

Socio-economic and demographic characteristics of the population¹

This section contains a description of the principal demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the Spanish population. The source material was taken from the National Statistics Institute, and other documents of interest have been used to enrich the information provided by the Institute.

In demographic terms, the period between 1998 and 2006 has been marked in Spain by a growth of the resident population of 12%. This growth has been slightly greater among the male population (13.4%) than the female (11%). This increase in the male population can be attributed to the arrival of immigrants.

The foreign population legally residing in Spain in 2005 amounted to 3,730,610 persons. However, the most recent data to emerge from the municipal population statistics, from January 2007, indicates that the number of foreign residents has risen to 4,48 million, which is nearly 10 % of the whole population. At the same time, as figure 1 shows, the Autonomous Communities which had the highest percentages of foreign residents emerged as Andalusia, Catalonia, Valencian Community and Madrid.

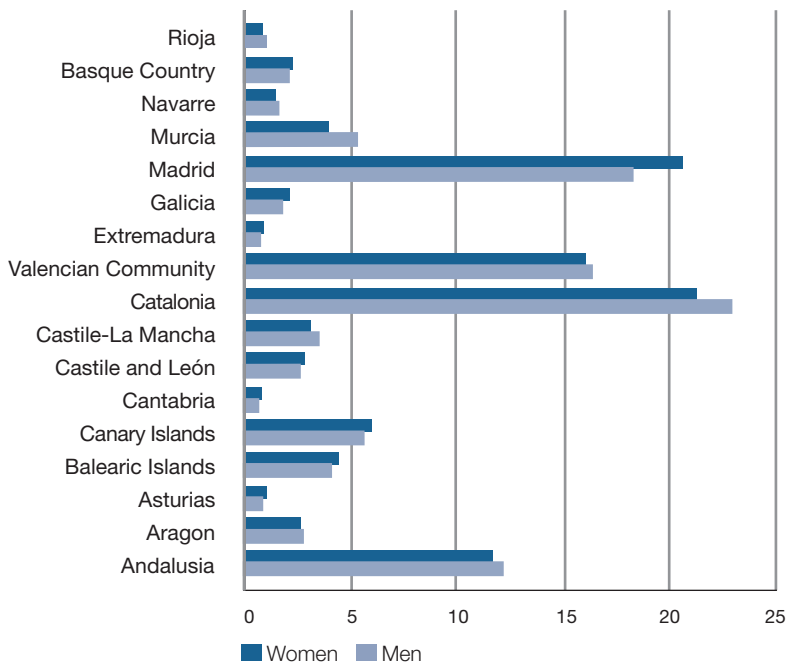
In total, the population of Spain on the 1st of January 2006 was 44,708,964 inhabitants. Of these, 51% were women (22,608,498). Life expectancy at birth was 80.23 with women living for 83.48 years, while men expected to live for 79.96 years.

The aging of the population emerged as an important factor which should be noted. It is a well-known fact that Spain is among the countries with the highest life expectancies in the world. According to the UN Human Development Report for 2006, Spain occupied fifteenth place in the world ranking for men, and fourth place in the ranking for women, after Japan, Hong Kong and Switzerland. It is worth noting also that the data obtained from the population census of 1991 and 2001 has revealed a 50 % increase in the number of persons over 85 years of age who live alone. In the case of men, the rate has risen from 12.74 % to 19.83%, while the rate among women has risen from 21.02% to 35.52%.

Immigration has also been an important factor in the increase of the number of persons covered by the National Health System in recent years

1 Information available in various press releases from the National Statistics Institute at www.ine.es/prensa/prensa.htm

Figure 1: Distribution of foreign population by sex, by Autonomous Communities, 2006



Created from data drawn from the National Statistics Institute register of municipal population records, 2006

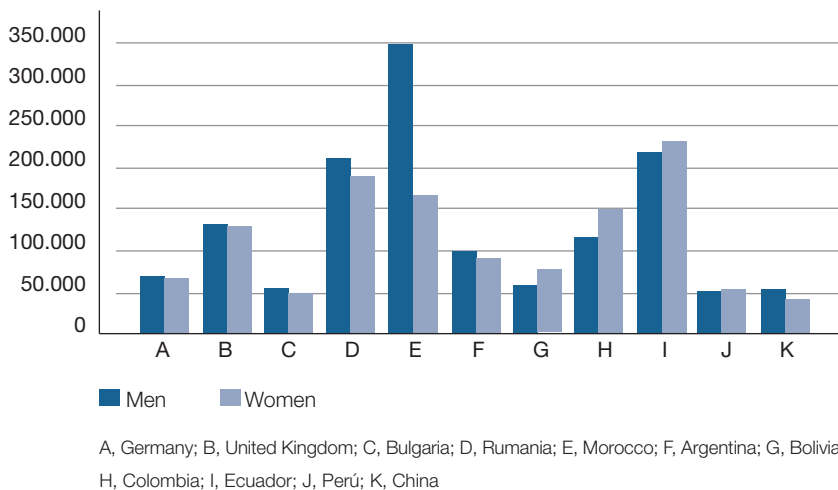
(which experienced 10 % growth in the period between 1999 and 2005). This influx of population has taken place in the context of a policy that guarantees universal recognition of the right to health care, in accordance with the applicable legislation.

The principal immigrant groups are balanced in terms of their gender, although there tends to be a slight predominance of males.

This can be seen in figure 2, where the situation of Moroccans is remarkable, because the number of men is double that of women. In contrast, the proportion of women is higher among the immigrants from Ecuador, Bolivia and Peru. This would seem to indicate that emigration from the Andean countries is at variance with African immigration in that there is a slight predominance of women.

In this sense, one of the features that characterises the current pattern of immigration is that women have been the initiators of the migratory process, which is to say that they have been the pioneers who have created the

Figure 2: Most significant groups within the foreign population, by country of origin and sex, 2006



Created from data drawn from the National Statistics Institute register of municipal population records, 2006.

home. This is an aspect that can also be noted in those groups which are predominantly male.

The *fertility rate* stood at 1.37 in 2006, compared with 1.35 in 2005.

The index of fertility continues to rise, and has risen to its highest point since 1991.

There were 481,102 births registered in 2006, and the crude birth rate (which is the number of childbirths per 1,000 people per year) rose to 10.92%.

This increased number of births was due to the contribution of foreign mothers. The births registered to foreign mothers represented 16.46% of the total in 2006, while they were 15.07% in 2005 and 13.78% in 2004.

In comparison with the other countries of the European Union (EU-15), the fertility rate in Spain has gone from the second highest place in 1976 (behind Ireland) to the lowest of all in 2001. The Spanish rate began to rise again in 2005, when it occupied 11th place in the European Union area, overtaking Germany, Greece, Italy and Slovenia.

The natural growth rates (difference between the number of births and deaths) of the Autonomous Communities were most positive in absolute terms in Andalusia (which gained 32,936 inhabitants), Madrid (with 31,290), and Catalonia (with 23,630). In contrast, Galicia, Castile and Leon, Asturias and Aragon were the regions that registered the most negative natural growth rates.

One of the aspects reflecting the quality of life of the population of Spain is the access to and use of new information and communication technology (ICT). There are 6.5 million homes in Spain with an internet connection. Table I shows the data from the Survey of Equipment and Use of Information and Communication Technologies in Spanish homes which was undertaken in the second half of 2006.

Table I: Information and Communication Technology in Spanish Households (%) during the second half of 2006

Persons who have used Internet at some point	Households with computer	Households with Internet connection
53.8	58.4	41.1

Created with data from the National Statistics Institute.

It should be noted that the population of the 10 to 14 age group, which has a particularly close relation with new information and communication technology, has registered a steady increase in the last few years. It is also notable that girls begin to use information and communication technology at an earlier age than boys. As they grow older this difference gradually closes, and in many cases it is reversed.

Table II: Educational level of the Spanish population, 2006

Both sexes Absolute data (in thousands)	Total	37,236
	Illiterate	833
	Primary education	11,327
	Secondary education, first cycle	9,259
	Secondary education, second cycle	7,442
	Job training and insertion with equivalence of secondary education (second cycle)	32
	Higher education, except doctorate	8,174
	Doctorate	169
Women (%)	Total	50.97
	Illiterate	68.44
	Primary education	54.72
	Secondary education, first cycle	46.59
	Secondary education, second cycle	50.04
	Job training and insertion with equivalence of secondary education (second cycle)	44.55
	Higher education, except doctorate	50.22
	Doctorate	32.86

From the Women's Institute. Available on www.mtas.es/mujer/mujeres/cifras/educacion/nivel_estudios.htm

Among the socio-economic characteristics of the population, it is important to take into account the level of education (table II). Spain has experienced an increase in the level of education of its inhabitants in recent years which has been common to the rest of the European countries. Even so, the increase in this country has not been sufficient to raise our figures to the level of the European average.

The data collected in 2003 revealed that the level of education of the foreign population residing in Spain was higher than that of the indigenous population². This can be explained by the fact that migratory flows are selective, and that the greater part of the emigrant population consisted of young people with higher education. The number of immigrants who have finished their secondary and university studies is therefore very high, approximately 50% in the case of secondary education and 20% in the case of university degrees.

Women make up 70% of the number of teachers working outside of the university system, and the last decade has seen a significant increase in the number of women in higher education. This participation of women in higher education has been generalised across all subjects, except for technical areas, where they are still under 30%.

Another aspect which should be considered is the changing nature of employment which has been generated in the labour market. In this aspect, the data from the Survey of the economically active population³ from the fourth quarter of 2006 shows the total number of workers as 21,812,400, giving an active rate of 58.58%. If this rate is separated by gender, significant differences come to light between the rate for women, which stands at 48.56%, and that of men which stands at 69%. In general the year-on-year employment growth rate is 3.56%. The increase in the active population is most notable in the groups over 30 years of age, but especially in the 30-34 age group. Even so, there are differences between the figures for men and for women (17 percentage points). The general rate of unemployment among females in 2006 was 11.4%, which was higher than that of men, at 6.1%, and was higher across all age groups.

As regards the number of employed persons, there were a total of 16,208,100 in 2006. Of these, 66 % had indefinite contracts, while 34 % were

2 Report on women and men in Spain 2006, National Statistics Institute (NSI). See figure 2-2 (Percentage distribution of the immigrant population of age 16 or over by education completed and sex, 2003). Available on www.ine.es/prodyser/pubweb/myh/myh_edu.pdf

3 The Survey of the Active Population (SAP) is carried out by continuous sampling of family homes, which has been performed since 1964. This survey selects 3,588 censal sections from among the 30,000 in which Spain is divided. An average of 18 homes are interviewed in each of these areas, except in the provinces of Barcelona, Madrid, Seville, Valencia and Zaragoza, where 22 homes are interviewed. The sample population is therefore approximately 65,000 homes, which in turn implies obtaining information from 180,000 persons.

employed on a temporary basis. There were also slight differences between the sexes in this aspect, with 68% of men and 63.3% of women having indefinite contracts, while temporary contracts made up the other 32% and 36.7% respectively.

However, another aspect which should not be overlooked is the existence of part-time employment. Recent years has seen an increasing number of women taking part-time employment in the labour market. This has resulted in the number of women in part-time employment rising from 16.8% in 2001 to 23.2% in 2006, compared with 4.3% of men.

Finally, as regards the burden of housework and caring for dependent persons, it is the women who continue to shoulder the greater part of looking after the children and the home on a regular basis (fig. 3). This is in spite of the fact that men are participating more in housework tasks, as the figure for men who are employed full-time and carry out housework has risen from 9.35 % in 1998 to 16.31 % in 2004.

