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# Spain Small Business Export Report

Promoting Growth and Resilience

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## INTRODUCTION

Digital technology combined with ecommerce marketplace models are expanding economic opportunities available to independent small businesses and entrepreneurs around the world. This is especially true in Spain, which has Europe's fifth largest and increasingly digitally connected population, a growing tech base of skilled firms and workers, vibrant small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) that are proving increasingly receptive to online opportunities, and products that are valuable to consumers worldwide.

eBay, a global commerce leader, is leveling the playing field and empowering small businesses across Spain to collectively reach

consumers in over two hundred international export markets.<sup>1</sup> It is proving its value for entrepreneurial SMEs in Spain, helping them export more, including to valuable consumer markets that are not top destinations for traditional Spanish businesses.

The cross-border trade analysis in this report is based on data covering transactions on the eBay marketplace in 2024 unless otherwise indicated. When analyzing the activities of small businesses on eBay, the data were limited to transactions by registered businesses in Spain with sales of EUR 9,240 (equivalent to USD 10,000) or more annually on the eBay marketplace.<sup>2</sup> In this report, these sellers are referred to as "eBay small businesses."

# SME digitalisation and trade: core components of Spain's economic strategy

Micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises play an enormous role in the Spanish economy, accounting for 99 percent of its businesses<sup>3</sup>, 61 percent of employment<sup>4</sup>, and 61 percent of value-added.<sup>5</sup> Firms with 10 or fewer workers, including the owner, make up nearly 93 percent of enterprises<sup>6</sup>, and the retail sector, which accounts for a larger share of the Spanish economy than in most EU Member States, is even more micro business-intensive, with half of the firms not employing any salaried staff and 48 percent employing fewer than 10.<sup>7</sup> However, as is the case across Europe, small firm productivity in Spain is lower than that of larger firms.<sup>8</sup> For nearly a decade, two of the top Spanish Government strategies to foster sustainable small business productivity gains and growth have been digitalisation and internationalisation.<sup>9</sup>

Digitalisation is firmly entrenched as a central component of the Spanish economic strategy. The country is ahead of the overall EU average on many indicators in the EU's Digital Economy and Society Index, including often being ranked above the EU's other big economies.<sup>10</sup> Spain is among the very top in the rollout of digital infrastructure, including fibre and 5G technology, and the business community, including SMEs, continues to make steady progress in digitalisation, with almost three out of four SMEs reporting a basic level of digital intensity by 2024.<sup>11</sup> The digital economy is projected to account for 40 percent of Spain's GDP by 2030.<sup>12</sup> However, despite significant progress on basic business digitalisation, including through public initiatives such as the Digital Kit, Retech,

and the Next Tech fund, Spain's SMEs struggle to realize their full digital potential due to limited awareness, understanding, and employee skills needed to implement advanced digital tools effectively.<sup>13</sup> As a result, accelerating SME adoption of advanced technologies such as AI, cloud infrastructure, and data analytics remains a priority.<sup>14</sup>

Internationalisation is a parallel strategic priority of Spain. Small businesses have always faced significant barriers to cross-border trade, with smaller firms facing "internal challenges" such as financial constraints and knowledge barriers, and "external challenges" such as regulatory and logistical complexity, and global instability.<sup>15</sup> However, a growing body of research has confirmed that firm-level digitalisation, and enablers such as broadband access and digital platforms, allow SMEs to reach international markets more easily and showcase their products and services to a global audience without the need for a physical presence.<sup>16</sup> The EU is therefore pressing forward with internationalisation and digitalisation as two top strategies for sustainable SME productivity gains and growth.<sup>17</sup>

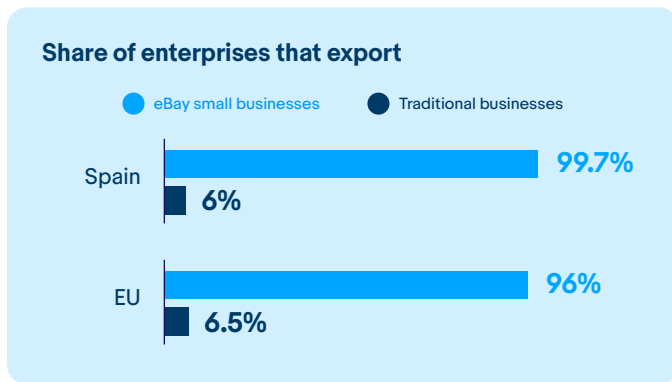
Spain has been fully aligned with this EU policy pairing. The country's original 2017-2027 internationalisation plan<sup>18</sup> established digitalisation as a primary pillar under "Axis 2", and that prominence only increased in the government's 2024-2025 strategy update<sup>19</sup>, which expanded digitalisation from a sectoral objective to a "cross-cutting guiding principle" that will underpin all government trade

support, particularly for SMEs. Research on Spanish SMEs backs up the strategy, with increased firm-level digitalisation positively correlating with cross-border trade by increasing access to both customers and suppliers as well as improving operational productivity.<sup>20</sup>

eBay is committed to helping small businesses and entrepreneurs in Spain export with peace of mind. We support sellers in Spain in several important ways, including valuable one-on-one assistance, tools to facilitate cross-border shipping and payments, help with “troubleshooting” on issues like returns and cancellation of orders, support in Spanish as well as other translation services, and identifying and working to resolve potential regulatory challenges. The next sections will present findings from the latest available eBay marketplace trade data to illustrate the level of export activity by eBay small businesses in Spain and confirm this important link between digitalisation and trade.

### Share of eBay small businesses exporting

In Spain, 99.7 percent of eBay small businesses were exporters in 2024.<sup>21</sup> This export rate exceeded that of eBay small businesses situated across the European Union as a whole. Also noteworthy is how this extreme export success compares with firms in the traditional economy, where just 6 percent of Spanish businesses and 6.5 percent of traditional EU businesses are exporters.<sup>22</sup>



### Average number of international destination markets

The average number of international markets reached by a single small business on an annual basis provides a key measurement of export activity and reach. Exporting to a new international market traditionally imposed new “costs of entry”, leading to smaller firms with smaller budgets exporting to fewer markets than larger firms with more financial resources.<sup>23</sup> eBay largely breaks this long-held link between enterprise size and export reach. eBay small businesses in Spain averaged 25 different export markets in 2024<sup>24</sup>, far exceeding the average of five export markets for traditional Spanish businesses and traditional businesses across the EU as a whole.<sup>25</sup> This export performance for Spain’s eBay small businesses again exceeded the overall EU average for eBay small businesses, which was 18 export markets.



## Share of eBay small businesses that reach ten or more different international markets

To provide another measurement of the scale of eBay small business exporting activity, we calculated the share that exported to ten or more international markets. As with the previous data point, our findings show that small businesses on eBay defy the traditional export model, with 77 percent of eBay small businesses in Spain reaching the 10-export market threshold.<sup>26</sup> Once again, the mark for Spanish small businesses on eBay exceeded that for eBay small businesses based in the EU, which stands at 59 percent.

## Spain's small businesses are "Global Sellers" on eBay

Although a non-traditional measurement of scale and scope of exporting activity, we have calculated the continental reach of eBay small businesses.<sup>27</sup> We classify a business with sales to four or more continents in a year as a "Global Seller." A striking 51 percent of eBay small businesses in Spain reached the Global Seller threshold in 2024.<sup>28</sup> By comparison, 30 percent of eBay small businesses based in the EU reached the Global Seller threshold.

## eBay's small business community in Spain is a virtual export giant

If one looks at the collective exporting of eBay small businesses in Spain, the total number of international markets reached is a staggering 203 markets.<sup>29</sup> These numbers stand up favorably to the export reach of the world's largest consumer brands.<sup>30</sup> Together, the community of eBay small businesses in Spain exhibits the reach of a truly global export giant.



### Top product categories exported by eBay small businesses in Spain<sup>31</sup>

- |                        |                                    |
|------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Auto Parts          | 6. Collectibles                    |
| 2. Home & Garden       | 7. Clothes, Shoes & Accessories    |
| 3. Jewellery & Watches | 8. Business, Office and Industrial |
| 4. Toys & Games        | 9. Computing                       |
| 5. Health & Beauty     | 10. Mobile & Home Phones           |

## eBay Fitment for Auto Parts sellers

eBay Fitment, also known as parts compatibility, is a powerful tool that allows sellers to list parts compatible with multiple vehicles in a single listing. Instead of creating separate listings for each vehicle, sellers can provide key details like make, model, year and other specifications, ensuring all compatible vehicles are found in search results. This saves time, increases visibility, and reduces the chances of returns due to compatibility issues, helping sellers build a better customer experience.

For buyers, the process is just as seamless thanks to eBay's MyGarage tool. By entering their vehicle's make, model and year, buyers can filter search results to show only items that match their vehicle. This eliminates the guesswork and minimizes the risk of purchasing incorrect parts. MyGarage ensures a smooth and efficient shopping experience, allowing buyers to quickly find compatible parts, saving time and effort. Overall, eBay Fitment enhances the buying and selling process, connecting the right parts with the right vehicles.

eBay small businesses in Spain are utilizing these tools with great success and collectively exporting Auto Parts products to 189 countries and territories worldwide.

# More top export markets promote growth and resilience

Diversification is a well-understood business and economic policy strategy to reduce risk, promote stability, and better weather a wide range of external shocks.<sup>32</sup> Facilitating sales into more markets expands export diversification. This diversity brings multiple benefits including reducing vulnerability to external economic downturns and adverse terms of trade shocks.<sup>33</sup> Nationally, increasing the diversity of exports has been positively correlated to greater economic growth and reduced export volatility.<sup>34</sup>

Operating on several ecommerce platforms, rather than one or two, is another diversification strategy to reduce risk and expand growth. Operating on multiple platforms reduces the risk that a critical market or region served by a company's sole platform provider experiences an economic downturn.<sup>35</sup> It also reduces vulnerability to the policies, infrastructure, or capabilities of a single marketplace service provider.<sup>36</sup> Importantly, marketplace diversity is an achievable risk reduction and growth strategy for businesses of all sizes, with even very small enterprises proving adept at operating on multiple ecommerce platforms simultaneously.<sup>37</sup>

eBay export data shows how Spanish small businesses are using our marketplace to grow sales beyond the top export markets for the country's traditional businesses. Comparing Spain's Top 10 export markets for traditional businesses<sup>38</sup> and the Top 10 export markets for Spain's eBay small businesses<sup>39</sup> reveals that three of the top eBay export markets are not included in Spain's Top 10

traditional export markets. The ability of eBay's global level-playing field marketplace to grow exports outside of Spain's traditional European export base is highlighted by strong export growth on eBay to Mexico, Argentina, United Arab Emirates, India and Algeria.<sup>40</sup>

## Spain's top traditional business export markets vs. top eBay export markets

### Top 10 export markets for traditional businesses

- |                   |                  |
|-------------------|------------------|
| 1. France         | 6. United States |
| 2. Germany        | 7. Belgium       |
| 3. Italy          | 8. Netherlands   |
| 4. Portugal       | 9. Morocco       |
| 5. United Kingdom | 10. China        |

### Top 10 export markets for eBay small businesses

- |                   |                       |
|-------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Germany        | 6. <b>Austria</b>     |
| 2. France         | 7. Portugal           |
| 3. Italy          | 8. <b>Australia</b>   |
| 4. United States  | 9. <b>Switzerland</b> |
| 5. United Kingdom | 10. Belgium           |

Note: The export markets for eBay small businesses in bold are those not in the Top 10 for traditional businesses.



### Adrián Nicolás

Desguaces Renaulto  
Murcia

Desguaces Renaulto is a family-owned business in Murcia going back three generations, founded by Adrián's grandfather in 1970 and now co-owned by Adrián and his cousin. Desguaces Renaulto breaks down older cars and refurbishes or recycles its functional parts, selling sustainable parts affordably all across the EU. Over 5 years ago, they decided to start selling their second-hand car parts all over the world using online marketplaces. Today, Desguaces Renaulto is one of eBay's most reputable sellers.



Visit Adrián's store

**"eBay let us turn a local family-owned business into an international supplier of goods, with most of our inventory being shipped outside of Spain."**



## Newcomers, “scalars” and economic vitality

The birth of new enterprises has long been seen as a key determinant of job creation and economic growth. Enterprise births “increase the competitiveness of a country’s enterprise population” by stimulating innovation and facilitating the adoption of new technologies.<sup>41</sup> A 2022 study from the European Central Bank found that productivity growth is higher in young firms compared to mature incumbents, while a small percentage of “young superstar” firms drive the majority of aggregate productivity growth through innovative business models.<sup>42</sup>

The importance of new firms to overall productivity growth increasingly highlights the phenomenon of “scalars” or “scale-ups,” terms used to describe often small, fast-growing firms.<sup>43</sup> Their success is generally rooted in high innovation and digital intensity. They are leaders in labor productivity, profitability, and investment,

and they disproportionately drive job creation, often exceeding the contributions of large enterprises.<sup>44</sup> Exporting businesses scale more frequently, and scalars export more often.<sup>45</sup> The 2025 OECD Economic Survey of Spain describes facilitating the “scale-up” of SMEs, for example by improving access to finance, easing regulatory burdens, and promoting advanced digital tools, innovation, and skills investment, as vital for Spain to achieve income convergence with its peers.<sup>46</sup>

The OECD found that 38 percent of SMEs under 5 years old went on to become scalars, compared to only 22 percent of mature firms.<sup>47</sup> We classify an eBay small business as a “Newcomer” in this report when the seller achieved small business status in 2024 and had sold on eBay for four years or fewer. A robust 26 percent of Spanish eBay small businesses were newcomers.

### CONCLUSION

The Spanish Government has been leaning into digitalisation and internationalisation growth strategies that account for the central role that small businesses play in Spanish society. eBay, a global ecommerce marketplace leader leveling the playing field for export success, is aligned with this strategy by helping digitally proficient SMEs across Spain succeed on a global stage. Platforms are central to Spain’s ecommerce ecosystem, and once online, even the smallest businesses can operate on multiple platforms to expand their growth opportunities and reduce their risks through diversification. eBay’s value as an export growth and diversification platform is clear.

Nearly every eBay small business in Spain is an exporter, many making sales to shoppers in dozens of valuable markets each year. Together, they exported to a remarkable 203 markets worldwide - a global reach that exceeds many multinational corporations. Finally, eBay adds diversity to the list of Spain’s traditional top export markets, promoting resilience for individual small businesses and the Spanish economy overall.

## RESOURCES

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- <sup>5</sup> European Commission, Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs (DG GROW). “2025 SME Country Fact Sheet: Spain.” 2025. Available at: <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/circabc-ewpp/d/d/workspace/SpacesStore/a94cdd71-f6f6-443c-9802-49794fccca5c/download>.
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- <sup>7</sup> Ondina, Pedro Álvarez. “The role played by retail in Spain’s economy.” CaixaBank Research. July 7, 2021. Available at: <https://www.caixabankresearch.com/en/sector-analysis/retail/role-played-retail-spains-economy>.
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- <sup>10</sup> European Commission. “Digital Decade DESI visualisation tool.” Available at: <https://digital-decade-desi.digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/>. Note: An example of country comparison for the DESI Indicator “SMEs selling online” for Spain, France, Germany, Italy and the EU Average is available at: [https://digital-decade-desi.digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/datasets/desi/charts/compare-countries-progress?indicator=desi\\_sme\\_esell&breakdown=ent\\_sm\\_xfin&unit=pc\\_ent&country=EU,FR,DE,IT,ES](https://digital-decade-desi.digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/datasets/desi/charts/compare-countries-progress?indicator=desi_sme_esell&breakdown=ent_sm_xfin&unit=pc_ent&country=EU,FR,DE,IT,ES).
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- <sup>12</sup> ICEX Invest in Spain. “Starting Up in Spain: Startup ecosystem overview & soft-landing guide for international entrepreneurs.” September 2025. Available at: [https://www.investinspain.org/content/dam/icex-invest/documentos/publicaciones/sectores/otros/Starting\\_Up\\_in\\_Spain.pdf](https://www.investinspain.org/content/dam/icex-invest/documentos/publicaciones/sectores/otros/Starting_Up_in_Spain.pdf).
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- <sup>14</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>15</sup> Izsak, Kincsö; Strauka, Orestas; Borbon, Yari; Zegel, Stijn; Konstantynova, Anastasiia; Technopolis Group. “Study of the European Union SME Internationalisation Strategy: Final Report.” Prepared for the European Commission, January 2025, p. 65. Available at: [https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/document/download/67fdeffd-6c80-45ff-8b60-75ca57e96289\\_en](https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/document/download/67fdeffd-6c80-45ff-8b60-75ca57e96289_en).
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- <sup>21</sup> The eBay data reflects the share of 2024 eBay small businesses (those with EUR 9,240 / USD 10,000 or more in sales on eBay) in Spain, who exported in that year.
- <sup>22</sup> Source for total number of enterprises: Eurostat Business Demography Data (includes zero employment enterprises) - Industry, construction and market services (except public administration and defence; compulsory social security; activities of membership organisations). Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/bd\\_l\\_form/default/table?lang=en&category=bsd.bd](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/bd_l_form/default/table?lang=en&category=bsd.bd); Source for total number of enterprises that export: Eurostat Data (Trade by number of partner countries and NACE Rev. 2 activity). Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/ext\\_tec04/default/table?lang=en&category=ext\\_go.ext\\_tec](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/ext_tec04/default/table?lang=en&category=ext_go.ext_tec); Share = (total number of enterprises that export) / (total number of enterprises).

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- <sup>25</sup> Average number of international destination markets reached by exporters = ((number of enterprises that trade with 1 country)\*1 + (number of enterprises that trade with 2 countries)\*2 + (number of enterprises that trade with 3 to 5 countries)\*4 + (number of enterprises that trade with 6 to 9 countries)\*7.5 + (number of enterprises that trade with 10 to 14 countries)\*12 + (number of enterprises that trade with 15 to 19 countries)\*17 + (number of enterprises that trade with 20 or more countries)\*25) / ((number of enterprises that trade with 1 country) + (number of enterprises that trade with 2 countries) + (number of enterprises that trade with 3 to 5 countries) + (number of enterprises that trade with 6 to 9 countries) + (number of enterprises that trade with 10 to 14 countries) + (number of enterprises that trade with 15 to 19 countries) + (number of enterprises that trade with 20 or more countries)). Source for (i) Number of enterprises that trade with 1 country; (ii) Number of enterprises that trade with 2 countries; (iii) Number of enterprises that trade with 3 to 5 countries; (iv) Number of enterprises that trade with 6 to 9 countries; (v) Number of enterprises that trade with 10 to 14 countries; (vi) Number of enterprises that trade with 15 to 19 countries; (vii) Number of enterprises that trade with 20 or more countries, using most recent available country data: OECD Trade by enterprise characteristics (TEC) data: Dataset IV - TEC by number of partner countries. Available at: [https://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=TEC4\\_REV4](https://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=TEC4_REV4).
- <sup>26</sup> The eBay data reflects the share of exporting 2024 eBay small businesses (those with EUR 9,240 / USD 10,000 or more in sales on eBay) in Spain, who exported to 10 or more international markets in that year.
- <sup>27</sup> For the purposes of this analysis, sales were designated to buyers on one of six continents: North America, South America, Europe, Asia, Africa, and Australia. When an eBay small business exported to a buyer in a country on a continent, they were credited with an export to that continent. Additionally, when an export sale is made to a country on the same continent as the seller, that sale is counted as an export to that continent. (e.g. A sale from a Spanish eBay seller to a buyer in Poland is an export to a European market).
- <sup>28</sup> The eBay data reflects the share of exporting 2024 eBay small businesses (those with EUR 9,240 / USD 10,000 or more in sales on eBay) in Spain, who exported to four or more continents in that year.
- <sup>29</sup> The eBay data reflects the total number of different international markets (countries and territories) collectively reached by 2024 eBay small businesses (those with EUR 9,240 / USD 10,000 or more in sales on eBay) in Spain, who exported in that year.
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- <sup>39</sup> The eBay data reflects the top 10 export market (countries and territories) destinations (based on sales) for 2024 eBay small businesses (those with EUR 9,240 / USD 10,000 or more in sales annually on the eBay marketplace) in Spain, who exported in that year.

## RESOURCES

- <sup>40</sup> The eBay data is a selection of the Top 10 extra-EU export growth market (countries and territories) destinations (based on the absolute growth in sales over the time period 2020-2024) for eBay small businesses (those with EUR 9,240 / USD 10,000 or more in sales annually on the eBay marketplace) in Spain, who exported during those years.
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- <sup>43</sup> Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). "Unleashing SME Potential to Scale Up: Helping SMEs Scale Up." OECD Studies on SMEs and Entrepreneurship, OECD Publishing, Paris, 2025. (Definition of "scalars" (often referenced by the European Commission) is SMEs with 10-249 employees that grew at an average rate of at least 10% per year over three years in either employment, turnover or both. Available at: [https://www.oecd.org/content/dam/oecd/en/publications/reports/2025/11/unleashing-sme-potential-to-scale-up\\_a7869b94/ea948a58-en.pdf](https://www.oecd.org/content/dam/oecd/en/publications/reports/2025/11/unleashing-sme-potential-to-scale-up_a7869b94/ea948a58-en.pdf).
- <sup>44</sup> Schulze Brock, P., Katsinis, A., Laguera Gonzales, J., Di Bella, L., Odenthal, L., Hell, M., Lozar, B., and Secades Casino, B. "Annual Report on European SMEs 2024/2025: SME Performance Review." Publications Office of the European Union. Luxembourg. 2025. Section 4. Available at: <https://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/handle/JRC142263>.
- <sup>45</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>46</sup> OECD (2025), OECD Economic Surveys: Spain 2025, OECD Publishing, Paris. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1787/abc5c435-en>.
- <sup>47</sup> Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). "Unleashing SME Potential to Scale Up: Helping SMEs Scale Up." OECD Studies on SMEs and Entrepreneurship, OECD Publishing, Paris, 2025. Available at: [https://www.oecd.org/content/dam/oecd/en/publications/reports/2025/11/unleashing-sme-potential-to-scale-up\\_a7869b94/ea948a58-en.pdf](https://www.oecd.org/content/dam/oecd/en/publications/reports/2025/11/unleashing-sme-potential-to-scale-up_a7869b94/ea948a58-en.pdf).

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