

Spanish

Español

Spoken in: Mexico, Colombia, Spain, Argentina, Chile, USA and many other countries, territories and communities.

Region: Europe, the Americas (Latin America, the Caribbean and the USA), Equatorial Guinea in Africa, Rapanui (Easter Island) in Oceania, immigrant communities in Australia, and a few thousand speakers in Asia.

Total speakers: 330 million (417 million including second language speakers)

Genetic Classification: Indo-European Italic Romance Italo-Western Western Gallo-Iberian Ibero-Romance West Iberian Spanish

Official language of: Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, New Mexico (USA), Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Puerto Rico (USA), Spain, Uruguay, Venezuela and Western Sahara.

Spanish is a member of the Romance group of the Italic subfamily of the Indo-European family of languages. The official language of Spain and 19 Latin American nations, it is the native language of over 17 million people in the United States, and is one of the official languages of the United Nations.

There are important variations in dialect among the various regions of Spain and Spanish-speaking America. In Spain the North Castilian dialect pronunciation is commonly taken as the national standard.

It became the written and educational standard in Spain, even though several spoken dialects remained. The most noteworthy was Andalusian, a dialect spoken in the southern city of Seville in the Andalucía region.

Spanish alphabet

The Spanish alphabet traditionally consists of the following 29 letters:

A, B, C, Ch, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, L, Ll, M, N, Ñ, O, P, Q, R, S, T, U, V, W, X, Y, Z

This includes the 26 letters of the Latin alphabet plus the letter Ñ, and the digraphs ch and ll.

Currently SSWAHS Health Care Interpreter Service employs 2 FTE Spanish interpreters and 9 sessional interpreters.