Employability of Engineers-New challenges within a difficult economic landscape

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1. Introduction

Spain's high unemployment rate, with 26% of the active population currently out of work, prompted the General Council of Official Industrial Engineering Associations to take a long hard look at the situation of industrial engineers in the country, and their prospects for employment.

Existing data were fairly disperse; although some Industrial Engineering Associations carry out periodic analyses of the professional situation of their industrial engineers, no comprehensive study exists at a nationwide level.

The aim of this study was not only to determine whether or not the engineers in question were in active employment, but also to analyse what kind of job they had (identification of possible situations of underemployment), the likelihood of them remaining in their posts in the future and their actual tasks in the workplace, etc.

The aim of this diagnosis was to enable both individual Associations and the General Council itself to establish action plans with two clear objectives:

- To help unemployed engineers find active employment;
- To help ensure that those who currently have a job, remain in active employment.

2. The structure of the engineering profession in Spain

The engineering profession in Spain is governed by a Decree issued on 18 September 1935, which indicates the skills that must be acquired by an Industrial Engineer.

Subsequently, another Decree was issued by the Ministry of Trade and Industry on 9 April 1949, authorising the establishment of Industrial Engineering Associations. The number of Industrial Engineering Associations in Spain has since risen from 11 in 1949 to 20 in 2013.

The highest-level body representing the profession nationwide is the General Council of Official Industrial Engineering Associations, on which all regional Industrial Engineering Associations in Spain (of which there are currently 19) have a seat. The structure of the General Council of Official Industrial Engineering Associations is as follows:

- Chairman
- Deputy Chairman
- Second Deputy Chairman
- Secretary

- Assistant Secretary
- Treasurer
- Auditor

The posts are filled by democratic closed-list elections, held once every 4 years.

The regional Associations have a more diverse structure, although all have a Governing Board made up by peer-elected members. The Governing Board is made up by a Dean, Deputy-Dean, Secretary and Treasurer, as well as by various voting members, the number of which varies from Association to Association.

The plenary body of each Association is the General Council, whose meetings all members have the right to attend. The General Council meets once or twice a year and its mission is (among others) to approve the annual budget and accounts, approve or censure the Governing Board and elect its members, etc.

Moreover, each Association also has a fixed structure for performing various internal tasks: membership and fee management, project approvals, training management, dissemination of the engineering profession, organisation of recreational and cultural events, etc.

3. Procedure followed

The General Council of Official Industrial Engineering Associations was eager to gain more detailed information regarding the situation of industrial engineers in Spain. The high national unemployment rate, coupled with the widespread brain drain, low numbers of new start ups and the general deindustrialisation of the country prompted the Council to recognise the need to take action in order to foster the employability of its engineers.

To this end, a Commission was established, formed by 5 Deans from Galicia, Western Andalusia, Asturias, Santa Cruz de Tenerife and Gipuzkoa.

The work was initially divided into two phases:

1. An analysis of the employment situation of member engineers.
2. Diagnosis of the Associations' current offer in the field of employability.

Following this, the aim was to implement a working plan to respond to the conclusions of the initial diagnosis. At the time this present document was drafted, the working plan was being developed.

1. What are the Associations currently doing to foster employability?

The Industrial Engineering Associations offer a wide range of services to their members; some of these services, such as project approval for example, are obligatory, while others, such as lists of job openings and recreational activities, etc. are voluntary.

Given the differences which exist between different Associations regarding membership size, staff structure and member needs, the Commission decided to analyse all the services provided by each Association to its members.

To this end, a questionnaire was compiled and sent to all Associations. The questionnaire was divided into two sections: employment and entrepreneurship.

As regards employment, the questionnaire aimed to elicit information regarding:

- The existence of a commission in the Association dealing specifically with the issue of employment.
- The existence of job search and member employability monitoring systems, and lists of job openings.
- The provision of training courses on job search systems, use of new technologies for finding employment, etc.
- Systems aimed at keeping track of members' professional situation.

As regards entrepreneurship, the questionnaire aimed to elicit information regarding:

- The entrepreneurship support structure in the Associations.
- Actions designed to foster entrepreneurship.
- Provision of specific training for entrepreneurs.

The questionnaire was sent to all 19 Associations, with responses being received from 12. The most striking conclusions drawn from the results are as follows:

- None of the Associations have a commission or similar body dedicated specifically to the issue of member employment.
- All Associations have a list of job openings, although major differences were observed in the way in which these lists were managed.
- 100% of those Associations which completed the questionnaire published job offers on their website, although 10% do not publish job offers from other Associations.
- 95% of Associations provide no financial aid to members to help them find a job.
- 90% of Associations do not use the social media (LinkedIn, Facebook, etc.) to inform their members of job opportunities or openings, etc.
- 70% of Associations have signed no agreements with business associations, human resources firms, etc. to help foster the employability of their members.
- 50% of Associations have provided some kind of training aimed at fostering the employability of their members.

As regards entrepreneurship, the conclusions are extremely negative. Actions in this field were few and far between, with the majority of Associations stating that they had engaged in no type of action in this sense.

2. Study of engineer employability in Spain. A diagnosis.

Following the survey of the services provided by the Associations, the next step was to analyse the professional situation of members. However, we did not only seek to determine whether or not they had a job, but rather also to analyse the likelihood of them remaining employed in the future, their degree of job satisfaction and to what extent they were interested in the idea of setting up their own company. Moreover, this survey also enabled us to gain information about the specific nature of their jobs and how long they had been in their current post, etc.

To carry out this survey, we worked in collaboration with a member of the Gipuzkoa Association, Aitor Dias Lucas, who developed an on-line questionnaire which was subsequently sent via email through the various Associations to all Spanish members (33,809 in total) in June 2013. Responses were received from 15% of all those contacted (5,083). We consider this response to be satisfactory, although it should also be noted that the response rate varied considerably from Association to Association. Consequently, in some cases, the reliability of the data at Association level may not be very high (see table 1).

ASSOCIATION	Nº members	% of total	Responses	% of Total	% Participation	SAMPLING ERROR
Álava	414	1,2%	49	1,0%	11,8%	13,2%
Albacete	118	0,3%	32	0,6%	27,1%	14,9%
Western Andalusia	3.360	9,9%	470	9,2%	14,0%	4,2%
Eastern Andalusia	1.060	3,1%	329	6,5%	31,0%	4,5%
Aragón and La Rioja	2.092	6,2%	367	7,2%	17,5%	4,6%
Asturias and León	2.397	7,1%	328	6,5%	13,7%	5,0%
The Balearic Islands	554	1,6%	101	2,0%	18,2%	8,8%
Bizkaia	3.116	9,2%	292	5,7%	9,4%	5,5%
Burgos and Palencia	364	1,1%	124	2,4%	34,1%	7,2%
Eastern Canary Islands	1.113	3,3%	113	2,2%	10,2%	8,7%
Cantabria	575	1,7%	95	1,9%	16,5%	9,2%
Catalonia	-	0,0%	-	0,0%	-	-
Valencia	3.831	11,3%	361	7,1%	9,4%	4,9%
Extremadura	405	1,2%	85	1,7%	21,0%	9,5%
Galicia	1.515	4,5%	280	5,5%	18,5%	5,3%
Gipuzkoa	1328	3,9%	264	5,2%	19,9%	5,4%
Madrid	9.688	28,7%	1.496	29,4%	15,4%	2,3%
Navarre	691	2,0%	126	2,5%	18,2%	7,9%
Murcia	774	2,3%	59	1,2%	7,6%	12,3%
S.C. de Tenerife	414	1,2%	112	2,2%	27,1%	7,9%
TOTAL	**33.809**	**100,0%**	**5.083**	**100,0%**	**15,0%**	**1,3%**

Table 1 ©AD Consultores

The most relevant conclusions drawn by the study are as follows:

- The largest percentage of engineers in active employment work in Technical, Management or Organisation departments, although the distribution of the percentages varies somewhat depending on their years of experience (see table 2).

Current job	0 – less than 1 year	1- from 1 to 5 years	2- from 6 to 10 years	3- from 11 to 15 years	4- from 16 to 20 years	5- from 20 to 25 years	6- more than 25 years	General total
Technical department	34,9%	42,2%	41,6%	33,3%	19,5%	23,9%	19,6%	31,4%
Management	7,9%	5,2%	12,2%	20,6%	29,5%	30,9%	40,3%	22,1%
Organisation	15,9%	17,3%	17,9%	18,4%	16,9%	15,7%	13,2%	16,8%
Production	7,9%	10,8%	8,6%	8,0%	9,8%	6,5%	7,2%	8,4%
Quality-Prevention-Environment	3,2%	6,0%	6,4%	6,7%	6,8%	6,2%	5,3%	6,2%
Research	15,9%	11,2%	4,5%	3,5%	5,4%	6,0%	3,7%	5,3%
Sales	6,3%	3,7%	4,7%	5,3%	6,2%	5,2%	3,7%	4,8%
Teaching	3,2%	1,9%	2,4%	1,7%	3,8%	3,2%	4,0%	2,7%
Acquisitions	0,0%	1,5%	1,2%	2,1%	1,6%	1,5%	1,2%	1,5%
Others	4,8%	0,2%	0,5%	0,5%	0,4%	0,7%	1,7%	0,7%
General total	**100,0%**	**100,0%**	**100,0%**	**100,0%**	**100,0%**	**100,0%**	**100,0%**	**100,0%**

Table 2 ©AD Consultores

- The global unemployment rate for industrial engineers, among those surveyed, was 15.5% (see table 3).

- This rate (15.5%) does not affect all Associations to the same degree. For example, the rate among members of the Gipuzkoa Association is 6.1%, as opposed to 23.9% in the Eastern Canary Islands and 23.5% in Extremadura (see table 3).

ASSOCIATION	Unemployment rate
Álava	18,4%
Albacete	21,9%
Western Andalusia	17,2%
Eastern Andalusia	17,9%
Aragón and La Rioja	14,4%
Asturias and León	22,6%
The Balearic Islands	8,9%
Bizkaia	9,6%
Burgos and Palencia	10,5%
Eastern Canary Islands	23,9%
Cantabria	9,5%
Valencia	21,3%
Extremadura	23,5%
Galicia	20,7%
Gipuzkoa	6,1%
Madrid	13,4%
Navarre	17,5%
Murcia	20,3%
S.C. de Tenerife	11,6%
GENERAL TOTAL	**15,5%**

Table 3 ©AD Consultores

- Engineers with between 1 and 10 years of experience were the group with the highest unemployment level (27.1% / 1-5 years), as opposed to just 10% among those with more than 10 years of experience (see table 4).

- 9.1% of all those surveyed claimed to be in a precarious situation of employment, in a job that did not correspond to their qualifications. This percentage was higher among those with 10 or fewer years' experience (16.3%) and lower among those with over 25 years' experience (6.5%) (see table 4).

YEARS OF EXPERIENCE	Unemployed	Precarious. My job does not correspond with my qualifications	I would only change if the new job was more in keeping with my expectations	Satisfied	General total
0 – Less than 1 year	59,2%	12,1%	15,3%	13,4%	100,0%
1- from 1 to 5 years	27,1%	16,3%	34,5%	22,1%	100,0%
2- from 6 to 10 years	16,6%	9,0%	42,3%	32,0%	100,0%
3- from 11 to 15 years	10,1%	8,2%	40,5%	41,2%	100,0%
4- from 16 to 20 years	8,9%	6,0%	35,0%	50,0%	100,0%
5- from 20 to 25 years	11,1%	8,2%	29,9%	50,9%	100,0%
6- more than 25 years	10,8%	6,5%	15,7%	67,0%	100,0%
General total	15,5%	9,1%	33,7%	41,7%	100,0%

Table 4 ©AD Consultores

- The unemployment rate was higher amongst women (21.4%) than amongst men (14.4%) (see table 5).

- As regards precariousness, the percentage was again higher amongst women (11.0%) than amongst men (8.7%) (see table 5).

SEX AND PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE	Unemployed	Precarious. My job does not correspond with my qualifications	I would only change if the new job was more in keeping with my expectations	Satisfied	General total
Male	14,4%	8,7%	33,4%	43,5%	100,0%
0 – Less than 1 year	57,7%	11,4%	17,1%	13,8%	100,0%
1- from 1 to 5 years	25,1%	15,9%	35,3%	23,7%	100,0%
2- from 6 to 10 years	15,8%	8,0%	44,2%	32,0%	100,0%
3- from 11 to 15 years	9,1%	9,0%	39,2%	42,6%	100,0%
4- from 16 to 20 years	9,0%	6,2%	35,3%	49,5%	100,0%
5- from 20 to 25 years	11,1%	8,3%	29,7%	50,9%	100,0%
6- more than 25 years	10,8%	6,2%	15,8%	67,2%	100,0%
Female	21,4%	11,0%	35,6%	31,9%	100,0%
0 – Less than 1 year	64,7%	14,7%	8,8%	11,8%	100,0%
1- from 1 to 5 years	33,1%	17,8%	31,9%	17,2%	100,0%
2- from 6 to 10 years	20,1%	13,1%	34,8%	32,0%	100,0%
3- from 11 to 15 years	14,1%	5,0%	45,6%	35,3%	100,0%
4- from 16 to 20 years	8,2%	4,9%	32,8%	54,1%	100,0%
5- from 20 to 25 years	10,7%	7,1%	32,1%	50,0%	100,0%
6- more than 25 years	11,1%	22,2%	11,1%	55,6%	100,0%
General total	15,5%	9,1%	33,7%	41,7%	100,0%

Table 5 ©AD Consultores

- As regards the risk of being made redundant, 27% of those surveyed claimed that the risk was HIGH or VERY HIGH (see table 6).

YEARS OF EXPERIENCE	0 - Very high	1 - High	2 – Low	3 – N/A	General total
0 – Less than 1 year	22,2%	23,8%	42,9%	11,1%	100,0%
1- from 1 to 5 years	10,3%	25,5%	52,7%	11,4%	100,0%
2- from 6 to 10 years	9,8%	22,4%	54,1%	13,7%	100,0%
3- from 11 to 15 years	6,1%	20,6%	57,5%	15,8%	100,0%
4- from 16 to 20 years	6,9%	17,5%	58,7%	16,9%	100,0%
5- from 20 to 25 years	4,1%	17,2%	56,2%	22,5%	100,0%
6- more than 25 years	5,0%	14,2%	45,9%	34,9%	100,0%
General total	**7,4%**	**19,8%**	**53,9%**	**18,8%**	**100,0%**

Table 6 ©AD Consultores

- The jobs ranked as being most at risk were generally technical department posts and those related to quality, prevention, teaching and research, as opposed to sales, acquisitions and managerial posts which were ranked as being much less at risk (see table 7).

JOB	0 - Very high	1 - High	2 – Low	3 – N/A	General total
Management	3,5%	15,9%	49,0%	31,6%	100,0%
Technical department	9,9%	22,6%	51,5%	16,0%	100,0%
Organisation	6,2%	17,3%	61,0%	15,5%	100,0%
Teaching	13,2%	15,8%	37,7%	33,3%	100,0%
Research	8,0%	24,1%	52,2%	15,6%	100,0%
Production	7,5%	18,4%	64,2%	9,8%	100,0%
Quality-Prevention-Environment	11,3%	23,4%	54,0%	11,3%	100,0%
Sales	4,9%	23,9%	61,5%	9,8%	100,0%
Acquisitions	4,8%	21,0%	64,5%	9,7%	100,0%
General total	**7,4%**	**19,8%**	**54,1%**	**18,6%**	**100,0%**

Table 7 ©AD Consultores

- The last jobs held by unemployed engineers were mainly technical department posts (34.54%) and jobs related to organisation (16.88%), management (11.73%) and production (6.7%), with 55.91% of all jobs being in the industrial and engineering industries (see table 8).

LAST POST HELD	% of those surveyed
Technical department	34,54%
Organisation	16,88%
Management	11,73%
Production	10,44%
Quality-Prevention-Environment	6,70%
Sales	5,41%
Research	5,41%
None	3,87%
Teaching	3,48%
Acquisitions	1,55%
General total	**100,00%**

Table 8 ©AD Consultores

- Of unemployed engineers, 48% had between 1 and 10 years' professional experience (see table 9).

Num. years' professional experience	% of those surveyed
0 – Less than 1 year	11,8%
1- from 1 to 5 years	22,7%
2- from 6 to 10 years	25,9%
3- from 11 to 15 years	15,4%
4- from 16 to 20 years	6,2%
5- from 20 to 25 years	6,4%
6- more than 25 years	11,6%
General total	**100%**

Table 9 ©AD Consultores

- 60.8% of unemployed engineers have been without work for 12 months or less, with those with between 11 and 15 years' experience being the most heavily affected group over the last 6 months (see tables 10 and 11).

TIME UNEMPLOYED (months)	% those surveyed
0 – Less than 6	32,8%
1 – between 6 and 12	28,0%
2 – between 12 and 24	24,7%
3 – Over 24	14,6%
General total	**100,0%**

Table 10 ©AD Consultores

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE	0 – Less than 6	1 – between 6 and 12	2 – between 12 and 24	3 – Over 24	General total
0 – Less than 1 year	25,8%	36,6%	24,7%	12,9%	100,0%
1- from 1 to 5 years	31,8%	27,9%	26,8%	13,4%	100,0%
2- from 6 to 10 years	35,3%	29,9%	23,5%	11,3%	100,0%
3- from 11 to 15 years	41,3%	28,9%	22,3%	7,4%	100,0%
4- from 16 to 20 years	38,8%	20,4%	28,6%	12,2%	100,0%
5- from 20 to 25 years	18,0%	18,0%	42,0%	22,0%	100,0%
6- more than 25 years	29,7%	23,1%	14,3%	33,0%	100,0%
General total	**32,8%**	**28,0%**	**24,7%**	**14,6%**	**100,00%**

Table 11 ©AD Consultores

One aspect that the Council wishes to foster, with the aim of improving the employability of our members, is entrepreneurship. Due to the training and, in many cases, the professional career of our engineers, our profession is particularly suited to the setting up of new companies and enterprises. The conclusions drawn by the study regarding the possibility of starting new business projects were as follows:

- Of those engineers with active employment, 75.7% claimed they would be willing to participate in the setting up of a new company. Among the unemployed, this percentage was 91% (see table 12).

Willingness	Employed	Unemployed
Yes, alone	12,7%	18,6%
Yes, with others	63,0%	72,5%
No	24,3%	8,9%
Total	**100,0%**	**100,0%**

Table 12

- If we compare the data for professional experience and professional situation, the results reveal that a similar percentage of employed engineers expressed a desire to set up a new company, either alone or with partners, regardless of their professional experience (see table 13). However, among the unemployed, these percentages vary, with willing ness to set up a company with partners being more prevalent among those with fewer years of professional experience (see table 14).

Willingness according to experience	Yes, alone	Yes, with others	No	General total
0 – Less than 1 year	14,1%	60,6%	25,4%	100,0%
1- from 1 to 5 years	12,9%	68,2%	18,9%	100,0%
2- from 6 to 10 years	13,4%	68,0%	18,6%	100,0%
3- from 11 to 15 years	13,6%	62,7%	23,6%	100,0%
4- from 16 to 20 years	13,5%	62,4%	24,1%	100,0%
5- from 20 to 25 years	13,1%	62,8%	24,1%	100,0%
6- more than 25 years	9,4%	53,6%	37,0%	100,0%
General total	**12,7%**	**63,0%**	**24,3%**	**100,0%**

Table 13 ©AD Consultores

Willingness according to experience	Yes, alone	Yes, with others	No	General total
0 – Less than 1 year	9,7%	79,6%	10,8%	100,0%
1- from 1 to 5 years	16,8%	77,1%	6,1%	100,0%
2- from 6 to 10 years	22,2%	68,0%	9,9%	100,0%
3- from 11 to 15 years	17,4%	71,9%	10,7%	100,0%
4- from 16 to 20 years	30,6%	61,2%	8,2%	100,0%
5- from 20 to 25 years	16,0%	76,0%	8,0%	100,0%
6- more than 25 years	19,8%	71,4%	8,8%	100,0%
General total	**18,6%**	**72,5%**	**8,9%**	**100,0%**

Table 14 ©AD Consultores

- In the case of employed engineers, those most willing to set up their own company worked in sales and management (see table 15), while those working in acquisitions and research were the least willing in this sense. Among unemployed engineers, those that had worked in acquisitions, management and sales were more inclined to set up a company, with those without prior experience or who had worked in Quality-Prevention-Environment being the least willing in this sense (see table 16).

Willingness according to post	Yes, alone	Yes, with others	No	General total
Sales	17,4%	67,1%	15,5%	100,0%
Management	14,8%	64,3%	20,9%	100,0%
Technical department	13,3%	63,4%	23,3%	100,0%
Organisation	13,9%	61,6%	24,5%	100,0%
Teaching	13,8%	59,5%	26,7%	100,0%
Quality-Prevention-Environment	9,7%	61,8%	28,6%	100,0%
Production	8,6%	62,8%	28,6%	100,0%
Acquisitions	7,8%	68,8%	23,4%	100,0%
Research	6,2%	70,4%	23,5%	100,0%
Others	3,1%	59,4%	37,5%	100,0%
General total	**12,7%**	**63,0%**	**24,3%**	**100,0%**

Table 15 ©AD Consultores

Willingness according to post	Yes, alone	Yes, with others	No	General total
Quality-Prevention-Environment	11,5%	73,1%	15,4%	100,0%
Sales	11,9%	85,7%	2,4%	100,0%
Acquisitions	8,3%	91,7%	0,0%	100,0%
Teaching	18,5%	70,4%	11,1%	100,0%
Management	35,2%	63,7%	1,1%	100,0%
Research	12,2%	80,5%	7,3%	100,0%
None	13,3%	63,3%	23,3%	100,0%
Technical department	17,9%	69,4%	12,7%	100,0%
Organisation	19,1%	73,3%	7,6%	100,0%
Others	9,1%	81,8%	9,1%	100,0%
Production	17,3%	80,2%	2,5%	100,0%
General total	**18,6%**	**72,5%**	**8,9%**	**100,0%**

Table 16 ©AD Consultores

- The resources perceived as most useful in finding a job were personal contacts (98%), networking (91%) and the professional social media (LinkedIn 85%) (see table 17).

	BEST RESOURCES FOR FINDING A JOB			
RESOURCES	**1 - useful**	**2- very useful**	**0 – not useful**	**TOTAL**
Newspaper advertisements	61%	14%	26%	100%
Website advertisements	54%	32%	14%	100%
LinkedIn	59%	25%	15%	100%
Other social media	52%	8%	40%	100%
Engineering Association list of job openings	56%	34%	11%	100%
Head hunters	54%	26%	19%	100%
Personal contacts	21%	77%	2%	100%
Networking / Sharing professional contacts	47%	44%	9%	100%

Table 17 ©AD Consultores

4. Definition of an action plan

Having carried out a diagnosis of the situation based on the information provided regarding the services offered by Associations in the field of employability, and the data gathered regarding the professional situation of members, the next phase was initiated. This phase consisted of designing and implementing an action plan with the aim of defining and setting in motion General Council and/or Association-led actions aimed at improving the employability of engineers in Spain. At the time this present document was drafted, the action plan was being defined.

Upon reflection, the members of the Commission defined the aim of the project, along with a series of general objectives.

The aim of the project is “To improve the quality of employment among engineers through better insertion and/or reinsertion into the job market, and to increase the levels of employability and entrepreneurship/self-employment in the profession."

Once the project’s principal aim had been defined, the Commission established a series of more specific objectives. These objectives were:

- To improve the quality of professional training: closer links with what employers actually want.
- To strengthen the link between the training on offer and professional demand.
- To integrate entrepreneurial project support polities and develop specific skills designed to foster business training among engineers.
- To improve the employment conditions of young engineers.
- To improve the employability of senior engineers who are currently unemployed.

In order to meet these specific objectives, a set of strategic areas of action were established. These strategic areas of action were:

1. To improve the employability of young engineers.
2. To foster entrepreneurship among engineers.
3. To help unemployed senior engineers re-enter the job market.
4. To encourage and support the return of members to Spain.
5. To support members in the process of professional internationalisation.
6. To maintain employment rates among members.

Specific objectives were then established for each strategic area of action. These specific objectives were:

1. **To improve the employability of young engineers.**
   Objective 1.1: to train new engineers in active job search techniques.
   Objective 1.2: to facilitate the entry of young engineers into the job market.
   Objective 1.3: to train our engineers in accordance with real market needs.
2. **To foster entrepreneurship/self-employment among engineers.**
   Objective 2.1: to foster entrepreneurship among engineers.
   Objective 2.2: to foster entrepreneurial skills.

Objective 2.3: to train engineers to set up and grow their own companies.
Objective 2.3: to foster exchanges between members with the aim of creating new business projects.

3. **To help unemployed senior engineers re-enter the job market.**
   Objective 3.1: to increase the employability of unemployed senior engineers.
   Objective 3.2: to foster self-employment as a professional option.
4. **To encourage members to return to Spain.**
   Objective 4.1: to facilitate the return of engineers currently working abroad.
5. **To support members in the process professional internationalisation.**
   Objective 5.1: to establish an international network of Spanish engineers.
   Objective 5.2: to train our members so as to allow them to gain experience abroad.
   Objective 5.3: to improve the language skills of our members.
6. **To maintain employment rates among members.**
   Objective 6.1: to keep abreast of members' professional situation.

At the time this present document was drafted, we were in the process of reaching a consensus regarding the general aims, strategic areas of action and specific objectives.

The Commission aims to have agreed upon these issues by the end of the year, and to have defined the corresponding actions, those who will be responsible for their implementation and the resources required to include them in the Associations' and General Council's management plans.