

## General Information



### KEY INFORMATION ABOUT SPAIN

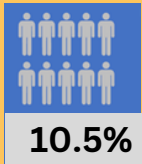
**Capital:** Madrid  
**Official Language:** Spanish  
**Population:** 49,570,725 (Q1 2026)\*  
**Currency:** Euro (EUR)  
**Calling Code:** +34

### KEY ECONOMIC INDICATORS

**GDP per capita:** 35,326.8 (2024)\*\*  
**Real GDP growth:** 2.8% IMF projection of 2.0% for 2026\*\*\*  
**Unemployment rate in the last quarter of 2025:** 9.93%\*\*\*\*

## Statistics and Demographics

### Volunteering rate of population in 2025\*\*\*\*\*



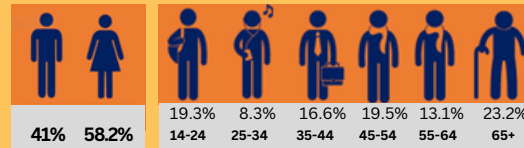
**Total number of volunteers in 2025\*\*\*\*\*:**  
 4,400,000 individuals over the age of 14.

### Annual economic value of volunteering\*\*\*\*\*:

The Gross Value Added generated by volunteering was 7,086 millions Euros in 2023, an increase of 1,664 millions compared to 2019.

Additionally, the broader Third Sector of Social Action accounts for approximately 1.2% of the national Spanish GDP.

### Volunteer experience per gender and age group (percentage of the total population)\*\*\*\*\*



### Education Levels and Volunteering\*\*\*\*\*

The prevalence of volunteering is higher among individuals with tertiary, university-level, or higher education.

## DEFINITION OF VOLUNTEERING \*\*\*\*\*

According to **Law 45/2015** in Spain, volunteering is understood to be the set of activities of general interest carried out by natural persons, provided that they meet the following requirements: a) That they have a **solidarity** nature, b) That its realisation is **free**, without its cause being a personal obligation or legal duty and is assumed voluntarily, c) That they are carried out without economic or material compensation, without prejudice to the **payment of reimbursable expenses** that the performance of the voluntary action causes to the volunteers in accordance with the provisions of article 12.2.d), d) That they are developed through **volunteer entities** in accordance with specific programs and within or outside Spanish territory without prejudice to the provisions of articles 21 and 22."

## SOCIAL CONTEXT AND SIGNIFICANCE OF VOLUNTEERING \*\*\*\*\*

Acts as a critical counterweight to individualism, serving as a vital mechanism for rebuilding social capital, fostering fraternity, and cultivating active democratic citizenship. Its significance is heavily amplified during crises, such as the DANA floods in Valencia in 2024, which mobilized over half the national population in various forms of solidarity.

### Types of Volunteer Activities \*\*\*\*\*

Governed by the State Law on Volunteering (Ley 45/2015), there are 10 types of volunteer defined: Social (56.7%), International cooperation (3.9%), Environmental (9.6%), Cultural (11.5%), Sports (7.3%), Education (6.0%), Social and healthcare (12.2%), Leisure and free time (11.2%), Community (5.0%), Civil protection (0.0%).

## Motivation for Volunteering

Primary Motivations are deeply rooted in social consciousness, ethics, and empathy-driven responses to humanitarian emergencies.

## National E-platform for Volunteering

Spanish Platform of Volunteering has developed a platform that connects volunteers directly with those seeking volunteer services called 'Voluncloud'. Anyone can get involved easily, quickly and directly. It provides the resources to connect people who want to show solidarity with those in need of volunteers.



\*Source: Instituto Nacional de Estadística <https://www.ine.es/dynt3/FMI/en/>

\*\*Source: World Bank Group <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.CD>

\*\*\*Source: International Monetary Fund (2025) <https://www.imf.org/en/press/2025/04/02/20250402-gdp-2025-spain>

\*\*\*\*Source: Instituto Nacional de Estadística <https://www.ine.es/dynt3/FMI/en/>

\*\*\*\*\*Source: Plataforma de Voluntariado de España (2025) Barómetro del voluntariado. La Acción Voluntaria en 2025 [https://biblioteca.plataformavoluntariado.org/descarga?doc=2025%2F12%2Faccion-voluntaria-2025\\_accessible.pdf](https://biblioteca.plataformavoluntariado.org/descarga?doc=2025%2F12%2Faccion-voluntaria-2025_accessible.pdf)

\*\*\*\*\*Source: Cuenta Satélite de la Economía Social del Instituto Nacional de Estadística. [https://public.tableau.com/v/ews/INE\\_CSES/Dashboard?3AshowVidHomeNo](https://public.tableau.com/v/ews/INE_CSES/Dashboard?3AshowVidHomeNo) and Fundación Botín (2025) <https://fundacionbotin.org/sala-de-prensa/mas-de-cuatro-milones-de-personas-trabajan-o-son-voluntarias-en-mar-de-28-000-ong-que-realizan-mas-de-100-000-pequenas-acciones-cada-dia-y-cuya-actividad-representa-el-12-del-pib-espanol/>

\*\*\*\*\*Source: Boletín Oficial del Estado (2015). Ley 45/2015 de voluntariado <https://www.boe.es/buscar/act.php?id=BOE-A-2015-11072>

\*\*\*\*\*Source: Plataforma de Voluntariado de España (2025) El valor del voluntariado en el Tercer Sector [https://plataformavoluntariado.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/valor\\_voluntariado\\_nuevo\\_escenario-1.pdf](https://plataformavoluntariado.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/valor_voluntariado_nuevo_escenario-1.pdf) and Plataforma de Voluntariado de España (2025) Barómetro del voluntariado. La Acción Voluntaria en 2025 [https://biblioteca.plataformavoluntariado.org/descarga?doc=2025%2F12%2Faccion-voluntaria-2025\\_accessible.pdf](https://biblioteca.plataformavoluntariado.org/descarga?doc=2025%2F12%2Faccion-voluntaria-2025_accessible.pdf)

## Impact of Volunteering\*

- **Macro-Societal:** Serves as a foundational pillar for social cohesion, bridging socio-economic divides, and addressing systemic poverty.
- **Micro-Individual:** Measurably improves the psychological and physical well-being of the volunteer, leading to heightened feelings of connection and belonging.

## Measuring the Impact of Volunteering\*\*\*\*\*

We have been working on different tools to measure the impact of volunteering from different perspectives. Firstly, we have analysed the socioeconomic impact of volunteering from two perspectives: its effects on volunteers and on the organisations that host them. Overall, we have found that volunteering generates significant benefits for both groups, with only minor drawbacks for individuals. For volunteers, the impact is largely positive across multiple dimensions. It improves physical and emotional well-being by increasing happiness, enhancing emotional regulation, and reducing stress. It also strengthens interpersonal and professional skills such as communication, teamwork, empathy, flexibility, and problem-solving, making volunteering a valuable pathway for personal development. In terms of employability, it increases confidence, expands professional networks, and improves job prospects. Additionally, volunteering promotes social cohesion by fostering inclusion, solidarity, and stronger social ties, while also improving the quality of personal relationships with family, friends, and partners. Although it requires time and effort, reducing availability for leisure and personal activities, these costs are generally limited and manageable. For organisations, volunteers represent both a practical and strategic asset. They contribute a significant amount of labor, accounting for roughly a quarter of the hours provided by paid staff, and play an especially important role in support and community-based activities. Beyond their direct work, volunteers enhance the internal environment by improving morale, encouraging diversity, strengthening a sense of belonging, and offering fresh external perspectives. They also contribute to the organisation's public image, increasing trust, credibility, and reputation, while reinforcing alignment with its values and mission.

## Quality Standards in the Field of Volunteering\*\*\*\*\*

The Volunteer Platform of Spain has developed the Vol+ program, a tool for evaluating and certifying the skills acquired during volunteering. At the same time, we have Evavol, a platform for those university students interested in a formal validation of their skills learnt through volunteering. In a less formal manner (not leading to certification), the Volunteer Platform of Spain has developed the Volunteer Management Cycle Manual, which clearly outlines the phases and processes for such management. Following the same line, we have built a Self-Diagnosis Tool for Quality Standards of the Volunteer Management Cycle that allows entities to measure suitability and identify areas for improvement in their volunteer management.

Secondly, we have also developed a quantitative measurement tool that allows social entities to reliably quantify the impact of voluntary action on beneficiaries and use that data to improve their services. The questionnaire evaluated several dimensions, including the beneficiaries' general perception of the volunteers, the specific personal benefits derived from the service, comparisons between volunteers and hired staff, and whether the gender of the volunteer influenced the care received. According to the findings, beneficiaries hold an exceptionally positive perception of volunteers and report high overall satisfaction with both the volunteers and the organisations providing the service. We have also worked on adapting the tool for beneficiaries with cognitive difficulties or disabilities by implementing an adapted questionnaire. Finally, we have explored the impact of volunteering as a protective factor against unwanted loneliness in both Young and Elderly People. The study on young people found that volunteering provides a symmetrical, peer-to-peer relational environment that helps to develop emotional and social skills, contrasting heavily with the superficial and often isolating interactions of digital social networks. Ultimately, the research concludes that volunteering should be a freely chosen activity driven by a meaningful cause, which empowers youth, improves their self-esteem, and creates vital social spaces that are not tied to consumption. The research on elderly people reveals that older volunteers experience significantly higher levels of physical health, life satisfaction, self-esteem, and resilience, along with lower levels of loneliness and suicidal ideation. The study emphasises that the subjective quality of the volunteering experience—such as feeling competent, autonomous, and connected to others—is far more crucial for well-being than structural aspects like the amount of hours dedicated.

## Challenges to the Development of Volunteering\*\*\*

The ecosystem is a highly institutionalised and indispensable pillar of the nation's social contract, operating at an incredible scale and functioning as a critical shock absorber against ecological and social crises. We have identified **12 challenges to assure the development of volunteering**:

- **Improve coordination and response to emergencies:** Highlighting the need for a more structured system to channel citizen solidarity into organised, safe structures during crises, such as those caused by climate change.
- **Volunteering and gender:** Promoting a feminist perspective that breaks traditional gender stereotypes, encourages male participation in highly feminized areas (like social and healthcare volunteering), and ensures equal representation of women in the leadership roles of these organisations.
- **Accessible and inclusive volunteering:** Making volunteering spaces open and appealing to everyone, regardless of age, socioeconomic status, or diverse capabilities. This includes adapting to the flexible participation preferences of youth and giving meaningful roles to older adults.
- **Social change:** Strengthening the activist dimension of volunteering to defend human rights, combat negative ideologies, and empower beneficiaries. This also involves working to introduce the values of the third sector into the educational system.
- **Social presence:** Building a clear, unified, and attractive symbolic identity for volunteering so that it is recognised not just as an emergency response, but as an expression of committed citizenship. This will help position volunteering as a priority in social and political agendas.
- **Improve the volunteer management cycle and increase training:** Utilising digital tools and inclusive models to manage volunteers throughout their lifecycle in an organisation, while providing continuous training adapted to emerging social needs and the safety of the volunteers themselves.
- **Volunteering in rural areas:** Supporting volunteering efforts that tackle rural depopulation ("Empty Spain") and help drive a just, ecological, and social transition to improve the quality of life in these territories.
- **Sustainability:** Reducing reliance on public administration by actively working to diversify funding sources (such as private funding) and advocating for more agile and fair public grant processes.
- **Cohesion and collaboration:** Moving beyond just declaring the importance of collaboration, and establishing concrete actions for entities to work together, optimize resources, and implement joint strategies to face common challenges.
- **Generate knowledge:** Encouraging organisations to recognise the importance of collecting, managing, and systematising data to improve their own operations and contribute to a stronger, shared understanding of the volunteering landscape.
- **Regulatory development:** Addressing the standstill in national legislative progress since 2015, specifically the urgent need to approve the pending regulatory development (Reglamento) of the 2015 Volunteering Law.

We've talked about twelve challenges, but we've only listed eleven. The twelfth is, in fact, a summary of the previous ones. No list of challenges would be complete without acknowledging that the greatest challenge of all is taking the steps to act. Taking action.

## Institutional and Legal Framework for Volunteering\*\*\*\*

The legal framework is structured around the Volunteer Law (Ley 45/2015 de voluntariado). In addition to this, almost all the Autonomous Communities have their own legislative development.



## Financial Support for the Development of Volunteering in Spain

Under this legislative framework, Spanish Public Administrations delegate the promotion and management of volunteering to non-profit entities; the general formula is the granting of subsidies for programs, which leads these entities to great financial uncertainty. For national entities, the most substantial funding is the one convened annually from 0.7% of the income tax collection (IRPF)

## Key Stakeholders in the Development of Volunteering\*\*\*\*

First and foremost, the Spanish Volunteering Platform, which brings together 83 member organisations, representing and coordinating the sector at national level, alongside non-governmental organisations (NGOs), which channel voluntary action across various fields. Public administrations, universities and the private sector act as promoters and supporters, encouraging volunteering among students and staff as a means of fostering social engagement, participation and the development of civic values.

## National award and recognitions for volunteering\*\*

There are State Awards for Volunteering administered by the Ministry of Social Rights. The awards recognise individuals, NGO's, Volunteering Projects, and National Research on Volunteering and are annually awarded.



## Research in the Field of Volunteering

In 2007, the Volunteering Observatory was established within the Spanish Volunteering Platform. Since then, we have been working to become the national benchmark for analysis and research on all matters relating to volunteering. We have our own virtual library, which contains a wealth of documents and research on volunteering. We have recently continued 'voluntary action', a study that began in 2016 and provides a longitudinal measurement and description of volunteering in our country. Similarly, we have carried out various research projects on the measurement and evaluation of the impact of volunteering. In accordance with the provisions of the Law of Volunteering 45/2015, the National Volunteering Observatory has been established this year. It remains to be seen how this public body will develop.

## Trends in the Development of Volunteering

The main trends in the development of volunteering point, first and foremost, to a systemic digitalisation that is fundamentally transforming the management, coordination and participation of volunteers; this is complemented by growing global integration, reflected in strategic alignment with international frameworks such as the United Nations International Year of Volunteers in 2026, which strengthens cooperation and the sector's international visibility; Another key trend is the strategic management of data and the ethical use of artificial intelligence, aimed at improving decision-making, efficiency and transparency without compromising rights or values; and, finally, impact assessment is becoming increasingly important as a tool for measuring results, demonstrating social value and guiding the continuous improvement of volunteering initiatives.

\*Source: Plataforma del Voluntariado de España (2021) El Voluntariado en la Economía: estado de la cuestión <https://biblioteca.plataformavoluntariado.org/descarga?doc=2024%2F01%2Fvoluntariado-economia.pdf>  
\*\*Source: Boletín Oficial del Estado (2025). Premios de voluntariado [https://www.boe.es/diario\\_boe/txt.php?id=BOE-A-2025-21909](https://www.boe.es/diario_boe/txt.php?id=BOE-A-2025-21909)  
\*\*\*Source: Plataforma del Voluntariado de España, (2026). V Plan Estratégico de la PVE (2026-2030): una estrategia compartida para fortalecer el voluntariado en España. [https://biblioteca.plataformavoluntariado.org/descarga?doc=2026%2F03%2Fv\\_plan\\_estrategico\\_pve-1.pdf](https://biblioteca.plataformavoluntariado.org/descarga?doc=2026%2F03%2Fv_plan_estrategico_pve-1.pdf)  
\*\*\*\*Source: Boletín Oficial del Estado (2015). Ley 45/2015 de voluntariado <https://www.boe.es/buscar/act.php?id=BOE-A-2015-11072>  
\*\*\*\*\*Source: Plataforma del Voluntariado de España, (2025). Voluntariado 2030: una estrategia compartida [https://biblioteca.plataformavoluntariado.org/descarga?doc=2025%2F02%2Festrategia\\_compartida\\_2030.pdf](https://biblioteca.plataformavoluntariado.org/descarga?doc=2025%2F02%2Festrategia_compartida_2030.pdf)

\*\*\*\*\*Source: Plataforma del Voluntariado de España (2025) Impacto socioeconómico del voluntariado: Memoria del proyecto 2025 and Plataforma de Voluntariado de España (2025) Barómetro del voluntariado. La Acción Voluntaria en 2025 and Plataforma de Voluntariado de España (2025) El papel del Voluntariado en la adolescencia [https://biblioteca.plataformavoluntariado.org/descarga?doc=2025%2F12%2F20251210-juvenes-y-soledad\\_acc.pdf](https://biblioteca.plataformavoluntariado.org/descarga?doc=2025%2F12%2F20251210-juvenes-y-soledad_acc.pdf) and Plataforma de Voluntariado de España (2025) Personas mayores y voluntariado: un estudio comparativo sobre los beneficios de esta práctica and [https://biblioteca.plataformavoluntariado.org/descarga?doc=2025%2F12%2F20251211-mayores-y-voluntariado\\_acc.pdf](https://biblioteca.plataformavoluntariado.org/descarga?doc=2025%2F12%2F20251211-mayores-y-voluntariado_acc.pdf) and Plataforma de Voluntariado de España (2025) Impacto de las personas destinatarias and