The Spanish education system has a **decentralised management and administration model**. Educational powers are shared between:

- the State General Administration (Ministry of Education and Vocational Training)
- the Autonomous Communities (Departments for Education).

The general system for the transfer of funding to each Autonomous Community is settled by means of a multilateral agreement between regional governments and the State, which guarantees, through a series of mechanisms, solidarity between territories and a certain level of expenditure for the provision of the basic public service of education throughout the country.

The Autonomous Communities enjoy a high degree of management autonomy and they are therefore entitled to approve their own annual budget and to decide on the distribution of their resources.

Most of the investment in education is public, representing an 86% of the total spending on education in 2017 in the case of levels that are lower than higher education and a 66% in tertiary education.

Private expenditure comes mainly from household spending, particularly in non-university education, where household spending is equal to the total expenditure.

**Proportion of public and private expenditure on education. 2017**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>% Public expenditure on education</th>
<th>% Private expenditure on education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lower than higher 1</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher education</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1The remaining 2% corresponds to investment in education by international institutions.

Source: Drawn up by Eurydice Spain-Spanish Network for Information on Education (National Centre for Educational Innovation and Research, Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport) on the basis of *Education at a Glance 2019: OECD Indicators* [1].

A distinction is therefore made between public and private expenditure:

- **public expenditure** on education refers to the amounts targeted by public authorities. Most of it is assumed by the education authorities (the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training and the Departments for Education in each Autonomous Community), whereas the rest is
provided by other authorities

- **private funding** comes exclusively from private sources:
  - **non-university education in public schools and publicly-funded private schools**: it supplements public expenditure and covers expenses such as books and school materials, meals, transport or extracurricular activities. In **private non grant-aided schools**, families must pay for registration and tuition fees
  - **university education**: in public universities, private funding comes mainly from registration and tuition fees paid by students, the organisation of specialised courses and agreements signed with private corporations, as well as from other sources such as legacies, donations or subsidies granted by private institutions.

The **annual expenditure, both public and private, per student by educational institutions** is the result of dividing the total expenditure on education by the total number of students in Spain. This expenditure per student, **expressed as a percentage of GDP per capita**, reflects the effort made by the country in relation to its level of development.

Tertiary education students are the ones generating the highest cost, followed by secondary and primary education students.

**Annual expenditure (public and private) per student**\(^1\) by educational institutions, **relative to GDP per capita (from primary to tertiary education)**. 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Level</th>
<th>Amount (in EUR thousand)</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary education</td>
<td>7 653</td>
<td>20.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary education</td>
<td>9 502</td>
<td>25.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tertiary education</td>
<td>12 614</td>
<td>24.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All levels</td>
<td>9 464</td>
<td>25.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\)In equivalent US dollars converted using PPPs.

Source: Drawn up by Eurydice Spain-Spanish Network for Information on Education (National Centre for Educational Innovation and Research, Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport) on the basis of [Education at a Glance 2019: OECD Indicators](#).[1]

**Public educational expenditure in 2017** reached around EUR 49 464 million, representing 4.24% of the GDP, and was mainly distributed amongst pre-primary and primary education (31%), secondary education and vocational training (30%) and university education (20%).

**Distribution of public expenditure on education according to educational activity. 2017 (in EUR thousand)** (according to Autonomous Community)[2]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Activity</th>
<th>Amount (in EUR thousand)</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-primary and primary education</td>
<td>14 717 821.0</td>
<td>31.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary education and vocational training</td>
<td>13 937 620.9</td>
<td>29.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University education(^1)</td>
<td>9 474 003.4</td>
<td>20.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SPECIALISED</strong> [^3]</td>
<td>1 034 944.0</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special education</td>
<td>1 350 998.9</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult education</td>
<td>381 937.0</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Public spending on education

#### Education abroad
- **Education abroad**: 96,622.0 (0.2%)

#### Supplementary services
- **Supplementary services**: 1,153,460.8 (2.5%)

#### Compensatory education
- **Compensatory education**: 309,188.1 (0.7%)

#### Extracurricular and additional activities
- **Extracurricular and additional activities**: 549,866.9 (1.2%)

#### Teacher training and retraining
- **Teacher training and retraining**: 154,290.8 (0.3%)

#### Educational research
- **Educational research**: 46,357.2 (0.1%)

#### General administration
- **General administration**: 999,423.2 (2.1%)

#### Other higher education
- **Other higher education**: 15,313.8 (0.03%)

#### Occupational training
- **Occupational training**: 775,827.5 (1.7%)

#### Grants and financial support
- **Grants and financial support**: 2,084,714.5 (4.5%)

#### Grants for the exemption from payment of academic fees
- **Grants for the exemption from payment of academic fees**: -346,222.5 (-0.7%)

#### Undistributed expenses
- **Undistributed expenses**: 4,443,000.0 (9.5%)

#### Adjustment items
- **Adjustment items**: -1,714,493.6 (-3.7%)

#### Total
- **Total**: 49,463,674.1 (100.0%)

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1. It includes EUR 346,222.5 thousand for the exemption from payment of academic fees and EUR 1,714,493.6 thousand of private funding from universities.

2. The amount for these grants is paid directly to universities by the education authorities. Students who are awarded these grants are exempt from paying registration or other academic fees. For this reason, the amount for these grants has to be deducted from the total public spending for university education, so that there is no double accounting for this item.

Source: Drawn up by Eurydice Spain-Spanish Network for Information on Education (National Centre for Educational Innovation and Research, Ministry of Education and Vocational Training) on the basis of data from [Statistics on Public Spending](#) of the General Subdirectorate for Statistics and Studies of the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training.

### Public expenditure allocated to agreements. 2017 (in EUR thousand) (according to Autonomous Community)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Education</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-primary/Primary education</td>
<td>3,168,524.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary education</td>
<td>2,563,256.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special education</td>
<td>351,395.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other types of provision</td>
<td>27,263.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>6,179,440.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Drawn up by Eurydice Spain-Spanish Network for Information on Education (National Centre for Educational Innovation and Research, Ministry of Education and Vocational Training) on the basis of data from [Statistics on Public Spending](#) of the General Subdirectorate for Statistics and Studies.
of the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training.

**Spain’s priorities regarding European Funds**

The [2014-2020 Common Strategic Framework in the context of the Europe 2020 Strategy](#) has a fundamental principle for its programming: ‘prioritise investment co-financed with funds in a smaller number of priorities, depending on the development level of the different regions and the European Structural and Investment Funds’.

In December 2013, the **new architecture of the European Social Fund** for the 2014-2020 programming period was reported: ‘the ESF will act through national and regional operational programmes throughout the period’.

Regarding Spain:

- the budget is similar to the one for the previous period: about EUR 9 000 million, including current EUR 945 million corresponding to the Youth Employment Initiative
- apart from the thematic objectives established and given the importance attached to the national implementation of Youth Guarantee, a specific line of action devoted to youth initiatives, which is an integral part of all the programmes, was included
- within national operational programmes, three horizontal and thematic programmes are implemented throughout the period:
  - **Operational Programme for the Promotion of Social Inclusion** [7]: EUR 800 050 000
  - **Youth Employment Operational Programme** [8]: EUR 2 786 943 900 (2 360 617 817 of which are in terms of aid), which will contribute to the Strategy for Entrepreneurship and Youth Employment and to the implementation of the National Youth Guarantee System
  - **Employment, Training and Education Operational Programme** [9]: EUR 2 115 030 502. Its third major line of action, ‘Investing in education, training and vocational training for the acquisition of skills and lifelong learning’, intends to fund actions aimed at reducing early school leaving in education and training with measures such as individualised attention, the flexibility of pathways and the modernisation of vocational training.

This Thematic Objective is included in order to strengthen the link between education and training and employment policies, particularly regarding the matching of skills to labour market needs.

Measures strengthening ties between the education and training systems and the labour market will be supported:

- development of dual vocational training
- development of the National System of Qualifications and Vocational Training
- evaluation and accreditation of professional competences
- EUR 5 million is foreseen for financing the updating of the National Catalogue of Qualifications.

In addition, there will be a regional operational programme for each Autonomous Community and Autonomous City, as well as a technical assistance one.

**DID YOU FIND WHAT YOU WERE LOOKING FOR?**

**YES**