The integration of immigrants in Spain

Increasing immigration and its characteristics

Immigration from developing countries to Spain has risen sharply in the last two decades (table 1). Although the number of immigrants is still modest when compared with the rest of Europe, it has grown more in Spain, relatively speaking, than in any other country in Western Europe during the last decade (SOPEMI, 2001). Moreover, the actual increase is even greater if one considers the unceasing news about “pateras” that arrive from the coasts of Africa crammed with immigrants, and the reality that many migrants live in Spain without documentation, which was brought to light by the most recent extraordinary regularisations implemented in 2000 and 2001 (481,910 immigrants applied).

The number of foreign residents in Spain increased by 11.9% annually between 1991 and 2001. Africans were the group that experienced a higher annual rate increase (+17%), closely followed by Latin Americans (15.2%), thanks to a sharp rise in their numbers in 2001. Asians were on a par with the national average (11.6% annually), while the number of immigrants from developed countries rose by 8.1%. Documented migrants from developing countries resident in Spain totalled 676,220 in 2001, or 61% of the total number of foreigners, of whom almost half were Africans (304,149), mainly from Morocco (77%). The pivotal role of the Africans is also made plain if we include only non-Community foreign workers, as they comprised half of the 200,000 foreign workers who had a valid work permit in 1999.

The rapidly increasing number of non-Community immigrants in Spain, mainly Africans, is due to the extraordinary regularisations. A total of 680,822 undocumented immigrants applied for permits in the five regularisations, implemented in Spain between 1985 and 2001 (43,815 applicants in 1985-86, 130,406 in 1991-92, 24,691 in 1996, 246,392

1 Small, flimsy boats.

### Table 1 – Foreign residents in Spain according to nationality, 1985-2001

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<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Europe</strong></td>
<td>158,211</td>
<td>180,735</td>
<td>412,522</td>
<td>8.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>65.4</td>
<td>50.1</td>
<td>37.2</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Eastern Europe</td>
<td>711</td>
<td>6,377</td>
<td>81,170</td>
<td>28.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States + Canada + Japan</td>
<td>14,394</td>
<td>16,875</td>
<td>18,279</td>
<td>0.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oceania</td>
<td>748</td>
<td>775</td>
<td>944</td>
<td>1.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total developed countries</strong></td>
<td>173,353</td>
<td>198,385</td>
<td>431,745</td>
<td>8.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>71.6</td>
<td>55.0</td>
<td>38.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America</td>
<td>40,796</td>
<td>68,877</td>
<td>283,778</td>
<td>15.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td>25.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>18,253</td>
<td>29,375</td>
<td>88,293</td>
<td>11.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>8,529</td>
<td>63,054</td>
<td>304,149</td>
<td>17.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>27.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morocco</td>
<td>5,817</td>
<td>49,513</td>
<td>234,937</td>
<td>16.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total undeveloped countries</strong></td>
<td>67,578</td>
<td>161,306</td>
<td>676,220</td>
<td>15.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>27.9</td>
<td>44.7</td>
<td>61.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stateless</td>
<td>1,039</td>
<td>964</td>
<td>1,095</td>
<td>1.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>241,971</td>
<td>360,655</td>
<td>1,109,060</td>
<td>11.89</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Foreign residents in Spain represent 2.7% of the country’s population in 2001, the smallest percentage of all countries in Western Europe; this amount falls to 1.7% if we consider only migrants from developing countries, and to 0.7% if only Africans are counted, the group that the Spanish feel is the most difficult to integrate. The dramatic rise in numbers cited above is an objective fact that, without doubt, encourages the feelings of disquiet engendered in Spanish society in the face of immigration from developing countries. Although the number of foreigners in Spain is still relatively low, their geographical distribution varies widely, and this may affect the way the Spanish people view immigrants in society.
To be precise, foreign residents in Spain almost invariably congregate in the most populated areas with the most dynamic economies: i.e., the main concentrations of foreigners are to be found in Madrid, Barcelona, the Mediterranean coast and the archipelagos (fig. 1 and 2). Foreigners from developed countries (Western Europeans) predominate only in the provinces where there is a high level of residential...
tourism: Alicante, Malaga, Balearics and the Canary Islands. Developing country nationals preponderate in the remaining provinces that have a high number of foreigners, mainly in Almeria, Murcia, Barcelona, Madrid and Girona. This predominance also extends to the Ebro Valley and throughout the southern half of the peninsula. The majority of immigrants in Spain come from developing countries (61%), and comprise the bulk of migrants in 41 of the 50 provinces, as well as in Ceuta and Melilla. The unequal geographical distribution of foreigners in Spain is a phenomena that occurs at both provincial (fig. 1 and 2).
and municipal levels, and even in urban neighbourhoods. The spatial concentrations of developing country immigrants have a profound impact on the Mediterranean’s coastal areas, where the practice of intensive farming flourishes, especially in Murcia and Almeria, which over the last twenty five years have developed into the main farming zone in terms of horticultural production for export, mostly in plastic greenhouses. Their major source of labour are Maghrebians and lately Andean Latin Americans, groups that often suffer social rejection, and may even be the target of xenophobia.

Age and gender patterns for foreign residents in Spain differ, and are dependent on the reason for migration. Elderly people comprise a high proportion of developed country immigrants from Europe and North America (similar to the Spanish population), given that 16.3% were over 65 in 2001 and a scant 6.6% were under 15. On the other hand, only a small number of developing country immigrants are old people. Only 0.8% of all Africans in Spain are over 65, 2.4% in the case of Asians, 2.5% in the case of Latin Americans and 4.3% in the case of Eastern Europeans (Delegación del Gobierno para la Extranjería y la Inmigración, 2001). The composition of the latter groups consistently reflects a preponderance of young people, in relative terms, which is not true for foreigners from developed countries. Thus, immigrants under 15 comprise 7.9% of Eastern Europeans, 11.8% of Asians and 17.8% of Africans, which denotes that among the latter groups the tendency for families to immigrate is on the rise. This situation is exemplified by African children under the age of 5, that compose 8.1% of the 304,000 Africans registered in Spain as of 31-12-2001, whereas they make up only 4% of Asians and 1.35% of Latin Americans. Therefore, young adults predominate among developing country immigrants resident in Spain: 71% were aged between 19 and 44 in 2001. Although the proportion of young adults is similar irrespective of the point of origin, the number of women varies widely, as they comprise merely 31% of Africans, but account for 58% of Latin Americans (Delegación del Gobierno para la Extranjería y la Inmigración, 2001).

The above figures show that immigrants from developing countries still represent a small fraction of the Spanish population. The characteristics of immigration to Spain (increasing number of arrivals, differentiated geographical distribution, frequent clandestine arrival, an immigration still on its early stages within the European context) have created a degree of social unrest in the Spanish population and frequent amendments in the policies and legislation covering non-Community immigration in Spain.
Immigration policy

Up to 1997, the majority of foreign residents in Spain were from developed countries. However, immigration policy and social unrest, spurred by the rising number of foreigners, were centred, from the outset, on immigration from undeveloped countries, above all migration from Africa and Latin America. Political and social concerns over foreign immigration were consolidated in Spain from 1985, through the enactment, on the 1st of July, of the Organic Act 7/1985 on the rights and freedoms of foreigners. If we take into account the fact that the Spanish labour market shrank dramatically from 1985 on, and continued to deteriorate throughout most of the nineties, with unemployment levels often higher than 20%, we may deduce that the immigration policy blueprint was not excessively restrictive.

With regard to immigration policy, the following stages can be identified:

a) during the five-year period 1985-90, the Government starts measures to control the growing, generalised, illegal flow of immigrants, enforcing the Immigration Law (1985) and its implementing regulation (1986). A key issue was the potential of emigration from countries of origin, especially Morocco, because of its large birth rate and low mortality and the international economic recession. Furthermore, at that time, Spanish borders were easily breached by illegal immigrants. The fact that immigrants in Spain tended to concentrate in the same areas exacerbated negative social repercussions, as they had to endure highly unsatisfactory living and working conditions and inadequate accommodation. Government measures to control clandestine immigration were far from successful, while the number of immigrants in situations favouring the exploitation of labour and social exclusion augmented, thus laying the foundations for the outbursts of xenophobia in the future.

b) A more active and socially comprehensive immigration policy was developed between 1990 and 1994, on the basis of the document The situation of foreigners in Spain. An outline of Spanish immigration policy, which was presented by the Government to Parliament in December 1990, and passed virtually unanimously. From this document, the following actions merit attention: 1) over 110,000 foreign workers and 5,900 family dependants were regularised in 1991. This important operation, undertaken while the Spanish labour market was in serious difficulties, highlights the determination to implement a socially positive migration policy. 2) Several administrative-policy institutions related to immigration were reorganised or created. For

example: the Directorate for Migration was remodelled (1991), Immigration Offices (1991) and an Inter-ministerial Immigration Commission (1992) were set up. 3) Steps were taken to improve efficiency in the fight against the arrival of illegal immigrants and against the clandestine work normally undertaken by immigrants, 4) An annual quota, or block system for non-Community foreign workers, was initiated in 1993. Although the aim of the legislation was to hire workers in the country of origin – to fill jobs left vacant by the national labour market – *de facto* these quotas functioned, during the 1990s, as a mechanism for the regularisation of workers who were already present in Spain. Domestic service workers and intensive farming labourers have benefited the most from them, comprising 56% and 80% respectively out of the total of 143,161 non-Community workers included in the quotas between 1993 and 1999 (Ministerio de Trabajo, *Anuario de migraciones*). Morocco is the country that benefits the most, as 36.5% of these workers are Moroccan. The annual quotas fluctuate between 20,000 and 30,000 jobs, except in 1999 when 39,711 workers were accepted.

c) The third stage started in 1995, and was defined in the *Plan for the social integration of immigrants* already resident in Spain. This Plan intensifies control measures to prevent illegal immigration and the clandestine work of immigrants in Spain. Immigration policy aimed to focus on the integration of immigrants, foster co-operation with the immigrants' countries of origin to help them develop, and increase understanding of migratory flows in order to manage them appropriately. This Integration Plan, a governmental initiative, sought the collaboration of Autonomous and Municipal Administrations, as well as social organisations and the immigrants themselves. Two organisations were set up in 1995 to assist the Plan: the Forum for the social integration of immigrants, to act as a sounding board for consultation and dialogue between public administrations, social organisations and immigrant associations, and the Permanent Observatory of Migration, to act as an information-gathering macro-system to determine problems and suggest measures that would foment integration. Out of the activities developed from this Plan, it is worth highlighting the publication in 1996 of a new implementing regulation for the 1985 Immigration Law, which aimed at facilitating the long-term stay and integration of immigrants already resident in Spain. The third extraordinary regularisation of illegal foreigners (1996) was included in this regulation. The 1996 review of the Plan manifested that the change of Government that took place in 1996 (from the Socialist Party to the Popular Party) had not engendered a change of direction in the policy of integrating immigrants into society; the Congress of Deputies (24-9-1996) reiterated the guidelines established in 1991.
During the period 1995-1999, the number of immigrants in Spain proceeding from developing countries soared; resident Africans grew by 21.9% annually, Asians by 14.8%, Latin Americans by 11.6% and Eastern Europeans by 25.8%. At the same time, the rise in the number of illegal immigrants virtually corresponded to the figure registered in the mid-1980s, given that 246,392 immigrants applied for permits in the 2000 regularisation.

Within this migratory context, a new Immigration Law was put forward in the Congress of Deputies in 1999, replacing the 1985 law, which attributed a big role to the police, but was inadequate to handle the integration of immigrants. This new Organic Act 4/2000 on the rights and freedoms of foreigners and their integration into society, which came into effect in February 2000, was considered to be progressive and pro-integration. The new Act accepted that a large number of immigrants were present in Spanish territory, that the country needed immigration to provide labour force, that immigrants want to settle down permanently in Spain with their families and that there was a high number of undocumented. The Act therefore needed to encompass ways to integrate these immigrants, whether legal or unauthorised (Díez Bueso, 2002). The Organic Act 4/2000 was approved by the Congress of Deputies even if the Spanish Government opposed it, so that, when the party in power attained an absolute majority in the following elections, the Act was amended, as the Government felt that the Act 4/2000 provided a “strong incentive” for further immigration. The Government considered this Law to be “the most permissive in the European Union” (Fernández-Miranda, 2002). The Act 4/2000 was amended by the Organic Act 8/2000, which is currently in force. Although the most recent Act curtails the rights of immigrants, it did accept principles contained in the Act 4/2000, such as the need for new immigration and the necessity to maintain immigration stable in Spain, amongst others (Díez Bueso, 2002).

After the Organic Act 8/2000 had been approved, the Government decided that “no (more) extraordinary regularisations will be undertaken” as in its judgement they have no effect whatsoever on regulating migratory flows, and also they “undoubtedly provide a strong incentive for immigration”. The Government created a Delegación del Gobierno para la Inmigración, with the authority of a Secretario de Estado, in order to develop the new labour immigration policy in Spain; it will co-ordinate and design policy for foreigners and immigrants, and will be empowered to implement policy in the relevant Ministries. According to the new Secretary of State, the main objectives are: a) to ensure that the foreigners and immigration policy is a State policy that avoids confrontation with political and social forces,
and is in line with the European Union guidelines. b) To organise and rationalise labour force immigration, to which end it will be assisted by existing institutions. c) To provide a suitable legal framework to deal with immigration, along the lines indicated by the Act 8/2000, on the rights and freedoms of immigrants. d) To manage immigration, which means, amongst other things, controlling borders and integrating immigrants who are already resident in Spain. To this end, it is necessary to provide them with a job and the chance of family reunification after having worked for one year in Spain. The Government helps NGOs financially in order to facilitate the integration of immigrants (Fernández-Miranda, 2002).

The immigrants integration process

The term “integration” is usually associated with developing country immigrants. Integration is a social reality that is very difficult to measure, although one commonly accepted way of assessing it is by ascertaining whether or not foreigners and nationals have equal obligations, rights and opportunities, as long as the social groups under consideration are homogenous. This equality should translate into a pluralist civic coexistence. Measuring integration, or selecting the appropriate indicators to measure it in the different stages of immigration, is a complex process — which is compounded by the heterogeneous nature of the foreign groups, particularly in terms of culture, religion, race, which is true for the two main groups resident in Spain, Africans and Latin Americans. Furthermore, not only are there striking differences between groups, but also between individuals (e.g. in education, the immigrant’s age on entry to the host country, the number of years they have lived in the immigration country, etc). Experts maintain that integrating immigrants into the host country is a long term process, and therefore the parameters set to measure the level of integration should only be applied to immigrant children born in the host country (Garson et Thoreau, 1999; Dewitte, 1999; Aparicio y Tornos, 2001).

At present, immigration policies of Western European countries, all of whom have a numerous, rapidly growing foreign population,

\footnote{Such as the Observatorio Permanente de la Inmigración, the Comisión Interministerial de Extranjería, the Comisión Interministerial de Asilo y Refugio, the Foro para la Integración Social de los Inmigrantes, NGOs, unions, employers associations, the Administration itself and a Consejo Superior de Política de Inmigración and the Programa Global de Regularización y Coordinación de la Extranjería y la Inmigración in Spain (GRECO), in which seven Ministries participate, and which is reviewed by the Congreso de los Diputados.}
have made integration of developing country immigrants a top priority. Integration policies are necessary as it is assumed that these immigrants will remain in Europe for a long time, a fact borne out by immigrant surveys, and because of the rising number of rejection and discrimination signs against them.

Nevertheless, immigrants and nationals in Spain are still far from enjoying the equal opportunities that should be created by integration. Obstacles in the path to integration are exacerbated, amongst other factors, by: the recent and accelerated pace of immigration; the fact that immigrants are usually undocumented; family reunification very rarely occurs; cultural and religious differences, mainly applicable to those who practice Islam; large waves of immigrants arrived in a period when unemployment figures in Spain were soaring (1985-1995); living and working conditions of immigrants are often precarious.

All surveys of how Spaniards feel about foreign residents highlight the fact that immigrants are discriminated against in daily life, in the workplace and in access to housing. Furthermore, surveys of the immigrants themselves clearly corroborate the fact that discrimination exists. Added to this, discrimination against developing country immigrants is prevalent throughout Western Europe, as the common opinion is that their integration is difficult, a view normally attributed to a hypothetical cultural gap, in particular for Muslims. (Dewitte, 1999).

In the case of Spain, immigrants from Morocco comprise the largest foreign group, with the highest expansion-rate in recent years, and are the most ostracised, according to surveys of Spaniards. Moroccans also class themselves as the immigrant group that is the least integrated into Spanish society, and the one that is excluded the most by Spaniards (Díez Nicolás, 2002). On the other hand, Latin Americans, the second-largest foreign group in Spain, manifests the most positive attributes needed for integration, as it emerges from surveys on the perception of immigrants by the Spaniards and vice versa. The cultural differences and similarities between these immigrant groups and local population are, without a doubt, the starting point of any explanation of why it is easier to integrate one community rather than another.

Indicators showing how Spaniards discriminate against the integration of immigrants have been determined by recent surveys. The surveys carried out among Spaniards are: 1) the "barometer" made by the CIS (Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas, Madrid) in February 2001. 2) Study No. 2,257 "Youth and national identity" undertaken by the CIS in September 1997, consisting of 2,437 interviews made to young Spaniards, of both sexes, aged between 15 and 29. 3) Study No. 2,214 "Attitudes towards immigration" conducted by the CIS in June 1996, consisting of 2,500 interviews made to Spaniards, of both sexes,
aged over eighteen and 4) a series comprising 11 surveys of “Attitudes towards immigration” carried out between 1991 and 2000, with a population sample of 1,200 people of both sexes, aged over eighteen (Diez Nicolás, 2002).

The surveys involving resident immigrants in Spain are: 1) a survey undertaken in 2000 of 750 immigrants divided into four areas of origin (North African, black African, Latin American and Asian) (Diez Nicolás, 2001 and 2002). 2) Two surveys among immigrant Africans resident in eight provinces of Mediterranean Spain, between Girona and Almería. The first survey (1991-1992) included a total of 498 Moroccans and 116 Senegalese, while the second one (1999-2000) included a total of 540 Africans (of whom 394 were Moroccans); both surveys were undertaken by professors from the Human Geography Department at Alicante University. 3) A survey carried out by the CIS (Study No. 2,216) in 1996 that comprised 1,981 illegal immigrants who applied for regularisation in the same year.

**Immigrants are increasingly ostracised by Spaniards**

Out of ten topics, labour immigration was ranked last by Spaniards in a 1996 survey, whereas by 2001 it was listed as third by the interviewees in the list of problems facing Spain, although it trailed far behind unemployment and terrorism. Even though the proportion of immigrants in Spain is one of the lowest in Western Europe at the present time, and is well below the European average (SOPEMI, 2001), 28% of Spaniards interviewed in 1996 affirmed that there were “too many” immigrants in Spain, and by 2001 42% were of that opinion.

In 1997, a high proportion of young people (41%) stated that immigration is “generally negative” for the host country; in 2001 half the Spaniards believed that immigration is “generally positive” for developed countries. In the case of Spain, half the young people thought that immigration has “more disadvantages than advantages”. The growing number of those who see immigrants as a “burden” is likely to increase since the majority of Spaniards interviewed in 2001 (55%) believed that the number of immigrants will soar over the coming years, whereas in 1996 only 26% of the interviewees expressed such belief. Moreover, in 1996, over half the Spaniards were already convinced that violence against immigrants “will tend to increase” in the future, which led 13% to think that a political party with a racist or xenophobic platform would be successful in Spain; this matches the percentage given in the survey of young people.

According to the interviewees in 2001, the behaviour of Spaniards towards immigrants leaves a lot to be desired in terms of fostering inte-
igration, as the two most widespread feelings are distrust (44.5%) and contempt (15%), an opinion that has not changed since 1996. Eighteen percent of Spaniards interviewed feel that immigrants who wish to stay in Spain "should forget their traditions", although over three quarters view immigrants maintaining their language and traditions as positive. These "concerns" would not, to a large extent, appear to be based on first hand knowledge, as immigrants can still be said to be "complete strangers" to almost half the Spaniards, since they have never had any contact or dealings with them. This may be attributed to the fact that Spaniards have no wish to establish relations with immigrants, or that immigrants are still relatively few in Spain. Notwithstanding the above, the clear rise in immigrant ostracism may be influenced by the fact that people associate "immigrant" with "North African", an identification accepted by 70% of the Spaniards interviewed in 1996 and 77% of young people, and because Spaniards find it hardest to empathise with, or understand, immigrants from these countries of origin. There is still widespread ignorance about the number of non-Community citizens in Spain, as 43-48% of young people thought that Spain had the same number of immigrants as France or Germany, or even more.

In the face of obstacles to immigrant integration ascertained by the surveys, it is certainly encouraging that almost 100% of young Spaniards polled in 1997 were in favour of inculcating tolerance and mutual respect towards foreigners of different races and religions in schools, and also stipulated that Spaniards and immigrants should receive the same treatment from public sector personnel. Nevertheless, the fact that 12% of the same young people do not completely condemn violence against immigrants, occurred in some European countries, or that 5% feel that they might vote for a political group with a racist or xenophobic platform, sends a different signal.

Long-term immigrants who have relatives in the host country are far more likely to integrate successfully. Spaniards who support family immigration do not comprise a clear majority, as 36% were in favour in 1992 and 43% in 2000 (Díez Nicolás, 2002). These proportions are similar to those who prefer short-term immigration without relatives (from 46% in 1992 to 41% in 2000). The change of opinion registered among Spaniards is certainly due to evidence showing that immigrants who settle in Spain with relatives integrate better.

One indicator that Spaniards clearly feel is conducive to integration is the spatial dispersal of immigrants (45%); on the other hand, they believe that the concentration of immigrants hinders integration (66%) (Díez Nicolás, 2002). Moreover, when the Government presented the Plan for the social integration of immigrants in 1994, a policy to
spatially disperse immigrants was given high priority. However, effective measures by public Administrations and landlords aimed at implementing such policy have been virtually non-existent. The vast majority of immigrants also prefer spatial dispersal (83% to 93%, according to country of origin). According to Spaniards, the greatest obstacles to immigrant integration are differences in traditions, language (except for Latin Americans), religion (only applicable to North Africans), Spanish racism and the fact that many immigrants are in an irregular situation (Díez Nicolás, 2002).

Discrimination in the workplace is without a doubt one of the key issues as it has such widespread repercussions. Sixty percent of the Spaniards polled in 2001 felt that Spain needed immigrant labour, a belief that is closely linked to the recognised fact that intensive agriculture in the Mediterranean is highly dependent on African and Andean Latin American labourers (Gozálvez, 2001). Seventy-nine percent of the Spaniards polled in 2001 thought that immigrant labourers should only be allowed entry if they possessed a work contract, up from 63% in 1996.

Spaniards interviewed in 1996 recognised that foreign workers resident in Spain are discriminated against, since the most common response was that their rights should be increased. Seventy-seven percent think that immigrant living conditions are worse than for Spanish workers, mainly due to the fact that they occupy the worst paid jobs (70%), or they accept the jobs that Spaniards do not want to do (77% in 1996, 83% in 2001). Notwithstanding this widely accepted assertion, over half of the Spaniards interviewed in 1996 feel that foreign workers bring down the salaries of Spanish workers and take jobs away from them. These opinions are also shared by young people polled in 1997. However, the belief that rising unemployment is caused by immigrant labour, expressed in polls between 1992 and 1996, has weakened over the last few years in the face of evidence to the contrary – i.e. when the number of immigrants in Spain has escalated, at the same time unemployment has fallen (Díez Nicolás, 2002). Older Spanish people are the most “alarmed” by the negative consequences of foreign labour, together with those who would theoretically be competing with immigrants for jobs, i.e., the least educated and those belonging to the lowest social class (Gozálvez, 1998). Also, 82% of Spaniards interviewed in 1996 think that everyday life in Spain is more difficult for immigrant workers than for other citizens. Extremely harsh discriminatory measures in the workplace represent a large minority, since 16% of those polled in 1996 expressed the view that foreign workers do not have the right to belong to political parties or trade unions.
Immigrants' opinion concerning the likelihood of integration

When asked about equal opportunities between immigrants and Spaniards, the immigrants interviewed in Spain were pessimistic, although their "readiness" to become more integrated appears to have risen. This pessimism is to be expected to some extent, given the large waves of immigrants that have arrived recently, the clandestine way that most immigrants usually enter Spain or the high unemployment figures in Spain, amongst other reasons.

The indicators discussed below are drawn mainly from a comparison of two surveys of Africans resident on the Spanish Mediterranean coast, carried out by the Human Geography Department of Alicante University in 1991 and 2000. It is a young immigration (over 50% are aged between 25 and 34), mainly living in urban settlements (69%) and well-educated (26% went to secondary school and 9% to university, although one third do not possess any educational qualifications). However, irregular immigrants interviewed in Spain in 1996 (CIS, Study No. 2.216) were better educated, as 13% stated that they had a degree, a third had been to secondary school and only 7% were illiterate. The Africans who were interviewed had chosen Spain as a place to emigrate to because they had relatives or acquaintances (48%) (Human Geography Department, Alicante University), they believed they could find work (28%), for its geographical proximity (28%) and the ease of access or stay (18%). The only reason that has altered with respect to 1991— it has actually doubled —is the presence of an immigrant's relative in Spain. Immigrants chose Spain as a destination country because they had been strongly swayed by the advice of relatives and friends already resident there (54%). Only 5% of immigrants who arrived for the first time had had a verbal agreement for work and merely 2% had had a work contract. Most Africans interviewed in 2000 gained admission to Spain as tourists (50%), and almost a quarter entered illegally, 12% came for reasons of family reunification and only 7.4% had a work certificate. However, the number of those gaining admission to Spain as tourists has fallen, as 69% of the undocumented immigrants interviewed in 1996 had entered in this way. Three quarters of Africans stated that their first job in Spain had not been regulated by any type of labour contract. Sixty percent of immigrants' first jobs were in farming, almost invariably in irrigated farming, virtually the only option open to Africans, and in the majority of cases not subjected to labour regulations. If we add to this the fact that most immigrants come from an urban environment, it is easy to explain why they are often unhappy with the work they do, as it will be shown below.

The main obstacles that immigrants feel hinder their integration into Spanish society, ranked in order of importance, are: problems in
the workplace, being undocumented, lack of Spanish language skills (except the Latin Americans), Spanish racism and difficulties in access to housing (Diez Nicolás, 2002).

It would appear that African immigrants have gained Spanish language skills: over half say they can speak and understand Spanish well, although the situation is far from being satisfactory as less than a third can read it and write it well. The number of those who say they have attended Spanish classes since arriving in Spain has grown (from 28% in 1991 to 36% in 2000), although the majority have not yet attended courses. Fifty-eight percent of Africans interviewed wanted to attend Spanish classes, whereas 9% rejected the idea. This is a great improvement since 1991, when, according to the immigrants, only 12% of Africans had a good grasp of Spanish.

In 2000, a third of Africans stated that they were doing a job that did not meet their expectations, although this is an improvement compared to 1991 (50%). The most common grievance is low salary (39%, as opposed to 49% ten years before), followed by over-qualification (17%), job insecurity (14%) and skills mismatch (13%). Two thirds of those who are dissatisfied with their work, mainly farming, do it because there are no other jobs available. Immigrants have usually found their present job by looking for it themselves (41%), although a third found it through the agency of friends. Africans interviewed in 2000 first emigrated for economic-labour reasons (74%), whereas only 12% did it for family reunification reasons (only 5% in 1991). Over a quarter of the Africans who work in the Mediterranean area of Spain affirm that few or none of the foreigners in their workplace possess a valid work contract; the survey was carried out at the same time as the 2000 extraordinary regularisation for which 246,000 immigrants applied. However, only 16% of Africans claimed to receive a lower salary for performing the same work as Spaniards, although 38% declared that the work they performed was harder.

A rise in immigrants' grievances against their employers may indicate a higher level of integration, since the immigrant demonstrates greater awareness of his/her rights. In this sense, the number of those who admit that they have had problems with their employers has risen sharply, from 4% in 1991 to 38% in 2000. The main complaints have been poor pay (37%), long working hours (27%), discrimination because of their foreign origin (24%) and the unregulated nature of their work (20%). Two thirds of those who had had problems with their employer had not approached any organisation to settle the issue, mainly due to their status as undocumented foreigners, or because they were afraid of reprisals.

In 2000, 44% of African immigrants felt that the salary they received was not enough to live on, which was virtually the same figure
as in 1991. One third of Africans sends part of their wages to their relatives on a regular basis, another third never sends any money back and the remainder do so from time to time.

Sixty-two percent of interviewees in 2000 feel discriminated against, since foreign workers are disadvantaged because they are paid less than Spaniards for performing the same job (39%), they are less likely to have a work contract (34%), they are treated badly (26%), with less guarantees of job security (15%) and poor chances of work advancement (14%). Furthermore, 56% of Africans feel that local employers discriminate against them, declaring that two thirds of them are reluctant to offer immigrants a job.

Spaniards may be reluctant to supply housing to immigrants for several reasons, not least of which are suspicion, xenophobia or the proven immigrant overcrowding of rented housing. Half of the Africans interviewed in 2000 shared housing with relatives, and 35% with other immigrants. The housing never has all the required infrastructure, not even electricity (only 89% has electricity), running water (85%) and refrigerator (85%). Almost half the immigrants feel that housing is in good condition, 44% declare that it is normal or inadequate and 7% feel that it is extremely hazardous. The previous occupant of the housing where the interviewees live had also been an immigrant in 40% of the cases, and a Spaniard in another 40%. Two thirds of Africans affirm that they are happy with their present accommodation as opposed to a third who say they are not. This appraisal has therefore deteriorated with respect to 1991, when 72% were happy with their accommodation. Despite the high level of satisfaction registered, 57% of Africans would like to change accommodation, but are not in a financial position to do so (49%), or no-one is willing to rent them housing (30%). Seventeen percent stated that the majority of their neighbours, in the building where they live, are immigrants, mainly from the same country of origin, which indicates that there are now concentrations of immigrants in the same housing. Over three-quarters affirmed that owners are usually reluctant to rent them housing.

Out of the African immigrants interviewed in 2000, 41% were alone in Spain, 38% had part of their family with them and 18% were living with their entire family. Consequently, the number of immigrants who had no family in Spain had fallen since 1991 (58%), and the number of complete families had almost doubled. Moreover, it can be noted that family reunification will increase, since 48% of the immigrants intend to bring their relatives, although half of the interviewees are not going to recommend immigration to Spain to their relatives or acquaintances.

One indicator of integration is how often Africans associate with other people. In their free time or outside the workplace, they almost always associate only with people of the same nationality (78%), only 30%
of immigrants have frequent contact with Spaniards, 42% hardly ever associate with Spaniards and 23% never do so. Notwithstanding this, relations are somewhat more fluid in 2000 than in 1991, when a third of immigrant Africans had no contact whatsoever with Spaniards.

Conclusions

As Spain was one of the last European states to become an immigration country, the proportion of immigrants is one of the smallest despite their frequent geographical concentration and the rate of increase, – the highest in Europe over the last decade. This was particularly due to large waves of Moroccans, the immigrants that Spaniards ostracise the most. Developing country immigration is likely to continue rising sharply, as the two main reasons for this immigration are still valid: the wide gap in economic development and the strong demographic pressure in the countries of origin. In any case, family reunification immigration, which is still in its early stages in Spain, and clandestine immigration, seem likely to increase considerably. It is now widely accepted by Spaniards that immigration in the near future is going to rise rapidly.

Taking into account the expected increase in immigration and the survey results, that show an important discrimination against immigrants' integration, it is difficult to envisage an immigration policy that can encompass the many complexities. Apart from the need for strict entry rules, immigration policies have to include the growing need for foreign labour in Spain, provide solutions for integration and against xenophobia, co-operate effectively at the international level in the development of the immigrants' countries of origin; in short, manage migratory flows in accordance with the needs of host as well as source countries.

A key challenge is education aimed at fostering an integral understanding of the present-day developing country immigration, given the expanding pace of immigration flows and the high levels of discrimination clearly demonstrated in the surveys, mainly in issues concerned with immigrant labour, access to housing, etc. These obstacles are the first hurdle that has to be overcome in order to set in place the minimum requirements necessary for establishing an acceptable level of immigrant integration, and more financial resources must be allocated to this goal in order to accomplish it.

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Summary

The number of legal foreign residents in Spain stood at 1.1 million in 2001, or 2.7% of the country’s population. However, the rate of increase was one of the highest in Europe for the period 1991-2001, 8.1% annually for the totality of foreigners, 15.4% annually for developing country nationals, who are the large majority. The latter increase results from numerous extraordinary regularisations of non-community workers. Africans comprise the largest, fastest-growing group and also the one that seems to have the more difficulties in integrating into the Spanish society. Foreigners concentrate in Madrid and the Mediterranean coast. Immigration policies were initiated in 1985 and reformed in 1991, 1996, 2000 and 2001, in order to regulate illegal migratory flows and to facilitate the integration of immigrants already resident in Spain. Discrimination against immigrant integration has been studied using indicators obtained from surveys of Spaniards and the immigrants themselves. Whilst immigrants’ “readiness” to become more integrated appears to have risen, Spaniards recently ostracise immigrants more, or at least view them as a “burden”.

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