

Spain: Time of Reckoning after the Immigration Boom¹

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Summary

This paper gives an overview of the immigration boom recently experienced by Spain. The almost open-door immigration policy of the country is examined, together with the relationship between immigration and a model of extensive growth that demanded significant amounts of low-skilled labour. The end of the immigration boom in the scenario of a deep economic crisis is analysed. The complexity and contradictions of integration policy within the framework of a very decentralised state and the views of the main national political parties are discussed. The final section deals with the future outlook for immigration and integration, focussing on the challenges of the transition to a new growth model, the second generation and fundamentalism. The paper closes with some policy recommendations regarding the necessity of the enforcement of an immigration

¹ This paper was written in 2010 and published in *Opening the door? Immigration and Integration in the European Union*, Vít Novotný, Editor, CES, Brussels 2012.

policy based on legality and of an integration policy clearly based on shared values, pluralism and personal responsibility.

Introduction

Recent immigration to Spain is probably unique, taking into consideration the short period of time and the huge relative numbers involved. In January 2010, 6.5 million foreign-born residents or immigrants² lived in Spain, representing 14% of a total population of almost 47 million people³. This is a very sharp increase from the mid 1990s, when only one million foreign-born residents lived in Spain, representing around 2.5% of the total population. This wave of immigration constitutes a historical change for a country that for almost five centuries was a typical country of emigration. The main factors behind the swing from emigration to immigration are the rapid transformation of Spain into a prosperous democracy and the economic boom experienced from the mid 1990s until the recent economic crisis. The combination of a huge demand for low-skilled labour and a very liberal immigration policy has been responsible for veritable waves of immigration from the Andean countries, Morocco and Eastern Europe. An additional inflow of migrants has come from Western Europe, attracted by Spain's appeal as a pleasant place of retirement.

In this paper, recent immigration to Spain will be analysed from several perspectives. Firstly, figures will be presented in more detail and the main characteristics of this immigration will be described. Spanish immigration policy and the economic impact of immigration will then be discussed. Integration

² The terms 'foreign-born resident' and 'immigrant' will be used synonymously in this text. That is, an immigrant is a foreign-born resident living in Spain, regardless of his or her nationality.

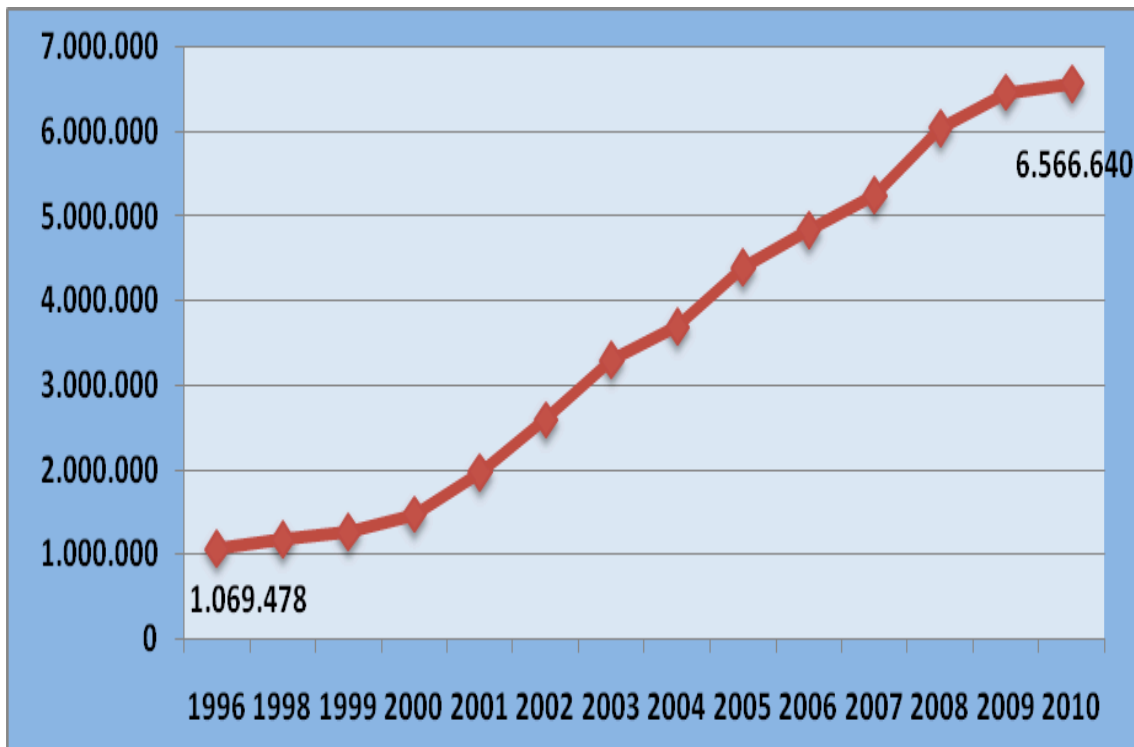
³ All figures used in this paper come from two sources available at the Spanish National Institute of Statistics (*Instituto Nacional de Estadística*, INE): the Municipal Register (*Padrón Municipal*) and the 2007 National Immigrant Survey (*Encuesta Nacional de Inmigrantes 2007*). These sources include immigrants with and without residence permits.

policy and reality will subsequently be analysed. Lastly, the future outlook regarding immigration and the integration of immigrants will be discussed and some proposals will be made.

The immigration boom

Immigrants from almost every corner of the world have come to Spain over the last fifteen years. Figure 1 shows the increase in the number of immigrants living in Spain from 1996 to 2010.

Figure 1: Foreign-born population living in Spain, 1996-2010

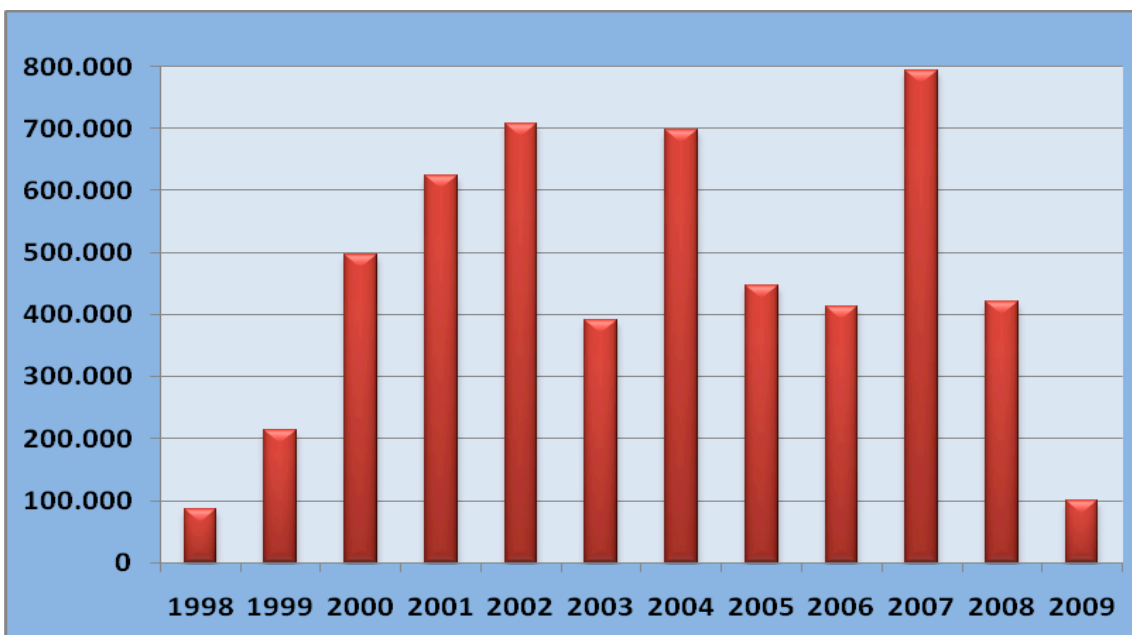


Source: INE (2010) *Padrón Municipal*, Instituto Nacional de Estadística. The figures are for 1 January of each year with the exception of 1996, when the figure is for 1 May. The figures include immigrants with and without residence permits.

This 5.5 million increase in the number of foreign-born residents living in Spain is the net result of a much bigger inflow of immigrants, given that the considerable number of immigrants leaving Spain every year must be deducted. For instance, almost one million foreign-born residents left the country from

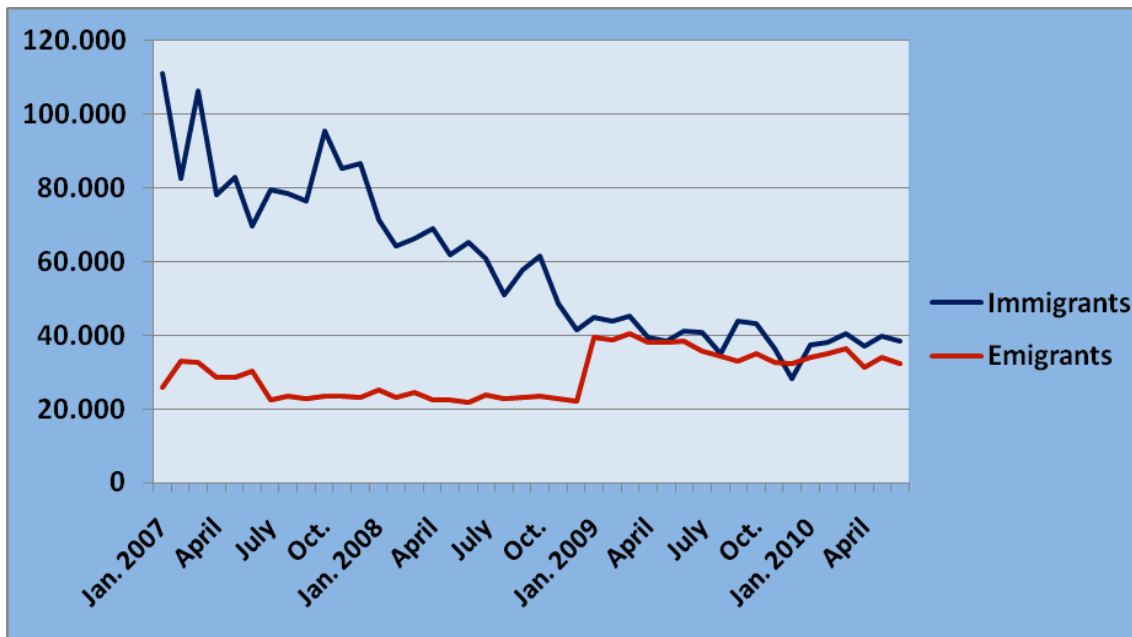
2006 to 2009, reducing by one third the inflow of nearly three million registered during that period. As can be seen in figure 1, the increase was sharply reduced at the end of the period, reflecting the severe impact of the economic crisis on the in-and outflows of migrants. Figure 2, showing the yearly net increase in the number of immigrants, and figure 3, which charts the monthly evolution of in- and outflows of migrants, summarize this change that clearly marks the end of the wave of immigration initiated at the end of the 1990s.

Figure 2: Yearly increase in the number of foreign-born residents living in Spain, 1998-2010



Source: INE (2010) *Padrón Municipal*.

Figure 3: Monthly in- and outflows of migrants, January 2007-June 2010



Source: INE (2010) *Padrón Municipal*.

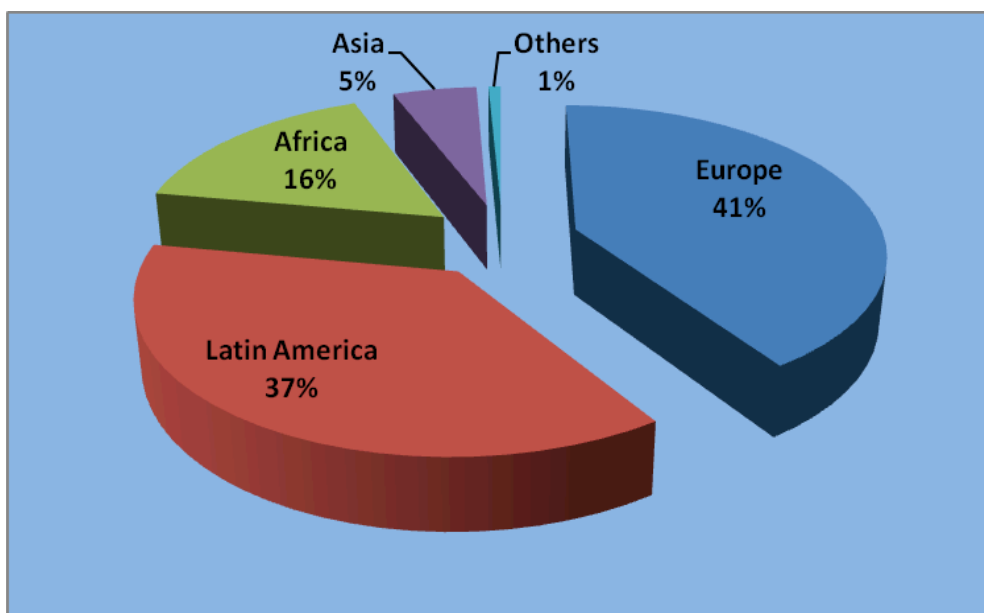
During the last decade not only the number, but also the origin, of the immigrants has changed. The most visible change is the diminishing importance of immigration from the EU15 countries. In January 1998 immigrants from these countries represented 41.3% of the total number of foreign-born residents. In January 2010, this figure was 19.8%. On the other hand, the most spectacular increase, in both relative and absolute terms, was registered by immigrants from the rest of Europe, particularly from Eastern Europe. The number of immigrants from the rest of Europe rose 17.6 times between 1998 and 2010, representing an increase from 6.6 to 20.9% of the total non-native population resident in Spain.

Looking at the national origin of the immigrants, in 1998 the five dominant source countries were Morocco (190,497), France (143,023), Germany (115,395), UK (87,808) and Argentina (61,323). In 2010, the list was as follows: Rumania (786,981), Morocco (754,114), Ecuador (480,213), UK (389,507) and Colombia (367,650). The rate of increase of all these nationalities has been extremely high, but for some of them it has been simply amazing: from 1998 to 2010 the number of Ecuadorians has increased 90 times, and the number of Rumanians has risen 255 times during the same period!

Origin, religion, culture and gender

The characteristics of the immigrants will now be considered. To begin with, in terms of regional origin, the distribution of the immigrants in 2010 was as follows:

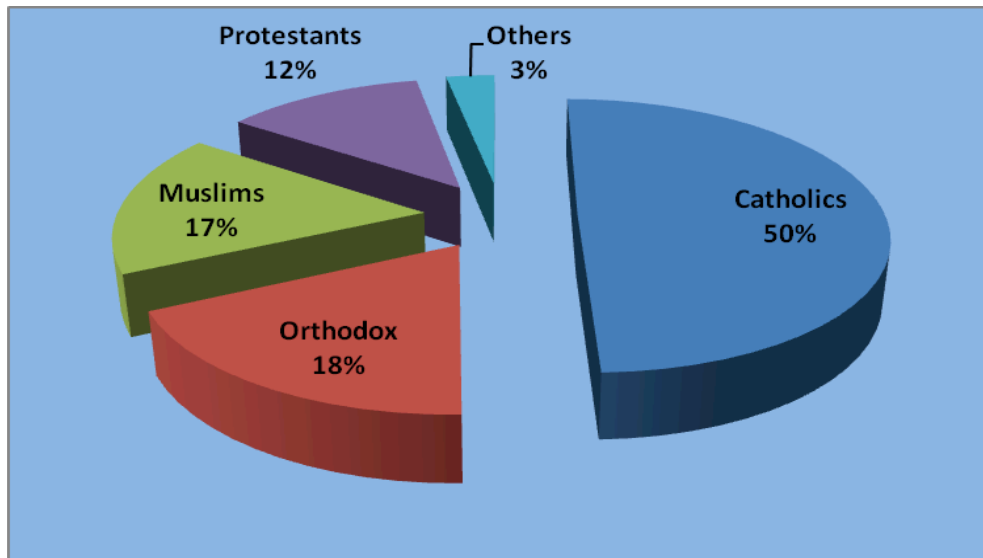
Figure 4: Percent distribution of immigrants by region of origin, 2010



Source: INE (2010) *Padrón Municipal*. Figures are for 1 January 2010.

Another way of grouping the immigrants is by looking at the dominant religion of their native country. This is shown in figure 5, but it is important to note that this graph gives only a very approximate idea of the religious affiliation of the immigrants. In many countries there exist significant religious minorities and, in others, a part of the population does not profess any religious belief.

Figure 5: Percent distribution of immigrants according to the main religion of their country of origin, 2010



Source: Own elaboration based on INE (2010) *Padrón Municipal*. Figures are for 1 January.

As we can see, half of the immigrants come from Catholic countries and a total of 80% have their origin in Christian countries. This is an important element of cultural proximity with Spain, as is the mother tongue of a large number of the immigrants. According to the 2007 National Immigrant Survey, almost two thirds of the immigrants have Spanish (44.9%) or another Romance language (18.2%) as their mother tongue. These elements of religious and linguistic proximity are reinforced by other cultural characteristics of a large number of recent immigrants, such as those from Latin America. The importance of these elements is not only practical, in the sense of facilitating the incorporation to the labour market and social life in general. The mutual perception of cultural proximity contributes to the development of a good social climate and reduces the fears of the native population about potential threats to their own cultural identity. This is evident from the surveys about the sympathy of the Spanish population towards different immigrant groups: a majority of the

respondents express high levels of sympathy with the Latin American immigrants sharply contrasting with other groups, like the Moroccans⁴.

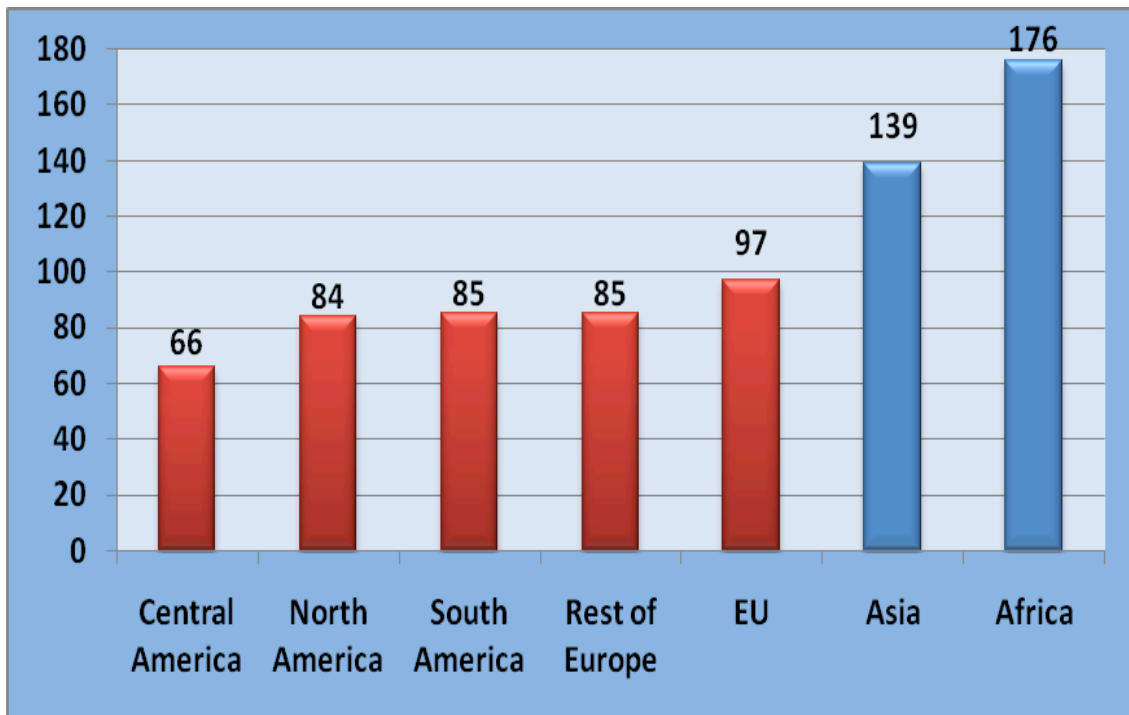
Apart from these aspects, the National Immigrant Survey shows that the most evident division among immigrants lies between those from 'the West' and 'the rest'⁵. In contrast to 'the rest', the group from 'the West', mainly Western Europeans, is much older, includes a sizeable proportion of retirees, lives mostly in coastal or insular areas and in smaller households, is less endogamous, has higher education and more skilled jobs. In this paper the focus will be on 'the rest', but it is important not to forget the existence of these 1.4 million foreign-born residents, who provide the Spanish labour market with half a million workers, many of them highly qualified.

Another important division among immigrant groups refers to gender. On the one hand, there are nationalities in which females are clearly dominant, as in the case of immigrants from Latin America, Eastern European countries outside the EU and some Asian countries, like the Philippines and Thailand. On the other hand, there are heavily male-dominated nationalities, mainly from Islamic and African countries. These disparities reflect significant differences in terms of culture and family structure leading to male- or female-initiated processes of migration. In the case of Latin America, with a comparatively high proportion of female-headed families, the pioneer role of women as migrant is very prominent. In the case of African and Muslim countries, more traditional and extended family structures give young males a central role as migrants. Figure 6 gives a picture of the gender composition, showing the number of men for each hundred women. Regions with a female majority are shown in red, while those in blue are of male majority.

⁴ For an example see Reher D-S & M Requena (2009) *Las múltiples caras de la inmigración en España*, Alianza Editorial, Madrid, p. 283.

⁵ 'The West' includes Western Europe, United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. But note that some groups from 'the West', like those from Portugal or Italy, have more in common with 'the rest' than with 'the West'. On the other hand, immigrants from Argentina have very much in common with 'the West'.

Figure 6: Number of men for each hundred women by region of origin

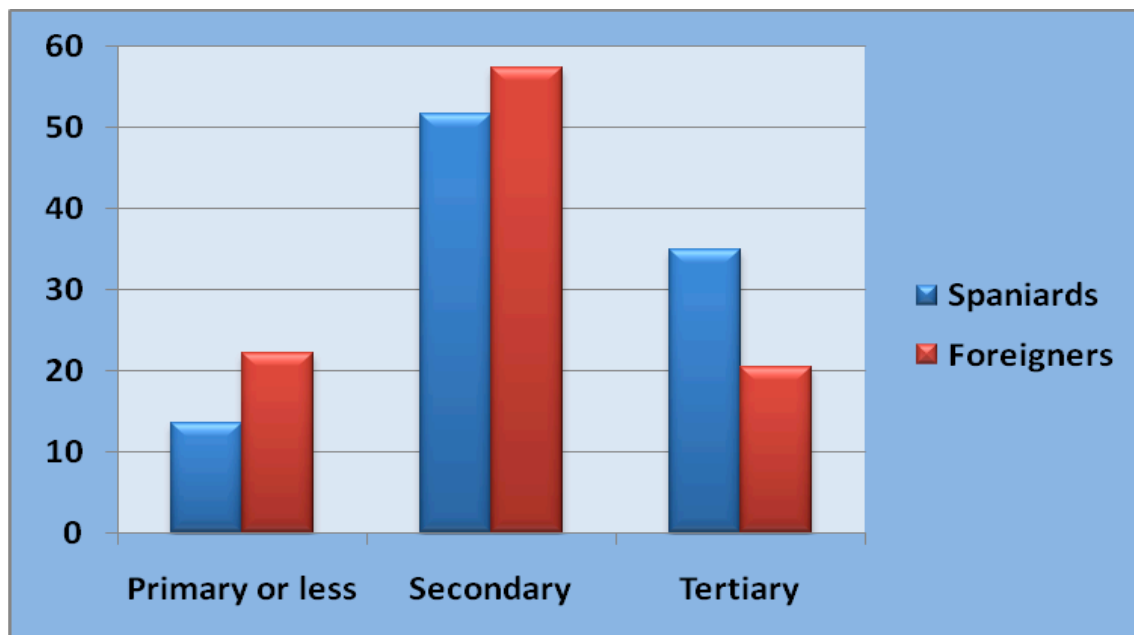


Source: INE (2010) *Padrón Municipal*. Figures are for 1 January 2010.

Education and labour market

The level of education is one of the most important variables in the process of integration, influencing in a decisive way both the capacity of cultural adaptation and the possibilities to cope with a more demanding and competitive labour market. In this respect the general picture shows that the level of education of the immigrants is lower than for the native-born population, explaining a part of the labour-market vulnerability of the immigrants that will be illustrated further on. Figure 7 shows the level of education of the active population (labour force) comparing Spanish citizens with resident foreigners.

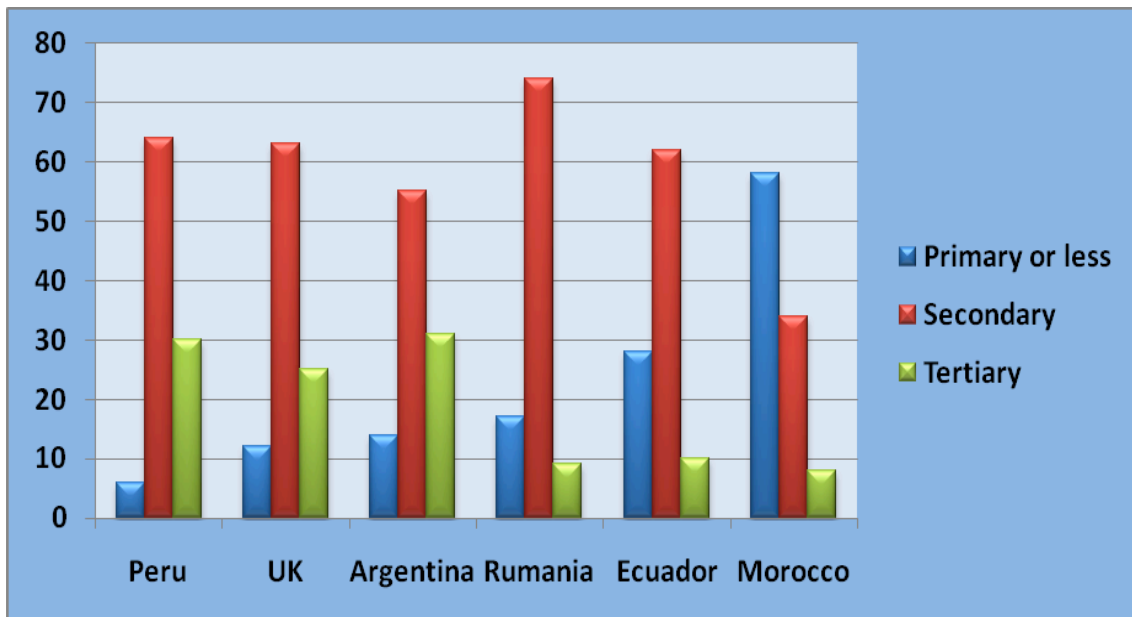
Figure 7: Educational level of the labour force by nationality, 2009



Source: Pajares M. (2010) *Inmigración y Mercado de Trabajo: Informe 2010*, Observatorio permanente de la inmigración, Gobierno de España.

Behind this general picture lie important differences among immigrant groups. There are groups, like those from Argentina or Peru, in which almost one third has university education, and other groups, like those from Africa, where around 20% is illiterate. Figure 8 gives examples of these disparities.

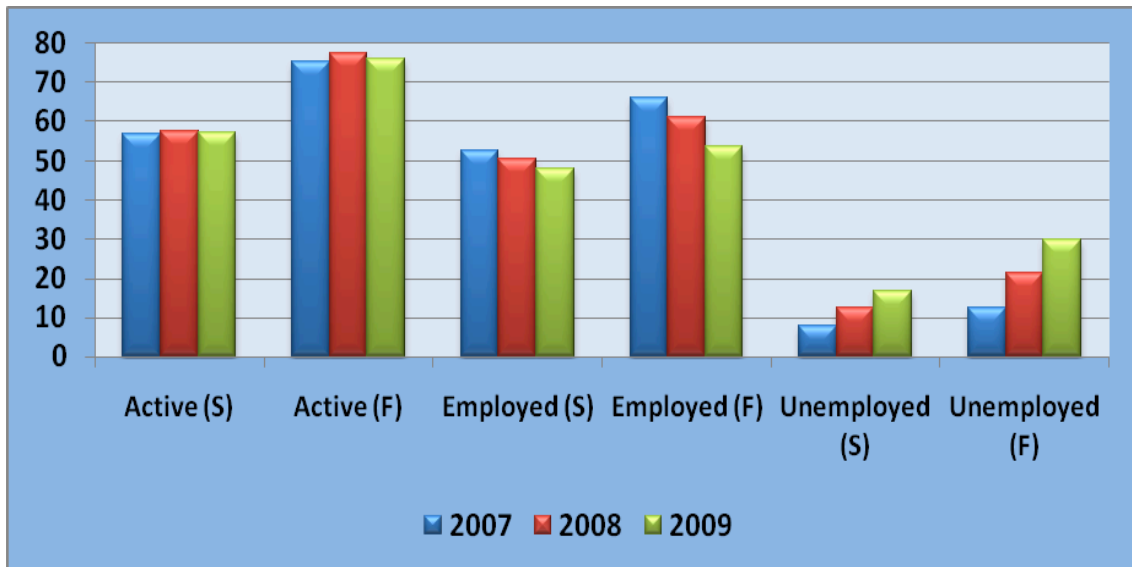
Figure 8: Percent distribution by level of education and origin, 2007



Source: INE (2010a) *Encuesta Nacional de Inmigrantes 2007*, Instituto Nacional de Estadística, accessed at <http://www.ine.es/jaxi/menu.do?type=pcaxis&path=/t20/p319&file=inebase&L=0> on 19 September 2010.

Participation in the labour market is considered the most decisive issue as far as integration is concerned. In the case of Spain, the rates of activity and employment have been very high among immigrants, exceeding by far the level of the native population. This was mainly due to the age distribution of both groups. The recent economic crisis has dramatically changed this situation. The crisis has affected both Spaniards and immigrants, but the impact on the foreign-born population has been much more severe. According to the Active Population Survey, between the fourth quarter of 2007 and that of 2009, the rate of employment fell by 8.8% for Spanish citizens and by 18.9% for foreigners. In the same period, the rate of unemployment increased from 7.9 to 16.8% for Spaniards and from 12.4 to 29.7% for foreigners. Figure 9 summarizes the change from the pre-crisis to the crisis situation.

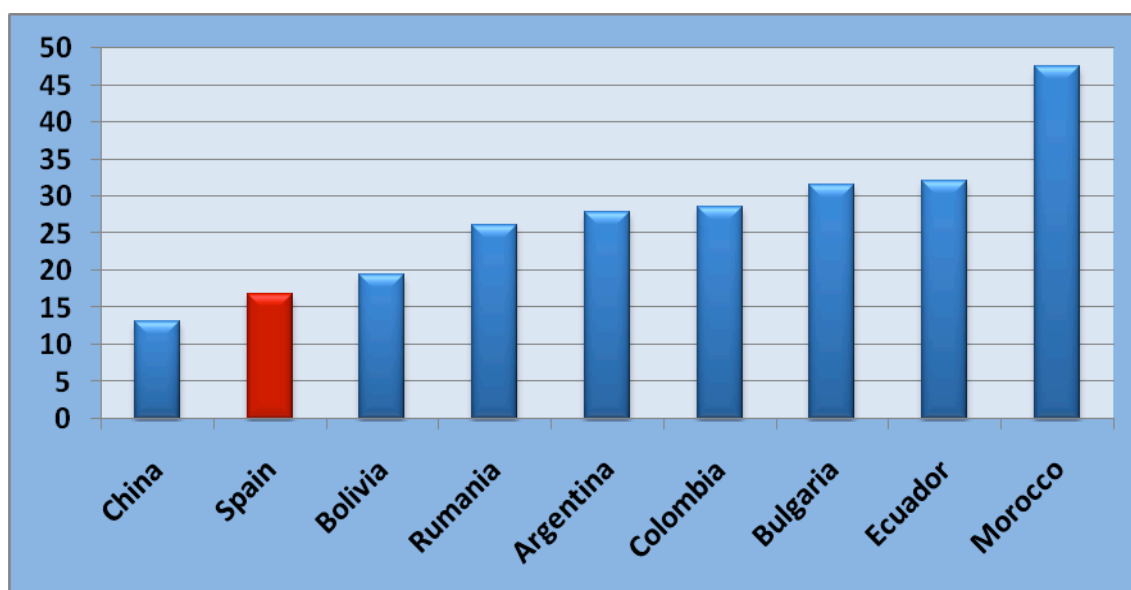
Figure 9: Rate of activity, employment and unemployment for Spanish citizens (S) and resident foreigners (F), fourth quarter 2007-2009



Source: Pajares M. (2010) *Inmigración y Mercado de Trabajo: Informe 2010*.

In terms of labour market integration, there are, as in other aspects, huge disparities among immigrants. For instance, there are groups (like the Chinese) with an unemployment rate that is even lower than for the Spaniards (16,8%), and there are other groups (like the Moroccans or the Africans in general) with an unemployment rate of almost 50%. Figure 10 illustrates these disparities.

Figure 10: Unemployment by country of nationality, fourth quarter 2009



Source: Pajares M. (2010) *Inmigración y Mercado de Trabajo: Informe 2010*.

Immigration policy and economic development

The great wave of immigrants to Spain was fuelled by a very strong demand for labour, combined with a very liberal immigration policy. Over the last decades, Spain has had an almost open-door immigration policy that is quite exceptional among advanced countries. The normal way to immigrate to Spain for non-EU citizens has been the illegal or irregular one: simply to enter the country as a tourist or illegally and then stay on, waiting for a mass-legalisation, as in 2005⁶, or applying for a residence permit after two or three years in the country in accordance with the regulations on employment or social *arraigo*, i.e. the possession of 'roots' in the country. With some exceptions, real border control has been extremely weak and no effective deportation policy of illegal immigrants has ever been implemented. The rights of illegal immigrants – to register on the Municipal Register, thereby obtaining free and full access to the public education and health care systems – have been the most generous in the

⁶ This was the biggest (around 600.000 immigrants were legalised), but not the first, mass-legalisation in recent Spanish history.

world and the country's extended informal economy has until recently provided plenty of opportunities for everyone to make a living. In some cases, like that of the Andean countries, the imposition of a visa requirement for entry into Spain seems to have had some effect, but in other cases, like that of Moroccan immigrants, the visa requirement, imposed as early as 1992, has been quite ineffective, as immigration statistics clearly show. A long-standing tradition of paying lip-service to the law is also a part of the problem, explaining the limited practical effect of successive legal reforms on bringing some order to a situation that, to this day, remains out of control.

In the case of EU citizens, free movement of persons has been a central part of the important immigration from other the EU countries registered since mid 90s. The transitional rules limiting the free mobility of workers from new member States were not hinder at all for a spectacular wave of immigration from, for instance, Rumania and Bulgaria. The extensive informal labour market and the possibility to work as self-employed created the incentives that explain the presence of more than one million immigrants from these two countries living in Spain at the beginning of 2010.

One of the consequences of this almost open-door immigration policy, combined with a very restrictive view on refugee policy, has been the very low number of asylum-seekers. In 2009 there were only 2,999 asylum-seekers in Spain, compared with 30,290 in the UK, 31,810 in Germany and 47,625 in France. During the years 2005-2009, the Spanish rate of asylum-seekers, together with that of Portugal, was by far the lowest in Western Europe. The 25,695 asylum-seekers that arrived during those years represented only 1.2% of the almost 2.2 million immigrants arriving in Spain. But if the number of asylum applicants was low, the number of those accepted was even lower: in 2009 only 350 people were granted a positive first instance decision,

representing 7.8% of the first instance decisions, compared with an average of 27.3% for the EU⁷.

Under this almost open-door immigration policy, the real regulators of immigration have been, as predicted by economic theory, the demand for labour and the cost-benefit ratio of migration. The costs of migration are difficult to measure, including subjective elements such as the separation from family, friends and the home country. Benefits are shown by the wage differential between the host country and the home country, plus what can be called 'the fringe benefits of migration'. In the Spanish case these are very important, including access to the education and health care systems and to the freedoms of a democratic and tolerant society with a very high level of personal security. The sum of all these benefits and the absence of significant legal impediments to immigration constitute the so called *efecto llamada* ('pull effect').

The real evolution of migration flows to and from Spain demonstrates that the fringe benefits of migration alone are not enough to motivate immigration at levels like those of the pre-crisis period. As shown in figure 3, the in- and outflows of migrants are practically equal in 2009 and 2010, giving only a marginal increase in the number of foreign- born residents that is mainly due to the increase in immigrants from EU countries. This 'halt' in immigration mainly from Third World countries⁸ may appear surprising, taking into consideration the substantial differences in per capita income between Spain and those countries. However, it must be remembered that migration to Europe is a very costly and complicated matter that excludes the poorest segments of the population in poor countries. In migration theory this is called 'the poverty trap' and is the most powerful limiting force to migration from poor countries. For people able to afford the costs of migration, the cost-benefit ratio does not appear favourable

⁷ The figures in this paragraph are from CEAR (2010) *La situación de las personas refugiadas en España: Informe 2010*, Comisión Española de Ayuda al Refugiado, Entimena, Madrid.

⁸ During 2009 even a slight decrease in the number of residents born in South America and Sub-Saharan Africa can be observed. This does not imply that immigration ceased totally, but rather that the outflow of immigrants was equal to or greater than the inflow.

without a clear job prospect. At the same time, for most people who have already invested in migration to Europe, the fringe benefits, combined with some informal jobs, can be enough to discourage return migration.

This is the tricky point with a model of almost open-door immigration like the Spanish one, when it is combined with quite generous access to the core services provided by the welfare state. Immigration tends to increase greatly in good times, but the number of immigrants does not diminish during bad times, as the ups and downs of the economic cycle would require. In these conditions, the solution to the high demand for labour characteristic of boom times can be a heavy burden to bear in times of decline or recession. This is very much the situation in Spain, confronted as it is with an extremely difficult and, according to all analysts, long-lasting growth and employment crisis.

Another serious problem with the Spanish model of almost open-door migration is the easy expansion of low-paid and low-skilled jobs, postponing structural change and leading to very poor or even negative productivity growth for the whole economy. The evolution of multi-factor productivity (MFP) between 1995 and 2008 reveals that there are only two countries with a negative MFP-development: Spain and Italy⁹. This means that economic growth during that period can be fully explained by the addition of factors of production and that none of this growth is due to better utilisation of these inputs. In fact, according to the British Productivity Handbook, two thirds of Spanish growth from 1995-2005 was due to additions of labour and the rest to additions of capital, while MFP was declining. No other advanced country presents a similar case of 'growth without development'¹⁰.

In short, immigration was a short-sighted solution for an expansive economy with serious labour-market rigidities and productivity problems. Immigrants introduced a flexibility and willingness to work of which the Spanish economy was desperately in need, but the price of this 'reform through the back

⁹ OECD (2010a) *Multi-factor Productivity*, Stat Extracts.

¹⁰ ONS (2010) *Productivity Handbook*, Office for National Statistics, United Kingdom.

door' was that real reforms of the Spanish labour market and the economy in general were postponed, with the consequences that are apparent today. The same can be said about pensions and social security. The surplus contribution of young immigrants gave some extra oxygen to systems that, in their present form, are unsustainable. However, this boost vanished when the crisis dramatically increased unemployment among immigrants.

Integration policy

It is extremely difficult to discuss integration policy in Spain due to the complex and extremely decentralized nature of the Spanish state, comprising three main levels (national, regional and local) that, in many cases, do not follow the same policy-orientation or do not even have the same idea about into what 'nation' the immigrants should be integrated. The first level is represented by the Spanish Government, the second by the governments of the 17 'Autonomous Regions' (*Comunidades autónomas*) and two Autonomous Cities (Ceuta and Melilla in North Africa) and the third by the 50 provinces and more than 8,000 municipalities. With regard to integration, the most important powers are held at the regional level, but even local governments play a significant role. The national government bears financial responsibility and transfers funds to regional and local integration programmes, even to such important activities as education and health care, which are exclusively under regional control.

The implication of this decentralized system is that, for all practical purposes, it is impossible to speak of a national or Spanish integration policy. Integration policy is a regional matter and reflects regional identities and aspirations as well as the political forces controlling the regional scene. For this reason, reading the voluminous national integration plan¹¹ is almost a waste of time, to the extent that the regional integration plans of the three main regions of

¹¹ This plan has three guiding principles: equal treatment and opportunity, citizenship and civic participation, and interculturalism. See Gobierno de España (2007), *Plan estratégico de ciudadanía e integración 2007-2010*, Ministerio de Trabajo y Asuntos Sociales, pp. 180-84.

immigration (Catalonia, Madrid and Valencia¹²) make no reference at all to the national plan!

Nevertheless, by comparing the integration plans of these Autonomous Regions¹³, some common and other fundamentally divergent elements can be distinguished. There are two important common elements. The first one is the 'principle of normalisation', i.e. not to create permanent separate institutions, services or solutions for immigrants. Exceptional measures specifically for immigrants are accepted in an introductory phase, but the goal is to treat immigrants in the same way as everybody else. This can be called a process of institutional assimilation, as opposed to multiculturalist institutional separatism.

The second common element is the rejection of both assimilation and multiculturalism, aiming instead for a combination of, on the one hand, respect for the law, common values and social cohesion and, on the other hand, diversity or pluralism. This ideal is well summarised in the Catalan integration plan as 'the equilibrium between the respect for diversity and the feeling of belonging to one community only'¹⁴. This combination has different nuances in the regional plans, putting, for instance, more stress on individual-centred pluralism or on cultural-centred diversity. In the plans of Madrid and Valencia, terms like 'intercultural' or 'interculturalism' are almost non-existent, but in the Catalan case one of the objectives of the plan is 'to promote Catalonia as an inclusive, intercultural and participative nation'¹⁵. The stress on social cohesion may be more explicit, as in the cases of Madrid and Valencia, or more implicit but no less significant, as in the case of Catalonia. Lastly, all three regions insist

¹² In January 2010 these three regions accounted for almost 54% of the total number of immigrants in Spain.

¹³ Generalitat de Catalunya (2010) *Plan de ciutadania e inmigración 2009-2012*, Secretaria per a la Immigració, Barcelona; Comunidad de Madrid (2009), *Plan de integración 2009-2012 de la Comunidad de Madrid*, Consejería de Inmigración y Cooperación, Madrid; and Generalitat Valenciana (2008) *Plan director de la inmigración y convivencia 2008-2011*, Conselleria d'Immigració i Ciutadania, Valencia.

¹⁴ Generalitat de Catalunya (2010) *Plan de ciutadania e inmigración 2009-2012*, p. 63.

¹⁵ Generalitat de Catalunya (2010) *Plan de ciutadania e inmigración 2009-2012*, p. 78.

on the importance of shared values and the sense of belonging to one and the same community, but the real meaning of this is totally different, as will be seen below.

The element that is totally different among these regions is a fundamental one, i.e. into which nation, national culture and linguistic community the immigrants should be integrated. In this sense the contrast between Catalonia and Madrid is very clear and illustrative. In the case of Madrid, the answers are self-evident: the nation is Spain and the culture and language are Spanish. For the Catalans, the answers are also self-evident, but totally different: the nation is Catalonia and the culture and language are Catalan. In their first regional integration plan of 1993, the Catalans defined what they call the ‘Catalan integration way’ or ‘doctrine’ based on the idea of ‘promoting the participation of the immigrants in the national construction of Catalonia’¹⁶.

The position of the political parties

Looking now at the two main national political parties, the Socialist Party (*Partido Socialista*) and the People’s Party (*Partido Popular*), it is possible to summarize their respective positions in the following way. With regard to immigration, both parties recognize that the almost open-door immigration policy is neither desirable nor manageable in the long run and that it is essential to have effective border control and to combat illegal immigration. In practical terms, however, the governing Socialist Party is conducting an extremely ambiguous policy, combining indiscriminate identity checks on the basis of

¹⁶ Generalitat de Catalunya (2010) *Plan de ciudadanía e inmigración 2009-2012*, p. 62. The idea of a ‘Catalan integration doctrine’ was elaborated by Jordi Pujol in the 1950s in relation to the massive immigration coming from southern Spain. For an in-depth comparative study of the integration policies of Madrid and Catalonia and their relation to the process of nation-building, see the doctoral thesis of Sandra Gil Araujo (2006) *Las argucias de la integración: Construcción nacional y gobierno de lo social a través de las políticas de integración de inmigrantes. Los casos de Cataluña y Madrid*, Universidad Complutense de Madrid.

physical appearance and eye-catching but very ineffective campaigns about re-migration with an inability to implement real border control and an unwillingness to rule out new massive legalisations. At the same time, the Socialist Party has no proposals about opening new channels for legal immigration. By contrast, at the last general elections in 2008, the People's Party proposed a broad program for what can be called a new deal on immigration. The central idea of this new deal was expressed in the electoral platform in this way: 'It is necessary to propose an immigration policy of great scope, capable of transforming Spain into a country where it is easier to arrive legally than illegally.'¹⁷ To reach this goal, the party proposes a long list of measures to combat illegal or undesirable immigration, such as legally excluding the possibility of new mass legalisations, strengthening border controls, penalising people-smuggling more heavily and establishing real mechanisms for deportation of illegal immigrants or expulsion of foreigners who commit crimes. On the other hand, the party proposes to open new channels for legal and responsible immigration, facilitating 'contracts in country-of-origin' and proposing an immigration system similar to those existing in Anglo-Saxon countries of immigration, with a general immigration quota adapted to the evolution of the labour market and a points system to select immigrants on the basis of 'circumstances that may facilitate their integration, such as knowledge of the language, professional experience and qualifications and knowledge of Spain's legal system, history and culture.'¹⁸

With regard to integration, the differences between the two parties are even more striking. The Socialist Party is still using a vague multiculturalist and interculturalist rhetoric, talking about 'multicultural society', 'intercultural citizenship' or 'intercultural coexistence'¹⁹, but it is extremely difficult to discern a

¹⁷ PP (2008) *Las ideas claras: Programa de Gobierno*, Partido Popular, Madrid, p. 215. For all the proposals of the party on immigration and integration see pp. 213-223.

¹⁸ PP (2008) *Las ideas claras: Programa de Gobierno*, p. 217.

¹⁹ These expressions are taken from the Resolution of the 37th Congress of the Socialist Party held in July 2008. PSOE (2008) *Socialismo y ciudadanía: Más y mejores derechos*, Partido

serious integration project behind these expressions. The People's Party, on the other hand, is a party evolving towards a clear vision of an integrated pluralistic society based on shared values and individual responsibility. These ideas are the opposite of the multiculturalist view that is still echoing in the socialist rhetoric and stress social cohesion, adherence to the basic values of an open society and knowledge of the history, traditions and language of the host society.

The evolution of the People's Party towards this definition of integration can be exemplified in many ways. The evolution of the regional integration plan in Madrid, one of the leading autonomous regions governed by the Party, is very illustrative in this respect. In the 2006-2008 plan, the concept of interculturalism was not only very prominent, but one of the six guiding principles of the plan²⁰. In the current plan (2009-2012), interculturalism has disappeared as a guiding principle and is almost totally absent in the 280 pages of the document. The central ideas of the current plan are individual freedom, personal responsibility and social cohesion. Another example is the proposal made in the campaign before the last general elections with regard to the introduction of an 'integration contract' for immigrants wishing, after a year, to stay in Spain. This was by far the most controversial proposal made by the party regarding immigration and expressed the clear idea of a type of integration that is more than formal or functional, having a component of understanding and acceptance of the basic social and cultural values of the host country. A final example is the recent proposal to prohibit the wearing of the full-face veil inside public buildings in order to reflect the necessary adherence by immigrants to the core values of an open society.

Socialista Obrero Español, pp. 50, 85 and 111. In the electoral platform of 2008 these kinds of expressions are even more common. See PSOE (2008a) *Motivos para creer: Programa electoral*, Partido Socialista Obrero Español.

²⁰ Comunidad de Madrid (2006) *Plan de integración 2006-2008*, Comunidad de Madrid, Madrid.

The reality of integration: will success last?

An immigration boom like that experienced by Spain cannot leave the host society unchanged, but it is still too early to assess the more far-reaching transformations of Spanish society that immigration will inevitably produce. It is important to remember this because, as far as immigration is concerned, the long term is the only appropriate measure in determining success or failure: what seems to be very successful in the short term can represent the very problem of tomorrow. Some examples of this contradiction between the short- and long-term perspectives have already been given during the examination of the relation between immigration, on the one hand, and economic growth, productivity development and social security and pensions, on the other. Some remarks will be made below about how integration has been successful in everyday life and some difficult issues for the future will also be mentioned.

The impression one easily gets of how day-to-day integration has worked is one of almost unprecedented success, taking into consideration the huge numbers of immigrants and the short period of time involved. There are, of course, local tensions and some serious incidents, like the one in the locality of El Ejido in Andalucía in February 2000. The general picture, however, is one of relatively good relations that not even the severe economic crisis has altered. On the contrary, the crisis seems to have made immigration a relatively minor issue for the general public. In the latest survey (July 2010) about the main issues worrying the Spanish population, only 12.4% indicated immigration as one of the three major issues of concern. This is the lowest figure in six years and significantly lower than in the peak year of the economic boom (the figure was 31.5% in July 2007)²¹.

A more systematic view of the relations between Spaniards and immigrants (resident foreigners in this case) is given by the Integration

²¹ CIS (2010) *Tres problemas principales que existen hoy en España*, Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas, Madrid, accessed at: http://www.cis.es/cis/opencms/-Archivos/Indicadores/documentos_html/TresProblemas.html on 19 September 2010.

Barometer for 2009 in the Madrid Autonomous Region²². In November 2009 more than 70% of Spaniards thought relations with immigrants were equally good (36.3%) or better (35.1%) than before. Only 11.4% thought that their relations with immigrants were worse. Immigrants were even more positive: 81.4% thought that their relations with Spaniards were equally good (26.9%) or better (54.5%) than before and only 8.5% said that they were worse!

This is extremely good news, speaking very highly of the 'integration climate' in the country and the tolerant spirit of today's Spaniards. Mention must be made, however, of three issues that can be very problematic if not handled properly. The first is the nature of the Spanish economic crisis, the second is the future of the so-called second generation, and the third is fundamentalism. Let me elaborate a little on each of these decisive challenges.

The characteristics of Spanish 'economic growth without development' have already been discussed, based on massive inputs of (mainly immigrant) labour to low-productivity and labour-intensive services and industries, like hotel, restaurant and retail trade services, construction activities or domestic services. The impact of the crisis on these sectors has been extremely severe and this is one of the main reasons behind the very high level of unemployment in Spain (double the average of the Euro-area²³). In the unanimous opinion of analysts, there is no easy way out of this difficult situation. To enter a new cycle of growth, Spain will require a thorough restructuring of its economy towards more productive and less labour-intensive activities. This means that unemployment will remain high for a long period of time and that the country is faced with the massive task of retraining its labour force, including a large number of the recently-arrived migrant workers. These are major challenges, demanding new political leadership at the national level and broad social

²² FEDEA (2010) *Barómetro de Inmigración 2009*, Fundación de Estudios de Economía Aplicada, Comunidad de Madrid.

²³ For the second quarter of 2010 the Spanish unemployment rate was 20%, compared with 10% for the Euro area. OECD (2010) *Harmonized unemployment rates and levels*, Stat Extracts, accessed at <http://stats.oecd.org/index.aspx?queryid=251> on 19 September 2010.

consensus, including the powerful trade unions, on the necessity of change. The future will tell if Spain has been able to cope with these fundamental problems, but a situation of long-lasting stagnation and increased social and political conflict cannot be ruled out, with consequences regarding integration that are not difficult to foresee.

The second challenge relates to the children of the immigrants. As is generally recognised, successful integration of the so-called second generation is the real litmus test with regard to integration and in this respect there are several worrying factors to consider. The first is the record-high general rate of youth-unemployment of some 40%, which in the case of young immigrants or children of immigrants can easily reach levels over 50%. To this must be added a second worrying factor: the school drop-out rate is very high among immigrant children and their school results are far worse than those of their Spanish classmates. According to a 2009 study, only one in ten young immigrants remains in the education system by the age of 21, compared with five in ten in the case of Spaniards²⁴. The same study points out the substantially lower results of immigrants and the increasing segregation in the Spanish school system. Other studies and surveys point out the weak identification of these young immigrants with Spain and the common occurrence of fights in the schools they attend. In fact, some 60% of the respondents to two recent surveys said that ‘there are frequent fights between students of different nationalities or races’²⁵. This kind of behaviour is a clear indication of an increasing frustration that integration policy has no answer for.

Last but not least is the issue of fundamentalism. There are two important facts to begin with. Firstly, since the 1990s there have been organized

²⁴ FEDEA (2009) *Inmigración y resultados educativos en España*, Fundación de Estudios de Economía Aplicada, Madrid. In this study the term young immigrants includes young immigrants and children born in Spain with two foreign-born parents; the rest are considered ‘Spaniards’.

²⁵ Portes, A., R. Aparicio & W. Haller (2009) *La Segunda Generación en Madrid*, Universidad Pontificia de Comillas, Madrid; Portes, A., R. Aparicio & W. Haller (2009a) *La Segunda Generación en Barcelona*, Universidad Pontificia de Comillas, Madrid.

militant groups in Spain forming part of the international Jihad fighting for the extension of the 'House of Islam', which in the fundamentalist vision includes Spain. Secondly, there are sympathies for militant Islam in a small but not insignificant portion of immigrants from Muslim countries. According to a study by the Pew Research Center in 2006, 16% of Muslims in Spain answered that often or sometimes 'violence against civilian targets in order to defend Islam can be justified' and only 70% answered that this was never the case²⁶. This is almost the same figure (67%) that in a recent Spanish survey answered that they totally agree with the following affirmation: "Violence must never be used to defend or spread religious beliefs"²⁷. Considering other estimates, it can be concluded that around 10% of the Muslims in Spain (some 130.000 people) are sympathetic to or at least tolerant of militant Islam. This is of course a significant number of people and demonstrates that the presence of different fundamentalist tendencies is quite apparent in some parts of Spain.

Time of reckoning: outlook and proposals

Spain is at a time of reckoning. The solutions of the past are the problems of today and the need for change is overwhelming. The immigration boom of the past 15 years was an integral part of a model of 'extensive growth' that has exhausted its possibilities. Spain must now look for a model of 'intensive growth', investing heavily in human capital, innovation and more productive ways of using its resources. This means that the time of mass immigration of low-skilled labour has ended and more selective criteria for future migration must be established and enforced. To achieve this, the almost open-door immigration policy for non-EU citizens must end and the rule of law prevail as

²⁶ Pew Research Center (2006) *The great divide: How Westerners and Muslims view each other*, Pew Research Center, Washington, p. 4.

²⁷ Metroscopia (2010) *La Comunidad Musulmana de origen inmigrante en España*, Gobierno de España, p. 79.

the only accepted method of immigration. A much more liberal view on legal migration should form part of a reform ending illegal migration.

At the same time, Spain has to create a consistent integration policy for the existing migrant population and their children, in circumstances that are very different from those of the pre-crisis situation. Jobs will be scarce and unemployment high for a long period of time. A poor educational background will be a big handicap and the necessity of retraining and long-term investment in education will be of decisive importance in attaining a less vulnerable position in the labour market. This represents a fundamental change in the plans of many immigrants who came to Spain to take any available job, work long and hard and send back remittances of crucial importance to their families. In this situation, for many, the informal economy will be even more important than it is today. This situation may lead to different forms of marginalization that, at the end of the day, could result in serious threats to social cohesion in the country.

Let me now conclude by putting forward some short policy recommendations:

1. Spain must end its ambivalent policy towards illegal immigration, making legal immigration the only way to migrate. This involves not only banning mass legalisations by law, but also eliminating the possibility for individuals to proceed from illegality to legal resident status.
2. This serious commitment to legality should be complemented by a much more liberal system of legal immigration for non-EU citizens and transitional rules to resolve the situation of the many illegal immigrants who came to Spain attracted by the implicit promise of legalisation under the current system. In this case individual legalization should be considered if the immigrant is working or has a serious job offer and has no criminal record.
3. Integration must mean that the whole population lives in the same society and not in segregated societies. A clear definition of integration based on pluralism, individual responsibility, adherence to the values of the open

society and knowledge of the culture and language of the host society must be the common basis of all concrete integration measures.

4. Fundamentalism or any other sectarian rejection of the open society must be firmly combated. Any attempt to restrict individual liberty and equality of rights in the name of group solidarity, religious beliefs or cultural traditions must be severely penalized.
5. Massive investments must be made to facilitate retraining and to give a second chance to early school leavers.
6. The future of the second generation will be the decisive test of integration policy. In this respect a general reform of the Spanish school system towards a system putting stress on learning, discipline, mutual respect and serious work is the single most important integration measure that can be taken.

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