


STAYING IN EUROPE AS A **NON-EU BACHELOR GRADUATE**

Powered by Talent & Careers

ASPIRING TO WORK OVERSEAS..?

WHAT TO BEAR IN MIND WHEN CONSIDERING WORKING IN A COUNTRY YOU ARE NOT FROM

- **Language Requirements:** The local language is usually required, at least at a conversational level.
 - **Company Policies:** Companies determine their own policies regarding international hiring, quotas, and whether they are open to sponsoring visas.
 - **Work Eligibility:** You are eligible to work full-time in the countries where you hold a passport or a valid work permit.
 - **Varied Permissions:** Being a citizen or holding a work permit does not grant the same rights in every country. Make sure to check the specifics for your situation.
 - **International Agreements:** Understand the relationships between your home country and the country you wish to work in, as there may be specific agreements (such as citizenship opportunities after long stays).
 - **Embassy Consultation:** After deciding to pursue post-graduation opportunities outside your country of origin, your next step should be to consult your embassy in the target country to explore all available options.
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STAYING IN SPAIN, BASICS FOR JOB SEARCH

If, after analyzing your **FIG strategy and priorities** (Function, Industry, or Geography), staying in Spain after graduation is your top priority, you will need to be adaptable and flexible in your approach.

Opening your scope is a must. You should be open to exploring opportunities in different sectors and functions which maybe were not your first option beforehand.

Analyze what your added value is. For instance, consider whether your language skills or uncommon technical abilities make you a stronger candidate.

Accept that your path may be more challenging compared to candidates who meet the required work permit criteria.

Recognize that you'll have a higher chance of success by applying for internships first, rather than full-time positions.

KEY MESSAGES YOU CAN GIVE TO RECRUITERS

- In your CV heading, state: **“Eligible to sign an internship agreement via IE University post-graduation”** (refer to the IE Student Visa Status section for more details).
- Highlight your unique value in the professional summary of your CV. Emphasize what makes your profile stand out from others.
- Network with people working at the firm, and if possible, talk to the recruiting team before submitting your application.
- Be aware of other visa options you may be eligible for. Make it easy for the company to understand your options and what you need from them (see more information on visa options [here](#)).

Many companies will be pleased to know that you can intern through IE for six months while they decide whether to sponsor you. Ensure you perform exceptionally during this period so they are motivated to keep you on.

IE STUDENT VISA STATUS



You are probably in Spain right now with a student visa, which has allowed you to intern

Upon graduation (**August 31st**), you can extend your student status through our Job Market Immersion Program. This program allows you to intern for up to 900 working hours (approximately 5.5 months), ensuring that you remain legally in Spain during this period.

You can also sign an internship agreement outside of Spain through the same Job Market Immersion Program after graduation. However, you will need to manage the necessary permits to legally stay in that country on your own.

OTHER VISA OPTIONS

Download and review the [document](#) prepared by Student Services, which outlines the main options available to IEU graduates.

If you have any doubts or need recommendations for specialized lawyers, reach out to ieustudentservices@ie.edu

Some of our alumni are happy to share their tips for securing sponsorship with you. **Read on!**

STORIES FROM OUR ALUMNI



Rusudan Topuria

Nationality: Georgian

Program Studied: Business Administration with a concentration in Digital Operations and Analytics

Year of Graduation: 2024

- **Current Company, Position, and Location:** Hyphen, Client Partnership Associate, Remote
 - **What visa are you currently in Spain with/working with:**
Job Seeker Visa (I will probably have this, or I can just as easily get a Digital Nomad Visa, but I'm not sure how long I want to stay in Spain, and the first option is easier)
 - **Why did you decide to stay in Spain?**
Because I loved the atmosphere and the country. I created my life here, and I don't want to part with it yet.
 - **Briefly, please share with us your journey to securing employment in Spain post-graduation as a non-European student:**
Getting a job in Spain as a non-European has been very difficult. I have applied to hundreds of jobs, and thankfully, I had the chance to receive multiple offers. I was fortunate to receive different offers, but at the end of the day, I chose a fully remote job; this allowed me to choose whether I wanted to be hired as an independent contractor, employee, or even an entity. For tax purposes, I decided to apply for a Job Seeker Visa instead of a Digital Nomad Visa because I plan to travel around the world, and this visa opens the possibility to reside in Spain and spend longer periods in other European countries. I hope this helps.
 - **Any tips you'd like to share with those students facing this situation now? Anything you would have liked to know at the time?**
Don't give up! This is a difficult and discouraging road, and many people will try to discourage you. Just stay true to yourself, constantly improve your skillset, and keep your values and goals in mind.
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Joao Rolim

Nationality: Brazilian (only hold a Brazilian passport)

Program Studied: Business Administration

Year of Graduation: 2022

- **Current Company, Position, and Location:** Solia Iberia, Commodity Trader, Madrid, Spain
- **What visa are you currently in Spain with/working with:**
Permiso de Residencia - Residencia y Trabajo | Temporal Renovada | Autorizado a trabajar por cuenta ajena/propia | Válido hasta 2028
- **Why did you decide to stay in Spain?**
I fell in love with the country while in university. Madrid is a place where people from LATAM can experience a culture similar to home while living in Europe.

- **Briefly, please share with us your journey to securing employment in Spain post-graduation as a non-European student:**

Many firms are hesitant to hire foreigners due to the extra step of obtaining a residence permit. I remember applying to many positions and ending up with just a couple of opportunities that were willing to proceed. There are few options regarding work permit visas. In my case, it was a mutual agreement between me and my employer on what best worked for the company. I entered the company as a full-time employee without going through an internship. From the moment we signed the contract, the process took four months until I could officially start working.

- **Any tips you'd like to share with those students facing this situation now? Anything you would have liked to know at the time?**

It's important to recognize the strengths you uniquely have compared to Spaniards, which usually are: fluency in multiple languages, being culturally well-versed, and having access to your home country/region. Applying to a position where the firm has an interest in either (a) the market of your home country or (b) your native language will drastically increase your chances. In general, you need to be resilient. Know that you are going against the odds, so apply more and be persistent in pursuing opportunities.



Askar Dossumbekov

Nationality: Kazakhstan

Program Studied: Dual Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration and International Relations

Year of Graduation: 2023

- **Current Company, Position, and Location:** Founder of "Click - Career Companion": An AI-driven platform designed to reduce administrative workload and costs for universities while boosting student career prospects and satisfaction.
- **What visa are you currently in Spain with/working with:**
Residence Permit for Students in Job Search or Entrepreneurship (Búsqueda de Empleo o Emprender un Proyecto Empresarial)
- **Why did you decide to stay in Spain?**
Spain has a young but thriving startup ecosystem. Over the past five years, entrepreneurship has become significant, with companies having international ambitions being established. Additionally, Spain is one of the largest tourist destinations in the world, which has positively impacted the local tech ecosystem, attracting investments and foreign talent to cities such as Barcelona, Madrid, Malaga, and Valencia, offering the right work-life balance. Moreover, there are multiple government funds and subsidies that support young entrepreneurs.
- **Briefly, please share with us your journey to securing employment in Spain post-graduation as a non-European student:**
In recent years, Spain has actively attracted foreign entrepreneurs and their promising projects, making it easier for top talent to come via Digital Nomad Visas or Startup Visas. In my case, during my final year, I started developing 'CLICK.' Once I graduated, I easily changed my residence status from "Student" to "In Search of Entrepreneurship," which can be obtained in less than a month and online. This status allows you to stay in the country for two years to establish a company and present your project to ENISA, which provides financial support to small and medium-sized enterprises wishing to bolster their innovative entrepreneurial endeavors. This also enables obtaining a lucrative three-year residence permit for conducting business and includes some family members.

- **Any tips you'd like to share with those students facing this situation now? Anything you would have liked to know at the time?**

I believe students are well-equipped with the services and handouts provided by IE University. I would recommend turning on notifications and keeping an eye on newsletters, as some tips may be very handy. Also, do not hesitate to email and arrange a visit with IE Career Coaches or Student Services; they are always available to help with any doubts you may have. Finally, keep in mind the expiry dates and procedure timings so you can plan ahead.



Alen Tadevosyan

Nationality: Armenian

Program Studied: Bachelor in Philosophy, Politics, Law and Economics

Year of Graduation: 2021

- **Current Company, Position, and Location:** Strategy Manager at Revolut
- **What visa are you currently in Spain with/working with:** Work Permit
- **Why did you decide to stay in Spain?**

Madrid has a great lifestyle and if you manage to get a good professional opportunity, life is very enjoyable. I already had a network and friends from IE and it was a very easy transition to keep living here. I think with a good education and job it is easily one of the best European cities to live in.

- **Briefly, please share with us your journey to securing employment in Spain post-graduation as a non-European student:**
 - Internships are almost a must, in many companies they don't hire for entry level without first having done an internship. Typically, an internship serves for you to prove that you can do it and well do the same job for less pay.
 - I dedicated almost the entire last year of university to internships with the last one then converting into full-time employment. It was a small startup, I loved the job and the team which made it easy to ask for Visa sponsorship help.
 - Small companies are flexible but likely do not have established processes. In my case, I was the first ever to require visa sponsorship and there was no full-time company lawyer so it was a learning for both sides.
 - **Any tips you'd like to share with those students facing this situation now? Anything you would have liked to know at the time?**
 - Visa sponsorship is pretty much a disadvantage - everything else equal you will cost the company more vs others (time, money, resources). Hence, it is important to navigate the situation intelligently. Internship route is the most effective, start with an internship where you do not need extra paperwork, once you prove your worth, the company will see visa sponsorship as an investment and not a cost
 - Bring it up as soon as you feel comfortable with your manager and confident regarding your position and value add to the company. Think of it from a company perspective and make it as little costly as possible. For example, I hired a lawyer which helped both sides so the company only really needed to provide required papers and pay taxes.
 - At the end of the day, some companies sponsor and others don't. Try to get information from other students if their company does and prioritize those if you don't have other options.
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Aryan Maskay

Nationality: Nepalese

Program Studied: Dual Degree in Business Administration & International Relations

Year of Graduation: 2023

- **Current Company, Position, and Location:** Financial Analyst at UPITE Consulting, Madrid, Spain
- **What visa are you currently in Spain with/working with:** Highly Qualified Workers Visa
- **Why did you decide to stay in Spain?**

I had been working in Spain since my second year in multiple part-time internships and was able to build a level of fluency in Spanish alongside my English. Furthermore, there were diverse opportunities that I was fortunate enough to take part in, such as internships in marketing and private equity, which provided me with valuable experience and interest in the Spanish market.

- **Briefly, please share with us your journey to securing employment in Spain post-graduation as a non-European student:**

The biggest contribution to securing my current job came from my previous work experience. I had been working part-time in Spain since my second year—first at IE in the marketing department, then at a digital marketing firm, and finally at a private equity firm. These experiences gave my current employer confidence in my adaptability and ability to work in a culture different from my own, and in an environment with a language other than my native one. As someone who enjoys being involved in multiple areas and working across different industries, I also appreciated working part-time while studying. In my final year, when applying for full-time positions, I focused on applying only to full-time roles, as I had enough internship experience (this job was my sixth internship) to request a work permit as soon as I started. I knew I would need to start as an intern initially, due to the time required to process legalities, but the company confirmed their intention to hire me full-time a few months after I started. I actively followed up with them to ensure they were aware of my situation and to expedite the work permit process.

- **Any tips you'd like to share with those students facing this situation now? Anything you would have liked to know at the time?**

I recommend starting your research as early as possible. Depending on your country of origin, the legal requirements and procedures can vary, so understanding these can help you find ways to secure a job that will sponsor you. IE provides substantial support, so it is best to utilize it from your first year, particularly through Talent & Careers. Contacting your IE Career Coach is also extremely helpful, as they offer excellent advice on securing internships or jobs. I found my job through the Career portal, so make sure to take full advantage of that platform. I wish I had improved my Spanish more during my time at IE, as language was a significant challenge for me. I recommend exposing yourself to opportunities to become fluent in Spanish as much as possible. Additionally, building confidence in yourself is crucial. Believe that a company hires you for your expertise and experience. Demonstrating confidence in your abilities, even if you feel they are minor, is important. Asking difficult questions professionally during interviews is also beneficial, as it shows your understanding and trust in your own capabilities, which is advantageous for both you and the company.



Marcela Aragon Gonzalez

Nationality: Guatemalan

Program Studied: Dual Degree in Business Administration & International Relations

Year of Graduation: 2024

- **Current Company, Position, and Location:** Nova, Sales Development Representative, Madrid, Spain
 - **What visa are you currently in Spain with/working with:**
One-year internship residence, transitioning to a work permit
 - **Why did you decide to stay in Spain?**
After 5 years of living in Madrid and experiencing some of the best years of my life here, I firmly believe Madrid is one of the best cities in Europe in terms of quality of life, safety, and welcoming expats with open arms. I knew that my time and the life I had built for myself here were not done yet, so I made many efforts to stay after graduation.
 - **Briefly, please share with us your journey to securing employment in Spain post-graduation as a non-European student:**
 - As I was clear that I wanted to stay in Madrid after graduation, and knowing that it can be a struggle for non-Europeans, I leveraged my time at IE to network and gain as much professional experience (through internships) as possible to enrich my profile and increase the chances of employers vouching for me. This was key.
 - During my graduation period, I was interning at UNESCO, and I had to make a difficult choice to transition to an opportunity that allowed me to return to Spain and get my visa sorted. To ensure this didn't negatively impact the job offer I received, I educated myself on my options before graduation and sought legal advice to explain this to my employer. This was also key.
 - My employer was willing to provide the documentation, and we negotiated the terms of the visa sponsorship. We all agreed and began the process with a one-year internship contract to issue my residence (with my full-time salary and conditions). From there, three months before my NIE's expiration date, we would transition into a work permit residence. We are currently in that process now.
 - **Any tips you'd like to share with those students facing this situation now? Anything you would have liked to know at the time?**
 - It is crucial to gain as much experience as possible and leverage your network during your time at IE to add value to a potential employer and convince them to vouch for you.
 - Get educated on your options and seek quality legal counsel. It is absolutely worth the investment if your firm is good and experienced in handling these foreign student processes. You will save valuable time and have many more options to secure your stay. It is also important to understand your options to explain them to potential employers or involve your lawyers and potential employer in an email exchange/call to back up your arguments and guarantee that what you are saying is feasible.
 - Look for employers with experience in hiring expats, or those with the flexibility and culture to vouch for hiring international employees.
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Francesca Paiewonsky

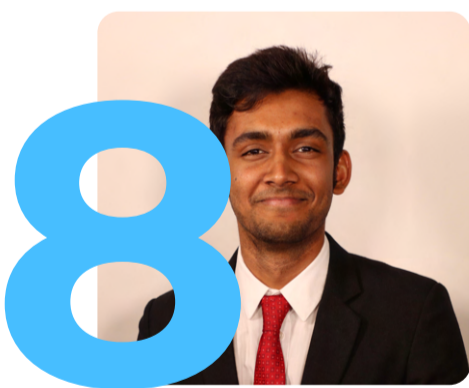
Nationality: Dominican and Panamanian

Program Studied: Bachelor in Philosophy, Politics, Law and Economics

Year of Graduation: 2023

- **Current Company, Position, and Location:** Sanerret, Operations Officer, Madrid
- **What visa are you currently in Spain with/working with:** Work Permit
- **Why did you decide to stay in Spain?**
I loved my experience in Spain and was really hoping for an opportunity to stay as I wanted to start my career in Europe and learn more about how sectors on this side of the pond work.

- **Briefly, please share with us your journey to securing employment in Spain post-graduation as a non-European student:**
 - Securing employment was extremely difficult. Spanish companies weren't really hiring people who required sponsorships, and neither were international companies based in Madrid. Graduate programs were also quite challenging, as those open to sponsorships required an internship in the specific department that would have openings the following year. I had the opportunity to advance to the second stage with a few consulting firms, as well as entry-level operations positions in sectors like sales and finance, but again, I faced the issue of sponsorships not being available. I must have applied to around 200 positions in my last semester.
 - Funnily enough, the day I delivered my thesis, I received an offer from a finance startup looking for a profile like mine. They offered to sponsor me because they saw potential in me and wanted to give me the chance to prove it. I have been working there for a year and two months, learning about a sector I never thought I would work in, and I will now pursue a master's at IE to continue filling in the gaps of what is required in this area. I would say I was quite lucky to find a team that wanted to work with me and understood how difficult the job market situation was.
 - **Any tips you'd like to share with those students facing this situation now? Anything you would have liked to know at the time?**
 - I would say to have patience and not get discouraged. It's true that my situation involved a stroke of luck, and if it hadn't happened, my dream of staying in Madrid might have been short-lived. I recommend keeping your options open, being willing to learn about sectors that might not be on your radar right now, and always having a contingency plan in case things don't work out as you'd hoped.
 - Always, always continue learning about how European markets work, especially through internships, and take advantage of networking opportunities, as they're something extra you can always bring to the table. A valuable lesson I learned is that while knowledge of the Latin American market is a strength—since many companies are now focusing on it, and it's also a passion of mine to create bridges between Europe and LatAm—I can't limit my options to that alone, as there are many other growing markets receiving more attention.
 - Something I wish I had known earlier is just how competitive international companies in Madrid have become, how many applicants have European master's degrees, how crucial patience is, and that it wouldn't be the end of the world if things didn't work out exactly as planned.
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Anshuman Ravi

Nationality: Indian

Program Studied: Dual Degree in Business Administration & Data and Business Analytics

Year of Graduation: 2024

- **Current Company, Position, and Location:** Data Scientist, Deloitte, Madrid
- **What visa are you currently in Spain with/working with:** Highly Qualified Professional
- **Why did you decide to stay in Spain?**

I decided to stay in Spain for the following reasons:

- I was looking at jobs in other countries like Ireland and the Netherlands but found the number of entry-level/Junior roles in Data Science or AI to be limited (at least ones that would also sponsor my visa, sponsorship was mostly offered to more senior roles + there was also a Master's requirement)
- Madrid is growing as a tech hub attracting a lot of investments and is in its nascent stage. This translated into a significant number of Junior roles in tech which was exactly what I wanted and it suited my profile.

- The network that I had built in Madrid over the years was much stronger compared to the limited connections I had in Ireland or the Netherlands. This made it easier to understand the teams inside different companies and the projects they were working on. Since I was very particular on the type of jobs I was looking for (highly technical with the business-facing side being an added bonus), I knew exactly which companies to look into and which to avoid.
- **Briefly, please share with us your journey to securing employment in Spain post-graduation as a non-European student:**
 - I am not going to mince words when I say that the journey was difficult. I applied to more than 60+ jobs and got rejected from most of them (Fun fact: I got rejected from a graduate program for being overqualified). This was how I approached my job applications from the beginning - as a non-European student, visa sponsorship was always going to be my biggest challenge. To make it worth the legal and logistical hassle for the company to sponsor my visa, I knew I had to go beyond the average profile and stand out. The way I decided to do this was by honing and sharpening my technical skills beyond the average graduate profile. This was mainly possible thanks to my amazing mentors/professors from IE + my internship experiences and self-learning outside the classroom.
 - Now to focus on the interview process with Deloitte, I met the entire Data Science team at an IE event in March and got a chance to know the projects they were working on. I sent in my CV and got contacted for the first HR call in May. After this, I had to pass a Data Science coding assignment, which was then followed by a technical interview with a member of the DS team. The final interview was with the Director and it was a combination of technical and business case problems.
- **Any tips you'd like to share with those students facing this situation now? Anything you would have liked to know at the time?** I am focusing this more towards the next batch of graduating students with tech profiles.
 - Throughout my job search, I did notice a large increase in the number of data engineering positions - both for internships and jobs. This is mainly driven by the fact that companies now need people to maintain/develop/upgrade/build their cloud infrastructure and support the deployment of LLMs and other models. So for tech profiles looking to break into the industry, taking the extra time to build your data engineering skills could be worth the hassle.
 - Make use of the fact that IE professors usually work in the industry or have their own startups. In my opinion, they are your best bet especially when you are coming in with little to no experience. You need someone who knows that you have the SKILLS/knowledge but just haven't been given a proper experience to show them. 3/5 of my internships were all through IE professors while the other 2 were through IE alumni. Don't lose this amazing opportunity.
 - In the absence of professional experience, GitHub profiles are your best friend. Very important to maintain a GitHub repository with projects. This is the PROOF you can show professors and other recruiters. If you are extremely driven, it is easy to build these projects outside class but for people who don't have that drive or time, an easier solution would be to put in 10-20% more effort in your class projects. Since you are spending time on them, might as well put in that little bit of extra time in projects you know could be of great value to your profile (however choose these projects wisely, don't put in extra hours if all you are building is a titanic survival classifier - unless you are using it to offer a very detailed explanation of an algorithm eg logistic regression).
 - Don't look at internships as individual stints but rather as rungs of a ladder that can help you land a better one next time. Each internship should target a skill/industry/function that will help enhance, complement or support your overall profile.
 - Going back to the point of standing out from the rest of your peers, this is what I followed - don't just STUDY about data science and AI but start LEARNING actively - by consuming news and information about it on a constant basis. Keep up to date with the major trends and insights: my personal preference for this were podcasts (find what works best for you). Another great resource is books. Would highly recommend Genius Makers by Cade Metz where he walks you through the history of deep learning, AI 2041 Ten Visions for Our Future by Chen Qiufan and Kai-Fu Lee, 21 lessons for the 21st century by Yuval Noah Harris. These are by no means an exhaustive list and are just to get you into the right mindset.

CONTACT US

ieu.careers@ie.edu

Segovia Campus

2nd floor (next to the SciTech office)
Monday to Thursday
Hours: 10:00 H - 16:00 H

IE Tower

T-15.05
Monday to Thursday
Hours: 10:00 H - 16:00 H

International Info Sessions

Interested in working in another region? Check out our sessions on IE Connects!