

*Focus on Spanish Society* is published by the Social Studies Office of Funcas. The aim of this publication is to depict the Spanish social situation and provide brief insights into some of its most relevant aspects. *Focus on Spanish Society* consists of three sections. The first one, “Spain in Europe”, draws attention to recently published statistical data and puts the Spanish case in comparative perspective. The second section, “Public opinion trends”, examines in more detail one particular social issue as perceived by the Spanish public and manifested through opinion surveys. Finally, the third section “Follow-up social data” presents several social indicators related to demography and families, labour market and education, health and welfare benefits and services.

### **Section I. Spain in Europe**

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## Section I. Spain in Europe

### I.1. Severe material deprivation in the year of the pandemic

#### 1.1. Break in positive trend

The severe material deprivation rate is an absolute measure of poverty which gauges the extent to which people in a country cannot afford goods, services or satisfy financial needs deemed as necessary to lead an adequate life.<sup>1</sup> Recently

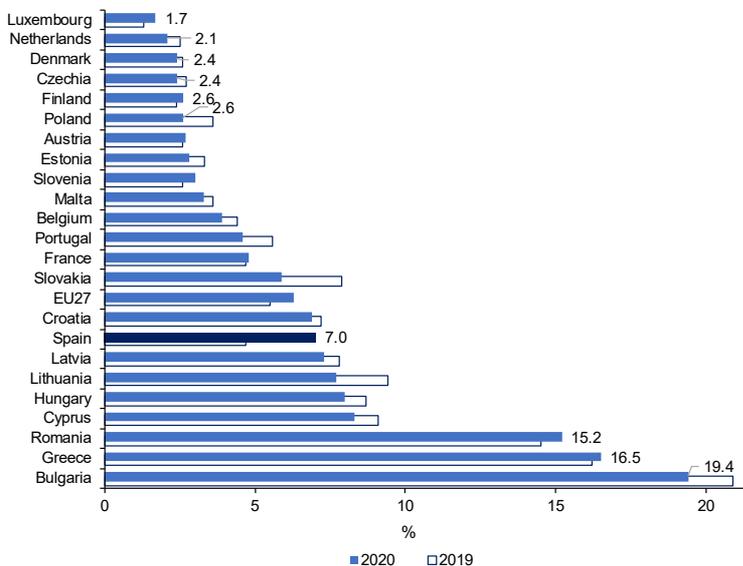
published data by Eurostat allow for approaching the impact of the pandemic on this type of poverty.

With rates ranging from 15 to 20%, Bulgaria, Greece and Romania were the European countries with higher percentages of people affected by severe material deprivation in 2020. By contrast, the Nordic countries, together with The Netherlands and Austria, as well as the Czech Republic and Poland, displayed rates lower than 3% (Figure I.1).

In 2020, many European countries managed to maintain or even reduce the level of severe material deprivation from the previous year. But this was not the case in Spain. Before the pandemic, the country was reducing the level of severe material deprivation from a

Figure I.1

#### Severe material deprivation (EU-27, 2019 and 2020)



Note: The figures next to the bars refer to 2020. Data for Germany and Sweden not included due to low level of reliability. Data for Ireland and Italy not available.

Source: Eurostat [ilc\_mddd11].

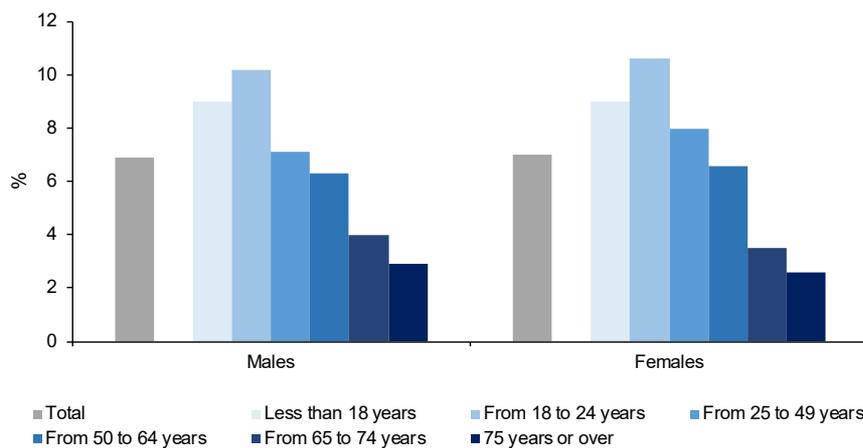
<sup>1</sup> People experiencing severe material deprivation are those living in households confronted with at least four out of the following nine items: inability to: (1) face unexpected expenses, (2) afford one week annual holiday away from home, (3) avoid arrears (in mortgage rent, utility bills and/or hire purchase instalments), (4) afford a meal with meat, chicken, fish or vegetarian equivalent every second day, (5) afford keeping their home adequately warm, (6) have access to a car/van for personal use, (7) afford a washing machine, (8) afford a color TV; and (9) afford a telephone.

maximum of 7.1% reached in 2014 (3,246 million). In 2019, people under severe material deprivation amounted to 4.7% (2,189 million), but the pandemic broke with this downward trend and the rate rose to 7% of the population in 2020 (3,259 million). Males and females are similarly affected by this type of poverty, but

age appears to be a much more significant variable. The material deprivation rate of people under 18 is nearly three times higher than the corresponding rate for people 65 and over. Among the latter group, those aged 75 and over are the least affected by severe material deprivation (Figure I.2).

Figure I.2

### Severe material deprivation, by sex and age groups (Spain, 2020)



Source: Eurostat [ilc\_mddd11].

#### 1.2. Single person households: Elderly fare much better

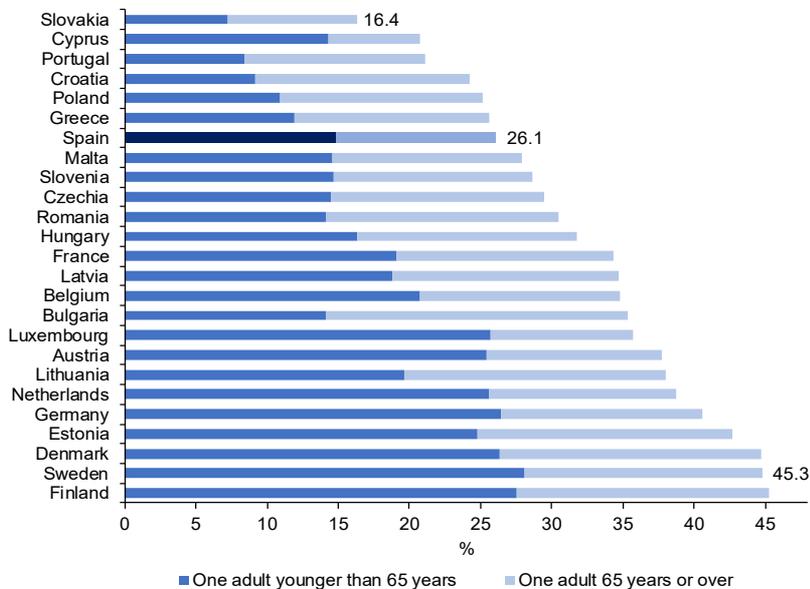
Single person households are increasing in many European countries, although international differences remain substantial. The share of single person households in the EU-27 ranges from 16.4% (Slovakia) to 45.3% (Sweden) in 2020. At 26.1%, Spain belongs to the group of countries with smaller proportions of single person households (Figure I.3.). As in many other countries, in Spain, single person households formed by a person younger than 65 (14.9% of total households) prevail over those inhabited by a person 65 or older (11.2%). In fact, the former are increasing at a faster pace than the latter in recent years.

Single person households of people aged less than 65 are in general more vulnerable

to severe material deprivation than those of people 65 years and over (with Portugal being one of the few exceptions). But the difference between both types of households in terms of severe material deprivation is greater in Spain than in other European countries (Figure I.4). While less than 3% of people aged 65 and over living in single person households suffer severe material deprivation, the share rises to 10.7% among people younger than 65 living alone. Yet, the type of household most affected by severe material deprivation is that in which two adults live with three or more dependent children (15%). In contrast to most other European countries, in Spain, traditional large families fare somewhat worse than single-parent families in terms of absolute poverty (Figure I.5).

Figure I.3

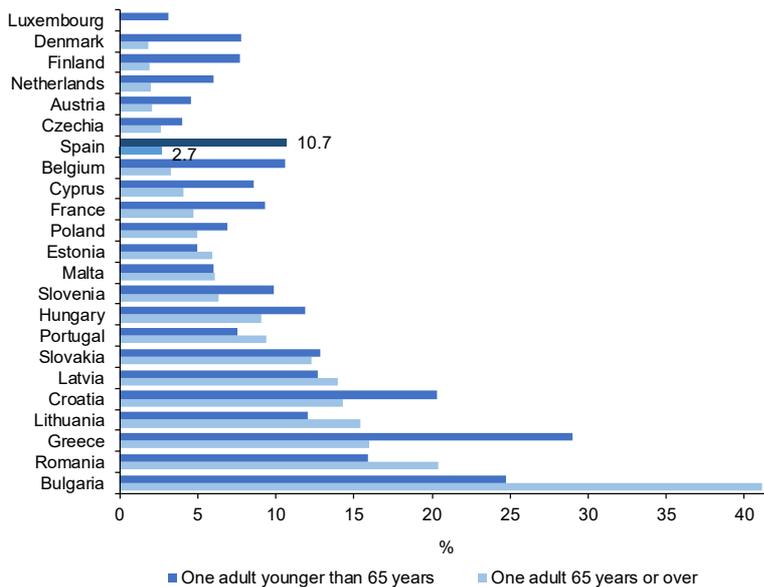
**Single person households (EU-27, 2020)**



Source: Eurostat [ilc\_lvph04].

Figure I.4

**Severe material deprivation in single person households (EU-27, 2020)**

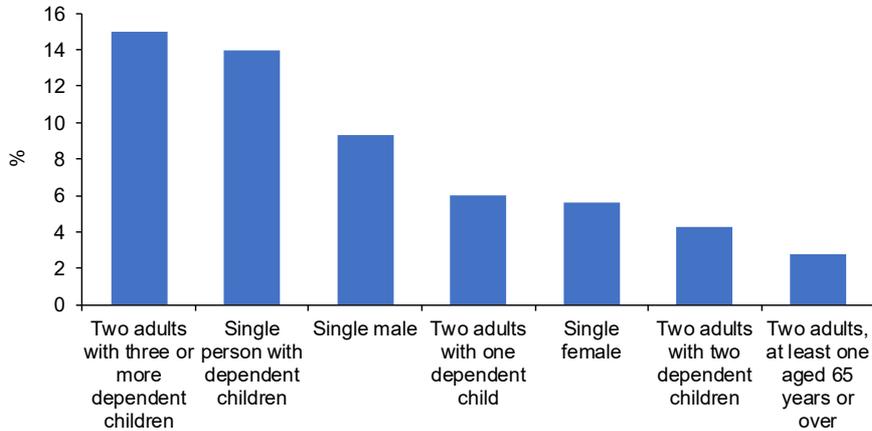


Note: Data for Germany and Sweden not included due to low level of reliability. Data for Ireland and Italy not available.

Source: Eurostat [ilc\_mddd13].

Figure I.5

**Severe material deprivation, by household type (Spain, 2020)**



Source: Eurostat [ilc\_mddd13].

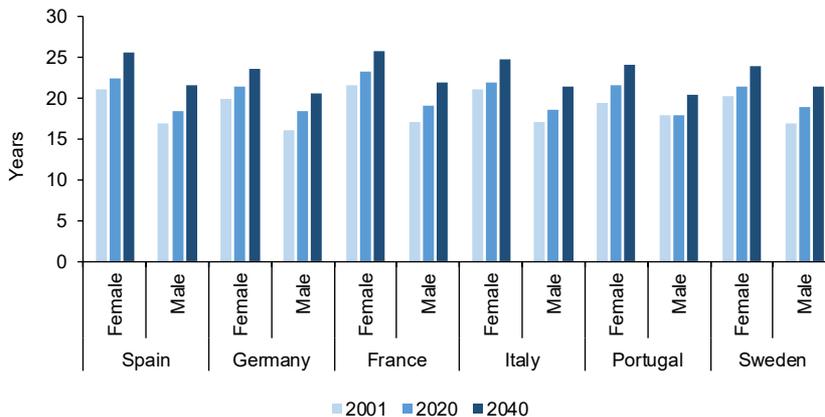
**1.2. Uncertain trends in pension expenditure**

Although the pandemic has hit the elderly population particularly hard and reduced life expectancy at advanced age, according to

Eurostat population projections, longevity will progress in the next two decades significantly in the European Union. France leads the current ranking of life expectancy at 65 in the EU, with 23.2 and 19.1 years for females and males, respectively. Spain also stands out for its high figures in this indicator and the expected upward trend (Figure I.6).

Figure I.6

**Projected life expectancy at 65 in selected European countries (2040)**



Source: European Commission, *The Ageing Report 2021*.

As it is well-known, the combination of increasing life expectancies and decreasing numbers of births results in the growing share of the elderly population. In 2020, nearly two out of every ten people living in Spain were 65 or older; in 2040, the proportion will rise to three out of ten. Italy and Portugal display even higher shares of population over 65 and over 80, thus exemplifying the particularly intense ageing of Southern European populations (Figure I.7).

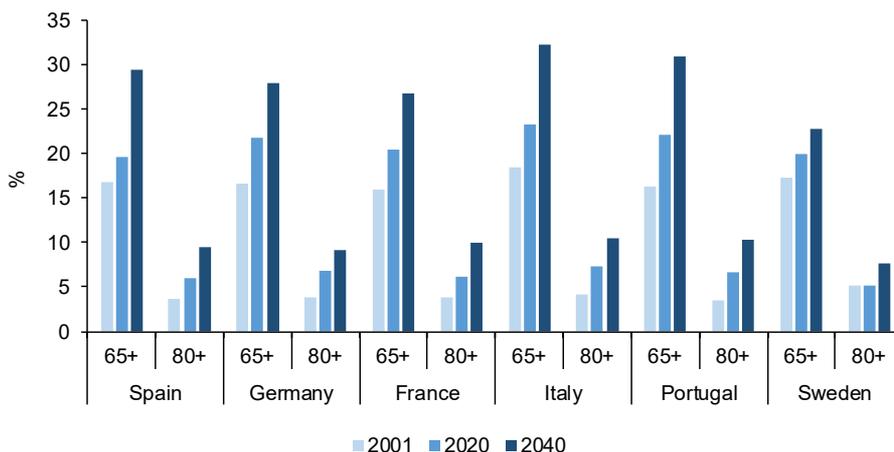
How population ageing impacts the labor market and the social protection system will depend very much on institutional factors concerning employment and social benefits. Focusing on pensions, the European Commission has published in its *2021 Ageing Report* estimates of pension expenditure showing significant cross-country differences. In 2019, Italy and France

were the European countries which had the highest pension expenditures as a percentage of GDP (ca. 15%), approximately twice as much as The Netherlands (6.8%) and Sweden (7.6%) and around five percentage points more than Germany (10.3%).

With 12.3% of GDP, Spain's public pension expenditure was also significantly lower than in France and Italy. According to projections included in the *2021 Ageing Report*, Spain will manage to maintain public pension expenditure under 13% until 2050. However, this estimate was made on the premise of the stability of pension legislation in place at December 2020. The likely suppression before the end of this year of the 2013 pension reform delinking pensions from inflation and establishing a sustainability factor from 2023 onwards increases the uncertainty in the evolution of public pension expenditure in Spain.

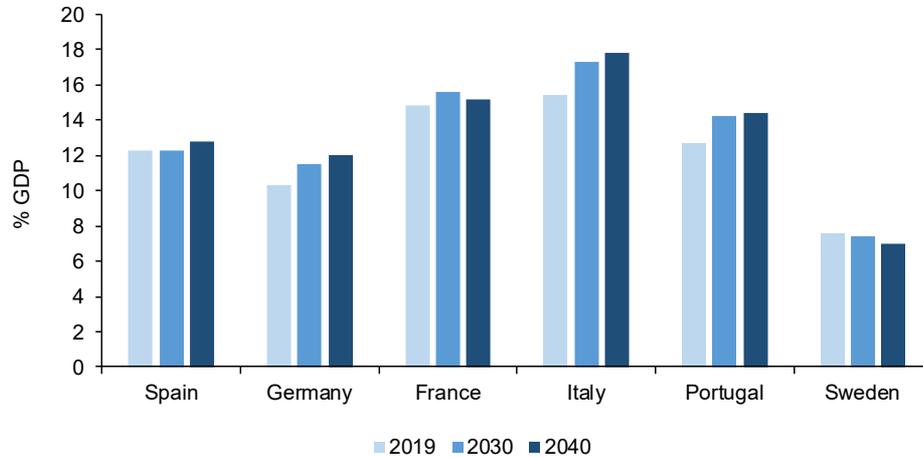
Figure I.7

**Projected share of elderly population in selected European countries (2040)**



Source: European Commission, *The Ageing Report 2021*.

Figure I.8

**Projected pension expenditure in selected European countries according to *The Ageing Report 2021* (2030, 2040)**

Source: European Commission, *The Ageing Report 2021*.

## Section II. Public opinion trends

**Dismal opinion about the strength of national scientific research**

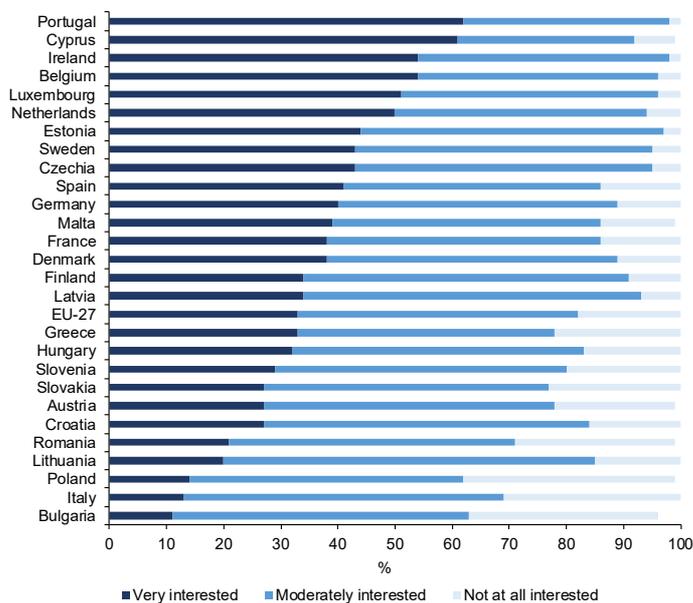
The recent and fast development of COVID-19 vaccines has focused significant attention on the critical role of science and technology in modern societies. According to the special Eurobarometer survey “European citizens’ knowledge and attitudes towards science and technology”, published in September 2021, one third of European citizens state they are “very interested” in new scientific discoveries and technological developments, while an additional half note being

moderately interested. True, differences across countries are outstanding. Thus, people living in Italy and some Eastern European countries (Bulgaria, Poland, Lithuania and Romania) seem to be much less interested in science and technology than those residing in Portugal, Cyprus, Ireland or the Benelux countries (Figure II.1). With 41% of respondents manifesting high interest in science and technology, Spain also ranks above the EU-27 average (33%). Moreover, it is worth noting that while the EU-27 average proportion of respondents declaring to be very interested in these subjects increased three percentage points between 2010 and 2021, in Spain, it soared by 12 percentage points.

However, the European capacity to make “new scientific discoveries” in comparison with other

Figure II.1

### Interest in new scientific discoveries and technological developments (EU-27, 2021)



*Question:* “In everyday life, we have to deal with many different issues, where we feel more or less interested in. For each of the following, please indicate whether you are...: ‘New scientific discoveries and technological developments’”.

*Source:* Special Eurobarometer 516 “European citizens’ knowledge and attitudes towards science and technology”, September 2021.

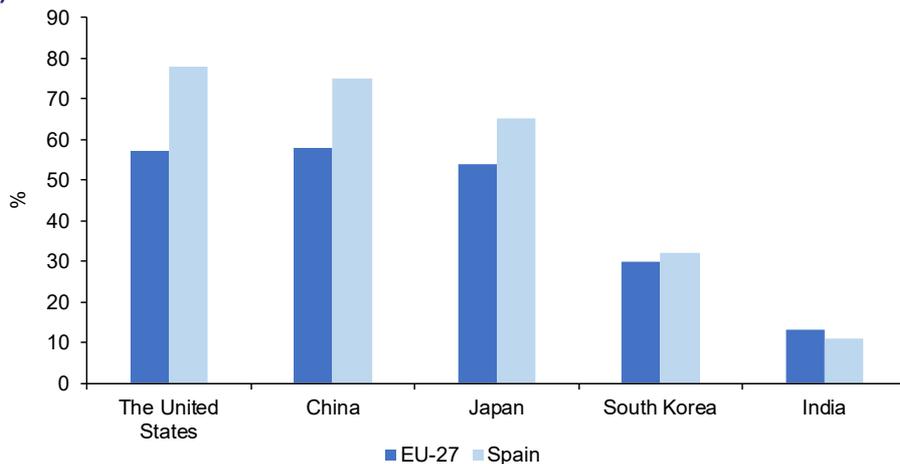
competing global powers is perceived as relatively modest. A majority of Europeans think that researchers in the United States, China or Japan are ahead of researchers in the EU. Spanish citizens are even more critical when comparing European research with research developed in the aforementioned countries (Figure II.2).

When asked to compare researchers in their own country to researchers in the EU on average, respondents in Germany and the

Nordic countries appear to be the ones with the best opinion about themselves: 36% of Germans, 33% of Dutch, 25% of Danes and 21% of Swedes think their national researchers are ahead of the EU average (Figure II.3). By contrast, this opinion is very rare in Southern and Eastern European countries. In Spain, only 6% of respondents argue that Spanish researchers are ahead of researchers in the EU on average in terms of making new scientific discoveries.

Figure II.2

### Comparing European researchers with researchers in world countries (EU-27 average and Spain, 2021)

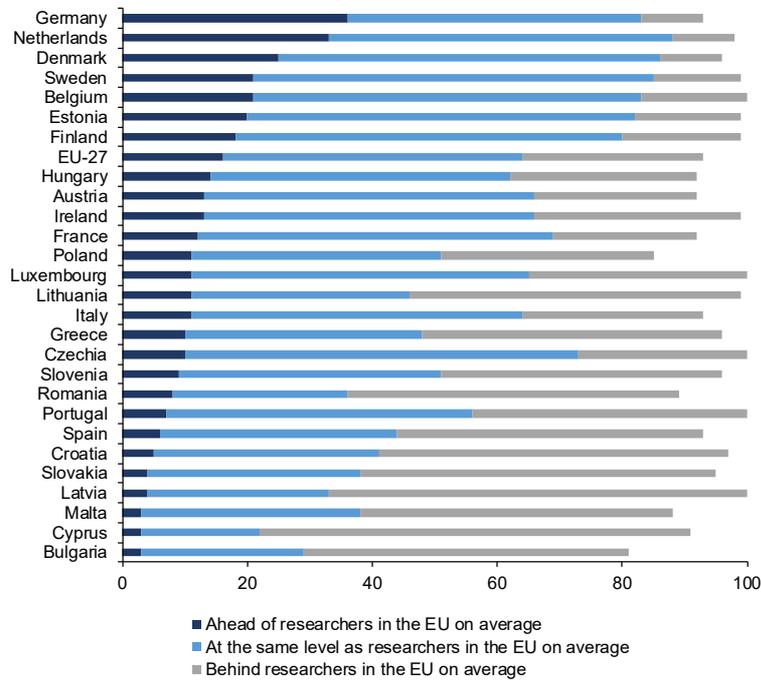


*Question:* “Do you think researchers in the following countries are ahead, behind, or at the same level as researchers in the European Union on average, in terms of making new scientific discoveries?”

*Source:* Special Eurobarometer 516 “European citizens’ knowledge and attitudes towards science and technology”, September 2021.

Figure II.3

**Comparing national researchers with European researchers on average (EU-27, 2021)**



*Question:* "Do you think researchers in the following countries are ahead, behind, or at the same level as researchers in the European Union on average, in terms of making new scientific discoveries?"

*Source:* Special Eurobarometer 516 "European citizens' knowledge and attitudes towards science and technology", September 2021.



## Section III. Follow-up social data

Table III.1

### Population

	Total population	Average age	65 and older (%)	Life expectancy at birth (men)	Life expectancy at birth (women)	Dependency rate	Dependency rate (older than 64)	Foreign-born population (%)	New entries (all nationalities)	New exits (born in Spain)
2008	46,157,822	40.8	16.5	78.2	84.3	47.5	24.5	13.1	701,997	33,053
2010	47,021,031	41.1	16.9	79.1	85.1	48.6	25.0	14.0	441,051	39,211
2012	47,265,321	41.6	17.4	79.4	85.1	50.4	26.1	14.3	344,992	51,666
2014	46,771,341	42.1	18.1	80.1	85.7	51.6	27.4	13.4	368,170	66,803
2015	46,624,382	42.4	18.4	79.9	85.4	52.4	28.0	13.2	417,655	74,873
2016	46,557,008	42.7	18.6	80.3	85.8	52.9	28.4	13.2	492,600	71,508
2017	46,572,132	42.9	18.8	80.4	85.7	53.2	28.8	13.3	592,604	63,754
2018	46,722,980	43.1	19.1	80.5	85.9	53.6	29.3	13.7	715,255	56,745
2019	47,026,208	43.3	19.3	80.9	86.2	53.7	29.6	14.4	827,052	61,338
2020	47,450,795	43.6	19.4	79.6	85.1	53.5	29.8	15.2	523,618	41,708
2021●	47,344,649	43.8	19.7			53.4	30.2	15.4		
<i>Sources</i>	EPC	EPC	EPC	ID INE	ID INE	EPC	EPC	EPC	EVR	EVR

EPC: *Estadística del Padrón Continuo*.

ID INE: *Indicadores Demográficos INE*.

EVR: *Estadística de Variaciones Residenciales*.

Dependency rate: (15 or less years old population + 65 or more years old population)/ 16-64 years old population, as a percentage.

Dependency rate (older than 64): 65 or more years old population/ 16-64 years old population, as a percentage.

● Provisional data.

Table III.2

### Households and families

#### Households

	Households (thousands)	Average household size	Households with one person younger than 65 (%)	Households with one person older than 65 (%)
2008	16,742	2.71	12.0	10.2
2010	17,174	2.67	12.8	9.9
2012	17,434	2.63	13.7	9.9
2014	18,329	2.51	14.2	10.6
2015	18,376	2.54	14.6	10.7
2016	18,444	2.52	14.6	10.9
2017	18,512	2.52	14.2	11.4
2018	18,581	2.51	14.3	11.5
2019	18,697	2.52	14.9	11.2
2020	18,794	2.52	15.0	11.4
2021■	18,895	2.51		
<i>Sources</i>	LFS	LFS	EPF	EPF

Table III.2

**Households and families (continued)**

<b>Nuptiality</b>						
	People getting married (per 1,000) (Spanish)	People getting married (per 1,000) (foreign population)	Divorce rate (per 1,000)	Mean age at first marriage (men)	Mean age at first marriage (women)	Same sex marriages (%)
2008	8.5	8.4	2.39	32.4	30.2	1.62
2010	7.2	7.9	2.21	33.2	31.0	1.87
2012	7.2	6.7	2.23	33.8	31.7	2.04
2014	6.9	6.5	2.17	34.4	32.3	2.06
2015	7.3	6.5	2.08	34.8	32.7	2.26
2016	7.5	6.8	2.08	35.0	32.9	2.46
2017	7.3	6.9	2.10	35.3	33.2	2.67
2018	7.1	6.6	2.04	35.6	33.4	2.90
2019	7.1	6.7	1.95	36.0	33.9	3.90●
2020	3.8	4.1				
<i>Sources</i>	ID INE	ID INE	ID INE	ID INE	ID INE	MNP
<b>Fertility</b>						
	Median age at first child (women)	Total fertility rate (Spanish women)	Total fertility rate (foreign women)	Births to single mothers (%)	Abortion rate	Abortion by Spanish-born women (%)
2008	29.3	1.36	1.83	33.2	11.8	55.6
2010	29.8	1.30	1.68	35.5	11.5	58.3
2012	30.3	1.27	1.56	39.0	12.0	61.5
2014	30.6	1.27	1.62	42.5	10.5	63.3
2015	30.7	1.28	1.66	44.4	10.4	65.3
2016	30.8	1.27	1.70	45.8	10.4	65.8
2017	30.9	1.24	1.70	46.8	10.5	66.1
2018	31.0	1.20	1.65	47.3	11.1	65.3
2019	31.1	1.17	1.59	48.4	11.5	64.1
2020	31.2	1.12	1.45			
<i>Sources</i>	ID INE	ID INE	ID INE	ID INE	MSAN	MSAN

LFS: *Labour Force Survey*.EPF: *Encuesta de Presupuestos Familiares*.ID INE: *Indicadores Demográficos INE*.CGPJ: *Consejo General del Poder Judicial*.MSAN: *Ministerio de Sanidad, Servicios Sociales e Igualdad*.MNP: *Movimiento Natural de la Población*.Marriage rate: *Number of marriages per thousand population*.Divorce rate: *Number of divorces per thousand population*.Total fertility rate: *The average number of children that would be born per woman living in Spain if all women lived to the end of their childbearing years and bore children according to a given fertility rate at each age.*Abortion rate: *Number of abortions per 1,000 women (15-44 years).*

■ Data refer to January-September.

● Provisional data.

Table III.3

**Education**

<b>Educational attainment</b>				
	<b>Population 16 years and older with primary education (%)</b>	<b>Population 30-34 with primary education (%)</b>	<b>Population 16 years and older with tertiary education (%)</b>	<b>Population 30-34 with tertiary education (%)</b>
2008	32.1	9.2	16.1	26.9
2010	30.6	8.6	17.0	27.7
2012	28.5	7.5	17.8	26.6
2014	24.4	6.1	27.2	42.3
2015	23.3	6.6	27.5	40.9
2016	22.4	6.6	28.1	40.7
2017	21.4	6.6	28.5	41.2
2018	20.5	6.4	29.2	42.4
2019	19.3	6.3	30.3	44.7
2020	17.7	6.1	31.3	44.8
2021■	16.5	5.8	32.3	46.4
<i>Source</i>	<b>LFS</b>	<b>LFS</b>	<b>LFS</b>	<b>LFS</b>

**Students involved in non-compulsory education**

	<b>Pre-primary education</b>	<b>Secondary education</b>	<b>Vocational training</b>	<b>Under-graduate students</b>	<b>Post-graduate students (except doctorate)</b>
2008	1,763,019	629,247	472,604	1,377,228	50,421
2010	1,872,829	672,213	555,580	1,445,392	104,844
2012	1,912,324	692,098	617,686	1,450,036	113,805
2014	1,840,008	690,738	652,846	1,364,023	142,156
2015	1,808,322	695,557	641,741	1,321,698	171,043
2016	1,780,377	687,595	652,471	1,303,252	190,143
2017	1,767,179	676,311	667,984	1,287,791	209,754
2018	1,750,106	667,287	675,971	1,290,455	217,840
2019	1,747,087	673,171	714,292	1,309,791●	234,214●
<i>Source</i>	<b>MECD</b>	<b>MECD</b>	<b>MECD</b>	<b>MECD</b>	<b>MECD</b>

**Education expenditure**

	<b>Public expenditure (thousands of €)</b>	<b>Public expenditure (% GDP)</b>
2008	51,716,008	4.63
2010	53,099,329	4.91
2012	46,476,414	4.47
2014	44,846,415	4.32
2015	46,597,784	4.31
2016	47,578,997	4.25
2017	49,458,049	4.24
2018	50,807,185	4.23
2019	53,052,700	4.26
<i>Sources</i>	<b>MECD</b>	<b>INE</b>

LFS: *Labour Force Survey*.MECD: *Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte*.INE: *Instituto Nacional de Estadística*.

● Provisional data.

■ Data refer to January-September.

Table III.4

**Social protection: Benefits****Contributory benefits\***

	Unemployment		Retirement		Permanent disability		Widowhood	
	Total	Total	Average amount (€)	Total	Average amount (€)	Total	Average amount (€)	
2008	1,100,879	4,936,839	814	906,835	801	2,249,904	529	
2010	1,471,826	5,140,554	884	933,730	850	2,290,090	572	
2012	1,381,261	5,330,195	946	943,296	887	2,322,938	602	
2014	1,059,799	5,558,964	1000	929,484	916	2,348,388	624	
2015	838,392	5,641,908	1,021	931,668	923	2,353,257	631	
2016	763,697	5,731,952	1,043	938,344	930	2,364,388	638	
2017	726,575	5,826,123	1,063	947,130	936	2,360,395	646	
2018	751,172	5,929,471	1,091	951,838	946	2,359,931	664	
2019	807,614	6,038,326	1,138	957,500	975	2,361,620	712	
2020	1,828,489	6,094,447	1,162	952,704	985	2,352,680	725	
2021■	967,997	6,152,204	1,188	949,085	994	2,353,057	739	
<i>Source</i>	<b>INEM</b>	<b>INSS</b>	<b>INSS</b>	<b>INSS</b>	<b>INSS</b>	<b>INSS</b>	<b>INSS</b>	

**Non-contributory benefits**

	Social Security			
	Unemployment	Retirement	Disability	Other
2008	646,186	265,314	199,410	63,626
2010	1,445,228	257,136	196,159	49,535
2012	1,327,027	251,549	194,876	36,310
2014	1,221,390	252,328	197,303	26,842
2015	1,102,529	253,838	198,891	23,643
2016	997,192	254,741	199,762	21,350
2017	902,193	256,187	199,120	19,019
2018	853,437	256,842	196,375	16,472
2019	912,384	259,570	193,122	14,997
2020	1,017,429	261,325	188,670	13,373
2021	989,205■	261,865♦	185,086♦	12,176♦
<i>Sources</i>	<b>INEM</b>	<b>IMERSO</b>	<b>IMERSO</b>	<b>IMERSO</b>

INEM: Servicio Público de Empleo Estatal.

INSS: Instituto Nacional de la Seguridad Social.

IMERSO: Instituto de Mayores y Servicios Sociales.

\* Benefits for orphans and dependent family members of deceased Social Security affiliates not included.

■ Data refer to January-September.

♦ Data refer to January-August.

Table III. 5

**Social protection: Health care**

<b>Expenditure</b>				
	<b>Total (% GDP)</b>	<b>Public (% GDP)</b>	<b>Total expenditure (\$ per inhabitant)</b>	<b>Public expenditure (\$ per inhabitant)</b>
2008	8.29	6.10	2,774	2,042
2010	9.01	6.74	2,886	2,157
2012	9.09	6.55	2,902	2,095
2014	9.08	6.36	3,057	2,140
2015	9.20	6.51	3,180	2,258
2016	9.00	6.34	3,248	2,293
2017	8.84	6.25	3,370	2,385
2018	8.90	6.20	3,323	2,341
2019	9.00	6.40	3,616	2,560
<i>Sources</i>	<b>OECD</b>	<b>OECD</b>	<b>OECD</b>	<b>OECD</b>
<b>Resources</b>				
	<b>Medical specialists per 1,000 inhabitants</b>	<b>Primary care doctors per 1,000 people assigned</b>	<b>Specialist nurses per 1,000 inhabitants</b>	<b>Primary care nurses per 1,000 people assigned</b>
2008	1.8	0.8	3.0	0.6
2010	1.8	0.8	3.2	0.6
2012	1.8	0.8	3.1	0.6
2014	1.8	0.8	3.1	0.7
2015	1.9	0.8	3.2	0.7
2016	1.9	0.8	3.3	0.6
2017	1.9	0.8	3.4	0.6
2018	2.0	0.8	3.5	0.7
2019		0.8		0.7
<i>Sources</i>	<b>INCLASNS</b>	<b>INCLASNS</b>	<b>INCLASNS</b>	<b>INCLASNS</b>
<b>Satisfaction (0-10 scale)</b>		<b>Time on waiting list (days)</b>		
	<b>With the working of the health system</b>	<b>With medical history and tracing by family doctor or pediatrician</b>	<b>Non-urgent surgical procedures</b>	<b>First specialist consultations</b>
2008	6.4	7.0	71	59
2010	6.6	7.3	65	53
2012	6.6	7.5	76	53
2014	6.3	7.5	87	65
2015	6.4	7.5	89	58
2016	6.6	7.6	115	72
2017	6.7	7.5	106	66
2018	6.6	7.5	129	96
2019			115	81
<i>Sources</i>	<b>INCLASNS</b>	<b>INCLASNS</b>	<b>INCLASNS</b>	<b>INCLASNS</b>

OECD: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

INCLASNS: *Indicadores Clave del Sistema Nacional de Salud*.

Table III.6

**Labour market**

	Employment		Unemployment				Social Security affiliation		
	Men (in thousands)	Women (in thousands)	Men (in thousands)	Women (in thousands)	Rate (men)	Rate (women)	Men (in thousands)	Women (in thousands)	Foreign population (in thousands)
2008	11,805	8,665	1,320	1,276	10.1	12.8	10,884	8,121	2,052
2010	10,424	8,301	2,536	2,104	19.6	20.2	9,710	7,872	1,841
2012	9,608	8,025	3,131	2,680	24.6	25.0	9,034	7,705	1,693
2014	9,443	7,902	2,917	2,694	23.6	25.4	8,853	7,639	1,555
2015	9,760	8,106	2,559	2,497	20.8	23.6	9,154	7,864	1,608
2016	10,001	8,341	2,213	2,268	18.1	21.4	9,421	8,097	1,688
2017	10,266	8,559	1,905	2,011	15.7	19.0	9,758	8,369	1,802
2018	10,532	8,795	1,675	1,805	13.7	17.0	10,058	8,643	1,947
2019	10,746	9,034	1,528	1,720	12.4	16.0	10,286	8,903	2,043
2020	10,430	8,773	1,679	1,852	13.9	17.4	10,038	8,729	2,046
2021 <sup>■</sup>	10,592	9,044	1,649	1,889	13.5	17.3	10,238	8,891	2,143
Sources	LFS	LFS	LFS	LFS	LFS	LFS	BEL	BEL	BEL

BEL: *Boletín de Estadísticas Laborales*.

LFS: *Labour Force Survey*.

■ Data refer to January-September.





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