

THEME 8

**Accumulating, transferring and
validating learning**

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08 - ACCUMULATING, TRANSFERRING AND VALIDATING LEARNING

801 - GENERAL BACKGROUND

1. MOBILITY IN THE LABOUR MARKET

Studies relative to the 1980s and 1990s have stressed the need for reforms in functional and geographical mobility, which was subject to important reforms in the 1990s.

From a regulatory point of view, the norms related to functional mobility are contained in the revised text of the Law on the Statute of Workers' Rights, with a central element: the reform of the occupational classification systems to replace the old Ordinances. This aspect is described in detail in the section on collective bargaining.

On the other hand, geographical mobility has been one of the objectives of active employment policies in the threefold dimension of professional guidance, training and employment.

Employment Act 56/2003, of 16th December, which repealed Basic Employment Act 51/1980, of 8th October, places the free movement of workers and geographical mobility at both national and European level, as one of the objectives of employment policies.

Under this Law, the National Public Employment Service was created, with powers that include the management of "programmes whose execution affects an area greater than the autonomous community and which require the geographical mobility of unemployed workers or workers participating in them to an autonomous community other than their own and need unified co-ordination" (art. 13.e.1).

Amongst the programmes and measures included in active employment policies, the Law contemplates, among others, the development of occupational and continuing training, training designed for qualification for employment, and the promotion of professional work experiences in companies, as measures aimed at facilitating labour mobility.

Both aspects have significantly changed due to the evolution and characteristics of the labour market in Spain.

2. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LABOUR MARKET

Among the most significant aspects of the evolution of the labour market, the following may be highlighted:

The Spanish population's demographic trends, significantly different from those of the late 1980s and early 1990s, with 4 features: population ageing, birth rate decrease, incorporation and participation of women in the labour market and increased emigration. These aspects have been, and still are, the subject of study in prospective research on the need for qualification.

On the other hand, Employment Act 56/2003, of 16th December, describes the evolution of the labour market in the following terms: "There have been expansive situations that have made it possible to generate employment. However, there is still a high unemployment rate and a low occupation rate, compared with European Union figures, particularly for women. Moreover, there are still difficulties for certain collectives to join the labour market, with particular effect in terms of long-term unemployment, training deficiencies among the working population, obstacles to geographical and functional mobility among the different labour markets, an excessive temporary employment rate and a limited rate of participation of public employment services in labour intermediation".

The high temporary employment rate and the low occupation rate has been the subject of successive Labour Agreements. The entry and exit flows in the labour market are high. Geographical mobility has considerably increased, according to recent studies by the National

Employment Institute.

Finally, one must note the existence of significant occupational and territorial imbalances.

3. REGULATION AND DEREGULATION OF PROFESSIONS

In general terms, Royal Decree 1754/1998 of 31st July (BOE [Official State Gazette] of 7th August, 1998), which amends the Appendix to R/D 1396/1995 regarding the General System of Recognition of Qualifications and Vocational Training Titles in the European Union member states and the other signatory states of the European Economic Space Agreement, specifies the professions for which there are specific training requirements. (Appendix IV of R/D 1396/95.

The list of regulated activities/professions is included in the appendices to the above-mentioned Royal Decrees, whereby Spanish Law incorporates the European Council and Parliament Directives relative to the General System of Recognition of Qualifications and Vocational Training Titles, the second General System of Recognition of Vocational Training Titles, as well as the recognition of qualifications for those professional activities to which the Directives on deregulation and transitory measures refer.

The regulated activities/professions pertaining to levels I-III, that is, those related to qualifications and certificates not covered by the first system, are the studied within the National Catalogue of Qualifications' corresponding occupational families, both in the case of those already regulated in accordance with specific regulations and those that exhibit trends towards regulation or deregulation.

This work is performed in co-operation with the corresponding competent Authorities and Bodies, particularly during the external comparison stage.

The regulated activities or professions are important, in varying levels, in the following families: Maritime-Fishing, Food Industry, Health Care, Electricity and Electronics, Energy and Water, Transport and Vehicle Maintenance. Extraction Industries, Construction and Civil Works, Hotel Industry and Tourism.

It should be noted that the professional qualifications identified and defined in the Catalogue do not involve any regulation of professional practice or exclusive attribution of certain functions to specific qualifications, nor do they affect the content of labour relationships. Consequently, there is no "automatic" recognition.

4. COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Under its legislation, collective bargaining has been given broad regulatory powers in accordance with the collective agreement model specified in the Statute of Workers' Rights.

In addition to the agreements that regulate working conditions and labour relationships within a given sphere, there are intersectorial Framework Agreements, designed to organise the structure of collective bargaining. There are also Agreements regarding specific issues, such as those that regulate continuing training, the National Continuing Training Agreements, which have had a significant impact on the development of this aspect since 1992.

The successive Agreements relative to this matter signed since 1992 have come to "make negotiating autonomy a primary source in the organisation of continuing training", giving the Spanish continuing training model certain originality as regards the role and protagonism of the social partners.

It is therefore advisable to make a distinction between intersectorial and sectorial Agreements in these matters, which have a nation-wide scope, and ordinary collective agreements, in which the role or presence of vocational training is very limited. In the case of Sectorial Agreements, they usually have recourse to the National Continuing Training Agreements.

In this regard, one must mention the matter of occupational classifications, which were the subject

of an Agreement in 1997, with the introduction of occupational groups as opposed to the categories included in the old ordinances. This Agreement initiated a process, which is still underway, to replace and introduce this new classification, which has also been addressed through sectorial studies on the related themes of qualification, training, work organisation and working conditions.

The Agreement on the Filling of Gaps specifies in article 7 ("Classification Factors") that the assignment of workers to a specific occupational group "shall be based on joint assessment of the following factors: knowledge, experience, initiative, autonomy, responsibility, command and complexity", with a scale of 8 occupational groups, the last of which refers to managerial functions.

The classification of workers within an agreed occupational structure and the subsequent assignment to a given Occupational Group shall be based on assessment of the following factors: knowledge, experience, initiative, autonomy, responsibility, command and complexity.

The occupational groups directly affect functional mobility and, more generally, the relationship between this system and the National System of Qualifications and, specifically, the National Catalogue of Professional Qualifications.

5. ORGANISATION OF VOCATIONAL TRAINING

Both the formal system of initial vocational training and occupational training are organised in occupational families.

In the case of occupational training, this has been carried out since the 1970s, with periodical adaptations until the present, and in the case of initial vocational training, since the passing of the Law on the General Organisation of the Educational System of 1990. Among the aspects of the 1990 reform now worth mentioning are: the modular design of specific vocational training; the organisational framework of families and low- and upper-level training cycles; the introduction of the Training at the Workplace (FCT) practice module with the convenience of designing a common certification system for the initial vocational training and the occupational training subsystems being noted at the time in the preparatory documents for debate.

The initial specific vocational training subsystem comprises 22 occupational families, organised in two training cycles, low-level and higher-level, with 142 Qualifications that make up the Catalogue of Formal Vocational Training Qualifications.

The occupational training subsystem is organised in 25 occupational families. The Repertoire of Certificates of Professionalism includes, in an integrated manner, the certifiable occupations and the basic contents of each of the certificates according to the occupations' professional profile, the training schedule sequentially organised in modules, the total duration of the training schedule and that of each of the modules, as well as personal and material requirements.

The public training offering leading to qualifications (Technical and Higher Technical) and certificates of professionalism is composed of these 2 subsystems.

On the other hand, the National Catalogue of Professional Qualifications, to which we refer below, establishes 26 Occupational Families. The professional qualifications are ordered by occupational family and by level.

As specified in Article 8 of Organic Law 5/2002, on Qualifications and Vocational Training, the Qualifications and Certificates of Professionalism accredit the pertinent professional qualifications and have the pertinent academic effects.

The purpose of this is to specify that all the qualifications included in the National Catalogue of Qualifications are accredited either within the educational system (Professional Academic Qualifications) or the labour system (Certificates of Professionalism).

Their recognition in the labour market is optional for business owners and, in the case of the

Certificates of Professionalism, they accredit professional proficiencies acquired through occupational and continuing training, training and employment programmes, learning and training contracts, work experiences or other non-formal training routes, without this entailing regulation of professional practice.

The document "Basis for the Elaboration of the National Catalogue of Professional Qualifications" (General Vocational Training Council" , May, 2003) emphasises:

"The organisation in occupational families makes it possible to classify qualifications according to sectorial and functional criteria in areas that include related professional and economic activity spheres. This structuring, which matches the organisation of initial vocational training and occupational training and facilitates the integration of the training offerings arising from the National Catalogue of Professional Qualifications, may be subject to the necessary amendments in order to reflect the changes that may take place in the productive system".

See below the following attachments.

<u>SUBSYSTEMS</u>					
<u>SYNTHESISED</u>	<u>STRUCTURE</u>	<u>OF</u>	<u>THE</u>	<u>NATIONAL</u>	<u>CATALOGUE</u>
<u>CNCP's</u>		<u>OCCUPATIONAL</u>			<u>FAMILIES</u>
<u>QUALIFICATION LEVELS</u>					

0802 - POLICY DEVELOPMENT ON ACCUMULATING, TRANSFERRING AND VALIDATING LEARNING MAIN POLICIES RELATED TO THE ACCUMULATION, TRANSFER AND VALIDATION OF LEARNING

1. LIFELONG LEARNING

Organic Law 5/2002 recognises the principle of lifelong learning or training when it refers, *inter alia*, to the purpose of the Law ("the system must promote lifelong training, by integrating the various training offerings and implementing recognition and accreditation of professional qualifications") and employability, as well as when it refers to groups with special difficulties for joining the labour market.

Recognition, evaluation and accreditation of proficiencies is addressed in article 8.2 and 3, in the following terms:

- "8.2 Evaluation and accreditation of professional proficiencies acquired through work experience or non-formal training channels shall have the National Catalogue of Professional Qualifications as a reference point and shall at all times be developed in accordance with criteria that guarantee the evaluation's reliability, objectivity and technical rigour.
- 8.3. Recognition of the professional proficiencies thus evaluated, when they do not complete the qualifications included in a given degree or certificate of professionalism, shall be carried out through a partial cumulative accreditation for the purpose, when applicable, of completing training leading to attainment of the pertinent qualification or certificate".

The Law talks about "partial cumulative accreditation", in reference to non-formal and informal learning.

In current practice, this partial cumulative accreditation has been, and is, performed through regulated entrance examinations for both initial vocational training qualifications and certificates of professionalism in occupational training, to which we will refer further below.

The Law proposes a model for the recognition, evaluation and accreditation of professional proficiencies within the framework of the National System of Professional Qualifications, which must have the National Catalogue of Professional Qualifications as a reference point.

The first materialisation of this model was the ERA 03 Experimental Project for the Evaluation, Recognition and Accreditation of Proficiencies, carried out in 2003 and now finished.

The General Vocational Training Council is currently analysing the basis for a Recognition and Evaluation System for Non-Formal and Informal Learning within the framework of the National System of Professional Qualifications, a text which is for the most part based on the results of the ERA project.

The National Catalogue of Professional Qualifications has been created to facilitate lifelong training, workers' mobility and the unity of the labour market. The organisation by proficiency units and training modules, following the experience already applied in the initial vocational and occupational training subsystems, leads to an integrated focus: given that the National Catalogue of Qualifications is the common reference point for both subsystems, this would facilitate, on the other hand, the correspondence and equivalence between both subsystems.

This incorporates the idea already included in the NPNFP (1998/2002) to create an offering of professional modules designed to allow the acquisition and capitalisation of professional proficiencies by the active population.

2. CONSISTENCY BETWEEN EDUCATIONAL POLICIES AND EMPLOYMENT POLICIES

Employment policies have always been considered as the main reference point for training policies, particularly in relation to the 3 subsystems. The most direct expression of this relationship is the one provided since 1998 by the National Employment Action Plans. It should be noted that substantial parts of the II National Vocational Training Programme 1998/2002 were formulated in terms of the guidelines and directives agreed at the Luxembourg Summit and that this referential component is maintained in Law 5/2002 and related regulations. The 2002 balances at EU and national levels show how this consistency functions, which can be taken as fully operative in terms of operational planning and programming.

Development of these policies takes place both at central government level and at regional government level.

The approaches may be characterised as mixed.

In this respect, the General Vocational Training Council should be mentioned, created by Law 1/1986, amended by Law 15/1997, which is a consulting body that has the institutional participation of government offices and advises the government on vocational training matters. It is attached to the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and is the only body that deals exclusively with matters related to vocational training. The Social Partners, the Autonomous Communities and the Central Government participate and are represented in it.

The most outstanding features as regards the accumulation, transfer and validation of professional proficiencies are:

- The commune agreement, virtually generalised, that exists regarding the construction of the National System of Qualifications and Vocational Training.
- The initiative adopted within the framework of the General Vocational Training Council regarding the ERA 03 experimental project and its continuation, as well as the scaled complementary initiatives that have arisen in some Autonomous Communities, as presented in their respective Training Plans.

3. THE KEY ACTORS

Organic Law 5/2002 defines, in the preamble and in articles 5 and 6 of the Preliminary Title, the key actors in the regulation and co-ordination of the National System of Qualifications and Vocational Training, as well as the collaboration of companies, the social partners and other entities.

Table 1: Key actors in Vocational Training

RESPONSIBLE ACTORS	SCOPE
Ministry of Education and Science. Autonomous Communities. Local Government Offices.	Initial Vocational Training. Adult Education.
Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. Autonomous Communities. Local Government Offices.	Occupational training and vocational training and job placement actions.
Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. Social Partners. Autonomous Communities.	Continuing training according to the schemes specified in the National and Tripartite Agreements.

4. REGULATION AND CO-ORDINATION

The Spanish Constitution sets out the distribution of responsibilities between the Central Government and the Autonomous Communities. The Central Government is responsible for the regulation and co-ordination of the National System of Qualifications and Vocational Training within the scope of the powers that correspond exclusively to the Central Government to safeguard the homogeneity and unity of the training system, the labour market, general programming, etc.

From the second half of the 1990s, there was an acceleration in the transfer of vocational training policy management responsibilities to the Autonomous Communities, which included the norms for developing central government legislation, regulation of non-basic aspects of the system and those executive-administrative responsibilities related to management within their own territory.

In most of the Autonomous Communities participatory and technical bodies have been created for the development of training policies, which are to a certain extent counterparts of the national entities, namely, Vocational Training Councils and Qualifications Institutes, and not forgetting the Regional Training Programmes.

The General Vocational Training Council (CGFP), created by Law 1/1986, of 7th January, amended by Laws 19/1997, of 9th June, and 14/2000, of 29th December, is the consulting body in which the government offices and the social partners have an institutional participation and which advises the government on vocational training matters.

The CGFP's primary mission has been that of drafting and submitting to the government the National Vocational Training Programme. Under this designation, these programmes specify objectives and working priorities for a given period, generally 5 years, which include the set of vocational training subsystems. So far 2 National Programmes have been drawn up, covering the periods 1993/1996 and 1998/2002, and have specified, in agreement with and approved by the government, the development framework for vocational training as a whole.

With the passing of Organic Law 5/2002, which coincided with the conclusion of the II National Programme, the Council's work has focused, among other aspects, on the development of core elements of the Law. During the first semester of 2003, the Council set the guidelines for the implementation of the ERA experimental project for evaluation, recognition and accreditation of

professional proficiencies and, likewise, the methodology basis for establishing the professional qualifications for the National Catalogue.

The National Qualifications Institute (Royal Decree 375/1999, of 5th March), is a technical body assisting the General Vocational Training Council, responsible for defining, drafting and updating the National Catalogue of Professional Qualifications and the corresponding Modular Vocational Training Catalogue.

Local Government Offices: The legislation recognises the local corporations' power to co-operate with National and Regional government offices in extracurricular and complementary activity programmes and in diverse services related to education, vocational training and employment.

5. COLLABORATION WITH COMPANIES AND OTHER ENTITIES

The participation of other entities usually takes place through collaboration agreements.

Companies, either individually or through their representative organisations, Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Navigation, Universities and productive sectors and the social partners participate in areas such as student training at the workplace, teacher training with the incorporation, where applicable, of qualified professionals, vocational information and guidance, etc.

NGOs, non-profit entities, as well as foundations of political parties represented in Parliament may participate in job placement plans and related actions (social inclusion), through specific regulations and agreements that on some occasions include the local corporations.

In the case of specific initial vocational training, the extremely active role of the Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Navigation in the programming and implementation of the Training at the Workplace module is particularly significant.

As a specific formula in the areas of occupational training aimed at unemployed groups and continuing training for workers, the contract-programmes are of particular interest.

See below the following attachments.

EDUCATIONAL				SYSTEM	
VOCATIONAL	TRAINING	FOR	JOB	SEEKERS	
CONTINUING	TRAINING	FOR	CURRENTLY	EMPLOYED	WORKERS

080201 - IMPACT OF EU POLICY COOPERATION

The European dimension is fully recognised in all the regulatory texts and the policies' approaches to the three qualification subsystems, initial, occupational and continuing.

In the II National Vocational Training Programme 1998/2002, the European framework and dimension of vocational training was one of the horizontal objectives ("whatever the Vocational Training Subsystem, the contents of the European Union Treaty constitute essential reference points for the development of training policies and actions, etc." The European dimension was taken into consideration in relation to priority themes arising, primarily, from the Luxembourg Summit, and attention was focused on the transparency of qualifications, the consistency of training actions with the objectives of the structural funds and the promotion of European vocational training programmes and Community initiatives.

In several of its articles, Organic Law 5/2002 refers to the EU's guidelines and criteria. Particularly worth mentioning, among the National System of Qualifications' statement of principles (article 2.3.d), is that which refers to "the adaptation of training and qualifications to European Union criteria, on the basis of the objectives of the single market and the free movement of workers".

Similarly, we may refer to the Preliminary Draft of the Organic Law, whose preamble reaffirms "the

determined commitment to the educational objectives proposed by the European Union for the coming years”, with the implication that “the Spanish educational system must adapt its actions in the coming years to the achievement of the objectives shared with its European Union partners”.

The ERA 03 Project Evaluation, Recognition and Accreditation of Professional Proficiencies, has been, after the passing of Organic Law 5/2002, the first action proposed by the General Vocational Training Council, which in the first quarter of 2003 agreed on the project's general guidelines, centred on a basic objective: to test a procedure for the evaluation, recognition and accreditation of proficiencies acquired through work experience or non-formal and informal training routes.

The ERA 03 Project may be considered, moreover, as a specific response to a historical demand from the Vocational Training Council itself, present in the successive proposals contained in the I National Vocational Training Programme (1993/1996), the Basic Agreement on Training Policies of 1996 and the II National Vocational Training Programme (1998/2002) relative to the recognition of professional experience.

The Council's Conclusions of May, 2004 on “Common Principles for the Identification and Validation of Non-formal and Informal Learning” are set out in the appendix on European reference points in the text “PROYECTO ERA 03, Evaluación, Reconocimiento y Acreditación de las Competencias Profesionales” [ERA 03 PROJECT, Evaluation, Recognition and Accreditation of Professional Proficiencies] (Experimental Project) (Ministry of Education and Science, European Social Fund, 2004).

The project has served as the basis for the drafting of a “Document of the Basis for a System of Recognition and Evaluation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning within the Framework of the National System of Professional Qualifications”, based on the provisions of article 8.2, Recognition, evaluation, accreditation and registration of qualifications, of Organic Law 5/2002: “The evaluation and accreditation of proficiencies acquired through work experience or non-formal training channels shall have the National Catalogue of Professional Qualifications as a reference point and shall at all times be developed in accordance with criteria which guarantee the evaluation's reliability, objectivity and technical rigour”.

The chapter which opens the document “Basis for a System of Evaluation, Recognition and Accreditation of Proficiencies” includes the common principles for identification and validation of informal learning as a basic reference element regarding individual rights, actors' responsibilities, transparency of the procedures, impartiality, social legitimisation.

Furthermore, in their Annual Reports the Economic and Social Council and the National School Council follow EU policies in the matter. Specifically, the Economic and Social Council's 2004 Report includes the common principles in the section on the European convergence process in education and training.

EUROPEAN QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK (EQF)

It is still too soon to assess this issue, which has aroused significant interest both in the context of the Qualifications Framework for Higher Education (Process of Bologna), with criticism and controversies regarding certain approaches present in that context, and in the specific context of the actors involved in education and vocational training.

The EQF (principles, blocks which compose it and functions) poses, particularly in the present situation, the challenge of matching and the articulation between the instrument's necessarily generic nature, given the approach based on learning results and the succinct description of each of the 8 levels in terms of the pertinent generic qualification, and the national frameworks. It is important to make progress in the way(s) the involved parties, including individual citizens, use it, within the premise that it does not entail a “legal obligation”.

In the case of Spain, the Qualifications Framework, constituted by the National Catalogue of Qualifications, organised horizontally by occupational families and vertically in 5 levels, adopts an approach whose origin lies in the proposal of the 1985 Decision on the Correspondence of

Qualifications, adapted at the time by the two subsystems, initial vocational training and occupational training, which basically comprises qualification levels I-III, with Higher Education excluded.

Consequently, the EQF has very significant implications. One of the principles of the National System of Qualifications and Vocational Training is “the adjustment of training and qualifications to European Union criteria, on the basis of the objectives of the single market and the free movement of workers”.

EUROPEAN CREDIT TRANSFER SYSTEM FOR EDUCATION AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING (ECVET)

The Copenhagen Declaration Credit Transfer Technical Group's work has received close attention, through the Intermediate Reports and the studies generated within it. The National Qualifications Institute has participated in this technical group.

Worth noting is the formal analogy between the models proposed by the Technical Working Group, amongst others, the Operational Typology based on the concepts of unity, module, credit and certification (Intermediate Report of October, 2003), and subsequent developments, and the methodological and conceptual approaches of the National Catalogue of Qualifications, which leads to the consideration that there is a strong congruence between the Ecvet instrument and the organisation of vocational training by the National System of Qualifications and Vocational Training.

As indicated in other sections, albeit modularised, the Spanish vocational training system has not considered applying a system of credit points, having only incipient partial experiences in this regard.

SOCIAL DIALOGUE

The noteworthy initiatives are based on the above-mentioned points and the continuity of the ERA 03 experimental project in the General Vocational Training Council's current approaches in “Basis for a System of Evaluation, Recognition and Accreditation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning within the Framework of the National System of Qualifications”.

0803 - ACCUMULATING, TRANSFERRING, VALIDATING LEARNING: LEGAL, ADMINISTRATIVE AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Qualifications within the education system are established by the government following consultation with the Autonomous Regions. The Royal Decree establishing any particular qualification also lays down the necessary skills characteristic of the qualification. These vocational skills are expressed in terms of the occupational profile required for the competent performance of the corresponding occupation.

In terms of the curriculum, the education authorities of the Autonomous Regions must complement the basic curriculum for each qualification. The curricula take into account the economic, social, and human resource development needs and the economic structure of each area, and encourage the participation of the social partners.

Law 1/1990, the *Ley Orgánica de Ordenación General del Sistema Educativo* LOGSE (General Educational System Reform Act) establishes educational goals for each level and the subjects to be taught in the whole of the schooling system: both the general system, including middle and upper level vocational schooling, and the special streams, including Arts, Languages and Sports, as well as university education.

The Organic Law 5/2002 of 19th June on Qualifications and Vocational Training establishes the creation of a National Qualification and Vocational Training System and indicates that one of its purposes is to evaluate and officially accredit vocational qualification, however this may have been acquired.

The Organic Law 10/2002 of 23rd December also establishes in the article 8.4 the recognition of

accreditations and the responsibility of the Education Administration about this matter.

ACCESS TO THE LABOUR MARKET

Access to the labour Market, as well as workers' labour rights, are specified in the Law on the Statute of Workers' Rights, revised text of 1995. Article 6. Work by minors (Section III. Elements and effectiveness of the employment contract. Chapter 1. General provisions of Title 1. Individual labour relationship) sets the age for admission in the labour market at 16 and specifies the working conditions for workers under 18 years of age (prohibition to do night work, overtime and the circumstances that may adversely affect their health or their professional and personal development). Article 7. Capacity to hire also specifies conditions for this age group.

Article 11. Training contracts regulates the basic conditions for the 2 types of contracts, work experience contracts and training contracts.

Section 1 Term of the contract in chapter II. Content of the employment contract, article 14 Probationary period, specifies that this period may be agreed in writing, within the bounds of the term limitations, either through a Collective Agreement or, in the absence thereof, by the rule of a maximum of 6 months for workers with qualifications and 2 for the rest.

MOBILITY BETWEEN DIFFERENT SECTORS

The Statute of Workers' Rights addresses mobility in article 22. Occupational Classification System, of Section 3 Occupational Classification and Promotion at Work of Chapter II. Content of the Employment Contract and in article 39 Functional Mobility of the Section Functional and Geographical Mobility of Chapter III Modification, suspension and termination of the employment contract.

The first of these, in addition to setting the occupational classification system through collective bargaining and the assignment to a given salary bracket, specifies the possibility to grant workers functional polyvalence or the performance of more than one function under the conditions specified in article 39, on the limitations to functional mobility, which are basically related to those imposed by the academic or professional qualifications required to perform the job and by belonging to the occupational group.

THE ASSIGNMENT OF SALARY LEVELS

The assignment of specific salaries may be considered through the provisions, in the case of contracts (among them, the work experience contract and the training contract), and the agreements adopted through collective bargaining, generally at the sectorial level, in which the salary structure is specified. The schemes vary depending on whether or not the salary structure is quantified, with the specification, in the first case, of guaranteed minimum wages or overall increases, and include the specification of the minimum wage at the upper level and the bonuses at the lower levels.

In the case of fixed-term contracts, the average annual salary is approximately 40% lower than for indefinite contracts.

The National Statistical Institute's Labour Cost Survey follows the evolution of labour and salary costs by branches of activity, occupation, type of working day and contract, educational level, age, sex and other variables.

In the case of the educational level variable, it is to be noted that:

- Vocational training qualifications pertaining to the low- and upper-level training cycles have a lower remuneration than the Higher Secondary Education Diploma.
- In general, women's average salary is 30% below men's for each qualification level.

There are significant differences among sectors of economic activity, branches, size of company

and territory.

TRANSITION FROM REGULATED TRAINING OR EDUCATION TO THE LABOUR MARKET

In the organisation of specific vocational training, the adaptation of study plans with a view to facilitating job placement, as well as students' mobility, is included not only in the training modules which make up the training associated with each qualification, but also in the transversal or general modules, among which the Training at the Workplace module (work experience training in companies, with a non-labour relationship character, at the end of the school education) is particularly worth mentioning, since it has represented, from its implementation, one of the most effective channels for job placement, according to some studies, among them, those conducted by the Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Navigation. Another of the modules, "Orientation and Labour Relationships", is designed to provide information about the basic labour legislation, opportunities for learning, access to employment and/or job placement/reinsertion.

For those students who drop out, the Social Guarantee Programmes, designed to facilitate their job placement or reinsertion in the educational system, continue to be in effect. One may also mention the specific Job Placement Programmes, within the framework of the measures adopted in the National Employment Action Programme.

TRAINING IN THE LABOUR MARKET

Training and actions for placement in the labour market in accordance with the Basic Employment Act, the National Vocational Training and Placement Programme and the Workshop School and Apprenticeship Centre and Employment Workshop programmes, are included in the National Employment Action Programmes. The Public Employment Service's Occupational Observatory performs a follow-up of these actions and their results in terms of the job placement of trained unemployed students.

080301 - LEGAL FRAMEWORK FROM FORMAL --> FORMAL WITHIN EDUCATION AND TRAINING

MOBILITY IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Mobility within education and the educational system's initial vocational training has been the subject of constant measures and readjustments since the enactment of Law 1/1990, of 3rd October, on the General Organisation of the Educational System. In particular, there has been a significant inflection between 2002, with the passing of Organic Law 10/2002, of 23rd December, on the Quality Education and Organic Law 5/2002 on Qualifications and Vocational Training, to which we will refer further below in this same section, and the present, with the Organic Law on Education Bill, which in its recital of motives recognises that "it is necessary to increase the education system's flexibility. Even though the Spanish educational system has lost part of its initial rigidity over the years, in general it has not favoured the existence of 2-way routes for studies and training. (...) And that flexibility entails creating connections between the various types of education, facilitating the passage from one to another and allowing the configuration of educational routes tailored to personal needs and interests".

Organic Law 10/2002 introduced a set of reforms within the educational system's most sensitive area, that of general secondary education, with a twofold proposal consisting in the introduction of pedagogical tracks at the end of general secondary education, and the transformation of Social Guarantee Programmes into Professional Initiation Programmes, aimed at youngsters who drop out from the educational system either before completing Compulsory Secondary Education or without having obtained the pertinent qualifications.

In 2004, following the delay in some sections of this Law coming into effect, the Ministry of Education and Science published the document for public debate "Towards Quality Education for All and by All". Contrary to the LOCE's (Organic Law for Quality Education) track-based model, the document advocated the implementation of a flexible organisation model, with curricular adaptation and diversification programmes, complementary reinforcement measures and professional initiation programmes leading to top-level professional qualifications and the Secondary Education Diploma (Professional Qualification Programmes), which would therefore make it possible to cater adequately for the students' plurality of needs, aptitudes and interests, and guarantee that all could achieve the stage objectives in the most satisfactory manner.

The said document shows measures that leaned towards creating flexible Higher Secondary Education streams, starting from a common core, with an emphasis on the scientific training essential for students at this educational level in today's society.

On the other hand, Vocational Training is organised in accordance with 2 laws, the above-mentioned LOGSE (Law on the General Organisation of the Educational System) and Organic Law 5/2002, of 19th June, on Qualifications and Vocational Training.

Vocational Training received a significant impetus with the passing of this Law, which created the National System of Qualifications and Vocational Training, as a framework designed to integrate initial vocational training, occupational training for unemployed workers and disadvantaged groups, and continuing training for employed workers, which was a central idea in the vocational training development proposals of the 1990s included in the National Vocational Training Programmes. Through the National Catalogue of Qualifications and the associated Modular Catalogue, the Law puts particular emphasis on evaluation, recognition and accreditation of proficiencies acquired through different routes, whether formal, non-formal or informal.

In the case of initial vocational training, in the low-level (ESO+2) and upper-level (BAC+2) cycles, measures have also been approved to make access and admission, horizontal and vertical movement, and transfer between general education and Vocational Training, and vice-versa, more flexible.

As noted in various studies and in the conclusions of the aforementioned debate, the organisation of Vocational Training in 2 cycles gives each of them a rather "terminal" character, with no possibility of direct access from the low-level to the higher-level. This aspect is mitigated by the approach, initiated in 2002, of making the educational system more flexible.

The upper-level cycles (BAC+2) form a part of non-university higher education and specific measures of correspondence to related university studies, generally exemptions, are applied.

Both specific vocational training and occupational training share a modular organisation of training.

Consequently, mobility is placed at the centre of the concerns of the non-university educational system and vocational training reforms, along the lines opened in 1990 by the LOGSE and the proposals contained in the National Vocational Training Programmes, essentially consolidated by Organic Law 5/2002 on Qualifications and Vocational Training.

MOBILITY BETWEEN GENERAL EDUCATION AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING, OR VICE-VERSA

COMPULSORY SECONDARY EDUCATION (ESO)

The general legal framework that regulates this stage is in Organic Law 1/1990, of 3rd October, on the General Organisation of the Educational System. Divided into 2 cycles, comprising 2 years each, the principle of attention to diversity is applied in the second, through the progressive differentiation of course content.

Organic Law 10/2002, of 23rd December, on Quality Education, introduced training tracks, as well as the Professional Initiation Programmes, in this second cycle.

The Social Guarantee Programmes continue to be in effect, with a new element, the Qualification Programmes, introduced by the Bill of the Organic Law on Education.

HIGHER SECONDARY EDUCATION

The general legal framework which regulates Higher Secondary Education is specified in articles 25 to 29 of section 2, Title I of Organic Law 1/1990, of 3rd October, on the General Organisation of the Educational System.

ROYAL DECREE 3474/2000, of 29th December, whereby the minimum educational requirements

in Higher Secondary Education are specified.

It introduces new approaches to some contents of the common subjects and those specific to each stream, updating the curricula from the scientific and didactic point of view.

RD 938/2001, of 3rd August, whereby the Higher Secondary Education curriculum is specified.

Consistent with the preceding Royal Decree, it incorporates the new subjects introduced in both the group of common subjects and the different streams and supplements all of the curricula's minimum contents in the direction of a greater specificity and up-to-dateness in the scientific and didactic spheres (objectives, content, evaluation criteria).

ORDER ECD/2026/2002, of 1st August, whereby instructions are issued for the application of Royal Decree 1179/1992, of 2nd October, which specifies the Higher Secondary Education curriculum, amended by Royal Decree 938/2001, of 3rd August.

The Order considers the conditions for access, enrolment, validation of subjects by vocational modules pertaining to the specific vocational training low-level cycles, as well as elective subjects and changes of stream, option and elective subjects.

Both Compulsory Secondary Education and Higher Secondary Education include basic vocational training components, which prepare for specific initial vocational training. The general education curricula are organised by subjects and not according to a modular principle.

MOBILITY BETWEEN DIFFERENT TYPES OF INITIAL VOCATIONAL TRAINING (HORIZONTAL BETWEEN SECTORS AND VERTICAL BETWEEN EDUCATIONAL LEVELS)

SOCIAL GUARANTEE

Law 1/1990, of 3rd October, on the General Organisation of the Educational System introduced this measure designed for youngsters who drop out of the educational system without having completed their studies or obtained the Compulsory Secondary Education Diploma. ORDER of 12th January 1993, whereby the Social Guarantee Programmes are regulated and the streams are specified, provided four types of programmes: Professional Initiation, Training-employment, Vocational Workshops, Programmes for students with special educational needs.

These are non-formal curricula regarding which the National School Council has demanded, among other things, a better and clearer articulation with the educational system.

The proposal of Law 10/2002 relative to the Professional Initiation Programmes having been suspended, the Bill of the Organic Law on Education introduces the new Initial Professional Qualification Programmes, designed for youngsters over 16 years of age and under 21 who have not obtained the Compulsory Secondary Education Diploma, to which students over 15 years of age who are not in a condition to pass this stage may exceptionally have access.

The purpose of these programmes is for all students to achieve professional proficiencies pertaining to a level 1 qualification, according to the National Catalogue of Professional Qualifications' current structure, with a modular organisation of training (specific modules for the qualification, general modules and modules geared to obtaining the Compulsory Secondary Education Diploma.

Specific Initial Vocational Training Low-Level (ESO+2) and Upper-level(BAC+2) Cycles.

Royal Decree 362/2004, of 5th March, whereby the general organisation of specific vocational training is specified.

In the development of Organic Law 5/2002, of 19th June, on Qualifications and Vocational Training, the purpose of the Royal Decree is to adapt the organisation of specific vocational training to the new regulatory framework created by the Law. "Basic requirements for access,

admission and enrolment in vocational training are specified in accordance with the principle of flexibility, in order that students may complete their training through the channels that are best suited to their interests, expectations or personal circumstances, and also in order to meet the needs of adult persons in the lifelong training process”.

ORDER of 20th December, 2001, which determines the validation of the specific vocational training studies arising from Organic Law 1/1990, of 3rd October, on the General Organisation of the Educational System.

It specifies validations between professional modules pertaining to different cycles, low-level and higher-level, according to professional modules common to several training cycles, validations of professional modules by occupational family, general validations.

ORDER ECD/2764/2002, of 30th October, which regulates basic aspects of the process of evaluation, academic accreditation and mobility for students enrolled in the Specific Vocational Training specified in Law 1/1990, of 3rd October, on the General Organisation of the Educational System.

It includes the model for the Vocational Training Qualifications Book, specifies the criteria for its implementation and provisions for issuing the Individualised Evaluation Reports in those cases in which students transfer to a different centre without having completed their studies.

MOBILITY BETWEEN DIFFERENT TYPES OF IVET

Organic Law 5/2002 on Qualifications and Vocational Training.

The types of vocational training correspond to the 2 subsystems, specific initial vocational training and occupational training. Law 5/2002 openly specifies the correspondences and/or equivalencies between different types of vocational training in Additional Provision 4. Equivalencies in the following terms:

“Having consulted with the General Vocational Training Council, the Government shall specify the equivalencies, validations, correspondences, and the effects thereof, between the vocational training qualifications and the certificates of professionalism which have been specified and those which may be created in accordance with the provisions of the Law”.

De facto, as specified in other sections, the accreditations are valid for both subsystems in the entrance examinations for academic qualifications or certificates of professionalism.

MOBILITY FROM SPECIFIC INITIAL VOCATIONAL TRAINING TO HIGHER EDUCATION: THE CORRESPONDENCES BETWEEN THE UPPER-LEVEL CYCLES AND HIGHER EDUCATION

There are applications in Autonomous Communities and Universities, and the Bill of the Organic Law on Education provides the common framework to regulate, once the University Co-ordination Council has been heard, the system of validations between university studies and upper-level vocational training studies.

Ministerial Order 25/27 of 4th July enhanced the number of University studies with direct access from the higher technician certificates. So, starting from the mentioned Ministerial Order, 73 higher technician certificates have direct access for more than 200 University studies.

MOBILITY FROM SPECIFIC INITIAL VOCATIONAL TRAINING TO CONTINUING TRAINING

There is no specific legislation in this regard, except in relation to the change of scheme (day, night or distance), in which case the student's training and evaluations are respected.

MOBILITY FROM CONTINUING TRAINING TO HIGHER EDUCATION

There is no specific legislation.

As a mean of access from continuing training to higher education, one may cite the Individual Training Permits, established in the national continuing training Agreements and, now, in the

above-mentioned Royal Decree 1046/2003, of 1st August, regulating the continuing training subsystem. Some 40% or a little over 40% of these permits are geared to obtaining of a university degree, the remainder is distributed between Higher Secondary Education and vocational training. The number of approved applications is about 6 000 per year, with an approximate duration of 175 annual hours.

080302 - LEGAL FRAMEWORK FROM NON-FORMAL/INFORMAL --> FORMAL

There are 3 main legal dispositions about the transfer of learning from non-formal/informal:

Royal Decree 362/2004, of 5th March, whereby the general organisation of specific vocational training is specified.

In Chapter V. Access and Admission, articles 16 to 19, the Royal Decree specifies the requirements for access to mid- and higher-level vocational training by means of an examination. In both cases, the examination has 2 parts:

- general, relative to knowledge (social, linguistic, scientific, mathematical) as specified in the general organisation and common curriculum for Compulsory Secondary Education (mid-level) and that corresponding to Higher Secondary Education (higher-level);
- specific, contents related to the occupational field which the student wishes to access.

Moreover, in both cases it specifies the exemptions for the specific part and, if applicable, the general part, as well as the validation of training modules or the total or partial exemption of the training at the workplace module.

The Royal Decree considers the adaptation of training offerings for students with special educational needs and collectives with particular difficulties in joining the labour market, as well as for adult persons, following the principle that “the educational Authorities may make the training offering and the enrolment system more flexible to adapt to the students' different personal and professional situations, by means of partial enrolment in one or several of the modules which make up a training cycle”.

Royal Decree 942/2003, of 8th July, which specifies the basic conditions that the examinations for obtaining the Specific Vocational Training qualifications of Technician and Senior Technician must meet.

This is the legislative instrument that specifies the procedure for the evaluation, recognition and accreditation of professional proficiencies acquired through non-formal and informal learning for obtaining specific vocational training qualifications, with special reference to adult persons. The basic conditions refer to the announcement of examinations, age, work experience and certification requirements, enrolment by professional modules or complete cycle, and the examinations, structure, contents and evaluation.

In particular, Additional Provision 4 of the above-mentioned RD 1046/2003 specifies the link between training actions and the national catalogue of qualifications: “Annually, the National Continuing Training Committee shall study and may specify the percentage of continuing training actions directly associated with the National Catalogue of Professional Qualifications”.

Royal Decree 1506/2003, of 28th September, whereby the guidelines for the certificates of professionalism are specified.

The certificates of professionalism accredit the professional proficiencies acquired through occupational and continuing training actions, training and employment programmes, learning and training contracts, work experience or other non-formal training channels. The Royal Decree regulates the conditions for obtaining the certificates of professionalism, specifying the general requirements, means of access and participation in the examinations, the constitution of the

Evaluation Committees and the issuing, when applicable, of the partial or total certificate of professionalism accreditation. Moreover, it considers the adaptation to persons with disabilities in order to guarantee their effective participation in the examinations.

Both Royal Decree 942/2003 and 1506/2003 refer to the previous implementation of the “System of Evaluation, Recognition and Accreditation of Proficiencies”, in the terms specified by Law 5/2002, article 8.2 and 3, already mentioned, according to which “the evaluation and accreditation of professional proficiencies acquired through work experience or non-formal training channels shall have the National Catalogue of Professional Qualifications as a reference point”.

080303 - BODIES INVOLVED IN THE ADMINISTRATIVE FRAMEWORK

The Educational Authorities and the Autonomous Communities, the labour Authorities and those Autonomous Communities with competencies in the management of the National Vocational Training and Placing Programme, are the bodies holding responsibilities for this matter.

For accumulation, transfer and validation of learning within the formal system, “formal–formal” situations, the educational Authorities are responsible for announcing examinations at least once a year within the framework of the prevailing provisions.

Curricular decentralisation is specified in a portion of the common curriculum for the entire Country (55% in the case of those Autonomous Communities with a language co-official with Castilian and 65% otherwise) and the curriculum which may be adapted to the circumstances of each Autonomous Community.

For accumulation, transfer and validation of learning from the non-formal/informal to the formal system the educational and labour Authorities and the Autonomous Communities with competencies in the management of the National Vocational Training and Placing Programme are responsible for announcing the examinations as well as for the appointment of the respective Evaluation Committees.

There are no specific measures for specific economic sectors.

Table 1: Responsible Bodies for Validation of learning

ACCUMULATION, TRANSFER, AND VALIDATION OF LEARNING	BODIES	RESPONSIBILITIES	TASKS
Formal-Formal	Educational Authorities. Autonomous Communities' Educational Authorities.	General common principles and rules. Management and execution in the respective sphere.	Standardisation. Information, orientation, diffusion.
Non-formal/Informal-Formal	Autonomous Communities' Educational Authorities. Autonomous Communities with transferred competencies in the management of the National Vocational Training and	Announcement of examinations, at least once a year. Evaluation Committees. Announcement of annual examinations.	Standardisation and certification of examinations by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. Information,

	Placing Programme.	Evaluation Committees.	orientation, diffusion.
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**0804 - IMPLEMENTATION OF AND PRACTICES FOR ACCUMULATION, VALIDATION AND TRANSFER OF LEARNING
SNCP'S PRINCIPLES**

The SNCP's principles cover the 3 subsystems in basic terms, each of which has its own specifications in the respective regulations.

These principles are stated in article 2 Principles of the National System of Qualifications and Vocational Training of Organic Law 5/2002.

ERA'S PILLARS

The ERA 03 project rests on 2 basic pillars:

- The individual or the person as the central figure in the process, in the sense of both the right to recognition and to the accompanying instruments during the entire process and management of the trajectory.
- Quality assurance of the entire process (credibility, recognition and social and professional validity of the obtained accreditations).

The ERA Project was initially proposed within the General Vocational Training Council and promoted by the Ministry of Education and Science with the participation of seven Autonomous Communities as well as the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (SPEE [National Public Employment Service]-INEM [National Employment Institute]) and the Social Partners, through their representation in the General Vocational Training Council.

The following table presents the Principles of the SNCP, ERA 03 Project and the Basis for a System of Recognition and Evaluation of Non-Formal Learning within the Framework of the SNCP.

Table 1: The Principles of the SNCP, ERA 03 Project and the Basis for a System of Recognition and Evaluation of Non-Formal Learning within the Framework of the SNCP

SNCFP'S PRINCIPLES	ERA 03 PROJECT	SYSTEM BASIS
<p>Vocational training shall be geared both to personal development and the exercising of the right to work and free choice of a profession or occupation and to meeting the needs of the productive system and lifelong employment.</p> <p>Access to the different vocational training streams under conditions of equality for all citizens.</p> <p>Participation and co-operation between the social partners and public authorities in vocational training and professional qualification policies.</p>	<p>Validity: professional proficiency must be expressly measured as an integral component of the qualification.</p> <p>Reliability: the recognition and evaluation instruments must guarantee uniformity of the results.</p> <p>Equity: the evaluation process must guarantee fair treatment which takes into consideration</p>	<p>Validity: <i>idem</i>.</p> <p>Reliability: <i>idem</i>.</p> <p>Equity: <i>idem</i>.</p> <p>Universality: the procedure must be reliable and valid for all the evaluators and verifiers and in all the evaluation centres and situations, as well as accessible and applicable to all the beneficiaries.</p> <p>Co-operation: the procedure must be specified by consensus with the social partners and obtain social credibility.</p>

<p>Adaptation of training and qualifications to European Union criteria, on the basis of the objectives of the single market and the free movement of workers.</p> <p>Participation and co-operation by the different Public Authorities on the basis of their respective powers.</p> <p>The Procedure's economic viability and adaptation to the different territorial needs of the productive system.</p>	<p>people's circumstances.</p> <p>Viability: the Procedure's economic viability must be guaranteed.</p>	<p>Viability <i>idem</i>.</p>
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080401 - IMPLEMENTATION AND PRACTICES WITHIN FORMAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The table 1 below summarises the main instruments, measures and practices adopted for the accumulation and transfer of partial qualifications.

The modular system, without credit points, is only applied in vocational training. This modular system is based on the concept of “partial creditable evaluation”, which is operational for the 2 subsystems, initial vocational training and occupational training, both for the formal and the non-formal and informal acquisition of proficiencies.

In general education, a distinction can be made between the final portion of Compulsory Secondary Education and Higher Secondary Education's different streams in post-compulsory secondary education.

Both Compulsory Secondary Education and the Higher Secondary Education systems incorporate basic vocational training components and, in both cases, the study plan considers diversity, by specifying streams of choice and options on the basis of the common curriculum.

The passage to different teaching schemes (day, night, distance), as well as the continuity of studies in the case of geographical displacement are also considered, in a marks Book which is applied to vocational training students.

The options selected by the students may be geared towards specific occupational fields, which may favour *admission* in the corresponding lower- and upper-level cycle programmes.

Those students in the lower-level cycle who wish to enrol in Higher Secondary Education may validate certain subjects of the pertinent Higher Secondary Education stream.

In initial vocational training, one can mention partial in specific modules of a qualification programme within a given training-qualification track.

Regarding horizontal mobility, there are provisions relative to the validation of modules for intra- and intersectorial programmes, an aspect which is also applied to vertical mobility between the lower-level cycle and the upper-level cycle.

Exemptions in the passage from the qualification programmes in the upper-level cycle and Higher Education are considered within the *correspondences* between this cycle and Higher Education related curricula. In some cases, exemptions are materialised through the ECTS credit points.

In the case of the final module, “Training at the Workplace”, there may be *total or partial exemption*, depending on the student's experience as well as the *validation* of training practices performed abroad.

In addition, there are specific *entrance examinations*, whose method and content depend on the level (general education and/or vocational training) which the student wishes to access.

“*Bridging courses*” have also been specified for passage, for instance, from the lower-level to the upper-level cycle.

The bodies holding responsibility for these matters are the same as those mentioned in the section 080303 “Bodies involved in the administrative framework”.

Table 1: Summary table of the main instruments applied for the accumulation, validation, transfer of learning

SUBSYSTEMS INSTRUMENTS	EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM			OCCUPATIONAL TRAINING		CONTINUING TRAINING	
	GENERAL EDUCATION	VOCATIONAL TRAINING	BODIES	OCCUPATIONAL TRAINING	BODIES	CONTINUING TRAINING	BODIES
	-	-	Educational Authorities Autonomous Communities	-	Labour Authorities Autonomous Communities	-	National Continuing Training Committee
MODULES	-	Yes	-	Yes	-	-	-
CREDIT POINTS	-	Partial application	-	Occupational credit without points	-	-	-
PARTIAL ACCREDITABLE EVALUATION	Yes	Yes	-	Yes	-	Individual training permit	-
GEOGRAPHICAL MOBILITY AND MOBILITY ACCORDING TO THE STUDENT'S TEACHING SCHEME	Yes	Yes	-	-	-	-	-

PARTIAL MATRICULATION	Yes	Yes	-	-	-	-	-
CHOICE OF STREAM, COMPULSORY SECONDARY EDUCATION (ESO), HIGHER SECONDARY EDUCATION	Yes	Yes	-	-	-	-	-
EXEMPTIONS	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
CORRESPONDENCES	Yes	Yes	-	Yes	-	-	-
VALIDATIONS	Yes	Yes	-	-	-	-	-
EQUIVALENCIES	Yes	Yes	-	-	-	-	-
EXAMINATIONS	Yes	Yes	-	-	-	-	-
“BRIDGING” COURSES	Yes	Yes	-	-	-	-	-

0805 - IMPLEMENTATION AND PRACTICES FROM NON-FORMAL/INFORMAL --> FORMAL

ACCESS TO EDUCATIONAL AND TRAINING PROGRAMMES

In initial vocational training, indirect access to educational and mid- and higher-level cycle vocational training programmes from non-formal training is obtained through examinations. The assessment corresponds to the knowledge (linguistic, social, scientific, technological) that students must have at the end of compulsory schooling (Compulsory Secondary Education). The successful pass of the examination provides direct access to the mid-level cycle qualification programmes and in one of the four prevailing streams of the Higher Secondary Education programmes in order to access the higher-level cycle programmes.

The Compulsory Secondary Education and the Higher Secondary Education curricula, depending on the streams, include learning geared towards vocational training.

In Adult Education, this section is standardised, with preparatory courses for those adults who wish to participate in them.

ADMISSION TO EXAMINATIONS IN ORDER TO OBTAIN QUALIFICATIONS/CERTIFICATES/DIPLOMAS

Vocational Training qualifications for programmes pertaining to the mid/higher-level cycles. RD 942.

The examinations to obtain qualifications or certificates are based on the specifications contained in the professional modules of the qualification programme, both in the case of specific vocational

training qualifications and occupational training certificates of professionalism.

In the case of specific vocational training degrees, the evaluation is based on abilities, according to the breakdown of proficiency units into performances and performance criteria, and the respective modules of the evaluation criteria. An examination is prepared for each of the professional modules which make up the qualification programme, except for the training at the workplace module.

The examination includes theoretical and practical contents.

The Educational Authorities are responsible for the examinations' elaboration and structure.

The Educational Authorities appoint Evaluation Committees, which may include qualified professionals in an advisory capacity.

There are provisions for validations as well as module exemptions which, in some cases, such as the Training at the Workplace module, may be partial or total, depending on the candidate's duly accredited professional experience.

There are also specific provisions for groups with special needs, disadvantaged collectives and adults, that contemplate either the adaptation of the examinations or preparation for these.

ACCESS TO OTHER FORMS OF VALIDATION OR TRANSFER OF LEARNING

Certificates of professionalism. RD 1506.

In the case of certificates of professionalism, the reference is the occupation's professional profile structured according to proficiency units that include professional performances and their execution criteria. The examinations include theoretical and practical contents.

The theoretical and practical examinations are standardised and certified by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs with the participation of the Autonomous Communities.

The Autonomous Communities with competencies in the management of the National Vocational Training and Placement Plan have the power to create Evaluation Committees, which are integrated by experts of recognised prestige in the pertinent occupational field.

If the candidates have disabilities, the necessary adaptations to guarantee their effective participation in the examinations are performed.

In the case of both qualifications and certificates, partial cumulative accreditations may be issued.

ERA 03 Project: experimental programme in which for the first time the validation of informal learning with formal learning has been studied.

Handbook-guides with supporting materials, which are described below, have been prepared for the three broad stages (awareness and positioning, intervention and accreditation) of the procedure followed in the project:

- The Candidate's Guide, which includes, among other supporting material, the admission application, the training/professional career record and information about the evaluation's process and framework.
- The Orientator's Guide: supporting material for initial orientation, advice and assessment, documentation for the interview with the candidate, proficiency reference points, self-evaluation questionnaires, initial assessment report and proficiencies dossier.
- The Evaluator's Guide: functions, evaluation planning, proof of proficiency guides.

A total of 302 candidates have been evaluated, with an average 20-25 applicants for each of the 9 chosen professional reference points and Autonomous Communities.

ERA PROJECT	INITIAL CANDIDATES	FULL ACCREDITATION	PARTIAL ACCREDITATION	DO NOT OBTAIN ACCREDITATION
CANDIDATES AND EVALUATION RESULTS	302	235	35	32

See below the following attachment.

THE PROCESS STAGES AND THE INTERVENING ACTORS

080501 - SECTOR INITIATIVES FROM NON-FORMAL/INFORMAL --> FORMAL

Most of the sectorial initiatives have been developed within the framework of the Complementary Actions and Accompanying Measures in Relation to Training or in the Leonardo da Vinci II 2000/2006 Community vocational training programmes.

These initiatives do not strictly or directly address the creation of models (procedures, instruments) for the validation of informal and non-formal learning. Rather, they define and explore the issue as a priority in training policies and, particularly, for the improvement and consolidation of continuing training. These approaches, viewed from the perspective of continuing training, have started from a basic scenario: in accordance with the National System of Qualifications' basic principle of integration, explore and propose certification channels for continuing training actions and work experience.

The sectorial studies performed have been framed within 3 lines of work:

- From the perspective of collective bargaining, the analysis of the functional interrelationship between the occupational classification system arising from collective bargaining and the national system of qualifications.
- From the point of view of the national system, the articulation among the 3 vocational training subsystems.
- From the study of the socio-economic and labour conditions, the creation of Professional Observatories with a 3-fold objective:
 - informing on the content of occupations.
 - observing their evolution and the emergence of new occupations.
 - setting priorities at sectorial and territorial levels for the purpose of social dialogue and collective bargaining.

A status report in relation to this matter during the period is offered by the document "Guide for the Accreditation of Professional Proficiencies" (*Julián Besteiro School, Unión General de Trabajadores -General Workers' Union-2000*), designed for workers' legal representatives, trade union delegates and people in charge of Vocational Training and Human Resources, on the grounds that "the accreditation of work experience currently represents a primary option to increase training and qualification levels in employment and to improve the transparency of the labour market".

Along these same lines, we will mention the project "VQT- Dialogue "Professional Proficiencies

and Qualifications in Europe: Approaches and Lines of Work within the Framework of Social Dialogue” (Leonardo da Vinci II -2000/2006: Procedure C Reference Materials, 2000 Edition), whose objectives include “posing hypotheses and lines of work which allow the agents involved to establish strategies in order to make progress in the recognition of professional qualifications”. The national report “The Role and Influence of the Social Partners in the Design, Certification and Validation of Professional Qualifications” (2003) summarises the different actors' positions in relation to recognition of work experience and validation of non-formal and informal learning:

- particular emphasis is put on the right to lifelong learning.
- advocacy of the evaluation of informal learning and its inclusion in training tracks.
- the construction, by consensus, of procedures and instruments for the recognition of qualifications, regardless of their acquisition channels.

080502 - PROFILE OF USERS/CANDIDATES FOR TRANSFER AND VALIDATION FROM NON-FORMAL/INFORMAL --> FORMAL

There are several sources for an estimate of the potential demand:

1. A potential estimate appears in the preamble of “RD 1506/2003, of 28th November, whereby the guidelines for the certificates of professionalism are specified”:

“Since 1995, over 200 000 unemployed workers a year have enrolled in courses whose accreditation could be subject to the issue of a certificate of professionalism or of partial occupational credits for such certificates. Jointly with this, a large part of the active population can accredit sufficient professional proficiencies, obtained through channels other than training, such as non-formal learning or work experience, in order to obtain accreditation of the latter, in the form of a certificate of professionalism”.

2. The Employment Observatory of the SPEE-INEM (National Public Employment Service-National Employment Institute) periodically presents statistical information on job seekers and participants in vocational training and job placement actions under the title Users' Profile.

3. On the other hand, the Tripartite Foundation for Training in Employment, presents, in its 2001 Activities Report (the last one published), the applicants' profiles (companies, business and trade union organisations, co-operative confederations and worker-owned companies with a strong position in the social economy) and the participants' employment profile, which is described in terms of age groups, sex, occupational classification, functional area, size of company and employment status.

4. The Labour Force Survey offers information on the participation of the employed and unemployed population in non-formal training in the “Module of Education/Training Courses Received in the Past 12 Months”. The variables considered are sex and completed educational level, and learning methods, by sex, method and age, distributed according to sex and age.

5. In Adult Education we may refer, *inter alia*, to the OECD report within the “Thematic Review on Adult Learning”, which addresses in chapter 3 “Needs, Motivations and Methodologies in Adult Education and Training”, some of the primary motivational vectors in the access to education and training.

For most of the groups specified in the question, if not for all, it is possible to offer a recipient group profile with the main statistical variables that characterise it.

RECIPIENT GROUPS

The ERA 03 experimental project has been designed for workers with professional proficiencies not officially accredited, susceptible to being included among 1 of the 3 following collectives:

- Youngsters without official accreditation who have joined the labour

market in one of the sectors included in the Project, with at least 2 years of experience in the proficiencies to be evaluated.

- Active workers without official accreditation and with at least 5 years of professional experience related to the proficiencies to be evaluated.
- Unemployed workers without official accreditation and with at least 3 years of professional experience related to the proficiencies to be evaluated.

The ERA 03 Project has analysed, by means of a survey, the assessment of the project by both sector representatives and the candidate workers involved in the development of the experiment.

MOTIVATION FOR VALIDATING LEARNING OF WORKERS

The main motivation to participate in the project has been that of obtaining a qualification or certificate.

Other reasons mentioned are learning and improvement, as well as curiosity about the project; in some cases (Autonomous Community of Navarre and the home care sector), social recognition of the occupation.

A majority of candidates –in tune with the companies- have noted that the evaluation should be closer to the reality of the profession, considering evaluation at the job, direct evidence of performance, as a key element in the development of the application models.

In general, the candidates positively assess the documents and instruments used, an attitude which is related to their satisfaction with the orientators' and evaluators' work.

The reasons for discouragement or lack of motivation include, in some cases, that the result of the evaluation is partial and, in others, the gap between the proficiencies to be evaluated according to the corresponding unit's reference point for the qualification or certificate and the real experience and demands of the jobs they perform.

MOTIVATION FOR VALIDATING LEARNING OF SECTOR REPRESENTATIVES

The Project has also taken into consideration the active participation of companies and professional sectors, with a very positive opinion regarding the procedure, which has been expressed in the demand for greater participation in the process.

The professional sectors and the Autonomous Communities considered it necessary to legally regulate the entire process of recognition, evaluation and accreditation of proficiencies, and to advance towards a Generalised System of Recognition and Evaluation.

In some Autonomous Communities, such as the Basque Country, the ERA Project has made it possible to test the model designed by the Basque Agency for Proficiency Evaluation and Vocational Training Quality.

080503 - BARRIERS TO ACCUMULATION, TRANSFER AND VALIDATION OF LEARNING

FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF THE APPLICATION OF INITIATIVES:

The most important obstacles are located in the respective scopes of the occupational vocational training and continuing training subsystems.

1. Regarding occupational training, since the second half of the 1990s there has been a demand for clear regulation of the conditions for obtaining certificates of professionalism, particularly by favouring the completion of the training tracks.

2. Regarding continuing training, most of the training actions, in its various streams, do not lead directly to accreditations which may be recognised by the other subsystems or the labour market. Royal Decree 1046 has considered this issue in some of its articles.

To overcome these obstacles has been created the Integrated Vocational Training Centres and a framework which makes it possible to have a Generalised System of Evaluation, Recognition and Accreditation of Proficiencies. Within this framework, the Autonomous Communities specify flexibility measures designed for the beneficiaries of education and training to overcome obstacles.

On the other hand the flexibility constitutes a principle that was already highlighted in Quality Law 10/2002, and is currently one of the key principles in the Preliminary Draft of the Organic Law on Education.

FROM POTENTIAL SOCIAL DEMAND

On the basis of ERA and other sources, it is possible to detect psychosocial variables, motivational in a broad sense, in the obstacles to the benefits of the system as perceived by citizens. Among these, the psychological cost of tracks which are often discontinuous, the advisability of a greater proximity between proficiency reference points and real performance situations and adequate information and support regarding their personal and social circumstances.

0806 - TRANSFER AND VALIDATION OF LEARNING FOR VET TEACHERS AND TRAINERS

The characteristics of the teaching role (teacher, instructor, tutor, expert, qualified professional) vary depending on the subsystem (initial formal or occupational).

In the initial vocational training subsystem, linked to Ministry of Education, these roles are strictly defined by Law in terms of access, qualifications, functions and professional career. The qualification and training requirements to teach the vocational training curriculum (lower- and upper-level cycles) are the same as for teachers in Compulsory Secondary Education and Higher Secondary Education, in addition to the requirement of specific pedagogical ability, through the didactic specialisation course.

In the occupational subsystem, linked to Ministry of Labour, which is closer to the demands of the labour market and of specific groups or collectives, with different approaches to the programming and development of training actions, the teaching function, albeit well-defined, makes it possible, under certain conditions, to have access to the teaching profession, through training actions geared to that end. In this subsystem the main figure is the Occupational Instructor.

The training of instructors has 2 aspects:

- Initial Training-Didactic Methodology.
- Training in Technical Improvement.

The programming of these courses takes place annually and the purpose is to cover the training needs that are detected and demanded within the group of occupational instructors. Through these training programmes, it is possible for university graduates with an intermediate or higher degree, and without specific teaching qualifications, to have access to teaching functions in occupational training, within any of the following groups or collectives.

SPEE-INEM (National Public Employment Service-National Employment Institute) teachers.

- Experts hired or who may potentially be hired.
- Teaching staff at Collaborating Centres and Collaborating Companies.
- Teaching staff at Workshop Schools, Apprenticeship Centres and Employment Workshops.

For certain training modules, depending on the qualifications and the system needs, qualified professionals from the labour sphere may be hired as specialist teachers.

In the specific case of the Training at the Workplace module, students receive orientation and advice from 2 key figures: the teacher-tutor at the educational centre, generally pertaining to the body of technical teachers, and the tutor, monitor or instructor at the collaborating company or entity.

These aspects are included in Law 5/2002 on Qualifications and Vocational Training within the framework of the National System of Qualifications, as well as in the Preliminary Draft of the Organic Law on Education.

Both subsystems recognise the role of the expert or qualified professional.

0807 - INNOVATIVE METHODS FOR ACCUMULATING, TRANSFERRING AND VALIDATION OF LEARNING

The systems of official recognition and accreditation of people's professional experience, knowledge and proficiencies, regardless of their acquisition channel, are playing a dominant role in the evaluation of human resources and the individual management of proficiencies in Spain as well as in the European arena.

Among the experiences most worthy of mention are:

The pilot project "Development of a Common Model for the Recognition and/or Certification of Acquired Proficiencies" (Leonardo da Vinci Programme) in which the National Employment Institute (SPEE-INEM - labour sphere) actively participated, jointly with 8 other member countries. This project provided a very enriching experience regarding the design and experimentation of a common model that is sufficiently flexible to respect the different national contexts in certification matters; the procedures and methodologies that need to be considered, the various actors involved in the process, sectorial participation and participation by the social partners; etc. The project's conclusions included the shared need to advance and complete the legal framework that may legitimise partial or total certification of acquired proficiencies.

The project VALIDE included in Leonardo Programme, developed a method on validating previously acquired business skills at European level. This project had as coordinator, the Spanish Confederation of Young Entrepreneurs.

Project for the Evaluation, Recognition and Accreditation of Acquired Proficiencies (ERA), promoted and co-ordinated by the Ministry of Education and Culture, with the participation of the Ministry of Labour. In addition to the Central Government, 7 Autonomous Community Authorities and the Social Partners intervened.

The purpose of the project was to design, experiment and verify a procedure that made it possible to evaluate, recognise and accredit the proficiencies acquired by people through work experience or non-formal training channels.

Other initiatives adopted in the Autonomous Communities are, for example:

The Basque Country model, as described in the Basque Vocational Training Plan 2004/2007. The section Strategic Lines in Relation to the Updating and Improvement of the Integrated System of Qualifications and Vocational Training includes the strategic objective to "Implement an instrument for the recognition and evaluation of the active population's proficiency", with the following objectives:

- To improve the transparency of the labour market and match labour supply and demand.
- To contribute to the improvement of knowledge on the potential professional proficiency of companies' human resources.
- To make it possible to know and plan the active population's qualification levels.
- To recognise and evaluate the professional proficiency acquired through any formal, non-formal and informal learning process, leading

to attainment of a qualification or certificate by the Basque Country's active population.

- To achieve a valid and reliable process for the recognition and evaluation of the active population's proficiency.
- To adapt this instrument as much as possible in order that people with disabilities may participate in it without any obstacles.

The Catalan Institute of Professional Qualifications, of the *Generalitat* (Regional Government) of Catalonia, has elaborated a "Model for the Accreditation of Proficiency" designed for people, employed or unemployed, who wish to accredit the professional proficiency acquired through work experience for which they do not have official certification. The model contemplates three stages: recognition, evaluation and certification.

Other Autonomous Communities (*Castilla y León*, for example) include among their priority objectives the development of procedures for the recognition and evaluation of professional experience.

All these procedures share the modular organisation of specific vocational training and occupational training.

They are expressed in terms of general proficiency, performance criteria and evaluation criteria.

Their breakdown, which corresponds to the training profile, specifies the required categories (knowledge, aptitudes/ skills, personal/social skills) in terms of the results of learning.

The specific vocational training mid- and higher-level cycles include, jointly with the qualifications' proficiency units, a set of transversal modules or common curriculum (training at the workplace, orientation and labour relationships, occupational risk prevention, information and communication technologies, languages, entrepreneurial spirit) which are, to a large extent, located within the scope of personal/social skills.

THE INTEGRATED VOCATIONAL TRAINING CENTRES

In terms of organisational structure, one must mention the Integrated Vocational Training Centres.

Law 5/2002 created these bodies, specified or outlined in the NPNFP (1998/2002), of the Integrated Vocational Training Centres, in article 11: "those centres which provide the vocational training offerings leading to qualifications and certificates, with reference to the National Catalogue of Professional Qualifications, shall be considered as Integrated Vocational Training Centres" .

Within the very advanced development of these Centres' functions, the following should be highlighted:

"To carry out the recognition, evaluation and accreditation of professional proficiencies".

"To facilitate mobility and progress through the various training and professional tracks for the different collectives, recognising the equivalencies and correspondences among the different training offerings with reference to the National Catalogue of Professional Qualifications".

See below the following attachments.

SYNTHESISED STRUCTURE OF THE NATIONAL CATALOGUE OF PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

NATIONAL SYSTEM OF QUALIFICATIONS AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING

080701 - RESEARCH ON INNOVATIVE METHODS ON ACCUMULATION, TRANSFER AND VALIDATION OF LEARNING

The closest source of transnational applied research projects are Community programmes, particularly Socrates and Leonardo da Vinci II. This has been present, in the latter case, particularly in projects pertaining to Procedure C. Reference Materials, in which the subject of informal learning and key proficiencies is the purpose of the project and, indirectly, in projects pertaining to Procedure B, creation of professional profiles, of European professional degrees/diplomas, of associated modules, etc.

Tools: Identification, evaluation, development and mobilisation within companies of transversal proficiencies acquired in everyday life.

Three proficiency reference points (negotiating, communicating and organising work) and their respective pedagogical tracks have been created and validated transnationally on the basis of the best practices identified in the various countries within the consortium.

Programme: Socrates.

Promoter: Fondo Formación Euskadi.
www.ffeuskadi.net/Tools.htm

Che-mi-tec: "System of Evaluation, Recognition and Validation of Proficiencies Sensitive to Technological Changes in the Chemical Sector".

The project studies evolution trends in the sector, attempts to identify the associated proficiencies in processes of change with a view to creating adequate reference points, reviewing evaluation instruments (best practices) and elaborating an instrument for the validation of proficiencies identified under standard UNE 66-513-91.

Programme: Leonardo da Vinci II. Procedure C. Reference Materials.

Promoter: *Fondo Formación Euskadi/FIA* (Federation of Related Industries)/UGT (General Workers' Union).

Toolbridge: "Tools for Assessment and Recognition of Skills in the Building Sector".

The project studies, by means of case studies, the situation of the Construction sector, Building Construction subsector, as well as the status of the recognition of work experience in low-skilled workers (levels 1 and 2).

It incorporates the point of view of experts, the social partners and authorities on the subject of qualifications and proposes, on the basis of this diagnostic work, the forms which the evaluation/recognition of proficiencies in the above-mentioned levels might adopt.

Programme: Leonardo da Vinci II/Procedure C. Reference Materials.

Promoter: *Unión General de Trabajadores* (General Workers' Union)/MCA (Metal, Construction and Similar). Institute of Training and Social Studies. Madrid.

0808 - RAISING AWARENESS ON ACCUMULATION, TRANSFER AND VALIDATION OF LEARNING

Many actors have noted the need for a greater diffusion of the National System of Qualifications and Vocational Training among companies and workers.

This diffusion may be considered reasonable among those actors (public and private training providers, business and trade union organisations, and civil society organisations) that are involved parties or direct users, but this diffusion is still far from reaching citizens, due to the following reasons:

There are public diffusion initiatives, such as the annual, national-scale AULA events, on training

and employment opportunities, which bring together a large number of students, parents and interested persons. The National System of Qualifications is the subject of priority attention and the focus of a significant number of forums, conferences and technical meetings, which specifically address the accumulation, transfer and validation of learning.

One may mention the broad debate initiated by the Ministry of Education and Science regarding the proposals contained in the document "A Quality Education for All by All. Proposals for the Debate", (between September, 2004 and February, 2005), a precursor of the Preliminary Draft of the Organic Law on Education, which considers measures to make the general educational system more flexible and integrate the vocational training subsystems.

There are reasons for this limited diffusion, given the relative proximity in time of Organic Law 5/2002 on Qualifications and Vocational Training as well as the fact that some of its important chapters are still in the process of development, albeit at an advanced stage.

Regardless of the initiatives adopted in some of the Autonomous Communities, there are 2 crucial issues in the development of dissemination strategies related to the accumulation, transfer and validation of learning:

- The conclusion of work on the National Catalogue of Qualifications expected for the first semester of 2006.
- The creation of the framework leading to a System of Evaluation, Accreditation and Recognition of Proficiencies as an instrument of the National System of Qualifications and Vocational Training, most likely for autumn this year, 2005.

0809 - TRANSFER AND VALIDATION OF LEARNING FOR GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING PRACTITIONERS

The profession of professional orientator is not officially regulated in Spain. Nevertheless, this function is present in the educational and labour spheres in the following form:

Labour environment. The Public Employment Services offer career guidance for unemployed workers in such a manner that the agents devoted to this function are in charge of monitoring all the users' actions geared to their job placement. In general, the persons who perform this function are intermediate or senior technicians in careers related to the Social Sciences (Psychology, Social Education, Sociology, Social Work, Labour Relations, Labour Sciences, etc.)

Education Environment. The orientators are qualified psychologists or pedagogues who offer support, advice or specific orientation to students in the various educational levels (from Pre-school to Higher Secondary Education).

They belong to the Body of Secondary Education Teachers and must hold a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology, Pedagogy or Psychopedagogy. They collaborate with the centres and their teaching staff in the elaboration of projects for various activities, tutoring and academic and professional orientation.

The bodies involved in the Information and Orientation Services include the Central Government, the Autonomous Community Governments, Local Governments, Social Partners, Business Organisations, Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Navigation, non-profit Entities, etc.

The functions developed by orientators may be summarised in general terms as follows:

- To facilitate professional information regarding both the training offering and the labour market.
 - To diagnose and assess needs.
 - To provide orientation regarding the labour market.
 - To provide orientation to families or groups/collectives if necessary.
- These functions vary in scope depending on the type of service and orientation action.

THE NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT SERVICES USUALLY ENTER INTO COLLABORATION AGREEMENTS IN ORDER TO EXPAND THESE SERVICES' COVERAGE AND SPECIALISATION

Law 5/2002, of 19th June, on Qualifications and Vocational Training, after considering Career information and guidance a basic instrument of the National System of Qualifications, devotes Title III to Career Information and Guidance.

TITLE III.

Professional information and Guidance.

Article 14. Purpose.

Within the framework of the National System of Qualifications and Vocational Training, the purpose of professional information and orientation shall be:

1. To inform about employment access opportunities, possibilities for the acquisition, evaluation and accreditation of professional proficiencies and qualifications and lifelong progress therein.
2. To inform and advise regarding the various training offerings and potential training tracks designed to facilitate job placement and reinsertion, as well as professional mobility within the labour market.

Article 15. Organisation of professional information and orientation:

1. Professional information and orientation may be conducted by, among others, services pertaining to the educational and labour authorities, local government and the social partners, with the central government being in charge of developing formulae for cooperation and collaboration among all the involved entities.
2. The government authorities' professional information and orientation services shall be in charge of providing information on the educational system to students, families, unemployed and employed workers, and society in general.

In addition, the government authorities shall be in charge of providing the social partners with information about the system which may serve as a reference guide in collective bargaining, notwithstanding the autonomy of the parties involved therein.

0810 - FINANCING

Financing for the transfer or validation of learning is covered by the General National Budget through the economic items allocated to vocational, occupational and continuing training, and by EU structural funds.

The ERA 03 Project has made an estimate of the costs incurred in the Project on the basis of data provided by the Autonomous Communities (costs per candidate, per evaluated proficiency unit and candidate, for the elaboration of supporting materials for the evaluation -reference point, self-evaluation questionnaire, evidence guide- and for the training of evaluators). After analysing the data provided by the Autonomous Communities, the Technical Working Group estimated that the approximate cost/ expense per candidate/qualification is about 400 €.

The financing of the system's services is analysed in the document "Basis for a System of Evaluation, Recognition and Accreditation of Proficiencies.

**0811 - TRANSFERRING AND VALIDATING LEARNING ACROSS NATIONAL BOUNDARIES
CERTIFICATION AND VALIDATION OF FOREIGN QUALIFICATION AND ACCREDITATIONS IN SPAIN**

The existing legislation on the matter still does not include specific provisions for the validation, recognition of informal learning.

The provisions for the certification and validation of foreign qualifications and studies for their Spanish equivalents in non-university education has been the subject of readjustments and adaptations since RD104/1988 on the certification of foreign non-university education qualifications and studies. This was designed to simplify the proceedings and to make it possible to provide schooling for students from foreign educational systems in any of the compulsory education levels or any type of curriculum for which the Secondary Education Diploma is not required, and to indicate more precisely the documents that must be submitted, specifically considering the prescriptive documentation for the certification or validation of Vocational Training studies or Special Education (ORDER ECD/3305/2002, of 16th December, which amends previous orders on the certification and validation of foreign non-university education qualifications and studies).

The number of foreign students enrolled in non-university education has increased almost 8-fold between academic years 1993/1994 and 2003/2004, from 50 076 students to 389 726. In vocational training, during the same period the figure has increased from 2 663 to 13 367 students.

PROVISIONS FOR THE TRANSFER AND VALIDATION OF ACCREDITATIONS IN THE EU

The instruments and mechanisms are, essentially, those developed within the Community vocational training programmes, in relation to mobility, particularly, the Leonardo da Vinci.

In the first stage of the programme, LdVI, the annual average was about 2 550 beneficiaries. At the end of the programme, the groups of “youngsters in initial vocational training and young workers” amounted to slightly over 9 000 beneficiaries. The first 2 editions of the second stage of the programme have shown a net progression in the total number of beneficiaries, with an annual average of over 4 000, a progression which is particularly evident in the group of “youngsters in initial vocational training”.

The mobility programmes have aroused considerable interest, for which reason, in many cases, the public authorities (Autonomous Communities) have provided co-financing for projects designed for youngsters in initial vocational training and young workers, as has the University Secretary of State's Office for study-abroad programmes for university students.

One must highlight the role of vocational training practices in the EU. Under certain conditions, they have served to validate, totally or partially, the Training at the Workplace module. From this point of view, one may affirm that practices and the associated training in the EU are highly valued and are inscribed within mainstream programming of the qualification programmes for the initial vocational training mid- and higher-level cycles.

in the case of occupational training, practices performed in EU companies have the same value as those performed in Spanish companies, forming a part of the training track necessary for the issue, if applicable, of the pertinent certificate of professionalism.

The document Europass-Training according to the “Decision on European Alternating Tracks” has been issued to the large majority of students, youngsters in initial vocational training, young workers, who have participated in the Leonardo da Vinci mobility programmes, both in the first and the second stages.

Europass' condition as the single framework for transparency is well-known, at national level, the Europass National Agency has been created, within the Ministry of Education and Science (Subdirectorate for Vocational Training), and launching and diffusion campaigns are planned for next autumn.

