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# INFORME

## DUAL TRAINING IN SPAIN: SITUATION AND PROSPECTS

### CONCLUSIONS AND PROPOSALS



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CONSEJO ECONÓMICO Y SOCIAL ESPAÑA  
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# INTRODUCTION

The process of changes in the structure of occupations that has been observed in recent decades responds to far-reaching socio-economic trends, driven, among others, by technological transformations, climate change policies, a globalised economy and the emergence of new geopolitical risks. These trends, common to the countries in our European context, have recently been accentuated in Spain by the effects of the pandemic crisis, and will foreseeably become more intense from the transformative impact on the productive fabric of the European *Next Generation EU* funds articulated through the Recovery, Transformation and Resilience Plan (abbreviated as ‘PRTR’ in Spanish).

In the context of the transitions underway, both of a demographic nature with, among other effects, a growing demand for care for people, and fundamentally economic digitalisation (not only, but especially, as deployed around industry 4.0) and the ecological transition necessary to face the climate emergency, in the last decade in Spain there has been significant growth in occupations requiring higher levels of qualification, autonomy and responsibility, but also in intermediate occupations of a technical nature, while an increase in basic occupations continues to be observed<sup>1</sup>.

Prospective studies indicate that, in the coming years, a large volume of jobs will need to be filled, mainly in high-skilled occupational groups, as part of the evolution towards a more knowledge-based economy, but also for certain occupations requiring medium and low-level skills. These forecasts point to the demand for higher levels of skills and competences in occupations because the changes are not only in their structure, but also in their more sophisticated and complex tasks<sup>2</sup>.

The changes in the economy and in jobs pose major challenges, among others, in the field of training. The ESC has pointed to certain worrying features of the current trends of change that point to future bottlenecks in the labour supply, and has pointed to the need for a decisive orientation of training systems<sup>3</sup>. These challenges are also part of the aforementioned demographic transition, another feature of which is the decline in the young popula-

#### **NOTES**

- 1 CES Report 2021, pp. 160 and 161.
- 2 Cedefop, *Skills forecast 2020: Spain*, pp. 6-10 ([https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/skills\\_forecast\\_2020\\_spain.pdf](https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/skills_forecast_2020_spain.pdf)).
- 3 CES Report 2021, cit.

tion and its proportion in the age structure, a greater reduction than the European average<sup>4</sup>. The qualifications and competences necessary in the context of these transformations must be provided by an advanced education and training system, together with the improvement of the training of workers at companies, with the responsibility of both parties in their training. On the one hand, vocational training must be carried out in closer collaboration with companies, especially in the context of the expansion of dual training; on the other hand, companies must acknowledge that participating in the training of talent, and retaining it, is the best strategy for having qualified workers, and even better if this participation by companies anticipates possible bottlenecks in the labour supply.

In the above-mentioned context of changes, the presence of occupational mismatches and the necessary articulation between supply and demand of competences is common to European economies, to a greater or lesser degree, and is likely to increase. In countries such as Germany, a well-established system of dual vocational training based on the training content set out in professional regulations, oriented towards the needs of companies and with schools teaching general theoretical and vocational subjects, is a substantial instrument for anticipating and responding to the emergence of bottlenecks in sectors and professions.

In our country, a lower percentage of the labour force with intermediate qualifications than in neighbouring countries has been identified<sup>5</sup>. The focus has been placed on vocational training in the education system as the provider of many professional profiles that will be in demand in the coming years. And the still low proportion of young people in vocational training programmes has also been highlighted in comparison with other European countries. Current occupational trends are, however, a major challenge for the vocational training system as a whole, both in terms of initial training, and lifelong learning for the working population. And they also pose major challenges in the field of university education.

Meanwhile, young people in Spain continue to have higher unemployment rates and lower employment rates than the EU average, proportions that are worse when compared with Member States with better youth employment indicators. They also have higher rates of temporary employment and a high proportion of short-term contracts, which is associated with a high turnover in employment. The persistence of this comparatively worse labour market position of young people in Spain over time, aggravated by two successive financial and health crises, points to the existence of structural problems in the youth labour market and the risk of their chronification<sup>6</sup>.

This position of young people, both in relation to the total age group and in relation to the European average, has multiple and complex causes. Part of these problems, as the aforementioned report also pointed out, have to do with mismatches between the qualifications held and the competences demanded in the labour market. As a consequence,

4 CES Report 2/2020, *Jóvenes y mercado de trabajo en España*, pp. 22-26.

5 Government of Spain: Plan de Modernización de la Formación Profesional (2020) and I Plan Estratégico de Formación Profesional del Sistema Educativo 2019-2022.

6 See CES Report 2/2020, *Jóvenes y mercado de trabajo en España*.

young people in Spain often have longer and more difficult transitions from education and training to employment. It is therefore necessary to build more and better bridges between school and work, facilitating young people's entry into the world of work.

But other equally important problems should not be forgotten, such as the persistently high total unemployment rate (with which the youth unemployment rate should be put in context), compared to the European average, and in particular widespread and increasingly long-term unemployment. There is a major challenge in the need to improve the competences and provide retraining opportunities for long-term unemployed adults, many of whom have lost their jobs in the recent crises and face serious difficulties in re-entering the labour market in a process of more structural economic changes of a technological and environmental nature.

Dual training interrelates theoretical knowledge and practical work-based learning, within a structure of alternation between the company and the educational centre. It involves applying elements of collaboration and co-responsibility between training centres and companies, which are necessary for the achievement of learning objectives. The dual vocational training models considered as a reference in Europe thus respond to a scheme of training provided in the company and at the educational centre, alternating between the two areas, with the characteristics of being complementary, coordinated and co-responsible.

Due to its characteristics, dual training has been identified as a training modality that can effectively combat unemployment, especially youth unemployment, by facilitating transitions between training and the world of work. In Spain, the results of the Statistics on Labour Market Integration of Vocational Training Graduates, which have since 2022 been disaggregated for dual vocational training graduates, would support this hypothesis, as analysed in this report (chapter II).

EU education and training policy has placed apprenticeships and dual training at the centre as a tool for improving youth employment. Since 2013, the European Union has pursued a policy of support and cooperation with member States in apprenticeship training, promoting supply and quality through the European Alliance for Apprenticeship. On the promotion side, in the period 2014-2020, several general and specific European financial instruments (including the EU Programme for Employment and Social Innovation and the Youth Employment Initiative), have provided support for apprenticeships. On the quality side, the European Union has promoted the identification of common guiding principles for Member States, with benchmarks defined at the EU level in 2018<sup>7</sup>.

During the preparation of this report, ten years have passed since the regulation of the bases of dual vocational training in Spain<sup>8</sup>. Throughout this decade, all Autonomous Com-

7 Council Recommendation of 15 March 2018 on a European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships.

8 Royal Decree 1529/2012, of 8 November, which develops the training and apprenticeship contract and regulates the bases of dual vocational training.

munities have begun to develop a series of experiences which do not form a uniform model and which present strengths and weaknesses that can be analysed with a certain perspective.

The current situation reflects a still limited implementation of dual vocational training in Spain in relation to the average of the member States and far removed from the countries with the most consolidated systems, fundamentally the Central European countries, which are therefore considered to be models of success. This points to the existence of barriers and obstacles of various kinds that prevent a wider deployment, in line with the potential attributed to this type of training.

However, this has not prevented a significant amount of good practice and knowledge of dual vocational training management from being generated over the years as a result of the many educational projects that have been set up with the work of a wide range of actors: vocational training centres and teaching staff, company managers and tutors, and public authorities. This development has been supported by intermediate bodies and entities that have played an important role in the collaboration and dynamisation of dual vocational training through analyses, case studies, quality improvement projects, the sharing of experiences and the promotion of networks between professionals (networking) in this field<sup>9</sup>. The development of these experiences and the good practices generated have made it possible to tackle the reorganisation of the vocational training system and its orientation towards the dual nature that the bulk of the training offer should have, not starting from scratch, but relying on this valuable prior experience<sup>10</sup>.

The challenges we face suggest that dual training should also be advanced in training environments other than the vocational training offered by the education system. It therefore seemed appropriate to address in this report the situation and prospects of dual training in two other areas: training for employment in the labour market (training of the active, employed or unemployed population) and at universities. In the latter, “without prejudice to the prior existence of programmes of a dual nature in university curricula”, the regulation of a legal basis for dual university training has only recently come into being<sup>11</sup>. Until now, with the exception of certain professional fields and the aforementioned programmes, developed by some universities in a certain legal limbo and promoted in some cases thanks to the initiative of the teaching staff, dual training at this educational level has seen scant and non-generalised development. It is to be hoped that Organic Law

9 The important role of understanding, boosting and dynamizing this training carried out by the entities integrated in the Alliance for Dual Vocational Training should be highlighted.

10 In this sense, initiatives such as the Regional Report on the quality of dual vocational training in Spain, carried out by the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (abbreviated as ‘MEFP’ in Spanish) and the Bertelsmann Foundation, with the collaboration of the European Commission, have made it possible to identify strengths and weaknesses in what has been carried out in recent years, facilitating the design of solutions to improve the system.

11 The “Dual mention in official university education” has been regulated in Royal Decree 822/2021, of 28 September, which establishes the organisation of university education and the procedure for quality assurance. See E. Cabero Morán: “La dimensión laboral de la formación dual en las enseñanzas universitarias oficiales”, *Trabajo y Derecho* 91-92/2022 (July-August), pp. 1-6, from which the quotation in the text is taken.

2/2023, of 22 March, on the University System (abbreviated as ‘LOSU’ in Spanish) will consolidate this framework, providing it with the appropriate legal status and the necessary development policies.

In view of the limited extension of dual vocational training after a decade of implementation, the equally scarce presence of dual training in training for employment and at universities, and apart from other routes that do not constitute dual training in the proper sense, such as external internships (curricular or otherwise), it may be asserted that Spain has a gap in work-based learning that may be making it less competitive in relation to the developed economies around us, and that may be hindering better employability prospects for the working population.

The purpose of this report is to highlight the contribution that a broad development of dual training in Spain can make in the coming years to contribute to a lasting, sustainable and inclusive recovery, to innovation and business growth, cooperating in the transformation of the production model, and to the generation of more and better jobs, especially in the post-pandemic economic and labour market reconstruction, in the current context of structural socio-economic, productive and occupational changes.

In order to contextualise the state of play and prospects for dual training in Spain, the report first takes into consideration the European framework built around common quality criteria, which places this training at the forefront of youth employment policies, as mentioned above. It also reviews the main comparative models operating in neighbouring countries, some of which have a well-established tradition, in order to identify those characteristics that determine greater efficiency in their operation and results.

This is followed by a diagnosis of the situation of dual vocational training in Spain, based on a comparative analysis of the regulatory framework approved ten years ago. This analysis highlights the achievements and shortcomings that have been detected in the main characteristics of the system developed over the years, based on generic and flexible foundations that have given rise to heterogeneous models without, at the same time, having built an effective system of governance for the whole.

The central part of this chapter analyses the main data and trends in dual vocational training in the education system, noting, as has been mentioned, the limited implementation and development still seen in our reality, albeit within a trend of continuous growth, especially in recent years. Substantial differences have also been observed in its deployment between Autonomous Communities and a different weighting of this by professional families and training cycles, and between genders. An important new factor for the knowledge and development of dual vocational training in Spain, which is also analysed in this chapter, lies in the employment outcomes obtained by students graduating from these courses, based on the new statistical information that the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training has begun to publish. These are descriptive statistics, but the data they provide show comparatively better integration rates and, in general, better results in terms of contract duration and pay levels.

One important objective of this chapter is to try to identify obstacles that may have prevented a wider deployment of such training. At the same time, however, the aim is to point out factors that could contribute to a significant expansion of dual training. For this reason, in addition to the above questions, special attention is paid to the participation of companies in dual training, based on the premise that a strong business fabric is a necessary condition in organising such training, while at the same time the participating companies benefit from it. Thus, the current situation and structure of the productive business fabric in Spain is analysed in comparison with the European Union, as well as its projection in the territorial productive structure. All of this with the aim of providing elements for decision-making in relation to policies to promote business participation, especially SMEs and small companies. In this respect, the absence of updated information on the participation of companies in dual training is noted, as well as the need for better data on participating companies and their characteristics.

We are at a particularly propitious moment to accelerate the deployment of dual training in Spain. This report is positioned within the current process of transformation and empowerment of vocational training, with the deployment of a substantial set of resources that will mark the future of dual training in the coming years, and to this end it seeks to offer proposals that contribute to the results of the levers of change that are already being applied.

The promotion of dual vocational training must, therefore, be framed within those policies with the aim of transforming the economy as a whole, and specifically vocational training, implemented in the recent period, from the 1<sup>st</sup> Strategic Plan for Vocational Training in the Education System (2018) to the Plan for the Modernisation of Vocational Training (July 2020). A central place within these policies is occupied by the approval of a modernised legal framework through Organic Law 3/2022 of 31 March, on the Organisation and Integration of Vocational Training (abbreviated as ‘LOIFP’ in Spanish)<sup>12</sup>, the implementing regulations of which are currently being drawn up within the framework of social dialogue. These and other regulatory and planning instruments have been anchored in the Recovery, Transformation and Resilience Plan (PRTR), component 20 of which orders reforms and investments related to the Strategic Plan for the Promotion of Vocational Training. However, in addition to these specific policies, the transformation of vocational training will be indirectly supported by other more cross-cutting levers, such as those focused on strengthening the productive fabric and digital transformation. All these instruments are addressed in the last chapter, which is specifically dedicated to policies for the promotion of dual training.

12 In its Statement 5/2021 on the Preliminary Draft of this Organic Law, the CES made observations and proposals on the provisions of the draft legislation regarding dual training, among other aspects.

## CONCLUSIONS AND PROPOSALS

## Conclusions

### **1. DUAL TRAINING REPRESENTS AN OPPORTUNITY IN THE FACE OF CHANGES TO JOBS**

1.1. The changes that are taking place in the structure and contents of occupations, in the context of the demographic, ecological and digital transitions underway, require and will require the broadening and improvement of qualifications in many productive activities, a challenge that cuts across traditional sectors and those driven by the transformations underway. Moreover, in the coming years we will need to cover a large demand for labour due to workforce replacement, mainly due to retirement. This situation poses major challenges, among others, in the field of training.

1.2. The necessary qualifications and competences must be provided by an advanced education and training system, together with improved training for workers at companies, with both sides taking responsibility for their training. On the one hand, vocational training must be carried out in closer collaboration with companies, especially with a view to expanding dual training; on the other hand, companies must acknowledge that participating in the training of talent, and retaining it, is the best strategy in order to have qualified workers.

1.3. In the face of these major economic and employment trends, dual training is a decisive and defining tool to provide workers and businesses with the qualifications and competences they need.

### **2. DUAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (DUAL VET) ADVANCES IN THE EUROPEAN CONTEXT**

2.1. Over the last two decades, dual vocational training has been gaining importance in European employment and education policies. These include the European Alliance for Apprenticeships, which has been working since 2013 to improve the supply and quality of apprenticeships through a broad collaboration of key actors, including the most representative European confederations of trade unions and employers, in employment and education.

2.2. In line with the recommendations of the European Commission, many countries have in recent years adopted measures to develop dual training systems, one of the main challenges of which is to move towards quality standards that guarantee their better implementation, development and effectiveness.

2.3. The countries where the best results are observed are those whose dual VET systems have been in place for decades, such as Germany, Austria, Switzerland or Denmark. According to the specialised literature, the success of these models is due to the confluence of several factors, including the following:

- Social partners, and in some of these, other entities such as chambers of commerce, are a key part of inclusive governance models.
- Joint efforts have been made among the actors involved to ensure quality training, including a high level of coordination between administrations and socio-economic organisations.
- They have created systems with a long tradition of participation and co-responsibility of companies within the system, including small companies, which see dual vocational training as a fundamental mechanism in obtaining the qualified workers they need.
- They have sectoral training centres.
- They have a larger average company size.
- Evaluation is a key instrument for progress and improvement.
- They have significant public and private funding.

### **3. SPAIN: A STILL LOW LEVEL OF IMPLEMENTATION OF DUAL VOCATIONAL TRAINING WITH MARKED IMBALANCES**

3.1. Dual VET began to be implemented in the 2013-2014 academic year and has since then experienced strong growth in the number of people enrolled, from 4,292 to 37,841 in the 2020-2021 academic year, with a particularly strong increase in the number of students since the 2016-2017 academic year (86 per cent). Although these data speak of accelerated growth, the number of people enrolled in the dual mode still represented a very small percentage of the total number of vocational training students in the 2020-2021 academic year (3.7 per cent).

3.2. Meanwhile, the contract for training and apprenticeship, the other channel devised for dual vocational training in 2012, should have been a key element in promoting dual training, favouring the transition between the educational and employment stages, especially for young people without recognised qualifications. In practice, however, its training purpose was distorted and it has played a marginal role as a way for young people to access the labour market.

3.3. Dual VET is concentrated in a few territories, and the concentration of students has increased since the 2016-2017 academic year. In the 2020-2021 academic year, almost seven of every ten people enrolled in dual vocational training were in Andalusia, Catalonia and Madrid, and only in a minority of Autonomous Communities does the percentage represented by dual vocational training become somewhat more significant, with above-average proportions. On the other hand, the Basque Country stands out for its greater historical tradition and particularities in the implementation of this model, although it is not currently among the regions with the greatest number of dual vocational training students.

3.4. In both dual and non-dual vocational training, there is a very significant concentration of students in certain professional families, which is intensified when the analysis is broken down by training cycles. The demand for studies belonging to STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) professional families in dual vocational training in the 2020-2021 academic year was around 40 per cent of the student body, a proportion which, although higher than in non-dual vocational training, possibly has room for growth in relation to the knowledge economy.

3.5. There is a gender imbalance in training choices, which is due, among other elements, to the weight of gender stereotypes. As is generally the case in vocational studies, the presence of women in dual vocational training is lower than that of men, and there is a significant concentration and segmentation by gender in educational choices. In addition, there is a significant under-representation of women in STEM fields, although less significant than in non-dual VET. The lower presence and participation of women in STEM fields has among its causes the persistence of gender stereotypes, as well as fewer job opportunities.

3.6. There is a high drop-out rate from vocational studies, but its impact on dual VET is unknown.

Basic VET is the main means for rescuing secondary school students with more difficulties at the end of ESO and for reducing the still high rate of early school leavers in Spain. However, high drop-out rates are observed in this type of training (41.7 per cent), as well as in intermediate cycles (30.7 per cent), which limits progress in this reduction. This problem is not exclusive to vocational training, as it is also found in compulsory and university studies, which are also affected by substantial socio-economic conditioning factors.

The consideration of all vocational training as dual under the terms of the LOIFP makes it even more necessary to know the incidence of failure and drop-out in this type of training. Despite the improvement in the availability of statistics on dual vocational training, the lack of data on this issue is one of the gaps that limit a better understanding of it.

#### 4. IMPROVED TRANSITIONS TO EMPLOYMENT OF DUAL VET GRADUATES

4.1. A recent improvement in the statistical knowledge of dual vocational training comprised the publication by the MEFP of data on the integration of students who have graduated in this modality. These statistics indicate that the employability of graduates in dual vocational training is higher than in non-dual vocational training. The evolution of the average enrolment rates of the cohorts of graduates in 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 in dual and non-dual vocational training shows several conclusions that are observed for both intermediate ('CFGM' in Spanish) and higher cycles ('CFGM' in Spanish):

- Higher integration, in the short and medium term, of graduates in the dual mode.
- Integration increases as the years pass since graduation, and this integration is higher among graduates in CFGS than among those in CFGM, which may partly explain the greater propensity of the latter to continue their studies.
- Dual vocational training graduates show better integration rates in almost all the Autonomous Communities, with a high level of integration in some of them.

4.2. At both levels of training cycles, intermediate and higher, the best integration rates in dual vocational training extend to almost all vocational families.

The highest integration rates in the four years following graduation in dual vocational training, for graduates in both intermediate and higher cycles, are observed in many of the so-called STEM families, and in some families related to caring for people. In intermediate cycles, it is in these professional families where the differences in integration in favour of dual vocational training are the widest. However, in non-dual vocational training, there are other vocational families with good integration rates that are not reflected in dual vocational training.

4.3. Mismatches in supply and demand by vocational families. In dual VET, similarly to non-dual VET, there are signs of excess demand for enrolment in specialities with relatively worse results in terms of labour market integration and, on the contrary, a lack of demand for vocational studies which nonetheless have high integration rates, such as those related to STEM fields. All this shows that there is room for improvement in vocational and career guidance for young people, especially during Compulsory Secondary Education, and in the socio-cultural factors involved in this decision-making. In addition, it is possible that there may be some deficits of training offers in certain specialisations with good labour market integration. This reveals some deficiencies and delays in the transfer of the previous studies of diagnosis and forecasting of the needs of the productive fabric with regard to the training centres.

4.4. The integration of men is higher than that of women in both cycles in the dual mode. The integration rates of men who have completed a CFGM (intermediate cycle)

in the dual mode, in the four years following their graduation in 2017-2018, are higher than those of women. In the case of the CFGS, the integration rates for women are lower in all years.

- Gender stereotypes and the under-representation of women in the so-called STEM disciplines have major effects on this difference in integration rates.
- Meanwhile, the low social valuation of professions related to caring for people is possibly undermining the success of some highly feminised professional families, such as socio-cultural and community services and health.

4.5. Better employment results for dual vocational training graduates. Dual vocational training graduates in general terms reveal better results in the characteristics of their jobs compared to the non-dual mode, with greater short and medium-term integration, as mentioned above, and greater job stability, in terms of contract duration, type of working hours and average pay.

In view of the data on labour integration and performance, it may be affirmed that dual vocational training represents a training modality that favours the reduction of youth unemployment, which facilitates the transition from education to work, allowing for earlier integration and improving the employment stability of the younger population.

## **5. INVOLVEMENT OF COMPANIES IN APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING, A CORE ISSUE**

5.1. Dual vocational training can help to improve business productivity and competitiveness by enabling companies to train and subsequently recruit people with professional profiles associated with specific training that meets their needs, and facilitates the acquisition of cross-cutting competences, while at the same time saving on the costs of selecting and adapting new employees. Beyond the above, dual vocational training can favour an alliance between companies and society as a whole, with the former contributing to training workers in accordance with the needs and interests of the environment in which they operate, and thus in line with territorial and social development.

5.2. This requires a strong and stable business fabric, which bases its growth and value creation on innovation, the international orientation of its activity, investment in human capital and the establishment of collaboration strategies. In this respect, business strengthening policies are essential in developing an extensive and sustainable dual training model.

5.3. Attention should first be drawn to the lack of up-to-date statistical information in this field, which prevents a true picture of both the exact number of collaborating companies and their profile, making it difficult to analyse and understand the dual vocational training system. Nor is there any information of the retention rates of graduates by the companies where they were trained.

5.4. Despite the momentum of recent years, the participation by companies in dual VET remains low. The latest official data available, corresponding to the 2016-2017 academic year, showed a total of 9,916 companies (0.3 per cent of the number of active companies).

5.5. The low participation of companies in Spain is to a large extent, but not only, down to the characteristics of the business fabric itself, with a predominance of small companies which, in general terms, reveal greater difficulties in handling the costs and management capacity associated with apprenticeship training. Institutional support in this area is scarce, there are practically no incentives or support measures for the participation of SMEs. There are also insufficient information and awareness-raising actions as to the opportunities and advantages of being dual vocational training companies.

5.6. Another feature of the Spanish business structure that may be relevant in explaining lower business participation in dual vocational training, taking into account the possible pull effect of these companies on the participation of other companies in the value chain, is the smaller proportion of large industrial companies in Spain compared to the EU average and to countries such as Germany. Among other aspects, this differential feature may be relevant in relation to the development of Industry 4.0.

5.7. The participation of companies as trainers in Spain has relied to a large extent on the search activity carried out by the training centres themselves and by their teaching staff, in functions that go beyond their teaching profiles and have led to an increased workload, all without additional resources appropriate to this transformation of functions. This reality limits the system's capacity to attract new companies to participate in dual training, and the consequent capacity to offer dual cycles. In contrast, in successful systems such as Germany's, it is the companies themselves that offer apprenticeships, with a system of accreditation and support from bodies such as chambers of commerce and industry, all of which has contributed to the creation of an extensive and consolidated culture of business participation in apprenticeship training. For this reason, it will be essential in Spain to promote the figure, incorporated in the LOIFP, of company prospectors who facilitate contacts between VET centres and companies or similar bodies. Likewise, the proactive participation of sectoral and territorial business organisations and intermediate bodies in these tasks is very important.

5.8. As some qualitative studies show, companies collaborating in dual VET programmes tend to be larger, older, more invested and more profitable than those that do not. Larger companies, in addition to having more human and financial resources to devote to training, are able to spread the costs over several apprenticeships. Moreover, they show, in general terms, a greater capacity to attract and retain the most qualified

apprentices, and they have staffing needs practically every year, which is not the case for smaller ones. On the other hand, trainees trained in these companies may find recruitment opportunities at other companies, for example at the SMEs that are part of their value chain.

5.9. However, the small size of companies in Spain should not be an obstacle to dual vocational training. In fact, neighbouring countries with a similarly structured business fabric show greater development of this type of training. In this respect, and given the economic importance of SMEs and their important contribution to job creation, it is necessary to encourage their participation in dual vocational training, either to train workers for their own staff or as providers of qualifications in a sector of activity.

5.10. The need to strike a balance between the objective of having enough training companies, and requiring them to meet minimum standards that guarantee the quality of training, has been identified as one of the main challenges, preventing dual vocational training from being distorted, and to this end providing support measures for participating companies.

5.11. In any case, if more companies are to participate in dual vocational training projects, the benefits of apprenticeship training must outweigh the costs of the training. This can happen both in the short term, through the productivity gains derived from the performance of the apprentice during the training period, and above all in the long term, when the company is able to retain the apprentices trained to become part of its workforce, once the training is completed.

## **6. LOIFP: A NEW FRAMEWORK FOR DUAL VET WITH MORE COHESION AND GOVERNANCE**

6.1. The regulation of the foundations of dual vocational training in 2012 provided initial coverage for the implementation of this training. Over the course of a decade, numerous educational projects, shared knowledge and a substantial body of good practices in this training modality have been generated, facilitating gradual progress in its quality and extension.

6.2. However, the perspective of these ten years has shown the genericity and insufficiency of this first regulation. This has led to dysfunctions that may have hindered further development and contributed to the fact that dual vocational training is still very limited, fundamentally:

- Lack of a recognisable model of dual VET at the national level to establish its social and business prestige.

- Inefficiencies in the operation derived from the existence of different requirements in each territory.
- Lack of definition of important elements of the system, which has led to certain shortcomings and weaknesses in some territorial models.
- Unequal territorial compliance with common quality criteria, as indicated by relevant studies such as the Regional Report on the quality of dual VET in Spain, which needs to be ensured in line with the Council Recommendation (EU) of 15 March 2018.
- Lack of specific governance structure for dual VET as a whole with a lack of explicit recognition of the roles of social partner organisations, as well as intermediate bodies and entities, among other aspects.

These shortcomings are combined with the lack of sufficient funding for measures to support and promote dual projects.

6.3. The approval of Organic Law 3/2022, of 31 March, on the Organisation and Integration of Vocational Training (LOIFP), with broad political and social support, has established a new and more complete framework of common instruments for dual vocational training that provides significant innovations in key aspects for its operation. These include the definition of the organisation of in-company training, the reinforcement of the key figures of the tutor at the centre and at the company, the greater orientation of training towards the competences demanded by the productive sector, greater attention to the needs of SMEs, as well as a reinforcement of the system's guidance and instruments for evaluation and quality.

This framework aims for a more cohesive system, which should not be incompatible with the sectoral and territorial adaptation of dual vocational training. It is also committed to reinforced governance, and aims to promote the development of dual vocational training throughout the country.

6.4. However, to make progress on these objectives, it is necessary to:

- Complete the configuration of the new framework with the approval of the LOIFP, starting with the Royal Decree on the organisation of vocational training, currently being drafted within the framework of social dialogue.
- Provide sufficient and efficient resources that, through the corresponding policies, allow the goals and changes designed to be made effective, above all two of particular importance: firstly, greater integration of the vocational training system, making lifelong learning opportunities effective, and secondly, the consideration of all vocational training (grades C, D and, where appropriate, E) as dual vocational training. The latter is a paradigm shift that will require a significant scaling up of the number of training places available at companies. It is a question of expanding intensive dual vocational training, but without neglecting, and instead modernising and strengthening general dual vocational training.

## 7. A FAVOURABLE JUNCTURE FOR THE PROMOTION OF DUAL TRAINING: THE TIME OF POLICIES

7.1. Although the Vocational Training Modernisation Plan already envisaged the need for a major reform of the system, the *Next Generation EU* resources represent a decisive opportunity to achieve the desired boost to vocational training, now configured as dual vocational training, and especially intensive dual training under the LOIFP scheme. The Recovery, Transformation and Resilience Plan (PRTR) provides a greater volume of additional resources (2,076 million euros) to promote and transform vocational training.

7.2. However, the actions envisaged in the PRTR for vocational training have a broad approach, with no explicit references or investments specifically aimed at promoting dual training.

7.3. The PRTR includes investments in three areas:

- The improvement of qualifications and the requalification of the active population (60 per cent of total resources), where the bulk of resources are allocated to the assessment and accreditation of professional competences acquired through work experience and other non-formal channels.
- The digital transformation of vocational training, highlighting, among other measures, the innovative implementation of a network of centres of excellence in innovation.
- The innovation and internationalisation of vocational training, which includes the reinforcement of the offering of training with more than 200,000 new places, backed by reasons of equity and efficiency (not to lose talent, especially young talent).

7.4. Other PRTR components can contribute directly or indirectly to the promotion of dual training and the correction of gender gaps, either through their content, such as component 19, which focuses on digital competences, or because they refer to other areas where dual training could be implemented, such as vocational training for employment in the framework of active policies in component 23, or dual university training in component 21.

Likewise, the actions envisaged in components 12, on industrial policy, and 13, on boosting SMEs, aimed at transforming the productive system and aligned with the creation and development of companies and their survival, are key to achieving greater participation of companies in dual training.

## 8. DEVELOPING DUAL TRAINING IN OTHER KEY AREAS: TRAINING FOR EMPLOYMENT AND UNIVERSITIES

8.1. The available comparative information shows that Spain has a gap in work-based learning in relation to some of the main neighbouring countries. It is therefore consid-

ered necessary, in addition to accelerating the deployment of dual VET, to develop dual training also in university and in vocational training for employment in the workplace.

8.2. Dual university education in Spain is undergoing initial, albeit uneven, development thanks to the impetus of certain universities, which have in turn based themselves on consolidated dual higher education systems in other countries, as well as on the experience acquired with industrial doctorates.

8.3. The approval of Royal Decree 822/2021, of 28 September, establishing the organisation of university education, has been followed by the recent approval of Organic Law 2/2023, of 22 March, on the University System, providing a framework for the offering of dual undergraduate and postgraduate studies, and opening up new perspectives for policies aimed at promoting them.

8.4. Dual vocational training for employment can facilitate retraining and reintegration in the labour market for both employed and unemployed people. It can be particularly suitable in the case of the long-term unemployed and other groups with particular difficulties of integration or reintegration into the labour market.

8.5. The reform of Law 30/2015 that is currently being drawn up, within the framework of dialogue with social partners, represents a clear opportunity to make progress in the introduction of dual formulas, taking into account the heterogeneous characteristics and purposes of this area of training.

## Proposals

The analysis contained in the text of the report and the main conclusions that have been drawn allow a series of proposals to be formulated, as set out below.

### 1. IMPROVING STATISTICAL KNOWLEDGE OF DUAL TRAINING

1.1. In recent years there have been improvements in the statistics on dual VET. However, it is essential to make further progress in this area in order to have **sufficient and up-to-date statistical knowledge**. The statistical transparency of the dual vocational training system should make it possible to fill important gaps that currently exist in the knowledge of the system in Spain, such as the number and characteristics of the companies that provide training, or the retention rate of the students trained there. The continuous improvement of official statistics on dual vocational training is even more necessary, if possible, given the implementation of the LOIFP and the new organisation it introduces in dual vocational training in the two regimes, general and intensive, and it is important that the adaptation to new categories, concepts and indicators allow for continuity of knowledge, avoiding breaks in the series as far as possible.

1.2. In any case, it would be advisable to support the **creation of a state monitor of dual vocational training**, with the functions of statistical analysis, observation and monitoring of the system. This tool should provide information, based on homogeneous and comparable indicators, at national and Autonomous Community level, regarding, among other aspects, the map of supply in relation to the productive environment, equity of access, student and company participation, learning outcomes, integration, quality and satisfaction with dual vocational training. All of which should take into account the two training regimes: general and intensive.

It would be desirable for INE statistical operations relating to training to also include indicators on the characteristics of dual training in different areas (vocational training and universities).

1.3. The recent statistical knowledge of school drop-out from vocational studies represents a first step in focusing public policies for prevention, intervention and compensation. It would therefore be advisable to continue this system of indicators with the adaptation that may be necessary for vocational training in its new consideration as dual. It would also be advisable to exploit the administrative registers of students, which are necessary to monitor the risk of disengagement with school at the different educational stages, as well as to be able to analyse the effect of socio-economic characteristics of households on school drop-out.

## 2. UPDATING THE SUPPLY OF TRAINING TO HELP THE EXPANSION OF DUAL TRAINING

2.1. The new demands for qualifications in the field of digitalisation, environmental sustainability, the care sector or in emerging competences would make it advisable **to adapt the existing offering and create new training areas** in relation to the National Catalogue of Standards of Competence and the Catalogue of Training Specialities of the SEPE. The new qualification needs detected must be quickly transferred to the training on offer through the design of new qualifications and the revision of existing ones. All of this in order to respond to the training needs of people and the productive sector, in the short, medium and long term.

- It is crucial to guarantee and concretise in practice the participation of social partners in this definition, given their greater knowledge of and proximity to the productive sector and its needs.
- The reorientation of supply must make use of well-articulated needs prospection tools and continuous collaboration between the different agents involved in the system, in order to be able to identify on which vocational families and training cycles efforts should be concentrated. And it should be supported by reinforced academic and vocational guidance services, aimed at disseminating and giving value to vocational training options in the continuation of studies.

- In this sense, it is also essential to know the supply and demand for places in the different vocational families and training cycles.

2.2. Design investments appropriate to the urgency of addressing the **infrastructure resources and other additional means necessary** to meet the increase in supply with a sufficient level of quality.

2.3. Promote, through the Autonomous Communities and within the framework of social dialogue, the implementation of three-year dual vocational training cycles, especially aimed at those cases in which professional specialisation is necessary to acquire advanced qualifications, in order to respond to the needs of greater complexity in production processes.

2.4. Promote the offering, on the part of the General State Administration, and without detriment to the responsibility of the competent educational administrations, of state-wide **lifelong learning programmes** aimed at VET teachers and trainers, provided for in the LOIFP. To this end, financial support from PRTR funds could be considered for the initial promotion of these programmes.

This continuous teacher training could include, in addition to the reinforcement of digital and language competences, specific training to adequately and in a coordinated manner develop the functions of student tutoring, among other aspects, including international programmes or placements, and placements at companies, to incorporate good practices in dual training.

2.5. Complete within a reasonable period of time the provisions for the regulatory development of the LOIFP regarding the possibility of **authorising practising professionals from the productive sectors** to provide vocational training, and promote, through effective policies, the operability and expansion of this type of teaching support. This will strengthen the capacity of training centres to better cope with the new dual vocational training and the evolution of the range of training on offer.

### 3. COMPANIES: STRONGLY BOOST THEIR PARTICIPATION IN DUAL TRAINING

Substantially expanding the participation of companies as trainers in dual vocational training, especially in intensive dual training, and extending this participation to other areas of dual training, especially in universities, is a crucial goal in order to achieve a more definitive deployment of dual training in the coming years. To this end, the following are seen as necessary:

3.1. Promote a **general framework that favours the development of business activity**, the entrepreneurial impulse and the creation, growth and survival of companies.

All of this within the context of the far-reaching changes affecting today's economies and, in particular, labour markets.

- Strengthen financial instruments.
- Develop instruments to support internationalisation and access to innovation and technology.
- Provide the necessary qualifications both for workers and management training for entrepreneurs and business people.

3.2. Articulate **measures to disseminate and raise awareness** about dual training and what it can offer, publicising its potential benefits, aimed at the business fabric.

3.3. Guarantee the presence of **company tutors and trainers** with appropriate training, professional experience and pedagogical vocation. The absence of measures to promote these figures has been a major hindrance to the deployment of dual vocational training. It is essential to make the legal provisions effective through outreach policies that help more companies to employ these professionals. In this sense, in a context of growing social and business demand for vocational training, and its consideration as dual by the LOIFP, resulting in the need to train a large number of these professionals, it would be advisable to design national plans or programmes that provide the necessary means and support for this purpose.

3.4. It is considered very important to promote dual training from a **sectoral and territorial approach**, counteracting the limitations that the size and sectoral structure of the business fabric in Spain may imply. In a highly tertiarised knowledge economy, dual vocational and university training can and should be expanded in all sectors. To this end, the following would be advisable:

- Take advantage of **sectoral strengths** of the Spanish economy to promote the creation of niche apprenticeships, especially in certain sectors. Given the regional productive structure in Spain, the sectoral promotion of dual vocational training should take advantage of the sectoral strengths of the territories.
- Within **rural policies**, specific measures are needed to promote the offer of dual training projects in agriculture, livestock and fishing activities, with the involvement of administrations, training centres and farms. It would also be necessary to take into account the socio-health sector and care for dependent persons, as sectors that need to be strengthened, given the ageing of the population in these areas. Dual vocational training can also play an important role here.
- Support for the **capacity building of sectoral and territorial organisations of the social partners**: associations, business and trade union organisations and foundations, to promote dual training in the sector, which could focus on functions including:

- Prospecting for apprenticeships at companies in the sector and identifying training centres offering the appropriate cycles, as well as facilitating links between companies and centres.
- Creation and updating of registers of training companies. Regular liaison with training companies.
- Offer technical support services for the compliance of training companies with quality standards (similar to a verification or accreditation system), on behalf of and in cooperation with the competent territorial administrations. The aim would be to achieve results similar to those achieved in some comparative models by organisations such as the German chambers of commerce and industry. To this end, they should have the corresponding accredited technical staff.
- Promote “quality seals” to recognise training companies.
- Participate with the competent educational administrations in measures to make curricular design more flexible, contributing to the alignment of training with the specific needs of the productive sectors. Design of training cycles at the sectoral level.

All of the above is supported by the greater role that the LOIFP recognises for the social partners. Furthermore, based on the role recognised by the Law for intermediate bodies and entities, synergies should be sought between the above organisations and these.

- **Promote sectoral and territorial studies** on the needs for qualifications, the needs for adaptation of training cycles and the potential business fabric for training.

3.5. Plan **specific financial and non-financial support measures** to promote the participation of companies, especially SMEs and small companies in dual training, above all in intensive dual vocational training, given its greater difficulty and demands. In relation to the latter, based on an evaluation of those previously applied, economic support measures for the recruitment of people under the alternating training modality could be studied, which could stimulate the supply of apprenticeships. In addition to the above, such measures should include:

- Support for the promotion of the **professional figure of the coordinator of company tutors**, which could help to encourage the participation of small and micro companies in dual training, reducing their workload, improving the accompaniment of apprentices during their training at the company and facilitating follow-up by the centre, improving the quality of the projects.
- Promote **business collaboration strategies**, such as training alliances, which allow SMEs in particular to obtain economies of scale in apprenticeship training. The development of collaborative networks between companies for the delivery of certain specialised modules could also be encouraged. Such networks of companies for collaborative training purposes, foreseen and allowed by the LOIFP, should be effective through the necessary support policies.

- Information on the advantages and opportunities of being a dual training company. It would be advisable to provide companies with digital cost-benefit calculation tools.
- Information on applicable regulations and available resources: shared company tutors, supra-company training centres, financial or fiscal support if necessary.
- Support in the management of the procedure (agreements with the centres, selection of trainees, legal and administrative aspects).
- Open lines of financial and/or fiscal support for participation as training companies, not only but especially for SMEs and micro companies.
- Integrate support for participation in dual training in policies for business creation and growth, launching of start-ups, business incubators, etc.
- Integrate support for participation in dual training into policies to support self-employment and entrepreneurship.

3.6. The above support measures should mainly be provided by the Autonomous Communities. They should be based on **the cooperation of these administrations with the sectoral and territorial organisations of the social partners** and with the chambers in the territory. They could also be supported by central government and local entities.

In any case, incentives for the participation of companies in dual vocational training programmes should take into account the peculiarities of the territories and the regional productive structure, in order to take advantage of the strengths and overcome the weaknesses of each territory.

3.7. Implement, in a staggered and gradual manner, with a sufficient time span, **systems or procedures for the accreditation of companies participating in dual training** that comply with minimum standards or requirements. To this end, SMEs in particular should be able to count on the advice, guidance and support of the authorities and social partner organisations, as well as intermediate bodies and entities. To this end, it is necessary to be able to rely within an appropriate timeframe on the quality verification instruments and certification systems for companies or similar bodies, the development of which is provided for in the LOIFP.

3.8. Meanwhile, beyond the obligations for companies to inform workers' legal representatives about the places available for trainees and about educational or training cooperation agreements that provide for training contracts, as provided for in the LOIFP and the LET respectively, it would be desirable for collective bargaining to explore formulas for collaboration between the parties to labour relations for the successful development of dual training plans.

#### 4. TRAINING CENTRES: REINFORCEMENT AND SUPPORT MEASURES

It is essential to address the adaptation and reinforcement of vocational training centres in order to meet the objectives and requirements of the new dual vocational training, especially with a view to the goal of expanding intensive dual vocational training in the process of implementing the LOIFP. To this end, measures including such examples as the following would be advisable:

4.1. Develop and promote **organisational, management and pedagogical autonomy** that allows the centres to adequately articulate the supply of training cycles and adapt the training programmes (in the sense envisaged in the LOIFP), taking into account that a substantial part of the training will have to be carried out at companies.

4.2. Guarantee the **necessary training resources for teachers** to adapt to a predominantly dual vocational training system, to promote links between centres and companies in order to collaborate with them in the training of company tutors and trainers, to promote company placements for teachers and territorial mobility to learn about experiences of good practices.

4.3. Take advantage of the **digital transformation** of the education system to promote virtual training environments, creating virtual training centres with online resources and materials, new channels of communication and distance teaching and care, but also with the most innovative technological developments, such as the use of virtual and augmented reality or other immersive experiences.

4.4. Promote the **creation of vocational training innovation and development centres**, in line with existing experiences in some Autonomous Communities. These centres, which provide a good knowledge of the productive fabric of the territory and shorten the time between the detection of productive needs and the configuration of training cycles, could be located as part of business clusters and technology parks.

In this regard, it is worth recalling the possibility of promoting these centres of innovation and excellence within the framework of transnational collaboration networks in the European Union, one area of which includes actions in education and training thanks to Community funding from the ESF+ and the Erasmus+ programme.

4.5. Promote the **participation of the social partners** and, where appropriate, intermediate bodies and organisations in the network of centres of excellence, in order to generate a multiplier effect of investment and disseminate innovation in the territory.

It is also an opportunity for companies, especially SMEs and micro companies, to get involved in innovation by collaborating with the network, offering placements for students and teaching staff, or participating in clusters and in innovation or ‘e-startup’ development projects.

4.6. Promote **integrated VET centres** and guide them to provide training and modules in emerging competences, bringing together training in these areas for the whole of the VET system, students in the education system and the labour force. In this respect, it would be desirable to make progress in coordinating the two existing networks of training centres, those of the education system and those of the national employment system.

4.7. It would be advisable for **VET centres to be specific to vocational training**, as well as for centres to **specialise more**, which would allow for better recognition by companies and a better connection between centres and companies in each geographical area.

4.8. Encourage **collaboration between centres and companies** to develop innovation projects, which can lead to greater co-responsibility of companies in VET and boost their effective participation.

4.9. Public administrations should encourage **collaboration between educational centres** regardless of their ownership.

4.10. It is necessary to be able to rely within an appropriate timeframe on the **quality verification instruments** and certification systems for vocational training centres, the regulatory development of which is provided for in the LOIFP.

## 5. STUDENT BODY: TACKLING GENDER IMBALANCE IN EDUCATION AND IMPLEMENTING INCLUSIVE POLICIES FOR ALL PEOPLE

The reasons for the lower presence and participation of women in VET and STEM fields, and gender segregation in vocational studies, include the persistence of gender stereotypes.

5.1. It is therefore necessary to continue to investigate and act effectively from an early age in the educational levels prior to VET on the factors that contribute to reproducing gender segregation and segmentation, both in STEM studies and in other disciplines. A greater dissemination of the high employability rates of professional families linked to STEM fields and of female role models in these fields, as well as a greater dissemination of the success of occupational integration in some highly feminised branches,

oriented towards caring for and tending to people, which currently have a low social value, could help in a more gender-balanced choice of these studies.

5.2. In order to incorporate the necessary inclusive dual training policies, it would be advisable to establish security mechanisms in cases where students are unable to complete the dual training, or are unable to obtain a training position in companies to carry it out.

It would also be important to implement measures aimed at promoting dual training among all students, with a particular focus on people from socially vulnerable households. To this end, it would be advisable to balance academic qualifications with other access requirements, given the association between academic results and family income levels.

## 6. UNDERTAKE THE CREATION OF A STRONG CAREER GUIDANCE SYSTEM

A good vocational guidance system is key to meeting people's training needs, bringing training choices closer to occupational trends and facilitating positive student outcomes, limiting the risk of drop-out. Specific guidance on the possibility of participating in dual VET projects, especially intensive dual VET, is a necessary instrument for its expansion. To this end, it would be advisable to consider the adoption of measures such as, among others:

6.1. Professionalise the figure of **vocational guidance counsellors**, with specific training and differentiating it from psycho-pedagogical guidance. Consider the creation of specific bodies of vocational guidance counsellors or as a speciality within the teaching corps, albeit with their own training and qualifications.

This service must be offered adequately in all secondary schools, maintaining a ratio of counsellors/enrolled students that allows for personalised attention, including profiling techniques for the detection of students' personal needs. And it is essential to provide means and access to labour market knowledge resources (structure, contents and evolution of occupations and professions).

6.2. The **national strategy for vocational guidance**, the drafting of which is mandated by the LOIFP, should be approached in a **collaborative and coordinated** manner between the education system and the National Employment System, with the proactive participation of the social partners in its design.

6.3. As a complement to the vocational guidance system, it is still necessary to promote transparency and information on dual training by means of **measures** aimed at the educational community, families and companies, as well as society as a whole, to **disseminate and raise awareness** of the differential contribution of this training, the

need for qualified technical professionals, and the real possibilities of finding employment. Greater dissemination of the better job placements offered by dual vocational training compared to other educational options could increase the choice of these studies, especially among female students.

## 7. EVALUATION OF THE SYSTEM: THE CORNERSTONE FOR PROGRESS AND IMPROVEMENT

7.1. It is essential to develop the **system for evaluating the quality of the Vocational Training System** in accordance with the indicators established in the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training, as set out in the LOIFP. It is also positive that the implementation of such a system is envisaged by central government in collaboration with the competent administrations and the most representative employers' and trade union organisations.

7.2. In this respect, a **methodology and a set of indicators** should be established with targets for the degree of implementation and success, as well as making it possible to trace the training processes and the transitions of dual training students to the labour market. All of this could be evaluated by means of longitudinal surveys that would allow comparison over time, and which could be complemented by opinion barometers, both of companies and of students.

## 8. MAKING THE STRENGTHENING OF THE GOVERNANCE OF THE SYSTEM EFFECTIVE

Strengthening the governance of the system is a fundamental step, but it needs to be made effective. To this end, it is considered essential to:

8.1. Intensify **cooperation and dialogue between the competent administrations** at different levels, within a transparent and coordinated decision-making system. In particular, greater effort should be made to coordinate the different models established in recent years, avoiding dysfunctions that could hinder participation in dual programmes.

8.2. It is also considered necessary to promote collaboration and dialogue between administrations and social partner organisations, facilitating the **proactive actions of these organisations** in strategic and operational governance tasks, at the state, territorial and sectoral levels.

8.3. Study the possible **creation of a public body at the state level** with functions of **research, innovation, development** and proposals for improving dual training, along the lines of those that exist in some comparative experiences such as Germany. Alternatively, consideration could be given to extending the competences of existing

bodies with these objectives, providing them with the necessary resources to carry out these tasks.

## 9. DUAL UNIVERSITY EDUCATION

In view of the development that dual university training is beginning to see, it is advisable to adopt measures to support and promote this, including the following:

9.1. Launching of a **statistical operation on dual university training** at the Ministry of Universities.

9.2. Support for the creation of a **dual university training monitor**, similar to that for vocational training, but specific to university education (bachelor's degrees, master's degrees and industrial doctorates).

9.3. In the short term, promote the drawing up of a **map of universities with dual studies**.

9.4. Promote the creation of a **network of universities with dual studies**, with study functions, dissemination of good practices and support for projects.

9.5. Promote the **prospecting of potential training companies**, including those located in technology parks, for bachelor's degrees, master's degrees, and especially industrial doctorates.

9.6. Dual university education should be able to rely on **specific evaluation mechanisms** to assess its impact in terms of generation and transfer of knowledge and competences, as well as its contribution to the employability of individuals and the country's competitiveness.

## 10. DUAL VOCATIONAL TRAINING FOR EMPLOYMENT

10.1 It is necessary to promote measures to develop the dual nature of vocational training for employment, particularly in **modular training associated with obtaining professional certificates** as accumulable and accreditable training.

10.2. In order to advance in the integration of the vocational training system proposed in the new regulatory framework of the LOIFP, consideration could be given to **connecting the SEPE's Catalogue of Training Specialities with the new National Catalogue of Competence Standards**, establishing the necessary correspondences between the two of them. With the same objective, it would be advisable to integrate or coordinate the different public occupational observatories. To

this end, it would be necessary to structure cooperation between the competent administrations.

10.3. Develop a more central role for the network of vocational training centres, and specifically, for the **integrated vocational centres** (abbreviated as ‘CIFP’ in Spanish). The goal should be for the CIFPs to function to a greater extent as true integrated centres, serving both the training of students in training cycles and the working population, whether employed or unemployed.

10.4. In the short term, set up **pilot projects for the benefit of unemployed people** of different age, gender and educational backgrounds, which include part of the training at companies. The application of incentives to participate in dual vocational training for the benefit of young unemployed and long-term unemployed people could be considered.

## 11. SEIZE THE OPPORTUNITY PRESENTED BY THE PRTR

11.1. Incorporate in the PRTR (in the addendum currently being drafted and negotiated) **specific investments with a dedicated focus** to undertake some of the central commitments of the new VET scheme, such as the fact that all training will be of a dual nature.

11.2. Looking to the future, it will be necessary to seek out formulas, in coordination with the Autonomous Communities, to guarantee **sustained and sustainable funding over time** which, beyond the period of implementation envisaged for the PRTR, will enable the new model to be deployed.

11.3. The PRTR could offer substantial support to boost the **deployment of dual training in other areas**:

- In vocational training for employment, with “dual” modular offers aimed at the qualification and requalification of the active population.
- In dual university training, with provisions to support the deployment, at least initially, of the dual mention envisaged in the new Organic Law on the University System.

11.4. Meanwhile, the PRTR represents **an opportunity to overcome the gender imbalances** detected in the implementation of dual training, by fully integrating the principle of equality between women and men as one of its four axes of action, which is embodied in practice both in the incorporation of specific measures and in the adoption of a cross-cutting perspective in the design and deployment of the entire Plan.

## 12. CONVERGING WITH THE EUROPEAN ENVIRONMENT IN DUAL VOCATIONAL TRAINING BY USING EU RESOURCES

12.1 It would be desirable to **take advantage of all the resources that the European Commission** has made available to the Member States **for the funding of dual training programmes**, as well as support and awareness-raising services.

12.2. These European resources should also make it possible to further promote mobility at the EU level through the Erasmus+ and ErasmusPRO programmes. In this respect, transnational mobility should be considered as a component of qualifications.

12.3. The **presence** of Spanish institutions, public authorities, organisations and companies, especially SMEs, **in the European Alliance for Apprenticeships** should be **encouraged**.