

Despite this success, significant skills challenges remain in the development of skills. For instance, while the performance of youth improved, the skills of adults are still low in comparison with most OECD countries. In addition, despite attainment rates in tertiary education that are comparable with the OECD average, the skills of many young adults with a tertiary degree are relatively low.

The labour market in Spain is comparatively inclusive, but overall employment and participation rates are low compared to the OECD average. There is also evidence of significant skills imbalances in the labour market – Spain ranks in the bottom 20% of OECD countries for the alignment between skills supply and labour market demand.

The OECD Skills for Jobs database finds that there is a shortage of basic skills and abilities related to numeracy and literacy, as well as higher-level cognitive skills and abilities, like reasoning, systems skills and complex problem solving. Shortages are also evident in education and training, science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields, business and management, and communications.

Spain could also improve the intensity with which skills are used in the workplace. The use of skills in the workplace has

increased in Spain, however, it's still lower than in most OECD countries. Similarly, Spain performs poorly in the adoption of high-performance workplace practices, which are found to stimulate skills use in the workplace.

Spain has taken important steps to respond to many of these challenges. Government and stakeholders have introduced a number of measures to bring skill supply more in line with demand. A single Spain-wide job portal was created to facilitate matching of job openings and jobseekers and to promote labour mobility. Spain also reformed the professional training system and introduced training accounts to ensure that both employed and unemployed adults can upgrade their skills and acquire new ones. *Industria Conectada 4.0* initiative was introduced to promote the adoption of digital technologies among Spanish firms, which could reduce over-qualification by boosting the demand for higher-level skills and qualifications.

Still, Spain could benefit from a renewal of its strategic vision for the future to ensure that all of its people have the necessary skills to respond to the challenges and opportunities of a complex and rapidly changing world. A whole-of government approach is needed to achieve this aim.

Key recommendations for improving the performance of countries' skills system

Developing relevant skills over the life course: Making skills systems responsive

- Making each stage of learning a foundation for success in the next
- Enabling policies to support learning in adulthood
- Supporting teachers to become lifelong learners
- Financing adult learning
- Harnessing the power of technology as a tool for learning

Using skills effectively in work and society: Making the most of everyone's potential

- Make full use of everyone's skills
- Making the most of migrants' skills
- Activating skills to build more inclusive and cohesive societies
- Making intensive use of skills in work
- Aligning skills with the needs of the economy and society
- Aligning skills policies with industrial and innovation policies

Strengthening the governance of skills systems: Tackling increased complexity

- Promoting co-ordination, co-operation and collaboration across the whole of government
- Engaging stakeholders throughout the policy cycle
- Building integrated information systems
- Aligning and co-ordinating financing arrangements

Further reading

- OECD (2019), *OECD Skills Strategy 2019: Skills to shape a better future*, OECD Publishing, Paris, [//doi.org/10.1787/9789264313835-en](https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264313835-en).
- OECD (2019), *OECD Skills Outlook 2019: Thriving in a Digital World*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/df80bc12-en>.
- OECD (2015), *OECD Skills Strategy Diagnostic Report: Spain 2015*, OECD Skills Studies, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264300262-en>.
- OECD (forthcoming), *Strengthening the Governance of Skills Systems*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

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