Funding

Higher education comprises both university and non-university education.

Non-university higher education

It comprises:

- advanced vocational training cycles [1]
- advanced artistic education.

It has the same characteristics as the rest of non-university educational levels regarding:

- financing system
- degree of financial autonomy and mechanisms for control
- fees in public and private institutions
- financial support for families and students

For more information, see Early childhood and school education funding [2].

Funding

Advanced vocational training cycles have some specificities:

- minimum amount of public funding to be provided for each school unit (group of students being collectively and simultaneously taught by a teacher on an ordinary basis) in 2018: it ranged from EUR 63 366.23 to EUR 71 529.08. It is annually set by the State in its Budget and it refers to the funding of the 1st year. Funding in the 2nd year varies and may be lowered or increased. The amounts vary depending on the group the specific training cycle belongs to, depending on the number of hours and the expenditure they imply
- total amount of public funds allocated to publicly-funded private schools: it is established in the budgets of the relevant education authorities
- amount of fees students have to pay in publicly-funded private schools: it depends on the specific Autonomous Community. As a general rule, fees cannot exceed the limits annually established in the State Budget, except in special cases recognised by legislation. In 2018, the amount ranged from EUR 18 to 36 per student per month, ten months a year
- students may receive ‘salary grants’ and be eligible for the Excellence Awards, given by the Autonomous Communities, and the National Awards, organised by the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training in order to recognise students who show excellent performance.
Financial support for students

For students in any of the following types of university and non-university post-compulsory education:

- access courses and courses to prepare vocational training entrance examinations and specific training courses in order to have access to intermediate and advanced vocational training offered by public and publicly-funded private institutions providing authorised vocational training
- university studies adapted to the European Higher Education Area leading to official Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees
- course to prepare university entrance examinations for people aged over 25 offered by public universities
- supplementary training in order to have access or obtain the Master’s degree and supplementary credits to obtain the Bachelor’s degree.

System of grants and financial support

The Ministry of Education and Vocational Training obliged to assume the same responsibility established for university students:

- advanced vocational training students have to enroll for a year or in, at least, half of the modules of the cycle
- the grant is not awarded to students who repeat part or all of a year
- they must have passed all the subjects or modules of the previous year
- advanced vocational training students may receive a grant in the 2nd year provided they have passed 85% of the modules in which they were enrolled, which is equivalent to 500 hours.

The following academic requirements were established in order to be eligible for any grant component:

- students in the 1st year of advanced vocational training have to prove they have obtained a 5.50 in the 2nd year of Bachillerato, or in the entrance examination or course
- students in the 2nd or subsequent years of non-university post-compulsory education organised into modules have to prove they have passed, at least, a number of modules which represent 85% of the total number of hours of the relevant year.

The thresholds of family income and assets and the amounts of grants and financial support approved were the following:

1. the thresholds of family income and assets above which students are not eligible for a grant or financial support are maintained, grouping into three
2. the awarding system consists of two parts:

- fixed amounts:
  - grant to cover tuition fees
  - fixed amount linked to the student’s income
  - fixed amount linked to the student’s residence during the school year
  - fixed amount linked to academic excellence
  - basic grant.
- varying amount: it is calculated, depending on the specific call and beneficiary, through a formula taking into account family income and academic performance:
  - the lower the income and the better the performance, the bigger the amount
for the same income, better performances will lead to greater amounts
for the same performance, those on lower incomes will be entitled to bigger amounts.

Amounts corresponding to non-university post-compulsory education students:

- threshold 1:
  - fixed amount of EUR 1,600 linked to income
  - fixed amount of EUR 1,500 linked to residence
  - fixed amount of EUR 50-125 linked to academic excellence
  - basic grant of EUR 200
  - varying amount of at least EUR 60 according to student performance and family income.
- threshold 2:
  - fixed amount of EUR 1,500 linked to residence
  - fixed amount of EUR 50-125 linked to academic excellence
  - basic grant of EUR 200
  - varying amount of at least EUR 60 according to student performance and family income.
- threshold 3:
  - basic grant of EUR 200.

The following is also established:

- the following additional support is maintained:
  - for students living in the Canary Islands, the Balearic Islands, Ceuta and Melilla
  - the previous year's subsidies and assistance for students with special educational needs related to a disability or serious conduct disorder, which may reach up to 50% more in the case of students with a degree of motor disability higher than 65%
  - financial aid for highly gifted students.
- all students whose family income falls within Threshold 3 are entitled to a grant, at least exemption from registration fees or the basic grant
- a new regulation of grant components for distance education students.

In 2014/15, the system of grants and financial support implemented was consolidated, and changes in the adjustment of the percentage of credits students need to complete to consider 'the grant has been used for the purpose it was awarded' were introduced. This consideration means the following:

1. enrolment, class attendance and sitting of examinations
2. payment of the corresponding expenses, if appropriate
3. conduct of the practice on which grounds it was awarded.

University higher education

Its funding is established in the State Budget, which include the priorities of the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training for 2018:

1. objectives at national level:
   - consolidation of the adaptation of the European Higher Education Area
   - internationalisation and excellence of the Spanish university system
   - maintenance and reinforcement of the equity of the system (grants)
   - promotion of the mobility and training of university teaching and research staff
   - design of a system of indicators and progress towards the implementation of an analytical accounting model for Spanish public universities
improvement of the employability of university students.

2. Objectives at European level:
   - coordinated management of the actions of the Action Programme in the Field of Lifelong Learning and the Erasmus+ Programme
   - take the necessary measures for the wide dissemination of the new Erasmus+ Programme
   - ensure a transparent and efficient management of European funds
   - maintain relations with the European Commission for the proper management of the Erasmus+ Programme and address the relations that might be established
   - participate in the activities organised at European level in order to develop and maintain relations with the national agencies of the other countries of the European Union
   - facilitate the participation of all the education sectors involved through networks, seminars, etc.

Bodies responsible for public funding

Sources of income of public universities

- fees paid by students
- public funds provided by the Autonomous Communities and the State:
  a. State: it establishes the funds for universities which are directly dependent on it, the National University of Distance Education \(^{[3]}\) and the Menéndez Pelayo International University \(^{[4]}\). The amounts allocated to each institution are annually established in the State Budget
  b. Autonomous Communities: they establish in their annual budgets the funds for universities located in their territories. Such funds come from:
     - the taxes they collect and other revenues
     - State transfers: the amounts established for each Autonomous Community are determined by different parameters, especially population ones.

Funding model of public universities

Each Autonomous Community establishes it within its own territory.

These models, which are multi-annual, set out the criteria for the allocation of resources to the different universities on the basis of their:

- teaching activity
- research activity
- technology transfer and innovation activity.

Public funding depends, to a large extent, on the number of students.

General system of grants and financial support

The State regulates and finances it from the State Budget.

It is financed by the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training in two ways:

1. it regulates, finances and manages grants for students to pursue university education in an institution outside their region, as well as for students enrolled in the National University of Distance Education
2. it regulates and finances grants which are managed by the Autonomous Communities and
universities themselves, by establishing the different categories and the amounts to be awarded, the academic and economic requirements that candidates must meet, and the situations leading to incompatibility. The Autonomous Communities and universities are in charge of their development, implementation and control, so as to facilitate decentralised management of resources and cater for territorial diversity.

The Autonomous Communities and universities also have their own grants.

**Other sources of income of public universities**

- prices of studies leading to the award of their own diplomas and certificates, especially postgraduate Master, Expert or Specialist programmes, which are not official
- prices of lifelong learning studies, such as language courses
- transfers from public and private entities, as well as bequests, legacies and donations
- patrimony and any other economic activity they may develop
- credit operations
- contracts for people, or public and private universities or entities, to carry out scientific, technical or artistic work, as well as to develop specialised courses or specific training activities.

Policies to encourage public-private partnerships in university education have been implemented over the past few years.

**University education financing system**

**Financial autonomy and control**

State regulations grant public universities economic and financial autonomy and establish accountability over the functions assigned to these institutions.

**Autonomy of public universities**

Public universities are entitled to:

- draw up their own statutes
- prepare, approve and manage their budgets
• administer their goods.

Budgets

• the Autonomous Communities establish the regulations and procedures for their development and implementation
• they specify total income and expenses and are annually approved by the university’s Social Council, which is the body in charge of supervising all economic activities and promoting the participation of society in university funding.

Expenses

• budgets include, together with current spending, a detailed list of the different job categories established within university staff, as well as total expenditure on personnel
• the salaries of teaching and research staff, as well as of administration and service personnel, must be authorised by the relevant Autonomous Community, or the State in the cases of the National University of Distance Education and the Menéndez Pelayo International University.

Remuneration of staff

• teaching and research staff: their remuneration complies with what is established by the education authorities:
  ◦ civil servants: the State determines the system of remuneration. Salaries cannot exceed the maximum limits defined by the relevant Autonomous Community, in accordance with the rules established by the State
  ◦ staff employed on a contractual basis: the Autonomous Communities regulate the system of remuneration
• administration and service staff: they are paid from the budgets of the Autonomous Communities.

Control in public universities

The Autonomous Communities establish the regulations and procedures for the control of their investments, income and expenses, by means of audit services under the supervision of the Social Councils.

Universities submit a budget settlement to the Governing Council of each regional government, together with all the documents related to their annual accountancy.

Once the regional government has received the books, they are sent to the relevant body in charge of the supervision of the accountancy, or, failing that, to the Court of Auditors.

Analytical accounting model for public universities

This model was approved in 2011 by the Council of Universities and the General Assembly for University Policy. Objective: determine the real costs of the different services provided by universities in a more efficient way, as well as their relationship with private and public funding. By doing so, accountability levels and efficiency in management are expected to increase.

Fees within public higher education
Cost of education

Students pay for a series of fees which cover part of the cost of education.

Official university studies

The fees students pay depend on:

- the public prices fixed by the relevant Autonomous Community, within the limits established by the General Assembly for University Policy
- the number of credits in which they are enrolled
- whether the programme is highly experimental
- the extra charges involved in registration for second or subsequent times in one or more subjects:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minimum and maximum public prices of credits for new students of official Bachelor and Master programmes in Spain. 2017/18 academic year</th>
<th>Lowest fee per credit</th>
<th>Highest fee per credit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor programme¹</td>
<td>10.28</td>
<td>39.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Official Master programme² which entitles the holder to perform a professional activity that is regulated in Spain</td>
<td>12.13</td>
<td>42.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Official Master programme³ which does not entitle the holder to perform a professional activity that is regulated in Spain</td>
<td>12.13</td>
<td>65.87³</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹Official Bachelor programmes: study programmes generally have 240 credits.

²Official Master programmes: they comprise 60 to 120 credits.

³In Catalonia, in the case of Master degrees whose programmes are not a prerequisite to performing professional activities that are regulated: the Social Councils may establish a discount in the price of the credit of up to a 30%, in accordance with the criteria they may set. They may also establish a specific discount in the case of the Erasmus Mundus Master programmes.

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 the 2017/18 Statistics on University Public Prices (Ministry of Education and Vocational Training).

Non-official university studies

Registration fees are determined by the Social Council of each university.

PhD programmes

The academic tutorship for the preparation of the doctoral thesis varies between EUR 60.30 and EUR 421.95 per year, depending on the services offered to doctoral candidates.

Fees only new students have to pay

The total cost of registration for a student includes registration fees (depending on the number of credits), together with:

- school insurance fees (for students under 28)
• student record
• ID fee.

Fees for other services

• the issuing of the relevant certificate or the Diploma Supplement
• the doctoral thesis examination: its price ranges from EUR 117.09 to EUR 259.97.

Financial support for learners’ families

University students’ families do not receive direct financial support; it is directly awarded to students, although their family situation is taken into account.

Grants and financial support

In order to be eligible, in terms of household income and capital, for national grants and financial support, the following is taken into account:

• number of members of the family who live in the family home
• large family (except in special cases, those with three or more children)
• disability of the applicant or family member (brother/sister or son/daughter)
• residence outside the family home while pursuing university studies: applicant or any of his brothers/sisters
• orphan and under 25 years of age.

Full or partial fee waivers

They are established in accordance with national and regional regulations.

They are both aimed at students coming from certain family situations, including the following:

• member of a large family
• dependent or disabled person
• high-performing students
• victims and relatives of victims of terrorist attacks
• victims of gender violence
• orphans of civil servants and military personnel who have died in the line of duty
• students with dependent family members.

Financial support for learners

There are some mechanisms which allow coordination between the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training and the Autonomous Communities in order to ensure that the general system of grants and financial support guarantees access to higher levels of education according to students’ aptitudes and inclinations, regardless of their financial circumstances, social status or place of residence.

System of grants and financial support

The academic requirements applicants have to meet are the following:

Bachelor programmes
• grant in the 1\textsuperscript{st} year:
  - have obtained a 5.50 in the university entrance examination, excluding the specific part
  - have obtained a 6.50 in the examination or in the university access course
  - if they are only applying for the enrolment grant, the mark required is 5.50.

• renewing of the grant in the 2\textsuperscript{nd} and subsequent years: they must have passed a percentage of the credits of the previous year:
  - 85\% in Architecture and Engineering
  - 100\% in Arts, Humanities, Social and Legal Sciences, Sciences and Health Sciences
  - the percentages decrease by 10-35\%, depending on the branch of knowledge:
    - if the average mark of the subjects passed is 6.00-6.50
    - if they are only applying for the enrolment grant.

Master programmes

• grant in the 1\textsuperscript{st} year:
  - have obtained a 6.50 in the previous studies from which they gained access
  - in order to have access to a Master’s degree whose programme is not a prerequisite to performing a professional activity that is regulated, the average mark is 7
  - in order to renew the grant in both cases, they have to obtain the same average mark.

• students enrolled for a second or subsequent time are not eligible
• award of a 'salary grant'/additional aid:
  - they must obtain a 6.0
  - if they want to renew it, they must pass 100\%, or 85\% in the case of Engineering and Architecture, of the credits.

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1. enrolment, class attendance and sitting of examinations
2. payment of the corresponding expenses, if appropriate
3. conduct of the practice on which grounds it was awarded.

Beneficiaries must complete, at least, 50% of the credits or subjects in which they have enrolled, with the exception of beneficiaries of the university branches of Sciences and Technical Education, who must pass, at least, a 40%.

In 2016/17, a total of 558,618 students of Bachelor and Master programmes in public universities received some sort of grant or financial support, which represents 37.4% of the total number of students enrolled in public universities. The total amount was EUR 989 million.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of grant holders and percentage they represent in Bachelor and Master programmes. Public universities. 2016/17 academic year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grant holders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor programmes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master programmes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹These figures can be slightly overestimated for some Autonomous Communities, because they have made the number of students receiving financial help equivalent to the number of grants awarded.

²First and second cycle university education is included.

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
Grants and financial support for PhD students under the State Programme for the Promotion of Talent and its Employability

The objectives of this Programme are to finance and encourage, on the basis of competitive calls:

- training and specialisation of human resources in R&D&I
- promote of their employability, both in the public and private sector
- access to international mobility and mobility within the public sector –universities and research bodies–, and between the latter and companies.

It is comprised of three State subprogrammes: Training, Incorporation and Mobility.

1. State Subprogramme for Training:

**Assistance for pre-doctoral contracts for the training of doctors 2018** [6]

In 2015, it merged with Severo Ochoa assistance for pre-doctoral contracts for the training of doctors.

Objective: the training of doctors through the funding of employment contracts.

- the contractual arrangement is a *pre-doctoral contract*, between the institution in question (universities, public research bodies and other research institutions) and the research staff in training
- doctoral theses are part of the best projects of research groups of scientific and academic standing
- they generally have a duration of 4 years
- the hiring of doctoral students is also financed, provided they obtain the PhD before the last annual payment, during a post-doctoral guidance period of one year.

2. State Subprogramme for Incorporation:

**Assistance for the promotion of youth employment and the implementation of Youth Guarantee in R&D&I 2018** [7]

Objective: grant aid, for a 2-year period, to improve the training and employability of R&D technical and management staff through their recruitment by universities and public research bodies and institutions.

In order to be hired, candidates must hold any of the following degrees/certificates:

- university degrees: *licenciado, ingeniero, arquitecto, graduado, diplomado, ingeniero técnico* and *arquitecto técnico*
- certificates of vocational training of the education system: *Technician* [8] and *Advanced Technician* [8].

3. State Subprogramme for Mobility:

**Pre-doctoral mobility assistance for short stays in R&D institutions 2018** [9]

Objective: improve the training of research staff in training in R&D institutions.
Stays of research staff in training in R&D institutions different from the ones they are attached to, so that they can carry out activities to improve their training and develop their doctoral theses, are financed. For more information, see State Subprogramme for Mobility [10].

**Private education**

Private universities draw up and pass their own organisational and operational rules:

- internal regulations concerning administrative and financial principles
- preparation, approval and management of their budgets
- administration of their goods.

The funding of private universities comes mainly from students’ contributions.

The cost of fees for the provision of training services is established by each university and represents about 80% of the funding. In some private universities, students make considerably lower contributions, since these institutions receive subsidies from public regional and local bodies which make up for users’ contributions.

Official grants and financial support for students enrolled in private universities is the same as the one offered to public university students.

In the case of registration fee waivers, the amount awarded must not exceed the official price established for the same degree and study programme in public institutions within the same region.

In 2016/17, a total of 21 807 students of Bachelor and Master programmes in private universities received some sort of grant or financial assistance from the education authorities, which represents 8.6% of the total number of students of those programmes in private universities. The total amount was EUR 41 million.

**Number of grant holders and percentage they represent in Bachelor and Master programmes. Private universities. 2016/17 academic year**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Grant holders</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor programmes</td>
<td>18 182</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master programmes</td>
<td>3 625</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1These figures can be slightly overestimated for some Autonomous Communities, because they have made the number of students receiving financial help equivalent to the number of grants awarded.

2 First and second cycle university education is included.


They can also:

- offer grants and financial support which are financed from their own resources
- grant some benefits to their students provided they fulfil a series of academic requirements
• offer a reduction in academic fees in the case students who are victims of terrorism or members of large families.

**Source URL:**

**Links**
[6] http://www.ciencia.gob.es/portal/site/MICINN/menuitem.dbc68b34d11ccbd52fbeb801432ea0/?vgnextoid=131955e2d5e01610VgnVCM1000001d04140aRCRD&amp;vgnextchannel=115222e988f75610VgnVCM1000001d04140aRCRD&amp;lang_chosen=en
[7] http://www.ciencia.gob.es/portal/site/MICINN/menuitem.dbc68b34d11ccbd52fbeb801432ea0/?vgnextoid=aa8aacd7f79b2610VgnVCM1000001d04140aRCRD&amp;vgnextchannel=def865dd69b2610VgnVCM1000001d04140aRCRD
[9] http://www.ciencia.gob.es/portal/site/MICINN/menuitem.dbc68b34d11ccbd52fbeb801432ea0/?vgnextoid=f87be95451231610VgnVCM1000001d04140aRCRD&amp;vgnextchannel=aa1bf87a9a75610VgnVCM1000001d04140aRCRD