



Spain

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Introduction

Spain, officially the Kingdom of Spain (Spanish: Reino de España), is a country mostly located on the Iberian Peninsula in Europe. It is the second largest country in Europe. Spain includes a number of islands including Mallorca, Tenerife, Ibiza and Gran Canaria. The Spanish language is spoken in many areas of the world due to the early influence of the Spanish Empire. Spanish is the second most spoken language. The largest city and capital of Spain is Madrid.



The Kingdom of Spain is a parliamentary constitutional monarchy guided by the 1978 constitution. The head of government is the king, a position which is hereditary.

The currency used in Spain is the Euro. The population of Spain in 2017 was around 46.57 million. The majority of the population is Catholic. Other religions also practised in Spain include Islam, Judaism, Protestantism, and Hinduism, all of which have places where to conduct their rituals.

The national anthem of Spain has no words. The bull is the national animal of Spain. In Spain they drive on the right-hand side of the road. It is the world's largest producer of olive oil. It is also a prominent producer of wines. In Spain there is no law against public nudity.

National Holidays and Celebrations

Public holidays, when businesses, banks and other institutions are usually closed to the public, take place in Spain throughout the year. Along with the major Christian holidays, there's Labor Day on May 1, Assumption Day on August 15, Hispanic Day on October 12 and Constitution Day on December 6.

One of the most admirable things about Spanish people, in my opinion, is their commitment to a good party. Throughout the year there are a ton of festivals all over the country.

Semana Santa

A religious festival, Semana Santa (Holy Week) is a big deal in Spain. It commemorates the Passion of Christ in the Catholic tradition the week before Easter. Each region has its own distinct traditions, but flamboyant parades fill the streets all over the country with festivities beginning on Palm Sunday and finishing with dramatic processions on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. You'll see life-sized floats of biblical characters being carried through the streets, people walking with crosses or candles and religious spectacles throughout the week.

Carnival

If you want to celebrate Carnival in Spain, hop on a flight to Tenerife in the Canary Islands and head up to the capital city, Santa Cruz. It may be small in size, but each February the island hosts the largest Carnival celebrations in the world after Rio de Janeiro in Brazil. For two weeks, you'll find street parties packed with revelers in colorful costumes dancing into the earliest hours, plenty of loud music to keep them moving and the vote for the carnival queen from a number of contestants who show off their elaborate outfits.

La Tomatina

The Valencian town of Buñol is bathed red with squashed tomatoes during La Tomatina on the last Wednesday of August. Everyone gathers and an hour-long fight ensues, with tomatoes being smashed before they are thrown to limit injuries. The yearly tradition happens in the town square.

The Fallas Of Valencia

For five days and nights in March, the people of Valencia are joined by visitors from around the world for a continuous street party known as "the fire festival. Cue days full of processions, fireworks, and plenty of noise. It culminates with the explosion of ninots that have been stuffed full of fireworks in the Plaza Ayuntamiento, the street lights switched off and firefighters in position. The festival has been included in UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity list.

Esta Major De Garcia

In August, blocks compete to win a prize for the best decorated streets around the neighborhood of Gràcia in Barcelona. Each year there's a different theme. High standards have been set, creativity and originality reign and the competition is fierce with canopies of decorations hanging above you between the buildings and continuing onto balconies. It becomes a week-long street party and is accompanied by about 600 concerts, workshops, parades, and other activities and events. There's an emphasis on community here and you'll likely find long tables in the streets so everyone can enjoy traditional Catalan food together.

Santa Fermin And The Running Of The Bulls

One of Spain's most iconic festivals is Fiesta de San Fermín, better known as the "running of the bulls." Over nine days in July, a half-dozen or so bulls are let loose to run through crowds of festival-goers along the streets of Pamplona. The festival was established originally to honor Saint Fermin, but in contemporary times, the bulls and their willing potential victims get all the publicity.

Unique Practises and Customs

Religion

Spain is a predominantly Roman Catholic country with approximately 94% of the population affiliated to that religion. Religious history is apparent in every small town, where the most grandiose building is typically the church. In the large cities the Cathedrals are almost museums.



Family and Children

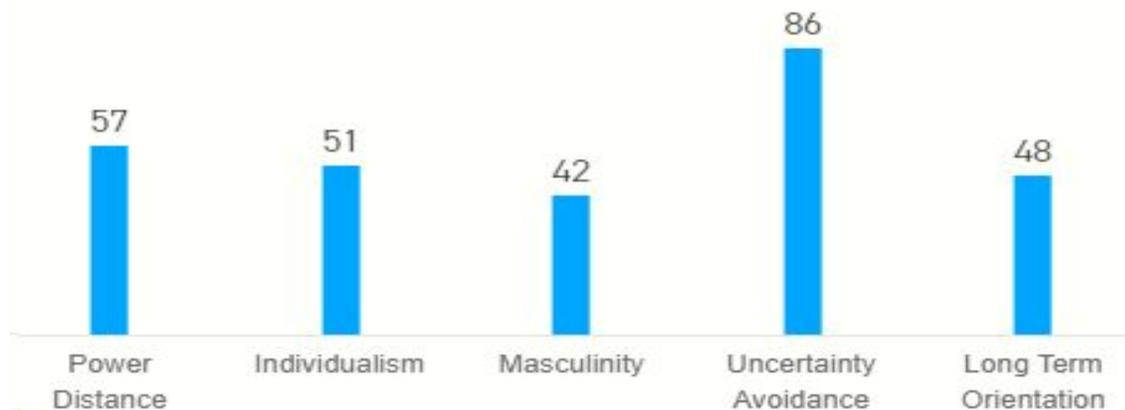
Although it has become less common over the past few decades for extended family to share the same home, familial ties remain a very important aspect of Spanish society. Children in Spain are highly prized and doted upon by parents and extended family. They are raised to have respect for their elders and to observe family values and obedience. The education of children is compulsory between the ages of six and sixteen but nursery and pre-school facilities are widely available.

Social Customs and Protocols

Children in Spain are given a first name which is then followed by the paternal surname and then the mother's surname. Rather uniquely, contrary to most of the world Spanish women do not change their surname after marriage. Spanish people are open and friendly, In an informal situation whether with family close friends or virtual strangers they greet women with a kiss on each cheek. Men have no fear of personal space with other men in an informal situation and they will often greet or say good-bye with a hug.

When invited to a home for dinner it is customary to give the host or hostess a gift. It is especially good to ensure the gift is beautifully wrapped. Avoid giving chrysanthemums, white lilies or red roses and flowers should be in odd numbers except for 13 which is seen as an unlucky number. If receiving a gift it should be opened immediately in the presence of the giver. Spanish people are proud and very protective of their standing and how others perceive them. Boasting of achievement and personal accomplishment should be avoided. Spanish people tend to be extroverted and friendly as is typical in Mediterranean culture and they place modesty and personality foremost to professional or business success.

Cultural Dimensions



Power distance

Spain has a fairly high score of 57 in the Hofstede's Cultural Dimension of Power Distance, making the Spanish culture largely hierarchical. The inherent inequality in the distribution of power and authority is seen as the unquestionably accepted norm. This autocratic fashion of business does not affect them negatively either. Centralisation of the decision-making power in a corporate setting is incontestable. An ideal worker is used to receiving instructions while an ideal boss is charitable yet powerful. This stress on a considerably large power distance affects the way in which feedback and/or criticism may be taken by an individual during such an interaction. Negative feedback, more often than not, has a personal connotation attached to it, making it difficult for an ordinary worker to confront her senior regarding any issue. Consequently, criticism of one's work by someone in power may be taken as an insult.

Masculinity

The Spanish culture scores 42 in this cultural dimension, implying that a more Feminine/Qualitative way of life is admirable. Pursuit of a passion is considered desirable while material success is not. Living in harmony and sympathizing with the weak are taught to the children as virtues and in a professional scenario, the opinions of a subordinate are paid heed to as well, in a democratic manner. Standing out in a crowd or fierce competition are not laudable and gender roles are not as clearly distinguishable as a masculine society. This culture percolates even into politics, where the role of minorities is not overshadowed by the dominant. Therefore, the image of the Spanish machismo does not translate directly into their culture. Emotion, involvement and idealism are more prevalent than pragmatism.

Time orientation

Spain has an intermediate score of 48 in time orientation but still proves to be a largely normative society. Their concern with the future is minimal and they rather prefer to be bothered by the events of the present. Their high uncertainty avoidance score also plays a role here, leading them to stick to the tried and tested way of life from the past instead of being experimental in their approach. In a way, they stick to their traditions. Their fixation with the present drives the Spanish to look for quick results and be skeptical of any form of cultural or societal transformations.

Individualism

Spain is kind of in the middle of the spectrum in individualism index, that is the degree of interdependence a society maintains among its members. Although Spain is overall collectivist, it is certainly not as extreme as countries like Mexico. However, compared with other areas of the world it is seen as clearly individualist. This has made Spaniards quite easy to relate with certain cultures (mainly non-European) whereas other cultures can be perceived as aggressive and blunt. From a professional point of view, employees don't need motivation from their superiors to work in a team, teamwork is something that is perceived important naturally in the Spanish culture. In a business context, personal attributes and character are frequently valued as much as technical ability, experience or professional competence. When doing business in Spain, individualism is particularly pre-dominant in management, where Spanish managers are less inclined to favor group decision making and team orientation.

Uncertainty avoidance

Spain scores a very high 86 in uncertainty avoidance. Spaniards like to have rules for everything, but as long as they don't make life more complex. They think that change causes stress, so they try to avoid it. Spaniards are cautious not only with business relationships but also with their approach to new ideas. They prefer to feel truly familiar with new situations before taking any steps or making decisions. Patience is necessary when doing business in Spain as Spaniards try to avoid ambiguity and need as much detail as possible. They are less inclined to take risks. Thus, for example, in a very recent survey 75% of Spanish young people wanted to work in civil service (i.e. a job for life, no concerns about the future) whereas in the USA only 17% of young people would like it.

Indulgence

Fairly intermediate but leaning towards restrained, Spain scores 44 in the cultural dimension of Indulgence vs. Restraint. Spaniards are moderately suppressive in the strength of expression, seeing how grace and humility are regarded as highly esteemed qualities. Leisure is equated to

leniency. As a culture, this dimension regards the Spanish as pessimistic and sceptical. The appeasement of any kind of desire is controlled by societal mores and has an inherently negative connotation.

Social Adjustment: Etiquette And Protocol

Naming conventions

Children in Spain are given a first name which is then followed by the paternal surname and then the mother's surname. There is no concept of a middle name although the first name is sometimes a composite of two names - eg: José Luis.

Meeting & greeting

When 2 people are introduced to each other in the Spanish culture, they are expected to shake hands. Once a relationship is established, men may embrace and pat each other on the shoulder. Female friends kiss each other on both cheeks, starting with the left. In formal meetings, people are often referred to as 'Don' or 'Dona' and their first name as a general rule. Many men use a two-handed shake where the left hand is placed on the right forearm of the other person.

Communication style

Communication regarding business relationships is often quite formal and incorporates strict rules of protocol. Any form of confrontation is not acceptable and should be avoided which is a symbolic of a high context culture. Spanish people are proud and very protective of their standing and how others perceive them. Spanish people tend to be extrovert and friendly as is typical in Mediterranean culture and they place modesty and personality foremost to professional or business success which is rather feminine in nature, again a characteristic of Mediterranean culture.

Personal space

Spanish people are open and friendly. In an informal situation whether with family close friends or virtual strangers they greet women with a kiss on each cheek. Men have no fear of personal space with other men in an informal situation and they will often greet or say good-bye with a hug (abrazo).

Gift giving

When invited to a home for dinner it is customary to give the host or hostess a gift: a good bottle of wine, flowers, chocolates and/or a dessert. It is especially good to ensure the gift is beautifully wrapped. It is not advisable to give chrysanthemums, white lilies or red roses and flowers should be in odd numbers except for 13 which is seen as an unlucky number. If the hosts of the dinner party have children it is considered good etiquette to take a small gift for

them. If receiving a gift, it should be opened immediately in the presence of the giver otherwise it is considered rude.

Dining & Food

A person should remain standing until invited by the host/hostess to sit down at a particular seat. One should always keep his hands visible when eating with wrists resting on the edge of the table. Do not begin eating until the hostess starts. The host gives the first toast while an honored guest should return the toast later in the meal. All food, even fruits are eaten with a knife and fork. The Spaniards indicate having finished eating by laying the knife and the fork parallel on the plate, tines facing up, with the handles facing to the right. Getting up before the guest of honor does is considered disrespectful.

Co-Culture

Spanish culture is mainly divided into three language groups . At least 90% of the population speak Castilian Spanish as a first or second language this is also the official language of Spain. About 17% of the population speak Catalan, 7% speak Galician and 2% speak Basque.

Spanish culture is based on a variety of historical influences, primarily based on pre-Roman Celtic and Iberian culture. Other ancient peoples such as Romans, Phoenicians, Carthaginians, and Greeks also had some influence. In the areas of language and also religion, the Ancient Romans left a lasting legacy in the Spanish culture because Rome created Hispania as a political, legal and administrative unit. The subsequent course of Spanish history added other elements to the country's culture and traditions.

Spain has been the subject of several cultural disputes and separatist movements over the years. The oldest of these Andalusian nationalist movement, which asserted that the Andalusians are a nation and not a part of Spain, because of the significant differences that the Andalusians perceived in their culture and the Spanish culture.

Several other communities like the Basques and the Catalans, and the Valencians have fought and subsequently won their right to autonomy after several outbursts of violence and terrorism on the part of the separatist groups.

Spanish architecture leans heavily on the work of Antoni Gaudi. His style was distinctive and eclectic and included the famous basilica La Sagrada Familia. Spain has produced many famous artists Picasso, Dali, Goya, Velázquez, el Greco to name a few. In the field of literature, Spain's history has been well documented in the written word from medieval times including the *cantar de mio cid*, a poem dating back to the 12th Century. The story of *Don Quixote* penned by Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra and published in 1605 remains as popular today as it was then. It is an adventure which was made into a movie in 2000. Numerous works have been written about the Spanish Civil War which raged from 1936 to 1939.

Throughout Spain's history one of the most traditional forms of music is the iconic Spanish Guitar music played at family and cultural celebrations across the country. Of all the traditions of music and dance in Spain, the most famous and popular is the Flamenco guitar that accompanies another traditional and popular art form, the Flamenco dance. The female

traditionally wears a flouncy red dress and dances to the music holding in her hand castanets, (small concave pieces of wood in two parts joined by chord) which are clicked as the dancer twirls and stamps her feet.

Sayings and Legends

Sayings:

1. *Año nuevo, vida nueva.*

Literally: New year, new life.

Meaning: one may use the expression to mean starting something new, starting a new page, turning a new corner or a clean slate.

2. *A cada cerdo le llega su San Martín.*

Literally: Every pig has her Saint Martin.

*Meaning:*The expression is essentially about bad behavior being punished in the end. You will get what you deserve in the end.

3. *A mal tiempo, buena cara.*

*Literally:*In bad weather, a good face.

*Meaning:*The expression talks about the proper attitude a person should have in the face of adversity.It's an attitude of hope and optimism.

7. *Dios los cría, y ellos se juntan.*

Literally: God breeding them flock together.

Meaning: People who share the same characteristics, tendencies or interests often become bonded in their commonality

Folklore:

The Teruel Lover.

The legend comprises of Isabel and Diego, both coming from wealthy families, fell in love and wanted to marry. However, unfortunate events caused Diego's family to lose their money and Isabel's father refused to let his daughter marry him. Diego asked her father for five years in which he would make his fortune and return to marry Isabel. No one heard of him for the next five years, and on the day of the completion of the agreed period, Isabel's father married her to someone else. In a twisted turn, right after the wedding ceremony, Diego was seen returning to the city with lots of wealth and riches. He was heartbroken to see the love of his life being

married to someone else and could not bear the thought of their separation. Later at night he sneaked into her bedroom and asked her to kiss him, as he was dying. Isabel refused to do so, as she did not want to deceive her husband. Diego died right next to her bed, leaving her in a shocked state. The next day she went to his funeral in her wedding dress and proceeded to kiss him one last time. However, she died right there, next to his body. The villagers decided to bury them side by side, near the church of San Pedro, so that at least in death the lovers could be together. To this day, in February, the city celebrates the love of the couple and represents their story in different ways.

The legend of San Gorge

Legend has it that there was once a dragon living in Montblanc, who terrorised the villagers and devoured their animals. Once the animals vanished, the dragon turned his wrath to the people. The villagers decided to draw lots and sacrifice a person each day to the dragon. On one of these occasions, the unfortunate person whose name was picked was the princess. People offered to take her place, owing to her kind nature, but the king refused to let anyone sacrifice their lives for his daughter. The princess was sent to the dragon, and just as she was about to be swallowed, a knight in shining armour appeared and fought the creature. After a rough confrontation, he was able to kill the dragon with his lance and spill its blood. From the spot where the blood spilt grew a red rose, which the knight then plucked and presented to the princess. The knight was called San Jorge (Saint George). To commemorate this event every year on 23 April, a huge celebration is carried out on the streets and men give roses to the women they love. If you happen to visit Barcelona at that time, you are bound to experience a grand public event. In the recent years, women have started gifting books to the men on that day.

Body Language And Non Verbal Communication

Spanish people always prefer face-to-face contact to written or telephone communications, as they believe it is easier to build a personal relationship that way. In general, physical contact is more common in Spain than in other Western European countries. People use a more animated style of body language and expressive gestures. They also stand closer when in conversation and maintain more direct eye contact when they speak.

In general, when speaking with someone in their non-native language, it is important to take care to speak slowly, clearly and without the use of slang or excess technical vocabulary

Nonverbal language in Spanish culture is different from nonverbal culture in the United States. Be careful with hand gestures when visiting other countries. A thumbs-up to someone in the United States might mean something else in a different country. Certain gestures innocuous in America could offend a Spaniard.

- For example, the hand gesture we use for "come here," the hand palm up with the index finger extending in and out three or four times, has a very different meaning in Latin America. It means that you are very romantically interested in the person and is considered a solicitation. To motion to someone in Latin America "come here" extend your hand palm down and move all four fingers in and out together three or four times.

- Watch for the "thief gesture" on buses when you travel. When standing in the aisles, pay attention to the grandmothers and mothers. They will let you know if a pickpocket is nearby by placing their hand sideways with all four fingers extended, and then moving one finger at a time to touch the palm. It takes only a few seconds to do, but can be important. When you see this hand gesture, hold on to your things!

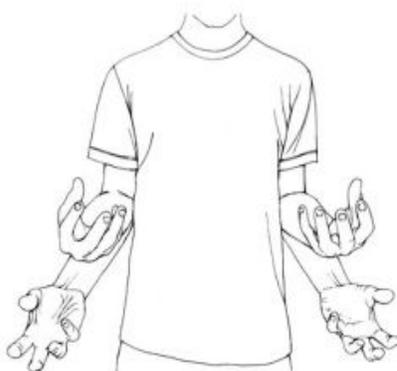
Another nonverbal action to be careful with when having a conversation or interaction with other people is pointing your finger. Pointing your finger is considered bad manners and might be a bad habit to break for someone who's native culture does not have that assumed rule. Almost in contrast to that nonverbal action, staring at other people is not immediately taken as rude in Spanish culture. In a place like the United States, at least in my own experience, staring is almost automatically taken as a rude action. There is also a variety of hand gestures that can be used as a way to efficiently convey an emotion or a statement. Some common examples of those hand gestures are outlined below.



- Firstly, this gesture is stating that a place is full of people or also can be thought of as a way of saying that it is packed. It is executed by using one or both hands held in front of your body and opened and closed in quick succession.



- Secondly, is a simple way to communicate that you are broke or 'down to two candles.' You hold your first and middle fingers in front of your face and moving them downwards.



- Thirdly, this gesture is a way to explain that someone is lazy or perhaps sluggish. Both hands are moved up and down, from below the waist to up above the waist, as evidence of a large effort to carry something heavy.



- Finally, if you want to exclaim that something is really, really good you can use this gesture. Form a circle with your thumb and first finger, similar to the 'ok' gesture in the United States, and move your hand in a downward fashion two or three times.

Body Language

- Spanish people can be described as cheerful and outgoing people and they will use expansive body language to express that.
- In conversation, the Spanish aren't likely to stand uncomfortably close, but they may still pat your arm or shoulder.
- Yawning or stretching in public is considered vulgar.
- The Spanish tend to act more affectionately toward each other than Americans do.
- When introduced expect to shake hands
- Female friends kiss each other on both cheeks, starting with the left.

Business Protocol

Fundamental Principles of Business Culture

In Spain, the major concepts in business are saving face, family, proximity and aversion to risk. It is common that Spanish businessmen treat their counterparts as their friends. Spaniards are more relaxed than their other European counterparts. They are also known for showing strong regional pride.

The development of an informal and personal relationship is often necessary for the smooth running of business. Face-to-Face communication is often preferred over written communication. Lunch or dinner invitations are an important part of business culture. Business between two parties is often a result of personal ties which are built painstakingly over a period of time. One must be careful while selecting a representative- switching at later time is burdensome.

Hierarchy

Hierarchy and position are highly valued, but lower-ranked individuals may be in better standing or have more influence than higher-ups. Setting up meetings between representatives of an equivalent position and professional status is recommended. Individualism is predominant in management, whereas teamwork is not valued as much.

First Contact

Appointments must be confirmed in writing through email or by phone the day before. The head of SME (Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises) rarely speak anything other than Spanish. Hence, knowing Spanish or being accompanied by an interpreter is imperative. Furthermore, it is safe to have any documentation printed in Spanish as well.

Time Management

Spanish people are usually lenient with punctuality and meeting duration, but one should arrive on time, especially if they are a foreigner. Deadlines do not have great prominence and will be met if comfortable.

Greetings and Titles

Hands are shaken with everyone present and people are addressed using "*Señor*" or "*Señora*" followed by their name and surname. "*Usted*" is the formal way to address new people, until invited to use the familiar form of address "*tu*". Kissing should be avoided unless initiated by the other party. When two men know each other well, they hug while patting each other's back energetically. They can also shake hands by placing the other hand on the forearm of the person opposite to them.

Gestures

The act of pulling down on one's eyelid implies alertness for the Spanish. Moreover, crossing one's fingers is a mark of protection or luck.

Gift Policy

Gifts are to be avoided during the first meeting. Regional souvenirs and promotional products are appreciated at the end of subsequent meetings.

Dress Code

Conservative attire is respected with nothing too showy. Elegance and style are preferable to glamour and ostentatiousness (competition and standing out are not appreciated). Men wear jackets and ties regardless of the weather while women wear dresses, blouses and skirts. Exhibiting good sartorial taste is imperative.

Business Cards

Business cards are a must to be seen as professional. They are to be presented at the beginning of the meeting, preferably with a Spanish side that is shown when offered to the Spanish counterpart.

Meetings Management

It is important to create a personal relationship with the counterpart. Small talk is then done often before talking business. Personal qualities are valued above technical skills or competence. A typical dinner meeting starts late in the evening. Dining together in itself is considered an important step in building professional relationships. Within an organisation, the ranks do not dine together.

While presenting, the doors are preferably kept shut. One should expect to be frequently interrupted when speaking. Negotiations can be disorderly, with people speaking out of turn simultaneously. Rules may be brought into play but only as a last resort. The presentation should be thorough, detailed and one should bring literature about their company. Negotiations are generally long. The Spanish may prefer their counterparts to speak first. Last minute questions and repetition should be avoided. It is advised to avoid confrontation and boasting about achievements. An oral understanding must be reached before redacting a formal contract.

Indian Organisations

Federación Hindú de España (FHE)

FHE was formed in 2017 with the intention to unite Hindus, to promote and defend Hinduism. It also wants to challenge the academic misrepresentation of Hinduism and help in correcting it. FHE also works with the local, regional and national governments on Hinduism. It also promotes authentic yoga and ensures equal stature of Hinduism.

According to reports, founding Hindu groups included Veda Dharma (Madrid), Sudha Satva (Valencia), Arsha Vidya (Madrid) and Advaita Vidya (Barcelona); while Centro Védico Dharma (Alicante) and Om Shiva Shakti (Barcelona) joined later.

Indian Cultural Centre (ICC)

ICC was formed in 2017 with the intention to promote rich Indian culture in Spain. Its main headquarters is situated in Barcelona. ICC also promotes business and investment opportunities between India and Spain. It also works to social awareness among Indian citizens residing in Spain.

Indian Sindhi Association of Madrid (ISAOM)

ISAOM aims to provide a common identity to the Indian Sindhi community through the promotion of unity, friendship and goodwill based on mutual understanding and cooperation. It also aims to promote and provide social, educational and cultural programs which will enable children of Sindhi heritage to understand the Sindhi traditions.

The Balvihar Group, a subgroup of ISAOM, aims to educate children about the Hindu religion, Sindhi culture and Sindhi linguistics.

Indian Women Charity Association (IWCA):

Spain based Indian Women's non-profit NGO that helps needy people in Spain and India, thus spanning the two cultures and nations.

Conclusion

Spain has an extremely rich culture- rooted deeply in its past, in religion and in familial values. It stands apart from the generic European cultures. The femininity of the Spanish culture penetrates not only into its societal norms but also in the professional sphere. Cooperation is a virtue and competition isn't.

Spain's individualism stands out among other Latin cultures with self-reliance being of great import. And the large power distance that exists in society is reflected, to some extent, in business protocols too. Spaniards are extremely risk averse and have a short time orientation. The interplay of all these characteristics makes the Spanish culture unique. It creates a pyramidal structure for organisations and a security and emotion-driven way of life while practising restraint. In addition to this, Spain is controversially considered a relatively low context culture, even with its high usage of non-verbal communication, old-age traditions and a very expressive body language.

While corporate hierarchy is well-defined and very autocratic. The education and nurturing of children and adolescents is family and modesty-centric while material wealth is not taught to be a metric of success. The typical male-centric, indulgent and stereotypically-hispanic culture of Spain is thus challenged.