

**To have and to have not.  
Some questions on  
secondary Geography in  
Spain**



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# Preliminary Questions

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- ✧ Why the number of Geography candidates is decreasing in Spanish Universities?
- ✧ How secondary students are introduced to geographical knowledge?
- ✧ What is the background of teachers?
- ✧ What knowledge and skills have they?
- ✧ Are these questions connected?

# The place of Geography in the curriculum

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## ➤ Primary

### ➤ Included in the curriculum unit:

*“Knowledge on social and natural environment”*

**(Complementary with History and Civic education)**

## ➤ Secondary

### ➤ Lower (12-16)

*Included in Social Sciences Unit. (40% of the total study load in the 2 first years)*

### ➤ Upper (16-18)

*105 hours in 2nd year. Compulsory only for those students taking Humanities and Social Sciences strands.*

# WHO IS TEACHING GEOGRAPHY IN SECONDARY EDUCATION? (12-18)

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- ✦ **Geography Graduates**
- ✦ **History Graduates**
- ✦ **Geography/History Graduates**
- ✦ **Teachers (3 years degree) with a further higher degree in History or Geography**
- ✦ **Other graduates**

# Objectives of the research:

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## To get a profile of:

- ✧ Teachers background and skills
- ✧ The use of resources in the Geography classroom
- ✧ The level of in-service attendance

## To analyse:

- ✧ The professional development of Geography teachers

## To make a proposal for:

- ✧ New in-service courses
- ✧ Improvements in teacher training

## The sample:

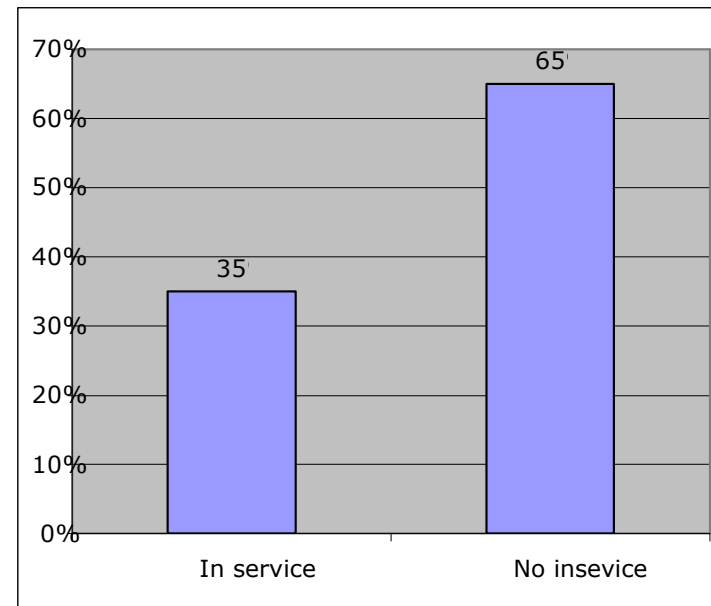
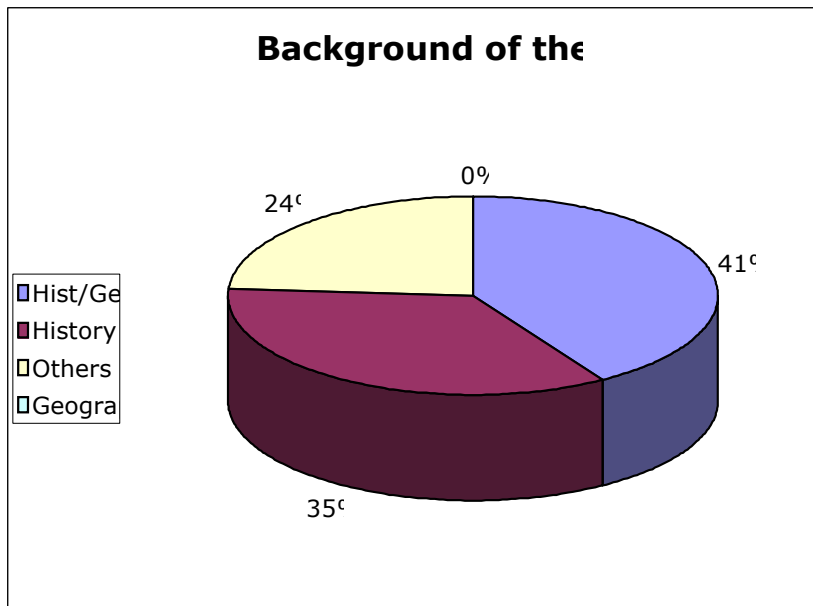
- ✧ 12 schools : 9 public / 3 private subventioned by the state
  - ✧ 30 geography teachers
    - years of teaching average: 12

# Main points of the enquiry

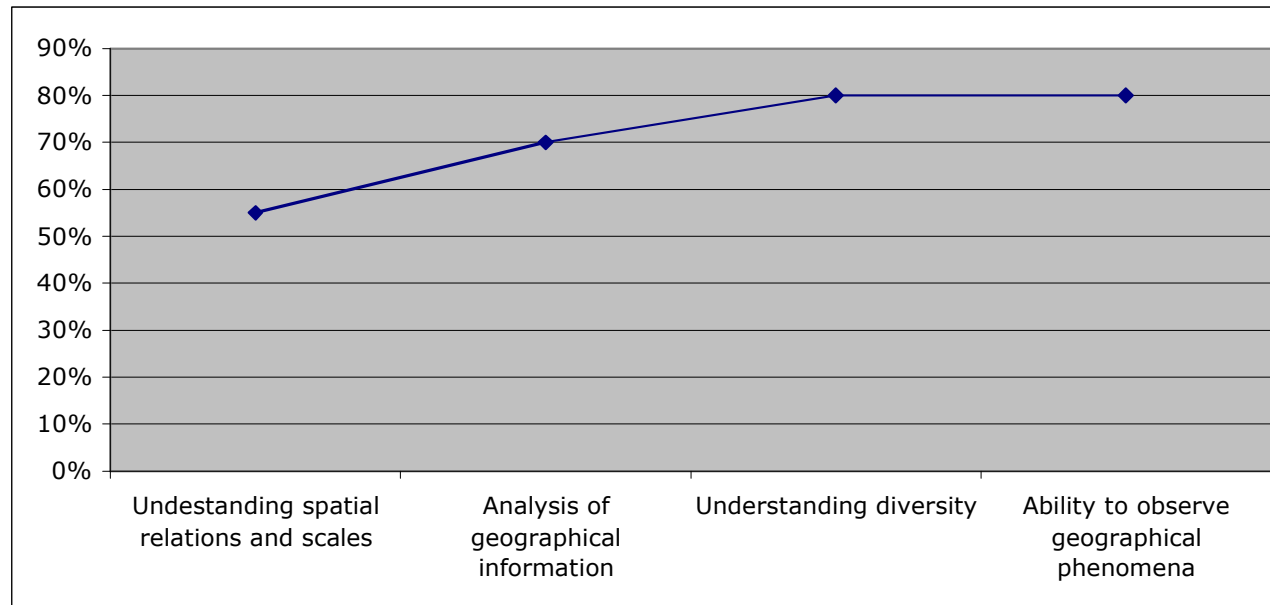
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- **Scientific background (academic degree, teaching experience, in-service training courses attended, specialization)**
- **Geographical approaches of the teacher (topic preferences, curriculum contents,...)**
- **Type and use of resources in the classroom.**
- **Open questions:**
  - **Geography in the curriculum**
  - **Geography in Citizenship education.**

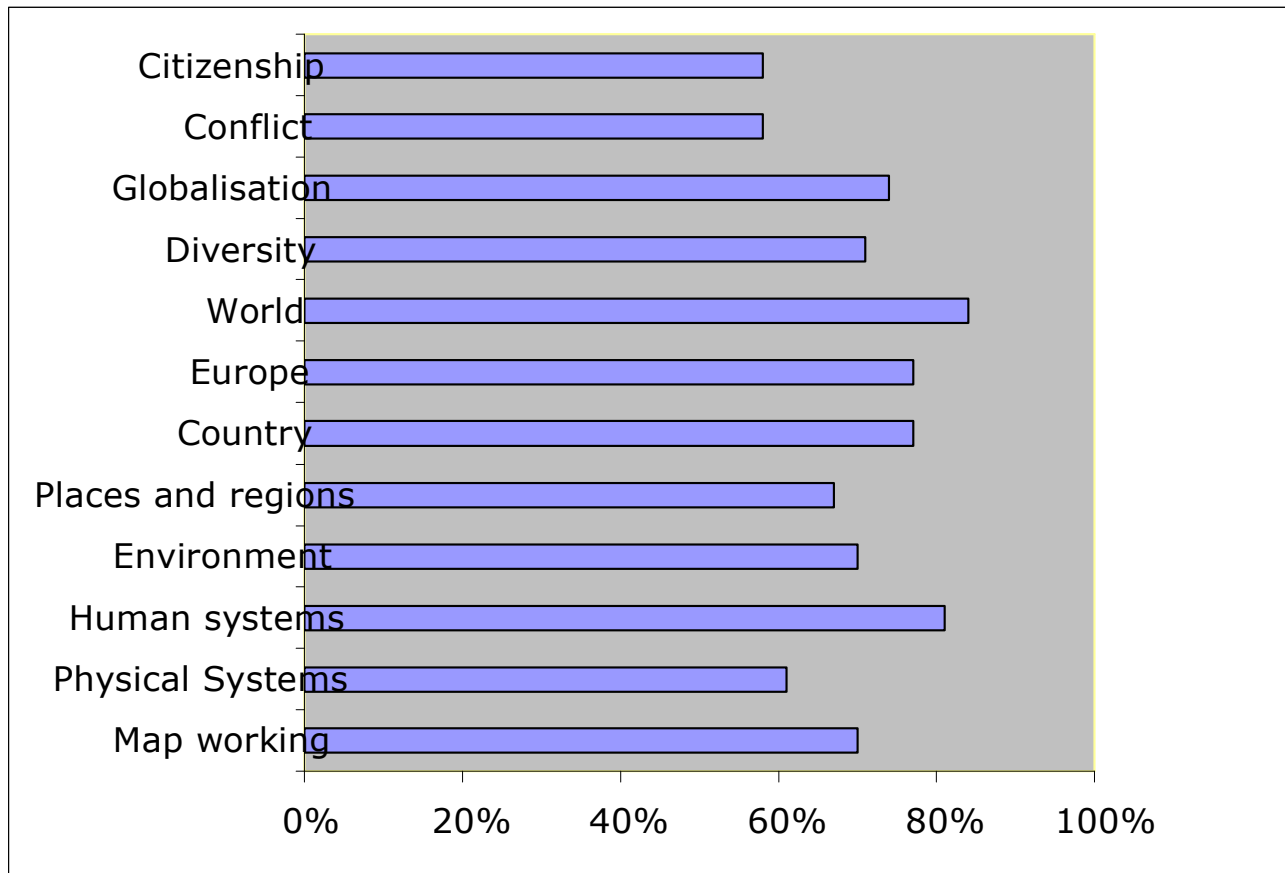
# Teacher's background



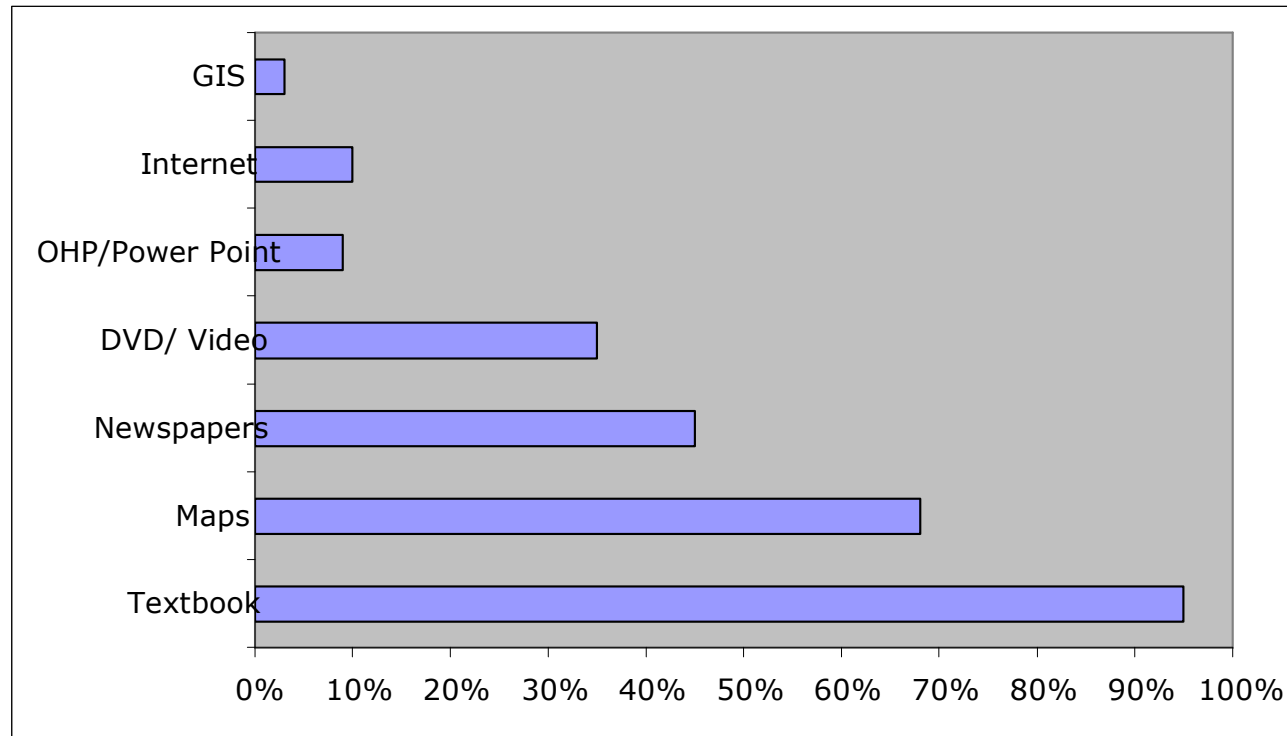
# Competences enhanced



# Main topics



# Use of resources



# Some teacher's opinions

***Geography has to be integrated with History; it provides the coordinate “space” to the coordinate “time”. (teacher I)***

***The geography field of work is strongly related to Sociology, Economy and mainly with History (teacher II)***

***Geography is complementary with History (teacher III)***

***Geography introduces critical thinking  
(Teacher IV)***

***Geography helps in the understanding of diversity (teacher V)***

# GEOGRAPHY STUDENTS ENROLLMENT IN THE 26 SPANISH DEPARTMENTS

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**Total of Geography students (1998-99) : 7781**  
**Total of Geography students (2003-2004) : 5790**

## 2001-2002

✦ **900 new students:**

Barcelona U.	105
Seville	96
Madrid Comp.	75
Valencia	55
Barcelona A.	54
La Laguna	52
Las Palmas	50

## 2003-2004

✦ **844 new students**

Barcelona U	81
Barcelona A.	71
Madrid Comp.	64
Valencia	60
Las Palmas	50
La Laguna	40
Seville	35

## Some interim conclusions

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- ✧ *The Spanish pupils study geography but.....*
  - ✧ *Geography is mainly taught by non Geographers.*
  - ✧ *The main resource is a textbook.*
  - ✧ *The more geographical competences are not underlined by teachers.*
  - ✧ *Geography is, in the minds of teachers, a complement to History*
  - ✧ *Geography departments have to be actives in this situation*
    - ◆ *A task of diffusion among secondary students*
    - ◆ *To promote in service activities addressed to teaching methodology*
      - *Urgent need of introducing new technologies*

# ***Are the times changing?...***

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- ✦ Old claims, could they be a reality with the Bologna process?***
  
  - ✦ Primary teachers: 4 years of study instead of 3 (more specialisation) at the Faculty of Education***
  
  - ✦ Secondary teachers:***
    - ◆ Bachelor degree in different specialities***
    - ◆ Master in Teaching at the Faculty of Education***