

How one company is helping Spain's depressed labour market and middle-aged women

Deliberry hires women that charities recommend and who need employment but are at risk of social exclusion



The women are paid a market rate for their work, which comprises receiving emailed orders on their smartphones, selecting and buying the produce and handing it over to a driver for delivery.

Photo: Deliberry

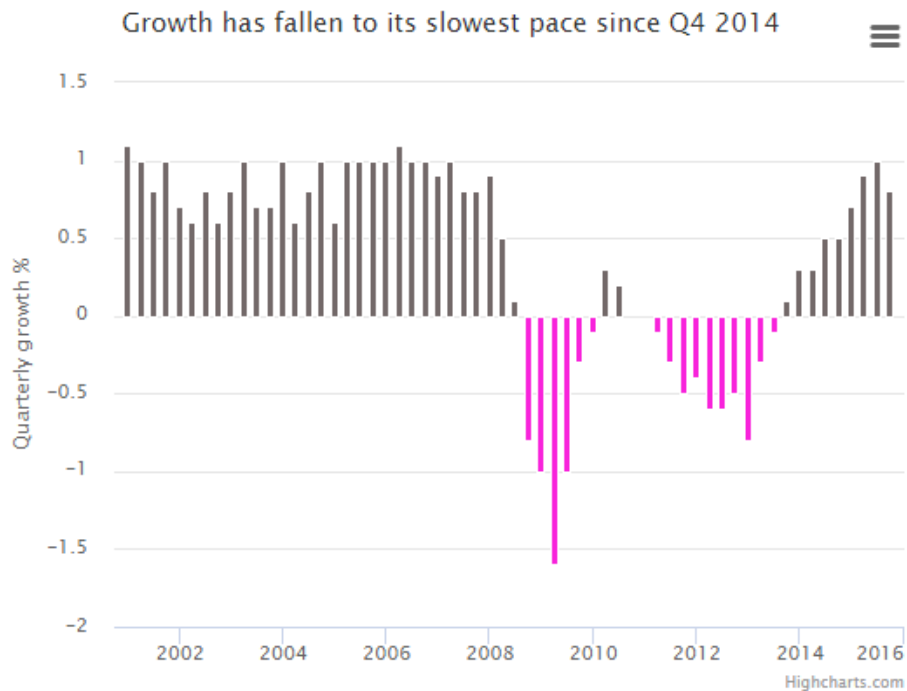
By James Badcock, Madrid

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For those customers too busy to do their own food shopping in **Spain**, a new delivery service has recruited middle-aged “mamá shoppers” to buy the groceries and help the country's labour market improve.

It is hardly the first delivery service, but the special appeal of Deliberry is that the women have been recruited through charities such as the Red Cross. The charities recommend people they know to be at risk of social exclusion due to long-term unemployment.

Middle-aged women are one of the most excluded **segments of Spain's depressed labour market**.



“At that age, most companies’ selection processes makes it almost impossible for them to enter the labour market,” said a spokesman for the company which currently operates only in Barcelona, but plans to launch in Madrid next year.



The Deliberry website

The women are paid a market rate for their work, the spokesman said, which comprises receiving emailed orders on their smartphones, selecting and buying the produce and handing it over to a driver for delivery.

Marga, who has been working for Deliberry since April, said that the personal touch was the key to the system. “You get to know customers. Some like their fruit very ripe and another might want his ham sliced extra-thin. Today I called one up to say that there were no decent peaches anymore as it is not the season. We decided I would get tangerines instead”.

"We do each shopping as if it were our own," said Marga, one of the dozen-strong team of Deliberry mamá shoppers.

- **Spanish economic growth moderates ahead of general election**

Although she says she has always been fortunate enough to find work, Marga knows that many women, like her aged 45 and over, struggle to maintain their families.

"Many of us are well qualified but it seems like after a certain age, you are no use and they won't even look at your CV. I am no feminist but I am a woman, and the labour market is very difficult for us – particularly in terms of working hours and salaries."