

THE EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND



Support to Education and Training: 2014-2018

SPAIN

SUMMARY

ESF Thematic Objective 10 funding is used to support education, training and vocational training for skills and lifelong learning. Over 3 billion euro has been allocated to such operations in Spain, with 1 425 947 participations having taken place by the end of 2018. This factsheet summarises the main actions, outputs, results and lessons learned so far in the use of this funding in Spain.

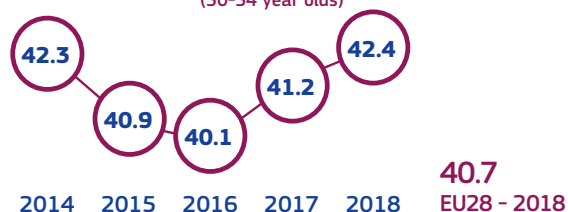
SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT AND CHALLENGES

Early school leaving (ESL) rate (%)



► The **rate of early school leaving (ESL)** in Spain was 17.9% in 2018, much higher than the EU28 average of 10.6%. While the ESL rate has fallen consistently over the four years since 2014, it remains one of the main education challenges for Spain.

Tertiary educational attainment rate (%)
(30-34 year olds)



► The **tertiary educational attainment rate** in Spain was 42.4% in 2018, which is slightly higher than the EU average of 40.7%. Overall, it is important for Spain to harmonise labour market demands with education and training provision to increase the productivity and employability of graduates, and to increase employer engagement.

► The **participation of the adult population in education and training** is, at 10.5%, slightly lower than the EU average of 11.1%. There is a relatively low level of basic skills among the adult population in Spain. Promotion of lifelong learning is a focus for some Spanish regions.

► **Regional inequalities** hinder the harmonious functioning of the Spanish educational system and create disparities among regions in terms of educational procedures and outcomes.

Participation rate in education and training by adults aged 25-64 (%) (last 4 weeks)



► **Total general government expenditure on education** has remained consistent in recent years at just below the EU28 average. In 2017, the rate in Spain was 4.0%, while the EU28 average was 4.6%.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

ESF European Social Fund

TO10 Thematic Objective 10

OP Operational Programme

IP Investment Priority

* Figures present the situation for ESF operations under Thematic Objective 10 and its four Investment Priorities (IPs) for the programming period 2014-2020 implemented up to the end of 2018, as reported on 1 October 2019. In many instances, operations are not yet complete at this stage, or have only recently started.

* As one person could participate more than once in ESF operations over time, the number of participations is reported. These figures exclude Technical Assistance.

* Where the breakdown of participants according to employment status, age, and level of education does not add up to 100%, it means that it was not possible to include characteristics of a number of participants in some OPs.

Support to Education and Training: 2014-2018

ESF PRIORITIES AND ACTIONS IN SPAIN

- ▶ Spain has **one** national OP and **15** regional OPs that are relevant to Thematic Objective 10 (TO10).
- ▶ The national OP has the following broad priorities relevant to TO10:
 - ▶ **The reduction of early school leaving.** Spain needs to address the underlying causes of its high ESL rate: factors such as gender, socioeconomic background, parents' level of education, school performance and the high youth unemployment rate are all contributing factors;
 - ▶ The need to **increase basic skills and competences** in school and among adults. The OECD PISA report from 2015 shows that

Spanish students are lagging behind their EU counterparts in reading comprehension, science, and mathematics. The OECD survey of adult skills, PIACC, also highlights the lower level of basic skills among the adult population in Spain;

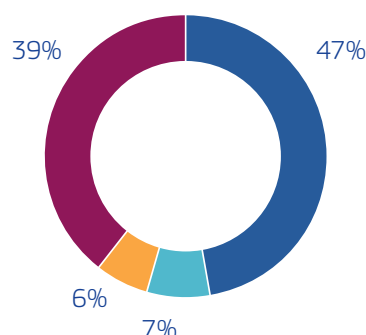
- ▶ **Improvements to the transition between education and the labour market.** Transition into the labour market is easier the higher the level of education. However, the Spanish educational system lacks intermediate qualifications and vocational training, with the majority of the population having either a low or high level of education.

31% of total ESF funding¹...

€3 127 026 456

...is allocated to the following TO10 investment priorities: **early school leaving (47%)**, **access to quality tertiary and equivalent education (7%)**, **enhancing access to lifelong learning (6%)**, and **improving the labour market relevance of education and training (39%)**.²

Allocation of ESF TO10 funds



- Reducing and preventing early school leaving - IP10.i
- Improving quality and access to tertiary education - IP10.ii
- Enhancing access to lifelong learning - IP10.iii
- Improving the labour market relevance of education and training - IP10.iv

STATE OF PLAY

66% of planned resources under TO10 had been allocated in 2018, with 23% spent.

Number of overall participations in TO10 operations by the end of 2018:

1 425 947

- ▶ **870 601** participations in operations to reduce and prevent early school leaving
- ▶ **5 979** participations in operations to improve the access to, and quality of, tertiary and equivalent education
- ▶ **256 211** participations in operations to enhance access to lifelong learning
- ▶ **293 156** participations in operations to improve the labour market relevance of education and training

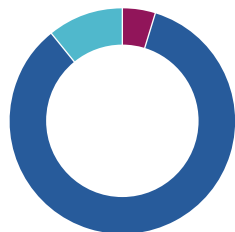
¹ This includes EU-only funding and co-financing from the Member State.

² The total does not add up to 100% due to rounding issues.

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PARTICIPANT PROFILES WHEN RECEIVING SUPPORT

Employment status



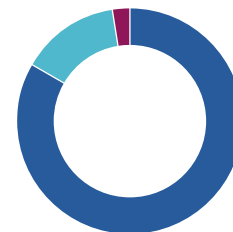
4% (60 225) Unemployed
 71% (1 015 871) Inactive³
 9% (133 637) Employed

Sex

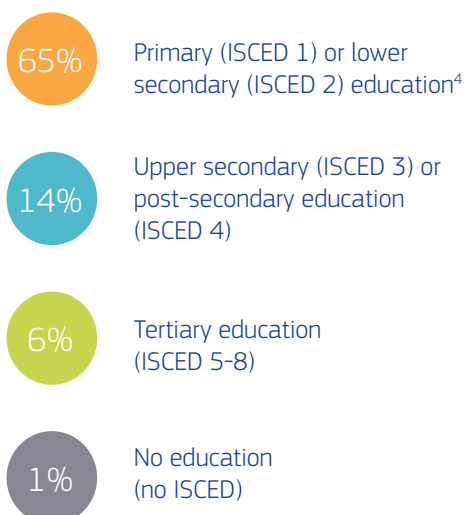
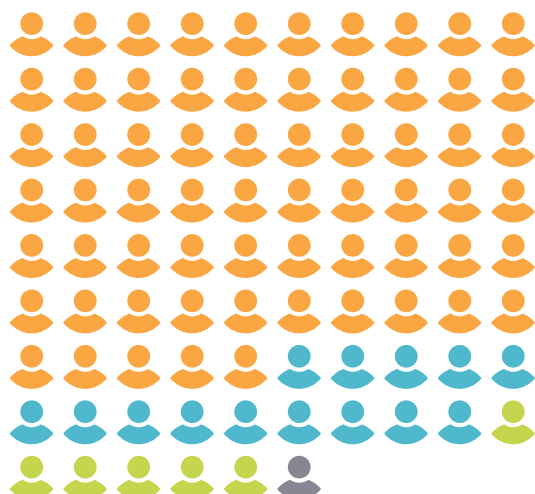


49% Women
 51% Men

Age



71% (1 016 713) <25 years
 12% (168 012) 25-54 years
 2% (25 008) >54 years



81 050
Migrants

31 380
Other disadvantaged

36 163
Participants with disabilities

9 875
Homeless

Key achievements to date of ESF T010 operations in Spain include⁵:

- ▶ **1 757 327** successful results have been achieved to date following participation in an activity funded by ESF T010, of which:
 - ▶ **52 989** inactive participants went on to engage in job searching
 - ▶ **71 271** participants went into education or training
 - ▶ **1 605 086** participants gained a qualification
 - ▶ **27 981** participants moved into employment upon leaving
- ▶ The milestones set for IP10.i have been achieved in all areas and, in some cases, the targets for 2023 have also been achieved.
- ▶ Operations focused on lifelong learning through competence accreditation programmes and languages are reported by case study interviewees to be having a high level of impact and a high return on investment.
- ▶ Some programmes are having a positive impact in terms of reducing the rate of ESL. In Galicia, for example, Learning and Performance Improvement Programmes have been evaluated as having had positive results.

³ The inactive population can include pre-school children, school children, students, pensioners and housewives or -men, for example, provided that they are not working and not available or looking for work.

⁴ ISCED is the UN reference classification for organising education programmes and related qualifications by education levels and fields.

⁵ Participants' data are collected when starting an operation. Data on results are collected at the end of an operation or even later. Because of this time lag the two sets of data (participations and results) should not be directly compared.

LESSONS LEARNED SO FAR

► Impacts on early school leaving (ESL)

One of the main areas of focus of the Spanish OPs is the reduction of the rate of ESL. There is evidence that operations are having an impact in this regard. In Galicia, for example, initiatives such as Learning and Performance Improvement Programmes (PMAR) have already had a relevant impact on the population in terms of reducing ESL and reaching more remote rural areas. There are, however, strong regional differences in ESL rates in Spain.

► Actions are well-targeted

The operations funded under ESF T010 in Spain are relevant and focused on the needs of target groups. However, while available resources have been allocated appropriately amongst the four investment priorities, further work needs to be done to attract a greater number of beneficiaries.

► Good level of flexibility

The Spanish national OP was amended in December 2018, opening up funding to specific objectives not initially envisaged. This enabled better adaptation to European and national policies in the field of education and employment. For example, the Guidance and Reinforcement Programme for Progress and Support in Education is an added measure to prevent ESL in primary school which addresses both students and teachers.

► Promoting structural change

A number of structural impacts from operations under ESF T010 can already be noted. For example, the 2013 national law for the improvement of educational standards (LOMCE) regulates the Spanish education system. The implementation of this legislation has been supported by ESF co-financing, ensuring consistent implementation in all Spanish regions, which is normally challenging due to a lack of coordination and agreement between the regions.

► Actions to increase take-up of operations

Some operations in Spain, for example those providing training opportunities, have a lower number of enrolled participants than was initially expected, leading to poor common results indicators, for example, the Dual Vocational Programme. Actions to increase take-up have been carried out, such as promoting the relevant programmes in employment fairs, conferences and at local events.

► Increase in VET participation

There has been an overall increase in the take-up of vocational training throughout Spain. Nevertheless, there is only a moderate employment rate for tertiary-educated people in most regions, which indicates a lack of sufficient coverage of highly qualified occupations. Even though participation in vocational training has increased, dual vocational training programmes have not taken off as expected. This will continue to be a priority in the upcoming programming period.

PROJECT EXAMPLES

► Pre-doctoral grants for researchers

This operation aims to increase research capacity in Spain, and specifically in biomedicine. It includes actions such as the provision of scholarships to join research centres and high-level research programmes, the placement of researchers in research groups in universities, hospitals and research centres, and follow-up of researchers after the placement. So far, it has awarded 526 grants for pre-doctoral studies, 159 of which in 2018.

► Accreditation of training and work experience

This operation aims to provide individuals with a standardised and recognised vocational or educational qualification in order to better access the labour market. Actions are based on the evaluation and accreditation of competences acquired through work experience. The operation also includes training for advisors, evaluators, and counsellors. The target number of participants is 26480 by the end of 2023.

► Programmes to improve learning and school performance (PMAR)

This operation was introduced in Galicia to prevent ESL and to improve educational outcomes, targeting mainly pupils with special needs. During the 2017-18 academic year, 223 PMARs were carried out in 158 schools, engaging more than 1-600 students. By December 2018, 6-083 individuals had been reached, 76% of whom had obtained a certificated qualification.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

2a Evaluación Intermedia del Programa Operativo de Empleo, Formación y Educación, anualidad de 2019, Red2Red, June 2019, <https://www.educacionyfp.gob.es/dam/jcr:9b2f6f05-65be-4135-b579-965f5e7125b7/informese Segunda-evaluacion-intermedia-2019.pdf>

European Commission, Study supporting the evaluation of ESF support to education and training (Thematic Objective 10)

The ESF Spain: <https://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=378&langId=en>

Website of the ESF in Spain: <http://www.mitramiss.gob.es/uafse/>

