



**National summary sheets on
education systems in Europe
and ongoing reforms**

2007 Edition



SPAIN

SEPTEMBER 2007

1. Education population and language of instruction

The total population registered in Spain on 1 January 2006 was 44 395 286, according to the National Institute of Statistics. Women accounted for 50.92 % of the population. The number of people under 24 was 11 546 273 (26.00 % of the population), of whom 48.70 % were women.

The number of students enrolled at some educational level in the school year 2006/07 were 8 473 158 ⁽¹⁾ (see in section 2 the breakdown of figures). In Spain, around 67 % of people under 30 are engaged in some form of studies.

According to the Spanish Constitution, Spanish, also known as Castilian, is the official language in Spain. Therefore, it is every Spanish citizen's duty to know this language and their right to use it. Apart from Castilian, there are other co-official languages in six Autonomous Communities. In those Communities, both Castilian and the co-official language are taught compulsorily at non-university levels of education. The use of the Autonomous Community language as a language of instruction varies in the different Communities, depending on their respective linguistic policies.

2. Administrative control and extent of public-sector funded education

In the school year 2006/07, 67.5 % of students at non-university levels (around 65 % of those in pre-primary, primary and lower secondary education and around 75 % of those in vocational training and general upper secondary education) and 90.2 % of university students attended publicly funded educational institutions.

A private party, either a person or a legal entity, may own educational institutions. Private schools may be financially independent or government dependent and may offer any level of education.

Publicly funded private schools are funded via educational agreements, which are established with the education administration of the corresponding Autonomous Community. Schools may sign these agreements provided that the requirements laid down in the educational legislation are met.

⁽¹⁾ Data of the Ministry of Education and Science. Estimate.

In Spain, the decentralized model of education administration distributes the responsibilities among the State, Autonomous Communities, local administrations and schools. The responsibilities corresponding to each of these levels are set out in the following table:

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSIBILITIES IN EDUCATION	
Central government	General organisation of the system, minimum requirements for schools, international cooperation in education, policies to encourage and coordinate research, general planning of education and regulation of academic and professional qualifications, High Inspectorate, policies on financial support for studies, ownership and administration of public institutions abroad, establishment of the legal basis for foreign institutions in Spain, education statistics for state purposes, etc.
Autonomous communities	Administrative responsibility within their territories, creation and authorization of institutions, staff management, curriculum development, student guidance and support, financial support and aids, etc.
Local Administration	Provision of sites for building public institutions, maintenance and refurbishment of pre-primary and primary schools, planning extra-curricular and supplementary activities, monitoring compulsory schooling, etc.
Schools	Schools are autonomous in organisational, educational and financial matters. The aim of such autonomy is to achieve a better adaptation and better use of allocated resources, as well as facilitate a model of educational action which best meets the students' needs and the characteristics of the school environment.

Source: CIDE on the basis of legislation, 2007.

Universities are autonomous as regards their general management, as well as in academic and financial matters, including the management of their own resources. They are also autonomous concerning staff management (including recruiting, hiring and promoting teaching staff) and student admission procedures.

The central government is responsible for the educational High Inspectorate of Education, whose task is to ensure that the common requirements established by the central government are met throughout the whole country. The education authorities of the Autonomous Communities, for their part, are responsible for the education inspectorate within their territories. The inspection duty applies to all elements of the education system.

3. Pre-primary education

Pre-Primary Education is conceived as a single education-oriented level with a structural and curricular development similar to the rest of educational levels. It caters for children from 0 to 6 years. Since 2006, (see section 9), it is divided into two three-year stages. The first stage is provided in pre-primary education institutions and the second stage can be provided in both pre-primary or pre-primary and primary schools. Although this level is not compulsory, it is free of charge during the second stage (children aged 3 to 6) both in public and publicly funded private schools.

In 2006/07, the net enrolment rates in pre-primary education is less than 20 % for the under 3 years and concerns almost 100 % of children aged from 3 to 5 years.

4. Compulsory education

(i) Phases

Education is compulsory from age 6 to 16, and is divided into two educational levels: Primary Education, which consists of three stages, each of them lasting two years, and Lower Secondary Education, which consists of four school years.

STRUCTURE OF COMPULSORY EDUCATION	
Primary Education (3 two-year stages) (<i>Educación Primaria</i>)	Age 6-12
Lower Secondary Education (4 years) (<i>Educación Secundaria Obligatoria – ESO</i>)	Age 12-16

(ii) Admissions criteria

Parents or legal guardians may choose any school they wish for their children, either public or private. If there are insufficient places in the public or publicly funded private school chosen by the parents, the following criteria are applied to establish admission priorities: annual family income, large family status, proximity of home (or workplace), enrolment of siblings in the same school, or parents/legal guardians working in it, and a disability of the pupil or of either of their parents or siblings. The Autonomous Communities and schools themselves may establish yet other supplementary criteria. Non-publicly funded private schools are free to establish their own pupils admission criteria.

(iii) Length of school day/week/year

Each Autonomous Community establishes the school calendar every year, following general guidelines set up by the central government to ensure homogeneity in the national territory. The 2006/07 school year comprised a minimum of 175 days both at primary level and lower compulsory secondary level, between the first fortnight of September and late June. Schools operated five days a week on an average of 25 lessons a week at primary level and 30 lessons at secondary level. The minimum number of annual teaching hours is 875 at primary level and 1 050 at lower secondary level.

(iv) Class size/student grouping

At primary level classes are limited to 25 pupils, and to 30 at secondary level. Classes including pupils with special educational needs are further limited at a rate of two pupils less for each pupil with special needs. Students are grouped according to age. Mixed age groups exist in some rural areas where classes are very small. In Primary Education, a class teacher teaches most areas of knowledge, except for Music, Physical Education and Foreign Languages, which are taught by specialist teachers. Secondary school students have different specialist teachers for the different areas or subjects.

(v) Curriculum control and content

Curriculum development occurs at three levels. The central government fixes the national core curriculum, which implies 55 % of the timetable in the Autonomous Communities with a second official language and 65 % in the rest. Each Autonomous Community develops this core curriculum in order to establish its own curriculum (first level of curricular development). In addition, each school adapts and expands upon this basic curriculum in what is known as the second level of curricular development. The third level corresponds to classroom programming drawn up by the teacher for each group of pupils, and includes a set of teaching units.

In Primary Education the following content areas are compulsory: Natural, Social and Cultural Environment; Artistic Education; Physical Education; Spanish Language and Literature; the co-official Language and the Literature of the Autonomous Community (if applicable); Foreign Language and Mathematics. The Lower Secondary Education curriculum includes the following: Natural Science; Social Studies; Geography and History; Physical Education, Plastic and Visual Education; Spanish Language and

Literature, the co-official Language and Literature of the Autonomous Community (if applicable); Foreign Language; Mathematics; Music and Technology. Religion is compulsorily offered by schools in both Primary and Lower Secondary Education, but it is voluntary for pupils.

The methodology in Primary Education is global and interdisciplinary. Its purpose is to integrate pupils' experiences and learning processes and must be adapted to their personal characteristics. In Lower Secondary Education, methodology must also be adapted to each pupil's needs, foster both independent learning and teamwork, as well as promote creativity and dynamism. It must also integrate ICT resources into the learning process.

Schools are free to choose their own textbooks and other teaching materials. Publishers are responsible for devising these books with due regard for the principles and content of teaching laid down by legislation, without requiring any further authorisation from education authorities. The supervision of textbook contents and other teaching materials as elements of the teaching-learning process is one of the responsibilities of the inspectorate.

(vi) Assessment, progression and qualifications

Basic guidelines for the assessment of pupils are set out in the official curricula.

In Primary Education, assessment must take into account pupils' progress in all areas with a global, continuous and instructive approach. The class teacher makes the final decision on each pupil's progression. This is automatic within the same stage of Primary Education but progression from one stage to the next is contingent upon the pupil's meeting the curricular aims for that particular stage. A pupil may repeat a year only once throughout the primary level. Pupils who promote to the next stage, but who are negatively assessed in one or more areas must receive appropriate support to help them catch up. Likewise, special attention is paid in Primary Education to the early detection of learning difficulties and to the prevention of school failure at an early age.

In Lower Secondary Education, assessment is continuous and separate for each area or subject. At the end of each year of this level, all the teachers of the group jointly decide on each pupil's promotion after considering their maturity and potential for catching up and progressing in subsequent years. Pupils may take a special examination in subjects they have not passed at the end of the school year. Those who still have not passed more than two areas or subjects after their special examination may not promote and have to repeat the whole year. Each year can only be repeated once, taking into account that students can only repeat twice through compulsory education. If, after repetition, a pupil does not meet the requirements for promotion to the next year, the assessment team will decide on their promotion and on individual measures for reinforcement that may be adopted.

Pupils who complete Lower Secondary Education passing all areas and subjects in this level are awarded the *Graduado en Educación Secundaria Obligatoria* (Certificate of Compulsory Secondary Education). This gives access to *Bachillerato* (General Upper Secondary Education) or *Formación Profesional Específica de grado medio* (Intermediate Specific Vocational Training). Under exceptional circumstances, the assessment team may propose that pupils who have not obtained a pass mark in one or two subjects may be awarded the certificate in view of their educational maturity in relation to the specific aims of the level and their potential for progress, on condition that the two failed subjects are not both Spanish Language and Literature and Mathematics. The same applies to any other official language in those Autonomous Communities that have one. Pupils who are not awarded this certificate receive a *Certificado de Escolaridad* (Certificate of School Attendance), which shows the years they have completed.

5. Post-compulsory education/upper secondary and post-secondary level

(i) Types of education

Post-compulsory secondary education comprises two branches: an academic one, *Bachillerato* which lasts two years, and a vocational one, *Formación Profesional Específica de grado medio*, the duration of which may vary from one-and-a-half to two years, depending on the professional profile.

STRUCTURE OF POST-COMPULSORY SECONDARY EDUCATION	
<i>Bachillerato</i> (General Upper Secondary Education) 2 years	Age 16-18
<i>Formación Profesional Específica de grado medio</i> (Intermediate Specific Vocational Training) 1½ to 2 years	Age 16-18

(ii) Admissions criteria

Students must hold a *Graduado en Educación Secundaria Obligatoria* certificate to access either branch of post-compulsory secondary education. Students without this certificate may be admitted to *Formación Profesional Específica de grado medio* if they are 17 or older and they pass an entry examination.

In publicly funded schools moderate fees are charged for education at this level, although the fees are well below the real tuition costs.

(iii) Curriculum control and content

As in compulsory education, *Bachillerato* minimum core curriculum is established by the central government although the Autonomous Communities and schools develop and adapt the curriculum to their own context. Four modalities of *Bachillerato* are being currently provided: Arts, Natural and Health Sciences, Humanities and Social Sciences, and Technology. The *Bachillerato* curriculum comprises common subjects, specific subjects of each modality and optional subjects. Subjects which are common to all four modalities are: Philosophy, Spanish Language and Literature, the co-official Language and Literature of the Autonomous Community and Foreign Language. In addition, Physical Education is a common subject in the first year and History in the second year.

Formación Profesional Específica de grado medio is structured in different *ciclos formativos* (modular studies of variable duration) classified into 22 trade sectors. These *ciclos formativos* consist of modules with both theoretical and practical content, and can be of two types: associated with a proficiency unit (the most specific modules) or cross-curricular basic ones (aimed to develop basic cross-curricular skills for professional competence in the corresponding course). Furthermore, all *ciclos formativos* include a module on Training and Guidance in the Labour Market (offering guidance on the labour market, understanding relevant legislation, compliance with basic health precautions and identifying the most common hazards) and another module concerning On-the-Job Training.

Both types of post-compulsory education may be taught in the same or in different institutions, which in turn may also be compulsory secondary education schools.

(iv) Assessment, progression and qualifications

In *Bachillerato*, assessment is continuous and is carried out separately for each subject. Those who fail a subject at the end of the year can take a special examination. First-year students who fail more than two subjects must repeat the whole year. Similarly, second year students failing more than three subjects must repeat this year, whereas those who fail up to three subjects only have to take those subjects. Students may spend no more than four years in this level. Successful students receive the *Bachiller* diploma.

Assessment is also continuous in vocational training and after passing all the modules in a course, students receive the *Técnico* (technician) certificate in the relevant area of specialization. In courses

lasting longer than one school year, students who have failed modules with a timetable allocation equivalent to up to 25 % of the duration of all first-year modules at the end of the first year may progress to the following year following a programme of remedial activities. If the total is higher than 25 %, students have to complete again all curricular activities corresponding to the failed modules. Students attending on-site classes may follow curricular activities in the same module no more than three times. Likewise they can take examinations for final assessment and qualification for a given module no more than four times.

6. Higher education

(i) Structure

Higher Education comprises university and non-university education. The latter includes the following categories: *Formación Profesional Específica de grado superior* (Advanced Specific Vocational Training) *Enseñanzas Artísticas Superiores* (Higher Artistic Education), *Enseñanzas Profesionales de Artes Plásticas y Diseño de grado superior* (Advanced Vocational Training in Plastic Arts and Design, to be introduced in 2008/09) and studies leading to the certificate as *Técnico Deportivo Superior* (Advanced Sports Technician).

University education is structured in different cycles. Studies may fall into the following categories: first cycle, first and second (or dual), only second, and third cycle studies. University education is provided by University Faculties, *escuelas técnicas superiores* (Higher Technical Schools, providing all cycles in studies of a technical nature) and *escuelas universitarias* (University Schools, providing only first-cycle studies). The integration of Spanish universities into the European Higher Education Area has brought about the implementation of specific measures set out in the 2001 *Ley Orgánica de Universidades*, LOU (Act on Universities). At present, the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), the undergraduate and postgraduate university studies and the Diploma Supplement (DS) have been adopted by law. This new regulation is already in force in Spain, though it might not be fully implemented until 2010 (see section 9 for more information on new developments).

The *Formación Profesional de grado superior* and the *Formación Profesional de grado medio* are usually offered in the same institutions: the secondary education schools or the vocational training schools.

Advanced Artistic Education is provided at public institutions called *Conservatorios Superiores y Escuelas Superiores* (Higher Music Conservatories and Higher Schools of Art) ISCED 5A. Although these are not university studies, they lead to an equivalent degree to that of university graduate.

(ii) Access

Passing a *Prueba de Acceso a la Universidad*, PAU (university entrance examination) is required to enrol at university. Regulated by the Ministry of Education and Science and the Autonomous Communities, the PAU is organised and planned jointly by universities and education authorities responsible for *Bachillerato*. Students who are going to take artistic or sports education must also pass a specific examination. There are other higher education studies where students are required as well to pass an additional specific examination in which they must demonstrate that they have the prior knowledge and skills required in the chosen area of specialization.

There are two ways of enrolling in *Formación Profesional de grado superior*: direct access, for holders of the *Bachiller* certificate or access through a test for students not meeting academic requirements, on condition they are 19 years of age or over, or else 18 years of age and holders of the *Técnico* certificate in the same professional area.

(iii) Qualifications

Diplomado, *Arquitecto Técnico* and *Ingeniero Técnico* degrees are earned after completing first-cycle university studies (3 years), and *Licenciado*, *Arquitecto* and *Ingeniero* degrees after first- and second-cycle

university studies (4-6 years). The degree of *Doctor* is awarded following completion of third-cycle university studies and successfully defending a thesis. Students completing Advanced Music and Dance Studies and Dramatic Arts are awarded a *Título Superior* (higher diploma) equivalent to a university *Licenciado*.

Students successfully completing *Formación Profesional de grado superior* are awarded the *Técnico Superior* (Advanced Technician) certificate. Students finishing the *ciclos formativos* of Advanced Plastic Arts and Design earn a *Técnico Superior de Artes Plásticas y Diseño* certificate for their respective speciality. Advanced courses in Conservation and Restoration of Artistic Objects, in Ceramics, in Design and in Glasswork lead to the *Título Superior en Conservación y Restauración de Bienes Culturales, Cerámica, Diseño y Vidrio*, respectively. All these diplomas are equivalent for all intents and purposes to a university *Diplomado*. Upon satisfactorily completing Advanced Sports Technician Education the *Técnico Deportivo Superior* (Advanced Sports Technician) certificate is obtained in the corresponding type or speciality. This certificate will be equivalent to all intents and purposes to the *Técnico Superior* certificate of Specific Vocational Training.

7. Special needs

Pupils with special educational needs are those who need, at a certain point in their education or permanently, special support and specific educational attention as a result of disabilities or severe behavioural problems. The specific criteria to be recognised as a pupil with special educational needs and the professionals in charge of this appraisal are determined by each Autonomous Community. It is a widespread policy to educate these pupils alongside their peers in mainstream schools. Only when their needs cannot be reasonably met in mainstream schools they do attend special education schools or classes. In the 2006/07 school year, only 0.4 % of all pupils attended special schools (46.4 % of SEN-children are in private institutions).

8. Teachers

Pre-primary and Primary Education teachers are required to hold a Maestro teaching diploma. These teachers are considered generalists, as they are competent in all areas except Music, Physical Education and Foreign Languages. These subjects are taught by specialist teachers.

Teaching Secondary education requires a university degree (*Licenciado, Arquitecto* or *Ingeniero* degree) plus completion of a teacher-training course. Secondary teachers can only teach subjects considered closely related with their field of specialisation.

In the case of university teaching staff, regulations establish different requirements depending on the category they belong to. Thus, *Catedráticos de Universidad* or *Catedráticos de Escuela Universitaria* and *Profesores Titulares de Universidad* must hold a Doctorate. *Profesores Titulares de Escuela Universitaria* as well as other university teaching staff are required to hold a *Licenciado, Arquitecto* or *Ingeniero* degree or, in the case of certain specific fields, *Diplomado, Arquitecto Técnico* or *Ingeniero Técnico* degree.

In publicly funded institutions, teaching staff both in higher education and at lower levels, usually have permanent civil servant status. Candidates to teaching posts are generally selected by means of a selection process which also involves competitive examinations, established specifically for each teaching level.

In the private sector, candidates to teaching posts sign a labour contract with the management of the teaching institution.

9. Current reforms and priorities

The new ongoing process of general reform of education started with the 2006 *Ley Orgánica de Educación*, LOE (Act on Education) and a number of regulations which develop certain aspects of the same reform process have continued with a new Act, passed in April 2007, introducing amendments to the 2001 *Ley Orgánica de Universidades*, LOU (Act on Universities).

The new Act on Education was passed on 3 May 2006. This Act addresses the need to 'simplify and clarify regulations' in view of the proliferation of educational legislation in recent years. The new Act rests upon three **basic principles**:

- 1) Quality and equity in education.
- 2) The need for all sectors in the educational community to cooperate in order to achieve learning success.
- 3) A firm commitment to the EU common educational aims in the process of convergence of education and training systems.

The main **changes** introduced by the new Education Act are the following:

As regards the **general planning of education**, and its **levels** and **stages**, the basic structure of the system remains the same, but some reforms are introduced. **Pre-Primary Education**, conceived as a single level, is divided into two stages. Both have an educational purpose that obliges the educational institutions to draw up a specific educational offer from the first stage. In the second stage, early development of reading and writing skills as well as basic numerical skills and a first contact with a foreign language and ICT are to be encouraged.

In **Primary Education**, special emphasis must be laid on diversity among pupils and the prevention of learning difficulties, and action must be taken as soon as these are detected. One of the new aspects in the Education Act is the establishment of a procedure for diagnostic assessment of the basic attainment of pupils, with the sole purpose of guidance and training, on completion of the second stage of this level (at the age of 10).

Lower Secondary Education will combine the principle of comprehensive education with the attention to be paid to the specific needs of each pupil, allowing schools to introduce organizational and curricular measures that are deemed the most appropriate in view of the pupils' characteristics. To do so, a greater degree of common curriculum is proposed for the first three years, with learning programmes to reinforce the basic skills of pupils who require them, and a fourth year with an emphasis on guidance, involving flexible provision of common subjects and three optional ones. There will also be a diagnostic assessment at this level on completion of the second year of Lower Secondary Education (pupils aged 14). In order to provide help for pupils with special learning difficulties, **curricular diversification programmes** are implemented from the third year of this level. Furthermore, to prevent early school dropout, raise hopes of subsequent training and qualification, and facilitate access to the labour market, **programmes for initial vocational qualification** will be introduced for young people from 16 to 21 years of age who have not obtained the *Graduado en Educación Secundaria Obligatoria* certificate.

Bachillerato will still comprise two years, but it will be offered in three instead of four distinct modalities: Arts, Science and Technology, and Humanities and Social Sciences.

The LOE provides for more flexible means of access to **Vocational Training** and establishes links between general education and vocational training.

Artistic education is the focus of special attention. This area had not been reformed since 1990. On the one hand, the Act provides for professional artistic education, including music and dance at elementary and intermediate levels, as well as Plastic Arts and Design at intermediate and higher levels. On the other

hand, Higher Artistic Education is established including higher studies in Music and Dance, Dramatic Art as well as Conservation and Restoration of the Cultural Heritage and Higher Studies in Plastic Arts and Design.

As for **foreign language learning** the new Act establishes that these studies are provided through the **Escuelas Oficiales de Idiomas** (Official Schools of Languages), which will follow the recommendations of the Common European framework of Reference for Languages established by the Council of Europe.

Adult education is also the focus of special attention, in response to the goal of providing every citizen with opportunities to acquire, update, complete or increase their knowledge and skills for their personal and professional development in line with the lifelong learning principle.

To ensure equity, the Act establishes the aim of the full **integration** of pupils who require educational attention other than that provided in ordinary education. Pupils considered to be in need of special attention are not only students with disabilities, but also those of high intellectual ability or those who are late entrants to the education system.

The new Act addresses **compensation for inequality** in specific programmes to be developed in schools or in geographical areas where compensatory educational action is required. The proposal is to guarantee an appropriately balanced distribution of pupils in need of educational support between public and publicly funded private institutions

Teachers are also the focus of attention in the LOE, in particular as regards their initial and in-service training, which will be reformed with reference to the new European Higher Education Area and bearing in mind the needs of the education system and the recent demands placed on it. Initial teacher training should include adequate academic and pedagogical training as well as professional supervision and guidance by experienced colleagues. The Act plans to step up in-service teacher training in the academic and methodological areas, as well as in all aspects related to organization, coordination, guidance, tutoring and attention to diversity. The use of ICT as well as foreign language learning will be encouraged. In addition, the recognition and appreciation by society of the teacher's role is addressed as well as the improvement of teachers' working conditions (e.g. legal protection and assistance, insurance coverage against civil liability, professional and economic recognition of their tutorial activities and special dedication, encouragement of paid leaves for professional development).

Participation is viewed as a basic value. To this end, the education authorities will ensure that the educational community is involved in the organization, governance, management and evaluation of schools. Special attention is paid to the autonomy of schools regarding their academic activities, financing, organization and general management. The Act reinforces the responsibilities of the mixed membership management and governing bodies (the School Council, the Teacher Assembly and academic departments). It also deals with the responsibilities of school head teachers, the procedure for their appointment and the recognition of their **management role**.

The **evaluation of the education system** is considered to be a basic factor for the improvement of education and the increase of transparency in the education system. General evaluation of the system is entrusted to the *Instituto de Evaluación* (Evaluation Institute), which will work jointly with the corresponding bodies set up by the Autonomous Communities. With the purpose of accounting for the progress of education, an annual report will be presented to the Spanish Parliament.

The LOE sets out the tasks and responsibilities of the education **inspectorate**, which is responsible, among other duties, for helping schools to draw up their educational and self-evaluation projects.

The **calendar for the implementation** of this Act establishes a time frame of five years, in which the curricula and new organizational structure of each educational level will be gradually implemented.

As regards **Vocational Training**, the legal framework established by 2002 *Ley Orgánica de las Cualificaciones y de la Formación Profesional*, LOCFP (Act on Qualifications and Vocational Training) adapted the new Specific Vocational Training programmes to the EU guidelines, so as to ensure these are referred to the National Catalogue of Vocational Qualifications. The implementation of this new planning of vocational training is still ongoing.

As to **university education**, on 26 September, 2006 the Ministry of Education and Science published a working paper which includes the main guidelines of the new organizational structure of university education proposed to complete the creation of the European Higher Education Area. The main purpose of this paper is to contribute to the debate on the organizational structure of university education in Spain within the University Coordination Council. This paper, together with the Council's report, will be the starting point from which the central government will develop subsequent regulations. In addition to the reforms concerning the adaptation of university education to the European Higher Education Area, the Ministry of Education and Science has recently published the Act 4/2007, of 12 April, amending the Act on Universities (LOU) 6/2001, of 21 December. One of its main aims are to boost the role of the Autonomous Communities concerning university education policy and university autonomy in matters related to teaching staff recruitment, the election of rectors and the composition of governing and social councils. It also aims to foster research and ensure accountability and responsibility before society. It establishes a new accreditation system, which will lead to a more effective and transparent process of teachers' selection, and grants universities greater freedom to create categories of non-civil servant teaching staff to meet their needs. The coordination bodies established are the following: the General Assembly on University Policy (administrative level), the Council for Universities and the Council of Spanish University Students.

Furthermore, it is noteworthy that in March 2006 the Ministry of Education and Science and the main trade unions endorsed the *Plan para la Promoción y la Mejora de la Convivencia Escolar* (Plan for the Promotion and Improvement of Human Relations in Schools) with a view to enhancing positive relationships within educational institutions as a necessary requirement for improving the quality of education.

In addition, the Ministry of Education and Science is currently developing further legislation regulating **access to posts of civil servant teaching staff**, the renewal of **artistic studies**, the *Observatorio de la Convivencia Escolar* (**Observatory of Human Relations in Schools**), and the reform of the **Consejo Escolar del Estado** (**State School Council**).

<p>For more detailed information on education systems in Europe, you may consult the EURYDICE data base, EURYBASE (http://www.eurydice.org)</p>
