Language Assistants in Spain

Handbook 2025-2026

Acción Educativa Exterior Ministerio de Educación, Formación Profesional y Deportes



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Handbook 2025-2026

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MINISTERIO DE EDUCACIÓN, FORMACIÓN PROFESIONAL Y DEPORTES

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The Language Assistants programme began in 1936 with the exchange of language assistants between the United Kingdom and Spain.

This programme seeks to improve the quality of foreign language education in Spain by integrating native speakers of the language into classrooms in order to promote the students' understanding of both the language and culture of the country of the language assistant.

Another objective of the programme is to facilitate the learning of the language and culture of Spain among those who come here as language assistants and thus contribute to their professional development and to the advancement of the Spanish language.

Language assistants are exchanged yearly with Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, China, countries of Oceania (Fiji, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu), Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, India, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, Morocco, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Singapore, Sweden, Switzerland, Tunisia, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America.

Under the supervision of a full-time teacher, the language assistants help students in Spanish public schools to improve their speaking and listening proficiency in the target language.

We hope that participating in this programme will be a positive experience that will facilitate both professional development through your work and personal growth through your experience here in Spain.

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Introduction

The ability to communicate in one or more foreign languages is a necessity today. For this reason, the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training and regional education offices have dedicated an increased effort to improving the teaching of world languages. As a part of this improvement, these institutions recognize the invaluable role of language assistants in the process of world language learning, since they awaken students' curiosity and motivate them to study the language. The language assistant serves as a model for the use of language in communicative situations and provides a new, firsthand perspective of the culture and everyday life in his or her country.

Furthermore, language assistants are in the process of learning the Spanish language and culture, and it also grants an opportunity to live a formative and a professional experience. This will allow them to acquire a deeper knowledge of Spain, its society and its education system.

With the goal of familiarising the language assistants with their tasks and making this experience a positive one for all the parties involved, the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training provides this comprehensive guide, which serves two functions: the first being to provide information concerning the procedures before starting, and the second is to introduce the Spanish education system as well as the functions and tasks of a language assistant.



Ministry Cohort and Regional Education Office Cohort

Necessary Procedures to

Begin the Programme

Before listing all the necessary procedures to start the programme, we remind you that **world language assistants are divided into two cohorts**, depending on the organization funding your participation:

- **Ministry cohort:** those who receive their monthly stipend directly from the Ministry of Education, Vocational Training and Sports.
- **Regional education office cohort:** those who receive their monthly stipend directly from the regional education offices (comunidades autónomas) where their school is located.

The **Placement letter** indicates which organization will provide the monthly stipend: The Ministry or the allotted Regional Education Office's Department of Education.

It is essential to know which cohort you belong to, as each have different points of contact and instructions for completing paperwork which vary.

Therefore, to facilitate the resolution of any issue or question, it is very important to communicate with a single point of contact, according to the cohort of the given office:

- Language assistants belonging to the Ministry cohort may contact auxiliares.conv@educacion.gob.es.
- Language assistants belonging to the regional education office cohort may refer to the contact information provided by these offices (see appendix I).

In respect to the monthly stipend:

- Language assistants in the Ministry cohort will receive a monthly stipend through bank transfer to the Spanish bank account, according to the procedure indicated in section **Procedures Once in Spain**.
- Language assistants in the regional education office cohort will receive information on this matter from the specific programme coordinators in these offices (see appendix I).

Preparations Before Arriving in Spain

During the months of May, June, and July, the language assistant will receive a **placement letter.** This letter is an official document of the allotted placement of a Language Assistant in Spain, and it is essential in order to be able to complete basic paperwork, such as applying for a visa, opening a bank account or handling a rental agreement.

The first step once the placement letter is received is to get in touch with the assigned school/s and/ or contact person. It is important to keep in mind that most schools are closed during the month of August.

Language assistants in the Ministry cohort please note that you will be sent an Acceptance document that states that you have officially accepted the position that has been assigned to you. You will receive this via email, and you must sign it and return it to the Ministry.

Questions that might be useful to ask the assigned school/mentor:

- Age of the students with which you will be collaborating.
- Number of teachers who teach the target language.
- School calendar.
- School dress code.
- Means of transportation to the school.
- Contact information of your mentor teacher.
- When to arrive, where to go and who to look for.
- If possible, name and contact information of previous language assistants at that school. It might be useful to get firsthand information about their experiences at that same location, the teaching methodology, housing, etc.
- Authentic teaching materials that can be used in the classroom.

Please bear in mind that, if you are not a citizen of the EU, you will need to **apply for a visa.** You will find all the information related to this process through the Education Office of Spain in your citizenship country or the international organization through which you applied. If you are a renewing candidate in the programme, you must renew your TIE before it expires; for more information, please refer to section **Procedures Once in Spain**.

This is an example of the placement letter sent by the Ministry and another one from a regional education office. Each regional education office has its own format for this letter, but the basic information is the same.

- 1. Logos.
- 2. The assigned school.
- 3. Start and end dates for the position.
- **4.** Hours of class per week and amount of monthly stipend.
- **5.**E-mail addresses to contact for questions and other issues.





✓	Documents to bring to Spain
	Placement letter.
	Other documents sent by the Ministry or Regional Education Office.
	Passport or, in case of European citizens, identification card.
	Visa, if required.
	European Health Insurance Card (EHIC or TSE), for European citizens, or Global Health Insurance Card (GBHIC) for British citizens.
	A letter from a guarantor (family, bank) translated into Spanish to present in case it is required to rent an apartment.
	Background Check.
	Student ID card, if applicable.
	Credit card, to make payments easier. You should have at least 2500 € available to cover your initial costs, although you may need more than this to pay a deposit on your rental, as is usually the case. The October payment may be delayed until December due to difficulties in opening your bank account or issues with your paperwork.
	Authentic teaching materials to use in the classroom, such as family photos, tourist maps and brochures, menus, recipes, coins and bills from your county (if you are not from the Eurozone), newspapers, magazines, and audio and audio-visual materials.

Background Check1

According to section eleven of Article 1 of Law 26/2015, of 28 July, amending the protection system for children and adolescents, adding section 5 to Article 13 of Organic Law 1/1996, of 15 January, on the legal protection of minors, on the partial amendment of the Civil Code and the Law of Civil Procedure, language assistants must present this certificate on their first day of school. This certificate is issued by the central registry for sex offenders or by the criminal record office of the language assistant's country, verifying having not been convicted by final judgment for any crime against sexual freedom and indemnity. The language assistant will have to contact their regional education office to verify the type of certificate that will be required.

Procedures Once in Spain

Registration and residence permit in Spain (both cohorts)²

Schools receiving language assistants have been instructed to help them with any questions that they may have regarding the procedures set forth in this chapter of the handbook.

The following procedures may vary depending on the local immigration office (oficina de extranjería) or police station, so it will be necessary to ask for specific instructions when applying for the documents listed below. These will vary based on whether the assistant is a citizen of the European Union (EU) or not and will allow them to obtain their Non-national Identification Number (NIE).

^{1.} Translator's note: the Spanish phrase for this is *certificado de penales* or *certificado de antecedentes penales*. Depending on your country and state, there are various certificates with differing names that may qualify for this: Police Clearance Certificate, Certificate of Good Conduct, Certificate of Sexual Offenses, etc.

2. Translator's note: the TIE refers to the Tarjeta de Identidad de Extranjero or the Foreigner Identity Card. The NIE refers to the Número de Identidad de Extranjero, or the Foreigner Identification Number.

Language assistants from member countries of the European Union: how to obtain the EU REGISTRATION CERTIFICATE.

The first step to take upon arriving is to apply for an **EU Registration Certificate** at the immigration office (oficina de extranjería) or police station in the assigned city or town.

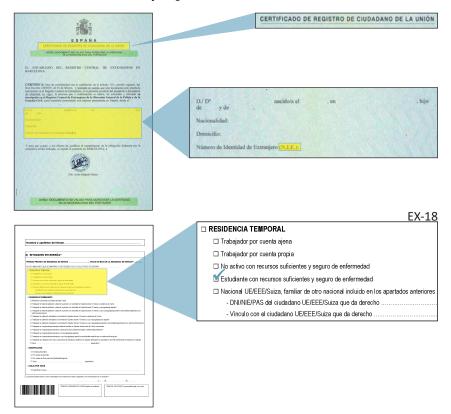
You can request an appointment, before arriving in Spain, for the Immigration Office or Police Station in the province where you will be residing.

A Spanish telephone number (6xxx) is required when making the appointment. A foreign telephone number can be used by adding in front of it the symbol + or two zeros. You will receive the verification code needed to confirm the appointment by email.

To request this certificate, it is necessary to pay the corresponding fee and provide the following documents:

~	Documents to be provided
	Application form EX-18, in duplicate, duly completed and signed.
	Valid identity document (if it is expired, a copy of it and of the renewal application will have to be provided). The original document must be presented upon submitting the application.
	Original and photocopy of the Placement letter.
	Proof of payment of the corresponding fee.

Once the application is submitted and the fee has been paid, a Registration Certificate will be issued, which will include name, nationality, address, date of registration and Non-national Identification Number (NIE). This number will be required by the bank to open a Spanish bank account, which will allow the language assistant to receive their monthly stipend.



Language assistants from countries outside the European Union: How to obtain the Non-national Identity Card (TIE)

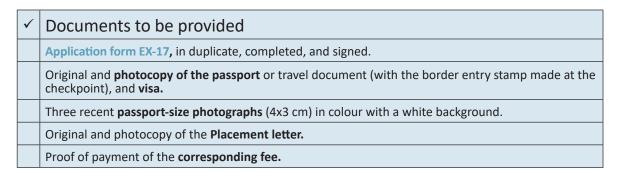
The Non-national Identity Number (NIE) usually appears on the visa, but upon arrival in Spain it is mandatory to apply for a Residency Card (TIE) since the stay will be longer than six months and it is necessary to present it to open a bank account. (If your stay is shorter than six months you do not need to apply for a TIE).

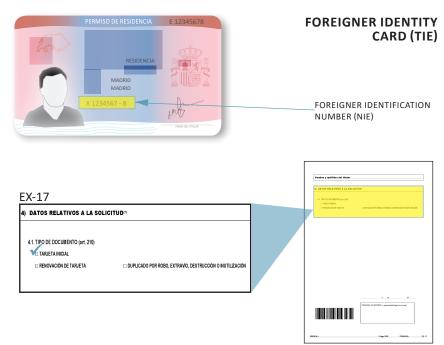
Upon arrival at your destination, you must apply at the corresponding immigration office (oficina de extranjería) or police station for the TIE.

It is possible to **make an appointment** before arriving in Spain using a different VPN, for the corresponding immigration office (oficina de extranjería) or police station in the province where you are going to reside.

The TIE is the document that proves that non-nationals have obtained a residence permit or authorization to stay in Spain for a period of more than 6 months.

To apply for the TIE, the corresponding fee must be paid (around 16 euros) and the following documents provided if applying for the first time:





If the language assistant is renewing in the programme, it is necessary to renew the TIE in order to legally reside in Spain.

An **extension of studies** must be requested in advance and, once granted, the renewal of the TIE is requested.

The application period to apply for a TIE is one month from the date of notification of the extension being granted.

The official application form EX-17 must be completed during the 60 calendar days prior to the expiration date of the validity of the authorization. It may also be submitted within 90 calendar days thereafter. If the

presentation is made on time, the initial stay authorization remains valid, until the resolution of the extension request.

If an assistant has entered Spain with a student visa for up to six months and **does not obtain a TIE**, but wishes to renew in the programme, they must request an **extension of stay**, with the **application form EX-00**.

Pending receipt of the new TIE, it is possible to leave Spain upon request of a return authorization, with the application form EX-13.

Important

Language assistants that would like to renew should not leave Spain without having applied for their TIE renewal and Return Authorization (Regreso). After your TIE has expired, language assistants should not leave Spain to travel to Schengen area countries.

Opening a bank account in Spain and the monthly stipend (Ministry cohort)

The language assistants in the **Ministry cohort** must open a bank account in Spain **as soon as possible** to receive their monthly stipend via direct bank deposit and provide the banking information to the Ministry office with this format:

IBAN ES+2 digits

Bank account 20 digits

This bank account information, together with the NIE, must be provided to Ministry supervisors through the Profex platform (according to the instructions received) as soon as possible, so that payments are not delayed.

In some banks, a temporary bank account may be open without a NIE by presenting a passport or equivalent identification document and the placement letter. However, you need to remember that obtaining a NIE is necessary in order to participate in the programme and live in Spain.

When opening the Spanish bank account, it is important that you specify that you will receive a monthly stipend through an educational programme. This will help to avoid bank fees. Most banks charge fees for maintaining accounts and sometimes could freeze them if no movements are made.

Important: if you do not provide a Spanish bank account number before October 10th, the payment for your first month may be delayed by up to two months, even as late as December.

If you have opened a bank account without a NIE, when you obtain the NIE, you must provide this number to the bank immediately, otherwise, they may freeze your account.

After obtaining the NIE, it is likely that the bank account number will automatically change. You should ask the bank about the possibility of this happening. If the bank account number does change, provide your new bank details through the Profex platform and **immediately communicate** your new bank details to the Ministry at auxiliares.conv@educacion.gob.es. In the email you must include the following information: first and last name, autonomous community (region of Spain) of destination, name of the bank and new account number in addition to sending a bank account holder certificate.

Important: It is necessary to check your bank account details often during the first few months to avoid issues.

For payments received directly from a regional education office, the instructions received by the community supervisors must be followed to a tee.

Health Insurance (both cohorts)

All language assistants have the right to healthcare during their stay in Spain, which is provided in two modalities:

Healthcare provided by Spanish Social Security for language assistants with a European Health Insurance Card or for British language assistants with Global Health Insurance Card

The language assistant must request a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC/TSE), or a Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC) for British citizens, in their country before coming to Spain.

- How to receive medical assistance

If medical care is needed, you should go to a local health centre or to the emergency room of a state hospital. You will receive medical assistance in the emergency services of the public health system.

If your health is in such a state that you cannot travel to a medical centre, you may request home health care by calling your medical centre or by calling 112 (Spanish emergency phone number).

- Medication

The primary care physician or specialist will prescribe the medication that he or she considers necessary using the official prescription form. Medication can be bought at any pharmacy by presenting the prescription. Medication costs are not included in the health insurance offered. You can save the receipts for your medicine and the doctor's note in case you can claim these costs on an insurance policy in your country of origin. Please note that medication is extremely affordable in Spain.

- Dental Treatment

Regarding dental care, public health insurance only covers tooth extraction. Depending on the assigned autonomous community (region of Spain), this coverage may be increased.

Healthcare provided by a private insurance company for those language assistants who DO NOT have access to the European Health Insurance Card in their countries

The Ministry and the regional education offices have signed a policy with a private insurance company to provide access to healthcare, in the event of sudden or unexpected accident or illness, during the period of the language assistant's participation in the programme.

The language assistants in **the Ministry cohort** who do not have a European Health Insurance Card, will have health coverage through a private company. The company will contact you by e-mail upon arrival in Spain to send you a virtual health card and some instructions. The physical health card will be sent to the school during the first few weeks upon your arrival. For information concerning the available medical centers, you can visit the company's website.

Important

If you were to have any special medical condition, it is strongly recommended that the language assistant brings to Spain their own medical insurance. Chronic illnesses are not covered by the health insurance provided.

Neither the private healthcare insurance provided by the Ministry **nor the public healthcare** will cover, in any case:

- Total amount of medicines.
- Treatment of chronic illnesses
- Treatment of pre-existing conditions

Language assistants in the **regional education office cohorts** will receive instructions in this regard from those responsible for the programme in each regional education office.

All language assistants, of any nationality, also have a policy that includes repatriation and accident insurance.

Housing

It is advisable to contact the school's mentor teacher, school leadership team or head of department for help in finding the best housing situation possible in the area.

Specialised websites, local newspapers, announcement boards, etc., may be valuable tools in finding adequate accommodation. It should be noted that, if a language assistant chooses to rent an apartment or flat, he or she will likely be required to sign a contract and pay, along with the first month's rent, one month's deposit, which will be returned at the end of the contract period.

Local Registration (empadronamiento)

Once you have settled at your permanent address in Spain, you may go to the City Hall or corresponding Municipal Council to register locally. In some autonomous communities, this may be required. Information on the steps to take and the necessary documentation can be found on the website of the City Hall of the destination town. If you do not have definitive housing, there is the possibility of registering in the same City Hall. The Certificado de Empadronamiento (a Certificate of Residence) may be required by the local immigration office when applying for a NIE or TIE.



Duties of a Language Assistant

Language assistants are part of an international educational cooperation programme and act as **cultural ambas-sadors** for their country of origin; thus, this position entails certain responsibilities towards the school where the language assistant will collaborate. It is critical that your professional behaviour makes a positive impact on both teachers and students. The exchange of language assistants serves a cultural purpose; for this reason, **no employment relationship is established between the language assistant and the school. This means that the language assistants will not be required to pay Social Security.**

School Calendar, Schedule, and Organization

With a few exceptions, the programme begins on October 1st and ends on May 31st. The language assistant will normally collaborate with their mentor teacher fourteen hours a week and have the same school holidays as the school teachers. The number of weekly hours may vary in some regional education offices.

Important for language assistants of the Ministry cohort

The day you begin your tasks, the school principal should fill out the *Hoja de incorporación* (language assistant onboarding form) and sent to the Ministry following the instructions given by this office. This document is required to process your monthly stipend; for this reason, we recommend that you remind the school principal as soon as you arrive at the school.

Start date

The assistant must start the first week October. If he/she does not do so on those days, he/ she will not be able to start until October 15th. Assistants who do not start on October 15th will not be able to start until November 1st, and so on. That is to say, starting dates will have to take place on the 1st or 15th of each month.

The *Hoja de incorporación* which must include your exact start date. This document must be sent to the Ministry supervisor **before October 10th**.

Latest starting date permitted: the first school day in February.

The language assistant will be part of the school's language department. This department will provide information about the teaching schedule, learning objectives and the minimum requirements for each course. In addition, it will report on the use of spaces, facilities, materials, and equipment assigned to the department. The Head of the Department will oversee supervising the activities with which other teachers entrust the language assistant.

It is essential that **you follow the set schedule and that you justify your absences,** if there should be any, so that your stay with the school is satisfactory for the entire school community.

The school leadership school will be responsible for the preparation of the assistant's schedule and for its fulfillment. Any absence must be notified to the mentor teacher, vice principal (jefe de estudios) or principal as soon as possible. The school leadership school will inform the Ministry or regional education office, depending on the cohort membership, of unexcused absences or repeated tardiness.

In the case of justified absences, the school will decide how to **make up for the missing days** according to their needs. If the absences are not justified, the school will inform the Ministry or the regional education office to proceed with the non-payment of those days from the monthly stipend.

IMPORTANT: Absences are considered those that occur after the language assistant has onboarded at the school. In other words, late arrivals are not considered absences and cannot, under any circumstances, be made up, as they will not be paid.

Holidays and Permits

Language assistants will enjoy the holidays listed in the school calendar. If a leave of absence for personal reasons is needed, for a maximum of one week, it must be requested by the school leadership team. A schedule to make up the missed classes will have to be set up.

Ministry cohort: IIf the leave of absence is longer than a week, it must be approved by school leadership and be communicated to the Language Assistant Programme Division via e-mail: auxiliares.conv@educacion.gob. es. The e-mail must indicate the exact dates of the absence and if a make-up plan for the missed classes has been set. After reviewing the request, school leadership will be notified of the decision made.

Absence Due to Illness

It is necessary to follow the procedure indicated by the school and present a valid medical proof. In the case of a prolonged illness, assistants will continue to receive the monthly stipend as long as they remain in Spain and are able to resume their duties within one month.

Monthly Stipend

The monthly stipend as compensation for living costs is 800 euros for a fourteen-hours per week schedule. This amount may vary depending on the cohort that you belong to. (See Appendix II).

Payments for each month will be made within approximately the first fifteen days of the following month as long as the administrative procedures allow it. It is possible that the first deposit will be somewhat delayed

because of the initial procedures; in that case, the payment may be delayed for some weeks. For this reason, the assistant must ensure that he/she arrives in Spain with a good amount for living expenses necessary to support him/her during the first few months.

We remind assistants, once again, that a Spanish bank account number should be provided **before October 10**th in order to avoid delayed payments. It is important to check the account movements in the first few months in order to be aware of any issues.

Withdrawal and Dismissal

IMPORTANT: If you do not onboard or withdraw from the program, you will NOT be able to be assigned again during the same school year within the programme.

In case of withdrawal before the end of the programme, the assistant must immediately notify this via e-mail to:

- 1. **Ministry cohort:** renuncias.auxminis@educacion.gob.es, and to the program supervisor of the regional education office indicating the exact date of termination.
- 2. Regional education office cohort: You must write to the programme supervisor, cc-ing the school.

The End of the School Year

Before the school year ends, an online questionnaire about the language assistant's tasks will be sent to the school. Additionally, the principal will give the assistant a **certificate of recognition for services rendered,** indicating the number of hours a week in the programme and the start and end dates.

Language assistants will have **to fill out a questionnaire to evaluate the programme,** in which they will be able to contribute suggestions for improvement for future cycles. Some regional education offices may require a report to be completed by the language assistant.

Renewals

Renewal is not automatic. It should be kept in mind that the Language Assistant Programme favours mobility and new applications. Renewal criteria vary according to the applicant's country of origin; thus, renewal cannot be guaranteed for all candidates.

Information providing detailed instructions about the renewal process according to nationalities can be found on the **programme website**.

Language Assistant Tasks

Language assistants are normally recent college graduates or college students in their last year who cannot be expected to assume the responsibilities of the teacher and **cannot teach alone**. Thus, the language assistant **is only to help the classroom teacher,** and their efforts are aimed to strengthen speaking and listening skills of the students.

Those language assistants assigned to **Official Language Schools** can work on tasks with small groups of students, under the coordination of the corresponding department. Once the language assistants are comfortable with the school and the way classes are run, they may, if agreed upon with the teachers, teach a part of the class without help.

Also, language assistants at Official Language Schools can conduct oral exam preparation while the teacher conducts other regular exams in the classroom, always under the supervision of the corresponding department.

Assistants must have a **mentor teacher** to guide their work and offer them professional and personal help (finding housing, obtaining a NIE, etc.). This mentor teacher will be the first person of reference in case of incidents such as being entrusted with functions and tasks that are not within the assistant's ability. In the absence of the mentor teacher, the assistant must request help in the following order:

- 1. Another teacher at the school or the Head of Studies/Vice Principal (jefe de estudios).
- 2. The program supervisors in the regional education offices (see appendix I).
- 3. The program supervisors at the Ministry of Education.
- 4. The international organization that manages the programme in the assistant's country, if any.

The language assistant may perform the following tasks under the coordination and supervision of the classroom teacher:

- Conversation practice by topic.
- Presenting the culture of the assistant's country.
- Creating materials to facilitate students learning as directed by the teachers.
- Making recordings in the target language for language teachers to use as an example of a native speaking in his language.
- Contributing to the training of the teaching staff, if they are available within their hours.
- Other related tasks.

It is essential that assistants always communicate in their own language, avoiding the use of the students' native language even if you have a knowledge of Spanish.

The language assistant may voluntarily choose to participate in extracurricular activities of various kinds: cultural activities, sports, study trips, school exchanges, etc. These activities can be very enriching, and we recommend the assistant to take active part in them.

The following tasks and activities are outside the scope of the language assistant's duties:

- Direct teaching to groups of students without the supervision of the teacher.
- Drafting or editing the syllabus.
- Preparation or grading of exams, quizzes, compositions, or similar exercises.
- Giving grades to students.
- Meeting with the parents of students or participating in other activities and functions that pertain to the class-room teacher.
- Supervising recess or lunch.
 - Under no circumstances will the language assistant ever be responsible for students' safety.
 In the case of team teaching or of sessions in small groups, these should take place in the same room where the teacher is located, or in a room connected to it, with easy access between them.
 - The language assistant should not deal with student behaviour or discipline problems alone. You should always involve the teacher to resolve such situations.
 - The language assistant should not become socially involved with the students. This also applies to the use of social networks unless you have the permission from the school. In no case should you exchange personal information with students (especially if they are minors), invite them to be friends in social networks, or accept similar invitations.

Classroom Observation

It is advised that the language assistant attend several language classes as an observer at the beginning of the school year. This will allow you to familiarize yourself with:

- The language skills of each class group.
- The expectations of the faculty with respect to the objectives that their students should achieve.
- The teaching methodology.
- Mistake correction models.

- Attention to diversity.
- Classroom management.

If the school does not provide you with this opportunity, we encourage you to request it.

The Role of a Language Assistant

Language is an inherent element of cultural identity. Having a language assistant at a school is an extraordinary opportunity for the students and for the educational community in general.

It is necessary to establish a **professional yet close relationship with the students** from the beginning to obtain their trust and respect. It is equally important to adapt to the local customs and participate in the daily life at the school by participating in extracurricular activities. This will allow greater contact with the country's language. Exchanges and correspondence between schools, groups or individuals can also be encouraged.

It is important to establish a good relationship with the school staff, including faculty from the department of languages and other departments, as well as with the members of the leadership team. All of them can be very helpful and can contribute to the language assistant's professional and personal development.

Ideas for Teaching a Foreign Language Class

A central issue to keep in mind when preparing a foreign language activity is that students have not yet mastered the target language. For this reason, we recommend:

- Simplifying and adjusting the speed of the language when necessary.
- Asking questions and rephrasing to ensure understanding.
- Using various resources in order to make oneself understood: facial expressions, gestures, body language, drawings, etc.

Authentic teaching materials are an excellent methodological resource. They encourage conversation, bringing the student closer to the culture and language of everyday life, thus avoiding restriction to the purely academic. They also allow for more realistic exercises.

Below are some ideas and suggestions for using these materials in the classroom. In order to implement these activities, there should be effective communication with the mentor teacher and with the world language teachers. It is important to inform the teachers about these activities to know if they meet the objectives proposed for each level.

Posters

Posters enrich the classroom atmosphere and represent the culture of the language being taught. Suggested activities may include:

- Asking questions about the topic of the poster.
- Asking students to describe it.
- Showing it for a minute, then covering it and asking: What do you remember? What is going on? What was there? etc.

Films

The appeal and motivating role of cinema is undeniable. However, if the movie or film clips are not chosen wisely, or if they do not match the linguistic level of the class, it may turn out to be very frustrating. It is suggested that the language assistant:

- Contextualize the film or clip by relating it to the current coursework. If it is about a topic that the students are working on, we must make sure that they have already read or know something about it.
- Ask students to fill out a worksheet during the movie, one that asks enough questions that it makes the activity purposeful, but not so much that it becomes overly difficult.

- Give the students supplementary reading assignments that relate to the topic, historical context, etc.
- Ask for opinions, clarifications, summaries, etc.
- Introduce the topic of film itself: actors, actresses, directors, film genres, current films from different countries, etc.

Photos, PowerPoint Presentations, Comic Strips, Drawings, etc.

There are infinite ways to take advantage of these resources. Some ideas include:

- Describe one photo out of several similar ones.
- With a partner, spot the differences between two similar pictures.
- Spot similarities between photos, dividing the class into small groups or pairs.
- Hand out a set of photographs that are out of order to small groups. Each student has to describe his or her photographs. The objective is that the groups order the photos logically and then take turns telling the story to the class.

News

Students can be given simple tasks where they don't have to understand everything, but they should be able to find the information that they are asked for. Some examples may include:

- Filling out a simple worksheet with the information provided by each brief news report: events, people, dates, places, etc.
- Talking about a news story that they have read or heard.
- Reenacting the most important news of the week.
- Starting a conversation, discussion or debate.

Interviews, editorials, and the food, culture and lifestyle sections of newspapers and magazines may also be very helpful in secondary education classes.

Forms

Filling out forms can be used to familiarize oneself with some essential bureaucratic aspects when visiting or living in another country: ID (National Identification Document), student ID, Social Security Card, passport, local registration, bank accounts, etc.

This is a mostly written exercise, but it may be an excellent way to end a series of speaking and listening activities on personal identification.



Figura 1: Language Class, Paul Bangs.

Songs

Using songs in the classroom is highly motivating. When choosing songs, it is important to consider the interests of the students, the suitability of the topic, the skill or area to be worked on (listening comprehension, vocabulary, etc.) and the students' level of language proficiency.

Songs may be extremely useful for diverse classroom activities: filling in the blanks, reordering the verses, correcting errors, numbering the lines, rewriting the verses, changing the verb tense, looking for synonyms, adding a verse, adding a title, etc.

Games

Games are beneficial to all grade levels, but they have to be chosen wisely so that they are not too difficult in terms of linguistic level or too childish for the age of the students. Here are some ideas:

- Words linked together by letters or syllables.
- Hangman.
- Broken Telephone.
- Define and guess the word.
- Board games with modified instructions (roll and move games, Parcheesi, etc.).
- Themed bingo: animals, numbers, clothing, fruit, food, word recognition, etc.
- If you were a... (colour, animal, country, celebrity), what would you be?

Other Resources

- Street maps.
- Train, bus, and school schedules.
- Store hours.
- TV and radio shows.
- Posters, announcements, invitations, advertisements, etc.
- Weather reports, newspaper articles, teen magazines, comic strips, etc.
- Real-life conversations and sounds, individuals with regional accents, etc.
- Supermarket flyers or advertisements.
- Tourist brochures, postcards, etc.
- Recipes, shopping lists, price lists, menus, etc.



The Spanish Education System

The Education Law (LOE) (2/2006, May 3), modified by the current Education Law 3/2020, December 29 (LOMLOE) regulates the teachings that comprise the Spanish education system.

The Spanish education system runs on principles of quality, cooperation, equity, academic freedom, merit, equal opportunities, non-discrimination, efficiency in the allocation of public resources, transparency, and accountability.

Education Stages

Preschool

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Preschool (Educación Infantil) serves children aged 0-6. It is optional and is divided into two cycles. The first cycle is for ages 0-3; the second is free of charge and for ages 3-6.

The integral development of children is progressively addressed in both cycles, helping children to develop a positive and balanced self-image and to acquire independent development.

Elementary Education

Elementary Education (Educación Primaria) is both mandatory and free. It comprises six academic years (divided into three cycles) for students ages 6-12. It includes the following subjects: Natural, Social and Cultural Knowledge that could be divided into: Natural Sciences, Social Sciences; Art, Physical Education, World Languages, Mathematics, Information Technology and Communication, History, Geography, Culture, Spanish Language and Literature, Religion, or Social and Civic Values, and, in the case of autonomous communities with two official languages, Co-official Language and its Literature.

Regarding the learning of foreign languages, one of the objectives of this stage is for students to acquire, in at least one language, a basic communicative competence that will allow them to express and understand simple messages and overcome daily challenges.

In bilingual elementary schools in some autonomous communities, external language proficiency tests are performed in order to assess the level of linguistic competence of students in their third and sixth year, according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). The assistants assigned to bilingual schools may collaborate in the preparation of these tests by helping students improve their oral skills (listening and speaking).

Compulsory Secondary Education (ESO)

Compulsory Secondary Education (Educación Secundaria Obligatoria, ESO) includes two cycles. The first cycle comprises three school years and the second cycle only one. Students are usually aged 12-16 for both cycles.

At the end of the fourth year, students obtain the Graduate in Compulsory Secondary Education diploma, which allows them to access the Baccalaureate, Intermediate Vocational Training, Intermediate Visual Arts and Design cycles, Intermediate Sports Education, and even start to work. If they do not obtain an ESO degree, they can take Basic Vocational Training.

Baccalaureate

The Baccalaureate (Bachillerato) is a non-compulsory stage of education that includes two academic years, and which is available to those who hold the Compulsory Secondary Education Diploma. It has different tracks, is flexibly organized and has its own areas.

The Bachillerato tracks are as follows:

- Arts.
 - Visual Arts and Design.
 - Performing Arts: Theatre, Music, and Dance.
- Science and Technology.
- Humanities and Social Sciences.

Students who successfully complete the Bachillerato receive the Baccalaureate certificate (Título de Bachiller) that enables students to seek higher education, although each university establishes its own admission criteria.

Vocational Training

Vocational Training (Formación Profesional, FP) is organized into three stages: Basic Vocational Training, Intermediate Vocational Training and Advanced Vocational Training. It consists of more than 170 training cycles offered in public and private schools, which may be taught in-person or remotely. These cycles train students for the qualified performance of various vocations and qualify them for employment. These diplomas have academic and professional value.

Basic Vocational Training lasts 2 years, at least 2000 hours of theoretical and practical education, of which 240 hours should be completed by working.



Figure 1: Students from IES Alfonso II (Oviedo), María Matilla.

To access the **Intermediate Vocational Training** stage, students must have achieved the Compulsory Secondary Education Certificate (Graduado en Educación Secundaria Obligatoria). **The Advanced Vocational Training** stage can be accessed once students obtain their Título de Bachiller. Additionally, there are entrance exams for those who do not meet any of the above requirements.

Students who complete all the Vocational Training courses receive the Technical Certificate or Advanced Technical Certificate (*Titulo de Técnico or Técnico Superior*) of the corresponding profession.

Artistic and Sports Education

Artistic and Sports Education, which may be combined with Secondary Education, and provide the necessary training and skills for future professionals in Music, Dance, Theatre, Visual Arts, Design, and Sports. They are divided into three levels of instruction: Elementary, Professional, and Higher Education.

In order to access the intermediate and higher levels, students must have received their Compulsory Secondary Education Diploma or their *Título de Bachiller*, respectively, and have passed an entrance exam. Upon completion of this instruction, the corresponding Professional Certificate is issued.

Language Learning

Language instruction is offered in **Official Language Schools** (EOI) and enables students to use different foreign languages outside the ordinary stages of the educational system. The General Law of Education (LOE) structures this instruction at the **basic** (A1-A2), **intermediate** (B1-B2) and **advanced** (C1-C2) levels, as set forth in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages of the Council of Europe (CEFR).

To access these studies, it is required to have completed the first cycle of Compulsory Secondary Education or to have received the *Título de Graduado Escolar*¹. Since the implementation of the LOE, students who have reached the age of 16 may enter Official Language Schools; those over 14 may enrol in language studies that are not offered in Compulsory Secondary Education.

Language instruction by Official Language Schools (EOI) is offered in one of the following ways:

a. Official Instruction:

- In-Person Instruction: Students attend class and various final exams in person. In addition, students can participate in any of the school's cultural activities and events. The school year tends to last nine months (from September to May), and classes tend to be taught in the afternoon. However, there are, some schools that teach intensive courses and have extended hours.
- **Blended Instruction:** This option is only for English through the *That's English!* programme, offered by some Official Language Schools.

b.Intensive or Monographic Courses and Track-Specific Plans for the Training of Adults and Teaching Professionals: These courses are only offered at certain schools.

Adult Education

Adult education offers those over 18 years of age the opportunity to acquire, refine or expand their knowledge and skills for their personal and professional development through regulated educational opportunities, such as Compulsory Secondary Education and the *Bachillerato*, and through non-regulated educational opportunities.

Schools and Leadership Teams

Language assistants are placed in the following schools supported by public funds:

^{3.} Translator's note: the Titulo de Graduado Escolar is a certificate that is no longer offered, but is still valid to continue to this level of instruction.

Public Schools for Preschool and Elementary Education (Colegios Públicos de Educación Infantil y Primaria, CEIP)

These schools have students aged 3-12. Most elementary schools and preschools split the school day in morning and afternoon sessions, although some schools may offer only morning sessions.

Secondary Education Schools (Institutos de Enseñanza Secundaria, IES)

These schools have students aged 12-18. Most secondary schools offer morning classes, although some schools also offer afternoon or night classes. In addition to the secondary education itself, they also offer *Bachillerato* and Vocational Programmes.

Official Language Schools (Escuelas Oficiales de Idiomas, EOI)

These have many shared aims with the other schools; however, the nature of their teachings and daily schedule suggest that their function is unique. This student body mostly consists of adults and **school hours usually take place in the afternoon.** However, depending on what the school may offer, school hours may also take place in the morning.

With respect to the geographical location, language assistants are assigned to schools located throughout Spain, so that students from both rural and urban areas may have access to this resource.

The Leadership Team

This is the executive body of the public schools, composed of a Principal, a Head of Studies and a Secretary:

- The principal (director/a) represents the school and the educational administration. In addition, the principal's responsibilities include: ensuring compliance with the laws and other regulations in force, directing and coordinating the school's activities and exercising leadership over all staff members.
- The head of studies (jefe/a de estudios), among other duties, exercises the leadership of the teaching staff in everything related to the academic programmes. They set, in collaboration with the other members of the management team, the schedules of teachers and students, and coordinate the activities of the heads of department.
- The secretary (secretario/a) is responsible for the school's administrative work: they issue certificates, manage finances, and supervise every aspect of the maintenance of school equipment and materials.

Depending on each autonomous community and type of educational establishment, there may be other types of management positions, such as vice principals, administrators, educational coordinators, etc.



Useful Addresses

Ministerio de Educación, Formación Profesional y Deportes (Ministry of Education, Vocational Training and Sports)

Unidad de Acción Educativa Exterior Paseo del Prado, 28, 3rd floor 28014 Madrid auxiliares.conv@educacion.gob.es

Relevant Documents and Links

- Hoja de incorporación (language assistant onboarding form)
- Conditions per Regional Education Offices
- Public offices for foreign citizens
- Ministry for the Inclusion, Social Security and Migration (Ministerio de Inclusión, Seguridad Social y Migraciones): Clicking on this link you can download the EX official forms, which are required for the initiation of procedures for your TIE.

Online Resources for Teaching Foreign Languages

The internet is an endless source of resources. It would be lengthy to list here all the useful sites for class preparation tasks, finding suitable materials and ideas that can be adapted to each specific situation.

educaLAB

It is a website of the Ministry's Institute of Educational Technology and has been developed for teachers of the Spanish educational system. This site stands out for its abundance of classroom material, available for all subjects and grade levels.

Acción Educativa Exterior

The website of the Ministry's Overseas Education Action (Acción Educativa Exterior) offers access to publications, articles, and teaching and outreach materials related to Spanish and the teaching of Spanish, offered by the Education Offices of Spain abroad.

The redELE portal offers issues of the scientific journal redELE, dedicated solely to Spanish as a foreign language (ELE), and the biennial publication El mundo estudia español (The World Learns Spanish), that reports on the teaching of Spanish in education systems around the world and the Spanish international education programmes and schools.

Cervantes Institute Virtual Centre

The website of the Cervantes Institute's Centro Virtual Cervantes offers many resources, links, exercises, and news articles about Spanish as a foreign language and its translation, questions about the language, various forums, etc. News and activities about the promotion of the Spanish language and Hispanic cultures are also available on this website. There is an extensive collection of bibliographical references and databases about Hispanic studies around the world.

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Appendix I. Contact Information for the Regional Education Offices

Andalusia	Consejería de Educación C/ Juan Antonio de Vizarrón, s/n, Isla de la Cartuja 41092 Sevilla auxiliares.ced@juntadeandalucia.es
Aragón	Departamento de Educación, Cultura y Deporte Avda. Ranillas, 5D, 3 rd floor, 50018 Zaragoza auxiliaresconversacion@aragon.es
Asturias	Consejería de Educación y Cultura Pza. de España, 5, 4 th floor 33007 Oviedo idiomas@educastur.org
Balearic Islands	Direcció General de Planificació, Ordenació i Infraestructuras Educatives C. Ter, 16, 2 nd floor, 07009 Palma de Mallorca spl@dgpice.caib.es
Basque Country	Departamento de Educación Hezkuntza Saila C/ Donostia-San Sebastián, 1, 01010 Vitoria-Gasteiz hizkuntzalaguntzaile@euskadi.eus
Canary Islands	Consejería de Educación y Universidades Avda. Buenos Aires, 3-5, 4 th floor 38071 Sta. Cruz de Tenerife auxlengext.educacion@gobiernodecanarias.org
Cantabria	Consejería de Educación, Cultura y Deporte C/ Vargas, 53, 8 th floor 39010 Santander asesoria.llee@educantabria.es
Castile-La Mancha	Consejería de Educación, Cultura y Deportes Bulevar del Río Alberche, s/n 45071 Toledo auxiliaresdeconversacionclm@jccm.es
Castile and León	Consejería de Educación Avda. Reyes Católicos, 2 bis, Edificio Emilio Alarcos 47006 Valladolid auxiliares.conversacion@jcyl.es
Catalonia	Departament d'Educació Via Augusta, 202-226, 08021 Barcelona auxiliars.conversa@xtec.cat
Ceuta	Dirección Provincial de Educación C/ Echegaray, s/n, 51001 Ceuta miguel.perezt@ceuta.educacion.gob.es daniel.salcedo@ceuta.educacion.gob.es
Extremadura	Consejería de Educación y Empleo Avda. de Valhondo, s/n, Edificio III Milenio, módulo 5, 4 th floor, 06800 Mérida plurilinguismo@educarex.es
Galicia	Consellería de Cultura, Educación e Universidade Edificio Administrativo de Rúa de San Caetano, s/n 15781 Santiago de Compostela auxconversa@edu.xunta.es

La Rioja	Consejería de Educación, Formación y Empleo C/ Marqués de Murrieta, 76, Ala Este, ground floor 26071 Logroño lenguas.extranjeras@larioja.org
Madrid	Consejería de Educación, Universidades, Ciencia y Portavocía C/ Alcalá, 32, 4 th floor, 28014 Madrid auxiliares.conversacion@educa.madrid.org https://dgbilinguismoycalidad.educa.madrid.org/auxmadrid
Melilla	Dirección Provincial de Educación C/ Cervantes, 6, 52001 Melilla ignacio.reverte@educacion.gob.es
Murcia	Consejería de Educación y Universidades Gran Vía Escultor Salzillo, 32, 4 th floor, 30005 Murcia auxiliares.conversacion@murciaeduca.es
Navarre	Departamento de Educación Cuesta Santo Domingo, s/n, 31001 Pamplona eechenie@navarra.es
Valencian Community	Conselleria d'Educació, Investigació, Cultura i Esport Av. Campanar, 32, 46015 València auxiliars@gva.es

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Appendix II. Embassies and Consulates in Spain

Australia	P.º de la Castellana, 259D, 24 th floor, 28046 Madrid 91 353 6600
	madrid.embassy@dfat.gov.au
Austria	P.º de la Castellana, 91, 9 th floor, 28046 Madrid 91 556 5315 madrid-ob@bmeia.gv.at
Belgium	P.º de la Castellana, 18, 6 th floor, 28046 Madrid 91 577 6300 madrid@diplobel.fed.be
Brazil	C/ Fernando el Santo, 6, 28010 Madrid 917 00 46 50 adm.madrid@itamaraty.gov.br
Bulgaria	Travesía de Santa María Magdalena, 15, 28016 Madrid 91 345 5761 Embassy.Madrid@mfa.bg
Canada	P.º de la Castellana, 259D, 28046 Madrid 91 382 8400 MDRIDG@international.gc.ca
China	C/ Arturo Soria, 113, 28043 Madrid 91 519 4242 consuladochino@163.com
Czech Republic	Avda. Pío XII, 22-24, 28016 Madrid 91 356 1896 1897 consulate_madrid@mzv.cz
Denmark	C/ Serrano, 26, 7 th floor, 28001 Madrid 91 431 8445 madamb@um.dk
Finland	P.º de la Castellana, 15, 28046 Madrid 91 319 6172 sanomat.mad@formin.fi
France	C/ Salustiano Olózaga, 9, 28001 Madrid 91 423 8900 https://es.ambafrance.org/Contactar-con-nosotros
Germany	C/ Fortuny, 8, 28010 Madrid 91 557 9095 Zreg@MADRI.Auswaertiges-Amt.de
Hungary	C/ Fortuny, 6, 28010 Madrid 91 413 7011 mission.mad@mfa.gov.hu
India	Avda. Pío XII, 30-32, 28016 Madrid 902 90 1010 91 309 8870 socsec.madrid@mea.gov.in
Ireland	P.º de la Castellana, 46, 4 th floor, 28046 Madrid 91 423 3300 madridembassy@dfa.ie
Italy	C/ Lagasca, 98, 28006 Madrid 91 423 3300 madrid.cultura@esteri.it

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Luxembourg	C/ Claudio Coello, 78, 28001 Madrid 91 435 9164 madrid.amb@mae.etat.lu
Malta	P.º de la Castellana, 45, 6 th floor, 28046 Madrid 91 391 3061 maltaembassy.madrid@gov.mt
Morocco	C/ Serrano, 179, 28002 Madrid 91 563 1090 correo@embajada-marruecos.es
Netherlands	P.º de la Castellana, 259D, 28046 Madrid 91 353 7500 mad@minbuza.nl
New Zealand	C/ Pinar, 7, 3.ª planta, 28006 Madrid 91 523 0226 madrid@embajadanuevazelanda.com
Norway	C/ Serrano, 26, 5 th floor, 28001 Madrid 91 436 3840 emb.madrid@mfa.no
Philippines	C/ Eresma, 2, 28002 Madrid 91 782 3830 info@philembassymadrid.com
Poland	C/ Guisando, 23 bis, 28035 Madrid 913 736 605 madryt.amb.sekretariat@msz.gov.pl
Portugal	C/ Lagasca, 88, 4.° A, 28001 Madrid 91 782 4960 madrid@mne.pt
Singapore	Avda. de Bruselas, 28, 28108 Alcobendas (Madrid) 91 662 9373 sgbcnconsul@gmail.com hcgmadrid@fmetropoli.org
Sweden	C/ Caracas, 25, 28010 Madrid 91 702 2000 ambassaden.madrid@gov.se
Switzerland	C/ Núñez de Balboa 35A, 7 th floor,28001 Madrid 91 436 3960 madrid@eda.admin.ch
Tunisia	Avda. Alfonso XIII, 64-66-68, 28016 Madrid 91 447 3508 at.madrid@diplomatie.gov.tn madrid@embajadadetunez.es
United Kingdom	P.º de la Castellana, 259D, 28046 Madrid 91 714 6300 http://www.gov.uk/contact-consulate-madrid
United States	C/ Serrano, 75, 28006 Madrid 91 587 2200 askACS@state.gov

Appendix III. Flowchart for the Spanish Education System

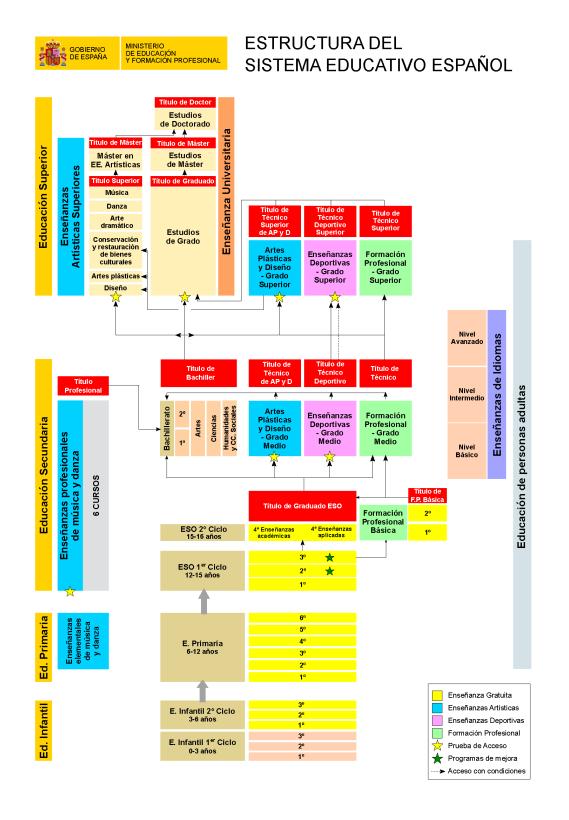


Figure 3: "Flowchart for the Spanish Education System", Datos y cifras. Curso esolar 2021-2022. S. G. de Estadísticas y Estudios.





