

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



## SPAIN FOREIGN ACTION STRATEGY **2025-2028**

Foreign policy with  
a distinct identity

The new **Foreign Action Strategy 2025-2028** is a roadmap through which Spain sets out how it will respond to a global landscape undergoing seismic changes. It is an **ambitious yet realistic** strategy, tailored to the new international context through a **distinct foreign policy** that staunchly defends our interests and remains committed to the values that define us as a society. Its aim is to ensure that Spain's place in the world enables our citizens to fulfil their life goals, recognizing that many decisions affecting their daily lives are made beyond our national borders.

To maintain and enhance our influence in this new context, Spain will seek to transform its national **strengths** into levers for more effective foreign action. The ultimate goal is to help build a more just, stable, and secure world. These strengths include an internationalized, growing economy, a leading position in renewable energies, an open, diverse, pro-European and tolerant society, increasing soft power rooted in our languages and cultural industries, and a strategic geographic location. Together, these assets enable Spain to consolidate its position and influence globally.

We live in uncertain times, in an **era marked by the fragility of peace and the international order**. The year 2025 marks the third anniversary of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, and violence continues to escalate throughout our strategic environment—from the Sahel to the Middle East. The world faces enormous challenges due to a reconfiguration of the factors that determine power, with destabilizing consequences.

This new context stems from three systemic shifts that have reshaped the international landscape and require Spain to adjust its foreign action accordingly.

The first of these changes is a transition from a rules-based order to power-based dynamics. The erosion of international law, the rise in conflicts, and growing impunity pose serious threats to peace and stability. **Spain must adopt a more strategic approach to foreign action**, defending multilateralism and international law.

Secondly, Spain faces a context of economic fragmentation and growing strategic competition. Global economic dynamics are shifting from a focus on efficiency—the hallmark of globalization—to an emphasis on resilience and risk mitigation. These changes are reshaping trade and investment frameworks, requiring Spain to **balance economic openness with increased economic security**.

Lastly, democratic societies are facing multiple challenges in an increasingly polarized climate, marked by the rise of disinformation that threatens

democratic stability and undermines social consensus. Spain must **continue to promote open, inclusive societies** and preserve internal cohesion as the foundation of its global engagement.

The 2025-2028 Foreign Action Strategy addresses these transformations of the international scenario through three cross-cutting principles aiming to ensure: **(A) a stronger Europe; (B) a committed Spain; and (C) a Spain that builds peace and security.**

### **A stronger Europe**

**To defend the interests of Spanish citizens today, our response must first and foremost be European.** This reflects the strong pro-European convictions of Spanish society and the belief that only at the European level can we attain the necessary influence to play a decisive role in a rapidly evolving global order. Therefore, we must strengthen the stability, resilience, and effectiveness of the European Union. In the face of multiple crises, **Europe must respond with ambition and courage.**

In recent years, the European Union has endured three major shocks—the pandemic, Russia's aggression, and the energy crisis—yet it has successfully coordinated an effective response to all of them. The challenge now is to build on this **strategic awakening** and solidify the EU's role as a true **geopolitical actor**. Retaining control over our political, economic, and technological future requires making difficult decisions collectively. We must adopt a long-term perspective—expanding, improving and accelerating our actions— and, above all, working together as Europeans.

Spain supports a **qualitative leap in common policies and their funding**, alongside institutional transformations. To this end, we will advocate for **a more ambitious European budget** that ensures the EU's capacity for action and response. We also support **reforming the decision-making process** by extending qualified majority voting to new areas, such as foreign policy, in order to prevent paralysis. Spain will champion **EU enlargement**, which must be accompanied by **realistic reforms of the Union** to continue advancing and prepare us to move forward with a greater number of Member States.

We also support a **Europe that assumes greater responsibility for its own security**. The Union's open strategic autonomy must be underpinned by a **comprehensive approach to security** that encompasses domains beyond traditional defence. We must strengthen autonomy by expanding our **shared capabilities and resources**, including further development of the European defence technological and industrial base. In a world marked by greater

conflict and division, Europe's **external action must be better coordinated** to maximize the impact of our political and budgetary efforts. This will entail an **improved dialogue with our global partners**—based on equality and on Europe's example of principled leadership. Equally, we must foster a stronger **strategic convergence** among Member States in their assessment of threats to European security, with a 360-degree security approach.

In the face of current challenges, **social cohesion** is not only imperative in the interest of ethics and equity, it is also a strategic asset. It reinforces our security at a time when foreign actors seek to exploit divisions within democratic societies. That is why Spain will champion **cohesion policy** and initiatives that bring Europeans closer together, such as Erasmus+, while continuing to support the development of the **European Pillar of Social Rights**.

Effective European external action is not possible without a robust power base, particularly in the economic domain. The EU must bridge the innovation gap with global competitors in key sectors that will shape the economy of the future. In that respect, Spain will work to **increase competitiveness** through a robust commitment to **the green, digital, and social transitions** as drivers of economic growth in Europe. This includes promoting **re-industrialization, deepening the Single Market, fully realizing the Banking Union, and strengthening the international role of the euro**.

Yet, economic fragmentation is on the rise. This compels us to **incorporate economic security** into the decision-making process to reduce risks. The weaponization of interdependences and the spread of barriers to trade are forcing us to re-examine the trade-off between efficiency and security, paying more attention to the latter. The EU, as the world's most open economic region, is particularly vulnerable to protectionist trends. In this context, Spain aims to **reduce vulnerabilities and critical dependencies** by **guaranteeing the security of our supply chains and safeguarding access to key raw materials and technologies**; **anticipate threats and equipping ourselves with more tools** to counter economic coercion; and **broadening our network of trading partners**, as trading more and with more reliable partners will enhance our autonomy.

### A committed Spain

**Multilateral institutions are at a critical juncture.** Global trends of increasing geostrategic competition are hindering multilateral cooperation, precisely when it is needed most. In this context, our first goal is to **preserve, reform, and strengthen the multilateral system**, upon whose effectiveness—or

paralysis—depends our capacity to **address global challenges** that, from climate change to pandemic prevention, have a tangible impact on the people's lives. Spain is committed to safeguarding the achievements of multilateralism while supporting reforms that enhance inclusiveness and better reflect the structure of today's international community.

As part of the efforts to strengthen our multilateral engagement, Spain will continue to **protect and promote human rights, support reforms in international economic and financial governance, design ethical and responsible technological governance and reinforce our feminist foreign policy**. Where multilateral solutions fall short, Spain will pursue flexible cooperation mechanisms to advance shared interests effectively. We will also **promote safe, orderly and regular migration**, without renouncing to the principles of humanity and responsibility, and with the conviction that our economic dynamism and the sustainability of our welfare model depends partly on migration.

In the midst of a global crisis of solidarity, the world needs more development cooperation, not less. Spain will continue to champion **development cooperation and humanitarian action** as essential tools for addressing collective challenges. We will continue to spearhead the **green transition** through environmental diplomacy and the fight against the climate emergency, as a pillar of our foreign action. In this regard, Spain will pursue **competitive decarbonization** as an opportunity for the country's industry, thus ensuring that climate neutrality objectives go hand in hand with a just transition, while promoting the economic sectors of the future.

### A Spain that builds peace and security

Spain's response must not disregard **the security of our citizens**. This entails **adapting to a more complex world** in which Europe no longer benefits from the peace dividend of the past decades. The new context obliges Spain and Europe to **take greater responsibility in their defence** and to make greater contributions to shared security as providers of security in the framework of the EU, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the United Nations. Spain seeks to strengthen the architecture for arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament and will maintain its commitment to the fight against terrorism.

At the same time, Spain will aim to **build peace through a consistent and coherent defence of international law**, monitoring compliance with the rules of international humanitarian law in all circumstances and in all conflicts. In this regard, Spain will continue to support international courts in their

**fight against impunity**, and will strengthen our capacity as a **mediator**.

We must also **increase the resilience of our democracy**. In an era marked by unprecedented interconnection, we paradoxically find ourselves divided. Algorithmic biases, increased disinformation and a rise in hate speech are not mere technical challenges, but threats to our very social cohesion, making us more vulnerable to radicalization and foreign interference. In view of the risks posed by deregulation, Spain advocates for **greater transparency, neutrality and accountability** from technological platforms, with a **human-centred and rights-based approach and increased international coordination**. In addition, for its foreign action to be effective, Spain must **safeguard its internal cohesion**, and that entails addressing citizens' demands, combating inequality, and addressing the demographic challenge.

## Spain in the world

Spain's foreign action will continue to unfold region by region, with a dual focus on its Euro-Atlantic and Mediterranean dimensions, and through its global presence.

Now more than ever, circumstances call for **investment in our strategic environment**, experiencing mounting instability: from the Sahel to the Middle East, including Ukraine. This involves paying special attention to our immediate neighbours and to the neighbours of our neighbours. That is, to the countries—in Eastern Europe, West Africa, North Africa, and the Middle East—that constitute our wider neighbourhood, which give rise to **many of the challenges that directly affect Spain's security and prosperity**. In order to address the difficulties and leverage the opportunities offered by this space, over the coming years Spain will **expand its diplomatic presence** on the ground until we achieve full coverage of our strategic environment, as well as boosting political dialogue and offering support to our neighbours in the areas of economic development, security and governance.

Spain aims to **strengthen bilateral relations with our partners in Europe beyond the EU**; maintain our **comprehensive support to Ukraine** in the defence of its sovereignty; and **accompany the accession processes of the Western Balkans** and other candidates for EU membership.

**Latin America and the Caribbean is a constant presence in Spain's identity and its foreign action**. In recent years, Spain has put Latin America at the heart of the European Union agenda, with

the first summit between the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States and the EU (CELAC-EU Summit) in eight years, during the Spanish Presidency of the Council of the European Union in 2023. Spain has worked tirelessly to promote the agreements with MERCOSUR, Chile and Mexico, while maintaining an intense bilateral agenda. For the coming four years, the aim is to build on this work and **strengthen the Ibero-American space**. Based on shared values and convergent interests, Spain will work with the region to expand our collective influence in multilateral forums and in the major discussions concerning the global agenda. Likewise, we aspire to **deepen mutually beneficial equitable economic relations** in the face of a scenario of economic fragmentation.

We will strengthen our relations with the countries of the Mediterranean basin in the **Maghreb** and the **Middle East**, with a firm commitment to peace and stability in our Southern Neighbourhood. Spain will continue to foster close, dialogue-based relationships with the countries of **North America**. We will also intensify our engagement with **Africa** by making further investments aimed at achieving a qualitative leap in our relations with Africa, guided by the implementation of the new Spain-Africa Strategy 2025-2028, with special emphasis to West Africa. At the same time, we will work to enhance Spain's profile in **Asia-Pacific**, with a new strategy for the region. We will also strengthen our presence in the **South Caucasus** and **Central Asia**. Across all these regions, Spain will redouble its efforts to **promote our culture and languages**, as assets that contribute to our standing and influence abroad.

To be able to make effective the priorities and goals set in this Strategy, Spain must reflect on how to adapt our foreign action instruments to the challenges described previously. Firstly, efforts will be made to equip our Foreign Service to better serve the interests of Spanish citizens in this new context, by adapting our diplomatic deployment to current needs, digitalizing the tools we work with, and training and investing in our human capital, which forms the backbone of our foreign action. To bolster Spain's global projection, it will be vital to make better use of the knowledge and experience of the three million Spanish citizens who live beyond our borders.

Lastly, we must not forget that **foreign action concerns us all**, including all branches of government, public authorities, and our civil society, including Spanish citizens abroad. We will therefore continue to improve coordination with all stakeholders, so that they can contribute with their knowledge and experience to enriching the design of a **broad-based foreign action**.