KEY COMPETENCES IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

SPAIN

THEMATIC PERSPECTIVES
The thematic perspectives series complements the general information on vocational education and training (VET) systems provided in ‘VET in Europe’ reports. The themes presented in the series feature high on the European agenda.

Thematic perspectives provide national overviews of specific themes in a common format and offer comparative dimension across the EU Member States, Iceland and Norway. They are available at:

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Introduction

Key competences are considered within the national VET and qualifications system. Since 2015, they are defined (1) for the general education and VET. In relation to VET, the Ministry of Education, already since 2010, have included in every intermediate and advanced VET programme specific modules for entrepreneurship. Communication in a foreign language (English) is strongly promoted in VET curricula. ‘Communication in the mother tongue’, ‘maths, scientific and technological knowledge’, ‘learning to learn’ and ‘interpersonal and cultural expression’ are included implicitly within the training process. Since 2014, the new two-year VET programmes comprise specific module ‘communication and society’ that include Spanish, local languages, a foreign language as well as topics about history and society (2).

Qualifications from the ‘catalogue of VET diplomas’ (awarded by the education authorities) and from the ‘national repertoire of professional certificates’ (awarded by the labour authorities) refer to the occupational standards defined by the CNCP (3). They comprise key competences in programme units or implicitly within the tasks or learning outcomes (4). Key competences (competencias basics or competencias clave) of the CNCP are personal initiative, responsibility, self-assessment, creativity and innovation (5), communication in foreign languages and scientific competences. Thus, the development of VET programmes, leading to a diploma or professional certificate, takes account of key competences as general principles and objectives (6).

1 Key Competences were initially translated as competencias basicas but in 2015 the order 65/2015 (http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2015/01/29/pdfs/BOE-A-2015-738.pdf) has defined also competencias clave for VET (http://www.todofp.es/todofp/orientacion-profesional/conoce-tus-habilidades/competencias-basicas.html).


4 Ley Orgánica 5/2002 del Sistema nacional de Cualificaciones y formación profesional.

5 Royal Decree 1128/2003 regulating the CNCP (Article 4 point 4 the levels of qualifications are defined and defined in Annex II).

6 Article 3 of the Royal Decree 1147/2011, of 29 July, establishing the organisation of vocational education in the education system.
1. Key competence: communication in the mother tongue

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The title(s) in the national context (if different)</th>
<th>Language communication (Comunicación lingüística)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The ECD 65/2015 regulation defines the key competence without differentiation between mother tongue (official: Spanish and co-official (mother tongues from the regions) Catalá, Valenciano, Euskera, Galego) and foreign languages.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| The acquisition of the key competence at upper secondary VET is promoted at national/regional level | Yes |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How is it promoted?</th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• national/regional policy document(s)</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• national/regional law(s), regulation(s)</td>
<td>The ECD 65/2015 regulation defines teaching strategies by competence (Annex II Orientaciones para facilitar el desarrollo de estrategias metodológicas que permitan trabajar por competencias en el aula). Effective communication in the personal and professional life is an objective of all VET programmes (Real Decreto 1147/2011, Art 3.i). National regulations referring to the basic VET diplomas (RD 127/2014, 356/2014, ECD/1030/2014 and RD 34/2008 on professional certificates refer to general objectives and competences of the CNCP.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• national/regional curricula, standards and qualifications</td>
<td>VET programmes at ISCED level 353 include the ‘communication and society’ training module with reference to Spanish and co-official languages. The module. Levels of key competences for lower and upper secondary education, including VET, are defined in regulation RD 1147/2011.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• training VET teachers trainers</td>
<td>Training for VET teachers is responsibility of education regional authorities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• centralised assessment of the key competence in VET</td>
<td>No. However, to access an intermediate and advanced VET programme it is necessary to demonstrate ISCED level 3 of competence in Spanish.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• other instruments (e.g. ways of working, teaching/learning methods)</td>
<td>The Annex II of ECD 65/2015 regulation supports teaching by competences in secondary education, including VET.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| The progress of improving key competence is monitored | No |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How is it monitored?</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• through international or national statistical data</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• survey(s)</td>
<td>PISA (literacy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• benchmark(s)</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• other instrument(s)</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Key competence: communication in foreign languages

The title(s) in the national context (if different)

Language communication (comunicación lingüística)
The ECD 65/2015 regulation defines the key competence without differentiation between mother tongue (official: Spanish and co-official (mother tongues from the regions) Català, Valenciano, Euskera, Galego) and foreign languages.

The acquisition of the key competence at upper secondary VET is promoted at national/regional level

Yes (at national and regional levels).

How is it promoted?

- **national/regional policy document(s)**
  The acquisition of foreign languages in VET is part of education and employment policies. The employment strategy 2014-16 (751/2014) sets a priority of improving communication in foreign languages and VET providers implement this policy. Transversal skills needs are mentioned and foreign languages among them: English, German and French.
  English (independent user level) is promoted within the lower and upper secondary VET. It is compulsory for some VET programmes. Bilingual programmes in collaboration with the British Council and Camoes institute for Portuguese language are also available. [http://educalab.es/cniie/competencias-basicas/lenguas-extranjeras](http://educalab.es/cniie/competencias-basicas/lenguas-extranjeras)

- **national/regional law(s), regulation(s)**
  ‘Organisation of VET system’ regulation (1147/2011) promotes foreign languages in VET. Several VET programmes comprise a compulsory module of foreign languages, especially in the fields of trade and marketing, tourism and business. Regional education authorities can decide to add a module in foreign language in VET programmes.

- **national/regional curricula, standards and qualifications**
  Some VET programmes (for example, manager assistant, international trade management) comprise ‘professional English’ of other foreign language modules.
  Levels of mastery of foreign languages for upper secondary education, including VET, are established by regulation 1147/2011. CEFR levels apply.

- **training VET teachers trainers**
  No

- **centralised assessment of the key competence in VET**
  No

- **other instruments (e.g. ways of working, teaching/learning methods)**
  VET students can acquire the ‘on-the-job’ module (FCT) through an internship abroad.
The progress of improving key competence levels/learning outcomes among upper secondary VET students is monitored No

How is it monitored?

- through international or national statistical data No
- survey(s) No
- benchmark(s) No
- other instrument(s) Teachers and trainers are responsible for assessment of these competences.

Key competence level improved among upper secondary VET students since (+/-) 2010 No data

3. Key competence: competences in maths, science and technology

The title(s) in the national context (if different) Competence in maths and basic (key) competences in science and technology (competencia matemática y competencias básicas en ciencia y tecnología)

The acquisition of the key competence at upper secondary VET is promoted at national/regional level Yes

How is it promoted?

- national/regional policy document(s)
- national/regional law(s), regulation(s) Competences in maths, science and technology are promoted within the VET programmes according to the occupational needs. VET programmes are designed considering the occupational standards of the CNCP as a reference.
- national/regional curricula, standards and qualifications The occupational standards have a reference to competences in maths, science and technology and are defined in the national catalogue of professional qualifications. VET curricula are designed based on these standards.
- training VET teachers trainers Training of VET teachers in science and technology competence is promoted by the regional education authorities. Training on specific software for VET teachers and trainers is offered annually. The topic and duration of these programmes vary. Training for teachers in public VET schools is promoted by economic incentives that are available only to those who gather a minimum of training credits within a six-year period.
- centralised assessment of the key competence in VET No. However, to access VET programmes (intermediate and advanced level) it is necessary to demonstrate the level of maths.
- other instruments (e.g. ways of working, teaching/learning methods) The regulation ECD 65/2015 refers to key competences (maths, science and technology) in Annex II (ANEXO II Orientaciones para facilitar el desarrollo de estrategias metodológicas que
**The progress of improving key competence levels at upper secondary VET is monitored**

**How is it monitored?**

- **through international or national statistical data**
  - Education system indicators (*Sistema estatal de indicadores de la educación*:
    [http://www.mecd.gob.es/inee/publicaciones/indicadores-educativos/Sistema-Estatal.html#SEIE2014_1](http://www.mecd.gob.es/inee/publicaciones/indicadores-educativos/Sistema-Estatal.html#SEIE2014_1) measure the key competence, although for general education as a whole and not specifically for VET.

- **survey(s)**
  - PISA (numeracy)

- **benchmark(s)**
  - No

- **other instrument(s)**
  - No

**Key competence level improved among upper secondary VET students since (+/-) 2010**

- PISA 2009-12 shows no change in numeracy competence level for upper secondary (including VET) students (level 1: 24%, levels 5-6, 8%).

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### 4. Key competence: digital competence

**The acquisition of the key competence at upper secondary VET is promoted at national/regional level**

**How is it promoted?**

- **national/regional policy document(s)**
  - Digital Agenda (*Agenda digital para España, 2013*) promotes the revision of VET qualifications to improve the use of ICT through better connectivity of VET schools, promoting digital literacy and developing new VET programmes for ICT-related jobs.
  - Employment strategy 2014-16 and active labour market policy also promote ICT in VET.
    [https://www.sepe.es/contenidos/personas/encontrar_empleo/normativa/politicas_activas_empleo.html](https://www.sepe.es/contenidos/personas/encontrar_empleo/normativa/politicas_activas_empleo.html)

- **national/regional law(s), regulation(s)**
  - No

- **national/regional curricula, standards and qualifications**
  - VET comprises ICT-related fields of studies.

- **training VET teachers trainers**
  - Teachers and trainers improve digital competence through acquisition of digital resources for teaching, software and online applications and the use of the online (open) resources. Procomun resource ([http://educalab.es/recursos/procomun](http://educalab.es/recursos/procomun)) facilitates access to the repository of open digital educational resources, including teaching materials and simulation apps for VET ([http://educalab.es/recursos/historico/formacion-](http://educalab.es/recursos/historico/formacion-))
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### 5. Key competence: learning to learn

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Yes</th>
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</table>

**How is it promoted?**

- **national/regional policy document(s)**: Learning to learn is promoted at all VET levels, including upper secondary. Self-learning is linked to identification of own learning needs.

- **national/regional law(s), regulation(s)**: Self-learning is one of the objectives of VET ([regulation 1147/2011, Art 3.c and 3.f](#)).

- **national/regional curricula, standards and qualifications**: VET qualifications are developed based on professional qualifications and occupational standards. Learning to learn is part of 'personal autonomy and initiative; that is described in the standards for professional qualifications.

- **training VET teachers trainers**

- **centralised assessment of the key competence in VET** No

- **other instruments (e.g. ways of working, teaching/learning methods)** Learning to learn (self-learning) competence is a learning outcome in upper secondary VET encouraging active participation in the learning opportunities at work ([Formación en Centros de trabajo and Modulo de Prácticas no laborales](#)).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>No</th>
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6. Key competence: interpersonal, intercultural and social competences, and civic competence

<table>
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<tr>
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Key competence level improved among upper secondary VET students since (+/-) 2010 No data

The progress of improving key competence levels/learning outcomes among upper secondary VET students is monitored No

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<thead>
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<td>• national/regional policy document(s)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• national/regional law(s), regulation(s)</td>
<td>Personal and social relationship and team work are objectives of VET (regulation 1147/2011, Art 3c and 3d). National regulations referring to the basic VET programmes (127/2014, 356/2014 and ECD/1030/2014) define and promote social and civic competences in VET.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• national/regional curricula, standards and qualifications</td>
<td>All VET programmes at ISCED level 353 comprise the compulsory ‘communication and society I’ and ‘communication and society II’ modules.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• training VET teachers trainers</td>
<td>Specific training of VET teachers in dealing with students with intercultural and personal education needs is in demand. Training of VET teachers in the education system is provided at the regional level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• centralised assessment of the key competence in VET</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• other instruments (e.g. ways of working, teaching/learning methods)</td>
<td>‘On-the-job’ modules (Formación en Centros de trabajo and Modulo de Prácticas no laborales) promote practical application of interpersonal, intercultural and social competences (working with different people). The national centre for innovation in education develops education resources for social inclusion, including intercultural aspects <a href="http://educalab.es/cnie/DDHH-Convivencia">http://educalab.es/cnie/DDHH-Convivencia</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The progress of improving key competence levels/learning outcomes among upper secondary VET students is monitored No
7. Key competence: entrepreneurship

The title(s) in the national context (if different) | Personal initiative and entrepreneurship (Sentido de iniciativa y espíritu emprendedor)
---|---

The acquisition of the key competence at upper secondary VET is promoted at national/regional level | Yes

How is it promoted?

- **national/regional policy document(s)**
  - Strategy for youth employment and entrepreneurship 2013-16 (*) includes measures promoting entrepreneurship competence among young unemployed. Annual ‘active labour market policy’ plans of public employment service promote VET programmes (e.g. management of micro-enterprises) for youth without upper secondary education.

- **national/regional law(s), regulation(s)**
  - Regulation (1147/2011) defines compulsory entrepreneurship training module in every upper secondary VET programme. Curricula of each VET Diploma

- **national/regional curricula, standards and qualifications**
  - Intermediate (advanced upper secondary) and higher VET programmes include an entrepreneurship module (Módulo de Empresa e iniciativa emprendedora: Business and entrepreneurial initiative) that teaches how to create and run an enterprise, and provides social responsibility skills. Entrepreneurship competence is promoted in all upper secondary VET programmes as a stand-alone subject ‘business and entrepreneurial initiative module’. Entrepreneurship culture is considered essential for VET students as it is also related to innovations, self-learning and personal initiative. An ‘enterprise development’ project is compulsory in all upper secondary VET programmes at ISCED level 355 regardless of the field of study.

- **training VET teachers/trainers**
  - Regional authorities each year offer entrepreneurship module for teachers/trainers. The duration of the module varies by region. Training for teachers is considered compulsory at least in public VET schools as it entails financial incentives. The ‘Finance for everybody’ online resource comprises specific resources for teachers: [http://www.finanzasparatodos.es/gepese/es/inicio/](http://www.finanzasparatodos.es/gepese/es/inicio/)
### Key competence: cultural expression

#### The title(s) in the national context (if different)
Consciousness and cultural expression (Conciencia y expresiones culturales)

#### The acquisition of the key competence is promoted at national/regional level
Yes

#### How is it promoted?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instrument/Method</th>
<th>Promoted</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>national/regional policy document(s)</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>national/regional law(s), regulation(s)</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>national/regional curricula, standards and qualifications</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>training VET teachers/trainers</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>centralised assessment of the key competence in VET</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other instruments (e.g. ways of working, teaching/learning methods)</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### The progress of improving key competence levels/learning outcomes among upper secondary VET students is monitored
No

Conclusions

Key competences are included in upper secondary VET as objectives. Specific key competences, such as learning to learn and interpersonal and civic competences, are considered transversal in curricula. Key competences such as communication in a foreign language and entrepreneurship and personal initiative are mostly taught as separate subjects/modules. Since 2014, the new communication and society subject/module was introduced in basic (upper secondary) VET for learners without compulsory secondary education certificate. English is considered essential for increasing employability and modernisation and globalisation of the national economy. Therefore, bilingual VET programmes are being developed.

There is no centralised assessment of key competence in upper secondary VET. When key competences are taught through a specific subject/module, individual assessment of learning outcomes takes place. Improvement on literacy and numeracy are evaluated through OECD PIACC and PISA (for 15 years old) studies.

Digital and entrepreneurship competences are promoted mostly within the ICT and administrative/managerial VET programmes. Professional certificates on entrepreneurship (*Creación y gestión de microempresas*) *(7)* and cultural expression exist.

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*(7)* Real Decreto 1692/2011, de 18 de noviembre, por el que se establecen dos certificados de profesionalidad de la familia profesional Administración y gestión que se incluyen en el Repertorio Nacional de certificados de profesionalidad.
References

*Education and training monitor 2015 Spain*

*Real Decreto 1147/2011, de 29 de julio, por el que se establece la ordenación general de la formación profesional del sistema educativo.*

*Real Decreto 34/2008, de 18 de enero, por el que se regulan los certificados de profesionalidad.*

*Orden ECD/65/2015, de 21 de enero, por la que se describen las relaciones entre las competencias, los contenidos y los criterios de evaluación de la educación primaria, la educación secundaria obligatoria y el bachillerato.*