

Education and Culture DG
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Leonardo da Vinci

Research on Montessori education and the learning methods in VET In our country

Materials, numbers and needs

The Spanish National Report

By: Anabel Menica and Cherith Megaw

anamenica@gmail.com

cherithmegaw@gmail.com

from

Politeknika Ikastegia Txorierri, S. Coop. Ltda.

www.txorierri.net

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1) History of Montessori in our country.

Maria Montessori opened a research institute in Barcelona, Spain in 1916, nine years after the first "Casa de Niños" in San Lorenzo Italy in 1907. Her aim was to continue investigating how children naturally develop their abilities when given freedom, independence and dignity. Called the "Iglesia de los Pequeños", the Centre applied Montessori methods to the religious education of young children. Montessori went on to write essays (I bambini viventi nella Chiesa, 1924; La Santa Messa spiegata ai bambini, 1949) based on these experiences. In 1933, Montessori was forced into exile in Spain after denouncing the fascist molding of youth under Mussolini in Italy. However, when the Spanish Civil War broke out in 1936, she moved to the Netherlands.

The main pedagogical legacy she is remembered for are the principles of FREEDOM, INDIVIDUALITY and ACTION, AUTONOMY, INDEPENDENCE, INITIATIVE, DEVELOPMENT of WILLPOWER and SELF DISCIPLINE.

2) Today's Statistics

◆ How many Montessori School are there in your country?

There are several centers in Spain which "apply" the Montessori Method in Spain. The Montessori Association in Spain which was founded in 1973 (AME Asociación Montessori Española) lists 6 Centres on their website www.asociacionmontessori.net/links.html

Colegio Montessori-Palau (Gerona) www.montessor-palau.net

Colegio Montessori (Zaragoza) www.colegiomontessori.com

Colegio Internacional Parque Conde de Orgaz (Madrid) www.montessori.es

Colegio The English Montessori School www.englishmontessorischool.com

Montessori School Los Fresnos (Alpedrete, Madrid)

Montessori School El Enebral (Collado Villaba, Madrid) www.montessorischool.es

There is no official register of Montessori Colleges or schools to be found. To fill this gap there is an online forum where parents or researchers can ask for information about Montessori in their area. www.metodomontessori.es/forum/.

The most recent posts testify to the opening of a Montessori Centre in Valencia in Sept 2012 for children between 2-6 yr old, or the informal grouping of parents who wish to implement Montessori in alternative educational projects. www.valenciamontessori.org

There are perhaps a dozen schools mentioned in this forum from around the peninsula but it is difficult to obtain solid data or exact numbers.

It should be noted that not all centers which are called "Montessori" implement the official "Montessori" method. Some schools simply use the name "Montessori" as a tribute to this historical educator and her legacy or at least some members of staff have had some form of Montessori training, but that does not mean they are applying this method of education in the classroom. Many traditional schools may have personnel trained in the Montessori methodology. The AME website mentions a Masters Programme in Montessori Pedagogy at the University of Vic (www.uvic.cat) in January 2012, suggesting that interest and training in the Method is still thriving.

If a center is using the method successfully it has been suggested that certain characteristics should be in evidence. There should be:

- Mixed ages - 3 or more in the classrooms
- Availability and use of Montessori learning materials
- Teachers formed specifically in the Montessori Method or by the IMA: the International Montessori Association.
- Freedom of movement of students in the classroom allowing them to choose the activities guided by their own motivation

◆ What about the variety of Montessori Schools (kindergarten, primary, secondary).

In Spain, Montessori is mainly implemented in kinder gardens or early education (primary) but a few schools also work in secondary education up to the age of 16 (see the Montessori School in Zaragoza www.colegiomontessori.com which offers education through all the cycles, including VET)

3) National and Local contacts for Montessori.

◆ Name and Location of the Montessori School.

1. Barcelona: <http://www.montessoricanela.es>

Mobile numbers: Marco Zagal 63070030; Betzabé Lillo: 608977033. Email: montessoricanela@gmail.com

These two Montessori contacts in Barcelona train staff who wish to attain a Masters in Montessori Pedagogy. See www.uvic.cat

◆ How do they apply the method in 2011?

The courses follow the same educational principles as those outlined by Maria Montessori.

◆ How is it changed and what they are still using?

The basics are still the same. There are evident changes in the use of new technologies and settings.

◆ Could the Montessori Method be applied to adult training? How?

-The method can definitely be applied to adult training. Betzabe reminded us that the Montessori Method was established to assist in the education of the differing segments of youth up to the age of 24.

- SOCIAL INTEGRATION: As the method indicates, and as recent neurological research confirms, just as small children from 3-6 develop social autonomy, from the ages of 14-18, a young person is also shaping and developing their social identity. It is suggested that a young person at this stage needs greater economic autonomy at the same time and they develop this in the method by providing entrepreneurial projects which allow for confidence.
- This stage is characterized by integration in the group and cooperation. Such entrepreneurial projects (just one example) encourage this sense of interdependence, responsibility, commitment and social maturity.
- RITUALS: In the Montessori Method, rituals form a very important part of the growth process. As an aid to establishing group cohesion and cooperation and the ability to concentrate on ones tasks individually while forming part of the whole, they carry out small, significant rituals. Examples include (in a group of 30 16 year olds) passing a candle from one person to another close to the face without extinguishing the flame.

4) National VET situation. Please explain briefly the system of Vocational Education and Training (VET) in your country! Who is responsible for what?

Structure:

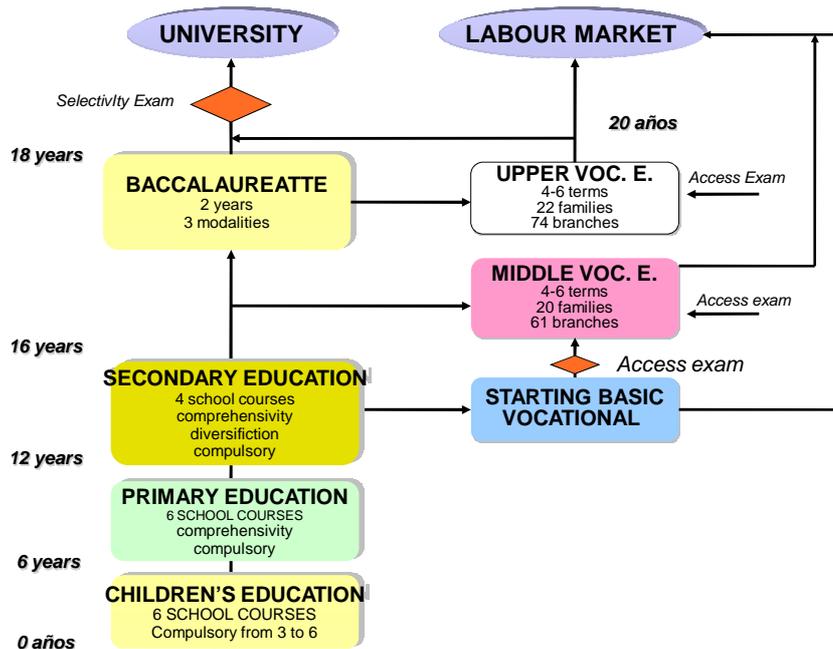
VET in Spain comprises:

- Initial VET within the educational system
- Continuing VET for employed and unemployed people.

VET for young people begins predominantly after the end of compulsory education at the age of 16.

- Intermediate/Middle level VET (ISCED 3B). It offers 1300 to 2000 hours modular training. Completion of all modules leads to a technician diploma. It gives access to the labour market, bachillerato tracks and, after an exam, for advanced/upper level VET.
- Advanced/Upper level VET (ISCED 5B) lasts at least 2000 hours. Completion of all modules leads to an advanced technician diploma. It gives access to university education

SEE DIAGRAM:



◆ Educational system and qualifications/curricula in VET

Educational system

The Ministries of Education and Labour, the Autonomous Communities, the Public Employment Service and the social partners share VET governance and decision-making. A network of national reference centres observes labour market changes and skills needs, to help update professional qualifications and develop training to meet those needs. They also act as a link between training institutions, the productive sector and the professional qualifications systems.

Two organizations are responsible for the design of qualifications:

1. National Agency for Qualifications (INCUAL),
<https://www.educacion.gob.es/iceextranet/>

It is made up of companies, teachers/trainers and technicians.

The competences of INCUAL are, among others, the development, production and current maintenance of the National Catalogue of Professional Qualifications and the development of support tools for the assessment and accreditation of skills acquired through work experience and non-formal of training.

2. The Ministry of Education (MEC) converts these qualifications into VET Diplomas and designs the curricula.

5) Learning system

- ◆ Is competence based learning common in VET in your country? If not, what is the learning system that VET uses?

Yes.

- ◆ Stage / internship (what is the percentage of internships in the complete study?)

18% of the period of VET Study is dedicated to work placement. The course modules last for 1390 h (84 credits), the common modules for 200 h (9 credits), the training period in a company for 360 h (22 credits) and the final project for 50 h (5 credits).

- ◆ Is this qualifying to get the diploma? (if yes, this means that you will not get your diploma if you did not succeed in your internships).

Yes, it is.

- ◆ What is the learning goal of the internship? (Is it an assignment, several small tasks, an integral complicated project) And can the student choose his goals?

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Students don't have a specific assignment. They have to perform several tasks related to their field of studies and also a project. Our students don't look for their internship. It's done by the school tutor who takes them to the company on their first day and then visits them in between the training and at the end for evaluation. There is a final module called "Project" which the students have to develop while they're having their internship. Within this module, Project, they have the opportunity to choose according to their interests and their goals.

6) Research on target groups.

- ◆ What do you think is needed to involve the target group in education? (Motivation/ own choice for the learning path/ on the job learning instead of school).

More motivation is needed. If students could choose their own learning path, they would become more engaged in their own learning process and much more motivated. We also believe having more on the job learning hours (50-50) could be highly motivating for students.

7) Best practices in Spain

- ◆ How are subjects taught through specific methods?

PBL: Problem based Learning is used in VET

- ◆ Are the eventual methods used by the choice of the single teacher or are standardized by the Training center?

Both: they are the choice of the single teacher and also standardized

- ◆ Please describe examples for best practices concerning on the job learning for target groups in VET.

Marketing students who during their internship have worked with a high degree of autonomy and initiative in a company are offered a full time job. This involvement is usually the result of higher expectations and demands from the company itself. They performed better than other trainees because they were acknowledged, recognized, challenged. It links with Maria Montessori's beliefs in the value of the person.

8) Conclusion and proposals.

- ◆ Please formulate your conclusions and integrate your suggestions for the WP's 6 and 7. (New Learning Methodology; Workshop)

Students' engagement in their own learning process is a must that can be achieved by :

- A higher involvement in their own learning paths. By getting involved in their own work placement search and initial contact with the company would be a step forward for students in VET in Spain.
- Higher expectations and demands by teachers and companies. Students need to be challenged.

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