



WORK IN SPAIN

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Our country, our people. An overview

Spain is a sovereign country, member of the European Union, a social and democratic State, with a Parliamentary-Monarchy government. Its territory, with capital in Madrid, is politically organised into seventeen autonomous communities and two autonomous cities.

It has a surface area of 505,940 square kilometres.

Language

The official language in the entire country is Spanish or Castilian Spanish. In several autonomous communities it shares its status with other languages such as Euskera, Catalan, Galician or Valencian in their respective geographical areas.

Population

Spain has a population of approximately 46.5 million people.

The average population density is 92 inhabitants per square kilometre.

Currency

The currency is the Euro.

Climate



Spain has a diversity of climates; temperatures depend on the time of year and on the different regions. The predominant climate is mild Mediterranean.

The centre of the peninsula has a continental climate, with low temperatures in winter, high in summer and irregular rains.

The Cantabrian coast and Galicia have an ocean climate with abundant rains throughout the year, especially in winter, and cool temperatures.

The Balearic Islands, Ceuta and Melilla have mild temperatures in winter and hot in the summer, with little rain.

The Canary Islands have a subtropical climate with warm temperatures all year round and little rain.

The time

Peninsula and Balearic Islands: GMT +1 / Canary Islands: GMT.

Phone calls

Spain's international code for calls from abroad is 34 plus the 9-digit number.

Social life

Social life is very important in Spain. Family and friends are a core part of life for most Spaniards. An informal and spontaneous attitude and language is usually used in social encounters. Physical contact is frequent when greeting, kisses, hugs, which may be surprising for those visiting us for the first time.

Lunchtime is usually between 1:30 and 3:30 pm, and dinner between 9:00 and 11:00 pm, quite later than usual in the rest of Europe. People often eat out with friends, especially on the weekends.

Spain has a lively night-life tradition. The hospitality sector is one of the most dynamic sectors in the Spanish economy.

Although there have been significant changes in recent years, family is still at the core of personal relationships and remains a very important part of life. It is also very important to keep in touch with friends.

There is a wide variety of popular celebrations, some of them internationally renowned, such as San Fermin in Pamplona, the Fallas in Valencia, the April Fair in Seville or Easter.

Shopping life is quite dynamic as well. Shops are usually open from 10:00 am until 8:00 pm. Opening hours are even longer at shopping centres.

Thanks to the good weather, bathing at some of the world's best beaches is guaranteed. For example, would you like to enjoy the ambience of the Costa del Sol, dive on the Costa Brava, get to know our villages and seafaring towns? Active people can try their hand at all types of water sports.

In addition to beaches, Spain has cultural options for all tastes and budgets. If you prefer to dance to the rhythm of festivals, you will also find many that are internationally known.

Accommodation

Finding an apartment at the right price before arriving in Spain may not be easy, because owners often prefer to meet their tenants before signing the contract. It is also not advisable to commit to renting an apartment without having looked at it first.

A search usually takes between one to three weeks; the first thing to do is become familiar with the neighbourhoods we may be interested in and look into their transportation connections.



Many empty apartments have a “for rent” sign in the window or at the entrance door. Many apartments are not advertised, the information is spread by word of mouth because the owners would rather their tenants are someone known.

Specialised websites, bulletin boards and many local newspapers and magazines have a real estate section that offers rental accommodation with well-organised lists.

There are real estate agencies for selling and renting properties; the price for their services may be the equivalent of one month's rent. The room search services are more active and cost a bit less; they charge a sum in advance and they try to find an apartment that fits the requirements.

Once you have found a place to live, it is usually easier to negotiate the rental contract. Contracts are usually for a year. You should read it carefully and make sure that everything is clear.

If the contract specifies an inventory, check that everything is in the apartment and that all appliances work properly.

Utilities such as water, electricity, gas and community fees may or may not be included in the rent price. Make sure to ask what expenses you have to pay for; heating, for example, is usually a significant cost.

As for the security deposit, most landlords ask for one month deposit, and sometimes two if the apartment is furnished. Any additional agreement should be set down in writing.

Given that the Spanish legal system does not provide much protection for owners, it is very common for them to ask for additional guarantees: if you work, a copy of the payroll slip that guarantees that you earn more monthly than what the rent costs; if you are a student, a letter from the education centre that certifies that you have sufficient means or they may even ask for additional guarantees such as a bank guarantee.

There are other options, such as living with a family or in a hostel, in a university dorm or residence hall, which are usually cheaper and more flexible regarding rental periods.

The best time to look for an apartment in Spain is between May and July. August is complicated due to vacation, and September is usually the worst month because it is the return from vacation and when students begin the school year. There is not much real estate activity around Christmas either.

Cost of living

Basic monthly expenses, such as housing, food, transportation, clothing and shoes, education and entertainment, may vary in Spain depending on the region where you live.

In general, living costs are higher in larger Spanish cities (Madrid, Barcelona, Valencia, Bilbao) than in smaller towns.

The minimum wage in Spain for 2018 was €24.53 per day, or €735.90 per month or €10,320.60 per year, with 14 pay instalments.

A professional's monthly salary depends on factors such as age, academic level, job classification, social benefits provided by the employer and other factors.

You would need around €1,500 per month to live in Spain at a basic or average level. This amount is calculated for one person and includes food, housing, basic services (electricity, telephone, water, gas), transportation, clothing and entertainment. These figures are approximate and may vary year by year. You would have to add another €500 per child.

The average monthly cost for a rented home is €600, although this information may vary greatly



depending on the area and city in question.

In order to give you a basic idea of the cost of living in Spain, we offer estimated prices of the main food items and familiar consumer goods in Euro:

Supermarket: water (1.5 litre) €0.50; a dozen eggs €1.70; a kilogram of bread €0.93; a 1-litre bottle of milk €0.76; a bottle of wine €4; a national beer (0.5 litre) €2; an imported beer (0.5 litre) €2.50, potatoes (1 kilogram) €0.93; rice (1 kilogram) €0.95; tomatoes (1 kilogram) €1.50.

Restaurant: meal for two people €30 (with set menu), a soft drink €1.65.

Clothing and shoes: An average pair of shoes €40; a dress in a large department store €30; a pair of jeans €70; name-brand sports shoes starting at €60.

Transportation: gasoline: €1.20; a monthly public transport card €43; a return ticket on public transport €1.40.

Internet: 6 Mbps, flat rate, cable and DSL €35.

Accommodation: Purchase price of a home in the suburbs €1,600/ square metre; purchase price of a home in the centre €2,500/square metre; rent in the suburbs with one bedroom €420; rent in the centre with one bedroom €560; rental of a home with three bedrooms in the suburbs €600; rental of a home with three bedrooms in the centre €900.

Entertainment: Cinema ticket €10; pack of cigarettes €5.

Links of interest:

- [fotocasa](#)
- [enalquiler](#)
- [The spanish society \(homes\)](#)

Culture

Spain is, mainly, a mosaic of diverse, respectful and popular cultures. Spanish cultural and social life is the product of multiple external influences received throughout its history, thus its richness and diversity.

It has a very rich culture that encompasses all forms of expression, from literature to paint, from music to architecture, from theatre to luxury art.

Cultural tourism is becoming an alternative to the sun and sand tourism, given the wealth and quality of its museums, monuments, festivities and traditions, as well as exhibitions and diverse cultural expressions. As an example, Spain is one of the world's richest countries when it comes to monuments, it happens to be the second country with the most UNESCO-declared World Heritage sites.

Spain's architecture has been influenced by numerous cultures, thanks largely to its historical and geographical diversity. It is currently a combination of influences from ancient times and contemporary modernism, a style that includes many famous architects, such as the world-renowned Antoni Gaudí.

Spanish literature development intersects with other literary traditions from the various regions of the country. The most well-known Spanish author is Miguel de Cervantes, who wrote the famous novel Don Quijote de la Mancha, the most emblematic work in the history of Spanish literature and a foundational classic of Western literature.

Painting in Spain has varied greatly throughout history, depending mainly on the artistic styles and periods (Romanic, Gothic, Renaissance, Mannerism, Baroque and modern periods). Some of the most



renowned Spanish artists who have contributed to and improved Spanish culture are Velázquez, Murillo, Zurbarán, Goya, Picasso, Dalí, Sorolla or Miró.

Music is a fundamental part of Spain's culture and folklore. It spans the various styles developed throughout the various historic periods.

Spain has a huge historic-artistic bibliographic legacy: it is the third country in the world regarding number of monuments declared of worldwide historic value. Madrid has three major museums holding universal art masterpieces: the Prado Museum, the Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum and the Reina Sofía Art Museum. Spanish theatre and cinema are becoming a worldwide reference, with renowned theatre festivals such as Mérida, Sagunto o Almagro and cinema festivals such as San Sebastian, Malaga or Valladolid.

Cooking plays a large part in Spanish culture; some of its main attractions are the richness and variety of its products, with dishes that vary depending on the geographic location and climate. Spain's long history has brought the contribution of many cultural influences, which means that its gastronomy is not only delicious, but also quite unique. It is not so much a national gastronomy, rather multiple regional gastronomies.

Links of interest:

- [Formalities and Services, the Ministry of Culture](#)
- [Spain, mosaic of cultures](#)
- [Turespaña official website](#)
- [Network 2000](#)
- [SpainData](#)
- [Maporama](#)
- [Yellow Pages \(Toledo\)](#)
- [Youth Hostels](#)
- [Sleep in Spain](#)
- [Travel](#)

Transportation

Transportation in Spain includes an extensive network of roads, railways, airports and ports. The country boasts the longest network of high-speed roads (combining motorways and toll roads) of the European Union and the third in the world.

Regarding air traffic, there are a total of 52 airports, which transport over 200 million people every year. All of the main cities have an airport. The main airport is Adolfo Suarez Madrid Barajas in Madrid, followed by the Prat airport in Barcelona.

All town centres can be reached by car on the Network of National Roads, however small they may be, or however winding their design.

The railway network features superb connection, by means of high-speed lines (AVE), regional trains and intercity trains.

The major cities have very efficient underground (metro) transportation networks that usually operate between 6:00 am to 1:30 am.

All larger cities also offer a good inner-city bus service. Taxis are the most convenient means of transportation, but also the most expensive.



Traveller traffic by sea is not very common. Relations between both sides of the Strait of Gibraltar (Algeciras-Ceuta) and between islands or between the islands and the Peninsula are relatively important, mainly during the tourism season months.

Links of interest

- [Ministry of Public Works: roads, railways, aviation and maritime transportation](#)
- [Air transportation](#)
- [Transportation by train](#)

The economy

Spain has managed to transform itself politically, socially and economically over the span of thirty years. It has become an advanced and modern country, overcoming decades of isolation and underdevelopment.

Spain has traditionally been an agricultural country, it is still one of the largest producers in Western Europe, but since mid-1950's industrial growth boomed and it soon overtook agriculture in the country's economy.

As happened to the economy in all European countries, it recently underwent a strong recession, but then the gross domestic production began to grow again; factors such as the reduction in oil prices, improved financial conditions and depreciation of the Euro, as well as the forecast of growth for the Eurozone, all contributed to this.

Tourism is one of the main pillars of the Spanish economy: Spain is the third most visited country in the world, and the second in financial income from tourism.

The current situation includes improvements in job creation, exports and corporate investment.

Private consumerism is evolving better than expected, thanks to the impact of job creation on the available income in homes, and the reduced rate of savings.

Job market

We have a job market that is very sensitive to changes, which shows that the impact of the crisis on Spain is deeper than on other developed economies.

Its situation is characterised by maintaining a high rate of structural unemployment, which has greatly increased during these times of crisis.

From an employment standpoint, Spain's corporate structure has a high atomisation in small corporate units, to the point that eight out of every ten companies have two or less employees. The largest percentage of small enterprises are in the Services sector, especially in Trade. On the other hand, the majority of large companies are found in the industrial sector.

The job market is quite sensitive to variations in the GDP, which means that unemployment may fluctuate more than in other developed economies. Actual wages are low compared to other similar countries in our area. Most contracts are temporary.

Although it is improving, the Spanish job market still has serious structural problems: high unemployment rates among youths and over 50s, a high percentage of long-term unemployment, high seasonality, low level of qualifications (accredited) aimed at employment and a high number of discouraged youths who neither work nor study.



In keeping with the whole of the economy, the job market has experienced a certain improvement, breaking the trend towards job destruction, but there are still structural problems.

Links of interest

- [SEPE Occupations Observatory](#)

Free circulation of workers

Travel and residency

EEA citizens can circulate, reside and work freely in any member state, enjoying the same rights as the nationals of the chosen country. This right of free circulation also extends to their family members, whatever their nationality, under certain requirements.

Therefore, as a national of an EEA member country, you can access any job activity in Spain, both by third parties or as self-employed, without the need to apply for a work permit, and have the same rights as Spanish nationals regarding salary, working conditions, access to housing, professional training, social security or union membership, with certain exceptions when accessing jobs with the Public Administration, which are contained in the Treaty on European Union.

All you need to show when entering Spain is a valid identification document or passport. You may remain for three months to look for a job or to set up a business for yourself. If after three months you still have not found a job in Spain, you are entitled to remain longer if you are still seeking a job and you truly have a chance of finding one.

Formalities

If you are going to reside in Spain for longer than three months, citizens must apply for the registration certification and their family members for the card as family member of a citizen of the Union. Citizens of the Union and their family members may obtain permanent residency in Spain, if they meet certain requirements.

All persons residing in Spain are under the obligation to register themselves in the city where they live. This can be done at the Town Hall.

Family members of a community citizen who do not have the nationality of a member state may reside in Spain for a period exceeding three months. To this purpose they must apply for a residency card as a family member of a citizen of the Union, through the Foreigners' Office.

Nationals of a country member of the EEA may access any job in Spain, both hired by third parties or as self-employed, without having to apply for a work permit, and they have the same rights as Spanish nationals.

Links of interest:

- [Immigration Portal](#)
- [Ministry of labour and Social Economy](#)

Looking for a job

Public Employment Services

The Spanish employment services, both of the state and autonomous communities, have a network of offices whose services can be accessed freely and without charge by all citizens.



Anyone over 16 can register with the public employment services by presenting their current identification document or passport, provided that they have a physical address.

Services provided: these services are job offers, occupational professional guidance and training, processing of unemployment benefits, information on job promotion measures, grants and capitalisation, self-employment, etc.

Links of interest:

- EURES network
- National Public Employment Service (SEPE)
- National Employment System Portal
- Employment Services of the Autonomous Communities
- [EURES Network](#)
- [Public employment service Estatal \(SEPE\)](#)
- [The national employment System](#)
- [Employment services in the autonomous communities](#)

EURES (European Employment Services)

EURES is a cooperation network established between the European Commission, the national Employment Services of the member States, Norway, Switzerland, Liechtenstein and Iceland, and in the case of border areas, the organisations representing the social spokespersons.

Website where you can check information on mobility and a database on job offers, as well as the possibility to upload a CV.

- [EURES Europe job search](#)

Placement agencies, selection companies and temporary job companies

Placement agencies are another intermediary in the Spanish job market. The national and autonomous community employment services will provide information on these agencies and the services they offer for you.

There are also companies specialising in human resource selection, that usually use ads in companies and on social media to find candidates.

Temporary work companies always include the acronym ETT, they hire the workers directly and then they transfer them to the user company through their assignment contract. They are especially useful when looking for temporary jobs.

Authorised employment agencies

It is essential to be able to speak Spanish to work in Spain.

The Spanish employment services, of both state and autonomous communities, have a network of offices whose services can be accessed by all citizens. It is increasingly common for companies to resort to Internet to publish their job offers.

Companies introduce themselves on their websites, and they usually include a human resources section.

Use all available resources (acquaintances, family members, newspapers, information centres, professional associations...) as well as the EURES network and a good dose of imagination and creativity.



Associations, Professional Associations and Unions

Other sources of information are professional associations and unions. Some professions in Spain have a Professional Association where one must be registered in order to practise the profession.

Links of interest:

- [National Employment System](#)
- [Placement agencies](#)

Employment through the Internet

- [monster](#)
- [infojobs](#)
- [trabajos](#)
- [infoempleo](#)
- [tea cegos seleccion](#)
- [laboris](#)
- [empleo.com](#)
- [acciontrabajo](#)
- [trabajo.org](#)
- [oficinaempleo.com](#)

Specialised job offers and/or by sectors

- [Executives and qualified professionals](#)
- [turijobs](#)
- [turiempleo](#)
- [infoempleo](#)
- [poraqui](#)
- [Teachers and educators](#)
- [novanotio](#)
- [tecnijobs](#)
- [Jobs for people with disabilities](#)
- [Universitary students and recent graduates](#)
- [Secretarial staff](#)

Temporary employment agencies

- [Access](#)
- [Adecco](#)
- [Alta Gestión](#)
- [Cepede](#)
- [Faster](#)
- [Randstad](#)

Job offers in the media

All Spanish newspapers include a daily job offers section, although it is the Sunday edition where the most job offers are published. Public television stations also have specific employment programs; the program “Aquí hay trabajo”, which is aired from Monday to Friday on La 2 (RTVE), is popular.



Newspaper websites usually have a link called “work with us”, “jobs” or “careers”.

The newspapers in German, English or French that are published in the main Spanish tourism areas also include a list of jobs being offered.

Links of interest:

- [El Mundo](#)
- [El País](#)
- [ABC](#)
- [Infoempleo](#)
- [La Razón](#)
- [El Periódico](#)
- [La Vanguardia](#)
- [Servijobs](#)
- [La Estrella Digital](#)
- [Sur in English](#)
- [El Heraldo de Aragón](#)
- [RTVE program "Aquí hay trabajo"](#)

Self-candidacy and personal contacts

Another possible way is spontaneous candidacy. In this case, the candidate addresses the company with a cover letter and their CV, even if at that time there is no specific ongoing selection process.

Personal contacts and relationships are also very useful when seeking employment. If you have friends or family in Spain, it would be good to tell them that you are looking for a job, because many vacancies are filled through this type of contacts and references.

CV and cover letter

Some companies provide an application form for their positions, although the most widely-used practise is to submit the CV and a cover letter to the company. This can be done as a reply to an offer or an ad in the media, and also by just submitting a spontaneous candidacy.

Cover letter: This is not a simple formality, it is your presentation card and the company's first impression of you. Unless otherwise stated, the letter and CV should be written in Spanish. Typed on DIN A-4 format and on a single page. Concise, using formal language. The letter should make direct reference to the position being applied to. Avoid standard letters.

Curriculum Vitae: It must be structured and be clear and concise. A maximum of two pages, on DIN A-4 format, is recommended. A photograph is not necessary, although for some positions it might be convenient. Diplomas and certificates should not be attached, unless specifically required, as they will be provided during the interview.

Templates and tips for producing CVs can be found on most websites of Spain's public employment services.

- [Employment Services of the Autonomous Communities](#)

Labour conditions

In Spain the minimum age to work is 16, although an authorisation from the parents or guardians is necessary until the worker turns 18, unless the person is legally emancipated.



However, it is forbidden for persons under 18 to perform night jobs, overtime hours or other activities that the Government declares may be unhealthy, arduous, damaging or harmful. Exceptionally, and prior written authorisation from the labour authorities, persons under 16 may participate in public shows provided that it does not entail a hazard to their health or to their education.

A job contract may be formalised in writing or verbally; any contract may be made as full-time or part-time (except training contracts). They may be for an indefinite period (which are called “permanent contracts”) or for a defined period (which are called “temporary contracts”). It is understood that there is a work contract when there is an agreement between the employer and the worker by which services are provided under the former’s supervision and organisation, in exchange for an economic compensation.

A work contract may be indefinite (permanent) or have a specific duration (temporary).

If it does not expressly specify otherwise in the contract, it is considered to be indefinite and full-time.

An employer can be any individual over 18 years-old who has full legal capacity and hires a worker. Persons over 18 years-old, persons under 18 and 16 or older who are legally emancipated or with the consent of their parents or guardians, and foreigners, according to legislation applicable to them, all have legal capacity for hiring.

There are four main formats of work contracts: indefinite, temporary, training and apprenticeship, and internships. Other forms of providing salary work are part-time, in common and group and remote contract.

There are a series of incentives for hiring, especially for indefinite contracts.

Self-employed work

In Spain a self-employed worker (not to be confused with an individual employer) is an individual who habitually, personally and directly performs an economic activity for profit, not subject to a work contract, even though they occasionally may use the paid services of other people. The condition as self-employed worker is assumed if one holds ownership of an establishment open to the public as owner, usufructuary, tenant or under other similar concepts. A self-employed worker is also a person who works remotely and has clients, performs a paid activity and issues formal invoices for their activities, as they are holders of a single-person company. The self-employed person is responsible for signing up, changing and signing off from the Social Security; their responsibility is unlimited with all of their present and future assets.

Payment

Salary is considered to be the entirety of the financial amounts received by workers, in cash or in kind, with no discrimination due to sex, for the professional provision of their labour services under third-party hire, whether the effective work is paid in cash or in any form, or the periods of rest computable as work periods. The minimum interprofessional wage (SMI) establishes the minimum amount that the worker will receive for a legal workday. Its value is established every year by Royal Decree.

Working hours

The duration of the work day is established in the work contract. The signed duration must comply with the limit established in the Collective Negotiation Agreement and, in any case, a maximum limit of 40 hours per week, calculated annually. A worker may not have a workday exceeding 9 hours, unless by Collective Negotiation Agreement or by agreement between the company and workers’ representatives it is agreed otherwise and the periods of rest are observed.



Leave

Annual vacation periods may be agreed individually or collectively, and their annual duration may not be less than 30 days, with Saturdays and Sundays included. There are also 12 national bank holidays and two local bank holidays per year. Workers are also entitled to 15 days for marriage, and 16 continuous weeks in the event of maternity, adoption or fostering (two weeks more for each child after the second in the event of birth, adoption or multiple fostering). The father may enjoy part of this period if both parents work. Also, in the case of birth of a child, adoption or fostering, workers will be entitled to the suspension of the contract for parenting for thirteen continuous days, extendible by two more days for each child after the second one in the case of birth, adoption or multiple fostering.

Links of interest

- [Labour guide](#)
- [Salaries](#)
- [Collective Negotiation Agreements](#)

Social Security

Spain's Social Security is the country's main social protection system. Its purpose is to guarantee specific and individualised social benefits, to face certain contingencies that may place the person (and their dependants) in a situation of need. The essential regulation of the Social Security can be found in Article 41 of the Spanish Constitution and in the Consolidated Text of the General Law on Social Security (Royal Legislative Decree 8/2015).

The Social Security comprises a contributory mode, for working persons and funding dependent on the contributions made by the persons enrolled, and a non-contributory mode, universal and funded by contributions from the National General Budget.

Provided that certain requirements are met, it guarantees for Spanish citizens and, where applicable, foreign residents in our country, a series of financial or assistance benefits to prevent, repair or overcome certain situations of misfortune or need such as illness, temporary incapacity or disability, retirement or death of a family member.

Community regulations on Social Security will apply to nationals of a Member State of the European Union or of the European Economic Area, who are employed or self-employed workers and who are or have been subject to legislation of one or several of said States, students, civil servants and stateless people or refugees residing in the territory of one of the member States, as well as to their family members and survivors. According to the Agreement between the European Union and Switzerland, free circulation of people also applies to Swiss nationals.

Unemployment benefits

Situation, documentation, forms

In Spain, workers who perform an activity hired by third-parties must be insured against job loss. The fees for this coverage are paid by companies and workers.

Contributory level benefits

All hired workers who have periods paid to the Social Security general regime exceeding 360 days and who lose their job partially or in full due to reasons beyond their control are entitled to receive them.

Assistance level benefits and allowances



Workers who are not entitled to contributory benefits or who have used them up may apply for an allowance or for assistance for unemployment, provided that they meet some of the conditions established for certain special groups (low income, family responsibilities, over 55, etc.)

Export of the unemployment benefit

If you are receiving unemployment benefits in your country or in any other EEA country and Switzerland, you can export them to Spain or other member state to look for a job for a maximum period of three months, in some cases extendible to another three, prior application.

Before leaving you will have to:

- a) have been available to the Public Employment Service of the country of origin for at least four weeks.
- b) request the U2 form and notify the actual date when you are leaving.

When you arrive in Spain you will need to register as a job seeker with the Public Employment Service that is assigned to you according to your address in Spain, within a period of seven days after the date when you left your country of origin. If you have worked in Spain, before leaving the country you should request from the National Public Employment Service form U1 that proves the periods that you paid into the system in our country, so that it can be taken into account when calculating possible benefits in another country of the European Economic Area.

Health care

The basic network of the public health system is organised through primary care offices called health centres, specialised care centres, and hospitals. Spain has reciprocal health care agreements with all of the countries of the European Union. Citizens from these countries will have to request the European Health Card in their country in order to access the public medical services in Spain.

In the public social security system if a specific treatment is required or the primary care physician refers the patient to the pertinent specialist. The pharmacy benefit provides medication to users at a lower cost, with a financial contribution by the user that varies depending on their personal situation.

All workers, self-employed and third-party hired, must sign up and pay monthly fees to the Social Security. Private insurance can also be contracted through a private medical company. In this case the treatment expenses are not reimbursed, except in certain emergency cases.

In Spain, people who are insured with the Social Security system or are beneficiaries are entitled to health protection and public health care through the National Healthcare System.

The National Healthcare System is organised in two levels of care:

Primary care provides the population with a series of basic services from any place of residence. The main healthcare organisations are the health centres (CAP: Primary Care Centre, CS: Health centre, Medical office), with multi-discipline teams comprised of primary care physicians, paediatricians, nursing staff and administrative staff, and there may also be social workers, midwives and physiotherapists.

Specialised care is provided at specialisation centres and hospitals, both outpatient and inpatient.

The public health services are accessed using the Individual Health Card (TSI) issued by each Health Service. This is the document that identifies each citizen as a user for the entire National Health System. Each Autonomous Community has a Health Service, which is the administrative and management structure that comprises all of the centres, services and establishments of the community, regional governments, town halls and any other intracommunity territorial administrations.



It contains the Spanish healthcare services and benefits, which according to law are the responsibility of the public authorities.

Management of public healthcare is transferred to the Autonomous Communities.

Taxes

One of the main issues to be resolved after you arrive in Spain is to sign up with the National Tax Administration Agency. Remember to bring with you the necessary tax documentation from your country of origin, as well as proof of having processed all of the outstanding tax matters before your departure. When you arrive, remember that you may have to open a bank account and that you will need to have enough money set back to pay your taxes.

The various Spanish Public Administrations are in charge of collecting tax income. Taxes are the main contributions and they are mandatory, without any individualised compensation. Within taxes, we have the following direct taxes: Income Tax (IRPF); Non-Resident Income Tax (IRNR); Wealth Tax; Companies Tax and Inheritance and Donations Tax, which apply to economic capability, that is, wealth. Indirect taxes: Value Added Tax (IVA) and Tax on Conveyances and Documented Acts (ITP and AJD), which apply to the use of that wealth, which everyone has to pay in the same amount when they make the same purchase, whether they earn or have more or less money.

Income Tax is one of Spain's main taxes. It is applied progressively (higher income, higher taxes), and applies to the annual income of individuals with habitual residence in Spain.

It is considered that the taxpayer has their habitual residence in Spain:

- a) when they remain in Spain for longer than 183 days during a calendar year. Occasional absences are taken into account when determining this permanence period, unless the taxpayer proves that their tax residence is in another country.
- b) When the main nucleus or the base of their activities or economic interests are directly or indirectly located in Spain.
- c) It is presumed, unless proven otherwise, that the taxpayer's habitual residence is in Spanish territory, when according to the above criteria, their spouse, not legally separated, and the under-age children dependent on them, live habitually in Spain.

Foreign workers who have moved to Spain and as such acquire their tax residence in Spain, may choose to pay the Non-Resident Income Tax (IRNR), maintaining their status as taxpayers for the Individual Income Tax for the tax period in which the residence is changed, and during the following five years, fulfilling certain requirements.

Value Added Tax (IVA) is the most important indirect tax. It is applied on consumer goods and services performed by business owners and professionals. This tax has a different rate depending on the product.

In the Canary Islands the Indirect Canarian General Tax (IGIC) is applied instead, and in Ceuta and Melilla, the Tax on Production, Services and Imports (IPSI).

In addition to these nation-wide taxes, there are also other indirect taxes that are local and of the autonomous community. These are some of them:

Property Tax (IBI) which must be paid just for owning a home.

Tax on Mechanical Traction Vehicles (IVTM) or Circulation Tax, which is paid just for owning a vehicle



(car, motorbike, caravan) that drives in Spain.

Economic Activities Tax, that is paid in order to perform an economic activity, that is, for owning a company.

To avoid double taxation and to promote foreign investments (foreign in Spain or with Spanish capital abroad) there are Tax Treaties (CDI)

Education

The Spanish educational system is characterized by:

Decentralisation: the competences on education are divided between the National General Administration (Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports) and the Administrations of the autonomous communities (Councils or Departments of Education):

The central educational administration implements the Government's general guidelines on educational policy and regulates the basic elements or aspects of the system.

The autonomous community educational administrations develop the national regulations and have executive-administrative competences to manage the educational system in their own territories.

Educational, organisational and management autonomy over the resources of the educational centres.

Participation by the educational community in the organisation, government, operation and evaluation of the centres.

Educational system structure

There are five main stages in the Spanish educational system: pre-school, primary, secondary, higher-secondary and higher education.

Basic education is free and mandatory.

Education in Spain is regulated by the Ministry of Education, but the autonomous community governments are in charge of managing and funding the educational centres in their territory.

Pre-school is up to 6 years-old. Although it is not a compulsory education stage, the second cycle is free in all centres operated with public funds (public centres and charter schools). Public centres that teach this stage are called Escuelas Infantiles (EI) and those that also offer Primary Education are called Colegios de Educación Infantil y Primaria (CEIP).

Basic education is compulsory and free in centres operated with public funds. It includes ten years of schooling and is divided into two stages:

Primary education, taught at Primary Education Centres (CEP). This comprises six school years, which are usually from 6 to 12 years-old.

Compulsory Secondary Education (ESO), that is studied at Secondary Education Centres (IES), from 12 to 16 years-old. At the end of this stage students receive a first official certification, the diploma of Graduate in Compulsory Secondary Education, that allows them access to Higher Secondary Education or to the workforce.

Higher Secondary Education is also taught in the Secondary Education Centres. It lasts for two school years, generally between 16 and 18 years-old. It offers students two possibilities, Baccalaureate (general branch) and intermediate level Vocational Training CFGM (professional branch). The latter is also offered at Integrated Vocational Training Centres and at national reference Centres.



Current reforms have introduced significant modifications to Vocational Training. Among the reforms on Vocational Training teaching is the creation of Basic Vocational Training cycles, for students between 15 and 17 years-old, among other access requirements, and the development by the educational administrations of Dual Vocational Training within the scope of the educational system.

Higher Education comprises university studies and professional studies. University studies are taught in Universities and Higher-Level Vocational Training (CFGS) is taught in the same centres as the Intermediate Level (IES).

Adult Education (EPA) covers different education offered by the educational, labour and local Administrations and is taught in varied centres. In-person instruction that leads to official diplomas is offered in ordinary education centres or centres specific for adults. EPA is aimed for people over 18 and, exceptionally, for over 16-year-olds who work and cannot attend the educational centre in ordinary hours, or who are high-performance sports athletes.

In addition to this instruction, the Spanish education system offers special regime education:

Languages, taught at the Official Schools of Languages EOI. Persons 16 or older can register.

Art Studies, that include elementary Music and Dance studies, professional Art Studies and Higher Art Studies. These are taught in different specific centres, in accordance with each type and level of teaching.

Sports Studies, organised in intermediate and higher training cycles and taught in the same institutions as Professional Training.

Links of interest

- [WordStudent](#)
- [Educaweb](#)
- [Eurydice](#)
- [Universities](#)
- [Learn english \(Instituto Cervantes\)](#)
- [Real Academia Española de la Lengua](#)
- [Akash studies](#)

Certificates and diplomas

Diploma validation

Diploma validation is a formality that leads to the authorisation to practise a profession in the destination country. To obtain this validation, the profession must be regulated and legally subject to the possession of certain professional qualifications, officially recognised. [Further information](#).

There is a community directive (Directive 2005/36/CE) that regulates the validation of professional qualifications. Each country must have a point of contact and an agency in charge of providing validation of the professional qualifications between the various countries of the European Union.

The Ministry of Education, through the Sub-directorate General of Diplomas and Validation of Qualifications, is the coordinating agency in Spain regarding application of the directive on validation of diplomas:

NARIC Centre SPAIN Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports

C/ Torrelaguna, 58-2ª planta 28027 Madrid



Tel.: + 34 91 506 55 93

Email: naric@mecd.es

The request for validation will be submitted to the corresponding agency of the national administration, in the case of university diplomas, or of the autonomous community where the profession is to be practised, in the case of non-university diplomas.

The various professions and agencies from which professional recognition are to be requested are contained in Annex X of Royal Decree 18377/2008, that includes directive 2005/36/CE in the Spanish legal framework.

The validation provides the foreign diploma, from the date when it is granted and the corresponding credentials are issued, with the same effects as the Spanish diploma or academic degree that is being certified, in the entire Spanish territory, in accordance with current regulations.

Certification is the official recognition of the validity, to academic purposes, of higher studies obtained abroad, whether they were completed or not with a diploma, regarding partial Spanish university studies that would allow the student to continue their education in a Spanish university.

Links of interest

- [Formalities and services, scholarships, grants, allowances and awards that the Ministry offers in the Education Department](#)
- [Processing of diplomas](#)

European embassies in Spain

- [Germany](#)
- [Austria](#)
- [Belgium](#)
- [Bulgaria](#)
- [Cyprus](#)
- [Denmark](#)
- [Eslovenia](#)
- [Eslovakia](#)
- [Estonia](#)
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- [Ireland](#)
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- [Latvia](#)
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- [Malta](#)
- [Norway](#)
- [Netherlands](#)
- [Portugal](#)
- [Poland](#)



- [United Kingdom](#)
- [Czech Republic](#)
- [Romanía](#)
- [Sweden](#)
- [Euroinfo. European Commision Representation in Spain](#)

Don't forget

Before travelling to Spain in search of a job or for a job interview, there are certain documents you should not forget:

Current EU/EEA passport or identification document.

Translated curriculum vitae, cover letters and letters of reference from previous jobs, photocopy of your academic diplomas and courses. You should have your CV and cover letter in some form of electronic format so that you can update and/or amend them.

European Health Card issued by the Social Security of your country (Form E-100)

Form recording payments made to Social Security (U1 or E301), where applicable.

Form for export of benefits (U2 or E-303), where applicable.

Photocopy of your birth certificate and family certificate.

Certified translation of your diploma, if any.

Other permits and licenses you deem necessary, for example, driver's license.

Before accepting a job, check that:

You understand the terms and conditions of the work contract. It is important to make sure who will cover your expenses for travel and accommodation: you or the employer.

You are familiar with the payment method and frequency of your salary.

You have accommodation in Spain.

You have proper healthcare coverage.

You have enough money to tide you over until you receive your first salary or to return home, if necessary.

Before returning it is important that you:

Request in your employment office the U1 or E-301 form that certifies your payments to the Social Security in Spain, for future benefits that you may be entitled to.

Check that you have all of the personal documentation proving your work history in Spain (work contract, payroll slips, etc.).

Resolve your tax situation with the Tax Agency.