

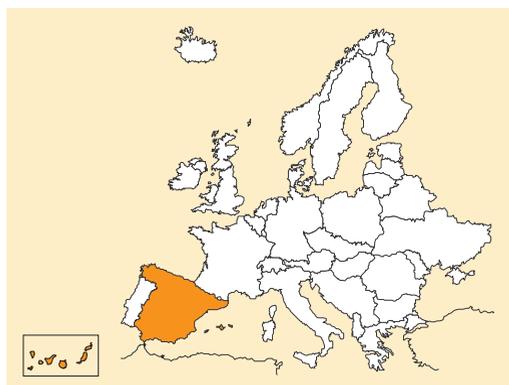




# 1. Background

- Territory and climate
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- Current population
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- Plans and programmes: sustainable rural development and biodiversity protection

## Territory and climate



Spain's total land area of 506,030 km<sup>2</sup> makes it one of the world's 50 largest countries and places it second in terms of size in the European Union. If river estuaries are included in the calculation, its coastline totals 10,099 km. As regards topography,

57.7% of Spain's territory stands at over 600 m above sea level, making it the second-highest country in Europe.

Spain has a variety of climates, including the ocean, continental and Mediterranean types. Temperatures vary greatly between inland areas, which have cold winters and hot summers, and the periphery, where the winters are mild, particularly along the Mediterranean coast.

Autumn and spring see heavy rainfall, while rain is scarce in the summer. Marked contrasts between areas also exist in terms of rainfall — the north and north-west of Spain are very rainy and do not have a clear dry season, while the rest of the country is predominantly dry, although some areas may receive exceptionally high rainfall. In parts of the south-east, rainfall is very scarce, creating a semi-desert landscape.

## Administrative structure

Spain is a constitutional monarchy with a parliament comprising two houses — the Congress of Deputies and the Senate. The 1978 Constitution establishes the right to autonomy of the nationalities and regions that comprise the Spanish nation. Thus, Spain consists of 17 distinct regions, known as autonomous communities, and 2 autonomous cities (Ceuta and Melilla). This makes Spain one of the most decentralised countries in Europe.



In administrative terms, government comprises three tiers — the General State Administration, which is responsible for Spain’s entire territory; regional government, which is responsible for each respective autonomous community; and local government, which comprises municipal councils, provincial councils and the island councils of the Canary and Balearic Islands.

## Current population

According to the Municipal Register as at 1 January 2010, Spain had 47.021 million inhabitants, 16.1% more than in 2000, representing an average annual increase of 1.6%. Of the resident population, 5.7 million were non-Spanish (12.2%), the provenance and population size of which are shown in the following table:

SPAIN: NON-SPANISH POPULATION BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

EU-27	2,346,515	41.1
Other European countries	226,379	4.0
Africa	1,048,909	18.4
The Americas (North, Central and South)	1,769,429	30.9
Asia	314,701	5.4
Other countries	3,007	0.2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5,708,940</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: INE. Advance figures for the Municipal Register as at 1 January 2010 (press release, 29/04/2010)

Spain's population is distributed very unevenly and the most densely populated areas (with the exception of the Autonomous Community of Madrid) lie on the periphery. The four most highly populated autonomous communities are Andalusia (8.4 million people), Catalonia (7.5 million), Madrid (6.5 million) and Valencia (5.1 million) which, between them, account for over half (58.4%) of the population despite only occupying barely 30% of the country's territory. More than 78% of Spain's population live in towns and cities with over 10,000 inhabitants. There are around 750 municipalities of this size, 62 of which have over 100,000 inhabitants.

The population living in Spain's rural environment is noteworthy for its low density. Moreover, the rural population as a share of the overall population is declining steadily and has shrunk by approximately 1.6% since 2000. The rural population stands at 8.2 million and is spread among 6,694 municipalities, of which number 59% have fewer than 5,000 inhabitants.

## Economic and industrial development

The economic and financial climate since 2007, which has had a dramatic effect on the international economy, has also had a major impact on the Spanish economy, halting the growth that Spain had enjoyed in recent decades. In 2010, the unemployment rate in Spain stood at 20.01%. The figures provided by the INE reveal the changes in GDP between 2006 and 2009, as shown in the table below.

GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT: ANNUAL GROWTH IN TERMS OF VOLUME

Year	Updated series
2006 (definitive)	4.0%
2007 (provisional)	3.6%
2008 (provisional)	0.9%
2009 (advance estimate)	-3.7%

INE. Spanish National Accounts. 2000 base. Update of the 2006–2009 accounting series (press release of 25/08/2010)

In 2009, factors such as the credit crunch, the price of raw materials, the slump in construction and the weak state of international trade all contributed to the decline witnessed in almost all of the productive sectors. Those most affected were industry, energy and building, while the service sector only declined by an average of 1%. Primary industry (agriculture, livestock farming and fishing) was the best-performing sector with a moderate 1.0% increase in GVA.

However, the rest of the industrial sector, which registered a drop of 13.6% on 2008,

suffered most, principally due to the fall in external demand and the situation in the building industry, which accounts for a large part of the sector's business. The biggest decreases were recorded in durable consumer goods.

Several steps were taken to try to deal with this situation. As well as the reforms planned under Spain's Strategy for a Sustainable Economy (which include the Sustainable Economy Law, reform of the labour market and implementation of a new R&D and Innovation strategy), the Social and Economic Agreement for Growth, Employment and Pension Sustainability is intended to instil confidence in investors, workers, businesspeople and citizens. In addition, the Spanish Economy and Employment Stimulation Plan (Plan E) includes over 100 economic policies and has allocated significant public resources to tackling the economic crisis.

The energy sector, which is strongly dependent on industry, also saw a slump of 6.4%.

However, on a positive note, in 2009, and for the first time in Spain, renewable energy exceeded all other energy sources used in electricity production.

Meanwhile, the fall in activity in the building sector (6.2%) resulted in job losses and moderately lowered house and land prices.

**GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT AT MARKET PRICES AND ITS COMPONENTS**  
CURRENT PRICES 2000–2009  
(million €)

	2000	2002	2004	2006	2007	2008(P)	2009(A)
Agriculture, livestock farming and fishing	24,984	26,586	27,365	24,471	27,201	26,494	25,955
Energy	15,802	17,193	20,330	23,219	24,905	28,360	28,208
Industry	103,415	111,846	119,555	132,633	138,774	141,310	121,917
Construction	47,584	62,452	80,480	105,823	112,040	113,511	105,522
Services	378,775	443,440	508,939	590,680	641,904	686,336	698,097
Total gross value added	570,560	661,517	756,669	876,826	944,824	996,154	979,699
Net tax on products	59,703	67,689	84,373	107,458	108,713	92,113	74,215
GDP (at market prices)	630,263	729,206	841,042	984,284	1,053,537	1,088,124	1,053,914

Source: INE. Spanish National Accounts. (P): Provisional; (A): Advance estimate

Although sufficient data are not yet available to make a definitive analysis, according to some organisations, which had predicted Spain's GDP to fall by around 0.5%, the economy performed better than expected in 2010. In the third quarter of 2010, GDP increased by 0.2%, while in the fourth it rose by 0.6%. Nevertheless, for the year as a whole it remained 0.1% below the 2009 figure.

In 2010, exports of goods and services increased by 10.3% on the previous year, well above the rise in imports, which grew by 5.4%.

Tourism recovered from the downturn in 2009 and the number of tourists even increased by just over 1%, while revenue from tourism climbed by 2.5%.

## **Advances in adoption and implementation of environmental protection legislation**

### *Law 2/2011, of 4 March, on the sustainable economy*

At the end of 2009, the Spanish Government submitted the Sustainable Economy Bill to Parliament. It was adopted in March 2011 as Law 2/2011, of 4 March, on the sustainable economy (BOE no 55, of 5 March). With this initiative, the Spanish Government intends to change the country's economic model and direct it towards more economically, socially and environmentally sustainable parameters.

The law, under its Preliminary Title, defines a sustainable economy as a growth model that, as well as balancing economic, social and environmental development, is able to guarantee respect of the environment, rational use of resources and “meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” In terms of environmental sustainability, the law lays the foundations for a new energy model based on supply security, efficiency and respect for the environment, and includes the European Union's targets for 2020.

The Sustainable Economy Law's articles emphasise the scope of the environment-related areas covered (which are detailed in Title III). Its four sections are devoted to the sustainable energy model; emissions reductions; sustainable transport and mobility; and restoration and housing. Finally, the nineteenth additional provision announces the drafting of a Sustainable Mobility Law that “will lay the foundations to improve sustainable accessibility and mobility, increase road safety for passenger and freight traffic and reduce greenhouse gases.”

### *Law 41/2010, of 29 December, on protection of the marine environment*

Law 41/2010, of 29 December, on protection of the marine environment (BOE no 317, of 30 December 2010) transposes Directive 2008/56/EC, of 17 June 2008, known as

the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, into Spanish law and establishes the general planning framework for ensuring the good environmental status of the marine environment. There are three key elements in this law: Marine Strategies as planning instruments; creation of the Network of Marine Protected Areas; and mainstreaming of environmental criteria into use of the marine environment.

Since many human activities take place in the marine environment and since it is subject to many significant pressures and impacts, the goal of the law is to achieve good environmental status for the sea through coherent planning of the aforementioned activities. The Marine Strategies will be the instruments used to achieve this goal. These consist of a list of consecutive tasks that should be completed for each of the five areas that make up the marine environment in Spain. The Marine Environment Protection Law places particular emphasis on discharges, which are regulated. This means that authorisation by the relevant authority and a favourable preliminary report will be required from Spain's Ministry of the Environment and Rural and Marine Affairs to determine whether the discharges comply with the marine strategy for each particular area.

One of the most noteworthy aspects of Law 41/2010 is the creation of the Network of Marine Protected Areas. This network comprises the protected areas in Spain's marine environment that characterise the country's marine natural heritage, regardless of whether they are included in other EU or international protection networks. Areas categorised under regional legislation are also included in the network. The network consists of various areas, such as those explicitly declared Marine Protected Areas, Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas for Wild Birds (Natura 2000 Network), and Marine Reserves regulated by Law 3/2001 on state marine fisheries.

## **Plans and programmes: sustainable rural development and biodiversity protection**

### *Sustainable Rural Development Programme 2010–2014*

Law 45/2007, of 13 December, on sustainable rural development, laid the foundations for a State policy adapted specifically to Spain's circumstances. The PDRS (*Programa de Desarrollo Rural Sostenible* – Sustainable Rural Development Programme) is the instrument employed to put the principles into practice and meet the targets stipulated in the policy. The PDRS was adopted by Royal Decree 752/2010, of 4 July, pursuant to Law 45/2007.

## BACKGROUND

The PDRS was drawn up in partnership with regional government, local authorities and other stakeholders in the rural environment. The PDRS, designed as the main means via which to plan economic activity in the rural environment, encompasses the sectoral goals, plans and measures to be taken by national and regional government.

After completing an in-depth study of the rural environment focusing on demographic, economic, environmental and funding issues, the programme required an assessment of the rural environment's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT analysis) to determine the circumstances to bear in mind when formulating the strategy to achieve the targets set out in Law 45/2007.

The strategy adopted is based on a model that prioritises multi-sector action plans and endeavours to create synergies through co-ordinated and planned operation. These actions will be carried out in a way agreed on by local, regional and national government and will involve participation by the sections of the public affected.

This strategy puts particular emphasis on defining lines of action. Firstly, it deals with economic activity and employment. Secondly, with infrastructure and basic facilities. The third line of action concerns services and social well-being, while the fourth focuses on environmental planning, management of natural resources and hydrological and forest restoration.

The rural areas in each autonomous community included in the PDRS are listed in chapter four, according to the following breakdown:

Type of area	Number of areas	Population (inhabitants)	Area (km <sup>2</sup> )
Regeneration areas	105	3,001,840	253,828
Intermediate areas	84	5,411,589	136,883
Peri-urban areas	30	2,165,852	35,360
<b>PROGRAMME TOTAL</b>	219	10,579,281	426,071

Source: Royal Decree 752/2010, of 4 June. Annex (BOE no 142)

Rural areas are defined as groups of rural municipalities with fewer than 30,000 inhabitants and a population density of less than 100 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup>, or smaller local authorities. These 219 areas account for 84.41% of Spain's national territory and are home to 22.92% of its total population. Each of these will have a Rural Area Plan, which will transfer the measures and actions defined in the PDRS to the local environment and respond to each area's particular needs and potential. The PDRS also defines the types of agreement possible between national and regional government to create and implement each area's plans.

## ***Strategic Plan for Natural Heritage and Biodiversity 2011–2017*** *(Currently under development. Public consultation ended 05/03/2011)*

Law 42/2007, of 13 December, on natural heritage and biodiversity, establishes the basic legal framework for the conservation, sustainable use, improvement and restoration of Spain's natural heritage and biodiversity and encompasses the regulations set out in the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity. In 2010, the period established by the Parties to the Convention within which to halt biodiversity loss came to an end with the acknowledgement that although major measures had been taken, the underlying causes of biodiversity loss had not been addressed sufficiently and that the loss had not been significantly reduced, thereby necessitating adoption of new strategies.

In this context, and as established in Law 42/2007, Spain has drafted a Strategic Plan for National Heritage and Biodiversity that has already been through public consultation and will soon be passed. The Plan features an analysis of biodiversity in Spain and reviews the most significant issues and the commitments undertaken to ensure its conservation and sustainable use. The Plan establishes a series of specific Goals, Targets and Actions for government to fulfil:

- The **Goals** are the strategic medium-to-long-term objectives that will ensure consistency across biodiversity conservation policy beyond its implementation period. The overall goal is to halt biodiversity loss and the decline of ecosystem services, then restore them to their former state. Of the nine goals set, the following are particularly significant:
  - Acquire the knowledge needed to ensure conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity;
  - Encourage mainstreaming of biodiversity issues in agriculture, tourism and the management of inland and marine waters;
  - Reduce the impact of invasive alien species;
  - Inform the public and raise awareness about biodiversity issues and encourage public commitment to biodiversity conservation; and
  - Design a biodiversity conservation policy, taking into account biodiversity's economic value and the needs of climate change adaptation.
  
- The **Targets** are the objectives to be met during the Plan's six-year term. These are measured via the associated indicators and success criteria defined in the monitoring programme. Each goal contains targets and indicates the priority area.

- The **Actions** comprise specific measures to be taken to achieve the targets and should be carried out by the pertinent government bodies. These also contain an estimated budget and are rated according to a priority index based on the repercussions of achieving the targets and the urgency with which they should be implemented.

The Strategic Plan for Natural Heritage and Biodiversity will be applicable for six years from the date of adoption. Over this period, its implementation and the extent to which the targets are attained will be monitored. Implementation of this Strategic Plan may be modified, if considered appropriate, to adapt to situations arising in the future. At the end of the Plan's six-year term, a final assessment and proposed revisions will be produced.

