



Country guide for new EPIET/EUPHEM fellows

INSTITUTO DE SALUD CARLOS III – MADRID (SPAIN)

Last updated: February 2022

Camille Jacqueline (camjacqueline.pro@gmail.com) – Current fellow

Lucia Reh (lucia.reh@isciii.es)

Fatima Amaro (ffalcao@isciii.es)

Patricia Ndumbi (pndumbi@isciii.es)

Horacio Gil Gil (hgil@isciii.es)

Konstantinos Koutendakis (koutendakis@gmail.com)

Please note:

This is a living document. If you find any information to be incorrect or out of date, or there is anything you wish to add, please amend the guide (and date it accordingly) and send the new version to your cohort representative for uploading onto the EAN country guides website. Thank you.

NIE (Numero de Identificación de Extranjero)

THIS NUMBER IS VERY IMPORTANT FOR ALL OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES. You have no NIE – You get nothing. Without this document you cannot sign the contract, open a bank account, rent a flat etc.

There are two types of NIE: temporary and permanent. The number is the same but still temporary NIEs are not accepted equally.

Last experience (2021): You can ask for the temporary NIE in the consulate of Spain in your country. It is really easy to obtain it and it takes less than two weeks. You will need to show your passport and fill two forms EX-15 and the tax form 790. You'll also have to prepare an envelope at your address and a check of 14 euros. All of this should be described on the consulate webpage.

Alternatively previous fellow reported that the **temporary NIE** can be requested from the **police office at Calle San Felipe 7**. There, a little bit of English is spoken.

This webpage well describes the process and the documents required:

<https://www.spotahome.com/blog/how-to-get-a-nie-number-in-madrid-a-guide-for-eu-citizens/>

Except for the ING bank (we will get back to that) the permanent NIE was not necessary.

If you still want to obtain the permanent NIE, here is what previous fellows advised:

The permanent NIE can only be obtained a short time before the start of the work contract. It requires an online appointment which can be hard to get, especially in September/October. An alternative is to get the temporary NIE first (which at least allows you to get a Spanish pre-paid SIM card) while waiting for the appointment.

The permanent NIE needs to be requested from the office of foreigners. There is one at: Avda. Padre Piquer, 18 (metro Campamento, línea 10). You have to arrange an online appointment by yourself in advance (see the link below).

Make the appointment online before arriving to Spain (it is the only way you can do it, even if you go to the police office, they will give you the link and send you home).

Arrange this appointment BEFORE you sign the contract because you will need this number in order for your contract to be processed. Usually they give you a temporary NIE, which will allow you to sign the contract and give you ten days to come back to the office of foreigners to show the contract. You can only obtain your definitive NIE if you show them a signed contract.

Steps to get the appointment online:

1. Go to <https://sede.administracionespublicas.gob.es/icpplus/citar>
2. Choose Madrid & CERTIFICADOS UE
3. You get forwarded then to INTERNET CITA PREVIA where you mark Tipo de documento: PASAPORTE, then, insert your passport number and your name 4. Then you choose SOLICITAR CITA on the next step
5. It offers only one place to have the appointment (cita) --- Padre Piquer 18
6. Then you insert your contact details (enough with telephone number and/or e---mail)
7. Choose the date from three that are offered :)

Also, before you go to this appointment you have to fill up the document "EX---18" and bring it with you when you go there. You will find it in the following link:

<http://www.ub.edu/uri/Documents/ex18.pdf>

Documents you need to have with you on the day of appointment:

- a). Filled out EX---18 form --- you can fill it yourself or ask for help from someone in ISCIII b). Your passport (and a simple copy)
- c). Some kind of document that proves that you are going to work in ISCIII (e.g. a letter from the Director of the National Centre of Epidemiology)
- e). Tasa modelo 790 (Cod. 12) which is a tax form and costs 10,50 euros. The best is to arrive 1 hour earlier and get it from the office of foreigners – then go to pay for it at any bank nearby.

Bank offices that are not close to Calle San Felipe 7 or Padre Piquer 18 usually are not familiar with the tax form. Therefore it is recommended to do the payment right before the appointment.

These steps are also described here:

<http://extranjeros.empleo.gob.es/es/InformacionInteres/InformacionProcedimientos/CiudadanosComunitarios/hoja102/index.html>):

Accommodation

Landlords

Some landlords will require a 'nomina' which is a salary slip (which you will obviously not have when you arrive) but you can try to show your contract which will have your monthly salary and/or your ECDC letter as well as the decision of the director of the EDCD regarding salary of the fellowship.

Others may require an 'aval bancario' which means that your bank can guarantee your payments.

However, some landlords do not require a salary slip.

Recommendations/Suggestions

If you can, please try to find a place to stay before going to the introductory course! In August and in the beginning of September there are many available apartments but in October most of them are already rented by university students. On the other hand, you probably don't know the city yet and need some time to decide which area you'd prefer to live in. In that case you can get a temporary accommodation for 2--4 weeks and use the first few weeks of your fellowship (which are a bit slow anyway) to get to know the city and figure out where you would like to live. It is your choice and you have to see the pros and cons. During your search make sure you filter the flats properly. There is a big difference between interior and exterior i.e. whether the flat faces the street or the interior court with other buildings (there are some windows literally facing walls in interior apartments). This makes a difference with how much light enters and the noise level but also regarding the price. Interior flats are usually cheaper. Zones where to live are very dependent on the person, so it is better to ask your colleagues before you start looking.

It is also a good idea to live somewhere with easy public transport access to work. The metro and train stops for EPIETS is Chamartin (metro line 1, metro line 10 or cercania train lines) whereas for EUPHEM you take a 20 minutes bus (Isla 3, Dársena 38, Linea 553), from Moncloa metro station (Intercambiador). There are also shuttle busses to Majadahonda from various parts of the city in the morning. The, however, only return in the early afternoon on the same route. The evening bus only takes the route via Moncloa, Cuatro Caminos to Nuevos Ministerios.

Some nice and lively areas are La Latina, Salamanca and Malasaña which are, however, not necessarily well connected to the busses to Majadahonda. Depending on where you want to live the price will vary. For shared accommodation expect to pay between 300-600 euros a month if you want to be relatively close to the centre. For apartments/studios, expect to pay around 700-800 euros a month for a furnished place not too far from the town centre. It's recommended that you do live close to town, otherwise you will almost definitely need a car, especially if working in Majadahonda. Madrid is well connected by public transport. Good places to start looking for apartments include www.idealista.com, www.segundamano.es, or www.fotocasa.es. Also, walking in the area where you would like to live, you can find postings for apartments to rent.

Empadronamiento

As soon as you find a place to live, you should register at the town hall to get what is called the "padron", which is the proof of address. This document is also very important for most of the other administrative procedures. Again, you will need to make an appointment online first using this link: www.madrid.es/citaprevia. You can go to any administrative service point in Madrid. The closest one to the institute is located at 40, Avda Monforte de Lemos, but you can easily find a location that suits you best online.

You need to bring the following documents with you:

--- Your passport

--- Your NIE. Sometimes the temporary one would be enough but they can give you a hard time. Nevertheless if you explain the situation they should not make too much fuss about it.

--- An original copy of your rental contract (with the address). If you do not have a rental contract for some reason, they might accept a letter from your landlord confirming that you live at the address.

--- If you have roommates with a padron at the same address or if your landlord is registered at this address then you will need their padron too.

Social security (pension and health)

Ask for your social security number online before coming to Spain. You'll need it for your contract. You can do it with this link :

https://www.tarjetasocialdigital.es/wps/portal/tsu/TSocial/AccesoTSU!/ut/p/z1/hY7LDolwEEW_hQVL6diKVneNjwUhEqIodmNAa8FUSlrk-yVqXKHObuaeczOloTxKmtLmTWlrljLV7Qc-PvoRhWEAOIziDYEYpmxByRpDgtH-H8C7GL4Mg87nT-TTAIRiYKsJZrtkS5bz0Rv40REgLpXOX--yKidUIm7ERRhvhLvpzkXT1HbmggtWnlVnhRxYfSoz5Umde8K60KcW2jYo7TdQfUvh6qs2Z17zAFbSl_4!/dz/d5/L2dBISevZ0FBIS9nQSEh/

With the contract you receive full health-care (which in Spain covers everything besides dental care) and unemployment benefits.

With that number, your NIE and passport, your padron and your work contract you then have to register at the closest health care centre to your flat. To identify the health care centre associated with your address you can use this website: <http://centrossanitarios.sanidadmadrid.org>. Select "Centro de Salud que te corresponde según tu domicilio" and fill in the data required.

They will create you sanitary card. You might have to wait for up to a month to get it after you get your appointment.

Bank Account

You will need that for your work contract! To open a bank account, you will need to have your NIE number (or passport). Most banks require a permanent (!) NIE number at the moment you open the account. If you don't have one then I'll advise to open a bank account online at N26. No complain so far and they have a great system to transfer money abroad.

In the Center

- Work contract: You will probably have a bit of delay in receiving your work contract (for me it took almost one month). Make sure to sign it on your first day.
- Ficha/Access card: You can ask a temporary one on your first day. It can take a while to be activated. Meanwhile, you need to ask for a permanent one. They will ask you to send a picture of you by email and it can take a few weeks/months.
- Nomina: It comes at the end of the month. First, you will probably not receive your first paycheck until October (you receive both months then). Another trick is that your annual salary is split in 14 months and you will receive the equivalent of 2 salaries on December and June.
- When you work in Majadahonda, you'll need a blood analyses to start working in the lab. For that take an appointment with the service of preventative medicine
- Finally, if you are planning to work in a P3 you'll need to do a reconocimiento laboral/ work medicine visit. You'll have to ask the preventative medicine to schedule that for you.

Other

Mobile phone / Internet...

If you don't have a Spanish bank account you'll only be able to have a pre-paid sim card. Vodafone is said to have good coverage but bad service. You can really choose any company. You will need only your Passport or NIE. In case you need a mobile contract along with a landline with internet you need of course a permanent address and your NIE. You might want to avoid contracting Movistar as they have a TERRIBLE customer service programme, take forever to install the internet at home and are more expensive than a lot of the other companies. They also have a poor coverage.

Language schools

It is vital to learn Spanish as it is the working language and will help you integrate into Spanish life. If you can, start learning Spanish before you come to Spain. Spanish people either don't speak English or they are shy to do so. Therefore, no efforts will be made to switch to English to integrate non-Spanish speakers! There are several schools that have group lessons in the evening, for example the International House or the Instituto Cervantes. I can advice Spaneasy as they have classes for all levels and extensive program of 4h a week as well as personal classes.

In Spain, individual classes (which also exist online) are more expensive but well affordable with the ECDC budget for language courses (1500 euros for language classes). If you go private, you have to find a teacher or a school that can provide you invoice (factura) that in turn you submit it to ISCIII to pay directly the teacher. **Be careful that the date on the invoice need to be posterior at the date were ISCIII declare the expense.** Speak with your supervisor to allocate this money on the years you want to use them. If you want to use all the money in the first e.g, 16 months, this must be written on the agreement between ISCII & ECDC and you can fix it the first 3 months of your stay in the ISCIII with your coordinator. You can find some online classes at: www.duolingo.com // <http://www.bbc.co.uk/languages/spanish/>

Relocation

ECDC is not permitted to release details on companies that have been approved in the past, so the relocation process can be a significant administrative burden. To aid you in choosing a company, contact current or previous fellows. You need to find a company that can provide you an invoice and you need to be able to prove the payment from your bank account. All receipts/invoices must include your full name, date, outbound and inbound origin and the reason e.g. relocation (advice: write the reason in Spanish: GASTOS DE MUDANZA DESDE PAÍS X A PAÍS Y). Only costs for relocation will be covered, not for things you need to buy after your move (so plan well!).

Reimbursements tips

All your travel and removal costs will be reimbursed once you submit all the legal receipts to the ISCIII HR Dept. advice: do it as soon as possible because the budget are closing after mid-October in ISCIII). But always ask your supervisor if something has changed.

At the beginning of the fellowship you will have a lot of expenses (flight tickets, relocation, pension, health insurance, language course, apartment deposit fee etc.). ECDC has in the past taken approximately four months to reimburse expenses (e.g. it is possible that you will make two or three pension/insurance payments before they are reimbursed), so **it is wise to have a couple of thousand euros in your bank account at the start of the fellowship to help with cash flow.**

Life in Spain

Meeting people

Spain and Spanish people are very friendly and welcoming if you have a basic knowledge of Spanish. Without Spanish, however, you can feel excluded and lonely sometimes. A good way of meeting people (Spanish as well as other foreigners) is the MeetUp platform online. Here, people organize all kinds of activities (sports, eating out, language exchanges etc).

Sports

Most people in Madrid do sports in the gym. Gyms are quite expensive (usually around 50€/months) and surprisingly many have a waiting list. Cheaper gyms are basic fit and Altafit. Only few gyms allow you to pay other rates than monthly. One exception is Centro el Horno, a dancing school combined with a gym that allows for paying only for the classes that you take.

There are plenty of public swimming pools in the city but only few are suitable for sport swimming. One (small and crowded but nice) is the CDM Escuelas de San Antón which belongs to the official pools of the city (Piscinas municipales Madrid). Here, you can also take swimming and aqua fit classes without buying a monthly membership fee (you only pay for the classes).

Sightseeing/Cultural activities

Madrid is a nice, cultural city with people from all over the country living here. As a royal city, it has very nice parks (e.g. Retiro, Parque de Oeste, Casa de Campo), museums, operas etc. Plenty to offer for nightlife as well. There is a good mix of foreign students (French/English/American), expats and tourists and places catered to them. A little fact: Madrid is the city with the most trees and taxis of Europe.

Madrid is particularly known for its museums. For people younger than 26, most of them are free. If you are older, there are still some hours during the week to avoid the (quite elevated) entry fees:

<https://caminandopormadrid.com/horarios-gratuitos-de-los-museos-de-madrid>

The official event homepage of Madrid is quite useful to provide an updated schedule of events in the city: <https://www.esmadrid.com/en/whats-on-madrid>

If you are interested in parties and good suggestions I suggest you follow the Instagram account Mundo Fomo, Madrid secreto and Visita_Madrid.

Getting around

Driving licence: If you have a European driving licence, you can perfectly use it in Spain. If not you'll have to get a Spanish one.

The public transport system in Madrid is one of the best in Europe and comparatively cheap. Tickets that you can buy are usually valid for Metro and Bus as you cannot buy tickets on the city busses. You can buy single tickets, tickets for 10 rides, tourist passes for several days (usually the 10-ride ticket is the better deal), monthly tickets and yearly tickets. To go to the airport by metro, you need to buy a surcharge. For single tickets and 10 ride tickets, you still need to buy a plastic card at the machines which can be recharged. For monthly and yearly tickets, a personal transport pass is needed with which you can then buy the tickets at the machines. The personal transport pass can either be obtained at big metro stations (e.g. Sol, book an appointment before going because the line is quite long):

https://www.metromadrid.es/en/viaja_en_metro/Tarifasybilletes/TTP/index.html

Monthly tickets for the city zone A cost 54,60 €. If you want to use it to go to Majadahonda (if not using the free institute shuttle) you need a ticket for up to zone B2, which costs 72€.

The systems of metro and bus are not jointly organized and therefore it can be hard to particularly find bus schedules. The apps of Metro Madrid and EMT Madrid (the bus system) can help:

https://www.metromadrid.es/en/viaja_en_metro/APP/index.html

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.emtmadrid.emt&hl=en>

Additionally, there are urban trains and interurban busses. Google maps covers all city busses but not the buses leaving the city (Interurbanos), e.g. going to Majadahonda. These apps can help to find the way:

<https://itunes.apple.com/es/app/interurbanos-madrid/id912349132?mt=8n> (provides real-time bus schedules when inserting the number of the bus stop)

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.citymapper.app.release&hl=en> (also works in other cities!)

Last but not least, the city of Madrid offers electric bicycles to rent at different stops in the city:

<https://www.bicimad.com/>

Madrid is not a bike friendly city (even though the situation is improving), so biking outside the small roads and without a helmet is not recommended. Further, bikes get very (!) frequently stolen and you should not leave your bike somewhere for several hours.

Getting out

While Madrid has a lot to offer, its surroundings are equally beautiful. Historic cities worth seeing include Toledo, Segovia, El Escorial, Ávila and Salamanca and can be visited on a day trip. A useful website to compare bus and train tickets is: <https://www.goeuro.com>

Also mountains for hiking and even skiing and snow-shoeing are close to Madrid and surprisingly well connected with the public transport. Trails are often well-marked and suggestions can be found on wikilog: <https://www.wikiloc.com/>

Still, it can be easier to go with groups in the beginning. Several hiking groups can be found on MeetUp. Other organizations are:

Arawak <http://www.arawakviajes.com/senderismo/>

Geográfica <http://www.geographica.es/productos/category/10/8>

Tierra de Fuego <http://tierradefuego.es/>

Last but not least...

The lifestyle, both at work and in social life is naturally different than in other parts of Europe. As such, unless you have already lived in a Mediterranean country, be prepared to live and work in a style you may not be used to 😊😊