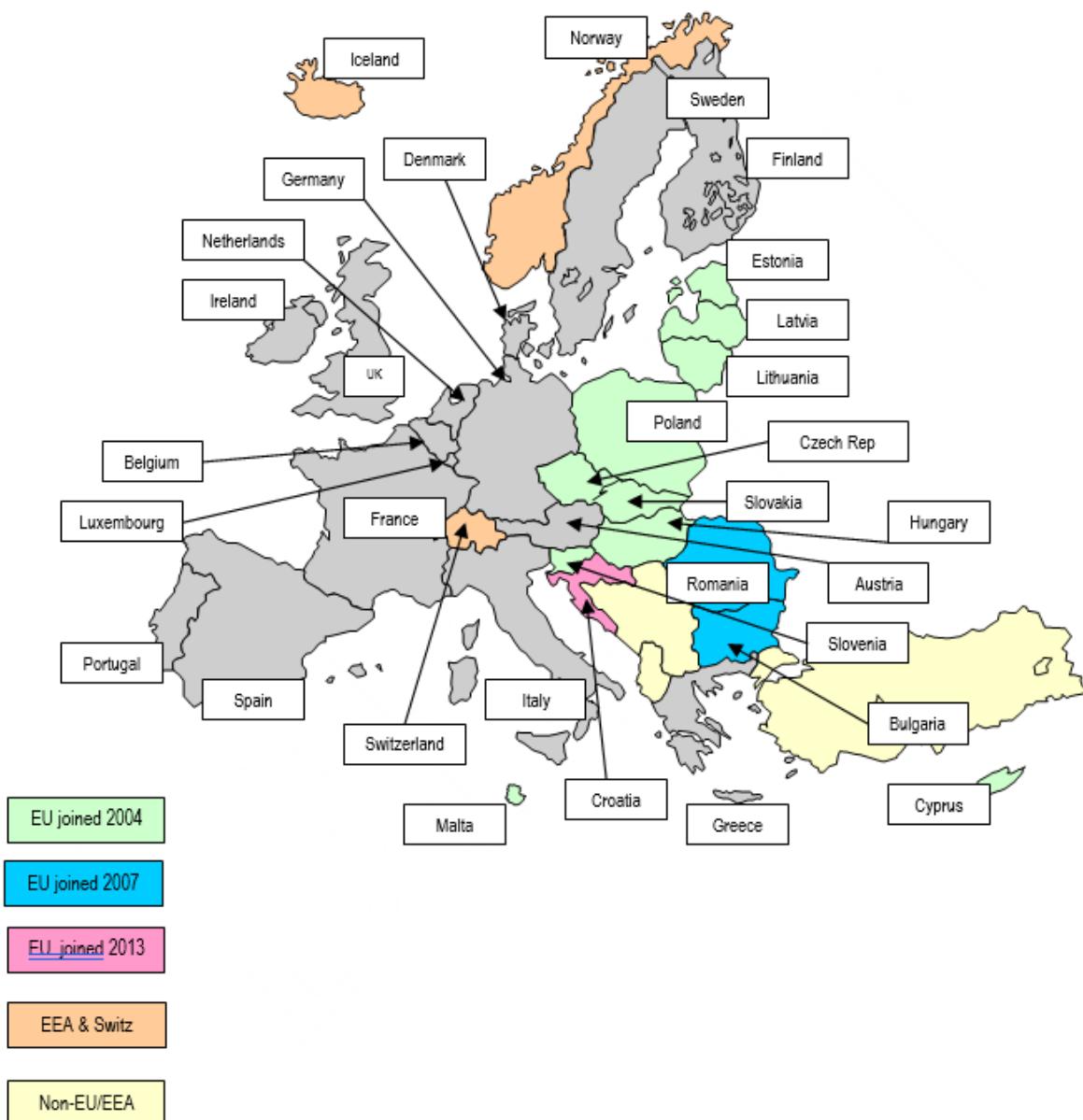


Council of European Dentists

MANUAL OF DENTAL PRACTICE 2026

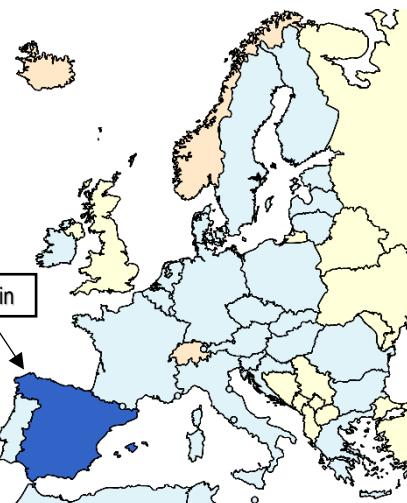
Spain

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2026





Spain



Date of last revision: 15 January 2026

In the EU/EEA since	1986
Population (2023)	48 619 695
GDP PPP per capita (2024)	36 329
Currency	Euro € (EUR)
Official language	Spanish (secondary languages: Catalan, Basque, Valencian & Galician)
Spain has a decentralised healthcare system based on universal health coverage principles, with universal, tax-funded healthcare. The Universal Health System (SNS) is funded through general taxation and provides basic healthcare to all residents. Separate health schemes exist for civil servants, soldiers and judiciary workers. Dental care is mostly excluded from public coverage, except for emergency care and some treatments for children under 14, pregnant women, people with disabilities or affected by neck or oral cancer.	
Between 1-2% % of people hold voluntary private health insurance to cover for additional dental care. 97% of dental care is paid out-of-pocket.	
Number of dentists (active)	41 558
(Active) dentist to population ratio (per 100 000 inhab)	87.3
Members of Dental Association	42 860
Spain is one of the two EU countries to not formally recognise any dental specialties. CPD is not mandatory law but highly encouraged as an ethical duty.	

Government and healthcare in Spain

Spain is a constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary system, with the King as head of state and the Prime Minister (*Presidente del Gobierno*) as head of government.

The Spanish Parliament, known as the *Cortes Generales*, is composed of the Congress of Deputies (*Congreso de los Diputados*) with 350 seats, and the Senate (*Senado*) with 266 seats. Members of the Congress serve a four-year term, while senators are elected by a combination of direct election and nomination, with most serving four-year terms as well.

There are 17 Regions (*Comunidades Autónomas*), and two autonomous cities (Ceuta and Melilla), governed by elected local politicians. Autonomous Regions have strong delegated responsibilities to organise and deliver health services and allocate the budget to healthcare services at a regional level. 17 regional health ministers operate and administer healthcare under the National Health System (*Sistema Nacional de Salud, SNS*) in each *Comunidades Autónomas*.

This decentralization allows for the adaptation of public policies to regional needs, especially in areas with distinct languages and cultures, such as Catalonia, the Basque Country, and Galicia.

The Ministry of Health delivers the planning and regulation of health laws and regulations at a national level. The SNS Interterritorial Council is the national coordinating body of all regional health systems. It regroups 17 regional Health Ministers, the National Institute of Health Management for autonomous cities and the Spanish Minister of Health. Dental care planning falls under Autonomous Communities.

The National Health System (*Sistema Nacional de Salud, SNS*), provides universal healthcare to all residents, including documented and undocumented migrants. The SNS is primarily financed by general taxation and delivered by public services. Dental care is mostly delivered by private practitioners.

	Year	Source
% GDP spent on all healthcare	8.2%	2023 OECD
% of this spent by government	73%	2023 OECD

The benefits package includes primary healthcare services, as well as some specialised healthcare. All included care is free at the point of delivery. Separate health schemes exist (mutual funds), cover healthcare for civil servants, soldiers, judiciary workers, work-related accidents and occupational diseases.

Dental care services receive limited coverage under the Spanish public health system, with only some basic dental care included. This covers mostly emergency and basic dental care, such as teeth extraction, treatment of infections, caries prevention, preventive measures and hygiene counselling.

The portfolio of included services has however recently been expanded under the Oral Health Plan. This plan was adopted by the Spanish Government in June 2022, under the Strategic Framework for Primary Care. It allocates €68 million euros for oral healthcare under the public service across autonomous regions. These measures expanded public coverage to some services such as the treatment of acute infections, exodontia, etc, to all beneficiaries. It however mostly expands the scope of services for eligible groups, such as children from 0 to 14 years old (23%), pregnant women (34%), and people with disabilities or affected by cervicofacial cancer. The full list of all newly included oral care treatments can be found [here](#).

One in five people has purchased voluntary health insurance. 1 to 2% of the population has voluntary insurance covering additional dental care. 97% of all dental care is paid out-of-pocket.

Education, Training and Registration

Undergraduate Education and Training

Access to dental studies in Spain is open after completion of secondary education (*Bachillerato*) and successful completion of the University Entrance Examination (*Evaluación de Bachillerato para el Acceso a la Universidad – EBAU*). Admission to dental faculties is highly competitive and based on academic performance, with minimum entry grades set annually by each university. Public dental schools also require a common entry-level test.

Year of data	2024
Number of schools	26
Student intake	2 100
Number of graduates a year	~1 900
Gender balance (% of female students)	68%
Duration of studies	5

There are currently 12 public and 14 private schools that provide undergraduate dental courses across Spain.

This includes courses in the cities of Barcelona, Madrid, Granada, Murcia, Sevilla, Oviedo, Salamanca, Bilbao, Zaragoza, Valencia, Santiago Compostela, Baleres and Santa Cruz Tenerife.

Students follow a bachelor's degree in Dentistry, lasting 5 years. The program is divided between a focus on foundation sciences for the first two years and practical and clinical practice for the 3 last years.

The number of available places is determined by individual universities, subject to authorization by Regional Governments (Autonomous Communities) and oversight by national education authorities. Regional Governments are responsible for planning and regulation in the area of Health and Education. However, these regions have not yet established a *numerus clausus* on the number of admitted students in undergraduate dental students.

Upon successful completion, graduates are awarded the official degree of Dentist (Odontólogo).

Some schools offer programs in English, such as the University of CEU San Pablo in Madrid.

Dental schools are subject to accreditation and quality assurance by the National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation (ANECA) and the corresponding regional quality agencies. The national agency also carries out evaluation, certification accreditation of the educational system in Spain to adhere to rules under the European Education Area.

Private universities with English programs mainly welcome international students, with EU countries (Italy and France) as well as international (Chinese students).

Registration

Cost of registration	€250-400 (depending on place of practice)
Yearly membership fee	€340-360 (depending on place of practice)

To practise as a dentist a dentist must hold a degree awarded by a recognised Spanish University, or a diploma from a European Union country which is recognised by the Ministry of Education, Vocational Training and Sports.

The Spanish Dental Council registers professionals and issues the license to practice. Each dentist must register with his local regional branch of the Council, namely regional Official College of Dentists (*Colegios de Odontólogos y Estomatólogos*).

Vocational Training (VT)

Students do not have to carry out mandatory vocational clinical training after the completion of students and before registering with the Spanish Dental Council.

Language requirements

Dentists must have a minimum B2 level in Spanish language to practice dentistry in Spain. Language tests are organised by Spanish Dental Council.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

Continuing Professional Development is not mandatory by law in Spain but is however an ethical requirement for dentists. The Spanish Code of Dental Ethics and Deontology states that "*continuing dental education is an ethical duty, a right and a responsibility of all dentists throughout their professional life*".

Health regional authorities accredit carried-out CPD activities.

Specialist Training Requirements

Spain is one of the two remaining EU countries to not officially recognise dental specialities on a national level. Dentists can however specialise through master's degrees or diploma programs. These degrees do therefore not fall under the automatic recognition of diplomas at an EU level and in most EU countries.

A Royal Decree regulating the process of creating new specialities and areas of specific training was adopted on 19 July 2022. This measure has pushed, at the time of writing of this chapter in 2025, 9 of Spain's 17 autonomous regions to report in favour of the creation of official dental specialities, which would bring Spain in line with other EU countries.

Workforce

Dentists

Spain has seen a significant increase in the number of registered and practising dentists in Spain over the last decade, resulting in a current surplus of dentists in Spain according to population needs.

This is partly due to the increasing number of dental students and the absence of coordinated national planning for the annual allocation of undergraduate admission places.

The private dental sector is well-developed, with many practitioners offering competitive prices and modern treatment options. A vast majority of dental care is delivered by private independent practices.

The structure of family dentists is well established in Spain. Some dentists also practice in regional urban primary health centres.

Year of data	2024
Total Registered	42 860
In active practice (2024)	41 558
Dentist to population ratio (per 100 000 inhab) *	87.3
Percentage female	59.3%
Foreign-trained dentists	NA
*Active dentists only	

Movement of dentists across borders

Spain has also witnessed its dental workforce supplemented by incoming foreign-trained dentists.

Specialists

As noted above, no specialties are formally recognised at a national level in Spain.

However, an important number of practitioners limit their practice to a given speciality, mainly orthodontics, periodontics, endodontics and oral surgery, but also endodontics, cosmetic dentistry, oral pathology, prosthodontics and oral maxillofacial radiology. An increasing number of Spanish universities offer postgraduate courses in different specialist areas, through master's degrees.

Furthermore, 9 of Spain's 17 autonomous regions report in favour of the creation of official dental specialities at a national level.

Auxiliaries

Year of data	2024
Technicians	7 500
Hygienists	~ 14 000
Dental Chairside Assistants	NA

Dental Chairside Assistants

Dental chairside assistants are widespread in Spain, but do not usually go through formal training and are usually trained on-the-job by dentists. Formal dental assistant programs have now been developed by remain voluntary.

Dental Technicians

There is a qualification for Dental Technicians which is obtained after training and education at schools of Formation Professional, over a 2-year period. Voluntary registers are kept by the regional associations, but there is no national mandatory requirement. However, some regional 'colegios' have established compulsory registration.

Dental technicians may only work in commercial laboratories and may work without supervision from a dentist. In 2013 the Supreme Court announced a judgement that dental technicians are health care professionals but cannot take part in clinical acts performed on patients, being the taking of dental impressions and recordings – these being reserved exclusively to dentists.

Dental Hygienists

Hygienists must hold a registerable qualification in vocational training. Their education and training is provided over 2 years by private or public schools of Formation Professional and certificates of proficiency are granted by the Ministry of Education, Vocational Training and Sports.

Hygienists are allowed to carry out prophylaxis and oral health education, but only under the prescription of a dentist who must be present in the building while they are working. The employing dentist is responsible for their work.

Hygienists are not authorised to practice independently and without the supervision of a dentists.

Hygienists are almost exclusively employed in private practice. The public dental service has created positions for this category of auxiliaries, although some are employed on preventive programmes, on temporary contracts.

Other Useful Information

Main national associations

National dental associations and information centres
<p>Spanish Dental Council <i>(Consejo General de Colegios de Odontólogos y Estomatólogos de España)</i></p> <p>Dr Óscar Castro Reino (President) Calle Alcalá, 79 - 2nd floor ES – 28009 Madrid</p> <p>Tel.: + 34 / 91 426.44.12 – 11 Email: consejo@consejodentistas.es Website: https://www.consejodentistas.es</p>

Competent authorities

Ministry of Health <i>(Ministerio de Sanidad)</i>	Ministry of Education, Vocational Training and Sports <i>(Ministerio de Educación, Formación Profesional y Deportes)</i>
Paseo del Prado 18 – 20 28014 Madrid Email: oiac@oiac.sanidad.gob.es Phone: +34 91 596 10 00 Website: https://www.sanidad.gob.es/home.htm	Calle Alcalá, 34. 28014 Madrid Phone (Education): +34 910 837 937 Website: https://www.educionfpymdeportes.gob.es/en/portada.html
National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation (ANECA)	
C/ Orense nº 11 7 ^a planta 28020 MADRID Email: informacion@aneca.es Website: ANECA home - Aneca Web	

Main Professional Journal
RCOE – Journal of the Spanish Dental Council <i>(Revista del Ilustre Consejo General de Colegios de Odontólogos y Estomatólogos de España)</i> Avda. San Luis, 47. 28033 Madrid Tel: +34 91 766 99 34 Email: rcoe@infomed.es Email (for commercial matters): sonia@grupoicm.es Website: https://rcoe.es/

Dental Schools:

Public Universities	
Universidad Complutense, Madrid – Faculty of Dentistry Plaza Ramón y Cajal 28040 Madrid, Spain Phone: +34 91 394 1920 Email: infodon@pas.ucm.es Website: https://odontologia.ucm.es/ Number of incoming students: 100	University of Barcelona — Faculty of Medicine & Health Sciences Campus Clínic, Casanova 143 08036 Barcelona Campus Bellvitge, Feixa Llarga 08907 Hospitalet de Llobregat Phone: +34 934 035 250 +34 934 024 256 Email: capest-odontologia@ub.edu Website: https://web.ub.edu/en/web/estudis
University of Granada – Faculty of Dentistry Colegio Máximo, Campus Universitario de Cartuja 18071 Granada, Spain Phone : +34 958 243 812 Contact form: https://odontologia.ugr.es/facultad/contacto Website: https://odontologia.ugr.es/	University of Sevilla – Faculty of Dentistry C/ Avicena, s/n 41009 Sevilla, Spain Phone: +34 954 48 11 31 Email: odontologia@us.es Website: https://odontologia.us.es/
University of Valencia – Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry Av. Blasco Ibáñez, 15, 46010 Valencia, Spain Phone: +34 96 386 41 00 Email: fac.medicina@uv.es Website: https://www.uv.es/grado/odontologia	University of País Vasco (Bilbao) – Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry Apartado de Correos 699 48080 Bilbao, Spain Phone: +34 94 601 20 00 Email: odontologia@ehu.es (common faculty contact) Website: https://www.ehu.es/
University of Zaragoza – Faculty of Health and Sports Sciences Vicente Berdusán, s/n 22001 Huesca (Zaragoza campus) Phone: +34 974 29 04 24 Email: ciu@unizar.es Website: https://estudios.unizar.es/estudio/ver?id=129&anyo_academico=2025	University of Oviedo – Faculty of Health and Sports Sciences C/ Julián Clavería, s/n 33006 Oviedo, Spain Phone: +34 985 10 20 00 Email: javega@uniovi.es Website: https://www.uniovi.es/estudia/grados/salud/odontologia
University of Murcia — Faculty of Medicine Campus de Espinardo 30100 Murcia, Spain Phone: +34 868 88 88 88 Email: cau@um.es Website: https://www.um.es/web/estudios/grados/odontologia	University of Salamanca – Faculty of Medicine Plaza de la Merced, s/n 37008 Salamanca, Spain Phone: +34 923 294 500 Email: dec.fm@usal.es Website: https://www.usal.es/grado-en-odontologia

Language of teaching: Spanish Number of incoming students: 45	Number of incoming students 2025-2026: 30
University of Santiago of Compostela – Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry Rúa Entrerríos, s/n, 15782 Santiago de Compostela Spain Phone : +34 881812343 Email : odontoxia.negociado@usc.gal Website: https://www.usc.gal/en/studies/degrees/health-sciences/dentistry-degree-2nd-edition	University Rey Juan Carlos (Madrid) – Faculty of Health Sciences Av. Atenas, s/n, 28922 Alcorcón Madrid, Spain Phone: +34 91 488 89 23 Email: salud@urjc.es Website: https://www.urjc.es Number of yearly incoming students: 75
Private Universities	
International University of Catalonia (UIC Barcelona) – Faculty of Dentistry Josep Trueta Street, s/n, 08195 Sant Cugat del Vallès (Barcelona), Spain Phone: +34 935 042 000 Email: info@uic.es Website: https://www.uic.es	CEU San Pablo University (Madrid) Faculty of Medicine – Dentistry Programme Julián Romea Street, 23 28003 Madrid, Spain Phone: +34 91 745 40 00 Email: odontologia@uspceu.com Website: https://www.uspceu.com/academic-programs/degree/dentistry/faculty
European University of Madrid - School of Biomedical and Health Sciences Villaviciosa de Odón Road, km 14.5, 28670 Madrid, Spain Phone: +34 91 616 94 00 Email: info@universidadeuropea.es Website: https://universidadeuropea.com/en/degree-dentistry-madrid	Alfonso X the Wise University (Madrid) – Faculty of Health Sciences University Avenue, s/n, 28691 Villanueva de la Cañada, Madrid, Spain Phone : +34 91 810 9100 Email : odontologia@uax.es Website : https://www.uax.com/titulaciones/grado-en-odontologia Language of teaching: English, Spanish
Catholic University of Valencia “Saint Vincent Martyr” – Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry Quevedo Street, 2, 46003 Valencia, Spain Phone: +34 96 386 20 00 Email: odontologia@ucv.es	CEU Cardenal Herrera University (Valencia) - Faculty of Health Sciences Valencia Avenue, 124 46017 Valencia, Spain Phone: +34 96 136 60 00 Email: info@uchceu.es Website: https://www.uchceu.com/en/studies/degree/dentistry/program
European University (Valencia & Alicante) - School of Health Sciences Valencia and Alicante campuses Spain Phone: +34 91 616 94 00 Email: info@universidadeuropea.es Website: https://universidadeuropea.com/	European University Miguel de Cervantes (Valladolid) – Faculty of Health Sciences Padre Julio Chevalier Street, 2 47012 Valladolid, Spain Phone: +34 983 03 33 00 Email: informacion@uemc.es Website: https://grados.uemc.es/odontologia
Camilo José Cela University (Madrid) – Faculty of Health Sciences	Nebrija University (Madrid)

<p>Castillo de Alarcón Street, 49 28049 Madrid, Spain</p> <p>Phone: +34 91 815 40 40 Email: salud@ucjc.edu Website: https://www.ucjc.edu</p>	<p>Berzosa Street, 11, 529 La Berzosa Madrid, Spain</p> <p>Phone : +34 91 452 10 00 Email : odontologia@nebrija.com Website: https://www.nebrija.com/en/bachelors-degrees/odontology/</p>
<p>Catholic University of San Antonio of Murcia (UCAM) (Cartagena)</p>	<p>European University of the Canary Islands (Universidad Europea de Canarias) - School of Health Sciences</p>
<p>Murcia–Cartagena Road 30107 Murcia, Spain</p> <p>Phone: +34 968 278 200 Email: info@ucam.edu Website: https://international.ucam.edu/studies/bachelor-in-dentistry-cartagena-on-campus</p> <p>Number of yearly incoming students: 60 Tuition fees: 245.83 €/ECTS; 14,750 €/Curso</p>	<p>The Orotava Campus: Calle Inocencio García, 1 38300 La Orotava, Tenerife, Spain</p> <p>Santa Cruz de Tenerife Facilities: Calle Valentín Sanz, 22 38002 Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Tenerife, Spain</p> <p>Phone (La Orotava Campus): +34 92 209 70 91 Phone : (Santa Cruz de Tenerife): +34 92 244 26 31 / +34 92 244 26 34 Website : https://universidadeuropea.com/conocenos/canarias/</p>
<p>University Fernando Pessoa (Las Palmas, Gran Canaria)</p>	<p>University of Balears Island (Palma de Mallorca)</p>
<p>C/ de la juventud, s/n 35450 Santa María de Guía Las Palmas – España</p> <p>Phone: +34 928 333 848 Website: https://ufpcanarias.es/admisiones/grado-en-odontologia/</p>	<p>Cra. de Valldemossa, km 7.5. 07122 Palma (Illes Balears).</p> <p>Phone: +34 971 17 30 00 Website: https://www.uib.es/es/</p>