**Spain** ([Spanish](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spanish_language%22%20%5Co%20%22Spanish%20language): *España* [[esˈpaɲa]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Help%3AIPA/Spanish) ([listen](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/6/64/Es-Espa%C3%B1a.ogg))), officially the **Kingdom of Spain** (Spanish: *Reino de España*), is a country mostly located on the [Iberian Peninsula](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iberian_Peninsula%22%20%5Co%20%22Iberian%20Peninsula) in [Europe](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Europe%22%20%5Co%20%22Europe). Its territory also includes two [archipelagoes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Archipelago%22%20%5Co%20%22Archipelago): the [Canary Islands](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canary_Islands%22%20%5Co%20%22Canary%20Islands) off the coast of Africa, and the [Balearic Islands](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Balearic_Islands%22%20%5Co%20%22Balearic%20Islands) in the [Mediterranean Sea](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mediterranean_Sea%22%20%5Co%20%22Mediterranean%20Sea). The African [enclaves](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Enclave) of [Ceuta](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ceuta) and [Melilla](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Melilla) make Spain the only European country to have a physical border with an African country ([Morocco](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Morocco%22%20%5Co%20%22Morocco)). [Several small islands](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plazas_de_soberan%C3%ADa%22%20%5Co%20%22Plazas%20de%20soberan%C3%ADa) in the [Alboran Sea](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alboran_Sea%22%20%5Co%20%22Alboran%20Sea) are also part of Spanish territory. [The country's mainland](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peninsular_Spain) is bordered to the south and east by the Mediterranean Sea except for a small land boundary with [Gibraltar](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gibraltar); to the north and northeast by [France](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/France), [Andorra](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Andorra), and the [Bay of Biscay](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bay_of_Biscay%22%20%5Co%20%22Bay%20of%20Biscay); and to the west and northwest by [Portugal](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portugal) and the Atlantic Ocean.

With an area of 505,990 km2 (195,360 sq mi), Spain is the largest country in Southern Europe, the second largest country in Western Europe and the European Union, and the [fourth largest country in the European continent](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Area_and_population_of_European_countries%22%20%5Co%20%22Area%20and%20population%20of%20European%20countries). By population, Spain is the [sixth](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_European_countries_by_population%22%20%5Co%20%22List%20of%20European%20countries%20by%20population) largest in Europe and the [fifth](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Member_state_of_the_European_Union%22%20%5Cl%20%22List%22%20%5Co%20%22Member%20state%20of%20the%20European%20Union) in the European Union. Spain's capital and largest city is [Madrid](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madrid); other major [urban areas](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_metropolitan_areas_in_Spain%22%20%5Co%20%22List%20of%20metropolitan%20areas%20in%20Spain) include [Barcelona](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barcelona), [Valencia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Valencia), [Seville](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seville%22%20%5Co%20%22Seville), [Málaga](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/M%C3%A1laga) and [Bilbao](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bilbao).

[Modern humans](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Modern_humans) first arrived in the Iberian Peninsula around 35,000 years ago. [Iberian](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iberians) cultures along with ancient [Phoenician](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phoenicia%22%20%5Co%20%22Phoenicia), [Greek](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Greece%22%20%5Co%20%22Ancient%20Greece), [Celtic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Celts%22%20%5Co%20%22Celts) and [Carthaginian](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carthaginian_Iberia%22%20%5Co%20%22Carthaginian%20Iberia) settlements developed on the peninsula until it came under Roman rule around 200 BCE, after which the region was named *[Hispania](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hispania%22%20%5Co%20%22Hispania)*, based on the earlier Phoenician name *Sp(a)n* or *Spania*. At the [end of the Western Roman Empire](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fall_of_the_Western_Roman_Empire%22%20%5Co%20%22Fall%20of%20the%20Western%20Roman%20Empire)the Germanic tribal confederations migrated from Central Europe, invaded the Iberian peninsula and established relatively independent realms in its western provinces, including the [Suebi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Suebi%22%20%5Co%20%22Suebi), [Alans](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alans%22%20%5Co%20%22Alans) and [Vandals](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vandals%22%20%5Co%20%22Vandals). Eventually, the [Visigoths](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Visigoths%22%20%5Co%20%22Visigoths) would forcibly integrate all remaining independent territories in the peninsula, including Byzantine provinces, into the [Kingdom of Toledo](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kingdom_of_Toledo%22%20%5Co%20%22Kingdom%20of%20Toledo), which more or less unified politically, ecclesiastically and legally all the former Roman provinces or successor kingdoms of what was then documented as [Hispania](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hispania%22%20%5Co%20%22Hispania).

In the early eighth century the [Visigothic Kingdom](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Visigothic_Kingdom%22%20%5Co%20%22Visigothic%20Kingdom) fell to the [Moors](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moors%22%20%5Co%20%22Moors), who arrived to rule most of the peninsula in the year 726, leaving only a handful of small Christian realms in the north, lasting up to seven centuries in the [Kingdom of Granada](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kingdom_of_Granada%22%20%5Co%20%22Kingdom%20of%20Granada). This led to many wars during a long reconquering period across the [Iberian Peninsula](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iberian_Peninsula%22%20%5Co%20%22Iberian%20Peninsula), which led to the creation of [Kingdom of Leon](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kingdom_of_Leon%22%20%5Co%20%22Kingdom%20of%20Leon), [Kingdom of Castille](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kingdom_of_Castille%22%20%5Co%20%22Kingdom%20of%20Castille), [Kingdom of Aragon](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kingdom_of_Aragon%22%20%5Co%20%22Kingdom%20of%20Aragon) and [Kingdom of Navarre](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kingdom_of_Navarre%22%20%5Co%20%22Kingdom%20of%20Navarre) as the main Christian kingdoms to face the invasion. Following the Moorish conquest, Europeans began a gradual process of retaking the region known as the [Reconquista](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reconquista), which by the late 15th century culminated in the emergence of Spain as a unified country under the [Catholic Monarchs](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catholic_Monarchs%22%20%5Co%20%22Catholic%20Monarchs).

In the early modern period, Spain became the [world's first global empire](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spanish_Empire%22%20%5Co%20%22Spanish%20Empire) and [the most powerful country in the world](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Superpower%22%20%5Co%20%22Superpower), leaving a large cultural and linguistic legacy that includes +570 million [Hispanophones](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hispanophone%22%20%5Co%20%22Hispanophone), making [Spanish](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spanish_language%22%20%5Co%20%22Spanish%20language) the world's [second-most spoken native language](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_languages_by_number_of_native_speakers%22%20%5Co%20%22List%20of%20languages%20by%20number%20of%20native%20speakers), after [Mandarin Chinese](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mandarin_Chinese%22%20%5Co%20%22Mandarin%20Chinese). During the [Golden Age](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spanish_Golden_Age) there were also many advancements in the arts, with world-famous painters such as [Diego Velázquez](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diego_Vel%C3%A1zquez). The most famous Spanish literary work, [*Don Quixote*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Don_Quixote), was also published during the Golden Age. Spain hosts the world's [third-largest](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_World_Heritage_Sites_in_Spain%22%20%5Co%20%22List%20of%20World%20Heritage%20Sites%20in%20Spain) number of [UNESCO](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/UNESCO) [World Heritage Sites](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_Heritage_Sites).

Spain is a [secular](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Secular_state) [parliamentary democracy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parliamentary_democracy%22%20%5Co%20%22Parliamentary%20democracy) and a [parliamentary monarchy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constitutional_monarchy%22%20%5Co%20%22Constitutional%20monarchy), with King [Felipe VI](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Felipe_VI_of_Spain) as [head of state](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Head_of_state%22%20%5Co%20%22Head%20of%20state). It is a major [developed country](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Developed_country%22%20%5Co%20%22Developed%20country)[[14]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spain#cite_note-22) and a [high income country](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/High_income_country%22%20%5Co%20%22High%20income%20country), with the world's [fourteenth largest economy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_GDP_%28nominal%29%22%20%5Co%20%22List%20of%20countries%20by%20GDP%20%28nominal%29) by [nominal GDP](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nominal_GDP) and [sixteenth largest](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_GDP_%28PPP%29%22%20%5Co%20%22List%20of%20countries%20by%20GDP%20%28PPP%29)by [purchasing power parity](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Purchasing_power_parity%22%20%5Co%20%22Purchasing%20power%20parity). It is a member of the [United Nations](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Nations) (UN), the [European Union](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/European_Union%22%20%5Co%20%22European%20Union) (EU), the [Eurozone](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eurozone%22%20%5Co%20%22Eurozone), the [Council of Europe](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Council_of_Europe)(CoE), the [Organization of Ibero-American States](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Organization_of_Ibero-American_States%22%20%5Co%20%22Organization%20of%20Ibero-American%20States) (OEI), the [Union for the Mediterranean](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Union_for_the_Mediterranean), the [North Atlantic Treaty Organization](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/North_Atlantic_Treaty_Organization%22%20%5Co%20%22North%20Atlantic%20Treaty%20Organization)(NATO), the [Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Organisation_for_Economic_Co-operation_and_Development) (OECD), [Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Organization_for_Security_and_Co-operation_in_Europe%22%20%5Co%20%22Organization%20for%20Security%20and%20Co-operation%20in%20Europe) (OSCE), the [Schengen Area](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Schengen_Area), the [World Trade Organization](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_Trade_Organization) (WTO) and many other international organisations. While not an official member, Spain has a "Permanent Invitation" to the [G20](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/G20) summits, participating in every summit, which makes Spain a [*de facto*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/De_facto)member of the group.



Anachronous map of the Spanish Empire, including territorial claims



Pre-Roman map of The Iberian Peninsula



Celtic [castro](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Castro_culture) in [Galicia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Galicia_%28Spain%29%22%20%5Co%20%22Galicia%20%28Spain%29)



[Roman Theatre](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Theatre_%28M%C3%A9rida%29), [Mérida](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/M%C3%A9rida%2C_Spain)



The death of the [Frankish](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Franks%22%20%5Co%20%22Franks) leader [Roland](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roland) defeated by a [Basque](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Basque_people%22%20%5Co%20%22Basque%20people) and [Muslim](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Muslim)-[Muladi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Muladi%22%20%5Co%20%22Muladi) ([Banu Qasi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Banu_Qasi%22%20%5Co%20%22Banu%20Qasi)) alliance at the [Battle of Roncevaux Pass (778)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Roncevaux_Pass_%28778%29%22%20%5Co%20%22Battle%20of%20Roncevaux%20Pass%20%28778%29)originated the [Kingdom of Navarre](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kingdom_of_Navarre%22%20%5Co%20%22Kingdom%20of%20Navarre) led by [Íñigo Arista](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C3%8D%C3%B1igo_Arista_of_Pamplona%22%20%5Co%20%22%C3%8D%C3%B1igo%20Arista%20of%20Pamplona).



The [Great Mosque of Córdoba](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mosque%E2%80%93Cathedral_of_C%C3%B3rdoba) is among the [oldest mosque buildings in the world](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_the_oldest_mosques%22%20%5Co%20%22List%20of%20the%20oldest%20mosques)



[Basilica of San Isidoro](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Basilica_of_San_Isidoro), [León](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Le%C3%B3n_%28Spain%29)



During the 1370s and 1380s, in alliance with the French, Castilian fleets launched regular raiding expeditions against the southern coast of England, while at the same time increasing numbers of traders, many of them Basques, began to ply the sea-routes that linked the Atlantic and the Mediterranean



[Christopher Columbus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christopher_Columbus) meets [Isabella I of Castile](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Isabella_I_of_Castile%22%20%5Co%20%22Isabella%20I%20of%20Castile) and [Ferdinand II of Aragon](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ferdinand_II_of_Aragon) in the [Alcázar of Córdoba](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alc%C3%A1zar_de_los_Reyes_Cristianos%22%20%5Co%20%22Alc%C3%A1zar%20de%20los%20Reyes%20Cristianos)



Spanish and Portuguese empires in 1790.



Spain has been a member of the [European Union](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/European_Union) since 1986



[Spanish PM](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spanish_PM) [Pedro Sánchez](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pedro_S%C3%A1nchez_%28politician%29) in 2018





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| **Basque Country***Euskadi*[a](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Basque_Country_%28autonomous_community%29%22%20%5Cl%20%22endnote_a) (in Basque)*País Vasco* or *Euskadi* (in Spanish) |
| [**Autonomous community of Spain**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Autonomous_communities_of_Spain) |
| **Autonomous Community of the Basque Country*Euskal Autonomia Erkidegoa***[b](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Basque_Country_%28autonomous_community%29#endnote_b)**(in Basque)*Comunidad Autónoma del País Vasco* (in Spanish)** |
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|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Flag of Basque Country[Flag](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flag_of_Basque_Country_%28autonomous_community%29) | Coat-of-arms of Basque Country[Coat of arms](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coat_of_arms_of_Basque_Country_%28autonomous_community%29) |

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The **Basque Country** ([/bæsk, bɑːsk/](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Help%3AIPA/English%22%20%5Co%20%22Help%3AIPA/English); [Basque](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Basque_language%22%20%5Co%20%22Basque%20language): *Euskadi* [[eus̺kadi]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Help%3AIPA/Basque); [Spanish](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spanish_language%22%20%5Co%20%22Spanish%20language): *País Vasco* [[paˈiz ˈβasko]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Help%3AIPA/Spanish); [French](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/French_language%22%20%5Co%20%22French%20language): *Pays Basque*), officially the **Basque Autonomous Community** ([Basque](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Basque_language%22%20%5Co%20%22Basque%20language): *Euskal Autonomia Erkidegoa*, EAE; [Spanish](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spanish_language%22%20%5Co%20%22Spanish%20language): *Comunidad Autónoma Vasca*, CAV) is an [autonomous community](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Autonomous_communities_of_Spain%22%20%5Co%20%22Autonomous%20communities%20of%20Spain) in northern [Spain](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spain%22%20%5Co%20%22Spain). It includes the Basque provinces of [Álava](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C3%81lava%22%20%5Co%20%22%C3%81lava), [Biscay](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Biscay%22%20%5Co%20%22Biscay), and [Gipuzkoa](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gipuzkoa%22%20%5Co%20%22Gipuzkoa).

The Basque Country or Basque Autonomous Community was granted the status of *[nationality](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nationalities_and_regions_of_Spain%22%20%5Co%20%22Nationalities%20and%20regions%20of%20Spain)* within Spain, attributed by the [Spanish Constitution of 1978](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spanish_Constitution_of_1978%22%20%5Co%20%22Spanish%20Constitution%20of%201978). The autonomous community is based on the [Statute of Autonomy of the Basque Country](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Statute_of_Autonomy_of_the_Basque_Country%22%20%5Co%20%22Statute%20of%20Autonomy%20of%20the%20Basque%20Country), a foundational legal document providing the framework for the development of the [Basque people](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Basque_people) on [Spanish soil](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Southern_Basque_Country%22%20%5Co%20%22Southern%20Basque%20Country), although the territory of [Navarre](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Navarre) was left out and made into a separate autonomous community.

Currently there is no official capital in the autonomous community, but the city of [Vitoria-Gasteiz](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vitoria-Gasteiz), in the province of Álava, is the de facto capital as the location of the [Basque Parliament](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Basque_Parliament), the headquarters of the [Basque Government](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Basque_Government), and the residence of the President of the Basque Autonomous Community (the [Palace of Ajuria Enea](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ajuria_Enea)). The [High Court of Justice of the Basque Country](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/High_Courts_of_Justice_of_Spain)has its headquarters in the city of [Bilbao](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bilbao). Whilst Vitoria-Gasteiz is the largest municipality in area, with 277 km2 (107 sq mi), Bilbao is the largest in population, with 353,187 people, located in the province of Biscay within a conurbation of 875,552 people.

The term *Basque Country* may also refer to the [larger cultural region](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Basque_Country_%28greater_region%29%22%20%5Co%20%22Basque%20Country%20%28greater%20region%29) (Basque: *Euskal Herria*), the home of the Basque people, which includes the autonomous community.

The following [provinces](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Provinces_of_Spain) make up the autonomous community:

* [Álava](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C3%81lava) (Basque *Araba*), capital [Vitoria-Gasteiz](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vitoria-Gasteiz)
* [Biscay](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Biscay) (Spanish *Vizcaya*, Basque *Bizkaia*), capital [Bilbao](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bilbao)-Bilbo
* [Gipuzkoa](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gipuzkoa) (Spanish *Guipúzcoa*), capital [Donostia-San Sebastián](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Donostia-San_Sebasti%C3%A1n)



Txindoki mountain from Lazkaomendi



Basque coast near [Mundaka](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mundaka%22%20%5Co%20%22Mundaka)



Rioja vineyards near the Ebro


[Bilbao](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bilbao)


[Vitoria-Gasteiz](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vitoria-Gasteiz)


[San Sebastián](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/San_Sebasti%C3%A1n)



Monument to the [Battle of Vitoria](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Vitoria%22%20%5Co%20%22Battle%20of%20Vitoria), part of [Spanish Independence War](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spanish_Independence_War%22%20%5Co%20%22Spanish%20Independence%20War) against the French rule.