



## Society and Living Standards

### Task: Spain's Living Standards

#### Activity 1: Listening

Welcome to a practice listening task for the GESE 8.

You are going to hear a talk about **Spain's Living Standards**. You will hear the talk twice. The first time, just listen. Then I'll ask you to tell me generally what the speaker is talking about. Are you ready?

#### Audio Script

Have you ever thought about how living standards have changed in your country when comparing it to the past? Young people of Spain live in a much different society than their great-grandparents did.

**So to continue**, if we analyze the past, we are able to see some fundamental differences. People were connected more to religion in the past; being a predominantly catholic country and many people were quite religious. Another aspect that is different from today is the amount that people lived. Most people are aware that in the bygone days, people had a 40-year shorter lifespan in general when compared to people of today. There were many medical aspects that were still developing or even unknown. Something else that was lacking in the past was that of housing. Citizens of Spain **had gone** through a housing shortage for some time until housing was created. **Despite** the creation of these houses in 1961, they were only really being created for affluent middle-class families. However, in 1980 this had to be readdressed about still needing housing because of the poor conditions people continued to have to live in. Now, if you consider technology, most people really enjoy watching television. Back in the day, when TV was introduced to Spain in 1956, there were only two government run channels, which were solely in Castilian Spanish. One more difference would be that of transportation. The capital of Spain, Madrid, used to have 50 tram lines that no longer exist today, being replaced with buses, trains and the underground.

**Although** Spain has gone through many changes, perhaps one of the most notable is the roles that women play in modern day society. Women have become more equal. We can witness this partly in the fact that they have more educational and employment opportunities. Additionally, Spain has gone through a rapid change in diversity compared to other countries in Europe. It was once closed off from other countries, but has quickly caught up in most aspects to the rest of Europe.

Also, **in spite of** living standards having improved in many ways, one concerning things that is happening in Spain during present times is that people are having fewer children than in the past. Society in Spain is notably an older society, and this is worrisome due to covering future employment and maintaining the retirement funds. Moreover, we **have been seeing a** notable influence in technology these days. With the advancement in technology the sectors that have benefited from these are that of education, healthcare, businesses, family life, socializing and so on. As a final thought, not all has been for the best. **Many experts have**

mentioned the challenges with the environment. Nowadays, there is more air contamination, prolonged droughts, extreme flooding, global pandemics and illnesses, among other things. If past generations had known how they were affecting the environment, they would have done things differently for it to be in a better condition these days.

As a whole, living standards are constantly changing from generation to generation, with the social, environmental and global changes in the world. It is a much different world today and as a consequence of the changes of today, the standard of living will yet change again for future generations, but hopefully for the better.

Can you tell me in one or two sentences what the speaker was talking about?

Now listen to the talk again. This time make some notes as you listen, if you want to. Then I'll ask you to tell me about how the living standards have changed from the past to the present.

Now tell me about how the living standards have changed from the past to the present. You have one minute to talk.

This is the end of the listening task.

**Answers:**

Living Standards in Spain in the Past	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Catholic country, religious</li> <li>• People had a 40-year shorter lifespan</li> <li>• Housing shortage; created housing for affluent middle-class families in 1961 and in 1980 still needed more housing because conditions were poor</li> <li>• When TV was introduced to Spain in 1956, there were only two government run channels in Castilian Spanish</li> <li>• Transportation; Madrid used to have 50 tram lines that no longer exist</li> </ul>
Living Standards in Spain in the Present	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Women have become more equal, more educational and employment opportunities</li> <li>• Rapid change in society in diversity</li> <li>• People are having less children than in the past; worrisome for future employment and retirement funds</li> <li>• Influence of technology and sectors benefited; education, healthcare, businesses, family life, socializing</li> <li>• Challenges with the environment; more air contamination, prolonged droughts, extreme flooding, global pandemics and illnesses</li> </ul>

Marks: +\_ / +10



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**Grammar Used in the listening task:**

- **Past Perfect**
- **Present Perfect Continuous**
- **Reported Speech**
- **Third Conditional**
- **Connectors**
  - **So to continue**
  - **Although**
  - **In spite / despite**