Focus on Spanish Society

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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 or political 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. Divergence across government expenditures

Euro area countries show significant variations in total general government expenditure, as confirmed by recently released Eurostat data for the year 2018. Taking as a reference both Spain's expenditure and the Euro area (19) average as percentages of GDP, we can classify spending into three groups of eurozone countries. The first group encompasses those countries whose total general government expenditure is below that of Spain (41.7% of GDP, or 501,500 million euros); the second group includes the countries which spend between 41.7% of their GDP and the Euro area average (47.0% of GDP), while the third group comprises the countries above the latter level (Figure I.1).

Consequently, Spain's differential relative to the Euro area average in 2018 was 5.3 percentage points. This gap is smaller than the one prior to the Great Recession. Thus, for example in 2007 Spanish total general government expenditure amounted to 39.3% of GDP (422,200 million euro), 6.3 percentage points lower than the Euro area average. The difference was even bigger at the beginning of the century, when total public expenditure in Spain amounted to 39.1% of GDP (253,350 million euro), while the Euro area average reached 47% of GDP (Figure I.2).

However, the evolution of general government expenditure in the countries belonging to the eurozone does not support the argument of growing convergence. In fact, while the Euro area average in total government expenditure has shown considerable stability between 2000 and 2018 (ranging from a minimum of 46.3 to a maximum of 50.9), the international differences have increased over this period. In the years prior to the crisis (2000-2007), the standard deviation between the nations sharing the single currency oscillated around 6, while in the recovery years (2014-2018) it increased to ca. 7 (Figure I.3). In this latter year, the gap between the country with the lowest and the country with the highest total government expenditure (Ireland and France, respectively) amounted to 30.6 percentage
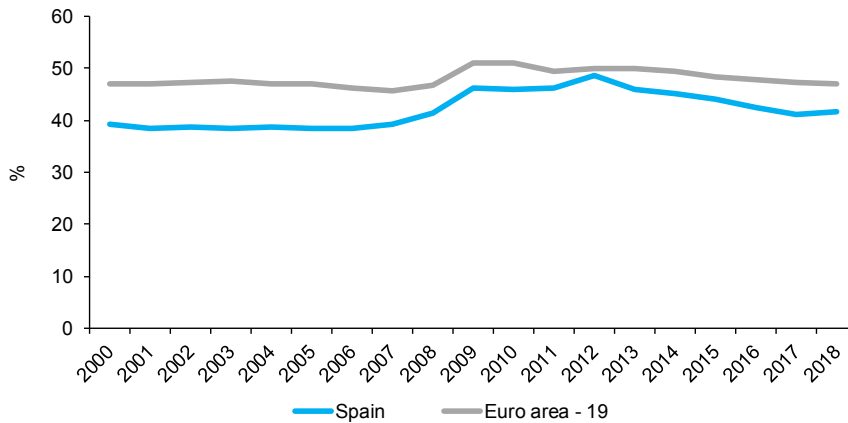
Figure I.1

Total general government expenditure as a percentage of GDP (Euro area, 2018)
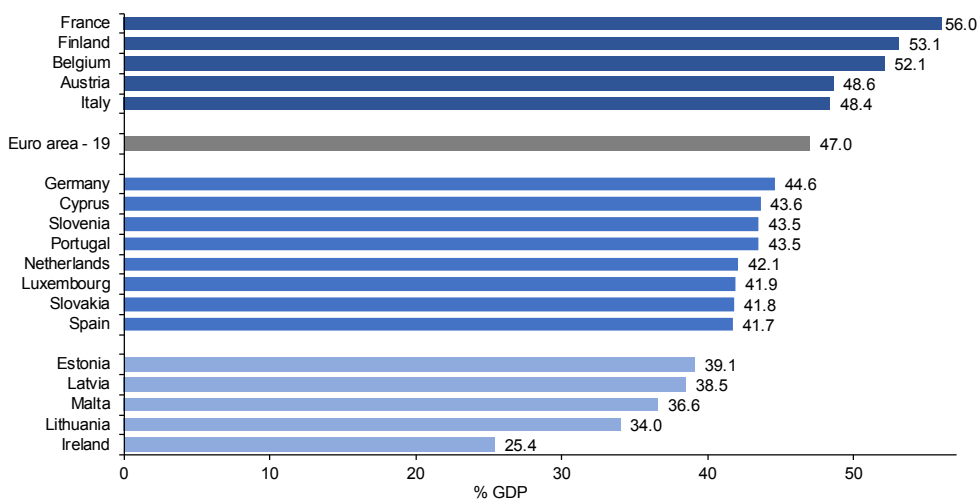
Source: Eurostat [gov_10a_exp].

Figure I.2

Total general government expenditure as a percentage of GDP (Spain and Euro area, 2000-2018*)

*Euro area (19) during the whole period.
Source: Eurostat [gov_10a_exp].

points (pp), whereas in 2000 it was 20.8 pp (and in 2007 16.7 pp).

Euro area countries also demonstrate a wide range of variation in their behavior throughout the observation period. Some of them –for example, Germany, Austria, Italy and France– have shown moderate annual variation in total government spending since the beginning of the century (and even since the outbreak of the crisis), while others –first and foremost, Ireland, but also Greece and, to a lesser extent, Spain– have witnessed important fluctuations in this indicator, as evidenced by sizable standard deviations between the yearly averages (Figure I.4)

Figure I.3

Total general government expenditure as a percentage of GDP: Average of Euro area-19 countries and standard deviation (2000-2018)
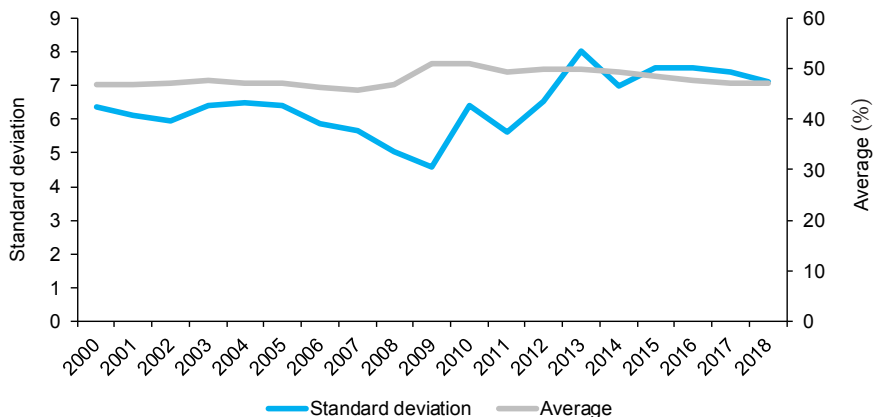
Source: Eurostat [gov_10a_exp].

Figure I.4

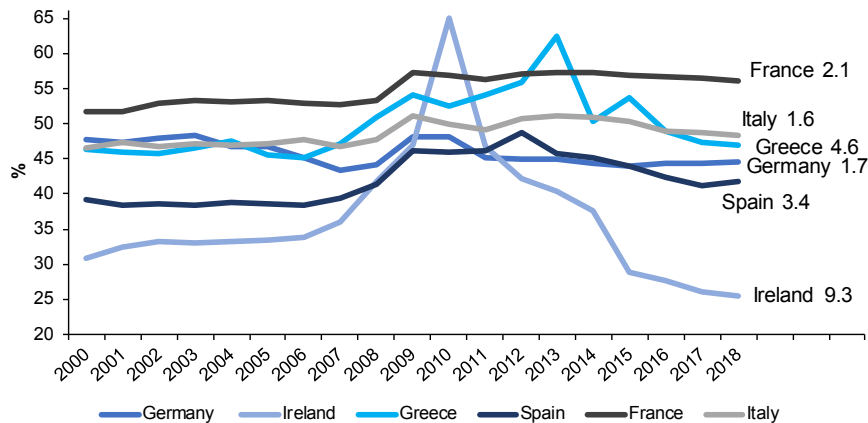**Total general government expenditure as a percentage of GDP (2000-2018) and standard deviation during the period (selected Euro area countries)**

France 2.1
Italy 1.6
Greece 4.6
Germany 1.7
Spain 3.4
Ireland 9.3

Germany · Ireland · Greece · Spain · France · Italy

Source: Eurostat [gov_10a_exp].

I.2. Spain's intermediate position in government expenditure on social protection

Social protection is the government function which absorbs the greatest part of total public expenditure in all European countries. However, there are significant differences in the proportion of national wealth devoted to this objective.[1] The Nordic countries continue to stand out for their high spending in this area, but France's social protection expenditure in terms of GDP was in 2018 higher than that registered by Sweden as well as by Denmark. Italy, Austria and Germany also rank in the group of countries with the highest social protection spending. At the opposite side of the spectrum, we find Ireland and most of the former Communist countries now integrated in the European Union (the Baltic nations, as well as Bulgaria, the Czech Republic and Hungary) (Figure I.5).

Spain again ranks in the middle, with 16.9% of GDP, together with countries like Portugal (17.1%) and Poland (16.2%), but also with others which have much higher levels of GDP per capita, like The Netherlands and Luxembourg[2] (Figure I.5). Spain's government expenditure on social protection represents 88% of the EU (27) average (and 86% of the Euro area (19) average). In all but two of the socio-economic functions included in the international Classification of Functions of Government (COFOG)[3], Spain shows lower percentages in government expenditure (as a percentage of GDP) than the EU average, the two exceptions being "Public order and safety" and "Environmental protection". Spain's government expenditure on "Public order and

[1] This government function includes benefits and services for protection in the case of illness and disability, old age, survivors, family and children, unemployment, housing and R&D, as well as for combatting social exclusion.

[2] GDP per capita in PPS (Index EU27_2020 = 100) for Spain is 92, for Portugal: 76, for Poland: 71, for The Netherlands: 130, and for Luxembourg: 256.

[3] The functions according to COFOG are ten: "Social protection", "Health", "General public services", "Education", "Economic affairs", "Public order and safety", "Defence", "Recreation, culture and religion", "Environmental protection" and "Housing and community amenities".

Figure I.5

General government expenditure on social protection as a percentage of GDP (EU-27 countries, 2018)
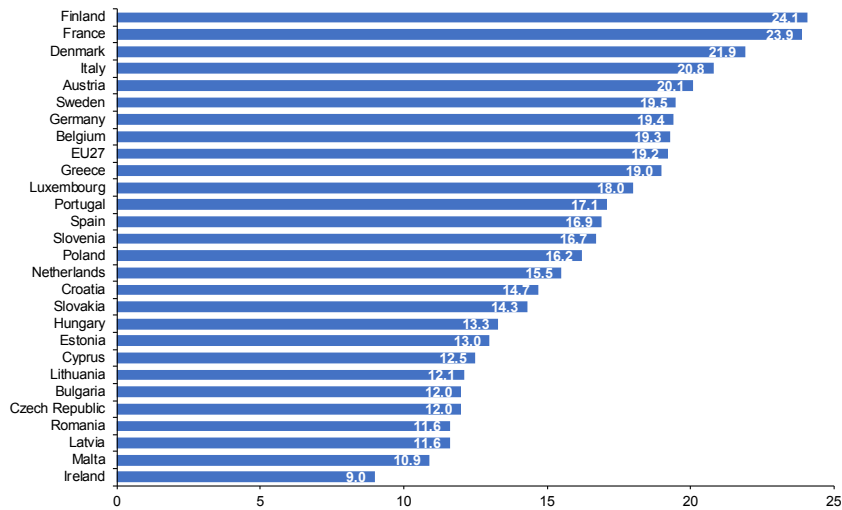
Source: Eurostat [gov_10a_exp].

safety" represents 106% of the EU average, while expenditure on "Environmental protection" amounts to 113% of the EU average. Yet, Spain is far from heading government expenditure (as a percentage of GDP) in both of these functions. In particular, Bulgaria is the leading country in public spending devoted to public order and safety (147% of the EU average), while The Netherlands leads public spending on environmental protection (175% of the EU average) (Figure I.6).

Figure I.6

General government expenditure by function (COFOG) as a percentage of GDP (EU-27 average, Spain and leading country in each function, 2018)
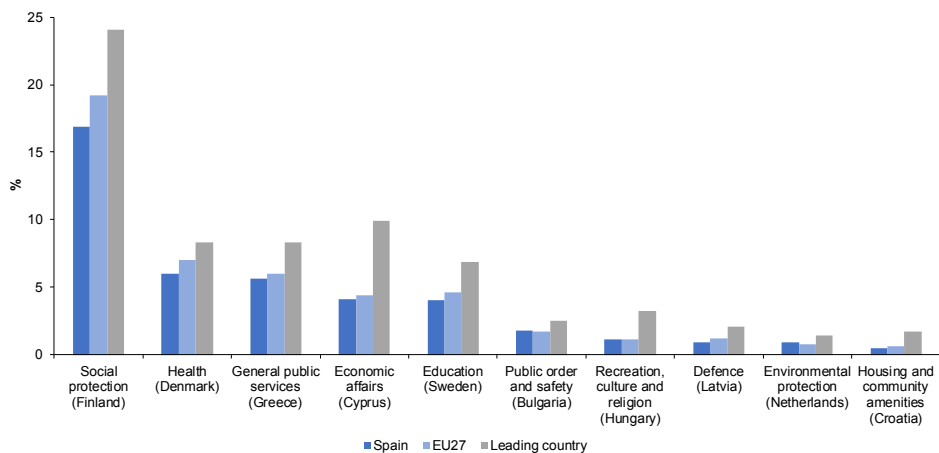
Source: Eurostat [gov_10a_exp].

Section II.
Public opinion trends

Dissatisfaction with public resources devoted to social and environmental protection

A recent survey has found that Spanish citizens are mostly discontent with the amount of public resources dedicated to social protection. In September 2019, about six out of every ten people aged 18 and older considered that the resources allocated to long-term care, pensions as well as scientific and technological research were "too few". Health and environmental protection were also identified by similar proportions as underfunded governmental areas. In contrast, defence, transport/communications and public

works were the areas less frequently cited by interviewees (Figure II.1).

Dissatisfaction with the volume of taxes devoted to social welfare has appreciably risen since the end of the Great Recession. The evolution of opinions regarding pensions and health is very telling: the proportion of people answering that public administrations dedicate "too few" resources to these areas has soared in recent years. The same applies to environmental protection, which since 2013 has witnessed a strong increase in the number of people who stated they were dissatisfied. However, the most outstanding rise in the share of people thinking that resources are too scarce is found in scientific and technological research. In 2010, around one third of interviewees (34%) considered that research was underfunded, while in 2019 this proportion had skyrocketed to nearly two thirds (62%).

Figure II.1

Opinions about resources dedicated to public services: "very few" (September 2019)
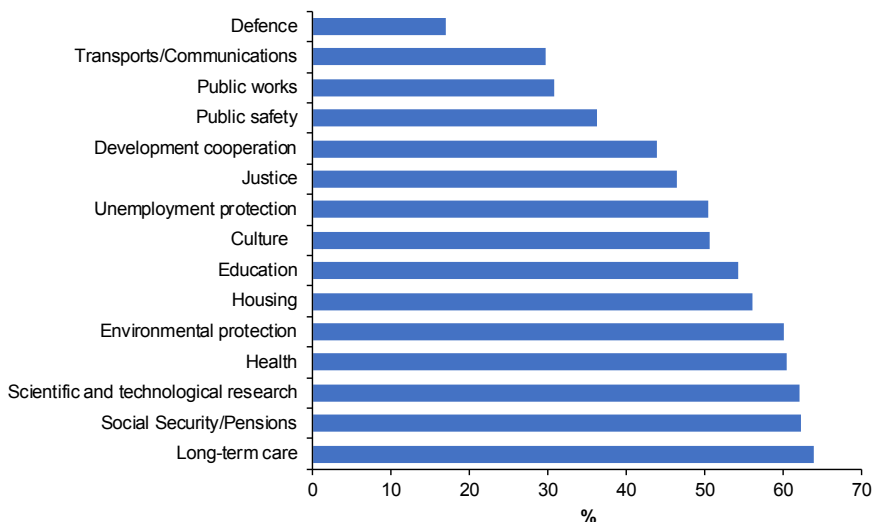
Question: "As you know, public administrations devote the money that we in Spain pay in taxes to the financing of public services and benefits. Tell me please if you think that too many, very few or just the necessary resources are dedicated to each of the services I am going to mention".
Source: Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas, survey 3259 ("Public opinion and fiscal policy XXXVI"), N=2,464, (www.cis.es).

Figure II.2

Evolution of opinions about resources dedicated to public services: "very few" (2005-2019)
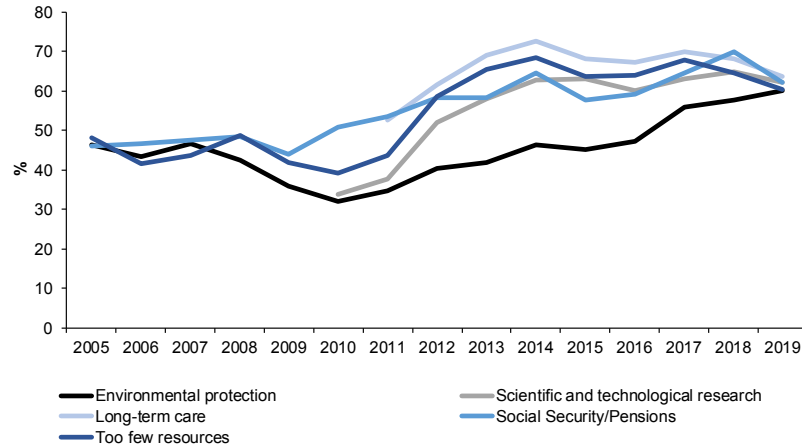
Legend:
- Environmental protection
- Long-term care
- Too few resources
- Scientific and technological research
- Social Security/Pensions

Question: "As you know, public administrations devote the money that we in Spain pay in taxes to the financing of public services and benefits. Tell me please if you think that too many, very few or just the necessary resources are dedicated to each of the services I am going to mention."

Source: Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas, yearly surveys "Public opinion and fiscal policy" (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) (%)
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	80.3	85.8	52.9	28.4	13.2	534,574	33.4
2017	46,572,132	42.9	18.8	80.4	85.7	53.2	28.8	13.3	637,375	39.3
2018	46,722,980	43.1	19.1	80.5	85.9	53.6	29.3	13.7	760,804	25.8
2019	47,026,208	43.3	19.3			53.7	29.6	14.4		
Sources	**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.

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		
Sources	**LFS**	**LFS**	**EPF**	**EPF**

Table III.2

Households and families (continued)

Nuptiality

	People getting married (per 1,000) (Spanish)	People getting married (per 1,000) (foreign population)	Divorce rate	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
Sources	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
Sources	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).

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
Source	**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●	1,747,374	667,426	677,083	1,293,892	214,528
Source	**MECD**	**MECD**	**MECD**	**MECD**	**MECD**

Education expenditure

	Public expenditure (thousands of €)	Public expenditure (% GDP)
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
Sources	**MECD**	**INE**

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 (€)
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	939,666♦	6,098,363■	1,150■	959,764■	982■	2,362,144■	719■
Source	INEM	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♦	977,427	260,950	191,196	14,066
Sources	INEM	IMSERSO	IMSERSO	IMSERSO

INEM: Servicio Público de Empleo Estatal.
INSS: Instituto Nacional de la Seguridad Social.
IMSERSO: Instituto de Mayores y Servicios Sociales.
* Benefits for orphans and dependent family members of deceased Social Security affiliates not included.
■ Data refer to January-February.
♦ Data refer to January.

Table III. 5

Social protection: Health care

Expenditure

	Total (% GDP)	Public (% GDP)	Total expenditure ($ per inhabitant)	Public expenditure ($ per inhabitant)
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
2017	8.84	6.25	3,370	2,385
2018	8.90	6.20	3,323	2,341
Sources	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
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
Sources	INCLASNS	INCLASNS	INCLASNS	INCLASNS

Satisfaction (0-10 scale) / 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
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		
Sources	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)
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	2,092
2020							10,225■	8,935■	2,075◆
Sources	**LFS**	**LFS**	**LFS**	**LFS**	**LFS**	**LFS**	**BEL**	**BEL**	**BEL**

BEL: *Boletín de Estadísticas Laborales.*
LFS: *Labour Force Survey.*
▪ Data refer to January-February.
◆ Data refer to January.