



Kingdom of Spain

Background

Spain's powerful world empire of the 16th and 17th centuries ultimately yielded command of the seas to England. Subsequent failure to embrace the mercantile and industrial revolutions caused the country to fall behind Britain, France, and Germany in economic and political power. Spain remained neutral in World War I and II but suffered through a devastating civil war (1936-39). A peaceful transition to democracy following the death of dictator Francisco Franco in 1975, and rapid economic modernization (Spain joined the EU in 1986) gave Spain a dynamic and rapidly growing economy and made it a global champion of freedom and human rights.

Leaders

Head of state: King Felipe VI

King Felipe succeeded to the throne on the abdication of his father Juan Carlos in June 2014.

Born in 1968 when his father was heir-apparent to the vacant throne during the Franco dictatorship, Prince Felipe was educated for his future royal role, and undertook official engagements on behalf of the king from 1995.

Despite retaining considerable constitutional power as chief executive and commander-in-chief, King Felipe has pledged to continue his father's legacy of supporting the primacy of parliament.

Prime Minister: Pedro Sanchez

Socialist leader Pedro Sanchez took over as prime minister in June 2018, after his conservative predecessor Mariano Rajoy lost a parliamentary vote of confidence.

This was triggered by a long-running corruption trial involving members of Mr Rajoy's Popular Party.

Mr Sanchez lacks a working majority in parliament, and has called a snap election for April 2019.

Current economic state

After a prolonged recession that began in 2008 in the wake of the global financial crisis, Spain marked the fourth full year of positive economic growth in 2017, with economic activity surpassing its pre-crisis peak, largely because of increased private consumption. Strong export growth helped bring Spain's current account into surplus in 2013 for the first time since 1986 and sustain Spain's economic growth. Increasing labor productivity and an internal devaluation resulting from moderating labor costs and lower inflation have improved Spain's export competitiveness and generated foreign investor interest in the economy, restoring FDI flows.

Spain gets most of its GDP from the textiles and apparel (including footwear), food and beverages, metals and metal manufactures, chemicals, shipbuilding, automobiles, machine tools, tourism, clay and refractory products, footwear, pharmaceuticals, medical equipment industries. (23.7%), services (74.2%) and agriculture (2.6%).

Military

Military expenditures compromised 0.93 % of Spain's GDP in the year 2018.

Military service age and obligations are: 18-26 years of age for voluntary military service by a Spanish citizen or legal immigrant, 2-3 year obligation; women allowed to serve in all SAF branches, including combat units; no conscription, but Spanish Government retains right to mobilize citizens 19-25 years of age in a national emergency; mandatory retirement of non-NCO enlisted personnel at age 45 or 58, depending on service length

Domestic Terrorist group(s)

Basque Fatherland and Liberty (ETA):

aim: establish an independent Basque homeland in northern Spain and southwestern France based on Marxist principles

area of operation: headquartered in northern Spain, reportedly disarmed in 2017

General Affairs

Gibraltar dispute

in 2002, Gibraltar residents voted overwhelmingly by referendum to reject any "shared sovereignty" arrangement; the Government of Gibraltar insists on equal participation in talks between the UK and Spain; Spain disapproves of UK plans to grant Gibraltar greater autonomy; after voters in the UK chose to leave the EU in a June 2016 referendum, Spain again proposed shared sovereignty of Gibraltar; UK officials rejected Spain's joint sovereignty proposal; Morocco protests Spain's control over the coastal enclaves of Ceuta, Melilla, and the islands of Penon de Velez de la Gomera, Penon de Alhucemas, and Islas Chafarinas, and surrounding waters; both countries claim Isla Perejil (Leila Island); Morocco serves as the primary launching site of illegal migration into Spain from North Africa; Portugal does not recognize Spanish sovereignty over the territory of Olivenza based on a difference of interpretation of the 1815 Congress of Vienna and the 1801 Treaty of Badajoz

Refugees

Refugees (country of origin): 11,752 (Syria) (2017), 29,603 (Venezuela) (economic and political crisis; includes Venezuelans who have claimed asylum or have received alternative legal stay), 9,260 (Ukraine) (2018) note - estimate represents asylum applicants since the beginning of the Ukraine crisis in 2014 to September 2017

Contributions to the EU

There are 54 members of the European Parliament from Spain.

Total EU spending in Spain: € 9.6643 billion

Total Spanish contribution to the EU budget: € 8.080 billion

Total EU spending as % of Spanish gross national income (GNI): 0.83%

Source(s)

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/sp.html>