

Immigrant workers in Spain. From migratory boom to crisis impacts

Francisco Torres Pérez
University of Valencia



International Conference

SHIFTING CONTEXTS AND PATTERNS OF MIGRATION

Comparing Europe and Central-North-America

The Spanish migratory boom

Total population and foreign residents in Spain, 1981-2016.

Year	Total population	Foreigners	Percentage of total foreigners
1981	37.689.662	197.942	0,6
1991	38.858.680	360.655	0,9
1996	39.617.477	499.773	1,3
1998	39.852.651	637.085	1,6
2000	40.499.791	923.879	2,3
2002	41.837.894	1.977.946	4,7
2004	43.197.684	3.034.326	7,0
2006	44.708.964	4.144.166	9,3
2008	46.157.822	5.268.762	11,4
2010	46.951.532	5.708.940	12,2
2011	47.190.493	5.751.487	12,2
2012	47.265.321	5.736.258	12,1
2013	47.129.783	5.546.238	11,8
2014	46.771.341	5.023.487	10,7
2015	46.624.382	4.729.644	10,1
2016	46.557.008	4.618.581	9,9

Source: Census 1981, 1991. Municipal Population Register. INE. Population data to January 1st of every year.

The Spanish migratory boom

Causes

- High economic growth rate, generated by a development model with intensive unskilled labor force.
- Reduced national work force, more qualification and expectations.
- Origin of expulsion factors: Crisis in Ecuador (1999), Argentina (2000), Rumania (2004), etc.
- Institutional factors: No need for visas in various Latin American countries (Ecuador, 2003, Bolivia, 2007), hardened measures for entry to the United States and France; expansion of the European Union.
- Geographic factors: North Africa and East Europe
- Historic and cultural factors: Latin America
- Social networks actions, positive references of pioneers.

Most relevant nationalities

- ✓ 1985-1996: Moroccan, Subsaharian, etc.
- ✓ 1996-2004: Ecuatorian, Colombian, Bolivian, Latin Americans
- ✓ 2005-2010: Rumanian, Bulgarian, East European

From a labor and irregular model to a mixed one: labor and family.

Approximation of irregular situation foreigners proportion, 2000-2010

Year	Municipal foreigners register	Permits	Studies	Regular Residents Total	Percentage of irregular foreigners
2000	923.879	801.329	27.410	828.739	10,30
2001	1.370.657	895.720	28.820	924.540	32,55
2002	1.977.946	1.109.060	29.410	1.138.470	42,44
2003	2.664.168	1.324.001	23.774	1.347.775	49,41
2004	3.034.326	1.647.011	30.267	1.677.278	44,72
2005	3.730.610	1.977.291	35.769	2.013.060	46,04
2006	4.144.166	2.738.932	30.676	2.769.608	33,17
2007	4.519.554	3.021.808	33.293	3.055.101	32,40
2008	5.268.762	3.979.014	40.132	4.019.146	23,72
2009	5.648.671	4.473.499	41.881	4.515.380	20,06
2010	5.708.940	4.791.232	44.465	4.835.697	15,30

Source Municipal Population Register to January 1st of respective year. INE. Anuarios de Extranjería. Ministerio del Interior. Permits up to December 31 of previous year (register certificates, community and assimilated registers, as well as not community residency cards). Torres (2011).

From a labor and irregular model to a mixed one: labor and family.

Immigration policy principles (from LOEX 7/1985)

- Immigration must adjust to the national employment situation for jobs not covered by residents in Spain.
- Hiring must be done at origin by General Regime and since 1993 by Contingent.

Migratory Labor model conceived as temporal but responding to a structural flexible cheap and unskilled work force demand.

Between 2000 and 2005, 70% of immigrants arrived in Spain without a mandatory work permit

Reasons

- ✓ Contradictions between a very restrictive norm and entrepreneurial needs that demanded “migrant work”.
- ✓ The importance of an informal economy and the possibility of finding a job without a permit.
- ✓ The absence of means to comply with hiring at origin.
- ✓ The difficulties of estimating the work force needs in different sectors (agriculture, domestic services, others).
- ✓ The convenience of having a “reserve army of workers”.

From a labor and irregular model to a mixed one: labor and family.

1993-1999. The General and Contingent regimes function as “de facto” regularization models for irregular workers.

Extraordinary regularization processes in Spain, 1985-2005.

	Motive	Applications	Regularized
1 st 1985	LOEX 7/1985	38.181	34.832
2 nd 1991	Parliament proposition 1991	130.406	109.135
3 rd 1996	1996 Regulation	25.128	21.286
4 th 2000	LOEX 4/2000	247.598	163.913
Reexamination 2000	Lorca accident	57.616	36.013
5 th Ecuador operation		24.089	20.352
6 th 2001	LOEX 8/200, refugees in churches	351.269	232.679
7 th 2005	2004 Regulation	691.655	565.121
Total regularizations		1.508.326	1.183.331

Source: Cachón (2009). The total represents regularizations, not regularized persons, since the same immigrant may have gone through several processes because he/she was not able to renew the initial permit.

From a labor and irregular model to a mixed one: labor and family

Extraordinary regularization processes

As it happens in other countries, in Spain these processes have an exceptional and collective nature for a limited amount of time, with less requirements, and some repressive measures are suspended.

The last process, in 2005, linked regularization to the effective registration of the contract to Social Security.

Ordinary regularization procedures.

Permanent, individualized, and allowing the legalization of effective residency procedure through the enforcement of a series of requisites.

Loex 4/2000. “Individual procedure for social rooting”, de facto suspended by LOEX 8/2000.

2004 Regulation (Zapatero government)

From a labor and irregular model to a mixed one: labor and family

2004 Regulation (Zapatero government)

This ordinance established several types of regularization procedures, which allow for a work permit and initial residency for a year.

- Working roots: Two years of residency and proof of a work relationship of at least one year.
- Family roots: Three years of stay in the country, contract offer and direct family links with legal foreign residents.
- Social roots: Same as family roots. Substitutes family links for accreditation of social insertion by City Council of residence.

2004 Regulation. Reduced “undocumented institutional generation”.

- ✓ Difficult Coverage Occupations Catalogue.
- ✓ Creation of the Large Enterprise Office.
- ✓ Simplification of the procedure that facilitates origin hiring.

From a labor and irregular model to a mixed one: labor and family

Foreign workers affiliated to Social Security, foreign employed population and foreign worker proportion in informal economy, 2000-2010.

	Foreigners affiliated to Social Security	Employed foreigners	Employed foreigners without Social Security register	Percentage over total employed foreigners
2000	402.711	423.800	21.089	5,0
2001	557.074	665.700	108.626	16,3
2002	766.470	931.200	164.730	17,7
2003	924.805	1.250.100	325.295	26,0
2004	1.048.230	1.607.700	559.470	34,8
2005	1.461.140	2.043.800	582.660	28,5
2006	1.822.406	2.425.200	602.794	24,9
2007	1.975.578	2.753.800	778.222	28,3
2008	2.052.406	2.943.100	890.694	30,3
2009	1.878.023	2.671.800	793.777	29,7
2010	1.840.827	2.550.500	709.673	27,8

Source: Annual averages affiliated to Social Security. MTAS/MITI. Employed foreigners, second trimester of every year. INE. Economically Active Population Survey (EPA).

Work insertion and labor market fragmented by ethnic group.

Consolidation of ethnic-labor stratification conformed through the 90s during the first decade of the XXI century.

Ethnic stratification in a triple sense: (i) through the formation of “their own” immigrant activity sectors; (ii) through the work performed by those immigrants, and (iii) through social dynamics that tend to legitimize and reproduce this situation.

1.- “Niche” immigrant activity sectors.

- 2003-2007. Construction, domestic service, hotels, retail sales and agriculture concentrate 60% of foreign workers with Social Security
- In 2007. Foreign workers with Social Security represented 50.2% of total Special Regime Home Employees, 22% of hotel workers, 7.8% of construction workers, and 15.5% of Agricultural Special Regime.
- Foreign workers: 10.3% of all productive sectors.
- This concentration presents clear gender bias.

Work insertion and labor market fragmented by ethnic group.

2.- Work performed by immigrant and its place in productive organization.

Distribution of employed workers, Spanish and foreigners in four occupational groups, 2000-2008 in percentages.

	Spaniards		Foreigners	
	2000	2008	2000	2008
TOTAL (thousands)	14.965,6	17.276,8	432,8	2.943,1
Total (%)	100	100	100	100
Group A: 1+2	19,3	22,5	18,4	7,9
Group B: 3+4	19,7	23,2	11,5	8,4
Group C: 6+7+8	32,5	27,4	20,3	30,6
Group D: 5+9	28,0	26,4	49,8	53,0

Source: Economically Active Population Survey (EPA).

Group A: 1. executives/companies management and public administrations, and 2. professionals and technicians. Group B: 3. middle-ranking technicians, and 4. managing personnel. Group C: 6. skilled agricultural workers, 7. skilled workers in industry, and 8. machinery operators. Group D; 5. services workers in restauration, personal, protection, etc., and 9. unskilled workers.

Work insertion and labor market fragmented by ethnic group.

2.- Work performed by immigrant and its place in productive organization.

- Temporality rate. 2007: 29.2 Spanish workers; 60.4 foreign workers.
- Overqualification. 2007: 10% Spanish workers; 40% foreign workers

3.- Social dynamics that reproduce this situation.

- LOEX and its regulations
 - ✓ Contingent
 - ✓ initial limitations for work permits,
 - ✓ degree homologation problems, etc.
- employers' strategies and
- labor practices.

Work insertion and labor market fragmented by ethnic group.

1. Functional for employers.
 - Cheap work force, flexible and reserve, competitiveness condition.
 - Creation of jobs for immigrants.
2. Complementary with Spanish workers.
 - ✓ No competition for jobs.
 - ✓ Ascending labor mobility condition for an ample sector of Spanish workers.
3. Economic contribution.
 - Immigration is thought to have produced 30% of GDP growth between 1996 and 2006 (Oficina Económica de Presidencia del Gobierno, 2006).
 - Enhancement (cheap) of middle class welfare.

Labor itineraries.

Men: agriculture, construction → transport, industry, services.

Women: Domestic service → hotels, retail, services.

The crisis and his impacts

The crisis in Spain

- Crisis of employment destruction and unemployment increase
- Flip side of the model of economic growth, productive sectors very dependent on the economic cycle
- Spanish unemployment rate twice as large as the European rate

Larger impact of unemployment between the immigrant workers

- Larger presence in the most affected sectors by the crisis (construction)
- Larger proportion of temporary contracts
- Less average period employed, cheapest severance pay

The crisis and his impacts: the unemployment

Evolution of the rate of unemployment for nationality, 2005-2017

	Spanish	Foreign	Foreign EU	Foreign no EU
2005	9,73	13,78	8,01	14,68
2006	8,58	12,33	8,01	12,90
2007	7,78	12,58	11,57	12,98
2008	8,72	14,74	13,37	15,31
2009	15,22	28,37	24,16	30,17
2010	17,93	30,54	25,62	32,65
2011	19,23	31,83	30,66	32,36
2012	22,07	36,81	32,80	38,65
2013	24,98	39,16	32,94	42,24
2014	24,25	37,72	32,41	40,77
2015	22,42	33,65	27,37	37,26
2016	19,81	29,72	23,85	33,18
2017	17,85	25,46	20,48	28,35

Source: Economically Active Population Survey, 1er Quarter of every year. INE.

The crisis and his impacts: the loss of occupational status

Occupational distribution of Spanish and foreign workers, in four groups of occupation.
2008-2016.

	Spanish workers		Foreign workers	
	2008	2016	2008	2016
TOTAL (thousands)	17.276,8	16.318,5	2.943,1	1.982,5
Total (%)	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>
Group A: 1+2	22,5	23,5	7,9	10,6
Group B: 3+4	23,2	22,1	8,4	8,3
Group C: 6+7+8	27,4	21,2	30,6	19,9
Group D: 5+9	26,4	32,8	53,0	61,2

Source: Economically Active Population Survey (EPA). INE. Double nationality is included by Spanish to support series from 2008. There is not included CSL 10. Armed Forces

- A minority with a position consolidated (groups A and B)
- Reduction of skilled workers (group C): was the way of labour rising mobility before the crisis
- Increase of unskilled workers, agriculture, industry and services labourers (group D)

The crisis and his impacts: the poverty

At-risk-of-poverty and social exclusion rate (strategy Europe 2020) for nationality (persons of 16 and more years). 2006-2016.

	Spanish	Foreign EU	Foreign no EU	Total
2006	22,0	26,9	38,9	23,1
2008	21,5	32,9	43,6	23,5
2009	21,8	33,3	42,5	23,8
2010	23,9	31,3	48,2	26,0
2011	24,6	33,5	51,7	26,8
2012	25,0	34,9	53,3	27,4
2013	23,5	38,9	60,3	26,6
2014	25,6	45,2	62,7	28,1
2015	25,5	40,2	63,9	27,8
2016	24,7	47,3	60,1	27,2

Source: Life Conditions Survey. INE

Major impact in the immigrant families that in the Spanish families

- Large dependence on the wage revenues
- More limited savings and economic resources
- Less average severance pay and unemployment insurance, since they have proof of a briefer labour trajectory

The strategies of the immigrant workers and their families

The immigrant families as units of social reproduction who, in order to support or to improve their situation, implement interrelated strategies in the productive and reproductive area, are mutually conditioned, and change as the situation modifies.

Productive area

- Members of the family look actively for work.
- The active foreign population increases to its 2009 maximum, and then descends
- They try to self-employ or pursue other forms of not wage-earning work
- Occupied self-employed foreign workers:
2005: 21,2 % → 2014: 30,8 %
- Change of activity sector

The strategies of the immigrant workers and their families

Occupational distribution of Spanish and foreign workers by activity sector. 2008-2016.

	Spanish workers		Foreign workers	
	2008	2016	2008	2016
TOTAL (thousands)	17.424,3	16.361,0	2.836,7	1.980,6
Total (%)	100	100	100	100
Agriculture	3,9	3,7	5,4	8,5
Industry	16,5	14,4	11,6	8,6
Construction	10,6	5,6	20,7	8,3
Services	69,0	76,4	62,3	74,6

Source: Economically Active Population Survey (EPA). INE. Double nationality is included by Spanish to support series from 2008. Average of four quarters of the year.

Men: from the construction to the agriculture and services

Women: from hotel service, ant retail, back to domestic and personal services

The strategies of the immigrant workers and their families

Acceptance of worse conditions to keep employment or to accede to one.

Austerity policy –as a way of internal devaluation due to wage reduction and working conditions– has especially affected the immigrants.

- Part-time contract: 28% of foreign workers in 2012.
- 2007-2010. 5,5 % decrease of foreign workers' average salary
- Foreign workers' average salary represented 49,2 % of the Spanish workers' average salary in 2013.

(Torres y Gadea, 2015)

Reproductive area

- Expense reduction in terms of spending and housing
- Families again rent rooms, or share apartment with several families
- Some immigrant families are again transnational, as way of reducing expenses or increasing income:
 - ✓ Moroccan families: the males remain in Spain, while the women and children return to their country
 - ✓ Ecuadoran families: the women and children remain in Spain, the males emigrate to other European countries

The strategies of transnational mobility

Between 2011-2016, foreigners inscribed in the Municipal Register decreased by 1.132.906 persons
Since 2012 total Spanish population has decreased due to foreigners' emigration and, in a lesser measure, Spanish young adults

Different strategies

- Return to the native land
 - ✓ We are talking about an autonomous, "spontaneous" return, independent of official programs
 - ✓ Latin Americans: a more definitive return
 - ✓ East Europeans: a provisional return

- Emigration to a third country, especially to other European countries
 - ✓ Latin Americans and East Europeans. Men and women emigrate
 - ✓ In the beginning, a part of the family stays in Spain

- Circular migration: East Europeans
 - ✓ To profit from the limited opportunities of work in countries of origin and in Spain
 - ✓ Previous relationships, consolidated networks, EU as free circulation zone