



TO IMPROVE THE EMPLOYABILITY OF WORKERS AND UNEMPLOYED PEOPLE, PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATES PROVIDE FORMAL RECOGNITION OF COMPETENCIES ACQUIRED VIA TRAINING UNDERTAKEN AS PART OF THE MEASURE, OR COMPETENCIES PREVIOUSLY ACQUIRED THROUGH FORMAL, NON-FORMAL AND INFORMAL LEARNING, AND/OR THROUGH WORKING LIFE EXPERIENCE.

Professional Certificates (Certificados de Profesionalidad)

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The measure aims to improve the match between the competences of individuals (employed and unemployed) and job opportunities in the labour market in order to improve the employability of individuals. Providing information on the Professional Certificates to businesses would result in greater understanding of the competencies acquired through the training process and of its recognition in the educational system.

Name of the PES

Spanish PES (Servicio Público de Empleo Estatal - SEPE)

Scope of measure

National reform

When was the practice implemented?

2008 – onwards

What was the driver for introducing the practice? Was it internal or external?

Legislation was introduced in 2002 on 'Qualifications and professional training' (Law 5/2002 of 19 June 2002). Professional Certificates were then established by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry for Employment through the Spanish PES.

Which organisation was involved in its implementation?

The main organisations involved were:

- ▶ The Ministry of Labour, Migration and Social Security (Ministerio de Trabajo, Migraciones y Seguridad Social);
- ▶ The Ministry of Education (Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte);
- ▶ The Autonomous Communities¹ (Comunidades autónomas de España);
- ▶ Public and private training providers;
- ▶ Trade unions and employers' organisations;
- ▶ Private companies.

Which groups were targeted by the practice?

The main target groups of the Professional Certificates are as follows:

- ▶ Unemployed people, to help improve their employability;
- ▶ Workers who want to receive formal accreditation of their non-formal and informal qualifications;
- ▶ Individuals who have dropped out of education, to give them the opportunity to go back to learning and receive formal qualifications.

What were the practice's main objectives?

The Professional Certificates programme aims to improve and extend the training offer in order to allow individuals (employed and unemployed) to receive formal recognition for their qualifications; it also aims to provide formal recognition for non-formal and informal competences already acquired by individuals. Other objectives include helping jobseekers and workers to improve access to apprenticeships and professional growth during their entire life, provide easier access to the labour market, and find employment opportunities that better reflect their competences.

¹ Spain is composed by 17 Autonomous Communities and two autonomous cities (Ceuta and Melilla). They have legislative and executive competencies in some areas as social services, agriculture, inland fishing, industry, commerce, tourism, youth and sport; they are also responsible for the implementation of the legislation approved by the State in the field of employment and vocational training. They share competences of legislation and implementation with the state on areas like culture.

<p>What activities were carried out?</p>	<p>The main activities carried out include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Drafting of professional certificates (between 2008 and 2014). This task was carried out by a working group composed by professionals and technical staff in the Spanish PES. Since 2017 an update has been carried out of the certificates, for which the professional qualifications of reference² had been changed; ▶ Training is provided (since 2009) by public and private organisations, funded by public resources. A final examination is taken at the end of the training, leading to the acquisition of the certificate; ▶ The recognition and accreditation process of professional experiences, and the recognition of prior informal and non-formal learning acquired, takes place through open calls managed by the Autonomous Communities³.
<p>What resources and other relevant organisational aspects were involved?</p>	<p>PES staff at national, regional and local level were involved in implementing the Professional Certificates.</p>
<p>What were the source(s) of funding?</p>	<p>Spanish PES' budget (the state and the Autonomous Communities)</p>
<p>What were the outputs of the practice: people reached and products?</p>	<p>The main outputs were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ 583 different Professional Certificates have been developed since 2009; ▶ The number of unemployed people attending the training activities between 2013 and 2017 was 832 000; during the same period 402 000 training activities were offered to this group; ▶ The number of employed people who attended the training activities offered between 2013 and 2017 was 78 450 (attending 10 800 training programmes); ▶ More than 80 000 contracts of dual professional training⁴ (for which the training activities were associated with obtaining a professional certificate) were signed between new employees and employers in 2016 and 2017 where the employment contract includes a certain number of hours that will be dedicated to training.
<p>What outcomes have been identified?</p>	<p>The main outcomes were the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Between 2013 and 2017, 436 716 Professional Certificates were obtained; the most common areas for which the certificates were issued were community and socio-cultural services, administration and management, hotels and tourism, commerce and marketing; ▶ The labour insertion rates of unemployed people, who participated in the Professional Certificate activities were as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ In 2013, after 180 days 39.62 % and after 360 days 55.69 % ▶ In 2014, after 180 days 42.53 % and after 360 days 59.21 % ▶ In 2015, after 180 days 44.95 % and after 360 days 61.60 % ▶ In 2016, after 180 days 47.23 % and after 360 days 62.79 % ▶ In 2017, after 180 days 48.32 % and after 360 days 62.57 %

2 The changes in the professional qualifications necessary to exercise a certain profession imply that the certificates are needed periodically; this was started by the PES in 2017.

3 The Autonomous Communities (CCAA) issue public calls whereby a person can seek to have his/her training and prior learning validated. The process is regulated at national level by the Royal Decree 1224/2009, of July 17, of recognition of professional competences acquired through work experience. The Autonomous Communities each organise and manage their own regional calls in line with the indicated Royal Decree 1224/2009.

4 The CEDEFOP definition of dual training refers to 'all types of VET which combine work and learning with the aim to obtain vocational qualifications within the education system or VET for employed and unemployed people.' CEDEFOP, 2014, <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news-and-press/news/spain-laying-foundations-dual-system-vocational-training>

What are the lessons learnt and success factors?

The lessons learnt and success factors include:

- ▶ Before the implementation and development of the practice, it is essential that an analysis of the economic sectors and businesses of the region/country of operation and the training needs of individuals is completed;
- ▶ PES should focus on raising awareness of Professional Certificates among employers, so that employers view the Certificates as an instrument to acquire competencies and deliver training for their employees;
- ▶ The main stakeholders need to be involved from the beginning: among others, the PES, educational centres, social agents and enterprises. Establishing expert sectoral working groups, with training centres and the PES centres was crucial to ensure that the different perspectives of these stakeholders were taken into account and consensus was achieved throughout the different phases of the development and implementation process;
- ▶ It is important to simplify the drafting and update process of the Professional Certificates as much as possible in order to reduce the response time and therefore better respond to rapid changes of the skills and competencies requirements in the labour market;
- ▶ The drafting of the certificates was driven by the introduction of the legislation. Funding for the development of the certificates and their provisions was available through public calls and private initiatives. This helped the unemployed and employed to participate in the relevant training measures and uptake of the certificates;
- ▶ In the process of establishing and implementing the Professional Certificates, it has been essential to count on training centres, accredited by the administrations, to provide the training. Training sessions were carried out, which have resulted in an increase in the number of accredited centres from 10 863 centres in 2013 to 12 123 in 2017;
- ▶ A dissemination strategy was developed and information sessions on the Professional Certificates took place throughout Spain. These sessions were targeted at educational, public employment centres and business representatives. However, further dissemination to enterprises would result in greater understanding of the competencies acquired through the training process and of its recognition in the educational system.



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