

## Assessment and Recommendations (OECD Reviews of Regional Innovation: Catalonia, Spain 2010)

Similar to Spain, Catalonia's strong period of economic growth since the early 1990s has now ended. In terms of gross domestic product (GDP), Catalonia (3.2%) grew at almost the same average annual growth rate as Spain overall (3.3%) from 1995-2005, and higher than OECD regions (2.9%). For Spain generally, this slowdown is attributed in part to the reduction of the housing construction sector and the adjustment of the financial markets. Catalonia has experienced important increases in unemployment, particularly with its large population of lesser-skilled workers, many being immigrants. Between first quarter 2008 and first quarter 2009, Catalonia's unemployment jumped by 8.6 percentage points to 16.3% -above the national increase of 7.8 percentage points and the increases of other advanced Spanish regions. Recognising its need for sustainable competitiveness, Catalonia has increasingly made science, technology and innovation a focus for regional action in support of economic development.

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