

ANALYSIS ABOUT EXISTING STRUCTURE OF FORMAL NON FORMAL AND INFORMAL LEARNING AND THE SITUATION WITH REGARD TO THE ACCREDITATION OF PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE IN SPAIN

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Transferring methods for validation of informal learning to VET institutions in the field of sustainable agriculture

Term/ Acronym/ Abbreviation	Description
Formal learning	Learning that occurs in an organised and structured context (in a school/training centre or on the job) and is explicitly designated as learning (in terms of objectives, time or learning support). Formal learning is intentional from the learner's point of view. It typically leads to certification.
Non-formal learning	Learning which is embedded in planned activities not explicitly designated as learning (in terms of learning objectives, learning time or learning support), but which contain an important learning element. Non-formal learning is intentional from the learner's point of view. It typically does not lead to certification.
Informal learning	Learning resulting from daily work-related, family or leisure activities. It is not organised or structured (in terms of objectives, time or learning support). Informal learning is in most cases unintentional from the learner's perspective. It typically does not lead to certification.
Learning outcome(s)	the set of knowledge, skills and/or competences an individual acquired and/or is able to demonstrate after completion of a learning process.
Competence	ability to apply knowledge, know-how and skills in a habitual and/or changing work situation.
Prior learning	the knowledge, know-how and/ or competences acquired through previously unrecognised training or experience
Assessment	the sum of methods and processes used to evaluate the attainments (knowledge, know-how and/or competences) of an individual, and typically leading to certification.
Certification	the process of formally validating knowledge, know-how and/or competences acquired by an individual, following a standard assessment procedure. Certificates or diplomas are issued by accredited awarding bodies.
Validation (of informal /non-formal learning)	the process of assessing and recognising a wide range of knowledge, know-how, skills and competences which people develop throughout their lives in different contexts, for example through education, work and leisure activities.
Validation of learning outcomes:	Confirmation by a competent body that learning outcomes (knowledge, skills and/or competences) acquired by an individual in a formal, non-formal or informal setting have been assessed against predefined criteria and are compliant with the requirements of a validation standard. Validation typically leads to certification. Source: Cedefop, 2008c.
Accreditation of prior learning (APL)	See validation of informal / non-formal learning

Source: CEDEFOP Validation Inventory

1. Analysis per country of the current situation of non-formal, informal, and formal learning in agriculture

During last meeting it was agreed in focusing the project in the level 3-4 of qualification of the European Qualification Framework. The University and centres of high education level will be treated very briefly in this report.

1.1 Formal learning

About the university formation in Spain, there are several specialities inside the agricultural family given in the most of Spanish universities. In this way, in each university it often exists a specialized centre in this matter, called School of Agricultural Engineering.

In Spain, the formal learning is contained in the called “Vocational Training”. The Vocational Training is regulated by the *Royal Decree 1147/2011, July 29th, where is established the general organization of Vocational Training education system.*

This training is structured according to criteria of affinity to the professional expertise in 26 families. So, Sustainable Agriculture is inside the agricultural professional family.

The Vocational Training depends on the Regions (NUTS 2) – *Comunidades Autónomas* in Spanish –. The access to this training is divided into two degrees, which have different access requirements:

- **Intermediate Level Training Cycle:** it can be accessed after obtaining the title of E.S.O.¹ either making a specific test of access to Intermediate Level for which is necessary to be 17 years old. At the end of these studies is obtained the title of technician in the corresponding qualification.
- **Top Level Training Cycle:** it can be accessed after obtained the degree of Bachelor². Another option is to make a specific test of access to Top Level. At the end of these studies is obtained the title of senior technician in the corresponding cycle.

1.1.1. Spanish centres that teach Vocational Training Cycle related with agro-ecology and sustainable agriculture

Then, it be cited the centres that offer this training (20 centres). In parentheses is the town in which are:

- I.E.S. (High school of Secondary Education) El Palmeral (Orihuela – Alicante)
- Centre IMK of Arkaute (Áraba)
- I.E.S. Luces de Colunga (Asturias)
- Centre of Rural Training of Don Benito (Don Benito, Badajoz)
- Centre of Agricultural Training of Manresa (Manresa, Barcelona)

¹ E.S.O. (Compulsory Secondary Education) free and compulsory education stage that completes basic education. It consists of four academic courses that will be ordinarily carried out between 12 and 16 years old.

² Bachelor, it is part of post-compulsory secondary education and, therefore, it has a voluntary. It consists of two academic courses that are ordinarily performed between 16 and 18 years old. It develops in different modalities, is organized flexibly and, where appropriate, in different ways.

- I.E.S. La Granja. (Heras, Cantabria)
- I.E.S. Gilabert de Centelles. (Nules, Castellón)
- School of Agricultural Training of Arucas (Arucas, Gran Canaria)
- Centre of Agricultural Training EFA El Soto. (Chauchina, Granada).
- I.E.S. Ramón Llull. (Palma, Islas Baleares)
- School of Agricultural Training of Alfarràs (Alfarràs, Lleida)
- Centre of Training and Experimentation Agro-forestry "Pedro Murias". (Ribadeo, Lugo)
- CIFEJA Jumilla (Jumilla, Murcia)
- School of Agricultural Training Viñalta (Viñalta, Palencia)
- I.E.S. Pasqual Calbó i Caldés. (Maó, Palma de Mallorca)
- Integrated Vocational Training Centre A Granxa. (Ponteareas, Pontevedra).
- I.E.S. d'Horticultura i Jardineria. Reus (Tarragona).
- School of Agricultural Training of Catarroja (Catarroja, Valencia)
- School of Agricultural Training of la Malvesía (Llombai, Valencia)
- I.E.S. Alfonso IX. (Zamora)

In addition, each region has several centres where other agricultural specialties are taught. In the case of Extremadura, the followings can be cited

- Centre of Rural Training of Don Benito
- Centre of Rural Training of Moraleja
- Centre of Rural Training of Navalmoral
- Centre of Rural Training of Villafranca
- I.E.S. Castillo de Luna (Alburquerque)
- I.E.S. Ntra. Sra. De Botóia (Badajoz)
- I.E.S. Gabriel y Galán (Montehermoso)
- School of Agricultural Training Casagrande (Valdivia)
- School of Agricultural Training Guadaljucén (Mérida)
- I.E.S. Jaranda (Jarandilla de la Vera)

1.2 Non-formal learning

The non-formal learning in Spain is often made by private companies as academies, by public entities (regional government and dependent organisms) and semi-public entities (energy agency, nonprofit organization,...)

About private companies, in order to issue a "certificate or diploma of achievement" or similar, they should be enrolled in the IAE register (register of Economic Activities Tax) under the caption "932 non-regulated education for training and professional development, and higher education"

Nowadays, there are multitudes of training courses related with sustainable agriculture. To cite some examples, it can be consulted the taught by: (Links are in Spanish)

- Extremadura Government. Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Environment and Energy (http://rurex-formacion.gobex.es/cursos_detalle.php?curso_id=17).

- Extremadura Energy Agency (<http://www.agenex.net/dptos/dpto-eficiencia-energetica/56-agricultura#a>).
- Spanish Society of Sustainable Agriculture (<http://www.agroecologia.net/que-hacemos/formacion/>)

1.3 Informal learning

The informal training, in the agricultural world, is deeply ingrained. Currently, there is a continuous transfer of information between the different generations of farmers, becoming, in the majority of cases, the parents in their children's teachers. Something similar occurs in certain circles of the farmer, such as cooperatives, associations, etc. where the exchange of knowledge acquired through the trial and error makes some farmers to take the role of teachers and other the role of students. These roles, many times, are exchanged.

In addition, in Spain to be a farmer, specific formal qualifications are not necessary. In this way, the majority of Spanish farmers are without it. Although, they sometimes resort to non-formal training (mostly short-term) in order to acquire knowledge about new practices, technological advances and/or innovations.

2. Accreditation of prior learning and/or previous experience

2.1 National perspective on validation

2.1.1 Description of system of validation

Spanish validation system is governed by the *Organic Law 5/2002, of June 19th, qualifications and vocational training*. Especially in its article "8: Recognition, evaluation, accreditation and registration of qualifications professionals", which says: "... 2. The evaluation and accreditation of skills acquired through work experience or non-formal training way, will take as a reference the National Catalogue of Vocational Qualifications and will be developed according to criteria that guarantee reliability, objectivity and technical rigour of the evaluation in any case..."

The organic law 5/2002 attribute to the INCUAL (National Institute of Qualifications) the responsibility to define, develop and keep updated the National Catalogue of Vocational Qualifications and the corresponding Modular Catalogue of Vocational Training. The INCUAL, one of its functions is to "propose the necessary measures for the regulation of the system of correspondences, validations and equivalences between the three sub-systems of vocational training (formal, occupational and continuous), including the work experience". The INCUAL is a body under the Ministry of Education and Culture.

At the regional level is the Extremadura Institute of Qualifications and Accreditations, attached to the Department of the Extremadura Public Employment Service, acts as technical support function to the own Department and to the Vocational Training Council.

2.1.2 Links with existing national qualification framework and standards used for validation

In Spain, the existing framework of qualifications is collected in the National Catalogue of Vocational Qualifications (CNCP) which is the instrument of the National System of Qualifications and Vocational

Training (SNCFP) to ordering the professional qualifications subject to recognition and accreditation, identified in the production system based on competencies appropriate for professional practice. The Catalogue can be consulted at the following link (in Spanish):

http://www.educacion.gob.es/educa/incual/ice_catalogoWeb.html.

The elaboration of the Catalogue responds to methodological bases approved by the General Council of Vocational Training, in which participate and collaborate the General Administration, the Regional Governments and business and trade union organizations.

The work to identifying and preparing the catalogue is organized in five successive stages:

1. **Data Preparation.** Data preparation and formation of the working group.
2. **Design of Qualification.** Design of the competence units which constitute the certain professional qualifications.
3. **Definition of the associate training.** Definition of formative modules associated to the qualifications.
4. **External contrast.** External contact of the work carried out by groups of professional family, through the General Council for vocational training and other organizations linked to the elaborate qualifications.
5. **Qualification approbation.** Completed the process of institutional consultation and after receiving the approval of the competent bodies (General Council for Vocational Training, State School Council, ministerial departments involved), it is the Government of the nation who definitely approves qualifications that should be included in the Catalogue.

2.1.3 Forms of identification and recognition of non-formal and informal learning

The identification and recognition of non-formal and informal training rests with the competent bodies of the Regional Governments. For this reason, there are often differences between one and another, although in general this identification and recognition includes the following phases:

1. **Counselling.**

The counselling aims to help people to self-assessing your competition and make your professional and educational history. This is done through individual and/or group sessions. The Advisor helps to collect all the documentation (evidences) with which it can be shown the professional competence and to each person it is provided a report guidance and, where appropriate, a training plan

2. **Evaluation.**

Its aim is to check the professional competence of persons. An Evaluation Committee examines all the documentation provided by the candidate, together with the report prepared by the Advisory. The Commission decides the methods and evaluation activities that will help to demonstrate the professional competence, which can be: interviews professionals, simulations, competency tests, observation in the workplace...

3. **Accreditation.**

If the evaluation is positive, it is got an official accreditation of each competition units shown in the phase of evaluation, giving the possibility of completing a professional certificate or a diploma of vocational training. Candidates receive a customized report indicating, if necessary, a more adequate training in order to complete your learning path

A document which are shown the competencies of the formal learning in sustainable agriculture is attached to this report. The document is in Spanish

2.1.4 Target groups requiring assessment of the prior learning and/or experience

In the agricultural world, the target groups for this kind of evaluation are the traditional farmers. The most effective way to reach them is through professional associations and cooperatives. Some of them are named in point 2.3.1.

2.1.5 The situation with regard to validation of informal and non-formal learning and/or experience in the field of agriculture

The validation in the field of agriculture is regulated by all the previous considerations, because it is one of the leading families of the National Catalogue of Vocational Qualifications.

As mentioned previously, the process to be followed to obtain the validation varies depending on the Regions. Nevertheless, roughly all of them make one or more annual calls focused on one or more vocational qualifications. Subsequently, the candidates begin the process stages that are described in the previous point.

It is usually required a minimum requirements to accessing the validation. One of the most usual is to request for work experience of 3 year minimum or 2,000 hours worked related to units of competition convened. Other ones can be to request for at least 300 hours of non-formal training related to the units of competence of the vocational qualification. All of this experience should have been made in the last 10 years. The limits, in terms of hours and years, may vary.

2.2 Overview of existing initiatives

2.2.1 Examples of local, regional or national based initiatives

In the case of Extremadura, in 2014, there has not been any call for the accreditation of professional qualification in the agrarian family. But, there have been calls for the professional qualification of medical transport and socio-health care for dependants in social institutions and socio-health care to people at home.

They can be consulted at the following website (in Spanish)

<http://extremaduratrabajo.gobex.es/node/1562>

2.2.2 Description of methods used

The methods used in the previous cited calls are the shown in this report, above all in the points 2.1.3. and 2.1.5.

2.2.3 Advantages/disadvantages of the methods used

The main advantage can be summarized in that, in Spain, the methods of validation are rather regularized and standardized. Therefore, the task of the validator and others interested in validation is facilitated.

On the other hand, one major disadvantage of the method is that it requires a high specialization of those in charge of the validation and, in many cases, the involvement of a multidisciplinary team. This makes validation processes will lengthen. It is also added the large volume of information to provide and justify by those interested in validation, due to the requirement of normalization. In certain cases, it is got a rejection of stakeholders.

2.2.4 Benefits for the individuals (target group)

As the most important, the following may be cited:

- Contribute to the personal and professional development.
- Increase the professional qualification.
- Promote lifelong learning.
- Improve job opportunities.
- Allows validating modules of a title of vocational training or a certificate of professionalism.

2.3 Condition on implementation of the APL in the country in the context of organization, individuals and VET teachers, counsellors

2.3.1 Relevant organisations, stakeholders helping in the implementation process of new tools

Public entities:

- Ministry of de Education, Culture and Sport
- Ministry of Agriculture, Feeding and Environment
- National Institute of Qualifications
- Spanish Society of Sustainable Agriculture
- Extremadura Government. Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Environment and Energy
- Extremadura Government. Department of Employment, Women and Social Polices.
- Extremadura Institute of Qualifications and Accreditations
- Extremadura Public Employment Service (SEXPE)

Agricultural organizations and associations, as:

- Association of Agro-feeding Cooperatives of Spain (Association that encompasses most of the cooperatives of Spain)
- Coordinator of Organizations of Farmers and Stockbreeders (COAG)
- Agrarian Association of Young Farmers (ASAJA)
- Union of Small Farmers and Stockbreeders (UPA)

2.3.2 Awareness of VET teachers, counsellors, advisers on the importance of the validation of non-formal and informal learning

The awareness of the Spanish stakeholders in the validation of learning is very high. This is because of a big problem with the informal training (and to a lesser extent, with the non-formal training) about agriculture and, especially, agro-ecology. This problem is that most of the learning is done through non-qualified people or with a very low qualification.

This implies that much of the information that is transmitted is erroneous, favouring the survival of practices that have nothing to do with the agro-ecology. At the end, these practices are assumed as correct and also it causes the rejection of proper agro-ecological practices for objecting to the first.

Therefore, sustainable agriculture professionals request, each time with more insistence, that this training should be regularized and extended. Not only at the national level, but also at European level.

Bibliography

- Ministry of de Education, Culture and Sport (<http://www.mecd.gob.es/>)
- Spanish Society of Sustainable Agriculture (<http://www.agroecologia.net/>)
- Extremadura Government. Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Environment and Energy (<http://gobex.es/cons002/>)
- National Institute of Qualifications (http://www.educacion.gob.es/educa/incual/ice_incual.html)
- Extremadura Institute of Qualifications and Accreditations (<http://extremaduratrabaja.gobex.es/ciudadanos/formacion/instituto-extreme%C3%B1o-de-las-cualificaciones-y-acreditaciones>)
- Extremadura Public Employment Service (SEXPE) (<http://extremaduratrabaja.gobex.es/>)

Links are in Spanish



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BDC

Cualificaciones/ Familia: Agraria

Cualificación profesional: AGRICULTURA ECOLÓGICA
 Nivel: 2
 Código: AGA225_2

Competencia general

Realizar las operaciones de implantación, mantenimiento, producción y recolección de cultivos en una explotación agrícola ecológica, aplicando criterios de calidad, sostenibilidad y rentabilidad, cumpliendo con la legislación de agricultura ecológica, de control de calidad y de prevención de riesgos laborales vigentes.

Unidades de competencia

- UG0716_2: Preparar el terreno e implantar cultivos en explotaciones ecológicas.
- UG0717_2: Manejar el suelo y realizar las labores culturales y de recolección en explotaciones ecológicas.
- UG0526_2: Manejar tractores y montar instalaciones agrarias, realizando su mantenimiento.
- UG0718_2: Controlar y manejar el estado sanitario del agroecosistema.

Entorno profesional

Ámbito profesional

Desarrolla su actividad profesional en empresas públicas o privadas, tanto por cuenta ajena como por cuenta propia, dedicadas al cultivo ecológico.

Sectores productivos

Se ubica dentro del sector agrario en las siguientes actividades productivas: Explotaciones frutícolas ecológicas. Explotaciones hortícolas ecológicas. Explotaciones de cultivos herbáceos ecológicos. Empresas de producción de plantas para jardinería ecológica. Instituciones de investigación y experimentación en cultivos ecológicos. Empresas de servicio a la agricultura ecológica. Viveros y huertas escolares. Empresas de certificación de productos ecológicos. Granjas escuelas. Aulas de naturaleza.

Ocupaciones y puestos de trabajo relevantes

Trabajador cualificado por cuenta ajena en cultivos ecológicos.
 Trabajador cualificado por cuenta propia en cultivos ecológicos.

Formación asociada (600 horas)

Modulos Formativos

- MF0526_2: Mecanización e Instalaciones Agrarias
- MF0716_2: Preparación del terreno e implantación de cultivos en explotaciones ecológicas
- MF0717_2: Manejo del suelo, operaciones de cultivo y recolección en explotaciones ecológicas
- MF0718_2: Prevención y manejo de la sanidad del agroecosistema.

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