

Spain - Europe's New Melting Pot

The world is becoming more and more of a global society, and the United States may no longer lead the way in attracting immigrants.

Spain has experienced notable growth in recent years, thanks in large part to immigration. Naturally, some of this growth can be attributed to illegal entries. However, Spain's immigration reforms of the late 1990s and early 2000s curtailed this somewhat. Today the fastest growing immigrant populations are from other parts of Europe.

There are a number of qualities about Spain that are attractive to European immigrants. Earlier in the decade, lower housing prices sparked renewed interest in the market from outsiders. Many Europeans snatched up economically priced homes, either to live in full-time or as vacation properties. Today housing prices in many areas, particularly urban ones, were driven up. Subsequently, cheap housing is scarcer and it isn't the drawing card it once was.

Despite this, Europeans still flock to Spain in droves. Affluent Europeans care less about housing prices and more about housing quality. Developers and municipalities are responding to the demand for quality living and building communities that attract these outsiders. Europeans often value proximity to amenities like shopping, recreational/fitness opportunities, and nature. This is one reason why the population of the city of Alicante is growing by leaps and bounds.

In fact, recent statistics reflect that 20% of the city's population originates from countries other than Spain. Of immigrant numbers, half are from European countries. A staggering 70% of property that is owned by non-native Spaniards in the Valencia region is located in Alicante. This seems to indicate that outsiders are drawn to qualities that Spaniards-by-birth take for granted: sunny weather, rolling beaches, and endless activity.

Something else that may draw newcomers to Spain - long life expectancy. For the first time in over a decade, life expectancy in Spain has breached the 80-year mark. Perhaps this has something to do with the very things that attract outsiders. Spaniards value a balanced lifestyle consisting of work, recreation and fitness, and getting in touch with nature. These values are reflected in aspects like quality housing developments, governmental efforts to protect wildlife and natural areas, and the financing of tourism promotion.

Europeans are not the only outsiders to take up residence in Spain. People continue to migrate from poorer countries than Spain, particularly from neighbouring countries like Morocco, Algeria, and other African countries, who often head for Tenerife, not far from the coast with Africa, and better known among Europeans as a winter holiday destination where they take a [Tenerife holiday](#).

Spain's immigration reforms swept its borders wide open in recent years. Although some experts predicted chaos, it seems Spain has realized more prosperity than problems. The reforms made it easier and quicker for legitimate applicants to apply for immigrant status. It also streamlined the process for refugee status applications. All of this has resulted in a boom of prosperity for Spain's economy.

Although housing prices continue to rise, socio-economists predict that Spain's economy will continue to flourish. How long it will thrive isn't clear. Historic patterns suggest that the Spanish housing market is due for a slump. But if Spain keeps marketing itself successfully to the European population, it is likely that the economy as a whole will remain buoyant.

About the Author

Tribune Properties produce a series of guides for different areas of Spain including the island of Tenerife which includes both airport details and [cheap Tenerife flight](#) deals from various airlines.

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