

# SPAIN

## Early Childhood Education and Care **ECEC Workforce Profile**

*Country report author*

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# Contents

- 1. ECEC governance in Spain ..... 4
- 2. Who belongs to the early years workforce? ..... 5
  - 2.1 Regular contact staff in ECEC provision ..... 5
  - 2.2 Centre leader..... 10
  - 2.3 Centre-based posts of responsibility ..... 13
  - 2.4 Co-ordinating and supervisory staff..... 13
  - 2.5 Specialist support staff..... 15
- 3. Structural composition of ECEC workforce: qualifications, gender, ethnicity..... 16
- 4. Initial professional education (IPE) ..... 17
  - 4.1 Initial qualifying routes (higher education and vocational)..... 17
  - 4.2 Competences, curricula and pedagogic-didactic approaches in IPE programmes..... 20
  - 4.3 Alternative entry and qualification routes, system permeability..... 23
- 5. Guided workplace experience (practicum) in the initial professional education of core professionals ..... 24
- 6. Continuing professional development (CPD) of ECEC staff ..... 26
- 7. Working conditions and current workforce issues ..... 29
  - 7.1 Remuneration ..... 30
  - 7.2 Full-time and part-time employment in ECEC provision ..... 32
  - 7.3 Support measures in the workplace for newly qualified and newly appointed staff..... 33
  - 7.4 Non-contact time ..... 34
  - 7.5 Current staffing issues..... 35
- 8. Recent policy reforms and initiatives relating to staffing and professionalisation issues ..... 36
- 9. Recent country-specific research focusing on ECEC staff..... 38
- 10. Workforce challenges – country expert assessment ..... 39
- References..... 41



## Glossary

### **EQF** – *European Qualifications Framework*

Outcomes based (knowledge, skills, competences), eight-level reference tool to enable qualification comparisons between countries.

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/events-and-projects/projects/european-qualifications-framework-eqf>

### **ECTS** – *European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System*

A system for enhancing student mobility through the Europe-wide recognition of credit transfers and credit accumulation in higher education

[https://ec.europa.eu/education/resources-and-tools/european-credit-transfer-and-accumulation-system-ects\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/education/resources-and-tools/european-credit-transfer-and-accumulation-system-ects_en)

### **ISCED** – *International Standard Classification of Education*

An instrument for comparing levels and fields of education across countries, developed by UNESCO in the 1970s and revised in 1997 and 2011.

<http://uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/documents/international-standard-classification-of-education-isced-2011-en.pdf>

## About the author

**Ana Ancheta-Arrabal**, PhD, is University Professor in the Department of Comparative Education and History of Education of the University of Valencia. She qualified as an Early Childhood Education Teacher in 2001, graduated in Pedagogy in 2004, and was awarded a doctoral degree in 'Education in Political and Social Studies' in 2010. Her dissertation with European Mention opened a line of research focused in Early Childhood Education and Care from a comparative perspective in Spain. Over the past two decades she has contributed to various national and international networks and projects.

## 1. ECEC governance in Spain

In Spain, an integrated approach to Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) was adopted by the 1990 Organic Law on Education (*Ley Orgánica General del Sistema Educativo* – LOGSE). Since that time, ECEC has come under the auspices of the Ministry of Education, currently called the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (*Ministerio de Educación y Formación Profesional* – MEFP). This national law explicitly recognised that, from early childhood onwards, ECEC provision constitutes the first stage of the Spanish education system (ISCED level 0<sup>1</sup>). It precedes compulsory education, which starts at the age of 6. Children aged 0–5 years are enrolled in ECEC, including those with special educational needs and those who are socially disadvantaged. ECEC is governed by the principles of normalisation and inclusion, ensuring non-discrimination and equal access to and continuity in the education system. To promote the wellbeing of children and further eliminate inequalities, a new Ministry of Youth and Childhood was established in November 2023 (*Ministerio de Juventud e Infancia*).

Spanish ECEC is divided into two three-year cycles: the first for children aged 0–2 years, and the second for children aged 3–5 years. ECEC can be provided either in separate settings (*centros incompletos de primer ciclo* and *colegios de educación infantil y primaria*, respectively) or in combined and integrated/unitary settings for children aged 0–5 years (*escuelas infantiles*).

Centre-based settings are the main form of provision, but home-based ECEC provision is also an option within the first cycle (0–2 years), taking place at the home of the service provider (childminder). It exists in only two of the 17 autonomous communities: the Community of Madrid and the Chartered Community of Navarre (Eurydice 2023a).

The state and regional educational bodies establish the educational guidelines that apply to both cycles of ECEC. The first cycle (ISCED level 010) is the responsibility of the regional Education Departments, except in the autonomous community of Galicia, where responsibility is shared with the Department of Social Policy. The second cycle (ISCED level 020) falls exclusively under the education departments. In the autonomous cities of Ceuta and Melilla, the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training directly controls both cycles.

The Spanish education system operates as a decentralised governance system and responsibilities are distributed on four levels: central government, regional government, local authority level, and ECEC centre level (Eurydice 2023a). This means that the education departments of the autonomous communities are responsible for the running of pre-primary education in their territories; the local authorities contribute to the organisation of the first cycle of ECEC (0–2 years); and the centre leaders of ECEC institutions are responsible for managing them in economic, material and personnel terms, as set out in the Organic Law on Education 2/2006 (LOE), as amended by the Organic Law on Education 3/2020 (LOMLOE).

The education administrations of the autonomous communities are in charge of regulating the admission of children to both cycles of ECEC for public and publicly subsidised private settings, with two aims:

- To guarantee the right to education and access under conditions of equality and freedom of choice for parents or guardians
- To maintain an adequate and balanced distribution of children, without discrimination on ideological, religious, moral, social, sex, race or birthplace grounds. In the case of children

<sup>1</sup> International Standard Classification of Education 2011 (UNESCO Institute for Statistics 2012).



with specific needs for educational support, the educational administrations will establish a balanced proportion of these students who must be enrolled in either the public or the publicly-funded private centres. Private settings have their own regulations.

## 2. Who belongs to the early years workforce?

### 2.1 Regular contact staff in ECEC provision

The 1990 Organic Law on Education (LOGSE) not only made provision for a complete restructuring of the education system for children aged 0 to 5 years but also for a reform and upgrading of the professional qualifications needed to work in this field. Since 1990 there are now two main groups of professional workers in early years settings:

- **Early Childhood Education Teachers** (*Maestro especialista en educación infantil*), with a Bachelor's degree in pre-primary teaching (*Grado universitario de Maestro en Educación Infantil*)
- **Senior Technicians in Early Childhood Education** (*Técnico superior en educación infantil*) with an advanced vocational training diploma in early childhood education (*Ciclo Formativo de Grado Superior en Educación Infantil*).

In the first group, maestros are professionals who have a university degree in pre-primary education or in primary school teaching with a specialisation in pre-primary education (both corresponding to ISCED level 6). In the first cycle (*primer ciclo*, 0–3) professionals in the second group holding the Advanced Vocational Training Cycle in Early Childhood Education diploma (ISCED level 5) may teach or support maestros, as determined by the education authorities.

Broadly speaking, only the *maestros* work as group leaders in the **second cycle** of early childhood education (*segundo ciclo*, 3–5), whereas in the first cycle, either *maestros* or Senior Technicians in ECE may take on the role as core practitioner with group responsibility. Nevertheless, the second cycle classes that are taught by *maestros* can be supported by school teachers in other specialities/subjects if necessary or even can be assisted by *técnicos* if permitted by the education authorities. In infant-toddler centres for under-threes, at least one *maestro* must be part of the centre team. Following LOGSE (Organic Law 1/1990), the auxiliary worker training scheme was abolished.

Moreover, since the 2006 Organic Law on Education (*Ley Orgánica 2/2006 de Educación*, LOE), different types of professionals are responsible for support in the fields of education and/or health of young children. They are specialists who have been specifically trained to perform such duties. Early childhood provision may have all or some of these professionals on their staff depending on the institution's needs and/or features (Royal Decree 1630/2006) – see *Chapter 2.5* for details of the specialist support staff.

Moreover, there may be a number of persons in **auxiliary roles** (see also *Table 1*).

*Technicians in Education*: Persons with a second-level vocational training certificate or equivalent qualifications who provide additional support to pupils with disabilities, assisting them on the school bus, helping them with their daily personal care and in the dining room, and in other similar situations. They also monitor hallways during classroom changes, students' toilets, classrooms (when the teacher is absent) and school playgrounds (during breaks) in coordination with the responsible teaching staff for such activities.

*Infant Assistants* help other staff working with pre-primary education pupils, especially in relation to their diet, their well-being and hygiene in the classroom.

Finally, there are professionals in charge of **administration** and the general **services** in schools. These include: administrative staff; library staff; ICT staff and service staff.

**Publicly-funded private schools and private schools** employ their personnel by means of contracts. The categories of non-teaching personnel in private ECEC centres related to educational activities, administration and services are established in the Collective Agreements of publicly-funded private schools and private schools respectively, both applicable throughout Spain.

Table 1 shows the main types of ECEC staff in centre-based settings in Spain and also categorises the **core practitioners** (i.e. staff with group or centre responsibility) according to one of five ECEC professional profiles adapted from the original SEEPRO study (see Box 1 at end of this chapter).

Table 1

**Spain: ECEC staff in centre-based settings**

Job title	Main ECEC work-place settings and age range	Main roles and positions	Main age-range focus of initial professional education	Minimum qualification requirement ECTS credits EQF level ISCED level
<p><b>Early Childhood Education Teacher<sup>2</sup></b> <i>Maestro especialista en educación infantil</i></p> <p><i>Profile:</i> Early Childhood Pedagogy Professional</p> <p><i>In some cases:</i> Pre-primary and Primary Education Professional</p>	<p><b>Age-integrated early childhood education centre</b> <i>Escuela de educación infantil unificada</i> 0–5 years<sup>3</sup> (1st and 2nd cycle)</p> <p><b>First cycle early childhood education centre</b> (separate nursery setting) <i>Escuelas de educación infantil primer ciclo</i> 0–2 years</p> <p><b>Second cycle ECE centre</b> <i>Escuela de educación infantil segundo ciclo</i> 3–5 years</p>	<p>Core practitioner with group responsibility</p> <p>Centre head</p>	0–6 years	<p>4 years at university <i>Award: Bachelor's degree (Grado universitario de Maestro en Educación Infantil)</i></p> <p>ECTS credits: 240 EQF level: 6 ISCED 2011: 6</p>

<sup>2</sup> Please note that, according to Spanish regulations, Primary education teachers can also work as an ECE Teacher and their profile is then Pre-primary and Primary Education Professional.

<sup>3</sup> **Editors' note:** International data sources use varying ways of presenting the age range of children enrolled in ECEC settings. We have chosen the following age-inclusive format for the SEEPRO-3 reports for countries with a school starting age at 6 (as in Spain): **0–2** years for children **up to** 3 years of age and **3–5** years for 3, 4 and 5 year-olds.



Job title	Main ECEC workplace settings and age range	Main roles and positions	Main age-range focus of initial professional education	Minimum qualification requirement ECTS credits EQF level ISCED level
	<p><b>Second cycle early childhood education unit in primary school</b> <i>Colegio de Educación Infantil y Primaria</i> 3–5 years (in several Autonomous Communities (e.g. Comunidad Valencia, País Vasco) as from 2 years)<sup>4</sup></p>			
<p><b>Senior Technician in Early Childhood Education</b> <i>Técnico superior en educación infantil</i></p> <p><i>Profile:</i> Early Childhood Pedagogy Professional</p>	<p><b>Age-integrated early childhood education centre</b> <i>Escuela de educación infantil unificada</i> 0–5 years (1st and 2nd cycle)</p> <p><b>First cycle early childhood education centre</b> (separate nursery setting) <i>Escuelas de educación infantil primer ciclo</i> 0–2 years (1st cycle)</p> <p><b>Coordinated first cycle nursery units</b> <i>Unidades de primer ciclo en centros separados</i> 0–2 years</p> <p><b>Second cycle ECE centre</b> <i>Escuela de educación infantil segundo ciclo</i> 3–5 years</p>	<p>Core practitioner with group responsibility (only for work with 0–2 year-olds)</p> <p>Otherwise: Qualified co-worker<sup>5</sup></p>	<p>0–2/3 years 0–5/6 years</p>	<p>1,600 hours non-tertiary, post-secondary vocational <i>Award: Diploma/Advanced Vocational Training Cycle in Early Childhood Education (Ciclo Formativo de Grado superior en Educación Infantil).</i></p> <p>ECTS credits: 120 EQF level: 5 ISCED 2011: 4</p>

<sup>4</sup> see Ancheta-Arrabal et al. 2022

<sup>5</sup> Occasionally, in some regions they can work to support ECE teachers in early childhood units in primary school for children aged 2–5 years (Ancheta-Arrabal et al. 2022).



Job title	Main ECEC work-place settings and age range	Main roles and positions	Main age-range focus of initial professional education	Minimum qualification requirement ECTS credits EQF level ISCED level
	<b>Second cycle ECE unit in primary school</b> <i>Colegio de Educación Infantil y Primaria</i> 3–5 years			
<b>Senior Technician in Sociocultural and Tourism animation</b> <i>Técnico superior en animación sociocultural y turismo</i>	All ECEC settings, but not necessarily on-site	Qualified co-worker	All ages	Post-secondary Diploma/ Advanced Vocational Training Cycle in socio-cultural and tourism animation  ECTS credits: 120 EQF level: 5 ISCED 2011: 4
<b>Senior Technician in Social Integration</b> <i>Técnico superior en integración social</i>	All ECEC settings, but not necessarily on-site	Qualified co-worker	All ages	Post-secondary Diploma/ Advanced Vocational Training Cycle in social integration  ECTS credits: 120 EQF level: 5 ISCED 2011: 4
<b>Technician in education</b> <i>Técnico en educación</i>	<b>Age-integrated early childhood education centre</b> <i>Escuela de educación infantil unificada</i> 0–5 years (1st and 2 <sup>nd</sup> cycle)  <b>First cycle early childhood education centre</b> (separate nursery centre) <i>Escuelas de educación infantil primer ciclo</i> 0–2 years  <b>Second cycle ECE centre</b>	Short-term qualified co-worker	All ages	6 months (100-150 hours depending on the autonomous community) vocational education + 1-2 months (100-150 hours) in a work placement.  ECTS credits: n/a <sup>6</sup> EQF level: 3 ISCED 2011: 3

<sup>6</sup> n/a not applicable



Job title	Main ECEC workplace settings and age range	Main roles and positions	Main age-range focus of initial professional education	Minimum qualification requirement ECTS credits EQF level ISCED level
	<p><i>Escuela de educación infantil segundo ciclo</i> 3–5 years</p> <p><b>Second cycle ECE unit in primary school)</b> <i>Colegio de Educación Infantil y Primaria</i> 3–5 years</p>			
<p><b>ECE Teacher’s Assistant</b> <i>Técnica / Auxiliar en educación infantil</i></p>	<p><b>Age-integrated early childhood education centre</b> <i>Escuela de educación infantil unificada</i> 0–5 years (1st and 2nd cycle)</p> <p><b>First cycle early childhood education centre</b> (separate nursery unit) <i>Escuelas de educación infantil primer ciclo</i> 0–2 years</p>	Short-term qualified co-worker	0–5/6 years	<p>6 months (100-150 hours depending on the autonomous community) vocational education + 1-2 months (100-150 hours) in a work placement.</p> <p>ECTS credits: n/a EQF level: 3 ISCED 2011: 3</p>
<p><b>Health Aid Technicians or Clinical Auxiliaries</b> <i>Técnicos sanitarios o asistentes de clínica</i></p>	All ECEC settings, but not necessarily on site	Short-term qualified co-worker	All ages	<p>6 months (100-150 hours depending on the autonomous community) vocational education + 1-2 months (100-150 hours) in a work placement.</p> <p>ECTS credits: n/a EQF level: 3 ISCED 2011: 3</p>

Box 1

**SEEPRO profile categories for ECEC core professionals** (adapted from Oberhuemer, Schreyer, and Neuman 2010)

- **Early Childhood Pedagogy Professional** (specialist focus, 0–6/7 years)
- **Pre-primary Education Professional** (exclusive pre-primary focus 3/4–6 years)
- **Pre-primary and Primary Education Professional** (focus on pre-primary *and* primary education 3/4–10/11 years)



- **Social and Childhood Pedagogy Professional** (mainly broad focus, including ECEC, usually 0–12 years, but sometimes including adults)
- **Social Care/Health Care Professional** (sometimes early childhood focus, sometimes broad focus, including adults)

## 2.2 Centre leader

In the relevant Spanish legislation, ECEC settings for 3 to 5 year-olds come under the umbrella term of ‘schools’ because they are mostly located in primary schools, whereas settings for the under threes and the small number of age-integrated 0–5 settings are referred to as ‘early childhood centres’. The terminology in this report will either refer to ‘early childhood education settings’ in general (0–2 and 3–5 years) or use the specific terms ‘first cycle early childhood centre’ (0–2) or ‘second cycle early childhood centre’ or ‘school’ (3–5) according to the context.

According to Article 34 of the Royal Decree 82/1996, which regulates early childhood and primary school education, and Article 33 of the Royal Decree 83/1996, the single-member governing bodies of **public early childhood education settings** are the members of the management team, most of whom also teach children. All members of the management team and any other positions defined by the educational authorities are career civil servant teachers and therefore their initial training is similar to that of other civil servant teachers. These include: Centre/School Head; Head of Curriculum; secretary; any other posts established by the education authorities such as Deputy Heads).

According to the relevant legislation (LOE 2006, LOMLOE 2020), 1st and 2nd cycle ECE setting management must combine organisation, administrative management, resource management and pedagogical leadership and development by means of a collaborative approach, seeking a balance between administrative and pedagogical tasks

Article 132 of LOE 2006, as amended by LOMLOE 2020, establishes that the competences of the leaders in early childhood education settings and heads in primary schools are as follows:

- To represent the centre/school and inform the educational authorities about the approaches, aspirations and needs of their educational community
- To supervise and coordinate the activities of the centre/school without detriment to the powers of the Teachers’ Assembly and the School Council
- To be responsible for the pedagogical supervision, promote educational innovation and encourage plans in order to attain the goals of the School Development Plan
- To ensure that legislation and other regulations in force are observed
- To serve as the leader/head for the entire educational staff
- To promote a sense of community in the institution
- To promote collaboration with families, with institutions and with organisations that support the centre's relations
- To promote internal evaluations and collaborate in external evaluations and in the evaluation of the teaching staff
- To call and preside over the academic events and meetings of the School Council and the Teachers’ Assembly and implement the agreements reached by such bodies
- To contract works, services and supplies, as well as authorise expenses in accordance with the centre/school budget, order payments and endorse the official school certifications and documents



- To formulate proposals to the education authority as regards the appointment and dismissal of members of the management team, subsequent to notification to both the Teachers' Assembly and the School Council
- To approve the School Development Plan, the management project and the centre/school organisational and operational rules
- To decide upon the admission of children
- To approve the allocation of additional resources
- To determine guidelines for the collaboration, for education and cultural purposes, with local authorities, other educational institutions, bodies and organisations
- To take on any other responsibility established by the education authority
- To adapt human resources to the needs of the institution.

The Head of Curriculum is the person responsible for all academic-educational matters in the early childhood educational setting or primary school, such as:

- Coordinating the educational activities
- Drawing up academic timetables
- Coordinating the work of tutors and department heads
- Participating in the proposal of the development plan and the yearly general programme, and promoting a sense of community at the educational setting.

The selection of the Centre Leader/School Head (*Director o directora de centro/ Jefe o jefa de estudios*) (requirements, procedure, appointment, dismissal and recognition of the management role) in **public early childhood education settings** is regulated in Articles 133-139 of the LOE as amended by the LOMLOE and carried out through a process in which the educational community and the educational administration are involved in a merits-based selection system in which the centre's/school's career teachers participate. Participants are required to present a management concept. The selection is carried out at the school by a committee made up of:

- Representatives of the education administration
- Representatives of the setting concerned. At least one third of the members of the committee shall be teachers elected by the teaching staff and another third shall be elected by and from among the non-teaching members of the School Council
- The Centre Leader/School Head of an early childhood educational setting that provides the same type of education.

Those who have passed the selection process must complete a training programme on competences for the performance of the management function.

Those civil servant teachers wishing to access the post of Centre Leader/School Head at an early childhood education setting or primary school may apply to the setting of their choice. The requirements for taking part in this selection process include at least five years of service as a civil servant teacher and the submission of a management concept demonstrating objectives, strategies and assessment procedures. The educational administration of the autonomous community may require completion of a management/leadership training programme, especially in schools that offer both primary and pre-primary education.

The selected candidate is decided upon democratically by all members of the committee. The candidate selected is the one who obtains the highest final score. Furthermore, the results of the admitted and excluded candidates (always including the reasons behind their exclusion) must be published in the school or institution for which they are competing. The committee proposes the selected candidate to the education authority or announces the lack of selected candidates. Under extraordinary circumstances, whenever there is a shortage of candidates or



whenever a setting has just been opened or even if the corresponding committee has not selected any candidates, the education authority may appoint a civil servant teacher as a Centre Leader/School Head for a maximum of four years.

Prior to their appointment as heads, candidates must successfully complete a management training programme, as defined in Royal Decree 894/2014. Those holding a Master's degree or postgraduate degree in the leadership and management of educational institutions are exempt from taking the core modules as well as the specific modules the relevant education authority might establish, with the exception of the 'management concept' module.

Apart from the course previously mentioned, there is also a 60-hour course on the updating of management skills. Its characteristics are the same as those for the training course on the development of leadership, except for core modules which are:

- Module I. Updating of the regulatory framework for educational institutions
- Module II. Management of institutional approaches
- Module III. Efficient and effective management of school resources
- Module IV. Key factors for effective leadership
- Module V. Accountability and educational quality
- Module VI. Management concept/project.

Once the training course has been completed, the Centre Leader/School Head is appointed for a period of four years. The appointment may be renewed for another four-year term, depending on whether they have been positively assessed at the end of their first term of office.

Centre/School Leaders assessed positively obtain personal, professional and economic recognition throughout their time in office. The criteria and procedures for this evaluation are public and objective and include the results of the individualised evaluation on completion of previous studies.

Similarly, the education authorities may establish a maximum limit to the number of terms that heads may apply for renewal. Once the chances of renewal are no longer possible, the candidate must take part in a new merits competition in order to be appointed as Centre Leader/School Head again in the same or in a different institution. Once Centre Leaders/School Heads end their term of office, they return to their original teaching post. For this reason or cause, the education authorities may appoint a temporary head, who will carry out the corresponding tasks until the next selection period is over and a new director is appointed.

The Order of 9 October 269/1996 on the constitution and appointment of the governing bodies of **publicly funded private schools**, stipulates that Centre Leaders/School Heads are appointed by the employer or elected in accordance with the legislation in force. Their tasks are to manage, guide and supervise the educational activities, in addition to those other duties that may be entrusted to them.

Article 13 of the 10th National Collective Bargaining Agreement establishes that **private non-subsidised centres** have the autonomy to determine their organisation and functioning, and to establish the governing bodies they deem appropriate. The Centre Leader is responsible for managing, guiding and supervising the educational activities in all matters entrusted to him/her. The duration of office is determined by the time that the employer entrusts the employee with the responsibilities associated with that position.

Article 37 of Royal Decree 82/1996 and article 36 of Royal Decree 83/1996, stipulate that, in general terms, Centre Leaders/School Heads have the same working hours and holidays as other teachers. However, their own specific headship tasks are included within their teaching hours, so their teaching load is reduced. The education authorities are the ones in charge of establishing the number of hours that are to be assigned to teaching and to headship tasks, which vary



in accordance with the specific design of the post (if it is that of a School Head or any other leadership posts such as Head of Curriculum), of the level of studies taught at the institution and of its size (number of registered children), resulting in a different teaching load for heads from one autonomous community to another.

Centre Leaders/School Heads are evaluated at the end of the period for which they were appointed. If they obtain a positive evaluation they receive personal and professional recognition as is established by the education authorities, which are the ones that set up the assessment procedure and its characteristics. Regarding mobility, and as career civil servants, they have the possibility to apply for the state-wide transfer competitions regulated by Royal Decree 1364/2010, Order EFP/1015/2018 and regional regulations. These transfer competitions are organised by the education authorities to cover vacancies in schools.

The dismissal of any of the leadership members takes place whenever a serious offence has been committed, if they have renounced their Spanish nationality or if they have been banned from exercising any kind of professional activity. The management of such processes corresponds to a commission of administrative infractions and is dealt with through a common process for all public civil servants. Articles 93-98 of the Law on the Basic Statute of Public Workers (Royal Legislative Decree 5/2015), establish the grounds for dismissal.

In educational establishments which are wholly or partly publicly funded, the conditions of teaching staff are regulated in the relevant 7th Collective Bargaining Agreement.

The position of centre management or the task of conceptualising the centre programme can only be carried out by an Early Childhood Education Teacher, not by other members of staff.

### 2.3 Centre-based posts of responsibility

In Spain, there are no centre-based posts of responsibility rewarded with higher pay which are held by regular Early Childhood Education Teachers for specific pedagogical tasks within the early childhood educational setting. Such tasks could include: working with migrant families, developing inclusive practices, mentoring trainee teachers.

### 2.4 Co-ordinating and supervisory staff

Articles 113 and 119 of the LOE as amended by the LOMLOE define the governing bodies of non-university education institutions such as early childhood education settings as follows:

A. Single-membership governing bodies:

**Management Team** (see *Chapter 2.2*) and **Teachers' Assembly** (chaired by the centre/school head and made up of all the teaching staff working in the centre/school).

B. Mixed-membership governing bodies:

**School Council** (comprising the centre leader as Chair, the head of curriculum, a representative of the city council, a group of teachers comprising not less than one third of the total number of members, representatives of the families and children, also comprising not less than one third of total members, and a representative of the school management and services staff).

**School Counsellors** belong to the internal and external guidance structures that intervene directly in education institutions. In early childhood and primary education there is usually, depending on the number of pupils, one educational guidance team assigned to several schools. The different educational authorities establish the counsellor's functions in Early Childhood, Primary and Secondary Education centres. Some of these responsibilities are:

- To coordinate academic and professional guidance activities
- To provide advice to the Pedagogical Coordination Commission
- To participate in the prevention and identification of learning issues



- To conduct the psycho-pedagogical evaluation of students in need of one
- To participate in the curricular adaptations of students with educational support needs
- To provide advice on the development of social guarantee programmes
- To provide support, advice and specific guidance to all students at non-university levels
- To cooperate with the educational establishments and their teaching staff in the development of projects for different activities, tutorials, and academic and professional guidance
- To be responsible for the psycho-pedagogical evaluation of students and contribute to the efforts of the Pedagogical Coordination Commission or similar body in the schools
- To advise families.

The **Pedagogical Coordination Commission** in ECE settings with more than twelve groups meets once a month to deal with key topics related to the curriculum. The Commission is chaired by the Centre/School Head and brings together the coordinators of each cycle, the Head of Curriculum and the School Counsellor. Its main tasks are focused on the design of educational content, the Diversity Attention Programme and psycho-pedagogical interventions.

The great diversity found in ECEC settings in terms of ownership, management and integration into primary schools makes it difficult to draw general conclusions about co-ordinating bodies or persons.

In terms of **supervisory staff**, the mechanisms for control and administrative inspection fall within the responsibility of the respective inspection services of the autonomous communities (Article 148 of Organic Law 2/2006 as amended by Organic Law 3/2020). These duties are carried out by **Education Inspectors**. Although their general responsibilities are defined at state level, the autonomous communities are in charge of establishing their specific duties. According to Article 151 of the LOE as amended by the LOMLOE, Education Inspectors are entrusted with the following tasks:

- To monitor, evaluate and control, from a pedagogical and organisational point of view, the functioning of educational institutions, as well as the projects and programmes they develop; supervise teaching practice, the management function and collaborate in its continuous improvement
- To participate in the evaluation of the education system and all its elements
- To ensure that the institutions comply with the laws, regulations and other provisions in force, and that the principles and values set out in the LOE as amended by the LOMLOE, are observed and applied, including those aimed at fostering real equality between men and women
- To advise, guide and inform the educational community about their rights and duties
- To guide management teams in the adoption and monitoring of measures that favour coexistence, participation of the educational community and resolution of conflicts, promoting and participating, when necessary, in mediation processes.

Inspectors do not teach in educational institutions; they issue the reports requested by the respective educational authorities or which are derived from the knowledge of the reality of educational inspection.

To carry out these duties effectively, Education Inspectors must have direct knowledge of the activities carried out at educational institutions, to which they have free access; assess and check the academic and administrative documentation of the setting, and receive from the various members of the educational community the necessary collaboration to carry out their tasks.

Education Inspectors are civil servant teachers, which means that their initial training is similar to that of the rest of civil servant teachers (see *Chapter 4*). However, in terms of inspecting early



childhood education centres, they are not required to have a specialist qualification. The selection process is regulated by Articles 43-48 of Royal Decree 276/2007. Candidates take a competitive examination in order to access the inspectorate of the autonomous communities. Likewise, there is a traineeship period which is part of the selection process and lasts between three months and one year. Furthermore, candidates must meet the following specific requirements to take part in the publicly announced competitive recruitment: (a) belong to one of the bodies that make up the public teaching service with at least eight years' experience; b) hold a PhD, a Master's degree, a Bachelor's degree, or an equivalent qualification (but not specifically in Early Childhood Education); (c) go through the corresponding selection process; (d) prove knowledge of the co-official language of the autonomous community of destination, in accordance with its regulations.

Once appointed, they are obliged to take part in the competitions for the provision of inspector positions that are announced until they achieve a fixed post in their preferred autonomous community.

## 2.5 Specialist support staff

Pedagogical work in ECEC settings comprises many support activities beyond teaching which are carried out by staff holding a range of qualifications. These are professionals in the fields of **education and/or health**, depending on the specific needs of the children enrolled in each institution. In terms of their qualification, these staff members may include:

- Higher education graduates such as *Licenciados* (those who graduated before the Bologna process was adopted), with duties corresponding to their respective studies
- Intermediate graduates such as Registered Nurses (who monitor and care for pupils who fall ill, supervise the administration of prescribed medication, etc.); specialist support staff such as teachers specialised in Community Services and Therapeutic Pedagogy; Physiotherapists; or Occupational Therapists (see below) (Eurydice 2023b)
- Other professionals such as Senior Technicians in Sociocultural and Tourism Animation or Senior Technicians in Social Integration (see below).

The education authorities determine the necessary specialists in each educational institution. These may be teachers with a specialisation in Community Services, Therapeutic Pedagogy, or Hearing and Speech Therapists who provide specific treatment for disorders in coordination with other professionals involved in each case. These teachers are part of the educational and psycho-pedagogical guidance teams for early childhood and primary education (Eurydice 2023b). They are specialists with a specific qualification for the tasks they are assigned, such as:

- **Speech Therapists**, who provide specific treatment for speech disorders or problems related to the articulation of language in coordination with other professionals involved in the case
- **Occupational Therapists**, who provide specific treatment for the functional recovery of children by instructing on the handling of aids and prostheses, by training specific activities and by designing or making adaptations which help pupils to carry out their activities. They are also responsible for monitoring and evaluating the treatment pupils undergo, in coordination with other professionals working at the institution;
- **Senior Technicians in Sociocultural and Tourism Animation**, who cooperate with the *maestro* to plan leisure and free time activities. They are responsible for carrying out such activities and assisting pupils during such activities; they coordinate and monitor extracurricular teaching and cooperate in monitoring pupils' schooling, liaising between the institution and families, etc.
- **Senior Technicians in Social Integration**: In cooperation with the ECEC core practitioner in context of social intervention, they can be family workers, special needs educators or attend



to community mediation, support for educational intervention, first aid or promotion of personal autonomy, among others. They carry out socio-educational interventions. Their work is aimed at dealing with marginalised children and/or those at risk of social exclusion (ethnic minorities, disabled students, pupils with chronic diseases, pupils suffering from child abuse, etc.). They are in charge of programming, organising, developing and evaluating activities for the prevention of such adverse situations by promoting social integration, taking into account the information derived from the evaluation to determine which strategies and techniques are the most adequate for the development of the pupils' autonomy and their occupational integration under these circumstances;

- **Health Aid Specialists** or **clinical auxiliaries** are professionals with training in intermediate vocational education/training cycles in the field of health care. They perform the tasks entrusted to them by a physician/paediatrician or a registered nurse, who supervises their work.

These specialists can be based at the centre for regular support if the educational authorities so decide, work in special centres or special units, or they can be allocated in individual cases by a local counselling or advisory service.

### 3. Structural composition of ECEC workforce: qualifications, gender, ethnicity

The 2006 Organic Law on Education (LOE) stipulates that only qualified staff may work with children aged 0–6 years. However, there are no systematically compiled data in Spain on the breakdown of the workforce according to the qualification level of the staff (see *Table 2*).

*Table 2:*

**Spain: Structural composition of ECEC workforce, 2021**

Staff categories	Year / Proportion of workforce in 2021
Staff with specialist higher education degree	No systematically compiled national data – but since a Bachelor's degree is required for working as a core practitioner in the second cycle (3–5), and an Advanced Vocational Training qualification in the first cycle (0–2) of early childhood education, a high proportion can be assumed.*
Staff with specialist vocational qualification (post-secondary)	No systematically compiled national data**
Staff with specialist vocational qualification (upper secondary)	No systematically compiled national data**
Staff with non-specialist qualification	No systematically compiled national data
Unqualified staff	n/a ***
Specialist support staff (e.g. Speech Therapists)	<b>0.9%</b> off-site*
Male staff	<b>2.3%</b> total* <b>6.6%</b> centre heads or administrators*; unknown for core practitioners; unknown for qualified co-workers**
Staff with a background of migration	No systematically compiled national data

\*Data from 2020/2021 school year (MEFP 2022a).

\*\* Disaggregated data for this category are not available. The official data from the MEFP do not specify the percentages among professionals working in formal ECEC services by type of qualification, as all ECEC professionals need to be qualified to work.





\*\*\* The only relevant data are the percentage of staff working with children from 0–3 in non-formal ECEC (with professional careers or other careers with no remuneration), which was 18% in 2014.

## 4. Initial professional education (IPE)

### 4.1 Initial qualifying routes (higher education and vocational)

In order to teach in the different non-university programmes established by Article 100 of the Organic Law 2/2006 (LOE) as amended by the Organic Law 3/2020 (LOMLOE), it is necessary to hold the corresponding academic qualifications and to acquire the pedagogical and didactic training established by the Government for each programme. The model of initial professional education is mainly concurrent, so it combines theoretical and practical training related to teaching with training and studies in the key content areas.

In Spain, both Early Childhood Education Teachers and Primary School Teachers are required to have a Bachelor's degree. This is considered to be generalist qualification. For all other levels of education needing a certain subject specialisation, a Master's degree is required.

Today, following the reform instigated by the 1990 Organic Law on Education (LOGSE), there are two main kinds of ECEC qualified professionals working with young children:

- (1) **Early Childhood Education Teachers** who are university trained with a focus on early childhood education
- (2) **Senior Technicians in Early Childhood Education** trained at post-secondary level for work mainly with children aged 0–2 years.

The following tables outline the professional qualifications and fields of work of the professional groups who work directly and on a daily basis with young children.

#### Early Childhood Education Teacher (*Maestra especialista en educación infantil*)

A four-year university-level degree with a specialisation in early childhood education is the required qualification for Early Childhood Education Teachers wishing to work in both public and privately run ECEC provision (Royal Decree 476/2013). The initial qualification route was transferred to university colleges specialising in teacher preparation in 1970, and the post-1990 route for prospective Early Childhood Education Teachers (*maestros especialistas en educación infantil*) stipulated higher entry requirements. The professional education/training syllabus was reformed in accordance with the Bologna Process, and currently the study route takes four years to complete and comprises 240 ECTS credits. Today, the IPE programme takes place at university-based teacher education faculties and qualifies for work with the age group 0–5 years. It is a Bachelor-level qualification (*primer ciclo de formación universitaria*), in contrast to the Master's degree, which is the requirement for teachers working in all stages of the education system except pre-primary and primary.

Table 3

#### Spain: Early Childhood Education Teacher

<p><b>Job title in Spanish:</b> <i>Maestra en educación infantil</i></p> <p><b>Profile:</b> Early Childhood Pedagogy Professional</p>
<p><i>Since 2006:</i></p> <p><b>Entry requirements:</b> 10 years of compulsory schooling (up to 16) + 2 pre-university foundation years from 16 to 18; school leaving certificate – <i>Bachillerato</i>.</p>

<b>Job title in Spanish: <i>Maestra en educación infantil</i></b> <b>Profile: Early Childhood Pedagogy Professional</b>
<p><b>Professional studies:</b> 4 years higher education at a university faculty for teacher training (<i>Facultad universitaria de formación de profesorado</i>) – specialised training for work with 0- to 6-year-olds</p> <p><b>Award:</b> Bachelor’s professional degree as Teacher in Early Childhood Education (<i>Grado en Maestro/a en Educación Infantil</i>)</p> <p><b>ECTS credits:</b> 240</p> <p><b>EQF level:</b> 6</p> <p><b>ISCED 2011:</b> 6</p> <p><b>Main ECEC workplace:</b> First and second cycle early childhood education centres, 0–2 years, 3–5 years; age-integrated ECE centres, 0–5 years; early childhood education and primary school (<i>Escuela de Educación Infantil y Primaria</i>), 3–5 and 6–12 years</p>

### Senior Technician in Early Childhood Education (*Técnico superior en educación infantil*)

A number of transition regulations applied up to 2000 for those who had a job before the 1990 legislation came into force. In 1987 and 1993, a specific form of training was developed for practitioners working in first cycle early childhood centres without formal qualifications. This qualifying route was designed to take into account previously accumulated work experience and to enable them to continue working as an early childhood centre employee. The 2006 Organic Law LOE stipulates that only qualified staff may work with children aged 0–5 years.

Table 4

#### Spain: Senior Technician in Early Childhood Education

<b>Job title in Spanish: <i>Técnico superior en educación infantil</i></b> <b>Profile: Social and Childhood Pedagogy Professional</b>
<p><i>Since 2006:</i></p> <p><b>Entry requirements:</b> 10 years of schooling (6 to 16 years) + 2 years’ pre-university foundation; school leaving certificate (<i>Bachillerato</i>) <b>or</b> a successfully completed access test for higher professional training (minimum age 20 years)</p> <p><b>Professional studies:</b> Approx. 1½ years (1,600 hours) post-secondary, non-tertiary vocational education + 3 months (400 hours) in a work placement. Focus on age-group 0–2 years.</p> <p><b>Award:</b> Advanced Vocational Training Cycle in Early Childhood Education, <i>Técnico Superior en Educación Infantil</i></p> <p><b>ECTS credits:</b> 120</p> <p><b>EQF level:</b> 5</p> <p><b>ISCED 2011:</b> 4</p> <p><b>Main ECEC workplace:</b> Age-integrated early childhood education centres (<i>escuelas de educación infantil unificadas</i>), 0–5 years; coordinated first cycle nursery units (<i>unidades de primer ciclo en centros separados</i>), 0–2 years. Occasionally, in some regions they may work to support ECE teachers in early childhood units in primary schools for children aged 2–5 years (Ancheta-Arrabal et al. 2022) or as a home-based ECEC provider.</p>

### ECE Teacher’s Assistant (*Técnica/Auxiliar en educación infantil*)

The *Técnicos* or *Auxiliares en Educación Infantil* assist other staff to look after early childhood education pupils, especially in relation to their diet, their well-being and personal care. Mostly, they are specifically in charge of children’s hygiene in the classroom or accompanying them during meal times. There is no national regulation for this professional profile. The 2006 Organic Law LOE stipulated that only qualified staff may work with children aged 0–5 years. However, the *Infant Assistant* certificate is partly recognised, not on a national basis by the MEFP, but by



some of the autonomous community employment services, and it is mainly offered in agreement with certain private IPE institutions.

The professionalisation of this sector has been and still remains an important reform to improve the quality of the provision, especially for the first cycle of the stage and in order to guarantee the equality of attention in terms of integrating vulnerable groups, which represents a challenge within ECEC provision.

Table 5

**Spain: ECE Teacher's Assistant**

<b>Job title in Spanish: <i>Técnica/Auxiliar en educación infantil</i></b>
<p><i>Since 2006:</i></p> <p><b>Entry requirements:</b> 10 years of schooling (6 to 16 years) (minimum age 16 years)</p> <p><b>Professional studies:</b> 6 months (100–150 hours depending on the autonomous community) vocational education + 1–2 months (100–150 hours) in a work placement.</p> <p><b>Award:</b> Certificate – Infant Assistant in Early Childhood Education, <i>Técnica/Auxiliar en Educación Infantil</i></p> <p><b>ECTS credits:</b> n/a</p> <p><b>EQF level:</b> 3</p> <p><b>ISCED 2011:</b> 3</p> <p><b>Main ECEC workplace:</b> First cycle ECE centre (<i>escuela de educación infantil</i>), 0–2 years; second cycle ECE centre, 3–5 years; co-ordinated nursery units (<i>escuelas de educación infantil primer ciclo</i>), 0–2 years (1st cycle)</p>

**Senior Technician in Sociocultural Animation (*Monitor/Animador de ocio y tiempo libre*) – commonly known as Play Workers**

Play Workers are not specialists in early childhood education, but in leisure and free time activities in various educational institutions. They generally work independently with children before and after school hours and during the break times. However, in the case of settings for children below age 3, they may also sometimes work alongside the teacher, or even as a substitute for the teacher, particularly in private settings.

In Spain, the IPE of professionals in the leisure and free time field began in the 1960s with courses for Play Workers and managers of leisure time. Later, in 1988, the qualification was regulated on a national basis (Figueres and Morros 2005), but the IPE for Sociocultural Animators still faced some complications, as they received very little practical learning against a very broad theoretical syllabus and little time to explore and extend this knowledge (Morros 2008). Since 2013, the certificate of Play Worker is recognised as a vocational education route on a national basis by the MEFP as the Advanced Vocational Training Cycle in Sociocultural Animation, but the competence to establish the IPE route lies in the responsibility of the education authorities of each autonomous community (Institut Valencià de la Juventut 2002:7).

Table 6

**Spain: Play Worker/Senior Technician in Sociocultural Animation (IPE)**

<b>Job title in Spanish: <i>Técnico Superior de Animación Sociocultural</i></b>
<p><i>Since 2013:</i></p> <p><b>Entry requirements:</b> 10 years of schooling (6 to 16 years); minimum age 16 years</p> <p><b>Professional studies:</b> 1–2 years (2000 hours), (1,600 hours) post-secondary, non-tertiary vocational education + 3 months (400 hours) in a work placement, but hours are depending on the autonomous</p>



**Job title in Spanish:** *Técnico Superior de Animación Sociocultural*

community.

**Award:** Certificate of Advanced Vocational Training Cycle in Sociocultural and Tourism Animation

**ECTS credits:** 120

**EQF level:** 5

**ISCED 2011:** 4

**Main ECEC workplace:** All first and second cycle early childhood education settings.

*Since 2006:*

**Entry requirements:** 10 years of schooling (6–16 years); minimum age 16 years

**Professional studies:** 6 months (100–150 hours depending on the autonomous community) vocational education + 1–2 months (100–150 hours) in a work placement.

**Award:** Certificate of Play Worker for leisure and free time, *Monitor/Animador de ocio y tiempo libre*.

**ECTS credits:** n/a

**EQF level:** 3

**ISCED 2011:** 3

**Main ECEC workplace:** all first and second cycle early childhood education centres, 0–2 years, 3–5 years; ECE unit in primary school

## 4.2 Competences, curricula and pedagogic-didactic approaches in IPE programmes

The Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MEFP 2021) sets the requirements for university Bachelor's and Master's degrees in teaching, vocational training and specialised education (artistic and sports education). Universities autonomously establish the Bachelor study programmes and second cycle degrees in line with the minimum requirements established in the state regulations, which are evaluated by the relevant bodies.

### Early Childhood Education Teacher (*Maestra especialista en educación infantil*)

**Competence specifications:** Prospective ECE Teachers will be expected to acquire competencies related to the implementation of curricular goals and content. These include addressing diversity; knowledge of ICT; school organisation; learning to live together both inside and outside the classroom; addressing language learning within multicultural and multilingual contexts; working effectively with families; reflecting on classroom practice; and knowledge of quality improvement models (Oberhuemer et al. 2010). Specifically, legislation regulating the university bachelor degrees in early childhood and primary education establishes the competences and abilities to be acquired by students (Royal Decree 1594/2011):

- Being familiar with the goals, curricular contents and evaluation criteria of early childhood/pre-primary education
- Designing and regulating learning environments in diversity contexts attending to the individual educational needs of children, gender equality, equity and respecting human rights
- Promoting a sense of community in and outside the classroom and dealing with the peaceful settlement of conflicts; being able to observe systematically learning and coexistence contexts and to be able to reflect on them; reflecting in the group on the acceptance of rules and respect for others; promoting children's autonomy and individuality as factors for educating emotions, feelings and values in early childhood

- Knowing about language development during early childhood, being able to identify possible dysfunction and ensure the right intervention; dealing with situations for learning languages in multicultural and multilingual contexts; mastering the use of different techniques of expression in oral and written language
- Knowing about the educational implications of Information and Communication Technologies and of television in early childhood
- Knowing about the foundations of child nutrition and hygiene
- Knowing the foundations of early attention, psychological, learning and personality-building processes during early childhood
- Knowing about the organisation of ECEC centres
- Viewing teaching as a professional activity needing continuous improvement and adaptation according to scientific, pedagogic and social changes
- Acting as a counsellor for parents regarding family education with children aged 0–6 years and mastering social abilities in the treatment and relationship with the family of each child and with all families
- Reflecting on class practices in terms of innovating and improving teaching work
- Acquiring habits and skills for autonomous and cooperative learning and promoting this among children
- Understanding the function, possibilities and limits of education in current society and the key competences that affect ECEC centres and their professionals
- Knowing about models for improving quality in educational institutions
- Mastering the Castilian language equivalent to level C1 (in those autonomous communities with a co-official language, the co-official language equivalent to the level C1) apart from a foreign language equivalent to the level B1 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.

### **Curricular areas**

The initial professional study route for prospective ECE Teachers is organised in three curricular areas or modules: (1) theoretical frameworks, (2) didactic and discipline-oriented training, and (3) practical work placement/field-based studies.

Based on current State regulations (Order ECI/3854/2007, ANNEX), the Bachelor study programmes are required nationwide to include the following modules and contents, without prejudice of the universities' autonomy (Royal Decree 1027/2011):

- **Basic education:** Education processes, learning and personality development (0–5 years old); learning difficulties and developmental disorders; society, family and school; childhood, health and food; organisation of the school room, materials and teaching abilities; systematic observation and contexts analysis; pre-primary education school/ECEC centre.
- **Didactic and discipline-oriented education:** Natural sciences, social sciences and mathematics; languages and reading and writing literacy; music; modelling; body language.
- **Practicum:** Periods spent in educational institutions and the preparation of the Bachelor thesis project.
- **Qualifying mention (*mención cualificadora*):** Special subject/topic (e.g. working with children with special needs, children with autism) proposed by the university when the students choose and develop their Bachelor thesis project.



Apart from these common core subjects, in all study programmes there are compulsory subjects to be included according to each specialisation. In addition to these subjects, which are called common core compulsory subjects and common core specialised subjects, each university is entitled to establish other compulsory as well as optional subjects. The pedagogic-didactic approach of the Bachelor studies emphasises independent work of the students through experiential learning. The IPE study route for Early Childhood Education Teachers was conceptualised under this approach, hence the realisation of field-based studies and work experience in early childhood education centres settings has an important place in the overall studies. According to Eurydice (2022b), 50 ECTS credits are allocated to practical work experience, representing around one fifth of the total (BA=240 ECTS credits), starting during the first semester of the study programme. The remaining credits are allocated to modules of basic education (100 ECTS credits), didactic and disciplinary education (60 ECTS credits), and the qualifying mention (*mención cualificadora*) (30–60 ECTS credits) which means that the student can obtain a specialised degree after acquiring a minimum of 30 ECTS credits.

### Senior Technician in Early Childhood Education (*Técnico superior en educación infantil*)

The Royal Decree 1394/2007 (18 July) set out the conditions for this advanced vocational qualification. In addition, each autonomous community established a regulatory framework for the examinations required. Intermediate and higher vocational training may be provided in institutions exclusively devoted to vocational education/training, or in regular schools with a specific upper secondary vocational route. In the latter case, the vocational training is organised independently, but personnel and material resources may be shared. According to the Royal Decree 1538/2006, all these institutions must meet a series of requirements and conditions which apply throughout the whole of Spain.

The qualifying route for the *técnico superior* (Advanced Vocational Training Cycle in Early Childhood Education) is short and emphasises the birth to 3 age phase. It was upgraded considerably following LOGSE in 1990, and again in 2006 when the course length was extended from one year to 1½ years, with an additional three months (400 hours) spent in a work placement. This may be in the nursery unit of an early childhood education centre, in a children’s hospital ward or in other childcare and social institutions.

**Competence specifications:** Senior Technicians in Early Childhood Education are expected to acquire the following competences during their IPE (Royal Decree 1394/2007):

- Organising resources according to the children's needs and characteristics
- Developing the programme activities, employing the appropriate resources and methodological strategies and creating a climate of confidence
- Designing and applying appropriate action strategies with families related to the goals and procedures of the ECEC institution
- Coping with uncertainties regarding people, resources or environment transmitting security and confidence
- Evaluating the intervention process and the results achieved; preparing and managing the documentation associated with the process, with the goal of improving the quality of the service
- Updating research and technical knowledge regarding their professional activity, using the available resources for lifelong learning
- Maintaining relationships with the children, their families, community groups and other professionals
- Managing cultural diversity and providing solutions to the conflicts that may occur



- Creating safe environments; respecting the regulations and security protocols in the planning and development of activities
- Exercising their rights and complying with their obligations under the current labour relations agreements
- Managing their professional career, analysing work opportunities, self-employment and earning
- Creating and managing a small enterprise; carrying out a products feasibility study; planning the production and marketing
- Participating actively in economic, social and cultural issues, with a critical and responsible attitude.

This study route is organised into modules based on the minimum teaching standards established at state level according to ANNEX I of Order ESD/4066/2008, which establishes the curriculum of the Advanced Training Cycle corresponding to the qualification of Senior Technician in Early Childhood Education. These modules must include, as a minimum, the following areas (see Eurydice 2023b):

Table 7

Spain: Curricular areas of the modules (*Técnico superior en educación infantil*)

Curricular areas	Hours	ECTS credits
Didactics of early childhood education	125	14
Personal autonomy and child education	105	12
Children's play and methodology	105	12
Expression and communication	100	11
Cognitive and motor development	105	12
Social and emotional development	75	8
Social abilities	60	6
Intervention with families and attention to children at social risk	60	6
Projects to become familiarised with alternative services in early childhood education and care	25	5
First aid	35	3
Work training and guidance	50	5
Enterprise and entrepreneurial initiative	35	4
Placements in various workplaces	220	22
<b>Total</b>	<b>1100</b>	<b>120</b>

These studies are fully or partly provided, and some vocational modules are delivered in different formats: in person, at a distance, or mixed. The number of credits allocated to this qualification is 120 ECTS credits. 20% of the time is spent in a work placement, and just over 18% of the ECTS credits are awarded for work placements.

### 4.3 Alternative entry and qualification routes, system permeability

Both levels of initial vocational education/training (intermediate and higher) are open to applicants who do not have the usual academic requirements, provided they pass a specific test proving that their background in the area will enable them to take full advantage of such training. In order to gain access to intermediate vocational training, pupils must hold the *Grado en Educación Secundaria Obligatoria* certificate. Pupils successfully completing these studies are

awarded a *Técnico* certificate, with which they have access to Bachelor studies such as the degree of *Maestro en Educación Infantil*.

Also, a system for evaluating and accrediting knowledge and skills acquired through experience or non-formal means and for adapting and updating vocational qualification routes according to real market needs has been established. The 2002 Organic Law on Qualifications and Vocational Training (Organic Law 5/2002, LOCFP) aimed to organise a comprehensive system of vocational training, qualifications and accreditation that provides a solution to social and economic demands through different types of training, including in-company and occupational training, and training addressed to the integration and reintegration of workers into the labour market. In this respect, among other measures, a system of grants and financial assistance was put in place for workers between 18 and 24 with no vocational training qualification to be able to combine their employment with the training activities required for obtaining that qualification (Royal Decree 1224/2009).

More recently, the Spanish Qualifications Framework<sup>7</sup> has been implemented as an internationally recognized instrument that guides the coherent levelling of qualifications for their classification, relationship and comparison and that also serves to facilitate the mobility of people in the European space and in the international labour market.

The Spanish Qualifications Framework defines the unique Vocational Training system as a whole, for the first time, articulated and compact that:

- Identifies the professional skills required by the employment market
- Ensures suitable training offers
- Enables the acquisition of the corresponding training or, where appropriate, its recognition, and
- Offers a guidance service and professional accompaniment that allows the design of individual and collective training pathways.

Access to a career guidance system within the framework of the Vocational Training system is incorporated into the training process and into the accreditation procedure of skills gained through work experience.

## 5. Guided workplace experience (practicum) in the initial professional education of core professionals

The IPE institutions have a great degree of autonomy in terms of organising the amount of time devoted to the theoretical and practical components of study programmes within the framework set by the relevant education authorities (Eurydice 2023b). The practical component of both ECE Teachers and Senior Technicians in ECE includes periods spent in educational settings and the preparation of a final project, which is necessary to get the qualifying mention (see *Chapter 4.2*). The “practicum module” of the Bachelor teaching degree in Early Childhood and Primary Education amounts to 55 ECTS credits (whereby the proportion allocated to the “Final Bachelor’s Project” within this module may vary) and the “work placement” module for prospective Senior Technicians in Early Childhood Education amounts to an average of 22 ECTS credits (the exact number of credits assigned by each autonomous community varies).

<sup>7</sup> For further information see MEFP 2022b





Work placements are field-based studies supervised by a mentor at the institution where the practicum takes place and by an academic tutor of the university or the vocational training centre. Their main objective is to enable students to apply and complement the acquired knowledge in their theoretical training.

Table 8 compares the practicum in the IPE of core practitioners in its different dimensions:

- Whether this element of IPE is regulated by national and/or regional and/or provider guidelines and how explicit these are about the cooperation between and the complementary roles of IPE institutions and ECEC centres
- The length of time spent overall in the workplace (in weeks or days) throughout the course of studies and how the time blocks are structured
- The number of ECTS credits allocated to workplace learning in the professional study routes for core practitioners
- The skills and competences students are expected to develop in the workplace
- Forms of student self-evaluation and external evaluation
- Whether mentoring/supervising staff in ECEC centres are *expected to* or *have to* complete a specific qualifying course for the task of supporting students in the workplace
- Whether mentoring/supervising staff in ECEC centres have a designated role, with time allocation specifications for mentoring, and whether/how they are remunerated for their work.

Table 8

**Spain: Characteristics of guided workplace experience (practicum)**

	<b>Early Childhood Education Teachers</b>	<b>Senior Technicians in ECE</b>
Regulation/Provider	Public and private provider agreements*	Public and private provider agreements**
Length/time blocks	First and last year of studies 1 semester	Final year of studies 3 months
ECTS credits awarded	50	22
Skills/ competences	Practising professional activities; facilitating their occupation; encouraging their entrepreneurial ability	n/a
Self-evaluation and external evaluation	Bachelor project with mentor at the IPE institution	Final project with mentor at the IPE institution
Mandatory course for mentors	No	No
Specified time allocation/remuneration for mentoring	No	No

\* Royal Decree 1027/2011; \*\* Royal Decree 1543/2011; \*\*\* Order ESD/4066/2008

**Recent reforms, trends and debates**

There are no recent reforms or debates on this issue, but a worrying trend is emerging due to the 2011 reform of employment and labour in Spain which includes a new type of contract called “in placement” (*Contrato en prácticas*). This particular type of contract and the time students spend in the ECE institution during the practicum are being used by ECE providers to cover their



needs for staff during certain periods of the school year. This is having an impact on the quality of ECE provision and of the work placements. One negative effect is the lack of staff in the institution who can take on a mentoring and supervising role with the students; another is that students are being used as substitute staff during their placement and are left to work alone with no supervision, despite the fact that taking on responsibility for a group of children is not permitted.

## 6. Continuing professional development (CPD) of ECEC staff

### **National, regional and/or provider framework for regulating the CPD of ECEC personnel**

National regulations regarding the CPD of ECEC personnel have been provided only for fully-qualified teachers. Professionals with lower qualifications are encouraged to pursue further studies in order to improve their initial professional education and to gain access to jobs in the public sector, which in turn guarantee free access to CPD.

Early Childhood Education Teachers have a right and an obligation to pursue lifelong learning (Article 102, Organic Law on Education 2/2006). Continuing professional development is thus a responsibility for the education authorities and educational institutions. ECE Teachers and Senior ECE Specialists are expected to continually update their knowledge in the areas of early childhood research, didactics and professional issues. However, participation in CPD activities is voluntary.

Article 103 of the LOE (Organic Law 2/2006) establishes that the education authorities shall plan teacher training activities for the teaching staff working in public schools, including ECEC provision. They guarantee a diversity of offers which are available free of charge, and take the necessary measures to foster teacher participation in these activities. There are financial supports available for participants wishing to attend activities offered by other institutions.

CPD programmes for ECE Teachers are planned according to the priorities of the specific autonomous community and to the professional development needs expressed by teachers themselves. The autonomous communities are free to establish their own priority guidelines, considering the training needs of the teaching staff within their jurisdiction. This implies that both the content of the training and the institutions in charge of its provision differ from one autonomous community to another.

They are required to provide teachers with a range of activities and cater for their training needs, as well as establishing other training priority guidelines.

The National Institute of Educational Technologies and Teacher Training (INTEF – *Instituto Nacional de Tecnologías Educativas y de Formación del Profesorado*) is the unit within the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training responsible for the integration of ICT and teacher training. Its tasks include (Eurydice 2023b):

- Developing, promoting and disseminating curriculum materials
- Drafting of models for the training of teaching staff
- Designing and implementing specific programmes aimed at the scientific and didactic updating for teachers
- Developing and disseminating digital and audiovisual materials

- Implementing, in collaboration with the autonomous communities, specific programmes for the development of digital competence.

### Main forms of CPD for ECE Teachers

According to article 5 of Order EDU/2886/2011, there are five main formats for CPD activities: courses; seminars; working groups; training projects in institutions; and conferences. They are also classified according to whether they are attendance-based or not (Eurydice 2023b):

- Face-to-face** courses and seminars may include non-face-to-face periods, provided that the total duration of the activity is at least twenty hours, and the non-face-to-face hours do not exceed 20% of the total. These periods must be evidenced by the submission of an individual or group report or project. As a general rule, face-to-face sessions shall not exceed eight hours per day.
- Online** activities may include a face-to-face session for their co-ordinations
- Blended activities** combine face-to-face and online phases. In general, the face-to-face phase may not be of less than ten hours.

Teachers can take part in these activities during their teaching hours, during the compulsory time of on-site work in the setting or during working hours if they are carried out outside the educational institution.

CPD activities can be grouped according to three basic types (Eurydice 2023b): (1) courses requiring attendance or participation in online courses, (2) seminars and (3) teamwork. CPD also takes place on-site. This form is considered an effective tool for meeting the training needs of a team or group of practitioners who work at a particular early childhood education setting, and it is aimed at the theoretical and practical training of ECE Teachers. On-site CPD includes issues such as centre administration, management and organisation, innovative projects and their development, and so on. The Spanish Institute for Education Technologies and Teacher Training (INTEF) also establishes the relevant agreements with other institutions to this end.

CPD courses are organised according to the specific age-level and specialisation (e.g. ECE). The autonomous communities regulate the announcements, validations, certificates, activities registrations, equivalences between research activities and university degrees, priority lines in life-long learning, and so on. After taking part in these activities, educators receive attendance certificates.

The MEFP, in collaboration with the 17 autonomous communities, is responsible for fostering the international mobility of public school teachers, post-to-post teacher exchanges and visits to other countries.

### Leave entitlement specifications

The educational administrations of the autonomous communities encourage and grant paid study leave for teaching staff in the public ECEC centres they manage (Article 105.2.d, Organic Law 2/2006, LOE). The purpose of these leaves is to promote their participation in activities regarding training and educational research and innovation. CPD provided by public institutions is free of charge, whereas CPD offered by other types of institution is fee paying, but teachers receive financial support for participation. Terms and conditions are determined by the corresponding authority with competencies in the field of education in each autonomous community, and the amount of financial support depends on the available budget, so there is a significant variety (Eurydice 2023b).



Official internship periods are granted through a selective process and, if successful, teachers receive leave for this time.

### **Main providers of CPD for ECE Teachers**

The Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MEFP), through the National Institute of Educational Technologies and Teacher Training (INTEF), establishes on a yearly basis the priority areas to which continuing teacher training plans must adhere. It also offers State Continuing Professional Development programmes and it establishes the appropriate agreements with other institutions to this end. The education authorities of the autonomous communities can:

- Establish their own priority guidelines for continuing training, taking into account the training needs of the teaching staff within their jurisdiction
- Establish the content of the training
- Decide on the institutions in charge of its provision.

All autonomous communities have a network of institutions which provide CPD activities. Although they have different names, the most widespread term is **Teachers' and Resource Centres** and they are the main institutions responsible for providing formal CPD activities. Each institution is responsible for a variable number of schools, including ECEC settings, to which they provide support in relation to professional development, promote inter-institutional working teams supporting the dissemination of knowledge, provide resources to the teaching staff and contribute to the development of their teaching activity and the improvement of settings through educational innovation.

In all the autonomous communities there are also other institutions involved in the continuing professional development of teachers, such as university departments, institutes of education, professional associations, unions or educational reform movements.

Finally, there are numerous private associations, groups or institutions (such as official professional associations, unions, pedagogical reform groups, foundations, etc.) whose aim is to foster in-service teacher training; Education authorities may grant these institutions financial assistance to help them achieve such an objective.

### **Formal recognition of CPD**

Undertaking CPD activities has a direct impact on teachers' professional careers, since they are regarded as merits in competitive examinations (merit for transfers, secondments, management of educational institutions) or as a necessary requirement to be eligible for a salary bonus. The amount and name of this bonus varies in the different autonomous communities.

The Resolution of 16 February 2011, by the Directorate General for Evaluation and Territorial Cooperation establishes the recognition, within the area of competence of the different education authorities, of additional allowances for teachers linked to the completion of training activities. Undertaking continuing teacher training is optional but has specific effects on teachers' professional careers like merits in public competitive examinations or receiving an additional payment. Agreements between the Ministry of Education and the education authorities of the autonomous communities (2011) regulate the recognition of teachers training activities. The education authorities recognise the training activities, research and innovation carried out by the teaching staff out of the jurisdiction of the target education authority, providing that they have been previously accredited by the education authority in charge of offering such training. The recognition of such activities is considered a merit in any call including the assessment of continuing professional development activities.



Recognition of additional payments related to the implementation of training activities refers to specific additional remuneration for continuing professional development (bonus for every five-year and six-year period in service): recognition of the training activities carried out by teachers out of the jurisdiction of the target education authority, as long as they have been previously recognised by the education authority where they were implemented; certification and recognition by the relevant education authority of the number of bonuses for every 6-year period in service; certification and recognition by the target education authority of the training activities carried out during the current six-year term in service, to those teachers moving for work to such education authority. The recognition of these training activities is carried out according to the regulations and criteria on continuing professional development activities of the education authority to which teachers belong. It has effect on all the calls, competitions or administrative actions considered to assess them (Eurydice 2023b).

### Content of CPD courses

The 2013 Act on the Improvement of Quality in Education (Organic Law 8/2013), which modifies the 2006 Organic Law on Education, lays down several guidelines for the CPD programmes offered by the education authorities of the autonomous communities. These include:

- Adapting knowledge and methods to accommodate recent research findings and specific teaching methodologies
- Offering training related to coordination, guidance, tutorship, attention to diversity and school organisation
- Establishing training programmes in Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and foreign languages
- Promoting educational research and innovation programmes
- Providing specific training as regards equal opportunities between men and women, and coeducation.

In addition, each Community offers specific guidelines for different groups of teachers, depending on the demands and needs of the particular stage of education in which they are working (e.g. early childhood education). In fact, CPD for Early Childhood Teachers in Spain tends to be distinctly diverse since so many different entities offer such professional learning programmes and there has been little specific regulation in this regard (Úcar Martínez et al. 2007).

There have been no large-scale research projects on the CPD activities of ECE personnel over the past five years. Smaller-scale studies have included the following topics:

- Collaborative reflection on ECE to improve transition
- Citizenship in CPD for ECE teachers
- Digital competency and the use of ICT in ECE professionals.

## 7. Working conditions and current workforce issues

Conditions of service for **Early Childhood Education Teachers** vary depending on the education level and the ownership of the educational institution. Both the national and regional education authorities, are responsible for regulating these conditions. The 2013 Act on the Improvement of Quality in Education (Organic Law 8/2013) establishes that the education authorities must

ensure that teaching staff receive consideration, treatment and respect which reflect the social importance of their task. This has led to new measures aimed at the social recognition and support of teachers and the improvement of their working conditions.

The **Senior Technicians in ECE** have been campaigning for years for improvements in their working conditions, including being placed in a higher professional level or category within public administration. The Senior Technicians in ECE belong to the so called ‘technical category’ for which only a baccalaureate or vocational training is required and as a professional group they are thus categorised at a lower level than Early Childhood Education Teachers. However, they argue that a majority in fact have higher degrees, usually a university degree, but the differences in the qualifications required in the first and second cycle keeps them in a lower professional category (Cadena Ser 2017), since there is still no equity between the conditions of work with under 3 year-olds and over 3 year-olds. According to a survey by Sánchez Muliterno (2009) this is more of an economically based justification than a professional one since it is commonly accepted that the younger the children, the less qualified the staff need to be. In fact, Senior Technicians in ECE work in regular and specialised services and perform a wide range of duties. That is the reason for claiming more recognition of the job category itself and for wishing to clarify schedules, duties and other working conditions.

One issue to reconsider is the fact that, both in the IPE and CPD of ECE Teachers, there is insufficient focus on self-evaluation which are central to the quality of ECEC (Ancheta-Arrabal et al. 2022). This is not a trivial issue, since studies that included the views of parents came to similar conclusions about the gaps in initial professional studies regarding the role and perspectives of families, and about the conditions which undermine the quality of ECE, such as the high teacher-child ratios in the groups, the constantly changing national ECE policies, or the lack of resources (Sánchez Muliterno 2009, 59). Therefore, further analysis should focus on the causes of these social and professional understandings, which can be related to the current working conditions and social status of ECE teachers.

However, according to Organic Law 4/2019 on the improvement of teaching and learning conditions in non-university education, working conditions may vary depending on (Eurydice 2023b):

- Ownership of the workplace: public or private
- Contractual relationship with the administration or educational institution (e.g. in public schools being a civil servant, interim or labour staff)
- Educational level they teach
- Employment category (for example, in public schools, belonging to the Secondary Teachers' Corps or to the Faculty Corps)

Even for public educational institutions, there can be differences amongst the various autonomous communities.

## 7.1 Remuneration

In Spain, ECE Teachers' salaries can vary depending on the ownership of the educational institution. They are paid the same as Primary School Teachers. With this salary it is possible to live without additional support, even as a single parent in a major city.

The salaries of civil servants are classified into basic and supplementary, according to the Royal Legislative Decree 5/2015, which approves the revised text of the Law on the Basic Statute of Public Workers. Career civil servant teachers in public educational institutions, including ECEC centres, can receive the following (see Eurydice 2023b):

- a) **Basic rewards:** These are paid according to the secondment of their body or category and to their seniority. They are:
- *Basic payment:* includes the monthly allowance of basic payment corresponding to the specific professional classification group or subgroup, and the supplementary remuneration (applicable allowance to the post and certain components of the specific additional remuneration)
  - *Additional payment:* Paid according to the characteristics of the jobs, the professional career or the development, performance or results achieved by the civil servant.
- b) **Additional bonuses:** General component (based on the above-mentioned levels); individual component (related to the specific conditions of each position.); continuing professional development component (amount allocated for every five or six years in service, which varies in each education authority).

According to the monthly figures in euros provided for in the 2021 State Budget, ECE Teachers in **public pre-primary settings** are placed in Group B/Subgroup A2, level 21 on the salary table of career civil servant teachers. With three years' working experience they earn a gross basic salary of at least €1,881.8 per month. With additional payments they can earn between €2,400.13 and €2,646.34 per month. For a detailed salary table, see Eurydice 2023b.

The salary of teaching staff on a contract basis is established in line with national labour laws, the applicable group agreement and the employment contract. Interim civil servants receive the basic remuneration and extra pay corresponding to their assigned body, as well as most of the additional remuneration earned by career civil servants.

The payment system for teachers in **private schools** is regulated by the various labour conventions and agreements. In **publicly-funded private schools**, the minimum salary for the staff in the jurisdiction of these agreements is set in their salary tables, and it comprises: basic salary, additional rewards, bonus for every three-year or six-year period in service and other supplements (regional salary supplement; temporary incapacity supplement; residence allowance; two extraordinary payments, each equivalent to one month's salary, seniority and specific supplements). These payments vary according to the autonomous community and they are paid by the corresponding education authority as delegated payment and on behalf of the owner of the institution.

The awards of the staff in the 9<sup>th</sup> collective agreement on **private education** without grant-aided or subsidised levels comprise: basic salary; a teaching productivity bonus; a supplement for professional development and improvement allowance (which is paid for the training and knowledge acquired in each five-year period, with a minimum of 100 hours of training during this period) dedication allowance, to be paid in full to teachers with a working day of 60% or more; teachers with a working day of less than 60% receive it in proportion to their working day; temporary allowance for government posts, to be paid to teachers who hold the posts of Centre Leader/Director, Deputy Director, Head of Curriculum and Head of Department; insularity bonus, for those workers who work in Ceuta, Melilla, the Balearic and Canary Islands; a supplement for the completion of the Baccalaureate, equivalent to 14% of the basic salary, is paid to teaching staff serving in the final year of the baccalaureate; three special payments, each equivalent to one month's basic salary, professional development allowance, allowance for the completion of the baccalaureate and temporary government allowance, if any (Eurydice 2023b).

In general terms, the conditions of service for Centre Leaders/School Heads, Heads of Curriculum and secretaries in public schools are similar to those of other career civil servant teachers, with some exceptions listed below. Centre Leaders/School Heads have the status of civil servant teachers, which means that they have an indefinite contractual relation with the education authorities.



The salary for heads in public institutions is established in the same way as for the rest of civil servant teachers, according to the adscription to the body or scale to which they belong, to a certain professional subgroup or group, to their seniority (three-year work period), to their category or professional level and the specific post they hold.

The General State Budget only influences the common salaries for all teachers in Spain. This remuneration includes the basic salary, the three-year bonus payments, the additional remuneration attached to a post, the extra pay salary and the extra pay three-year bonus. The autonomous communities, in turn, determine the complement for management positions.

The annual salary ranges can be found in the different autonomous communities, but in smaller pre-primary and primary education centres (specific size according to autonomous community) the minimum annual wage is €34,363 and the maximum wage is €47,816; while in the largest pre-primary and primary centres (specific size according to autonomous community) the minimum wage is €41,480 and the maximum wage is €53,933 (Eurydice 2023b).

## 7.2 Full-time and part-time employment in ECEC provision

Both working time and holidays vary between the autonomous communities and whether the early childhood education settings are publicly or privately owned. In general, a full working week in public educational institutions is 37.5 hours, 30 of them must be spent at school and 25 on teaching time (Organic Law 3/2020, LOMLOE). All ECE Teachers in the **public sector** work full time.

Concerning **publicly-funded private** schools/ECEC settings, the 7th Collective Bargaining Agreement for private education companies fully or partially supported by public funds defines the working hours of teachers in these institutions: hours devoted to the teaching activity; and hours devoted to non-teaching activities (preparation, in-between periods, evaluation meetings, etc.) (Eurydice 2023b).

The annual working time of the teaching staff is 1,180 hours:

- 850 hours are devoted to teaching (a maximum of 25 hours per week)
- 330 hours are devoted to non-teaching activities (distributed over the school year)
- Temporary workers have to work an additional 40 hours a year.

The annual working time of the teaching staff in the 1st cycle of pre-primary education (0–2 years):

- 1,362 hours for Early Childhood Education Teachers (a maximum of 32 hours per week);
- 1,620 hours for Senior ECE Specialists (a maximum of 38 hours per week).

In **private schools/ECEC settings**, the 10th National Collective Bargaining Agreement for general regime private institutions or formal education institutions without any educational agreement or public financial support states that 27 hours per week plus 237 additional teaching hours a year can be distributed over the year, providing that the overall working time does not exceed 8 hours per day (teaching hours included). Moreover, 50 hours a year are devoted to training and updating. Subject to agreement between the company and the worker, the annual working time may be increased by a maximum of 90 hours. This increase, freely offered and voluntarily accepted, is preferably offered to **part-time staff** (Eurydice 2023b). However, there are no disaggregated data available specifically about part-time employment in early childhood educational settings.





### 7.3 Support measures in the workplace for newly qualified and newly appointed staff

In public educational institutions there are several general supporting measures, targeted at all the teachers, amongst them early career teachers and newly qualified staff in their first post.

During their first year of teaching, candidates who have passed both phases of the selection process to access the teaching profession must complete a final 'on-the-job' qualifying phase before they are appointed as civil servants. During this probation phase, and as a support measure for newly appointed teachers, they are monitored by experienced teachers so that responsibility for the trainee teacher's teaching plan is shared. This induction phase, including professional development activities, ranges from a minimum length of three months to a maximum of one school year. Education authorities are responsible for the regulation and organisation of the final 'on-the-job' qualifying phase. Applicants take and pass a traineeship period which differs according to the ownership of the educational institution where they are teaching.

#### *Traineeship period in public ECEC settings*

Article 23 Royal Decree 276/2007 regulates the traineeships that are part of the process for accessing the **public service** before being appointed career civil servant teachers; this includes a tutored and paid period before joining teaching. Each autonomous community regulates it and sets its length, which can range between three months and a school year; trainee teachers elaborate a final report assessing the difficulties found and the support received.

The tutor of the traineeship period must be an experienced teacher, with whom the trainee teacher shares the responsibility for planning and teaching; a teacher belonging to the same body and speciality as the applicant and, preferably, to the body of senior teachers. The functions of this tutor are to assess the trainee teacher in every relevant aspect for the appropriate development of the teaching activity, as well as to monitor and evaluate this period.

The activities carried out by trainee teachers, apart from teaching, can be regular meetings for discussing progression or problems with the tutor; monitored activities regarding classroom programming, students teaching and assessment; participation in the drafting of the institution documents; meeting with the families.

#### *Training aimed at trainee teachers*

The autonomous communities establish the mandatory or non-mandatory nature and the themes of these training courses. Their length varies between the different education authorities and they can be provided in different formats:

- Classroom-based at the educational institution
- Blended or distance
- At the Teachers' and Resources Centres.

The trainee teacher can participate through observations in other teachers' classrooms and, mainly, in the classroom of the teacher-tutor.

The evaluation of the traineeship period is carried out at the end of the traineeship period; applicants are evaluated in terms of 'pass' or 'non-pass':

- Positive evaluation, 'pass': the trainee is appointed as a career civil servant. This assessment is carried out by the traineeship tutor, the head of the establishment and the assigned inspector.
- Negative evaluation ('non-pass'): the education authority can allow the repetition of this phase only once. Those who do not incorporate or do not pass it for the second time lose all rights to be appointed as career civil servant teachers.



The education administration can grant exemption from the traineeship period to those candidates who have passed the phase of competitive examination based on merits and who prove that they have taught, at least, for a school year.

#### *Traineeship period in private ECEC settings*

**Public-funded private schools:** there is a probation period lasting four months for all the new teaching staff, as set out in the Collective Agreement for private education providers financed in whole or in part by public funds.

**Private schools receiving no public funds:** In accordance with the National Collective Bargaining Agreement for general regime private institutions or formal education institutions without any educational agreement or public financial support, this period lasts three months.

At the end of the probationary period, the candidate's teaching ability is assessed and he/she is declared eligible/not eligible. If a candidate is considered not eligible, education authorities may allow the candidate to retake this final phase. Those who do not take up their post or are declared not eligible for a second time lose their right to be appointed career civil servants.

## 7.4 Non-contact time

The working time of teaching staff in the **civil service** varies according to the education authority they are ascribed to. In general, the working day for teachers in *Educación Infantil* is similar in all autonomous communities and is currently around 37.5 hours per week, with approximately one hour of each five hours dedicated to the work without children (see *Table 9*).

The non-contact hours are used for meetings, talks with parents, assessment sessions, and so on. Seven and a half hours of the weekly working time can be used at discretion outside the setting. They are used for continuing professional development, preparation, meetings, evaluations or extracurricular activities.

*Table 9*

**Spain: Working hours, including non-contact time, of ECE staff according to setting providers**

	Public settings	Publicly funded private settings	Private settings
Teaching hours*	25 hours per week 875 hours per year	25 hours per week 875 hours per year	27 hours per week (32 hours availability on-site)
Non-teaching hours (non-contact time)	1 out of 5 hours (7,5 hours per week can be spent off-site)	330 hours per year	Up to 287 hours per year
Hours to be spent in the setting**	25-30 hours per week up to 1,140 per year	1,180 hours (2nd cycle) 1,362 hours (1st cycle, ECE Teachers) 1,620 hours (1st cycle, Senior ECE Specialists)	32 hours per week (1st cycle) 27 hours per week (2 <sup>nd</sup> cycle)
Average working week in hours	37.5 hours	32 hours (1st cycle, ECE Teachers) 38 hours (1st cycle, Senior ECE Specialists)	37.5 hours

*Source:* adapted from Eurydice 2023b

\*The calculation of teaching hours is made up of the minimum number of school days in the Organic Law on the Improvement of Quality in Education, 175 school days, although in the calendars established by the education authorities this number is increased with slight differences depending on the autonomous community.

\*\* The hours to be spent at school and the global working day are calculated taking into account the 190 days between September 1st and June 30th, without including Christmas and Holy week and bank holidays.

In **publicly-funded private schools** 850 hours are devoted to teaching (a maximum of 25 hours per week) and 330 to non-teaching activities (distributed over the school year). The annual working time of the teaching staff in the first cycle (0–2 years) is 1,362 hours for Early Childhood Education Teachers (max. of 32 hours per week) and 1,620 hours for Senior ECEC Specialists (max. of 38 hours per week).

The workload of teachers in **private-sector** schools depends on the Collective Agreement which covers them. The Agreement for pre-primary education establishes 32 hours of availability at school per week.

## 7.5 Current staffing issues

A significant structural feature of the Spanish education workforce in general is that it is an ageing workforce. However, teachers in ECE and primary education show a younger profile than those in other levels of education. The largest group is between 40 and 49 years (31.6%), followed by those between 30 and 39 years (28.9%) and those between 50 and 59 years old (24.7%). Moreover, a considerable percentage of teachers are under 30 years of age (8.6%) (MEFP 2022a, 55).

In Spain, there are currently more ECE Teachers than needed, so the widespread European phenomenon of staff shortages does not apply here. Many teachers now seek an additional qualification as Senior Technician in ECE, since there are more jobs available in the private sector settings for children aged 0–2 years. However, this means that they are placed in a lower salary category and experience less favourable working conditions than they would in a public sector setting.

General processes of recruitment vary in relation to the ownership of the educational institution and to the educational level provided (Eurydice 2023b):

- **Public centres/schools:** This is subject to passing a competitive examination established for each of the teaching staff categories, in accordance with the provisions of the Regulation on entry, access and acquisition of new specialisations.
- **Publicly-funded private centres/schools:** The selection criteria for teachers have a public nature and are established by the School Board, the school head and the owner of the school. The selection process is carried out by the owner of the centre together with the director, according to the established selection criteria, as indicated in Article 60 of Organic Law 8/1985 on the Right to Education (LODE). Each educational administration verifies that this procedure complies with the established criteria and is entitled to elaborate on the conditions for its implementation.
- **Non publicly-funded private centres/schools:** the selection process is carried out by the owner of the school and their recruitment adapts to the provisions of the Workers Statute.

Another consistent issue is that Senior ECE Specialists do not have similar CPD options in different parts of the country, that they have fewer options than Early Childhood Education Teachers and even fewer if they work in the private sector.

## 8. Recent policy reforms and initiatives relating to staffing and professionalisation issues

In 2008, with the aim of improving educational care for the first cycle (0–2 years), the Ministry of Education, Social Policy and Sport (MEPSyD) launched the **Educa3 Programme**. This was a programme to expand the provision of places for the 0–2 years age group and to improve quality through the continuing professional development of staff (Consejo de Ministros extraordinario, 2009). This involved: expanding the vocational training for Senior Technicians in ECE, depending on the specific situation in the autonomous community; starting to recognise previous work experience and providing specific training modules offered through distance learning or based in an institution; promoting exchanges of experience between ECEC centres and supporting the improvement of educational quality, e.g. through the establishment of a website for professional training and a family education website including information about resources and didactic materials and providing a framework for exchange of experiences. One outcome was the implementation of the Royal Decree on the recognition of professional competences acquired through work experience (Royal Decree 1224/2009).

On January 19, 2021, the Organic Law on Education 3/2020 (LOMLOE) which amends Organic Law 2/2006 became effective and the former Organic Law 8/2013 on the improvement of quality in education was repealed.

This reform initiative aims at tackling the following challenges in the Spanish education system:

- Improving the level of competence of all children, compensating for initial disadvantages
- Regaining the equality lost during crisis years
- Updating the teaching profession to lead curricular and didactic innovation
- Improving the scope and quality of 0–2 education and its curricular framework
- Increasing STEM vocations, especially among female students.

The Ministry of Education proposes the following general changes in Early Childhood Education, in accordance with the existing challenges and the objectives set out in the education reform:

- The first cycle 0–2 will be educational in nature with certain minimum requirements and a pedagogical proposal.
- The educational stage will be aimed at compensating for the effects of inequalities of cultural, social and economic origin on children's learning.
- Early detection and early attention to support needs will be encouraged.

The specific changes this new law introduces in Early Childhood Education are the following (Eurydice 2023c):

### A. *Educational provision*

The administrations will gradually increase the offer of public places in the first cycle in order to meet the demand for places for children up to age three. All centres 0–6 years will require authorisation by the educational administration for their operation. The Government will regulate the curriculum and the minimum requirements of the two cycles of this stage, that is, the qualifications of all professionals, the staff to child ratio, the facilities, and the number of school positions.

### B. *Aims and principles*

- At this stage, emotion-management, education for responsible and sustainable consumerism, and health promotion and education are pedagogical principles.

- The promotion of gender equality is a new objective in Early Childhood Education.
- At this stage, the effects of cultural, social and economic inequalities on children's learning and development will be compensated for.

### C. *Evaluation and orientation*

- Early detection and early attention to specific educational support needs will be a priority.
- At the end of the stage, a report will be issued on the development and needs of each child.

Since this legislation came into force, an implementation process has begun that will conclude in the 2023/2024 academic year. In order to achieve greater equity in the educational system, one of the fundamental objectives set by the LOMLOE (Organic Law 3/2020) is the universalisation of enrolment from 0 to 2 years. To achieve this objective, new forms of cooperation between the MEFP and the autonomous communities are necessary. A cooperation programme to finance the creation of public places for the first cycle of Early Childhood Education, endowed in 2021 with 200 million euros, was presented to the General Education Commission. The first annuity will allow the creation of more than 21,000 new places in ECEC provision. Nevertheless, the sustainability of the ECEC Spanish system needs to be addressed also in terms of quality, which involves giving institutional priority to its workforce and conditions (Ancheta-Arrabal 2022).

LOMLOE also seeks to improve the social recognition of vocational training tracks to bring Spain closer to the rates of students who choose this path in other European countries.

The Law on the Organisation and Integration of Vocational Training (2021, Organic Law 3/2022) consolidates Vocational Training into a single system at the service of students, workers and unemployed. This new system will integrate the VET of the educational system and the VET for employment. The implementation of this Law will establish a unique, modular and flexible provision of Vocational Training. It will be organised in training itineraries that allow progression through five ascending degrees: partial accreditation of competences (Grade A), Certificate of Professional Competence (Grade B), Professional Certificate (Grade C), Training Cycles (Grade D) and Specialisation Courses (Grade E). The entire offer in cycles of Grades C, D and E will have a dual character and will be divided into two types: General Dual Vocational Training or Advanced Dual Vocational Training. Regarding the accreditation of competencies, the new text also streamlines the system of accreditation of professional competencies acquired through work experience and non-formal training channels. The new Vocational Training Law regulates the relationship between Vocational Training and university education, promoting mutual recognition, such as higher education credits, to facilitate the establishment of training itineraries that recognize previously acquired training in both directions. A Catalogue of Professional Competence Standards replaces the current National Catalogue of Professional Qualifications.

Lastly, the Royal Decree 62/2022 on the Modernisation of Vocational Training aims to relax the requirements for obtaining vocational training qualifications, professional certificates and other awards currently linked to the National Catalogue of Professional Qualifications. Likewise, it aims to progress in terms of the expansion and flexibility of vocational training courses. This norm applies to authorised high schools, both public and private, which offer vocational training qualifications, professional certificates and other awards. In this respect, it complements and expands the assumptions provided for in Royal Decrees 34/2008 and 1147/2011 as requirements for vocational training.

## 9. Recent country-specific research focusing on ECEC staff

### Evaluation of CPD programme on collaborative reflection on early childhood education

**Source:** Vizcarra, M. T., E. López-de-Arana, and R. Gamito 2021 (see *References* for further details)

**Aims:** This research analyses the process of collaborative reflection carried out by the professionals of the Municipal Network of Early Childhood Schools of Vitoria-Gasteiz to define key aspects of the transition from home-based ECEC to centre-based ECEC and their understandings of the adaptation process. The aim was to identify the main aspects related to this period of transition, in order to jointly construct the professional knowledge for improving the work in this crucial stage for the children.

**Procedure:** An action research approach was adopted in four phases. In this article the third phase is presented, reflecting on current practices during the adaptation period and how language and modes of action should be transformed in the future. In the study, 115 early childhood professionals, 12 researchers and 6 senior ECE specialists participated in eight working groups to reconstruct knowledge through different strategies.

**Findings:** The study is a pioneer in its field. The conclusions show that the reception time, as opposed to the adaptation period, implies accepting the emotional affordances that each girl and boy brings with them, so that new bonds can be created that give them security, instead of forcing them to adapt to a rigid, pre-set structure.

**Implications:** The study suggests the need to rethink the settling-in stage when children enter the institutional framework of an early childhood setting for the first time.

### Construction of citizenship in the initial professional education of ECE Teachers

**Source:** García Pérez et al. 2020 (see *References* for further details)

**Aims:** The severe social and environmental problems in our world demand a model of education for a global, participative and critical citizenship. This requires training future teachers as educators in citizenship, developing awareness in relation to these problems and attitudes of social commitment, with a teaching model that favours the construction of this model of citizenship in the children they will be working with.

**Procedure:** Against this background, a qualitative research study was developed. Group interviews were held with 36 students in 12 groups in 2014/15 and 64 students in 15 groups in 2015/16. Participants analysed the process of construction of citizenship in students of the Early Childhood Education Teacher study programme at the University of Seville. The research is based on the monitoring of the development of teaching the subject "City and citizenship in Early Childhood Education", through the statements of the students involved.

**Findings:** The results show an evolution of the conception of citizenship in students towards a more participative model linked to social commitment. An important factor in this development was the didactic model applied by the university teacher. In the interviews, the impact of certain activities on the students' awareness of socio-environmental problems was highlighted. Likewise, reflections on the possibilities offered by the official curriculum to educate for citizenship and, above all, knowledge about education projects for children for citizen participation were important. The study concluded with the design of a project or proposal for didactic intervention by the student work groups, to consolidate the link with the reality of teaching. Moreover, the



students were able to perceive the role of the teacher as a reference for building a model of desirable citizenship.

**Implications:** In this sense, there are explicit implications for the everyday application of the didactic model that the subject intended to transmit, confirming that really significant learning is developed by living the said model in daily learning experiences and complementing this with personal experiences of citizen participation in real social contexts.

### Vocation in the identity of the Early Childhood Education Teacher: a review of the last decade

**Source:** Romero-Sánchez et.al. 2020 (see *References* for further details)

**Aims:** The review study of research over a period of ten years aims to constitute an approach to the role played by vocation in building the professional identity of the Early Childhood Education Teacher. To do this, a systematic review of research from 2010 to 2019 was conducted. Although teaching as a vocation is a topic that has been widely studied and investigated in the past, the novelty of this study lies in the fact that it currently does not feature in research. This review intended to present an updated analysis of the contemporary status quo of the issue. The study therefore aims to identify the main contributions of studies on the importance that the concept of vocation has in the process of professionalising the Early Childhood Education Teacher and to find out what additional elements influence the construction of the teaching identity of these professionals.

**Procedure:** To this end a systematic review of Spanish-language research studies on this topic over a period of ten years was carried out. Out of the 909 studies located, 40 were finally selected. Out of these 40 studies, 33 were research articles and 7 were doctoral theses.

**Findings:** Results show that a great number of research studies – predominantly qualitative – were carried out during the ten-year period, mostly in Spain. Among the topics addressed were: the influence of vocation on the choice and enactment of the profession; the practicum in initial professional education; and working conditions of the teaching profession. The least researched topics were: the impact of gender on the construction of the identity; the role of the family in the choice of profession and professional orientation of the teacher.

**Implications:** The article concludes with the recommendation to continue researching aspects such as responsibility, illusion and motivation to reinforce the vocational component of the teacher.

## 10. Workforce challenges – country expert assessment

One of the recent workforce challenges in the teaching profession in general has been and still is: **achieving a balance between the teaching and administrative duties of core practitioners**. A survey of practitioner views focusing specifically on ECEC services in Spain (Sandstrom 2012) noted that an excessive bureaucratic workload has a negative impact on the practitioners' practice, reducing the time available for reflection, meetings, planning or participation in CPD. The study also showed that the over-enrolment of children led to teachers relying more on lesson books and worksheet activities as a way to control a large class.



At the same time, the previous Organic Law (8/2013) on the Improvement of Quality of Education stipulated that for the second cycle of pre-primary education the Government is responsible for establishing:

- The objectives, skills and evaluation criteria of the core curriculum, which will represent 55% of the school timetable in the autonomous communities with a co-official language and 65% in the rest
- The foundations for multilingual education.

These requirements imply additional tasks for ECEC professionals working in the second cycle.

Whether the implementation of this Organic Law achieved the desired balance is a question that remains without a clear response, due to a lack of relevant policy measures or research.

Thus, a second challenge that needs to be addressed by the authorities is the identification and recognition of these conditions and the **funding of research** to help improve them. On the one hand, given the high variability in the administration of ECEC provision in Spain (departments, city councils, consortiums, autonomous communities, etc.), it is necessary to point out that the legal regulations sometimes only refer to one type of educational centre, since the others are regulated in a particular way by each city council. This makes it difficult to draw conclusions about ECEC settings in general and the conditions of ECEC professionals in a specific region. On the other hand, improving the availability and accessibility of information is essential. Available official statistics still do not show, for example, the proportions of professionals in ECEC by type or level of qualification. This is also the case for vulnerable groups related to lower professional positions, such as the number of Assistants from ethnic cultural minority groups. One thing is for sure, the requirements to access the private sector (the predominant sector for 0–2 provision) are becoming higher and higher (such as having an education degree/training in English language or other languages, etc.), even for posts as Assistants. This situation, added to the financial crisis that Spain has been experiencing, has made it even more difficult for minority groups to gain access to higher levels of education or even to finish their compulsory education, meaning that the chances to access this kind of employment are very limited. However, it cannot be assumed that in most cases people coming from ethnic minority groups are Assistants in ECEC services. They tend to be more represented as caregivers in home-based ECEC provision, as “the changes in demographic, economic, socio-cultural and health foster the emergence of a new set of caregivers: the hired caregiver, covered generally by immigrant women” (Ruiz López and Moreno Preciado 2013, 86).

Concerning the **right to CPD**, guaranteeing the principle of non-discrimination among ECEC professionals needs to be emphasised, since the public offer of CPD is mainly addressed to ECE teachers in public ECEC services. The possibilities to develop further as a professional thus rely too heavily on the economic circumstances of the practitioners and their personal situation in terms of participation in further education. Moreover, this is also related to the varying working conditions: for ECE teachers in public provision, accessing CPD is both a right (with dedicated work time and reimbursement of costs) and can also facilitate a reward (as a merit or even to get extra payment bonuses). However, for ECE teachers working in the private sector or for other ECEC practitioners this is not the case.

Finally, as already outlined in *Chapter 8*, there is a need to reconsider the fact that both the initial professional education and continuing professional development of ECE Teachers focus insufficiently on **quality issues in ECEC** compared with other areas. For instance, one of the main challenges that the new Law on Education (Organic Law 3/2020, LOMLOE) presents for the ECEC workforce is how to develop the competences to deal with **diversity** and how to handle an **inclusive intervention**, thus making it vital to extend the training and education of ECEC professionals to include the specific needs of educational support (Lao et al. 2022). This is, among other





things, a key issue for research – to explain a societal and professional perspective that fails to value the professional status of early childhood education and thus hinders the development of the profession and effective CPD policymaking (Ancheta-Arrabal, 2018). Further analysis needs to examine the causes for this. In line with the Decent Work Agenda (ILO, 2013) this is a responsibility shared among social and economic actors, including social scientists and practitioners. Hence, a new space for debate, study and reflection around the status of the **self-image and self-perception of ECE professionals** in Spain and its consequences for the improvement of the profession should be encouraged from the highest authorities in education to the professionals that work and dedicate their daily attention to the youngest citizens of our society (Ancheta-Arrabal 2019), in order to recognise and value their education for what it really is: a human right.

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