

# CoSN 2024 International Education Delegation to Spain Overview



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The CoSN 2024 International Education Delegation to Spain provided a rich, multifaceted view of Spain's educational landscape, emphasizing historical roots, contemporary practices, and forward-looking innovations. The delegation's experiences spanned from visiting a school created by the renowned architect Antonio Gaudi to engaging with modern educational leaders and exploring the role of artificial intelligence in education. The CoSN 2024 International Education Delegation to Spain provided valuable insights into the innovative approaches within Spanish education. Delegates gained an understanding of Spain's educational landscape by visiting historical and contemporary schools, attending informative presentations, and engaging with educational leaders.

## Key Themes

- **Vision and Leadership:** Clear, effective leadership is critical for the success of educational initiatives.
- **Student-Centered Learning:** Emphasis on learner agency, project-based learning, and technology integration to create enriching educational experiences.
- **Community and Collaboration:** Strong ties within the school community and collaborative efforts are essential to fostering successful educational environments.

## Key Takeaways

- **Historical and Cultural Perspectives**
  - A visit to Gaudi's early 20th-century school highlighted Spain's longstanding tradition of educational innovation, setting the stage for understanding current practices.
  - Spanish schools foster innovation through a culture of trust, without public rankings, where data is used internally to improve practices, unlike the more standardized and metrics-driven approach in the U.S.



- **Technology Integration and Strategic Frameworks**
  - Spain's advancements in educational technology are guided by the European Commission's Digital Education Action Plan (2021–2027), supported by EU funding through the #DigEdu Plan. This includes over €1.297 billion invested in digital competence development and school digitalization.
  - In comparison, U.S. education technology implementation varies by state, with funding fragmented and no centralized investment on the same scale as Spain.
  - Similar to what we find in the US, Project-Based Learning (PBL) and Design Thinking were key methodologies observed, emphasizing student agency and collaboration.
- **Policy and Governance**
  - Visits to Spain's Ministry of Education and the Catalanian Regional Ministry revealed the complexities of implementing technology, including the need for improved assessment and training frameworks.
  - The U.S. National Educational Technology Plan provides guidance, but state-level autonomy results in varying levels of technology integration and investment.
- **Professional Development and Leadership**
  - In Spain, professional development is voluntary, driven by teachers' intrinsic motivation to improve, with no mandatory recertification requirements. In contrast, professional development in the U.S. is often compulsory and seen as a bureaucratic requirement.
  - Spanish school leadership is rotational, with senior teachers serving as principals temporarily while continuing to teach. This collaborative model contrasts with the more hierarchical leadership structures found in many U.S. schools.
- **AI in Education**
  - Delegates participated in the Global Education Forum, which focused on AI's role in education. Both Spain and the U.S. are in the early stages of defining the appropriate use of AI in K-12 education, balancing innovation with ethical considerations.



## CoSN Education Delegation to Spain Roster

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## Conclusion

The CoSN 2024 International Education Delegation to Spain provided valuable insights into Spanish education's historical context, current practices, and future directions. The trip underscored the importance of visionary leadership, student-centered learning, and strategic use of technology, offering rich lessons and inspiration for educational leaders globally.

Please watch for the upcoming briefs on Similarities and Differences, School Perspectives, and an Australian Perspective.

## About CoSN – The Consortium for School Networking

CoSN, the world-class professional association for K-12 EdTech leaders, stands at the forefront of education innovation. We are driven by a mission to equip current and aspiring K-12 education technology leaders, their teams, and school districts with the community, knowledge, and professional development they need to cultivate engaging learning environments. Our vision is rooted in a future where every learner reaches their unique potential, guided by our community. CoSN represents over 14 million students and continues to grow as a powerful and influential voice in K-12 education.

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