

Barcelona Treball

# Education

Sector Report 2013

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Blanquerna

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# The 10 keys to understanding the sector

Education can be considered an instrument that improves the human condition and society. Increasing a country's educational levels involves including the educational community (fathers, mothers, teachers, students and governments) in people's education.

## The sector

Education is one of the cornerstones of developed societies, and the educational level achieved by a country's citizens is an indicator of its level of economic and social development. Education can, therefore, be considered an instrument that improves the human condition and society and provides training which can meet the needs and demands of people and social groups.

## Main areas of activity

Education is divided into four main fields: formal education, which covers compulsory and higher education; occupational training, which includes professional training and lifelong learning; non-formal education, which includes various specific types of education that complement formal education and occupational training; and online training, a new tool for delivering training based on new information and communication technologies.

## Trends

One of the commitments that the Spanish Government has made regarding this sector is to improve the quality of education in order to bring it up to European Union levels of quality. Achieving this goal will involve the implementation of short-and long-term strategies, which will have to be based on alliances between businesses and universities, on the gradual incorporation of dual training, regarding education and a solid commitment from all members of the educational community (students, families, teaching staff and governments). It will also hinge on the introduction of new teaching techniques combining traditional approaches and new technologies.

## Economic significance

The educational level obtained by individuals within a society plays a crucial role in determining its economic progress. There are various theories that link education to economic growth. Specifically, the theory of human capital considers education an investment that makes more (human) capital available. In a market as competitive as the current one, this investment increases people's productivity and, therefore, their future income. It thus establishes a causal relationship between education, productivity and income, leading to the conclusion that increasing a country's educational level contributes to increasing incomes, and so to economic growth affecting all productive sectors.

In 2012, the budget of the Department of Education of the Generalitat of Catalonia contemplate spending 4.669,2 million, representing 15,5% of the total budgets of the Generalitat of Catalonia. Between 2011 and 2012 the budget has been reduced by 7.8%. In the other hand, the Ministry of Knowledge and Economy, managing Catalan universities, spent €907.24 billion in the Higher Education Program; 6% more than in 2011. Taking into account the latest available

data from 2010, education in Catalonia accounts for 4.1% of the GDP of Catalonia. In Spain and the European Union (UE), according to 2009 data, education represents 5% and 5.4% of Spanish GDP and EU GDP, respectively.

## Employment

The evolution of employment in the sector is different depending on the main activity and on public investments that are made in each one. According to the 2012 budget approved by the Government of Catalonia, there are 81.505 people employed in the Department; 77.7% are teachers.

52.8% of the cost of education is related to teaching staff of the Department and 7.3% to Education Consortium of Barcelona. In this sense, teachers are the main item in the budget for education in Catalonia.

Moreover, during the 2011-2012 academic year there are 118.895 teachers in Catalonia (public and private schools): 109.097 are from this general scheme (childhood education, primary, special, secondary, high school and vocational training middle and upper level), 8.805 are from the special scheme (art schools, higher education in art, music schools, dance schools, music schools and dance, drama, official language schools and sports education centres), and 1.713 teachers are from adult education. As for universities, according to the latest data available from the 2010-2011 school year, in Catalonia there are 18.382 university professors: 89% work in public universities and 11% in private.

## Professional profiles most in demand

The education sector mainly needs highly qualified people with advanced level qualifications such as bachelor's degrees, master's degrees, or PhDs. In addition to the required qualifications, it is necessary for anyone wishing to work in education to have their teaching ability accredited in some way. In order to work in the public education sector one first must pass an examination of merits.

## Occupations most in demand

Among the most in-demand occupations are primary and secondary school teachers. This is because these profiles are needed to cover compulsory basic education, which everyone studies, amongst other reasons. However, recent expenditures in vocational training and occupational education have had an effect on the demand for teaching staff in these systems, particularly in specialised education.

## Future scenarios

New information and communication technologies (ICT), and applications based on Web 2.0 (interactive tools and social networks), will, to a large extent, determine any teaching methods that emerge in the future. Therefore, the intensive use of ICT in the classroom could determine how education develops because the flexibility afforded by ICT-based training (e.g. online training) could increase student demand in the future and, therefore, the need for new staff.

## Weaknesses

Weaknesses in the education field include the lack of family involvement in the process of educating children, stagnation of teaching techniques used in the classroom, and the fact that a certain percentage of teachers lack a vocation for the teaching profession.

## Opportunities

The diversity of types of education and the national system of qualifications currently under development could foster the implementation of processes that integrate various types of training. This in turn could lead to the establishment of a system for recognition of professional competences and emphasising the value of occupational training. The Department of Enterprise and Employment and the Department of Education are already taking steps to implement a competences recognition system based on skills and knowledge, for example *Acredita't*.

# 01 Introduction to the sector

One of the pillars of developed societies is the education received by the people living within them. In fact, the educational level of a country's people is a key indicator of the level of its individual and collective welfare. Education is one of the means that a society has to build its personality and identity, develop its capabilities, transmit and renew its culture, promote democratic coexistence and respect for individual freedoms, and promote solidarity and non-discrimination. This makes a quality education one of the major assets that a country and its citizens can enjoy.

This means that every country should make use of the human talent each of its citizens has, especially in today's world whose economic and social development is based on the knowledge society.

The following are the main challenges facing the Spanish and Catalan education system: improving the quality of education, reducing the school dropout rate and promoting lifelong learning. These challenges, which must be met by working in partnership with all members of the education community, are one of the bases of the country's economic and social development. In response to them, the Catalan and Spanish education system proposes to cover the educational needs of its citizens by offering education divided into four broad categories: formal education, which covers compulsory and higher education; occupational training, which includes professional training and lifelong learning; non-formal education, which includes various specific types of education that complement formal education and occupational training; and online training, which is based on applying new information and communication technologies to education.

# 02

## Main areas of activity

### Formal training

The education system is organised into sequential cycles, years and levels of teaching so as to ensure the proper transition between each of them. Similarly, formal education is structured into two major stages: basic and higher education. .

Basic education comprises primary education, for students aged 6-12, and secondary education consisting of a compulsory stage (Obligatory Secondary Education, or ESO) for students aged 12-16, and a second, post-compulsory stage. Post-compulsory secondary education includes baccalaureate and intermediate-level vocational training, as well as other intermediate-level vocational training courses in the visual arts and sports.

Higher education comprises university education, made up of the old honours degrees and diplomas, as well as the bachelor's degrees, master's degrees and PhDs set out by the Bologna Process. It also includes advanced-level vocational training courses. In order to enter university, students must have passed the baccalaureate and a university access exam (PAU), or have completed an advanced-level vocational training course.

### Occupational training

The occupational training system is under the authority of various organisations and institutions that offer courses for personal development and retraining. The purpose of the system is to facilitate access to jobs and improve the qualifications of people. The specific bodies that offer occupational training are the Catalan Employment Service (SOC) and the "Tripartite Foundation for Training and Employment" through the Consortium for Continuous Learning in Catalonia, the region's competent body in this area. These organisations offer training for unemployed and employed individuals which is taught in authorised institutions.

Training subsidised by SOC is intended for unemployed and employed people, and offers instruction in sectors that are currently experiencing job growth or in activities considered to be of future strategic significance.

Training subsidised by the Tripartite Foundation for Training and Employment is intended for unemployed and employed people. It is cross-cutting in nature, could be related to many industries or limited to one and is offered in accordance with demand. It is aimed at providing training for individuals and companies that require very specific training.

Occupational training also includes programmes to promote employment that combine training with work experience in companies, and are intended for people who have left the education system, who are long-term unemployed individuals or who have a high risk of social exclusion.

### Non-formal education

In addition to the education and occupational training systems, which cover the training required for the personal and professional development of individuals, there is an additional system whose purpose is to complement basic, higher and occupational education in areas that may or may not be covered by the two aforementioned systems. Non-formal education therefore covers training that cuts across all industries, like IT skills, as well as training in specific fields such as sports, the arts, languages, etc. Non-formal training is normally undertaken after or at the same time as formal education or occupational training, and aims to cover any areas not covered by basic education. Non-formal education also covers training undertaken for personal reasons, interest or leisure, etc.

### Online training

Although online training does not constitute an education system as such, it is significant enough to be considered as being within the education sector. Online training is a system for imparting knowledge as would be done in person, but given the specific professional profiles that are needed to use online training techniques (tutors, online platform administrators, online instructors, etc.), it is important to include this training as a specific area within the education sector.

Application of new technologies applied to education has enabled the development of training systems based on virtual platforms adapted to students' needs. Online training has thus contributed to increasing the number of students registered for some training courses, since this type of training enables study schedules to be compatible with work schedules. The increased amount of training available online and the creation of public institutions specialised in this

type of training have led to increases in the number of people enrolled in such training programmes. Available training includes both formal and non-formal varieties.

# 03

## Sector trends

**Only commitment and effort shared between all members of the education community will make it possible to increase the quality of education, reduce the dropout rate and promote lifelong learning.**

### **Integration of education**

The education sector has undergone a two-fold change in recent years. Firstly, state-funded formal education has had to coexist with various types of training financed in other ways, whether private, subsidised or discounted. Secondly, specific standards have been developed with the aim of establishing a system of vocational skills at the Spanish and Catalan level (National System of Vocational Qualifications) that run in parallel to formal education.

This double-faceted change will oblige public authorities to pursue a three-pronged strategy: firstly, seeking systems capable of integrating the various types of existing training to give them the appropriate value in the workplace; secondly, implementing recognition schemes between the various existing types of training; thirdly, building access points that are more stable between current systems of formal education and occupational training. The adoption of standards (e.g. Decree-Act 182/2010, of 23 November, on the classification of vocational training in Catalonia) already provides a certain level of future integration of occupational and lifelong learning systems.

### **Blended learning**

Until a few years ago, educational methodology was based on sequential teaching and conducted using written and spoken language. The current educational system, which has had to adapt to changes in new information and communication technologies, has adopted new classroom teaching techniques and tools (computers, interactive whiteboards, etc.) that have substantially modified methods of learning and processing information: knowledge transfer occurs through various channels, in addition to traditional teacher-student interaction. There are new forms of learning and knowledge transfer based on e-learning systems (distance learning using new technologies or technological platforms for learning), which are based on knowledge building.

In this context, new technologies are instruments for knowledge transfer and, therefore, cannot be considered main components the learning process, even though the medium used for learning has a decisive influence on how knowledge is built.

Therefore, any in-person education that incorporates new classroom technologies will have to include new formats that enable teaching and learning to be based around simultaneous and non-simultaneous learning: that is, involving both classroom-based and distance learning, which is known as blended learning. This means that both the content and the methods of teaching and learning will have to adapt to this type of education, which also enables the interaction between students and teachers, as well as between classmates, to move beyond the classroom.

### **Workplace-focussed training**

Very often when people complete their basic education and want to enter the labour market they hit a series of problems that have to do, not just with looking for jobs, but also with a lack of knowledge of the trade in which they intend to work. The vocational training provided by the education system is often far from the real training needs of someone working in a business. Therefore, people entering the labour market often need a considerable period to get to know the business world around them, and companies have to invest time and money in training people who have already undergone some form of training.

If this situation is to be corrected, the education system and employees will have to work together on improving access to the labour market. In order to achieve this, firstly, vocational-training institutions and universities will have to adapt their curricula to some extent, and incorporate elements related to business training (for example, sessions on job seeking, career advice, human resources management, customer focus, etc.); secondly, companies will have to communicate their needs to universities regarding the types of training they will require of future staff.

### **Commitment and quality of education**

One of the principles of Organic Act 2/2006, of 3 May, on Education is the need for all elements of the education community to work together to reduce the school dropout rate in Spain (around 30% of students do not complete post-

compulsory education). Quality of education and equal opportunities for students are needed to achieve this goal, which requires a joint effort from all members of the education community. While it is essential for students to make efforts to avoid dropping out, the responsibility also lies with families, teaching staff, education institutions, education authorities and society as a whole. As a result, families will have to work closely with their children and make a commitment to their day-to-day life; teaching staff and education institutions will have to build dynamic, motivating and demanding learning environments; and education authorities will have to guarantee the rights of all members of the education community by providing the tools necessary to do so. Only mutual commitment and effort will enable an increase in the quality of education and reduce the number of people leaving school prematurely.

#### **Decline in the number of university graduates**

The number of students enrolled in universities has not changed much in the last five years, even though the opposite may seem to be true. In fact, the number of graduates has decreased, especially in studies of science, engineering and technology. This decrease in 2011 is between 30% and 60 % in comparison with 2005, and only 8% of Spanish youth study for degrees in science, while 14% study for technical degrees.

It should be noted that a working knowledge of ICT is essential for anyone who wants to grow professionally in the knowledge society. Hence all staff with academic qualifications should be able to use ICT, which will be essential to ensure long-term economic and social development in Europe. Specifically, in the coming years Europe will require an estimated 5 million ICT staff. By 2015, 90% of all jobs in all sectors will require the use of ICT.

#### **Dual training, studying and working**

Some of the more developed economies of Europe, such as Germany, Switzerland and the Netherlands, are committed, since long time ago, to a new model of training that combines classroom training with work experience in companies or institutions in exchange for a salary. This model is being used in Spain as a framework to promote a new work plan to overcome abandonment, one of the biggest challenges that the Catalan and Spanish education system have to face. In this sense, one of the advantages of dual training model is the incentive that represents a salary for young people with little motivation studies. This educational model allows students acquire, from an early age, professional skills related to a job. The second factor is an opportunity to adapt the skills of new professionals with the real needs to productive sectors. Today, Catalonia and the Basque Country have already implemented a pilot of dual training that have been positive for both students and companies.

# 04

## The sector in figures

### Economic data

- According to the 2012 budget approved by the Government of Catalonia, the Education budget stands at €4.669,2 million, 15,57% of total spending. In 2011 this figure was €5.096.336 millions (14,23% of total spending). In 2010 this figure was €5,317,600,000, 19.9% of total expenditure. This represents an 8% reduction in spending. Thus, between 2011 and 2012, there was a budget reduction of 7.8%. In proportional terms, in 2012, the weight of the educational budget of the Generalitat of Catalonia is higher.
- The budget for education is the second highest, behind Health, representing 30.3% of the weight of social spending by Catalan Government, formed by the Departments of Health, Education and Social Welfare and Family. These three departments account for about 69% of the budget of all departments of Catalan Government.
- In 2012, spending in programs education and policies in Catalonia is, in relative terms, over the spending in 2007. Spending in 2008 to 2011 was higher than than the spending in 2012. In recent years, it was necessary to adjust the budget to cope with the economic situation (reduction in public incomes due to the reduction of economic activity). Spending on education policies and programs, in 2012, dropped by 2.3% compared to 2011 and by 8.9% compared to 2010.
- Spending on education, according to the initial budget of the Department of Education, is distributed as follows: 52.8% to teaching staff of the Department, 35,2% to Gabinet and General Secretary, 7,3% to teaching staff of the Education Consortium of Barcelona (CEB), 2.9% to the Education Policy Secretary, and 2% Education Consortium of Barcelona.
- Spending on Higher Education Program, included int the budget of the Department of Economics and Knowledge 2012 is €907.24 million. In 2011, this Program had a budget of €855.83 million. In 2012 the budget for this Program is 6% higher compared to 2011.
- In 2010, according to the latest data available from Idescat, public expenditure on education represented 4.1% of Catalan GDP. In Spain, this figure was 5.0% (latest data available in 2009) and the average of the European Union was 5.4% of EU GDP (latest data available for 2009).
- According to data from the Survey of Family Budgets (INE), in Spain every household spent €310,9 per year in education (0.6% higher than in 2010 and 9.6% higher than the 2009). In Catalonia, the cost is higher, and in 2011 was €445,9 household/year (135 euros higher than the rest of Spain). Spending in Catalonia has remained stable compared to 2010, and is 3.6% higher than in 2009.
- 2011 State spending on scholarships and grants for education (sum of the expenditure of the Ministry of Education and the Region), according to the INE was €1.999,47 million for 3.5 million scholarships. This expenditure was distributed in: €1.039,95 million for college (52%); €536,52 million for non-university post-compulsory studies (26.8%); and €422,98 million for compulsory education, kindergarten and special education (21.2%). 77% of this expenditure was supported by the Ministry of Education, and 23%, for Region authorities.
- Spending in Catalonia scholarships and grants for education in 2011, according to INE data, was €169,64 million (8.5% of spending on scholarships and grants of Spain) for 310.255 scholarships. This expenditure was distributed in: €107,07 million for university studies (63.1%); €35,26 million for post-compulsory education no university (20.8%); and €27,30 million for compulsory education, kindergarten and special education (16.1%). A 96.2% of this expenditure was supported by the Ministry of Education, and a 3.8%, by Government of Catalonia.

### Employment data

- As stated in the budgets of Education, 2012, there are 81.505 people employed in the Department: 77.7%,

teaching staff; 10.2%, teaching staff of Education Consortium of Barcelona; 8.9%, staff of Gabinet and the General Secretariat of Education; 1.6%, non-teaching staff of the Education Consortium of Barcelona; 1.1%, other staff of Education Consortium of Barcelona attached directly to the Department; 0.4% staff of School of Music of Catalonia Foundation; and 0.1%, staff of National Youth Orchestra Foundation.

- Data from the Department of Education for the 2011-2012 academic year shows that the number of students in the general system (childhood, primary education, special education, secondary, high school, vocational training middle and upper) is: 1.266.311: 835.815 are in public schools (66%) and 430.498 in private schools (34%). During the 2010-2011 academic year the number of students in the general education was 1.237.274; there were 29.039 students less than 2011-2012 academic year.
- The number of students by level of education and institution type (public or private in 2011-2012) is shown as follows: 338.566 early childhood education students (9.125 more than in 2010-11 academic year), 452.826 primary school students (11.439 more than in 2010-11 course), 6.585 special education students (216 more than in 2010-11 academic year), 280.913 compulsory secondary education students (4.795 more than in 2010-11 academic year), 85.772 baccalaureate students (1.489 more than in 2010-11 academic year), 52.913 intermediate-level vocational training students (5.999 more than in 2010-11 academic year), 48.738 advanced-level vocational training students (3.414 more than in 2010-11 academic year).
- The number of general education institutions in 2011-2012 was 4.633, of which 3.270 (17%) are public and 1.361 private (29%). In 2010-2011 there was 4.777 of general education institutions.
- The number of general education institutions in 2011-2012 by educational level is as follows: 1.504 early childhood institutions, 1.833 primary schools, 282 primary and Obligatory Secondary Education (ESO) schools, 1.833 ESO, baccalaureate and vocational training institutions, 222 primary, ESO, baccalaureate and vocational training institutions; 104 special education institutions, 1 distance learning institution; and 239 Initial Professional Qualification Programme (PQPI) institutions.
- The number of teachers in general education during the 2011-2012 academic year was 109.097, of which 72.751 were in public institutions (67%) and 36.346 in private institutions (33%). During 2010-2011 academic year the number of teachers in general education was 108.409 (688 less than 2011-2012 academic year)
- By level of education taught, the numbers of teachers for the 2011-2012 year is as follows: 63.907 (59%) in early childhood and primary level education, 41.661 (38%) in secondary education and vocational training; 1.968 (2%) in both of the previously mentioned levels (early childhood, primary, secondary and vocational levels) and 1.561 in special education (1%).
- According to the latest data available from the Department of Economics and Knowledge (collected by Idescat), in the 2010-2011 academic year public universities had a total of 18.382 teaching staff (private and public institutions), 2,1% less than 2009-2010 academic year, when there were 18.009 professors.
- During the 2011-2012 academic year there were 8.085 teachers in special scheme: 855 were in art school (10.6%); 21 in art schools of higher education (0.3%); 1.329 in music schools (16.4%); 70 in dance schools (0.9%); 4.609 in schools of music and dance (57%); 118 in drama schools (1,5%); 670 in official language schools (8.3%); and 413 in sports education centers (5.1%).
- The number of adult students during the 2011-2012 academic year was 72.753: 70.201 were in public schools (97%), and 2.371 in private schools (3%). In the previous academic year (2010-2011) there were 198 specific training centres for adults, with 1.713 teachers.
- The number of students in specialised education during the 2011-2012 academic year was 127.084 (2.887 less than 2010-11 academic year), of which 102.939 (81%) were educated in public schools and 24.145 (19%) in private schools.
- The number of specialised education institutions during the 2011-2012 academic year is 462, of which 322 are public and 140 private. The teaching staff in specialised education institutions numbers 7.886 people.
- According to the latest data available from the Department of Economics and Knowledge, public universities had, during 2010-2011, 16.419 teachers (3.6% over 2009-2010): professors (10%) and title professors (27%), partners (43%) and emeritus, visitors, readers, aggregates, temporary employees, and others (17%). The distribution between universities was the following: University of Barcelona (30%), UAB (20,7%), Polytechnic University of Catalonia (16,2%), Universitat Rovira i Virgili (10,3%), University Girona (8,5%), Pompeu Fabra University (7,3%), University of Lleida (5,6%) and the Open University of Catalonia (1,5%). University teachers in the public system represent 89% of university teachers in Catalonia.
- As for private universities in Catalonia, according to the same data from the Department of Economics and Knowledge, during 2010-2011 academic year, there were 1.963 teachers (9,4% less than in 2009-2010): 1.041 were professors at the University Ramon Llull (53%); 464 at Vic University (24%); 409 at International University of Catalonia (21%); and 49 at Abat Oliva University (2%). The private system of university

professors represents 11% of professors from Catalonia.

Sources. Latest data available: INE; Idescat: Department of Education of the Government of Catalonia, Department of Economics and Knowledge of the Government of Catalonia.

# 05

## Professional profiles most in demand

### Training profile

The education sector requires very specific profiles and, in general, very highly-qualified people. In fact, the minimum requirement for a job in education is normally a modern bachelor's degree or old-style diploma, which must be accompanied by an Aptitude for Teaching Certificate (CAP), qualifications relating to a teaching specialisation, or a Teaching Qualification Certificate (CQP). This is because of intrinsic traits of the education sector. Teachers, in addition to being knowledgeable in a given field, must also be capable of transferring this knowledge to others.

Professional educators generally have a level of training equivalent to higher-education qualifications, such as the old-style diploma or bachelor's degrees or engineering degrees, and are specialised in one or another area, depending on the subject being taught. These profiles are for teaching or training staff. However, within the education system there are some specific profiles that require training in addition to that outlined above. That is the case for directors of education institutions or training programmes who, in addition to a higher education qualification, will normally need additional training in project management or human-resources management.

Moreover, it is essential for all professional profiles in this industry to acquire some form of accreditation of their knowledge of IT, as such technology is now used extensively in classrooms, both in primary and secondary schools as well at all educational levels that people experience throughout their lives. In addition, knowledge of English could be considered additional training that is practically essential these days, as it is the lingua franca of the European Union and the language used the most in communicating with other countries.

### Skills profile

Professional educators generally have a good knowledge of the subject they teach. In addition to this specific knowledge, to work in education they must also have a vocation for teaching: this means becoming personally and professionally committed to the profession, and being sensitive enough to take into account the social and cultural conditions of the area in which their school is located. Whether or not students leave school with qualifications will depend to a large extent on this vocation.

Other important professional skills shared by all profiles are empathy, the capacity to work unsupervised and make decisions and the ability to assess and organise their own work. However, two broad groups of people with different skills can be distinguished: those who are employed in positions with direct student contact and those in administrative positions.

People employed in positions that involve more contact with people (teaching or training staff) must be capable of resolving situations of conflict, working under pressure and responding favourably to difficult circumstances.

Administrative staff in education institutions or training programmes need, in addition to the skills described above, the ability to manage teams of people with diverse ideologies and to take decisions that directly affect the proper functioning of the education system and relationships between members of the education community. They therefore need to be people who are motivated, sure of themselves, able to take initiative, and are capable of handling any changes that arise.

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### Examples of jobs in the Web Barcelona Treball directory

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- ✓ [Director of an educational center](#)
  - ✓ [Secondary school teacher](#)
  - ✓ [Music teacher](#)
  - ✓ [Employment training course trainer](#)
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# 06

## Future scenarios

### Weaknesses

- Focus on qualifications and not on knowledge acquisition. To a large extent, students' main objective has been to pass courses in order to obtain a level of training rather than to acquire knowledge. This means that education is still perceived more as the need to achieve a specific academic level and less as an obligation to learn.
- Lack of family involvement in their children's education. This means that teaching staff have to invest part of the time that they should be dedicating to imparting specific knowledge about a subject to educating students about other issues that are more related to classroom behaviour, and to doing homework.
- Lack of development of teaching methods. Education techniques still based on knowledge transfer rather than adopting new methods based on knowledge building and self-directed learning.
- School teachers lacking a vocation for the teaching profession. The generous social and economic benefits that school teachers enjoy has led to people entering the system who, although they have all the training and skills needed to do the job, do not have a vocation for the profession, which could have a direct impact on the quality of their teaching.
- University teaching staff lacking a vocation for teaching. The majority of those teaching at universities are people who have earned PhDs and whose vocation is more for research than for teaching.
- Few incentives and job mobility opportunities for those who want to continue training beyond their university education. In this regard, the lack of support for academic excellence becomes a weakness in a country that has a 31,9% school dropout rate, according to 2011 data from the Labour Council, Economic and Social Catalonia (CTESC), really above the European average (15.2%)

### Threats

- Education is very sensitive to social, political and cultural changes within societies. It is very sensitive to periodic social and cultural conditions, which has a direct impact on its operation and development.
- Education institutions lack the independence to launch their own initiatives. Because educational programmes and activities in teaching institutions, particularly in primary and secondary schools, are subject to guidelines set by the Catalan and Spanish governments, educators are prevented from implementing approaches that fit their students' needs.
- The entry of foreign students into the education system has contributed to the increasing segregation amongst school students. Currently, many teaching institutions are accumulating a high percentage of immigrant students while others have practically none, which is contributing to increased social segregation. This is also happening between state and private schools.
- High mobility of teaching staff. Teaching staff in temporary positions are obliged to perform jobs that could change from one year to the next. This means that not only do they have to change schools, but that they have to change the subject they are teaching. This increases the difficulties faced by institutions in implementing long-term actions and reduces the quality of teaching.
- The reduction in the 2012 education budget may affect the quality of educational services if this situation is not handled well by the Government of Catalonia and by each of the schools whose financial capacity has been reduced.
- Low level of international recognition of Catalan universities.

### Strengths

- The education that people in developed societies receive is one of the pillars of these societies. The educational level of a country's people is a key indicator of the level of individual and collective welfare that it achieves.
- The establishment of parents' associations (AMPES) in education institutions in recent years is of vital importance in terms of increasing the participation of families in their children's education.
- The existence of laws guaranteeing everyone a free basic education and of education policies creates a very positive situation for education's continued development and evolution, as well as for improved-quality education.
- Education plays a key role in the integration of immigrants and includes programmes of educational reinforcement that contribute to guaranteeing equality of opportunities within societies.

### Opportunities

- Making full use of the investment into education. Even though education expenditures are already considerable, in order to increase quality and reduce dropout rates it would be advisable to invest more in human resources as a way of retaining talent which leaves education institutions, especially universities, for work in foreign countries where better professional opportunities are available.
- Increasing the involvement of the education community. Increasing the involvement of teaching staff, families, the government and students in teaching and learning processes could contribute to increasing the quality of education and reducing school dropout rates.
- Implementing new learning methods related to new technologies. Making use of new technologies to apply new teaching techniques based more on knowledge building than on information transfer.
- Developing the national system of qualifications. Definitively rolling out, at Spanish and Catalan level, the already-started national system of qualifications for all existing professional families and establishing clear criteria for awarding professional certificates.
- Creating academic recognition systems. Establishing criteria for academic recognition between formal education, occupational training, and complementary training would avoid overlaps in the education system and speed up people's education processes.
- Emphasising the value of occupational training both to the people who should be receiving it and to companies that should be requiring it. To this end, it is essential for both to understand its usefulness. Work placement programmes, which can very often result in hiring by companies which participate in them, are a good means of achieving this goal, as well as of highlighting this type of training to companies.
- To increase educational levels in Catalonia, it is essential to develop new programs that foster the accreditation of skills and qualifications acquired without formal training. Initiatives such as l'Acredita't and Qualifica't are good examples of programmes that promote knowledge acquisition and its accreditation.

# 07

## Useful links

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### International organisations

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International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement

<http://www.iea.nl/>

European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP)

<http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/>

International Association of Universities

<http://www.iau-aiu.net/>

Organisation of Ibero-American States for Education, Science and Culture (OEI)

<http://www.oei.es/quipu/espana/index.html>

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### Spanish organisations

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Spanish Ministry of Education and Culture

<http://www.educacion.es/portada.html>

Ministry of Education of the Government of Catalonia

<http://www.gencat.cat/ensenyament/>

Department of Economy and Knowledge

<http://www20.gencat.cat/portal/site/economia>

Employment Service of Catalonia (SOC)

[http://www.oficinadetreball.cat/socweb/opencms/socweb\\_es/home.html](http://www.oficinadetreball.cat/socweb/opencms/socweb_es/home.html)

Consortium for Continuous Learning in Catalonia

<http://www.conforcat.cat/principal.asp>

Spanish National Institute of Qualifications

[http://www.educacion.es/educa/incual/ice\\_incual.html](http://www.educacion.es/educa/incual/ice_incual.html)

Catalan Institute for Vocational Qualifications

[http://www10.gencat.cat/sac/AppJava/organisme\\_fitxa.jsp?codi=13864](http://www10.gencat.cat/sac/AppJava/organisme_fitxa.jsp?codi=13864)

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### International Events (fairs, conferences, etc.)

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4th Ibero-American Congress of Teachers

<http://www.congresopedagogia2010.com/>

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Virtual Educa

<http://virtualeduca.org>

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### National events (fairs, conferences, etc.)

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Catalonia Education Awards

<http://www.gencat.cat/educacio/premiscal/>

14th Spanish Congress of Teachers and 3rd Ibero-American Congress of Teachers

<http://www.sepedagogia.es/congresos.html>

1st Schooling 2.0 Congress

<http://www.ite.educacion.es/cuola20/index.php/es/presentacion>

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### International thematic portals

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Intute. Helping you find the best websites for study and research

<http://intute.ac.uk/>

Information on education systems and policies in Europe (EURYDICE)

[http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/index\\_en.php](http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/index_en.php)

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### National portals

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Centre for Education Research and Documentation

<http://www.educacion.es/cide/>

Edu365.cat

<http://www.edu365.cat/>

Portal Educaweb

<http://www.educaweb.com/>

Institute for Evaluation of the Government of Spain's Ministry of Education and Science

<http://www.mecd.gob.es/inee>

Spanish Higher Scientific Research Council (CSIC)

<http://www.csic.es/>

Intercambia. Educating girls and boys

<https://www.educacion.es/intercambia/portada.do>

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