



# Spain

## Kingdom of Spain

### Europe

### Geography

**Area** 504,783 sq km. The major part of the Iberian peninsula and Balearic Islands in the Mediterranean. Also included are the Canary Islands off northwest Africa and the enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla on the North African coast.

Population	Ann Gr	Density
2010	45,450,497	1.02%
2020	48,701,629	0.57%
2030	49,915,060	0.21%

**Capital** Madrid 5,851,288. **Other major cities** Barcelona 5.1 million; Valencia 814,000; Sevilla 773,000; Zaragoza 694,000. **Urbanites** 77.4%. **Pop under 15 yrs** 15%. **Life expectancy** 80.7 yrs.

### Peoples

An estimated 5.6m immigrants live in Spain, including 3m non-registered people, mainly from North Africa and Latin America.

**European** 91.7%.

**Spanish** 85.4%. Major groups: Castilian 53.2%; Catalan 17.0%; Galician 7.3%; Aragonese 4.4%; Extremaduran 2.5%; Asturian 1.1%.

**Basque** 2.5%. Estimates vary on the Basque population and on how many speak Euskera as a primary language.

**Other European** 3.7%. British 1.7%; Romanian 1.1%; many others.

**Latin American** 3.9%. Ecuadorean 1.0%; Colombian 0.6%; every other Latino nationality.

**Arab World** 1.9%. Moroccan 1.5%.

**Gypsy/Romani** 1.4%. Known locally as Gitanos, also with a wide range of population estimates.

**Others** 1.2%. Sub-Saharan Africans and Asians.

**Literacy** 97.7%. **Official languages** Catalán, Galician and Basque are official languages in the respective autonomous regions. Castilian (Spanish) is the only official language for all the Spanish territory. Spanish is the first language of

over 340 million people; the world's third most widely used language. **All languages** 21. **Indigenous languages** 14. **Languages with Scriptures** 4Bi 1NT 3por 4w.i.p.

### Economy

The world's mightiest economic power in the 16th Century, followed by three centuries of decline and economic stagnation until entry into the EU in 1986. This helped transform the country into a modern economic power with rapidly rising living standards. Main sources of income are tourism, industry and agriculture. The recession, which began in 2008, and bursting of the housing bubble slowed economic growth significantly. One of Europe's higher unemployment rates.

**HDI Rank** 15<sup>th</sup>/182. **Public debt** 40.7% of GDP. **Income/person** \$35,117 (74% of USA).

### Politics

Spain's tumultuous past moulds the present. The Muslim Moorish occupation lasted 700 years, ending in 1492. The worldwide Spanish empire lasted for three centuries. The 19th and 20th Centuries were marked by instability, civil wars and dictatorships; the most recent one, under General Franco, lasted from 1939 to 1975. Constitutional monarchy with an effective multiparty democracy. Wide powers have been given to 17 autonomous communities and to the two autonomous cities of Ceuta and Melilla as a means of preserving national unity. The Basque ETA terrorist campaign for full Basque independence has plagued Spain and divided the Basque community since 1961.

### Religion

During Franco's dictatorship, Catholicism was the state religion. Non-Catholics, especially evangelicals, were subject to discrimination and even persecution. The 1978 constitution guaranteed equality of rights for all ideologies and religions, though Catholicism remains under special consideration from the State. The "cooperation agreements" with the government signed in 1992 for evangelicals, Muslims and Jews are a step forward. Spain is fast moving from a traditional Catholic society to a secular-dominated, multicultural, multi-religious one.

Religions	Pop %	Population	Ann Gr
Christian	77.13	35,055,968	0.1%
Non-religious	19.47	8,849,212	4.7%
Muslim	2.40	1,090,812	4.8%
Jewish	0.70	318,153	2.2%
Other	0.10	45,450	1.0%
Hindu	0.10	45,450	1.0%
Buddhist	0.10	45,450	1.0%

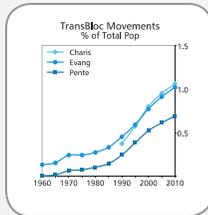
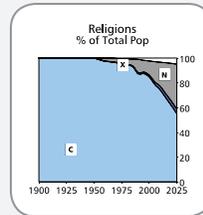
Christians	Denoms	Pop %	Affiliates	Ann Gr
Protestant	114	0.84	383,000	3.0%
Independent	39	0.24	108,000	5.3%
Anglican	1	0.17	76,000	4.8%
Catholic	2	74.83	34,010,000	-0.2%
Orthodox	14	1.24	562,000	19.9%
Marginal	8	0.48	220,000	0.8%
<i>Doubly affiliated</i>		-0.67	-305,000	0.0%

TransBloc	Pop %	Population	Ann Gr
<b>Evangelicals</b>			
Evangelicals	1.0	461,998	3.4%
<b>Renewalists</b>			
Charismatics	1.1	481,675	3.3%
Pentecostals	0.7	311,989	3.4%

### Missionaries from Spain

**P,I,A** 915 (512 long-term) in 28 agencies; elsewhere in Europe 243, South America 216, Mexico/Central America 133, Africa 119.

Churches	MegaBloc	Congs	Members	Affiliates
Catholic Church	C	23,000	9,664,935	37,210,000
Other Orthodox groups	O	70	350,000	560,000
Filadelphia Evang Ch	P	725	101,750	203,500
Jehovah's Witnesses	M	700	113,000	161,000
Anglican Church	A	17	15,200	76,000
Latter-day Saints	M	125	31,818	45,500
Assemblies of God	P	220	13,622	25,200
Christian Brethren	P	180	9,200	19,596
Assemblies of Brethren	P	145	10,389	18,700
Seventh-day Adventist	P	120	14,000	14,500
Baptist Union	P	88	9,680	12,100
Other denominations[161]		1,261	120,555	208,824
<i>Disaffiliated</i>				-3,200,000
<i>Doubly affiliated</i>				-305,000
<b>Total Christians[178]</b>		<b>26,651</b>	<b>10,454,149</b>	<b>35,049,920</b>



## Answers to Prayer

**1** Spain's transformation since 1978 is astonishing, from dictatorship to liberty, poverty to wealth, isolation to integration into Europe and religious discrimination to religious liberty. Spain has had only two brief periods of religious freedom, 1868-1875 and 1931-1939, before the new Constitution passed in 1978. Thank God for more than 30 years of liberty, and pray that Spain's believers would take full advantage of it.

**2** Evangelical growth has followed this freedom, largely because of immigration. Most evangelicals in Spain are immigrants. Latin American, Romanian and African believers flood into Spain, bringing their dynamic faith in Jesus with them. Their arrival swelled the number of evangelicals from under 40,000 (0.1%) in 1960 to over 450,000 (1%), meeting in nearly 3,000 churches in 2010. Praise God for a truly diverse and multicultural expression of Christianity that offers Spaniards some new options for belief in Jesus.

**3** The "Filadelphia" movement among Spain's Romani (Gypsies) since 1966 is a point for praise. The Filadelfia movement is the largest evangelical body in the country, with more than 200,000 people associated with it.

## Challenges for Prayer

**1** Spain's modern transformation is not all positive. Secular materialism brought religious freedom and economic advancement, but it has also struck a crushing blow to traditional foundations of society and created a spiritual vacuum that is being filled with many dangerous elements.

a) **Morality, and values in general, have suffered.** Decadent behaviours and hedonistic lifestyles, combined with increased material possessions, cause greater degrees of depression, addiction, debt and lost direction. The younger generation rejects the idea of absolute truth. Pray that Christianity might still be able to provide a moral compass and demonstrate moral authority.

b) **Spiritual confusion.** False beliefs are quickly multiplying – a natural consequence of the rapidly formed vacuum left by departure from religious faith. Spaniards flirting with occult practices is common. New Age deceptions abound. Marginal cults such as Jehovah's Witnesses

and Mormons have a large presence, augmented now by the arrival of new foreign sects and other religions.

- c) **Drugs are a blight** on Spain, one of the world's heaviest users of cocaine, heroin and marijuana. Around two million take drugs, most of them young people. Cocaine dominates the drug trade, but heroin wreaks particular havoc on the health of users. As yet, there are no signs of drug abuse or addiction abating.
- d) **Gambling addiction** remains a problem for the nation as well. It is estimated that 15% of net household income is spent on betting, possibly one of the highest proportions of any nation in the world. Bookmakers and gambling companies press in harder on the lucrative Spanish market, well aware of the breadth of addiction.
- e) **Sexual ethics and behaviours are a battleground**, since immorality, prostitution and abortion are common. Children are sexualized at ever younger ages, while an "anything goes" mentality characterizes young people especially. The Spanish have all but stopped having children – they have one of the lowest fertility rates in the world, lower still if excluding immigrant families. All of these will have devastating future consequences in terms of disease, social attitudes and demographic pressure.

Pray for Spain to wake up to the lies that have blinded it to the truth of the gospel. Pray for social renewal, and that those working for the salvation of the Spanish might be endowed with love, power and wisdom.

**2** The Catholic Church is troubled, finding itself in crisis. From being regarded as one of the most Catholic of countries, Spain is fast becoming one of the most irreligious. The challenges include:

- a) **The legacy of a tarnished past.** The Inquisition casts a dark shadow across history. In the 16th Century, thousands of suspected apostates were tortured or killed and hundreds of thousands of Jews, Muslims and Protestants forced to convert or flee the country. This weapon of repression was then used throughout the Americas against the indigenous population. The Church was also tainted by association with the Franco dictatorship. Pray that this stain on the Spanish nation may be fully repented of and renounced, and that the shame on Christianity would be diminished.
- b) **The loss of authority in the present day.** There is widespread mistrust of the institution of the Church, which often finds itself pitted against the current liberal government on issues of morality, sexuality and the sanctity of life. Most Spaniards feel caught in the middle. Less than 17% regularly attend mass. For most younger people, the rituals and feasts of Catholicism hold little to no religious or spiritual meaning. Pray for a renewal in Catholicism that breathes new life and relevance into the Church.
- c) **The bleak future.** Only 14% of young people describe themselves as religious, and less than half identify themselves as Catholic at all. The numbers enrolling in the priesthood or in training are drying up. Within one generation, Spain may no longer be a majority-Catholic country. Pray that the pendulum, swinging as it is toward rampant secularism, may be reversed and the Spanish nation drawn back to God.

**3** Evangelical numbers have grown, but not as fast or in the ways hoped for. Many evangelical churches are concentrated in Catalonia (especially Barcelona), along the east coast, in Andalucía and in the areas around Madrid. Pray for:

- a) **Revival.** Spain has never experienced a national outpouring of the Holy Spirit in revival, and, as secular attitudes predominate, the general spiritual atmosphere is drier than ever.
- b) **Greater cooperation among denominations.** Unity is actually a positive point overall, but deliberate collaboration is scarce. FEREDE, the Federation of Spanish Evangelical Religious Entities, is a key network hub for evangelical denominations, giving focus in ministry and speaking for evangelicals to the government. The Evangelical Alliance of Spain has promoted unity among evangelicals for more than 130 years.

**4** The perception of evangelicals in Spain still needs to improve, as does the culture and forms that too many evangelicals tend to use. Pray for:

- a) **Evangelical churches to lose their "foreign-ness".** While many of the older evangelical churches were planted by Spanish workers, many newer congregations imported Anglo-Saxon

dynamics and structures. Many evangelicals are Gypsies, Latin Americans, Eastern Europeans, Africans and other foreigners who bring their own idiosyncrasies and styles with them.

- b) **Perceptions of Christianity by Spaniards.** The media can be quite hostile. Pray for the effectiveness of the few opportunities that exist in national and regional media to project a positive image. Evangelical church culture can isolate congregations from relevance in modern-day society.
- c) **Discrimination still exists**, even if outright persecution has faded. Preferential treatment of Catholics and restrictions on other religious groups have seen some congregations shut down by local authorities over issues of permits and licences.

**5 Leadership training.** Few churches can afford to pay for a full-time pastor, let alone a team of them. As a result, churches must use bivocational pastors or be entrusted to full-time foreign missionaries, who end up pastoring instead of church planting. There are at least 15 seminaries and Bible schools. IBSTE(**GEM**), UEBE Seminary, GU and CSTAD (all **AoG**), SEFOVAN(WorldLink), *Seminario Teológico Al-Ándalus*, CEIBI and SEUT (collaborative effort) are just a few of the notable seminaries. The Brethren have four Bible schools. The *Escuela Evangélica de Teología* runs a rapidly growing online seminary. Some newer, larger churches provide in-house leadership and theological training. TEE is a significant need. Pray that these schools would be filled with young Spanish future leaders, shaped by solid instruction in the Word of God.

**6 There is a considerable increase in missionaries** and agencies since 1978, probably numbering over 1,000 today. But some areas remain largely unreached. Proliferation of agencies and lack of coordination are issues for concern. Pray for:

- a) **Christian workers** to be called to less-evangelized areas, such as Castilla Leon, parts of Andalucía, Extremadura, the northern provinces of Galicia, Asturias, Cantabria and the Basque country.
- b) **Missionaries** to be able to integrate fully into Spanish culture and life. Challenges adapting and integrating persist.
- c) **Latin Americans** are present in great numbers. Careful and conservative estimates state that 48% (others suggest up to 80%) of all new churches are planted by Latinos – missionaries, tentmakers and economic migrants. This claim is contested by others, but there is no denying the massive missional impact of Latinos upon Spain.

Some larger missions are **AoG, WEC, YWAM, CB, ECM, OM, TEAM, GEM, ABWE, OMS** and **WH**.

**7 The evangelistic challenges facing Spain** are enormous, including:

- a) **Unreached cities.** There is no evangelical church in 345 cities and towns of over 5,000 people. Many smaller towns, villages and districts have no witness whatsoever. Of 8,112 municipalities, only around 650 have an evangelical church.
- b) **Of the 17 regions,** Galicia and Asturias are less than 0.2% evangelical, and Extremadura and Navarre are less than 0.1%.
- c) **Of the 50 provinces,** Soria and Avila have less than one evangelical for every 1,000 people, and 28 provinces have less than 1,000 members of evangelical churches.
- d) **While religious liberty exists on paper,** difficulties and discrimination are still widespread for evangelicals, especially for obtaining licences to broadcast and to open new churches.
- e) **Evangelical congregations** are small and dependent on foreign resources, with poor facilities in less than ideal locations. Pray for wisdom in knowing how to be more effective in outreach and balanced in testimony.

**8 The Canary Islands** form an archipelago of seven larger islands off Africa's northwest coast. Among the two million inhabitants, at least 10,000 are evangelical – most live on the two larger islands and over half belong to Assemblies of God. Evangelicals may be stronger in the Canaries than in most of Spain; with strong churches among both nationals and immigrants. Even so, more ministry is needed on the smaller islands of Lanzarote, Fuerteventura, Gomera, La Palma and El Hierro, and more teaching is needed for the scattered groups of

believers. Illegal immigrants from Morocco, Senegal and other parts of Africa are a challenge to the government, but an opportunity for Christian ministry.

**9 Ceuta and Melilla** (70,000 each) are two city enclaves on Morocco's north coast. Approximately half of the population are Muslim, half speaking Cherja, a Berber language. There are four evangelical churches in Ceuta and seven in Melilla. Betel, REMAR and The Bible Society have ministries in both enclaves. Pray for these cities to be effective means of bringing the gospel to North Africa.

**10 Vision for the future** has been limited but is now coalescing. Pray for effective, culturally appropriate methods of outreach and for nationwide evangelistic strategies to be developed. Pray for the vision to mature. Pray also for the growth and development of Spanish mission agencies. Decision Spain and *Evangelismo a Fondo* are indigenous Christian groups researching the cities that are without testimony in Spain, and PUEDES is a new entity focusing on research in order to formulate a national plan for evangelism. These groups and the Conference for the Evangelization of Spain work to coordinate evangelism and mission efforts in Spain.

**11 Mission sending.** Spaniards have had a miniscule legacy of sending missionaries, largely because of a tiny evangelical population focused mostly on its own nation. But now, more than 20 Protestant groups send out missionaries, including REMAR, RETO, Betel, **AoG**, Foursquare, Open Bible, **CMA**, Brethren, Baptists and others.

**12 Key groups for outreach.** Pray for these:

a) **The Basques** are an ancient and proud people without a single Euskera-speaking Protestant church. The Basque ETA movement terrorizes and polarizes society in the Basque region. There are fewer than 100 evangelical churches in the four provinces where Basques live (Guipúzcoa, Vizcaya, Alava and Navarra) and all of these are Spanish-speaking. The few Basque-speaking evangelicals there find it difficult to worship or witness in their own language. Only now are Christian resources in Euskera appearing. The differing dialects in an already difficult language complicate the task. Pray for those involved in ministry, including **AoG**, **YWAM**, **WEC** and **OM**. Pray that centuries-old suspicions and fears, and the reserve of the Basque people, may be broken down.

b) **Muslims** may number over two million and are growing rapidly. The Moors ruled much of Spain for 700 years, and Muslims long to win back what they lost. The vast majority are immigrants from Morocco, but from many other African nations as well. South Spain is a key base area for many agencies committed to evangelizing Muslims in North Africa and in Spain; very few have been won to Christ. Pray for the Malaga Media Centre and the Ibero-American Institute of Islamic Studies (PMI). Pray for Muslim hearts to be opened and for believers in Spain to reach out in love.

c) **Chinese** numbers have increased to over 100,000. COCM, **CMA** and **OMF** work among them. There are now over 30 churches among the Chinese, who still number only 2% Christian.

d) **Drug addiction** is a blight on Spain (see point 1c), which has one of Europe's highest rates of heroin and cocaine addiction. This in turn is a major contributing factor in the AIDS epidemic and the crime rate. In their centres across the country, RETO, REMAR and Betel (**WEC**-related) successfully rehabilitate drug addicts. RETO has 80 rehabilitation centres and ministers in 25 countries. REMAR has communities in 175 Spanish towns and works in 58 countries. Betel ministers in 80 urban areas and has planted churches in 21 countries. Over 100,000 former addicts have been set free, and many of them won to Christ through these vital ministries.

e) **Young people** need the gospel, having given themselves over to postmodern materialism and hedonism. They distrust organized religion. Their lifestyle is based on experience. Ministry to them must be highly relational and authentic. The **IFES**-linked student movement, *Federación de Grupos Bíblicos Universitarios de España*, has 35 university groups with 400 students – a tiny drop in the bucket of over one million students. Alongside GBU(**IFES**), **AGAPE(CCCI)** also works among students in several universities. *Contra Corriente*, an indigenous Spanish ministry to young people and students, possibly has the greatest impact. A growing number of alternative and underground ministries among young people are proving effective.

f) **The elderly and retirees.** This is a growing segment of the population, both among Spaniards and immigrants which will only get larger in the future. Some ministries are already proving quite effective in outreach to this generation; Doukonía is one such example.

### 13 Pray for the effectiveness of these Christian help ministries:

- a) **Bible translation.** New versions are being produced in regional languages and in dialects of Spain. A conversational Spanish Bible, an Aragonese NT as well as Bibles in Euskera (Basque), Galego (Galicia), Asturian, Catalan and Romani are examples. Pray that many will read and be impacted by these translations.
- b) **Christian literature** is a major factor in church growth, although literature work is expensive and bookstores hard to finance. Pray for Christian bookstores; **CLC** has six centres and a distribution network serving evangelical bookstores throughout Spain. Pray for more Christian authors who can write from a truly Spanish perspective.
- c) **Pocket Testament League** impacts Spain through literature, well-publicized research and promotion of missionary vision.
- d) **Christian radio.** Evangelicals run over 90 radio stations. However, licensing for evangelical radio remains a problem, while Catholics easily obtain AM, FM and TV licensing.
- e) **Christian TV.** There are now around 30 small evangelical TV stations, all without a licence but tolerated by the state. Evangelical programmes on public TV maintain an evangelical presence in the secular and mainstream media.
- f) **Internet.** There are countless evangelical websites in Spanish. *Protestante Digital* is Spain's leading evangelical news agency. *Solidaria* is a Castilian TV channel on the Internet and satellite, run by REMAR. Pray for the growing number of Internet radio stations in Spanish.
- g) **Christian camps** are a ministry through which many youth in Spain come to Christ. Some 37 evangelical camps do wonderful work in evangelism, discipleship and leadership training. Pray for their continued impact and effectiveness in breaking down negative preconceptions of evangelicals and in winning many to Jesus.