

CONSEJERÍA DE EDUCACIÓN – SPANISH EDUCATION OFFICES ABROAD

The Spanish Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport (MECD) runs different educational initiatives abroad aimed -depending on each context- at disseminating Spanish language and culture, and at promoting the teaching of Spanish in the formal education of numerous countries.

The Spanish Education Offices (Consejerías de Educación) are technical bodies of the Diplomatic Missions of Spain abroad. They form part of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport's foreign offices network spread over five continents.

The Consejería de Educación in Berlin is headed by an Embassy Counsellor, Mercedes de Castro, and counts with a Secretary General, four Education Advisers, one of them in Stockholm, one secretary and four administrative staff. Our aim is to provide support and professional advice to the official educational systems of the countries covered: Germany, Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden by means of human, technical, curricula and didactic resources, in collaboration with the educational and cultural administrations, institutions and agencies.

The encouragement of exchanges within the educational context, and in general, any other means which may facilitate the access to education abroad for Spanish citizens and for foreigners in Spain are key objectives in our mission. The reciprocity principle usually yields fruitful cooperation with the educational authorities of the countries concerned.

These are some of our functions:

- The administration of Spain's educational policies in Germany, Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden.
- Fostering the Spanish language and culture in the education systems of the countries concerned by means of the international programmes of the Spanish Ministry of Education. Developing and advising bilingual programmes.

- Resource Centre with an education adviser and didactic Spanish material to offer pedagogical support to teachers of Spanish, offering them continuing professional development programmes such as literary conversation group, specialised courses (also on line), teachers' conferences...
- Distance learning exams and procedures: Spanish Universities, and CIDEAD (distance formal education).
- Help with information about studying in Spain and the validation of studies and degrees to work in Spain.
- Grants for students and teachers, internships programmes.

ACTIVITIES FOR SWEDISH TEACHERS AND STUDENTS DURING 2013

Web page:

<http://www.educacion.gob.es/exterior/se/es/home/index.shtml>

- **Encuentro de Profesores de Español en Escandinavia (“Spanish Teachers in Scandinavia Conference”)**, 14-15 June, Stockholm. Organised with Instituto Cervantes and Skolverket, Tema Modersmål. Prestigious plenary speakers and about 18 didactic workshops to chose from among other activities. Around 100 teachers attended. More information at: <http://www.encuentro-estocolmo.com/>
- **Spansklärardagar (“Spanish Teachers Conference”)**, 4-5 October, (planned) Göteborg, organised with Spansklärföreningen i Västra Sverige (the Association of Spanish Techers in the west of Sweden). Programme at: <http://www.mecd.gob.es/exterior/se/es/programas/gotenburgo2013.pdf>
- **On line course *La enseñanza de gramática en la clase de español* (“Teaching Grammar in the Spanish lesson”)** by Francisco J. González Pérez. April-May. 5 Swedish teachers followed it (the target group was formed by 5 teachers from each country: Germany, Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden).

- **Pedagogic workshop: *Propuestas para la enseñanza de las cuatro destrezas*** (“*Proposals for the teaching of the four skills: reading, writing, listening and talking in Spanish lessons*”) by education advisor Mercedes Jiménez Vilallonga. About 30 teachers attended each session.
 - January 23 at the Resource Centre, Embassy of Spain organized in cooperation with *Spanskläraryöreningengiven i Stockholm* (the Association of Spanish Teachers in Stockholm) and given by education advisor, Mercedes Jimenez Vilallonga.
 - February 5 at Schillerska Gymnasiet, Göteborg, organized in cooperation with *Spanskläraryöreningen i Västra Sverige* (the Association of Spanish Teachers in the west of Sweden).
 - March 10-11 at the Språkbåten conference of LMS, Språklärarnas riksförbund, (Swedish Modern Language Teachers Association).
- **Literature conversation group:** 12 to 15 people (mostly teachers) come to the Resource Centre to talk about a novel we have previously read.
 - March 20, “Mi amor en vano” by Soledad Puértolas.
 - May 22, “Los sordos” by Rodrigo Rey Rosa.(Guatemala).
 - September 4, “Los días más felices” by Rodrigo Hasbún.(Bolivia).
 - December 18 (planned), “Los hijos del mar” by Pedro Feijoo.
- **Activities with schools:**
 - April 23, **World Book Day**, 20 pupils from Spanska Skolan (year 5) and 17 pupils from Trollbodaskolan (year 7) came to the Embassy with their Spanish teachers for a **formal reading aloud of “Don Quixote”** fragments which they had previously prepared.
 - September 19, visit to Kungsholmen Gymnasiet. **Spanish talk and activities about “Study in Spain”** for 30 students (Year 2).

MECD OVERSEAS EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMES

SPANISH LANGUAGE ASSISTANTS

Students of the last year of university education or recently graduated are placed in a primary or secondary school (there may be two or three host schools for the same assistant) for a school year in order to support the teaching of Spanish.

This programme also offers the possibility of receiving language assistants, from the countries where a bilateral cooperation action has been agreed, to help with the teaching of foreign languages in Spanish schools.

Objectives

- Language assistants improve their foreign language skills and get a deeper knowledge of the culture of the host country.
- Foster the knowledge of Spanish language and culture in formal education abroad.
- Improve the teaching of foreign languages at Spanish schools.

The main objective of the language assistants work in foreign countries is to enhance the quality of the teaching of Spanish in their schools, awakening among the students the interest and motivation to learn the Spanish language, serving as model for its use in communicative situations and providing a fresh and direct vision of present-day life and culture in Spain.

Recruitment process

The selection of the participant language assistants is carried out in Spain through an annual public call by the Ministry of Education through the “Boletín Oficial del Estado (BOE, the official gazette of the Government of Spain). The Ministry determines eligibility according to each country requirements and pre-screens candidates.

Bilateral selection committees from Spain and host countries and/or Education Offices abroad make the final selection

The process for school year 2013-2014 started in December 2012 and more than one thousand language assistants are being sent to Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, France (including French Guinea, Martinique and Guadalupe, Reunion and New Caledonia) Germany, Ireland, Italy, Malta, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, United Kingdom and United States.

Spain received 3.668 language assistants for school year 2012-2013 mainly from United States and United Kingdom but also from other countries such as Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, China, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, New Zealand and Portugal.

Requirements

The Spanish language assistants are required to have a high level of English (or French, Italian, Portuguese depending on the country). They are in the last year before graduating, or have recently graduated, from university with a degree in Foreign Languages Studies, Linguistics and Literature Studies, Translation and Interpreting or similar.

Duties

Language assistants become part of the foreign language department of their school and work directly with the students under the supervision of local teachers. Their work consists mainly of supporting the teaching of Spanish through the practice of oral skills and communicative and cultural activities with their students. They frequently collaborate in extracurricular activities organized by the school.

The host schools, or corresponding local authorities, pay a monthly salary to the language assistants. The amount of salary and the number of hours at the school is determined yearly and varies according to the country. Travel expenses from and to Spain are covered by the participants themselves.

For example, the language assistants in Portugal earn around 700 euros but in New Caledonia, 1.502 euros. The number of working hours range from about 12 hours a week in Germany to 16 to 20 hours in United States. The conditions are negotiated separately with each country and there are also variations regarding the length of the contract, the medical/accident insurance and the accommodation help.

The Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport and the autonomous regions education authorities organize welcome and training sessions for foreign language assistants in Spain in September or October. The Education Offices support the Spanish language assistants abroad with information, material and pedagogic assessment and can organize jointly with host country education authorities similar welcome and training sessions.

SPANISH VISITING TEACHERS

This programme offers schools the opportunity to recruit highly qualified teachers from Spain who can teach Spanish language and culture in order to improve the quality of teaching of Spanish in formal education.

Objectives

The programme was created in 1986 to satisfy the need of qualified teachers of Spanish in United States and spread to other countries such as Canada and Germany. Since then, more than 6,000 visiting teachers and more than 30,000 foreign students have benefited from this programme. During school year 2012-2013, 1,191 visiting teachers worked in the United States, 46 in Canada and 21 in Germany.

The aims of this programme are:

- To improve the quality of the teaching of Spanish language in the host countries.
- To offer the Spanish teachers an excellent opportunity for professional development.

The spirit of the programme is based on multicultural understanding and cultural exchange in order to strengthen the relations between Spain and the host countries.

Recruitment process

The recruitment process begins in September/October of the previous school year as the positions have to be officially announced in Spain through the “Boletín Oficial del Estado” in November/December.

Once the call has been made, applicants submit their Curriculum Vitae online. The Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport determines eligibility and pre-screens the candidates according to the requirements of every country. A second screening can be made by the Education Office if agreed by the selection committee from the host country. A selection committee from each country can travel to Madrid in spring to interview candidates under a “career fair” format, set up in a conference centre for about a week. Candidates can also sit written tests if the employers require them.

The candidates are interviewed and ultimately hired by the country educational/local authorities. Participating local authorities employ these teachers in accordance with national regulations and policies. Their working status and salary conditions have to be equivalent to those of their national coworkers according to their experience and certification level.

The selected teachers receive orientation in Madrid or the country of destination. Participating educational/local authorities in collaboration with Ministry of Education representatives can provide initial support and continued mentoring to visiting teachers.

ALCE-SPANISH LANGUAGE AND CULTURE PROGRAMME

General Information

The Spanish Language and Culture Programme (ALCE: *Agrupación de Lengua y Cultura Españolas* in the Spanish acronym) is one of the programmes that the Spanish Ministry of Education has developed to support the teaching and learning of Spanish abroad.

The ALCEs offer Spanish language and culture classes for Spanish citizens or descendents of Spanish citizens in different countries (Australia, Belgium, France, Luxembourg, Germany, the Netherlands, Switzerland and United Kingdom). These classes are aimed at students who attend schools in the education systems of the country where they live. The students' ages range from 7 to 18, and must be enrolled fulltime in primary or secondary education.

The Spanish teachers in charge of the classes are fully qualified primary school professionals; most of them are Spanish Civil Servants who have obtained their tenured position after competitive exams and all of them have mastered a process of professional qualification that enables them to teach in Spanish Public Schools.

These classes are based on a general curriculum plan which is adapted to students' needs in the different countries where the programme is offered.

Objectives

The aims of the ALCE are:

- To maintain language and cultural links with Spain.
- To provide the students with new intellectual and cultural skills.
- To prepare students for qualified jobs and better international possibilities with the skill of another language spoken by more than 500 million people in the world.
- To relate the students to their heritage.

Lessons take place outside regular school hours, generally between 16.00 and 20.00 hours, Monday to Friday. Students are grouped according to their knowledge of the Spanish language and, if numbers permit, by age. Teaching follows the school calendar year in the different countries from September to June (February to December in Australia). The lessons are conducted at some local schools, but these schools only provide the classrooms and are not responsible for the running of the lessons.

Requirements

In order to enrol, students must fulfil the following requirements:

- Be a Spanish national, the child of a Spanish national or be able to prove that either parent was once a Spanish national. Most students have two nationalities.
- Be enrolled in a Primary or Secondary school.
- Be able to prove that the student is or will be 7 by the end of the school year.

The Curriculum Plan is based on the Common European Framework for Languages.

Level	Class	Year	Age
A1	A1	1	7-8
A2	A2.1	2	8-9
	A2.2	3	9-10
B1	B1.1	4	10-11
	B1.2	5	11-12
B2	B2.1	6	12-13
	B2.2	7	13-14
C1	C1.1	8	14-15
	C1.2	9	15-16
	C1.3	10	16-17

Official Qualifications

At the end of levels B1, B2 and C1 students take a final exam, that is common to all the ALCEs. At the end of the year 10, level C1.3, the Spanish Ministry of Education issues a certificate of level to all the students who have passed the C1 test. These tests are provided by the Spanish government free of charge (no fees) for all our students.

Language Education on the Internet

The students of A1 and A2 levels can now learn on-line using a Language site developed for this purpose: International Classroom (AI: *Aula Internacional* in the Spanish acronym). AI is an interactive platform specially designed, using state-of-the-art technology combined with the latest teaching methods.

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