



Migration Profile

SPAIN

A. Executive Summary

Spain is currently one of the primary destination countries for international migration. The largest groups are from Morocco, China, Ecuador, Colombia and usually arrive by air and sea. Many arrivals are people of working age who take job in primary industries and the service sector. Men predominate in the construction and agricultural sectors, whereas workers in the care and cleaning sectors as predominantly women. With regards to schooling, although a significant percentage of people from Latin America have secondary education, the number of those who access jobs in their line of training is very low – educational attainment is less decisive than labour market needs.

Spain receives the fourth highest number of forced migrants in Europe; its asylum applicants come mainly from Venezuela, Colombia, and Honduras. The airport of Madrid/Barajas is the main port of entry by air, while the maritime routes cross the Mediterranean and the Atlantic to reach the Andalusian and Canary Island coasts. The journeys in small boats result in the death of hundreds of people every year. Long waits to formally apply for international protection, as well as challenges linked to housing, education, and employment, impede the socioeconomic integration of asylum seekers in Spain.

The above problems also affect victims of trafficking, usually sexually exploited women who are mostly from Romania, Brazil, Colombia, and Nigeria. They are generally under 25 years of age. Sex trafficking cases may go unrecognized due to being confused with voluntary prostitution. This and other problems make it difficult to implement legislated measures against human trafficking and for the protection of victims.

In recent years, numerous young graduates have been leaving Spain: due to the economic crisis and labour market conditions, they seek better opportunities abroad to use their skills. During the 2012 World Economic Forum in Davos, the term "lost generation" was used in reference to the loss of a new generation of Spanish professionals.

B. Country Profile

I. Basic Information

Spain is a parliamentary monarchy, and its territory is organised into seventeen Autonomous Communities; these in turn are made up of fifty provinces and two autonomous cities. The current president is Pedro Sánchez Pérez-Castejón, whose term of office was renewed for a second time on 8 January 2020. The total surface area of Spain is

506,030 km², of which 493,514 km² is the Spanish mainland; the Balearic Islands cover 4,992 km², the Canary Islands cover 7,492 km², and the cities of Ceuta and Melilla have a total area of 32 km². The total population is 47,100,396, of which 23,089,389 are men and 24,011,006 are women. As for religion, 68.8% of the population is Catholic, 3.3% comprises believers of another religion (Evangelicals, Muslims, Jehovah's Witnesses, Orthodox, Buddhists, Adventists, Mormons, Hindus, Jews), 15.3% is non-believer and 10.2% is atheist. In 2018, 12,188,288 people (26.1% of the Spanish population) were living in poverty and/or social exclusion.

II. International and Internal migration

According to data from the Permanent Observatory of Immigration, the top four sources of immigrants present in Spain are Morocco, China, Ecuador and Colombia. There are more men than women among those from Morocco, China and Ecuador; while migration from Colombia is mainly female. In all cases, the preponderance of migrants are of working age, which suggests that joining Spain's labour market is a major motivator.

According to the IOM, from 2010 to 2019 the presence of immigrants in Spain grew by 21.6%. It is tenth in the world as a receiver of international migrants, following the United States, Germany, the Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, the United Kingdom, the United Arab Emirates, Canada, France and Australia.

Internal mobility, i.e. migration between municipalities, has increased by 65%, with movement mainly to metropolitan and often suburban areas. Foreigners are especially likely to move, due to the impacts of the economic crisis (which recovered slightly between 2014 and 2015).

The employment data from the 2018 Labour Force Survey of the National Statistics Institute (INE) shows that migrants work mainly in primary industry, commerce, and food and health care services. Immigrant men are mainly employed in the agricultural and construction sectors, while women work as domestics and in health care and catering.

In 2018 the average annual earnings for men and women from Latin America were €14,635. This was 62% of the salary of native Spaniards and 59.2% of what non-EU migrants in Spain received.

Taking all of migration into Spain, from both EU and non-EU countries, women outnumber men.

Economics is the main reason for migration from non-EU countries to Spain. This is reflected in the remittances back to the countries of origin, which rose from €6 million in 2016 to more than €7 million the following year.

Immigrants mainly reside in urban areas. According to INE data for 2017, two out of every ten residents in cities are from foreign countries. Madrid and Barcelona have the most, followed by Pamplona, Valencia, Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Bilbao, Granada and Seville.

Depending on the distance from the place of origin to the destination, the routes through which immigrants arrive in Spain are mainly by air and sea. Migration is by air from Asia

and the Americas, but little from Africa; most migrants arrive by sea. Ferries depart daily from the Moroccan coast to Algeciras in southern Spain. There are also unauthorized crossings by small boats from the Moroccan coast over the Mediterranean to the Spanish coast. Two Spanish enclaves that are in Moroccan territory, Ceuta and Melilla, serve as doors to Europe for migrants who succeed in entering them illegally. Finally, the Atlantic route is used by mafias for crossings from the coasts of Mauritania and Senegal to the Canary Islands.

Around 77% of undocumented immigrants come from Central and South America, while 9.2% come from Africa and mainly from Morocco.

The 2016 report of the Spanish Commission for Aid to Refugees (CEAR) notes that migrants and refugees in Spain face different types of discrimination:

1. Discrimination in employment: migrants and refugees cannot enter the labour market due to refusal to recognize their skills, often for the most marginal and precarious occupations.
2. Discrimination in access to housing: residential areas with a higher percentage of migrants receive less investment in infrastructure, resulting in the deterioration of the housing.
3. School discrimination, through the segregation of migrant children into a small number of schools.
4. Exclusion of migrants with irregular legal status from health services.
5. Gender discrimination, which, together with nationality, prevents men and women from integrating economically and socially in Spain.

These forms of discrimination put migrants and refugees at a disadvantage compared to the indigenous population, minimizing their integration in the social, economic, and political fabric of the host communities.

III. Emigration and skilled migration

The average level of qualifications of immigrant origin workers in Spain is lower than that of the native population workers. In 2018, only 32% of all foreigners had secondary education. Among them, however, the educational level of the active population from Latin America is close to that of workers native to Spain, 39% having secondary education and 23% having university studies. Nevertheless, almost 70% of Latin American women and men are placed in primary and service sector jobs (see point 2 above) suggesting that other factors in addition to education affect participation in the labour market.

In 2012 and 2013, some 50,000 Spaniards emigrated, nearly half being women of working age. The main destinations were European and Latin American countries, and 10% went to the United States. The main European destinations are Germany, France, and the United Kingdom. Meanwhile, the main Latin American countries receiving Spanish migrants are Ecuador, Mexico, and Chile.

It should be noted that the current emigration of Spaniards is made up mainly of qualified young people who emigrate because they cannot find jobs in the Spanish economy that are commensurate with their level of education. Although characterized generally as a 'flood', there is no data in support of such observations.

According to the World Economic Forum in Davos in 2012, Spain is experiencing a "lost generation" due to emigration, insofar as the new generations of professionals turn to emigration in order to avoid wasting their skills in a labour market more interested in individuals for unskilled jobs.

IV. Forced migration (internally displaced persons, asylum seekers and refugees)

Spain has the fourth highest number of asylum applications among European countries; they reached 118,446 in 2019, 112.46% more than the previous year. Of the total 53,401 decisions in 2019, 14,938 were unfavourable, 1,659 were granted refugee status, 11,569 were granted subsidiary protection and 35,235 were resolved with the granting of stay or residence on humanitarian grounds.

The origin of asylum-seekers has remained constant in 2019 with Venezuela, Colombia, and Honduras still topping the list of countries of origin by number of applications. Migrants from sub-Saharan Africa make up a smaller share of the flows of undocumented foreigners, accounting for 9.2% of the total.

In terms of the various routes, in 2019 CEAR's Legal Service dealt with 2,191 people at Madrid-Barajas airport, resulting in 1,735 applications. The majority came from Venezuela (591), Colombia (189) and Yemen (141). Migrants from Africa (mainly Sudan, Algeria, Morocco, Eritrea, and Nigeria) and a lesser number from Asia (mainly Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Bangladesh) typically arrive in Spain in small boats from Morocco and Libya. The Atlantic Ocean route from Mauritania or Senegal brings migrants to the Canary Islands, where 18,000 have arrived so far this year. Finally, Ceuta and Melilla, two Spanish enclaves located in Moroccan territory, are the gateway to the land route into Spain, where applications were recorded from people from Syria, Palestine, and Yemen.

The gender composition of asylum seekers has been quite steady in recent years; in 2019 54.56% were men and 45.44% were women. The trend also continued in age distribution, with more than 50% being between 18 and 34.

Arrivals of unaccompanied minors by sea almost tripled, from 2,345 in 2017 to 6,063 by the end of 2018.

The main reasons why asylum seekers flee are political instability and the actions of drug traffickers.

Migrants first enter reception centres located in Malaga, Motril, Algeciras and Almeria. They stay for 72 hours, the time needed to establish the type of help they need. From there they move to other reception centres where the length of stay varies, depending on their profile. These centres are located in small and medium sized cities such as Seville, Chiclana de la Frontera and Merida, as well as large cities such as Bilbao, Valencia, Barcelona and Madrid. However, according to the latest data available, migrants arriving in the Canary Islands stay

in the centres located in Gran Canaria, La Gomera, and Tenerife without being successively transferred to the mainland.

One of the main risks involved in migration by sea is the number of people who die during the journey in boats. In 2019 at least 552 people died trying to reach the Spanish coast across the Mediterranean, while the Atlantic route in the same year recorded at least 63 deaths.

Those who survive the voyage can face a long wait to formalise the application for international protection on Spanish territory, sometimes up to two years. While waiting, the people are in a legal limbo and cannot access other migrant services, and often they are not given an appointment for the next step in the process.

Inclusion in Spanish society also entails many challenges, starting with language learning, and continuing with recognition of training acquired in the country of origin, and access to housing, education and employment. Furthermore, according to the CEAR 2020 report, the most vulnerable people find it more difficult to achieve a certain degree of autonomy. This includes such as the elderly, women victims of trafficking or gender violence, single-parent families or people with special needs.

There is no evidence that asylum seekers have any advantages over members of the indigenous population with limited resources.

The media tend to sensationalize news about immigration by emphasizing events on the southern Spanish border, including Ceuta and Melilla on Moroccan territory. This sensationalism – what the *Red Acoge* calls "immigrationism" – not only influences public opinion; it also creates stereotypes of certain nationalities, thus generating even more prejudices.

V. Victims of human trafficking

There is no accurate data on human trafficking in Spain. While the Fiscalía de Extranjería reports that between 1,300 and 1,400 victims of trafficking are detected each year, the Ministry of Health's anti-trafficking plan estimates that trafficked women make up one third of all those in prostitution; 40,000 according to its estimates.

In 2019, CEAR's Legal Service assisted 24 people at Madrid-Barajas airport who were suspected of being victims of trafficking.

They are mainly women under 25 and victims of sexual exploitation. According to UN Women, 98% of all trafficking victims are women. Similarly, although the lack of official data makes it impossible to speak with certainty, it is estimated that one third of prostituted women in Spain are victims of trafficking.

The victims of trafficking are mainly from Romania, Brazil, Colombia, Nigeria, Russia, Ukraine, China, Paraguay and the Dominican Republic.

Where trafficked individuals are found in Spain depends on the work they are obliged to do. As mentioned above, most trafficked persons are involved in prostitution, but they also labour in the agricultural sector, wholesale and retail trade, textile, leather or shoe

workshops and in laundry. Some of the investigations carried out in 2011 by the Ombudsman revealed the following locations in relation to trafficking: Madrid, Valencia, Seville, Cadiz, Palma de Mallorca, Castellon and Toledo.

The first problem faced by trafficked persons is the insufficient number of places within the asylum reception system to provide them with the necessary care. Places are also scarce for some of the more vulnerable categories, such as women with children, pregnant women, and trafficked men. But even prior to this, trafficked persons may refuse to approach these specialised facilities because the danger of reporting traffickers, or because the authorities fail to gain the trust of the presumed trafficked person.

A second problem is related to the application of the laws: there are few convictions. It starts with law enforcement officials not recognizing trafficking situations, which they confuse with prostitution. Then the prosecution of these crimes is rarely effective, and the protection of victims is weak. Moreover, although work and residence permits can be granted legally to victims of trafficking, the entities working with them complain about the difficulty to obtain these permits.

Trafficked persons can be assisted by being transferred to a shelter where they receive accommodation, food, and legal, social and health advice, without obligation to cooperate with the authorities. This is defined as a reflection period lasting at least 30 days, during which victims decide whether to collaborate with the competent authorities. Similarly, trafficked persons have the right to return to their country if they wish to do so.

Generally, trafficking in women is still referred to by the media as white slavery. This is not only inappropriate but also highly stigmatised because most women in prostitution, which is also the sector with the largest number of trafficking victims, are Black. In this way, trafficking in women is made invisible and charged with negative prejudices as prostitution is seen as a predominantly voluntary rather than a forced activity.

VI. National legal framework

The Law on Foreigners is the name given to the Organic Law 4/2000, of 11 January, on the Rights and Freedoms of Foreigners in Spain and their Social Integration, modified by the LO 8/2000, 14/2003 and 2/2009. Its current implementing regulations were approved by Royal Decree 557/2011 of 20 April, which repealed the previous Royal Decree 2393/2004 of 30 December.

Law 12/2009 regulates the right to asylum and subsidiary protection in Spain.

With regards to victims of trafficking, the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings has been ratified. Likewise, those aspects of Directive 2011/36/EU which refer to the identification of victims have been taken into consideration. The organic law 2/2009 of reform of the Law on Foreigners gave priority to the protection of victims and the prosecution of the crime of human trafficking over the sanctioning of irregular immigration. Royal Decree 557/2011 reinforced the protection of the most vulnerable victims, guaranteed their assistance regardless of their administrative situation, and regulated the granting of a period of reinstatement and reflection. In turn, Organic Law

8/2015, of 22 July, modified Article 59 bis of the Law on Foreigners, extending the period for restoration of victims from 30 to 90 days, and finally, Law 4/2015, of 17 April, of the Statute of the Victim of Crime, created a comprehensive catalogue of procedural and extra-procedural rights to provide a legal and social response to victims and their families.

From 2004 onwards, various changes have served to increasingly limit and restrict the rights of immigrants even though the legal norms have been subject to several reforms in a very short period of time. In addition, there is still confusion about identifying victims of trafficking. An effective identification and protection procedure has not been achieved, and there is a lack of coordination between the different police forces. The result is confusion in practice that prevents the effective implementation of protection measures for victims and discourages them from collaborating with authorities.

VII. Main actors

The State

The main government institution responsible for the migration issue is the Secretariat of State for Migration (which falls within the Ministry of Labour, Migration and Social Security). Its General Secretariat for Immigration and Emigration coordinates the work of three bodies: the General Directorate for Integration and Humanitarian Assistance, the General Directorate for Migration, and the Technical Cabinet of the General Secretariat for Immigration and Emigration. In addition, the Secretariat also manages a website, which is the Immigration Portal, that provides information on migration and the documentation required for a stay in Spain. Another ministry, the Ministry of Justice, is responsible for providing care to victims of trafficking through the Victims of Violent Crime Assistance Offices located throughout the country.

The Catholic Church

The reception and accompaniment of vulnerable and excluded people is the main work of Caritas Spain, and some of its projects are dedicated to migrants. The Episcopal Commission for Migration of Spain's Conference of Bishops guides the study and practice of integral pastoral care of migrants. Migrant commissions at the diocesan level very involved in integral services to the immigrant population. For instance, the Diocesan Commission for Migration in the municipality of Getafe, which also includes Caritas, CONFER (Conference of Religious) and *Pastoral Obrera*, is responsible for medium- and long-term support to migrants and refugees. However, studies on the role of local churches in the care of migrants point to the need to build a network that connects the different services and their providers, not only to optimize these services, but also to make them visible.

There are other Church-related institutions that provide support to the migrant population. The Salesian missionaries of the Pope John XXIII Community spread educational and Christian values, and take care of children and young people at risk, among others, by looking for available families to take them in. The Community of Sant'Egidio provides care for people in vulnerable situations. The missionary sisters of St. Charles Borromeo Scalabrinians, who have been in Guadalajara since 2003, attend particularly to the needs of migrants. The Order of Malta, based in various Spanish towns, assists the marginalized by

providing support services for health and poverty alleviation. The Episcopal Conference of Religious is another body that, via the Congregations themselves, provides services to the immigrant population. Similarly, the Jesuit Migrant Service-Spain is a network that offers accompaniment to migrants and services aimed at their integration. This network also carries out campaigns and studies aimed at promoting human rights and a culture of hospitality.

International organisations

Several international organizations assist migrants and refugees in Spain. Among these are the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), which carry out studies, campaigns and programmes aimed at helping migrants to integrate into Spanish society.

Other organisations

Since 1979, the Spanish Commission for Refugee Aid provides direct and comprehensive care for asylum seekers and refugees in the areas of reception, labour integration and psychosocial care. *Red Acoge* is a federation of twenty organisations that was created to promote the rights of migrants through the coordination of the network's member organisations. Very similar is the work of the *Coordinadora de Organizaciones para el Desarrollo*; founded in 1986, it currently brings together 75 development NGOs, 5 associated entities and 17 regional coordinators, which in turn involve more than 550 organizations. But while these networks organize the work of NGOs and other organizations involved in the care of migrants and refugees, some sources point to a lack of communication, and therefore coordination, between government offices and these organizations.

VIII. Other important issues

In December 2019, the Spanish government participated in the First Global Forum on Refugees convened by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Among the proposals that the Spanish government presented during the Forum, the contributions on strengthening the international protection system and an action plan for the implementation of the Global Compact on Refugees that Spain will have to present during the 2022 Review Forum stood out.

As for the Spanish Church and its participation in formulating the Global Compacts on Migration and on Refugees, there was significant representation from the Spanish Bishops Conference through its Commission on Migration. Along with Caritas Española, Justicia y Paz, and the Spanish Conference of Religious Men and Women, this Commission participates in the Migrants with Rights Network, which is very active in this field. The coordination between all these entities has generated and continues to generate constant collaboration with other organisations of the Church at a European and international level, as well as with the Spanish government for the implementation of the Global Compacts.

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