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**Spain** ([Template:IPAc-en](/wiki/Template:IPAc-en); [Template:Lang-es](/wiki/Template:Lang-es) [Template:IPA-es](/wiki/Template:IPA-es)), officially the **Kingdom of Spain** ([Template:Lang-es](/wiki/Template:Lang-es)),[Template:EfnTemplate:Efn](/wiki/Template:Efn) is a [sovereign state](/wiki/Sovereign_state) largely located on the [Iberian Peninsula](/wiki/Iberian_Peninsula) in [southwestern Europe](/wiki/Southern_Europe), with [archipelagos](/wiki/Archipelago) in the [Atlantic Ocean](/wiki/Atlantic_Ocean) and [Mediterranean Sea](/wiki/Mediterranean_Sea), and several small territories on and near the [North African](/wiki/North_Africa) coast. Its [Mainland](/wiki/Peninsular_Spain) is bordered to the south and east by the Mediterranean Sea except for a small land boundary with [Gibraltar](/wiki/Gibraltar); to the north and northeast by [France](/wiki/France), [Andorra](/wiki/Andorra), and the [Bay of Biscay](/wiki/Bay_of_Biscay); and to the west and northwest by [Portugal](/wiki/Portugal) and the Atlantic Ocean. Along with France and [Morocco](/wiki/Morocco), it is one of only three countries to have both Atlantic and Mediterranean coastlines. Extending to [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert), the [Portugal–Spain border](/wiki/Portugal–Spain_border) is the [longest uninterrupted border](/wiki/List_of_countries_and_territories_by_land_borders) within the [European Union](/wiki/European_Union).

Spanish territory includes two archipelagos: the [Balearic Islands](/wiki/Balearic_Islands), in the Mediterranean Sea, and the [Canary Islands](/wiki/Canary_Islands), in the Atlantic Ocean off the African coast. It also includes two major [exclaves](/wiki/Exclaves), [Ceuta](/wiki/Ceuta) and [Melilla](/wiki/Melilla), in continental North Africa; and the islands and [*peñones*](/wiki/Peñón) (rocks) of [Alborán](/wiki/Isla_de_Alborán), [Alhucemas](/wiki/Peñón_de_Alhucemas), [Chafarinas](/wiki/Chafarinas_Islands) and [Vélez de la Gomera](/wiki/Peñón_de_Vélez_de_la_Gomera). With an area of [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert), Spain is the largest country in Southern Europe, the second largest country in Western Europe and the European Union, and the [fourth largest country in the European continent.](/wiki/Area_and_population_of_European_countries). By population, Spain is the sixth largest in Europe and the fifth in the European Union.

[Modern humans](/wiki/Anatomically_modern_humans) first arrived in the Iberian Peninsula around 35,000 years ago. [Iberian](/wiki/Iberians) cultures along with ancient [Phoenician](/wiki/Phoenicia), [Greek](/wiki/Ancient_Greece) and [Carthaginian](/wiki/Carthaginian_Iberia) settlements developed on the peninsula until it came under Roman rule around 200 BCE, after which the region was named *Hispania*. In the Middle Ages, the area was conquered by [Germanic tribes](/wiki/Germanic_tribes) and later by the [Moors](/wiki/Moors). Spain emerged as a unified country in the 15th century, following the marriage of the [Catholic Monarchs](/wiki/Catholic_Monarchs) and the completion of the centuries-long reconquest, or [*Reconquista*](/wiki/Reconquista), of the peninsula from the Moors in 1492. In the early modern period, Spain became one of history's first [global colonial empires](/wiki/List_of_largest_empires), leaving a vast cultural and linguistic legacy that includes over 500 million [Spanish speakers](/wiki/Hispanophone), making Spanish the world's [second most spoken first language](/wiki/List_of_languages_by_number_of_native_speakers), after [Chinese](/wiki/Chinese_language) and before [English](/wiki/English_language).

Spain is a [democracy](/wiki/Democracy) organised in the form of a parliamentary government under a constitutional [monarchy](/wiki/Monarchy_of_Spain). It is a [middle power](/wiki/Middle_power) and a [developed country](/wiki/Developed_country) with the world's [fourteenth largest economy](/wiki/List_of_countries_by_GDP_(nominal)) by [nominal GDP](/wiki/Nominal_GDP) and [sixteenth largest](/wiki/List_of_countries_by_GDP_(PPP)) by [purchasing power parity](/wiki/Purchasing_power_parity). It is a member of the [United Nations](/wiki/United_Nations) (UN), the [European Union](/wiki/European_Union) (EU), the [Council of Europe](/wiki/Council_of_Europe) (CoE), the [Organization of Ibero-American States](/wiki/Organization_of_Ibero-American_States) (OEI), the [North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)](/wiki/NATO), the [Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development](/wiki/Organisation_for_Economic_Co-operation_and_Development) (OECD), the [World Trade Organization](/wiki/World_Trade_Organization) (WTO) and many other international organisations.

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## Etymology[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=1)]

The origins of the Roman name [*Hispania*](/wiki/Hispania), from which the modern name *España* was derived, are uncertain due to inadequate evidence. Down the centuries there have been a number of accounts and hypotheses: [thumb|left|upright|](/wiki/File:Dama_de_Elche_(M.A.N._Madrid)_01.jpg)[Lady of Elche](/wiki/Lady_of_Elche)

The [Renaissance](/wiki/Renaissance) scholar [Antonio de Nebrija](/wiki/Antonio_de_Nebrija) proposed that the word *Hispania* evolved from the [Iberian](/wiki/Iberian_language) word [*Hispalis*](/wiki/Hispalis), meaning "city of the western world".

Jesús Luis Cunchillos argues that the root of the term *span* is the [Phoenician](/wiki/Phoenician_language) word *spy*, meaning "to forge metals". Therefore, *i-spn-ya* would mean "the land where metals are forged".[[1]](#cite_note-1) It may be a derivation of the Phoenician *I-Shpania*, meaning "island of rabbits", "land of rabbits" or "edge", a reference to Spain's location at the end of the Mediterranean; Roman coins struck in the region from the reign of [Hadrian](/wiki/Hadrian) show a female figure with a [rabbit](/wiki/Rabbit) at her feet,<ref name=burke>[Template:Cite book](/wiki/Template:Cite_book)</ref> and [Strabo](/wiki/Strabo) called it the "land of the rabbits".[[2]](#cite_note-2) *Hispania* may derive from the poetic use of the term *Hesperia*, reflecting the [Greek](/wiki/Ancient_Greece) perception of [Italy](/wiki/Italy) as a "western land" or "land of the setting sun" (*Hesperia*, *Ἑσπερία* in [Greek](/wiki/Greek_language)) and Spain, being still further west, as *Hesperia ultima*.<ref name=anthon>[Template:Cite book](/wiki/Template:Cite_book)</ref>

There is the claim that "Hispania" derives from the [Basque](/wiki/Basque_language) word *Ezpanna* meaning "edge" or "border", another reference to the fact that the Iberian Peninsula constitutes the southwest corner of the European continent.[[3]](#cite_note-3) Two 15th-century Spanish Jewish scholars, [Don Isaac Abrabanel](/wiki/Don_Isaac_Abrabanel) and [Solomon ibn Verga](/wiki/Solomon_ibn_Verga), gave an explanation now considered folkloric. Both men wrote in two different published works that the first Jews to reach Spain were brought by ship by Phiros who was confederate with the king of Babylon when he laid siege to Jerusalem. This man was a [Grecian](/wiki/Greeks) by birth, but who had been given a kingdom in Spain. He became related by marriage to Espan, the nephew of king Heracles, who also ruled over a kingdom in Spain. Heracles later renounced his throne in preference for his native Greece, leaving his kingdom to his nephew, Espan, from whom the country of *España* (Spain) took its name. Based upon their testimonies, this eponym would have already been in use in Spain by c. 350 BCE.[[4]](#cite_note-4)

## History[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=2)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|Reproduction of](/wiki/File:AltamiraBison.jpg) [Altamira Cave](/wiki/Altamira_Cave) paintings,[[5]](#cite_note-5) in [Cantabria](/wiki/Cantabria). Iberia enters written records as a land populated largely by the [Iberians](/wiki/Iberians), [Basques](/wiki/Basques) and [Celts](/wiki/Celts). After an [arduous conquest](/wiki/Roman_conquest_of_Hispania), the peninsula came under the rule of the [Roman Empire](/wiki/Roman_Empire). During the early Middle Ages it came under Germanic rule but later, much of it was conquered by Moorish invaders from North Africa. In a process that took centuries, the small Christian kingdoms in the north gradually regained control of the peninsula. The last Moorish kingdom fell in the same year Columbus reached the Americas. A global empire began which saw Spain become the strongest kingdom in Europe, the leading world power for a century and a half, and the largest overseas empire for three centuries.

Continued wars and other problems eventually led to a diminished status. The Napoleonic invasions of Spain led to chaos, triggering independence movements that tore apart most of the empire and left the country politically unstable. Prior to the Second World War, Spain suffered a devastating civil war and came under the rule of an authoritarian government, which oversaw a period of stagnation that was followed by a surge in the growth of the economy. Eventually democracy was peacefully restored in the form of a parliamentary constitutional monarchy. Spain joined the European Union, experiencing a cultural renaissance and steady economic growth.

### Prehistory and pre-Roman peoples[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=3)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|](/wiki/File:2014_Castro_de_Santa_Trega._Galiza-2.jpg)[Celtic](/wiki/Celts) [castro](/wiki/Castro_culture) in [A Guarda](/wiki/A_Guarda), [Galicia](/wiki/Galicia,_Spain). Archaeological research at [Atapuerca](/wiki/Archaeological_Site_of_Atapuerca) indicates the Iberian Peninsula was populated by [hominids](/wiki/Hominid) 1.2 million years ago.[[6]](#cite_note-6) In [Atapuerca](/wiki/Atapuerca_Mountains) fossils have been found of the earliest known [hominins](/wiki/Hominins) in [Europe](/wiki/Europe), the [Homo antecessor](/wiki/Homo_antecessor). Modern humans first arrived in Iberia, from the north on foot, about 35,000 years ago.[[7]](#cite_note-7)[Template:Failed verification](/wiki/Template:Failed_verification) The best known artifacts of these prehistoric human settlements are the famous paintings in the [Altamira cave](/wiki/Altamira_(cave)) of Cantabria in northern Iberia, which were created from 35,600 to 13,500 [BCE](/wiki/Before_Common_Era) by [Cro-Magnon](/wiki/Cro-Magnon).[[5]](#cite_note-5)[[8]](#cite_note-8) Archaeological and genetic evidence suggests that the Iberian Peninsula acted as one of several major refugia from which northern Europe was repopulated following the end of the [last ice age](/wiki/Quaternary_glaciation).

The largest groups inhabiting the Iberian Peninsula before the Roman conquest were the [Iberians](/wiki/Iberians) and the [Celts](/wiki/Celts). The Iberians inhabited the Mediterranean side of the peninsula, from the northeast to the southeast. The Celts inhabited much of the inner and Atlantic sides of the peninsula, from the northwest to the southwest. [Basques](/wiki/Basque_people) occupied the western area of the Pyrenees mountain range and adjacent areas, the [Tartessians](/wiki/Tartessos) were in the southwest and the [Lusitanians](/wiki/Lusitanians) and [Vettones](/wiki/Vettones) occupied areas in the central west. A number of trading settlements of [Phoenicians](/wiki/Phoenicia), [Greeks](/wiki/Greek_colonies) and [Carthaginians](/wiki/Carthaginians) developed on the Mediterranean coast.

### Roman Empire and the Gothic Kingdom[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=4)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|](/wiki/File:Teatro_Romano_de_M%C3%A9rida_(Badajoz,_Espa%C3%B1a)_02.jpg)[Roman Theatre](/wiki/Roman_Theatre_(Mérida)), [Mérida](/wiki/Mérida,_Spain) During the [Second Punic War](/wiki/Second_Punic_War), an expanding [Roman Republic](/wiki/Roman_Republic) captured Carthaginian trading colonies along the Mediterranean coast from roughly 210 to 205 BCE. It took the Romans nearly two centuries to complete the conquest of the Iberian Peninsula, though they had control of it for over six centuries. Roman rule was bound together by law, language, and the [Roman road](/wiki/Roman_road).[[9]](#cite_note-9) The cultures of the Celtic and Iberian populations were gradually [Romanised](/wiki/Romanisation_(cultural)) (Latinised) at differing rates in different parts of [Hispania](/wiki/Hispania_Baetica). Local leaders were admitted into the Roman aristocratic class.[Template:Efn](/wiki/Template:Efn)[[10]](#cite_note-10) Hispania served as a granary for the Roman market, and its harbours exported [gold](/wiki/Gold), [wool](/wiki/Wool), [olive oil](/wiki/Olive_oil), and [wine](/wiki/Wine). Agricultural production increased with the introduction of irrigation projects, some of which remain in use. Emperors [Hadrian](/wiki/Hadrian), [Trajan](/wiki/Trajan), [Theodosius I](/wiki/Theodosius_I), and the philosopher [Seneca](/wiki/Seneca_the_Younger) were born in Hispania.[Template:Efn](/wiki/Template:Efn) [Christianity](/wiki/Christianity) was introduced into Hispania in the 1st century CE and it became popular in the cities in the 2nd century CE.[[10]](#cite_note-10) Most of Spain's present languages and religion, and the basis of its laws, originate from this period.[[9]](#cite_note-9)[thumb|upright|](/wiki/File:Alcazar_of_Toledo_-_Toledo,_Spain_-_Dec_2006.jpg)[Toledo](/wiki/Toledo,_Spain), capital of the [Visigothic Kingdom](/wiki/Visigothic_Kingdom).

The weakening of the Western Roman Empire's jurisdiction in Hispania began in 409, when the [Germanic](/wiki/Germanic_peoples) [Suebi](/wiki/Suebi) and [Vandals](/wiki/Vandals), together with the [Sarmatian](/wiki/Sarmatian) [Alans](/wiki/Alans), crossed the [Rhine](/wiki/Rhine) and ravaged [Gaul](/wiki/Gaul) until the [Visigoths](/wiki/Visigoths) drove them into Iberia that same year. The Suebi established a kingdom in what is today modern [Galicia](/wiki/Galicia_(Spain)) and northern [Portugal](/wiki/Portugal). As the western empire disintegrated, the social and economic base became greatly simplified: but even in modified form, the successor regimes maintained many of the institutions and laws of the late empire, including Christianity.

The Alans' allies, the [Hasdingi](/wiki/Hasdingi) Vandals, established a kingdom in [Gallaecia](/wiki/Gallaecia), too, occupying largely the same region but extending farther south to the [Douro](/wiki/Douro) river. The [Silingi](/wiki/Silingi) Vandals occupied the region that still bears a form of their name—*Vandalusia*, modern [Andalusia](/wiki/Andalusia), in Spain. The [Byzantines](/wiki/Byzantine) established an enclave, [Spania](/wiki/Spania), in the south, with the intention of reviving the Roman empire throughout Iberia. Eventually, however, Hispania was reunited under [Visigothic rule](/wiki/Visigothic_Kingdom).

[Isidore of Seville](/wiki/Isidore_of_Seville), [archbishop](/wiki/Archbishop) of [Seville](/wiki/Seville), was an influential philosopher and was much studied in the [Middle Ages](/wiki/Middle_Ages) in [Europe](/wiki/Europe). Also, his theories were vital to the conversion of the [Visigothic Kingdom](/wiki/Visigothic_Kingdom) to a Catholic one, in the [Councils of Toledo](/wiki/Councils_of_Toledo). This [Gothic](/wiki/Goths) kingdom was the first Christian kingdom ruling in the [Iberian Peninsula](/wiki/Iberian_Peninsula), and in the [Reconquista](/wiki/Reconquista) it was the referent for the different kingdoms fighting against the Muslim rule.

### Middle Ages: Muslim invasion and Reconquista[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=5)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|The death of the](/wiki/File:Mort_de_Roland.jpg) [Frankish](/wiki/Franks) leader [Roland](/wiki/Roland) defeated by a [Basque](/wiki/Basque_people) and [Muslim](/wiki/Islam)-[Muladi](/wiki/Muladi) ([Banu Qasi](/wiki/Banu_Qasi)) alliance at the [Battle of Roncevaux Pass (778)](/wiki/Battle_of_Roncevaux_Pass_(778)) originated the [Kingdom of Navarre](/wiki/Kingdom_of_Navarre) led by [Íñigo Arista](/wiki/Íñigo_Arista_of_Pamplona).

In the 8th century, nearly all of the [Iberian Peninsula](/wiki/Iberian_Peninsula) was [conquered](/wiki/Umayyad_conquest_of_Hispania) (711–718) by largely [Moorish](/wiki/Moorish) [Muslim](/wiki/Muslim) armies from North Africa. These conquests were part of the expansion of the [Umayyad](/wiki/Umayyad) [Caliphate](/wiki/Caliphate). Only a small area in the mountainous north-west of the peninsula managed to resist the initial invasion.

Under [Islamic law](/wiki/Sharia), Christians and [Jews](/wiki/Jews) were given the subordinate status of [dhimmi](/wiki/Dhimmi). This status permitted Christians and Jews to practice their religions as [*People of the Book*](/wiki/People_of_the_Book) but they were required to pay a special tax and had legal and social rights inferior to those of Muslims.[[11]](#cite_note-11)[[12]](#cite_note-12) Conversion to [Islam](/wiki/Islam) proceeded at an increasing pace. The [*muladíes*](/wiki/Muladi) (Muslims of ethnic [Iberian](/wiki/Iberian_Peninsula) origin) are believed to have comprised the majority of the population of Al-Andalus by the end of the 10th century.[[13]](#cite_note-13)[[14]](#cite_note-14) The Muslim community in the Iberian Peninsula was itself diverse and beset by social tensions. The [Berber people](/wiki/Berber_people) of North Africa, who had provided the bulk of the invading armies, [clashed with the Arab leadership](/wiki/Berber_Revolt) from the [Middle East](/wiki/Middle_East).[Template:Efn](/wiki/Template:Efn) Over time, large Moorish populations became established, especially in the [Guadalquivir River](/wiki/Guadalquivir_River) valley, the coastal plain of [Valencia](/wiki/Valencian_Community), the [Ebro River](/wiki/Ebro_River) valley and (towards the end of this period) in the mountainous region of [Granada](/wiki/Granada).[[14]](#cite_note-14)[thumb|Hypostyle hall in the](/wiki/File:Spain_Andalusia_Cordoba_BW_2015-10-27_13-54-14.jpg) [Great Mosque of Córdoba](/wiki/Cathedral–Mosque_of_Córdoba).

[Córdoba](/wiki/Córdoba,_Spain), the capital of the caliphate since [Abd-ar-Rahman III](/wiki/Abd-ar-Rahman_III), was the largest, richest and most sophisticated city in western Europe. Mediterranean trade and cultural exchange flourished. Muslims imported a rich intellectual tradition from the Middle East and North Africa. Muslim and Jewish scholars played an important part in reviving and expanding classical [Greek learning](/wiki/Greek_culture) in Western Europe. Some important philosophers at the time were [Averroes](/wiki/Averroes), [Ibn Arabi](/wiki/Ibn_Arabi) and [Maimonides](/wiki/Maimonides). The [Romanised](/wiki/Romanisation_(cultural)) cultures of the Iberian Peninsula interacted with Muslim and Jewish cultures in complex ways, giving the region a distinctive culture.[[14]](#cite_note-14) Outside the cities, where the vast majority lived, the land ownership system from Roman times remained largely intact as Muslim leaders rarely dispossessed landowners and the introduction of new crops and techniques led to an expansion of agriculture. [thumb|left|upright|](/wiki/File:Petronila_Ramon_Berenguer.jpg)[Petronilla of Aragon](/wiki/Petronilla_of_Aragon) and [Ramon Berenguer IV, Count of Barcelona](/wiki/Ramon_Berenguer_IV,_Count_of_Barcelona), dynastic union of the [Crown of Aragon](/wiki/Crown_of_Aragon).

In the 11th century, the Muslim holdings fractured into rival [Taifa](/wiki/Taifa) kingdoms, allowing the small Christian states the opportunity to greatly enlarge their territories.[[14]](#cite_note-14) The arrival from [North Africa](/wiki/North_Africa) of the Islamic ruling sects of the [Almoravids](/wiki/Almoravids) and the [Almohads](/wiki/Almohads) restored unity upon the Muslim holdings, with a stricter, less tolerant application of Islam, and saw a revival in Muslim fortunes. This re-united Islamic state experienced more than a century of successes that partially reversed Christian gains.

The [*Reconquista*](/wiki/Reconquista) (Reconquest) was the centuries-long period in which Christian rule was re-established over the Iberian Peninsula. The Reconquista is viewed as beginning with the [Battle of Covadonga](/wiki/Battle_of_Covadonga) won by [Don Pelayo](/wiki/Pelagius_of_Asturias) in 722 and was concurrent with the period of Muslim rule on the Iberian Peninsula. The Christian army's victory over Muslim forces led to the creation of the Christian [Kingdom of Asturias](/wiki/Kingdom_of_Asturias) along the northwestern coastal mountains. Shortly after, in 739, Muslim forces were driven from [Galicia](/wiki/Galicia_(Spain)), which was to eventually host one of medieval Europe's holiest sites, [Santiago de Compostela](/wiki/Santiago_de_Compostela) and was incorporated into the new Christian kingdom. The [Kingdom of León](/wiki/Kingdom_of_León) was the strongest Christian kingdom for centuries. In 1188 the first modern parliamentary session in Europe was held in [León](/wiki/León_(Spain)) ([Cortes of León](/wiki/Cortes_of_León)). The [Kingdom of Castile](/wiki/Kingdom_of_Castile), formed from Leonese territory, was its successor as strongest kingdom. The kings and the nobility fought for power and influence in this period. The example of the Roman emperors influenced the political objective of the Crown, while the nobles benefited from [feudalism](/wiki/Feudalism). [thumb|](/wiki/File:PanteónSanIsidoroLeón.jpg)[Basilica of San Isidoro](/wiki/Basilica_of_San_Isidoro), [León](/wiki/León_(Spain)).

Muslim armies had also moved north of the Pyrenees but they were defeated by Frankish forces at the [Battle of Poitiers](/wiki/Battle_of_Tours), [Frankia](/wiki/Francia). Later, [Frankish](/wiki/Franks) forces established [Christian counties](/wiki/Marca_Hispanica) on the southern side of the Pyrenees. These areas were to grow into the kingdoms of [Navarre](/wiki/Kingdom_of_Navarre) and [Aragon](/wiki/Kingdom_of_Aragon).[[15]](#cite_note-15) For several centuries, the fluctuating frontier between the Muslim and Christian controlled areas of Iberia was along the [Ebro](/wiki/Ebro) and [Douro](/wiki/Douro) valleys.

The break-up of [Al-Andalus](/wiki/Al-Andalus) into the competing taifa kingdoms helped the long embattled Iberian Christian kingdoms gain the initiative. The capture of the strategically central city of [Toledo](/wiki/Toledo,_Spain) in 1085 marked a significant shift in the balance of power in favour of the Christian kingdoms. Following a great Muslim resurgence in the 12th century, the great Moorish strongholds in the south fell to Christian Spain in the 13th century—Córdoba in 1236 and [Seville](/wiki/Seville) in 1248. The last Nasrid sultanate of [Granada](/wiki/Granada), a Muslim [tributary state](/wiki/Tributary_(political)) would finally surrender in 1492 to the Catholic monarchs [Queen Isabella I](/wiki/Isabella_I_of_Castile) of [Castile](/wiki/Crown_of_Castile)[[16]](#cite_note-16) and [King Ferdinand II](/wiki/Ferdinand_II_of_Aragon) of [Aragon](/wiki/Crown_of_Aragón).[[17]](#cite_note-17)[[18]](#cite_note-18)[[19]](#cite_note-19) From the mid 13th century, literature and philosophy started to flourish again in the Christian peninsular kingdoms, based on Roman and Gothic traditions. An important philosopher from this time is [Ramon Llull](/wiki/Ramon_Llull). [Abraham Cresques](/wiki/Abraham_Cresques) was a prominent Jewish cartographer. [Roman law](/wiki/Roman_law) and its institutions were the model for the legislators. The king [Alfonso X of Castile](/wiki/Alfonso_X_of_Castile) focused on strengthening this Roman and Gothic past, and also on linking the Iberian Christian kingdoms with the rest of medieval European Christendom. He worked for being elected emperor of the [Holy Roman Empire](/wiki/Holy_Roman_Empire) and published the [Siete Partidas](/wiki/Siete_Partidas) code. The [Toledo School of Translators](/wiki/Toledo_School_of_Translators) is the name that commonly describes the group of scholars who worked together in the city of Toledo during the 12th and 13th centuries, to translate many of the philosophical and scientific works from [Classical Arabic](/wiki/Classical_Arabic), [Ancient Greek](/wiki/Ancient_Greek), and [Ancient Hebrew](/wiki/Ancient_Hebrew). The [Islamic transmission of the classics](/wiki/Transmission_of_the_Classics) is the main [Islamic contributions to Medieval Europe](/wiki/Islamic_contributions_to_Medieval_Europe). The [Castilian](/wiki/Old_Spanish) language—more commonly known (especially later in history and at present) as "Spanish" after becoming the national language and [*lingua franca*](/wiki/Lingua_franca) of Spain—evolved from [Vulgar Latin](/wiki/Vulgar_Latin), as did other [Romance languages](/wiki/Romance_languages) of Spain like the [Catalan](/wiki/Old_Catalan), [Asturian](/wiki/Astur-Leonese) and [Galician](/wiki/Galician-Portuguese) languages, as well as other Romance languages in Latin Europe. [Basque](/wiki/Basque_language), the only non-Romance language in Spain, continued evolving from Early Basque to Medieval. The [Glosas Emilianenses](/wiki/Glosas_Emilianenses) founded in the [monasteries](/wiki/Monasteries_of_San_Millán_de_la_Cogolla) of [San Millán de la Cogolla](/wiki/San_Millán_de_la_Cogolla) contain the first written words in both Basque and Spanish, having the first become an influence in the formation of the second as an evolution of Latin.

[thumb|](/wiki/File:University_of_Salamanca_Fray_Luis_de_Leon.jpg)[Salamanca](/wiki/Salamanca) is one of the [UNESCO World Heritage Sites](/wiki/UNESCO_World_Heritage_Sites). The [School of Salamanca](/wiki/School_of_Salamanca) was the intellectual origin of modern [international law](/wiki/International_law). In the 13th and 14th centuries, the [Marinid](/wiki/Marinid) Muslim sect based in North Africa invaded and established some enclaves on the southern coast but failed in their attempt to re-establish Muslim rule in Iberia and were soon driven out. The 13th century also witnessed the [Crown of Aragon](/wiki/Crown_of_Aragon), centred in Spain's north east, expand its reach across islands in the Mediterranean, to [Sicily](/wiki/Sicily) and even Athens.[[20]](#cite_note-20) Around this time the universities of [Palencia](/wiki/University_of_Palencia) (1212/1263) and [Salamanca](/wiki/University_of_Salamanca) (1218/1254) were established. The [Black Death](/wiki/Black_Death) of 1348 and 1349 devastated Spain.[[21]](#cite_note-21)

### Imperial Spain[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=6)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main)

In 1469, the crowns of the Christian kingdoms of [Castile](/wiki/Crown_of_Castile) and Aragon were united by the [marriage](/wiki/Catholic_Monarchs) of [Isabella I of Castile](/wiki/Isabella_I_of_Castile) and [Ferdinand II of Aragon](/wiki/Ferdinand_II_of_Aragon). 1478 commenced the completion of the conquest of the [Canary Islands](/wiki/Canary_Islands) and in 1492, the combined forces of Castile and Aragon captured the Emirate of Granada, ending the last remnant of a [781-year presence](/wiki/Timeline_of_the_Muslim_presence_in_the_Iberian_peninsula) of Islamic rule in Iberia. That same year, [Spain's Jews](/wiki/Sephardi_Jews) were [ordered to convert](/wiki/Converso) to [Catholicism](/wiki/Catholicism) or face [expulsion](/wiki/Alhambra_Decree) from Spanish territories during the [Spanish Inquisition](/wiki/Spanish_Inquisition).[[22]](#cite_note-22)The [Treaty of Granada](/wiki/Treaty_of_Granada) guaranteed religious tolerance toward Muslims,[[23]](#cite_note-23) and although the tolerance was only partial, it was not until the beginning of the 17th century, following the [Revolt of the Alpujarras](/wiki/Morisco_rebellions_in_Granada), that Muslims were finally expelled.[Template:Efn](/wiki/Template:Efn)[[24]](#cite_note-24) The year 1492 also marked the arrival of [Christopher Columbus](/wiki/Christopher_Columbus) in the [New World](/wiki/New_World), during a voyage funded by Isabella. Columbus's first voyage crossed the Atlantic and reached the Caribbean Islands, beginning the European exploration and conquest of the Americas, although he remained convinced that he had reached the [Orient](/wiki/Orient). The colonisation of the Americas started, with [*conquistadores*](/wiki/Conquistador) like [Hernán Cortés](/wiki/Hernán_Cortés) and [Francisco Pizarro](/wiki/Francisco_Pizarro). [Miscegenation](/wiki/Miscegenation) was the rule between the native and the European cultures and people.

[thumb|left|](/wiki/File:Emanuel_Gottlieb_Leutze_-_Columbus_Before_the_Queen.JPG)[Christopher Columbus](/wiki/Christopher_Columbus) meets the [Catholic Monarchs](/wiki/Catholic_Monarchs) in the [Alhambra](/wiki/Alhambra).

As [Renaissance](/wiki/Renaissance) [New Monarchs](/wiki/New_Monarchs), Isabella and Ferdinand centralised royal power at the expense of local nobility, and the word *España*, whose root is the ancient name *Hispania*, began to be commonly used to designate the whole of the two kingdoms.[[24]](#cite_note-24)With their wide-ranging political, legal, religious and military reforms, Spain emerged as the first [world power](/wiki/Historical_powers#Spanish_Empire).

The unification of the crowns of Aragon and Castile by the marriage of their sovereigns laid the basis for modern Spain and the Spanish Empire, although each kingdom of Spain remained a separate country, in social, political, laws, currency and language.[[25]](#cite_note-25)[[26]](#cite_note-26) Spain was Europe's leading power throughout the 16th century and most of the 17th century, a position reinforced by trade and wealth from colonial possessions and became the world's leading [maritime power](/wiki/Spanish_Navy). It reached its apogee during the reigns of the first two [Spanish Habsburgs](/wiki/Habsburg_Spain)—[Charles I](/wiki/Charles_I_of_Spain) (1516–1556) and [Philip II](/wiki/Philip_II_of_Spain) (1556–1598). This period saw the [Italian Wars](/wiki/Italian_Wars), the [Revolt of the Comuneros](/wiki/Revolt_of_the_Comuneros), the [Dutch Revolt](/wiki/Dutch_Revolt), the [Morisco Revolt](/wiki/Morisco_rebellions_in_Granada), clashes with the [Ottomans](/wiki/Ottoman-Habsburg_wars), the [Anglo-Spanish War](/wiki/Anglo-Spanish_War_(1585–1604)) and wars with [France](/wiki/Early_modern_France#The_French_Renaissance).[[27]](#cite_note-27) [thumb|Anachronous map of the Spanish Empire including territorial claims.](/wiki/File:Spanish_Empire_Complete.svg)

Through exploration and conquest or royal marriage alliances and inheritance, the [Spanish Empire](/wiki/Spanish_Empire) expanded to include vast areas in the [Americas](/wiki/Americas), islands in the Asia-Pacific area, areas of Italy, cities in Northern Africa, as well as parts of what are now France, Germany, [Belgium](/wiki/Belgium), [Luxembourg](/wiki/Luxembourg), and the [Netherlands](/wiki/Netherlands). The [first circumnavigation](/wiki/Timeline_of_Magellan's_circumnavigation) of the world was carried out in 1519–1521. It was the first empire on which it was said that [the sun never set](/wiki/The_empire_on_which_the_sun_never_sets). This was an [Age of Discovery](/wiki/Age_of_Discovery), with daring explorations by sea and by land, the opening-up of new [trade routes](/wiki/Trade_route) across oceans, conquests and the beginnings of European [colonialism](/wiki/Colonialism). Spanish explorers brought back [precious metals](/wiki/Precious_metal), spices, luxuries, and previously unknown plants, and played a leading part in transforming the European understanding of the globe.[[28]](#cite_note-28) The cultural efflorescence witnessed during this period is now referred to as the [Spanish Golden Age](/wiki/Spanish_Golden_Age). The expansion of the empire caused immense upheaval in the Americas as the collapse of societies and empires and new diseases from Europe devastated American indigenous populations. The rise of [humanism](/wiki/Humanism), the [Counter-Reformation](/wiki/Counter-Reformation) and new geographical discoveries and conquests raised issues that were addressed by the intellectual movement now known as the [School of Salamanca](/wiki/School_of_Salamanca), which developed the first modern theories of what are now known as [international law](/wiki/International_law) and [human rights](/wiki/Human_rights).

[Template:Double image](/wiki/Template:Double_image)

In the late 16th century and first half of the 17th century, Spain was confronted by unrelenting challenges from all sides. [Barbary pirates](/wiki/Barbary_pirates), under the aegis of the rapidly growing [Ottoman Empire](/wiki/Ottoman_Empire), disrupted life in many coastal areas through their [slave](/wiki/Slave) raids and the renewed threat of an [Islamic invasion](/wiki/Muslim_conquests).[[29]](#cite_note-29) This was at a time when Spain was often at war with France.

The [Protestant Reformation](/wiki/Protestant_Reformation) dragged the kingdom ever more deeply into the mire of religiously charged wars. The result was a country forced into ever expanding military efforts across Europe and in the Mediterranean.[[30]](#cite_note-30) By the middle decades of a war- and [plague](/wiki/Great_Plague_of_Seville)-ridden 17th-century Europe, the Spanish Habsburgs had enmeshed the country in continent-wide religious-political conflicts. These conflicts drained it of resources and undermined the economy generally. Spain managed to hold on to most of the scattered [Habsburg empire](/wiki/Habsburg_empire), and help the imperial forces of the [Holy Roman Empire](/wiki/Holy_Roman_Empire) reverse a large part of the advances made by Protestant forces, but it was finally forced to recognise the [separation of Portugal](/wiki/Portuguese_Restoration_War) (with whom it had been [united](/wiki/Iberian_Union) in a [personal union](/wiki/Personal_union) of the crowns from 1580 to 1640) and the [Netherlands](/wiki/Netherlands), and eventually suffered some serious military reverses to France in the latter stages of the immensely destructive, Europe-wide [Thirty Years' War](/wiki/Thirty_Years'_War).[[31]](#cite_note-31)[thumb|left|](/wiki/File:La_familia_de_Felipe_V_(Van_Loo).jpg)[The Family of Philip V (1743)](/wiki/The_Family_of_Philip_V_(1743)). During the [Enlightenment in Spain](/wiki/Enlightenment_in_Spain) a new royal family reigned, the [House of Bourbon](/wiki/House_of_Bourbon).

In the latter half of the 17th century, Spain went into a gradual decline, during which it surrendered several small territories to France and the Netherlands; however, it maintained and enlarged its vast overseas empire, which remained intact until the beginning of the 19th century.

The decline culminated in a controversy over succession to the throne which consumed the first years of the 18th century. The [War of the Spanish Succession](/wiki/War_of_the_Spanish_Succession) was a wide-ranging international conflict combined with a civil war, and was to cost the kingdom its European possessions and its position as one of the leading powers on the Continent.[[32]](#cite_note-32)During this war, a new dynasty originating in France, the [Bourbons](/wiki/House_of_Bourbon), was installed. Long united only by the Crown, a true Spanish state was established when the first Bourbon king, [Philip V](/wiki/Philip_V_of_Spain), united the crowns of Castile and Aragon into a single state, abolishing many of the old regional privileges and laws.[[33]](#cite_note-33) The 18th century saw a gradual recovery and an increase in prosperity through much of the empire. The new Bourbon monarchy drew on the French system of modernising the administration and the economy. [Enlightenment](/wiki/Enlightenment_in_Spain) ideas began to gain ground among some of the kingdom's elite and monarchy. Military assistance for the rebellious British colonies in the [American War of Independence](/wiki/American_Revolutionary_War) improved the kingdom's international standing.[[34]](#cite_note-34)

### Liberalism and nation state[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=7)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|](/wiki/File:El_Tres_de_Mayo,_by_Francisco_de_Goya,_from_Prado_in_Google_Earth.jpg)[The Third of May 1808](/wiki/The_Third_of_May_1808) by [Francisco de Goya](/wiki/Francisco_de_Goya) depicts an episode of the [Spanish Independence War](/wiki/Peninsular_War).

In 1793, Spain went to war against the revolutionary new [French Republic](/wiki/First_French_Republic) as a member of [the first Coalition](/wiki/War_of_the_First_Coalition). The subsequent [War of the Pyrenees](/wiki/War_of_the_Pyrenees) polarised the country in a reaction against the [gallicised](/wiki/Francization) elites and following defeat in the field, peace was made with France in 1795 at the [Peace of Basel](/wiki/Peace_of_Basel) in which Spain lost control over two-thirds of the island of [Hispaniola](/wiki/Hispaniola). The Prime Minister, [Manuel Godoy](/wiki/Manuel_Godoy,_Prince_of_the_Peace), then ensured that Spain allied herself with France in the brief [War of the Third Coalition](/wiki/War_of_the_Third_Coalition) which ended with the British victory at the [Battle of Trafalgar](/wiki/Battle_of_Trafalgar) in 1805. In 1807, a secret treaty between Napoleon and the unpopular prime minister led to a new declaration of war against Britain and Portugal. Napoleon's troops entered the country to invade Portugal but instead occupied Spain's major fortresses. The ridiculed Spanish king abdicated in favour of [Napoleon's](/wiki/Napoleon_I_of_France) brother, [Joseph Bonaparte](/wiki/Joseph_Bonaparte).

Joseph Bonaparte was seen as a [puppet monarch](/wiki/Puppet_monarch) and was regarded with scorn by the Spanish. The [2 May 1808 revolt](/wiki/Dos_de_Mayo_Uprising) was one of many nationalist uprisings across the country against the Bonapartist regime.[[35]](#cite_note-35) These revolts marked the beginning of a devastating [war of independence](/wiki/Peninsular_War) against the Napoleonic regime.[[36]](#cite_note-36) Napoleon was forced to intervene personally, defeating several Spanish armies and forcing a British army to retreat. However, further military action by Spanish armies, [guerrillas](/wiki/Guerrilla) and [Wellington's](/wiki/Arthur_Wellesley,_1st_Duke_of_Wellington) British-Portuguese forces, combined with Napoleon's disastrous [invasion of Russia](/wiki/Napoleon's_Invasion_of_Russia), led to the ousting of the French imperial armies from Spain in 1814, and the return of [King Ferdinand VII](/wiki/Ferdinand_VII_of_Spain).[[37]](#cite_note-37) During the war, in 1810, a revolutionary body, the [Cortes of Cádiz](/wiki/Cortes_of_Cádiz), was assembled to co-ordinate the effort against the Bonapartist regime and to prepare a constitution.[[38]](#cite_note-38) It met as one body, and its members represented the entire Spanish empire.[[39]](#cite_note-39) In 1812 a [constitution](/wiki/Spanish_Constitution_of_1812) for universal representation under a constitutional monarchy was declared but after the fall of the Bonapartist regime [Ferdinand VII](/wiki/Ferdinand_VII) dismissed the [Cortes Generales](/wiki/Cortes_Generales) and was determined to rule as an [absolute monarch](/wiki/Absolute_monarchy). These events foreshadowed the conflict between conservatives and liberals in the 19th and early 20th centuries. [thumb|The Proclamation of the](/wiki/File:Cortes_de_cadiz.jpg) [Spanish Constitution of 1812](/wiki/Spanish_Constitution_of_1812) in [Cádiz](/wiki/Cádiz).

Spain's conquest by France benefited Latin American anti-colonialists who resented the Imperial Spanish government's policies that favored Spanish-born citizens ([Peninsulars](/wiki/Peninsulars)) over those born overseas ([Criollos](/wiki/Criollo_people)) and demanded [retroversion of the sovereignty to the people](/wiki/Retroversion_of_the_sovereignty_to_the_people). Starting in 1809 Spain's American colonies began a series of revolutions and declared independence, leading to the [Spanish American wars of independence](/wiki/Spanish_American_wars_of_independence) that ended Spanish control over its mainland colonies in the Americas. King Ferdinand VII's attempt to [re-assert control](/wiki/Reconquista_(Spanish_America)) proved futile as he faced opposition not only in the colonies but also in Spain and [army revolts](/wiki/Ferdinand_VII_of_Spain#Revolt) followed, led by liberal officers. By the end of 1826, the only American colonies Spain held were [Cuba](/wiki/Cuba) and [Puerto Rico](/wiki/Puerto_Rico).

The Napoleonic War left Spain economically ruined, deeply divided and politically unstable. In the 1830s and 1840s Anti-liberal forces known as [Carlists](/wiki/Carlism) fought against [liberals](/wiki/Liberals) in the [Carlist Wars](/wiki/Carlist_Wars). Liberal forces won, but the conflict between progressive and conservative liberals ended in a weak early constitutional period. After the [Glorious Revolution](/wiki/Glorious_Revolution_(Spain)) of 1868 and the short-lived [First Spanish Republic](/wiki/First_Spanish_Republic), a more stable [monarchic period began](/wiki/Restoration_(Spain)) characterised by the practice of *turnismo* (the rotation of government control between progressive and conservative liberals within the Spanish government).

[thumb|Spanish general](/wiki/File:Gobierno_Provisional_1869_(J.Laurent).jpg) [Juan Prim](/wiki/Juan_Prim), [Prime Minister of Spain](/wiki/List_of_Prime_Ministers_of_Spain), with his government after the [Glorious Revolution](/wiki/Glorious_Revolution_(Spain)), 1869.

In the late 19th century nationalist movements arose in the Philippines and Cuba. In 1895 and 1896 the [Cuban War of Independence](/wiki/Cuban_War_of_Independence) and the [Philippine Revolution](/wiki/Philippine_Revolution) broke out and eventually the United States became involved. The [Spanish–American War](/wiki/Spanish–American_War) was fought in the spring of 1898 and resulted in Spain losing the last of its once vast colonial empire outside of North Africa. *El Desastre* (the Disaster), as the war became known in Spain, gave added impetus to the [Generation of 98](/wiki/Generation_of_98) who were conducting an analysis of the country.

Although the period around the turn of the century was one of increasing prosperity, the 20th century brought little peace; Spain played a minor part in the [scramble for Africa](/wiki/Scramble_for_Africa), with the colonisation of [Western Sahara](/wiki/Western_Sahara), [Spanish Morocco](/wiki/Spanish_Morocco) and [Equatorial Guinea](/wiki/Equatorial_Guinea). It remained neutral during World War I (see [Spain in World War I](/wiki/Spain_in_World_War_I)). The heavy losses suffered during the [Rif War](/wiki/Rif_War_(1920)) in Morocco brought discredit to the government and undermined the monarchy.

A period of authoritarian rule under General [Miguel Primo de Rivera](/wiki/Miguel_Primo_de_Rivera) (1923–1931) ended with the establishment of the [Second Spanish Republic](/wiki/Second_Spanish_Republic). The Republic offered political autonomy to the linguistically distinct regions of [Basque Country](/wiki/Basque_Country_(autonomous_community)), [Catalonia](/wiki/Catalonia) and [Galicia](/wiki/Galicia_(Spain)) and gave [voting rights to women](/wiki/Women's_suffrage#Spain) and was increasingly dominated by left wing political parties. In the worsening economic situation of the [Great Depression](/wiki/Great_Depression#Spain), Spanish politics became increasingly chaotic and violent.

### Spanish Civil War and dictatorship[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=8)]

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The Spanish Civil War broke out in 1936. For three years the [Nationalist](/wiki/Nationalist_faction_(Spanish_Civil_War)) forces led by General [Francisco Franco](/wiki/Francisco_Franco) and supported by [Nazi Germany](/wiki/Nazi_Germany) and [Fascist Italy](/wiki/Kingdom_of_Italy_(1861–1946)) fought the [Republican](/wiki/Republican_faction_(Spanish_Civil_War)) side, which was supported by the [Soviet Union](/wiki/Soviet_Union), Mexico and [International Brigades](/wiki/International_Brigades) but it was not supported by the Western powers due to the British-led policy of [Non-Intervention](/wiki/Non-Intervention). The civil war was viciously fought and there were [many atrocities committed by all sides](/wiki/Spanish_Civil_War#Atrocities). The [war](/wiki/Spanish_Civil_War) claimed the lives of over 500,000 people and caused the flight of up to a half-million citizens from the country.[[40]](#cite_note-40)[[41]](#cite_note-41) In 1939, General Franco emerged victorious and became a dictator.

[thumb|Franco giving a speech in](/wiki/File:Franco_dando_un_discurso_en_Éibar_en_1949.jpg) [Éibar](/wiki/Éibar), 1949 The [state as established under Franco](/wiki/Francoist_Spain) was nominally [neutral](/wiki/Neutrality_(international_relations)) in the Second World War, although [sympathetic](/wiki/Spain_in_World_War_II) to [the Axis](/wiki/Axis_Powers). The only legal party under Franco's post civil war regime was the [*Falange*](/wiki/Falange) *Española Tradicionalista y de las JONS*, formed in 1937; the party emphasized [falangism](/wiki/Falangism), a form of [fascism](/wiki/Fascism) that emphasized [anti-communism](/wiki/Anti-communism), [nationalism](/wiki/Nationalism) and [Roman Catholicism](/wiki/Roman_Catholicism). Given Franco's opposition to competing political parties, the party was renamed the National Movement ([*Movimiento Nacional*](/wiki/Movimiento_Nacional)) in 1949.

After World War II Spain was politically and economically isolated, and was kept out of the [United Nations](/wiki/United_Nations). This changed in 1955, during the [Cold War](/wiki/Cold_War) period, when it became strategically important for the US to establish a military presence on the Iberian Peninsula as a counter to any possible move by the Soviet Union into the Mediterranean basin. In the 1960s, Spain registered an [unprecedented rate of economic growth](/wiki/Spanish_miracle) which was propelled by [industrialization](/wiki/Spanish_miracle#Industrialisation), a [mass internal migration](/wiki/Spanish_miracle#Rural_exodus) from rural areas to cities and the creation of a [mass tourism industry](/wiki/Spanish_miracle#Mass_tourism). Franco's rule was also characterized by [authoritarianism](/wiki/Francoist_Spain#Authoritarianism), [promotion of a unitary national identity](/wiki/Francoist_Spain#Nationalism), the favouring of a very conservative form of Roman Catholicism known as [National Catholicism](/wiki/National_Catholicism), and [discriminatory language policies](/wiki/Language_policies_of_Francoist_Spain).

### Restoration of democracy[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=9)]

[Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also) [thumb|left|Posters of the first elections under](/wiki/File:TransicionCartelesCongreso2.jpg) [Spanish Constitution of 1978](/wiki/Spanish_Constitution_of_1978), showing political leaders including [Adolfo Suárez](/wiki/Adolfo_Suárez) (first president), [Manuel Fraga](/wiki/Manuel_Fraga), [Felipe González](/wiki/Felipe_González) and [Santiago Carrillo](/wiki/Santiago_Carrillo). In 1962, [Salvador de Madariaga](/wiki/Salvador_de_Madariaga), founder of the [Liberal International](/wiki/Liberal_International) and the [College of Europe](/wiki/College_of_Europe), met in the congress of the [European Movement](/wiki/European_Movement) in [Munich](/wiki/Munich) with members of the [opposition](/wiki/Opposition_(politics)) to Franco's regime inside the country and in the exile. There were 118 politicians from all factions. At the end of the meetings a resolution in favour of democracy was made.[[42]](#cite_note-42)[[43]](#cite_note-43)[[44]](#cite_note-44) With Franco's death in November 1975, [Juan Carlos](/wiki/Juan_Carlos_I_of_Spain) succeeded to the position of [King of Spain](/wiki/King_of_Spain) and [head of state](/wiki/Head_of_state) in accordance with the law. With the approval of the new [Spanish Constitution of 1978](/wiki/Spanish_Constitution_of_1978) and the [restoration of democracy](/wiki/Spanish_transition_to_democracy), the State [devolved](/wiki/Devolution) much authority to the regions and created an internal organisation based on [autonomous communities](/wiki/Autonomous_communities_of_Spain).

In the Basque Country, moderate [Basque nationalism](/wiki/Basque_nationalism) has coexisted with a [radical nationalist movement](/wiki/Basque_Conflict) led by the armed organisation [ETA](/wiki/ETA_(separatist_group)). The group was formed in 1959 during Franco's rule but has continued to wage its violent campaign even after the restoration of democracy and the return of a large measure of regional autonomy. On 23 February 1981, rebel elements among the security forces seized the Cortes in an attempt to impose [a military backed government](/wiki/23-F). King Juan Carlos took personal command of the military and successfully ordered the coup plotters, via national television, to surrender.

During the 1980s the democratic restoration made possible a growing open society. New cultural movements based on freedom appeared, like [La Movida Madrileña](/wiki/La_Movida_Madrileña). On 30 May 1982 Spain joined [NATO](/wiki/NATO), following a referendum. That year the [Spanish Socialist Workers Party](/wiki/Spanish_Socialist_Workers_Party) (PSOE) came to power, the first left-wing government in 43 years. In 1986 Spain joined the [European Economic Community](/wiki/European_Economic_Community), which later became the [European Union](/wiki/European_Union). The PSOE was replaced in government by the [Partido Popular](/wiki/People's_Party_(Spain)) (PP) after the latter won the 1996 General Elections; at that point the PSOE had served almost 14 consecutive years in office.

[thumb|Spain has been a member of the](/wiki/File:Tratado_de_Lisboa_13_12_2007_(081).jpg) [European Union](/wiki/European_Union) since 1986

On 1 January 2002, Spain fully adopted the [euro](/wiki/Euro), and Spain experienced strong economic growth, well above the [EU](/wiki/European_Union) average during the early 2000s. However, well publicised concerns issued by many economic commentators at the height of the boom warned that extraordinary property prices and a high foreign trade deficit were likely to lead to a painful economic collapse.[[45]](#cite_note-45) On 11 March 2004 a local [Islamist](/wiki/Islamist) terrorist group inspired by [Al-Qaeda](/wiki/Al-Qaeda) carried out the largest terrorist attack in Spanish history when they killed 191 people and wounded more than 1,800 others by [bombing commuter trains](/wiki/11_March_2004_Madrid_train_bombings) in Madrid.[[46]](#cite_note-46) Though initial suspicions focused on the Basque group [ETA](/wiki/ETA_(separatist_group)), evidence soon emerged indicating Islamist involvement. Because of the proximity of the [2004 election](/wiki/Spanish_general_election,_2004), the issue of responsibility quickly became a political controversy, with the main competing parties PP and PSOE exchanging accusations over the handling of the incident.[[47]](#cite_note-47) At 14 March elections, PSOE, led by [José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero](/wiki/José_Luis_Rodríguez_Zapatero), obtained a [plurality](/wiki/Plurality_(voting)), enough to form a new cabinet with Rodríguez Zapatero as the new *Presidente del Gobierno* or [Prime Minister of Spain](/wiki/Prime_Minister_of_Spain), thus succeeding the former PP administration.[[48]](#cite_note-48) The proportion of [Spain's foreign born population](/wiki/Immigration_to_Spain#Currently) increased rapidly from around 1 in 50 in 2000 to almost 1 in 8 in 2010 but has since declined. In 2005 the Spanish government legalised [same sex marriage](/wiki/Same-sex_marriage_in_Spain). The bursting of the [Spanish property bubble](/wiki/Spanish_property_bubble) in 2008 led to the [2008–15 Spanish financial crisis](/wiki/2008–15_Spanish_financial_crisis) and high levels of [unemployment](/wiki/Unemployment), cuts in government spending and [Catalan independentism](/wiki/Catalan_independentism) served as a backdrop to the [2011–12 Spanish protests](/wiki/2011–12_Spanish_protests). In 2011 [Mariano Rajoy's](/wiki/Mariano_Rajoy) conservative [People's Party](/wiki/People's_Party_(Spain)) won elections with 44.6% of votes and Rajoy became the Spanish Prime Minister after having been the leader of the opposition from 2004 to 2011. On 19 June 2014, the [monarch](/wiki/Monarchy_of_Spain), Juan Carlos, abdicated in favour of his son, who became [Felipe VI](/wiki/Felipe_VI).

## Geography[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=10)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|Topographic map of Spain](/wiki/File:Spain_topo.jpg) At [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert), Spain is the world's [fifty-second largest country](/wiki/List_of_countries_and_outlying_territories_by_area) and [Europe's fourth largest country](/wiki/Area_and_population_of_European_countries). It is some [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) smaller than France and [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) larger than the US state of [California](/wiki/California). Mount [Teide](/wiki/Teide) ([Tenerife](/wiki/Tenerife)) is the highest mountain peak in Spain and is the third largest volcano in the world from its base.

Spain lies between latitudes [26°](/wiki/26th_parallel_north) and [44° N](/wiki/44th_parallel_north), and longitudes [19° W](/wiki/19th_meridian_west) and [5° E](/wiki/5th_meridian_east).

On the west, Spain is bordered by [Portugal](/wiki/Portugal); on the south, it is bordered by [Gibraltar](/wiki/Gibraltar) (a [British overseas territory](/wiki/British_overseas_territory)) and [Morocco](/wiki/Morocco), through its [exclaves](/wiki/Exclave) in North Africa ([Ceuta](/wiki/Ceuta) and [Melilla](/wiki/Melilla), and the peninsula of [Vélez de la Gomera](/wiki/Peñón_de_Vélez_de_la_Gomera)). On the northeast, along the [Pyrenees](/wiki/Pyrenees) mountain range, it is bordered by France and the [Principality](/wiki/Principality) of [Andorra](/wiki/Andorra). Along the Pyrenees in [Girona](/wiki/Province_of_Girona), a small exclave town called [Llívia](/wiki/Llívia) is surrounded by France.

### Islands[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=11)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) Spain also includes the [Balearic Islands](/wiki/Balearic_Islands) in the [Mediterranean Sea](/wiki/Mediterranean_Sea), the [Canary Islands](/wiki/Canary_Islands) in the [Atlantic Ocean](/wiki/Atlantic_Ocean) and a number of uninhabited islands on the Mediterranean side of the [Strait of Gibraltar](/wiki/Strait_of_Gibraltar), known as [Template:Lang](/wiki/Template:Lang) ("places of sovereignty", or territories under [Spanish] sovereignty), such as the [Chafarinas Islands](/wiki/Chafarinas_Islands) and [Alhucemas](/wiki/Peñón_de_Alhucemas). The peninsula of [Vélez de la Gomera](/wiki/Peñón_de_Vélez_de_la_Gomera) is also regarded as a *plaza de soberanía*. The isle of [Alborán](/wiki/Isla_de_Alborán), located in the Mediterranean between Spain and North Africa, is also administered by Spain, specifically by the municipality of [Almería](/wiki/Almería), Andalusia. The little [Pheasant Island](/wiki/Pheasant_Island) in the River [Bidasoa](/wiki/Bidasoa) is a Spanish-French [condominium](/wiki/Condominium_(international_law)).

Largest inhabited islands of Spain: [thumb|](/wiki/File:Teide_2_Blick_auf.jpg)[Mt Teide](/wiki/Teide), [Tenerife](/wiki/Tenerife), [Canary Islands](/wiki/Canary_Islands).

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Island** | **Population** |
| [Tenerife](/wiki/Tenerife) | 899,833 |
| [Majorca](/wiki/Majorca) (*Mallorca*) | 862,397 |
| [Gran Canaria](/wiki/Gran_Canaria) | 838,397 |
| [Lanzarote](/wiki/Lanzarote) | 141,938 |
| [Ibiza](/wiki/Ibiza) | 125,053 |
| [Fuerteventura](/wiki/Fuerteventura) | 103,107 |
| [Minorca](/wiki/Minorca) (*Menorca*) | 92,434 |
| [La Palma](/wiki/La_Palma) | 85,933 |

### Mountains and rivers[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=12)]

[thumb|right|](/wiki/File:Circo_de_Soaso.jpg)[Ordesa y Monte Perdido National Park](/wiki/Ordesa_y_Monte_Perdido_National_Park), [World Heritage Site](/wiki/World_Heritage_Site) in the [Pyrenees](/wiki/Pyrenees).

Mainland Spain is a [mountainous](/wiki/Mountainous) country, dominated by high [plateaus](/wiki/Plateau) and mountain chains. After the Pyrenees, the main mountain ranges are the [Cordillera Cantábrica](/wiki/Cantabrian_Mountains) (Cantabrian Range), [Sistema Ibérico](/wiki/Sistema_Ibérico) (Iberian System), [Sistema Central](/wiki/Sistema_Central) (Central System), [Montes de Toledo](/wiki/Montes_de_Toledo), [Sierra Morena](/wiki/Sierra_Morena) and the [Sistema Bético](/wiki/Sistema_Bético) (Baetic System) whose highest peak, the 3,478 m high [Mulhacén](/wiki/Mulhacén), located in [Sierra Nevada](/wiki/Sierra_Nevada_(Spain)), is the highest elevation in the Iberian Peninsula. The highest point in Spain is the [Teide](/wiki/Teide), a [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) active [volcano](/wiki/Volcano) in the Canary Islands. The [Meseta Central](/wiki/Meseta_Central) (often translated as "Inner Plateau") is a vast plateau in the heart of peninsular Spain.

There are several major [rivers in Spain](/wiki/Rivers_in_Spain) such as the [Tagus](/wiki/Tagus) (*Tajo*), [Ebro](/wiki/Ebro), [Guadiana](/wiki/Guadiana_River), [Douro](/wiki/Douro) (*Duero*), [Guadalquivir](/wiki/Guadalquivir), [Júcar](/wiki/Júcar_River), [Segura](/wiki/Segura), [Turia](/wiki/Turia_River) and [Minho](/wiki/Minho_River) (*Miño*). [Alluvial plains](/wiki/Alluvial_plain) are found along the coast, the largest of which is that of the Guadalquivir in [Andalusia](/wiki/Andalusia).

### Climate[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=13)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|Spain map of Köppen climate classification.](/wiki/File:Spain_map_of_Köppen_climate_classification.svg) [thumb|](/wiki/File:291114B-_Tablas_Daimiel_-_El_puente_-_Castilla-La_Mancha.jpg)[Tablas de Daimiel National Park](/wiki/Tablas_de_Daimiel_National_Park). [thumb|The coastal](/wiki/File:Tossa_de_Mar_View.jpg) [Mediterranean](/wiki/Mediterranean_climate) region of [Costa Brava](/wiki/Costa_Brava) Three main climatic zones can be separated, according to geographical situation and [orographic](/wiki/Orography) conditions:[[49]](#cite_note-49)[[50]](#cite_note-50)[[51]](#cite_note-51)\* The [Mediterranean climate](/wiki/Mediterranean_climate), characterised by warm and dry summers. It is dominant in the peninsula, with two varieties: *Csa* and *Csb* according to the [Köppen climate classification](/wiki/Köppen_climate_classification). The *Csb* Zone, with a more extreme climate, hotter in summer and colder in winter, extends to additional areas not typically associated with a Mediterranean climate, such as much of central and northern-central of Spain (e.g. Valladolid, Burgos, León).

* The [semi-arid climate](/wiki/Semi-arid_climate) (*Bsh*, *Bsk*), located in the southeastern quarter of the country, especially in the [region of Murcia](/wiki/Region_of_Murcia) and in the [Ebro](/wiki/Ebro) valley. In contrast with the Mediterranean climate, the dry season extends beyond the summer.
* The [oceanic climate](/wiki/Oceanic_climate) (*Cfb*), located in the northern quarter of the country, especially in the region of [Basque Country](/wiki/Basque_Country_(autonomous_community)), [Cantabria](/wiki/Cantabria), [Asturias](/wiki/Asturias) and partly [Galicia](/wiki/Galicia_(Spain)). In contrary to the Mediterranean climate, winter and summer temperatures are influenced by the ocean, and have no seasonal drought.

Apart from these main types, other sub-types can be found, like the [alpine climate](/wiki/Alpine_climate) in the [Pyrenees](/wiki/Pyrenees) and [Sierra Nevada](/wiki/Sierra_Nevada_(Spain)), and a typical [desert climate](/wiki/Desert_climate) in the zone of Almería and in most parts of the [Canary Islands](/wiki/Canary_Islands); while in higher areas of the Canary Islands the predominant climate is [subtropical](/wiki/Subtropical_climate).

The below-listed list covers the average temperatures of three major cities in Spain; [Madrid](/wiki/Madrid), [Barcelona](/wiki/Barcelona), [Valencia](/wiki/Valencia) along with [Santa Cruz de Tenerife](/wiki/Santa_Cruz_de_Tenerife) which has a significantly different climates to the predominant climate in Spain. More information regarding temperature can be found in city articles and the main article about the Spanish climate.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Average daily maximum and minimum temperatures for Madrid, Barcelona, Valencia and Santa Cruz de Tenerife**[[52]](#cite_note-52) | | |
| **Location** | **Coldest month** | **Warmest month** |
| [Madrid](/wiki/Madrid) | [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert)  [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) | [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert)  [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) |
| [Barcelona](/wiki/Barcelona) | [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert)  [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) | [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert)  [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) |
| [Valencia](/wiki/Valencia) | [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert)  [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) | [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert)  [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) |
| [Santa Cruz de Tenerife](/wiki/Santa_Cruz_de_Tenerife) | [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert)  [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) | [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert)  [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) |

### Fauna and flora[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=14)]

The [fauna](/wiki/Fauna) presents a wide diversity that is due in large part to the geographical position of the Iberian peninsula between the Atlantic and the Mediterranean and between [Africa](/wiki/Africa) and [Eurasia](/wiki/Eurasia), and the great diversity of habitats and [biotopes](/wiki/Biotopes), the result of a considerable variety of climates and well differentiated regions.

The vegetation of Spain is varied due to several factors including the diversity of the relief, the climate and [latitude](/wiki/Latitude). Spain includes different [phytogeographic](/wiki/Phytogeographic) regions, each with its own floristic characteristics resulting largely from the interaction of climate, topography, soil type and fire, [biotic](/wiki/Biotic_component) factors.

## Politics[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=15)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|The](/wiki/File:Palacio_Real_Jardines.jpg) [Royal Palace](/wiki/Royal_Palace_of_Madrid) in [Madrid](/wiki/Madrid).

According to the [Democracy Index](/wiki/Democracy_Index) of the EIU, Spain is one of the 20 full democracies in the world.

The Spanish Constitution of 1978 is the culmination of the [Spanish transition to democracy](/wiki/Spanish_transition_to_democracy). The constitutional history of Spain dates back to the constitution of 1812. Impatient with the slow pace of democratic political reforms in 1976 and 1977, Spain's new King Juan Carlos, known for his formidable personality, dismissed [Carlos Arias Navarro](/wiki/Carlos_Arias_Navarro) and appointed the reformer [Adolfo Suárez](/wiki/Adolfo_Suárez) as Prime Minister.[[53]](#cite_note-53)[[54]](#cite_note-54) The resulting [general election in 1977](/wiki/Spanish_general_election,_1977) convened the [*Constituent Cortes*](/wiki/Constituent_Cortes) (the Spanish Parliament, in its capacity as a constitutional assembly) for the purpose of drafting and approving the constitution of 1978.[[55]](#cite_note-55) After a national referendum on 6 December 1978, 88% of voters approved of the new constitution.

As a result, Spain is now composed of 17 [autonomous communities](/wiki/Autonomous_communities_of_Spain) and two [autonomous cities](/wiki/Autonomous_Communities#Autonomous_cities_and_"plazas_de_soberanía") with varying degrees of autonomy thanks to its Constitution, which nevertheless explicitly states the indivisible unity of the Spanish nation. The constitution also specifies that Spain has no state religion and that all are free to practice and believe as they wish.

The Spanish administration approved legislation in 2007 aimed at furthering [equality between genders](/wiki/Gender_equality) in Spanish political and economic life (Gender Equality Act).[[56]](#cite_note-56)[[57]](#cite_note-57) However, in the legislative branch, as of July 2010 only 128 of the 350 members of the Congress were women (36.3%).[[58]](#cite_note-58) It places Spain 13th on a list of countries ranked by proportion of women in the [lower house](/wiki/Lower_house). In the Senate, the ratio is even lower, since there are only 79 women out of 263 (30.0%).[[59]](#cite_note-59) The [Gender Empowerment Measure](/wiki/Gender_Empowerment_Measure) of Spain in the United Nations [Human Development Report](/wiki/Human_Development_Report) is 0.794, 12th in the world.[[60]](#cite_note-60)

### Government[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=16)]

[thumb|](/wiki/File:Congreso_de_los_Diputados_(España)_14.jpg)[Congress of Deputies](/wiki/Congress_of_Deputies_(Spain)), Madrid. [Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also) Spain is a [constitutional monarchy](/wiki/Constitutional_monarchy), with a hereditary [monarch](/wiki/Monarch) and a [bicameral parliament](/wiki/Bicameral_parliament), the [*Cortes Generales*](/wiki/Cortes_Generales) (General Courts). The executive branch consists of a [Council of Ministers of Spain](/wiki/Council_of_Ministers_of_Spain) presided over by the [Prime Minister](/wiki/Prime_Minister_of_Spain), [nominated and appointed](/wiki/Prime_Minister_of_Spain#Royal_Nomination,_Congressional_Confirmation) by the [monarch](/wiki/Monarchy_of_Spain) and confirmed by the Congress of Deputies following legislative elections. By political custom established by King Juan Carlos since the ratification of the 1978 Constitution, the king's nominees have all been from parties who maintain a plurality of seats in the Congress.

The [legislative branch](/wiki/Legislative_branch) is made up of the [Congress of Deputies](/wiki/Congress_of_Deputies_(Spain)) (*Congreso de los Diputados*) with 350 members, elected by popular vote on block lists by proportional representation to serve four-year terms, and a [Senate](/wiki/Spanish_Senate) (*Senado*) with 259 seats of which 208 are directly elected by popular vote and the other 51 appointed by the regional legislatures to also serve four-year terms.

* **Head of State**
  + [King](/wiki/Monarchy_of_Spain) [Felipe VI](/wiki/Felipe_VI_of_Spain), since 19 June 2014
* **Head of Government**
  + [Prime Minister of Spain](/wiki/Prime_Minister_of_Spain) (*Presidente del Gobierno*, literally *President of the Government*): [Mariano Rajoy](/wiki/Mariano_Rajoy) Brey, elected 20 November 2011.
    - [Deputy Prime Minister](/wiki/First_Vice_President_of_the_Government_(Spain)) and [Minister for the Presidency](/wiki/Ministry_for_the_Presidency_(Spain)): [Soraya Sáenz de Santamaría](/wiki/Soraya_Sáenz_de_Santamaría).
* **Cabinet**
  + [Council of Ministers](/wiki/Council_of_Ministers_of_Spain) (*Consejo de Ministros*) designated by the Prime Minister.

Spain is organisationally structured as a so-called *Estado de las Autonomías* ("State of Autonomies"); it is one of the most [decentralised](/wiki/Decentralised) countries in Europe, along with Switzerland, Germany and Belgium;[[61]](#cite_note-61) for example, all Autonomous Communities have their own elected parliaments, governments, public administrations, budgets, and resources. Health and education systems among others are managed regionally, and in addition, the Basque Country and Navarre also manage their own public finances based on [foral](/wiki/Fuero) provisions. In Catalonia, the Basque Country, Navarre and the Canary Islands, a full-fledged autonomous police corps replaces some of the State police functions (see [Mossos d'Esquadra](/wiki/Mossos_d'Esquadra), [Ertzaintza](/wiki/Ertzaintza), [Policía Foral](/wiki/Policía_Foral) and [Policía Canaria](/wiki/Policía_Canaria)).

### Human rights[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=17)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|](/wiki/File:Europride_2007_Madrid.JPG)[Europride](/wiki/Europride) festival 2007 in [Madrid](/wiki/Madrid)

The Government respects the [human rights](/wiki/Human_rights) of its citizens; although there are a few problems in some areas, the law and judiciary provide effective means of addressing individual instances of abuse. There are allegations that a few members of the security forces abused detainees and mistreated foreigners and illegal immigrants. According to [Amnesty International](/wiki/Amnesty_International) (AI), government investigations of such alleged abuses are often lengthy and punishments were light. Violence against women was a problem, which the Government took steps to address.

Spain provides one of the highest degrees of liberty in the world for its [LGBT](/wiki/LGBT) community. Among the countries studied by [Pew Research Center](/wiki/Pew_Research_Center) in 2013, Spain is rated first in acceptance of homosexuality, with an 88% of society supporting the gay community compared to 11% who do not.[[62]](#cite_note-62)

### Administrative divisions[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=18)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) The Spanish State is integrated by 17 autonomous communities and 2 autonomous cities, both groups being the highest or first-order administrative division in the country. Autonomous communities are integrated by provinces, of which there are 50 in total, and in turn, provinces are integrated by municipalities. In Catalonia, two additional divisions exist, the *comarques* (sing. *comarca*) and the *vegueries* (sing. *vegueria*) both of which have administrative powers; *comarques* being aggregations of municipalities, and the *vegueries* being aggregations of *comarques*. The concept of a *comarca* exists in all autonomous communities, however, unlike Catalonia, these are merely historical or geographical subdivisions.

#### Autonomies[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=19)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also) [Template:Autonomous communities of Spain](/wiki/Template:Autonomous_communities_of_Spain)

Autonomous communities are the first level administrative division in the country. These were created after the 1979 and current constitution came into effect in recognition of the right to self-government to the "[nationalities and regions of Spain](/wiki/Nationalities_and_regions_of_Spain)".[[63]](#cite_note-63) Autonomous communities were to be integrated by adjacent provinces with common historical, cultural, and economical traits. This territorial organisation, based on [devolution](/wiki/Devolution), is known in Spain as the "State of Autonomies".

The basic institutional law of each autonomous community is the [Statute of Autonomy](/wiki/Statute_of_Autonomy). The Statutes of Autonomy establish the name of the community according to its historical identity, the limits of their territories, the name and organisation of the institutions of government and the rights they enjoy according to the constitution.[[64]](#cite_note-64) The government of all autonomous communities must be based on a division of powers comprising:

* a Legislative Assembly whose members must be elected by [universal suffrage](/wiki/Universal_suffrage) according to the system of [proportional representation](/wiki/Proportional_representation) and in which all areas that integrate the territory are fairly represented;
* a Government Council, with executive and administrative functions headed by a president, elected by the Legislative Assembly and nominated by the [King of Spain](/wiki/King_of_Spain);
* a Supreme Court of Justice, under the Supreme Court of the State, which head the judicial organisation within the autonomous community.

[thumb|left|Supporters of](/wiki/File:11s2012_Via_Laietana.JPG) [Catalan independence](/wiki/Catalan_independence) in 2012 Catalonia, Galicia and the Basque Country, which identified themselves as "nationalities" were granted self-government through a rapid process. Andalusia also took that denomination in its first Statute of Autonomy, even though it followed the longer process stipulated in the constitution for the rest of the country. Progressively, other communities in revisions to their Statutes of Autonomy have also taken that denomination in accordance to their historical regional identity, such as the Valencian Community,[[65]](#cite_note-65) the Canary Islands,[[66]](#cite_note-66) the Balearic Islands,[[67]](#cite_note-67) and Aragon.[[68]](#cite_note-68) The autonomous communities have wide legislative and executive autonomy, with their own [parliaments](/wiki/Parliament) and regional governments. The distribution of powers may be different for every community, as laid out in their Statutes of Autonomy, since devolution was intended to be asymmetrical. Only two communities—the Basque Country and Navarre—have full fiscal autonomy. Aside of fiscal autonomy, the "historical" nationalities—Andalusia, the Basque Country, Catalonia, and Galicia—were devolved more powers than the rest of the communities, among them the ability of the regional president to dissolve the parliament and call for elections at any time. In addition, the Basque Country, Catalonia and Navarre have police corps of their own: [Ertzaintza](/wiki/Ertzaintza), [Mossos d'Esquadra](/wiki/Mossos_d'Esquadra) and the [Policía Foral](/wiki/Policía_Foral) respectively. Other communities have more limited forces or none at all, like the *Policía Autónoma Andaluza*[[69]](#cite_note-69) in [Andalusia](/wiki/Andalusia) or the [BESCAM](/wiki/BESCAM) in [Madrid](/wiki/Madrid). [thumb|Hall of the](/wiki/File:Salo_de_Cent.jpg) [Consell de Cent](/wiki/Consell_de_Cent), local body of [Barcelona](/wiki/Barcelona) between the 13th and 18th centuries. Nonetheless, recent amendments to existing Statutes of Autonomy or the promulgation of new Statutes altogether, have reduced the asymmetry between the powers originally granted to the "historical nationalities" and the rest of the regions.

Finally, along with the 17 autonomous communities, two autonomous cities are also part of the State of Autonomies and are first-order territorial divisions: [Ceuta](/wiki/Ceuta) and [Melilla](/wiki/Melilla). These are two exclaves located in the northern African coast.

#### Provinces and municipalities[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=20)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) Autonomous communities are subdivided into [provinces](/wiki/Provinces_of_Spain), which served as their territorial building blocks. In turn, provinces are integrated by [municipalities](/wiki/Municipalities_of_Spain). The existence of both the provinces and the municipalities is guaranteed and protected by the constitution, not necessarily by the Statutes of Autonomy themselves. Municipalities are granted autonomy to manage their internal affairs, and provinces are the territorial divisions designed to carry out the activities of the State.[[70]](#cite_note-70) The current provincial division structure is based—with minor changes—on the [1833 territorial division](/wiki/1833_territorial_division_of_Spain) by [Javier de Burgos](/wiki/Javier_de_Burgos), and in all, the Spanish territory is divided into 50 provinces. The communities of Asturias, Cantabria, La Rioja, the Balearic Islands, Madrid, Murcia and Navarre are the only communities that are integrated by a single province, which is coextensive with the community itself. In this cases, the administrative institutions of the province are replaced by the governmental institutions of the community.

### Foreign relations[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=21)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|right|](/wiki/File:Cumbre_del_G20_en_Los_Cabos,_México.jpg)[Mariano Rajoy](/wiki/Mariano_Rajoy) in a G-20 Summit in Mexico. Spain is a permanent guest of the [G-20](/wiki/G-20). [thumb|The](/wiki/File:Cumbre_Iberoamericana_2008.jpg) [Ibero-American Summit](/wiki/Ibero-American_Summit), in [San Salvador](/wiki/San_Salvador), 2008 After the return of democracy following the death of [Franco](/wiki/Francisco_Franco) in 1975, Spain's [foreign policy](/wiki/Foreign_policy) priorities were to break out of the diplomatic isolation of the [Franco years](/wiki/Spain_under_Franco) and expand [diplomatic relations](/wiki/Diplomatic_relations), enter the [European Community](/wiki/European_Union), and define security relations with the West.

As a member of [NATO](/wiki/NATO) since 1982, Spain has established itself as a participant in multilateral international security activities. Spain's EU membership represents an important part of its foreign policy. Even on many international issues beyond western Europe, Spain prefers to co-ordinate its efforts with its EU partners through the European political co-operation mechanisms.[Template:Vague](/wiki/Template:Vague)

Spain has maintained its special relations with [Hispanic America](/wiki/Hispanic_America) and the [Philippines](/wiki/Philippines). Its policy emphasises the concept of an [Ibero-American](/wiki/Ibero-America) community, essentially the renewal of the historically liberal concept of *"*[*Hispanidad*](/wiki/Hispanidad)*"* or *"*[*Hispanismo*](/wiki/Hispanism)*"*, as it is often referred to in English, which has sought to link the Iberian Peninsula with Hispanic America through language, commerce, history and culture.

Territorial disputes

[Spain claims Gibraltar](/wiki/Disputed_status_of_Gibraltar), a [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) [Overseas Territory of the United Kingdom](/wiki/British_overseas_territories) in the southernmost part of the [Iberian Peninsula](/wiki/Iberian_Peninsula). Then a Spanish town, it was conquered by an Anglo-Dutch force in 1704 during the [War of the Spanish Succession](/wiki/War_of_the_Spanish_Succession) on behalf of [Archduke Charles](/wiki/Charles_VI,_Holy_Roman_Emperor), pretender to the Spanish throne.

The legal situation concerning Gibraltar was settled in 1713 by the [Treaty of Utrecht](/wiki/Treaty_of_Utrecht), in which Spain ceded the territory in perpetuity to the British Crown[[71]](#cite_note-71) stating that, should the British abandon this post, it would be offered to Spain first. Since the 1940s Spain has called for the return of Gibraltar. The overwhelming majority of [Gibraltarians](/wiki/Gibraltarians) strongly oppose this, along with any proposal of shared sovereignty.[[72]](#cite_note-72) UN resolutions call on the United Kingdom and Spain, both EU members, to reach an agreement over the status of Gibraltar.[[73]](#cite_note-73)[[74]](#cite_note-74) The Spanish claim makes a distinction between the [isthmus](/wiki/Disputed_status_of_the_isthmus_between_Gibraltar_and_Spain) that connects the Rock to the Spanish mainland on the one hand, and the Rock and city of Gibraltar on the other. While the Rock and city were ceded by the Treaty of Utrecht, Spain asserts that the "occupation of the isthmus is illegal and against the principles of [International Law](/wiki/International_Law)".[[75]](#cite_note-75) The United Kingdom relies on *de facto* arguments of possession by [prescription](/wiki/Prescription_(sovereignty_transfer)) in relation to the isthmus,[[76]](#cite_note-76) as there has been "continuous possession [of the isthmus] over a long period".[[77]](#cite_note-77) [[File:Combattantes sahraouies du Front Polisario.jpg|thumb|[Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic](/wiki/Sahrawi_Arab_Democratic_Republic) army. According to [United Nations](/wiki/United_Nations), Spain is the administrative power of the [Western Sahara](/wiki/Western_Sahara) de iure.[[78]](#cite_note-78) This early global expansion is a competitive advantage over its competitors and European neighbours. The reason for this early expansion is the booming interest toward Spanish language and culture in Asia and Africa and a corporate culture that learned to take risks in unstable markets.

Spanish companies invested in fields like [renewable energy commercialisation](/wiki/Renewable_energy_commercialisation) ([Iberdrola](/wiki/Iberdrola) was the world's largest renewable energy operator[[86]](#cite_note-86)), technology companies like [Telefónica](/wiki/Telefónica), [Abengoa](/wiki/Abengoa), [Mondragon Corporation](/wiki/Mondragon_Corporation), [Movistar](/wiki/Movistar), [Hisdesat](/wiki/Hisdesat), [Indra](/wiki/Indra_Sistemas), train manufacturers like [CAF](/wiki/Construcciones_y_Auxiliar_de_Ferrocarriles), [Talgo](/wiki/Talgo), global corporations such as the textile company [Inditex](/wiki/Inditex), petroleum companies like [Repsol](/wiki/Repsol) and infrastructure, with six of the ten biggest international construction firms specialising in transport being Spanish, like [Ferrovial](/wiki/Ferrovial), [Acciona](/wiki/Acciona), [ACS](/wiki/Grupo_ACS), [OHL](/wiki/Obrascón_Huarte_Lain) and [FCC](/wiki/Fomento_de_Construcciones_y_Contratas).<ref name=Economist2009big>[Template:Cite news](/wiki/Template:Cite_news)</ref>

[thumb|The urban transformation of](/wiki/File:Guggenheim_Bilbao_06_2012_Panorama_2680.jpg) [Bilbao](/wiki/Bilbao) has been hailed as an example of "[smart city](/wiki/Smart_city)".[[87]](#cite_note-87)[[88]](#cite_note-88)[[89]](#cite_note-89)

In 2005 the [Economist Intelligence Unit's](/wiki/Economist_Intelligence_Unit) [quality of life](/wiki/Quality_of_life) survey placed Spain among the top 10 in the world.[[90]](#cite_note-90)

### Transport[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=27)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main)

The Spanish road system is mainly centralised, with six highways connecting [Madrid](/wiki/Madrid) to the [Basque Country](/wiki/Basque_Country_(autonomous_community)), [Catalonia](/wiki/Catalonia), [Valencia](/wiki/Valencian_Community), West [Andalusia](/wiki/Andalusia), [Extremadura](/wiki/Extremadura) and [Galicia](/wiki/Galicia_(Spain)). Additionally, there are highways along the Atlantic ([Ferrol](/wiki/Ferrol,_Spain) to [Vigo](/wiki/Vigo)), Cantabrian ([Oviedo](/wiki/Oviedo) to [San Sebastián](/wiki/San_Sebastián)) and Mediterranean ([Girona](/wiki/Girona) to [Cádiz](/wiki/Cádiz)) coasts. Spain aims to put one million [electric cars](/wiki/Electric_car) on the road by 2014 as part of the government's plan to save energy and boost [energy efficiency](/wiki/Efficient_energy_use).[[106]](#cite_note-106) The Minister of Industry [Miguel Sebastian](/wiki/Miguel_Sebastian) said that "the electric vehicle is the future and the engine of an industrial revolution."[[107]](#cite_note-107)[thumb|](/wiki/File:Trenes.jpg)[AVE](/wiki/AVE) high-speed trains.

Spain has the most extensive high-speed rail network in Europe, and the second-most extensive in the world after China.[[108]](#cite_note-108)[[109]](#cite_note-109) As of October 2010, Spain has a total of [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) of high-speed tracks linking [Málaga](/wiki/Málaga), [Seville](/wiki/Seville), [Madrid](/wiki/Madrid), [Barcelona](/wiki/Barcelona), [Valencia](/wiki/Valencia) and [Valladolid](/wiki/Valladolid), with the trains reaching speeds up to [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert). On average, the Spanish high-speed train is the fastest one in the world, followed by the Japanese [bullet train](/wiki/Shinkansen) and the French [TGV](/wiki/TGV).[[110]](#cite_note-110) Regarding punctuality, it is second in the world (98.54% on-time arrival) after the Japanese Shinkansen (99%).[[111]](#cite_note-111) Should the aims of the ambitious [AVE](/wiki/AVE) program (Spanish high speed trains) be met, by 2020 Spain will have [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) of high-speed trains linking almost all provincial cities to Madrid in less than three hours and Barcelona within four hours.

There are 47 public airports in Spain. The busiest one is the [airport of Madrid](/wiki/Madrid_Airport) (Barajas), with 50 million passengers in 2011, being the [world's 15th busiest airport](/wiki/World's_busiest_airports_by_passenger_traffic), as well as the European Union's fourth busiest. The [airport of Barcelona](/wiki/Barcelona_Airport) (El Prat) is also important, with 35 million passengers in 2011, being the world's 31st-busiest airport. Other main airports are located in [Majorca](/wiki/Palma_de_Mallorca_Airport) (23 million passengers), [Málaga](/wiki/Málaga_Airport) (13 million passengers), [Las Palmas (Gran Canaria)](/wiki/Gran_Canaria_Airport) (11 million passengers), [Alicante](/wiki/Alicante_Airport) (10 million passengers) and smaller, with the number of passengers between 4 and 10 million, for example [Tenerife](/wiki/Tenerife_South_Airport) (two airports), [Valencia](/wiki/Valencia_Airport), [Seville](/wiki/Seville_Airport), [Bilbao](/wiki/Bilbao_Airport), [Ibiza](/wiki/Ibiza_Airport), [Lanzarote](/wiki/Lanzarote_Airport), [Fuerteventura](/wiki/Fuerteventura_Airport). Also, more than 30 airports with the number of passengers below 4 million.

### Science and technology[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=28)]

[thumb|](/wiki/File:Ing_telescopes_sunset_la_palma_july_2001.jpg)[Roque de los Muchachos Observatory](/wiki/Roque_de_los_Muchachos_Observatory), [Instituto de Astrofísica de Canarias](/wiki/Instituto_de_Astrofísica_de_Canarias).

In the 19th and 20th centuries science in Spain was held back by severe political instability and consequent economic underdevelopment. Despite the conditions, some important scientists and engineers emerged. The most notable were [Miguel Servet](/wiki/Miguel_Servet), [Santiago Ramón y Cajal](/wiki/Santiago_Ramón_y_Cajal), [Narcís Monturiol i Estarriol](/wiki/Narcís_Monturiol_i_Estarriol), [Celedonio Calatayud](/wiki/Celedonio_Calatayud), [Juan de la Cierva](/wiki/Juan_de_la_Cierva), [Leonardo Torres y Quevedo](/wiki/Leonardo_Torres_y_Quevedo) and [Severo Ochoa](/wiki/Severo_Ochoa).

*See also* [*ASCAMM*](/wiki/ASCAMM)*, Associació Catalana d'Empreses constructores de Motlles i Matrius*

### Water supply and sanitation[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=29)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [Water supply](/wiki/Water_supply) and [Sanitation](/wiki/Sanitation) in Spain is characterized by universal access and generally good service quality, while tariffs are among the lowest in the EU.[[112]](#cite_note-112)Almost half of the population is served by private or mixed private-public water companies, which operate under concession contracts with municipalities. The largest of the private water companies, with a market share of about 50% of the private concessions, is Aguas de Barcelona ([Agbar](/wiki/Agbar)). However, the large cities are all served by public companies except Barcelona and Valencia. The largest public company is [Canal de Isabel II](/wiki/Canal_de_Isabel_II), which serves the metropolitan area of Madrid.

Droughts affect water supply in Southern Spain, which increasingly is turning towards seawater [desalination](/wiki/Water_desalination) to meet its water needs.

## Demographics[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=30)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also) [thumb|](/wiki/File:Hemispheric_-_Valencia,_Spain_-_Jan_2007.jpg)[Valencia](/wiki/Valencia). The Mediterranean coast is the most densely inhabited area in Spain.

In 2008 the population of Spain officially reached 46 million people, as recorded by the *Padrón municipal* (Spain's Municipal Register).[[113]](#cite_note-113) Spain's population density, at 91/km² (235/sq mi), is lower than that of most Western European countries and its distribution across the country is very unequal. With the exception of the region surrounding the capital, [Madrid](/wiki/Madrid), the most populated areas lie around the coast. The population of Spain more than doubled since 1900, when it stood at 18.6 million, principally due to the spectacular demographic boom in the 1960s and early 1970s.[[114]](#cite_note-114) Native [Spaniards](/wiki/Spaniards) make up 88% of the total population of Spain. After the [birth rate](/wiki/List_of_countries_and_territories_by_fertility_rate) plunged in the 1980s and Spain's population growth rate dropped, the population again trended upward, based initially on the return of many Spaniards who had emigrated to other European countries during the 1970s, and more recently, fuelled by large numbers of immigrants who make up 12% of the population. The immigrants originate mainly in [Latin America](/wiki/Latin_America) (39%), [North Africa](/wiki/North_Africa) (16%), [Eastern Europe](/wiki/Eastern_Europe) (15%), and [Sub-Saharan Africa](/wiki/Sub-Saharan_Africa) (4%).[[115]](#cite_note-115) In 2005, Spain instituted a three-month amnesty program through which certain hitherto undocumented aliens were granted legal residency.

In 2008, Spain granted citizenship to 84,170 persons, mostly to people from Ecuador, Colombia and Morocco.[[116]](#cite_note-116) A sizeable portion of foreign residents in Spain also comes from other Western and Central European countries. These are mostly British, French, German, Dutch, and Norwegian. They reside primarily on the Mediterranean coast and the Balearic islands, where many choose to live their retirement or [telecommute](/wiki/Telecommute).

Substantial populations descended from Spanish colonists and immigrants exist in other parts of the world, most notably in Latin America. Beginning in the late 15th century, large numbers of Iberian colonists settled in what became Latin America and at present most [white Latin Americans](/wiki/White_Latin_American) (who make up about one-third of Latin America's population) are of Spanish or Portuguese origin. Around 240,000 Spaniards emigrated in the 16th century, mostly to [Peru](/wiki/Peru) and [Mexico](/wiki/Mexico).[[117]](#cite_note-117) Another 450,000 left in the 17th century.[[118]](#cite_note-118) Between 1846 and 1932 it is estimated that nearly 5 million Spaniards emigrated to the Americas, especially to [Argentina](/wiki/Argentina) and [Brazil](/wiki/Brazil).[[119]](#cite_note-119) Approximately two million Spaniards migrated to other Western European countries between 1960 and 1975. During the same period perhaps 300,000 went to Latin America.[[120]](#cite_note-120)

### Urbanisation[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=31)]

[Template:Largest cities of Spain](/wiki/Template:Largest_cities_of_Spain)

Metropolitan areas

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|300px|Geographical distribution of the Spanish population in 2008](/wiki/File:EspDens2.jpg)

Source: "*Áreas urbanas +50*", [Ministry of Public Works and Transport](/wiki/Ministry_of_Public_Works_and_Transport_(Spain)) (2013)[[121]](#cite_note-121)[Template:Electiontable](/wiki/Template:Electiontable) |- style="background: #efefef;" !rowspan="2"| Rank !rowspan="2"| Metro area !rowspan="2"| Autonomous  
community !colspan="2"| Population |- style="background: #efefef;" !Government data !Other estimates |- style="text-align:right;" | 1 || [Madrid](/wiki/Madrid) || [Madrid](/wiki/Community_of_Madrid) || 6,052,247 || style="text-align:left;"| 5.4 – 6.5 m[[122]](#cite_note-122)[[123]](#cite_note-123)|- style="text-align:right;" | 2 || [Barcelona](/wiki/Barcelona) || [Catalonia](/wiki/Catalonia) || 5,030,679 || style="text-align:left;"| [Template:Nowrap](/wiki/Template:Nowrap) |- style="text-align:right;" | 3 || [Valencia](/wiki/Valencia) || [Valencia](/wiki/Valencian_Community) || 1,551,585 || style="text-align:left;"| 1.5 – 2.3 m[[124]](#cite_note-124)|- style="text-align:right;" | 4 || [Seville](/wiki/Seville) || [Andalusia](/wiki/Andalusia) || 1,294,867 || style="text-align:left;"| 1.2 – 1.3 m |- style="text-align:right;" | 5 || [Málaga](/wiki/Málaga) || [Andalusia](/wiki/Andalusia) || 953,251 || style="background:silver;"| |- style="text-align:right;" | 6 || [Bilbao](/wiki/Bilbao) || [Basque Country](/wiki/Basque_Country_(autonomous_community)) || 910,578 || style="background:silver;"| |- style="text-align:right;" | 7 || [Oviedo](/wiki/Oviedo)–[Gijón](/wiki/Gijón)–[Avilés](/wiki/Avilés) || [Asturias](/wiki/Asturias) || 835,053 || style="background:silver;"| |- style="text-align:right;" | 8 || [Zaragoza](/wiki/Zaragoza) || [Aragon](/wiki/Aragon) || 746,152 || style="background:silver;"| |- style="text-align:right;" | 9 || [Alicante](/wiki/Alicante)–[Elche](/wiki/Elche) || [Valencia](/wiki/Valencian_Community) || 698,662 || style="background:silver;"| |- style="text-align:right;" | 10 || [Murcia](/wiki/Murcia) || [Murcia](/wiki/Region_of_Murcia) || 643,854 || style="background:silver;"| |}

### Peoples[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=32)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|](/wiki/File:Gaiterosenoviedo.JPG)[Asturian](/wiki/Asturias) [folk musicians](/wiki/Folk_music) with [bagpipes](/wiki/Bagpipes). The [Spanish Constitution of 1978](/wiki/Spanish_Constitution_of_1978), in its second article, recognises historic entities—[*nationalities*](/wiki/Nationalities_and_regions_of_Spain) (a carefully chosen word to avoid the more politically charged "nations")—and regions, within the context of the Spanish nation. For some people, Spain's identity consists more of an overlap of different regional identities than of a sole Spanish identity. Indeed, some of the regional identities may even conflict with the Spanish one. Distinct traditional regional identities within Spain include the [Basques](/wiki/Basque_people), [Catalans](/wiki/Catalan_people), [Galicians](/wiki/Galician_people), [Andalusians](/wiki/Andalusians) and [Valencians](/wiki/Valencian_people),[[125]](#cite_note-125) although to some extent all of the 17 Autonomous Communities will claim a distinct historic identity.

It is this last feature of "shared identity" between the more local level or Autonomous Community and the Spanish level which makes the identity question in Spain complex and far from univocal.

According to the [CIA](/wiki/Central_Intelligence_Agency) [World Factbook](/wiki/The_World_Factbook) (2011), Spain's racial description is presented as "composite of [Mediterranean](/wiki/Mediterranean_race) and [Nordic](/wiki/Nordic_race) types" under "ethnic groups" instead of the usual breakdown of ethnic composition.[[126]](#cite_note-126)

### Minority groups[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=33)]

Spain has a number of descendants of populations from former colonies, especially [Latin America](/wiki/Latin_America) and [North Africa](/wiki/North_Africa). Smaller numbers of immigrants from several [Sub-Saharan](/wiki/Sub-Saharan) countries have recently been settling in Spain. There are also sizeable numbers of [Asian](/wiki/Asia) immigrants, most of whom are of [Middle Eastern](/wiki/Middle_East), [South Asian](/wiki/South_Asian) and Chinese origin. The single largest group of immigrants are European; represented by large numbers of Britons, [Germans](/wiki/Germans), French and others.[[127]](#cite_note-127)[Template:Double image](/wiki/Template:Double_image) The arrival of the [*gitanos*](/wiki/Roma_in_Spain), a [Romani people](/wiki/Romani_people), began in the 16th century; estimates of the Spanish Gitano population fluctuate around 700,000.[[128]](#cite_note-128) There are also the [*mercheros*](/wiki/Merchero) (also *quinquis*), a formerly nomadic minority group. Their origin is unclear.

Historically, [Sephardi Jews](/wiki/Sephardi_Jews) and [moriscos](/wiki/Morisco) are the main minority groups originated in Spain and with a contribution to Spanish culture.[[129]](#cite_note-129) The Spanish government is offering Spanish nationality to sephardi Jews.[[130]](#cite_note-130)

### Immigration[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=34)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|](/wiki/File:Marbella3.jpg)[Marbella](/wiki/Marbella), [Málaga](/wiki/Province_of_Málaga), where Britons—who are the third biggest immigrant community in Spain—reside in large numbers.

According to the Spanish government there were 5.7 million foreign residents in Spain in 2011, or 12% of the total population. According to residence permit data for 2011, more than 860,000 were [Romanian](/wiki/Romanians), about 770,000 were [Moroccan](/wiki/Moroccan_people), approximately 390,000 were British, and 360,000 were [Ecuadorian](/wiki/Ecuadorian_people).[[131]](#cite_note-131) Other sizeable foreign communities are [Colombian](/wiki/Colombian_people), [Bolivian](/wiki/Bolivian_people), [German](/wiki/Germans), [Italian](/wiki/Italians), [Bulgarian](/wiki/Bulgarians), and Chinese. There are more than 200,000 migrants from Sub-Saharan [Africa](/wiki/Africa) living in Spain, principally [Senegaleses](/wiki/Senegalese_people) and [Nigerians](/wiki/Nigerian_people).[[132]](#cite_note-132) Since 2000, Spain has experienced high [population growth](/wiki/Population_growth) as a result of immigration flows, despite a birth rate that is only half the replacement level. This sudden and ongoing inflow of immigrants, particularly those arriving illegally by sea, has caused noticeable social tension.[[133]](#cite_note-133)[thumb|](/wiki/File:Bellver_Castle_2008_Palma_Mallorca_130.JPG)[Palma de Mallorca](/wiki/Palma_de_Mallorca) where a large population of [Germans](/wiki/Germans) live.

Within the EU, Spain had the 2nd highest immigration rate in percentage terms after [Cyprus](/wiki/Cyprus), but by a great margin, the highest in absolute numbers, up to 2008.[[134]](#cite_note-134) The number of immigrants in Spain had grown up from 500,000 people in 1996 to 5.2 million in 2008 out of a total population of 46 million.[[135]](#cite_note-135)[[136]](#cite_note-136) In 2005 alone, a regularisation programme increased the legal immigrant population by 700,000 people.[[137]](#cite_note-137) There are a number of reasons for the high level of immigration, including Spain's cultural ties with [Latin America](/wiki/Latin_America), its geographical position, the porosity of its borders, the large size of its underground economy and the strength of the agricultural and construction sectors, which demand more low cost labour than can be offered by the national workforce.

Another statistically significant factor is the large number of residents of EU origin typically retiring to Spain's Mediterranean coast. In fact, Spain was Europe's largest absorber of migrants from 2002 to 2007, with its immigrant population more than doubling as 2.5 million people arrived.[[138]](#cite_note-138) In 2008, prior to the onset of the economic crisis, the *Financial Times* reported that Spain was the most favoured destination for Western Europeans considering a move from their own country and seeking jobs elsewhere in the EU.[[139]](#cite_note-139) In 2008, the government instituted a "Plan of Voluntary Return" which encouraged unemployed immigrants from outside the EU to return to their home countries and receive several incentives, including the right to keep their unemployment benefits and transfer whatever they contributed to the Spanish Social Security.[[140]](#cite_note-140) The program had little effect; during its first two months, just 1,400 immigrants took up the offer.[[141]](#cite_note-141) What the program failed to do, the sharp and prolonged economic crisis has done from 2010 to 2011 in that tens of thousands of immigrants have left the country due to lack of jobs. In 2011 alone, more than half a million people left Spain.[[142]](#cite_note-142) For the first time in decades the net migration rate was expected to be negative, and nine out of 10 emigrants were foreigners.<ref name=emigracion>[580.000 personas se van de España](http://www.elpais.com/articulo/sociedad/580000/personas/van/Espana/elpepisoc/20111008elpepisoc_2/Tes). El País. Edición Impresa. 8 October 2011</ref>

### Languages[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=35)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|right|300px|The languages of Spain (simplified)](/wiki/File:Languages_of_Spain.svg) Spain is openly multilingual,<ref name=conversi>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref> and the constitution establishes that the nation will protect "all Spaniards and the peoples of Spain in the exercise of human rights, their cultures and traditions, languages and institutions.<ref name=preamble>Preamble to the Constitution [Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref>

[Spanish](/wiki/Spanish_language) (*español*)—officially recognised in the constitution as [Castilian](/wiki/Names_given_to_the_Spanish_language) (*castellano*)—is the official language of the entire country, and it is the right and duty of every Spaniard to know the language. The constitution also establishes that "all other Spanish languages"—that is, all other languages of Spain—will also be official in their respective autonomous communities in accordance to their [Statutes](/wiki/Statute_of_Autonomy), their organic regional legislations, and that the "richness of the distinct linguistic modalities of Spain represents a patrimony which will be the object of special respect and protection."<ref name=third>Third article. [Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref>

The other official languages of Spain, co-official with Spanish are:

* [Basque](/wiki/Basque_language) (*euskara*) in the [Basque Country](/wiki/Basque_Country_(autonomous_community)) and [Navarre](/wiki/Navarre);
* [Catalan](/wiki/Catalan_language) (*català*) in [Catalonia](/wiki/Catalonia), the [Balearic Islands](/wiki/Balearic_Islands) and in the [Valencian Community](/wiki/Valencian_Community), where its distinct modality of the language is officially known as [Valencian](/wiki/Valencian_language) (*valencià*); and
* [Galician](/wiki/Galician_language) (*galego*) in [Galicia](/wiki/Galicia_(Spain))

[thumb|right|300px|](/wiki/File:Países_de_Lengua_Ibérica.svg)[Iberophone](/wiki/Iberophone). As a percentage of the general population, Basque is spoken by 2%, Catalan (or Valencian) by 17%, and Galician by 7% of all Spaniards.[[143]](#cite_note-143) In [Catalonia](/wiki/Catalonia), [Aranese](/wiki/Aranese_language) (*aranés*), a local variety of the [Occitan language](/wiki/Occitan_language), has been declared co-official along with Catalan and Spanish since 2006. It is spoken only in the *comarca* of [*Val d'Aran*](/wiki/Val_d'Aran) by roughly 6,700 people. Other [Romance](/wiki/Romance_language) [minority languages](/wiki/Minority_languages), though not official, have special recognition, such as the Astur-Leonese group ([Asturian](/wiki/Asturian_language) – *asturianu*, also called *bable* – in [Asturias](/wiki/Asturias)[[144]](#cite_note-144) and [Leonese](/wiki/Leonese_language) – *llionés* – in [Castile and León](/wiki/Castile_and_León)) and [Aragonese](/wiki/Aragonese_language) (*aragonés*) in [Aragon](/wiki/Aragon).

In the [North African](/wiki/North_Africa) Spanish autonomous city of [Melilla](/wiki/Melilla), [Riff Berber](/wiki/Riff_language) is spoken by a significant part of the population. In the tourist areas of the Mediterranean coast and the islands, [English](/wiki/English_language) and [German](/wiki/German_language) are widely spoken by tourists, foreign residents, and tourism workers.[[145]](#cite_note-145)

### Education[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=36)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) State education in Spain is free and compulsory from the age of six to sixteen. The current education system was established by the 2006 educational law, LOE (*Ley Orgánica de Educación*), or Fundamental Law for the Education.<ref name=LOE\_juridicas>[*La Ley Orgánica 2/2006*](http://noticias.juridicas.com/base_datos/Admin/lo2-2006.html). Retrieved 23 September 2009</ref> In 2014, the LOE was partially modified by the newer LOMCE law (*Ley Orgánica para la Mejora de la Calidad Educativa*), or Fundamental Law for the Improvement of the Education System, commonly called *Ley Wert* (Wert Law).<ref name=LOMCE\_juridicas>[*Ley Orgánica 8/2013*](http://noticias.juridicas.com/base_datos/Admin/517990-lo-8-2013-de-9-dic-para-la-mejora-de-la-calidad-educativa.html). Retrieved 9 December 2013</ref> Since 1970 to 2014, Spain has had seven different educational laws (LGE, LOECE, LODE, LOGSE, LOPEG, LOE and LOMCE).[[146]](#cite_note-146)

### Religion[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=37)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [Template:Further](/wiki/Template:Further) [Template:Bar box](/wiki/Template:Bar_box) [Roman Catholicism](/wiki/Roman_Catholic) has long been the main religion of Spain, and although it no longer has official status by law, in all public schools in Spain students have to choose either a religion or ethics class, and Catholicism is the only religion officially taught. According to an April 2014 study by the Spanish Centre for Sociological Research about 69% of Spaniards self-identify as Catholics, 2% other faith, and about 26% identify with [no religion](/wiki/Irreligion). Most Spaniards do not participate regularly in religious services. This same study shows that of the Spaniards who identify themselves as religious, 59% hardly ever or never go to church, 15% go to church some times a year, 8% some time per month and 14% every Sunday or multiple times per week.[[147]](#cite_note-147) Recent polls and surveys have revealed that [atheists](/wiki/Atheism) comprise anywhere from 8% to 20% of the Spanish population.[[148]](#cite_note-148)[[149]](#cite_note-149) [thumb|upright|left|](/wiki/File:Santiago.de.Compostela.Catedral.Noche.jpg)[Santiago de Compostela Cathedral](/wiki/Santiago_de_Compostela_Cathedral), [A Coruña.](/wiki/Province_of_A_Coruña) Altogether, about 22% of the entire Spanish population attends religious services at least once per month.[[150]](#cite_note-150) Though Spanish society has become considerably more secular in recent decades, the influx of Latin American immigrants, who tend to be strong Catholic practitioners, has helped the Catholic Church to recover.

There have been four Spanish [Popes](/wiki/Pope). [Damasus I](/wiki/Pope_Damasus_I), [Calixtus III](/wiki/Pope_Calixtus_III), [Alexander VI](/wiki/Pope_Alexander_VI) and [Benedict XIII](/wiki/Antipope_Benedict_XIII). Spanish misticism was an important intellectual fight against Protestantism with [Teresa of Ávila](/wiki/Teresa_of_Ávila), a [reformist](/wiki/Counter-Reformation) nun, ahead. The [Society of Jesus](/wiki/Society_of_Jesus) was founded by [Ignatius of Loyola](/wiki/Ignatius_of_Loyola).

[Protestant](/wiki/Protestantism) churches have about 1,200,000 members.[[151]](#cite_note-151) There are about 105,000 [Jehovah's Witnesses](/wiki/Jehovah's_Witnesses). [The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints](/wiki/The_Church_of_Jesus_Christ_of_Latter-day_Saints) has approximately 46,000 adherents in 133 congregations in all regions of the country and has a [temple](/wiki/Madrid_Spain_Temple) in the [Moratalaz](/wiki/Moratalaz) District of Madrid.[[152]](#cite_note-152) A study made by the [Union of Islamic Communities of Spain](/wiki/Union_of_Islamic_Communities_of_Spain) demonstrated that there were about 1,700,000 inhabitants of Muslim background living in Spain [Template:As of](/wiki/Template:As_of), accounting for 3-4% of the total population of Spain. The vast majority was composed of immigrants and descendants originating from [Morocco](/wiki/Morocco) and other African countries. More than 514,000 (30%) of them had Spanish nationality.[[153]](#cite_note-153) The recent waves of immigration have also led to an increasing number of [Hindus](/wiki/Hindus), [Buddhists](/wiki/Buddhists), [Sikhs](/wiki/Sikhs) and [Muslims](/wiki/Muslims). After the Reconquista in 1492, Muslims did not live in Spain for centuries. Late 19th-century colonial expansion in northwestern Africa gave a number of residents in [Spanish Morocco](/wiki/Spanish_Morocco) and [Western Sahara](/wiki/Western_Sahara) full citizenship. Their ranks have since been bolstered by recent immigration, especially from Morocco and Algeria.

[Judaism](/wiki/Judaism) was practically non-existent in Spain from the 1492 expulsion until the 19th century, when Jews were again permitted to enter the country. Currently there are around 62,000 Jews in Spain, or 0.14% of the total population. Most are arrivals in the past century, while some are descendants of earlier Spanish Jews. Approximately 80,000 [Jews](/wiki/Jew) are thought to have lived in Spain prior to its expulsion.[[154]](#cite_note-154)

## Culture[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=38)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) Culturally, Spain is a [Western country](/wiki/Western_world). Almost every aspect of Spanish life is permeated by its Roman heritage, making Spain one of the major [Latin countries](/wiki/Romance-speaking_Europe) of Europe. Spanish culture is marked by strong historic ties to Catholicism, which played a pivotal role in the country's formation and subsequent identity. Spanish art, architecture, cuisine, and music has been shaped by successive waves of foreign invaders, as well as by the country's Mediterranean climate and geography. The centuries-long colonial era globalised Spanish language and culture, with Spain also absorbing the cultural and commercial products of its diverse empire.

### Monuments and World Heritage Sites[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=39)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also)

It should be noted that after [Italy](/wiki/Italy) (49) and [China](/wiki/China) (45), Spain is the third country in the world with the most [World Heritage Sites](/wiki/World_Heritage_Site). At the present time it has 44 recognised sites, including the landscape of [Monte Perdido](/wiki/Monte_Perdido) in the [Pyrenees](/wiki/Pyrenees), which is shared with [France](/wiki/France), the Prehistoric Rock Art Sites of the [Côa Valley](/wiki/Côa_Valley) and [Siega Verde](/wiki/Siega_Verde), which is shared with [Portugal](/wiki/Portugal) (the Portuguese part being in the Côa Valley, [Guarda](/wiki/Guarda_District)), and the [Heritage of Mercury](/wiki/Heritage_of_Mercury._Almadén_and_Idrija), shared with [Slovenia](/wiki/Slovenia).[[155]](#cite_note-155) In addition, Spain has also 14 [Intangible cultural heritage](/wiki/Intangible_cultural_heritage), or "Human treasures", Spain ranks first in [Europe](/wiki/Europe) according to [UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage List](/wiki/UNESCO_Intangible_Cultural_Heritage_Lists), tied with [Croatia](/wiki/Croatia).[[156]](#cite_note-156) [thumb|](/wiki/File:Aqueduct_of_Segovia_08.jpg)[Aqueduct of Segovia](/wiki/Aqueduct_of_Segovia), [Roman](/wiki/Ancient_Roman_architecture). [thumb|](/wiki/File:Santa_maria_del_naranco-001.jpg)[Santa María del Naranco](/wiki/Santa_María_del_Naranco), [pre-Romanesque](/wiki/Pre-Romanesque_art_and_architecture). [thumb|](/wiki/File:Catedral_de_Burgos_(58496966).jpg)[Cathedral of Burgos](/wiki/Cathedral_of_Burgos), [Gothic](/wiki/Gothic_architecture). [thumb|](/wiki/File:Aljafería2.JPG)[Aljafería](/wiki/Aljafería) of Zaragoza, [Mudéjar](/wiki/Mudéjar). [thumb|](/wiki/File:Concatedral_de_Caceres.JPG)[Old Town of Cáceres](/wiki/Cáceres,_Spain), [Renaissance](/wiki/Renaissance_architecture).

* 1984 — [Alhambra](/wiki/Alhambra), [Generalife](/wiki/Generalife) and [Albayzín](/wiki/Albayzín) (Granada, Andalusia).
* 1984 — [Burgos Cathedral](/wiki/Burgos_Cathedral) (Burgos, Castile-León).
* 1984 — [Historic Centre of Córdoba](/wiki/Historic_centre_of_Córdoba) (Córdoba, Andalusia).
* 1984 — [Monastery and Royal Site of El Escorial](/wiki/El_Escorial) (Madrid).
* 1984 — [Works of Antoni Gaudí](/wiki/List_of_Gaudí_buildings) (Barcelona, Catalonia).
* 1985 — [Cave of Altamira and Paleolithic Cave Art of Northern Spain](/wiki/Cave_of_Altamira_and_Paleolithic_Cave_Art_of_Northern_Spain) (Asturias, Basque Country and Cantabria regions).
* 1985 — [Monuments of Oviedo and the Kingdom of Asturias](/wiki/Asturian_architecture) (Asturias).
* 1985 — [Old Town of Ávila with its Extra-Muros Churches](/wiki/Ávila,_Spain) (Ávila, Castile-León).
* 1985 — [Old Town of Segovia](/wiki/Segovia) and its [Aqueduct](/wiki/Aqueduct_of_Segovia) (Segovia, Castile-León).
* 1985 — [Santiago de Compostela](/wiki/Santiago_de_Compostela) (Old Town) (A Coruña, Galicia).
* 1986 — [Garajonay National Park](/wiki/Garajonay_National_Park) (La Gomera, Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Canary Islands).
* 1986 — [Historic City of Toledo](/wiki/Toledo,_Spain) (Toledo, Castile-La Mancha).
* 1986 — [Mudéjar Architecture of Aragon](/wiki/Mudéjar_Architecture_of_Aragon) (Provinces of Teruel and Zaragoza in Aragon).
* 1986 — [Old Town of Cáceres](/wiki/Cáceres,_Spain) (Cáceres, Extremadura).
* 1987 — [Cathedral](/wiki/Cathedral_of_Seville), [Alcázar](/wiki/Reales_Alcázares_de_Sevilla) and [Archivo de Indias](/wiki/General_Archive_of_the_Indies) in [Seville](/wiki/Seville) (Seville, Andalusia).
* 1988 — [Old City of Salamanca](/wiki/Salamanca) (Salamanca, Castile-León).
* 1991 — [Poblet Monastery](/wiki/Poblet_Monastery) (Tarragona, Catalonia).
* 1993 — [Archaeological Ensemble of Mérida](/wiki/Archaeological_Ensemble_of_Mérida) (Badajoz, Extremadura).
* 1993 — [Route of Santiago de Compostela](/wiki/Camino_de_Santiago) (Provinces of Burgos, León and Palencia in Castile-León, Provinces of A Coruña and Lugo in Galicia, La Rioja, Navarre, and the Province of Huesca in Aragon).
* 1993 — [Royal Monastery of Santa María de Guadalupe](/wiki/Santa_María_de_Guadalupe_Monastery) (Cáceres, Extremadura).
* 1994 — [Doñana National Park](/wiki/Doñana_National_Park) (Provinces of Cádiz, Huelva and Seville in Andalusia).
* 1996 — [Historic Walled Town of Cuenca](/wiki/Cuenca,_Spain) (Cuenca, Castile-La Mancha).
* 1996 — [Silk Exchange of Valencia](/wiki/Llotja_de_la_Seda) (Valencia).
* 1997 — [Las Médulas](/wiki/Las_Médulas) (León, Castile-León).
* 1997 — [Palau de la Música Catalana](/wiki/Palau_de_la_Música_Catalana) and [Hospital de Sant Pau](/wiki/Hospital_de_Sant_Pau) in [Barcelona](/wiki/Barcelona) (Barcelona, Catalonia).
* 1997 — [Pirineos – Monte Perdido](/wiki/Pyrénées_–_Mont_Perdu_World_Heritage_Site) (Huesca, Aragon – Spanish part / Midi-Pyrénées and Aquitaine – French part). (Shared with France).
* 1997 — [San Millán Yuso and Suso Monasteries](/wiki/Monasteries_of_San_Millán_de_la_Cogolla) (La Rioja).
* 1998 (2010) — [Prehistoric Rock Art Sites in the Côa Valley](/wiki/Côa_Valley) (Guarda, Norte Region – Portuguese part) and [Siega Verde](/wiki/Siega_Verde) (Salamanca, Castile-León – Spanish part). (Shared with Portugal).
* 1998 — [Rock art of the Iberian Mediterranean Basin](/wiki/Rock_art_of_the_Iberian_Mediterranean_Basin) on the [Iberian Peninsula](/wiki/Iberian_Peninsula) (Andalusia, Aragon, Castile-La Mancha, Catalonia, Murcia and Valencia regions).
* 1998 — [University and Historic Precinct of Alcalá de Henares](/wiki/Alcalá_de_Henares) (Madrid).
* 1999 — [Ibiza, Biodiversity and Culture](/wiki/Ibiza_(island)) (Ibiza, Balearic Islands).
* 1999 — [San Cristóbal de La Laguna](/wiki/San_Cristóbal_de_La_Laguna) (Tenerife, Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Canary Islands).
* 2000 — [Archaeological Ensemble of Tarraco](/wiki/Tarraco) (Tarragona, Catalonia).
* 2000 — [Archaeological Site of Atapuerca](/wiki/Sierra_de_Atapuerca) (Burgos, Castile-León).
* 2000 — [Catalan Romanesque Churches of the Vall de Boí](/wiki/Catalan_Romanesque_Churches_of_the_Vall_de_Boí) (Lleida, Catalonia).
* 2000 — [Palmeral of Elche](/wiki/Palmeral_of_Elche) (Alicante, Valencia).
* 2000 — [Roman Walls of Lugo](/wiki/Roman_Walls_of_Lugo) (Lugo, Galicia).
* 2001 — [Aranjuez](/wiki/Aranjuez) Cultural Landscape (Madrid).
* 2003 — Renaissance Monumental Ensembles of [Úbeda](/wiki/Úbeda) and [Baeza](/wiki/Baeza) (Jaén, Andalusia).
* 2006 — [Vizcaya Bridge](/wiki/Vizcaya_Bridge) (Biscay, Basque Country).
* 2007 — [Teide National Park](/wiki/Teide_National_Park) (Tenerife, Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Canary Islands).
* 2009 — [Tower of Hercules](/wiki/Tower_of_Hercules) (A Coruña, Galicia).
* 2011 — [Cultural Landscape of the Serra de Tramuntana](/wiki/Sierra_de_Tramontana) (Majorca, Balearic Islands).
* 2012 — [Heritage of Mercury](/wiki/Heritage_of_Mercury._Almadén_and_Idrija). [Almadén](/wiki/Almadén) (Ciudad Real, Castile-La Mancha – Spanish part) and [Idrija](/wiki/Idrija) (Slovene Littoral – Slovenian part). (Shared with Slovenia).

### Literature[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=40)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main)

The earliest recorded examples of vernacular Romance-based literature date from the same time and location, the rich mix of Muslim, Jewish, and Christian cultures in Muslim Spain, in which Maimonides, Averroes, and others worked, the [Kharjas](/wiki/Kharja) (*Jarchas*).

During the [Reconquista](/wiki/Reconquista), the epic poem [*Cantar de Mio Cid*](/wiki/Cantar_de_Mio_Cid) was written about a real man—his battles, conquests, and daily life. [upright|thumb|left|upright|Bronze statues of](/wiki/File:Bronze_statues_of_Don_Quixote_and_Sancho_Panza.jpg) [Don Quixote](/wiki/Don_Quixote) and [Sancho Panza](/wiki/Sancho_Panza) in the [Plaza de España](/wiki/Plaza_de_España_(Madrid)) in [Madrid](/wiki/Madrid).

Other major plays from the medieval times were [*Mester de Juglaría*](/wiki/Mester_de_Juglaría), [*Mester de Clerecía*](/wiki/Mester_de_Clerecía), [*Coplas por la muerte de su padre*](/wiki/Coplas_por_la_muerte_de_su_padre) or [*El Libro de buen amor*](/wiki/The_Book_of_Good_Love) (The Book of Good Love).

During the [Renaissance](/wiki/Renaissance) the major plays are [*La Celestina*](/wiki/La_Celestina) and [*El Lazarillo de Tormes*](/wiki/El_Lazarillo_de_Tormes), while many religious literature was created with poets as [Luis de León](/wiki/Luis_de_León), [San Juan de la Cruz](/wiki/San_Juan_de_la_Cruz), [Santa Teresa de Jesús](/wiki/Santa_Teresa_de_Jesús), etc.

The [Baroque](/wiki/Baroque) is the most important period for Spanish culture. We are in the times of the [Spanish Empire](/wiki/Spanish_Empire). The famous [*Don Quijote de La Mancha*](/wiki/Don_Quixote) by [Miguel de Cervantes](/wiki/Miguel_de_Cervantes) was written in this time. Other writers from the period are: [Francisco de Quevedo](/wiki/Francisco_de_Quevedo), [Lope de Vega](/wiki/Lope_de_Vega), [Calderón de la Barca](/wiki/Calderón_de_la_Barca) or [Tirso de Molina](/wiki/Tirso_de_Molina).

During the [Enlightenment](/wiki/Age_of_Enlightenment) we find names such as [Leandro Fernández de Moratín](/wiki/Leandro_Fernández_de_Moratín), [Benito Jerónimo Feijóo](/wiki/Benito_Jerónimo_Feijóo), [Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos](/wiki/Gaspar_Melchor_de_Jovellanos) or [Leandro Fernández de Moratín](/wiki/Leandro_Fernández_de_Moratín).

During the [Romanticism](/wiki/Romanticism), [José Zorrilla](/wiki/José_Zorrilla) created one of the most emblematic figures in European literature in [Don Juan Tenorio](/wiki/Don_Juan_Tenorio). Other writers from this period are [Gustavo Adolfo Bécquer](/wiki/Gustavo_Adolfo_Bécquer), [José de Espronceda](/wiki/José_de_Espronceda), [Rosalía de Castro](/wiki/Rosalía_de_Castro) or [Mariano José de Larra](/wiki/Mariano_José_de_Larra).

In [Realism](/wiki/Realism_(arts)) we find names such as [Benito Pérez Galdós](/wiki/Benito_Pérez_Galdós), [Emilia Pardo Bazán](/wiki/Emilia_Pardo_Bazán), [Leopoldo Alas](/wiki/Leopoldo_Alas) (Clarín) or [Vicente Blasco Ibáñez](/wiki/Vicente_Blasco_Ibáñez) and [Menéndez Pelayo](/wiki/Menéndez_Pelayo). Realism offered depictions of contemporary life and society 'as they were'. In the spirit of general "Realism", Realist authors opted for depictions of everyday and banal activities and experiences, instead of romanticised or stylised presentations.

The group that has become known as the [Generation of 1898](/wiki/Generation_of_1898) was marked by the destruction of Spain's fleet in Cuba by US gunboats in 1898, which provoked a cultural crisis in Spain. The "Disaster" of 1898 led established writers to seek practical political, economic, and social solutions in essays grouped under the literary heading of *Regeneracionismo*. For a group of younger writers, among them [Miguel de Unamuno](/wiki/Miguel_de_Unamuno), [Pío Baroja](/wiki/Pío_Baroja), and [José Martínez Ruiz](/wiki/José_Martínez_Ruiz) (Azorín), the Disaster and its cultural repercussions inspired a deeper, more radical literary shift that affected both form and content. These writers, along with [Ramón del Valle-Inclán](/wiki/Ramón_del_Valle-Inclán), [Antonio Machado](/wiki/Antonio_Machado), [Ramiro de Maeztu](/wiki/Ramiro_de_Maeztu), and Ángel Ganivet, came to be known as the 'Generation of 98'.

[Template:Triple image](/wiki/Template:Triple_image) The Generation of 1914 or Novecentismo. The next supposed "generation" of Spanish writers following those of '98 already calls into question the value of such terminology. By the year 1914—the year of the outbreak of the First World War and of the publication of the first major work of the generation's leading voice, [José Ortega y Gasset](/wiki/José_Ortega_y_Gasset)—a number of slightly younger writers had established their own place within the Spanish cultural field.

Leading voices include the poet [Juan Ramón Jiménez](/wiki/Juan_Ramón_Jiménez), the academics and essayists [Ramón Menéndez Pidal](/wiki/Ramón_Menéndez_Pidal), [Gregorio Marañón](/wiki/Gregorio_Marañón), [Manuel Azaña](/wiki/Manuel_Azaña), [Maria Zambrano](/wiki/Maria_Zambrano), [Eugeni d'Ors](/wiki/Eugeni_d'Ors), and Ortega y Gasset, and the novelists Gabriel Miró, [Ramón Pérez de Ayala](/wiki/Ramón_Pérez_de_Ayala), and [Ramón Gómez de la Serna](/wiki/Ramón_Gómez_de_la_Serna). While still driven by the national and existential questions that obsessed the writers of '98, they approached these topics with a greater sense of distance and objectivity. [Salvador de Madariaga](/wiki/Salvador_de_Madariaga), another prominent intellectual and writer, was one of the founders of the [College of Europe](/wiki/College_of_Europe) and the composer of the constitutive manifest of the [Liberal International](/wiki/Liberal_International).

The Generation of 1927, where poets Pedro Salinas, [Jorge Guillén](/wiki/Jorge_Guillén), [Federico García Lorca](/wiki/Federico_García_Lorca), [Vicente Aleixandre](/wiki/Vicente_Aleixandre), [Dámaso Alonso](/wiki/Dámaso_Alonso). All were scholars of their national literary heritage, again evidence of the impact of the calls of *regeneracionistas* and the Generation of 1898 for Spanish intelligence to turn at least partially inwards.

The two main writers in the second half of the 20th century were the [Nobel Prize in Literature](/wiki/Nobel_Prize_in_Literature) laureate [Camilo José Cela](/wiki/Camilo_José_Cela) and [Miguel Delibes](/wiki/Miguel_Delibes). Spain is one of the countries with the most number of laureates with the [Nobel Prize in Literature](/wiki/Nobel_Prize_in_Literature), and with [Latin American](/wiki/Latin_America) laureates they made the [Spanish language](/wiki/Spanish_language) literature one of the most laureates of all. The Spanish writers are: [José Echegaray](/wiki/José_Echegaray), [Jacinto Benavente](/wiki/Jacinto_Benavente), [Juan Ramón Jiménez](/wiki/Juan_Ramón_Jiménez), [Vicente Aleixandre](/wiki/Vicente_Aleixandre) and [Camilo José Cela](/wiki/Camilo_José_Cela). The Portuguese writer [José Saramago](/wiki/José_Saramago), also awarded with the prize, lived for many years in Spain and spoke both Portuguese and Spanish. He was also well known by his [Iberist](/wiki/Iberism) ideas.

[Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also)

### Art[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=41)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|upright|](/wiki/File:Las_Meninas,_by_Diego_Velázquez,_from_Prado_in_Google_Earth.jpg)[*Las Meninas*](/wiki/Las_Meninas) (1656), [Diego Velázquez](/wiki/Diego_Velázquez), [Museo del Prado](/wiki/Museo_del_Prado).

Artists from Spain have been highly influential in the development of various European [artistic movements](/wiki/Art_movement). Due to historical, geographical and generational diversity, Spanish art has known a great number of influences. The Moorish heritage in Spain, especially in [Andalusia](/wiki/Andalusia), is still evident today and European influences include Italy, Germany and France, especially during the [Baroque](/wiki/Baroque) and [Neoclassical](/wiki/Neoclassicism) periods.

During the [Golden Age](/wiki/Golden_Age) we find painters such as [El Greco](/wiki/El_Greco), [José de Ribera](/wiki/José_de_Ribera) and [Francisco Zurbarán](/wiki/Francisco_Zurbarán). Also inside Baroque period [Diego Velázquez](/wiki/Diego_Velázquez) created some of the most famous Spanish portraits, like [Las Meninas](/wiki/Las_Meninas) or [Las Hilanderas](/wiki/Las_Hilanderas_(Velázquez)).

[Francisco Goya](/wiki/Francisco_Goya) painted during a historical period that includes the [Spanish Independence War](/wiki/Peninsular_War), the fights between liberals and absolutists, and the raise of state-nations.

[Joaquín Sorolla](/wiki/Joaquín_Sorolla) is a well-known impressionist painter and there are many important Spanish painters belonging to the modernism art movement, including [Pablo Picasso](/wiki/Pablo_Picasso), [Salvador Dalí](/wiki/Salvador_Dalí), [Juan Gris](/wiki/Juan_Gris) and [Joan Miró](/wiki/Joan_Miró).

### Cinema[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=42)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|left|upright|](/wiki/File:Pedro_Almodovar_and_Penélope_Cruz.jpg)[Pedro Almodóvar](/wiki/Pedro_Almodóvar) and [Penélope Cruz](/wiki/Penélope_Cruz) in [Oviedo](/wiki/Oviedo) ([Princess of Asturias Awards](/wiki/Princess_of_Asturias_Awards)). Spanish cinema has achieved major international success including [Oscars](/wiki/Academy_Award) for recent films such as [*Pan's Labyrinth*](/wiki/Pan's_Labyrinth) and [*Volver*](/wiki/Volver).[[157]](#cite_note-157) In the long history of Spanish cinema, the great filmmaker [Luis Buñuel](/wiki/Luis_Buñuel) was the first to achieve world recognition, followed by [Pedro Almodóvar](/wiki/Pedro_Almodóvar) in the 1980s. Spanish cinema has also seen international success over the years with films by [directors](/wiki/Film_director) like [Segundo de Chomón](/wiki/Segundo_de_Chomón), [Florián Rey](/wiki/Florián_Rey), [Luis García Berlanga](/wiki/Luis_García_Berlanga), [Carlos Saura](/wiki/Carlos_Saura), [Julio Medem](/wiki/Julio_Medem), [Isabel Coixet](/wiki/Isabel_Coixet), [Alejandro Amenábar](/wiki/Alejandro_Amenábar), [Icíar Bollaín](/wiki/Icíar_Bollaín) and brothers [David Trueba](/wiki/David_Trueba) and [Fernando Trueba](/wiki/Fernando_Trueba).

Actresses [Sara Montiel](/wiki/Sara_Montiel) and [Penélope Cruz](/wiki/Penélope_Cruz) are among those who have become [Hollywood](/wiki/Hollywood) stars.

### Architecture[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=43)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|upright|The](/wiki/File:Sagrada_Familia_03.jpg) [*Sagrada Família*](/wiki/Sagrada_Família) by [Antoni Gaudí](/wiki/Antoni_Gaudí), Barcelona Due to its historical and geographical diversity, Spanish architecture has drawn from a host of influences. An important provincial city founded by the Romans and with an extensive [Roman era](/wiki/Roman_era) infrastructure, [Córdoba](/wiki/Córdoba,_Spain) became the cultural capital, including fine Arabic style architecture, during the time of the Islamic [Umayyad dynasty](/wiki/Umayyad_dynasty).[[158]](#cite_note-158) Later Arab style architecture continued to be developed under successive Islamic dynasties, ending with the [Nasrid](/wiki/Nasrid), which built its famed palace complex in [Granada](/wiki/Granada).

Simultaneously, the Christian kingdoms gradually emerged and developed their own styles; developing a [pre-Romanesque](/wiki/Pre-Romanesque) style when for a while isolated from contemporary mainstream European architectural influences during the earlier Middle Ages, they later integrated the [Romanesque](/wiki/Romanesque_architecture) and [Gothic](/wiki/Gothic_architecture) streams. There was then an extraordinary flowering of the Gothic style that resulted in numerous instances being built throughout the entire territory. The [Mudéjar](/wiki/Mudéjar) style, from the 12th to 17th centuries, was developed by introducing Arab style motifs, patterns and elements into European architecture.

The arrival of [Modernism](/wiki/Modernism) in the academic arena produced much of the architecture of the 20th century. An influential style centred in [Barcelona](/wiki/Barcelona), known as [modernisme](/wiki/Modernisme), produced a number of important architects, of which [Gaudí](/wiki/Gaudí) is one. The [International style](/wiki/International_Style_(architecture)) was led by groups like [GATEPAC](/wiki/GATEPAC). Spain is currently experiencing a revolution in [contemporary architecture](/wiki/Contemporary_architecture) and [Spanish architects](/wiki/Category:Spanish_architects) like [Rafael Moneo](/wiki/Rafael_Moneo), [Santiago Calatrava](/wiki/Santiago_Calatrava), [Ricardo Bofill](/wiki/Ricardo_Bofill) as well as many others have gained worldwide renown.

### Music and dance[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=44)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|upright|](/wiki/File:Belen_maya.jpg)[Flamenco](/wiki/Flamenco) is an Andalusian artistic form that evolved from the [Seguidilla](/wiki/Seguidilla) Spanish music is often considered abroad to be synonymous with [flamenco](/wiki/Flamenco), a West Andalusian musical genre, which, contrary to popular belief, is not widespread outside that region. Various regional styles of [folk music](/wiki/Folk_music) abound in Aragon, Catalonia, Valencia, Castile, the Basque Country, Galicia and Asturias. Pop, rock, hip hop and heavy metal are also popular.

In the field of [classical music](/wiki/Classical_music), Spain has produced a number of noted [composers](/wiki/Composers) such as [Isaac Albéniz](/wiki/Isaac_Albéniz), [Manuel de Falla](/wiki/Manuel_de_Falla) and [Enrique Granados](/wiki/Enrique_Granados) and singers and performers such as [Plácido Domingo](/wiki/Plácido_Domingo), [José Carreras](/wiki/José_Carreras), [Montserrat Caballé](/wiki/Montserrat_Caballé), [Alicia de Larrocha](/wiki/Alicia_de_Larrocha), [Alfredo Kraus](/wiki/Alfredo_Kraus), [Pablo Casals](/wiki/Pablo_Casals), [Ricardo Viñes](/wiki/Ricardo_Viñes), [José Iturbi](/wiki/José_Iturbi), [Pablo de Sarasate](/wiki/Pablo_de_Sarasate), [Jordi Savall](/wiki/Jordi_Savall) and [Teresa Berganza](/wiki/Teresa_Berganza). In Spain there are over forty professional orchestras, including the [Orquestra Simfònica de Barcelona](/wiki/Barcelona_Symphony_and_Catalonia_National_Orchestra), [Orquesta Nacional de España](/wiki/Orquesta_Nacional_de_España) and the [Orquesta Sinfónica de Madrid](/wiki/Orquesta_Sinfónica_de_Madrid). Major [opera houses](/wiki/Opera_houses) include the [Teatro Real](/wiki/Teatro_Real), the [Gran Teatre del Liceu](/wiki/Gran_Teatre_del_Liceu), [Teatro Arriaga](/wiki/Teatro_Arriaga) and the [El Palau de les Arts Reina Sofía](/wiki/El_Palau_de_les_Arts_Reina_Sofía).

Thousands of music fans also travel to Spain each year for internationally recognised summer music festivals [Sónar](/wiki/Sónar) which often features the top up and coming pop and techno acts, and [Benicàssim](/wiki/Festival_Internacional_de_Benicàssim) which tends to feature alternative rock and dance acts.[[159]](#cite_note-159) Both festivals mark Spain as an international music presence and reflect the tastes of young people in the country.

The most popular traditional [musical instrument](/wiki/Musical_instrument), the [guitar](/wiki/Guitar), originated in Spain.[[160]](#cite_note-160) Typical of the north are the traditional bag pipers or [*gaiteros*](/wiki/Gaita_(disambiguation)), mainly in Asturias and Galicia.

### Cuisine[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=45)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|](/wiki/File:Paella_de_marisco_01.jpg)[Paella](/wiki/Paella), a traditional [Valencian](/wiki/Valencian_Community) dish[[161]](#cite_note-161) Spanish cuisine consists of a great variety of dishes which stem from differences in geography, culture and climate. It is heavily influenced by seafood available from the waters that surround the country, and reflects the country's deep [Mediterranean](/wiki/Mediterranean) roots. Spain's extensive history with many cultural influences has led to a unique cuisine. In particular, three main divisions are easily identified:

***Mediterranean*** Spain – all such coastal regions, from Catalonia to Andalusia – heavy use of seafood, such as *pescaíto frito* (fried fish); several cold soups like [*gazpacho*](/wiki/Gazpacho); and many rice-based dishes like [*paella*](/wiki/Paella) from Valencia[[161]](#cite_note-161) and [*arròs negre*](/wiki/Arròs_negre) (black rice) from Catalonia.[[162]](#cite_note-162) ***Inner*** Spain – Castile – hot, thick soups such as the bread and garlic-based *Castilian soup*, along with substantious stews such as [*cocido madrileño*](/wiki/Cocido_madrileño). Food is traditionally conserved by salting, like [Spanish ham](/wiki/Spanish_ham), or immersed in [olive oil](/wiki/Olive_oil), like [Manchego cheese](/wiki/Manchego_cheese).

***Atlantic*** Spain – the whole Northern coast, including [Asturian](/wiki/Asturian_cuisine), [Basque](/wiki/Basque_cuisine), [Cantabrian](/wiki/Cantabrian_cuisine) and [Galician cuisine](/wiki/Galician_cuisine) – vegetable and fish-based stews like [*caldo gallego*](/wiki/Caldo_gallego) and [*marmitako*](/wiki/Marmitako). Also, the lightly cured [*lacón*](/wiki/Lacón_Gallego) ham. The best known cuisine of the northern countries often rely on ocean seafood, like the Basque-style [cod](/wiki/Cod), [albacore](/wiki/Albacore) or [anchovy](/wiki/Anchovy) or the Galician octopus-based [*polbo á feira*](/wiki/Polbo_á_feira) and shellfish dishes.

### Sport[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=46)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|upright|](/wiki/File:Barcelona-1992-rr-800.jpg)[1992 Summer Olympics](/wiki/1992_Summer_Olympics) in [Barcelona](/wiki/Barcelona) While varieties of football had been played in Spain as far back as Roman times, sport in Spain has been dominated by English style [association football](/wiki/Association_football) since the early 20th century. [Real Madrid C.F.](/wiki/Real_Madrid_C.F.) and [FC Barcelona](/wiki/FC_Barcelona) are two of the most successful football clubs in the world. [The country's national football team](/wiki/Spain_national_football_team) won the [UEFA European Football Championship](/wiki/UEFA_European_Football_Championship) in 1964, 2008 and 2012 and the [FIFA World Cup](/wiki/FIFA_World_Cup) in [2010](/wiki/2010_FIFA_World_Cup), and is the first team to ever win three back-to-back major international tournaments.

[Basketball](/wiki/Basketball), [tennis](/wiki/Tennis), [cycling](/wiki/Cycling), [handball](/wiki/Team_handball), [futsal](/wiki/Futsal), [motorcycling](/wiki/Motorcycling) and, lately, [Formula One](/wiki/Formula_One) are also important due to the presence of Spanish champions in all these disciplines. Today, Spain is a major world sports powerhouse, especially since the [1992 Summer Olympics](/wiki/1992_Summer_Olympics) that were hosted in [Barcelona](/wiki/Barcelona), which stimulated a great deal of interest in sports in the country. The tourism industry has led to an improvement in sports infrastructure, especially for [water sports](/wiki/Water_sports), [golf](/wiki/Golf) and [skiing](/wiki/Skiing).

[Rafael Nadal](/wiki/Rafael_Nadal) is the leading Spanish tennis player and has won several Grand Slam titles including the Wimbledon 2010 men's singles. In north Spain, the game of [pelota](/wiki/Basque_pelota) is very popular. [Alberto Contador](/wiki/Alberto_Contador) is the leading Spanish cyclist and has won several Grand Tour titles including two [Tour de France](/wiki/Tour_de_France) titles.

### Public holidays and festivals[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=47)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|upright|](/wiki/File:Sanfermines_Vaquillas_Pamplona_05.jpg)[San Fermín](/wiki/San_Fermín) festival, [Pamplona](/wiki/Pamplona)

Public holidays celebrated in Spain include a mix of religious ([Roman Catholic](/wiki/Roman_Catholic)), national and regional observances. Each municipality is allowed to declare a maximum of 14 [public holidays](/wiki/Public_holiday) per year; up to nine of these are chosen by the national government and at least two are chosen locally.[[163]](#cite_note-163) Spain's National Day ([*Fiesta Nacional de España*](/wiki/Fiesta_Nacional_de_España)) is 12 October, the anniversary of the [Discovery of America](/wiki/Discovery_of_America) and commemorate [Our Lady of the Pillar](/wiki/Our_Lady_of_the_Pillar) feast, patroness of [Aragon](/wiki/Aragon) and throughout Spain.

There are many festivals and festivities in Spain. Some of them are known worldwide, and every year millions of people from all over the world go to Spain to experience one of these festivals. One of the most famous is [San Fermín](/wiki/San_Fermín), in [Pamplona](/wiki/Pamplona). While its most famous event is the *encierro*, or the [running of the bulls](/wiki/Running_of_the_bulls), which happens at 8:00 am from 7 to 14 July, the week-long celebration involves many other traditional and folkloric events. Its events were central to the plot of The Sun Also Rises, by [Ernest Hemingway](/wiki/Ernest_Hemingway), which brought it to the general attention of English-speaking people. As a result, it has become one of the most internationally renowned fiestas in Spain, with over 1,000,000 people attending every year.

Other festivals include the carnivals in the [Canary Islands](/wiki/Canary_Islands), the [Falles](/wiki/Falles) in [Valencia](/wiki/Valencia) or the [Holy Week](/wiki/Holy_Week) in [Andalusia](/wiki/Andalusia) and [Castile and León](/wiki/Castile_and_León).

## See also[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=48)]

* [Outline of Spain](/wiki/Outline_of_Spain)
* [Template:Books-inline](/wiki/Template:Books-inline)

## Notes[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=49)]

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## References[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=50)]

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## Further reading[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=51)]

* [Template:Cite book](/wiki/Template:Cite_book)

## External links[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=52)]

[Template:Sister project links](/wiki/Template:Sister_project_links)

* [Template:CIA World Factbook link](/wiki/Template:CIA_World_Factbook_link)
* [Spain](http://ucblibraries.colorado.edu/govpubs/for/spain.htm) from *UCB Libraries GovPubs*
* [Template:Dmoz](/wiki/Template:Dmoz)
* [Spain](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-17941641) from the [BBC News](/wiki/BBC_News)
* [Key Development Forecasts for Spain](http://www.ifs.du.edu/ifs/frm_CountryProfile.aspx?Country=ES) from [International Futures](/wiki/International_Futures)

Government

* [E-Government portal for Spain](http://administracion.gob.es/pag_Home/index.html?idioma=en#.VN4im-asWSo)

Maps

* [Template:Wikiatlas](/wiki/Template:Wikiatlas)
* [Template:Osmrelation-inline](/wiki/Template:Osmrelation-inline)

Tourism

* [Official tourism portal for Spain](http://www.spain.info/en/)

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