional areas in the work placements, as we assess students in order to advise them on the profiles in demand by companies, professional skills related to their sector, and the current state of work placement for the training they are doing (Cueto and Suárez 2014).

Regarding the role of Career Guidance Services in VET, Rodriguez (1991) emphasizes that due to their training and consultative role, they can enhance students' personal and professional development by providing resources that allow them to adapt to social and labor changes and promote a positive attitude toward work. These services "try to help the person achieve optimal career development, while at the same time, they must be able to design, internalize and develop their own professional project" (Ceinos 2008, p. 80). This means that the student's

transition from the VET school to the labor market must be facilitated, together with political, educational, and social agents.

Another type of agent that contributes to the development of students exists; these are, for example, associations, NGOs (Martín-Moreno 2010), other schools (Puente and Rodríguez 2004), and universities (Tejada 2005). According to De Gràcia and Elboj (2005), local authorities, associations, and NGOs favor transversal work in schools providing material resources, training, and workshops for the educational community. The relationship between VET and university represents an "attitude of integration and administration, such as training subsystems of production and delivery of service for the world" (Tejada 2005, p. 2). The agents of both institutions should collaborate to research, innovate, and transfer knowledge and experiences, focusing on the students and the partner community.

To observe, study at schools, and know the relationships and how they establish with their environment and the tools that they use for it are relevant topics. This is due to the need to transform the socio-educational dimension of institutions and their environment through the involvement of all people who directly or indirectly influence the learning and development of students, including teachers, family members, friendships, members of associations and organizations, volunteers, companies, etc. Creating collaborative networks, working as a team and becoming aware are key strategies for managing the environment surrounding VET schools.

The use of technologies, as web pages of the school as a means of information about it (Gairín and Martín 2004), platforms such as wikis, where different agents can collaborate (Fuchs 2015), blogger, Skype, social networks such as Facebook, and support platforms such as Timebank (Raihan 2014), can serve as bridges to create stable and strong collaboration and participation relationships that promote improvements and significant changes in schools and society (Muijs et al. 2011). It is worth highlighting some of the contributions that technologies offer us: tutorials and virtual forums and shared work, where students, teachers, families, and the community can interact (Vázquez 2008).

The networks created between the schools and their context are vehicles that lead to the improvement of the educational and partner community (Muijs et al. 2011). Ultimately, the collaboration produces an opening of the schools, breaking the physical walls of these. In addition, the use of ICT, in particular professional, educational, and social networks, helps to take a step further, breaking time-space barriers that bring schools (especially VET) closer to society and the labor market (Raihan 2014). The networks are outlined as amplifiers of the possibilities of school-context interaction, allowing to take advantage of not only the human and intellectual potential of all the members of the educational community, who are immersed in this structure created for collaboration, but also that of the external agents. In this sense, Fig. 6.2 shows how collaborative relationships are formed as mediating tools between two different cultures when VET schools-context collaborative relationships are established. On the one hand, the educational culture promotes a series of values, and promotes a specific type of learning, fruit of the interrelations between students, teachers and family. On the other hand, the social culture is different from

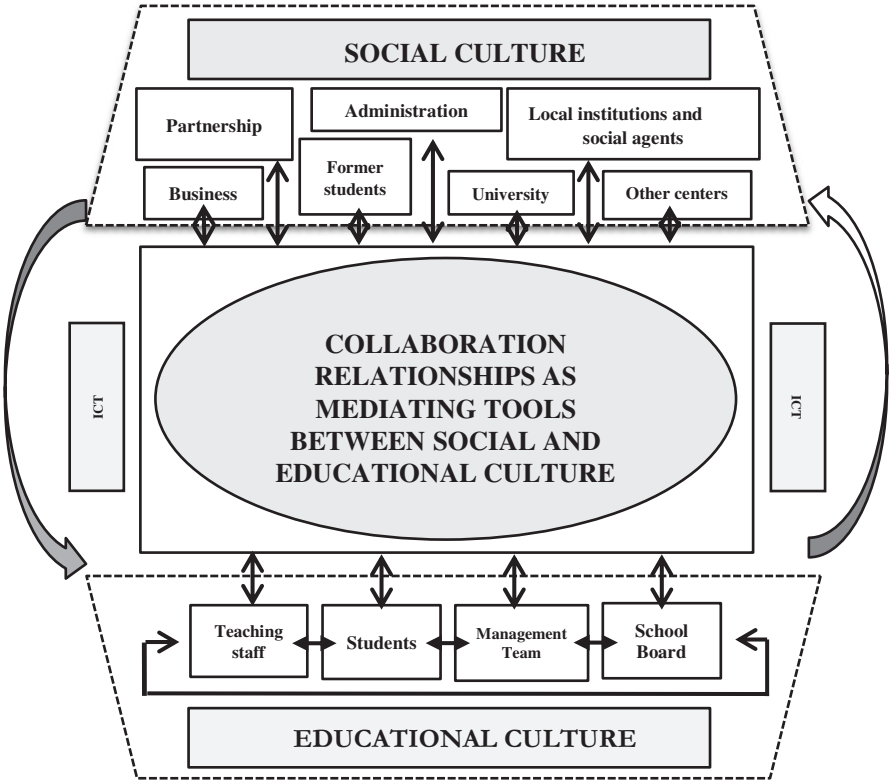


Fig. 6.2 Collaboration relationships as mediating tools between social and educational culture

the previous one, since agents and/or social institutions interact locally, nationally, and/or internationally (associations, companies, foundations, NGOs, etc.).

Both cultures are different, but they are in continuous interrelation; the one influences the other and vice versa. This cycle of influence and/or dependence is mediated by collaborative relationships, which promote values in favor of a better society and involve changes, that is, cultures do not go their own way but rather nourish each other. The educational changes the social, and the social changes the educational one. For this reason, the formalization of collaborative relationships in planning documents and/or projects become tools of change "increase social capital, promoting community relations and a sense of community work at school and between different schools of the district or municipality, families and environment, for a few decades, it has become a clear line where the improvement must be directed" (Bolívar et al. 2013, p. 26).

The society built on information and knowledge poses challenges to the educational environment, teaching trained individuals with a view of an increasingly unstable world of work (Homs 2008). This situation implores the creation of new scenarios (Cabero 2008), in which the individual can receive training and acquire

vocational skills adapted to their job as well as competencies for active citizenship (Tejada 2013); therefore contributing to social and human capital of the communities they belong to (Down et al. 2017). In this light, political, social, and educational institutions should establish ties to collaborate and work together (Martín and Morales 2013). Thus, occurs the importance of educational collaboration with the environment as an element of social transformation and change for organizational development and the performance of individuals linked to them (Katz and Earl 2010; Mfum-Mensah 2011; Schneider and Zufferey 2016). Vocational Education and Training (VET) has managed to adapt to today's society, acting as a driver for innovation and social improvement (Marhuenda 2012), as it reacts to market requirements but also meets the needs and interests of the individual (Royal Decree 1147/2011).

6.2 Planning VET in Andalusia

The Education Law of Andalusia (LEA 2007), in line with the European and national regulations, emphasizes the need for a greater connection between schools with the productive fabric and the labor market. And from this normative framework, a regulation of vocational training is being configured that aims to create a public network of schools and integrate initial or regulated professional training (students aged 16–24) and training for employment or occupational (population active, employed, and/or unemployed), with the involvement of companies and the development of dual vocational training (Order of June 2, 2014). Some relevant aspects of this normative regulation for the development of vocational training in Andalusia are:

(a) Attending training and updating of teachers.
(b) Increase pedagogical, organizational (with the participation of the community), and management (to make them more effective) autonomy of the schools.
(c) All VET courses of initial Vocational Training, in addition to the modules associated with professional competences, will include in their curriculum training related to prevention of occupational risks, information and communication technologies, promotion of the entrepreneurial culture, creation and management of companies and self-employment, and knowledge of the labor market and labor relations. On the other hand, students will receive a training module in companies (promoting the involvement of the business sector in training programs), in order to complete professional skills in real-work situations.
(d) Promotion of entrepreneurship through the development of business projects linked to innovation and technology transfer, especially in relation to social initiatives and the rural areas.
(e) Development of the Andalusian Vocational Training Council (AVTC) as the responsible structure for analyzing and disseminating aspects related to the labor market in Andalusia and planning the training offer. It includes the

representation of the Andalusian Institute of Professional Qualifications (AIPQ), the Andalusian Employment Service (AES), the Government Ministries with competencies in training, representatives of the trade union, business and social economy agents, representatives of the local corporations and organizations and vocational schools.

(f) The Andalusian System of Professional Qualifications will be developed (around the 26 professional families) according to the specific needs of the labor market in Andalusia. For what will be counted on the collaboration of business and union organizations. VET will be organized in a flexible way, offering a modular catalogue associated to the professional competences included in the Andalusian System of Professional Qualifications. And the competent administrations (employment and education) will establish a device for recognition and accreditation of professional competences acquired through work experience and non-formal learning, for which the collaboration of business and trade union organizations will be available.

(g) Development of a resource platform for the implementation of an integrated information and professional guidance system.

(h) Creation of a network of integrated vocational schools (with the aim of turning them into frames of reference), CIFP, which will provide all the offers corresponding to the vocational training subsystems, referred to the National Catalogue of Professional Qualifications, leading to the qualifications and vocational certificates referred to in Organic Law 5/2002, of June 19, of Qualifications and Vocational Training (LOCFP 2002). The Administration of the Regional Government of Andalusia, in collaboration with the most representative business and trade union organizations, will establish a common planning model for the network of integrated vocational schools (Decree 382/2010).

(i) Planning an offer of initial Vocational Training in blended and e-learning modules, using information and communication technologies (ICT) (Decree 359/2011).

(j) Promoting collaboration with universities, in order to establish acknowledgement procedures between university studies and initial higher VET studies.

In this context, it is interesting to discover the relational fabric between VET schools, as designers of educational responses; and their communities, demanding of training and qualification requirements. This is where the research problem arises: what partnerships do VET schools establish with community? At the same time, pursuing other questions: what other agents do they connect with, what objectives do they pursue, what are the roles of the management teams, and what are those of the educational community? Thus, the main purpose of this chapter is the discovery of the complex web of relationships between formal VET schools of the region of Andalusia, Spain. These relationships are analyzed from the perspective of institutions open to the community, trying to identify the value that comes from practical collaboration in schools and how it affects VET students. Knowing the reality and understanding it, discovering their weaknesses/strengths will lead to the development of proposals for improvement.

Regulations that control VET in Spain and Andalusia include structure and organization, objectives, content and evaluation criteria under the acquisition of basic skills, and professional and key competences for lifelong learning. Among the key skills, three that are closely related to VET can be highlighted: learning to learn, social and civic competences, and the sense of initiative and entrepreneurship (Winterton et al. 2006). Companies are demanding well-trained and qualified individuals for the jobs to be filled (Mulder and Winterton 2014). Along this line, Tejada (2013) raises the need to promote educational strategies to be integrated into the professional profiles of students: the professionalizing, social, ethical, and civic dimension.

Thus, the reaction of economic organizations, (OECD 2006), and the Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI) propose new contexts for the development of training and education of the population, focusing on the principles of the economy of knowledge, the paradigm of complexity and constant adaptation of workers to change. This approach between training and work has been developed in recent years due to the socio-economic and employment crisis (Marhuenda et al. 2010; Chan 2014; Riphahn and Zibrowius 2015).

6.3 A Study of VET Planning in Andalusia

Currently, the legislation in Spain that regulates the education system states that Vocational Training is divided into Initial or formal VET (Royal Decree 1538/2006) and VET for Employment (Royal Decree 395/2007). This section focuses on the formal VET schools in Andalusia (Spain), i.e., those offering training courses for the mid and upper level. This type of teaching is regulated by the *Ley de Educación Andaluza* (Law on Andalusian Education) (LEA 2007) and the preliminary bill for VET in Andalusia (Consejería de Educación, cultura y deporte, 2014). According to the databases, the network of schools of the Junta de Andalucía (Government of Andalusia) had, at the time of our research, a total of 383 public, semiprivate, and private schools.

Derived from the previous revision and trying to identify what value comes from participating and collaborating in VET schools in Andalusia (Spain), in our research (Martín-Gutiérrez 2015) we set out the following objectives:

1. To get to know, from an educational perspective, partnerships between the community and Andalusian VET schools, from the perspective of members of the management team
2. To understand the nature of these partnerships from the perspective of those involved in them (experiences and practices)
3. To propose guidelines for VET schools' collaboration and cooperation with their communities and organizations in an educational sense

Pursuing the first objective, a probability sample (Hernández-Sampieri et al. 2001) is used, with a confidence level of 95%, an error level of 5%, and a sample size of 225 schools. Stratified random sampling is used, which ensures proportional

representation of the sample in the eight provinces of Andalusia (Rodríguez 1991). A closed questionnaire is used because it requires less effort from those who respond (Hernández-Sampieri et al. 2001) with the following dimensions:

(a) Descriptive data (location and ownership of the school, age, sex, professional experience of the respondent)
(b) Collaborative relationships in the schools (with whom they have and would like to have collaborative relationships, promoters/facilitators, obstructions, needs)

In order to find answers to the second objective, a non-probabilistic intentional sample (Goetz and Le Compte 1988) was selected, with two phases to obtain the sample. First VET schools subject to study were selected based on the data of the questionnaire and in the second phase, key informants were used. Therefore, we chose to study in depth a public school located in the township of Dos Hermanas (Sevilla). Their key informants are eight people: two members of the management team (principal and head of studies); VET coordinator; four heads of the various departments of VET (Administration, Electronics, Career and Job Counseling, and Bodywork); and the coordinator in Sevilla of one of the companies with which the school collaborates. Semi-structured interviews (Álvarez et al. 2002) with a predominantly flexible and open character were used to interview key informants (and get their expressions for our analysis). In addition, planning documents of the VET school were analyzed (Tójar 2006). Finally, given the need to shape a common space for contrasting the views of some participants (Llopis 2004), we held a discussion group (Sandin 2003; Bisquerra 2004).

The interviews, documents, and discussion group were analyzed through content analysis (Frutos 2008), catering to the following categories:

- Importance of collaboration
- Current status of the schools
- Documents and collaboration agreements
- Desired state of the schools
- Current collaborators
- Desired collaborators
- Involvement of collaborating agents
- Objectives of collaboration
- Involved school agents
- Desired school agents
- Facilitating/hindering elements
- The effects of foreign collaboration
- Educational and professional networks
- Strategies at the internal level
- Strategies at the external level

Among the most significant results of this chapter, we must mention that members of the management teams of VET schools in Andalusia consider collaborating with the community very/quite important (98.2%). For Gairín and Rodríguez (2011), encouraging participation/collaboration of the different sectors of the edu-

cational and social community is an opportunity that is seen today as a fundamental condition for effectiveness and educational success.

Therefore, most have begun to develop collaborative actions and projects listed in the School Plan (PC hereafter) (33.30%), "almost 70–80% of the activities conducted have an agreement or are listed on our project" (coordinator of the electronics department), and routed their wishes to be involved in educational, professional, and social networks, through actions and planning projects (80.40%), "it is increasingly necessary to collaborate and of course not only in the school, but with society in general, life is understood from a different perspective and open to change" (coordinator of the private business of the environment). Muijs et al. (2010) uphold that improvement and change in educational organizations are currently focusing on networking and collaboration among institutions.

Principals are the agents in the school that primarily enhance these relationships (57.3%), "relationships and agreements also often arise from the principal of the school" (coordinator of the private business of the environment). According to Bolívar et al. (2013), managers must take risks and invest in internal and external, accessible, thoughtful, collaborative, and intentional relationships. Heads of the various departments are also prominent (44.4%) since they assume different roles depending on the projects pursued (Epstein 2014) "both staff and the various organs of the VET school are involved in various initiatives...every one of them supports the various activities that are carried out with institutions in this environment" (coordinator of the automobile bodywork department). Ultimately, schools and their members, especially teachers and management teams, are active agents and improve the contribution of social capital of their students and their reference communities (Buys and Miller 2009). As Gairín (2002) indicates, it is necessary to create conditions that lead to transformational, consensual and shared leadership, which involves planning, collaborative, contextualized relationships that are reviewed by both internal and external agents.

Remarkably, VET schools usually collaborate with companies where students carried out internships in work placements (FCT) (60.4%) followed by private external companies (53.3%) and public ones (45.8%). "Workshops for students on complementary and current aspects of their sector take place in the school and the companies themselves" (coordinator of the electronics department); "guided visits to different companies so that students learn the closely-held business views, the aims pursued by various companies and their activities, the various departments, the resulting products" (Principal). In the literature, one of the most prominent relationships is produced with FCT companies, due to the need for institutions where students can carry out internships (Raihan 2014), followed by those companies that provide resources, training, facilities, etc. (Sukarieh and Tannock 2009). However, these relationships are bureaucratic in most cases because the need for an integrated approach to the education system requires new ways of structuring and organization (Grubb and Kraskoukas 1993). Therefore, government policies and subsidies that are aligned at the educational, business, and economic level (Nkhangweleni 2013), joint ventures (Raihan 2014), and appropriate platforms to facilitate relationships (Smith and Betts 2000) are necessary.

Despite having no connection with them, the schools would like to collaborate with Career Guidance Services (48.4%), trade unions and social partners (51.1%), and various public employment services (47.6%) more often, "because of the close links with the labor market, mechanisms should be enabled regarding employment services and career counseling, trade unions and social actors, as there is hardly any contact with them" (coordinator of the administration department). Reality reflects how there are few links between VET schools and trade unions due to the involvement of the latter (Nielsen 2011). In that way, Napier (2014) aims to promote strategies to visualize the importance of the role they can play as a link between VET schools and companies. The same occurs with public employment services (Laval and Dardot 2013) and labor guidance services (Ceinos 2008). Epstein (2014) highlights the need for the willingness and availability of participants, because if the relationship were imposed, the purpose as to why the collaboration was initiated would be meaningless and unsuccessful.

It is noteworthy that families are not common agents of relationships; however, in the literature, this is the most notable collaboration (Comellas 2009; González 2014). "For the type of school in which we find ourselves, more family involvement is necessary, because you are doing a lot to cultivate certain relationships, agreements, and ultimately the development of their youngsters" (Assistant to the Principal).

Other agents that contribute to personal and professional development of students also stand out; these are associations, NGOs, local institutions (Martín-Moreno 2010) "due to the location of the school and socio-economic status of families, other entities that allow students' development and offer possibilities are also included" (assistant to the Principal), other schools (Puente and Rodriguez 2004), and universities (Tejada 2005) "university research can contribute a lot to the school and the student's incorporation" (coordinator of the automobile bodywork department).

Additionally, relationships with students also stand out as pursued goals (job-incorporation 72.4% and skills development 69.3%), "preparing them for the changing society and unstable labor market which they will encounter when they finish school" (VET coordinator), and the need to establish links with the community (company involvement 65.8%, VET orientation to the needs of the economy and society 67.1%, and projection of the school and the community 68.4%). However, other types of objectives relating to teachers (40%), families (43.1%), the integration of VET (44%), and participation in networks (48%) are found in the background. These objectives are covered mainly through coordination, promotion, and management of the management team (94.30%), "everything is much easier when the first thing you have is desire, drive, and enthusiasm from the management team" (coordinator of the administration department). This makes collaboration achieve a greater sense, facilitating the processes of change and improvement in schools (Muijs et al. 2010).

Results highlight the improvement of skills of students in the labor market (48%), and building bridges between students' training and professional realities (45.3%). In this sense, according to Kearns (2003), if the professionals involved in VET use

a strategic approach for the development of social capital in their communities, mutual benefits for the VET sector are achieved. In turn, the bonds created between different institutions create a social support, academic-vocational guidance, and job opportunities (Buys and Miller 2009).

Given the current structural transformation that affects organizations, the way schools consider necessary promoting and strengthening partnerships within the community (99.60%) is appreciated. They therefore propose strategies internally (resourcing 76.4%, have Internet available 72.4%; promote teacher training 68%; create times and spaces that encourage participation and collaboration 54.7%; enhance the coordinating and managing role of decisions together with the management team 49.3%; and collect collaborative initiatives in the school plan 47.1%), "if we could have a flexible schedule or some incentive, more collaborations could be established and give them the time they need." The development of social capital can be developed by setting tasks that require students to interact with networks that have not yet been agreed upon and organizing meetings and activities beyond the classroom context and the school, where members of the educational community and students participate (Stringfellow and Winterton 2005) (VET coordinator) and at the external level (establishing collaborative agreement 66.2%; promoting the use of ICT to create network 63.1%; promote a community-wide organizational structure driven by the administration 56.9%; and initiating and promoting a model of dual VET: VET-company 51.6%). "You would like to do many things...but you can't move forward because they tell you from above that the school should provide a curriculum established by the law, and that can end up interfering if an excessive number of activities exist" (principal). Students have a connection with educational networks, as they have a positive effect on education and training in general and the participation of students, their career aspirations and academic performance (Chan 2014). Furthermore, community networks promote the acquisition of skills for student life and work opportunities.

Moreover, the results confirm that significant differences exist, i.e. the answers given vary depending on the ownership of the school and gender, age, experience in leadership roles and in the VET, and the institutional position of the respondents.

In search of models of schools, the fact that there are differences in terms of partnerships with the community has been observed. We have identified four types of schools, which reflect the previous results (Fig. 6.3): Model A, administrative schools (frequent collaborations are made, mainly determined by the administration, but moving toward the development of actions not included in the PC; Model B, initial schools (actions and collaborative projects not included in the PC are developed and move toward their finalization in the planning documents); Model C, formalized schools (collaborative actions and projects listed in the PC are developed and advanced toward educational, professional, and social network immersion); and Model D, support schools (they are immersed in networks through actions and projects of the PC). This typology could help schools situate themselves in their current state and progress toward improving the quality of their relationships with the community. As Maruyama (2009) states, social collaboration produces better

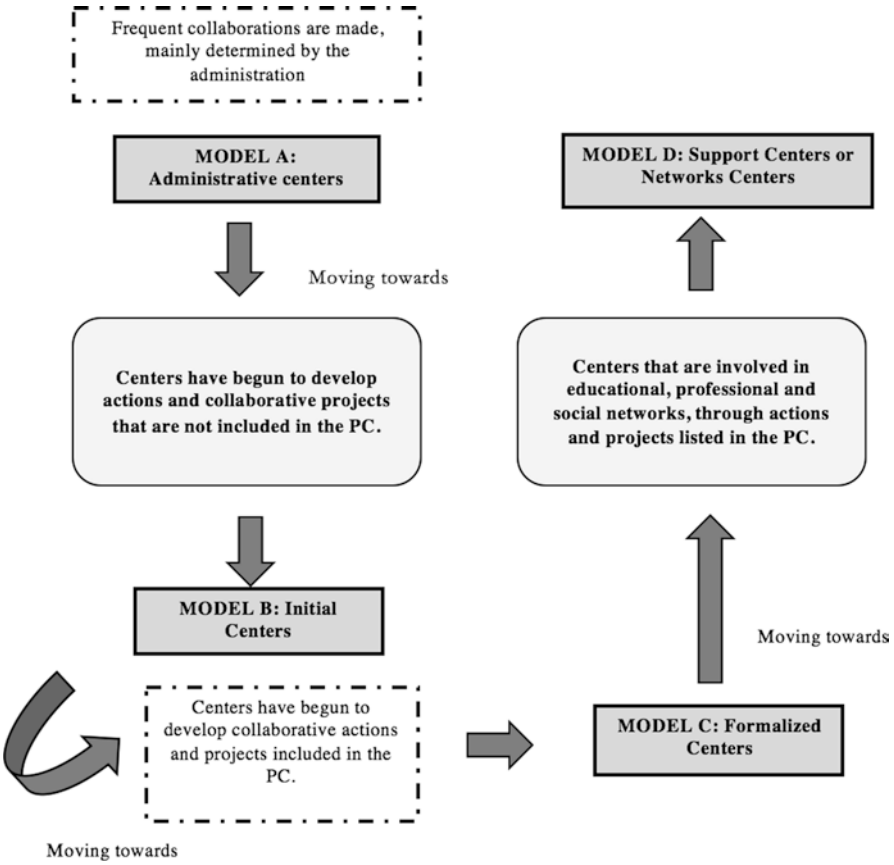


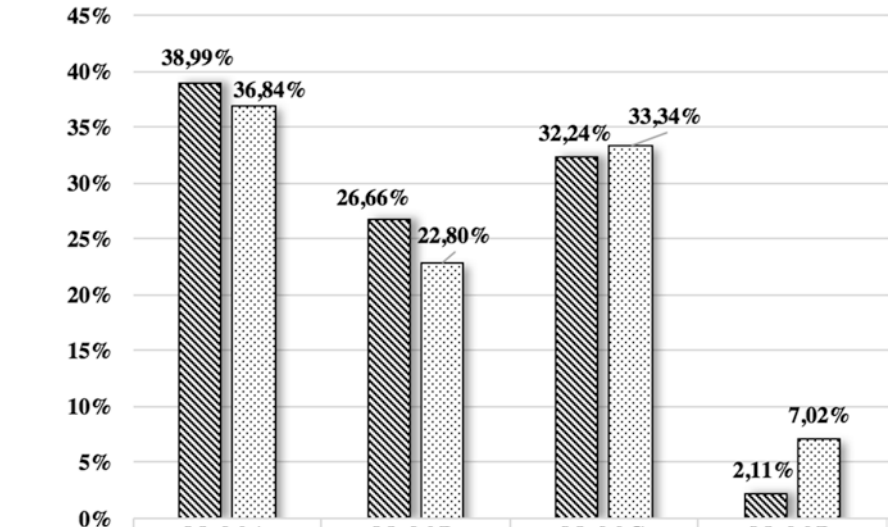
Fig. 6.3 VET models depending on the characteristics of partnerships with the community

results for young people entering the job, it enables insertion sectors to increase value, and students begin to become more involved in their local community.

As Epstein (2014) stated, collaboration begins as an informal process between different actors, where a relaxed and friendly atmosphere exists, and with the passing of time, the relationship between them will strengthen, in a way that agreements, collaborations, projects, etc. are formalized. Along the same line, Antúnez (1998) stated that collaborative processes in schools went through various stages or degrees of consolidation: promote and enhance mutual understanding, recognize improvements and compliance, share resources, participate in common projects and establish networks between institutions.

As Chart 6.1 shows, the model of the most predominant schools in Andalusia and of the province of Seville is the administrative schools model (A), followed by formalized (C), initial (B), and finally support (D).

"Increasing social capital, promoting community relations and a sense of work in the community, the school, and between different schools, families and the



	Model A	Model B	Model C	Model D
Andalusia	38,99%	26,66%	32,24%	2,11%
Seville	36,84%	22,80%	33,34%	7,02%

Chart 6.1 Distribution of collaboration models of VET-community schools in Andalusia and Seville

community during the past decades, it has become clear as to where the direction should be improved" (Bolívar et al. 2013, p. 26). In short, VET should not be relegated to a mere reproduction of market requirements, since it involves flexibility and the adaptability necessary to fit into today's society and to act as an engine of social change and improvement, a reciprocal relationship of continuous exchange (Marhuenda 2012).

6.4 Conclusions

In conclusion, this chapter provides an opportunity to understand the characteristics of the collaboration and the potential internal and external relationships and prospective partnerships from the perspective of members of the management team. And so it emphasizes the need for their development both from the internal action of the schools, with the management of their government teams, and from the commitment of the community to the formation of the new generations.

It designated establishing partnerships with the social, economic, and productive community as a priority. However, there are schools that maintain specific relationships, mainly determined by the Administration or have initiated some actions not included in the PC. Yet, they would like to advance their relationships in

educational, professional, and social networks, formalized in the planning documents and agreements. From this point of view, proposed VET models based on the characteristics of its partnerships with the community: Model A, administrative schools; Model B, initial schools; Model C, formalized schools; and model D, support schools. The most predominant school models in Andalusia and in the province of Seville is model A, followed by C, B, and D.

School staff that energize and enhance these relationships are the directors and head of the various departments, with support from the rest of the educational community. However, families do not have a significant role in the collaboration, despite the desire of VET schools. The assessment of partnerships between VET schools and community members that members of the management team carry out varies depending on the ownership of the school, the gender and age of the respondents, the number of years of experience in leadership roles and in VET, and the institutional role.

The most regular collaborative relationships are companies where students performed the FCT, followed by private and public external companies, local institutions, the government, and other schools. But they say they would like to collaborate more frequently with Career Guidance Services, unions, and social agents and public employment services, despite the low level of involvement they present. Thus, intended objectives of these collaborations are student's employment and skills development, and the need to establish links with the community (involving companies, VET organization to the needs of the economy and society, and the projection of the school toward the community). These objectives are covered by the coordination, promotion and management of the management team; autonomy, participation and responsibility; the PC and activities; internal and external spreading of the school practices; access to specific policies that support collaborative initiatives and the use of ICT.

As a result of the mechanisms put in place in these relationships, it stands out improving students' skills in the labor market and creating bridges between students' training and professional realities. Nevertheless, elements that facilitate collaboration are necessary, like training members of the organization, internal relations, the sensitivity of the educational community, school evaluation processes, involvement in ICT-supported networks, the working environment of teachers, institutional and professional recognition, infrastructure and material resources.

Given the current structural transformation that affects organizations, respondents consider that for establishing collaboration relationships, approaches at internal and external level are necessary. At internal level: resourcing; promote lifelong learning; create time and space; strengthen the coordinating and management role of the management team; and collect collaborative initiatives in the PC. And at external level, promote the use of ICT to create networks; promote an organizational structure at the community level driven by the administration; and initiate and promote a model of dual VET-VET company.

Because of the importance of relationship between VET schools and context, guidelines to empower them at the macro level (Government and Administration)

and at the micro level (community centers and institutions) are provided below, as the result of our research.

6.4.1 Government and Administration

First, it is necessary to access specific educational, social, labor, etc. policies that support collaborative community initiatives to formalize and generate a global collaborative culture that would support educational innovation and improve the quality of education. For this, a general consensus between the government, schools, employers, social agents/institutions, and unions is essential to avoid the great rift caused by the financial crisis.

In turn, an increase in VET budgets devoted to a national, regional, and corporate level with respect to training, learning, teachers, material resources, and mobility, in addition to the granting of aid and incentives for agents that promote collaborative relationships is required. Creating a system of institutional and professional recognition of the achievements of those involved and those schools and institutions that promote external collaboration is also necessary. Along the lines of recognition, it is also necessary to promote and organize on-site, semi on-site, and virtual environments to record experiences, resources, and best practices of partnerships between the VET schools and their communities.

Moreover, in terms of organizational structure, a review and adaptation of curricula and skills acquired by students is requested, according to labor market needs of the immediate community and the students themselves enrolled in VET. On this basis, it is indispensable to promote entrepreneurship among students. In turn, the requirements and competencies required for access to VET systems must be established; forms and mechanisms of recognition of prior learning; individualization and flexible teaching-learning process; and mobility programs.

Finally, as to those involved in VET, the school coordinator and the community profile must be framed: qualifications, continuing education, functions, duties, rights, etc.

6.4.2 School Management Teams and Community Institutions

In order for partnerships with the community to be possible, it is necessary to strengthen the role of coordinator and joint-decision manager in the management team. Fernández et al. (2002, p. 31) identified three main objectives that drive the change: promote a new concept of culture in schools, adopt distributed leadership, and internalize management functions to maximize resources and adapt to the reality of the school and the community.

A dynamic partnership with the community through public diffusion of such intention and the appointment of a management team responsible for the

coordination and monitoring of actions should be institutionalized. There should also be mediators to facilitate the initial negotiations and boost medium-term projects included in VET and collaboration agreements. In turn, promoting the creation of a commission for the empowerment and opening a line of collaborative work representing all sectors involved could also be implemented.

All this could be facilitated through programs that help prepare faculty and community agents for mobility and active participation at the local, regional, national, and international level in firms in the vocational training industry, other schools, and/or agents which influence student training. In addition, we must define and reinforce the profile of the community agents involved in collaborative relationships with schools. They should have teaching qualifications as they are involved in the teaching and learning processes. Thereby, guests of different social groups in the community, faculty and school boards can be incorporated in order to design joint collaborative projects; as well as welcoming professionals from schools within institutions of the community for a certain time.

Finally, as a cross proposal, the idea to use ICTs as tools for enhancing partnerships with the community arises. Faculty and institutions deem relationships based on ICT necessary to strengthen formal learning as they experience a sense of dissonance between students' routines inside and outside the schools. Siemens and Weller (2011) state as the educational potential of networks is "virtually unlimited," therefore, uniting all its potential for collaborative relationships, creating a cycle of endless and divergent interactive possibilities that connect the school with the community, is proposed. In this sense, networks are generating and amplifying knowledge, experience, and resources. Through proper use, they help define and produce personal-professional projects of each of those involved and adapt to social and labor challenges.

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Chapter 7
The Role of Work- and School-Based Supervisors in Bridging Educational and Workplace Contexts in Catalonia

Ana Inés Renta Davids, José Miguel Jiménez González, and Manel Fandos Garrido

Abstract The present chapter addresses the issue of collaboration between schools and companies in Vocational Education System in Catalonia, Spain. We argue that supervisors from both contexts have the potential to strengthen the relationships between schools and companies. We present a study on the collaboration that emerges from the interactions between school- and work-based supervisors occurring within the FCT scheme. The research draws from 21 semi-structured interviews to supervisors from schools and companies. The results show that collaborative actions emerge at different degrees of interdependence. Moreover, we identified some barriers that might thwart collaboration among schools and companies. Finally, practical implications are discussed to foster higher levels of collaboration.

Keywords Collaboration school-company · Supervisors · On-the-job-learning

7.1 Introduction

Collaboration between vocational education institutions and companies has been in the centre of debates in the Spanish context, as a means of improving vocational education outcomes (Planas-Coll 2005; González-Veiga et al. 2008), as well as in the Catalan context (Mària i Serrano 2006; Merino-Pareja 2009; Brunet and Rodríguez-Soler 2014). Traditionally, the Spanish VET system has an important school-based component, where educational institutions assume main training functions (designing the study plans, teaching and assessing learning outcomes).

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However, in the last 30 years, reforms have been undertaken, encouraging more participation from companies and social agents in training citizens. The implementation of the FCT was a turning point in this direction, not without its limitations. In this regard, stakeholders are still interested in finding ways to improve collaboration among schools and work organisations to provide students with better learning experiences and to achieve better outcomes. In this chapter, we argue that school- and work-based supervisors, within the FCT scheme, can be crucial actors in connecting schools and companies.

We present a study that shows the potential of school- and work-based supervisors in strengthening connections between school and work organisations and how these institutions can support and enhance their role. The study draws on semi-structured individual interviews conducted with 16 school-based supervisors and 5 work-based supervisors of vocational education programmes in Catalonia. Finally, we discuss suggestions and implications for practice.

7.2 Theoretical Framework

In recent decades, the quality of vocational education has been challenged on several grounds (Salvà Mut and Nicolau Colom 2009), and hence governments have made efforts to enhance vocational education provisions (Stenström and Lasonen 2000) to cope with unemployment levels and skills shortages. Regarding this, the collaboration between vocational education institutions and companies has been the subject of theoretical and empirical studies at the international (Tuomi-Grohn and Engestrom 2003; Griffiths and Guile 2004) and national levels (Casquero Tomás and Navarro Gómez 2013; Valiente et al. 2014; Fandos Garrido et al. 2017) as a means of improving the efficiency of vocational education systems.

From an institutional perspective, collaboration within vocational systems can be analysed at different organisational levels (Mulder et al. 2015; Gessler 2017). Macro-level collaboration is related to the development of training regulations for companies and schools; meso-level collaboration occurs between involved institutions (i.e. schools and companies and associated actors, teachers and workers); and micro-level collaboration occurs between students and supervisors (Gessler 2017). Based on the particular set of arrangements outlined among organisations, in the Spanish vocational system, learning can happen in two different contexts: school learning environments and companies working environments. Besides, learning can occur through a particular sequence of learning experiences at schools and work organisations (alternation) or in parallel (dual). These arrangements influence and shape opportunities for collaboration among the components of the vocational system.

From the perspective of activity theory, many scholars have called for pedagogical practices that help students integrate learning experiences from both contexts (Griffiths and Guile 2004; Tynjälä 2008; Stenström and Tynjälä 2009). In settings with more integrated models of vocational education, research has underlined the

importance of teachers and supervisors in helping students relate learning across contexts. For example, Sappa and Aprea (2014) argued that students need support to develop capacities to integrate different forms of expertise and to cope with the demands of different contexts. Moreover, some authors have highlighted the importance of facilitating school-work alignment, as this can help students integrate learning from both environments (Messmann and Mulder 2015). Furthermore, Kilbrink and Bjurulf (2012) have argued that communication is a central factor affecting relationships between school and work. These authors have found that communication serves as a fundamental aspect of cooperation between the two learning settings and that it has a considerable impact on learning.

We approach the study of collaboration within the vocational education system from the action level (Gessler 2017) by focusing on interactions between schools and companies and their actors, teachers (school-based supervisors) and trainers (work-based supervisors). We follow Gessler's (2017) conceptual framework of collaboration. For this author, actions are not executed in a 'free space'; rather, they are embedded in evolved formal structures, which are historically and traditionally defined. These formal structures are redefined and contextualised by actors through their daily interactions. A first stage involves the 'pre-configuration of collaboration' that is determined by historical processes of system construction. This stage creates a backdrop from which coordinative actions may emerge between teachers and trainers. Coordinative actions are oriented towards the exchange of essential information to maintain a system according to past experiences or to improve it in the future. Coordinative actions designed to improve a system may lay the grounds for cooperative action. At the cooperative level, actions are oriented towards enhancing the quality levels and are based on shared objectives with a higher degree of interdependence between components. The last form of collaboration is co-construction, whereby partners act to achieve common goals. Gessler (2017) argued that collaboration between schools and companies could be promoted but not prescribed. Moreover, collaboration can be encouraged only through daily interactions among actors (Gessler 2017).

In Spain, the collaboration between school and work organisations lags behind that observed in other countries in the region, and despite improvements made over recent decades (Mària i Serrano 2003; Planas-Coll 2005), it remains unsatisfactory (Brunet and Rodríguez-Soler 2014; Fandos Garrido et al. 2017). In this regard, researchers are still interested in finding ways to improve collaboration and communication among schools and work settings to provide students with better learning experiences.

To this end, the FCT scheme configures a hybrid space (Zeichner 2010) where actors coming from educational and workplace organisations meet; therefore, it is a place where we can find evidence of this collaboration. Our research aims to delve into daily interactions between actors engaged with FCT. We approach the study of FCT from a meso-level by focusing on collaboration that occurs between schools and companies and among the actors involved. Following, we describe briefly particular aspects of the FCT that are relevant for this study.

7.2.1 *FCT [*Formación en centros de trabajo*]: On-the-Job Learning*

The FCT aims to complement students' professional learning acquired at school through formative activities in the workplace and to contribute to the students' professional knowledge and competence development. The FCT consists of conducting a work plan previously defined on the agreement between the school and the host organisation. The work plan students carried on draws from the official curriculum of the study programme, from which both supervisors—from the school and the workplace—select a set of tasks that suit them to their needs according to their context. Students must approve some compulsory modules previously to proceed with the practice module, so it usually takes place after a full-time formative period at the school. Therefore, learning under the FCT scheme occurs through a sequenced arrangement where learning at school happens first and learning at work organisations occurs second. During the FCT, students attend to the workplace 4 h a day on school periods or 7 h a day on holidays.

A small human infrastructure for the management of the FCT involves a school-based supervisor and a workplace-based supervisor, who are designated by the corresponding organisation. School-based supervisors are responsible for designing and monitoring work activity plans that students put into practice at companies. Workplace-based supervisors are responsible for orienting, advising and training students through work placements and for ensuring compliance with company norms. Both must maintain frequent contact during the practice period, and at the end, school-based supervisors must generate an assessment report supported by observations of the company's supervisors (for more details, see Chap. 1). As a result, the FCT has the potential to create spaces on which different levels of collaboration emerge among the supervisors and the partner institutions fostering improvements and innovations (Brunet i Icart et al. 2017).

Research has revealed several benefits from the implementation of the FCT. On the one hand, the FCT allows students to put hands on real practice of their professions, to gain advanced knowledge in the technological development of professional fields and to make, for many of them, initial contact with the world of work. Moreover, several studies have observed that the practice module enhances the transition between school and work (Mària i Serrano 2006; Planas Oroval et al. 2007; Fandos Garrido et al. 2017). On the other hand, the FCT constitutes an opportunity for companies to generate a qualified workforce, as students ultimately would become part of the workforce market in their economic sectors (González-Veiga et al. 2006; Mària i Serrano 2006). Furthermore, the FCT has the potential to foster innovation, as it allows companies to identify students with better innovation capacities (Brunet i Icart et al. 2017). All social agents participating in the management of the FCT are satisfied with its outcomes, though there is much room for improvement (Marhuenda-Fluixà 2002; Pineda-Herrero et al. 2015; Brunet i Icart and Moral Martín 2017; Fandos Garrido et al. 2017). Empirical studies about the outcomes of the FCT have focused on students' learning (Pineda-Herrero et al. 2015; Renta

Davids et al. 2017), stakeholders' satisfaction level (González-Veiga et al. 2008) or general outcomes of the VET system (Valiente et al. 2014). However, there are no studies that focus on the role of the school-based and work-based supervisor, though supervisors play a fundamental role on which the FCT works (Marhuenda-Fluixà 2002). In that sense, our research intends to fill that gap.

Following, we present our empirical study.

7.3 The Study

Based on this framework, our research aims to investigate how school- and work-based supervisors can strengthen connections between schools and companies and how the participating institutions can support this aim. Two research questions guide the present study:

1. What roles, tasks and functions do school- and work-based supervisors assume in running practice modules of the Spanish VET System?
2. To what extent do school- and work-based supervisors' interactions through practice modules help to create a bridge between schools and workplaces?

A qualitative methodology was employed to investigate the scope and nature of school- and work-based supervisors' roles to identify areas that may be improved. The study reports on semi-structured individual interviews conducted with 16 school-based supervisors and 5 work-based supervisors engaged in the FCT scheme of VET programmes in Spain (see Table 7.1). Following qualitative methodological guidelines (Creswell 2014), we selected a convenient sample. We contacted school-based supervisors from eight local vocational institutions (two of them participate in the *InnovaFP* programme[1]) and work-based supervisors from five companies related to the selected vocational institutions. The participants belonged to the fol-

Table 7.1 Distribution of the participants by role and vocational field

Professional family	School-based supervisor	Work-based supervisor	Total
Health	5	2	7
Social services	4	1	5
Administration	1	1	2
Industry	6	1	7
Total	16	5	21

[1] *Innova*FP programme (*Departament d'Ensenyament* 2016) allows educational institutions to become leaders of innovation. The programme facilitates the exchange of technologies and talent among schools and companies, enhancing their relationship with the community. Through this programme, educational institutions and companies can receive funding to develop small innovation projects in response to needs identified in their community. Editor's note: See Chap. 7 for further information on InnovaFP.

lowing occupational fields: health, social services, administration and industry. These sectors have the highest levels of enrolment in Catalonia: health 16%, social services 11.3%, administration 13.8% and industry 9% (Departament d'Ensenyament 2014). In addition to the professional fields considered and to the two different roles of the participants, our sample is heterogeneous concerning gender (11 female and 10 males), age (M = 45 years old, SD = 8 years old) and job tenure (M = 15 years, SD = 10 years).

The interview questions were intended to stimulate narrative and argumentative discourse to allow the participants to express their experiences and views on the object of the study. We defined the same questions to both groups of interviewees (school- and work-based supervisors), adapting them to each participant's profile. In particular, we ask three broad questions:

- What role does the interviewee play and what tasks do they execute through practice modules?
- How does the interviewee experience relationships with their counterparts in schools and workplaces?
- What do these individuals learn from one another?

The interviews lasted between 50 and 70 min. All of the interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim.

We applied an exploratory approach to data analysis (Guest et al. 2012). Following this approach, the researchers carefully read the transcripts while identifying keywords, trends, themes and ideas to help outline the analysis. Our methodological approach applies systematic and inductive qualities of grounded theory (Corbin and Strauss 2008) and procedures of applied thematic analysis (Guest et al. 2012). Grounded theory guided our data analysis through the use of different levels of analysis. It involved the following steps: (1) read verbatim transcripts; (2) identify potential themes; (3) compare and contrast themes, identifying structures between them; and (4) build a model while continually validating it against the data (Guest et al. 2012). We aimed to develop an accurate interpretation of interactions observed from the practice module and supported by the data at hand.

7.4 Results

We coded a total of 150 fragments from our analysis of the interviews. Four main categories (coordination, cooperation, co-construction and barriers) and 14 sub-categories emerged. Figure 7.1 shows the categorical scheme applied. Following, we describe the categories and sub-categories and provide excerpts of each one as examples. We selected these illustrative excerpts on the following criteria: they convey a general meaning of the category or show a particular nuance of it.

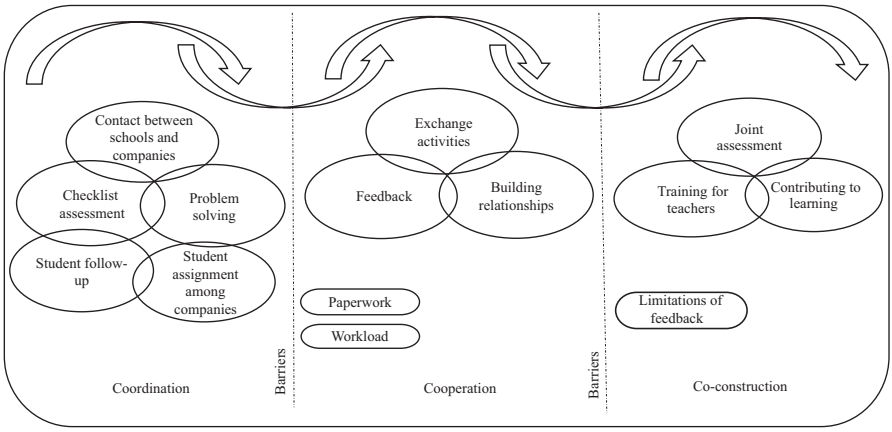

Fig. 7.1 The collaboration process between school- and work-based supervisors

7.4.1 Coordination

First, we found that school- and work-based supervisors are mainly engaged in tasks related to organising, following up and assessing students' learning outcomes during the practice module. At this level, we observed a linking function (coordination) between schools and workplaces to redefine and contextualise, in the face of the contingent daily practice, the structure upon which practice modules run. Such coordination involves making contact with enterprises, allocating students' to work placements, completing paperwork and engaging in attendance control and assignment evaluation.

Contact Between Schools and Companies An initial task of the practice module involves making contact between schools and companies. The schools usually initiate this action. Coordinators of practice modules and school-based supervisors are responsible for this. These coordinators and school-based supervisors have over the years established a list of potential companies where students can be assigned, and every year they contact these companies and ask them about their needs and available placements. In some cases, a company approaches a school and asks for a particular student to complete a work placement. In such cases, the school-based supervisor makes a preliminary selection of students according to their grades and behaviour in classes. Consequently, school-based supervisors serve as intermediaries between schools and companies and must evaluate the learning potential of the work placements offered:

> Usually, up to now, they [the companies] have contacted us, because they need an intern. Afterward, I drop by and hold an interview during which they show me the facilities and explain tasks that the intern would engage in. From this interview, I look at my files and search for a student who may adapt to that position (School-based supervisor, Administration)

Student Assignment Among Companies Although the process varies, schools usually select students who can perform tasks based first on the completion of curricular requirements, second on the availability of companies offering work placements and third on students' behaviours and attitudes observed at school. Other selection criteria are the work placement's geographic proximity and the student's timetable (some students have part-time jobs). On occasion, students decide where they want to complete their practice. Some schools have several offers of work placements, and students can choose among companies or alert their schools of particular companies or organisations that they already know. In such cases, coordinators and school-based supervisors try to orient students and help them make the best choice, as internships constitute significant experiences for their future careers and can expand job opportunities. The following excerpt shows the active role that schools play in the selection and assignment of students to companies: 'Teachers know students and enterprises, and then they try to make the best match: teachers "marry students to enterprises"' (school-based supervisor, social services). Although companies seem to play a secondary role in the selection process, some may ask for an interview with future candidates, and they ultimately decide which students will perform specific internships. In any case, school-based supervisors must find placements for all students who are in the position to complete a practice module:

> We must find a place for these three students because they have passed everything, those students have worked very well, but were not selected by the company so that they will go to another company nearby. We must look for one (School-based supervisor, Industry)

Student Follow-Up School- and work-based supervisors maintain regular contact through different means to discuss the development of practices and the performance of each student. According to regulations, school-based supervisors must hold at least three face-to-face meetings with their counterparts in the workplace: the first meeting takes place at the beginning of a practicum, the second one during the practicum, and the third one towards the end. However, as supervisors from both contexts usually know one another, these meetings are sometimes replaced with phone calls or e-mails. Through this follow-up contact, school-based supervisors gather information about each student's performance, potential reorientations of practice modules or possible conflicts. Meanwhile, students must complete task forms (checklist of tasks the student has engaged in at the workplace) every 15 days. Work-based supervisors sign these forms and submit them to the school-based supervisor. School-based supervisors also note that they speak with the students informally upon meeting at school and that they ask students how their placements are going. In general, school-based supervisors explain that communication between students and work-based supervisors is frequent during this phase and that both parties are satisfied. However, some school-based supervisors note that they do not have sufficient time to engage in follow-up meetings and that they thus cannot closely monitor what students are doing during their placements. Moreover, in some cases, school-based supervisors recognise that companies sometimes prefer them not to interfere constantly:

> The follow-up period is defined by the system. Then, it is not really like that. There are three formal visits, but it is not really like that. Contact is much more frequent than that. Whatever happens with the student, they send you an e-mail. Moreover, I like to see monthly reports certified by the company on the number of hours that a student has done. I also send them an e-mail asking about the student's performance (…). It is true that many companies do not want you to be there constantly… (School-based supervisor, Administration)

Work-based supervisors monitor each student's work daily. They typically work together hand in hand, and so they have plenty of opportunities to talk about work assignments, related norms and even how they feel about the tasks. However, in some cases students are not in direct contact with their work-based supervisors but are instead in contact with other employees; in such cases, students know that their supervisors are always available whenever they need them. Work-based supervisors must also respond to school-based supervisors' demands, meet with them when they visit and fill and sign attendance and performance forms. Some work-based supervisors argue that such last tasks are time-consuming and admit they sometimes do not complete them:

> Every fifteen days I explain the puncture's (…) four basic norms. As we hold meetings, we season [the explanation] it… 'You, in oncology, what have you seen? How do you feel?' Then we talk about these things and ask them what they have done. Nursery auxiliaries come once a month, and we say 'listen, do not ask me for concrete information on the student because I have four [students]… I have other tasks to do other than coordinating students (Work-based supervisor, Health)

Problem-Solving School- and work-based supervisors agree that conflicts are rare, but when any problem emerges, they know they can count on one another to solve them. The most common issues are related to students' attitudes, punctuality habits or failures to follow work agreements. Some work-based supervisors argue that students sometimes fail to perform professionally and that this becomes a significant problem because when this occurs, they must re-organise workloads. One school-based supervisor reports on a case in which a problem emerged between an employee and a student. When difficulties arise, the school-based coordinator or supervisor is responsible for addressing it, solving it or interrupting the contract.

> [When problems emerge] the contract is suspended, we determine the amount of practicum time [the student] completed, and we assess that period. I try to interview with the student because they must understand that it is not inconsequential but rather a serious matter to interrupt a contract. You are a human being, and sometimes you know the functioning of the company, and you are not comfortable with it. Also, companies have high expectations of students' profiles, and sometimes students do not meet those expectations… (School-based supervisor, Administration)

> A particular student was on the fence with very little interest in learning; this was a very limited student… In the end, we do not give him any responsibility. In the end, he/she finished the practicum but caused us trouble because we had everything organised in a way… (Work-based supervisor, Industry)

Checklist Assessment The assessment process involves controlling students' assignments. During their practicums, students must complete task-control forms utilising a software programme every week. Work-based supervisors review these forms first, and then school-based supervisors recheck them. Moreover, a competence form listing competencies that a student should acquire during his or her practicum must be filled out by the work-based supervisor. However, some school-based supervisors argue that work-based supervisors on occasions do not understand these forms, and so school-based supervisors help them with the task. This situation also creates an opportunity for school- and work-based supervisors to discuss a student's performance. School-based supervisors take notes on what their counterparts have to say on a student's performance and determine the final grade for a practice module:

> For some items of the evaluation forms, they [the company] ask you what they mean… They ask for your opinion on some issues that they are required to evaluate. I think that this is important. It is like this; it is a joint evaluation. It should be like this. But in the end, I determine the final grade based on what the company has told me. I determine the final grade based on the forms that I receive (School-based supervisor, Administration)

> [Assessment] is a little bit tiresome, because each school has specific evaluation procedures and sometimes it is a lot of work… It should be easier because people have a job to do here. It should be explained more objectively, it says: 'information management,' what does this mean? What should I put there? It only says 'information management,' related to what? (Work-based supervisor, Health)

7.4.2 Cooperation

Second, we observed cooperation processes between schools and workplaces through different mechanisms such as daily communication, exchange activities and the creation of bonds between schools and enterprises. This regular contact and communication creates spaces of exchange and builds relationships among school- and work-based supervisors as feedback and suggestions for improvements.

Exchange Activities Several other events occurring throughout practice modules create more opportunities for school- and work-based supervisors and former students to share experiences. Schools make considerable efforts to get to know companies in their fields. They organise day visits to the companies, invite workers to describe their jobs and ask former students to explain their experiences with a particular professional area. For example, companies, former students and teachers can share their experience with first-year students at workshops organised by schools. Schools are not often satisfied with the participation of companies in these activities, and they believe that companies could do better in this respect:

> Some activities we organise and that I value considerably are professional workshops. (…) Over three days, we facilitate contact between educational institutions and the professional

> field. These activities can involve visits to companies, talks. We hold a session with former students who come to describe their experiences. The thing is that sometimes it is difficult to do all of these things and for professionals from our field to collaborate. (School-based supervisor, Social Services)

Building Relationships As the practice module has progressed over the years, school- and work-based supervisors have got to know one another. Supervisors from both contexts maintain frequent contact throughout the year in running the practice module. They must attend meetings, respond to e-mails, receive school-based supervisors' visits, sign documents, discuss about students' performance and resolve conflicts. This process is completed each year by school- and workplace supervisors, strengthening relationships between schools and companies and acquainting these actors with one another as they discuss their needs and expectations and build common goals. Moreover, this helps prevent the emergence of conflicts, as schools do not send students to companies where problems have emerged in the past, and work-based supervisors do not assign students to potentially conflicting working units. In general, supervisors from both contexts value closeness, trust and strong relationships between partners:

> It is not about involving new companies each year but rather about involving companies that we know. We know how they work, and there is a close relationship. We continue to engage with these types of companies (School-based coordinator, Social Services)

Feedback Through this continuous communication throughout the practice module, supervisors of both contexts find opportunities to give and receive suggestions for improvement. These opportunities are highly valued, as each side 'can see things' that the other does not notice; these insights 'help to close the gap' between schools and workplaces. Suggestions from workplaces are related to the students' attitudes, social capacities and overall knowledge. Workplace supervisors argue that schools should train students in general skills such as teamwork and communication and in developing a broad understanding of the world of work. This content, which is included in the curriculum through a specific subject on 'Training and Labour Guidance' [*Formación y Orientación Laboral* (FOL)], seems to have little impact in students' professional competence. In some cases, work-based supervisors believe that knowledge and procedures taught at schools are out-dated, and they try to convey this to school administrators. Suggestions for improvement usually come in one direction, that is, from the workplaces to the schools:

> Yes, when we have meetings, the positive things… I say: 'I think it is good you mention the positive things, but I also need to know what we need to improve. They tell me 'the students do not know about pumps, or do not know about the pumps we've got here'. Well, when you see something is missing in the curriculum, we can correct for this the following next year (School-based supervisor, Industry)

7.4.3 Co-construction

The last level of collaboration involves co-construction. At this level, we observed how school- and work-based supervisors have a sense of working together to achieve common goals by for instance sharing students' assessments, contributing to the students' training or improving upon teachers' competencies.

Joint Assessment In some cases, school- and work-based supervisors try to make general assessments of students' performance in the workplace while taking into account three main issues: (1) their knowledge of the organisation, (2) attitudes and (3) work procedures. Most companies value attitudes more than knowledge, though these are often absent from the checklist: when a student is proactive and maintains good relationships with other staff members and clients, then for them an evaluation is positive. Some supervisors from both contexts take the time to speak with the students and provide them with proper feedback on their performance, but time is insufficient in their daily routines, and so this is dependent on the willingness of supervisors. One school-based supervisor noted that they ask students to present a project of their final assessments while work-based supervisors are invited to attend these oral presentations and to provide their opinion on them, though this does not influence their final grades:

> The project is assessed at the institute, as it has been established like this. You supervise from here [the school] with the supervisor there [the workplace] to reach an agreement. Afterward, the teacher determines the mark. (…) For example, fifteen days ago a presentation was given to five work-based supervisors and one director. That is very good because they raised questions that I could not make about the company. We do not know how the process went into such detail, but they do. The student commented on this, and you see there it is, [the student] understood the process well, understood the job position and explained it very well. You can see that the student has made the transition to developing a higher level of professional knowledge comprehension (School-based supervisor, Industry)

Training for Teachers Schools and workplaces organise various events for training teachers in the workplace (e.g. training programmes or internships for teachers). Sometimes, these training sessions serve to revise teaching materials or curricula: 'Last year, we completed a training session with teachers from the school on the content of the curricula… "use this, take that out"… it was an excellent experience; the teachers are very prepared there' (work-based supervisor, health). As a highly valued opportunity, school-based supervisors can spend days—or weeks—with a company. This opportunity is highly appreciated by supervisors from schools and workplaces, as during this period they can learn from one another, and as a result both acquire knowledge to better help students and help themselves apply what they learn to both contexts. However, this currently occurs from personal initiative and without institutional support from educational administrations. Moreover, supervisors argue that these opportunities appear when there are good relationships between a school and workplace or more concretely between supervisors who know one another:

> We try to know the company (…) you go with a work-based supervisor who is responsible for the student. You go, and you see what they will need from the student. This process involves immersion in a way. You know what you can tell the students and what the company expects from them, and you can convey information in a better way (School-based supervisor, Industry)

Contributing to Learning Supervisors from both contexts recognise that they contribute to each student's development in a complementary manner. School-based supervisors try to teach students practical and up-to-date knowledge and help them find connections to what they would do in the workplace. On the other hand, work-based supervisors help students reflect on what they have learned at school. Both supervisors recognise that each approach has unique benefits and limitations regarding learning outcomes. Schools do not usually offer updated equipment, but at the same time, they provide a certain level of abstraction through teaching. Workplaces are constrained by their daily routines and by contingencies of practice, and students may not also acquire experience in a broad variety of professional competencies, but they believe that work experience bolsters real professional practice:

> We understand that they are students and come to be trained, and you must offer them this; if you teach them well, this benefits you too (Work-based supervisor, Health)

> We may not have the equipment the company has, and so what we must do is complementary; that is, what they cannot see here [at the school] they can see it at the company. I tell them: 'we will do it manually, then you will see it automatically happen at the company (School-based supervisor, Health)

7.4.4 Barriers

We also identify some barriers that might prevent cooperation and co-construction. A heavy workload is typically involved, and sometimes school- and work-based supervisors feel overloaded, preventing them from engaging in deeper cooperation or co-construction. On another level, sometimes feedback provided by work-based supervisors cannot be addressed at schools or teachers do not have enough autonomy to alter the curricula to apply changes.

Paperwork Both school- and work-based supervisors agree that considerable amounts of paperwork are involved in running the practice module. The interviewees noted that each month many documents are exchanged between schools and workplaces. These documents include contracts, schedules, attendance sheets, task programmes, assessment forms and visit forms:

> There are a million papers. There is the practice contract, there is the work plan, there are attendance forms, there is the final assessment form, and there is a follow-up document on how the practicums have gone. The student, I tell you, using a software program must enter everything he/she has done the job. After this, we must also report, as school-based

> supervisors, on follow-up correspondence we have done via e-mail and in person. Then, the final assessment… (School-based supervisor, Health)

> Each month, or even before the month has finished, they (the students) give you a form… then they give you another one to sign. Of course, people get tired of signing papers each week, and you must supervise this protocol. It is a lot of work. (Work-based supervisor, Health)

Workload The participants noted that running the practice module involves a heavy workload given the limited time and material resources that they have. For example, school-based supervisors argue that following up on the practice module is a very demanding task, as supervisor must in some cases monitor up to 30 students. In such cases, making three visits to each company per student is almost impossible. The work-based supervisors complained about the limited time that they have to fill all related forms and to assess students as the schools ask. Even more, work-based supervisors argue that they do not have enough time for the visits school supervisors make to companies. However, they also recognise that as students become acquainted with the tasks they are assigned, they can alleviate the workload. Both school- and work-based supervisor agree that visits are very positive, but that it is difficult to make them all:

> There is not enough time to do all the work we are assigned. We do the work of course, but we use our time (School-based supervisor, Industry)

> It is a lot of work… at the beginning. Because you must teach them [the students] the procedures well, but they learn this later, and you can profit from it… (Work-based supervisor, Health)

Limitations of Feedback School-based supervisors argue that suggestions from companies are sometimes inadequate or that they cannot apply them for several reasons. For example, schools do not have enough resources to update their equipment and teachers are not able to change syllabi based on what the company requests. Some work-based supervisors understand that schools are limited to introducing changes. Also, while some school-based supervisors receive feedback from companies, they have little influence on other teaching staff:

> One company told us: 'the student does not know about the development program'. The student said it had not been taught. I said that while the same document may not have been used, I was sure a similar one had been introduced. The company's document was particular, and we could teach like this, but we do not because forms applied by other companies are different. In this sense, we address more generic things (School-based supervisor, Social Services)

> It depends on the person. I, from the comments that a company makes, as I have direct contact with them, try to tell the teaching staff 'Listen, we could improve this because it is not working… we could correct this because the students do not fully understand it'. But of course, some teachers are more receptive than others, and some say 'yes, yes' but they go on doing the same thing. They prefer to do other things that improve the syllabus (School-based supervisor, Industry)

7.5 Conclusions

This study aimed to analyse the nature and scope of interactions between schools and companies that have emerged as a result of the implementation of the FCT scheme to vocational education programmes in Catalonia. Previous works have highlighted the efficacy of the FCT in allowing educational institutions to mitigate disconnections with companies' training needs (Farriols and Inglés 1993; Mària i Serrano 2003) by creating spaces of dialogue, negotiation and collaboration. Through the present work, we intended to go a step further by delving into specific collaborations occurring between actors of the FCT (i.e. school- and work-based supervisors). We argued that these institutional players serve as crucial agents in connecting school and work learning contexts, thus paving the way for quality improvements. Based on Gessler's (2017) theoretical framework on collaboration, we observed interactions between school and company supervisors through the FCT scheme, which illustrate different degrees of interdependence.

At the first level of collaboration, we found coordinative actions involving reciprocate contact, student assignment to available work placements, student follow-up meetings, problem-solving and checklist assessments. These actions are designed to harmonise expectations and obligations among all players involved (teachers, students and trainers). At this level, school-based supervisors play an active role in coordinating all necessary issues with companies to apply the FCT and to keep it functioning. Although in some companies work-based supervisors may play an active role (by initiating contact with schools, selecting students and defining activity plans), they typically follow each school's directions. Previous research had shown that the selection and allocation process of students among companies is costly and time-consuming (Marhuenda-Fluixà 2002); though as time goes past, schools and companies acquire more experience, they get to know each other's expectations and limitations. Therefore, the process flows more easily (Marhuenda-Fluixà 2002; M. C. González-Veiga et al. 2008). Consistently with that, our results revealed the workload assumed by school-based and work-based supervisors in arranging the FCT at a coordination level.

Moreover, we observed that schools had created networks of collaboration among suitable companies to place their students every year, and this facilitates the coordination tasks. We believe that this is an essential step towards the consolidation of the FCT scheme mainly and for the improvement of the VET generally, although not sufficient. It may be argued whether companies offer real training positions or 'working positions occupied by students', as every year companies take in new students without consolidating a new labour contract. In this regard, some studies show that only small number of the students find a job in the same company where they did the FCT (see, for example, González-Veiga et al. 2006), though they do argue that the FCT increases their possibilities of finding a job. Other studies show that contracting depends exclusively on the dynamic of the labour market (Mària i Serrano 2006), and not on the FCT by itself.

At a second level, we observed cooperative actions involving exchange activities, relationship building and providing feedback. Through these actions, a higher degree of interdependence emerges, allowing for the creation of spaces through which school-based and work-based supervisors can exchange knowledge, experiences and suggestions for improvement. From these exchanges, supervisors of both contexts value long-lasting relationships between schools and companies, as they help them work on shared goals and maintain the quality of the FCT. Regular contact between school- and work-based supervisors may allow these actors to match school curricula to work tasks, thus enhancing the school-work alignment. In this vein, scholars have argued that supervisors are crucial actors for giving coherence to the learning experience between the school and the workplace. Moreover, supervisors are fundamental actors to guaranty that the FCT maintain its learning nature (e.g. Marhuenda 2002). Consistent with this claim, our results show evidence of the type of interactions that might foster coherence between learning at the school and learning at the workplace, though we observed that these are sporadic and anecdotal. Furthermore, previous research showed that only one-third of the school-based and work-based supervisors coordinate actions together (Martínez-Usarralde 2000).

The third level refers to the highest degree of collaboration through which partners work together to achieve common goals and to ensure benefits for one another. At this level, co-construction actions emerge via joint assessments, teacher training experiences with partner companies and complementary visions of contributions to student learning. A cross-boundary exchange occurs at this level when teachers complete internships at companies and when work-based supervisors are invited to attend students' oral presentations at schools. We observed a perception that this creates a win-win situation for all partners involved when such collaboration emerges. However, these experiences are scarce; only two school-based supervisors described such interactions. To our knowledge, there are no studies in the Spanish literature on VET that analyse to what extent these types of interactions emerge, though there are reports that recommend and encourage such exchanges (see, for example, Miñarro et al. 2017).

Furthermore, we found some constraints that thwart the collaborative process, and that may prevent higher degrees of interdependence from arising. The FCT scheme has become excessively bureaucratic, creating considerable volumes of paperwork for school- and work-based supervisors to complete and leaving less time to teach, guide and assess students. Work hours dedicated to the FCT are not accurately recognised, and as a result, the time required to complete school-based supervisors' tasks exceeds the number of hours assigned. Similarly, work-based supervisors typically assume this task as an additional workload, and though they exhibit a high commitment to this work, they have limited time to dedicate to student training and guidance. On top of these, previous research has shown that work-based supervisors usually do not have enough pedagogical knowledge to guide students (Martínez-Usarralde 2000; Marhuenda-Fluixà 2002) and that companies tend to mix regular working hours and hours of training and supervision (González-Veiga et al. 2008). Limitations on feedback reflect disagreements between schools

and workplaces, and although they can serve as a springboard to strengthen collaboration, they can also create limits when actors feel they do not have the power to make changes. Some scholars (see, for example, Marhuenda 2002) have highlighted this issue before, arguing about the function and autonomy of teachers for designing the curricula that go beyond what has been prescriptive. This issue seems to be still relevant today.

While all of these levels of collaboration are important, higher levels of collaboration are most desired, though they tend to be the most difficult to realise. Top-down legislative regulations can promote this outcome, though this is not the best approach, as this form of collaboration not only requires the definition of formal structures but also the application of a shared mind set (Gessler 2017). In this regard, institutions should support supervisors' actions more by making positions stable (currently there is considerable rotation in this position). Moreover, schools and companies should recognise the heavy workloads incurred by supervisors (completing extra hours, working outside of work hours and attending meetings in different places). Finally, the educational administration could offer more and better training courses to work-based supervisor's to improve their pedagogical skills (there are few specific training opportunities for supervisors, and while there are short courses available, participants have criticised them for their poor quality), and teachers could be granted more autonomy to decide upon the curricula.

Finally, considering these results into a broader perspective of the Spanish context, we need to take into account that the economic and the educational sector were turned on their backs to each other during a long time. Although this is changing, more efforts are needed to increase collaboration between the two sectors. In this regard, our study shows that there is much potential of improving by offering real support to supervisors allowing the emergence of collaboration from a bottom-up direction.

7.6 Limitations and Future Lines of Research

This study is not without limitations. First, it is a small-scale study. Therefore its results are not generalisable. Moreover, the data has been collected in the Catalonian context only. Consequently, results are biased by the particular economic and social features of that autonomous community. More extended studies are necessary in order to obtain a comprehensive picture of the levels of collaboration between schools and companies in the Spanish context. Previous research on a similar topic dates from the 1990s (Martínez-Usarralde 2000), hence the need to update our knowledge on this issue. Future research could extend this study further by analysing the extent to which schools and companies collaborate at different levels with each other. Scholars have argued that collaboration between the educational and the economic sector is crucial to respond to global challenges (Planas-Coll 2005; González-Veiga et al. 2008), thus the relevance of this topic.

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Chapter 8
The Production of Disqualified Youth Through Basic Vocational Education and Training Provision: Examples from Valencia

Míriam Abiétar López and Almudena A. Navas Saurin

Abstract Basic Vocational Education and Training (VET) in Spain is specifically addressed to young students that are previously categorized as early school leavers in the educational system. In this chapter, we approach this type of VET provision by focusing specifically on its influence on youth production. By doing so, we attempt to show connections among the training provided in a specific Spanish region and the youngsters' pathways. This will be accounted in terms of the constraints and possibilities it provides the youngster, and both will be examined under a dimensional social justice theory focusing on the professional transitions and social participation it enables. Overall, we aim to approach to this training from the perspective of the subject it produces.

Keywords Educational policy · Educational resources · Career development · Education work relationship · Social justice

8.1 Introduction

According to the latest statistics provided by the Autonomous Educational Administration of Valencia, in the school year 2016–2017, 5288 students enrolled in basic VET in this region. These students were differentially distributed among the 16 sector branches that make up this training in the Valencian Autonomous Community. Within every branch, students choose among several degrees: for instance, one can choose Health as a branch and then decide to follow the Ambulance

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Driver Degree or the Social Healthcare Aid Management Degree. They could, presumably, choose among pursuing studies in public or private educational organizations or in others that exclusively develop all kind of vocational training. In every case, all of them belong to the educational system. Depending on the characteristics of the organization and the resources made available to them, they could conduct practice field training, again of several kinds, or only study the practicalities of their future profession inside the organization premises. All these programs aim to grow the student's need for higher levels of training and, indeed, skills, so they can enter the world of work. However, as defined by law nowadays, these kinds of schemes are designed to be final and not necessarily propaedeutic.

Taking these data as our starting reference, the questions that guide the research we present in this chapter are the following: what happens with these students once they finish their training? If they find a job, could we consider that it is a successful professional transition? Going a step further: can a working-class trajectory—characterized by an early labour insertion after a short training, as explained further in the chapter—be considered successful in the current socio-historical moment? What then is the situation of these young students in a historical moment which is predominated by a millennial vision of youth, situated within the framework of the liquid modernity presented by Bauman (2008)? That is, a youth that is in contrast to the linear perception of time and to the performance of the "art of life" of the Baby boomer generation develops their life trajectories with a greater uncertainty but, on the other hand, through multiple experiences in different fields.

The data regarding the unemployment rates of young people in the Valencian Autonomous Community, where our research is located, and in Spain in 2017, according to the educational attainment level, show clear differences based on the situation when they exit from the educational system (Table 8.1). Thus, the statistics point out that education becomes a protective factor in the labour market. This result coincides with the analysis presented in the last report on youth in Spain (Benedicto 2017).

In order to situate basic VET in these data, it should be noted that the qualification that the students obtain after finishing this training is included in levels 3–4 (upper secondary education) of the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED). This is, as formally defined by the UNESCO (2013), postsecondary education non-tertiary that reinforces the knowledge acquired in secondary education, prepares for the labour market and for tertiary education. Despite the inclusion of basic VET in this level, it is quite remarkable that the skills, competencies and knowledge

Table 8.1 Unemployment rates (%) by age (25–34) and educational attainment level in the Valencian Autonomous Community and Spain, 2017

	Valencian Autonomous Community	Spain
Compulsory secondary education and lower	24.9	27.8
Upper secondary education	17.6	18.4
Tertiary education	12.5	13.9

Source: Ministerio de Educación y Formación Profesional (MEFP). Sistema estatal de indicadores de la educación. 2018

imparted at this training are below the level of complexity that characterizes tertiary education. Thus, the legal options offered for the students do not really correspond to the actual options they have once they finished their basic VET training.

As shown in Table 8.1, the unemployment rate in ISCED levels 3–4 in 2017 was 18.4% on average in Spain, compared to 27.8% of levels 0–2 (Compulsory Secondary Education and lower) and 13.9% of levels 5–8 (tertiary education). In this regard, the statistical information available allows us to affirm that professional transitions from basic VET encounter obstacles based on the credential obtained in this training and the labour positions it gives access to. A second obstacle is the difficult access that basic VET students have to the subsequent educational levels based on the reduction of the conceptual demand in basic VET and the institutionalized obstacles in the current organization of the Spanish educational system (Abiétar López 2016). Considering these two main points, the aim of our research is to describe and analyse what kind of transitions and, therefore, what kind of young subjectivities are produced in basic VET.

In order to achieve this aim, we start this chapter stating an important and often forgotten fact about the people following this kind of training: they are characterized as young. Then, we will present the theoretical framework, mainly based on the production of the GRET group of research, and we will connect those transitions with the general framework of Nancy Fraser's social justice perspective. Both of them give us the theoretical basis to sustain the research project we are developing. Finally, we will present some general thoughts about the data gathered here.

8.2 Youth as the Key Dimension of the Research

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, one of the most famous sociologists of all times, Pierre Bourdieu (2002), enlightened all of us by stating that youth *is* just a word. There's no possible way to gather any individuals under the umbrella of the youth concept by solely paying attention to the biological age. Even though this statement is sturdily accepted in academia, it seems to evaporate whenever we address policies of education, schools or educational institutions: most of the times when we speak of young people of basic VET, we take for granted that they *are* young.

Youth is a quite novel concept since it has been built over the last century. In fact, we may find the starting point of the thinking about youth with Stanley Hall in 1916 on the basis of a biological fact and of features that are desirable and accepted in the Global North cultures in which we live. At the same time, young people maintain a vision of time and its consequences, which differs from the youth researchers' visions. Thus, we realize that how a society selects and distributes constraints and possibilities among those called young is a fundamental arena of struggle that is worth a look at in social sciences research.

Our society, and every society in the Global North, establishes the pathways that allow people of certain characteristics to be included in the options provided to young with their institutions, their policies and several programs. However, at the

same time, being young is only possible because one can benefit from those institutions, those policies and several programs. We are facing here the old chicken-egg problem. It is essential to us to realize that whenever we conduct research on young populations, they are young because they are being trained in those programs. Once we do not study them inside the educational organizations, we cannot acknowledge in which social category they may fit. In this way, youth is a category closely related to their participation in the educational institution, as its custody function allows us to locate and contact them at a very specific time and space in their life. As soon as they stop being students, their location in a social category is more diffused, as it is no longer related to their situation in the educational institution but instead to an intersection of several categories. As an example, the most recent report on the Spanish Youth (Benedicto 2017) describes them—in line of the previous ones—by their relation with several social facts, institutions and fields such as the socioeconomic situation, the world of work, consumption, technology, health, and social and political participation, among others. In the same way, the difficulty in situating youth in an age range and the continuous extension of this category confirm, as Bourdieu explained, that it *is* just a word. Moreover, as we research, we also have to think about the methodological possibilities given that it is really hard to contact the students once they have left school.

Having these theoretical considerations on the basis of our approximation to youth, we are evaluating the itineraries in accordance with what traditionally has been made available for us: their career development. They are often based on classic issues of education and work relations and focus on how to learn the content in the context of an initial training for work. This educational context is already labeled as a failure for the youth of an upper secondary program. Therefore, it is a clear limit to the research reported here. We have in mind that we should be able to incorporate it in order to have a more authentic vision of what is happening in the field of education for young people in situation of social vulnerability. To be able to integrate this involves considering how the youth—as depicted by Bauman (2008), Tapscott (1998), Feixa (2006)—and its millennial features (focused on new technologies, very creative, with non-traditional relationships of commitment, and above all, with a pointillist vision of the future and the achievements that will make life a work of art) have an impact on the results that we get from the investigation. These results will be presented in terms of itineraries, transitions and social justice.

8.3 Researching VET: Transitions as a Biographical Contextualized Process

VET as an object of study can be approached from several perspectives that focus on different elements depending on the discipline in which they are positioned. From the academic context in which we are situated, we can identify at least three

strands of research that address the transition process and its effects on the biography of people from different disciplinary fields, as we expand on Marhuenda Fluixá, Salvà Mut, Navas Saurin and Abiétar López (2015). These lines are the developmental psychological research, which includes the study of access to adult life and individual expectations, characteristics and capabilities (Zacarés-González and Llinares-Insa 2006); the sociological research, which focuses on school failure and the transition processes within the educational system (Casal et al. 2006a); and the educational studies. This third strand is where our research is mainly located, focusing on several aspects of the pedagogical practice in these programs and its effects on the careers of the students, such as teachers training, teaching methodologies, students' situations, as well as organizational aspects that may interfere in the educational process, for example, the educational offerings. Some examples of these researches are collected in Marhuenda (2006) and González (2015).

In our research of basic VET and the youth it produces, we focus on transitions as the process to which young people are subjected during their stay in the educational institution. Specifically, we propose the educational itinerary developed throughout schooling as the process that contributes to the social construction and to the social delimitation of youth. More specifically, we highlight that the educational itinerary provides the credentials that positions students differentially in their transition to adult life.

In order to situate this subject in this section we will present the way in which we approach the transitions. Our main reference is the theoretical framework offered by the research group Labor and Education Research Group (GRET) in their approach on the sociology of youth from a biographical perspective (Casal et al. 2006a). Their theoretical production has been constructed in four research lines: educational expansion, competencies and labour market, university studies, and youth and school-work transition. Our own research interest leads us to take the third line as the main reference to address our subject of study. In particular, from their theoretical proposal we take the following concepts as key elements for specifying the analysis of transitions and relating them with the educational practices in local contexts: itinerary and trajectory, external and internal transitions, and the forms of transitions to adult life.

Firstly, the distinction between itinerary and trajectory is based on differentiating what has been finished up to the present moment and the probable itineraries deployed after this moment. In our research we place "this moment" in basic VET. Although this difference may seem mild, it is quite relevant for us to draw a distinction between the past itineraries ("done itineraries") that take the students to the present moment and the deployment of trajectories ("future itineraries"). Thus, it allows us to visualize the effects that the programs may have on the future itineraries, that is, the way in which the educational practices may produce different itineraries and subjectivities. A production in which the done itinerary represents unequal arrivals to the present moment and in which the deployment of future itineraries represents in turn unequal exits due to the diverse probability of developing trajec-

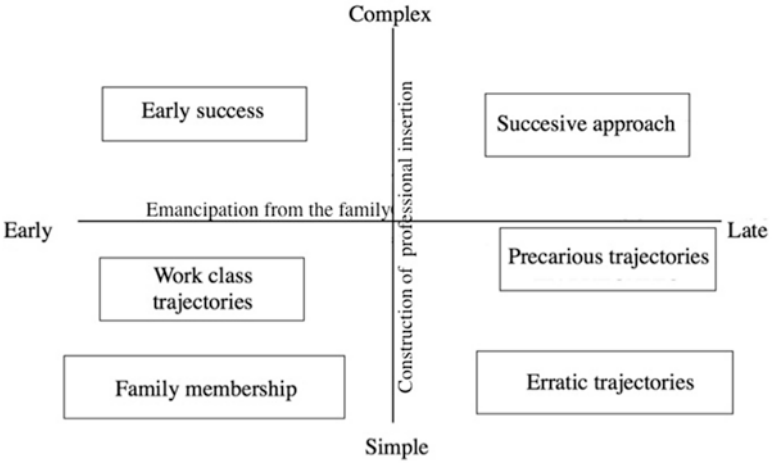


Illustration 8.1 Forms of transitions. (Source: Authors' translation from Casal et al. 2006a, p. 39, with permission from Maribel García)

tories. Since the academic literature on transitions makes different uses of itinerary and trajectory, we chose to talk about done itineraries and futures itineraries to clearly represent the biographical moment to which they refer.

Secondly, the difference between internal and external transitions allows us to situate the process of the transition in relation to the place of origin and destination. While the internal transitions refer to those that occur within the framework of the same institution, the external ones refer to those that take place between different institutions (García Gracia 2013). Placing these definitions in the educational space, the internals would represent the path between different levels (primary and secondary education); while the external ones can refer to the passage from family to school, as well as from school to work. In our research, we focus on the latter, although we certainly cannot ignore the influence of family on the transitions as a differential positioner.

A third element that is worth mentioning is the proposal of the GRET on the forms of transitions to adulthood. Although we assume that it is not possible to generalize the transitions due to the casuistry derived from the individual characteristics, as well as the external influences that condition the process, it is very interesting to consider the model they present for our work (Casal et al. 2006a, b). Their proposal is represented in a scheme organized in two axes: the horizontal refers to the early or late emancipation from the family, and the vertical to the complex or simple construction of professional insertion (referred mainly to the qualification level attained). In the resulting space there are six forms of transition (Illustration 8.1), which have to be thought from the internal heterogeneity of each group.

Quoting the authors themselves (Casal et al. 2006a, pp. 39–41), *early success* identifies the quickly developed trajectories towards successful professional positions and involves early forms of emancipation from the family. Generally, they

involve obtaining high degrees and professional insertions with a future projection. *Working-class* trajectories identify patterns of early emancipation and an early labour insertion due to short school training and a short ceiling of professional qualifications. *Successive approach* refers to those trajectories that point towards a successful insertion that demands decision-making and long training itineraries but also certain delays or adjustments to study and/or work situations, as well as to family emancipation. *Precarious* trajectories identify those transitions that are rather simple in training and professional qualification and contextualized in a very precarious labour market. This group may include both people with low degrees and people with high qualifications that have had to make adjustments due to scarce possibilities of professional promotion. *Family membership* refers to isolated cases of young people who develop a transition linked by their family, where there is not an election but an adscription to the family occupation. Finally, *erratic* trajectories identify the transitions of those who remain outside the circuits of training and work for many years. Considering all these definitions, we place the theoretical possible transitions from basic VET as simple in the construction of the professional insertion (lower area of the Illustration 8.1) due to the educational itineraries and the qualification level attained. In this frame, the success in these transitions would refer mainly to the early emancipation of the family, thus realizing a working-class trajectory.

This proposal of forms of transitions may be extrapolated to other Spanish regions. Moreover, it has been represented and validated throughout the results obtained in the successive Catalonian Youth Surveys (Casal et al. 2004; Miret et al. 2008; Serracant 2013). Their different distribution in the data obtained in the surveys shows the historical and changing nature (Casal et al. 2006a) of transitions and their strong relationship with the socioeconomic situation in which they take place (Adame Obrador and Salvà Mut 2010). In this regard, we emphasize that transitions are processes framed in the socio-historical context in which they take place. Thus, it is necessary to contextualize transitions to avoid the individualization of a social process that the subjects develop within several institutions and conditioning factors. In this line, it is worth highlighting how the academic literature on transitions has emphasized the rise of a de-standardization of the process compared to the characteristic linearity of previous historical moments (Machado Pais 2003; Walther 2006). A change understood as the development of transitions with processes of alternating training and work experiences, stages with greater instability and insecurity. In short, a development that contrasts with the linearity that involves the direct step from school to work and that is framed in the liquid modernity widely described by Bauman (2008). For basic VET youth, these changes have obvious effects: their chances of developing their professional transitions and competing in the labour market are reduced because of the short educational itinerary and their low qualification. The production of this youth through the educational provision has contextual causes to be added to the structural and institutional ones.

8.4 The Effects of the Educational Practices: A Matter of Social Justice

The second theoretical perspective from which we approach the analysis of basic VET is a dimensional perspective of social justice. We consider that this is a necessary critical approach for the analysis of the role that education plays in the social construction of youth. This perspective allows us to assess democracy in education considering the way the pedagogic rights are institutionalized in educational relationships (Bernstein 1998). These rights are the following: enhancement, inclusion and participation. All of them have as a necessary condition that subjects have to feel that they have an interest in school, and they have to trust that their interest will be considered. The first right, enhancement, refers not only to the right to be more in the personal, intellectual, social and material realm, but it is the right to access to the means of critical understanding and new possibilities (ibid, p. 25). The second right, inclusion, is the right to be included socially, intellectually, culturally and personally, which involves the right to be autonomous. The third right refers to participation, which does not only mean having the opportunity of discussing but also to produce some results in practice. It is the right to participate in the construction, maintenance and change of the social order.

On the basis of this proposal, our social justice perspective allows us to combine the study of basic VET with a wider analysis of the educational policies where these rights are considered as the main criteria to assess the educational practices (Abiétar López et al. 2015). For us, the key here is to analyse the way students are positioned in a social structure after completing their training. The differential positions are related to several ways of participating in society, thereby producing different "youths" and therefore, different performances of citizenship. This focus of research requires a dimensional perspective of social justice in order to embrace a wide sense of the concept. Throughout history, social justice has been conceptualized from quite diverse approaches that reveal diverse understandings of what society *is* and what society *should be*. That is, while analysing social relations and their consequences for the subjects as socially just, we are also stating what we consider socially unjust, and we choose what is considered to be better for society. As argued by Rawls (1985, p. 23): "even when justice has a certain priority for being the most important virtue of the institutions […] a conception of justice is preferable to another one when their consequences are more desirable". In a similar way, Wright (2010, p. 8) explains that: "behind every emancipatory theory, therefore, there is an implicit theory of justice, some conception of what conditions would have to be met before the institutions of a society could be deemed just".

Our approach to social justice is based on a dimensional perspective following the proposal of Fraser (2013), who has as core definition of social justice participatory parity in society. Consequently, the institutionalized obstacles that hinder this parity are to be considered socially unjust. These obstacles may be found in the institutions of the three dimensions or structures whereby social order is described: the economical, the cultural and the political one. In the economic structure, the

misdistribution or distributive injustice refers to the neglect of resources for social interacting. In the cultural structure, injustice means the misrecognition throughout institutionalized hierarchies of values that neglect the position of social groups and hinder their social interaction. Finally, in the political dimension, parity of participation may be impeded when there is no equity of vote and social representation, which would be misrepresentation. The key of this perspective is that parity of participation is needed in all of the three dimensions in order to have socially just practices; "representation is always already inherent in all claims for redistribution and recognition. The political dimension is implicit in, indeed required by, the grammar of the concept of justice. Thus no redistribution or recognition without representation" (Fraser 2013, p. 199).

On the basis of this conceptualization, we focus on the institutionalized obstacles that certain social groups find in the educational institution. More precisely, we focus on the obstacles that some students find during their training and the consequences they produce in their professional transition. That is, the consequences in the social production of unequal inclusions having in mind that "overcoming injustice means dismantling institutionalized obstacles that prevent some people from participating on a par with others, as full partners in social interaction" (Fraser 2005, p. 73). Therefore, we aim to describe those institutionalized obstacles in the educational structure and offerings that may promote or hinder social participation of the subjects.

As mentioned before, we focus on basic VET and on the students ("the basic VET youth") who participate in this training and are in a vulnerable position at risk of educational exclusion. Vulnerability refers here not only to their current position in the educational structure, but also to the future position and participation the programs enable. Therefore, we address the institutionalized injustice which is evidenced in the different pathways and professional careers produced for these students. As we explain in further detail in the next section, basic VET is addressed in the Spanish educational system to those students categorized as early school leavers. Thus, although being included as part of the VET system, it is mostly used as a remedial program to reduce the high rates of early school leaving in our country. As a consequence, we may state that this historical position of basic VET is being reinforced by conservative educational policies in Spain, thereby constraining socially just educational practices.

8.5 Basic VET in the Spanish Educational System: A Constrained Comprehensiveness Through Conservative Modernization

The Spanish educational policy is defined by the hasty succession of five laws that have been used since 1970 to regulate the educational system[1]. Nevertheless, these changes have not resulted in significant changes in the educational structure. More

[1] The General Education Act (LGE) in 1970, the Act on the General Organization of the Educational System (LOGSE) in 1990, the Act in the Quality of Education (LOCE) in 2002, the Organic Law

specifically, we state that basic VET has remained almost the same since they began in the framework of the Act on General Organization of the Educational System (LOGSE). In this regard, the first Social Guarantee Programs (PGS), the subsequent Initial Professional Qualification Programs (PCPI) and the current Basic Vocational Training Programs (FPB) have strengthened the position of basic VET as a path for those students categorized as early school leavers. This path reinforces their segregation by differentiating their future itineraries and by separating them from educational success. This success is understood here in a wide sense, not only referring to obtaining a certificate, but also of being able to participate in society.

Our analysis of the current law (the Organic Law for the Improvement of Educational Quality, LOMCE) enables us to state that our educational policy is clearly placed in a framework of conservative modernization. As Apple explains (2006), this trend is a confluence of several sectors (neo-liberals, neo-conservatives, authoritarian populists and the professional and new middle class) that intersect in the fight for controlling the educational field. Although they may contradict each other in their approach to the sense and aims of schooling, their combination is a confluence that results in a conservative restoration of the system. This restoration is specified in measures that shape the programs in a very restrictive sense. These measures can be understood as the political technologies, which "are devices for changing the meaning of practice and social relationships" (Ball 2013, pp. 48–49). The author proposes three technologies: the market form of the system, the entrepreneurial management of the educational organizations and the performativity that is referred to accountability. The three of them reinforce a mercantilist turn of the system that encourages competitiveness and individualization. In the framework of this trend, the position of the basic VET programs is definitively relegated to the realm of educational failure and early school leaving.

The specification of these technologies into analysis criteria provides us with arguments for studying the programs. More precisely, we refer to the tracking of the system and the paths provided. On the one hand the tracking and future paths provided by basic VET are quite remarkable to analyse its position in the educational structure. On the other hand, it gives us information about the careers provided for these students. The students who access basic VET have to comply with two requirements: being 16 years old or occasionally 15 and having a previous path of school failure, which means that there are no expectations of obtaining the Compulsory Secondary Education Certificate (GESO). Once they finish basic VET, their continuity in the educational system is complicated, as the students do no obtain the GESO, which would enable them to access the post-compulsory level. For obtaining it, they have to pass the same exam that the students of the Secondary Education path need to pass. Obviously, their previously done educational itinerary positions them in a quite different situation to pass it. Moreover, the time allotted in basic VET for the academic contents is not enough to recover the educational deficit: the hourly load dedicated to these contents is situated between 35% and 40%

on Education (LOE) in 2006 and the Organic Law for the Improvement of Educational Quality (LOMCE) in 2013

including the time for mentoring. Therefore, this exam turns into an institutionalized obstacle for their educational career and reinforces the undermining of the dignity of VET in our educational system, as explained by Tarabini and Montes (2015).

The current situation of basic VET in the Spanish educational system is evidence of a reduced comprehensiveness that constrains social justice. Just like social justice, comprehensiveness is a term that may have several definitions. As explained in Martínez, Bernad, Molpeceres, Abiétar, Navas, Marhuenda and Giménez (2015), it is possible to identify three approaches to the term. The first one is related to redistribution and equality, and it would have a main exponent in the universalization of education. Thus, enabling all the population access to the educational system would be a comprehensive policy. The second approach converts equality of access to equality of achievement: "the notion of 'giving according to need' instead of 'giving everybody the same' began to be regarded as a better embodiment of the equality principle" (ibid., p. 295). The third approach retains the competitive trend and strengthens the aforementioned conservative technologies, marketization, managerialism and accountability, which reinforce the individualization of the system. In this framework, basic VET is positioned within a structure that limits the options for their students in terms of training and itineraries provided. By so doing, they also reduce social justice to its distributive meaning, focusing on equality and not on equity.

From a dimensional conceptualization of social justice, it is necessary to consider the way social participation is fostered in the programs. With the current organization of basic VET, we state that social justice is constrained due to the way the educational system is tracked and how it segregates students. In order to change this, a structural proposal would be the introduction of feasible links between stages and programs so that students have a chance to continue their training. A second proposal would combine the redistribution with the pathways offered and the social participation they enable. This refers to a redesign of VET considering the professional branches provided in a specific territory. Thus, by analysing both the geographical location of the educational resources and the paths provided, we focus on the way educational policies and planning shape a given territory. Thus, our findings are focused on the professional careers provided in the region of Valencia.

8.6 Basic VET Provision in the Region of Valencia

The results we present here are based on the research we are conducting in the region of Valencia. We are replicating the project: "Success and dropout pathways in vocational education and training levels 1 and 2 in Spain" (EDU2013-42854-R), led by the research group "Education and citizenship" of the Universitat de les Illes Balears (Spain) and funded by the Spanish Government. This project focuses on VET success and dropout, particularly in the initial and medium level, which refer to professional qualifications of level 1 and 2. Its main objectives are generating knowledge about dropout in these levels of the VET system and developing proposals of actions to prevent and reduce this dropout. The project was initiated in 2014

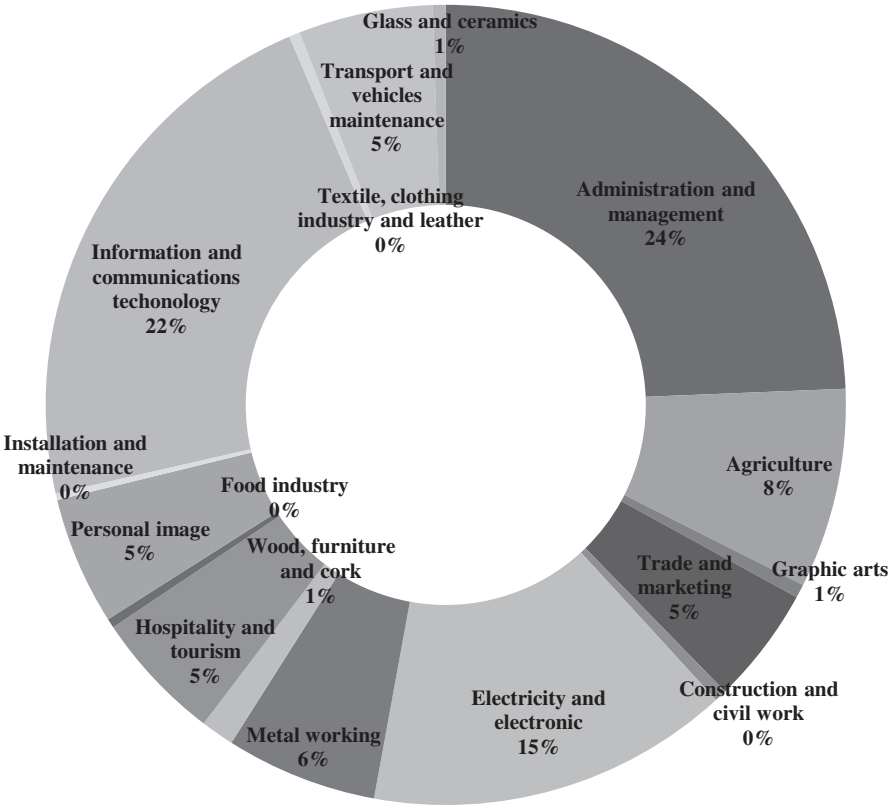
for a period of 3 years. More specifically, our research is framed in a cooperation agreement with the Education Department of the region of Valencia, which was signed in 2016 for a period of 3 years and funded by the Valencian Autonomous Government for 2018 and 2019 through the project: "Success and dropout pathways in Vocational Training level 1 and 2 of the educational system in in the Valencian Autonomous Community" (GV/2018/038).

The greatest strength of this project refers to its longitudinal methodological strategy. This approach is fundamental in the research about pathways and transitions, as it "contributes to a better understanding of the biographical processes of young people" (Casal, Merino and García 2011, p. 1150). As these authors explain, this approach may include several methods such as quantitative and qualitative, as it is the longitudinal character the feature that determines the transition approach. Having this consideration in mind, our methodological strategy includes three methods: (i) the analysis of statistical data regarding enrollments and completions in VET, (ii) the conduction of surveys in three consecutive years starting in November 2016 with students, (iii) and the development of focus groups with students and teachers, which is planned for the third year of the research. We are presenting here the results obtained throughout the analysis of statistical data regarding enrollments in VET. We combine these results with the information about the geographical location of the educational organizations that are conducting this training. By doing so, we attempt to connect the training provided in a specific region with the youngster's pathways and the social participation that it enables. Therefore, we aim to approach the production of this youth.

8.6.1 Basic VET Provision and Careers Distribution

How are basic VET students distributed among the educational offerings? This is our first question when trying to describe the educational and labour paths that basic VET students may start in this training. In this regard, the data presented in the following graphic show a significant concentration in specific professional branches (Graphic 8.1).

Firstly, it is worth highlighting that those professional branches with more population enrolled seem to be quite distant from what we consider to be the potential interests of students. Despite their preferences for those branches with a greater demand of manual activity, such as Mechanics or Cooking, the provision is focused on Administration (24%) and Information Technology (22%). One of the specializations of Electricity and Electronic (Installation and Maintenance) is in third place with 15% of enrollments. This distribution could be explained in part by the fact that it is easier and cheaper for the educational administration and for the organizations themselves to provide the specific tools and spaces that are needed to teach these branches. So, the careers that may be started in these programs may not be explained only by the students' interests, but together with other considerations regarding the educational budget and the options of educational provision and planning. Data



Graphic 8.1 Distribution of the population enrolled in basic VET by professional branches (2016–2017). (Source: Authors' own elaboration)

gathered in the surveys conducted in the first year of our research show that 56% of basic VET students[2] declare a main reason for having chosen their studies is that they like them and because they will allow them to improve their job options. However, in close examination by professional branch, data vary to 38% in the case of Administration, to 53% for IT and to 34% for Electricity and Electronics. As promising as these figures may at first appear, they declare as well that more than 60% of students in Administration are pursuing another agenda.

Secondly, the graph also gives us information about the options of the development of careers once the students finish the programs. Those branches with more students do not respond to the potential or emerging demands of the labour market.

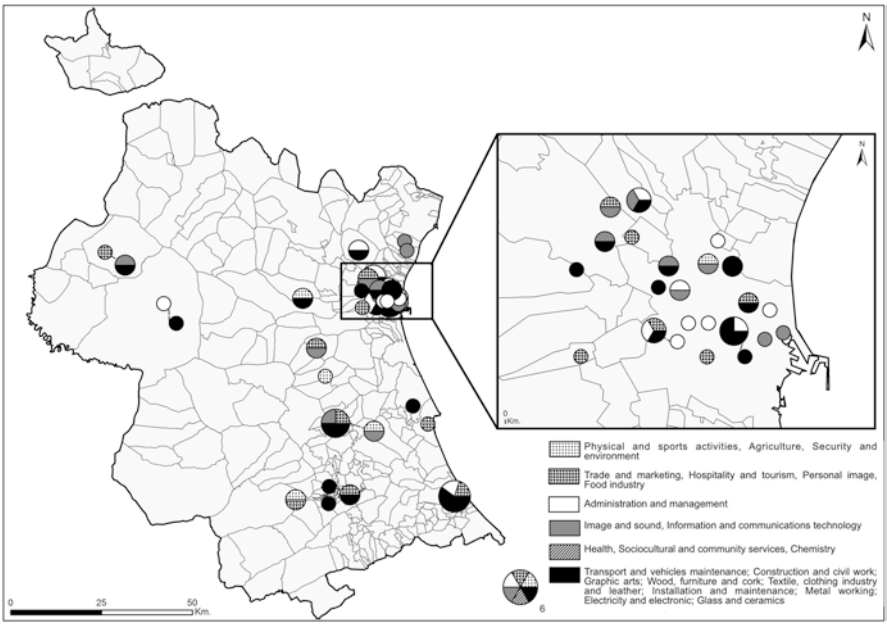
[2] From a sample of 740 students for the academic year 2016/2017 in the Valencian region. Global population of basic VET students was for that period 5288 students. The sample was stratified by professional branches and location at the region of Valencia and had a 0.3% sampling error and a 95% confidence level. The Autonomous Educational Administration of Valencia provided the data used to conduct the study.

On the contrary, there is an under-representation of some branches that could give more options of career development in our productive context.[3] This would be the situation of the programs related to environmental issues, for example. The point here is that if we assess the options of participation that this training enables, i.e., the itineraries of the students once they finish basic VET, there is a need of updating of the professional provision. If we continue training these students for outdated professions that are not related to the current socioeconomic context in which they are to be integrated, we are anticipating their unequal social position. The labeling as "basic VET youth" does already situate them in a disadvantaged position that an out-of-date training restates in a context with changing demands. Thus, the distance with the aforementioned millennial youth increases with this training that prepares for uncertainty. Moreover, in terms of our theoretical framework (Casal et al. 2006a), this situation favours a simple construction of the professional insertion due to a short educational itinerary that positions the students in a disadvantaged competitive position in the labour market. In terms of social justice, the educational offering produces inequitable options of labour and social participation.

After considering the distribution of the students, the second aspect we describe here addresses the distribution of the programs themselves (Map 8.1).

The map represents an expectable concentration of basic VET provision in the city of Valencia and its closer metropolitan area. Likewise, there is a concentration in towns with larger populations groups. Evidently, in these zones there is going to be an increased demand of these programs—and even any kind of educational program. Having said that, we should also think about the possible demand in less-populated areas. Therefore, the lack of an educational provision that covers the different educational levels of our system entails an unequal distribution of resources. Therefore, we may think it is an unequal distribution of educational and labour itineraries for the youngsters. Moreover, if we take into consideration that basic VET is addressed to those students who have an educational path of failure, the absence of these programs in their surroundings or of the opportunity of accessing them involves a limitation of their educational and labour participation options. Consequently, and facing the impossibility of offering all the programs in all the locations of a specific territory, we should think about fostering the accessibility of all the students. Otherwise, the place where the youngsters live would turn into another factor of inequality that conditions the development of their biography. In this way, it would become a social injustice that favours the precarious transitions of basic VET youth.

[3] Nowadays, in the Valencia region there is no study conducted that allows the Educational Administration to know which are the branches more demanded by the labour market. Recently, the Educational Administration and the University of Valencia signed a cooperation agreement that hopefully will provide this kind of data to improve the political decisions behind the VET provision.



Map 8.1 Geographical distribution of basic VET programs (2016–2017). (Source: Authors' own elaborati)

8.7 Conclusions and a Brief Note for Continuing the Research

The analysis presented in this chapter of the current development of the basic VET as an educational policy shows us that in its current arrangement, its final meaning concludes shortening the transition time. It does so by giving rise fundamentally to working class or precarious transitions depending on their success finding a job in the labour market. Both subjectivities are the main two possibilities offered to youngsters studying basic VET.

The data on the enrollment and the current distribution of the programs in the territory show the type of careers provided to these students from the political level. In this regard, it is worth highlighting the distance between what is mostly offered with the potential interests and even with the possible updated labour needs of the territory. In this sense, in the frame of the proposal of forms of transitions, the paths provided are placed within the framework of working-class trajectories. Therefore, in terms of social participation produced in basic VET and the production of youth, we state that it is a subjectivity production limited to a specific area of labour and social life. All this leads to the fact that basic VET favours the production of disqualified youth that are left in a position to perform unequal insertions into social

life. From the perspective of social justice exposed, these programs contribute to the differentiation of citizenship performances, and of their options of representation and participation in social life. We are not suggesting, then, that basic VET should be removed from the educational scene; on the contrary, given the socio-political conditions of the region, it is needed, but we strongly think that it must represent the first step of a professional career, not the final one.

Being young is an experience that includes multiple experiences in several realms. In terms of Bauman (2008), there are multiple ways of developing the "art of life" and constructing our own biography, i.e., our masterpiece. Although we may identify common trends that acquire meaning when they are situated in a social, economic, political and historical context, mostly in the framework of a generation there are no masterpieces alike. In this process of creating masterpieces, the educational system turns into one of the most significant social institutions having a determinant influence in this creation. The knowledge distributed, the way students are classified and positioned in the educational structure, and, on the whole, the constraints and possibilities each person finds in her/his itinerary result into several ways of being "a student". At the same time, it results into several ways of being "young". Youth studies only serve for a type of youth "white, visible, affluent and creative middle class", who ask for the meaning of what they do in their lives, and pretend to give it meaning. However, youth with more pressing and complex materialities, who is in need of an immediate response to life situations, cannot be considered as *young* today, at least, if we refer by young a liquid and millennial way of life. Instead of being young today, they look like the young adults of the baby boomer generation, with quite solid, although impoverished, perspectives.

By focusing on the study of basic VET, we focus on those students that are in a disadvantaged position not only regarding their previous path, but also taking into consideration their future itineraries. The options of careers provided for them are related to the production of a youth ("the basic VET youth") that will have fewer opportunities of performing citizenship and participating in social life in a wide sense. Of course, each individual masterpiece may occasionally become a hit, but *our* research interest in the educational field focuses on the way youth as a whole is produced throughout educational policies and practices. In this regard, the analysis of the development of basic VET in the Valencian region allows as to state that, at the moment, basic VET produces a disqualified youth that is unequally positioned for developing their professional transitions and, therefore, for performing social participation. The research we are conducting allows us a wide approach to this production. In the tracking of the students' paths we are interested on analysing the practices and trends that turn these youngsters into this "basic VET youth". With this expectation in mind, this proposal is to be continued.

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Chapter 9
The Promotion of Educational Success in Intermediate Level VET: The Case of the Balearic Islands

Francesca Salvà-Mut, Antoni Cerdà-Navarro, and Jaume Sureda-Negre

Abstract Considering the Spanish population, there is a clear lack of people who have completed an intermediate level of studies. Recent studies have established the positive relationship between higher levels of secondary schooling, including VET, and a reduction of the early school leaving rate. Our study on which factors steer students towards success in intermediate level VET used student engagement as its core concept. Our sample included 1030 students from 15 to 24 years old. Our approach was quantitative, and the instrument we utilized was a questionnaire.

The results we obtained have allowed us to identify the main characteristics of students' engagement and underline notable shortcomings, mainly regarding the time that students dedicate to school work outside of school, absenteeism, and perceptions of the interest that teachers have in students as people rather than just students. The most significant differences related to the sociodemographic characteristics considered were related to sex and age group.

Keywords Behavioral engagement · Cognitive engagement · Affective engagement · Dropout · Gender

9.1 Introduction

A study of the level of education in the Spanish population shows that there is a clear lack of people who have completed an intermediate level of studies (ISCED 3–4) and an excess of people with low levels (ISCED 0–2). Regarding young people, the most used indicator for referring to the group with an insufficient level of studies is early school leaving (ESL), which reveals what percentage of the population aged 18–24 has completed, at most, the first stage of secondary education (which in Spain

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means having completed Educación Secundaria Obligatoria or Compulsory Secondary Education) and has not carried on with any education or training program. Despite the apparent improvement in the ESL rate in recent years, Spain still ranks worse than most EU countries in this metric. According to the most recent data (from 2016), the European rate is 10.7%, while in Spain it is 19%, and in the Balearic Islands it is even worse at 26.8% (Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport 2017).

High levels of participation in and graduation from the higher levels of secondary education, including vocational training, are key to reducing the ESL rate (CEDEFOP 2016). Recent reports from the CEDEFOP and the OECD claim that 33.5–35% of secondary education students in Spain are enrolled in vocational training programs (Cedefop ReferNet Spain 2015; OECD 2017), compared to 48.5% of students across the European Union (EU-26) (Cedefop ReferNet Spain 2015) and an average of 46% in OECD (OECD 2017). According to data recently made available by Spain's autonomous communities, the rate of participation in CFGM[1] is 38.7%, and in the Balearic Islands, it is 31.5%. Regarding the academic results of CFGM in Spain, 50.5% of those who begin such programs graduate, and in the Balearic Islands this rate is 53.19%[2] (Salvà-Mut 2017a).

In addition to this, it is worth noting the positive influence that these VET programs have had on young Spaniards' abilities to find work when compared to young people in general (Albert-Verdú et al. 2009; Casquero Tomás 2009). This trend has also been observed in the Balearic Islands (Salvà-Mut et al. 2017).

All of these data make preventing dropout from CFGM a strategic issue in which understanding the factors that lead to the academic success of students is paramount to being able to create action plans based on evidence[3].

International literature on this topic focuses mainly on the study of VET dropout and ESL rates, risk factors, and processes that lead to dropout or success in VET programs (Glaesser 2006; Grønborg 2013; Jäppinen 2010; Jordan et al. 2009; NCVER 2005; Tangaard 2013).

As the core concept for our research, we focus on student engagement—an idea introduced in the 1980s—in the context of studies on secondary education dropout that aim to attain an in-depth understanding of and design interventions for preventing and remedying this phenomenon.

According to Reschly and Christenson (2012), engagement is a metaconstruct that brings together distinct lines of research and includes motivation. This can then

[1] The rate of participation is the gross schooling rate. It is calculated as the relationship between the total number of students, at all ages, taking the program being considered and the group of students at the age for which the program is theoretically aimed; in the case of intermediate VET, this is 16–17-year-olds (Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport 2017).

[2] This is the percentage of students who finished their studies in 2014–2015 over the total number of students enrolled in the first year of these studies in 2013–2014. Authors' own creation from https://www.educacion.gob.es/educabase/tabla.do?sel_1=19&busc_1=&cri1=00&cri1=01&c

[3] This is the main objective of the "Success and dropout pathways in vocational training educational system levels 1 and 2" project (Reference EDU2013-42854-R) financed by the Spanish Ministry of Economy, Industry and Competitiveness, the State Research Agency, and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), part of the results of which form the basis of this chapter.

be broken down into the three different kinds of engagement upon which we will focus in this study: (a) behavioral engagement, which is defined by participation in academic, social, and extracurricular activities; (b) affective engagement, which considers the affection (both positive and negative) present in students' interactions with teachers, peers, school work, and the school itself; and (c) cognitive engagement, which is related to students' investment in themselves and encompasses the personal performance of intellectual or knowledge capital, self-controlled cognition and/or self-learning, and the effort required to master certain areas of knowledge (specializations). Student engagement is also characterized by being susceptible to the effects of interventions, being easily influenced by different contexts (family, school, etc.), and being both a result and a process.

Research into student engagement in VET and its relationship with academic outcomes is scarce. However, some studies provide interesting results related to students' sociodemographic characteristics.

Regarding sex, the current consensus is that dropout is more common among males than females. To this respect, Elffers (2012) points out that males receive substantially less academic support from their networks than females do, but they also indicate that they have better social relationships with their classmates. The author of this study concludes that, as there is no reason to believe that males have less resources available than females, her findings suggest that males make less use of the potential resources offered by their social networks. On the other hand, it is worth mentioning the study by Colding (2006) in which she finds unexpected results: the proportion of Danish females dropping out of school is greater than the proportion of Danish males.

Regarding age, the accepted consensus is that the older students are, the greater their risk of dropping out. In this way, some authors suggest that younger students have more support from their families (Elffers 2012), although they also exhibit worse behavior, which shows up when considering the school experience (Elffers 2013). On the other hand, older students have fewer relationships with their counterparts and more highly value their education (Elffers et al. 2012). In any case, it is worthwhile to consider the following two points: first, age is often related to having to repeat a year of schooling, in which case an opportunity cost comes into play regarding the increased possibility of dropping out, as it takes longer to graduate; and secondly, some authors indicate that the process and reasons for dropping out are different between students with linear pathways (those coming from traditional secondary school) and student with non-linear pathways (young adults with more erratic educational pathways). Masdonati et al. (2010), for example, carried out a study on the motives behind Swiss dual vocational training dropout, and they suggest that the group with the linear pathway drops out for reasons related to making bad decisions regarding their chosen profession, while the group with the non-linear pathway drops out more for reasons related to problems with the work environment and poor working conditions.

Regarding immigrant status, it is generally accepted that immigrant students face a greater risk of dropping out than non-foreigners. This could be explained by the association of the status as an immigrant along with other family-related variables

and dropout, for example, having parents who are less capable in the language of the host country (Aguirre 1991), lower levels of studies and incomes (Colding 2006), etc. This could explain why immigrant parents are less likely to participate in school activities (Aguirre 1991) and less able to help their children with their homework (Elffers 2012; Fanoiki 2014). These studies also highlight that immigrant students could make up for some of these deficits via improved relationships with their peers and teachers and improved school experiences (Elffers 2012; Fanoiki 2014).

In this context, the research that we present herein analyzes the various dimensions of student engagement in those students taking their first year of intermediate level VET courses as well as how these dimensions relate to such sociodemographic characteristics as sex, age, and place of mother's birth. More concretely, the questions that we aim to answer in this text are as follows:

1. What are the behavioral and academic engagement characteristics of first-year intermediate level VET students? What differences exist based on sex, age, and place of mother's birth?
2. What are the affective engagement characteristics of first-year intermediate level VET students? What differences exist based on sex, age, and place of mother's birth?
3. What are the cognitive engagement characteristics of first-year intermediate level VET students? What differences exist based on sex, age, and place of mother's birth?

9.2 Context

Our research was carried out in the Balearic Islands, one of Spain's 17 autonomous communities. The main economic activity in the community is derived from tourism and related activities.

Economic and social development indicators paint a picture of a "rich" community with contrasting educational "poverty" and underline the significant weight of social inequalities that are present.

GDP per capita in the Balearic Islands (€24,870) is above the Spanish average (€23,979) and occupies the seventh position among all autonomous communities (INE 2017). 26.7% of the population is at risk of falling into poverty or social exclusion, according to the EU's AROPE indicator (the national average is 28.6%), and the community has one of the highest percentages of residents in extreme poverty. Specifically, it is the autonomous community with the third highest rate of extreme poverty, with 10.4% of the entire population being affected (Llano 2016).

The high level of seasonality inherent to tourism activities means that employment and unemployment rates in general, and particularly among young people, vary greatly throughout the year. For example, the employment rate for young people (16–24 years old) in the third quarter of 2017 was 41.72%, and the unemployment rate was 21.94% (Observatorio Injuve 2017a). In the first quarter of the same year,

these same rates were 19.96% and 41.77%, respectively (Observatorio Injuve 2017b). Compared to national averages, the greatest differences occur during the third quarter, though during all other quarters the Balearic Islands maintains the highest rates of employment and the lowest rates of unemployment among young people.

In the educational context, the lack of people with intermediate levels of education, a problem present across Spain, is especially intense in the Balearic Islands. Of note in this regard are the high rates of ESL and low rates of university graduation. According to the latest available data on ESL (Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport 2017), the Balearic Islands, with a rate of 26.8%, leads all communities and is positioned as the worst community in this metric in a country with an average dropout rate of 19%, which is among the highest in the EU (10.7% average across EU). According to the same source, the Balearic Islands is the community with the lowest proportion (32.1%) of young people (aged 25–29) who have completed advanced levels of education, while the Spanish average is 42.1% and the European average is 37.3%. These trends are well-established at the autonomous community level, as evidenced in the analysis of the evolution of these and other education-related indicators (Salvà-Mut 2017b).

The argument most commonly used to explain the sizable impact of having a population of young people with low levels of education, and more concretely the reasons behind ESL, is centered around the characteristics of the job market. Nevertheless, it is an argument that only considers part of a multidimensional problem: the pull effect stemming from a wide offering of jobs with low demands for qualifications (pull factors) rather than considering factors that push students towards leaving the system. That is to say, the factors that lead to this pull effect in turn lead to dropout. So-called push factors refer to the feelings that a significant portion of adolescents and young people have in which they see a lack of meaning in continuing their education, mainly because they are unhappy at school, unable to achieve good academic outcomes, or they think that what they are studying is not useful. All of this happens at a time of personal evolution characterized by the need for self-affirmation in the context of a society in which money and consumption are dominant actors (Salvà-Mut et al. 2014).

Studies carried out in the Balearic Islands based on the life history of young early school leavers clearly show that the impact of easily being able to find work translates to leaving study programs when poor academic results are obtained and also that those leaving do not always leave for work (Adame-Obrador and Salva-Mut 2010; Salvà-Mut et al. 2014). Members of this group often look for alternative training routes where they might find success, and they end up finding obstacles when it comes to being admitted to or staying in these alternatives due to the incompatibility of their characteristics and situations with the education and training system (Salvà-Mut et al. 2015).

In this context, and as we have previously mentioned, the contribution of secondary VET to increasing the amount of people with an intermediate level of education and reducing ESL rates is noteworthy (Cedefop 2016).

In the Balearic Islands, 7169 students enrolled in CFGM in the 2015–2016 school year.

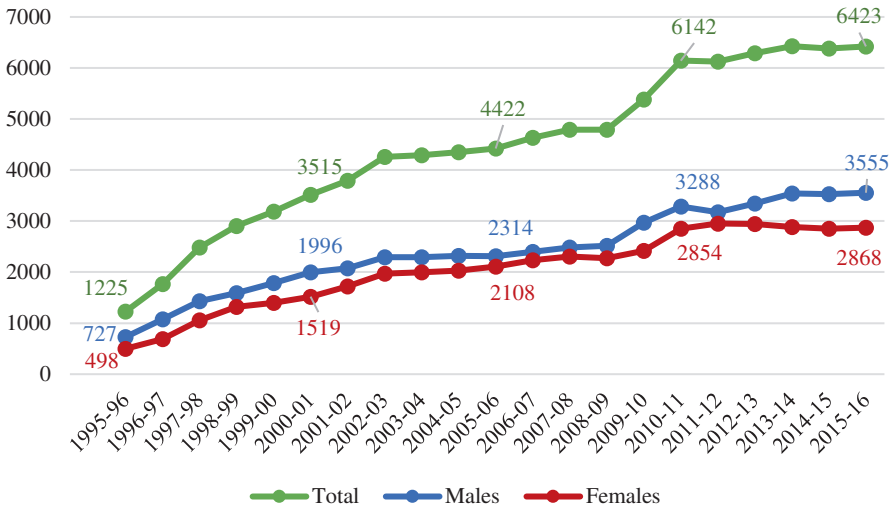

Fig. 9.1 Evolution of intermediate VET students in the Balearic Islands (face-to-face sessions) aggregate data and by sex. 1995–1996/2015–2016. (Source: The Office of Statistics and Studies of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport (2018). Authors' own creation)

As can be seen in Fig. 9.1, participation in CFGM programs has increased since the first year of such courses for which data is available (1995–1996) to the 2015–2016 school year, which is the year we use as a reference for this research. There is also a noticeable trend towards equal participation percentages by sex until 2005–2006, while since then the percentage of women's participation has decreased.

9.3 Methodology

This study of student engagement in first-year of CFGM represents a part of a longitudinal study that will collect information at three points of time. The data we are analyzing presently correspond to the first of these points, and the collection took place during the first term of the 2015–2016 school year.

There were a total of 1030 students between 15 and 24 years of age that participated in this study. They began their CFGM in Mallorca (Balearic Islands) during the 2015–2016 school year. The sample accurately represents the proportions of participation in the 16 vocational areas offered in Mallorca. In conducting the field work for this study, questionnaires were collected from 70 classes across 21 different education centers. The sample was made up of 643 males (62.4%) and 389 (37.6%) females; 796 had a Spanish-born mother (77.3%), and 225 had a foreign-born mother (21.8%). Regarding age (M = 18.17), the distribution was as follows: 449 were between 15 and 17 years old (41.7%), 412 were between 18 and 19 years old (40%),

and 189 were between 20 and 24 years old (18.3%). At the time that students completed the questionnaires, 2–3 months had passed since the school year began.

The study was approved by the University of the Balearic Islands' research ethics committee, and informed consent was given by the students or permission was granted by the family if students were minors.

The instrument used for collecting information was a questionnaire that was created based on a review of other instruments that focus on student engagement in order to prevent students from dropping out of their study programs. Contributions of note came from the Student Engagement Instrument (SEI), used in the Check & Connect project (Appleton 2012); the kit for assessing potential dropout (Trousse d'évaluation des décrocheurs potentiels-TEDP) that was originally employed in Quebec (Janosz et al. 2007); and a study on absenteeism in intermediate level VET programs in France (Lannegrand et al. 2012). Of similar utility were the contributions made by Tangaard (2013) in her study on the perceptions of Danish students on VET dropout, by Callan (2005) in his analysis of dropouts from various levels and types of VET programs in Australia, by Wang and Eccles (2012) on aspects of social support in academic engagement, and by Isik (2013) on students' perceptions of social support and loci of control regarding expectations of professional results. We also examined other instruments that had been adapted for the Spanish population, such as the social support scale from Landeta and Calvete (2002), the MSPSS (Zimet et al. 1988), and the Family Motivational Climate Questionnaire (FMC-Q; Alonso-Tapia et al. 2013).

In our analysis, we included in the questionnaire 34 items related to student engagement, organized around six variables and three dimensions. Each one of these items was to be responded to on a scale of agreement or disagreement in which 0 = "Strongly disagree," 1 = "Disagree," 2 = "Agree," and 3 = "Strongly agree."

The variables of student engagement were compared on three sociodemographic characteristics that have often been related to the risk of dropping out: (1) sex, male or female; (2) age, 15–17, 18–19, or 20–24 years old; and (3) the place of mother's birth, native or immigrant.

9.4 Results

The results we obtained allow us to understand the perceptions that students have regarding the main dimensions and variables that affect student engagement with their studies during the first few months of their CFGM programs. This early measure allowed for a preliminary diagnostic of the situation to be carried out, and for preventative measures and interventions based on evidence to be taken, thus promoting educational success.

Hereafter, we first analyze the data on behavioral and academic engagement via the variables of school belonging, student effort, and misbehavior. Secondly, we show the characteristics of affective engagement via students' perceptions of the rela-

tionships they have with the teaching staff, the school itself, and their peers. And thirdly, we focus on cognitive engagement via students' professional and educational expectations.

Statistical results are shown in Tables 9.1, 9.2, 9.3, 9.4, 9.5, and 9.6, and they include scores for each one of the items considered in the study as well as overall scores for each variable. The variables were also considered by sex, age, and place of mother's birth. To interpret this information, it is important to note that the values in the same row and subtable that do not have the same subindex (a, b, or c) are significantly different at $P < 0.05$ in the bilateral equality test for column averages. Boxes without a subindex were not included in the test, and tests assume equal variances.

9.4.1 Behavioral and Academic Engagement

Below are the main results of behavioral and academic engagement via the school belonging, student effort, and misbehavior variables.

9.4.1.1 School Belonging and Student Effort

School belonging and student effort were measured with the six items shown in Table 9.1. The average score obtained was 2.13. Lower scores can be seen for items referencing behaviors that imply a real dedication to one's studies. As percentages, 36.9% of students did not dedicate enough time outside of school to doing homework or studying, and 32.5% did not study or do homework daily or almost daily.

The highest scores corresponded to intentions rather than actual behavior: "When I do something at school, I want to do it well" and "When I do a school activity, I try to have a good understanding of what I am doing."

Comparing between the sexes shows significant overall differences that were present and significant in each and every item considered, with females always returning higher averages.

By age, greater school belonging and student effort were seen in the 20–24-year-old group, and significant differences were seen between this group and the two younger ones. The 18–19-year-old group showed the lowest average score.

Table 9.1 School belonging and student effort. Data by sex, age group, and place of mother's birth

	Sex			Mother's origin			Age group			
	Male	Female	Total	Native	Foreign	Total	15–17	18–19	20–24	Total
	Avg.	Avg.	Avg.	Avg.	Avg.	Avg.	Avg.	Avg.	Avg.	Avg.
1. I make an effort when doing school work	1.98[a]	2.28[b]	2.09	2.10[a]	2.09[a]	2.10	2.10[a,b]	2.02[a]	2.23[b]	2.09
2. I study and/or do homework almost every day	1.64[a]	2.10[b]	1.81	1.82[a]	1.78[a]	1.81	1.81[a,b]	1.73[a]	1.98[b]	1.81
3. When I do something at school, I want to do it well	2.47[a]	2.64[b]	2.54	2.56[a]	2.48[a]	2.54	2.53[a,b]	2.48[a]	2.66[b]	2.54
4. I dedicate enough time outside of school to doing homework and studying	1.62[a]	1.92[b]	1.73	1.75[a]	1.67[a]	1.74	1.77[a]	1.63[b]	1.87[a]	1.73
5. Before turning in school work or homework, I go over it to ensure that I did it correctly	2.10[a]	2.36[b]	2.20	2.18[a]	2.24[a]	2.20	2.19[a]	2.12[a]	2.38[b]	2.20
6. When I do a school activity, I try to have a good understanding of what I am doing	2.32[a]	2.41[b]	2.35	2.34[a]	2.36[a]	2.35	2.36[a,b]	2.29[a]	2.47[b]	2.35
School belonging and student effort	**2.03[a]**	**2.29[b]**	**2.13**	**2.13[a]**	**2.11[a]**	**2.13**	**2.13[a]**	**2.05[a]**	**2.27[b]**	**2.13**
Valid N	**627**	**382**	**1009**	**779**	**221**	**1000**	**423**	**401**	**185**	

9.4.1.2 Misbehavior

The average score for this variable was 0.42, and the item corresponding to absenteeism ("I have missed class(es) without an excuse") was clearly higher than this average, with 23.2% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing with this statement.

Table 9.2 Misbehavior at school. Data by sex, age group, and place of mother's birth

	Sex			Mother's origin			Age group			
	Male	Female	Total	Native	Foreign	Total	15–17	18–19	20–24	Total
	Avg.	Avg.	Avg.	Avg.	Avg.	Avg.	Avg.	Avg.	Avg.	Avg.
1. I am purposely a bother in class	.36[a]	.17[b]	0.29	.27[a]	.34[a]	0.28	.29[a]	.35[a]	.15[b]	0.29
2. I respond to the teacher in a manner that is inappropriate	.32[a]	.25[a]	0.30	.27[a]	.36[a]	0.29	.28[a]	.33[a]	.27[a]	0.30
3. I use "cheat sheets" or other methods for copying during exams	.39[a]	.24[b]	0.33	.33[a]	.31[a]	0.33	.34[a]	.39[a]	.19[b]	0.33
4. I have missed class(es) without an excuse	.83[a]	.70[b]	0.78	.75[a]	.87[a]	0.78	.59[a]	.97[b]	.79[b]	0.78
School misbehavior	**.48[a]**	**.34[b]**	**0.42**	**.40[a]**	**.47[a]**	**0.42**	**.38[a]**	**.51[b]**	**.34[a]**	**0.42**
Valid N	**637**	**386**	**1023**	**791**	**223**	**1014**	**427**	**410**	**186**	**1023**

Misbehavior varied based on sex and age group, with males and 18–19-year-olds showing higher scores for this variable.

In summary, the most relevant problems had to do with a lack of dedication to school work outside of the school and absenteeism. The situations that presented the greatest threat for disengagement could be seen in males and those who were 18–19 years old. The highest levels of engagement were seen in females and those aged 20–24 years old. No differences were observed for any of the variables or items based on the place of birth of the respondent's mother.

9.4.2 Affective Engagement

Approximating affective engagement was done using variables related to the teaching staff, the school/center, and peer relationships.

9.4.2.1 Relationships with the Teaching Staff and the School/Center

The average score for these variables was 1.99, lower than the other variables that made up affective engagement. Items with the highest scores—with very little difference between them—were "I feel safe at my school," "My teachers are available when I need them," "In general, the teaching staff at my school treats students appropriately," and "In general, my teachers are open and honest with me."

Table 9.3 Relationships with the teaching staff and the school. Data by sex, age group, and place of mother's birth

	Sex			Mother's origin			Age group			
	Male	Female	Total	Native	Foreign	Total	15–17	18–19	20–24	Total
	Avg.	Avg.	Avg.	Avg.	Avg.	Avg.	Avg.	Avg.	Avg.	Avg.
1. My teachers are available when I need them	2.11[a]	2.19[a]	2.14	2.17[a]	2.04[b]	2.14	2.18[a]	2.13[a]	2.08[a]	2.14
2. The teaching staff at my school listens to students	2.04[a]	2.11[a]	2.06	2.06[a]	2.07[a]	2.06	2.11[a]	2.03[a]	2.04[a]	2.06
3. The rules at the school where I study are fair	1.92[a]	1.89[a]	1.91	1.91[a]	1.90[a]	1.91	1.96[a]	1.91[a,b]	1.78[b]	1.91
4. The teaching staff at my school is interested in me as a person, not just as a student	1.66[a]	1.69[a]	1.67	1.69[a]	1.58[b]	1.67	1.67[a]	1.67[a]	1.69[a]	1.67
5. In general, my teachers are open and honest with me	2.09[a]	2.15[a]	2.11	2.11[a]	2.11[a]	2.11	2.07[a]	2.11[a]	2.20[a]	2.11
6. In general, the teaching staff at my school treats students appropriately	2.11[a]	2.16[a]	2.13	2.15[a]	2.08[a]	2.13	2.14[a]	2.10[a]	2.18[a]	2.13
7. I like talking with the teachers at my school	1.91[a]	1.90[a]	1.91	1.92[a]	1.85[a]	1.91	1.90[a]	1.90[a]	1.94[a]	1.91
8. I feel safe at my school	2.18[a]	2.13[a]	2.16	2.19[a]	2.07[b]	2.16	2.19[a]	2.16[a]	2.09[a]	2.16
9. At my school, most teachers care about students	1.86[a]	1.98[b]	1.91	1.92[a]	1.86[a]	1.91	1.98[a]	1.85[b]	1.85[a,b]	1.91
10. I like going to school	1.82[a]	2.06[b]	1.91	1.89[a]	2.02[b]	1.91	1.88[a]	1.87[a]	2.07[b]	1.91
Relationships with teachers and the school/ center	**1.98[a]**	**2.02[a]**	**1.99**	**2.00[a]**	**1.96[a]**	**1.99**	**2.01[a]**	**1.97[a]**	**2.00[a]**	**1.99**
Valid N	**609**	**372**	**981**	**758**	**214**	**972**	**410**	**389**	**182**	**981**

The lowest scores were seen for the item "The teaching staff at my school is interested in me as a person, not just as a student." As a percentage, 34.9% of students disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement.

Although an analysis of this variable by sex, age group, and place of mother's birth showed no significant differences, such differences were seen for some items. For example, females, those in the 20–24 age group, and those with a foreign mother liked going to school more. Also, females and those in the youngest group (15–17 years old) were more in agreement that the teaching staff cared about students.

Specifically considering the place of the mother's birth, sons and daughters of foreign mothers responded lower, on average, when considering the perceived availability of teachers when they were needed, the perceived interest of teachers in students as people and not just students, and feeling safe at school.

9.4.2.2 Relationships with Peers

The average score for this variable was 2.24, greater than the score for relationships with teachers and the school. The item with the highest average was "I have friends at my school," and the lowest was "My peers care about me."

Differences by sex for this variable were not significant, but significant differences were seen on the items "My peers help me when I need their help" and "I like communicating with my peers," where males returned scores higher than females.

Table 9.4 Relationships with peers. Data by sex, age group, and place of mother's birth

	Sex			Mother's origin			Age group			
	Male	Female	Total	Native	Foreign	Total	15–17	18–19	20–24	Total
	Avg.	Avg.	Avg.	Avg.	Avg.	Avg.	Avg.	Avg.	Avg.	Avg.
1. My peers care about me	2.00[a]	2.04[a]	2.02	2.06[a]	1.88[b]	2.02	2.08[a]	1.95[b]	2.01[a,b]	2.02
2. My peers help me when I need their help	2.28[a]	2.19[b]	2.25	2.26[a]	2.23[a]	2.25	2.27[a]	2.21[a]	2.28[a]	2.25
3. My peers respect my opinions	2.06[a]	2.03[a]	2.05	2.07[a]	1.99[a]	2.05	2.10[a]	2.01[a]	2.01[a]	2.05
4. I like communicating with my peers	2.47[a]	2.36[b]	2.43	2.44[a]	2.37[a]	2.43	2.49[a]	2.39[b]	2.37[a,b]	2.43
5. I have friends at my school	2.48[a]	2.43[a]	2.46	2.49[a]	2.39[b]	2.47	2.55[a]	2.44[b]	2.30[c]	2.46
Relationships with peers	**2.26[a]**	**2.22[a]**	**2.24**	**2.26[a]**	**2.17[b]**	**2.24**	**2.30[a]**	**2.20[b]**	**2.19[b]**	**2.24**
Valid N	**641**	**382**	**1023**	**791**	**223**	**1014**	**427**	**407**	**189**	**1023**

By age groups, the average was higher in the 15–17-year-old group, which differed significantly from the other two groups. Also, students with a mother born in Spain had a higher average score than those with a foreign-born mother.

To summarize, our analysis of affective engagement showed that the greatest differences can be seen in relationships with the teaching staff and the school. Of note was the perceived low levels of interest that professors had in students as people, beyond their role as students. Another notable element here is that students with foreign mothers perceived low levels of teacher availability and interest and low levels of school safety.

Peer engagement was observed to be higher in younger respondents, a desirable finding given the importance of peers at such ages and the increased chance that at least some of students' classroom peers have shared classes in previous years. Students with foreign-born mothers showed less peer engagement.

9.4.3 Cognitive Engagement

We considered cognitive engagement through the variables of professional expectations and educational expectations. In this context, in relation to the usefulness students give to VET studies towards their professional expectations, or their educational expectations.

9.4.3.1 Professional Expectations

The average score that we observed for this variable was 2.29. Items with the highest scores were "What I am learning in my classes is important for my future career" and "Studying will offer me many career opportunities in the future." The lowest scores made reference to expectations about professional activities derived from the studies: "Thanks to the studies I am taking, I will be able to have a job that will provide me with enough money to live" and "Thanks to the studies I am taking, I will be able to work doing what I want."

Significant differences for professional expectations were observed based on sex and age group: professional expectations were higher among women and also in the group of 20–24-year-olds.

Regarding having a Spanish- or foreign-born mother, the only significant difference was seen in the item "I like the profession for which I am receiving training," with higher scores being seen for respondents with mothers born in Spain.

Table 9.5 Professional expectations. Data by sex, age group, and place of mother's birth

	Sex			Mother's origin			Age group			
	Male	Female	Total	Native	Foreign	Total	15–17	18–19	20–24	Total
	Media	Media	Media	Media	Media	Media	Media	Media	Media	Media
1. What I am learning in my classes is important for my future career	2.45[a]	2.54[b]	2.48	2.47[a]	2.53[a]	2.48	2.46[a]	2.47[a]	2.57[a]	2.48
2. Studying will offer me many career opportunities in the future	2.41[a]	2.58[b]	2.47	2.46[a]	2.52[a]	2.48	2.49[a]	2.43[a]	2.53[a]	2.47
3. The studies that I am taking make me optimistic about my professional future	2.19[a]	2.35[b]	2.25	2.25[a]	2.26[a]	2.25	2.23[a]	2.20[a]	2.40[b]	2.25
4. Thanks to the studies that I am taking, I will be able to have a job that will provide me with enough money to live	2.10[a]	2.15[a]	2.12	2.12[a]	2.14[a]	2.12	2.18[a]	2.08[a]	2.07[a]	2.12
5. Thanks to the studies that I am taking, I will be able to work doing what I want	2.10[a]	2.18[a]	2.13	2.15[a]	2.10[a]	2.14	2.18[a]	2.06[a]	2.17[a]	2.13
6. My studies will help me be successful in my career	2.18[a]	2.25[a]	2.21	2.21[a]	2.21[a]	2.21	2.22[a,b]	2.14[a]	2.35[b]	2.21
7. I like the profession for which I am receiving training	2.35[a]	2.36[a]	2.35	2.37[a]	2.27[b]	2.35	2.39[a,b]	2.28[a]	2.44[b]	2.35
Professional expectations	**2.26[a]**	**2.35[b]**	**2.29**	**2.29[a]**	**2.29[a]**	**2.29**	**2.31[a,b]**	**2.24[a]**	**2.36[b]**	**2.29**
Valid N	**628**	**383**	**1011**	**784**	**218**	**1002**	**423**	**405**	**183**	**1011**

9.4.3.2 Educational Expectations

For the educational expectations variable, the average score was 2.28, with little difference between the scores for the two items included in the variable. In both cases, the percentages are notable: more than 80% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statements.

The variable was sensitive to sex, with females having higher educational expectations than males.

No significant differences were seen by age group or place of mother's birth.

To summarize, the perception that students had of the education that they were receiving was that it was important for their futures, but they were aware that it would be difficult for these studies to allow them work doing what they truly wanted to do or to give them jobs that would allow them to earn enough money to live. Seeing higher professional expectations in the 20–24-year-old group is in line with the fact that many in the group likely picked up studying again in order to improve their careers. Having higher professional and educational expectations among females is in line with the plethora of empirical evidence that says that females with lower levels of education are more penalized in the job market than males with similarly low levels of education.

Table 9.6 Educational expectations. Data by sex, age group, and place of mother's birth

	Sex			Mother's origin			Age group			
	Male	Female	Total	Native	Foreign	Total	15–17	18–19	20–24	Total
	Avg.	Avg.	Avg.	Avg.	Avg.	Avg.	Avg.	Avg.	Avg.	Avg.
1. I wish to continue my education once I finish with my current study program	2.20[a]	2.44[b]	2.29	2.31[a]	2.23[a]	2.30	2.32[a]	2.24[a]	2.36[a]	2.29
2. In order to work doing what I truly want to do, I will have to continue my studies/training after finishing this program	2.21[a]	2.35[b]	2.27	2.27[a]	2.25[a]	2.27	2.25[a]	2.25[a]	2.34[a]	2.27
Educational expectations	**2.21[a]**	**2.40[b]**	**2.28**	**2.29[a]**	**2.24[a]**	**2.28**	**2.28[a]**	**2.24[a]**	**2.35[a]**	**2.28**
Valid N	**631**	**385**	**1016**	**786**	**221**	**1007**	**423**	**406**	**187**	**1016**

9.5 Conclusions

Our research into student engagement at the beginning of CFGM programs has allowed us to provide an in-depth perspective on some of the key aspects for preventing dropout. We have defined the main characteristics of engagement in its behavioral/academic, affective, and cognitive dimensions, and we did so early in the study programs considered and thus enabled the possible use of intervention strategies to promote the educational success of students in intermediate level VET programs.

A first aspect to emphasize is in relation to the professional and educational expectations. Student perceptions are consistent with the dominant discourse on the importance of education and, more specifically, on vocational training for future employment opportunities. This speech, which in the Balearic Islands has strongly expanded since the 2008 crisis—which affected young population with low educational level—goes hand in hand with the increasing number of precarious jobs and an escalation of the before-mentioned poverty situations (Llano 2016). In this context, it is not surprising that the item with a lower average corresponds to the student's perception that the employment they will achieve, thanks to their studies, will allow them to have enough money to live.

In relation to professional expectations, the fact that between one and two out of ten young people consider that what they are studying in class is not important for their professional future should be studied in greater depth. The reasons can be very diverse (choice of studies by default, perception of inadequacy between the training and the demands of the labor market, among others), but, in any case, they can be of great interest to the prevention of dropout.

The results related to behavioral and academic engagement refer us to some of the characteristics of the students of CFGM, determined in large part by the place that this training occupies in the Spanish education system. Thus, despite the heterogeneity of this student body, a part of it has a school biography characterized by academic and behavioral difficulties. The fact of dedicating an insufficient time to school work outside of school (36.9% of students) and absenteeism (23.2% of students) is consistent with these school biography characteristics. The established relationships with the educational system during compulsory education still have an important weight in a professional form where the changes derived, among others, of a better articulation with the companies and the territories and of improvements in the selection and training of teachers, are still incipient.

The engagement variable with inferior results is related to the emotional link focused on relationships with the teaching staff and the school/center. Among the various items, the one that obtains a lower score is the one referred to the perception that "the teaching staff at my school are concerned in me as a person, not just as a student": 34.9% of students disagree with this statement. This finding is especially relevant as literature on the topic has provided evidence of the value that this consideration has on all students, and especially on those who face greater difficulties (Salvà-Mut et al. 2016a; Cerda-Navarro et al. 2017; Cedefop 2016; Pinya Medina et al. 2017).

The analysis we carried out based on the sociodemographic characteristics considered provides evidence of the following:

- Females show significantly higher levels of both behavioral/academic and cognitive engagement than males. This finding is in line with the general trend of seeing better academic results in females (OECD 2015; Bréau et al. 2016) and the greater influence that studying has on females' ability to find work and their living conditions, as evidenced in recent studies carried out in the Balearic Islands (Salvà-Mut et al. 2016b, 2017).
- The sons and daughters of immigrant mothers like going to school more, while those with a Spanish-born mother show significantly higher averages on items related to teacher availability and interest and to feeling safe at school. Children of native mothers also have better relationships with their peers. These results are in line with the findings of Elffers (2012) and Fanoiki (2014). According to them, the greater difficulty that immigrant parents have when it comes to helping their children with school work should lead to a greater dependence on peers and teachers as a possible compensation for these shortcomings, aspects on which, in our study, students with foreign-born mothers scored lower. One possible interpretation of this is that the "need to compensate" could influence, via lower average scores, the perception of relationships with peers and teachers. In any case, these findings should lead us to reflect on the educational practices and relationship dynamics in the classroom and school, as well as on the need to provide specific training to teachers in order to improve their understanding of students' cultural and linguistic diversity and how this diversity relates to dropout (Aguirre 1991; Fanoiki 2014).
- Regarding age, the youngest students (15–17 years old) have significantly higher average scores than other groups when considering relationships with peers. The oldest group (20–24 years old) has the greatest professional aspirations and a greater level of school commitment and student effort. The middle group (18–19 years old) has the highest levels of misbehavior and lowest levels of professional expectations. These results are consistent with the professional, personal, and school experiences related to each age group. 20–24 year olds have likely started studying again because they believe that it will provide them with better career opportunities; thus, their willingness and personal effort to undertake studying anew leads them to invest more in themselves, in turn leading to higher levels of commitment and effort. Taking the first year of a CFGM at 18–19 years old implies, in most cases, that students had to repeat at least 1 year of schooling or that they dropped out previously. This could explain the low levels of professional expectations and high levels of misbehavior in this group.

These results contribute to laying the foundations for the design of early strategies of prevention of dropout in CFGM that, as indicated, affects a very high percentage (about 50%) of the students who study this type of training, providing a global vision from the student engagement perspective.

The longitudinal and qualitative approximation to the pathways of the students, currently in its realization phase, will allow to deepen in the interrelations between

the diverse components of student engagement and in the most critical aspects of it, as well as its process dimension.

Improvements should be made to educational practices and organization that focus on teaching/learning methods and on the relationships between students and teachers (Pinya Medina et al. 2017). On the other hand, there should be a focus on determining which students are at risk of dropping out and specific action plans should be created that address this group (Cerda-Navarro et al. 2017).

At the moment we are working on the elaboration of two guides about preventing early VET leaving, aimed, respectively, to teachers and to schools and training institutions. We have also created a mixt stable group constituted by our research group and VET teachers and trainers, with the goal of facilitating the mutual transmission of knowledge and of designing joined training activities and exchanging good practices.

The impact of all these actions in the promotion of educational success in intermediate level VET is closely related to broader educational, but also economic and social policies. In this sense, it is very important that they become part of specific action plans at both territorial and sectoral levels in the context of an integrated vocational training system, paying special attention to the articulation of training systems that cover personal evolution, social and economic developments in territories, and the contribution of diverse actors.

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Chapter 10
Continuing Training in the Autonomous Region of Galicia: Perspectives and New Challenges

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Abstract This chapter focuses on the state of continuing vocational training in Spain, specifically, in one of its regions: the autonomous region of Galicia. To discuss this, we will take as reference a study conducted prior to 2016, whose main objective was to study the development of continuing training in medium and large companies in the Galician region. Therefore, we will make a general comparison between the results obtained in this study and other data of vital importance for this issue, such as demographic and labour market data in Galicia, or the results obtained in other studies, reports and research on the continuing training development in the Galician companies (formative contents, professional levels with more or less training, highlighted skills in continuing training, etc.). In this way, we think it will be easier to understand the current situation of the Galician labour market and the training which it is developing within it.

Keywords Spain · Autonomous region of Galicia · Vocational training for employment · Labour market · Business fabric · Continuing training · Companies · Workers

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10.1 Introduction

A study was published in 2016 about the *continuing vocational education and training* (CVET) reality in medium and large companies in Galicia (Barreira Cerqueiras 2015), a document largely motivated by the scarce attention paid from the academic point of view to this type of training in the Galician territory. This kind of training action—aimed at the employed population—is included as part of the Spanish *vocational training for employment* (in Spanish, *Formación para el Empleo, FPE*).

Since work on this study began, certain phenomena have been verified and others discarded, but all of them have, in essence, enabled us to characterize the training that is being provided to employed workers in the companies of the Galician territory. Therefore, in this chapter we will try to take a closer look at the results of the proposed research, comparing it with other studies and reports, highlighting the training specificities of medium and large companies in Galicia, from the perspectives of continuous training to the characterization of the profile of the trained worker (*Fundación Tripartita para la Formación y el Empleo* (hereinafter, FTFE 2014a; Barreira Cerqueiras 2015).

Finally, we will present a series of fundamental conclusions in relation to the new challenges which still have to be faced in the future regarding Galicia's socio-economic evolution and its relations with the training of employed workers in the autonomous region.

In order to carry through this process, we have followed the *documentary analysis method*—digital, printed or statistics documents and sources—acquiring an *intensive* and *contextualized* character (López Noguero 2002). It was *intensive* because a study of concrete documentation has been proposed related to a topic of research interest; it was *contextualized* because the documentary analysis has been carried out in the context in which they are located, allowing an interpretation of social, economic, political, labour and demographic facts and factors. More specifically, we contemplate the use of *content analysis* (Bardin 2002), a private technique of documentary analysis. In this technique, starting from some *themes* or categories of interest previously established by researchers, a concretion of associated *context units* and complementation is made—legislation, documentation and statistics—for a better explanation of the treated phenomenon.

In our case, the themes or categories which we use as a starting point were those most outstanding results, selected from the baseline study. These results allow us to clearly characterize CVET in Galicia. In the researchers' view, it was necessary to provide a series of data on the labour and productive context of Galicia using different socio-economic, formative and statistical researches, in order to obtain a better and more delimited overview of the status of the issue. Therefore, these new data became useful "context units".

We must not forget that CVET undoubtedly relates to all these aspects and, in a particular way, to the territories in which it develops. As we will see in this chapter, their joint treatment will allow us to identify a series of phenomena which change the continuous professional training and its reality in the Galician region (see the

data offered in Chap. 3 on the CVET situation in Spain): loss of young labour, level of academic education of the active population or the predominance of small- and medium-sized companies in our territory, among others.

10.2 Socio-economic and Productive Reality in the Autonomous Region of Galicia: A Contextualizing Approach

Following the words of González Laxe (2016, p. 55), *Galicia is a unique economy characterized by very distinctive features and peculiarities compared to other Spanish autonomous regions*. Therefore, any research must begin by analysing its socio-demographic and productive characteristics in order to understand the economic development of this territory. These particularities will enable us to understand the behaviour of the labour market in this autonomous community regarding its figures.

Thus, according to data from the National Statistics Institute (in Spanish, *Instituto Nacional de Estadística*, *INE*), in 2016 Galicia was populated by 2,718,525 inhabitants: 51.82% were women and 48.18% were men (INE 2017a). This represents 5.84% of the total population of Spain. Compared to the previous year (2015), in 2016 Galicia lost 13,822 inhabitants and 30,170 inhabitants if we match this with the data of 2014. This is a consequence of a phenomenon known as *population decline*, very recurrent in Galicia—and also in the rest of Spain, although to a lesser extent—which has become more visible in recent years. According to Aldrey et al. (2013), Galicia's population has grown by 34.9% over the last century, a moderate evolution, especially when compared to the increase of 149.7% of Spain's population for the same period. However, González Laxe (2016) confirms a population decrease of 75,000 inhabitants for Galicia over the period 1985–2015, as opposed to an eight million population increase in Spain.

Among the reasons that may explain the decline in Galicia's population, we must mention population movements, mainly migratory, to the rest of Spain and abroad, which from 2009 to the present have affected 237,356 people (IGE 2017a). In turn, this has caused other indirect phenomena, such as the fast reduction of the birth rate. While in 2010 the birth rate was 7.95%, in 2016 it decreased to 7.03%. These figures are widely surpassed by the death rate for both previously mentioned years: 10.73% in 2010 and 11.71% in 2016. In relation to this, we could mention the visible aging of the population as another influencing phenomenon in the Galician labour market. In 1985 the population under 20 years of age (29.40%) doubled the population over 65 years (14.42%). However, since 1995 this trend has been reversed and nowadays young population represents just 15.82% of the total. Meanwhile, the group of people over 65 almost doubled in relation to 1985, being 24.31% of the current population.

Looking more deeply into the demographic evolution, it has been dissimilar in the four provinces that make up the Autonomous Community of Galicia. The western provinces, A Coruña and Pontevedra, are much more populated than the eastern ones, Lugo and Ourense, as a consequence of rural migration towards urban entities. This fast urbanization process that began in the 1990s progressively depopulates the easternmost territory of Galicia, concentrating on the westernmost part, currently 76.04% of the total population (IGE 2017b).

The abovementioned reasons explain why Galicia is facing a severe case of aging population—the oldest population in Spain—which generates certain trends in terms of public policies. For example, an increase in the economic resources linked to health services and attention to dependency (De Miguel et al. 2011) or a reduction in educational spending directed to the young population. According to several authors (Hernández 2011; Aldrey et al. 2013), Galicia will continue to lose population as a whole, especially in the group of young people—between 16 and 64 years—and decreasing at a faster pace in the eastern provinces. This will undoubtedly affect the economic reality of our territory, traditionally defined by agriculture and fishing (primary sector).

As well, we may mention other factors which have dramatically transformed Galicia's economy since the 1980s: the entry of Spain into the *European Economic Community* (hereinafter, EEC)—and, consequently, the entry into a much more globalized and liberalized economy—expansion and influence of the *Information and Communication Technologies* (hereinafter, ICT); entrance of foreign capital investments in the region; etc. In fact, some important economic activities of the territory have been affected over the last years (Guisán 2017b) by these situations. For instance, the business fabric of the coastal strip, from north to south, have been largely disintegrated, the losses of production and employment being especially significant in the naval, maritime and agriculture sectors. According to Alonso (2011), 20 of the 50 large companies in Galicia (40%) converge in these last two sectors during the 1960s, but these figures had been drastically reduced by the beginning of the 1990s, with only 9 firms in those fields (18%). Basically, there was an economic transformation with a slow but significant transfer from primary assets to industry and services (Aldrey et al. 2013, p. 11), especially in the western half of Galicia. However, other productive activities have emerged as well with a relative momentum in the territory: textile sector, food industry, fish farming industry, canning industry, chemical and pharmaceutical industry or wood industry associated to construction, among others (Alonso 2011; Aldrey et al. 2013; Guisán 2017b)[1].

In addition, the tourism sector has been much developed in Galicia: on one hand, *cultural tourism*, by virtue of the *Camino de Santiago* which since the 1990s has crucially contributed to the increase in the *Gross Domestic Product* (hereinafter, GDP) of the community and the number of tourists that visit Galicia's capital, and, on the other hand, *thermal tourism*, thanks to the thermal villas, facilities and

[1] As examples we can highlight some companies that still continue their activity in these sectors, for example, the INDITEX group in the textile sector; Vegalsa or Froiz in the food industry; or the COREN cooperative in the agriculture sector.

infra-structures created around them. This has provided an economic boost to rural territories while also enabling a redirection of investments towards activities that are complementary to thermal tourism: trade and hospitality, cosmetic therapies or health services, for example.

With the onset of the economic crisis in 2007, real income per capita collapsed in the primary, secondary and construction sectors, until approximately 2013. Only the tertiary sector—services—remained in a more or less good condition, though not without certain difficulties (Guisán 2017a) since the decline in employment in all sectors have become evident. At present, it seems that the hospitality industry constitutes the fundamental productive activity of Galicia's labour market, followed closely by public employment, which is generating not only direct jobs in the public administration but also in the recruitment processes in the education sector and private education—academies and training centres, among others (Lemos 2017).

Broadly speaking, productivity and competitiveness in Galicia are characterized by being comparatively small, since both the recession experienced over the last years and the phenomenon of the relocation of companies have seriously affected the labour market reality. *Offshoring* has been a dominant phenomenon in Galicia. For example, in 2015 a total of 154 companies moved their headquarters out of Galicia, with only 135 establishing themselves in the region. This led to a negative balance of 19 delocalized companies (Rodríguez 2016). As well as that, in 2016, 100 companies entered Galicia and 115 left, which again indicates a negative balance of 15 companies (Informa D&B 2017, p. 3). Therefore, Galicia is one of the autonomous regions with the *lowest level of attraction for companies*[2] primarily due to Galicia's peculiar orography—laden with natural barriers that protect but at the same time isolate many villages—a situation that requires high public investments on infrastructures of communication, transport and exchange of goods (Consellería de Economía y Industria 2014), many of which are still pending. Furthermore, Galicia receives very little foreign capital: *less than 1% of the Spanish total and usually coming from nearby European countries [...] and has a small number of headquarters of large transnational companies* (González Laxe 2016, p. 57). This contrasts with the several attempts to further open the Galician economy to the world, *with exports highly concentrated on a few sectors and geographically polarized* (González Laxe 2016, p. 57). However, the number of exporting companies is still low and with reduced technological value (ARDÁN 2016). In fact, innovation is promoted mainly by public institutions—universities essentially—and, to a lesser extent, by private entities (Consellería de Economía y Industria 2014). The Galician industrial and *Research and Development* (hereinafter, R&D) sectors need a strong economic boost, especially to develop productive sectors, improve employment quality or reduce the current migratory balances of the highly qualified workforce (Guisán 2017a).

[2] Other Spanish regions also present negative balances. These are the cases of Catalonia, with a negative balance of 279 companies less; Navarra with 73 less; and even the Basque Country with a loss of 63 firms (Informa D&B 2017, p. 4).

In short, Galicia must promote a productive system focused on the perspective of *sustainable human development* based on *practices of social responsibility, decent working conditions, empowerment of women, investment in research and development, protection of the environment and transparency and accountability* (Remacha 2017, p. 6).

10.2.1 Current Situation of the Labour Market in Galicia

Considering the socio-demographic data presented so far, it is not surprising that the growth of the active population has stagnated, which has had negative consequences for the labour market in Galicia: the loss of jobs and the absence of generational change in the labour market (Pérez 2017). In fact, according to De Miguel et al. (2011), the decline in the active population in Galicia is a socio-economic constant to consider in the different analyses. The percentage of Spain's active population exceeds that of Galicia by 6 (Gonzalez Laxe 2016), something that did not happen at the beginning of the 1990s, when the trend was the opposite. At the same time, it should be noted that during 2016 the number of unemployed workers was reduced by 18,500 people, but figures show that the occupation only increased by 17,000 people (Pérez 2017). Workers between 16 and 34 years of age represent only a quarter of the total Galician population, being exceeded by 20% of active workers over 50 years. Moreover, the level of unemployment has been decreasing progressively since 2013, with a rate of 22% in that year, and dropping to 17.2% in 2016 (IGE 2017c).

According to the educational level of workers, the highest percentages of unemployment in 2016 belong to those in the illiteracy group (52.3%), followed by those workers (IGE 2017d) whose training has been limited to secondary education—according to the CNED-14 (INE 2014; IGE 2017d), this includes Compulsory Secondary Education, Baccalaureate and intermediate Vocational Training (VET)—with 37.3%. In third place (32.8%) we find the unemployed with primary education and, finally, the unemployed with higher education—which includes the higher degree of VET and university studies—with an unemployment rate of 12.1%.

Analysing the socio-economic reality from the perspective of the different productive sectors—primary, secondary, construction, services or *without activity*—we observe that in 2016 the service sector stands out as the economic category with the highest unemployment rate, *since almost three out of every four unemployed people in Galicia came from this sector (64.31%), followed by the industrial [...] sector, with 12.38% of the total, a percentage very similar to that of the construction field (11.35%)* (Instituto Galego das Cualificacións 2017, p.32). Keeping this in mind, it must be noted that the primary sector includes less unemployed people with a rate of 4.03%, joined to 7.93% of unemployed workers being located in the *no activity* category. However, the year-on-year level (2013–2016) of unemployment has been declining in a generalized manner, although to different degrees depending on the economic sector we take into account. Additionally, the occupation of those workers whose training has been limited to secondary education stands at 53.43%, followed by the group of workers with higher education (41.87%). The remaining levels of

training include 0.08% of employment for people without education and 4.52% for those with primary education (IGE 2017e).

In terms of data by economic sectors, the service sector stands out above the rest, with an occupancy level of 70.68%. Therefore, it must be assumed that those sectors that employ many workers are more likely to also have a higher amount of unemployed people. The other sectors accumulate the remaining percentage of occupation: 29.32% (Instituto Galego das Cualificacións 2017).

10.2.2 Some Particularities of the Business Fabric in the Autonomous Region of Galicia

In Spain, the energy and industrial sectors accumulate most of the large and medium-sized companies. In this sense, the energy sector has a great number of large companies (1.7%), followed by the manufacturing industry, the extractive industry and the financial intermediation sector (0.4%). The microenterprise, meanwhile, is relegated to sectors of financial intermediation, real estate or business services—with a higher average than the rest of sectors, hospitality and commerce or vehicle repair. Regarding the education sector, we must highlight the existence of small and medium-sized companies (Cámaras de Comercio 2005, p. 24).

On the other hand, the Galician business reality is mainly made up of companies without salaried employees (54%), while microenterprises are the majority among those that have employees (42.36%). Meanwhile, medium and large companies reach a figure of 1105, with two firms standing out among them due to the size of their workforces: one in the textile sector and the other in the automotive industry (ARDÁN 2016). Thus, the tertiary sector includes the most companies, 78.69% of the total to be precise. This sector includes most of the medium and large companies (653), as we are talking about 1105 companies in total. The industrial sector is not a reference category in Galicia, since it only includes 6.24% of the total number of firms that operate in our region, being a sector with a majority of microenterprises. The construction sector (15.07%) is characterized by a high presence of companies *without employees*, and combined with the microenterprises, it includes almost all the firms present in this sector −28,973—with a total number of 29,777 companies operating in the field of construction in Galicia.

10.3 Continuing Vocational Training in a Galician Context: Defining Factors of Business Practice

We will now try to contextualize the reality of continuous training in the autonomous region of Galicia. It would be convenient to remember that in another chapter, we address the different agents responsible for providing CVET in Spain. Besides

the public administrations or universities, there should also be mentioned private training agencies or companies of different sectors. Our attention focuses on the latter, that is, on the training actions which are carried out by business organizations in the region, using as reference a study carried out on Galicia (Barreira Cerqueiras 2015) and linking it to other reports and statistical data.

10.3.1 Key Matters Regarding the Operation of the Model of Continuing Training in Galicia

The training situation of Galician companies as a whole does not differ too much from that of the rest of Spain, except for the size of the firms, which is determined by the predominance of the microenterprises in Galicia. In this way, while the majority of medium and large companies in Galicia carry out training for their employees, microenterprises and small businesses are well below their percentages (FTFE 2014b; *Fundación Estatal para la Formación y el Empleo* (hereinafter FUNDAE), 2017e). Since 2006 in Spain we have been talking about training for employment (FPE): a labour and training agreement which has increased the role of the autonomous regions in their contribution to the new model of continuing training in the last years, specifically since 2013, with more collaboration in the planning and evaluation process of the training activities in the multi-year scenario (Art. 2, Royal Decree 694/2017). In this way, the current regulations consider CVET as one of the training initiatives of the FPE system (Art. 8.1, Law 30/2015): the training programmed by companies for their employees, to enable them to improve their skills and professional qualifications and to even acquire new ones (Art. 3, Royal Decree 694/2017).

Considering the data provided by the FUNDAE (2017a) there have been oscillations in the total number of companies that have carried out continuous training of their workers. More specifically, there is a strong upturn in 2011, both at Spanish and Galician levels. Of the total number of registered companies, 11.6% of Spanish companies and 15.82% of Galician companies carried out training in 2010. In 2012 those percentages stood at 14.36% and 19.46%, respectively (FUNDAE 2017a; INE 2017b). However, in 2014 a drastic decline began at national and regional levels, reaching the current percentages of 11.36% and 13.64% in relation to companies that develop continuing education in Spain and Galicia respectively. These figures and the training fluctuations coincide to a large extent with a study carried out in Galicia (Barreira Cerqueiras 2015), which shows that 34% of participating companies developed training actions in 2012 and 50.6% did so in 2013.

It should be remembered that in our country, there is not a training tradition within the Spanish business community, in comparison with other European Countries. This is the principal reason public and private funding coexist in the Spanish continuous training model, but with a greater role of the public sector, that is, the Labour Authorities provide funds for training. Those efforts—directed to

incentivize training in companies—translate into several procedures that companies can take advantage of to directly finance their training actions and obtain important tax benefits. Public funds earmarked for CVET are obtained from the VET tax—contributed by workers and companies—and are completed with the contributions of the SEPE's (in Spanish, *Servicio Público de Empleo Estatal)* funds, the funds allocated by each Autonomous Community or other entities and by funds from European organizations such as the European Social Fund. The most characteristic and widespread way of public funding of the CVET in Spain—and therefore in Galicia—is the *bonus training* (Barreira Cerqueiras 2015). It is received by companies in their Social Security contributions for having developed training actions for their employees. Also, this bonus helps the development of the *Individual Training Leave* (ITL).

10.3.2 Specific Contributions and Information on Continuing Training in Galician Companies

Medium and large companies in Galicia have provided very different answers regarding the content of continuous training actions for 2013, according to the FPE system. Their real training needs were related to their economic sector and specific activity, as would be expected. In this way, 73.6% of these companies offered specific data on the subject of the actions: languages, information technology, safety, prevention and occupational health.

On the other hand, in 2013 the majority of participants that made use of the *bonus training* in Galicia were linked to a few professional families: Safety and Environment (47,521 workers trained), Administration and Management (32,165) and Commerce and Marketing (with 18,416 employees trained) (FUNDAE 2017b). In contrast, there are training actions in which very few participants take part: Glass and Ceramics (26 people) and Arts and Crafts (21 people). In 2016, once again, we find the same professional families with the highest number of participants: Safety and Environment (46,709), Administration and Management (40,382) and Commerce and Marketing (20,005). Glass and Ceramics only contributed with three participants and Image and Sound with 64.

In that way, we have verified that *individual training leaves* (ITLs) are not a highly developed training modality among Galician companies. In fact, there are very low percentages of ITL applications by workers at the medium and large companies. Specifically, since 2010 only 15.4% of workers (Barreira Cerqueiras 2015) had requested this type of initiative, while a large majority—84.6% of them—provided a negative answer regarding it. Within that small affirmative percentage, 57.1% of workers indicates that ITLs were granted in 2012, 7.2% indicates 2013 and 28.5% mentions several years and, consequently, several ITLs having been granted in their company. On the other hand, 7.2% of companies indicate that they have granted this type of initiative, but they do not know the specific annual conces-

sion period. If we focus our attention on statistical data for Galicia in relation to this type of initiative (FUNDAE 2017c), the number of ITLs increased by 2013 (1895 ITLs being granted), especially if we take as reference only the 78 individual training leaves requested in 2010. However, the trend has been reversed over the last 3 years, as a reduction in the number of ITLs being requested, and consequently granted, has been noted. At present—2016—we can say that 270 ITLs have been granted so far.

Regarding the beneficiaries of continuous training actions according to their professional level within the medium and large Galician companies (Barreira Cerqueiras 2015), we can highlight three main groups: firstly, the technical staff with 64.3%; secondly, 21.4% of middle managers; and finally, 14.3% of workers. These data can be examined comparatively with the numbers of beneficiaries of any of these ITLs according to their educational level. Most of the employees who benefit from this type of initiative have secondary studies, followed by those who only achieved primary certifications—the latter standing out as the main beneficiaries of ITLs in 2012 and 2013 (FUNDAE 2017d).

Apart from that, the idea that continuous training contributes to improving employees' professional skills prevails in 73.7% of Galician firms (Barreira Cerqueiras 2015). As well as that, it is also possible to identify a low percentage of firms —12.7%—which understand training as an organization's field of activity or specific area. This indicates that, in general, surveyed companies attach more importance to other organizational departments than to the training area in their business organization chart. Indeed, only 6.8% of the firms of our research have a specific *Training Department*, while 67% of them manage their training actions through a *Human Resources Department*. If we talk about other figures or other departments, only a very low percentage of firms, 4.1%, indicated that training is managed by the *General Management*, while 7.6% of companies indicated the management of training is the responsibility of a single employee. This employee devotes part of this time to this task—understanding that he performs other functions and even holds another position within the company. Likewise, 11.9% of firms entrust the implementation of training functions to other departments in their organization chart—we must therefore assume that they do so in the absence of a specific department.

On the other hand, training is a task planned in Galician business organizations, usually on an annual basis and considering *the training needs as its essential element* (Barreira Cerqueiras 2015, p. 363). In addition, it is usual to include training actions for the different levels of professional categories inside the company—indicated by 46.6% of the companies—depending on the training needs of each group. *Operators and technical staff are the groups trained most often, followed by middle managers and administrative staff* (Barreira Cerqueiras 2015, p. 364). This coincides with the conclusions reached by the Adecco study (2014) at state level. The managers of the companies, however, would occupy the last place as a recipient group of training actions.

The academic achievements of the trained staff would be situated in post-compulsory secondary education—Baccalaureate or Vocational Training—fol-

lowed by those groups which have only completed the compulsory education, an aspect that has remained constant over the last 3 years (FUNDAE 2017e).

If we focus on the training methodology, there are several aspects to be addressed. Firstly, the course—both theoretical and practical—is the most common type of training action in the Galician context when a firm trains their workers, especially in relation to the two most trained professional groups: *operators and technical staff* (Barreira Cerqueiras 2015). Secondly, face-to-face training is still the most resorted to action of training by companies, although its duration has been reduced over time in favour of a mixed method. For most companies we can establish that between 3 and 12 h is the average duration of the training actions aimed at all professional levels. However, it must also be highlighted that training actions that last between 13 and 30 h take place both during and after working hours (mixed schedule). This situation is common for most professional groups, except for operators whose training usually takes place within their daily working schedule (Barreira Cerqueiras 2015, p. 374).

It should also be noted that the evaluation of training is one of the unavoidable phases in the planning of training and in the training process. However, it is a complex and difficult phase for companies. Only 70.9% of business organizations admit to carrying out some type of evaluation, compared with 28.2% which affirms that it does not carry out any kind of evaluation at all—while 0.9% of firms do not know whether or not an evaluation process is being carried out. The assessment processes conducted by 70.9% of firms are mainly focused on training actions (training courses), although *the practice of training content is also taken into account, which has a great implication when evaluating the new professional skills acquired by employees*. On the negative side, we must mention that very little attention is devoted to ensuring that these training actions have responded to the employees' training needs, especially if we remember that that was the basic pillar of the Training Plan. Furthermore, we must mention the low consideration given to the long-term impact of training on the company and its employees.

The questionnaire is the main assessment instrument; and participating students are the main evaluating agent of training actions. Although their implication is inevitable in the assessments, companies do not explicitly mention trainers and their Human Resources Department as evaluating agents taking part in the whole process. Mostly, the evaluation process is carried out at the end of the training actions, understanding it as a terminal phase of the process. As we remarked earlier, the impact of training initiatives on the organization is not usually taken into account. A second evaluation should be conducted after a while in order to ascertain whether training has brought actual qualitative and quantitative improvement for the organization and its workers.

To conclude, it seems necessary to provide data to compare Galicia's training reality in relation to Spain's. Over the last 3 years, the rate of training in the region has increased when compared with that of Spain, being nowadays 5.8 points above—28.5% and 22.7%, respectively. This is explained by an increase in the participation of Galician microenterprises in training initiatives (FUNDAE 2017e).

On the other hand, women continue to be the professional group that receives the least attention in Galician companies when it comes to training, especially when compared with national data (FTFE 2014b). The primary sector presents the lowest percentages of companies which provide training—therefore having very few participants. This situation has been very common both at national and regional level for some years. If we analyse national data for 2016 (FUNDAE 2017f), of all companies that provide training in Spain, only 3.94% operate in the agricultural sector, compared to 34.32% in the service sector—without considering the commercial and hospitality sectors. Galicia's percentages are not very different, because as it happens in the rest of Spain, 30.3% of the Galician companies involved in training activities operate in the service sector, while 4.64% of them belong to the field of agriculture. However, we can highlight the *greater relative weight of Galicia's industrial sector: 26% of the participants compared to 18.6% in Spain* (FUNDAE 2016, p. 34), with online training being a modality for which Galician figures are superior to those of the country, with 23.7% of the participants compared to 21.5% in the rest of Spain.

10.4 Conclusions and New Challenges Regarding the Productive System and Training of Workers

We consider the CVET as a key aspect not just in the FPE but also in improvement of the labour market in Spain. The current situation indicates several changes towards a new concept of employment, that is, precarious, dislocated and temporary (Standing 2011) and the CVET contributes to promote employees' adaptability to the social changes that influence business productivity nowadays. One of these social changes in Galicia has been the population transformations. Galicia's socioeconomic data clearly indicate the need of population growth that can lead to employment recovery, as well as to reach activity levels similar to those prior to the beginning of the crisis in 2007. Another factor that is also necessary to address is the problem of population aging, as well as the depopulation of certain areas of Galicia, and the undesirable consequences of both phenomena for Galicia's economy.

Different groups—social associations, politicians, work organizations, etc.—have stated the need to reactivate the primary sector in our autonomous community, mainly in the eastern half of Galicia (Lugo and Ourense), through the improvement and reconversion of the *Common Agricultural Policy*. Measures must focus on the improvement of economic aid to the sector, programs of reorganization and territorial exploitation, structural support of other productive sectors, etc. Regarding the demographic decline and the aging of the population, De Miguel et al. (2011) advocate the development of public policies aimed at elderly people. Actions should be focused on more and better health and care services. These initiatives would improve the quality of life of senior citizens, while also promoting the creation of jobs related to health care services.

On the other hand, it is necessary to design a strategic modernization and business adaptation plan to improve Galicia's competitiveness and productivity. All political and economic entities of the region should try their best in relation to several targets: to redirect business dynamics and promote more endogenous development associated with Galicia's potential and existing resources—currently underutilized or abandoned. In this line, we agree with Guisán's proposals (2017a), who mentions the need of an economic policy that promotes autochthonous industry and increases investment in R&D. There are two simple reasons to justify these suggestions: the increase of university graduates in the region and the inability of companies and institutions to absorb qualified personnel, who must leave Galicia in search of better professional opportunities.

These necessary transformations, in light of Galicia's socio-economic situation, present new implications and challenges for Spanish training policies. In this regard, the phenomenon of *training delimitation* is easily observed in the training of employees. This happens more often in a business context marked by size, in other words, when large companies act as trainers. Besides this, it is convenient to remember that in Spain—and Galicia—the training actions are associated or motivated by tax exemptions and the investment of the average Spanish company in training is usually highly conditioned by public funding policies on training and by their size (Barreira Cerqueiras 2015).

Therefore, it is necessary to increase the access of microenterprises and small businesses to training programs to improve the training being offered and to develop policies aimed at their specific needs. Although Spanish policies are encouraging CVET in SMEs—that make up the majority of the Spanish labour market—large companies are still the ones that care more about the training of their employees, also because they have greater access to the public funding system. In addition, the recent modifications introduced in the FPE system and the continuous promulgation of legislative dispositions prevent the consolidation of the subsystem and the different procedures. This hampers the participation and the establishment of positive dynamics for the continuous training. Likewise, it is necessary to take into account the need to adapt the training being offered to the characteristics of the working population, bearing in mind that it is especially needed by workers of advanced age, as they usually have specific training needs.

On the other hand, after the 2015 FPE system, the ever-increasing role played by the central administration in the management of the FPE model—at the expense of workers' organizations—deteriorates the CVET's leitmotiv. Currently, the presence of trade unions and employers in the decision-making process is reduced, something that can only be seen as a step back in the management and planning of continuing training, mainly because they know what happens in companies in relation to training and management needs. Therefore, these groups should enjoy more opportunities of opinion and control in the current FPE model.

In a similar way, and despite the fact that the role of Spain's autonomous regions has been greatly increased due to the remodelling of the FPE model, the truth is that there are still issues to be solved. There is a tremendous heterogeneity in Spain as a whole and between autonomies regarding their business fabrics, something that

definitely affects continuing training. It is also necessary to analyse the regional reality to plan and regulate Vocational Training, whose aim is to contribute to the sustainable human development of each local territory (Rego-Agraso 2013).

It would also be interesting to achieve a greater decentralization of continuing training programs in favour of the autonomous governments and the most outstanding regional productive sectors. Therefore, it would be necessary to analyse the business fabric of each province to determine its most important sectors and activities, as well as the needs and professional qualifications to be developed. This would not only help to outline a more adequate offer of continuous training to the firms by specialized entities or the public administration, but it could also be used as a criterion for a better distribution and use of resources (Barreira Cerqueiras 2015).

Focusing on the internal training processes developed in the Galician business organizations, training inside medium and large companies leads to an improvement of the professional skills of their employees. However, this is not so clearly perceived in the individual professional development of workers. We have seen in this chapter analysis that there are some factors such as age, sex or the position in the company which can condition their CVET. For example, in the planning of training it is taken into account the responsibility levels through specific itineraries, but the truth is that the conception of professional progress is not always perceived at an individual level. As a result, the training opportunities are not the same for the workforce according to its characteristics.

This is even clearer when we consider the data related to the individual training leaves (ITLs). Structurally speaking, it is not a predominant initiative, due to the scarcity—almost absence—of allusions to these ITLs in the current regulations. This training action is directly related to the construction of a self-determined professional pathway which could bring important benefits to the organizations, adopting the perspective of human resources as a strategic resource.

Another question that arises is that of the training actions aimed at the different professional categories within organizations. As we have seen, both operators and technical staff are at the head of the entire training process, as we know that productive changes usually affect them in the first place. However, the professional skills of other corporate categories must not be neglected by thinking they are more static. Managers can acquire new skills in personnel management, group leadership and motivation that are very relevant when managing the company. In the same way, personal interests within a company cannot be overlooked either, as they constitute an influential factor in the daily work carried out in the company and are directly related to the business objectives.

Another aspect in which we want to focus on these conclusions is the assessment process because it is an aspect to which, without a doubt, Galician companies should pay more attention. There is not an *assessment culture* (Andrés 2005) in organizations, but simply a final evaluation of the training actions without considering them as global and necessary processes to verify what has happened during the training. Companies do not usually assess whether training investments, both public and private, have produced some kind of impact on the company both in the medium and long term. In other words, we do not observe an evaluative model in the Galician

business fabric which takes into account social, economic and pedagogical parameters (Pineda Herrero 2000; INAEM 2010) and makes it possible to evaluate the transfer and impact of training throughout the organization. This situation can be an indicator of the real relevance that companies give to training as a strategic action. This perspective may be highly influenced by the public bonuses received and, to a lesser extent, by the global assessment of training as a key element for improving business productivity. Therefore, inculcating a culture of assessment and evaluation in companies is a very important challenge. The public administration and academic and economic entities must accept this and contribute by developing new researches to further develop the continuous training reality of the autonomic region according to business productivity, employability of workers and their professional and personal development.

To conclude, we are in agreement with Veira (1992) when he says that training in companies must be a continued and progressive process and must be related with the personal and professional development of workers, the business success and socio-economic development of the territories.

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Chapter 11
The Implementation of Dual VET in Spain: An Empirical Analysis

Fernando Marhuenda-Fluixá, María José Chisvert-Tarazona, and Davinia Palomares-Montero

Abstract This paper provides a brief overview of how Dual VET was implemented in the Spanish VET system. Dual VET was first regulated in Spain by the end of 2012 with the aim to replace the existing work experience module (FCT) within formal VET. However, companies have hardly contributed to its development, and the educational administrations that mandated it did not support its anchorage in the economy, while forcing VET schools and teachers to introduce it. This has resulted in an example of how not to implement educational reforms. We will use our own empirical research as well as secondary analysis of empirical studies to analyze the views of VET teachers on the whole process and the added value of Dual VET. Research conducted so far has used questionnaires to gather information from teachers responsible to implement Dual VET in almost all regions in Spain, covering most of the occupational areas in which it has been developed. Our findings are framed within European, Spanish and local literature and regulations.

Keywords Alternance training · Work-based learning · Educational policy · Educational reform · Employability

11.1 Introduction

Apprenticeship contracts have been legal currency in Spain since the early 1980s, as it is a kind of contract recognized in the Statute of Workers (Ley 8/1980) whose purpose is to train young people to prepare them for the world of work. However, along with the different reforms in that Statute, the extension of apprenticeship contracts has been very limited. Furthermore, apprenticeships are a part of the

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employment policy and have not been related to education in VET schools in the formal VET system.

That being said, Dual VET landed in Spain through the approval of a Decree (Real Decreto 1529/2012) in December 2012, ruling on the conditions of apprenticeship contracts *and* introducing a Dual VET type within the existing system, with the declared aim to replace the current VET with a Dual VET by 2018 (Gil and López 2013). Data provided by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport to the Alliance for Dual VET show an increase in the volume of students, companies and centres participating in the 2016–2017 course of Dual VET: approximately 24,000 students (close to 9000 more than in the previous academic year), 9916 registered companies and 894 VET schools (Pineda et al. 2017). However, it is far from covering the 793,499 students enrolled in formal VET (Trillas 2018). Different opinions have emerged regarding this evolution. Some people think that this positive tendency shows the support of Spain government for Dual VET. The Administration is increasing the supply by offering more places in existing VET courses or offering new places in occupational families where Dual VET was not available. On the other hand, some people reckon that this increase is a consequence of the huge evolution in VET demand, where the increase of Dual VET is a residual collateral consequence of the first.

Dual VET had not been demanded by employers, unions, teachers or young people, and none of them participated in its initial design: it was all part of the conservative party agenda, fostered by a combination of neoconservative (through the introduction of a segregated pathway within compulsory education) together with neoliberal policies (considering the value of the German VET system as a short-term solution (Marhuenda 2018), without taking into account its very different historical roots as well as how different the productive fabrics of these two countries are). This resulted in an improvised reaction of the government to the worst of the economic crisis, where no one would dare to reject apprenticeships as an appropriate means to counter it, even if apprenticeships have existed in the Spanish labor market for the past three decades (Marhuenda 2015; Echeverría 2016).

In this chapter, we will focus on the implementation and development of the Dual modality of VET, and we discuss what aims and effects it has achieved and to what extent it has improved the current VET model. Analysis of this implementation has already been conducted by Chisvert-Tarazona, Palomares-Montero and Marhuenda-Fluixà (2013), Cullerés, Lletjós and Porta (2013), Del Castillo (2013) and Gil and López (2013), even while it was still an issue on the reform agenda and there was hardly any development. Aside from these, most studies around Dual VET produced during these years have comprised declarations and manifestos about its worth, value, usefulness and appropriateness to improving the employability of young people; it was declared, not only by the national and regional governments but also in reports produced by institutions such as Bertelsmann, the main driving force in Spain to the Alliance for Dual VET (AFPD 2015; European Union

2013; Euler 2013) and others (Cámara 2015a, b; IESE 2014), as the solution to the extremely high rates of youth unemployment in Spain. The most recent debates about it can be found in Valcarce, in Diz and Rial (2018) and in Mosso (2018).

Nevertheless, no evaluation of the pilot implementation of the Dual VET had been foreseen by the educational administrations, and no reliable data were available in almost any region. Instead, the data produced by the Department of Education (SGOFP 2015) and those announced by the Secretary of State (Gomendio 2015) were scarce and contradictory, which may be related to the lack of prior diagnosis and planning of available resources (Echeverría 2016).

Additionally, teachers and headteachers involved in Dual VET complained about the way it was developed. They expressed the emphasis that the educational administration was placing on increasing the number of students in Dual VET, and further developments of VET schools were subject to the implementation of some form of Dual VET.

The questions behind our research are the following: What were the challenges and opportunities of Dual VET regarding its organizational dimensions? Was Dual VET significantly different from FCT? Which features are exclusive to Dual VET?

These questions were then operationalized in our empirical research: Our hypothesis, which we were ready to disregard, was that the implementation of Dual VET by the national and regional educational administrations was school- and not company-driven and that its introduction brought no significant improvement regarding learning acquired through FCT in terms of curriculum, methods, assessment or employability. In the pages that follow, we explain the context of our research and our strategy and methods, we present our data and relate them to other research and we discuss our findings.

11.2 Normative Regulations for a Dual Type of VET

The foundations of Dual VET were first established in RD 1529/2012, November 8, without addressing curricular, methodological or assessment issues. The Organic Law 8/2013, December 9, for the improvement of the educational quality, only introduces the concept of Dual VET in the Spanish Educational System without providing further details (art. 42bis). The scarce regulation of this training, at the state level, has induced some regions such as Valencia, Andalusia or Cantabria to regulate Dual VET in the absence of a well-defined state framework (Aguilar 2015). These regulations have therefore caused a de facto deregulation of Dual VET in the country, to the surprise of companies operating in different regions (Vila and Chisvert 2018). The Department of Education is working on an update of the Decree, and the Alliance (2017) is trying to lobby it, taking into account the views of different stakeholders, all of which favor its promotion.

The regulation on Dual VET is intended to have three impacts that regions have emphasized differently. The most desired aim is the improvement of the employability of young people, the second is to improve the quality of VET and the third is to contribute to the improvement of the labor market. Dual VET is, hence, considered as a policy upon the individual (focusing on employability) rather than a policy upon the institutions or the context. Employability is considered, here, as in most other discourses (Llinares et al. 2016), as a personal feature that allows us to characterize a person. This is a neglect of the socioeconomical context that lies behind employability: different levels of employability are possible for the same person at any given time, depending on the job that person is trying to access or perform, as employability and employment are not always connected.

In terms of qualification levels, it is not surprising that Dual VET attempts to increase the employability of those already most employable. It is considered an option to enrich higher-level formal VET, while it is almost absent from the Basic VET provision, with the sole exceptions of Aragón, the Basque country and Navarra, where it is a legal possibility.

In terms of occupational areas, there are sectors such as health and education where the main employer by and large is the public administration, yet the difficulties faced by public administrations in becoming involved in Dual VET are considerable.

In terms of the value of education and investment in training, there are six regions in which an economic compensation for companies engaging in Dual VET is foreseen: Valencia, Castilla-León, Extremadura, Galicia, Murcia and the Basque country, although only four of these have a budget for such a purpose. Asturias is the only region where it is clearly forbidden to pay companies to engage in Dual VET.

Most importantly, when it comes to how Dual VET is arranged, most regions accept the possibility of providing Dual VET without the student signing a contract with the company; thus, the student lacks the status of an apprentice (even if registered as Dual VET). This is a clear difference from the Dual systems in Germany, Austria or Switzerland, where the contract is an essential part of the dual apprenticeship model and where the use of the apprenticeship contracts, legal in Spain since 1980, has been neglected, for these are not required to fulfil a vocational qualification. Only three regions require a contract to engage in Dual VET: Aragón, Castilla-León and Baleares. Most other regions either accept a scholarship instead of a contract or even require no payment by the student at all.

In most regions, students are selected to take part in Dual VET according to their good grades, in a similar way to what used to be the case in the Alternance voluntary scheme within formal VET in the mid-1980s (Marhuenda 1994).

Assessment is the sole responsibility of teachers, and this is the case in all regions. The instructor in the company must write a report on the tasks performed by the student, which can be taken into account by teachers, except in Aragón.

If we consider all of these features together, we can certainly speak of a school-driven Dual type of VET, in strong contrast to what is understood worldwide under a Dual scheme.

11.3 Empirical Analysis: Context, Methods, Sample and Results

In this section, we explain the context in which the dual type VET has evolved, why we decided to conduct our research, our research strategy, the features of our sample and the main results we obtained.

11.3.1 Context

There is no better VET than that strongly rooted in practice and sensitive to the needs of the world of work. This belief was key to the Education Act passed in 1990 and which resulted in the update and renewal of VET throughout the country; it was also retained in the VET Law in 2002 as well as in the ensuing Education Acts approved in 2006 and 2013.

A compulsory module of work experience, to be developed within companies, was part of all VET curricula for all different qualifications, no matter the level. Furthermore, this module comprised between 20 and 30% of the entire curriculum of a given qualification. One of the principles of Dual VET, therefore, was already embedded and enacted in the system[1].

There seems to be a considerable agreement, as Saniter, Tutlys and Marhuenda (2015) have shown, that Dual VET tends to be useful in countries such as Germany, Austria, Switzerland or Denmark when the economy is undergoing, under conditions of stability and growth, a so-called marked effect, although the dual system in these countries also faces a crisis rooted in changes in the process of digitalization (Nägele 2017). On the other hand, these countries have experienced that Dual VET is at stake whenever economic growth slows down, while school-based VET systems seem to resist crisis in a much better way. Furthermore, dual systems, indeed those where stability has been a cornerstone, currently are under pressure related to changes in work processes and the very definition of work, while students opt for higher education in universities in greater proportions than in the past (Greinert 2009a, b). In 2012, Spain was still suffering the worst of the financial crisis that began in 2008 and that has lasted for a decade, and the country continues to experience extremely high unemployment rates (15% at the end of 2018, while it exceeded 25% at the beginning of the decade), worsening working conditions and increasing the precarious nature of various domains of life.

Nevertheless, several voices from different kinds of actors (from the EU to trade unions and international corporations) claim that apprenticeship and practical training within VET are key factors in fighting youth unemployment, facilitating the transition from learning to employment and responding to the needs of labor market competencies (European Commission 2013). To this end, the European Alliance for

[1] See Chaps. 2 and 6 for further details.

Apprenticeships (EAFA 2013) was founded in Leipzig in 2013, and Spain founded its own alliance by 2014, which is now trying to extend its mandate to SMEs and not only large companies (AFPD 2018).

It is surprising that these voices ignore the fact that the ordinary Spanish VET system has enjoyed practical training in companies as a compulsory subject for all students since 1993. Examples may be found in the European Alliance to Promote Apprenticeship, which has been fostered by the European Trade Union Confederation (2014). Institutions such as Bertelsmann (Euler 2013) or *Cámaras* (González 2015) have also supported the idea to foster practical training, considering that *the best and only* choice is Dual VET, as in German-speaking countries. Perhaps efforts by the *Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung* (GOVET-BiBb) have also played a role here, as this institution, supported by the German Chambers of Commerce and the German government, has sent missions to export the values of Dual VET to countries as different as China, Canada, Mexico, Costa Rica (Gessler 2015; Valiente 2014, 2015; Gonnon 2015b) and Spain itself, despite objections to the process (Deissinger 2015; Gonnon 2015a).

One example of such efforts, as shown by Gil and López (2013), is the offer of a *German* Dual VET to Spanish young people to fill the vacancies in German apprenticeships as a means of reducing unemployment among Spanish youth. However, this has consisted in recruiting Spanish youth in Spain to enroll in German companies.

The wish to improve vocational education, as a means of reducing youth unemployment, through the introduction of Dual VET is one of the main reasons behind the Decree ruling apprenticeship contracts and Dual VET. Nevertheless, the Spanish government and the employment administrations have made no effort to maintain proper records of the impact of such measures upon the number of contracts for young people. Despite our own efforts, we have been unable to find either primary or secondary adequate, accessible information on how the productive system has made use of apprenticeship contracts, a possibility that has existed since 1980.

This is an astonishing finding, given that the implementation of Dual VET in Spain began at a time when the financial crisis was worsening employment relations. While jobs were being made redundant, Dual VET emerged as a promised land of youth employment. Nevertheless, no evaluation has been conducted on how many jobs have been reformed or generated through apprenticeship contracts, either by region or by occupational area.

The German reference in the definition of the Spanish Dual VET is more an intention than a reality. The Spanish context cannot sustain a model that is so alien to it. The public administration and the social and educational agents cover in the German system relevant functions that in Spain are supported almost exclusively by VET schools. The huge differences, in terms of tradition and characteristics, with the German business fabric make its implementation difficult, considering in addition the different cultural and political traditions (Greinert 2004, 2005; Grollman et al. 2017).

11.3.2 Methods

In order to determine how many VET schools had implemented Dual VET, we first approached the official sources of information; however, the Departments of Education and Employment proved useless. Their information was either absent (the Department of Employment did not provide raw data nor did it analyze the data it gathers from apprenticeship and training contracts to make information public and transparent) or, where available, did not correspond to the data provided by the regional departments of Education. The only report available from the Department of Education (SGOFP 2015) was both simple and obscure, insofar as it was unable to show any valid information on the process. Prior to this situation, we invested time in producing our own database using the VET schools authorized in each province/region to deliver Dual VET; these amounted to 456 throughout the country. We contacted those schools and checked whether they were actually engaged in some Dual programme or not. In the meantime, we produced a questionnaire in order to gather information on how teachers and schools consider the Dual VET implementation process, an approach that has recently been followed by Pineda, Arnau and Ciraso (2017), sponsored by the Alliance for Dual VET.

We have tried to outline our results, taken from the perspective of teachers involved in Dual VET. This has also been the case for Pineda, Arnau and Ciraso (2017), who show how teachers are the main promoters of Dual VET and its implementation.

According to Pineda, Arnau and Ciraso (2017), the following dimensions were considered as facilitators of Dual VET implementation in Spain: the school's networking, the high competence level of the ordinary VET student, teacher-tutor continuity, the accessibility of the tutor in the company, the consensus among contents with the company and the students' motivation. Among the barriers, teachers highlighted the difficulty in finding companies to perform Dual VET, the limited knowledge of companies about Dual VET, the limited resources granted by the Administration, the lack of recognition of Dual VET tutoring by administrators, the limited period of time for tutors to monitor students and the complex bureaucracy to respond to the Administration. These authors found a positive attitude of teachers towards Dual VET but also some concerns, such as the wide dedication to management tasks, the difficulties in covering the official curriculum, the role played by companies and the scarce reduction of teaching hours.

Our questionnaires were addressed to both teachers and managers of schools involved in fostering Dual VET, and they contained a wide array of issues, including the organizational dimensions of Dual VET and its challenges and opportunities. The questionnaire for teachers asked for the micro-organizational dimensions of the Dual type of VET, its features and its impact upon the curriculum. We also compared Dual VET to FCT, as both deal with the involvement of companies in training delivery by providing a placement, be it with or without an apprentice contract.

11.3.3 The Sample

Our research is based upon responses from all 17 regions in 35 provinces and 179 validated schools, including 136 principals and 149 teachers in charge. A preliminary report was presented for discussion among and comparison with teachers from more than 40 Dual VET schools in the Valencian Region at the end of September 2015 (Marhuenda et al. 2017).

Even if the Department of Education of the Government (SGOFP 2015) indicated there were 375 schools within the Dual scheme, we identified a total of 456 that were authorized to develop it, even though some of those authorized schools were not even VET schools but post-compulsory academic schools. Our respondents comprise about one third of the overall population. The figures per region correspond approximately with the implementation of the Dual scheme in them, the only relevant exception being Madrid, where response to our questionnaire was too low, as opposed to Castilla–La Mancha, which is overrepresented in our sample. Responses by region are shown in Fig. 11.1.

We received responses from 149 teachers in charge of VET, approximately one third of them from the Valencian region, and again the Cataluña and Castilla–La Mancha regions were well represented in our study, with over 16% of the total sample for each one. Almost two-thirds of the responses were provided by men, somewhat over a third by women. More than two-thirds of our sample ranged between 36 and 55 years of age, the sample averaging 45 years of age. Almost two-thirds of the teachers responding were university graduates, while 25% had a VET qualification.

More than two-thirds of teachers committed to Dual VET have been engaged in the delivery of the work experience scheme (FCT). Therefore, teachers in our sam-

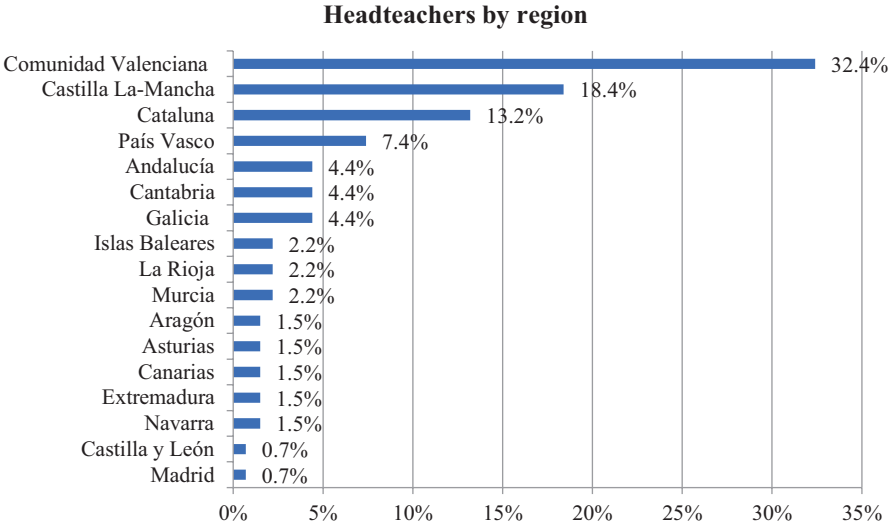

Fig. 11.1 Headteachers by region

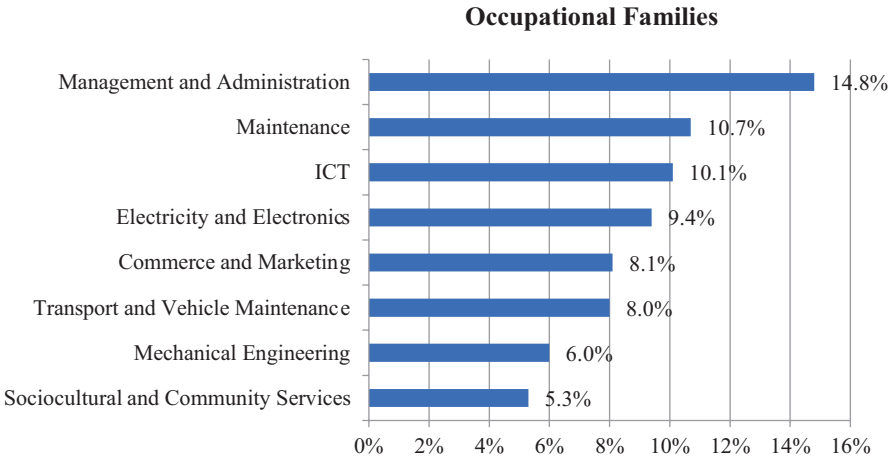

Fig. 11.2 Main occupational families

ple are very familiar with establishing relations to companies, planning placements, assigning content and assessing learning.

The occupational families with wider representation in our sample are Management and Administration, Maintenance, ICT, Electricity and Electronics, Commerce and Marketing, and Transport and Vehicle Maintenance (Fig. 11.2).

Taking into account these data, we can say that the implementation of Dual VET does not correspond to those occupations with a larger demand. As a matter of fact, companies are not only not offering jobs in these areas, but they are also not offering apprenticeship contracts for young people under Dual VET (Trillas 2018). As they consider young people to be students or scholarship-holders in the best of cases, there are no labor relations. Hence, the increase in employability that the Decree claims is severely at risk.

11.4 Results and Discussion: What Makes Dual VET Different from FCT?

In many cases, Dual VET provides an extended period of work experience in companies. Work experience in companies was first ruled in 1974 in Spain, first applied in 1983/1984 as a voluntary module (then called alternance training) and became an obligation for all VET students in 1990 (when it received the name FCT). To benefit from FCT, students must have passed all other subjects, for which alternance was no longer possible. Perhaps Dual VET might have stressed the importance of alternance as a means of providing benefits to the majority of students who were unable to find a placement within the Dual scheme. However, in most cases teachers pointed to Dual VET as an addition to FCT, through an extension of hours within

the company. Many teachers referred to it as an extended or prolonged FCT, where students find the chance to remain in their placement for a longer period of time, hence widening their experience.

Because these similarities have been much repeated, it is worth examining how FCT and Dual VET differ or complement each other, and analyzing the particular characteristics of the Dual scheme, to which we now turn.

We have found no relevant differences between Dual VET and FCT regarding motivation for and prevention against leaving VET among students[2], and the results of both are similar: around two thirds of the respondents consider work experience as a whole to be a good motivator, regardless of the two schemes it falls under. There is considerable improvement, however, regarding how Dual VET facilitates entry into the labor market, as well as the knowledge of the company (81.4% for Dual vs. 71.5% for FCT). There is also a slightly larger contribution of Dual VET to the knowledge that teachers have of the specific company (not the productive system or the world of work, which companies already value as appropriate) over the responsibility that the company must assume. Such differences vanish when teachers confirm that Dual VET has no impact upon the planning, management and development processes of VET qualifications.

We also found no strong differences regarding the contribution of Dual VET in improving decision-making in VET; in fact, 62.1% of teachers believe that Dual and FCT contribute decision-making in a similar manner: the knowledge and experience provided by FCT was good enough to update VET studies and to gear the contents of subjects to the demands of the productive sectors.

This is also the case with the academic value of learning acquired through work experience, considered equally important in both Dual VET and FCT, as the difference is of 78.4% vs. 73.9%, respectively. There is a slight gap between both schemes. Where we find one of the few differences between both schemes is in the domain of learning assessment: teachers address the assessment of Dual VET in a more systematic way than they handle the assessment of FCT (71.4% vs. 63.8%). However, the information provided about assessment appears confusing if not contradictory: to our surprise, around half of the sample replied that competencies are assessed, which means that the other half does not take them as a reference. Furthermore, if we look at the tools used to assess learning, almost two-thirds use tests and more than half also rely upon a memo regarding work placement, while only 58.1% rely upon performance observation. Only a fourth of the sample performs a final assessment, hence not checking the real learning of skills. There is very little assessment of attitudes (24.3%), self-evaluation (14.3%) or portfolios (7.4%).

We wonder to what extent Dual VET should introduce changes in current practices of work experience. The learning of on-the-job competencies should precede the value of content-oriented learning, as is usually the case in schools. However, the lack of emphasis upon competence assessment is puzzling. Perhaps assessment should be adapted to occupational profiles, the company and the instructor as well. Whether this implies different evaluation criteria for students preparing for the same

[2] See Chap. 10 for further details in this book.

VET qualification remains to be seen. Another open is how to involve companies in the assessment of qualifications, a dimension that is a key feature in Dual systems in Central Europe.

Pedagogical handling of work placements should be an issue in the implementation of Dual VET, and we find that almost two-thirds of teachers consider it appropriate, a figure very close to that of FCT. However, 15.5% of teachers point to the lack of control regarding Dual VET, slightly over the figure corresponding to FCT.

As one might expect, more than four-fifths of the teachers consider Dual VET appropriate for higher VET rather than for the lower levels of qualification; what is perhaps astonishing is that the percentage is even higher for FCT: it can be considered a well-established form of work-based-learning with which schools and employers were already satisfied. These results are similar to those obtained by Intermediate VET, though in this case the gap between Dual VET and FCT is larger, notably in favor of FCT (85.9% vs. 67.7%). These similarities break down for Basic VET, where again, FCT seems more appropriate than Dual VET.

This trend is reversed in favor of Dual VET in terms of the opportunities it offers to equip students with the technical and work-process knowledge required by the world of work. Differences cannot be considered meaningful, but they exist. Differences increase when comparing to what extent Dual VET favors contact with the world of work, a much larger measure than that allowed by FCT (72.2% vs. 55.4%). In this regard, there is considerable acknowledgment of the improvement brought about by Dual VET.

In concluding our comparison of Dual VET with FCT, data confirm that the former is more valued by teachers in terms of favoring relations and mutual knowledge among trainers, workers and apprentices. More than half of the teachers indicate this is the case, in contrast with 40% for FCT. These results and differences are not so clear regarding relations between employers and apprentices. Almost half of the teachers state that Dual VET increases the ability to adapt to the demands of the labor market, while only 28.6% say this is the case for FCT, yet another element in favor of Dual VET.

11.5 Reflections and Suggestions: Which Way Forward?

The motives leading to the implementation of Dual VET in Spain are diverse and varied in scope, as much as are the agents involved (national and regional departments of education, companies, national and international foundations, teachers and students themselves). The pressure and rush of the national and regional administration to adopt a notion, even with a disregard for the content to which it is usually connected, have caused much trouble along the process and created a sense of having left the system exhausted following an attempt that has diverted efforts from other areas of interest and need in order to improve Vocational Education. The process of implementation has been irregular and destandardized, causing confusion among the companies that were invited to participate in Dual VET (Echeverría

2016). The deregulation of the labor market, involving over 36 reforms in the past 40 years (Coscubiela and Rojo 2012; López 2013), seems to be accompanied at the moment by the deregulation of the vocational education system to which both Basic VET and Dual VET have contributed (Marhuenda 2015; Marhuenda et al. 2017).

Of course, no one would dare oppose the idea of a dual system, as the very notion is a renowned brand with an intrinsic value, as some have shown (Heikkinen and Lassnigg 2015; Lassnigg 2015; Marhuenda 2015). As Dual VET in its Central-European tradition seems to work properly and to be well consolidated, why should it not work in Spain as well? It is not only politicians and technicians who think so: teachers also consider that it may be beneficial for some of their students. One cannot forget that VET has been one of the major venues of pedagogical innovation and openness to society in the past 20 years in Spain and, therefore, teachers are ready to take part in experimentation and to change their traditional practices, as they have frequently done in the past. While at all other levels of the educational system, reforms have focused mainly on the curriculum, in the case of VET, the organization of educational provision itself has been subject to changes, in a constant search for improvement and innovation (Marhuenda 2012).

The question therefore is not whether Dual VET is going to be resisted, which is not the case, but if it will attempt to complement the existing VET system or, rather, act a substitute for it and replace it with something different and, to a large extent, alien to Spanish education and vocational culture (Greinert 2005; Gonnon 2015a, b; Valiente 2014), a change quite difficult to achieve in the short or medium term.

It would make sense, therefore, to focus upon the conditions that make the implementation of a dual modality of VET possible as an addition to the existing VET system, which in Spain, is, we cannot forget, a school-based one characterized by work experience being firmly rooted as a compulsory module in companies. Therefore, when considering plausible conditions, we must relate them to both companies and students, and perhaps the Department of Education could make an effort to look for differences among the occupational sectors as well as for new occupations that do not have a VET tradition and for which the Dual approach would certainly prove fruitful. There might be room here for the Department of Education to approve Dual-only degrees among the new occupational qualifications, after close dialogue and cooperation with the entrepreneurial sector.

The second option, a replacement of the current system by a Dual one, even if it was included in the political plans of the Minister of Education in 2012, is simply impossible: the Spanish VET system during the past 30 years has been negotiated and agreed upon among the main political parties and social agents, and there is no demand and hence not enough support for a wide extension of Dual VET: the system would simply collapse (Feria Valencia 2017).

Another question we must address is whether the training model can vary without introducing changes in its underlying pedagogical foundations. Of course, this will not be possible if we do not take into account a greater participation of the companies that Dual modalities of VET require, and that has not shown up until now in the implementation process (Pineda, Arnau and Ciraso 2017). This is per-

haps an issue related to the culture of training and education embedded in the entrepreneurial spirit of the country.

What we have found in our study is rather an alteration in terms of curriculum, which has been distorted and rearranged for all of the VET students in favor of a small group, that of the scarce beneficiaries of the Dual scheme. Dual remains, then, an element of individual gain, rather than having an impact upon the group, the school or the VET qualification as a whole. Employability is often conceived as an individual asset, and this is also the case in dual VET. Nevertheless, in terms of pedagogical practice, it would be an extremely valuable experience for all students to learn from the opportunities of those who were able to access the Dual type of registration, as they are classmates that still attend classes at the VET school.

Teachers point to fostering dimensions, such as the high competence level of the ordinary VET student and the students' motivation. Among obstacles, teachers refer to the difficulty of finding companies to engage in Dual VET. The Department of Education, other than regulating it, has done little in order to promote it, relying on the impulse of private stakeholders. Without even acknowledging the role of teachers, it has increased bureaucracies, which are not in the spirit of a Dual responsive system.

Other research (Vila and Chisvert 2018) has also taken into account what the different regions have ruled regarding Dual VET. Based upon their findings, we may now return to our initial questions: Does Dual VET consist of something other than more hours of work experience or an extension of FCT? Given the compulsory character of FCT and its universal feature, has the Dual scheme introduced new solutions in terms of VET provisions? Now that it has been established, will VET schools be able to extend its virtues also to the majority of students that cannot enroll in the scarce dual placements?

Of course, these questions are misplaced, as such a scheme has been introduced for more than 5 years now, has been promoted and has created expectations, particularly with students. Our questions then turn not to whether we could/should get rid of Dual VET, but rather to how to make it valuable as an additional contribution to the vocational preparation of students, on a voluntary basis.

Even if there was no clear demand on the side of the companies and this has led to a lack of proper involvement, and even if the administration has pushed teachers into Dual VET without providing them with the appropriate support, we do not claim that Dual VET should disappear. However, there are certainly some lessons to be learned about how this process of implementation has incurred mistakes that should be avoided in any future reform of Vocational Education in Spain.

First, gathering all social agents and agreeing with them on the main needs and areas of improvement of VET, instead of promoting a bottom-down reform without guaranteeing the engagement of those who must apply it. Duality is difficult if it is the Administration and the schools rather than the companies that are pushing for it.

Second, taking time to introduce such a new and complex scheme requires the real participation of different agents that are not used to it and have not requested it. The race into which some regional administrations run into, together with the Department of Education, in order to see who will be first to achieve higher num-

bers, has been counterproductive in terms of the prestige of Dual VET. It has been a rushed, accelerated attempt, lacking sufficient planning, follow-up and control measures (Echeverría 2016). All of these have spoiled the process and have caused confusion and pressure among VET schools, companies, social agents and families, as well as disparities among students within the same VET system.

It has been particularly worrisome to act in the name of companies without taking them into account and sending teachers as sales agents to sell them an idea that should have been originally raised by companies themselves, not by the Department of Education. With few exceptions, national and regional departments of education have not listened to companies' demands, suggestions, or requirements, and the system has been deployed without their consent. We have seen the rise of a Dual VET without the private initiative, Dual VET without the company.

Dual VET has unexpectedly landed in the VET system and nevertheless has already been well accepted. No one has rejected it, and each of the social agents and teachers has tried to make the best out of it. The process of implementation has developed in a mixture of fear, imposition, innovation and good will, particularly taking into account that some young people might benefit from it at a time of extremely high levels of unemployment and youth unemployment.

The result is clear so far: a school-based Dual VET scheme, where VET schools and teachers are responsible to look for companies, explain to them what Dual VET is about, convince them of its benefits for them (and for students), rearrange the curriculum and organization of VET and provide the companies with individual curricular plans as well as assessment criteria. Schools and teachers have been responsible for implementing it but have been given neither the resources nor the autonomy to perform and adapt it to their own circumstances, which has also caused significant differences among VET schools in terms of offer and attraction potential for new students.

Irresponsible as it may sound, the system has managed to open the gate to Dual VET in a school-based system and to find a place for it aside or beyond the compulsory module of work experience, FCT. Whether such a practice can be widely extended is a different question, and many changes must occur in order for this to be possible.

The ability of Dual VET to generate employment remains to be seen; its contribution to the increase in employability can only be measured in individual terms, and it has been introduced at the worst possible time: that of the deepest impact of the recent and long-lasting financial crisis. Its implementation has been selective for students and voluntarily performed by teachers, who cope with their disillusionment while trying to contribute to their students' learning possibilities. The national and regional departments of education have pushed it while remaining in their offices instead of listening to the demands of the social agents. These social agents, together with teachers, have reacted as best they can, without being proactive and with limited productivity. Dual VET is a good idea badly implemented in Spain. Dual VET has been criticized for the way it has been implemented. Perhaps it was not needed in a VET system such as the Spanish one. The issue is now how to make it useful, productive, responsible and sustainable and how to allow most VET students to benefit from a valuable opportunity that can enhance learning across the board.

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Acronyms and Abbreviations[1]

ANFC (*Acuerdos Nacionales de Formación Continua*).

The National Agreements on Continuing Vocational Training first signed in 1993, then renewed in 1996 and which opened the third and youngest subsystem of the VET provision in Spain.

APL (Accreditation of Prior Learning). (Also named as RPL, see below).
AROPE (At Risk Of Poverty and Exclusion).

It is an indicator included in the Europe 2020 Strategy approved by the Council of Europe in June 2010.

BOE (*Boletín Oficial del Estado*).

The Official Bulletin where all laws, decrees and legal rules are published with validity country-wide.

CCOO (*Comisiones Obreras*).

One of the largest trade unions in the country, in the 1960s and 1980s linked to the Communist Party.

CCSE (see GESO below).
CEDEFOP (European Centre for the Development of Vocational Education and Training).
CEO (*Director Ejecutivo*/Chief Executive Officer).

[1] In order to explain some of the notions in this list, we have followed the glossary published by Cedefop (2014). Terminology of European education and training policy. Luxembourg, Cedefop.

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CEOE (*Confederación Española de Organizaciones Empresariales*).

The Spanish Confederation of regional Employer Organizations.

CEPYME (*Confederación Española de la Pequeña y Mediana Empresa*).

The Spanish Confederation of Small and Medium Enterprises.

CFGM (*Ciclos Formativos*[2] *de Grado Medio*).

Intermediate level VET or VET level 2, one year VET after successful completion of compulsory school.

CFGS (*Ciclos Formativos de Grado Superior*).

Higher level VET or VET level 3, usually two years VET after successful completion of the Baccalaureate.

CIG (*Confederación Intersindical Galega*).

Galician trade union that joined CEOE, CEPYME, CCOO and UGT in the General Council of FORCEM.

CIFP (*Centro Integrado de Formación Profesional*).

Vocational Education and Training Centers, dependent either from the Department of Education or the Department of Employment, that offer education and training of both formal and non-formal training, both initial and continuing, for young people and adults, for employed and unemployed people.

CNAE (Clasificación Nacional de Actividades Económicas - National Classification of Economic Activities)

CNCP (*Catálogo Nacional de Cualificaciones Profesionales*).

Spanish National Catalogue of Vocational Qualifications. It consists of instruments and actions which are necessary to promote and develop the integration of Vocational Education and Training, as well as to assess and accredit professional competencies.

CNED -14 (*Clasificación Nacional de Educación 2014*).

The National Classification of Occupations as defined by the Spanish National Statistics Institute.

CNR (*Centro Nacional de Referencia*).

Vocational education and training schools, depending upon the Department of Education, that are acknowledged as national reference centers for one sector or occupational area, in charge of supporting the task of updating the curricula of all qualifications within the sector.

[2] Formative Cycles are the name that Vocational Qualifications or Vocational courses provided by the formal VET system receive.

CSR (Corporative Social Responsibility).
CVET Continuing Vocational Education and Training (see FC below)
EEC (European Economic Community).
EIE (*Empresa e iniciativa emprendedora*).

It is one of the few compulsory common subjects to all CFGS qualifications. It consists of basic knowledge on management and entrepreneurship, in order to facilitate the set up of one's own company.

ESF (European Social Fund).
ESL (Early School Leaving).
EU (European Union).
FC (*Formación Continua*).

Continuing Vocational Training, the subsystem addressed to the employed workforce, it is not part of the school system.

FCT (*Formación en Centros de Trabajo*).

Work placement, a compulsory subject that all formal VET students must take, be it in CFGM or CFGS, lasting between 300 and 700 hours approximately. Students keep their status as students, do not get a wage nor a subsidy of any kind. Approved in 1990, it was one of the major changes in formal VET and it got companies involved in actual delivery of vocational education.

FOL (*Formación y Orientación Laboral*).

It is one of the few compulsory common subjects to all CFGM and CFGS qualifications. It consists of an introduction to the world of work, with contents of three kinds: labor rights, labor search and health and safety issues at work.

FORCEM (*Fundación para la Formación Continua*).

The Continuing Training Foundation that was established in the mid 1990s and shut down before the end of the century, being replaced by FTFE (see below) and later on FUNDAE (see below).

FPB (*Formación Profesional Básica*).

It is the Basic Vocational Qualification or Vocational Qualification level 1, which is provided still within compulsory school and for students who will have difficulties in achieving the GESO. It is also known as PFI (*Programes de Formació Inicial*) in Catalonia.

FPE (*Formación para el Empleo*).

Non-formal vocational training, consisting of vocational training for the employed workforce as well as for unemployed people.

FPO (*Formación Profesional Ocupacional*).

Non-formal vocational training, consisting of vocational training for the unemployed, it plays the role of non-formal initial VET.

FTFE (*Fundación Tripartita para la Formación y el Empleo*).

It was a public-private trust, integrated by representatives of the government, employers and trade unions in order to set the mechanisms and assure quality of continuing vocational training. It was renamed in 2015.

FUNDAE (*Fundación Estatal para la Formación y el Empleo*).

Since 2015, it is the new public-private trust in charge of the management of continuing training in the country.

GDP (Gross Domestic Product).
GESO (*Graduado en Educación Secundaria Obligatoria*).

Also mentioned as CCSE (Certificate of Compulsory Secondary Education), it is the General Certificate in Secondary Education (GCSE), achieved after successfully completing compulsory secondary education. It is a requirement, since the 1990 reform, to have access to any post-compulsory offer within the Education System, that one can also achieve after 18 through registration in adult education schools.

IGE (*Instituto Galego de Estatística*).

Galician Institute of Statistics.

ICT (Information and Communication Technologies).
ILO (International Labour Organization).
INAEM (*Instituto Aragonés de Empleo*).

Region of Aragón Institute of Employment.

INCUAL (National Institute of Qualifications in Spain).
INE (*Instituto Nacional de Estadística*).

Spanish National Institute of Statistics.

ISCED (International Standard Classification of Education).ITL (*Individual Training Leave*).

Also known as PIF (see below). It is one of the possibilities a worker has to enrol in continuing vocational training, consisting of a maximum of 200 hours a year for the worker to take part in training of his/her choice, instead of attending already planned courses by the company, employers or unions.

IVET Initial VET

Vocational Education provided by the school system to young people, it includes FPB, CFGM and CFGS

LES (*Ley de Economía Sostenible*).

Approved in 2011, it was a law that intended to reshape the productive system of Spain and to facilitate decision making at different levels, VET included, in order to improve the productive and economic planning in the country to avoid huge impacts of financial crisis like the ones suffered in 2008.

Level 1 VET (see FPB)
Level 2 VET (see CFGM).
Level 3 VET (see CFGS).
LGE (*Ley General de Educación*).

It was the Act that modernised the school system in 1970 and that brought VET as an inherent part of the system, as it has remained ever since.

LOCFP (*Ley Orgánica de las Cualificaciones y la Formación Profesional*).

Proposed by the conservative party, it is he only Act on Education since Spain recovered democracy in 1975 that has not been contested but approved with the support of the main political parties, employer representatives and the largest trade unions in the country. Passed in 2002, it set up the basis towards the reunification of the three parallel subsystems that there still exist nowadays.

LOE (*Ley Orgánica de Educación*).

Passed in 2006, this law attempted to confirm some of the major features of LOGSE that the conservatives had tried to suppress in 2002.

LOGSE (*Ley de Ordenación General del Sistema Educativo*).

Approved in 1990 by the Socialdemocrats, this Act on Education introduced a couple of relevant features in terms of VET. First, the extension of the compulsory age of schooling for people under 16. Second, the proclamation of a comprehensive system for compulsory secondary education, hence avoiding segregation measures. Third, the need to have the Graduate in Secondary Education in order to enter Intermediate VET; which in fact implied the end of formal VET a as compensatory measure.

LOMCE (*Ley Orgánica para la Mejora de la Calidad de la Educación*).

It is the current law on Education, passed in 2013 by the conservatives and reintroducing segregation in the secondary system while considering VET as the alternative for the working class, limiting access to the post-compulsory academic pathways.

MECD (*Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte*).

Also known as MEC, it is the Department of Education, whose responsibilities have varied according to decisions of the different governments of the nation. The formal VET system depends from this Department, which fixes the nation-wide rules that apply in all regions.

MESS (*Ministerio de Empleo y Seguridad Social*).

It is the Department of Employment and Social Security, responsible for non-formal training as well as continuing vocational education and training.

NPNFP (*Nuevo Plan Nacional de Formación Profesional*).

It was the National Plan on VET, between 1998 and 2002, and the one which concluded by the approval of the 2002 LOCFP.

OECD (The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development).
PC (*Plan de Centro*).

It is a yearly plan that every school in the educational system must have and which should serve as a guideline to exercise its limited autonomy and to facilitate its management.

PCPI (*Plan de Cualificación Profesional Inicial*).

Basic Vocational Education, or VET level 1, between 2006 and 2013. See also FPB.

PGS (*Programas de Garantía Social*).

Basic Vocational Education, or VET level 1, between 1994 and 2006. See also FPB.

PIAAC (Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies).
PIF (*Permisos Individuales de Formación*).
PNFP (*Plan Nacional de Formación Profesional*).

National VET Plan, valid between 1993 and 1998, which was intended to coordinate initial VET, both formal and non-formal.

PNL (prácticas no laborales)

Work placement en la FPE que students must take. La duración es la que se establezca en el certificador e profesionalidad coespondiente. Igual que en la FCT, students keep their status as students, do not get a wage nor a subsidy of any kind.

R&D (Research and Development).
RIS (Regional Innovation System).

Regional analysis of innovation implemented in Europe to develop the Lisbon Strategy.

RPL (Recognition of Prior Learning).
SDG (Sustainable Development Goals – United Nations).
SDGF (Sustainable Development Goals Fund – United Nations).

SEPE (*Servicio Público de Empleo Estatal*).

It is the current branch of the Department of Employment in charge of Active Employment Policies, unemployment subsidies as well as many types of non-formal training provision and all regulations on Continuing Training.

SMEs (Small and Medium Entrerprises)UGT (*Unión General de Trabajadores*).

It is one of the oldest trade unions in the country, linked to the Socialist Party since its creation in the early 20th century.

UGT (*Unión General de Trabajadores*).

It is one of the oldest trade unions in the country, linked to the Socialist Party since its creation in the early 20th century.

UN (United Nations).
UNDP (United Nations Development Program).
VET (Vocational Education and Training).

Vocational training within the education system: medium-level training cycles and higher-level training cycles

VT (Vocational Training).

Vocational training out of the education system, providingoccupational certificates and vocational qualifications.