Mission Atlas Project

Spain

Basic Facts

Name

Spain or The Spanish State or El Estado Espanol. Spanish North Africa (Africa del Norte Espanol), composed primarily of five plazas (enclaves or fortified cities) was listed as a separate, non-sovereign country until 1973 after which the areas have been considered part of Spain.

Population

40,060,000 with an annual growth rate of between 0.2 and 0.37% which makes around 79 persons per sq. km (18.5 per sq. mi.)

Population includes 200,000 Arabic, 20,000 Chinese, 150,000 from Latin America, and some 15,000 refugees from Cuba. Over 56,000 Spanish exiles live outside Spain.

Area

504,788 sq. km. or 194,897 sq. mi. Includes the major part of the Iberian Peninsula plus the Balearic and Canary Islands (Isles Beleares and Canarias). Also, Spain holds the enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla on the North African Coast (31 sq. km. or 12 sq. mi.)

Economy

GNP US\$ 548 billion, GNP per capita US\$ 14,000 (.6025% of US). Unemployment around 20% with per capita income around \$9,150 (42% US) and public debt per person at around \$5,000. The economy shows an annual growth rate of 3.5% with inflation at 4.3%.

Society

Spain has overcome decades of isolation and instability which prevented economic expansion. Recent advances in industry and tourism plus entrance into the European Common Market have transformed Spain into a more modern and progressive society. Health care is adequate with 1,459 hospitals and 49,256 physicians. The education rate is 46% pointing to the 36,500 schools and 19 universities.

Language

Official language Castilian Spanish (266,000,000 first language speakers worldwide which increases to 352,000,000 with the inclusion of second language speakers). Spanish is the world's third most widely used language. Other languages widely used include Catalan, Galician, Aragonese, Basque (Euskera), various Gypsy languages (Calo Romani, Vlach Romani), and others. In all, some 16 languages are listed for Spain among which 2 are extinct.

Urbanization

Estimate at over 77% with an urban growth rate of 2.3%. Madrid has a population of over 4,200,000; Barcelona 2,600,000; Valencia 800,000; Seville 680,000.

Literacy

Estimated at 93-97%

Religion

Officially 92% of the population is counted as Roman Catholic but a more realistic figure is 78%. Estimates contend that only 50% of the Catholics have any meaningful connection with the Church. Roman Catholicism was the official state religion during Franco's reign and others were persecuted.

Historical Aspects

Humans have long inhabited the Iberian Peninsula. Paleolithic cave paintings at Altamira near the Bay of Biscay attest to human presence in prehistoric times. Iberian peoples arrived around the third millennium BC; most likely from the eastern Mediterranean. Waves of Celts flowed in Hispania (The Roman name) around the first millennium BC displacing in some cases and mixing with in other cases the Iberians. Other arrivals came from Greek, Phoenician, and Carthaginian sources.

Romans arrived as early as the third century BC. Efforts by the Romans to subdue the area and accomplish the adoption of Roman Law, language, and customs consumed most of two centuries. In AD 419 a Visigothic kingdom had been established.

In AD 711 Muslims crossed the Strait of Gibraltar and defeated Roderick, the last Gothic king. By AD 714 Muslims occupied the entire peninsula except for mountain regions in the north. Muslims remained in control of southern Spain (Al-Andalus) for 800 years. During the Muslim control, arts and sciences prospered, new crops and agricultural techniques were introduced, and great building progress produced palaces, mosques, schools, gardens, and public baths. Almost immediately after the Muslim conquest, efforts to retake (the Reconquista) the peninsula began. The effort, which marked the Reconquista, began in AD 722 at Covadonga in northern Spain when the Visigothic king Pelaya inflicted the first defeat on the Muslims. The Moors were not, however, finally disposed from the country until 1469 when the marriage of Ferdinand and Isabella united the crowns of Aragon and Castile.

Ferdinand and Isabella, who became known as the Catholic Monarchs, united Spain and laid the foundations for the Golden Age. In 1478, these monarchs instituted the ruthless Spanish Inquisition which executed or expelled thousands of Jews and other non-Catholics. They invaded the area of Granada in 1482 and ten years later accept the surrender of the Muslim king, thus completing the Reconquista.

The years following Columbus' arrival in the Americas saw Spain develop into one of the dominant colonial powers. Riches flowed to Spain from the "New World" and Spain became one

of the most powerful nations on earth. Misadministration of these powers and expensive wars with England, France, and the Netherlands held back the development that might have been. After the death of Louis XVI in 1793, Spain declared war on the French Republic. France defeated Spain and in 1808, Napoleon's troops entered Spain and the Spanish Crown began to lose its hold on the colonies. In 1813 the five year war of independence led to the expulsion of French forces and Fernando VII was restored to the Spanish throne. Fernando's 20 year reign brought disaster as the inquisition was reestablished, liberals and constitutionalists were persecuted, free speech repressed, Spain experienced a sever economic recession, and the American colonies won independence.

Spanish colonial power came to an end after the disastrous Spanish-American war of 1898. Spain lost Cuba, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines. In 1923, with the country on the brink of a civil war, Miguel Primo de Rivera declared himself military dictator and ruled until 1930. In 1931, the Second Republic was declared but soon fell victim to internal conflict. The elections in 1936 saw the country divided into two conflicting groups. The Republican government was composed of an uneasy alliance of communists, socialists, and anarchists who favored democracy, a more equitable civil society, and a diminished role for the Church. The opposition, Nationalists, constituted a right-wing alliance of the army, the Church, the monarchy, and the fascist-style Falange Party.

In the struggle, the assassination of the Nationalists leader, Jose Calvo Sotelo, by the Republican police force in 1936 gave the army an excuse to overthrow the government. In the civil was of 1936-1939, Nationalists received military aid from Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy. The Republicans, who received only minimal aid from Russia and other sources, were not supported by either England or France. Over 350,000 Spaniards died in this conflict (some estimates almost double this figure). Many thousands of other Spaniards either starved in the Republican areas or died of executions, while several hundred thousands fled from Spain.

The Nationalists, under the leadership of Franco (Generalissimo Francisco Franco y Bahamonde) had won the conflict by 1939 taking Barcelona and Valencia by March of that year. Final surrender came the last day of March 1939. Franco's 35-year reign saw Spain isolated by economic blockades, excluded from NATO and the UN, and crippled by economic recession. Part of Spain's troubles during the Franco days stemmed from Franco's obvious sympathies with the Axis powers during World War II. While leaning toward the Axis coalition, Franco did keep Spain neutral although some 40,000 Spaniards fought on the eastern front as part of the Blue Division which was composed mostly of Falangist volunteers. These troops were withdrawn in 1943 to reinforce Spain's neutrality.

By 1950, tourism (in 1974 the number of foreigners visiting Spain equaled the total population of the country) and a treaty with the United States provided funds to fuel an economic recovery. By 1970, Spain enjoyed one of the fastest growing economies in Europe. Part of the resurgence came from Franco's policy of using the Catholic lay society, Opus Dei, to help manage the economy and government. Many repressive restrictions were lifted.

Franco died in 1975 having earlier named as his successor Juan Carlos (Don Juan Carlos de Borbon y Borbon), grandson of Alfonso XIII. Actually, Spain was declared to be a monarchy without a king in 1957 and Don Juan Carlos groomed by Franco to assume the monarchy. Admiral Luis Carrero Blanco, a lifetime confidant of Franco, replaced the aging dictator as head of government in 1973 but was assassinated in 1974 by Basque terrorists. Don Carlos assumed duties as head of state in 1974.

With Juan Carlos on the throne, Spain made the transition from dictatorship to democracy. The first elections were held in 1977, a new constitution drafted in 1978, and 1982 a socialist government was elected. A failed military coup in 1981 and the continued efforts by the ETA, a group committed to an independent Basque homeland, have been the only blemish in this record of progress toward democracy. The ETA announced a cease fire in September 1998. In 1986 Spain joined the EC (now EU) and 1992 announced its return to the world stage as Barcelona hosted the Olympic Games, Seville hosted Expo 92, and Madrid was declared the European Cultural Capital. In 1996, Spaniards elected a conservative party under the leadership of Jose Maria Aznar. The conservatives finally completed a coalition with moderate Basque, Catalan, and Canary Island Nationalists.

Peoples/People Groups

General

The 40 million plus people in Spain divide along historically influenced lines into what has been termed, "Two Spains." This demographic division traces its origins back to the age of Napoleon Bonaparte. One Spain is traditionalist and sometimes reactionary while the other is liberal and sometimes radical. To view the Two Spains as Fascists on one side against communists on the other is an oversimplification. The Two Spains concept sees groups with divergent images of what Spain is and should be.

The Two Spains division finds differences in concepts of the proper place of the Church, economic development, the extent to which liberalization of political institution should proceed, and priorities in foreign policy. One Spain tended more the agricultural side and the other more toward the industrial.

Many of the political problems in Spain stem from the psychological differences involved in the Two Spains. After 40 years of leadership, Franco neither fused nor reconciled the Two Spains. He defeated but did not eliminate the other Spain. All relationships with the peoples of Spain must recognized and react to the basic reality of "Two Spains."

Non-Spanish Peoples

North African/Arabic Peoples

Some 200,000 Arabic people, mainly North African and usually Muslim, engage in unskilled labor, and many are undocumented. Living in poverty and unable to have their families not to practice the Muslim religion, the Arabic people constitute a problem for the Spanish Government.

Chinese

Around 20,000 with some 12,000 in Madrid.

Latin American

Some 150,000 including over 15,000 from Cuba.

Gypsies

Estimates of the number of Gypsies in Spain are notoriously contradictory and unreliable due to the difficulties in classifying them. They habitually register in many different places according to the advantages gained thereby. Best estimates show some 165,000 Gypsies of the Calo Romani group and around 1,000 of the Vlach Romani group. Spanish Gypsies divide into two main groups – Gitanos and Hungaros but the Gitanos are subdivided into three distinct parties, Beticos, Castellanos, and Cafeletes.

Basque

Some 580,000 Basques occupy a distinct area in the north central area of Spain (the provinces of Vizcaya, Guipuzcoa, Alava, and the northern portion of Navarre). The origin of the Basques is as uncertain as their language, Euskera, and their own name for themselves is Euskalerri or the people who speak Euskera. Only about 40% of the people in the Basque region actually speak the language which is extremely difficult to learn.

Jewish

Only around 15,000 can be counted. Around seven Jewish communities were reported in 1973 located in Spain proper (Madrid, Malaga, Barcelona, Alicante, Valencia, on the Canary Islands, and in the Beleares). Jewish communities exist also in the North African cities of Ceuta and Melilla.

In addition, there are still over 200,000 Marranos or Crypto-Jews, whose ancestors were forcibly converted to Catholicism, and who are counted as Catholics (they have been baptized) but still observe the Passover and other Jewish rites.

Spanish Peoples

Aragonese

Some 2,000,000 people of whom 11,000 are active speakers with another 20,000 people using the language as a second language. The people have a reputation for being obstinate and highly individualistic that seems to be expressed in a rich set of proverbs, refrains, and songs. Some Bible portions are translated into Aragonese but the Bible as a whole is only in the process of translation. The Jesus Film is unavailable (no status). The Aragonese are considered unreached though not World A.

Asturian

Some 550,000 in the ethnic unit. The Asturian language, 80% intelligible with Spanish, is required for children 6-16 and voluntary for those 16-19.

Bible portions in Asturian are available and work is in progress on further Scriptures. The Jesus film is not available.

The people of the Asturian region are considered unevangelized. Around 10-50 churches exist for the 550,000 people in Asturias resulting in a church for every 25-30,000 people.

Catalan-Valencian-Balear

Around 6,000,000 in this ethnic group in Spain with many others in other regions of the world. The group is found in the northeastern section of Spain in the Cataluna region near Barcelona, in the Valencia Province, the Balearic Islands, the region of Carche, and the Province of Murcia. The language has 87% lexical similarity with Italian, 85% with Portuguese and Spanish, 76% with Rheto-Romance, 75% with Sardinian, 73% with Rumanian. Between Valencian speakers and Catalan speakers there is about 95% intelligibility. Overall literacy in some language is as high as 96%. There is a Catalonian Sign Language that is distinct from Spanish Sign Language though some 50% intelligibility exists between the two sign languages.

The Bible and the Jesus Film are both available in the Spanish and Catalan languages. In Cataluna there are 250-335 churches, in Valencia 100-250 churches, while in the Beleares only 10-50 churches exist. These data translate to a church for at least every 25,000 persons in Cataluna and Valencia; one church for every 25,000 to 30,000 is the figure for Beleares. This region is considered evangelized.

Extremaduran

Over 1,100,000 in the ethnic group while 200,000 actually speak the Extremaduran language (some 500,000 can use the tongue). The people use Extremaduran language for informal relating

but Spanish for formal relationships. Extremadurans are 90% literate. Many of the conquistadors came from this region.

The Bible is not yet in the Extremaduran language nor is the Jesus Film available. This people is considered unreached evangelistically but not World A.

Extremadura has 10-50 churches to serve the more than 1,100,000 making one church for every 25,000 people.

Fala

10,500 people including 5,500 active speakers in the language area. Some 5,000 people outside the area return each summer. The people reside in the northwestern part of Spain, near the Galicia Province in the isolated valley on the Portuguese border. The language is spoken in informal contexts but not in schools, churches, and with outsiders. In these relationships Spanish is used. The people are nearly 100% literate.

Neither the Bible nor the Jesus Film is available in the Fala language and the group is considered unreached but not World A.

Galician

Located in the northwest of Spain, some 3,273,000 live in Spain and perhaps as many as 4,000,000 worldwide. Galician is closer to Portuguese than to Spanish. Portuguese has about 85% intelligibility to speakers of Galician. Population has experienced out migration in the last decades with many Galicians migrating to Latin America and other regions of Spain.

While there has been a resurgence of emphasis on learning and using Galician, in the main the language is not used by many of the younger people. The most illustrious son of the region, Generalissimo Francisco Franco never used the Galician language.

The Bible is available in the Galician language as is the Jesus Film. The area is considered evangelized as the 50-100 churches serve the 3,273,000 people. There are some 30-35,000 people per church.

Gascon, Aranese

The 3,814 speakers of the Gascon, Aranese language are augmented by some 1,300 who understand it in Spain. Over 250,000 persons speak Gascon in all countries including the Gascon area of France. The group is nearly 100% literate in Spanish with others literate in Catalan and Aranese.

The Gascon, Aranese people live in the Aran Valley, near the headwaters of the Garona River in the northwest corner of the region of Cataluna.

Bible portions are available and work is in progress on other translations. The Jesus Film is not available but research is in progress toward providing it in Aranese. The group is regarded as evangelistically unreached but not World A.

Castilian, Spanish

Around 29,000,000 in Spain or 72% of the population. The region is central and southern Spain and the Canary Islands. Worldwide, well over 600,000,000 use the Spanish language making it the third most used language.

Castilian, in a dialect version, serves widely in Andalusia which is an important cultural area in southern Spain. Castilian has linguistic similarities with Portuguese 89%, Catalan 85%, Italian 82%, Sardinian 76%, French 75%, Rheto-Romance 74%, and Rumanian 71%.

The Bible and the Jesus Film are available in Castilian Spanish as is a Braille Bible in Spanish. The population is largely but perhaps nominally Roman Catholic. Actually only 50% or less show loyalty to the Church.

Most of the region of the Castilian people has 50-100 churches. In the vicinity of Madrid this number rises to 100-250. The major part of the Castilian area has a church for every 30-35,000 people. But in the south the Andalusian region has one church for every 20-25,000. Evangelistically the group is considered unevangelized.

Christianity in Spain

Roman Catholic

The Golden age of the Roman Catholic Church in Spain began with the nation's ascendancy to a world power in the 16th century. Missionary thrusts in the New World colonies and the strengthening of the Church in Spain led to a strong Church organization. The Counter Reformation and the Spanish Inquisition (designed to force Spanish Jews and Muslims to become Catholic or leave the country) led to the establishment of Catholicism as the national religion and what has been called national Catholicism. Other religious expressions suffered persecution and their growth was curtailed. Spain accepted the typical European assumption that political unity necessitated religious unity.

The Catholic Church in Spain derives from a long tradition that links Throne and Altar (State and Church). The Concordat of 1753 restored some lost power over the Church to the Spanish Government. This situation led to the expulsion of the Jesuit Order in 1776. This concordat reconciled the Church and the constitutional monarchy but only at the cost of religious tolerance and education. The constitution of 1869 introduced religious toleration in principle. During Franco's reign, the concept of national Catholicism which had been modified under the Republic (1931-1936), was reinstituted to the almost full compliance with national Catholicism. Catholic doctrine was required for primary education and the power of Catholicism enhanced. In the 1950's a second type of Catholicism, optional Catholicism began to emerge. Traditional Catholicism remained politically conservative while optional Catholicism became more progressive and opposed the national Catholic image. The new optional Catholicism, which centered more on personal faith then on traditional Spanish cultural factors, was supported by Vatican II and even began to prevail by 1972.

The rise of optional Catholicism resulted in three important movements. (1) Local communities centered on the liturgy. These groups, of which 70 were noted in Barcelona alone, conducted priest-led Eucharistic celebrations and often jointly agreed to take up aspects of the political-social task. (2) The second movement, New Communities was designed to restructure the old parish system. (3) The third movement, the Synod of Seville, called together lay and priests (50%/50%) in small discussion groups, to produce a body of concrete proposals for Catholic work.

The two expressions of the Catholic Church in Spain, the traditional, national Church, and the optional, more personal faith Church, continue to exist in an overlapping relationship. Exact statistics on the Roman Catholic Church in Spain remain difficult due to the Catholic custom of counting all those in an area and who have been baptized as still Catholic. Within this limitation, the following facts seem true concerning the Roman Catholic Church in Spain. Roman Catholic Church claims between 92% and 96% of the Spanish people as Catholic but the far more realistic figure is 72%-78%. Still the Church reports 21,730 congregations with 9,402,317 members and 36,200,000 adherents (community). Even subtracting the 2,300,000 who are doubly counted (Catholic and non-Catholic groups) the Catholic Community is counted as 33,900,000 people.

The estimate is that 50% of the Catholics in Spain have no meaningful link with the Church. Some estimates are as low as 27% actually practicing the Catholic faith.

Roman Catholic growth in Spain is 1.3%.

Roman Catholics in Spain are experiencing a shortage of leadership. The southern regions indicate a larger shortage of priests than the northern. The Church has experienced a decided decline in the number of seminarians (5,211 in 1970 to 3,014 in 1973) and ordinations (1,000 in 1962 and 395 in 1972).

The Roman Catholic Church still boasts the largest numbers of contemplative Sisters and cloistered convents in the world.

Catholic Charismatics are arising. In 1975, reported over 3,000 members in 50 organized groups. The total community stands at over 5,000. At the first National Conference for the Charismatic Renewal in Spain (Madrid 1972) over 5,000 including 70 priests attended.

The Catholic Church is losing some 20% of the young people to secularism, indifference, and sectarian groups.

Protestant/Evangelical/Pentecostal

Protestant groups (as well as other religious entities) were outlawed in Spain between 1492 and 1968 when some religious freedoms were extended. Fuller religious liberty was given in 1967. Protestant efforts were persecuted prior to 1868. Still, Plymouth Brethren from England began house meeting as early as 1836 and in 1845 a Spaniard, Francisco de Paula Ruet, influenced by the Waldensians from Italy, began preaching in Barcelona. This pastor was exiled to Gibraltar from where clandestine evangelistic efforts resulted in a following that led eventually to the Spanish Reformed Evangelical Church with links to the English Anglican Church.

The Brethren Church entered Spain as did the Baptists during the period after 1868. Seventh Day Adventists entered around 1903. Swedish missionaries introduced the Pentecostal movement around 1928 and were followed by other Pentecostal groups such as the Assemblies of God in 1930 and the Church of God in 1937. Southern Baptist work began in 1921. After World War II a number of smaller missionary groups, primarily from the United States, entered. Since 1970 the Pentecostal groups have spread widely.

The Protestant and non-Catholic realities in Spain can be estimated in terms of growth. The 6,000 non-Catholic members in 1930 increased to 20,000 by 1963 to 36,000 in 1980, and over 89,000 in 1990. These Christians are unevenly distributed being concentrated in Cataluna (especially Barcelona), Andalusia, and Madrid. Protestant and other non-Catholic growth is estimated as high as 10%. Individual non-Catholic groups include:

Philadelphia Evangelical Church with 363 congregations, 30,990 members, and a total community of 200,000. Among the membership of the Philadelphia, many Gypsies are numbered. Around one-third of all Gypsy Christians hold membership in congregations affiliated with the Philadelphia Evangelical Church. Further, 60% of all Evangelicals in Spain are Gypsies. The Christian Brethren report 175 congregations, 9,768 members, and a community of 20,800. Seventh Day Adventist report 61 congregations with 5,671 members and a community of 18,900. The Baptist Union has 63 congregations, 7,405 members, and a community of 13,500. The Spanish Evangelical Church exists in 35 congregations, 2,277 members with a community of 10,000.

Assemblies of God in 86 congregations with 4,123 members and 6,566 community. Other Church Groups numbering 88 in all have 671 congregations, 29,267 members and 79,209 community.

Betel (World Evangelistic Crusade). Ministers to the needs of the 300,000 narcotic addicts and HIV carriers in Spain This group has experienced success in rehabilitating addicts, drawing them into congregations, and leading them to start other centers and churches aiming to rehabilitate addicts in Spain and other countries.

In all the Denominational groups in Spain have 1,454 congregations with 89,501 members, and a community of 348,975.

Of the total Denominational groups in Spain, 80,000 are considered evangelical and 49,000 Pentecostal. Over 55% of the Christians in Spain are related to the Pentecostal movement.

The non-Catholic Church movement in Spain demonstrates several characteristics.

Recruitment of new members for a long period targeted and reached urban, marginal, social strata persons especially workers, small employers, and newcomers from the rural areas.

Protestants in Spain have profited from people who oppose the Catholic Church. Renewal in the Catholic Church has led to a decrease in growth from these groups.

Churches in Spain reveal a certain degree of foreignness to the Spanish peoples. Some missionaries have experienced difficulty in integrating into Spanish society. In fact, two-thirds of the missionary force is concentrated around Madrid and Barcelona leaving vast areas unoccupied.

There needs to be a far larger emphasis on evangelism that results in church starts and leadership training.

Church Type Groups (Marginal)

Like most regions, Spain has groups that do not conform to strict standards to be included in Christian statistics.

Jehovah's Witnesses are the largest non-Catholic groups in Spain in spite of the fact that they were an illegal body until 1967. The Jehovah's Witness Church reports 1,079 congregations with 84,562 members and a community of 211,000. The Jehovah's Witnesses membership almost equals the full number of Protestant Churches in Spain.

The Mormon Church (Church of Jesus of Latter Day Saints) reports to be doubling their membership every five years. They currently have 129 congregations with 11,900 members and a community of 17,000.

It is estimated that over 300 cults are practicing in Spain and that at least 30 of these are Satanic.

Missiological Implications

Spain exhibits immense evangelistic and church needs including:

- 1. Over 15,000,000 live in the cities and towns which have no evangelical church.
- 2. Over 2,500,000 people live in the two regions which have less than 50 Protestant churches.
- 3. Of 50 Provinces, 16 have few evangelical churches.
- 4. Of 8,046 municipalities only 435 have an evangelical witness.
- 5. Four Divisions in Spain are considered unreached or unevangelized while the vast region made up of the regions of Castilla y Leon, most of Aragon, Murcia, Castilla-La Mancha, and Andalusia are regarded as unevangelized.
- 6. A number of unreached minorities including the Basques (among whom only some 50 Christians can witness in the Basque language), the Muslims (most of whom come from

North Africa but some from the Middle East), the Chinese, the one million university students who are largely unevangelized, the large numbers of people who no longer hold to the teaching and practices of the Roman Catholic Church.

Meeting these immense evangelistic and church needs will require attention to:

- 1. The creation of a more Spanish expression of church life in the local congregations which will be enhanced by a more accommodating lifestyle and ministry by missionaries.
- 2. The purposeful awakening to the needs of the entire nation, that is, without overlooking Madrid, Barcelona, and Valencia, giving attention to the very needy areas of Navarre (one church for every 45-60,000 people), the Gascon, Aranese people, the Extremaduran and Fala peoples. The needs of some of the smaller islands in the Canary Island group and the Balearic Islands should also be addressed.
- 3. Continued efforts to reach the minority peoples such as Basques, Muslims, Chinese, Marranos, and students. The ministry with addicted persons may constitute a method other Christian groups should consider in Spain and other countries.
- 4. Extensive training of Spaniards especially in evangelism and church planting. While some missionary groups are trying to fill this need, more emphasis is needed on the training that will equip men and women to reach others for Christ and disciple them in growing congregations.