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1. CV: Short Overview

Full Professor of Geography (January 2006), PhD in Geography from the University of Valencia (1990) and in Sociology from the Autonomous University of Barcelona (2017). He currently holds five sexennial periods of positive evaluated research.

Since 2020 he is the director of the inter-university doctoral programme in [Local Development and International Cooperation](#), in which the Universities of Valencia, the Polytechnic University of Valencia and the Jaume I University of Castelló participate.

He also leads the journal *AGER (Journal of Studies on Depopulation and Rural Development)*, of whose editorial board he became deputy director in 2015, and has been its director from 2019 to the present.

He is director and principal investigator of the Research Group Unit for Rural Development and Public Policy Evaluation (UDERVAL), in which he has supervised a total of 13 doctoral theses, with several more in progress.

He currently participates as evaluator in different committees and for different agencies, both national (ANEP, Agència per a la Qualitat del Sistema Universitari de Catalunya, Agencia Andaluza del Conocimiento, Agencia para la Calidad del Sistema Universitario de Castilla y León, Axencia para a Calidade do Sistema Universitario de Galicia, etc.), and international (for example, the Czech Science Foundation, the Horizon 2020 Programme of the European Commission, and he is a member of the college of evaluators of the European Science Foundation).

During the years 2019 and 2020 he has been the director of the University Chair of the Depopulation Agenda of the region of Valencia, at the University of Valencia. On this subject, in October 2020 he was the director of the international seminar "Policies against depopulation, under debate: what and how?", and he has also published short articles, such as "Depopulation: demographic challenge and national challenge", "Immigration: local solutions to rural depopulation", and "Rural depopulation: a

territorial problem with historical roots". He has recently published a chapter focusing on the regulatory deployment in Spain against depopulation, both at central government and regional level.

From 2004 to 2009 he was Manager of Social Sciences in the National R&D&i Programme (Directorate General for Research). He was also the Spanish representative on the Management Committee of the European Science Foundation (2005-2007), and was appointed by the Ministry of Science and Innovation and the Spanish National Research Council (CSIC) as the Spanish representative on the Social Sciences Standing Committee of the European Science Foundation (2007 to 2009). Spanish representative on the Social Sciences Standing Committee of the European Science Foundation (2007 to 2009).

In 2014 and 2015, he participated in the International Commission of Experts that assessed the Portuguese system of R&D centres, in the area of Social Sciences, commissioned by the Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia (Foundation for Science and Technology).

He has also collaborated in the evaluation of research projects and the ACADEMIA programme of the National Agency for Evaluation and Prospective ([ANECA](#)), and has been a member of different project evaluation commissions in the Directorate General for Research (Ministry of Science and Innovation, later Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness), as well as in the COFUND and Marie Curie Actions programmes of the European Commission.

He has been a member of the National Commission for the Evaluation of Research Activity ([CNEAI](#)), as a member (2013), secretary (2014) and president (2015) of Area 10, and between 2016 and 2021 he chaired the Commission for the Accreditation of University Teaching Staff (E-19) at the National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation ([ANECA](#)). In 2016 he has been area coordinator at the Spanish Foundation for Science and Technology ([FECYT](#)) for the evaluation of scientific journals, reviewer for several years, and in 2022 he is a member of the Academic Publishing Quality Evaluation Commission.

He was Head of the Department of Geography at the University of Valencia (April 2009 to October 2010), and director of the Master in Management and Promotion of Local Development at the Univ. of Valencia until September 2011. During the academic year 2011-2012 he started his second PhD, in the PhD programme in Sociology (Autonomous University of Barcelona). The culmination of this doctorate was the presentation and defence of this second doctoral thesis: "Social Capital and Territorial Development: Social Networks and Leadership in the new Rural Dynamics in Spain".

In 1998 he launched the first postgraduate course for local development agents, which has evolved into the official Master's degree in Management and Promotion of Local Development (Inter-University Institute for Local Development), of which he was the director until September 2011. He has taught doctorate and master's degree courses at the University of Valencia and different Spanish universities, as well as numerous conferences, mainly on the subjects of local development in rural areas and methodologies for evaluating public policies (mainly rural development).

In 1993 he founded UDERVAL (Research Unit for Rural Development and Public Policy Evaluation), which was integrated into the Inter-University Institute for Local

Development of the Valencian Community in 2003. This Unit is currently one of the Research Groups recognised in the research structures of the University of Valencia, of which he is the director. More than 10 doctoral theses on different topics related to rural dynamics, including issues of social capital and social innovation, are being carried out in the Unit.

He has carried out different specialisation stays in Canada and Great Britain as a visiting scholar (University of Toronto, 1994-95; York University, 1996; and Cheltenham College for Higher Education, 1998).

In his professional scientific activity, he collaborated with the Spanish Unit of the European LEADER Observatory, later the Cell of Animation and Promotion of Rural Development (Ministry of Agriculture), and was a member of the Editorial Board of the journal *Current LEADER-Rural Development* (1999-2004), in which he published numerous articles.

He has carried out and participated in the evaluation of rural development policies, mainly LEADER and PRODER programmes, both for the Generalitat Valenciana and the European Commission, and recently (2011) he has been part of the group of experts who have evaluated both programmes for the Directorate General of Rural Development, belonging to the current Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Environment (2012). He was appointed member of the Advisory Body of the Generalitat Valenciana on rural development (local action groups, development strategies and their monitoring, etc.), for the period 2016-2020 (having resigned in January 2017).

He is a member of the Scientific Committee of several national journals, and actively participates in the evaluation of articles in journals such as *Sociologia Ruralis*, *Journal of Rural Studies*, *International Journal of Sustainable Development*, *Urban Geography*, *International Journal of Sociology of Agriculture and Food*, *The Geographical Journal*, *Geoforum*, *African Journal of Agricultural Research*, *Ecological Indicators*, *International Journal of Sustainable Development*, as well as national journals such as *Investigaciones Regionales*, *Revista Internacional de Sociología*, *Papeles de Geografía*, *Revista Española de Estudios Agrosociales*, *Revista de Estudios Regionales*, *Estudios Territoriales*, *Geographicalia*, *Anales de Geografía de la Universidad Complutense*, *AGER-Revista de Estudios sobre Despoblación y Desarrollo Rural*, *Cuadernos de Geografía*, etc.

He has conducted research through on different competitive research projects, mainly funded by the European Commission and, to a lesser extent, the Ministry of Science and Innovation or other public administrations. In addition, he has worked on projects and contracts, also mainly for public administrations.

His scientific activity has focused on a basic line of research, local and rural development, especially the processes of socio-economic transformation in rural areas, the role of new activities, analysis of the relationships between social capital and territorial development (for example, through the EU Horizon Research Project ROBUST), and specifically the role of social networks, leadership, elites and power structures in the socio-economic dynamics of rural areas. He is paying special attention to the socio-territorial dynamics associated with depopulation processes in rural areas. Currently he is involved in those aspects through a couple of research projects, one at regional level (2021-2023) and the other one at national level (2021-2025), with the participation of six other universities

and specialists from various fields, including sociology, economics, social psychology, urban planning, geography and administrative law.

2. Some papers (last five years)

47. Mesa, R., Esparcia, J. (2021): Difusión de innovaciones en la agricultura ecológica y análisis de redes sociales: un ensayo de aplicación. *Anales de Geografía de la Universidad Complutense*, 41(1): 155-181 [PDF].
46. Vercher, N., Barlagne, C., Hewitt, R., Nijnik, M., Esparcia, J. (2021): Whose Narrative is it Anyway? Narratives of Social Innovation in Rural Areas - A Comparative Analysis of Community-Led Initiatives in Scotland and Spain. *Sociologia Ruralis*, 61 (1): 163-189. DOI:[10.1111/soru.12321](https://doi.org/10.1111/soru.12321)
45. Camacho, F., Esparcia, J. (2021): A contribution to the analysis of the first Spanish Public- Private Partnership in Primary and Specialized Maternity Care: A Social Network Analysis Approach. *Revista Internacional de Sociología*, 79(1): 367-376 [PDF]
44. Ruíz, I., Esparcia, J. (2020): Internet Access in Rural Areas: Brake or Stimulous as Post-Covid-19 Opportunity? *Sustainability*, 12(22), 1-17. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3390/su12229619>
43. Camacho, F., Esparcia, J. (2020): Influence and use of information sources about childbearing among Spanish pregnant women. *Women and Birth*, 33(4): 367-376 [PDF] <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wombi.2019.08.003>
42. Esparcia, J., Martínez Puche, A., Querol, V. (2020): Reflexiones en torno al medio rural y la despoblación: la necesidad de superar la vieja política y avanzar hacia un enfoque transversal, y una verdadera gobernanza multinivel. *Revista de Treball, Economia i Societat* (CES), 98:1-7. [PDF]
41. Mendieta, D., Esparcia, J. (2020): La política de energía eólica y sus efectos sobre el desarrollo local. Un análisis a partir del sistema de actores (Loja, Ecuador). *Anales de Geografía de la Universidad Complutense*, 40(1): 73-95 [PDF].
40. Herraiz, C., Vercher, N., Esparcia, J. (2019): Análisis relacional en iniciativas socialmente innovadoras. El caso de estudio de Alianza Mar Blava (Ibiza-Formentera). *Cuadernos Geográficos*, 58(3):83-102. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30827/cuadgeo.v58i3.8647> [PDF]
39. Abbasi, F., Esparcia, J., Saadi, H., (2019): From analysis to formulation of strategies for Farm Advisory Services (case study: Valencia – Spain). An application through SWOT and QSPMmatrix. *European Countryside*, Vol. 11 (1): 31 p. [PDF]
38. Mendieta, D., Esparcia, J. (2018): Aproximación metodológica al análisis de contenidos a partir del discurso de los actores. Un ensayo de investigación social de procesos de desarrollo local. *EMPIRIA. Revista de Metodología de Ciencias Sociales*, Núm. 39 (enero-abril): 15-47.[PDF]
37. Mendieta, D., Escribano, J. y Esparcia, J. (2017): Electrificación, desarrollo rural y Buen Vivir. Un análisis a partir de las parroquias Taday y Rivera (Ecuador). *Cuadernos Geográficos*56(2): 306-327. [PDF]

36. Esparcia, J., Serrano, J. (2016): Analysing social networks in rural development: a gender approach. *International Review of Social Research*, 6(4): 206-220. Special Issue on *Recent Advancements, Developments and Applications of Personal Network Analysis* [PDF]. In a [Special Issue](https://doi.org/10.1515/irsr-2016-0023). [<https://doi.org/10.1515/irsr-2016-0023>]
35. Esparcia, J., Escribano, J., Serrano, J. (2016): Una aproximación al enfoque del capital social y a su contribución al estudio de los procesos de desarrollo local. *Investigaciones Regionales—Journal of Regional Research*, 34: 49-71. [PDF]
34. Escribano, J., Valero, D.E., Serrano, J.J., Esparcia, J. (2015): La vulnérabilité des femmes espagnoles en milieu rural par temps de crise économique. *POUR. Revue du Groupe Ruralités, Éducation et Politiques*. 225: 91-97. <https://doi.org/10.3917/pour.225.0091> [PDF]
33. Esparcia, J., Escribano, J., Serrano, J. (2015): From Development to Power Relations and Territorial Governance: Increasing the Leadership Role of LEADER Local Action Groups in Spain. *Journal of Rural Studies* 42: 29-42. [PDF]
32. Cheshire, L., Esparcia, J., Shucksmith, M. (2015): Community resilience, social capital and territorial governance. *AGER - Journal of Depopulation and Rural Development Studies*, 18: 7-38. [PDF]
31. Escribano, J., Esparcia, J., Serrano, J.J. (2015): El comercio en los espacios rurales valencianos: caracterización, funciones, problemáticas y estrategias de actuación. *Cuadernos Geográficos*, 54 (1): 87-112. <https://doi.org/10.30827/cuadgeo.v54i1.2645> [PDF]
30. Esparcia, J. (2014): Innovation and networks in rural areas. An analysis from European innovative projects. *Journal of Rural Studies* 34:1-14. [PDF]

3. Chapters and books

1. Esparcia, J., Mesa, R. (2020): *LEADER en España: Cambios recientes, situación actual y orientaciones para su mejora*. Publicaciones Universidad de Valencia – Red Rural Nacional (MAPA). 451 p.
2. Esparcia, J., Abbasi, F. (2020): Territorial Governance and Rural Development: Challenge or Reality? In Cejudo, E., Navarro, F. (Eds.) *Neo-endogenous Development in European Rural Areas. Results and Lessons*, Springer International Publishing. 23 p.
3. Esparcia, J., Escribano, J. (2015): Del enfoque LEADER al enfoque territorial y al Desarrollo Local Participativo. En Compés, R., Álvarez-Coque, J.M., Aguilar, J. (Coord.): *Redes de Innovación y Desarrollo Local para el medio rural*. Ministerio de Agricultura, Alimentación y Medio Ambiente. pp. 48-70.
4. Grupo de Análisis sobre los Territorios Rurales (GATER) (2015): Hacia nuevas políticas de desarrollo territorial en las áreas rurales de la Comunidad Valenciana: incentivos territoriales, servicios públicos y gobernanza. En Romero J., y Boix, A. (Eds.): *Democracia desde abajo. Nueva agenda para el gobierno local*. Universidad de Valencia, pp. 355-382.
5. Esparcia, J., Escribano, J., Buciega, A. (2015): A perspective of LEADER Method in Spain

- based on the Analysis of Local Action Groups. In Granberg, L., Andersson, K., and Kovach, I. (Eds.), *Evaluating the LEADER Approach to Rural Development. Grass-roots Experiences of the LEADER Programme*. Ashgate Publisher, pp. 33-51.
6. Esparcia, J., Escribano, J. (2015): Programas Europeos y el enfoque territorial. En Hermosilla, J., Iranzo, E. (Coord.): *Atlas de los recursos territoriales valencianos*. Universidad de Valencia, pp. 268-277.
 7. Esparcia, J., Escribano, J. (2014): Capital social relacional en áreas rurales: un estudio a partir del análisis de redes sociales. En Cortizo, J., Redondo, J.M., Sánchez, M.J. (Coords.): *De la Geografía Rural al Desarrollo Local*. Homenaje a Antonio Maya. Universidad de León, pp. 215-230.
 8. Esparcia, J. (2013): La investigación en Geografía en los planes nacionales: elemento de consolidación de la disciplina. En Lasanta, T., Martín Vide, J. (Coords.): *La Investigación Geográfica en España (1990-2012)*. Asociación de Geógrafos Españoles-Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, pp. 87-117.
 9. Esparcia, J. (2012): From Business to Territorial and Social Networks in Rural Development: Experiences from rural Valencia (Spain). En Sjöblom, S., et al. (Eds): *Sustainability and Short-term Policies. Improving Governance in Spatial Policy Interventions*. Ashgate Publisher, pp. 261-299.
 10. Esparcia, J. (2012): The environmental dimension of LEADER approach. An analysis from best environmental practices in Spain. En Paniagua, A., Bryant, R., Kizos, T. (Eds.) *The political ecology of depopulation*. Centro de Estudios sobre Despoblación y Desarrollo de las Áreas Rurales, pp. 39-66.
 11. Esparcia, J. (2011): Los Grupos de Acción Local en el Programa LEADER en España. En Red Rural Nacional: *LEADER en España (1991-2011). Una Contribución Activa al Desarrollo Rural*. Ministerio de Medio Ambiente y Medio Rural y Marino, pp. 111-136, 311-312.
 12. Esparcia, J., Escribano, J. (2011): Desarrollo territorial y reforma de la PAC. En Moyano, E. (Coord.): *El Futuro de la PAC es nuestro Futuro*. Fundación de Estudios Rurales. Anuario 2011, pp. 142-149.
 13. Buciega, A., Esparcia, J., Ferrer, V. (2010): Traditional and Artisanal Versus Expert and Managerial Knowledge: Dissecting Two Local Food Networks in Valencia, Spain. En Fonte, M., Papadopoulos, A. (Eds): *Naming Food After Places. Food Relocalisation and Knowledge Dynamics in Rural Development*. Ashgate Publishing, pp. 215-236.
 14. Esparcia, J. (2010): Entrepreneurship in Rural Areas: Experiences from Rural Spain. En Robinson, G., Molinero, F., Guerra, J.C. (Eds.): *Proceedings III Anglo-Spanish Rural Geography Conference*, Institute of British Geographers—Asociación de Geógrafos Españoles, pp. 215-233.
 15. Esparcia, J. (2010): El potencial del 'Análisis de Contenidos' como metodología para la caracterización de modelos Conceptuales-Relacionales del Desarrollo Rural en España. En Leco, F., Pérez Díaz, A., et al. (Eds.): *Territorio, paisaje y patrimonio rural*. XV Coloquio de Geografía Rural, pp. 87-101.

4. **Research projects (as Principal Investigator or research PI in Spain)**

1. **Local development processes in rural environments: from the demographic challenge to territorial challenges.** Call AICO-Generalitat Valenciana (2021-2023) [Ref. AICO/2021/104].
2. **Depopulation in Spain: from demographic challenge to territorial challenge.** National Research Agency, Ministry of Science and Innovation (2021-2025) [Ref. PID2020-11455RB-100].
3. **Rural-Urban Outlooks: Unlocking Synergies (ROBUST).** European Commission. Research & Innovation, H2020-RUR-2016-2 (Rural Renaissance – Fostering innovation and business opportunities). 727988-2 (2017-2020).
4. **Personal networks and rural territories: spatial and temporal dynamics, innovations and social support.** Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness (3016-2018).
5. **Social capital and territorial development. Crisis, resilience and leadership in the new rural dynamics in Spain.** Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness (3013-2015).
6. **Social capital and territorial development. Social networks, power elites and leadership in the new rural dynamics in Spain.** Ministry of Science and Innovation, DG Research (2010-2012).
7. **Rural Areas, People and Innovative Development (RAPIDO).** Commission of the European Communities, DG Research, VI Framework Programme (2007-2009).
8. **A Cognitive Approach to Rural Sustainable Development: The Dynamics of Expert and Lay Knowledges (CORASON).** Commission of the European Communities, DG Research, VI Framework Programme (2004- 2006).
9. **Entrepreneurship and social and productive local systems in lagging rural regions in Spain.** Ministry of Science and Innovation, DG Research. (2003- 2006).
10. **Building New Relationships in Rural Areas Under Urban Pressure (Building Rurban Relations).** Commission of the European Communities, DG Research, VI Framework Programme (2002-2005).
11. **Aspatial Peripherality, Innovation and the Rural Economy (ASPIRE).** Commission of the European Communities, DGXI, VI Framework Programme (2001-2004).
12. **Supporting and Promoting Integrated Tourism in Europe`s lagging Rural Regions (SPRITE).** Commission of the European Communities, DGXI, VI Framework Programme (2001- 2004).
13. **Partnerships for Rural Integrated Development in Europe (PRIDE).** Commission of the European Communities, DGVI, FAIR Programme (1999- 2001).
14. **Regional Images and the Promotion of quality products and services in the lagging regions of the European Union (RIPPLE).** Commission of the European Communities, DGVI, FAIR Programme (1997- 1999).
15. **Improving the Economic Impact of Public Institutions on lagging Rural and Coastal Regions.** Commission of the European Communities, DG-XII-XIV-VI, AIR Programme (1994- 1996).