

Jakub Piecuch

Uniwersytet Rolniczy w Krakowie

RESULTS OF SPANISH ACCESSION TO THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES UPON REGIONAL LABOUR MARKETS

Summary: One of the most significant indicators of social situation in the European Union member states and their regions is unemployment rate level and job-creation potential. The following article presents changes on the labour market of Spanish autonomous communities as a result of integration with the European Union structures. Economic and social differences among well-developed regions and the remaining autonomous communities have been significant, and during the last few years these differences have been increasing systematically. This situation causes concern, because the most important aim of the European Cohesion Policy is to narrow regional economic and social differences.

Key words: labour market, economic development, region.

1. Introduction

During the Lisbon Council in 2000, the European Community set itself a new strategic goal – to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion. The major part of this strategy was focused on creating conditions for full employment and strengthened cohesion by the end of the year 2010 [European Commission 2005, p. 7-8]. But nowadays, in the context of global financial crisis, European Community has to rethink this strategy.

European structural funds have been the most important instrument to determine positive changes in the labor market. European aid resulted in considerable unemployment reduction. From the perspective of Central European countries, the most important changes take place in Spain. In this country, dynamic economic growth has for years coexisted with unemployment rate reduction.

The objective of the research is to present the impact of Spanish integration with EC structures upon the labor market. This paper focuses on territorial units, regarded in the European nomenclature (for statistical purposes) as NUTS-2 level. Research is based on the analysis of reports by the European Commission, Committee of the Regions as well as national studies. Also EUROSTAT, AMECO – annual macro-

economic database of the European Commission's Directorate General for Economic and Financial Affairs and national statistical data were used in the article.

The first part of the paper is focused on economic changes in Spanish Autonomous Communities. The second part is centered on adjustments taking place in regional labor markets.

The chronological range covers period from 1986 – the year of Spanish integration with the European Union structures – till the current programming period ending in 2013.

2. Economic development in Spanish Autonomous Communities

Spain is located in the Eastern part of the Iberian Peninsula, covering approximately 80% of its area. The population resident in 2009 was approximately 46,7 million inhabitants. In administrative terms, Spain is divided into 17 Autonomous Communities (Aragon, Balearic Islands, the Basque Country, Cantabria, Catalonia, La Rioja, Madrid, Navarre, Andalusia, Asturias, Canary Islands, Castile-La Mancha, Castile and León, Extremadura, Galicia, Murcia, Valencia) and two autonomous cities – Melilla and Ceuta [Instituto Nacional de Estadística 2009, p. 5-7]¹.

Spanish regions have been divided into three groups, depending on how much structural funds they have obtained in 2007-2013 period (convergence regions, transitional support regions and competitiveness and employment regions). The major part of European Funds went to less developed regions under Convergence Objective.

Table 1. Evolution of GDP per capita rate in Spanish regions (1986-2008)

Regions	Years							
	1986	1990	1994	1997	2000	2003	2006	2008
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Andalusia	52.8	57.0	56.7	58.8	61.8	67.9	72.2	66.0
Extremadura	44.2	49.0	53.6	50.7	53.4	58.5	63.2	60.1
Galicia	55.0	58.0	59.3	64.5	65.2	70.2	77.2	74.0
Castile-La Mancha	54.5	63.0	64.1	64.7	65.9	69.8	72.4	65.5
Convergence regions	51.6	56.8	58.4	59.7	61.6	66.6	71.3	66.4
Asturias	70.4	70.0	71.7	67.9	70.1	76.1	84.2	80.7
Castile and León	65.0	67.0	70.8	74.3	76.0	82.7	88.6	83.4
Murcia	67.3	74.0	67.6	65.8	70.4	75.4	77.8	70.3
Valencia	70.9	74.0	73.5	76.3	81.0	84.1	85.4	76.7
Canary Islands	69.3	76.0	75.3	75.5	79.6	83.4	83.1	75.5

¹ Autonomous Communities (*Comunidades Autónomas*) were established after the death of Francisco Franco and the restoration of democracy. In addition, two Spanish cities on South Africa coast – Ceuta and Melilla enjoy the same autonomous rights as the regions. These cities are not included in the analysis in this paper.

Table 1, cont.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Transitional support regions	68.6	72.2	71.8	72.0	75.4	80.3	83.8	77.3
Aragon	75.9	83.0	84.8	85.8	87.7	95.3	99.8	93.9
Balearic Islands	90.4	97.0	97.5	97.5	103.4	102.3	102.3	92.9
Catalonia	82.3	92.0	93.1	96.8	102.2	107.7	109.9	100.4
Cantabria	67.0	74.0	74.6	73.3	78.4	86.4	92.1	88.0
Basque Country	89.5	90.0	90.9	95.3	102.8	110.6	119.7	114.9
La Rioja	83.3	83.0	87.2	91.0	95.5	98.4	99.7	92.2
Madrid	85.9	96.0	95.2	104.2	114.0	118.1	121.7	111.5
Navarre	84.8	98.0	91.2	100.6	106.8	112.8	116.8	109.4
Competitiveness and Employment regions	82.4	89.1	89.3	93.1	98.9	104.0	107.8	100.4
Spain	69.8	74.1	76.1	79.3	83.9	89.3	92.9	94.0
EU-15 = 100								

Source: [European Commission, *Sixth periodic...*; Eurostat Press Office]; own calculations.

Despite the fact that better developed regions obtained much less funds, the accessible data illustrates how well developed they are: namely the Basque Country, Navarre and Catalonia – Communities Autonomous located close to French border in North-East part of Spain, as well as capital Madrid - region focuses on services and tourism. Since Spain's integration with the European Community, those regions have achieved high level of economic development in terms of GDP per capita, and they have less problems with unemployment. Changes in GDP per capita rate in well developed and undeveloped Spanish regions can be observed in table 1.

Table 2. The Interterritorial Compensation Fund 2002-2010 (Euros)

Regions	2002		2004		2006		2008		2010	
	Total (mln €)	Per capita	Total (mln €)	Per capita	Total (mln €)	Per capita	Total (mln €)	Per capita	Total (mln €)	Per capita
Andalusia	360.52	50.30	398.82	55.06	449.33	60.52	481.62	63.20	436.92	63.20
Asturias	37.58	35.40	44.67	42.38	51.53	48.55	56.56	53.39	43.96	53.39
Canary Islands	34.04	21.00	45.24	26.73	62.43	34.70	90.56	47.99	102.56	47.99
Cantabria	9.89	18.78	8.91	16.86	9.63	17.87	10.63	19.38	7.99	19.38
Castile and León	61.25	24.63	70.06	28.35	75.30	30.61	85.06	34.48	66.39	34.48
Castile-La Mancha	68.12	40.06	78.92	46.06	92.76	52.07	114.34	62.10	107.66	62.10
Valencia	56.93	14.35	61.99	15.34	82.40	19.45	116.88	26.21	130.07	26.21
Extremadura	73.31	68.41	81.27	75.59	87.79	82.71	97.20	91.13	82.15	91.13
Galicia	140.60	51.83	163.94	60.33	183.54	68.00	203.30	75.05	169.61	75.05
Murcia	38.63	35.05	41.75	37.09	47.25	38.79	61.14	47.64	59.52	47.64
TOTAL	894.70	37.44	1011.21	42.07	1159.89	47.03	1337.98	52.81	1225.77	52.81

Source: [Ministerio de Política Territorial...]; own calculations.

Since the integration with the European Communities, differences between well developed regions and the remaining Autonomous Communities have been significant, and what is even worse, they have been increasing systematically [European Commission 2001, p. 20-21]. Growing inequity between the regions has been noticed despite European structural Funds and Interterritorial Compensation Fund, which gave priority to the less developed regions². This situation causes considerable concern, because the most important aim of the European Cohesion Policy is to narrow regional economic and social differences. The Spanish Constitution creates a specific tool – the Interterritorial Compensation Fund (*Fondo de Compensación Interterritorial*) – with the goal of reducing the differences in income and wealth across Spanish regions.

In the Spanish Constitution stated that a compensation fund should be set up due to try to correct the inter-territorial economic imbalances. Consequently in 1980 the Interterritorial Compensation Fund was created. In a first phase, from 1984 to 1990, all regional governments were beneficiaries because funds were directed not only to support the development of the most disadvantages areas, but also to promote new investments in better developed autonomous communities. In a second phase, starting from 1990 well developed regions have been no longer beneficiaries of this fund. All resources have been moved to the poorest regions (the Objective 1 regions or currently Convergence Objective regions, table 2) [Laborda, Escudero 2006, p. 21].

3. Social changes in labor markets throughout Spanish regions

Remarkable improvement in the situation of the labor market in Spain as a whole during last years is need to note. Since 1986, the year of integration with EC, unemployment rate in Spain was one of the highest among European Community countries. On the day of accession, it amounted to more than 21% of all labor force. By 1994, it reached the figure of 24%, three times exceeding European Community average. And yet during the following years, the value of this index was systematically reduced, and in 2007 it was down to 8,3% of all labor force [European Union 2009, p. 38].

The level of economic growth is closely linked to the situation in the labor market, which leads to large disparities in unemployment rate between the analyzed groups of Spanish regions [European Commission 2002, p. 20-22].

Until mid-1990s, high speed of economic growth in the Autonomous Communities wasn't linked with positive transformation of their labor markets. Quite the opposite, with necessity of reforms, restructuring of the economy, and adjustment to European common market conditions, unemployment rate in Spain rose systematically. Only the middle of 1990s, with improved competition level of the Spanish economy,

²The Spanish Constitution creates a specific tool – the Interterritorial Compensation Fund (*Fondo de Compensación Interterritorial*) – with the goal of reducing the differences in income and wealth across Spanish regions [Laborda, Escudero 2006, p. 20].

brought considerable decrease of the index. Still in many Spanish regions the lack of jobs is the main dilemma, and unemployment rate remains very high. Moreover, long term unemployment concerns large part of total number of the unemployed persons, pushing them to underclass (table 3). On the other hand, during last years, along with the economic expansion in the Basque Country, Catalonia, Madrid, Balearic Islands or Navarre, the number of jobs has been on the increase. Since the integration with the EU, unemployment rates decreased in the group of well developed Autonomous Communities by almost 1/2: from approximately 11% of workforce in 1987, to 6% in 2007 (table 3). Convergence regions also experienced decrease in unemployment rates, but in 2007 their situation was much less favorable.

Table 3. Evolution of the unemployment rate in Spanish regions (1999-2009)

Regions	Years					
	1999	2001	2003	2005	2007	2009
Andalusia	26.5	18.7	18.6	13.8	12.8	25.4
Extremadura	25.1	14.5	17.4	15.8	13.1	20.6
Galicia	16.2	11.0	12.7	9.9	7.6	12.6
Castile-La Mancha	15.0	9.5	10.1	9.2	7.6	18.8
Convergence regions	20.7	13.4	14.7	12.2	10.3	19.4
Asturias	17.9	7.7	11.1	10.2	8.5	13.4
Castile and León	15.3	10.1	11.1	8.7	7.2	13.8
Murcia	13.9	10.7	10.7	8.0	7.6	20.7
Valencia	13.8	9.4	11.2	8.8	8.8	21.2
Canary Islands	14.2	10.8	11.4	11.7	10.4	26.2
Transitional support regions	15.0	9.7	11.1	9.5	8.5	19.1
Aragon	9.3	5.0	6.6	5.8	5.2	12.8
Balearic Islands	8.2	5.9	9.7	7.2	7.0	18.0
Catalonia	10.8	8.6	10.0	7.0	6.5	16.3
Cantabria	15.4	8.7	10.5	8.5	5.9	12.0
Basque Country	13.9	9.8	9.5	7.3	6.1	11.0
La Rioja	8.1	4.5	6.0	6.2	5.7	12.8
Madrid	13.0	7.6	7.4	6.8	6.3	14.0
Navarre	8.2	4.9	5.7	5.6	4.8	10.9
Competitiveness and Employment regions	10.9	6.9	8.2	6.8	5.9	13.5
Spain	12.2	10.3	11.1	9.2	8.3	18.0

Source: [European Commission, *Sixth periodic...*; Eurostat, *Regional unemployment...*; Eurostat, *Annual macro-economic...*].

Starting with 2009 Spanish economy went into recession and contracted by 3,6% of GDP, as a result of the global financial crisis. Due to the financial crisis, Spanish government faced tightening credit conditions and growing budget deficit, generated by falling state revenues and increasing government expenditures. Spanish budget deficit exceeded 11% of national GDP and thus violated the EU's Growth and

Stability Pact budget deficit criteria, with set the upper limit of 3% GDP [Eurostat 2010, p. 5]. Public debt has grown during the recent years to 65% of GDP in 2009 and European Commission provisions suggest the level of public debt in 2011 around 73% [European Economy 2010, p. 93].

Erosion of public finances in Spain determined rating agencies to downgrade Spanish's international debt rating. New ratings have again led to increased financial instability. At the moment this Mediterranean country is under pressure from EU institutions to cut the government spending and reforming the labor market and pension systems. This changes strongly influenced situation on labour market and unemployment rate grew to 18% of labour force in 2009.

Table 4. Evolution of labor market indicators in Spanish regions (1999-2008)

Regions	Employment Rate			Unemployment rate 15-24 years			Long term unemployment (12m >)		
	1999	2004	2008	1999	2004	2008	1999	2004	2008
EU27	:	56.6	53.7	18.1	18.7	15.6	46.8	45.4	37.2
Spain	51.9	55.7	52.4	29.4	22	24.6	45.6	32.0	17.9
Andalusia	50.2	52.9	46.6	42.3	27.6	31.1	43.2	30.1	19.6
Extremadura	49.2	50	44.7	39.7	26.8	29.1	58.4	28.7	23.2
Galicia	49.8	52.6	49.8	30.9	25.6	21.2	34.6	42.8	22.2
Castile-La Mancha	48.5	51.4	49.8	26.2	16.8	22.9	53.0	31.6	16.6
Convergence regions	49.4	51.7	47.7	34.8	24.2	26.1	47.3	33.3	20.4
Asturias	44.1	46	47.8	43.8	27.1	21.6	37.7	42.9	27.5
Castile and León	47.8	50	48.9	33.2	22.9	22.2	39.2	36.7	20.4
Murcia	51.7	57.5	53.2	25.7	18.8	23.6	40.8	23.6	13.5
Valencia	52.7	57.6	53.1	25.8	20.6	26.4	43.9	23.1	14.3
Canary Islands	54	58	49.6	28.6	26.0	32.1	40.8	28.4	19.7
Transitional support regions	50.1	53.8	50.5	31.4	23.1	25.2	40.5	30.9	19.1
Aragon	49.7	53.7	54.5	18.3	13.7	20.0		25.8	13.2
Balearic Islands	56.6	62.3	57.3	16.5	18.7	24.3	41.3	15.7	9.5
Catalonia	55.8	60.1	56.8	20.7	21.2	20.4	32.3	37.0	16.9
Cantabria	46.2	52.6	52.4	33.2	22.3	19.1	48.8	41.5	15.1
Basque Country	52.6	55.8	53.8	29	24.5	19.2	51.5	38.6	23.9
La Rioja	49.3	54.3	54.8	19	12.1	22.0	52.0	26.7	15.6
Madrid	54.8	59.4	58.3	25.7	15.9	21.0	51.6	31.5	14.7
Navarre	53.2	56.7	56.4	14.6	13.8	18.7	41.9	19.6	12.6
Competitiveness and Employment regions	52.3	56.9	55.5	22.1	17.8	20.6	39.9	29.5	15.2

Source: [European Commission, *Sixth periodic...*; European Commission, *Fourth Report...*].

Differences in unemployment rate between Autonomous Communities since the year of integration with European Community till the beginning of the global financial crisis remained considerable. In northern regions – namely Cantabria, Navarre, La Rioja or Aragon – unemployment rate in 2007 didn't exceed 6% of labor force, while in southern Spain – in Andalusia and Extremadura – it reaches 12-13% of labor force (table 3).

Not only long term unemployment is a problem in Spanish Autonomous Communities. Even more important are problems with Youth employment. Among young people (15-24 years old) unemployment rate reaches the level of 30% in Andalusia or Extremadura (table 4).

Table 5. Employment by sector in Spanish regions between year 1995 and 2008 (% of total)

Regions	Agriculture			Industry			Construction			Services		
	1995	2002	2008	1995	2002	2008	1995	2002	2008	1995	2002	2008
Andalusia	10.6	10.3	7.5	12.0	10.3	10.1	9.3	12.9	13.2	68.1	66.4	69.3
Extremadura	15.4	14.4	10.7	8.8	8.5	11.3	13.5	13.4	13.7	62.3	63.7	64.3
Galicia	23.2	14.5	8.0	15.1	16.8	17.9	9.6	10.9	11.0	52.1	57.8	63.0
Castile-La Mancha	13.0	10.7	6.6	19.0	19.3	17.4	11.2	12.1	15.8	56.8	58.0	60.3
Convergence regions	15.6	12.5	8.2	13.7	13.7	14.2	10.9	12.3	13.4	59.8	61.5	64.2
Asturias	12.3	8.0	4.4	20.6	18.1	15.9	8.7	10.8	11.6	58.4	63.0	68.0
Castile and León	13.1	9.7	7.5	17.0	17.2	17.5	10.3	11.2	11.6	59.6	61.9	63.4
Murcia	11.5	11.1	9.7	18.2	18.1	14.7	8.4	11.0	13.8	61.9	59.7	61.8
Valencia	6.7	3.9	3.3	24.3	22.3	18.5	9.4	12.2	13.0	59.7	61.6	65.2
Canary Islands	8.2	5.1	3.2	7.4	6.0	7.1	9.6	14.1	12.5	74.8	74.8	77.2
Transitional support regions	10.4	7.6	5.6	17.5	16.3	14.8	9.3	11.9	12.5	62.9	64.2	67.1
Aragon	4.8	6.3	4.8	21.3	22.7	21.4	7.5	9.2	10.7	59.8	61.8	63.1
Balearic Islands	1.8	5.1	1.8	7.4	6.0	8.5	9.6	14.1	15.5	74.8	74.8	74.2
Catalonia	2.0	2.5	2.0	26.2	24.7	21.8	8.1	9.5	11.3	62.2	63.3	65.0
Cantabria	9.6	6.6	4.2	19.0	19.1	19.1	10.3	12.1	12.9	61.1	62.3	63.8
Basque Country	1.6	1.5	1.6	28.2	27.9	23.8	7.8	9.1	8.9	61.4	61.5	65.7
La Rioja	4.7	7.3	4.7	29.8	30.5	25.7	6.0	9.6	11.7	52.7	52.6	57.9
Madrid	1.0	0.7	1.0	15.6	13.4	10.9	8.6	9.2	9.7	74.8	76.6	78.4
Navarre	4.4	5.7	4.4	30.1	30.0	27.3	7.7	9.1	10.9	55.5	55.1	57.4
Competitiveness and Employment regions	3.7	4.5	3.1	22.2	21.8	19.8	8.2	10.2	11.4	62.8	63.5	65.7
Spain	8.1	6.0	4.3	18.9	17.7	15.9	9.1	11.0	11.9	64.0	65.4	67.9

Source: [Statistical office...; European Commission, *Third report...*].

High level of unemployment rate in Andalusia and Extremadura is connected with the necessity of agriculture restructuring. In mid-1980s, the primary sector was responsible for more than 20% of employment, calculated as percentage of all employed persons. Difficulties in the labor market had negative impact in those Autonomous Communities with less developed economies and lack of possibility for non-agricultural job creation. In mid-1990s, unemployment rates reached the highest level – as much as 34% in Andalusia and 32% of labor force in Extremadura.

There is a close link between high-speed level of economic growth and positive changes in labor market in regions where unemployment rate is at present very low – namely Navarre (5,5%), La Rioja or Aragon with 5,6% of labor force.

Employment structure is one of the most important aspects of any region's socio-economic performance. Transformation in this area shows direction of changes in the analyzed regions. In years preceding the act of Spanish integration with the European Community, tendencies to modify the level of employment in each sector have been observed. That trend was even stronger in the years to follow, in response to necessary adjustments Member States had to make in order to increase their competitiveness.

No doubt the most significant changes can be observed in the primary sector of agriculture. In many Autonomous Communities, which depended on agricultural production in the years before accession, this conversion had violent character. In Galicia, since 1995 to 2008, employment in agriculture has decreased from 23,2% (of total employment in all sectors) to 8%. Simultaneously, employment increased in other sectors, mainly in services. Similar changes have been observed in other Autonomous Communities belonging to Convergence regions (table 5). Despite positive performance in Convergence group of regions, employment in agriculture is still very high and undeniably much higher than in other two groups of regions. At the same time employment in industry is lower than in non Convergence regions.

The highest level of employment in services is noted in regions closely connected with tourism – namely Canary Islands, Balearic Islands and the capital region of Madrid. In 2008, the level of employment in this sector was running at about 75% of total employment.

4. Conclusions

Spanish integration with the European Communities was a giant step on the road to highly developed economy. Spain, formerly peripheral, economically backward, and with high level of unemployment, turned into a modern and competitive country. Integration with EU structures forced Spain to reorganize and liberalize its economy and to reduce unemployment rate.

To understand foundations of today's Spanish success, it is necessary to look back to the beginning of Spain's integration process with the European Community. Even before 1986, there were well-developed and industrial regions among Spanish

Autonomous Communities. Moreover, Spain has border with France, and those better developed regions – namely the Basque Country, Navarre, Catalonia, and Aragon – were located close to that border. It is highly possible that these well-developed Spanish Autonomous Communities were the main source of structural changes, and of speeding up the process of economic development. In addition to positive performance, these regions were also able to absorb surplus of labor force from other Autonomous Communities.

From the perspective of Central European countries, economic changes which took place in Spain are of great significance; its situation back then is comparable to the new Member States' situation today. Just like Spain in the first years after accession, the new Member States participate in a significant part of community structural funds. We must remember that European funds obtained by Spain have played the role of the most important instrument which determined economic development of these states. Among all EU members, it is Spain which benefits from structural funds to the highest degree. The European aid resulted in increased economic development rate and caused considerable employment rise.

Central and East European Countries are facing the same problems as Spain had to confront twenty years ago. Similarly to Spain back then, New Member States integrated with the European Union in 2004 with a huge amount of unresolved economic and social dilemmas. The years to follow will show whether structural evolution follows a path similar to that undertaken in Spain in first years after accession, which allowed the country to be prosperous, and successful in unemployment reduction, or current economic crisis definitely stops positive changes on labour markets in new accession countries.

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REZULTATY PRZYSTĄPIENIA HISZPANII DO WSPÓLNOT EUROPEJSKICH NA REGIONALNE RYNKI PRACY

Streszczenie: Ewolucja sytuacji na rynku pracy w regionach państw Unii Europejskiej, które w trakcie ostatnich lat uzyskiwały największą pomoc finansową, stanowi przedmiot zainteresowania w Polsce ze względu na problemy na rynku pracy wywołane trwającym globalnym kryzysem finansowym. Pomimo pozytywnych przemian ekonomicznych i pozyskiwania środków strukturalnych w ostatnich latach, nasz kraj doświadcza obecnie wzrostu liczby osób pozbawionych zatrudnienia, dlatego warto przyjrzeć się sytuacji w innych krajach. Do analizy wybrano Hiszpanię – kraj, którego problemy ekonomiczne i społeczne w pewnym stopniu są zbliżone do problemów, jakie dotyczą nasz kraj. Jak wskazuje przykład Hiszpanii – pierwsze lata po integracji ze strukturami UE są zawsze trudne, lecz podjęcie reform gospodarczych i społecznych pozwala w dłuższej perspektywie osiągnąć sukces.