

Spain

Demographics for Spain

Population:	40,341,462 (July 2005 est.)
GDP (by PPP method):	US\$ 937.6 billion
Currency (inc code):	Euro (EUR)
Language(s):	Castilian Spanish, Catalan, Galician, Basque; note Castilian is the official language nationwide; the other languages are official regionally
Internet country code:	.es

The education system in Spain is structured into the following stages: kindergarten education; compulsory primary education and compulsory secondary education; professional training or *bachillerato*; university and postgraduate studies.

The Spanish government is currently working on reforms of this educational system and recently approved new laws that should homogenize undergraduate and postgraduate qualifications to European standards, within the new European Higher Education Area (EHEA).

Kindergarten education

Pre-primary schooling is given up to the age of six years, when students join the stage of compulsory education. It is structured into two cycles: the first cycle is up to the age of three years; and the second cycle is up to the age of six.

Compulsory primary education

Primary education comprises the first six years of compulsory schooling and it is structured into three cycles of two years. Normally, students studying at this

level are from six to 12 years of age. The maximum number of students in each class at primary level is 25.

Compulsory secondary education (in Spanish, ESO, Educación Secundaria Obligatoria)

ESO completes basic schooling and covers four years from the age of 12 to 16 years. It comprises two cycles of two years. Students completing this stage successfully are awarded the Certificate of Secondary Education.

After appropriate assessment, certain students on the second cycle who are over the age of 16 follow curricular diversification programmes of one or two years where the content and areas covered differ from the general content to make it possible for them to reach the objectives of this stage following a more specific methodology.

Compulsory education is free in state schools and in private schools that are financed with public funds. The maximum number of students in each class at secondary level is 30.

Bachillerato

This stage of education is open to students with the Certificate of Secondary Education. It lasts for two years, which normally are studied between the ages of 16 and 18, and leads to the Bachillerato Certificate. Success at this stage means that students can access courses at university or move on to advanced professional training.

Professional training

Students wishing to access the cycles of professional training must have the Certificate of Secondary Education. They can also access this level of education by passing an examination set by the education authorities. This stage of education includes practical training at work centres, and students who complete this schooling successfully are awarded the Certificate of Technician in the corresponding profession, which includes specialities such as electricity, plumbing, electronics, etc.

The objective of professional training is to prepare students for their working life and it provides them with training for any changes that may occur during their professional career. This is true of the basic, intermediate and advanced levels.

University education

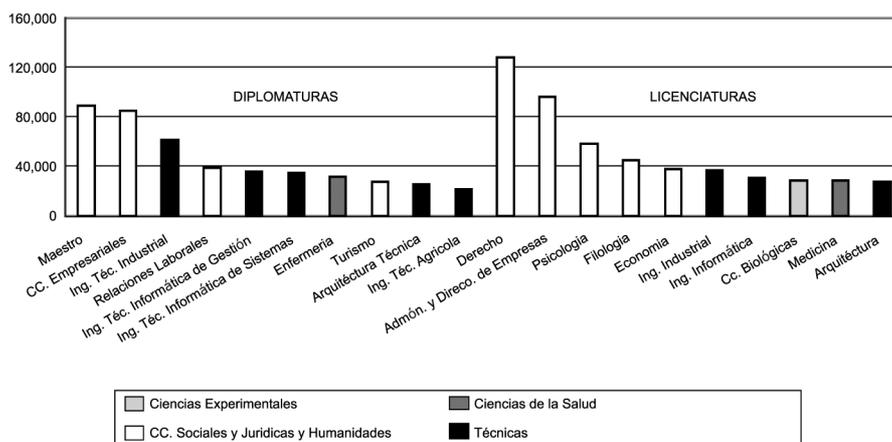
This is a third-level stage that is dependent on the Ministry of Education and Science and comprises both university and non-university education. The latter includes Higher Art Education and Higher Specific Vocational Training.

University studies are structured into cycles of at least two years. These cycles determine the different types of courses offered at the universities:

- *First-cycle courses* cover three academic years (a minimum of 180 credits) and lead to the title of Diploma, Technical Architect or Technical Engineer.
- *First- and second-cycle courses* are composed of a first cycle of two or three years and a second cycle of two years. Students who successfully complete these courses are awarded the title of graduate, architect or engineer. There are also second-cycle only courses, which cover two academic years and are aimed at students who have completed a first cycle related to the second-cycle course for which they apply.
- The courses available at university are completed with third-cycle courses, which students can study after obtaining the title of graduate, engineer or architect. These courses cover at least two academic years structured into courses and seminars aimed at the completion of a doctoral thesis for which students are awarded the title of doctor (Figure 1).

University professors must hold a doctorate. However, it is not a requirement for professors lecturing in colleges where the first cycle of university studies are taught (three-year degrees), but the latter must hold the qualification of graduate, architect or engineer.

Spanish universities are experiencing a fall in applications owing to the lower birth-rate during the 1980s and early 1990s. Increased internationalization of the economy and of the education system itself is creating a further need to change the curricula and for universities to differentiate themselves in order to capture students from outside their immediate catchment area.



Source: Ministry of Education. Spanish Government

Figure 1. Most popular university degrees in 2003

The Organic Statute on Universities (in Spanish, LOU) was passed in December 2001. It regulates the university system, increases student and teacher mobility, harmonises the system with the rest of Europe, encourages research activities and increases standards.

The Spanish university system is made up of 49 public universities, 14 private universities and four universities run by the Catholic Church (Table I).

Admission requirements

To enroll at a university, students have to pass the university entrance exam (in Spanish, PAU, Prueba de Acceso a la Universidad). The PAU, which is regulated by the Ministry of Education and Science and regional authorities, is organised and planned jointly by the universities and Baccalaureate teachers. Higher Art Education or Sports students also have to pass a specific exam. For certain courses, students also have to pass an additional specific exam to demonstrate that they have the knowledge and skills required for the speciality they have chosen.

The impact of Bologna

The Declaration of Bologna gives rise to a new European Space for Higher Education, which is likely to be the equivalent in university training to the introduction of the euro in the Spanish economy. When the implementation of this process is complete (before 2010), university courses will be structured into two periods and will carry the same titles throughout the European Union: degree for the first cycle (with a duration of three or four years) and Master's degree for the second cycle (one or two years).

In Spain the first cycle, that of "grado", will be changed from 180 to 240 credits, up until now known as "licenciatura", and that of "Master" from 60 to

	Total number of pupils	Number of pupils enrolled in public education	Percentage of pupils enrolled in public education	Number of pupils enrolled in private education	Percentage of pupils enrolled in private education
Pre-primary	1,419,307	926,689	65.3	492,618	34.7
Primary	2,494,598	1,660,520	66.6	834,618	33.4
Compulsory secondary	1,876,322	1,242,604	66.2	633,718	33.8
Special	29,283	15,353	62.4	13,930	47.6
Vocational training	516,504	387,310	75.0	129,194	25.0
Baccalaureate	623,154	476,466	75.4	155,668	24.6
University	1,462,771	1,330,574	91.0	2,259,228	32.4
All levels	8,430,939	6,039,516	71.6	2,391,423	29.4

Source: Ministry of Education, Spanish Government

Table I. *Numbers of Spanish students*

120 credits. This will give the possibility to students to complete their studies in three years, different from the current five years, and enter the job market earlier.

The main aim of this unification is to encourage university student and teacher mobility all over Europe, and the diffusion of knowledge in a similar way to other markets such as North America.

Management education

After the university stage, the Spanish education system includes postgraduate training courses. The portfolio of postgraduate courses includes the Master in Business Administration, Master's degrees specialised in different practical areas (Master in Marketing Management, Master in Financial Management, Master in Operations Management, etc.) and the area of Executive Education, which includes shorter higher courses and in-company programmes tailor-made to companies, etc. The postgraduate training sector has undergone significant growth in Spain in recent years.

Postgraduate training is given in Spain at both public (financed by the State) and private universities, with business schools linked to universities, and private business schools. Recently, some corporate universities have joined the postgraduate training market.

Each institution has the autonomy to define the content of the Master's degree programme and its duration, etc.

In the case of Spanish business schools, the last decade has seen an increase in the rate of internationalization of both teaching staff and students and the content of the courses on offer. In the specific case of Instituto de Empresa Business School in Madrid, more than 70 percent of MBA students come from other countries (mainly the Americas, Europe and Asia). Undoubtedly, this increases the diverse nature of the MBA experience, and enriches the MBA. Many students are attracted to Spain because of its strategic position as a bridge to the Americas. Spanish has now become arguably the second most important business language.

At present in Spain, the duration of MBA courses varies between one and two years and the trend is to reduce the two-year programmes to one year.

Amongst others, students in Spain can choose from the following portfolio of MBA courses:

- *MBA full time*. Aimed at university graduates with more than three years' professional experience (this varies in accordance with each institution). Full-time course.
- *MBA part time*. Aimed at university graduates with more than three years' professional experience (this varies in accordance with each institution). Part-time course that is compatible with professional commitments.

- *Executive MBA*. Aimed at university graduates with more than five years' professional experience (this varies in accordance with each institution). Part-time course.
- *Global MBA*. Aimed at university graduates with more than five years' professional experience (this varies in accordance with each institution). Part-time course with taught and online classes (or 100 percent online teaching) via technological learning platforms. The development of new technologies applied to training has made it possible to design this new kind of MBA course, involving executives from anywhere in the world who can fulfill their professional commitments at the same time as they follow the Global MBA course.

Accreditation

In Spain, the Master's degree courses given by the leading business schools are accredited by the top international institutions, EQUIS (four approved schools); AACSB (two approved schools); and AMBA (four approved schools).

The Spanish Association of Business Management Schools, AEEDE, was set up in 1989 by recognized business schools in Spain. It was based on a commitment to providing a corporate response to the standards and service required of management training that led to the founding of AEEDE. It also aimed to develop collaboration with similar associations in other countries, particularly with the European Foundation for Management Development (EFMD). It is currently composed of 11 members.

AEEDE's mission can be summarised as follows: the improvement of the standards of management education, the accreditation of business schools, the diffusion of best practices and increased interaction with the sector's main stakeholders.

Most important issues facing business schools in Spain

Bologna process

The implementation of the Bologna Declaration in Spain has encountered certain obstacles. Many of those involved in the system have pointed out certain potential problems: changes in current diplomas and degrees, having to learn how to learn, new management of universities, lack of financing, university elitism; an excessive focus on the needs of the market; the sufficiency of a three-year degree.

Globalization

The impact of the implementation of the Bologna process and the growing internationalization of Master's programs mean that new challenges are arising and the increased competition means that some business schools are rethinking their strategies.

Technology

New technologies applied to the field of education have permitted the creation of innovative new ways of teaching, of new programs that use online methods in varying degrees (up to 100 percent), of new teaching platforms, the creation of virtual communities, etc. This is a phenomenon that is revolutionizing the sector.

Funding

The lack of a fund-raising culture in Spain raises a challenge to the public universities that depend on state-funding; and for private universities and private business schools that depend on their tuition fees to develop their activities. All this is due, to a certain extent, to the lack of culture of “giving back” and the rooted culture of the welfare state. That Spanish national student associations seem to have a lower profile than in other countries might contribute to this as well.

Euro

The strong euro has led to a drop in non-EU applications to Spanish schools of an estimated 4-5 percent. This has been offset by the increased number of students coming to Europe as a result of the tightening of visa restrictions in the USA.

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