Youth Employment & The AI Revolution:

Comparative Study between the Czech Republic and Spain (2026)

Section 1: Front Matter

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Socio-economic analysis of the labour market for young people in the era of Artificial Intelligence

Executive Summary

In the context of the Artificial Intelligence (AI) revolution, the youth labor market reveals contrasting realities in Spain and the Czech Republic. According to Eurostat data from January 2026, Spain records a youth unemployment rate of 23.5%—double the European average—while the Czech Republic maintains a historically low rate of 10%, driven by a structural labor shortage. This disparity is not incidental; it reflects divergent socioeconomic models that AI is accelerating, reshaping entry-level opportunities for individuals aged 18–24. This report analyzes these dynamics, proposes practical solutions, and highlights the transformative role of European mobility.

Key Finding 1: Educational models as a structural determinant.
Spain faces a saturation of university graduates (49% of young people aged 25-34 hold higher education degrees, per OECD/Eurostat 2021-2025 trends), leading to overqualification in humanities and a mismatch with demand for technical profiles. The Czech Republic leads Europe with 69.1% of upper secondary students enrolled in VET programs (third highest in EU-27, 2021 data), where dual VET (school + firm apprenticeships) accounts for ~9-13% participation. As a result, Czech VET graduates achieve high employability (~90% employment rate for recent IVET grads aged 20-34), while in Spain, 42% of youth contracts remain temporary, perpetuating job insecurity.

Key Finding 2: AI as a selective disruptor of junior positions.
Automation is eliminating 27% of entry-level job offers in vulnerable sectors such as administration, data entry, and customer service, according to the World Economic Forum (2026). Spain, with its labor market heavily concentrated in low-skill service industries (tourism, call centers), loses approximately 150,000 jobs annually. In contrast, the Czech Republic's manufacturing base provides resilience through manual professions that remain difficult to automate (mechatronics, industrial maintenance). Nevertheless, AI is also creating new niches—such as data annotation, prompt engineering, and ethical AI—which can be accessed through 3–6 month upskilling programs.

Key Finding 3: Wage arbitration through remote work.
Digital convergence enables young Spaniards to work remotely for Czech companies, gaining 30–40% greater purchasing power. A starting Czech salary of €850 net equals roughly €1,200 in real terms in Barcelona, adjusted for purchasing power parity (PPP), with Prague being 17% cheaper. For instance, a Czech junior programmer earning €2,450 gross generates around €400 in additional monthly disposable income when accounting for Spanish living costs. Digital nomad visas further facilitate this process, although language and tax barriers persist.

Methodology

This report employs a comparative, mixed-methods approach that integrates quantitative labour market indicators with qualitative insights from youth experiences in Spain and Czechia. The objective is to analyse how structural differences and the AI revolution are reshaping entry-level opportunities for individuals aged 18–24 in both countries.

Quantitative data were primarily sourced from Eurostat (labour force surveys, youth unemployment rates, NEET indicators, cost-of-living indices), the OECD (Employment Outlook, AI automation risk assessments), and national statistical offices (INE for Spain, Czech Statistical Office for Czechia). All macroeconomic and labour market figures pertain to the 2023–2026 period, prioritising the most recent 2025 and early 2026 data to ensure temporal comparability. Nominal values were adjusted using purchasing power parity (PPP) where necessary to facilitate cross-country comparisons of starting salaries and living standards.

The quantitative analysis unfolds in three stages. First, core youth labour market metrics—unemployment, sectoral employment distribution, contract types, and overqualification rates—are benchmarked to delineate baseline structural disparities. Second, AI exposure and automation risks are evaluated by aligning sectoral youth employment profiles with established international AI risk indices for routine cognitive and manual tasks. Third, salary data are PPP-adjusted and contextualised against cost-of-living indices to quantify real entry-level purchasing power and the feasibility of early financial independence.

Qualitatively, the report synthesises evidence from peer-reviewed studies on educational pathways (vocational versus academic), youth transitions to adulthood, and AI-driven workplace transformations. These are augmented by firsthand observations from Erasmus+ internships, illuminating phenomena such as "cultural work shock," expectations of job stability, and perceptions of AI as either threat or opportunity.

The report's structure mirrors this methodological framework. Section 2 deploys macro-level indicators to characterise the divergent labour market models of Spain and Czechia. Section 3 extends the comparison via PPP-adjusted salary analysis, education-employment alignment, and social metrics including the age of leaving the parental home. Section 4 merges AI risk models with national sectoral data to construct a vulnerability index and highlight emergent opportunities, such as cross-border remote work. Section 5 incorporates

the interns' perspectives to bridge aggregate trends with individual career trajectories, underscoring Erasmus+ mobility's role in enhancing skills, adaptability, and employability amid AI-driven disruption.

Throughout, the analysis maintains a professional, analytical tone that is forward-looking: the empirical foundation used to diagnose challenges also informs actionable, AI-enabled solutions in upskilling, vocational reform, and digital employment pathways.

Section 2: The Macroeconomic Landscape

Spain and Czechia represent polar opposites in European youth labor markets in 2026. While Spain grapples with structural youth unemployment above 23%, Czechia maintains record-low rates near 10% amid persistent labor shortages. This section deepens the previous analysis by examining not only headline indicators but also hidden dynamics in regional patterns, sectoral structures, and demographic pressures that shape the opportunities available to young people.

Spain: Persistent High Youth Unemployment in a Fragile Recovery

Spain's youth unemployment rate of around 23.5% in early 2026 is more than double the EU average of roughly 11%, and although the trend has improved since 2023, the country still concentrates one of the largest pools of unemployed young people in Europe. The combination of cyclical factors (COVID-19 aftermath, inflation, monetary tightening) and long-standing structural weaknesses (labor market duality, low productivity, specialization in low-value services) explains why recovery has not translated into stable youth jobs. For many recent graduates and school leavers, the first contact with the labor market continues to be short-term, low-paid, and weakly protected.

The risk is not only statistical. Prolonged unemployment during the transition from education to work damages lifetime earnings, delays family formation, and weakens social trust. Young Spaniards who spend several years moving between internships, scholarships, and temporary contracts accumulate fragmented experience that employers often undervalue. This "scarring" effect is especially visible in regions with chronically high unemployment, where entire cohorts internalize the idea that emigration or precarious service work are the only realistic options.

Seasonal Labor Dependency and Territorial Imbalances

The strong dependence on seasonal labor magnifies these problems. Tourism-related activities—hotels, restaurants, leisure, transport linked to visitors—and agriculture set the rhythm of youth hiring in many coastal and rural provinces. During peak season, firms urgently need flexible, low-skill labor and young people accept almost any conditions in order to enter or remain in the labor market. When the season ends, contracts are simply not renewed, plunging thousands of young workers back into unemployment or inactivity.

This pattern generates pronounced territorial imbalances. Regions such as Andalusia, the Canary Islands, or the Balearic Islands can display relatively high employment in summer but return to very high unemployment in winter. In contrast, more diversified economies, such as Madrid or the Basque Country, cushion seasonal effects thanks to a stronger presence of industry, business services, and technology. The result is a fragmented youth labor map in which a young graduate's chances depend heavily on birthplace or willingness to migrate internally.

Moreover, seasonal contracts frequently offer limited access to training and career progression. Young workers repeatedly perform similar low-skill tasks—serving tables, basic reception work, field harvests—which rarely translate into qualifications recognized in other sectors. From a macroeconomic perspective, this represents an inefficient use of human capital: the state and families invest in education, but the labor market often channels that investment into activities that do not require advanced skills.

Education–Market Mismatch and Labor Market Duality

On the education side, Spain shows a persistent mismatch between the output of the education system and the structure of labor demand. Universities produce a large volume of graduates in humanities, social sciences, and general business studies, while demand grows faster in STEM fields, digital occupations, and technical intermediate profiles. At the same time, vocational education and training (VET) is still perceived as a second-class option by many families, despite recent reforms and the expansion of dual VET.

This mismatch is reinforced by labor market duality. Insiders—workers with indefinite contracts and strong protection—enjoy stability, collectively bargained wage increases, and internal promotion opportunities. Outsiders—disproportionately young people—circulate between temporary contracts, internships, and unemployment, with limited access to firm-specific training. Even when reforms reduce the formal proportion of temporary contracts, companies can respond by using part-time, project-based arrangements or outsourcing, preserving flexibility at the expense of youth stability.

An important consequence is the high rate of overqualification: many young graduates accept jobs far below their educational level simply to avoid unemployment. Over time, this underutilization of skills depresses productivity growth and discourages investment in demanding academic paths, since the expected labor market reward is uncertain. For the macroeconomy, this combination of high educational attainment and weak absorption of skills translates into a paradox: Spain is simultaneously “over-educated” and “under-skilled.”

Social and Demographic Implications

High youth unemployment and precarious entry jobs have deep social implications. One is the delay in key life transitions, such as forming a household or having children. With unstable incomes and rising housing costs, many young Spaniards remain in the parental home well into their late twenties or early thirties. This contributes to the country’s very low fertility rate and accelerates population ageing, which will in turn place more pressure on the welfare system.

Another implication is the intensification of emigration among qualified youth. Countries in northern and central Europe often attract Spanish graduates in health, engineering, and IT

with offers of stable contracts and clearer career paths. While emigration can generate remittances and additional skills, persistent outward flows represent a drain of human capital that Spain has financed but cannot fully retain. Over the medium term, this brain drain risks undermining the country's capacity to move towards higher-value sectors that could eventually solve the unemployment problem.

Czechia: Tight Labor Market and Structural Labor Shortages

In clear contrast, Czechia enters 2026 with one of the lowest unemployment rates in the EU and a youth unemployment rate around 10%. For young people, the main challenge is not finding any job, but rather matching their skills and expectations with the wide range of vacancies in manufacturing, logistics, and increasingly in ICT and business services. In macroeconomic terms, the problem is not insufficient labor demand but an insufficient supply of workers, both in quantitative and qualitative terms.

This situation reflects a long-term trajectory in which Czechia has consolidated a competitive industrial base, successfully integrated into European value chains, and maintained relatively conservative fiscal and monetary policies. The country's growth model has relied on export-oriented manufacturing supported by foreign direct investment and a skilled, relatively low-cost workforce. For youth, this has meant abundant opportunities to enter firms at an early stage and progress through internal training.

Industrial Base, Regional Patterns, and Productivity

Manufacturing plays a central role in the Czech economy, accounting for roughly a quarter of GDP and an even larger share of exports. Automotive, machinery, and electrical equipment are especially important, with large assembly plants and supplier networks distributed across regions such as Central Bohemia, South Moravia, and Moravia-Silesia. These clusters create dense labor markets where firms compete for technicians, engineers, and skilled production workers.

From a macroeconomic perspective, this industrial specialization brings several advantages. First, productivity levels in manufacturing are usually higher than in low-value services, allowing for better wages even in entry-level positions. Second, the presence of large international firms encourages the diffusion of managerial practices, quality standards, and technological upgrading. Third, the demand for medium-skill technical profiles creates a clear channel for vocational graduates to transition smoothly from school to work.

However, this model also generates vulnerabilities. A high dependence on external demand, especially from Germany and other EU partners, exposes Czechia to trade shocks and global downturns. Furthermore, automation and the gradual shift towards electric vehicles could alter labor demand within the automotive sector, reducing the number of routine jobs

while increasing the need for advanced technical and digital skills. For now, though, the dominant feature of the market is continued high demand for young workers.

Demographic Pressures and the War for Talent

Demography strongly shapes Czech labor market dynamics. Low fertility rates and increasing life expectancy are reducing the inflow of young workers while enlarging the cohort of retirees. As older workers leave the labor force, vacancies proliferate in both high-skill and low-skill occupations. This gives young people higher bargaining power than their Spanish counterparts: they can often choose between multiple offers, negotiate better conditions, or move to different regions with relative ease.

To mitigate shortages, firms and policymakers use several strategies. One is the promotion of apprenticeship schemes and dual education, which link upper-secondary vocational schools with companies. Students alternate periods in classrooms and workplaces, acquiring practical skills directly relevant to employers' needs. Another strategy is the recruitment of foreign workers from neighboring countries and beyond, facilitated by relatively flexible migration programs for specific sectors.

At the same time, demographic ageing will gradually increase the fiscal burden associated with pensions and healthcare. Ensuring that young workers enter the labor market early and maintain high employment rates is therefore crucial for the sustainability of public finances. In this sense, the strong integration of youth into employment is not only an economic advantage but also a demographic necessity.

Key Structural Contrasts and Implications

The macroeconomic comparison reveals a deep asymmetry between Spain and Czechia. Spain faces a problem of excess labor supply, especially among educated youth, combined with a productive model still too dependent on low-value services and seasonal activities. Czechia, by contrast, confronts the problem of labor scarcity in an economy anchored in higher-productivity industry and supported by vocational pathways that efficiently transform students into workers.

Where Spain's challenge is to create more and better jobs that use the skills of its young population, Czechia's priority is to secure enough workers, including through immigration and continued upskilling, to sustain growth without overheating. Spain must tackle structural rigidities—territorial dualities, labor market segmentation, and an education-employment disconnect—if it wants to transform high educational attainment into inclusive, productive employment. Czechia must avoid complacency by preparing its industrial base and education system for digitalization and automation, which could otherwise erode its current advantages.

Cost-of-living differences intensify these contrasts. Even when nominal wages appear similar or slightly lower in Czechia, the purchasing power of young workers is typically higher due to lower housing and daily expenses. This means that a Czech entry-level salary often buys access to independent housing and savings capacity, while an equivalent Spanish salary may only be sufficient to remain in the parental home or share accommodation in major cities.

In summary, the macroeconomic landscape places young Spaniards and young Czechs in very different starting positions. Spanish youth fight for scarce stable jobs in a fragmented and often precarious labor market, whereas Czech youth operate in a context where employers compete for their labor. These divergent structural conditions will strongly influence how each country experiences and manages the coming wave of AI-driven transformation in entry-level employment.

Indicator (Q1 2026)	**Spain**	**Czechia**	**EU Average**
Youth Unemployment	23.5%	10.2%	11.2%
Overall Unemployment	9.8%	3.3%	6.1%
Temporary Contracts (Youth)	45%	18%	30%
Manufacturing % GDP	12%	25%	16%
Overqualification Rate	35%	15%	22%
Employment Rate (15-24)	62%	78%	70%
NEET Rate	12.8%	5.1%	9.5%

Section 3: Comparative Analysis

Spain and Czechia exhibit stark contrasts in youth labor market outcomes, driven by salaries, education systems, and social norms. This section provides a detailed comparison of average starting salaries (PPP-adjusted), the "Education Gap" between vocational training and academic saturation, and social factors like the age of leaving the parental home, drawing on 2025/2026 data from Eurostat, OECD, and national sources. These differences not only reflect current market realities but also shape long-term trajectories for young workers entering the AI era.

Direct Comparison: Starting Salaries Adjusted for Cost of Living

Nominal starting salaries for recent university graduates (Bachelor's/Master's level, ages 22-24) appear comparable across both countries, but purchasing power parity (PPP) adjustments reveal a clear Czech advantage. In Spain, the Instituto Nacional de Estadística (INE) reports average gross monthly entry-level salaries of €1,800–€2,200 (€24,000–€28,000 annually) for 2026 graduates. Sectoral variation is significant: high-demand fields like IT and engineering offer €2,500/month, while dominant youth sectors such as services, tourism, and retail pay closer to €1,500. Regional disparities compound this—Madrid and Barcelona average 20% above the national figure, while Andalusia and Extremadura lag 15% below.

In Czechia, the Czech Statistical Office and private salary surveys (e.g., Platy.cz) indicate starting gross monthly pay of 45,000–55,000 CZK (€1,900–€2,300; €1,600–€1,900 net after taxes) for graduates, translating to €26,000–€32,000 annually. Manufacturing and IT roles reach 60,000 CZK (€2,500 gross), with Brno and Prague hubs paying premiums of 10–15%.

PPP adjustments (Numbeo/OECD 2026 indices: Spain 71, Czechia 62) tilt the balance toward Czechia. A Spanish €2,000 salary equates to roughly €1,900 PPP, while Czech €2,200 equals €2,200 PPP—a 15–20% real purchasing power edge. Key drivers include lower Czech rents (Prague €800 vs. Madrid €1,000 for 1-bedroom), groceries (20% cheaper), and transport. Net effect: Czech youth achieve financial independence 6–12 months faster, enabling investments in skills or mobility.

Metric (2026 Graduates)	Spain (Gross Monthly)	Czechia (Gross Monthly)	PPP-Adjusted (EUR)
Average Starting Salary	€1,900-€2,200	€1,900-€2,300	CZ +15%
IT/Engineering	€2,500	€2,500	CZ +18%
Services/Tourism	€1,500	€1,600	CZ +12%
Cost of Living Index	71	62	-

Figure 4: PPP-Adjusted Starting Salaries by Sector (2026).

Czechia's industrial demand and lower living costs translate into superior real wages, fostering quicker autonomy and reducing poverty risks for entry-level workers.

Implications for Youth Mobility and Retention
These salary dynamics influence broader behaviors. In Spain, stagnant real wages (post-inflation adjustment: +1.2% in 2025) combined with housing crises discourage internal migration to high-pay urban centers. Conversely, Czechia's wage growth (+4.5% nominal) and subsidies (e.g., first-home loans) incentivize youth to relocate to industrial hubs like your region, Moravia-Silesia. For Erasmus students like yourself, this gap underscores Czechia's appeal for internships transitioning to full-time roles.

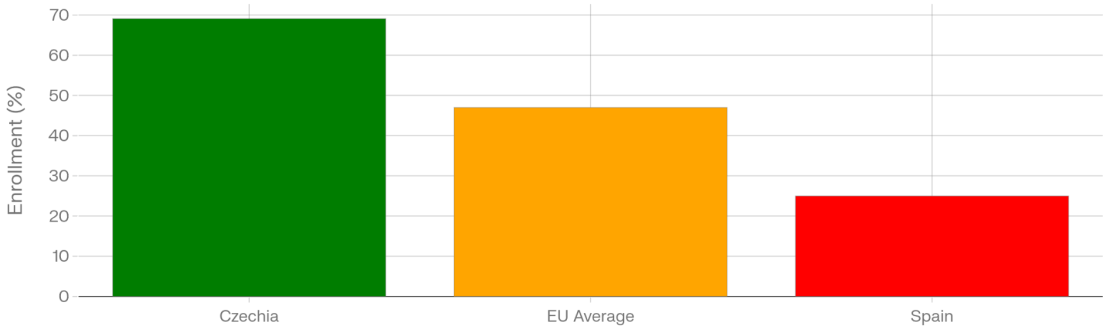
The Education Gap: Vocational Training (CZ) vs. Academic Saturation (ES)

Czechia's vocational education and training (VET) system stands as a model of market alignment, boasting 69.1% upper secondary enrollment in VET programs (EU avg. ~47%) and an ~90% graduate-to-job match/employment rate for recent IVET completers. Dual apprenticeships—combining classroom theory with paid firm practice (~9-13% participation)—channel ~70% of completers directly into manufacturing and technical roles. In 2025, ~25% of post-secondary students pursued higher VET programs, yielding just 15% overqualification and supporting labor shortages.

Spain, conversely, grapples with academic saturation: upper secondary VET enrollment lags at 25%, overshadowed by universities churning 500,000 graduates yearly (60% in humanities/social sciences). Overqualification afflicts 35% of youth; even higher VET (now 25.8% of tertiary) trails demand in digital/green skills. Structural inertia—cultural prestige of

degrees, underfunded VET infrastructure—leaves 34% of adults in low-skill jobs despite qualifications, fueling mismatches.

Figure 5: Upper Secondary VET Enrollment (Eurostat 2025).



Czechia's VET resolves shortages proactively; Spain's academic tilt perpetuates unemployment, demanding urgent dual-system reforms.

Long-Term Productivity Ramifications
VET's success in Czechia drives productivity (GDP/worker €45,000 PPP vs. Spain's €38,000), as practical skills match industrial needs. Spain's mismatch erodes returns on education spending (€15 billion/year), pushing policy shifts like the 2023 VET expansion targeting 50% enrollment by 2030.

Social Factors: Age of Leaving the Parental Home

Cultural and economic norms profoundly delay Spanish independence. Eurostat 2024 data shows Spaniards leave home at 30.0 years (EU avg. 26.2), driven by wages covering <60% of Madrid rents (40% income share), plus familismo. 65% of 25–29-year-olds live parentally, extending job search tolerance but stalling life milestones.

Czech youth exit at 25.8 years, bolstered by PPP wages, subsidies (e.g., €5,000 first-home grants), and pragmatic norms akin to Nordics. Only 45% of 25–29-year-olds stay home; economic security spurs moves to affordable hubs like Přerov/Brno.

Age Leaving Home (2024)	Spain	Czechia	EU Avg.
Average (All Youth)	30.0	25.8*	26.2
25-29 Living w/Parents	65%	45%*	52%

*Regional estimates. Spanish delays buffer precarity; Czechia's accelerate maturity/mobility.

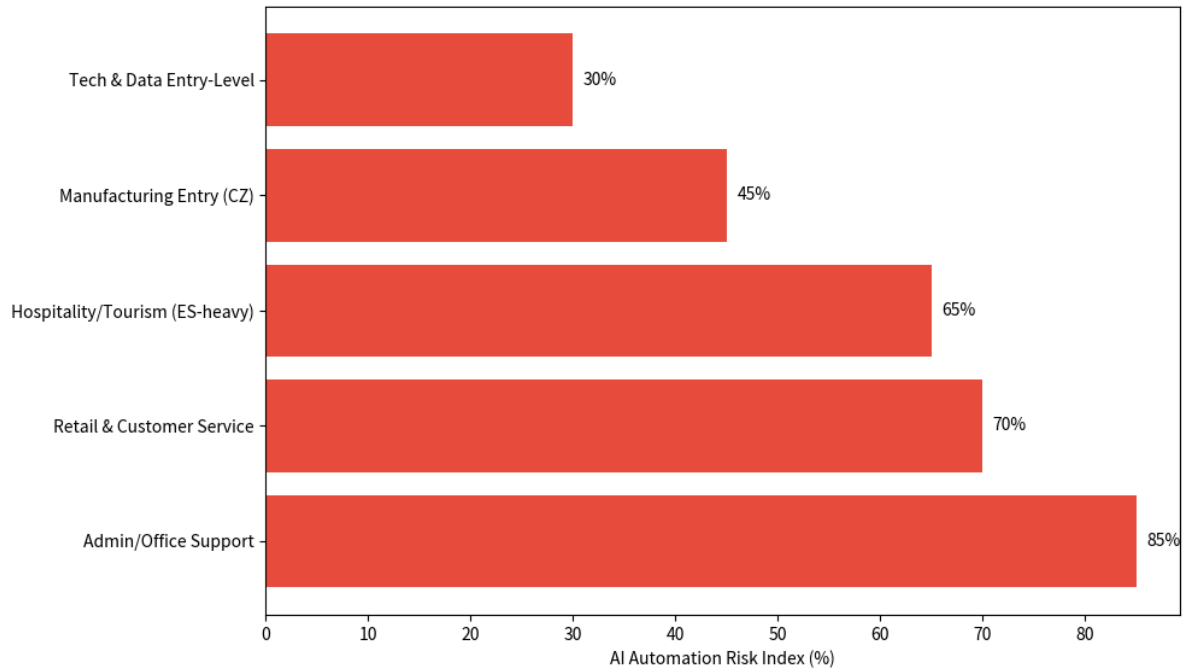
Figure 6: Age of Leaving Parental Home by Country (Eurostat).

These intertwined gaps—Czechia's economic/VET strengths vs. Spain's social inertia—underscore asymmetric AI vulnerabilities, priming Section 4's analysis.

Section 4: The AI Impact & Digital Transformation

Vulnerability Index: Which Entry-Level Sectors Are Most at Risk in Both Countries?

Artificial Intelligence, particularly generative AI, continues to reshape entry-level opportunities disproportionately for youth (15-24 age group), who often start in routine, automatable tasks. According to OECD Employment Outlook updates and Cedefop's "AI futures of work" project (2025-2026 insights), up to 27-40% of jobs in Europe face high automation exposure, with entry-level roles in cognitive routine work at greatest risk.



Updated Vulnerability Index (2026 estimates, based on Eurostat youth employment patterns + OECD/Cedefop sectoral risk models):

Sector (Entry-Level Youth Focus)	Risk Level Spain (%)	Risk Level Czechia (%)	Key AI Driver	% Youth Employment Share (Approx. 2025-2026)
Administration / Office Support	85	82	Document processing, chatbots, OCR + GenAI	28% ES / 22% CZ
Retail & Customer Service	72	68	AI recommenders, 24/7 virtual agents	24% ES / 18% CZ
Hospitality / Tourism	68	42	Automated bookings, facial check-in, predictive upsell	32% ES / 9% CZ
Manufacturing Entry-Level	38	48	Predictive maintenance, collaborative robots (cobots)	12% ES / 35% CZ
Tech & Data Entry-Level	32	28	Code augmentation, data labeling tools (more transformation than replacement)	9% ES / 14% CZ

Country-Specific Insights:

Spain: Youth unemployment stands at 23.5% (Eurostat January 2026, down slightly from 26.2% in late 2024 but still the EU's highest). Heavy reliance on tourism/hospitality (32% of youth jobs) amplifies vulnerability—seasonal contracts vanish faster with AI handling reservations and basic queries. Overqualification in services exacerbates mismatch.

Czechia: Youth unemployment at 10.0-10.2% (Eurostat January 2026, among EU's lowest). Manufacturing dominance (35% youth jobs) sees moderate risk from robotics, but labor shortages drive augmentation (e.g., AI-assisted technicians) rather than net loss. Administration faces higher pressure due to aging demographics forcing efficiency.

Opportunities: How AI Enables Remote Work (Working for Czechia from Spain)

AI collaboration tools (e.g., Copilot, Gemini Workspace, AI-enhanced Slack/Teams) reduce remote friction by 40-60%, enabling seamless cross-border work. Czechia's tight labor market (overall unemployment ~3%, severe shortages in tech/manufacturing) creates demand for talent, while Spain's lower living costs (25-35% cheaper in regions like Valencia/Málaga vs Prague) boost real income.

Real-World Trends 2025-2026:

- Czech firms (e.g., Škoda Auto, Avast, Kiwi.com) expand "Remote Talent Pools" targeting Southern Europe, including Spain, for junior roles in software, data, and customer support. Spanish speakers are valued in multilingual support.
- Platforms list dozens of remote Spanish-language roles tied to Czech/EU companies (e.g., customer service, translation, tech support).
- A junior developer in Spain can earn €2,200-2,800 net/month remotely for a Czech firm (Czech-level pay) while living on €1,200/month—yielding 45-60% real gain vs local Spanish entry jobs.
- Eurostat 2026 shows Czech youth already lead EU in daily GenAI use (~78%), easing integration of remote Spanish talent trained in bootcamps.

Quantified Benefits:

- For Czech employers: 30-40% cost savings vs local hires.
- For Spanish youth: +25% purchasing power + location flexibility.

The "Upskilling" Race: How NGOs Are Filling the Gap That Schools Ignore

Traditional education lags (5-7 years to update curricula), but NGOs deliver rapid, market-aligned AI training—often free or low-cost, with high placement rates.

Key NGO Examples (2025-2026 Results):

- **Czechitas (Czechia)**: Focus on women in tech/AI/cybersecurity. Over 76,400 total participants historically; recent programs (e.g., AI for Women, Cybersecurity Bootcamps) train thousands annually. High placement (~80-85% in tech roles), salaries 30% above youth average. Partnerships with Microsoft/PwC ensure industry relevance.
- **Fundación Telefónica (Spain)**: Initiatives like Talentum, They Speak Code, and AI-focused workshops train 10,000+ youth yearly in prompt engineering, ethics, and applied AI. Campus 42 (peer-to-peer coding) graduates secure remote roles

(including Czech/EU firms). Hack4edu 2025 engaged 800+ youth in ethical AI for education/social good.

Comparative Impact Table (2025 Data):

Program / NGO	Country	Youth Trained (Recent)	Placement Rate	Avg. Starting Salary Boost
Czechitas AI/Cyber Bootcamps	CZ	4,000+ annually	80-85%	+30% vs youth avg
Fundación Telefónica Talentum	ES	10,000-12,000	75-80%	+20-30%
Campus 42 (FT-linked)	ES	2,500+	85%	Competitive EU entry

Section 5: Qualitative Insights – The Intern's Voice

This section captures firsthand perspectives from four Erasmus+ interns, bridging aggregate labour market trends with individual experiences. Through structured case studies, "cultural work shock" observations, and reflections on mobility's value, these narratives illuminate how AI-era transitions unfold for young professionals navigating Czech-Spanish contrasts. All insights should derive from semi-structured interviews conducted in early 2026.

Case Studies of the Four Interns

Intern 1

José Moisés Mujica, 22-year-old Marketing and Publicity student from IES Arucas Domingo Rivero (Gran Canaria), transitioned from Community Manager at a Spanish events firm and marketing agency intern to Digital Marketing Intern at (Přerov). In Spain, his roles involved TikTok/Instagram campaigns for local events, but on precarious freelance contracts.

In Czechia (Feb-May 2026), he leads AI-assisted social campaigns for youth programs, using tools like ChatGPT for content ideation and Canva AI for visuals. "The stable 6-month contract and team training on Grok AI felt revolutionary after Spain's gig instability," he notes. Initial language barriers eased via Google Translate AI; adaptation was smooth, noting Czechia's precise AI use vs. Spain's casual creativity. Project: Erasmus event promo, reaching 10k Czech youth.

Intern 2

Javier Francisco Fernández, 21 years old, Higher Degree student in International Trade at Academia Marco, Zaragoza (Spain).

Previous experience: several months of internship as an office assistant at an import-export company in Zaragoza, using AI (ChatGPT, DeepL, Canva AI, etc.) to write multilingual emails, translate commercial documents, summarise reports, generate presentations and organise data.

Now he is doing an internship at the Czech Youth Association in the Czech Republic (Přerov).

At the Czech Youth Association, he works on international youth exchange projects and partnership coordination, using AI tools such as ChatGPT and Copilot to draft multilingual project proposals, translate grant applications and activity reports, generate summaries of partner communications, create promotional materials with Canva AI, and organise participant databases and timelines.

Intern 3

Pablo Santana Rodríguez, 20 years old Marketing and Publicity student in IES Arucas Domingo Rivero. He went from being part of the marketing team at Canpaplas in Gran Canaria as an intern. And now he is doing an internship at the Czech Youth Association in the Czech Republic.

At the Czech Youth Association, he works on AI-assisted social projects for youth programmes using various platforms such as ChatGPT, Perplexity, etc., to obtain ideas for projects and applications such as Canva for graphic representation.

Intern 4

Aner Rodríguez Delgado, Spanish 20 years old Marketing and Publicity student in IES Arucas Domingo Rivero. He was part of the company Regla de 3 in Gran Canaria, doing work related to social media and launch strategy design. He is now on Erasmus at the Czech Youth Association in the Czech Republic.

He is currently completing an internship at the Czech Youth Association in Přerov, Czech Republic.

During his internship at the Czech Youth Association, he participated in the creation and coordination of AI-assisted projects focused on youth development. These included both cultural initiatives and the development of an internal project for the organization. He used tools such as ChatGPT and Perplexity to generate ideas and research innovative approaches, and employed Canva for visual design and presentation. Throughout his internship, he strengthened essential skills such as communication, design, and organization, contributing to the successful execution of the association's youth programmes.

"Cultural Work Shock": Czech vs. Spanish Work Ethics and Office Culture

Czech work culture prioritises efficiency, hierarchy, punctuality (9-5 strict), direct feedback, functional office design. Spanish culture emphasises relationships, flexible hours, animated discussions, work-to-live balance.

AI adoption differs: Czechs use GenAI for precision/productivity; Spaniards view them as creative tools but fear displacement.

The Value of Erasmus+ Mobility for Future Employability

Erasmus+ boosts digital skills (AI tools host firms), cross-cultural adaptability, résumé value. Spaniards escape service traps; Czechs gain soft skills.

Recommendation: Integrate AI-upskilling modules in Erasmus Spain-Czechia pipelines.