The curriculum associated with the qualifications in vocational and technical education is developed based on Vocational Training Standards (VTSs). VTS is a document describing the learning outcomes which a participant in a training programme, developed in the framework of vocational and technical education, must demonstrate upon its completion; VTS is also the document underlying the assessment for certification purposes.

The structure of Vocational Training Standards in force is approved by the Order of the Education and Research Minister no. 5293/2015 on the approval of the structure of a Vocational and Training Standard in vocational and technical education.

One specificity of VTSs developed as from 2016 is the inclusion of an assessment standard corresponding to each unit of learning outcomes, which specifies the conditions for demonstrating the acquisition of that unit of learning outcomes. Those conditions are described in terms of criteria and attainment indicators. A Vocational Training Standard is the regulatory document with the most important role in the design of the vocational and technical education curriculum, being developed based on the occupational standards in force, or, where there are no such standards, on the competences connected with the occupation(s) targeted through that qualification, which are determined in consultation with the sector committees or economic operators, or other stakeholders.

For all vocational and technical education, the curriculum design process includes, at national level, the following steps:

- The initiators draw up the VTSs, coordinated by the National Centre for the Development of Vocational and Technical Education, based on the identified qualification needs.

- VTSs are validated by the sector committees.

- The National Centre for the Development of Vocational and Technical Education in cooperation with the Ministry of National Education and with the consultation of stakeholders draws up the Framework Curriculum, based on VTSs, and the National Curriculum.

- The National Centre for the Development of Vocational and Technical Education coordinates the development of the curriculum for the curricular area Technologies, based on the validated VTSs.

- The specialised commissions of the Ministry of National Education give their advice on the curriculum.
The curriculum is approved by the Ministry of National Education.

The upper cycle of the technological high-school is organised in 3 profiles which, in their turn, bring together several vocational training fields as follows:

- The Technical profile, which includes the fields:
  - Mechanics
  - Industrial Chemistry
  - Constructions, Installations and Public Works
  - Electronics and Automation
  - Electrical; Electro-Mechanics
  - Textile and Leather Industry
  - Construction Materials
  - Media Production
  - Manufacturing of Wood Products
  - Typographic Techniques.

- The profile Services, which includes the fields:
  - Tourism and Food
  - Commerce
  - Economics
  - Aesthetics and Hygiene of Human Body.

- The profile Natural Resources and Environment Protection, which includes the fields:
Agriculture

Food Industry

Environment Protection

Forestry.

Curriculum, subjects, number of hours

The National Curriculum is structured across 7 curricular areas:

- Language and Communication
- Mathematics and Sciences
- Man and Society
- Arts
- Physical Education and Sport
- Guidance and Counselling
- Technologies.

The Curriculum includes the following curricular components:

- Core Curriculum (CC) - it includes the subjects/modules, and their corresponding hour allocations, which are common to a profile/field of training, and is part of the National Curriculum

- Differentiated Curriculum (DC) - it includes modules that are specific to a qualification and is part of the National Curriculum

- Locally Developed Curriculum (LDC) - this educational provision is specific to each school, and is designed to adapt students' training to the requirements of the local labour market. LDC is proposed and developed by each school, following a consultation with its partner economic operators. The
design process for the locally developed curriculum includes the following steps:

- identification of the training needs at local level
- development of the LDC according to the training needs identified at local level
- approval of LDC by the board of the school and by the Local Committee for the Development of Social Partnership
- approval of LDC by the School Inspectorate.

In vocational and technical education, the curriculum for the curricular area Technologies is modular and is designed based on Vocational Training Standards (VTSs). The modular characteristic of the curriculum consists in designing the educational and training course based on the units of learning outcomes included in the Vocational Training Standards. The learning outcomes are expressed as knowledge, skills and attitudes correlated with descriptors of reference for each level of the National Qualification Framework. Each general or specialised technical unit of learning outcomes in a VTS usually has a corresponding module in the curriculum.

The categories of learning outcome units in a VTS are:

- general technical units of learning outcomes
- specialised technical units of learning outcomes.

The general technical units of learning outcomes are common to all qualifications in a vocational training field, at a particular level of qualification.

The specialised technical units of learning outcomes are specific to each qualification.

The 8 areas of key competences, defined in accordance with the European Reference Framework of Key Competences for Lifelong Learning, are formulated in terms of specific knowledge, skills and attitudes, are integrated in the units of general and specialised competences and are developed/refined in vocational training contexts.

In the ECVET context (European Credit Transfer System for Vocational Education and Training described in the Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 June 2009 on the establishment of a European Credit Transfer System for Vocational Education and Training), the transferable and accrual credits are represented by units of learning outcomes that have been acquired, assessed, certified, or recognised/validated.
The upper cycle of technological high-school has a unitary construction, having a total of 2159/2190 hours (depending on qualification), out of which 1152/1186 hours (about 54%) are allocated to general knowledge and 1007/1004 hours (about 46%) to specialised training. Within the specialised training, 38% of hours are allocated to theoretical training and 62% to practical preparation delivered through a technological laboratory and practical training.

**Teaching methods and materials**

The teaching methods in vocational and technical education are selected so as to lead to the attainment of the goals proposed for an education level/qualification level, the attainment of the objectives proposed for each module and, especially, so as to fit the students’ age and individual characteristics. Teachers are fully responsible for the choice of methods, taking into account the structure of their class, the learning resources available in school and according to the methodological guidance provided in the National Curriculum and the materials published for teachers. For the practical training at the workplace, the teacher collaborates with the responsible person/tutor at the workplace so as to apply the most appropriate learning methods.

Throughout vocational and technical education, every module of the curricular area Technologies (specialised module) is taught by one or several teachers (generally, in those cases where the specialised module has both theoretical hours, and technological laboratory and practical training hours). Where practical training takes place at the economic operator, the tutor is responsible for the way the training activity is carried out, following their collaboration with the teachers in the school. During classes at school, the teacher is fully responsible for the class management. Consequently, teachers independently choose to organise activities with all the students in a class (frontal activity), in groups or individually (differentiated activity) depending on the specific objectives of the lesson and students’ level.

Teaching-learning activities organised for separate groups of at least 10 students may be organised for laboratory and practical training activities taking place at school or at the economic operators and/or extracurricular activities. As regards the teaching methods, the following mentions of a general nature may be considered:

- The methods based on oral communication may be classified as methods based on exposition (telling, describing, explaining, etc.) and methods based on conversation (conversation, heuristic conversation, raising issues, etc.).

- Teachers also use learning and exploration methods based on discovery: direct exploration of objects and phenomena (systemic and independent observations, experiments, practical activities etc.) and indirect exploration (problem solving, demonstration based on images, films, etc.).

- The system promotes the use of interactive student-centred methods based on children’s voluntary action (exercises, practical activities, etc.) and encouraged action (educational games, learning through dramatization, etc.).

- Practical training is obligatory in vocational and technical education and is delivered by teachers-engineers and/or masters, in laboratories and workshops, as well as by tutors – staff assigned by employers for the practical training of students in enterprises.

At the end of each lesson, teachers usually assign homework for the next lesson. Homework involves
solving exercises, writing essays or other activities chosen either from textbooks, or from other publications (text collections, student books, collections of exercises and problems, etc.). In some cases students are also required to take some practical activities as homework, such as measurements, observations, small practical projects, etc.

At the beginning of each lesson, teachers usually check how students did their homework and, if necessary, help students finish it by providing additional explanations. As a general rule, the Ministry of National Education recommends to take into account when deciding on the time allocated to homework the students’ need to socialise and engage in various sports and recreational activities.

The Law of National Education stipulates that only the textbooks approved by the Ministry of National Education may be used in the classroom. For some specialised modules taught in vocational and technical education there are one or several alternative textbooks approved for every year of study. Depending on the students’ level, each teacher chooses and recommends the textbook for each specialised module at the beginning of the school year.

The learning resources used in vocational and technical education depend on the educational level and the specialised module. Printed materials may be purchased by the library of the school or may be recommended by the teacher and purchased by the students. A significant number of publications have been made available to support teaching: publications for general and specific teacher training, methodological materials, teacher’s manuals, teaching aids, etc.

Since the 2006/2007 school year, the specialised curriculum for the qualifications of the profile Services has included modules allocated to the development of entrepreneurial skills through the “Practice Firm” method. This learning method simulates the economic activities in the real world and allows the development of entrepreneurial skills in addition to specialised technical competences. In the 2016/2017 school year, 1180 practice firms (school education) were authorised and they carried out the usual activity stipulated in the curriculum.

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