

BUILDRES Project

Project number: 2024-2-CY01-KA220-YOU-000295718

EU COUNTRIES DESK RESEARCH

Partner organisation: Hexagonale

Research on: Spain

Country overview, healthcare services and financial & social benefits

Spain's demographic and family context is shaped by a population of about 47 million people, with fertility trends similar to other Western European countries — overall fertility rates below replacement levels and an increasing average age at first childbirth (early 30s). These demographic patterns, alongside economic pressures and evolving work–family norms, influence reproductive planning and parenting decisions, particularly for women balancing employment with childbirth and childcare responsibilities.

Pregnancy and maternal healthcare services are delivered through Spain's universal public health system (Sistema Nacional de Salud), which provides comprehensive prenatal, delivery and postnatal care to all residents. Prenatal care includes regular check-ups, ultrasound scans and specialised screenings fully covered by the public healthcare system, with services coordinated by regional health authorities across the autonomous communities. Childbirth in public hospitals is accessible at no direct cost to the patient, with midwives and obstetric teams providing medical support throughout pregnancy, delivery and the postpartum period. The emphasis on universal access ensures that pregnancy-related care is integrated into preventive and maternal health strategies, contributing to high levels of maternal and neonatal health outcomes.

Parental leave and workplace protections in Spain have undergone significant reforms aimed at gender equality and shared caregiving. Historically, both maternity and paternity leave were equalised at 16 weeks of fully paid leave for each parent, covered by the Spanish Social Security system (Seguridad Social), and available for birth, adoption and long-term foster care — with the first six weeks required to be taken immediately after the child's arrival. In 2025, Spain expanded these entitlements further: under the Real Decreto-ley 9/2025, each parent has a right to 19 weeks of fully paid birth and childcare leave (with six weeks mandatory immediately following birth and additional weeks flexible within the first year and up to the child's eighth birthday). Single-parent families receive a total of 32 weeks of leave in recognition of increased caregiving demand. In addition to paid leave, Spanish labour law includes breastfeeding breaks and the right to reduced working hours or flexible scheduling for childcare, reflecting a wider framework of family-friendly workplace rights.

Financial and social benefits for families extend beyond leave. Spain's social protection system, administered primarily through Seguridad Social and the Instituto Nacional de la Seguridad Social



(INSS), includes a variety of contributory and non-contributory benefits aimed at supporting families with children. These include:

- Birth and adoption allowances, offering one-time payments under certain conditions to families welcoming a child.
- Child tax deductions and family-related fiscal benefits, such as deductions for children under three years of age, designed to provide income support for young families.
- Broader family benefits and supports that may include assistance for large families, single parents and families with disabled children, contributing to a social safety net that mitigates income loss associated with childbirth and early parenting.

While Spain's parental leave and family support system is relatively comprehensive and progressive compared with many other OECD countries — particularly in equalising rights for mothers and fathers — implementation challenges remain. For example, reforms introducing additional parental care leave (eight weeks until the child turns eight) have been less widely used due to a lack of retributive compensation and limited public awareness.

Overall, Spain's framework combines universal maternal healthcare services, paid parental leave, and financial supports to reduce the economic costs associated with childbirth and early childrearing. These measures reflect policy priorities around gender equality, work–life balance and family wellbeing, even as socio-economic pressures and demographic trends continue to shape reproductive choices and parenting experiences.

Name of the organisation	Cruz Roja Española
Short Description (Around 300 characters)	Provides extensive support to vulnerable families, pregnant women and single mothers through emergency financial aid, food assistance, psychosocial support, parenting programmes and childcare resources. It operates nationwide and collaborates with public social services.
Country	Spain
Mail	informa@cruzroja.es
Phone	900 22 11 22
Website	https://www2.cruzroja.es/
Address	Avenida Reina Victoria, 26-28 28003, Madrid
Name of the organisation	Federación Española de Familias Numerosas (FEFN)
Short Description (Around 300 characters)	Represents and advocates for large families in Spain. Offers guidance on financial benefits, tax reductions, employment rights and social protections available to families with multiple children.
Country	Spain
Mail	info@familiasnumerosas.org
Phone	91 434 57 80
Website	https://www.familiasnumerosas.org/
Address	Ferraz, 110 Bajo Derecha 28008, Madrid
Name of the organisation	Fundación Madrina
Short Description (Around 300 characters)	Specialises in supporting pregnant women in vulnerable situations, particularly young, migrant or low-income mothers. Provides housing assistance, food, baby supplies, employment support and counselling services.
Country	Spain
Mail	fundacion@madrina.org
Phone	34 644 088 471
Website	https://madrina.org/
Address	Plaza San Amaro 4 28020, Madrid
Name of the organisation	PPiINA
Short Description (Around 300 characters)	Advocacy organisation promoting equal, non-transferable parental leave for mothers and fathers. Played a key role in Spain's reform equalising maternity and paternity leave.
Country	Spain
Mail	info@ppiina.org
Phone	
Website	https://www.ppiina.org/
Address	Bravo Murillo 4, 28015 Madrid
Name of the organisation	UNAF – Unión de Asociaciones Familiares



Short Description (Around 300 characters)	A national federation supporting diverse family models, including single-parent families. Provides counselling, mediation, education programmes and advocacy for family rights and child wellbeing.
Country	Spain
Mail	info@unaf.org
Phone	+34 91 446 31 62
Website	https://unaf.org/
Address	C/ Alberto Aguilera, 3 - 1º Izda. 28015, Madrid