

Polity IV Country Report 2007: Spain

<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 15%;">Score:</td> <td style="width: 15%;">2006</td> <td style="width: 15%;">2007</td> <td style="width: 15%;">Change</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Polity:</td> <td>10</td> <td>10</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Democ:</td> <td>10</td> <td>10</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Autoc:</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Durable:</td> <td colspan="3">29</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Tentative:</td> <td colspan="3">No</td> </tr> </table>	Score:	2006	2007	Change	Polity:	10	10	0	Democ:	10	10	0	Autoc:	0	0	0	Durable:	29			Tentative:	No			
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SCODE	SPN	CCODE	230	Date of Report	1 November 2008																				
Polity IV Component Variables																									
XRREG	XRCOMP	XROPEN	XCONST	PARREG	PARCOMP																				
3	3	4	7	5	5																				
Date of Most Recent Polity Transition (3 or more point change)																									
End Date		22 November 1975		Begin Date																					
				30 December 1978																					
Polity Fragmentation: No																									
Constitution	1978																								
Executive(s)	Prime Minister Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero (PSOE); initially elected by National Assembly 14 March 2004; reelected 9 and 11 April 2008, 46.9%																								
Legislature	Bicameral: Congress of Deputies (350 seats; proportionally elected; most recent elections, 9 March 2008) Spanish Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE): 169 Popular Party (PP): 154 Other parties: 27 Senate (264 seats; 208 members are directly elected; 56 appointed by regional legislatures; most recent elections, 9 March 2008; <i>note – number of appointed members increased to 56 as of 2008.</i>) PP: 101 PSOE: 88 Other parties: 19 Appointed members: 56																								
Judiciary	General Council of the Judicial Power																								

Narrative Description:¹

Executive Recruitment: Competitive Elections (8)

The prime minister of Spain is recruited through a competitive multiparty electoral system. The majority party (or majority coalition) in the National Assembly selects the chief executive. Members of the National Assembly are popularly elected. In parliamentary elections held on 9 March 2008, Prime Minister José Luís Rodríguez Zapatero's party, the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE), won 169 of 350 seats in the Congress of Deputies, falling just short of a majority. The main opposition party, the Popular Party (PP), won 153 seats and the remaining seats were scattered among small regional parties. Zapatero's re-election failed on the first ballot marking the first time the leader of the largest party failed to win on the first ballot since the electoral system was established in 1975. Zapatero's minority government must seek support from smaller parties on an issue-by-issue basis in order to pass its initiatives into policy.

Executive Constraints: Executive Parity or Subordination (7)

The parliamentary structure of governance found in Spain places significant constraints on the autonomy of the chief executive. The prime minister is elected by, and is directly accountable to, the national legislature. The judiciary is independent from executive influence.

Political Participation: Institutionalized Open Electoral Competition (10)

Spain has a competitive multiparty political system. Freedom of speech and assembly are constitutionally protected and the civil rights of citizens are generally respected. However, conflict between the Basque Fatherland and Liberty (ETA) separatist movement (the largest terrorist group in Europe) and the central government continues to threaten democratic practices in this country. ETA violence, which has claimed over eight hundred lives since the 1960s, resulted in the formation of government-sponsored anti-terrorist death squads in the 1980s. After a temporary cease-fire in 1998-99, the ETA resumed its terrorist activities.

¹ The research described in this report was sponsored by the Political Instability Task Force (PITF). The PITF is funded by the Central Intelligence Agency. The views expressed herein are the authors' alone and do not represent the views of the US Government.