

*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**

- I.1. Increasing maternal age at childbirth
- I.2. Scarce family and child benefits
- I.3. Childcare: A matter of families and households

### **Section II. Public opinion trends**

- Worsening perception of pensions as public benefits

### **Section III. Follow-up social data**

- Population, households and families, labour market, education and social protection



## Section I. Spain in Europe

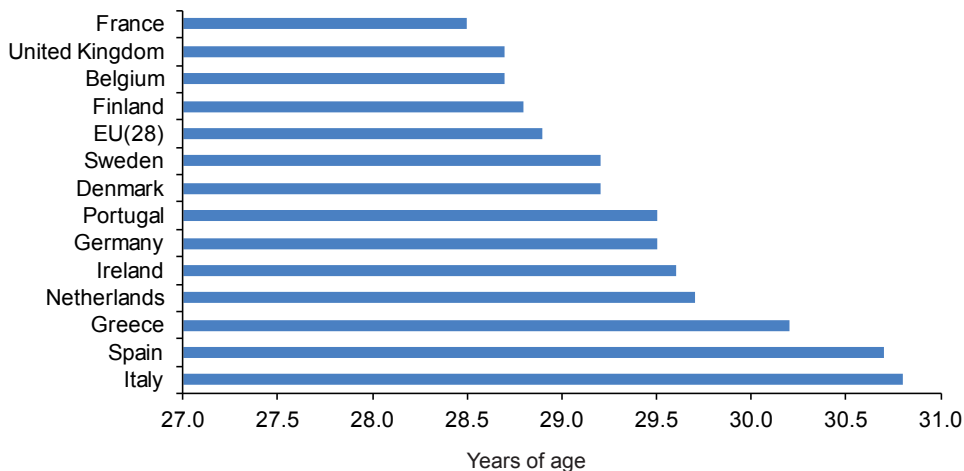
### I.1. Increasing maternal age at childbirth

Women in Spain become mothers later than in other European countries. The upward trend has been increasing remarkably since 2008. In that year, the mean age of women living in Spain at the birth of their first child was 29.3 years. It increased progressively in the following years, and in 2015 (latest available data) it reached 30.7 years. This figure was the second highest among the EU countries, after Italy (30.8), as shown in Figure I.1. It is true that many countries are witnessing an increase of the mean age at the birth of a woman's first child (for example, Germany, The Netherlands, Ireland or Sweden), but at a slower pace than in Spain (Figure I.2).

Spain ranks first when the indicator under consideration becomes the mean age of women at the birth of their second child. Again, the data issued by Eurostat show a generalized age increase during the last decade of European mothers having their second child, but Spain's increase has been especially pronounced. Less than four out of every ten children born in 2015 in Spain were second-born children (37.8%); their mothers' mean age was 33.1, that is 1.3 years more than the European average (Figure I.3).

Is the evidence of delayed maternity worrying? It should not be, if it corresponds to a voluntary decision by women and their partners. But since delayed maternity implies some fertility and health risks, it is supposedly not a voluntary outcome. If this assumption holds, delayed maternity is to be considered a problematic issue. Consequently, identifying and analysing the causes of this delay are necessary first steps to solve this problem, which is particularly serious in Spain.

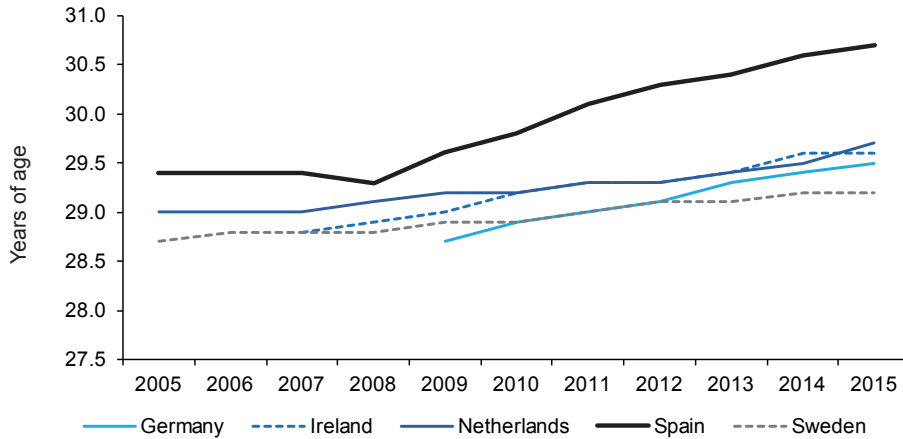
Figure I.1  
**Mean age of women at the birth of their first child (selected European countries, 2015)**



Source: Eurostat [demo\_find].

Figure I.2

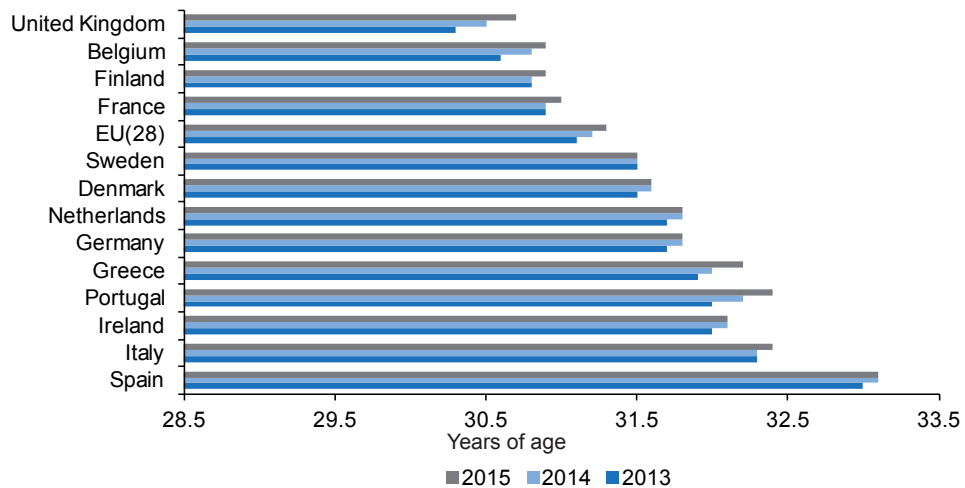
**Mean age of women at the birth of their first child (selected European countries, 2005-2015)**



Source: Eurostat [demo\_find].

Figure I.3

**Mean age of women at the birth of their second child (selected European countries, 20013-2015)**



Source: Eurostat [demo\_find].

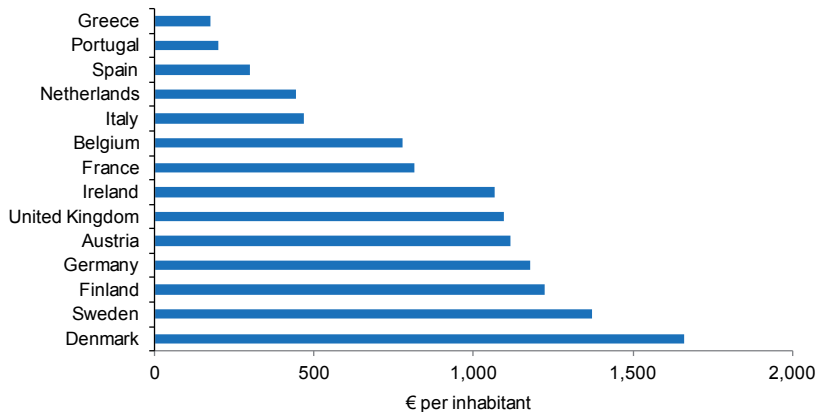
**I.2. Scarce family and child benefits**

Social protection benefits intended to address the risks and needs associated with families and children remain comparatively low in Spain.

According to newly published Eurostat data referring to 2015, Nordic countries maintain the top positions as welfare states that allocate higher amounts of public funding to families and children (around 1,500 euros per inhabitant, but with noteworthy variations). Belgium, France, Ireland and Germany follow them quite closely (roughly

Figure I.4

**Expenditure on family and child benefits (euros per inhabitant, selected European countries, 2015)**



Source: Eurostat [spr\_exp\_sum].

between 800 and 1,200 euros per inhabitant). These Central European countries devote to family and child benefits more than twice as much as Italy, The Netherlands, Spain, Portugal and Greece (approximately between 200 and 400 euros per inhabitant) (Figure I.4).

There is certainly not a mechanical relationship between family and child benefits, on the one hand, and fertility indicators, on the other hand, but in dual-earner families (the prevailing model among young families in Europe) public support for families and children might be a significant incentive for deciding to have children. Southern European welfare states have scarcely developed this family-friendly incentive, while nevertheless relying on families as important subsidiary welfare providers.

**I.3. Childcare: A matter of families and households**

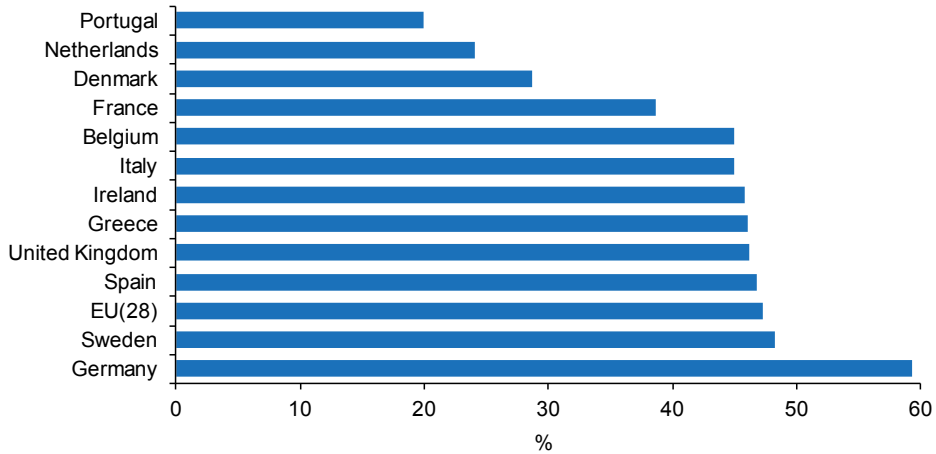
Similar amounts of social benefits for families and children do not lead to similar childcare arrangements. Thus, for example, Sweden had in 2016 significantly more children under the age of 3 cared for only by their parents (48%) than Denmark (29%), although both countries enjoyed high benefits for families and

children. France and Germany display similar differences. Both countries spend considerable similar amounts in family and child benefits per inhabitant. Yet, in Germany, six out of every ten young children (0-3 years) were cared for only by their parents (first and foremost by their mothers), whereas in France the corresponding proportion was much lower (39%). In Southern Europe, the percentages of children under the age of 3 cared for exclusively by parents does not diverge significantly from countries with strong public family and child support (for example, Sweden), the exception being Portugal, where less than 20% of children under the age of 3 were cared for in 2015 only by their parents (Figure I.5).

International differences become even more apparent when analysing children who receive formal childcare services. The main financing source of those paid services is in some countries the government and in other countries the household (Figure I.6). Sweden and Spain represent two outstanding examples. In Sweden, coverage of formal care for children under the age of 3 is entirely financed by the central or municipal government. Since no family in Sweden has to pay directly for those services, it can be presumed that childcare exclusively provided by parents is a deliberate choice by

Figure I.5

**Percentage of children under the age of 3 cared for only by their parents (selected European countries, 2016)**



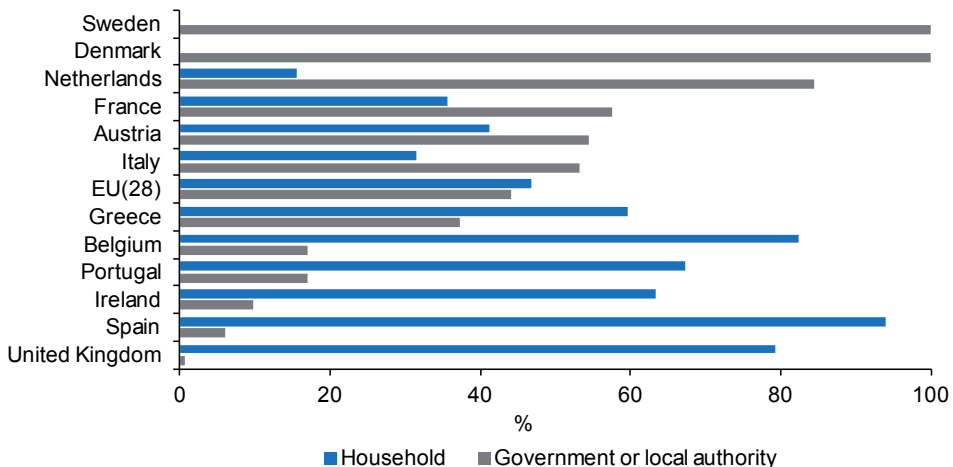
Source: Eurostat (EU-SILC survey [ilc\_caparents]).

families (assuming that there is no lack of formal childcare places). By contrast, in Spain, the percentage of children receiving formal childcare services paid for by the government amounts to only 6%, the rest of them getting formal childcare paid for by households.

This evidence suggests that although Sweden and Spain have similar proportions of children cared for only by their parents, the option for full parental childcare in Spain may not be as much of a voluntary decision as in the Scandinavian country.

Figure I.6

**Percentage of children under the age of 3 receiving paid formal childcare services by contributor (2016)**



Source: Eurostat (EU-SILC survey [ilc\_ats02]).

## Section II. Public opinion trends

### Worsening perception of pensions as public benefits

The Spanish Social Security pension system pays out each year a higher amount of benefits than in the previous one. In January 2018, it paid out 8,905 million euros for all contributory pension, 3% more than in January 2017.

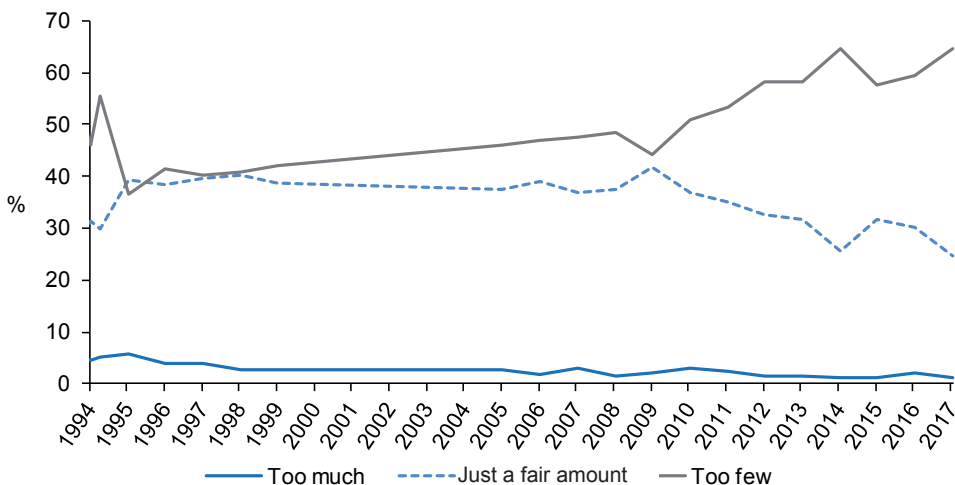
Curiously enough, despite growing pension expenditure, the proportion of people who think that too few resources are devoted to pensions is increasing. Two out of every three Spaniards held this opinion in July 2017, the biggest proportion since the 1990s (Figure II.1). Even if the amount of people who believe that Social Security is

underfinanced has been quite high since public opinion data on this issue became available, it has significantly increased during the last years.

As a matter of fact, while the Spanish pension system has been definitively improving its coverage and benefits during the last decades, public opinion seems to be increasingly dissatisfied with it. This growing discontent is also evident in the answers to a question regarding public pensions' management. Though pensioners consistently receive their benefits on time and complaints about the Social Security administration are extremely infrequent, 57% of the population claimed in July 2017 to be scarcely or not at all satisfied with public pension management, 20 percentage points higher than in 2009 (Figure II.2). Most probably, interviewees giving these answers are reacting to the information about the financial sustainability problems of Social Security, which have been high on the Spanish public agenda during the last years.

Figure II.1

### Opinion on the money devoted to Social Security/pensions (1994-2017)



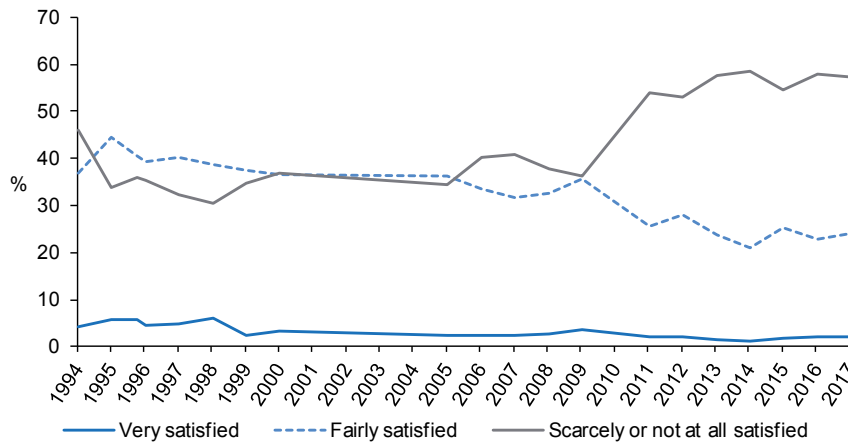
Question: "As you know, different public administrations devote the money that we pay in taxes to public services and benefits. Please tell me if you think that too many, just a fair amount or too few resources are allocated to Social Security/pensions?"

Source: Yearly surveys on "Public Opinion and Fiscal Policy", Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas ([www.cis.es](http://www.cis.es)).

Consequently, public opinion data suggest that the knowledge about sustainability difficulties does not encourage thoughts and attitudes more favorable towards rationalization and austerity, but rather elicits feelings of dissatisfaction with the system.

Figure II.2

**Opinion on the management of public pensions (1994-2017)**



Question: “To what extent do you think that each of these public services works satisfactorily? Management of public pensions: Very satisfactorily, fairly satisfactorily, scarcely satisfactorily or not satisfactorily”.

Source: Yearly surveys on “Public Opinion and Fiscal Policy”, Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas (www.cis.es).

## 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 entries (EU-28 born) (%)
2006	44,708,964	40.6	16.7	77.7	84.2	47.5	24.6	10.8	840,844	37.6
2008	46,157,822	40.8	16.5	78.2	84.3	47.5	24.5	13.1	726,009	28.4
2010	47,021,031	41.1	16.9	79.1	85.1	48.6	25.0	14.0	464,443	35.6
2012	47,265,321	41.6	17.4	79.4	85.1	50.4	26.1	14.3	370,515	36.4
2014	46,771,341	42.1	18.1	80.1	85.7	51.6	27.4	13.4	399,947	38.0
2015	46,624,382	42.4	18.4	79.9	85.4	52.4	28.0	13.2	455,679	36.4
2016	46,557,008	42.7	18.6	80.4	85.9	52.9	28.4	13.2	534,574	33.4
2017	46,572,132	42.9	18.8			53.2	28.8	13.3		
<i>Sources</i>	PMC	PMC	PMC	ID INE	ID INE	PMC	PMC	PMC	EVR	EVR

ID INE: *Indicadores Demográficos INE.*

PMC: *Padrón Municipal Continuo.*

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.

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 (%)
2006	15,856	2.76	11.6	10.3
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 <sup>a</sup>	18,512	2.52		
<i>Sources</i>	LFS	LFS	EPF	EPF



Table III.2

**Households and families (continued)**

<b>Nuptiality</b>						
	Marriage rate (Spanish)	Marriage rate (foreign population)	Divorce rate	Mean age at first marriage (men)	Mean age at first marriage (women)	Same sex marriages (%)
2006	9.3	9.5	2.86	32.2	29.7	2.08
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
<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 (%)
2006	29.3	1.31	1.69	28.4	10.6	
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
<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.

▪ *Data refer to January-September.*

*Divorce rate: Number of divorces per thousand population.*

*Marriage rate: Number of marriages 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).*

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 (%)
2006	32.9	8.4	15.6	25.3
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
<i>Source</i>	<b>LFS</b>	<b>LFS</b>	<b>LFS</b>	<b>LFS</b>

**Students involved in non-compulsory education**

	Pre-primary education	Secondary education	Vocational training	Under-graduate students	Post-graduate students (except doctorate)
2006	1,557,257	630,349	445,455	1,405,894	16,636
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•	1,778,620	687,692	651,722	1,307,461	184,745
<i>Source</i>	<b>MECD</b>	<b>MECD</b>	<b>MECD</b>	<b>MECD</b>	<b>MECD</b>

**Education expenditure**

	Public expenditure (thousands of €)	Public expenditure (% GDP)
2006	42,512,586	4.31
2008	51,716,008	4.63
2010	53,099,329	4.91
2012	46,476,414	4.46
2014	44,846,415	4.31
2015•	46,648,800	4.34
<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.*

Table III.4

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

	Unemployment		Retirement		Permanent disability		Widowhood	
	Total		Total	Average amount (€)	Total	Average amount (€)	Total	Average amount (€)
2006	720,384		4,809,298	723	859,780	732	2,196,934	477
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•			5,883,810	1,074	949,857	940	2,359,665	651
<i>Source</i>	<b>BEL</b>	<b>BEL</b>	<b>BEL</b>	<b>BEL</b>	<b>BEL</b>	<b>BEL</b>	<b>BEL</b>	<b>BEL</b>

**Non-contributory benefits**

	Social Security			
	Unemployment	Retirement	Disability	Other
2006	558,702	276,920	204,844	82,064
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•		256,299	198,197	17,623
<i>Sources</i>	<b>BEL</b>	<b>IMSERO</b>	<b>IMSERO</b>	<b>IMSERO</b>

BEL: *Boletín de Estadísticas Laborales*.

IMSERO: Instituto de Mayores y Servicios Sociales.

\* Benefits for orphans and dependent family members of deceased Social Security affiliates are excluded.

• Data refer to January.

Table III. 5

**Social protection: Health care**

**Expenditure**

	Total (% GDP)	Public (% GDP)	Total expenditure (\$ per inhabitant)	Public expenditure (\$ per inhabitant)
2006	7.76	5.62	2,391	1,732
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	9.16	6.51	3,180	2,258
2016	8.98	6.34	3,248	2,293
<i>Sources</i>	OECD	OECD	OECD	OECD

**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
2006	1.6	0.7	2.8	0.6
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		0.8		0.6
<i>Sources</i>	INCLASNS	INCLASNS	INCLASNS	INCLASNS

**Satisfaction**

**Patients on waiting list**

	With the working of the health system	With medical history and tracing by family doctor or pediatrician	Non-urgent surgical procedures per 1,000 inhabitants	Specialist consultations per 1,000 inhabitants
2006	5.6	7.0	9.4	35.4
2008	6.4	7.0	9.2	37.5
2010	6.6	7.3	9.8	33.0
2012	6.6	7.5	11.8	35.9
2014	6.3	7.5	11.4	39.4
2015	6.4	7.5	12.2	43.4
2016	6.6	7.5	12.7	40.9
<i>Sources</i>	INCLASNS	INCLASNS	INCLASNS	INCLASNS

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)
2006	11,809	8,131	801	1,040	6.4	11.3	10,955	7,641	1,822
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♦							9,794	8,418	1,810
<i>Sources</i>	<b>LFS</b>	<b>LFS</b>	<b>LFS</b>	<b>LFS</b>	<b>LFS</b>	<b>LFS</b>	<b>BEL</b>	<b>BEL</b>	<b>BEL</b>

BEL: *Boletín de Estadísticas Laborales*.

LFS: *Labour Force Survey*.

♦ Data refer to January.





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](mailto:publica@funcas.es)  
[www.funcas.es](http://www.funcas.es)

