# **ECO FLASH**

9 June 2020

### Spain: hopes of a green recovery

#### **Guillaume Derrien**

- The Covid-19 crisis will leave its mark on the economy. However, the decade ahead offers new prospects for growth and employment.
- Spain suffers from a lack of employment and investment in technology-related sectors, but has opportunities to close these gaps.
- The renewable energy sector can be a significant source of employment over the medium to long term.
- The National Energy and Climate Plan is a significant step forward (if passed and implemented).
- The European Green Pact and Brexit may also help boost high-tech investment in the country.

The Spanish economy will be one of the hardest hit by the Covid-19 crisis. The latest figures from the Spanish Employment Office (SEPE) confirm the sharp deterioration in the labour market: although the rate of decline in employment eased in May, it was nevertheless 70,800 last month, taking the fall for the last three months to 1,119,000 jobs. Over the same period, unemployment has jumped 803,668, to 3,936,000, pushing the unemployment rate at around 17,1%3. The creation in urgency of a minimum living income, approved by decree on 29 May and introduced from June, is a direct response to the increase in unemployment and poverty that the country will face over the coming months.

 For a detailed analysis of these weaknesses, see EcoFlash Eurozone: Four countries, four ways to recover, 20 May 2020.
 Number of workers registered with the social security system.

Number of workers registered with the social security system.
 Seasonally-adjusted data.
 Assuming that the active population (16 and over) remained the

<sup>3</sup> Assuming that the active population (16 and over) remained the same as in Q1 2020 (22,994,200; source: INE).

### Spain technology sector value added

Index 2000 = 100

Information & communication + professional, scientific & technical services VA

--- Total VA



Figure 1

Source: Eurostat. BNP Paribas

However, it would be misleading to compare the current situation to the crises of 2008 and 2011. The systemic risks were, prior to the current health crisis, smaller than in these past downturns. Up until the end of last year, consumer and business indebtedness fell markedly, the government deficit had been reduced and the housing market had turned higher (up 2.1% y/y in Q4 2019, compared to a record fall of 10.0% y/y in Q4 2012). The Covid-19 crisis will break this positive cycle and the economic recession in 2020 will be sharp. However, the epidemic seems to recede rapidly in Europe and borders within the Schengen area are progressively reopening: this raises hopes of a stronger-than-expected economic recovery in the second half of 2020, particularly in the tourist industry, which is a key sector in Spain.



**ECONOMIC RESEARCH DEPARTMENT** 



The bank for a changing world



## Technological transformation: Spain lagging behind?

It would also be wrong to ignore the profound transformation occurring in the Spanish economy since the financial crisis of 2008. The economic weight of the 'technology' sector has increased, and particularly since 2013. This trend can be seen at different levels:

- i) In terms of employment: the numbers of jobs in the information and communications sector and in "professional, scientific and technical services" increased by 21.7% (+90k) and 14.7% (+302.5k) respectively between Q1 2008 and Q1 2020. Conversely, total employment fell by 8.7% (-1,723k) over the same period. As a share of total employment, these two sectors accounted for a combined 15.7% in Q1 2020, compared with 12.3% in Q1 2008.
- In terms of production: value added from these two sectors represented 13.3% of total value added, up from 10.6% in 2008.
- iii) In terms of investment: the share of investment in intellectual property products (patents, inventions) climbed from 2.55% of GDP in Q1 2008 to 3.56% in Q1 2020.4

The increase in the share of high value added sectors in the economy is happening across most developed countries. It reflects – to a large extent – the expansion of the digital economy, both in services (e-commerce, fintech, apps) and industry (production chain automation, industrial robots, connected objects).

However, Spain continues to lag behind other major European countries. Table 1 compares EU economies on these three measures (value added, employment and investment). Spain remains below the EU-28 average, and in particular behind France and Germany. Looking beyond Europe, Spain is also trailing the US and Japan.

The lag in cutting-edge investment explains partly why Spain has not generated sufficient new jobs to offset losses in more traditional sectors heavily impacted by these technological transformations (manufacturing, construction and even finance). Nissan's announcement that the company will close its Barcelona plant – causing the loss of 2,800 jobs – is the latest example of the difficulties faced by the car industry visà-vis technological changes and increased competition from China in the electric-vehicle segment. The Covid-19 crisis has exacerbated these difficulties, but it is not the main cause, which is mainly structural.

#### Green investment: an opportunity to be seized

The Covid-19 crisis, major structural challenges (climate change, ageing population), and the large fiscal stimulus packages announced by governments and the EU, should increase the weight of technology sectors in all 'developed' economies over the coming years. Spain has key strengths to take advantage of this potential wave of investment:

### ■ Technology sector share\*, Q4 2019

%

	Value added (% total VA)	Employment (% total employment)	Intellectual property products investment (% GDP)
EU-28	17.3	9.2	5.0
Spain	13.3	8.2	3.4
Austria	13.6	9.2	5.0
Belgium	20.5	8.7	-
Bulgaria	12.8	6.5	2.4
Croatia	13.5	7.1	-
Cyprus	17.2	10.9	-
Czech Republic	13.0	7.9	4.4
Denmark	15.5	9.9	5.6
Estonia	17.7	9.8	2.9
France	19.5	9.3	5.9
Germany	16.4	9.1	4.0
Greece	8.8**	7.9	1.6
Hungary	16.6	6.8	3.4
Ireland	25.1	11.5	-
Italy	13.4**	9.1	3.2
Latvia	13.5	6.4	1.5
Lituania	11.2	7.2	2.4
Luxembourg	21.5	13.3	1.4
The Netherlands	20.5	10.4	4.6
Poland	12.9	6.6	2.8
Portugal	11.5	7.5	2.9
Romania	15.0	4.7	1.9
Slovakia	14.5	6.7	-
Slovenia	14.3	8.3	3.0

<sup>\*</sup> Technology sector = information & communication + professional, scientific & technical services

Table 1

Source: Eurostat, BNP Paribas

In the renewable-energy sector: Spain benefits from a favourable landscape and climate for the development of renewable energy, in particular solar power. In 2019, Spain was Europe's leader for onshore wind power.<sup>5</sup> The country also became the biggest recipient of solar power investment in Europe last year: installed capacity was 4.5GW, compared to 4GW in Germany and 0.9GW in France.<sup>6</sup> The Covid-19 crisis is expected cause to a slowdown, or even a drop in investment over the short term (2020-21). However, Spain's lead in this sector could represent a significant source of employment for the country. The solar power industry could generate 1.73 million jobs in Europe, which is equivalent to nearly half of the new jobs in the whole renewable energy sector for the region (between 3.3 and 3.4 million).



<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Other sources of investment should also be taken into account, such as investment in software or in information and communication technology. However, data are missing for numerous countries which does not allow for a like-for-like comparison.

<sup>\*\*</sup> Data are for Q3 2019

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Renewable energy market update May 2020, International Energy Agency, pages 35-37.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Ibid, pages 26-27.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> According to the IEA, installation of new solar capacity in Europe could be 18% lower than in the pre-crisis scenario (see *Renewable energy market update May 2020*, International Energy Agency).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> See Ram M. et al., *Job creation during the global energy transition towards 100% renewable power system by 2050*, Technological Forecasting and Social Change, February 2020.



Recent announcements by the Spanish Government have been encouraging: last month was presented a National Energy and Climate Plan, which sets an objective of carbon neutrality by 2050. This plan still needs to be approved by the parliament. If it goes forward, it would put a moratorium on any new fossil fuel project and would seek to achieve 100% renewable electricity by 2050. Government estimates suggest that this plan will require EUR 200 billion investments over the next 10 years and could generate 350,000 new jobs each year.

- Fintech: Spain remains a major fintech centre in Europe. According to the Bank of Spain, the number of fintech firms in Spain (224) was close to the level in Germany (261) and the highest in Europe on a per capita basis. The UK's departure from the EU the UK dominates by far the sector in Europe, with 1,171 fintech companies in 2019 could lead to a reshuffle in Europe and allow Spain to attract more investment and create more jobs in this sector.
- More broadly, Spain seems well placed in the digital economy sphere relatively to its main European partners. According to the European Commission's Digital Economy and Society index (DESI), Spain ranks 11<sup>th</sup> in Europe in 2019, behind the Netherlands (3<sup>rd</sup>) and the UK (5<sup>th</sup>) but ahead of Germany (12<sup>th</sup>) and France (16<sup>th</sup>).<sup>10</sup> Spain performs well in the digitisation of public services (4<sup>th</sup>), but is lagging significantly in the level of digital education of its population (17<sup>th</sup>). Between 2014 and 2019, Spain's DESI ranking increased from 13<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup>

There are still many obstacles for Spain to take full advantage of these opportunities: the public deficit will widen sharply this year, further limiting the government's fiscal leeway. The need to tackle higher unemployment could, in the short term, reduce investment in 'high-tech' sector and dampen the political will to follow an ambitious agenda in this area. The lack of digital education (as highlighted by the DESI index) will take time to be resolve and could limit the supply of labour needed to develop these new sectors.

On this point, the European Green Pact and the EU recovery package of EUR750 billion (EUR500 billion in grants and EUR250 billion in loans) could strongly support the Spanish economy. Under the current EU recovery package, Spain would benefit from EUR77.3 billion in grants, a sum equivalent to 6.2% of annual GDP<sup>11</sup>.

The structural challenges facing the Spanish economy are not isolated cases. Germany (automotive and coal sectors), France (automotive and retail sectors), the US (oil and retail sectors) and China (metallurgy and coal sectors) are all facing similar challenges in transforming their economies. The question is not when, but at what pace Spain will conduct this transition, which is essential for the country in order to remain competitive as well as to create long-term and, overall, betterpaid jobs.

### ■ DESI index (2019)

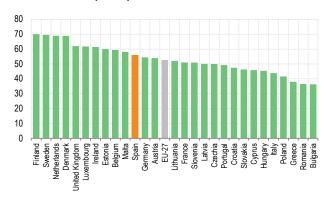


Figure 2

Source: European Commission, BNP Paribas

Guillaume Derrien guillaume.a.derrien@bnpparibas.com

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Based on 2019 GDP.



<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Financial Stability Review, Spring 2020, Bank of Spain, pages 31-36

https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/desi



### EcoFlash // 9 June 2020

## **Group Economic Research**

William De Vijlder Chief Economist	+33 1 55 77 47 31	william.devijlder@bnpparibas.com		
ADVANCED ECONOMIES AND STATISTICS				
Jean-Luc Proutat Head – United States, United Kingdom	+33 1 58 16 73 32	jeanluc.proutat@bnpparibas.com		
Hélène Baudchon France – Labour markets	+33 1 58 16 03 63	helene.baudchon@bnpparibas.com		
Louis Boisset European Central Bank watch, Euro area global view, Japan	+33 1 57 43 02 91	louis.boisset@bnpparibas.com		
Frédérique Cerisier Euro area (European gouvernance and public finances), Spain, Portugal	+33 1 43 16 95 52	frederique.cerisier@bnpparibas.com		
Raymond Van Der Putten Germany, Netherlands, Austria, Switzerland – Energy, climate – Long-term projections	+33 1 42 98 53 99	raymond.vanderputten@bnpparibas.com		
Tarik Rharrab Statistics	+33 1 43 16 95 56	tarik.rharrab@bnpparibas.com		
BANKING ECONOMICS				
Laurent Quignon Head	+33 1 42 98 56 54	laurent.quignon@bnpparibas.com		
Laure Baquero	+ 33 1 43 16 95 50	laure.baquero@bnpparibas.com		
Céline Choulet	+33 1 43 16 95 54	celine.choulet@bnpparibas.com		
Thomas Humblot	+ 33 1 40 14 30 77	thomas.humblot@bnpparibas.com		
EMERGING ECONOMIES AND COUNTRY RISK				
François Faure Head — Argentina	+33 1 42 98 79 82	francois.faure@bnpparibas.com		
Christine Peltier Deputy Head – Greater China, Vietnam, South Africa	+33 1 42 98 56 27	christine.peltier@bnpparibas.com		
Stéphane Alby Africa (French-speaking countries)	+33 1 42 98 02 04	stephane.alby@bnpparibas.com		
Stéphane Colliac Turkey, Ukraine, Central European countries	+33 1 42 98 26 77	stephane.colliac@bnpparibas.com		
Sara Confalonieri Africa (Portuguese & English-speaking countries)	+33 1 42 98 43 86	sara.confalonieri@bnpparibas.com		
Pascal Devaux Middle East, Balkan countries	+33 1 43 16 95 51	pascal.devaux@bnpparibas.com		
Hélène Drouot Korea, Thailand, Philippines, Mexico, Andean countries	+33 1 42 98 33 00	helene.drouot@bnpparibas.com		
Salim Hammad Latin America	+33 1 42 98 74 26	salim.hammad@bnpparibas.com		
Johanna Melka India, South Asia, Russia, CIS	+33 1 58 16 05 84	johanna.melka@bnpparibas.com		
CONTACT MEDIA				
Michel Bernardini	+33 1 42 98 05 71	michel.bernardini@bnpparibas.com		





### NOS PUBLICATIONS



### CONJONCTURE

Analyse approfondie de sujets structurels ou



### **EMERGING**

Analyses et prévisions sur une sélection d'économies émergentes



### **PERSPECTIVES**

Analyses et prévisions des principaux pays, développés et émergents



### **ECOFLASH**

Un indicateur, un évènement économique majeur. Le détail ...



### **ECOWEEK**

L'actualité économique de la semaine et plus...



### **ECOTV**

Tous les mois, nos économistes décryptent l'actualité économique, en images



### **ECOTY WEEK**

Quel est l'évènement de la semaine? La réponse dans vos deux minutes d'économie

POUR RECEVOIR NOS PUBLICATIONS

VOUS POUVEZ VOUS ARONNER SUR NOTRE SITE ONGLET ABONNEMENT http://economic-research.bnpparibas.com



NOUS SUIVRE SUR LINKEDIN https://www.linkedin.com/sho

https://twitter.com/EtudesEco\_BNPP



Les informations et opinions exprimées dans ce document ont été obtenues de, ou sont fondées sur des sources d'information publiques réputées flabies, mais BNP Paribas ne garantit, expressément ou implicitement, ni leur exhaustivité, ni leur mise à jour. Ce document ne constitue ni orbre, ni une solicitation d'acht du de vente de titres ou autres placements. Il ne constitue ni du conseil en investissement, ni de la recherche ou analyse financière. Les informations et opinions contenues dans ce document ne sauraient dispenser l'investisseur d'evercer son propre jugement : elles sont par allieurs susceptibles d'être modifiées à tout moment sans notification et ne sauraient servir de seuf support à une evaluation des instraments eventueilement mentionnes dans le présent document route éventueille référence à une performance réalisée dans le passe ne constitue pas une indication d'une performance future. Dans toute la mesure permise par la loi, auclune société du Groupe BNP Paribas riccepte d'être teure pour responsable (y compris en raison d'un comportement négligent) au titre de pertes directées ou découlant indirectement d'une utilisation des informations contenues dans ce document ou d'une confiance accordée à oes informations. Touteis estimations et opinions contenues dans ce document; il n'est pas prévu de le mêtre à jour. SINP Paribas SA et l'ensemble des entités juridiques, finales ou succursales (ensemble désignées ci-après « BNP Paribas »), sont ausceptibles d'agir comme teneur de marché, d'agent ou encore, à titre principal, d'interveirir pour acheter ou vendre des titres émis par les éméteurs mentionnes dans ce document, ou des dévrées y affertents. BNP Paribas s , sont susceptibles d'agir comme teneur de marché, d'agent ou encore, à titre principal, d'interveirir pour acheter ou vendre des titres émis par les éméteurs mentionnes dans ce document, ou des dévrées y affertents. BNP Paribas es susceptible d'agric contraits à terme, d'options ou de tous autres instruents dévrès reposant sur l'un de cossous-

document dans les trois mois sulvant sa publication. Toute personne mentionnée aux présentés est susceptible d'avoir regu des exitaits du présent document préalablement à sa publication afin de vertifer l'exactituée se faits sur le fondement desquelles il à été élabore.

BNP Paribas est en France constituée en société anonyme. Son siège est situé au 16 boulevard des Italiens 75009 Paris. Ce document est élabore par une société du Groupe BNP Paribas. Il est conqu a l'intention exclusive des destinataires qui en sont beneficiaires et ne saurait en aucume façon être reproduit (ne tout ou partie) ou même transmis à toute autre personne ou entité sans le consentement préalable écrit de BNP Paribas. En recevant ce document, vous acceptez d'être engagés par les termes des restrictions ci-dessus.

Pour certains pays de l'Espace Economique Européen:

Le présent document à été approuvé en vue de sa publication au Royaume-Uni par BNP Paribas Succursaie de Londres.

BNP Paribas Succursaie de Londres est autorisée et supervisée par l'Autorité de Contrôle Prudentiel et autorisée et soumise à une réglementation par la Financial Services Authority. Nous pouvons fournir sur demande les détais de l'autorisation et de la réglementation par la Financial Services Authority. Nous pouvons fournir sur demande les détais de l'autorisation et de la réglementation par la Financial Services Authority. Nous pouvons fournir sur demande les détais de l'autorisation et de la réglementation par la Financial Services Authority. Nous pouvons fournir sur demande les détais de l'autorisation et de la réglementation par la Financial Services Authorits. Le présent document à été approuvé pour publication en France par BNP Paribas S.A. constituée en France en société anonyme et autorisée et supervisée par l'Autorité de Contrôle Prudentiel (ACP) et réglementée par l'Autorité de contre de la s'estitué à l'autoritée de l'autorisée et supervisée par l'Autorité de Contrôle Prudentiel et est autorisée et BNP Paribas Succursitée (au par le BNP Paribas Secur

les instruments et marchés financiers.

Hong-Kong : le présent document est distribué à Hong Kong par BNP Paribas Hong Kong Branch, filiaie de BNP Paribas dont le siège social est situé à Paris, France. BNP Paribas Hong Kong Branch exerce sous licence bancaire octroyée en vertu de la Banking Ordinance et est réglementée par l'Autorité Monétaire de Hong Kong. BNP Paribas Hong Kong Branch est aussi une instituition agrée réglementée par la Securities and Futures Commission pour l'exerce des activités réglementées de types 1, 4 et 6 [Regulated Activity Types 1, 4 et 6] en vertu de la Securities and Futures Ordinance.

Les informations contenues dans le présent document peuvent, en tout ou partie, avoir déjà été publiées sur le site obalmarkets.bnpparlbas.c

© BNP Paribas (2015). Tous droits réservés

© BNP Paribas (2015). Tous droits réservés.

Bulletin édité par les Etudes Economiques de BNP PARIBAS

Siège social: 16 boulevard des Italiens - 75009 PARIS

Tél: +33 (0) 1.42.98.12.34 -

Internet: group.bnpparibas.com - www.economic-research.bnpparibas.com

Directeur de la publication : Jean Lemierre Rédacteur en chef : William De Vijlder

