



Charles V Palace in Alhambra



# Andalusia, Spain

## General overview

Andalusia is one of the 17 regions of Spain, located in southwestern Europe. Being the meeting points of Europe and Africa and of the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea, this region has been coveted by many different cultures throughout history and prehistory.

The region's diversity of landscapes and geographical terrain gives rise to a set of environments, ranging from the hot Guadalquivir River valley to the lush mid-mountain areas, volcanic landscapes and snow-capped peaks of the Sierra Nevada. It has a rich culture and a strong identity. Many of its Spanish cultural phenomena are of Andalusian origin, such as flamenco dancing, bullfighting, and Hispano-Moorish architecture.

Historically, Andalusia has been an agricultural region, but its economic growth has been converging with the Spanish average, especially in the industrial and service sectors. Today, with an area of 87 268 km<sup>2</sup> and a population of 8.4 million inhabitants, Andalusia is a modern region, comprising 785 municipalities with well-developed infrastructures. The gross domestic product per capita is €19 530 (2019) and life expectancy at birth for males and females, respectively, is 78.9 and 84.2 years (1).

While being aware of the need to move forward with the times, Andalusia also takes care to maintain its important cultural and monumental heritage, the legacy of its ancestors.

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## Regional activities linked to the WHO European Programme of Work

The following activities are linked to the three core priorities of the European Programme of Work (EPW) (2): (i) moving towards Universal

Health Coverage (UHC); (ii) promoting health and well-being; and (iii) protecting against health emergencies.



### Moving towards UHC

The Public Health System of Andalusia aims to improve the well-being of the population by ensuring universal access to safe and efficient personalized care, based on needs and expectations, and facilitating the continuity of care. Several plans and strategies in support of UHC are either in place or underway.

- The **Social Health Coordination Strategy** (under preparation) regulates collaboration and coordination between the competent regional ministries with the shared objective of providing comprehensive care and being able to guarantee access to health- and social-care services, especially to vulnerable groups, through joint and complementary interventions.
- The **Humanization Plan** endeavours to implement strategies aimed at safeguarding people's dignity and rights, incorporating patient values, ensuring adequate working conditions for professionals, and promoting respect and social responsibility among stakeholders by involving them in decision-making (3).
- The health services have developed **comprehensive plans** to reduce morbidity, premature mortality and disability rates by tackling the main health problems with a high impact on the population. Occasionally, these plans require coordinated, intersectoral action (4).
- The **Andalusian Health Population Database** represents an information system that collects clinical data on people receiving health care, including their use of health resources. It is used in performing longitudinal studies, estimating pathology incidence, making projections on population health and resource needs, and analysing the efficiency of distribution and use (5).



### Promoting health and well-being

In addition to its goals for health promotion, health protection and the prevention of ill-health, the Public Health System of Andalusia is committed to achieving comprehensive health care and to guaranteeing all citizens equal access through public health policies. In Andalusia, comprehensive health care combines the care and preventive aspects of health challenges, such as ageing, chronic disease, multimorbidity, poly medication, frailty and dependence, and the impact of climate change. Several operational tools are in place.

- The **Andalusian Health Plan** prioritizes equal and universal access to health services and the guarantee of health care for all, regardless of status — economic, social or administrative. Through a Health-in-All-Policies approach, it focuses on improving health by reducing

inequalities, enhancing leadership and increasing citizen involvement (6,7).

- The **Health Action Local Network** initiative is aimed at improving the health of the population of each municipality by ensuring quality health care for disease-related problems, as well as safe and healthy social, working and leisure environments, with a focus on food safety, air quality and drinking-water (8).

- The **Andalusian Child and Adolescent Health Programme** focuses on children's rights in the light of inequalities, strategic contexts for socialization and child development (family, school, community environments) and the positive youth development model (9,10,11). This multidisciplinary programme promotes positive parenting and defines health-promotion activities in group and community settings (12).



## Protecting against health emergencies

Several measures are in place in Andalusia towards providing protection against health emergencies.

- The **Public Health Surveillance and Response Strategy 2021–2026** (under development) aims to achieve optimal health levels through health surveillance. This requires coordination among the entities and agencies involved, an evaluation of the existing activities and programmes related to public health surveillance, and early detection and response to health problems and public health alerts. The Strategy will allow consolidation of the Epidemiological Surveillance System and the Integral Alert System, as well as the surveillance of communicable and noncommunicable diseases through appropriate protocols, taking factors that affect health into consideration.
- The **Genomic Epidemiology Integrated System of Andalusia**, which is based on the “One Health” approach, collects and sequences food, environmental and human samples from the Andalusian network of Public, Animal and Plant Health Laboratories and nominated hospital-based clinical laboratories, and generates a report for each sample. This has led to the creation of a genomic database of microorganisms in Andalusia (13).
- In response to the question, “**How to face the coronavirus crisis in a healthy way**”, the use of information and communications technologies can become a great ally. To help the public cope with expected adverse emotional reactions to the crisis in a healthy way, the Regional Ministry of Health of Andalusia publishes tips on its website to promote healthy-lifestyle habits and recommendations developed by other public agencies and institutions (14). Despite situations of isolation and limited mobility, health-promoting habits related to food, physical activity and sleep can be maintained on a daily basis.

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## Actions linked to the EPW flagship initiatives

(The Mental Health Coalition; Empowerment through digital health; The European Immunization Agenda 2030; Healthy behaviours: incorporating behavioural and cultural insights.)

### *Initiatives relative to the Mental Health Coalition*

- The **Shock Plan** incorporates the involvement of community-intensive treatment teams and clinical psychologists and interaction between care facilitators, aiming to strengthen associative movement through activities with patients and their families.
- The **Andalusian Suicide Prevention Plan** (under development) aims to homogenize lines of action in the area of mental health (for example, assessment of suicide risk in digital health care, web-based activities).

### *Initiatives relative to empowerment through digital health*

- **ClicSalud+** is a web-based platform, providing citizens access to their clinical reports and test results, as well as information on their current health problems, allergies and contraindications (15).
- The EnBuenaEdad (**In good age**) platform provides information and resources aimed at promoting health among older people and encouraging their participation in safety courses (17,18).
- **Salud Andalucía** centralizes the mobile applications of various institutions (for example, Salud Responde, Dona Sangre, Mi Prescripción, Vacunas or Radar COVID) approved by the Public Health System of Andalusia, provides access to ClicSalud+ and promotes active and healthy ageing through digital solutions (16).
- The initiative entitled, “**An open window to the family**”, provides information on safeguarding the health, development, and well-being of children. Upon registration, participants receive messages related to child care, health, and development, and are welcome to pose questions (19).

### *Initiatives relative to the European Immunization Agenda 2030*

- The **ANDAVAC project** involves training health professionals in the dissemination of vaccines, and providing them and the public with relative updates thereon (20).
- The **Andalusian Strategic Plan for Vaccinations** includes vaccines for all ages (not only those applicable in childhood) as well as indications for adapting other vaccination calendars. It applies to the whole of Andalusia.

### *Initiative relative to healthy behaviours: incorporating behavioural and cultural insight*

- The **Strategy for the Promotion of Healthy Living in Andalusia** (under development) focuses on promoting healthy habits among the population through interventions at the local level, in all environments and all policies, and on tackling the determinants that generate health inequalities. It addresses the importance of healthy sleep, emotional well-being, responsible sexuality, and the positive use of information and communication technology.

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## Initiative specific to Andalusia

In public health, health surveillance must provide a comprehensive analysis of the health of the population and different groups. This requires a powerful information system which, by incorporating primary data sources, can validate the data and analyse their relationship.

The **Information System for Public Health Surveillance of Andalusia** (under preparation), which relates to Core Priority 3 of the EPW, Protecting against health emergencies (2), will

support the Epidemiological Surveillance System of Andalusia in: the surveillance of communicable and noncommunicable diseases, injuries and other health conditions, occupational health, and environmental health and food safety; early warning and rapid response; and other public health events of interest. The information system is committed to: (a) disseminating epidemiological knowledge to professionals and the public; and (b) enhancing open access to microdata for analysis and research purposes.

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## The three most important topics for collaboration within the Regions for Health Network

These are:

1. the Public Health Surveillance and Response Strategy
2. the Strategy for the Promotion of Healthy Living in Andalusia
3. health impact assessment (21).

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## Main partners and collaborators

These are:

- dependent entities of the Regional Ministry of Health and Consumers of Andalusia, namely: the Andalusian Health Service, the Andalusian School of Public Health, and the Andalusian Public Foundation Progress and Health;
- other departments of the regional Government, such as the Department for Education, Equality and Social Policies, and municipalities involved in the Health Action Local Network.



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