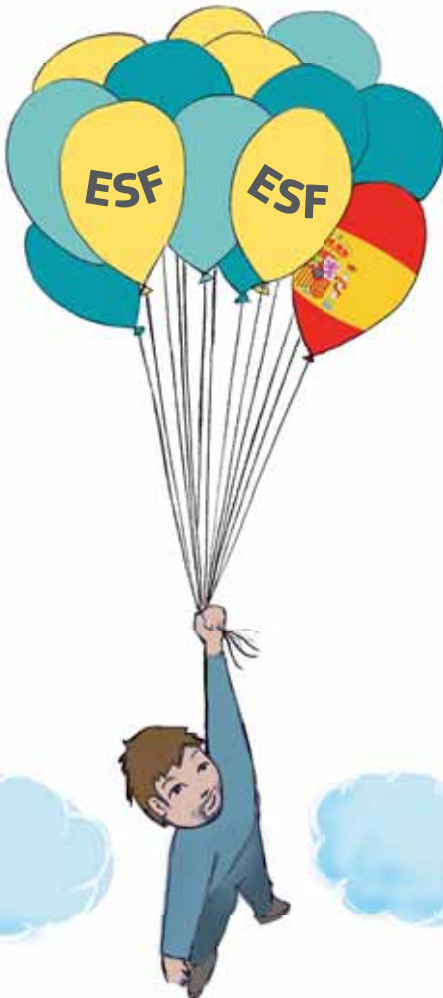




European
Commission



SPAIN

AND THE EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND

Spain is using ESF funding to keep workers employed and help job-seekers get back to work. Better education and vocational training are targeted as the means to ensure a more skilled workforce for the future, as are better job prospects for the young, women, the low-skilled and disadvantaged groups – to boost their participation in a more dynamic labour market.

INVESTING IN PEOPLE AND JOBS: THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR SPAIN

The intense economic downturn that started in 2008 has had a severe impact on employment across Spain. As the economy recovers, the government is implementing a comprehensive reform plan, with a core goal to create jobs, but also to build a more competitive economy capable of sustaining and improving the welfare of its citizens. And a more competitive economy involves not only creating new jobs, but also requires better-qualified workers to fill them. As part of this effort, Spain is aiming for 74% of the working-age population to have jobs by 2020.

“The core goal is to create jobs”

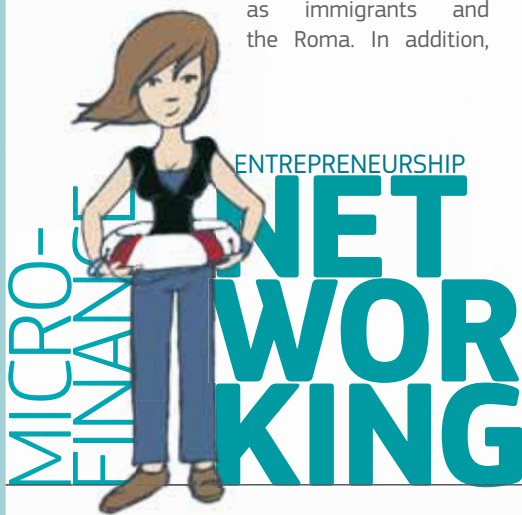
To raise employment levels, a number of obstacles must be overcome. There must be a boost in job prospects for certain groups who face particular challenges in getting a job: in particular the young, but also people with disabilities, and those who are less well integrated into Spanish society, such as immigrants and the Roma. In addition,

measures are needed to give women better prospects for jobs and promotion – fewer women than men work and too often in lower-skilled jobs.

Furthermore, as Spain promotes a more competitive and productive economy, it is taking measures to ensure that workers can acquire the new professional skills they need to prosper and get on in a more dynamic job market. And Spain is also taking steps to significantly reduce undeclared, precarious employment which puts workers and their families at risk of poverty and social exclusion.

ESF spending in Spain

Each Member State manages its ESF funding according to the particular challenges it faces. For 2007-2013, Spain is receiving EUR 8 billion of ESF funds. With national co-funding, this brings the total ESF spending on jobs to EUR 11.4 billion. ESF activities are implemented through three nationwide programmes that account for 60% of total funding, with the remaining 40% shared between 19 regional programmes.



SPAIN'S ESF PRIORITIES

More jobs

Active employment policies are playing an important role in preventing job-seekers from falling into the trap of long-term unemployment. ESF funding is going to projects that take an individual approach to guiding people either into a job or back to a job. The 'Programa Prepara' is a back-to-work initiative involving training and support which, during its first six months, helped 150 000 participants, 20% of whom went on to find a job. Similarly, the national 'Green Jobs' programme, comprising over 80 projects, is improving green skills and qualifications among workers at risk of losing their jobs. It aims to train over 28 000 people and create 1 000 'green' SMEs offering jobs for the future. Other projects are boosting competitiveness, such as the Sierra de las Nieves region which helped 1 500 local olive farmers go 'organic' through training, advice and product support. Likewise, the innovative 'University Entrepreneurship Network' was set up by eight Catalan universities to promote student entrepreneurship and support spin-off and start-up companies. In Extremadura, more than 11 000 workers and job-seekers were given the chance to upgrade their IT skills and improve their job prospects in the 'Technology Literacy Plan' project which offered computer training and career advice.

More chances

ESF spending is supporting Spain's objective of reducing the number of people at risk of poverty or exclusion by over 1.4 million – through improving education and job prospects. Equal opportunities measures for women are supporting their access to jobs, like the 'Opening of Centres' ESF programme in Aragon which offers after-hours education events to 8 000 schoolchildren at 235 schools – thus helping parents hold down a 'normal' job. Likewise, for disadvantaged children, home-based support and teaching is available, for example, in a project in the Canary Islands that is helping these children to develop the social and other skills they need to do better at school. And there are many projects helping disabled people into work, like the tourism training offered in Benidorm that helped disabled job-seekers get jobs with local bars and cafés. In Andalusia, the ESF is supporting deaf people via company internships to improve their job prospects – while offering sign-language training to potential work colleagues. And the city of Alicante has given specialised training in painting and decorating to school drop-outs to give them a pathway into work in a sector with job opportunities – around 80% of participants have found work.

*“Towards a more
competitive economy”*

THE ESF IN SPAIN: SOME EXAMPLES

Caritas Española: partnering the ESF

The Caritas organisation, which is active in helping the disadvantaged and unemployed get into work, is a significant partner in Spain's ESF programmes, implementing many diverse projects. For example, in Albacete it teams up with the university and the chambers of commerce to help the social and professional integration of people with special difficulties – such as the disabled and excluded – by offering job opportunities in environmental and rural development projects. In Granada, it uses ESF co-funding to put job-seekers into direct contact with employers, and guides them through job applications, into work and eventual training opportunities. In Menorca, the Caritas 'Mestral' ESF project created job

opportunities in the recycling sector for socially excluded individuals, giving them technical and practical training along with help to integrate better into working life.

Going local

ESF funding in Catalonia was used to put local interests and knowledge first in the fight against social exclusion in deprived neighbourhoods. Adopting a bottom-up approach, the regional employment service empowered local authorities and people at grass-roots level to find solutions for better integration – for example, by helping immigrant women improve their qualifications and find work. The 'Trellal als barris' project covered 57 neighbourhoods when it started, but its success in fighting exclusion and offering new opportunities led to it being extended to 133 localities in total.



Do you want to...?

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- ...understand better how the ESF works?
- ...see video clips on projects from across the EU?

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TRAINING
NEW JOBS
SKILLS INNOVATION