

Spain and Switzerland: observation of the management of the Covid-19 crisis and its economic impact

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Executive summary

Under normal conditions, economies go through boom-and-bust cycles. Covid-19 highlighted the problem of uncertainty in the economy that authors such as Frank Knight have proposed, particularly the unpredictable nature of economic systems. It is in this aspect that the analysis of the phenomenon is of particular interest, with the aim of understanding the repercussions that the response, in the form of economic policy, has had on the productive fabric and the labour market in Spain and Switzerland. Indeed, the labour market and the productive fabric are fundamental pillars of the economic and social structure of a country, due to their contribution to economic growth, full employment, income and wealth redistribution and social and territorial cohesion. Just as these elements are part of the welfare state, so have health issues been included since the mid-20th century. Governments in both Spain and Switzerland have therefore developed strategies to get through this period of health crisis, while trying to preserve their economic system. They face and will face several challenges and opportunities.

Each state is aware of the deficiencies and virtues of its economic structure. It is thanks to this knowledge, and depending on its health situation, that it can take decisions in the short, medium, and long term. After the Covid-19 crisis, aiming at it to be temporary, there are several structural challenges that the States must face. It is therefore necessary to find appropriate responses to them and, on the other hand, to define policies that will enable them to seize the opportunities that also arise.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose, opportunities, and timeliness of work

Under normal conditions, economies go through boom-and-bust cycles. Covid-19 highlighted the problem of uncertainty in the economy that authors such as Frank Knight have proposed, particularly the unpredictable nature of economic systems. It is in this aspect that the analysis of the phenomenon is of particular interest, with the aim of understanding the repercussions that the response, in the form of economic policy, has had on the productive fabric and the labour market in Spain and Switzerland. Indeed, the labour market and the productive fabric are fundamental pillars of the economic and social structure of a country, due to their contribution to economic growth, full employment, income and wealth redistribution and social and territorial cohesion. Just as these elements are part of the welfare state, so have health issues been included since the mid-20th century. Governments in both Spain and Switzerland have therefore developed strategies to get through this period of health crisis, while trying to preserve their economic system. They face and will face several challenges and opportunities.

1.2 Reasons and interests of this work

1.2.1 Academic

While previous economic crises were usually caused by market crisis, this one was caused by state policies. To preserve one of the pillars of the welfare state (health), another (labour market) has been restricted through a series of measures aimed at preventing mobility and contacts. While border closures had already been applied in conflicts throughout history, new strategies to achieve these objectives have emerged, such as categorising economic activities as non-essential and, where appropriate, closing them. In this way, a part of the economy has been voluntarily hindered in the free exercise of its functions by its categorisation, as has been the case with the tourism, transport, or cultural sectors.

Furthermore, and in comparison, to the subprime crisis, the responses did not focus primarily on the short term but highlighted the need to find long-term solutions. The aim is to transform the economic structure, making it more resilient in anticipation of future crises.

1.2.2 Personal

When the Coronavirus crisis arrived in Europe, I was on ERASMUS in Barcelona. I was under strict lockdown while observing the situation in my home country of Switzerland. I was following the press conferences of the Spanish Government, usually represented by Pedro Sánchez, the President, and Fernando Simón, the Director of the Centre for the Coordination of Health Alerts and Emergencies (*CCAES*), as well as of the Swiss Government, usually represented by Simonetta Sommaruga, the President in 2020, Alain Berset, Head of the Federal Department of Home Affairs (*DFI*) and Daniel Koch, Director of the Division of Communicable Diseases of the Federal Office of Public Health (*OFSP*). Faced with the different strategies put in place, I had the opportunity to comment on and debate the measures, both with friends living in Spain and in Switzerland. I came to wonder why certain decisions were taken in one direction in one country and why others were taken in the opposite direction. And finally, I wanted to know what the results were, both in terms of health and the economy.

I have a strong interest in economics and politics, both of which have been central to the management of this situation, in addition to the health aspect. Despite the sad outcome in terms of human lives, it is really a chance to observe a situation like this, both from a governance point of view and from an economic impact. As I wish to continue my academic training in a direction linking history, economics, and politics, I am delighted to have been able to analyse this historical event.

1.3 Problem and objectives

The aim of this study is to provide an overview of what happened between March 2020 and May 2021 in Spain and Switzerland. The main objectives are to analyse the influence on the economy of the measures taken to reduce the health crisis and to evaluate them, as well as to highlight structural and cyclical challenges.

In addition, some secondary objectives are addressed, such as the problems of centralised or decentralised management and their influence on the economic structure of a composite state (Federal State and State of Autonomies), understanding the influence of public policies on the productive fabric and the labour market, evaluating the heterogeneity of activities in the tertiary sector (hotels and restaurants, trade, tourism, digital services, services of the welfare state, transport, etc.) or giving an overview of the international challenge of transforming the production structures.

Furthermore, it seems important to understand what happened and how it was managed to know which strategies were successful in achieving the desired results, in case of a similar future situation.

1.4 Methodology

This work is based on official statistics (Eurostat, OECD, IMF, *INE*, *OFS*, ILOSTAT...) and offers the analysis of a few macroeconomic indicators (GDP, GDPpc, unemployment, deficit, debt, trade balance, I-DESI...) seeking to understand the functioning and impacts on the economy.

The understanding of the evolution of the measures of economic limitations and supports is based on the legal documents of the different authorities (Royal Decrees for Spain and ordinances for Switzerland). This makes it possible to recreate the chronology of events and the strategies put in place.

As for the joint assessment, the challenges and opportunities presented, they are mainly based on criticisms and recommendations of official institutions or scientific studies (ECB, *BdE*, *BNS*, *ETHZ*, IMF, PNAS, JP Morgan, Deloitte...).

Health statistics come from the public services of both countries. The behaviour of the curve of the number of newly diagnosed cases per day is observed, to see the result of the limitation measures. Only these figures are deliberately commented on, and not the statistics per 100,000 or 1 million inhabitants, the occupancy rate of hospitals, intensive care units, deaths, or the reproduction rate "Re" since the aim of this work is economic and not health related. However, this indicator has several biases: it does not show the real infections, but only those that have been diagnosed. Also, its result depends on the tracing of people and the number of tests carried out. Statistics per 100,000 or 1 million inhabitants allow the number of cases to be reported in relation to the population, which makes it possible to compare countries and territories. Data per million inhabitants are used only once, to show the differences between Spain and Switzerland. The occupancy rates of hospitals and intensive care units show the situation in the care units. It was to prevent them from being overwhelmed that decisions to reduce mobility were taken. It must be considered that as the rate of care units increases, the non-urgent care must be reduced and as a last resort, treatments must be selected and prioritised within the emergencies. These figures must be contrasted with the number of daily cases, since taken alone, they do not allow for anticipation. Indeed, a newly detected person will only go to hospital a few days, or even weeks, after being infected. These two indicators present curves like the number of daily cases. Finally, the "Re" is a mathematical formula

that indicates the reproduction rate of the virus. It is estimated that if it remains below 1, the situation is under control. But if it exceeds 1, then the spread is exponential. (FLAHAULT 2020)

In this work, the aim is to see how the curve reacts according to legal decisions. The daily indicator was therefore chosen, as it provides an overview.

The limitations of the study should indeed be recognised. The elements obtained can be used for a broader and more in-depth analysis of the subject. The study of other parameters, such as vaccination, case tracing, other health indicators or social impact, which were not addressed in this research, would help to qualify the statements made.

1.5 Announcement of the plan

First, the economic structures of the two countries are presented, to give the reader some knowledge of their productive fabric. This is indeed relevant, as the decisions that were taken were not only based on the epidemiological situation, but also on the economy. Annex 1 proposes to deepen this part by tracing the economic evolution of each country since the beginning of the 20th century, as well as the analysis of a certain number of macroeconomic indicators. An explanation of the political functioning of each country is given in Annex 2. It is highly recommended that this be considered before moving on to the analysis part. It seems important to know the relationships between the structures of the States, who takes decisions and how, since these directly affect health and economic developments.

The second part is the analysis. Spain and Switzerland follow the same logic of presentation within which the stages of governance and the measures applied are traced. Then, the epidemiological results are commented on. After that, the impacts that these elements have had on the economy are analysed, on the one hand in general terms of national accounting, and on the other hand, more specifically in the service sector. An aside is devoted to the aid provided by the States. Finally, a joint evaluation is proposed, aimed at providing some additional and critical elements that could potentially be used in future crises.

Before concluding, the third part is devoted to the challenges and opportunities for the future. These are largely structural elements, some of which have been reinforced by this crisis.

2. Economic

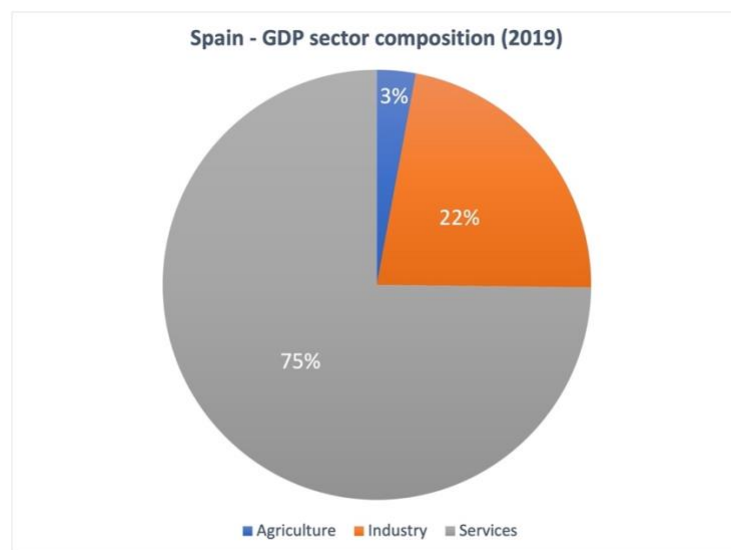
2.1 Productive fabrics

Now that the basics of the economic situations of Spain and Switzerland are in place, let's take a closer look at the different production sectors, more specifically the tertiary one.

2.1.1 Spain

On 1 January 2020, Spain had a population of just over 47,350 million, (INE 2021a) of which more than 19,966 million were in employment, which was approximately 42% of the total population. (INE 2021b)

Figure 1: Spain - GDP sector composition (2019)



Personal elaboration from ICEX 2020

2.1.1.1 Primary sector

Agriculture accounts for around 2.92% of Spain's GDP (ICEX 2020) and use around 4.1% of the employed population. (INE 2021c) The country is a major producer of all kinds of fruit and vegetables and the third largest producer of wine in the world. (MATEOS 2016) It also holds the gold medal for olive oil production. Cattle and pig breeding, as well as fisheries are important production sectors.

It should be noted that this sector is strongly influenced by the European Union's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP).

2.1.1.2 Secondary sector

Approximately 22.27% of GDP comes from the industrial sector, (ICEX 2020) which in turn accounts 20.3% of the employed population. (INE 2021c) The engineering, marine machinery, textile, industrial food processing, iron and steel sectors make up the bulk of the manufacturing industry. Manufacturing accounts for about 15.76% of GDP, while construction accounts for 6.51%. (ICEX 2020)

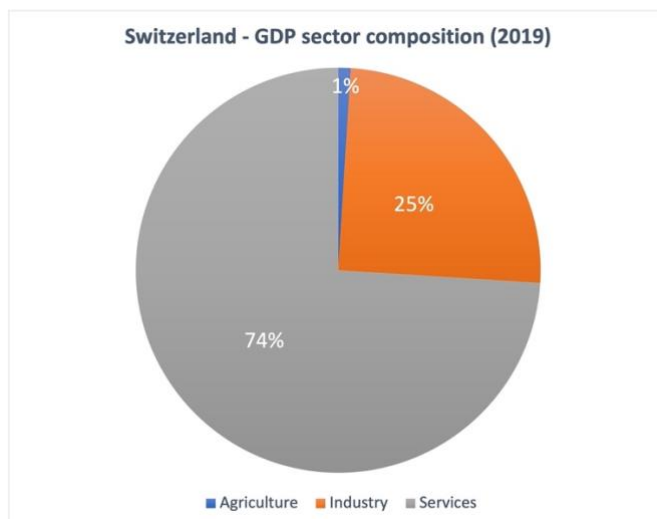
2.1.1.3 Tertiary sector

The latter sector is the heaviest, accounting for 74.81% of GDP (ICEX 2020) and 75.6% of the employed population. (INE 2021c) Within this sector is tourism, which contributed 12.4% to the gross domestic product in 2019, and 12.9% of the employed population. (INE 2020a)

2.1.2 Switzerland

Thanks to its high value-added services, its highly qualified workforce and its various industries, Switzerland is one of the most competitive and successful economies in the world. Out of a population of about 8.6 million, (OFS 2021a) about 5.3 million people are in the labour force, which is about 61% of the total population. (OFS 2021b)

Figure 2: Switzerland - GDP sector composition (2019)



Personal elaboration from UBS 2019

2.1.2.1 Primary sector

In Switzerland, the primary sector employs about 2.9% of the employed population (UBS 2019) and contributes to generating 1% of GDP. (ADMIN.CH 2019a) In addition to livestock and dairy production, wine production is also important. To support the agricultural and food sectors and to protect the soil, the federal Government provides

direct subsidies. This is part of an agricultural policy to protect the sector. In addition, apart from water, Switzerland has few resources of its own. Despite this fact, it is one of the world's leading countries in commodity trading.

2.1.2.2 Secondary sector

About 20.9% of the population is employed by the industrial sector, (UBS 2019) producing more than 25% of the GDP. (ADMIN.CH 2019a) Thanks to the high quality of its manufactured products, such as watches, machines and other high-tech products, Switzerland is known worldwide. Therefore, the export of these assets is an important part of foreign trade. It is also driven by the chemical and pharmaceutical groups; two extremely dynamic and powerful industries, which contribute 4.8% of GDP, (ADMIN.CH 2020a) making them the country's leading exporter. In second place are machines, electrical equipment, and metallurgy, followed by watchmaking with 1.5% of gross domestic product. (ADMIN.CH 2017a)

2.1.2.3 Services sector

The service sector provides jobs for almost 76.2% of the employed population (UBS 2019) and contributes 74% of the gross domestic product. (ADMIN.CH 2019a) The banking sector, together with insurance, accounts for about 10% of GDP. (ADMIN.CH 2019b) As mentioned earlier, this is a sector in which Switzerland stands out at the global level and, thanks to its contribution, has made it possible to develop international trade in the country. For this reason, trade in raw materials accounts for 3.8% of GDP, (ADMIN.CH 2020b) despite the limited availability of raw materials in Switzerland. Finally, tourism, which employs around 4% of the workforce, accounts for around 2.8% of GDP. (ADMIN.CH 2017b)

3. Pandemic

Now that the foundations of the political functioning and economic environment of the two countries we are dealing with have been laid, we can turn our attention to the global phenomenon that is the Covid-19 crisis.

Indeed, territorial, and administrative models, as well as the productive fabric of a state, are not static and are subject to the impact of exogenous phenomena, materialising in 2020 in the form of a pandemic. Thus, policies and economic performance around the world have been affected by its onset and, to contain the spread of the disease, some authorities have decreed the lockdown of the population to their homes and the closure of entire branches of economic activity (in particular, certain labour-intensive service sectors, such as hotels and restaurants or a significant part of the retail trade).

In this chapter, we will go through a brief review of the facts since the discovery of the virus, up to the time of writing, i.e., May 2021, focusing on the measures that have been taken, their health impacts and, above all, in terms of the object of this work, the economic impacts. This is done by focusing on the two actors described above, whose economic structures differ, but whose experience in governance has been similar, partly centralised, partly non-centralised and partly joint.

3.1 Background

In December 2019, a new strain of Coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2 (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus type 2, to differentiate it from type 1 which was rampant between 2003 and 2004), was discovered in Wuhan, Hubei Province, in China. (VAQUE RAFART 2005)

The virus then spread around the world, hitting Spain with force at the end of January 2020. Indeed, the first case was discovered on the island of La Gomera in the Canary Islands on 31 January 2020. (ARROYO 2020) In Switzerland, the first case was diagnosed in Ticino on 25 February 2020. (ADMIN.CH 2020c)

To put the situation in context and at that time, it is important to realise that the national executives did not have as much information as they have today about the causes of its spread, the condition of vulnerable groups or its lethality. On the other hand, cases were increasing dramatically, threatening to overwhelm hospitals. Faced with these unknowns, states had to take responsibility with the data available to them.

3.2 Spain

3.2.1 Governance and decisions

3.2.1.1 Centralized management (15 March 2020 - 21 June 2020)

Early March: throughout Spain, the Governments of the Autonomous Communities took decisions for their territories, within the framework of their competences: closure of creches, schools, universities, cancellation of socio-cultural events, change from playing football matches behind closed doors to a total suspension of the Liga championship. On 12 March 2020, the President of the Catalan Government, Quim Torra, announced the first closures of part of the territory, isolating the municipalities of Igualada, Vilanova del Camí, Santa Margarida de Montbui and Òdena. (PEREZ, MASREAL 2020) It also announced the suspension of all school and university activities from Friday 13 March 2020, bringing some 100,000 teachers and more than 1.8 million students to a standstill.

That same Friday marked a change of dynamic: the President of the Spanish Government, Pedro Sanchez, after discussions with the Head of State, King Felipe VI, informed the Kingdom of the holding of an extraordinary Council of Ministers on Saturday 14 March 2020. The purpose of this last-minute meeting was to approve the activation of the state of alarm (*Estado de alarma*, which is different from the state of emergency) and the guidelines to be followed in the coming weeks. In his words: "The State will thus have the exceptional instruments to act with agility and in a contentious manner to protect the health of citizens". (PRESIDENCIA DEL GOBIERNO 2020a) To prevent the health system from being overwhelmed, it was decided to deal with the problem at its root, namely, to limit contact and travel, to block the spread of the virus.

However, the right to liberty and security (*art. 17 CE*), freedom of movement and residence (*art. 19 CE*) or the rights of assembly and demonstration (*art. 21 CE*) are fundamental rights. (LOPEZ GUERRA 2019) A normally functioning democracy cannot violate these rights, so it is necessary to resort to a state of exception. Thus, the state of alarm is a constitutional tool that allows the Government to increase its room for manoeuvre, to centralise competences, to unify orders and therefore, to limit fundamental rights, such as those mentioned above. This is done when there is a serious alteration of normality. Hence, Organic Law 4/1981, of 1 June, on the State of Alarm, Emergency and Siege, (BOE 1981) empowers the Government, in the exercise of the powers conferred on it by article 116.2 of the Constitution, (LOPEZ GUERRA 2019) to declare a state of alarm in all or part of the national territory when health crises, such as epidemics, occur, which was the case in this situation. In times of constitutional normality, it is the Autonomous Communities that have competence in health matters in their territory. The exclusive

competences of the State are only external health, general health coordination and legislation on pharmaceutical products. It should be noted that this health system has the title of "best in the world" (World Economic Forum 2019), because it is universal (each citizen contributes according to his or her fiscal capacity and receives services according to his or her needs) and comprehensive (ranging from prevention to rehabilitation).

It should be understood that this is not a change in the distribution of competences between the State and the Autonomous Communities, but rather the activation of a dormant competence of the State. The latter allows the State, thanks to the alarm situation, to display a new goal, objective or constitutional principle aimed at overcoming the emergency. Thus, the Autonomous Communities continue to exercise their ordinary competences, but considering the new constitutional goal of overcoming the extraordinary situation. (VELASCO CABALLERO 2020)

In terms of form, this state of alarm, which is promulgated through a Royal Decree, must be delimited geographically and in time. In terms of content, it must propose rules that are proportional to the situation the State is facing.

On Saturday 14 March 2020, the Government of Pedro Sánchez announced the activation of the state of alarm. It also announced that he wanted to coordinate with the Autonomous Governments and their presidents, with whom a weekly meeting was held. He asked them for unity and loyalty to the Government of Spain, and to set aside their different political ideologies. He used a phrase that would be repeated throughout his subsequent speeches: "the virus does not understand borders, ideologies or political colours". (PRESIDENCIA DEL GOBIERNO 2020a)

To coordinate the action of the 17 Autonomous Communities, the Interterritorial Council of the National Health System (*CISNS*) was activated. (BOE 2020) Agreements were reached by consensus, i.e., by the favourable agreement of all its members, i.e., the Government and the Autonomous Communities. Otherwise, they were mere recommendations with no binding legal value, except in cases of urgent need, which obligated all parties.

The *CISNS* is made up of the Spanish Minister of Health, Consumer Affairs and Social Protection, who chairs it, the Authorities responsible for health in the Autonomous Communities, as well as the Under-Secretary of Health, Consumer Affairs and Social Protection and the Director General of the National Health System and High Inspection. Its purpose is to coordinate the State and its exclusive competences with the health competences held by the Autonomous Communities.

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During this period, the people were therefore confined to their homes and were not allowed to leave, except for just cause. The State Security Forces and Corps (*FCSE*) were deployed to ensure that these measures were respected. These were extremely strong and restrictive limitations. Nevertheless, people generally complied with them, as shown by the mobility figures, the average of which over the entire period of the state of alarm shows a 53% decrease compared to the previous year. (DELOITTE 2021)

In other measures to name, the country's borders remained closed, and the wearing of masks had become mandatory in all public spaces since 21 May 2020.

As mentioned in the previous paragraphs, the constitutional order was modified to manage the pandemic from the central level. However, after one and a half months of strict lockdown and closure of all non-essential economic activities (among other measures), this principle would be relaxed by an "asymmetric de-escalation" plan in 4 phases, to be implemented in a differentiated manner between the provinces, depending on their epidemiological situation. From phase 3 onwards, the powers were to be transferred to the Governments of the Autonomous Communities. In essence, each phase allowed for a gradual opening of mobility, ranging from walking times by age group, to the recovery of leisure activities, to the reopening of the economy and borders. (PRESIDENCIA DEL GOBIERNO 2020b) (PRESIDENCIA DEL GOBIERNO 2020c)

3.2.1.2 Decentralised management (21 June 2020 - 25 October 2020)

By 21 June 2020, all communities had regained their autonomy and were responsible for managing the crisis within their competencies. National and then international mobility was increasing, as was the number of new cases, showing that the fight against the virus was not over.

To illustrate this decentralised management, we will take the Autonomous Communities of Madrid and Catalonia as examples. In fact, these are the two most productive territories in the country (19.3% of the national GDP for the first and 19% for the last), (INE 2020b) with relatively similar populations (6.7 million in Madrid and 7.6 million in Catalonia) and different strategies. (COMUNIDAD DE MADRID 2021) (EC 2020a) Indeed, Madrid (the capital of the Autonomous Community of Madrid) had opted for more lax and surgical measures, while Barcelona (the capital of the Autonomous Community of Catalonia) had chosen to be more restrictive and general.

15 days after the end of the state of alarm, after the outbreak of some clusters, the Catalan Government started to put restrictions, imposing the wearing of masks, and closing some areas and municipalities of its territory. Thus, the metropolitan area of Barcelona was

closed in mid-July, prohibiting more than 3 million inhabitants from leaving the area. At the end of July, night-time entertainment was banned, a measure that will be applied by the Spanish executive throughout the country from mid-August onwards, and on the 24th, meetings will be limited to 10 people. These measures have allowed a stability in the daily indicators of detection of cases, until October. On the other hand, the wearing of masks was made compulsory in public places on 30 July. As the situation deteriorated rapidly in the Spanish capital, it was not until 4 September that meetings were limited to 10 people. Then, on 21 September, as the peak of the second wave had just passed, the regional Government closed its most affected Basic Health Zones (*ZBS*) (division of the territory by population and hospital zones). A few days later, rapid antigenic tests were made available to the population to increase the speed of detection and, if necessary, to apply quarantines. This measure would not arrive until three weeks later in Catalonia, this time fully in the second wave, when Madrid was already on the decline. (VILLALONGA 2021)

3.2.1.3 Shared management (25 October 2020 - 9 May 2021)

From the end of the state of alarm on 21 June, constitutional and parliamentary normality was restored in Spain. It would be on 12 October, Spain's National Day, that an inflection point would appear; in the days that followed, the situation became uncontrollable in most territories. The number of new cases and deaths increased daily, prompting several presidents of the Autonomous Communities to ask the Government to activate a new state of alarm, albeit different from the one in March. (LITA 2020)

This raised the question of the governance of the measures to be taken. Indeed, the aim of the first containment was to reduce the spread of the disease as much as possible by limiting the movements of the population. This required a centralisation of power, to limit fundamental rights of the citizens.

In October, all that was done was to impose a "night-time lockdown", in other words a curfew. This measure, imposed on the whole territory, by the central Government through a second state of alarm, prohibited the circulation between the Autonomous Communities, limited gatherings to 6 people and prohibited any movement of individuals between 11pm and 6am, leaving to the Autonomous Communities to adapt these times according to their needs. There is a fundamental disparity in response management between March and October. As in March, travel to work, for medical emergencies or to care for someone was allowed, despite the restrictions. (BOE 2020a)

The second state of alarm would transfer management and decision-making to the Autonomous Community until 9 May 2021, making their room for manoeuvre more

flexible, within the framework of a minimum common denominator established by the national executive. (BOE 2020b)

In addition, the Ministry of Health of the Government and the Autonomous Communities also agreed on common measures against the pandemic through a national strategy document designed within the Interterritorial Council of the National Health System. This document established 4 levels of alert, depending on the epidemiological situation and the corresponding measures. (RIVERA 2020)

In December 2020, for the Christmas holidays, the Executive relaxed the restrictions and allowed travel between Autonomous Communities. While insisting on distancing measures, it recommended not to visit one's family, to avoid spreading the virus. This was the starting point of the third wave, with a peak of almost 50,000 daily cases, on 15 January 2021. To counter this, the Autonomous Communities had to tighten up their measures.

To illustrate this part, the Community of Madrid and Catalonia are still good examples. In fact, on 25 October, when the second state of alarm was declared, the Community of Madrid was already on the downward slope of the second wave and did not apply more restrictive measures than those proposed by the Government of Spain, even delaying the start of the curfew to midnight. In Catalonia, on the other hand, the curfew was brought forward to 10pm and a municipal lockdown was introduced on weekends. The aim was to block all movement between municipalities from Friday to Monday morning. (MELGAR 2020)

At the beginning of December 2020, cases started to rise again in these two Autonomous Communities, as in the rest of Spain, and Catalonia banned circulation between its *comarcas* (districts grouping together several localities) during the week and restricted the opening hours of bars and restaurants. The latter were open from 7.30am to 9.30am and from 1pm to 3.30pm only, with the maximum occupancy capacity limited to 30%. (TAX.ES 2020)

In January 2021, the third wave hit these two Autonomous Communities. With nearly 5,000 daily cases, Catalonia announced a 10-day municipal lockdown and the closure of shopping centres and fitness centres. As for Madrid, with 2,000 more daily cases than Catalonia, it announced in mid-January that the curfew would be brought forward to 11pm, and then to 10pm 7 days later. (RTVE 2021)

At the beginning of March 2021, the two Autonomous Communities reached between 1,000 and 2,000 daily cases. In Catalonia, the local Government had given some breathing space by allowing restaurants to open uninterrupted between 7am and 5pm. In Madrid, bars and restaurants were open all day until 11pm. 6 people could be at the same table on the terrace and 4 inside. With fewer restrictions in Madrid (and Germany and France closed once again), it was not long before the Spanish capital appeared in the headlines of the international press as a party oasis. (HUFFPOST 2021) Indeed, this "island in the sea of European capital restrictions" was welcoming more and more tourists in search of leisure. (MOUZO 2021) It is necessary to recall that in Spain, the arrival of tourists was not prohibited if a negative PCR result could be presented on arrival, since the borders were opened again when the first state of alarm finished. Foreign tourists enjoyed a certain freedom that the Spanish population did not have: the borders between the country's territories remained closed. For example, you could not travel from Madrid to Barcelona, but could bypass the problem by transiting through another country. (RAMIREZ 2021)

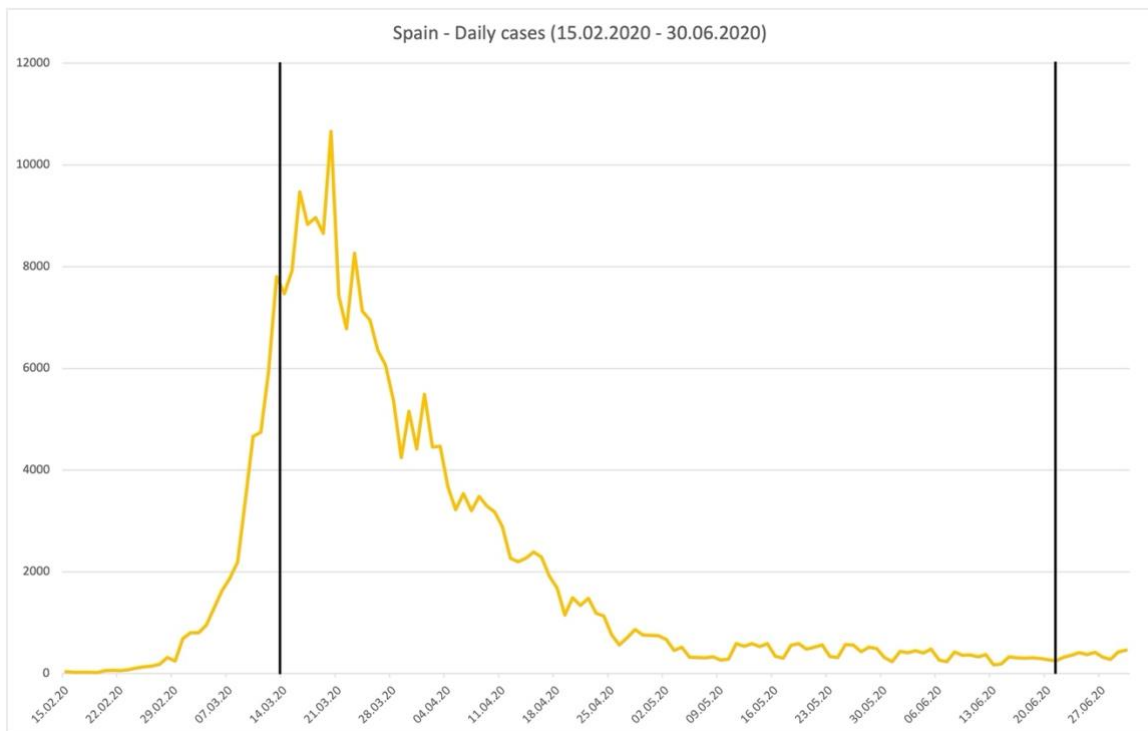
3.2.2 Impact of the measures in terms of health

It seems relevant to see how the decision-making and management of the pandemic materialised in terms of health, since the main objective of all the measures was none other than to reduce its incidence.

The Government's response came when the country experienced 7,802 new cases on 13 March 2020 and 7,465 new cases on 14 March 2020. The peak was reached on 20 March 2020, with 10,658 cases diagnosed, 6 days after the state of alarm was activated. This was followed by a 6-week decrease until the beginning of May when the curve stabilised. (RENAVE 2021)

The two vertical lines between 14 March 2020 and 21 June 2020 mark the period of centralized governance.

Figure 3: Spain - Daily cases (15.02.2020 - 30.06.2020)

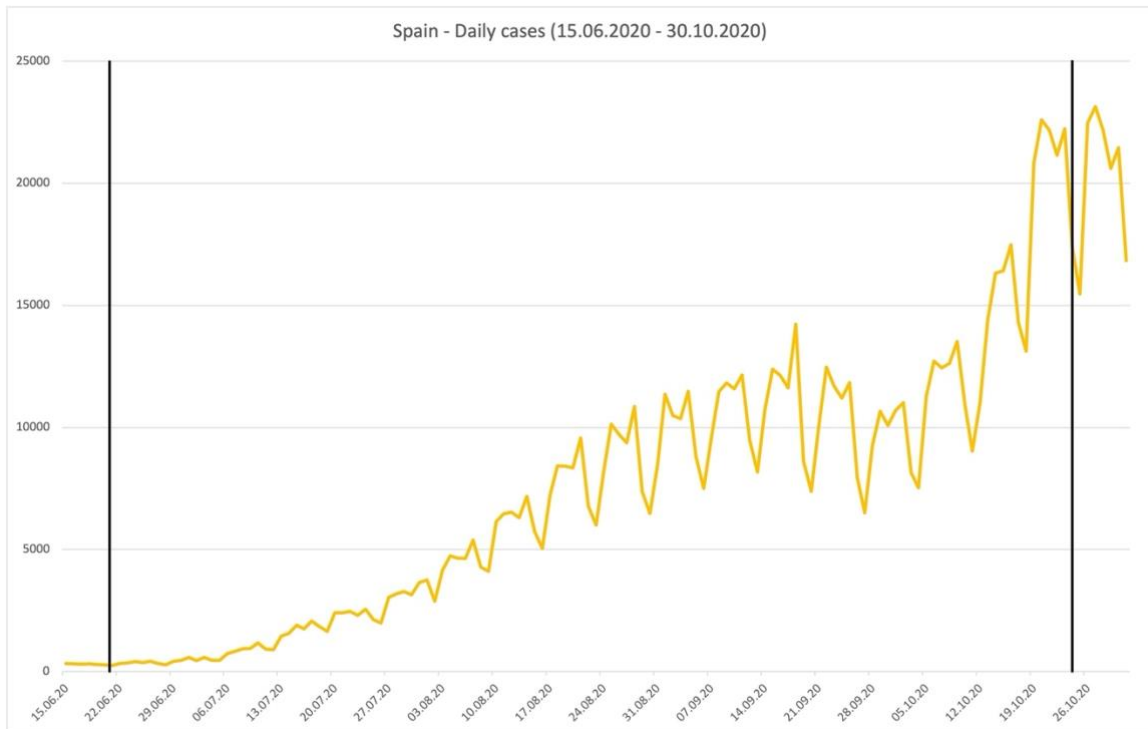


Personal elaboration from RENAVE 2021

Although it must be considered that other factors have had an impact on the evolution of cases, such as the dynamics of Mediterranean society during the summer or the intensification of movements with the arrival of tourists, the data showed a clear increase in the incidence when the Autonomous Communities recovered their powers. The following graph shows that on the last day of the state of alarm, 21 June 2020, the number of new daily cases diagnosed was relatively stable and low. It is from this date onwards, when decision-making shifted from the centralized level, i.e., the State, to the decentralized level, i.e., the Autonomous Communities, that we see a resurgence in the curve. On 28 August 2020, the peak of the first wave was reached, with 10,859 cases. Spain was then fully in the second wave. (RENAVE 2021)

The two vertical lines between 21 June 2020 and 25 October 2020 mark the period of decentralised governance.

Figure 4: Spain - Daily cases (15.06.2020 - 30.10.2020)

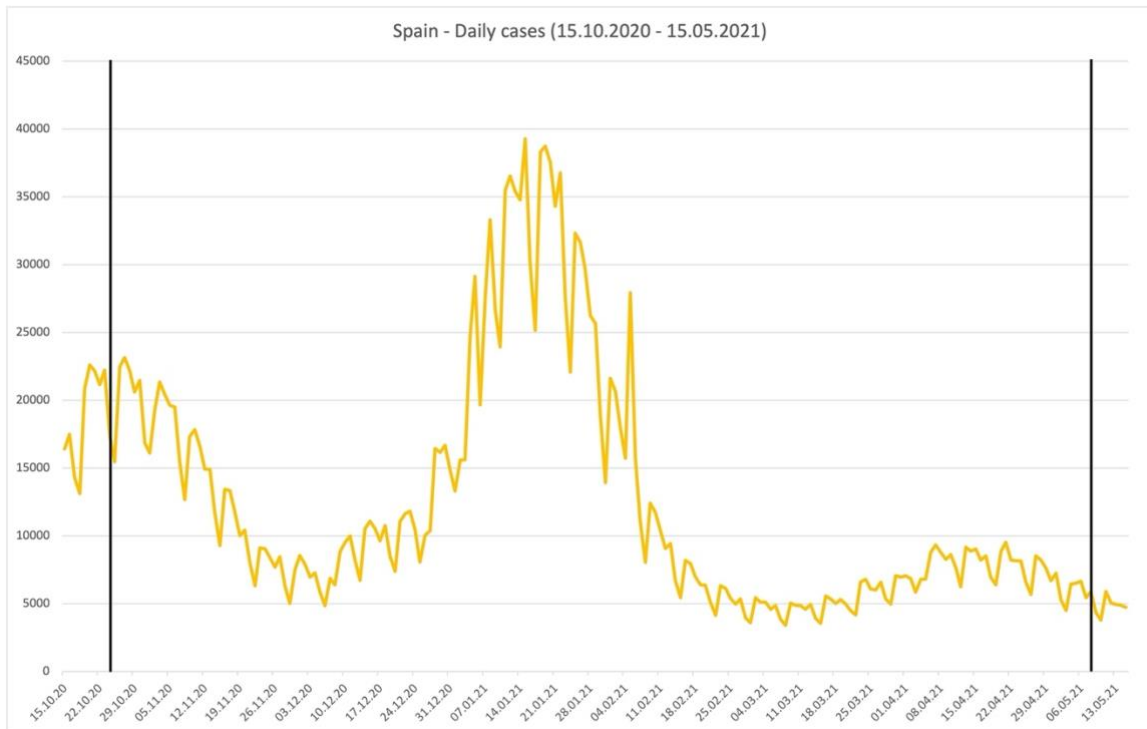


Personal elaboration from RENAVE 2021

This escalation of the second wave stabilised slightly in September 2020, before resuming in October 2020. The measures of the Autonomous Communities, such as those previously described by the examples of Madrid and Catalonia, made this possible.

In the following figure, the two vertical lines between 25 October 2020 and 9 May 2021 mark the period of shared governance.

Figure 5: Spain - Daily cases (15.10.2020 - 15.05.2021)



Personal elaboration from RENAVE 2021

The imposition of common basic standards by the State on 25 October 2020 helped to bend the curve. Until Christmas, the borders between Autonomous Communities were closed. During Christmas Holidays, measures were introduced to relax the rules, and this was reflected in the curve: while there was a 65% reduction in mobility on 25 December 2020 and 69% on New Year's Day, compared to the previous year, the number of cases increased rapidly. (DELOITTE 2021) It was only two weeks later, with the prohibition of travel between the Autonomous Communities and even between regions, that the curve began to fall again. Since then, the level has remained stable, until today. The end of the second state of alarm was reached on 9 May 2021, as planned.

The peak of the second wave was reached on 27 October 2020 with 23,140 cases, and the peak of the third wave on 15 January 2021 with 39,287 cases. (RENAVE 2021)

3.2.3 Impact of measures on the economy

We have seen that the pandemic required a response from Governments, which put in place various measures to contain the virus. These measures have produced results in terms of health but have also had an impact on the economy.

Indeed, as we have said, the restrictions on the free movement of people or the limitations imposed on the exercise of certain activities (hours, frequentation, etc.), as well as the drop in consumption due to the uncertainty generated by Covid-19, had a strong impact on the economy.

According to figures from the Spanish National Statistics Institute (*INE*), the Iberian Kingdom recorded negative GDP growth in the 4 quarters of 2020: -4.3% in the first, -21.6% in the second, -8.6% in the third and -8.9% in the fourth. (*INE 2021*) The final annual result, according to the IMF, was estimated to be -11%, almost three times higher than in 2009, when it was -3.8%. Spain is not alone in its recession, as the average for the European Union, including the United Kingdom, is -6.1%. (*IMF 2021a*)

Statistics on companies registered with the social security system showed a certain decline in the number of registered establishments. While in January 2020 they stood at 1,318,325, a year later they were only 1,282,944, or 35,381 fewer. However, these statistics showed a moderate recovery to 1,285,054 in April 2021. (*MINISTERIO DE TRABAJO Y ECONOMIA SOCIAL 2021a*)

As mentioned, the service sector is extremely heterogeneous. Therefore, there are many companies within that have suffered, while others have been able to do well. Indeed, bans and limitations have brought about a sudden change in the way of working, like teleworking.

There are some activities where telework is possible (finance, banking, consulting...) and others where the activity can only be done physically (wholesale and retail trade, motor vehicle repair, catering, tourism, transport, storage...).

The hotel, restaurant and tourism industries are sectors of the global economy that have grown rapidly in recent decades. Their high labour force and the multiplier effect of jobs in other related sectors make them one of the largest job creators. However, a few factors give them a reputation for poor working conditions; the industry is fragmented, comprising mainly small and medium-sized enterprises with low levels of unionisation, low skill requirements result in low pay, night and shift work, and seasonality. (*ILO 2021*)

In Spain, the decrease in catering sales between March 2020 and December 2020 was over 40% on average. In this country, which is already used to this practice, the consumption of home-delivered meals has increased by 225% since July 2020, with Glovo leading the market with a 50% share. (ALVAREZ 2020) This has, in part, provided alternatives to this particularly important sector. This is especially true given that Spain is said to have the largest number of bars and restaurants per capita in the world, at around 1 per 175 people. (EL MUNDO 2020)

The tourism sector accounted for 12.4% of GDP in 2019, for 12.9% of employment, (INE 2020a) and only 5.5% in 2020, according to a study by the *Universidad de Nebrija*, (BRAVO, FIGUEROLA 2021) or 4.3%, according to Exceltur, a Spanish tourism association. (HOSTELTUR 2021) Indeed, the prohibitions to operate, the limitations to the activity, the closure of the borders between states and the insecurity of the situation have caused a strong decrease in the tourist demand.

There are strong differences between Autonomous Communities. The Balearic Islands and the Canary Islands really depend on this sector; it represents 44.8% of territorial GDP and 32% of employment in the first, compared to 35% of GDP and 40.5% of employment in the second Autonomous Community. (EXCELTUR 2021)

Since 2017, more than 80 million tourists have arrived annually, making this country the second most popular destination in the world. In 2020, only 19 million entered the country, bringing these numbers close to those of the 1990s. This is precisely a 77.33% decrease compared to 2019. July and August usually bring more than 10 million tourists each month, whereas in the same period in 2020, there were just over 2 million arrivals per month. It should be noted that this is normally the time of year with the highest demand. The number of annual overnight stays is over 300 million, since 2017. In 2020, they were just over 91 million, a decrease of 73.3% compared to 2019. (INE 2021d)

3.2.3.1 Aid

To paraphrase the economist Toni Timoner, the purpose of the activity restriction measures was to flatten the economic curve, to flatten the epidemic curve. (TIMONER 2020) However, the temporary nature of the health crisis makes it essential that the negative effects of the crisis do not have a too negative impact on the economic recovery. Branko Milanovic argues that the main objective of economic policy should be to avoid social collapse. (MILANOVIC 2019) In this sense, the Government has sought to support the Autonomous Communities and health services through cash transfers, limit the disappearance of companies through credit lines, restrain the permanent destruction of

jobs and help the most disadvantaged people through special tools, in addition to allowing the deferment of tax and social security payments. (BOE 2020c)

The following is a non-exhaustive list of the assistance provided.

3.2.3.1.1 *Autonomous Communities and the health system (direct transfers)*

The Covid fund adopted on 22 June 2020, provides 16,000 million EUR in non-refundable funds for the Autonomous Communities and cities, as well as the health system. (BOE 2020d) The aim is to cover part of the losses of the Autonomous Communities whose budgets have been burdened by health expenditure, as well as to strengthen the health system.

3.2.3.1.2 *Enterprises (ICO loans)*

The Council of Ministers approved on 12 (BOE 2020e) and 17 March 2020 (BOE 2020f) the provision of a credit line guaranteed by the State for an amount of 100,000 million EUR, which could be increased to 400,000 million EUR. This aid was made available by the Official Credit Institute (*ICO*), which is affiliated to the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Digital Transformation (*MINECO*) and was intended to provide liquidity to businesses and self-employed people. The distribution of the funds was planned as follows: 67,500 million EUR for SMEs, 25,000 million EUR for non-SMEs, 2,500 million EUR for self-employed and SMEs in the tourism sector and 500 million EUR for self-employed and companies acquiring or renting road transport vehicles for professional use. (ICO 2020)

Other lines of credit have been provided: 40,000 million EUR are proposed to guarantee the financing granted to companies and the self-employed, mainly to meet their financial needs arising from new investments. (BOE 2020g)

3.2.3.1.3 *Workplaces (ERTE)*

An *ERTE* allows a company to make its labour costs more flexible during a difficult economic situation. In concrete terms, the state covers these costs while the situation is being adjusted, so that there is no structural loss of employment. On one hand, this offers the company the possibility of freeing itself from the employee's salary and, on the other, the employee continues to receive money, but this time from the Public Administration. The worker therefore goes on to receive benefits for the duration of the employment of this tool, up to 70% of his salary during the first 6 months. The aim is to reincorporate the workforce into the company once the situation has stabilised. This tool therefore aims to limit the reduction of employment, not only during the health crisis, but also afterwards. (CE CONSULTING 2020) (MAESTRE 2020)

It is striking to see the evolution of the use of this tool: while 2019 ended with 88,927 people having used an *ERTE*, more than 1 million had done so by the end of the following year, an increase of more than 1,044%. (MINISTERIO DE TRABAJO Y ECONOMIA SOCIAL 2021b)

Table 1: ERTE

ERTE						
	2020	2019			2020	2019
	Absolute values		Variation	Variation (%)	Sector weight (%)	
Agriculture	7'174	829	+ 6'345	765.38%	0.70%	0.93%
Industry	120'955	52'175	+ 68'780	131.83%	11.88%	58.67%
Construction	24'243	2'243	+ 22'000	980.83%	2.38%	2.52%
Services	865'417	33'680	+ 831'737	2469.53%	85.03%	37.87%
TOTAL	1'017'789	88'927	+ 928'862	1044.52%	100.00%	100.00%

Personal elaboration from MINISTERIO DE TRABAJO Y ECONOMIA SOCIAL 2021b

As this table shows, there has been an increase in all sectors and particularly in the service sector which covers 85% of *ERTEs*. So, almost 9 out of 10 people in temporary job cuts come from the service sector. It should be noted that the peak in the number of workers affiliated to an *ERTE* was reached in April 2020, with over 3 million people. (MINISTERIO DE TRABAJO Y ECONOMIA SOCIAL 2020)

At the end of 2020, more than 21.2 billion EUR were spent on covering temporary job reduction claims. (LAFRAYA 2021)

3.2.3.1.4 *Vulnerable people (ICO+IMV)*

An ICO fund of 1,200 million EUR was made available for tenants in situations of social and economic vulnerability. The aim is that they can access state-guaranteed and subsidised loans to cover their rent bills. (BOE 2020h)

On 29 May 2020, the Council of Ministers accepted the Minimum Vital Income (*IMV*). (BOE 2020i) This is a benefit for unemployed people, aimed at preventing the risk of poverty and social exclusion of people who do not have the economic resources to cover their basic needs. This national tool can be added to the aid provided by the Autonomous Communities. Once a job is found, this aid can be extended for a few months and the amounts adapted according to the salary. (MINISTERIO DE INCLUSION, SEGURIDAD SOCIAL Y MIGRACIONES 2021)

3.2.3.1.5 *Tax policy*

Tax revenues amount to 194,051 million EUR in 2020, 8.8% less than in 2019. In addition, there is a 33.2% decrease in corporate income tax, due to lower profits. VAT revenues

(11.5%) and special taxes (12.1%) decreased, while personal income tax revenues increased by 1.2%, mainly due to income maintenance measures. (ELDIARIO.ES 2021)

Thus, all the measures seen above have had an impact on the Spanish public sector budget. Indeed, the increase in expenditure, together with a fall in domestic production and tax revenue, has led to an increase in public debt. In fact, to cover its liquidity needs, the State has had to seek out debt. Therefore, while 2019 closed with a fall in debt for the fifth consecutive year since 2014, placing it at 95.51% of GDP, the IMF figures revise it upwards, reaching 117.08% at the end of 2020 (see figure 16). (IMF 2021b) The deficit has plummeted from -2.9% in 2019 to -11% (see figure 15). (EUROSTAT 2021a)

Expenditure due to Covid-19 was mainly borne by the state. According to the Minister of Public Finance, María Jesús Montero, "the central Government has taken on debt so that the Autonomous Communities have room to manoeuvre". She added that "up to nine Autonomous Communities have closed with a budget surplus". (ASENJO DOMINGUEZ 2021)

Unlike the subprime crisis, when austerity measures were taken, (SERVULO GONZALEZ 2012) the strategy of the current Government, like many countries around the world, has turned to more Keynesian techniques by increasing public spending. As a result, there was a sharp increase in global debt, which was already at its highest level in peacetime, at the end of 2019, according to the Financial Times. (STUBBINGTON 2019)

3.2.3.1.6 European Union (monetary policy and recovery plan)

As Spain is part of the European Union (EU) and the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU), it has received assistance from the European Commission on the one hand and from the European Central Bank (ECB) on the other.

Indeed, the budgetary measures decreed at national level were accompanied by measures at the level of the ECB's monetary policy. It has focused on asset purchase programmes and long-term financing operations. The aim is to make its policy accommodative, stabilise the markets and provide liquidity. (BDE 2020a)

Furthermore, in March 2020, the EU agreed to suspend the Stability and Growth Pact (SGP), to allow Member States to take measures to deal with the consequences of the pandemic. Thus, it was permitted to apply an expansionist fiscal policy, i.e., to increase spending despite a drop in income, in the hope of maintaining and reviving the economy. The 60% public debt target and the 3% deficit limit were subsequently suspended until at least 2022. (EC 2020b) (MALINGRE 2021)

In mid-March 2020, the President of the European Central Bank, Christine Lagarde, announced a plan to purchase securities to the tune of 750 billion EUR. (ALBERT 2020) In addition, the Eurogroup countries were in a hurry to find an agreement for a common recovery fund. This proposal of the European Commission, initiated by Emmanuel Macron and Angela Merkel, comes out following the extraordinary European Council between 17 and 21 July 2020. (COUNCIL OF THE EU 2020)

As such, in addition to the EU's long-term budget (2021-2027), the Next Generation EU fund allows the Commission to borrow up to 390 billion EUR on the markets. The aim is to stimulate recovery, while supporting the modernization of member countries. (COUNCIL OF THE EU 2020) (EC 2021a)

3.3 Switzerland

3.3.1 Governance and decisions

3.3.1.1 Centralized management (16 March 2020 – 19 June 2020)

It is around 24 February 2020, that the first case of coronavirus would have been diagnosed in Ticino. (OFSP 2021) Subsequently, several Cantons started to report contagions on their territory. The Federal Office of Public Health (OFSP) began its campaign of prevention of the “barrier gestures” (“*gestes barrières*”) and on February 28, the Federal Council took the floor. In view of the rapid increase in cases in Switzerland and abroad, it declared a "special situation" within the meaning of Article 6 of the Law on Epidemics (LEp) and prohibited events involving more than 1000 people. (ADMIN.CH 2020d)

This law, having been approved by Parliament in 2012, (FEDLEX 2012) and accepted by the people on 22 September 2013, (ADMIN.CH 2013) because of a referendum, allows the executive to have tools to deal with unusual situations. The article in question determines that there must be a specific risk to public health (*art. 6, al. 1, let. a, ch. 2. LEp*), that the World Health Organization (WHO) has established the urgency (*art. 6, al. 1, let. b. LEp*), and that the Federal Council can take decisions, after consulting the Cantons (*art. 6, al. 2. LEp*). (FEDLEX 2020)

Thus, several fundamental rights have been restricted. To apply this kind of constraint, it is necessary that it be founded on a legal basis (*art. 36 al. 1. Cst*), that it be justified by a public interest (*art. 36 al. 2. Cst*) and that the measure be proportionate to the aim (*art. 36 al. 3. Cst*). (FEDLEX 2021a)

In normal circumstances, the application of the *LEp* is a matter for the Cantons, whereas in a particular situation, the Federal Council has the power to issue certain rules. The Cantons are consulted beforehand. (OFSP 2020a)

Finally, this decision applied throughout Switzerland and was scheduled to run until 15 March 2020, implying the cancellation of several events scheduled for these dates.

Ticino was the first Canton to take drastic measures: on 11 March 2020, it decided to close its schools and asked the central executive to close the borders with Italy. The first measure was taken because the Canton had jurisdiction, but borders and customs are the Confederation's responsibility. (CH.CH 2021) (KUBICEK, MESTIRI, KOTTELAT 2021) This request came a few days after Lombardy was confined by the Italian authorities, a measure extended to the entire peninsula on 9 March 2020. (LEMONDE, AFP, REUTERS 2020)

Three days later, the Federal Council announced new decisions. It banned demonstrations of more than 100 people. Restaurants, bars, and discotheques were allowed to have up to 50 customers. Schools were closed until 4 April 2020 at the earliest, and entry from Italy was restricted. (ADMIN.CH 2020e)

On Sunday 15 March 2020, an extraordinary meeting of the Federal Council was held. The next day, everything changed: "The Federal Council decided that it was now time to implement the extraordinary situation, in accordance with Article 7 of the Law on Epidemics," said Alain Berset, head of the Federal Department of Home Affairs. "Now, a strong reaction is required throughout the country," added the President of the Confederation for that year, Simonetta Sommaruga. (FEDLEX 2020) (KUBICEK, MESTIRI, KOTTELAT 2021)

Through this statement, the executive showed its willingness to provide a rapid response, for the whole country. According to Article 185, paragraph 3 of the Constitution and Article 7 of the Law on Epidemics (*LEp*), it can order measures for all or part of the territory, in a unilateral way. (OFSP 2020a) In this case, this was done through an ordinance. The ordinances allow to execute legal provisions or to complete them. Therefore, they are lower in the hierarchy of legal norms than the Constitution and laws. (LE PARLEMENT SUISSE 2021a)

This Ordinance 2 on measures to combat the coronavirus, like all ordinances, is not subject to a referendum. Indeed, only federal laws and certain federal treaties and decrees are subject to referendum (*art. 141. Cst*). The ordinance in question is based on Article 7

of the *LEp*, a federal law that was itself subject to referendum. The power to issue ordinances is held by the Government, by virtue of the powers conferred on it (*art. 182, al. 1. Cst*), and on which Parliament and the people cannot vote. The way to change an ordinance would be for Parliament to propose a new law that would render the ordinance null and void (*art. 160, al. 1. Cst*), or for the people, a partial revision of the Constitution via a popular initiative (*art. 139, al. 2. Cst*). (FEDLEX 2021a)

Through the extraordinary situation, the Government supplants the Parliament and the Cantons, allowing it to take drastic decisions without the need for the usual approval of the bodies of direct democracy. On the other hand, these emergency ordinances have a limited effect in time.

This is a very special situation. Since the end of the Second World War, the Federal Council has not had full powers. Indeed, the circumstances of the time had, as in 2020, caused the drowsiness of direct democracy, depriving the Parliament and the people of the exercise of their democratic rights. (EUGSTER 2019)

Thus, was ordered the closure of all stores, restaurants, bars and establishments of entertainment and leisure, until 19 April 2020. Only the so-called "essential" entities were kept open, such as food stores, hospitals, and pharmacies. In addition, the Cantons were authorized to call on the army, which was providing 8,000 men. (ADMIN.CH 2020f) (ADMIN.CH 2020g) This happened on the day when 1'065 cases were diagnosed, while 23 March 2020 marked the peak of the contagion with 1'464 cases recorded. (OFSP 2021)

From the evening of Monday 16 March 2020, border controls were reintroduced. To enter the country, it was necessary to have a Swiss passport or a Swiss work permit. The number of people living abroad and crossing the border to work in Switzerland is high, so certain exemptions were possible. Therefore, the Canton of Geneva, where nearly one in four jobs is held by a foreigner, has introduced badges that act as passes. (MONFRINI 2020) Some companies employ mainly workers from the neighbouring country, such as the University Hospitals of Geneva (*HUG*), where about 60% of their employees are border workers. (LECOMTE 2021)

On 16 April 2020, one month later, the Federal Council announced the next steps to reduce the constraints, slowly and progressively. On this occasion, Alain Berset, speaking on behalf of the Government with these terms that have become cult, said: "We want to act as quickly as possible, but as slowly as necessary". (BERSET 2020) He thus showed his desire to return to normal life, while reminding that the situation required patience and pragmatism.

On 27 April 2020, the first restrictions were lifted, allowing hairdressers, doctors' offices, and various stores to reopen. (ADMIN.CH 2020h) Schools, as well as restaurants, museums and libraries reopened on 11 May 2020, with some adjustments to their premises. (ADMIN.CH 2020i) Among these, the tracing of the clientele that the tenants must ensure. In addition, the Cantons were also required to monitor the transmission of new infections.

Progressively, the freedom of assembly was increased, first from 5 to 30 people on 30 May 2020, (RTS 2020a) then to 300 people on 6 June 2020. (ADMIN.CH 2020j) On this date, most leisure activities could resume, including the reopening of zoos, cinemas, and theatres.

The borders with all EU and European Free Trade Association (EFTA) Member States were reopened in mid-June 2020. (ADMIN.CH 2020k) And on the 19th of the same month, the Federal Council downgraded its assessment of the situation from extraordinary to special. (FEDLEX 2021b)

3.3.1.2 Decentralized management (19 June 2020 – 11 December 2020)

We have seen that in a particular situation, the Federal Council sets the general tone, but with the agreement of the Cantons. As for the States, they again deal with governance, on their respective territories, in accordance with the objectives of the Confederation.

Thus, at the end of June, the Federal Council authorized meetings of up to 1,000 people and, (ADMIN.CH 2020l) on 6 July 2020, made mandatory to wear a mask on public transport. (ADMIN.CH 2020m) This measure was decided at a time when the number of new cases detected was again on the rise. To prevent a second wave, the executive recommended that people be tested. To facilitate this, it agreed to cover the costs, making the tests free of charge for the population in case of symptoms. (ADMIN.CH 2020n) As mobility between countries was recovered, a 10-days quarantine on entry to Switzerland was also introduced. This depended on the traveller's place of origin. The *OFSP* kept an updated list of the different regions concerned and the criteria were established in the ordinance of 2 July 2020, i.e., that the incidence per 100,000 inhabitants over the 14 days preceding entry should be less than 60 cases. Spain entered this list on 8 August, when it reached 78 cases per 100,000 inhabitants, while Switzerland had 17. (FEDLEX 2021c) (RENAVE 2021)

Each Canton implemented different measures in its territory. For example, some extended the wearing of masks inside stores, as did the Cantons of Jura and Vaud in early July. (RTS 2020b) The Canton of Geneva applied it at the end of the month, (RTS 2020c) while

Valais waited until the end of August to do so. (GABBUD 2020) At the national level, the Government made it compulsory in all enclosed spaces from 19 October 2020. (ADMIN.CH 2020o)

In October, the number of daily cases and the pressure on hospitals were increasing again, (24HEURES 2021) mainly in the French-speaking Cantons. In three weeks, the country went from one of the best situations on the continent to one of the most worrying. (RTS 2020d) At the beginning of November, the number of cases per 100'000 inhabitants in these territories was very high. Fribourg, Geneva, and Valais were even announced as part the European regions with the highest incidence in relation to their population with more than 2'500 cases each. As a result, some Councils of State declared a state of necessity, as in Geneva (CONSEIL D'ETAT GENEVOIS 2020) and the Canton of Vaud, (ETAT DE VAUD 2020) and applied a series of strict measures, including closing bars, restaurants, and non-essential businesses. That month, all the Cantons in French-speaking Switzerland had closed their restaurants. (CONSEIL D'ETAT VAUDOIS 2020)

In German-speaking Switzerland, the restrictions were less severe, but the indicators were showing signs of deterioration. For example, Zurich fans could go to the stadium to watch the games, while in Bern, events were held behind closed doors. Until then, the Federal Council had refused to take control of the situation, explaining that the States had to make decisions according to their realities. However, 11 December 2020 marked a change in dynamics. (BOURQUIN 2020)

3.3.1.3 Shared management (11 December 2020 – current, May 2021)

In view of the deteriorating situation in the German-speaking part of Switzerland and in Ticino, the Swiss Government announced on 8 December 2020 new measures applicable to the whole country. (ADMIN.CH 2020p) Among these, the closing of the restaurant business was brought forward to 7 pm, starting 11 December 2020, (ADMIN.CH 2020q) one day after the reopening of the sector in French-speaking Switzerland. (LE TEMPS 2020a) On the 18th, it went further, by decreeing the complete closure of restaurants, bars, cultural, sports and leisure establishments. The Conference of Cantonal Health Directors (*CDS*, an inter-Cantonal collaboration body) pointed out in its press release of 18 December that in a particular situation, where management is in the hands of the Cantons, it is normal to see disparities appear. However, when the indicators become very high, it is necessary that "the measures are uniform, clear and effective". This statement shows that most of the Cantons were in favour of a strong response from the Federal Council. (CDS 2020)

However, the so-called "good students" Cantons, which took compulsory measures in November, could benefit from an exceptional regime provided if they could keep the "Re" reproduction rate below 1. This concerned the French-speaking Cantons, except for the Jura. (GUILLAUME, BUSSLINGER 2020) This special regime only lasted a few days, since Geneva, by going back above this threshold, closed its establishments on 23 December 2020. (REVELLO 2020) It was followed by the rest of the French-speaking Cantons on 26 December 2020, except for the terraces on the ski slopes in the Canton of Vaud. Indeed, the national executive had decided to leave the resorts open, contrary to the wishes of the German (CHAZAN 2020) and French Governments. (BOURMAND 2020) The State Council of this Canton decided to do differently than the rest of the French-speaking Cantons, by leaving its mountain terraces open, while Fribourg and Valais closed them. (LE TEMPS 2020b) This situation was replicated in the German-speaking Cantons and lasted until the end of February. Following lengthy discussions, the central executive closed the terraces. The only place that escaped the bulk of the measures was the hotel, where it was still possible to eat ready-made meals and bathe, while eating, bathing and spa facilities were closed elsewhere. To take advantage of these facilities, it was necessary to stay overnight. (BUSSLINGER 2021a)

In mid-January, the Federal Council shifted from reactivity to proactivity by announcing new measures, including the obligation to work remotely (teleworking) and the closure of various businesses. This came after the peak of the second wave and in anticipation of a possible outbreak of cases, particularly because of the new variants circulating in the country. (ADMIN.CH 2021a)

From March onwards, the first openings were seen in the cultural and commercial sectors, but at a slower pace than the previous year. (ADMIN.CH 2021b) Terraces had been able to reopen in mid-April and restaurants not before the end of May. (ARCINFO 2021) (RTS 2021)

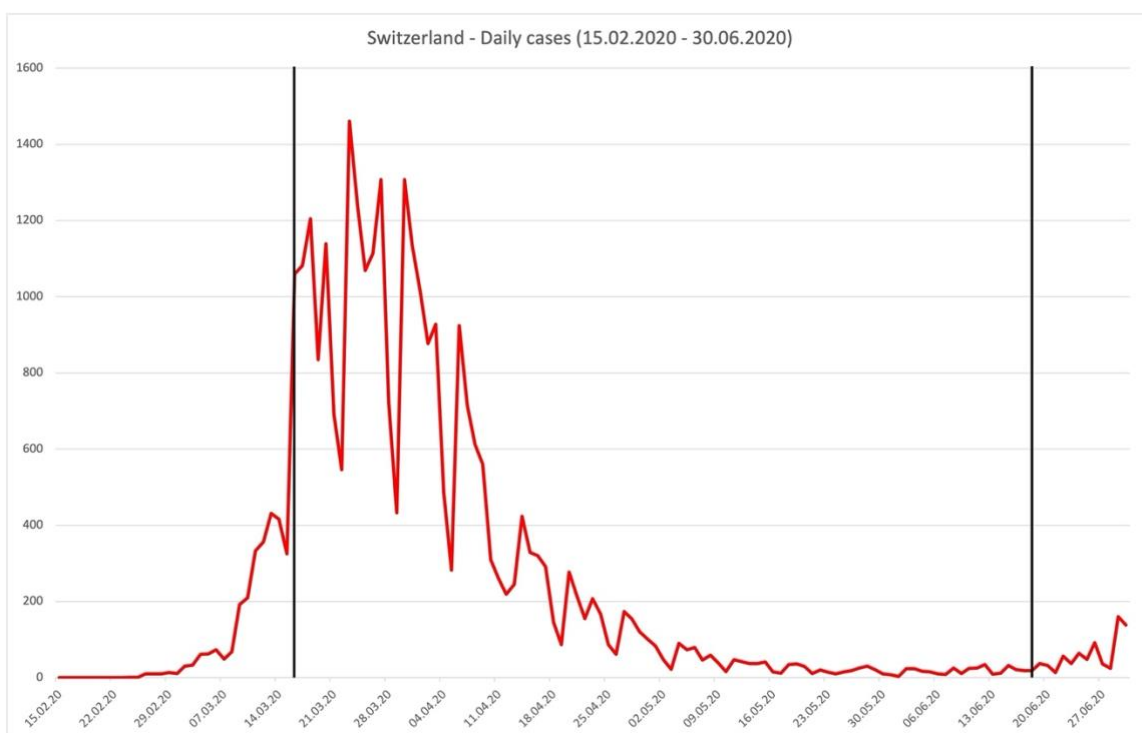
The Cantons could decide to maintain these closures since in this phase of joint management, although the Federal Council set the tone, the Cantons could increase the restrictions, but not remove those imposed by the Government.

3.3.2 Impact of the measures in terms of health

The Government's response came as the country experienced 416 new cases on 14 March 2020 and 325 new cases on 15 March 2020. The peak was reached on 23 March 2020, with 1,461 cases diagnosed, i.e., 7 days after the emergency measures were applied. This was followed by a 6-week decline, until the beginning of May when the curve stabilised. (OFSP 2021)

The two vertical lines between 16 March 2020 and 19 June 2020 mark the period of centralised governance.

Figure 6: Switzerland - Daily cases (15.02.2020 - 30.06.2020)



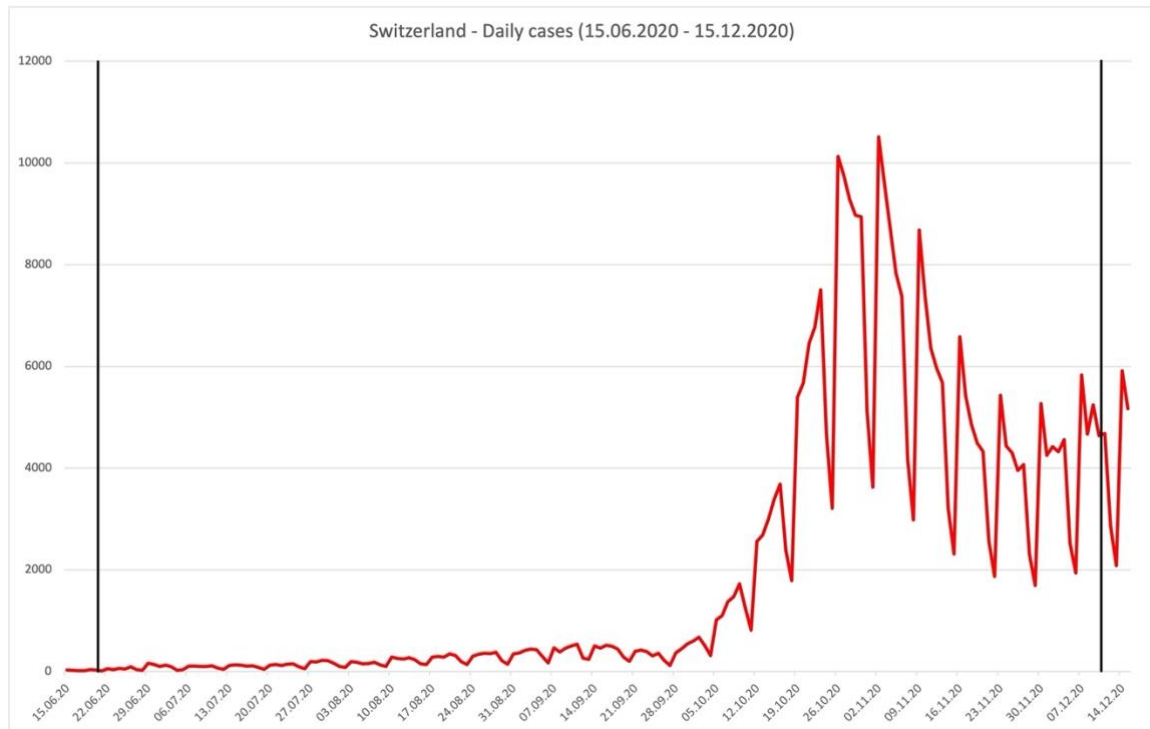
Personal elaboration from OFSP 2021

The curve remained stable with the period of decentralised management throughout the summer. It was at the beginning of October 2020 that the situation seemed to accelerate. This corresponded to about two weeks after the resumption of teaching in mid-September. It should be noted that temperatures dropped at this time. Also, people were more likely to be indoors in closed spaces.

On 8 October 2020, the peak of the first wave was reached, with 1,471 cases. Switzerland was fully into its second wave. The peak of the second wave was reached on 2 November 2020, with 10,514 cases. (OFSP 2021)

The two vertical lines between 19 June 2020 and 11 December 2020 mark the period of decentralised governance.

Figure 7: Switzerland - Daily cases (15.06.2020 - 15.12.2020)

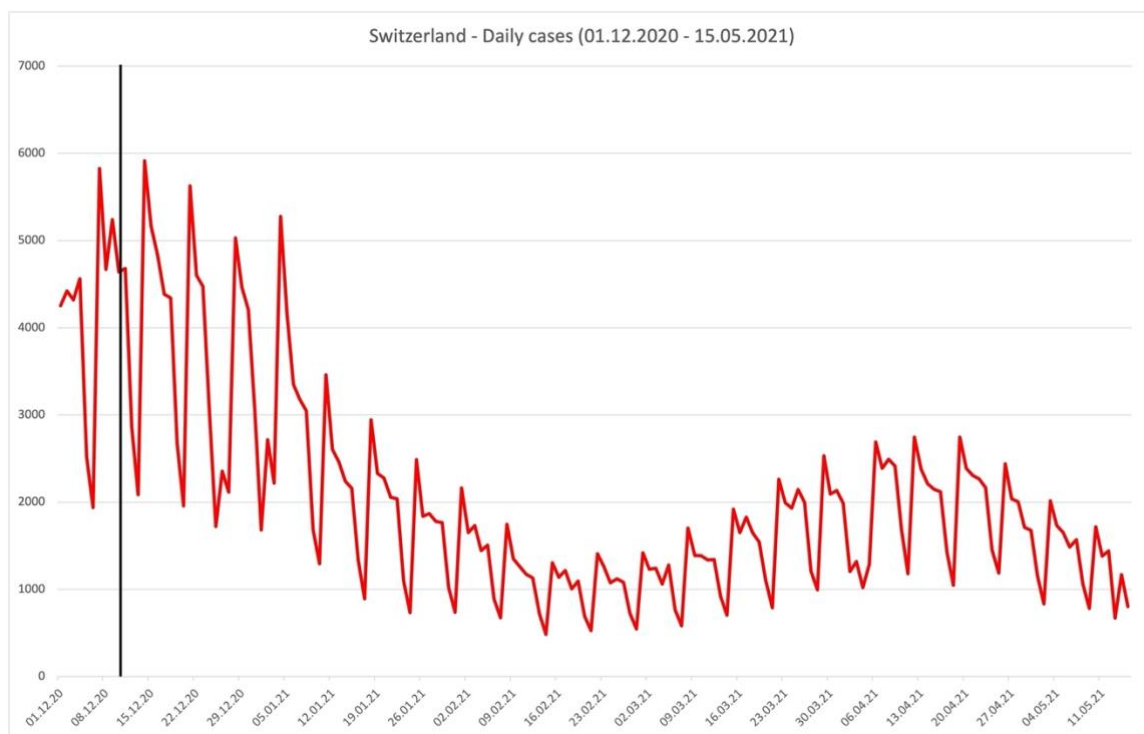


Personal elaboration from OFSP 2021

This de-escalation of the second wave was slightly stabilised towards the end of November 2020. However, the number of diagnosed cases remained at a high level and showed signs of increasing in the first two weeks of December 2020. At this point the Federal Council decided to take over, after the peak of the second wave.

The vertical line of 11 December 2020 marks the period of shared governance.

Figure 8: Switzerland - Daily cases (01.12.2020 - 15.05.2021)



Personal elaboration from OFSP 2021

The imposition of common basic standards by the Central Government on 11 December 2020 helped to bend the curve. In contrast to Spain, the end-of-year holidays did not bring a third wave and the decrease in diagnosed cases continued until mid-February. A slight rebound of three months was visible on the curve, but it was not really a third wave.

3.3.3 Impact of measures on the economy

As seen in the section "Impact of the measures on the economy" in Spain, these measures that aimed at containing the deterioration of health indicators, also have had an impact on the national economy.

Indeed, Swiss 2020 quarterly productivity varied successively to -1.9%, -7.2%, +7.6%, and then +0.3%. (SECO 2021a) The decline in the first and second quarters is clearly visible, due to all the measures in place and the climate of uncertainty. Then there is a clear rebound, which diminishes sharply in the last quarter, due to the second wave. According to the IMF, this total decline in real GDP amounts to -3%, which, as for Spain, is a higher value than during the financial crisis of 2009 (-2.2%). (IMF 2021a)

The Covid-19 crisis differs from previous recessions in its impact on the economy. In this sense, in 2009, trade and industrial production were particularly affected, while services and private consumption played a sort of stabilizing role. Conversely, in 2020, it is this sector that has suffered the most. Indeed, it includes many activities requiring interpersonal contact, which was mainly targeted by the restrictive measures. (SECO 2021b)

In Switzerland, hotels and restaurants are among the most affected activities. In addition, transport, health, and social services have been impacted. Indeed, the first activities have been clearly hindered, between closures or opening conditions (hours, limitations to terraces, distances...), resulting in a shock of the offer and a decrease in consumption in these sectors. Mobility and transport have been affected by the closure of leisure and tourism and the implementation of home-based work. (SECO 2021b)

On the other hand, the impossibility to travel has reduced external consumption, in favour of certain domestic activities. Indeed, meal delivery and online commerce has increased. In example, Uber Group reported that its Uber Eats sales jumped 600% in the second quarter in Switzerland. (ETIENNE 2020) *La Poste* also increased its workforce by nearly 500 people to keep up with the growing demand for their services. On the other hand, teleworking has increased demand for electronics and office products. (LE TEMPS 2020c)

The export of goods and manufactured products has also suffered some decline. As Switzerland's trading partners have also implemented lockdowns and semi-lockdowns, their consumption has declined, resulting in lower international demand. However, the high added value of chemical and pharmaceutical products has limited this decline. In fact, this market is not very sensitive to a conjunctural change in the economic situation. (LE TEMPS 2020c)

In the summer, the reopening of activities allowed indicators to soar. Domestic consumption benefited from this, in addition to the limitation of travel abroad. In Autumn, the new restrictions caused a sharp decline in cultural services, hotels, and restaurants. Shops did better, as they were able to stay open. (LE TEMPS 2020c)

As a result, we see the decrease in GDP explained above.

Public consumption has risen sharply. This is since the economic measures taken throughout the crisis have increased spending. In 2020, more than 31.2 billion have been made available by the Confederation, 15 of which have been spent. (AFF 2021) This bill will only increase in 2021. If the deficit (-2.6%) and the debt (42.95%) recorded in

December 2020 were going up compared to the previous year, it can be expected that it will also increase in 2021. (DFF 2021) (IMF 2021b)

The following is a non-exhaustive list of the assistance provided.

3.3.3.1 Aid

The following is a non-exhaustive list of the assistance provided.

3.3.3.1.1 Companies (credits and "cas de rigueur")

In the spring of 2020, the Federal Council proposed credits, repayable over 5 years, then increased to 7 years. Companies could apply for these until the end of July 2020. Of the 42.3 billion granted, 17.4 billion had been taken out by the end of the year, all companies included. Medium to large companies accounted for 15.3 billion and start-ups 64 million. (AFF 2021) (LE TEMPS 2020d)

Subsequently, the Covid-19 Law of 25 September 2020, has allowed the implementation of the so-called "*cas de rigueur*" system (hardship cases). Thus, the Confederation joins the Cantons to help companies particularly affected by the pandemic. Among these, the event, travel, tourism, and hotel/restaurant industries are particularly targeted. The Cantons could request assistance from the Confederation to meet the costs or losses. This could take the form of non-repayable contributions, repayable loans, guarantees or sureties. Following the amendment of the Covid-19 Law in March 2021, the Parliament has agreed to increase the budget to CHF 10 billion, while sharing it among the Cantons and Confederation. From then, companies that have suffered a decrease of more than 40% of their turnover or that have been ordered to close for 40 days by the authorities will be considered as hardship cases. For companies whose annual turnover exceeds CHF 5 million, the Confederation will issue the rules. For start-ups, it will be the Cantons. Companies established between 1 March and 30 September 2020, are also eligible. (ADMIN.CH 2021c) (DFF 2021a) (LE TEMPS 2020c)

3.3.3.1.2 Workplaces (RHT + APG)

The Reduction of Working Hours, or *RHT*, is a temporary reduction or complete suspension of the company's activity, while the contractual links between the employee and the company are maintained. This is done in case of economic difficulties or when the authorities order the closure of a business. These allowances are paid by the unemployment insurance (*AC*) to the employer. (SECO 2021c) The advantage is twofold: for the employee, he does not become unemployed and continues to contribute to his pension fund, and for the employer, he avoids the costs of staff turnover. The access procedure and prerequisites have been made more flexible due to the crisis. (SECO 2016)

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This tool was particularly in demand in 2020. In fact, the number of *RHTs* at the end of 2019 was 3,816, while in 2020 it was 365,286. This is an increase of more than 9'000%. (AMSTAT 2021)

Table 2: RHT

RHT						
	2020	2019			2020	2019
	Absolute values		Variation	Variation (%)	Sector weight (%)	
Agriculture	962	-	+ 962	-	0.26%	0.00%
Industry	69'208	3'531	+ 65'677	1860.01%	18.95%	92.53%
Services	295'116	285	+ 294'831	103449.47%	80.79%	7.47%
TOTAL	365'286	3'816	+ 361'470	9472.48%	100.00%	100.00%

Personal elaboration from AMSTAT 2021

All sectors have progressed and, as in Spain, there has been an inversion of the sectors with the highest demand: while the service sector represented only 7.5% of applications in 2019, it became the majority with 81% in 2020. Thus, among the *RHTs* in December 2020, 8 out of 10 came from the services sector. Industry moved into second place, from 92.5% to 19%. April 2020 was the month of peak enrolment, with over 1.3 million people. (AMSTAT 2021)

The insurance for loss of earnings (*APG*) has also helped a variety of people, including the self-employed, parents whose children could no longer be cared by a third party, and vulnerable or quarantined people who had to interrupt their gainful employment. (OFAS 2021)

In total, of the CHF 25.5 billion initially foreseen by the Federal Council, 12.9 have been spent by the end of 2020. Their estimates for the year 2021 amount to CHF 9.1 billion. (AFF 2021)

3.3.3.1.3 Targeted support (transport, culture, and health)

Some support has also been targeted. This is particularly the case for the support of public transport and tourism companies, whose total costs could amount to CHF 1.1 billion by the end of 2021. The culture and leisure industries also received support in 2020 (CHF 311 million) and should reach CHF 806 million in 2021. (AFF 2021)

On the other hand, economic losses in the health sector, due among other things to the cancellation of planned operations, have required funds. Plus, the purchase of additional equipment, as well as Covid-19 tests and vaccines, has cost CHF 856 million and might reach CHF 4 billion in 2021. (AFF 2021)

3.3.3.1.4 Monetary Policy (*BNS*)

The Swiss National Bank (*BNS*) has been working on three areas. The first was to provide liquidity in the spring in response to the increase in interest rates. Second, to limit the appreciation of the Swiss franc, the *BNS* increased its interventions in the foreign exchange market. Finally, it provided state-guaranteed liquidity, enabling commercial banks to grant the Covid loans mentioned above. (KAUFMANN 2021)

3.3.3.1.5 Cantons (*examples*)

The Cantonal Governments have also put their hands in the wallet in addition to the CHF 1.8 billion contributions to hardship cases agreed with the Confederation, to the *RHT* and to the *APG*. As each Government has put in place strategies specific to its productive fabric, I will give you three different and non-exhaustive Cantonal examples. (AFF 2021) (WUTHRICH 2021a) (WUTHRICH 2021b)

At the beginning of March 2021, the Canton of Vaud contributed CHF 238 million, including CHF 80 million for hardship cases. For the latter, this fund is still accessible for up to CHF 203.5 million. At that time, about 56% of the requests came from the restoration sector. (ETAT DE VAUD 2021) In addition, it was able to find a public-private partnership with the Vaud-based company Qoqa, through the WelQome project. With a budget of CHF 40 million, it aimed to help areas that have been hit hard by the crisis. (WELQOME 2021) For example, a person could buy a voucher for CHF 80, but whose value represented CHF 100. When using this voucher in a restaurant, for example, the owner cashed in CHF 110. The variation of CHF 30 between the consumer's purchase price and the amount cashed by the store was covered by the Canton. This way, consumption was encouraged, then companies participation and consumers benefited as well. (SEYDTAGHIA 2020)

The Canton of Valais, which has contributed CHF 201 million to its economy, including nearly CHF 80 million for hardship cases at the end of January 2021, has implemented something similar. (CONSEIL D'ETAT VALAISAN 2021) By booking a stay of at least two nights in a hotel, four nights in a vacation home or seven nights in a campsite, a voucher of CHF 100 was offered. This "*Tourisme Valaisan*" ("Valais Tourism") project aimed to support the local economy, for which the State Council has allocated a budget of CHF 16 million. (LE NOUVELLISTE 2020)

In mid-May 2021, the Canton of Geneva contributed CHF 250 million, including 201 for hardship cases and 4 for *RHT*. (GE.CH 2021a) It has also agreed to make a loan of CHF 200 million possible for Cointrin airport. This Airport was in serious financial difficulties,

with passenger numbers down by 70% in 2020 and a deficit of more than CHF 129 million at the end of the period. (ETIENNE 2021)

3.4 Joint evaluation

Along with the analysis and commentary of the data observed throughout the previous sections of the document, it seems relevant to highlight the main implications that the measures taken to limit the spread of the virus and deal with its economic consequences may have had. Some of the important issues that have been detected by the Spanish and Swiss Ministries of Health and other organizations in assessing the different problems discussed in this document are compiled below, but not exhaustively.

3.4.1 Government efforts

At the economic level, both countries have made considerable efforts in the measures adopted. The cost of these measures is high, and it will be necessary to see what the result will be when the situation is over, and whether the objectives they were designed to achieve have been met. In addition to this, the macroeconomic evolution as an influence must be considered.

According to IMF figures, Switzerland has spent about 10% of its GDP to cope with the different waves and welcomes its management. (ADMIN.CH 2021d) Thus, the containment of the impact has been more successful than in many European countries, for which it recommended a significant increase in spending. (CNMC 2021) Indeed, Spain, like France, has spent about 4% of its GDP and is among the EU countries that have made the most effort. That is why the IMF recommends continuing, in addition to maintaining a loose monetary policy (although knowing that this could be a risk if too prolonged), to support jobs (*ERTEs* in Spain) and provide direct aid to businesses, among other measures. This could reach 3% of European GDP in the next two years. (AGUSTINA 2021)

While the Swiss economy shrank by 3% in 2020, it is expected to grow by 3.5% in 2021 and 2.8% in 2022. For Spain, the IMF expects a strong rebound of up to 6.4% in 2021 and 4.7% the following year. (IMF 2021a)

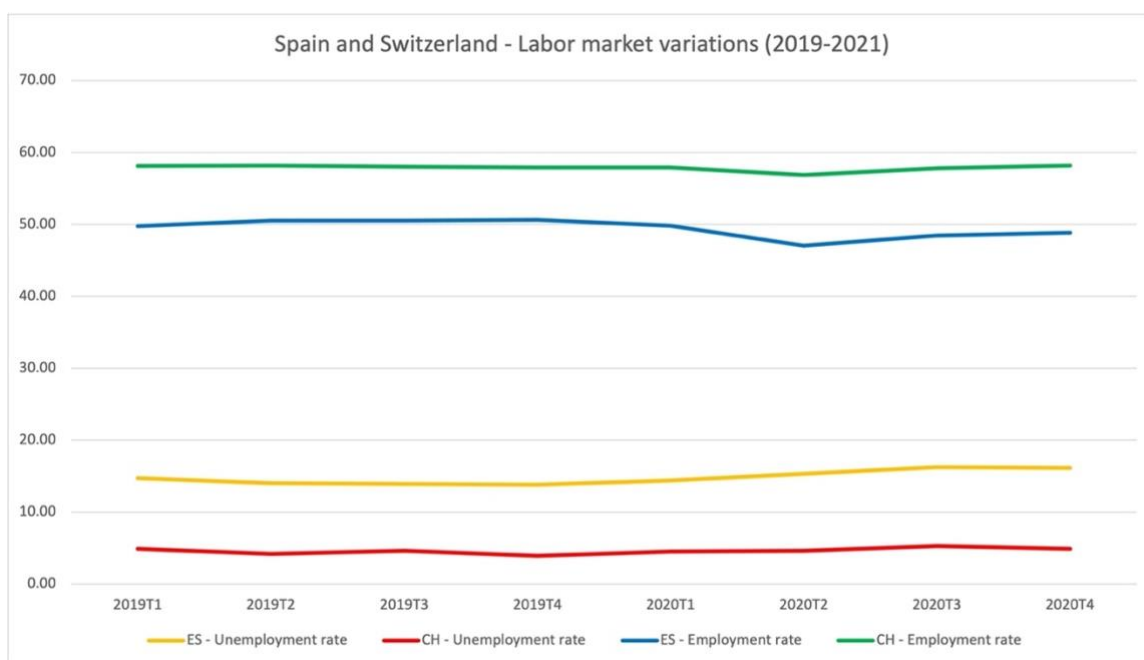
3.4.2 *ERTE, RHT* and unemployment

The Spanish National Statistics Institute (*INE*) conducts a Labour Force Survey (*EPA*) on a quarterly basis and indicates that the unemployment rate for the July 2020 to September 2020 period was 16.26%, 2.34% higher than in the previous year in those same months. This is equivalent to an increase of almost 508,500 people in one year. (INE 2021e)

In Switzerland a similar survey is conducted by the Federal Statistical Office (*OFS, ESPA*). The highest rate of the year was recorded in the third quarter of 2020, with 5.3%, or almost 35,000 people compared to the same period of the previous year. (*OFS 2021c*)

Although these figures are important, it is necessary to point out that people in *ERTE* or *RHT* situations are not counted in the unemployment result.

Figure 9: Spain and Switzerland - Labor market variations (2019 - 2021)



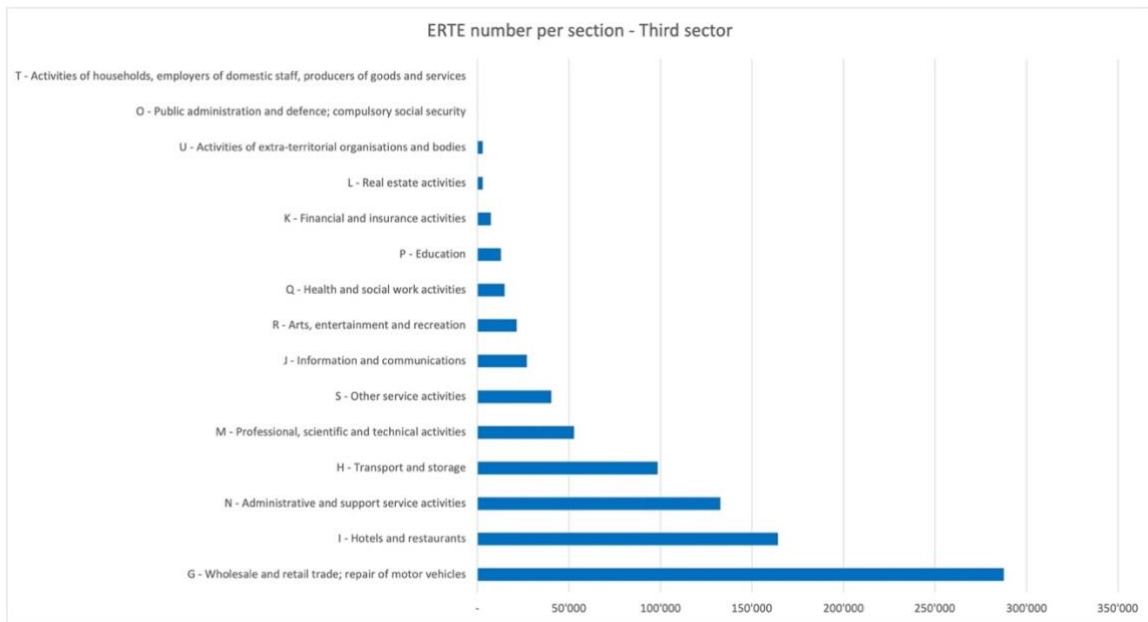
Personal elaboration from INE 2021e and OFS 2021c

This graph allows us to see the changes that have occurred in the labour market. We find a decrease in the second quarter of 2020 in both the Spanish (-2.77%) and Swiss (-1.0%) employment rates. This curve is partly reflected in the increase in the unemployment rate. In the same period, the unemployment rate increased by 0.92% in Spain and 0.1% in Switzerland. Then, in the third quarter, it continued to rise by 0.93% in the first country and 0.7% in the second. To understand this negative trend, we must also consider the increase in the number of *ERTEs* and *RHTs* memberships. It is thanks to these tools, among others, that the labour market has remained relatively stable, despite a slight deterioration in the indicators.

If we look more closely at the areas of the tertiary sector (the largest sector to have made use of these tools) to which *ERTE* or *RHT* applicants belong, we can see that these are indeed the ones that are dependent on tourism, physical labour, or internal or external demand. In fact, wholesale or small stores, the automobile sector or the transport and

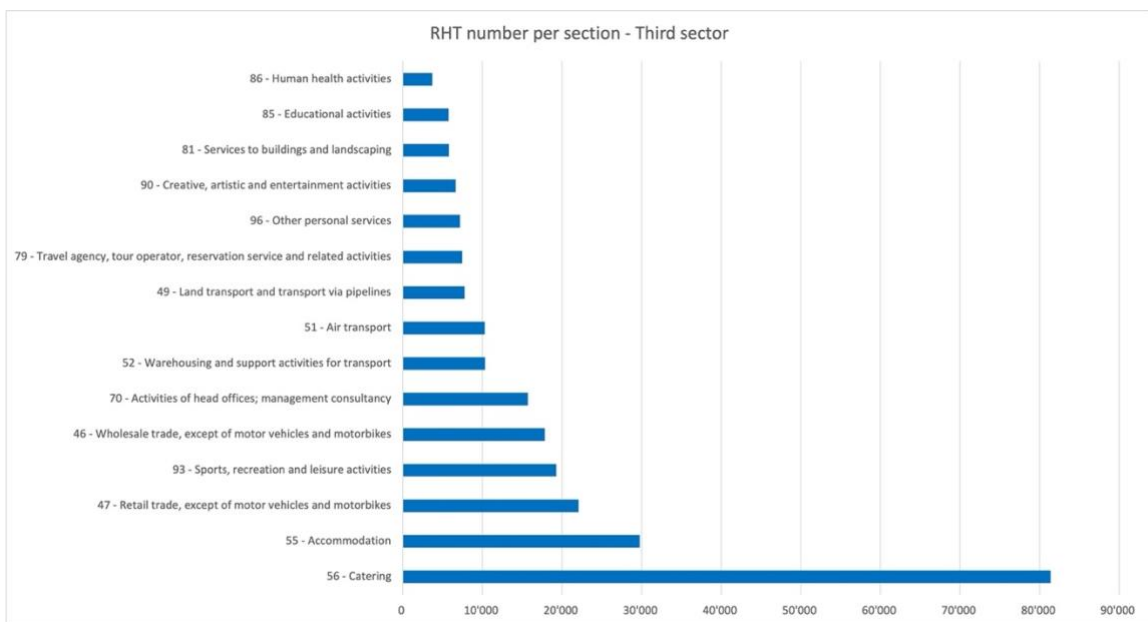
storage of materials require internal demand or international trade to function. On the other hand, the hotel and catering industry, as well as the transport of people, require physical work, contacts, as well as the mobility of people and tourism. Finally, support and administrative activities are dependent on the smooth functioning of the rest of the economy.

Figure 10: ERTE number per section - Third sector – 31.12.2020



Personal elaboration from INE 2021e

Figure 11: RHT number per section - Third sector – 31.12.2020



Personal elaboration from OFS 2021c

3.4.3 Lockdown, telework and digitalization

First, we refer to the timeliness and effectiveness of population lockdown measures. Faced with the circulation of the invisible enemy, (MACRON 2020) it is a matter of limiting contacts between people, which is corroborated by the figures: between 15 March and 21 June 2020, mobility decreased by more than 53% in Spain and by more than 46% in Switzerland. (OFS 2021d) However, it is true that in Spain, non-work trips decreased by 90% between mid-March and early April. (DELOITTE 2021)

While in Spain there was a strict lockdown where it was forbidden to leave the house except for "just reasons", in Switzerland it was recommended not to go out, except for going to the stores, the pharmacy or to work. (CONSEIL FEDERAL 2020) These reasons constitute just causes in Spain. Despite less restrictive movement restrictions in the Federal State, an average decrease in mobility is observed close to what observed in the Iberian country. This indicates, among other things, that the justified cause of "going to work" was decisive, and thus, that the possibilities of working remotely are lower in Spain than in Switzerland.

According to the *INE*, Spain is a country very vulnerable to lockdown due to its economic structure. Only 22.3% of Spanish workers can work remotely. More precisely, 100% of managers and executives have this possibility, and the percentages are reduced to 49.8% among technicians and scientific and intellectual professionals, 20% among administrative or accounting staff. In the rest of the professions (construction, manufacturing workers, personal services, etc.), the possibilities are minimal. (INE 2021f) (RANDSTAD 2020)

Therefore, while restrictions may have seemed necessary to mitigate the coronavirus outbreak, they may not be as specific when such a large percentage of the population must travel to their place of work in person. The effectiveness of containment measures to reduce the movement of people eliminated nonwork travel, but the lack of a telework culture in Spain was a barrier.

The European Commission has developed the International Digital Economy and Society Index (I-DESI), which measures the performance and competitiveness of the digital economy of the European Union States as well as 18 other countries. It brings together several indicators:

- Connectivity, the deployment of broadband infrastructure and its quality.
- Human capital, the skills needed to take advantage of the opportunities offered by the digital society.
- Use of Internet services, the variety of activities performed by citizens online.
- The integration of digital technology, the digitization of businesses and the development of the online sales channel.
- Digital public services, the digitization of public services, with a focus on e-Government.

(EC 2020c) (EC 2020d)

Table 3: I-DESI

	I-DESI			
	Switzerland	Spain		
	2018	2018	2019	2020
Connectivity	69.2	45.9	55.4	60.8
Human capital	55.8	44.9	44.5	47.6
Use of internet services	64.2	52.1	55.1	60.8
Integration of digital technology	86.1	41.1	41.3	41.2
Digital public services	50.1	79.6	80.9	87.3

Personal elaboration from EC 2020c EC 2020d

Although 2019 and 2020 are not available for Switzerland, we observe that it ranked ahead of Spain in 4 of the 5 categories. It even excelled in technology integration in 2018, placed first in the study. This is, in fact, the lowest score for Spain, where companies are only slightly digitalized, and no significant progress has been made between 2018 and 2020. However, the Spanish public administration is one of the most connected in the European Union, the second to be exact. On this indicator, it is well ahead of Switzerland.

(EC 2020c) (EC 2020d)

3.4.4 Interterritorial Council of the National Health System (*CISNS*)

Part of the doctrine, following the constitutional law professor José Ángel Marín Gámez, would consider that the Royal Decree 926/2020, of October 25, has led to the Autonomous Communities restricting fundamental rights and even applying perimeter fences, territorial border closures and autonomous confinements. So many measures for which they have no competence, and which cannot be transferred to them. (MARIN GAMEZ 2020)

It also states that the *CISNS* is not the place for such co-governance and adoption of measures restricting rights. Within it, common problems can be shared, but the limitations of fundamental rights are decisions that fall within the competence of the Executive, within the framework of its constitutional powers, endorsed, by the relevant legal instruments, such as the first Royal Decree that activated the state of alert in March 2020. (MARIN GAMEZ 2020)

However, it is interesting to note that this Council has allowed the representatives of each territory and the Government to sit down, find and agree on common strategies together.

3.4.5 Federal Council

In February 2021, the Federal Council, and more particularly Alain Berset, was heavily criticized. Indeed, the latter had announced the maintenance of restrictive measures in anticipation of the increased circulation of new variants. This was a proactive strategy to avoid a third wave, whereas in the first two waves, decisions were taken in reaction to the situation. The right-wing parties and the business community did not particularly like this. The public also found it difficult to accept, because these decisions came after the peak of the second wave. It is indeed more understandable to sacrifice oneself in the face of an emergency than in prevention of a possible one. (BOURQUIN 2021a) (CONSEIL FEDERAL 2021a)

On 17 February 2021, a reminder was given of what the institution of the Federal Council is and what its members represent. Ueli Maurer, Head of the Federal Department of Finance (*DFF*) and Guy Parmelin, President since 1 January 2021 and Head of the Federal Department of Economic Affairs, Education and Research (*DEFR*), came in support of their colleague. They recalled that decisions were not taken by Alain Berset, but in a collegial manner, by the seven members of the Federal Council. The President added that Mr Berset was not a dictator. This support gave a strong signal from this Institution. Indeed, the Federal Council was not taking restrictive measures out of ideology, but for health reasons and on the recommendation of the Federal Office of Public Health (*OFSP*). (BOURQUIN 2021a) (CONSEIL FEDERAL 2021a)

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3.4.6 Quarantine on entry into Switzerland

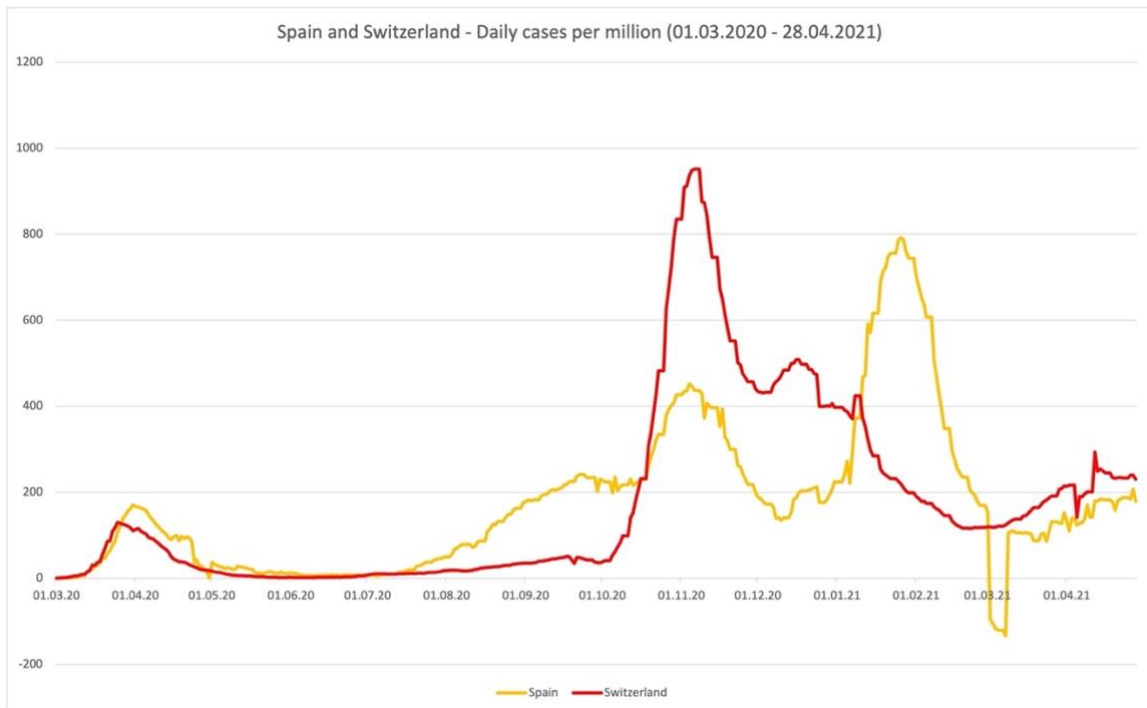
The management of the second wave resulted in an extremely high number of cases. Indeed, in November 2020, the country was at the top of the worst statistics in Europe.

Since the summer, a 10-day quarantine was compulsory when returning from certain areas considered at risk. As a reminder, the *OFSP* maintained a list of the different regions concerned and the criteria were established in the ordinance of 2 July 2020: the incidence per 100'000 inhabitants, over the 14 days preceding the entry needed to be less than 60 cases. Spain entered this list on 8 August 2020 when it reached 78 cases per 100'000 inhabitants, while Switzerland had 17. (FEDLEX 2021c) (RENAVE 2021)

If this measure had to be applied within the territory, travelling from Geneva to Lausanne would have required a quarantine onwards 27 July 2020. (UNIGE 2021) In fact, the territory of the end of the lake reached that day an incidence of 70 cases per 100'000 inhabitants. A number that would only increase, until becoming the highest of Europe, at the beginning of November 2020. (RTS 2020e) (ULTRICH 2020)

Here is a graph of the number of cases per million inhabitants, for Switzerland and Spain, and not per 100,000 inhabitants. Indeed, Our World in Data proposes a comparison on this unit of measure that allows a good understanding of the curve. Over a similar period, Switzerland was hit hard at the end of November. Indeed, Switzerland reached a peak of more than 951 cases per million inhabitants on 6 November 2020. In contrast, Spain hit 791.6 cases per million population on 26 January 2021. This is a time when this country was on the Confederation's list of states and areas considered at risk. However, it is no longer part of it, since 11 March 2021. (OFS 2021e) (OUR WORLD IN DATA 2021)

Figure 12: Spain and Switzerland - Daily cases per million inhabitants (01.03.2020 - 28.04.2021)



Personal elaboration from OUR WORLD IN DATA 2021

3.4.7 Decentralized management and territorial disparities

3.4.7.1 Economic closure, free movement, and competitive federalism

In the governance of the crisis, we observed three similar stages between Switzerland and Spain: first a centralization of decisions, then a decentralization to territorial entities, while keeping a common objective, before implementing a shared management, lastly.

The first reaction was to face the emergency and apply common rules to everyone. Faced with a situation like this and with the little information available in March 2020, people generally accepted this.

Then came the management phase by the territorial entities. Indeed, the worst being over (the first wave was behind), it was decided that each territory could choose its measures to apply. In this way, the Autonomous Communities and the Cantons were allowed to open their economy according to their epidemiological situation and not by applying uniform standards to the whole country.

This can be seen as both an advantage and a disadvantage. Having the same standards for everyone means equal opportunity. Decisions are based on which region is most affected, i.e., levelling down. This is not Pareto optimal, since the least affected

geographic areas are penalized. Conversely, by accepting that each territory makes the rules, an asymmetry of possibilities is created, which is what happened during the second stage of governance.

During this period, in Switzerland, each Canton could issue its own rules. It did not take long for these cantonal disparities to confuse the population. According to a study by economic experts at the Centre for Economic Research (*KOF*) of the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich (*ETHZ*) at the end of 2020, this was due to the competitive nature of Swiss federalism. It pointed out, however, that countries such as Germany, Austria and Switzerland have generally managed better than unitary countries. (GUIGNARD 2020)

On one hand, taking a passive stance would allow one's own Canton to benefit from the decision of its neighbours. On the other hand, for fear of giving an advantage to a neighbour, a Canton might refrain from being proactive.

Specific cases have been observed, almost of free riders seeking to maximize their welfare, by going where it was possible to perform an activity forbidden in their Canton. For example, when bars and restaurants were closed in the Canton of Vaud, some clients went to Bern to spend their money. When the Canton of Geneva closed its hairdressing establishments, some hairdressers in the Nyon region did not know how to face the increasing demand of services. Or when the museums in the French-speaking part of Switzerland were closed, people went to visit them in the German-speaking part. However, it is necessary to point out that tourist trips abroad were complicated by measures such as quarantines or PCR tests, and the population tended to stay and travel within the country. (BALMAT 2020) (JOB 2020)

But there is a worthy side of having different management, that of being able to observe the results of those measures taken. Thus, in the best of cases, one can take decisions that are relevant to its territory, according to its situation, whilst knowing ahead how effective they are.

Nevertheless, it is possible to coordinate between Cantons, which the French-speaking part of Switzerland managed to do at the end of December 2020, to reduce the impact for all and not to act alone, at the risk of worsening the situation for oneself and for others.

3.4.7.2 Perimeter closures and opening the economy

Although total lockdown of the population has not become again a reality in Spain, measures such as perimeter closures have been taken in the second wave. In May 2021,

the Superior Court of Justice of the Basque Country (*TSJPV*) did not allow to maintain the perimeter closures of the Autonomous Community or municipal, because it considered that they violate the fundamental rights in a disproportionate way, and the Autonomous Community of Madrid asserts that the perimeter closures have increased their contagions, instead of limiting them. (LOPEZ ALEMANY 2021)

The data show that: at Christmas some of the measures previously imposed were relaxed, including the closure of borders between Autonomous Communities, except in the Community of Valencia. At this point, one would have expected that the region's statistics in the third wave would be much better than the rest, since it did not lift the restrictions. However, the opposite happened. The Valencian Community was, along with Extremadura, the one that experienced the third most intense wave, breaking all records of cumulative incidence. Another example would be given on the feast of San José (19 March). 7 communities, with 42% of the total population, had a holiday and 10 did not. It has always been said that holidays had a negative impact on pandemic behaviour, but two weeks later, the data did not support this. In addition, communities that had time off had better outcomes than those that did not. By 3 April 2021, the difference in the incidence had narrowed to only 10 points, meaning that the behaviour of those who did not have a vacation was worsening compared to those who did. (LOPEZ ALEMANY 2021)

In view of these data, there are voices advocating a new national approach: seeking to minimize the total number of cases in the country, it would be to facilitate as much as possible the fact that the areas with higher population density allow their citizens to travel and stay to those with lower density. In Spain, many people have a second home in the countryside, in the mountains or at the beach. One could think it would be better to rely on the opposite strategy: the lower the density of population living together in a territorial space, the lower the possibility of contagion. This principle is inapplicable in large cities or provincial capitals, but the measure is possible to apply because of the many citizens from villages located in the so-called "*España vacía*" ("empty Spain"). In addition, given that the possibility of contagion is less, the issue of keeping leisure activities, hotels and restaurants in operation could be addressed. (LOPEZ ALEMANY 2021)

The report from the Community of Madrid concludes that these closures "are made to make it very visible that drastic measures are being taken, even though it makes no sense to implement them," again criticizing excessive public intervention. (LOPEZ ALEMANY 2021)

3.4.7.3 Conclusion

Two similar management models, but with different strategies. The first is to close many activities, while allowing the population to move freely within the territory. The other, closing the borders between and within the entities that make up the country, while opening the economy with certain restrictions. And yet, in both cases, it has been necessary for the national executive to take over the steering of the ship. In view of this, it is clear that mobility acts as a vector of propagation. However, it cannot be held solely responsible for the circulation of the virus. It is not so much the movement that is a problem, but the way people act when they move, which has consequences.

3.4.8 School Closure

A study by the *ETHZ*, demonstrates the effectiveness of school closures in combating Covid-19. Educational services, therefore, would be one of the scenarios of the tertiary sector whose closure could be more effective in reducing the spread of the virus. (PERSSON, PARIE, FEUERRIEGEL 2021)

However, while it is true that closing schools could help reduce mobility by up to 21.6% according to this study, this measure is one of the most controversial in the world. Its use has been considered only as a last resort, because of the importance of socialization in the development of young children, in addition to the heavy impact that the decrease in the quality of education could have on their future. (PERSSON, PARIE, FEUERRIEGEL 2021)

This measure was at the centre of discussions in January 2021 but was not implemented. On that occasion, bioethicist, and member of the federal working group Samia Hurst said on the Swiss Radio and Television (*RTS*) on the TV news: "It would be strange to have cable cars open, but schools closed." (NUSSBAUM 2021)

3.4.9 Wearing a mask

Another widely imposed measure was the use of masks. Since the beginning of the pandemic, their effectiveness in reducing SARS-CoV-2 transmission has been questioned in many countries and regions. According to a study published by the U.S. National Academy of Sciences (PNAS), the use of these measures (masks, distancing, and eye protection) can reduce the possibility of infections. This study is based on measures taken in different regions of Germany, between some that have made wearing masks in confined spaces mandatory and others that have not. Their results vary between 15 and 75% reduction in the number of cases, depending on the region and the time of implementation

of these measures. They establish a weighted average of 47%. (GOUBET 2020) (MITZE et al. 2020)

However, wearing a mask cannot be the only protective measure. Population density must also be considered. For this reason, Switzerland has imposed the wearing of a mask only for dense urban areas, while in Spain it is mandatory in all public spaces. Thus, it must be worn in a metropolis of one million inhabitants, as well as in a village of 3 neighbours. For this reason, some critics say that Spain has taken the PNAS recommendations too far.

3.4.10 Closure of the restaurant business

The Community of Madrid declared in July 2020 that, considering the active outbreaks, the greatest number of cases occurred in private social gatherings, in the workplace, in social and health centres (retirement homes, juvenile facilities) and in the family environment. Since the de-escalation, Madrid has been one of the most permissive communities in terms of opening public establishments, since, according to it, the data did not show a correlation between their closure and the decrease of cases. More recently, one of the latest reports from the Ministry of Health on the evolution of Covid-19 in Spain, dated May 2021, corroborated this principle, indicating that gatherings of family and friends continue to be the main area of coronavirus infection, followed by sports activities and then eating establishments. The Spanish Association of Mutual Workers' Compensation Insurance (*AMAT*) also supports this hypothesis, indicating that only 5.35% of coronavirus work stoppages occur in the hospitality sector (restaurants, bars, and catering), while 7.25% do so in the trade sector and 33.9% in the health sector. (VALDES 2021)

In the same line of thoughts, the Federal Office of Public Health, which from the analysis of 793 clinical reports received between 16 July and 1 August 2020, concludes that the family environment is the main source of contamination (27.2%), followed by the workplace (8.7%). Thus, 216 infections occurred within the family. The workplace caused 69 infections. Discotheques and clubs accounted for only 15 cases, bars, and restaurants for 13. 24 people were infected after a private party. It should be noted that the follow-up forms drawn up by the doctors do not include a category for infections contracted while shopping or on public transport, so no figures are available. Infections abroad are also not mentioned and may be counted in categories such as "bar/restaurant" or "family member". About 10% of the known infections were contracted outside Switzerland. (OFSP 2020b)

From an opposite perspective, a JPMorgan study based on data from 30 million credit cards, stated: "Exposures and activities where it is difficult to maintain the use of masks

and social distance, including frequenting places where food and drink are served, could be important risk factors for SARS-CoV-2". (LUCAS 2020) Rafael Manuel Ortí Lucas, president of the Spanish Society of Preventive Medicine, Public Health and Hygiene (*SEMPSPH*), declared that it can be said that "science confirms that bars and restaurants are risk factors". However, he stresses that it is not a question of "labelling places as dangerous", but of what is done there; "The danger is not in the place itself, but in the fact that there are no masks and there is no distance". (RTVE 2020)

Following this argument, it would seem appropriate to put more effort into educating the people to make healthier and safer use of the restaurant industry, such as raising awareness of the risks of not wearing masks. All of this would keep the restaurant sector in business, at least in open areas, with the goal of limiting the economic impact that their closure has on the service sector, followed by the need for a significant expenditure of public funds in income support and maintenance.

4. Challenges and Opportunities

Before the arrival of Covid-19, the economic structures and productive fabrics of Spain and Switzerland were already facing certain structural challenges. The health crisis has reinforced some of them and brought new ones to the fore and could have repercussions on the globalization process and the digitalization of the world economy.

The unprecedented situation created by this virus shows the need and urgency to provide an adequate response to these challenges, not only for the short term, but also and especially for the medium to long term.

4.1 Spain

4.1.1 Limits to economic growth

Various factors explain the low productivity of the Spanish economy, including the entrepreneurial fabric characterised by the small size of its companies (99.84% of companies are SMEs), (MINISTERIO DE INDUSTRIA, COMERCIO Y TURISMO 2019) and by the technological capital that is lower than that found in neighbouring countries (see DESI index).

On the other hand, human capital suffers from a relative disadvantage that requires adjustments to the education system. According to the OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) report, educational provision should be more closely linked to market needs. To this end, it recommends promoting dual vocational training with the collaboration of companies by reserving one third of the hours for teaching and the rest for practice in companies. Furthermore, it encourages the use of the German or Swiss apprenticeship model by offering remuneration in line with the work done by the apprentice. With a view to increasing technological knowledge, it proposes to set up continuous training courses. This would allow the acquisition of additional skills in computer science, robotic, and artificial intelligence. (OECD 2019)

In addition, the development of innovation support can be improved, with a view to encouraging investment and gaining competitiveness. In 2019, R&D expenditure was estimated at 1.25% of GDP, far from the Europe 2020 target of 3%. (BDE 2020a) (YOLDI 2020)

4.1.2 Labour market failures

Structural misalignments in the Spanish labour market contribute to limiting the country's economic growth. Indeed, for several decades, the Kingdom has had unemployment rates above the European average, even in periods of strong growth. Moreover, it has the

Spain and Switzerland: observation of the management of the Covid-19 crisis and its economic impact

highest unemployment rate in the EU for under 25 years old, at 39.9%. (MEDINILLA 2021) The Bank of Spain (*BdE*) has acknowledged in the report "Intergenerational labour trends in Spain over the last decades" that the working conditions of young people are now worse than those of their parents' generation. Furthermore, it warned that the biggest losers are the most educated generations. (BDE 2020b) In fact, more than 37% of young Spaniards work in jobs below their qualifications. The fact is that the Spanish productive fabric is not able to absorb the number of graduates that the country produces. (SEMPERE 2019)

The mechanisms for protecting the worker, in particular the high cost of compensation in the event of expulsion, make it difficult to gain access to a fixed and indefinite contract. Indeed, while in Switzerland compensation is provided only for employees over 50 years of age, after 20 years of service (*art. 339b CO*), in Spain it is provided for all occasions. (FEDLEX 2021d) In addition, the time limits for dismissing someone are organised as follows: 1 month during the first year, 2 months during the second to the ninth and 3 months from the tenth, without the need to provide reasons. On the other hand, in Spain, a termination of contract exceeding one year must be communicated at least 15 days beforehand, in writing. Remuneration for holidays, wages and a proportional part of extra wages must be paid (*finiquito*) as well as compensation. This is calculated as 22, 33 or 45 days of compensation per year of seniority, depending on the type of contract and the year in which it began, since the entry into force of the Royal Decree-Law 3/2012, of 10 February. (BOE 2012) (BOE 2015) For these legal reasons, dismissal is relatively expensive, and this legislation does not contribute to the reduction of temporary work.

In addition, the seasonality that characterizes certain industries, such as tourism, favours a high rate of temporary positions. Therefore, employment protection measures should be made compatible with the need for flexibility, with the aim of extending such protection to different types of contracts. This is indeed what the European Commission's European Employment Strategy, known as "Flexicurity", advocates. The result of this situation is inequality, increased by the health crisis, with persistent effects on workers' careers. Finally, the *BdE* recommends that workers particularly affected by the crisis be helped to move to sectors and companies with better growth prospects. The aim is to increase human capital and reduce unemployment permanently. This idea is included in the Recovery, Transformation and Resilience Plan. (BDE 2020a) (PRESIDENCIA DEL GOBIERNO 2021)

4.1.3 Next Generation EU

In the coming years, Spain's economic policy will be strongly influenced by the implementation of the European Union's Next Generation EU aid plan. This recovery plan, inspired by the 2030 Agenda and the United Nations' sustainable development objectives, will mobilize the resources available to Spain over the next few years, thanks to the Next Generation EU. (BDE 2020a)

The Government has placed 4 major axes of transformation in its economic policy strategy: ecological transition, digital transformation, gender equality and social and territorial cohesion. To this end, the National Plan for Recovery, Transformation and Resilience is structured in 10 main policies that will have a direct impact on the productive sectors most likely to transform the economic and social fabric. In a few words: (I) the fight against depopulation and the development of agriculture; (II) the promotion of resilient infrastructure and ecosystems or preservation of urban, energy and transport infrastructure; (III) the fair and inclusive energy transition; (IV) the promotion of a Public Administration for the 21st century, so that it acts as a driver of technological change and the modernization of the judicial system; (V) the modernization and digitization of businesses in the face of the urgency of sustaining them and guaranteeing industrial competitiveness ; (VI) strengthening and innovation in the national health system; (VII) support for education and knowledge, learning and capacity building; (VIII) support for long-term care and modernization of employment policies; (IX) development of culture and sports; (X) modernization of the tax system by increasing tax progressiveness and redistribution of resources, to achieve inclusive and sustainable growth. (BDE 2020a)

European Commission Executive Vice-President Margrethe Vestager said: "This Coronavirus crisis has shown how crucial it is that citizens and businesses are connected and can interact with each other online".

Thus, it will be necessary, among other things, to seek to increase the digitalization of the productive fabric and, consequently, the DESI index mentioned above. This will be achieved by strengthening the digital skills of workers and citizens, paying particular attention to the needs of the labour market and to reducing the digital divide in education. By 2025, the aim is for 80% of people to obtain basic skills and half of them must be women. In addition, businesses and more specifically start-ups and SMEs are targeted. In addition, the target is that at least 25% of their turnover should be generated by e-commerce. (MINISTERIO DE ASUNTOS ECONOMICOS Y TRANSFORMACION DIGITAL 2021)

This will increase the possibilities of teleworking and why not, create teleworking hubs, as the Canary Islands are trying to do. (BAU 2020) In addition, it would be necessary to establish new direct taxation policies to settle these cases, between the countries concerned, and avoid double taxation. Thus, an attraction of foreign labour, working remotely and enjoying a pleasant environment, would imply an increase in both direct and indirect tax revenue for the State.

4.2 Switzerland

4.2.1 European Union and the Framework Agreement (*Accord-Cadre*)

To follow up on the Bilateral Agreements I of 1999 (DFAE 2021a) and Bilateral Agreements II of 2004, (DFAE 2021b) which include more than a hundred sectoral agreements between Switzerland and the European Union, the idea of an institutional agreement was put forward in 2005. (BOURQUIN 2021b) The negotiations, which began in 2013, went through a few bumps in the road before being unilaterally rejected by the Federal Council in May 2021.

However, they were allowed to continue, despite the positive outcome of the 9 February 2014 vote "Against mass immigration", which directly conflicted with the Free Movement of Persons (FMP) contained in the Bilateral Agreement I package. (CHF 2021) It should be noted that all the items contained in this package are legally bound by a "guillotine clause". If one of the agreements were to fall, the others would lapse. The EU had responded by ceasing to collaborate with Switzerland on the Horizon 2020 and ERASMUS+ projects.

However, the FMP was not suspended, and negotiations reached a pre-agreement between representatives of the two entities in 2018. Despite this, the text did not convince the Federal Council, which did not ratify it. On the announcement of the abandonment of the Framework Agreement on 26 May 2021, it invoked "substantial divergences", such as wage protection, the EU citizenship directive and State aid. At the same time, it recalled that without it, the EU would not want to conclude a new market access agreement, and that it would be in the interest of both parties to find solutions. (CONSEIL FEDERAL 2021b)

The European Commission, which wanted to modernise relations, deplored the decision, saying that the bilateral agreements were getting old and were "no longer up to the level of what relations between the Union and Switzerland should and deserve to be". (EC 2021b)

The Federal Council will have to find a solution to this impasse. Being at the centre of the continent and having the EU as its main trading partner, it seems necessary for Switzerland to restore trust with Brussels and the European States. (AFD 2021) At the same time, if sanctions had been taken in 2014, it will be necessary to be attentive to the reaction of the Union in 2021. (BUSSLINGER 2021b) (GUILLAUME 2021)

4.2.2 Covid-19 Law

The measures taken in the various ordinances were not always provided for in the *LEp*. This is particularly true for the requirement to wear a mask in public places. Thus, this constraint, based on an executive order, moves away from the framework provided by the law, and loses its legitimacy. For this reason, an urgent federal law, known as the "Covid-19 Law", was approved by the Federal Assembly on September 25, 2020, and entered into force the next day. In this way, Government orders were based on a law that provided measures to address this specific threat. (FEDLEX 2021e)

An urgent federal law (*art. 165 Cst.*) is a norm that is approved by the Parliament and enters into force immediately, thus avoiding the usual delays in the approval of a standard federal law. This implies that the time limit normally allowed for the people to exercise their power by launching an optional referendum, before this law comes into force, is eliminated. This is a way of bypassing direct democracy, to allow a quick response from governance. However, an optional referendum can be launched later (*art. 141, al. 1, let. b. Cst.*), as was the case for this text and on which the Swiss people will vote on Sunday, 13 June 2021. However, the result cannot contravene the provisions put into force between the moment of approval of the urgent federal law and its potential later repeal decided by the people. The period of validity of the law is one year. (FEDLEX 2021a)

It should be noted that this Covid-19 Law has undergone two modifications, first on 18 December 2020 and then on 19 March 2021. The next vote will take place on the text of 25 September 2020, and not on its later adaptations, as Suzette Sandoz, honorary professor of law and former national councillor, pointed out in the newspaper, *Le Temps*. Thus, the articles modified in these two revisions should be null and void, but the new norms could endure. The March amendments came after the celebratory approval of the referendum, and it is likely that a citizen in good faith would think to reject the entire law and not just its September 2020 version. However, we noted that this complex situation is not explained in the brochure sent to the population. According to Mrs. Sandoz, "The presentation of the problem and the answer to the above questions could influence the outcome of the vote." (SANDOZ 2021)

Several questions arise, notably on how this crisis will be managed if the Covid-19 Law is not accepted by the people. The theory is that the resulting ordinances would lapse once the law ceases to operate, which would be 25 September 2021. This deadline would allow the Federal Council to adapt its ordinances on the *LEp* so that they would last beyond this deadline. This is how the first wave of ordinances worked. However, what would happen to the economic aid? One of the key points of this law is precisely the support to the economy. Would this mean that the aid would be cancelled? It seems unlikely that if this law is rejected, the Confederation will not find a way to help those who need it. And finally, we must ask ourselves if this law is necessary. In view of the management of the first wave, based on the *LEp*, it was possible to take governance measures to counter the health curve, as well as take measures to save the economy. We will find out these answers on 13 June 2021 and depending on the outcome, on 26 September 2021.

4.3 Shared

4.3.1 Inequality

According to the World Bank, Spain had a higher Gini index (34.7) (BANQUE MONDIALE 2021a) than Switzerland (33.1) (BANQUE MONDIALE 2021b) in 2018, meaning more inequality. In addition, the indicator of the population at risk of poverty or social exclusion amounted to 17.8% of the Swiss population and 26.6% of the Spanish one, in 2017. (LA CAIXA 2017) These data are already a few years old, and it is likely that they will deteriorate with the Covid-19 crisis. Indeed, vulnerable groups have been particularly affected. In Switzerland, precariousness was made particularly visible by the long queues to request food aid. This situation occurred notably in Geneva, but also in other Swiss cities. These images have certainly had an impact on the result of the cantonal vote of 27 September 2020, where the people of Geneva accepted a minimum wage of CHF 23.14 per hour, the highest in the world. (FARINE 2021) (GE.CH 2021b) (RTS 2020f) (RTS 2020g) (SKJELLAUG 2020)

In Spain, employment protection measures and the Minimum Vital Income (*IMV*) should help limit the impact on vulnerable and extreme poverty households. Access to housing is also an area where action can be taken. Indeed, 41% of Spanish tenants spend more than 30% of their wages on rent. More than 1.4 million of them spend more than half of their salary on rent. According to the 1981 US Brooke Act, exceeding the 30% threshold represents an undue burden on the household budget and should not be exceeded. This is indeed what is recommended in Switzerland and sometimes prohibitive for obtaining a lease. (BDE 2020a)

Working and studying at a distance also creates inequalities, because not everyone is equipped in the same way, either from a material point of view or in terms of the atmosphere at home. (FRAMMERY 2021)

4.3.2 Aging of the population

The ageing of the population has important consequences for the budgetary policy of a State. Indeed, the financing of the State, as well as the benefits it provides, depend directly on the tax revenue it collects from the population. Thus, it is expected that pressure will increase in Spain, as in Switzerland, especially on the pension system. Indeed, the percentage of the population over 65 years of age, over the population aged 15 to 64, will increase the next 25 years. This trend is reinforced by the pandemic, due to the decline in the birth rate for more than a year. On the Old Continent, the number of new-borns has fallen by 3% in October, 5% in November and 8.2% in December 2020. Spain even reached a drop of 20.4% in the last month of the year, a record since the end of the civil war in 1939. (DAMON 2021) (WERKLY 2021)

In addition, the aging of the population and the loss of manpower that retirement implies pose a real challenge for economic growth. It seems necessary to strengthen active labour market and training policies to bring about changes in working conditions.

In his *España 2050* plan, presented at the end of May 2021, Pedro Sánchez stated his intention to counteract the trend by legalizing immigration of 250,000 people per year. (LAMET 2021)

According to Mark Horton, IMF Head of Europe, and Head of Delegation for Switzerland, "In the medium and long term, Switzerland cannot avoid structural reforms, especially in pension systems. At present, the system is not aligned with the demographic trend, especially with increasing life expectancy." Finally, he advises raising the retirement age and linking it to life expectancy. (DFE 2021b) (ETWAREEA 2021)

4.3.3 Public accounts

Spain already had imbalances in debt and deficit, in 2019. As seen above, it was highlighted that the countercyclical measures proposed by Spain and Switzerland have deteriorated both indicators, burdening the public accounts. The current situation calls for a consolidation strategy for the coming years, on one hand to replenish funds in anticipation of a future negative shock, and on the other hand, for Spain, to comply with the commitments of the Stability and Growth Pact. Thus, the Bank of Spain proposes to implement a multi-year fiscal consolidation program that binds all public administrations.

Among its recommendations, tax benefits could be reconsidered to increase the tax basket. On the expenditure side, it recommends investment in the development of high human capital and technological positions. In addition, it calls on public administrations to improve the efficiency of their spending and the use of resources saved to serve the Spanish economy and society. (BDE 2020a)

Robot taxes would be another idea, as would "green" taxes. The examples of taxes on non-recycled plastics or certain digital services in the EU could be relevant. Spain could also follow the example of Switzerland, where some Cantons have introduced a bag tax. These bags are sold at a high price, seeking to change consumer behaviour by encouraging them to recycle.

Robot taxes would be another idea, (BBC 2019) as would "green" taxes. The examples of taxes on non-recycled plastics (LEQUEUX 2021) or certain EU digital services may be relevant. (EUROPEAN COUNCIL 2021) Spain could also follow the example of Switzerland, where some Cantons have implemented a bag tax. These bags are sold at a high price, seeking to change consumer behaviour by encouraging them to recycle. (VAUD-TAXEAUSAC 2021)

4.3.4 The transition to a more sustainable economy

The fight against climate change and the transition to a more sustainable economy are among the main challenges facing not only Spain and Switzerland, but also the rest of the world. Therefore, achieving the environmental goals that have been set will require a comprehensive and internationally coordinated strategy.

Fiscal policy can play a central role as a lever, both to discourage the most environmentally damaging activities, such as the CO2 Law in Switzerland (CONSEIL FEDERAL 2021c) or taxes on domestic flights in Spain, (EL PAIS 2021) and to stimulate the public and private investments needed to develop cleaner technologies, and to mitigate the social costs of the transition. (BDE 2020a)

4.3.5 European Union

The scale and nature of this crisis highlights the interdependence between countries and shows that decisions taken in one territory have an impact on its neighbouring areas. Indeed, a country cannot be safe if its neighbour is suffering from a bad epidemiological situation. Therefore, it seems necessary to deepen the multilateral institutional structure, to intensify the degree of international cooperation and to avoid the resurgence of protectionist policies. (BDE 2020a) The recent examples of the Czech Republic turning

on itself when it seized masks destined for Italy (LE PARISIEN 2020) or blocking the delivery of medical supplies from France and Germany to Switzerland, are situations that must not be repeated. (LE MATIN 2020)

Enrique Feás, from the Royal Elcano Institute, pointed out two things. The first is that the EU treaties cannot be stretched any further and that the time has come to make changes. The attitude of the German Constitutional Court regarding the principle of a balanced budget last spring shows that European integration must go forward. (FEAS, GARCIA ANDRES 2020)

Secondly, he points out that the current context calls for a reflection on the increase of the map of competences of the Union. Indeed, public health seems to have to be discussed, since the transmission of a virus does not stop at the borders of a country. Especially since there is free movement between the countries of the Shengen area. In addition, it should be noted that the purchase of the vaccines was done at the level of the Union, even though the EU does not have health competences. (FEAS, GARCIA ANDRES 2020)

What about Switzerland? From an epidemiological point of view and as seen at the beginning of the first wave with the proximity between Ticino and northern Italy, the same reasoning applies.

Finally, the IMF advises Switzerland to make progress in negotiations with the EU to secure access to the European market. The trajectory of the national economy will follow the global economic trends and trade tensions could have negative consequences for the country. (DFF 2021b) (ETWAREEA 2021)

5. Conclusion

Each state is aware of the deficiencies and virtues of its economic structure. It is thanks to this knowledge, and depending on its health situation, that it can take decisions in the short, medium, and long term. After the Covid-19 crisis, aiming at it to be temporary, there are several structural challenges that the States must face. It is therefore necessary to find appropriate responses to them and, on the other hand, to define policies that will enable them to seize the opportunities that also arise.

In this respect, it seems essential to improve digitalization in both countries, on the one hand in the Spanish productive fabric and on the other hand in the Swiss public administration. If a new threat of this kind were to arise, the possibility of remote working on a larger scale would allow greater flexibility and a reduced economic impact. It is also a method of working that opens new possibilities for workers and companies.

Immigration is indeed a key future issue, as the current population of both countries is ageing, and the birth rate has declined during the Covid-19 period. The challenge will be to find solutions for financial stability to maintain a pension system, reduce public debt and continue to have economic growth.

This crisis has had a severe impact on the tourism sector, which has already been singled out for the pollution generated by travel and, in Spain, for the dependence of the productive fabric on this area. Faced with an uncertain future, together with ecological trends and measures aimed at changing the behaviour of this type of consumption, the possibilities for economic growth may have to be diversified in the sector.

Furthermore, in these States with different levels of decision-making, the same governance chronology has been applied, first centralised, then decentralised, and finally joint. Therefore, to deal with such a situation and according to the result of the analysis, it seems necessary to have a certain centrality of command, while finding an agreement with the entities that make up the country. Indeed, each territory has a different reality, both in terms of health and economics, and this diversity cannot be ignored. The question of whether a caravel in the middle of a storm would sail better with a single captain or with 17 (Spain) or 26 (Switzerland) can be asked.

The journalist Andreu Claret, referring to the Spanish State as "almost federal", says: "Federalism is the best system for dealing with disasters, such as the Covid-19, because it is synonymous with solidarity and co-responsibility. The State of the Autonomies (Spain)

can be (federal) if the Autonomous Communities are involved in the management of the State and if the State is involved in what the territories do". (CLARET 2020)

Finally, although the decisions taken generally improved health indicators, they also had a negative impact on the economy. Also, health, being one of the pillars of the welfare state, could be considered as a macroeconomic parameter, since a person who is ill or prevented from working and without the possibility of doing so at a distance, does not contribute to economic growth. It should be noted that a social impact, due to this experience, is not to be neglected. This is a variable that has not been dealt within this research, but which should be considered now and in the future.

It is in this search for balance, between epidemiological management and the avoidance of an economic crisis, that the aid provided has been inserted. Thus, Keynes' counter-cyclical policies replaced the austerity measures applied during the subprime crisis, by increasing public spending. The wave of business failures has been contained so far, which is why it is important to keep the economy on life support.

However, economies are not immune to uncertainty. The general development of the Covid-19 and its variants, the recovery of normality at national level and the global situation could become obstacles. Moreover, the current light at the end of the tunnel seems to depend on the vaccination campaign.

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Annex 1: Economic

6. Historical background and macro indicators

In the following paragraphs, different macroeconomic indicators are presented to give key elements concerning the economic structure of Spain and Switzerland. Before that, a short passage through historical information seems relevant, to understand the reasons for this organisation. The aim is not to go into detail, but to give the reader an understanding of the environment in which these two countries operate.

6.1 Historical background

6.1.1 Spain

6.1.1.1 Instabilities and dictatorships (1898 - 1975)

As Antonio Garrido Torres, a professor at the *Universitat de Barcelona (UB)* whom I was lucky enough to have as part of the Economic Environment of Spain class, said during my one-year ERASMUS in the Catalan capital: "Spain has come a long way". This is indeed the expression he used to describe the drastic changes that the country's economic structure underwent during the 20th century up to the present day.

The aftermath of the Disaster of '98 - defeat in the Spanish-American War, resulting in the loss of the last colonies in the Caribbean (Cuba and Puerto Rico) and the Pacific (Guam and the Philippines) - was followed by political and economic instability, characterized by frequent changes of the regime, democratic or not, with or without a monarch, before leading to a civil war (1936-1939) and then, to the dictatorship of Francisco Franco (1939-1975). In the context of the Second World War, the *Generalissimo* applied an autarkic (national production for national consumption) and interventionist policy. It was from 1958 onwards that he allowed the gradual opening to external alliances and by integrating various organizations such as the IMF, the World Bank, or the OECD. This change of direction brought about a shake-up in the economic fabric; industrialization was in full swing and led to a strong transfer of the working force from the primary to the secondary sector.

6.1.1.2 Democracy and crisis (1975 - 2019)

After the death of General Franco in 1975, a period of transition began, before the establishment of the current democracy. During these years, the share of the industrial sector decreased in favour of services, which accounted for 58.5% of GDP in 1986 and 52.3% of employment. (GARCIA DELGADO et al. 2019)

Spain continued to open to the outside world by joining the European Community in 1986, and then in the 1990s, the Economic and Monetary Union, before implementing the Euro in 2002. This integration into the Old Continent has boosted international trade, tourism, and construction. Indeed, the latter was particularly intensive, to the extent that it exceeded 10% of GDP in the years preceding 2008. (BDE 2008) The ease of access to land and credit led to an increase in household and private enterprise debt, which exceeded 204% of GDP in 2009, up from 94% a decade earlier. (BDE 2008) Over the period 2005-2009, interest rates have also risen sharply. It was in this environment that the country entered the subprime crisis, leading to a recession, rising unemployment and an increasing the number of people unable to repay their debts. In a second phase, the crisis became financial; banks struggled to find liquidity and the property market was devalued. Finally, the sovereign debt crisis: countries were finding it difficult to finance their spending on aid to the economy, in the face of market distrust. To address the situation, the Government implemented austerity measures. These included cutting public sector spending across the board, raising taxes, as well as participating in the reorganization of the banking and savings markets, which had previously been rescued by the state. The export sector of goods and services was strengthened and became the engine of economic recovery, bringing the balance of goods close to zero and allowing the trade balance to turn positive again.

The difficulties encountered by Spain led the Council of the European Union to supervise the country's accounts, with a view to a recovery. Indeed, under the Stability and Growth Pact (SGP), Spain had a debt to GDP ratio of over 60% and an annual deficit over 3%. The latter indicator fell back below the required threshold in 2018 (2.5%), allowing the Council to abolish its decision 10 years later, in 2019. (COUNCIL OF THE EU 2019)

6.1.2 Switzerland

6.1.2.1 20th century

In the post-war period and in a Europe undergoing reconstruction, Switzerland was faced with an increase of the external demand. To meet this demand, it called on foreign workers, particularly in agriculture, the crafts, construction, and industry. In the following decades, banking neutrality and secrecy became key elements of the federal country, contributing to economic prosperity and political stability. On the other hand, Switzerland became a world-class financial centre, especially in the field of asset management and banking.

As in Spain, there was a shift in the labour force from the primary to the secondary sector and then to the tertiary sector. In 1971, the latter became the largest sector of the workforce, accounting for over 45%. (DEGEN 2017)

Thus, in addition to chocolate and mountains, Switzerland is known for its political and economic stability, high value-added products, such as high-end watches and clocks, but also for chemicals, pharmaceuticals, and trade in raw materials.

6.1.2.2 21st century

Over the 2004-2011 period, annual GDP growth was above the average for EU countries. Indeed, sectors such as high value-added manufacturing or the country's position as a global financial centre have been strengthened. According to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the country has several strengths, such as first-class infrastructure, good openness to capital, people and trade flows, a skilled workforce, small public institutions, and low tax rates. (IMF 2008)

The subprime crisis obviously affected Switzerland, with a banking sector of around 10% of GDP. (MOMBELLI 2018) However, the consequences were not as severe as in other European countries. Notable measures include the rescue of UBS and the introduction of the interest rate floor. Indeed, the fall of the dollar and the crisis in the eurozone, two extremely important economic partners, were contributing to the appreciation of the Swiss franc. A strong franc increases the price of goods for export, putting many companies in a difficult situation. For this reason, the Swiss National Bank (*BNS*) introduced a floor rate of CHF 1.2 for 1 EUR between 2011 and 2015, thereby limiting the rise in the value of the Swiss currency.

6.2 Macro indicators

National accounting quantifies macroeconomic quantities such as national income, national product, national consumption, etc. This is a system of accounts that records all activities in an economy, presenting them in aggregate form and over a given period.

It should be noted that there is a marked difference between national accounting and public accounting. Public accounting quantifies the variables that relate to the budget of the various public sector entities. Public accounting is therefore responsible for carrying out all the processes related to the reporting, quantification, and verification of the records of economic activities developed by the public sector.

Here we focus on national accounting indicators such as GDP, GDPpc, unemployment, deficit, debt, and trade balance.

6.2.1.1 Gross Domestic Product (GDP)

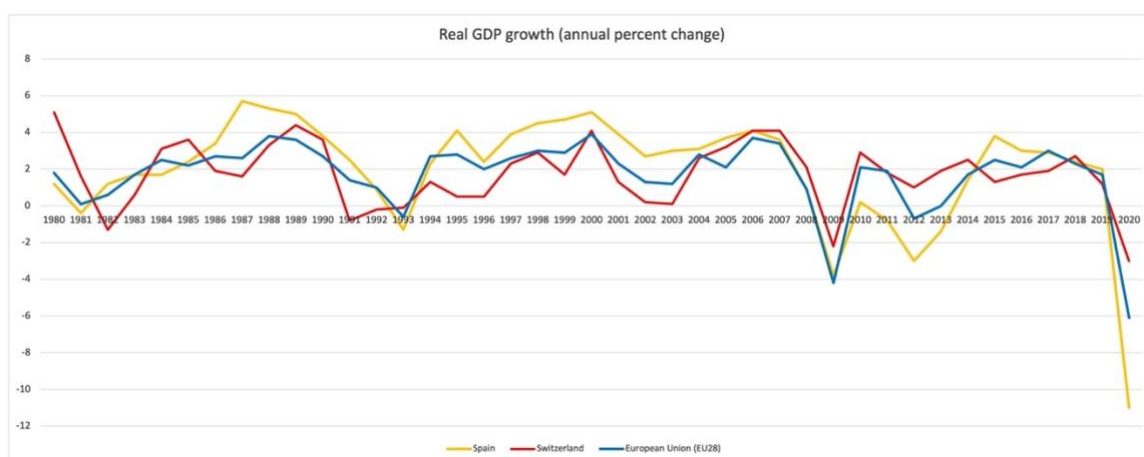
In the following figure we see the evolution of GDP in percent. For Spain, a strong growth can be observed until 1993, due to the oil crisis. Indeed, its use was relatively intensive in the Iberian country. This was followed by a period of expansion until 2009, when growth plunged to -3.8%. This was the first of two recessions that the country experienced during the 2008-2014 period. The second occurred in the third quarter of 2011, before showing new positive signs at the beginning of 2014 until the Coronavirus crisis. In 2019, its GDP amounted to just over 1,244,000 million, (EUROSTAT 2021b) with annual growth of 2%. (IMF 2021a)

Overall, in periods of expansion, Spain is above the European average, while in periods of recession it is below.

In Switzerland, there are fewer periods of recession than in Spain, with generally growth. Between 1980 and 2019, there were 3 recessions, one less than Spain, namely in 1982 (oil crisis, interest rate hike and appreciation of the Swiss franc), in 1991 (real estate bubble) and in 2008 (subprime crisis). The value of the Swiss country's GDP in 2019 was just over 653,000 million EUR, (EUROSTAT 2021b) with an annual growth rate of 1.2%. (IMF 2021a)

In 2020, the data for the three entities observed fall back into negative territory, with a result of -3% for Switzerland, -6.1 for the European Union (EU28) and -11% for Spain. (IMF 2021a)

Figure 13: Real GDP growth (annual percentage change)



Personal elaboration from IMF 2021a

6.2.1.2 Gross Domestic Product Per Capita (GDPpc)

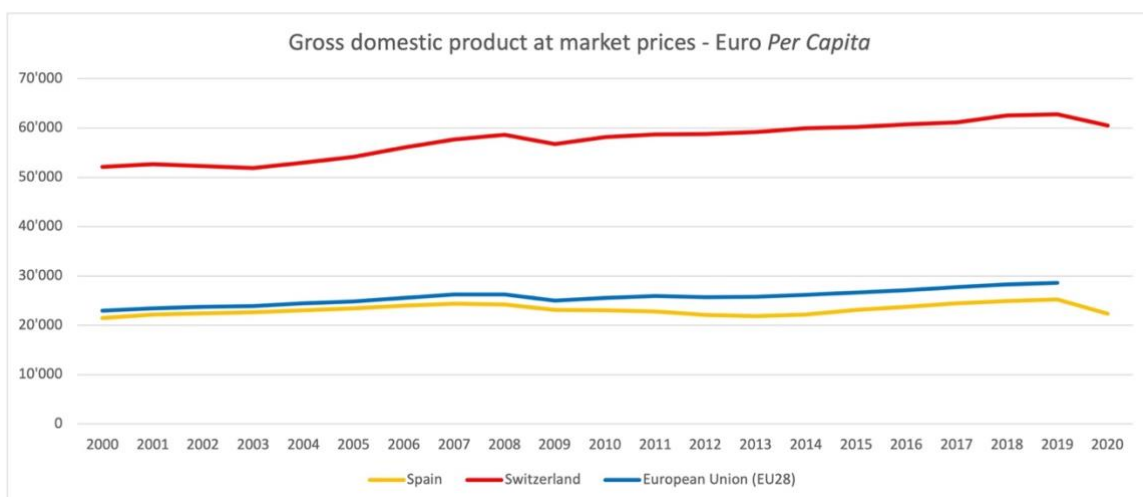
In this graph, we can see that Spain is below the European average and that its growth is relatively moderate, with a decline over the 2009-2014 period and from 2020 onwards. Its GDPpc in 2019 amounts to 25,200 EUR per person, (EUROSTAT 2021c) for its more than 47 million inhabitants. (INE 2021a)

In comparison, the growth of the Switzerland's indicator is higher, despite a slight jump in 2009. This may indicate a more stable and resilient productive base over the 2009-2014 period. In 2019, there were 62,780 EUR per person, (EUROSTAT 2021c) for its more than 8.6 million inhabitants. (OFS 2021a) It is worth noting that Switzerland ranks at the bottom of the podium of OECD countries in terms of GDPpc, behind Luxembourg and Ireland. (GUERINOT 2019)

As with GDP growth, there is a downward trend in 2020, bringing Spain's GDPpc to 22,350 EUR and Switzerland's to 60,500 EUR. These figures are the latest proposed by Eurostat, as of 30.05.21 and are still provisional. (EUROSTAT 2021c)

Although Spain's population is more than 5 times larger than Switzerland's, its GDP is less than the double of Switzerland's. Therefore, there is such a difference in GDPpc. This tells us that Swiss production is more valuable.

Figure 14: Gross domestic product at market prices - Euro *Per Capita*



Personal elaboration from EUROSTAT 2021b

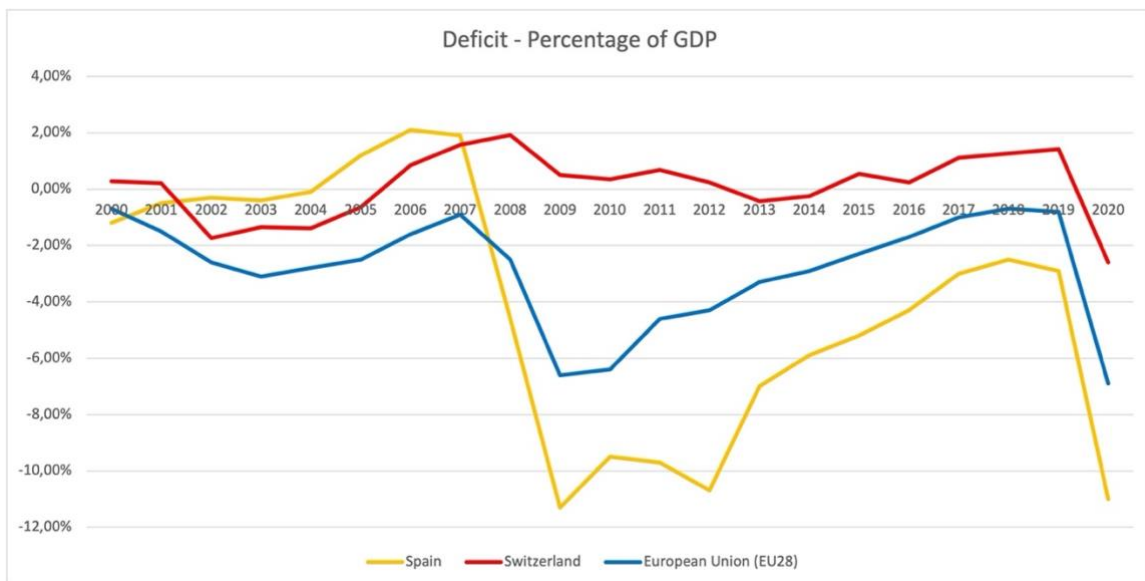
6.2.1.3 Deficit and debt

The subprime crisis caused a new rise in Spain's deficit, whereas the Kingdom's public administration had been in the green numbers since 2005. In fact, from 2008 onwards, the deficit was back: the State was no longer receiving enough money to meet its expenditures. Madrid had to turn to the financial markets to issue debt, which rose from a its lowest rate of 36% in 2007 to 101% in 2014. (EUROSTAT 2021a) (IMF 2021b)

In contrast, Switzerland is relatively more stable, with a variation in the deficit ranging from -2% to 2% since 2000. As for the debt, this indicator shows the opposite behaviour, namely a reduction from 59 points in 2004 to 42 points in 2019. This is due, among other things, to the debt brake (*frein à l'endettement*), aimed at achieving healthy public finances, and the mitigation of economic and growth fluctuations. (AFF 2020) (IMF 2021b)

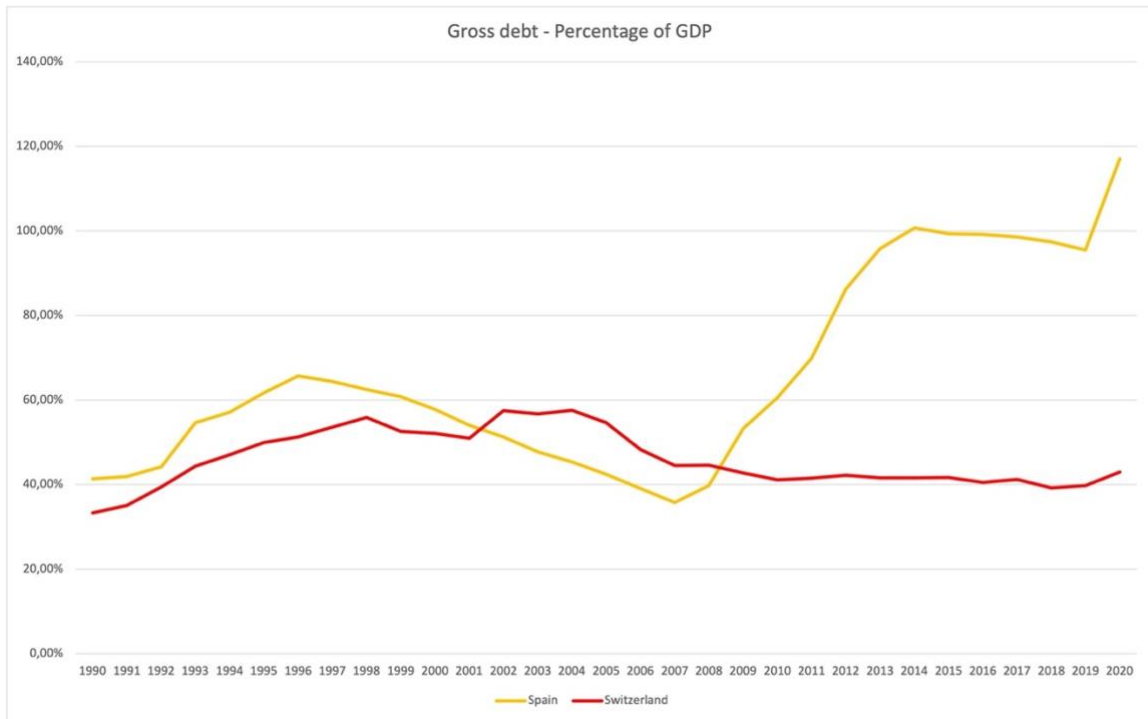
However, 2020 showed worse data for both countries: Switzerland felt to -2.6% while Spain reached -11% of deficit. In both countries, the debt has risen. At the end of 2020, it stood at 43% for Switzerland and 117% for Spain. (DFF 2021) (EUROSTAT 2021a) (IMF 2021b)

Figure 15: Deficit - Percentage of GDP



Personal elaboration from DFF 2021 and EUROSTAT 2021c

Figure 16: Gross debt - Percentage of GDP

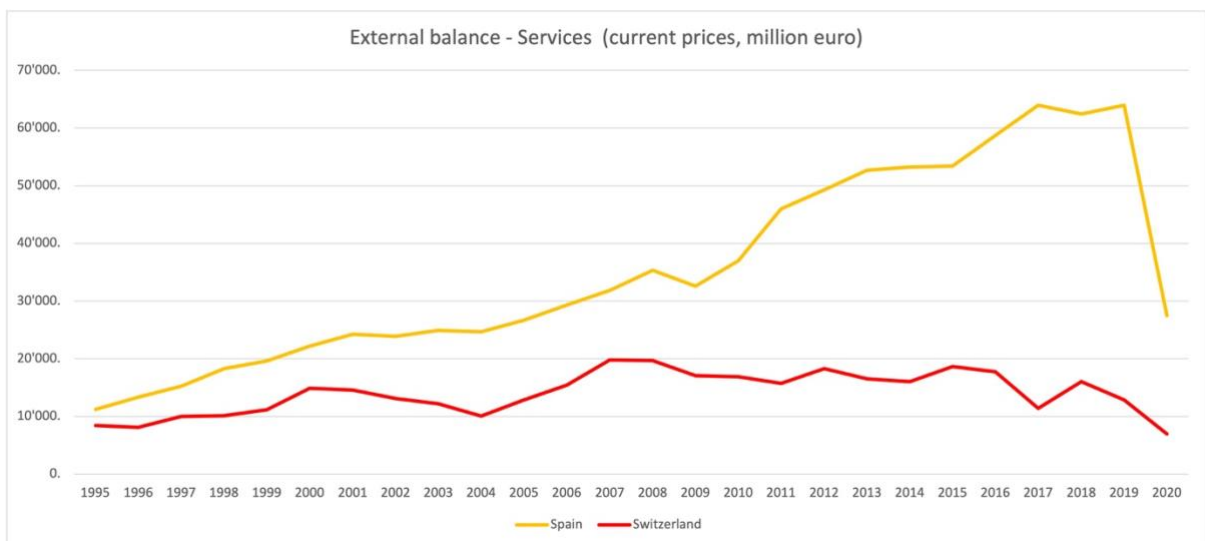


Personal elaboration from IMF 2021b

6.2.1.4 Trade balance

In the balance of services, it can be observed that over the whole period Switzerland was relatively stable, while the Spanish curve increased. However, 2020 showed a decline in the curve.

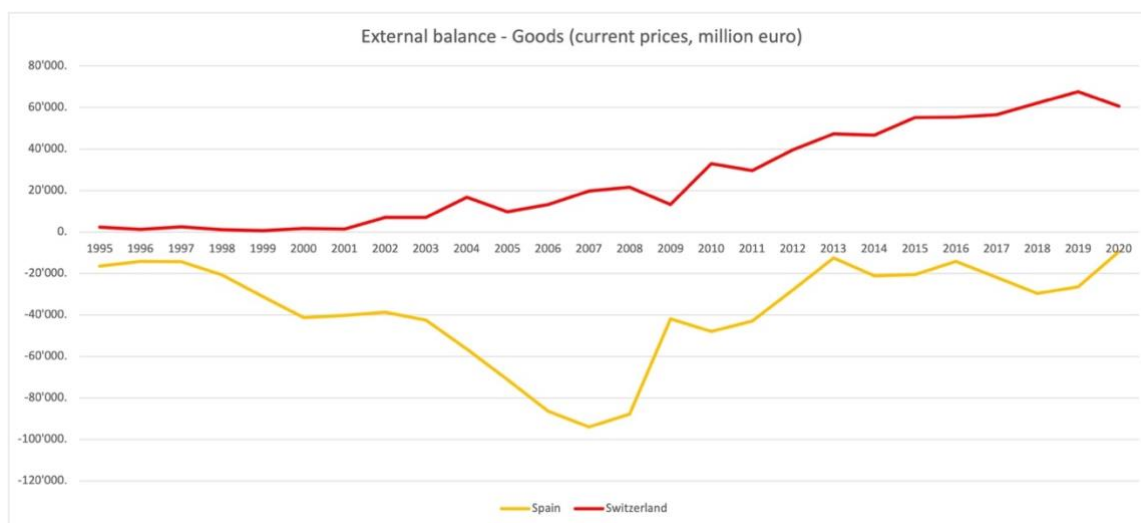
Figure 17: External balance - Services (current prices, million euro)



Personal elaboration from EUROSTAT 2021d

Concerning the balance of goods, Switzerland imports more products than it exports, while in Spain the opposite is true. In fact, the Iberian country exports a large proportion of products from the automobile industry, whether cars or vehicle parts, but also oil products, agricultural products, and medicines. On the other hand, the high level of fuel imports and goods with high added value means that the balance of goods is structurally negative. Switzerland exports mainly high value-added products from the pharmaceutical and watchmaking industries, as well as industrial machinery, tools and precision instruments, and electronics.

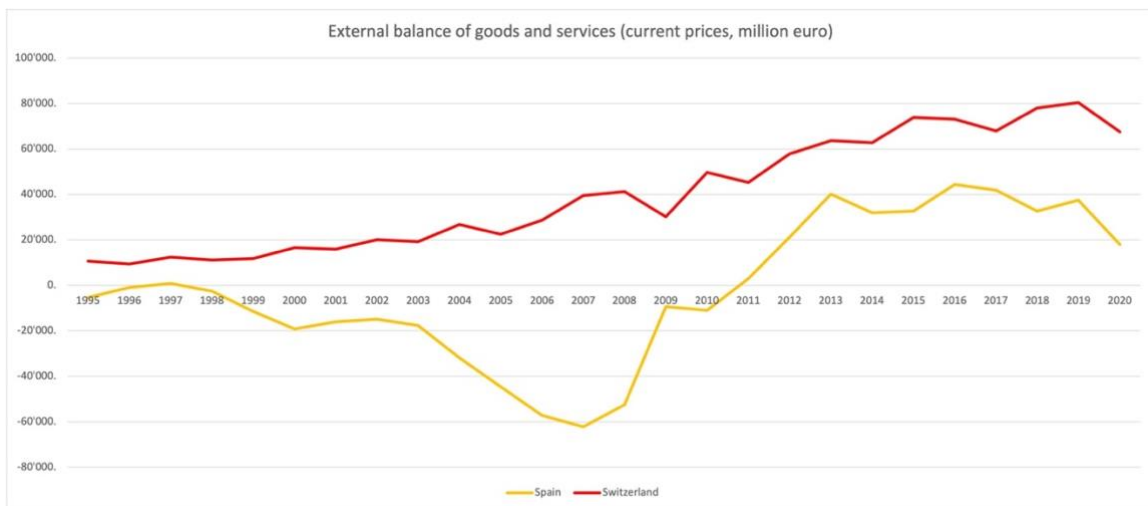
Figure 18: External balance - Goods (current prices, million euro)



Personal elaboration from EUROSTAT 2021e

Finally, the trade balance shows that for both countries, their values have been positive since 2011. In the case of Spain, the positive balance of services balances the deficit of the balance of goods. Indeed, Spain is the second country in the world in terms of tourists receiving, right after France. (GAUDIAUT 2020) According to the Bank of Spain (*BdE*), tourism is a strategic sector, crucial for the external balance. (BDE 2021) Although the balance of goods is in deficit, the approach of its curve to the equilibrium level during the positive phase of GDP growth (from 2013), would indicate that at least part of Spanish products has gained in competitiveness.

Figure 19: External balance of good and services (current prices, million euro)



Personal elaboration from EUROSTAT 2021f

Annex 2: Law - Structure of the State

7. Structure of the State

7.1 Spain

After the death of General Franco, in 1975, a period called Transition followed, during which the current Spanish Constitution (*CE*) or *Carta Magna* was prepared. It came into force in 1978 and with it, the transition to democracy.

7.1.1 Institutions

The political regime of the Kingdom is a democracy in the form of a parliamentary monarchy. This means that the royal institution exists in addition to the three usual powers (legislative, executive, and judicial), but within a highly regulated framework and in an essentially representative capacity. Therefore, the King is the Head of State, i.e., the highest representative of the State, and is the guarantor of the unity and permanence of the State (*art. 56.1 CE*). This title is hereditary and has been held since 2014 by His Majesty King Felipe VI. Among his most important tasks, described under article 62 of the Constitution, we can note that he ratifies the laws that apply to the whole territory, called Royal Decrees, convenes and dissolves *Las Cortes Generales*, otherwise known as the Parliament, appoints the President, after being elected by the Congress and is the Supreme Chief of the Armed Forces. (LOPEZ GUERRA 2019)

In contrast, the members of Parliament are elected by the people. There are 615 of them. This institution is composed of two chambers: the Congress of Deputies (lower house), representing the people, and the Senate (upper house), representing the territory. The first is made up of 350 people and the second of 265. (MELLON et al. 2018)

This bicameral system is said to be imperfect or asymmetrical, insofar as the Congress has exclusive powers that the Senate does not have. For example, granting confidence to the President of the Government is done by the Congress of Deputies (*art. 99 CE*). It can also revoke it through a motion of censure (*art. 113 CE*) and it has the last word in legislative procedures, with some exceptions (*art. 90 CE*). The only function of the Senate is to veto or introduce amendments to legislation sent by Congress. (LOPEZ GUERRA 2019)

However, the Senate does play an important role, exceptionally, in certain aspects. Specifically, a mention should be made of the measures that can be taken in application of article 155 of the Constitution (if an Autonomous Community fails to fulfil the obligations

imposed on it by the Constitution or other laws or acts in a way that is seriously prejudicial to the general interest of Spain) or regarding the title of the Crown (the King takes the oath before both Houses). Congress and the Senate also act together in a joint committee (e.g., in matters related to the European Union, national security or in relation to the Defender of the People (*Defensor del Pueblo*)).

The Senate therefore does not function as a territorial chamber, but as a "second reading" chamber.

As for the President, he is elected by the Congress of Deputies and then appointed by the King. It is from this that he can form his Government.

Elections for the *Cortes Generales*, and therefore for the renewal of the executive body, takes place once every 4 years. The members thus obtain legislative power, which they exercise in representation of the people. This organisation makes this political regime an indirect democracy.

7.1.2 Territorial organisation

In this democracy, the State derives its power from national sovereignty, i.e., from the Spanish people (*art. 1.2 CE*). It is based on the indissoluble unity of the Nation and recognises and guarantees the right to autonomy of the nationalities and regions that make it up (*art. 2 CE*). This is not a unitary democracy, i.e., in France, where Paris holds all the powers, since from the conception of the Spanish Constitution, articles 148 and 149 defined the competences of the Autonomous Communities, respectively of the State. (LOPEZ GUERRA 2019)

However, through political pacts between national and territorial agents, it is possible to exchange or give each other competencies. Moreover, the form of this democracy is said to be decentralised, since part of the power is given to the different territories. There are 17 of them and they are called Autonomous Communities. 15 are on the Iberian Peninsula, one in the Mediterranean Sea (Balearic Islands) and one in the Atlantic Ocean (Canary Islands). The cities of Ceuta and Melilla, city-territories in Moroccan territory, do not enjoy such a status, but rather special prerogatives, given by the State. In addition to these inhabited territories, Spain also has sovereignty over certain strongholds in northern Morocco.

The Autonomous Communities are named and recognised in the Constitution. They all have their own institutions, their own capital, are free to elect their representatives and exercise the legislative, executive, and administrative powers authorised by the *Carta*

Magna. The text governing their powers is called *Estatuto* or Statute and derives from Article 148 of the Spanish Constitution. (LOPEZ GUERRA 2019)

Within the Communities, there are Provinces, also with a capital. There are 50 of them in the whole territory, followed by the localities. (COTINO HUESO et al. 2019)

Ronald Watts, in his book "Comparing Federal Systems", states that Spain is a federal State in all but name. Indeed, the Spanish structure combines autonomous power with central power. The former allows its own constitution (*Estatuto*) and institutions, and the latter for common institutions with a double chamber (representation of citizens and territories) and a constitutional distribution of competences. (WATTS 1999)

Here is a political map of Spain where the Autonomous Communities are represented by different colours. The provinces are the demarcations within them.

Figure 20: Spain - Political map



MAPADEESPANA.ES 2020

Spain and Switzerland: observation of the management of the Covid-19 crisis and its economic impact

7.2 Switzerland

In the aftermath of the Sonderbund War, which pitted the Catholic Cantons against the Protestant Cantons in 1848, the Constitution was created, which forms the basis of the current order of the Swiss political system. This text marks a fundamental change in the organisation of the territory: the states cede part of their competences to create a central state endowed with them. This marks a vital change in the organisation of the territory: the states cede part of their powers to create a central state with these powers. Thus, the transition from the confederal system, which had been applied until then, to a true federation was made.

7.2.1 Institutions

The political system of the Swiss Confederation is a parliamentary democracy in the form of a federal state. It is not a decentralised system, but not a centralised one. Indeed, as the original sovereignty belongs to the Cantons, one cannot speak of decentralisation from a central state downwards. Unlike Spain, Switzerland does not have a permanent Head of State. In fact, this task, as well as that of presiding over the country, falls to the executive body, also called the Federal Council. It is composed of 7 members, the "7 wise men", who share power collectively. (ADMIN.CH 2021e) Thus, the decisions taken by this body are defended and assumed by each of its members, as the Government can only speak with one voice. This is called the principle of collegiality. These wise men and women are on an equal footing, and each is responsible for a department of the Federal Administration. The presidency of the Council is said to rotate, since a change takes place every year. However, this role is essentially representative, as it does not give more power to whoever holds the title. The election of the Government is a matter for Parliament but is not defined by law. The members are therefore elected by mutual agreement according to the "magic formula", i.e., by seeking a balance between the political parties.

Parliament, also known as the Federal Assembly, consists of two chambers: the National Council or lower house and the Council of States or upper house. It is the country's legislative body, and its members are elected by the people. These two chambers are of equal importance, unlike Spain. It is an absolute bicameralism, which aims to protect minorities. This is done on the one hand through the prerogatives of each of the chambers, the fact that they have equal weight in decision-making, and on the other hand, in the way they represent the whole country. Firstly, the National Council, with 200 members, is elected by the people and represents them. (LE PARLEMENT SUISSE 2020) Each Canton has several seats based on its population. It is therefore a question of proportional representation. The Council of States represents the Cantons. They share two seats per

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entity, except for the half-Cantons, which have only one seat. (LE PARLEMENT SUISSE 2021b) In this chamber, the equal weight of the Cantons ensures that minorities, whether linguistic or cultural, are represented and protected.

Below the federal level are the Cantons. All states are equal in terms of competences, and all have a constitution, a parliament, and a government. At the third level are the municipalities, which are competent according to the provisions of Cantonal law.

7.2.2 Territorial organisation

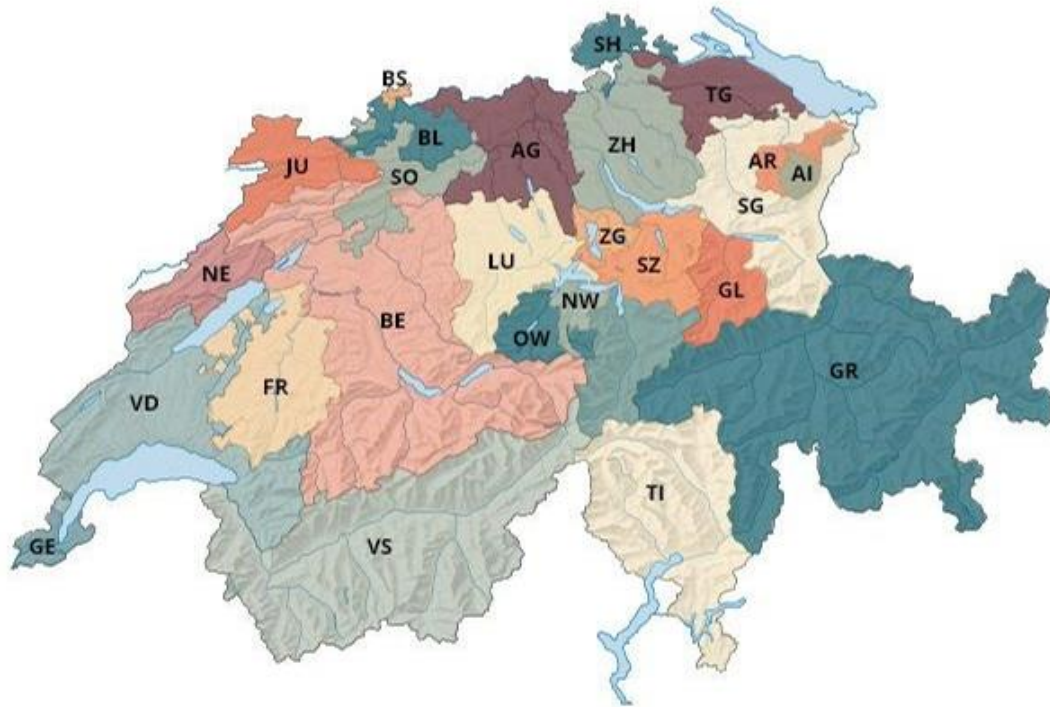
The country is in Central Europe, between Germany, France, Italy, Austria, and Liechtenstein.

The founding fathers of Switzerland, Uri, Schwyz and Unterwalden, the so-called primitive Cantons, were united by a desire to defend themselves from neighbouring territories. Over the course of several centuries, other territories joined this alliance, which can be called a confederation. Each state had its own currency, its own laws, and its own army. They were independent and had agreements with neighbouring Cantons. There was therefore no superior institution to govern the relations between these actors. It was in 1848 that a fundamental change took place, namely the creation of a federation. The desire to work together, while seeking to simplify the links between the states, led to the establishment of the system still in use today. However, the states retain their sovereignty, which is called Original Sovereignty while delegating part of it to the Confederation. Thus, the creation of the country as it is today starting from the bottom (people, Cantons), to the top (Confederation).

Today there are 26 Cantons, 6 of which are called "half Cantons". They all have their own constitution, and all have the same competences, i.e., all the competences that they have not ceded to the Confederation.

Here is the map of Switzerland, where each Canton is represented by a colour and designated by two letters.

Figure 21: Switzerland - Political map



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