

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 section, “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.

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Section I. Spain in Europe

I.1. Self-perceived health in the midst of the pandemic: Income less relevant of a factor in Spain than in other European countries

The pandemic has not significantly affected Spanish people's perception about their own health, though it has brought about a slight decrease in the percentage of people who consider their health "very good" or "good". In 2020, 73% of the population aged 16 and over rated their health in these terms, about two percentage points (pp) less than in 2019 (75.3%). In 2021, the percentage fell an additional two pp (to 71.2%), the lowest figure in the last decade (2012-2021) (Figure I.1).

Consequently, according to the latest available data, seven out of ten adult individuals living in Spain are satisfied with their health. This share is higher than that found in Germany (63.2%) and virtually coincides with that recorded by Nordic

countries: Denmark (67%), Finland (70.1%) and Sweden (72.4%) (Figure I.2).

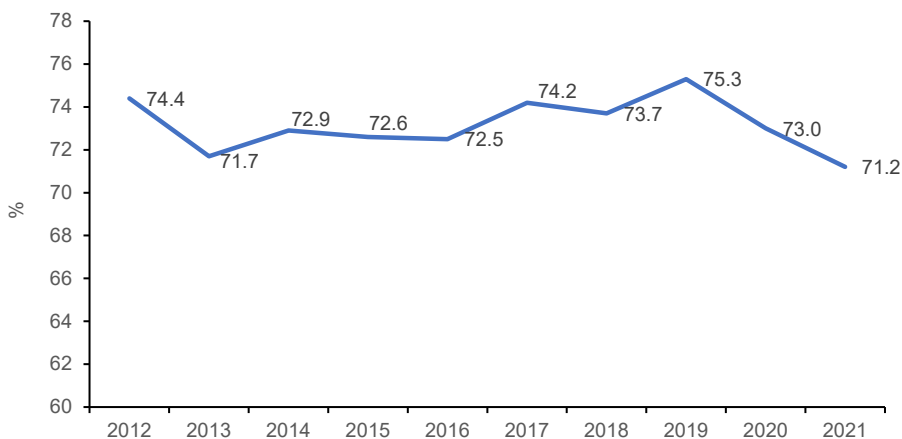
In all countries for which data have been published, the percentage of females who perceive their health as very good or good is lower than that of males (Figure I.3). In Spain, this difference amounts to 5.5 pp (68.5% of females and 74% of males), a slightly wider gap than that found in Germany and the Nordic countries.

Differences are more remarkable when the population is divided by income quintiles. In Spain, about two thirds of people (65.2%) included in the lowest 20% of income (first quintile) perceive their health as very good or good. This share is bigger than the corresponding shares in Germany (51.4%), Finland (56.9%), Denmark (57.9%) and Sweden (62.8%) (Figure I.4).

By contrast, when the focus is placed on the more affluent population (fifth quintile), the percentage of people in Spain who consider their health as very good or good is similar to that obtained in Germany (78.1%), Denmark (81.5%), Sweden (81.9%) or Finland (82.1%) (Figure I.4). Hence, differences between the self-perceived health

Figure I.1

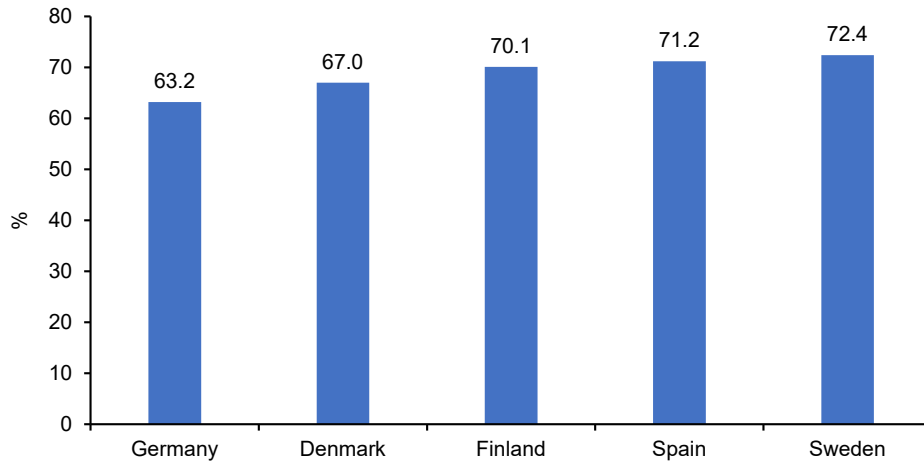
Self-perceived health ("very good" or "good") of population aged 16 and over (Spain, 2012-2021)



Source: Eurostat [HLTH_SILC_10__custom_3313606].

Figure I.2

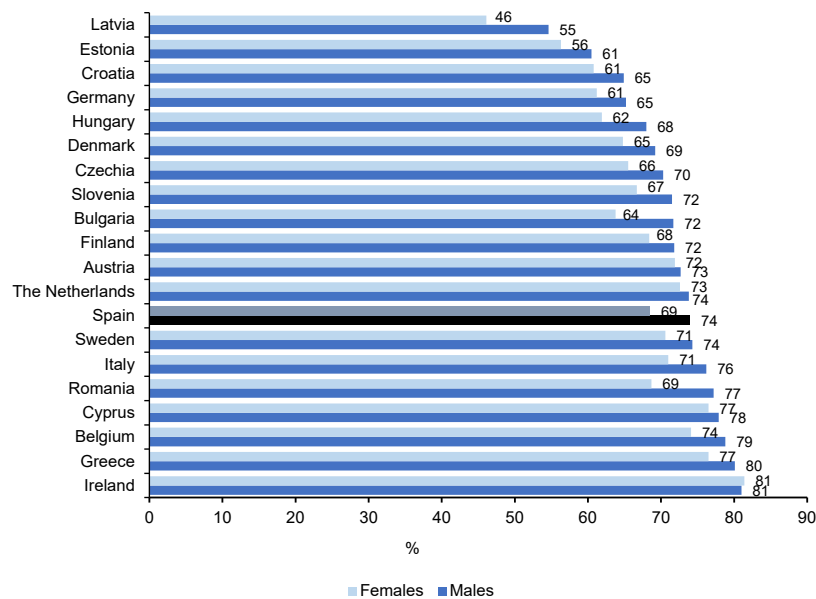
Self-perceived health (“very good” or “good”) of population aged 16 and over, (selected EU countries, 2021)



Source: Eurostat [HLTH_SILC_10__custom_3313606].

Figure I.3

Self-perceived health (“very good” or “good”) of population aged 16 and over, by sex (EU countries, 2021)

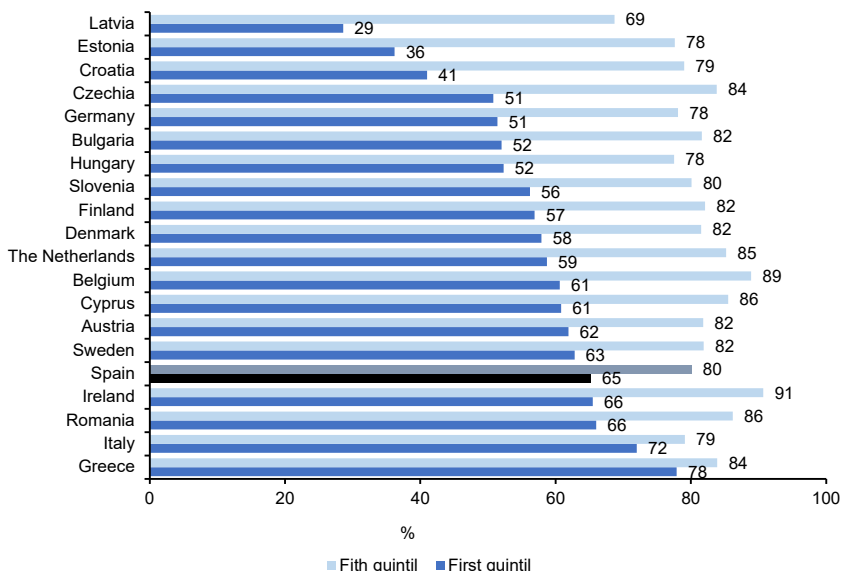


Note: The figure excludes countries for which data for 2021 have not been published.

Source: Eurostat [HLTH_SILC_10__custom_3313606].

Figure I.4

Self-perceived health (“very good” or “good”) of population aged 16 and over, by income quintile (EU countries, 2021)

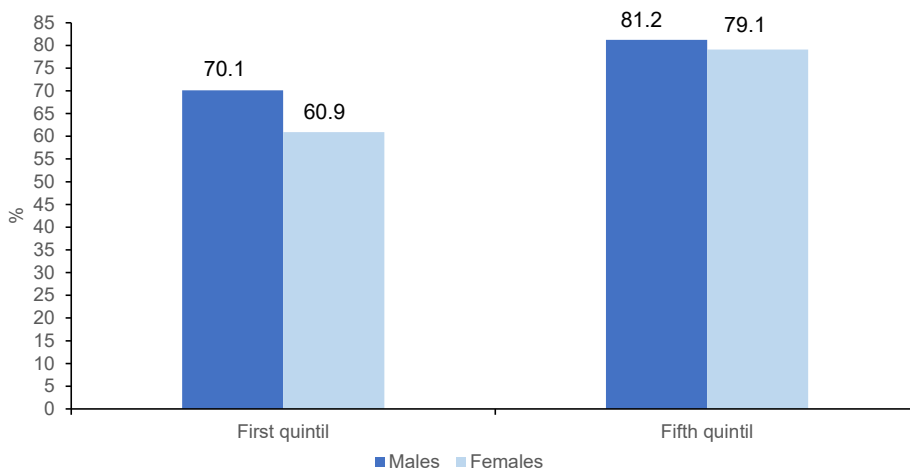


Note: The figure excludes countries for which data for 2021 have not been published.

Source: Eurostat [HLTH_SILC_10__custom_3313606].

Figure I.5

Self-perceived health (“very good” or “good”) of population aged 16 and over, by sex and income quintile (Spain, 2021)



Source: Eurostat [HLTH_SILC_10__custom_3313606].

of the richest and poorest population groups in Spain are less significant than in most European countries. The reasons underlying this empirical evidence merit investigation, but the universal and high-quality healthcare provided in Spain is most likely an important explanatory factor.

Taking a closer look at the variance within income quintiles, it is worth noting that the gender gap is bigger in the group which encompasses more economically disadvantaged people. Thus, 70.1% of males in the first quintile rate their health as very good or good, while this opinion is manifested by 60.9 % of females in the same quintile (Figure I.5). In the highest income group (fifth quintile), differences are much smaller (81.2% of males and 79.1% of females are satisfied with their health).

I.2. Booming participation in online courses

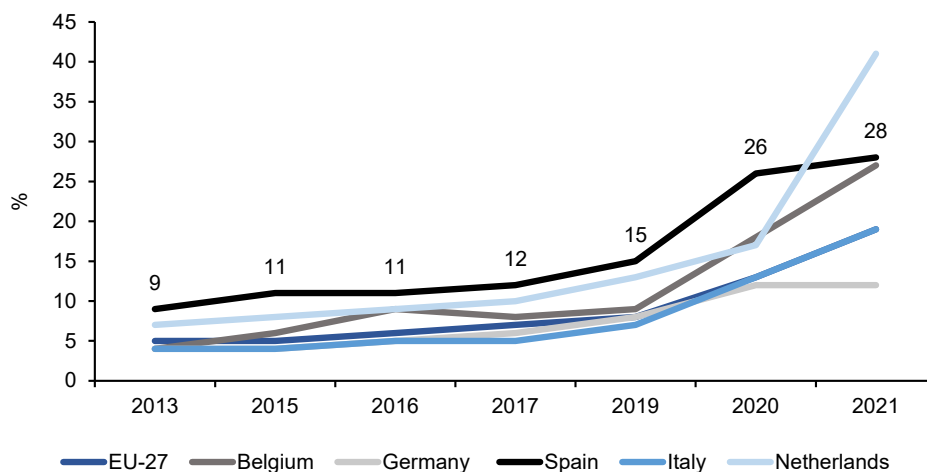
Since the pandemic, online courses have become a widely accepted way of learning

specific content. In 2020, Spain recorded one of the highest percentages in the European Union of individuals having done an online course in the last three months. Around a quarter of people (16-74 years old), up from 15%, declared having done such a course in 2019. However, this share only increased by 2 pp in 2021, while other countries experienced sharper increases in that year (Figure I.6).

In general, students form the group with higher participation rates in online courses. In 2020, 57% of Spanish students declared having done an online course, 37 pp more than in 2019. This strong increase reflects to a great extent the effort by teachers and educational administrations to switch to online learning. In fact, the percentages of students who in 2020 did online courses in Germany (22%), Belgium (24%), the Netherlands (26%) and Italy (35%) were considerably lower. Yet, in 2021, the Spanish percentage dropped to 50%, falling behind that of the Netherlands (89%) and Belgium (72%), though still ahead of Germany (34%) and Italy (45%) (Figure I.7).

Figure I.6

Individuals (16-74 years) having done an online course (in any subject) (2013-2021, selected European countries)

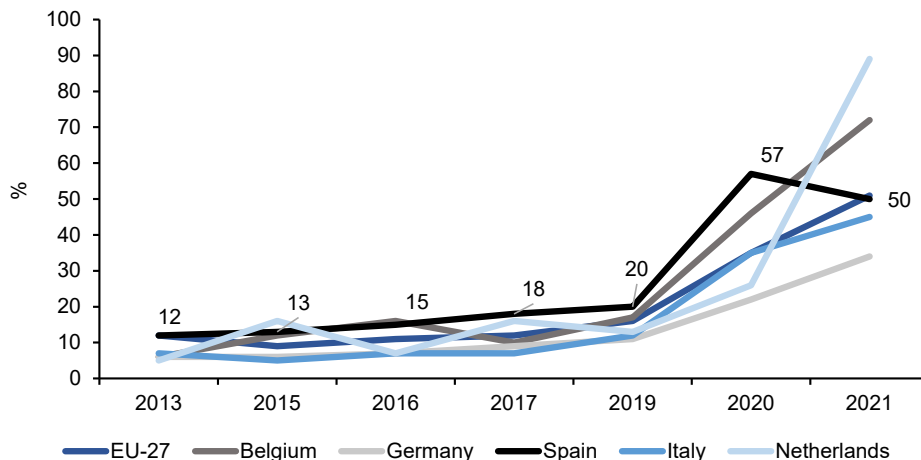


Question: "Have you conducted either of the following learning activities over the internet for educational, professional or private purposes in the last 3 months? Doing an online course".

Source: Eurostat [ESTAT].

Figure I.7

Students having done an online course (in any subject) (2013-2021, selected European countries)

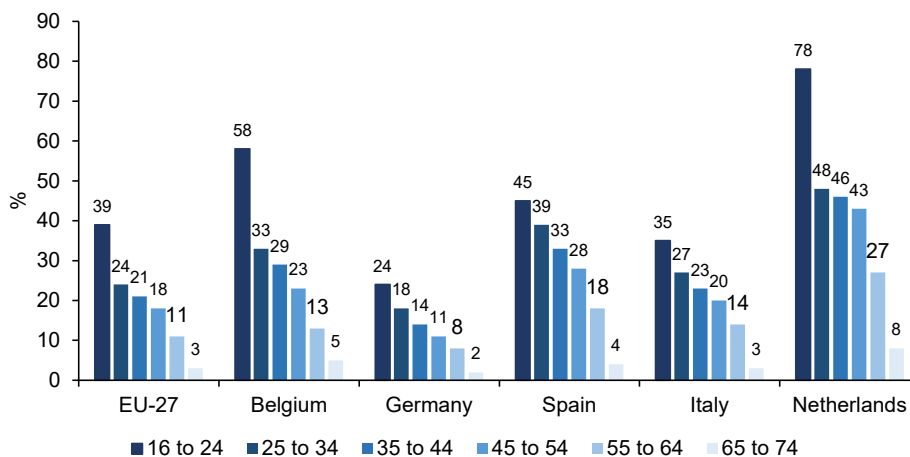


Question: "Have you conducted either of the following learning activities over the internet for educational, professional or private purposes in the last 3 months? Doing an online course".

Source: Eurostat [ESTAT].

Figure I.8

Individuals (16-74 years) having done an online course (in any subject) by age (2021, selected European countries)



Question: "Have you conducted either of the following learning activities over the internet for educational, professional or private purposes in the last 3 months? Doing an online course".

Source: Eurostat [ESTAT].

Individuals aged 16-24 show the highest share of participation in online courses. In fact, young people in most European countries are extensively used to online courses, the share of participation in these courses decreasing with age (Figure I.8).

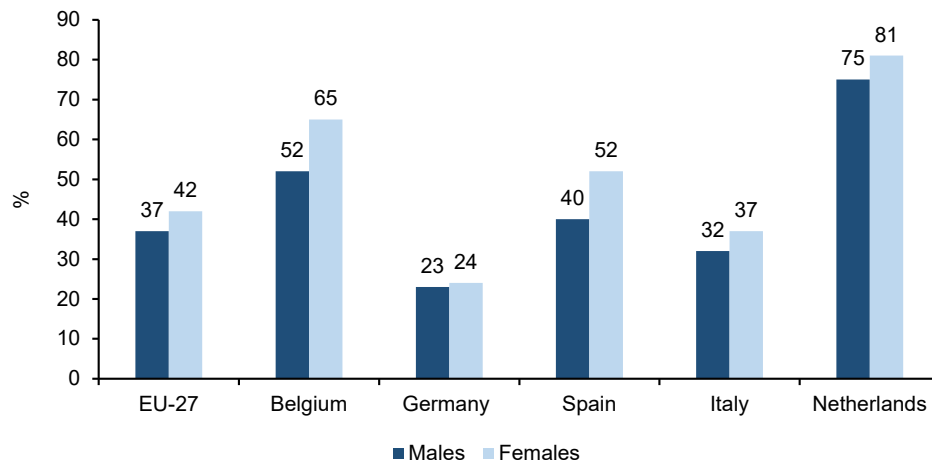
Focusing on the age group which shows higher participation rates in online courses (16-24 years) allows to spot important gender differences. Thus, while in 2019, the share of males and females aged 16 to 24 who declared having done an online course in the last three

months was the same (17%), in 2021, both percentages increased but diverged: 40% of males stated having done an online course, but the corresponding percentage among females amounted to 54% (Figure I.9). This gender gap is, in Spain, broader than in other countries.

It seems that Spanish teachers and lecturers reacted very quickly when the pandemic lockdowns prohibited in-person education, an effort that perhaps has been neither sufficiently recognized nor capitalized in educational terms.

Figure I.9

Individuals (16-24 years) having done an online course (in any subject), by gender (2021, selected European countries)



Question: "Have you conducted either of the following learning activities over the internet for educational, professional or private purposes in the last 3 months? Doing an online course".

Source: Eurostat [ESTAT].

Section II. Public opinion trends

The economic crisis: The main problem at the national and personal level

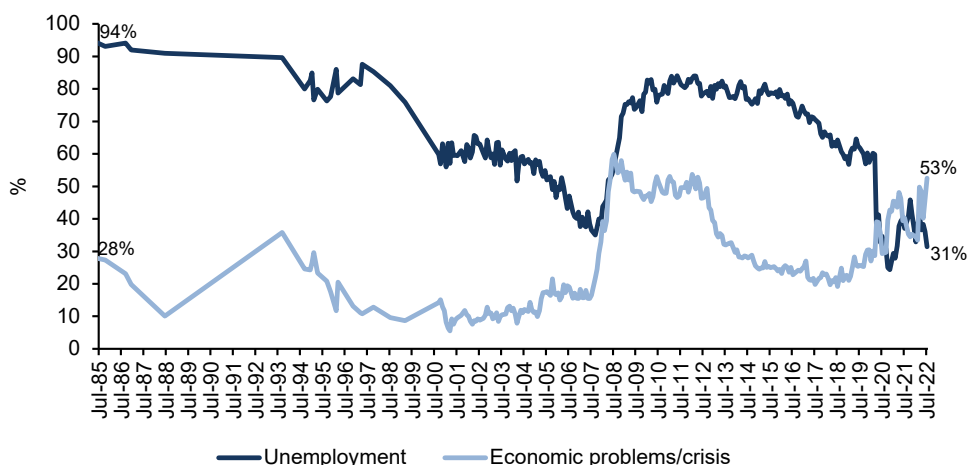
For many years, Spanish public opinion has pinpointed unemployment as the country's main problem. In fact, in opinion barometers conducted since the mid-80s by the Center for Sociological Research (CIS), the share of interviewees mentioning unemployment as one of the three main problems in the country has virtually always surpassed 50%, with this percentage rising above 80% during periods of economic recession. By contrast, the more general answer "economic problems" was less mentioned by citizens asked to identify

Spain's main problems (Figure II.1). But though unemployment was the top answer, it appeared in a much less prominent place when interviewees were invited to indicate the three problems affecting them most personally. Personal problems were reasonably more dispersed and not so easy to rank.

A noteworthy change has lately occurred in this regard. On the one hand, at the top of the ranking of Spain's problems the answer "unemployment" has been replaced by "the economic crisis" (Figure II.1). Since the outbreak of the pandemic, both percentages have evolved in parallel (as they did at the beginning of the Global Financial Crisis in 2007-2008), but since March 2022, (coinciding with the start of the war in Ukraine) the answer "economic crisis" has outstripped the answer "unemployment". In July, 53% of interviewees spontaneously cited "the economic crisis" when asked about the three main problems in Spain (more than 20 pp above the percentages of interviewees citing unemployment and health

Figure II.1

Evolution of "unemployment" and "economic problems/crisis" as perceived main problems in Spain (1985-2022)

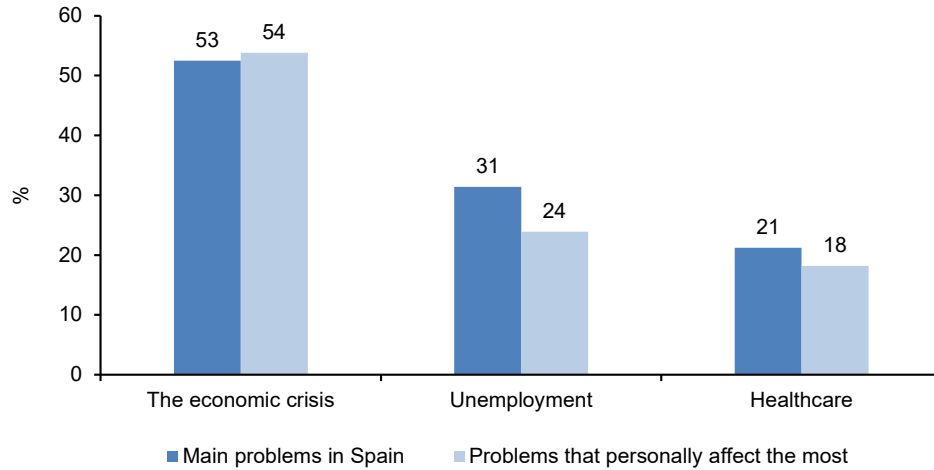


Question: "In your opinion, what is the main problem that currently exists in Spain? And the second? And the third?" (Open question) Accumulated answers.

Source: CIS (www.cis.es).

Figure II.2

The main problems in Spain and the problems that most affect interviewees as perceived by public opinion (July 2022)

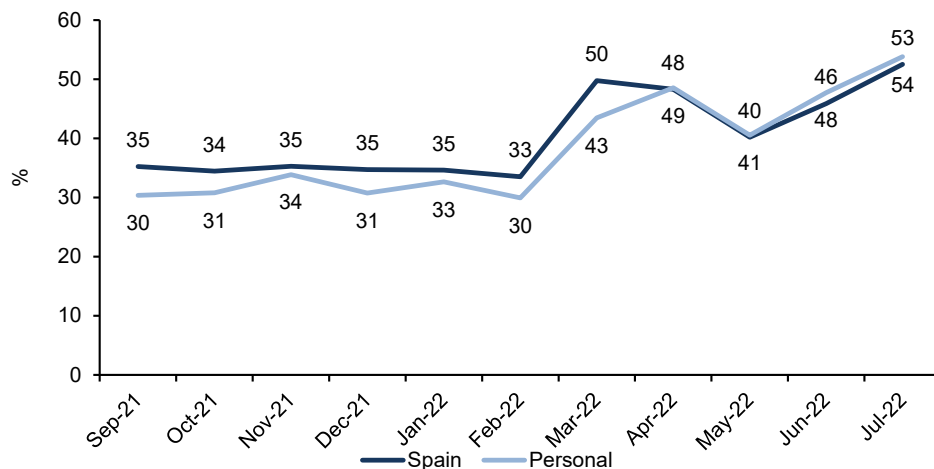


Question: “In your opinion, what is the main problem that currently exists in Spain? And the second? And the third?” “And what is the problem that personally affects you the most? And the second? And the third?” (Open question) Accumulated answers.

Source: CIS (www.cis.es).

Figure II.3

“The economic crisis”: the perceived main problem in Spain and the problem that most affects interviewees personally (September 2021-July 2022)



Question: “In your opinion, what is the main problem that currently exists in Spain? And the second? And the third?” “And what is the problem that affects you the most personally? And the second? And the third?” (Open question) Accumulated answers.

Source: CIS (www.cis.es).

as one of the three main problems in Spain: Figure II.2). On the other hand, since April 2022, the percentage of interviewees mentioning the economic crisis as Spain's problem virtually coincides with the percentage of interviewees giving the same answer when asked about

the problems that most affect them personally (Figure II.3). In fact, no answer in the time series to this latter question has ever achieved such a high percentage. The economic crisis has concentrated opinions about the main problems Spain and Spaniards currently face.

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	47,385,107	43.8	19.6	80.2	85.8	53.4	30.1	15.5	621,216	56,098
2022●	47,435,597	44.1	20.0			53.5	30.7	15.8		
<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	18,919	2.50	15.6	11.0
2022■	19,060	2.49		
<i>Sources</i>	LFS	LFS	EPF	EPF

Table III.2

Households and families (continued)

	Nuptiality					
	Marriage rate (Spanish)	Marriage rate (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	2.9
2019	7.1	6.7	1.95	36.0	33.9	3.1
2020	3.8	4.1	1.63	37.1	34.9	3.5
2021	6.3	5.6				3.4
<i>Sources</i>	ID INE	ID INE	ID INE	ID INE	ID INE	MNP

Fertility

	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	47.6	10.3	65.8
2021	31.6	1.16	1.38			
<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-June.

Table III.3

Education

Educational attainment				
	Population 16 years and older with primary education (%)	Population 30-34 with primary education (%)	Population 16 years and older with tertiary education (%)	Population 30-34 with tertiary education (%)
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	16.4	5.8	32.3	46.7
2022■	16.1	5.9	32.4	49.0
<i>Source</i>	LFS	LFS	LFS	LFS

Students involved in non-compulsory education

	Pre-primary education	Secondary education	Vocational training	Under-graduate students	Post-graduate students (except doctorate)
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	1,750,579	667,287	675,971	1,290,455	217,840
2019	1,749,597	673,740	706,533	1,296,379	237,118
2020	1,622,098	687,084	772,417	1,336,009	247,251
2021	1,622,919●	691,437●	776,664●	1,338,304	258,991
<i>Source</i>	MECD	MECD	MECD	MECD	MECD

Education expenditure

	Public expenditure (millions of €)	Public expenditure (% GDP)
2008	51,716	4.63
2010	53,099	4.91
2012	46,476	4.47
2014	44,846	4.32
2015	46,598	4.31
2016	47,579	4.25
2017	49,458	4.24
2018	50,807	4.23
2019	53,053	4.26
2020●	55,266	4.93
<i>Sources</i>	MECD	INE

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

● Provisional data.

■ Data refer to January-June.

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	922,856		6,165,349	1,190	949,765	994	2,353,987	740
2022	751,459■		6,240,196●	1,252●	951,903●	1,035●	2,350,951●	777●
<i>Source</i>	INSS		INSS	INSS	INSS	INSS	INSS	INSS

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	969,412	262,177	184,378	11,892
2022■	890,397	264,936	181,303	10,855
<i>Sources</i>	INSS	IMERSO	IMERSO	IMERSO

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-July.

● Data refer to January-August.

Table III. 5

Social protection: Health care**Expenditure**

	Public expenditure (% GDP)	Public expenditure (millions of €)
2008	6.1	67,344
2010	6.6	71,136
2012	6.3	64,734
2014	6.2	63,507
2015	6.2	66,489
2016	6.1	67,724
2017	6.0	69,312
2018	6.0	72,157
2019	6.1	75,929
2020●	7.6	85,383
<i>Sources</i>	Eurostat	Eurostat

Resources

	Medical specialists per 1,000 inhabitants	Primary care doctors per 1,000 people assigned	Specialist nurses per 1,000 inhabitants	Primary care nurses per 1,000 people assigned
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	2.0	0.8	3.5	0.7
2020	2.0	0.8	3.7	0.7
<i>Sources</i>	INCLASNS	INCLASNS	INCLASNS	INCLASNS

Satisfaction***Time on waiting list (days)**

	With the working of the health system	With medical history and tracing by family doctor or pediatrician	Non-urgent surgical procedures	First specialist consultations per 1,000 inhabitants
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
2020			148	99
2021			121	75
<i>Sources</i>	INCLASNS	INCLASNS	INCLASNS	INCLASNS

INE: Instituto Nacional de Estadística.

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

* Average of population satisfaction measured on a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 means "totally unsatisfactory" and 10 "totally satisfactory".

● Provisional data.

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	10,652	9,122	1,599	1,831	13.1	16.7	10,285	8,964	2,167
2022	10,884■	9,392■	1,416■	1,631■	11.5■	14.8■	10,607♦	9,336♦	2,351♦
Sources	LFS	LFS	LFS	LFS	LFS	LFS	BEL	BEL	BEL

BEL: *Boletín de Estadísticas Laborales*.

LFS: *Labour Force Survey*.

♦ Data refer to January-July.

■ Data refer to January-June.

Orders and information:

Funcas
Caballero de Gracia, 28
28013 Madrid (Spain)
Phone: +34 91 596 57 18
Fax: +34 91 596 57 96
publica@funcas.es
www.funcas.es

