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**93 DGINS Conference**  
20–21 September 2007, Budapest, Hungary



**DGINS 2007/93/II/3**

**Migration flows and globalisation: a critical challenge for Spanish and European statistical production**

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# Migration flows and globalisation: a critical challenge for Spanish and European statistical production

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**Abstract:** The paper briefly considers the relationships between the concepts of globalisation and international migration provides an overview of the global development of migration flows – with a special focus on their impact on Spain – and examines the various issues surrounding the statistical description of these phenomena. The discussion addresses the critical importance of the challenges faced by statistical bodies in measuring international migration, and looks at the main projects and efforts in this field carried out in Spain. The authors underline the need to reinforce coordinated European efforts and put forward a range of proposals for cooperation among countries and with Eurostat.

## **1. Preliminary points on the concepts of globalisation and international migratory flows**

The term ‘globalisation’ now seems to be a mandatory gateway prefacing any discussion of worldwide or trans-national phenomena. References to globalisation have become such a commonplace of conference papers that the concept is now almost a buzzword – or a password – without which entry to international forums is barred. The ubiquity of the idea carries a high cost, of course: every paper needs to make clear its own definition for the topic of discussion, and all kinds of different approaches and nuances then crop up.

What was first termed "the Information Age" (Castells, 1997-1998 [1]) later underwent a wide spectrum of accretions: increased flows of all the factors of production (especially capital),

growth in international trade, change in social relations, the spread of the mechanisms of economic competition, far-reaching cultural shifts, new political paradigms and long list of other changes. Even the bibliography of texts explicating the phenomenon (for lay readers) is vast.<sup>1</sup>

It is hard to find a core consensus on an explicit definition of globalisation, but, paradoxically, there is generally an implied agreement that the phenomenon is new, quite different from anything that went before, while the features that actually make it new often go entirely unmentioned. Almost no reference is ever made to the differences in the scale of such processes placed in relation to the major changes in our modern societies, starting with the beginnings of New World and overseas colonisation, for instance. And very few comparisons are attempted with the main processes of industrialisation of the mid-nineteenth century in Europe, or with the vast transformations of the period of imperialism and decolonisation.

Comparing the concept of globalisation with the concept of international flows thus entails enormous difficulties, although, as we shall see, the consequences are relatively mild.<sup>2</sup> It may not be worth the effort to sift out a highly problematic consensus on the definition of 'globalisation'. The term can be regarded as the shorthand by which specialists and laypeople refer to the major processes of economic, social and political change occurring worldwide in the latter two decades of the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. The idea is generic, then, a fuzzy cliché that nonetheless offers the advantage of brevity. Perhaps the only truly common features of its many meanings are that it relates to the phenomena of 'our time', and always at a global or planet-wide scale of analysis.

The second member of the title of this paper, 'international migratory flows', is well-known as a field replete with paradoxes. It is not merely a matter of the more technical<sup>3</sup> issues of the statistical definition of migratory flows and its systems of data capture. The demographic and statistical definition of migratory flows is based on abstracting some of the relations between people

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<sup>1</sup> Two references in Spanish exemplifying different approaches are Beck (1999) and Sampedro (2002) [2].

<sup>2</sup> The concept of globalisation is too broad, and its markedly ahistoric slant makes it inadequate for critical discussion. Its ubiquity is probably a result of its lying at a remove from, precisely, the major attempts at sweeping historical overview (see Hobsbawm, 1969, 1975, 1978, 1994 [3]), or even of its standing in a clear landscape of a hypothetical 'end of history' (Fukuyama, 1992 [4]).

<sup>3</sup> The fundamental text for standardisation and discussion of these issues is the United Nations set of recommendations [5], but the numerous methodological papers of the OECD are also worth examining [6].

and the space where they live.<sup>4</sup> It is important to note that these are the only aspects captured, and some of the globalisation processes that would likely be of interest may be left out of this simplification:

a) The statistics of international migratory flows hinge on the concept of a person's permanent residence as the sole locus from which lifetime events and movements are measured. Permanent residence and migration are plainly two sides of the same coin, with significant implications, as we shall see presently.

The space in which people live, for one thing, is no longer confined to the immediate environs of their permanent residence, and many users of statistics often find such further information highly important. The phenomenon is evident in many times and countries: ease of transport and communication makes living spaces and residential arrangements increasingly complex, as seen in two respects now widely exemplified in Spain.

Spain has experienced these circumstances very markedly. The non-economic migrations to Spain, at retirement age, for the sake of the climate and lifestyle, do not sit easily with the conventions of statistical definitions. And, among the more classical economic migrants, there is now a very diverse spectrum of backgrounds, pathways, frequencies of return to country of origin, and so forth. We now have recurring, cyclical, seasonal and itinerant international migrations. These flexible forms of migration give rise to new spaces of life and relationships: such is the case of so-called 'transnational families', centred on emigrants (particularly women) who leave behind children, parents and dependants. In many of these cases it is hard to apply the definitions of 'permanent residence', and, moreover, there is an increasing demand for measuring and anatomising the new phenomena.

There is a major need to consider all these issues, but National Statistical Institutes have generally not attempted much in the way of innovation,<sup>5</sup> perhaps in the awareness of the already immense difficulty even of the simplified migration statistics.

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<sup>4</sup> A detailed account of these issues is available in the classic paper by Courgeau (1980 [7]), especially the introduction and chapter 1 (pp. 1-18).

<sup>5</sup> INE introduced three questions in the 2001 housing census [<http://www.ine.es/censo2001/rvivicast.pdf>] on the availability of own dwellings for holiday or occasional stays and on the location and the timing of use of such dwellings.

The above points on the difficulty of measuring international migratory flows also make for problems in measuring the resident population, such as omissions and, in particular, duplications.

b) International migration involves a geographical 'mesh' of borders able to detect movements, which are captured theoretically only when a line is crossed. The mesh distinguishes international migrations from migrations internal to states. The statistical tally of international migrations thus overestimates relative mobility wherever the mesh-size is small (states with a small surface area) and underestimates relative mobility in large countries and quasi-continental states. In addition, any change in the mesh of international borders poses difficulties for time series, as occurred recently in Europe. The following point tellingly illustrates the significance of this. Owing to the difficulty of measuring flows, the global impact of migrations over the long term is most often gauged by comparing the stocks of foreign-born residents reported by ten-year censuses for all countries. A precaution to be taken here is suitably to account for residents who became international migrants as a result of the break-up of the Soviet Union.<sup>6</sup>

We can now point to some preliminary conclusions on the relationship between globalisation and migrations. First, it is hard to determine a theoretical relationship between the two phenomena that could be tested empirically. Globalisation is too broad a term, and international migrations capture only a subset of lifetime and residential mobility.

In the light of the various developments in the theory of migrations,<sup>7</sup> one would expect globalisation on one hand to stimulate residential movements (classical labour-related migrations to loci of greater economic accumulation in developed countries or emerging poles) and, on the other, to discourage them (outsourcing processes, ease of communication and cost of agglomeration).

Second, it is a possibility that globalisation stimulates general mobility, but international migratory flow statistics are unable to reflect this, because no change in permanent residence is involved or movements occur within national borders. One of the most significant demographic

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<sup>6</sup> This population raised the stock of international migrants despite their circumstances remaining unchanged, due solely to changes in political boundaries.

<sup>7</sup> It is unfeasible here to provide even a minimal overview of the various theoretical approaches. BIJAK (2006) [9] is an excellent compilation on population projection exercises, which also aim to ground quantification on a reasonable theoretical understanding of the phenomenon. Two classic references are the American debates toward an understanding of their recent migratory process ([10] and [11]) and the compilation in issue 38 (2004) of the *International Migration Review*, from a less markedly United States-based perspective.

shifts – the growth of the urban population (and that fraction of the urban population that lives in slums, UNFPA, 2007 [8], perhaps owing to the widespread restrictions on international flows) – falls outside the purview of international migration statistics, despite its importance.

Finally, if an overall relationship were found to hold between globalisation processes and indicators and migratory flows, it is likely that it would be overly simplified or of trivial content, because the social and economic processes that inform migrations in general and international migrations in particular unfold at different levels of analysis. Mid-range theories and working assumptions (PORTES, 2004 [12]) may therefore be more useful.

These considerations relate closely to the information requested from statistical offices, because they require the work to be done in several different ambits. On one hand there is the classical core, the effort to measure the size of the phenomenon and enhance the coverage and reliability of international migration figures. But, insofar as migrations touch upon diverse economic and social sub-processes, a greater effort is required to specify persons in detail (in their setting of family and migratory networks) and track the paths by which they enter the job market, the housing market and civil society.

## **2. Key features of international migratory flows in Spain**

In the second half of the twentieth century the average net number of annual migrants to the more developed regions grew worldwide, and, by the 1990s, had reached close to 2.5 million people a year,<sup>8</sup> or a rate of 2 per 1000 of the resident population of the destination countries. But, according to UN data, with respect to the resident population of developing countries these emigrants made for average annual outbound flows in the latter decades of the century of only 0.4 to 0.6 per 1000, and as low as 0.06 per 1000 in the most underdeveloped regions. The key figures confirm that the chief factors driving outbound flows are not high absolute poverty levels, and show that Asia is the leading absolute issuer of the past decade, despite its modest relative rates of net migrants. In the decade 1990-2000 Europe's absolute attraction rivalled North America's, but its net annual average immigration rate (1.44) was barely a third of the North American rate<sup>9</sup> (see Annex I, Graph 1)

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<sup>8</sup> Table IV.1 of the United Nations report [13], and authors' own.

<sup>9</sup> For the countries included in each region, see <http://esa.un.org/unpp/index.asp?panel=5#LDC>

For the reasons pointed out above this first statistical approximation underestimates actual migratory flows; nevertheless, the picture drawn is remote from some of the more exaggerated visions of South-North migrations. The economic and social impact and the difficulties associated with these figures should be given their due weight, but there is no worldwide migratory explosion, just an increase in flows. Moreover, United Nations estimates point to a future slowdown in these processes: net migrants from the developing to the developed world are expected to remain at around 2.3 million annually. Furthermore, the intensity of South-South migratory flows has also grown rapidly, as have the migratory effects of wars and humanitarian and environmental issues.<sup>10</sup>

In Europe, the situation differs widely from country to country as regards the immigrant population stock at any given time<sup>11</sup> and the trend of net migrant flows. The SOPEMI report<sup>12</sup> points to a slight increase of the migratory impulse in OECD countries, and underscores the increasingly important role of formerly emigrant countries whose net migration rates have caught up with those of established attractors.<sup>13</sup>

The information compiled by Eurostat in any case clearly shows a sharp change in migratory processes in Europe. In the three most recent years for which data are available (2004-2006), the average annual rate of net migrants<sup>14</sup> reached 0.82 per thousand in Germany, 2.7 in France, 3 to 4 per thousand in the Czech Republic, Greece, Portugal and the United Kingdom, 4.1 per thousand in Sweden and Belgium, 5.9 in Italy and Austria, 14.6 in Spain and 15.8 in Ireland. In absolute terms, the dynamic of net migrants in the European Union is strongly affected by the positive balances of the United Kingdom, Italy and Spain (Graph 2).

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<sup>10</sup> A highly visual and illustrative vision of these complexities is provided in [16].

<sup>11</sup> The disparity of the concepts measured by each source is an abiding difficulty. The chapter on Europe of the 2005 IOM report, p 143 [14], provides an example of differing results in the setting of the latest round of censuses. In the EU-15 the immigrant population stock varies from 13.9 to 26.4 million, depending on the concepts and sources used. The 2005 report already pays attention to Spain's growing role in the European dynamic, and to the specific features of Spanish administrative and statistical sources (p 141).

<sup>12</sup> The OECD report on international migrations combines direct data from countries with a standardisation chiefly based on residency permit statistics (hence exclusively reflecting migrations of non-nationals). Its standardisation criteria diverge from the definitions of the new European regulation, but, until the European compilation becomes available, SOPEMI, as a long-standing and carefully prepared source, remains invaluable.

<sup>13</sup> SOPEMI report [15], p 28.

<sup>14</sup> Net migrants (including corrections) of the New Cronos database. The only higher relative figure not included in the text is that for Cyprus: 16.2 per thousand. Data downloaded on 1 May, with reference to the latest update, 19 January 2007, for the Task Force papers in which INE is involved. *EU Methodology for Population Projections*

According to national sources, the very marked impact of the migratory process has increased enormously the number of residents included in our population register (the *Padrón*, or municipal register) in accordance with the two classical criteria for stock measurement: foreign-born persons and foreign nationals (Graph 3). The territorial breakdown of our population register enables us to track changes in minute detail. As in most migratory contexts, the territorial distribution of such groups differs widely from municipality to municipality (even inside the major cities). As immigration progresses, its territorial scope goes beyond the more established metropolitan loci and the areas of strongly growing economic, tourist and construction (Graph 4).

Another striking feature of the Spanish situation is the major change in the countries of origin of immigrants (Graph 5). Some large flows reached saturation point and were replaced by new, powerfully rising ones, which themselves would sometimes stop in later years. This poses a wide range of questions that challenge any detailed understanding of the processes of integration and make it extraordinarily difficult to make predictions.

Integration proceeds rapidly, owing to historic ties with Latin America and to the special features of the Spanish scenario: though not yet not known in sufficient detail, the speed of the process is borne out by the high number of naturalisations in train (Graph 6), which in the period 1997-2006 involved 260,000 people, and the maintenance of high proportions of exogamous marriages (Graph 7).

There is little need to make the point that the process has been led by a powerful drive in the job market (see Annex I, Graph 8) which has taken on immigrants on a mass scale in the fastest-growing industries and in segments that most use unskilled labour – but the process is by no means limited to those industries and segments alone, and has penetrated all areas and affected all levels of qualification.

### **3. The response of the Spanish statistical system and the role of INE**

These vast migratory flows have affected all statistics (not only population figures) and the very system of information production (its design, methodology, and planning in response to new needs). It is impossible to mention all the work being done in this respect. In this paper we highlight



those efforts that are of strategic importance, are especially novel or methodologically relevant, or are of special interest to statisticians of other countries who are not aware of the new features of the Spanish system.

### 3.1 The 'continuous population register' from 1996 onward

Luckily, before the immigration shock came about the Spanish Statistical System had already built and set in motion a fundamental improvement of its municipal population registers, by reinforcing the centralising and coordinating role of INE and introducing more robust mechanisms for communication and detection of inconsistencies. This major improvement, implemented from 1996 onward, is called the *Padrón Continuo*, or 'continuous'<sup>15</sup> population register'. The continuous population register was a fundamental step towards raising the quality and consistency of information and make more intensive use of administrative data. Given the size of Spain's territory and population, and the fact that social practices with regard to administrative matters still have some way to mature, even better results are expected in future. I think Spanish statisticians can be legitimately proud of this progress, which we believe is making our population data system one of the best in the European Union.<sup>16</sup>

The continuous population register allowed for novel and powerful features in the 2001 population census, and it provides extraordinarily rich, up-to-date and territorially detailed information on migratory movements.<sup>17</sup> As a population register, the *Padrón* naturally provides less coverage on Spanish residents' events overseas and on outbound migration.

To improve this aspect, while maintaining the functioning and principles of the 1996 reform, the government introduced a system of renewal and expiry of register entries.<sup>18</sup> The system has been

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<sup>15</sup> As against the old system, where old records were dropped if they did not appear in the forms collected by field agents. The key advances are nonetheless probably comprehensive computerisation, creation of a standardised system of exchange and higher central coordination and oversight.

<sup>16</sup> There should be more comparative assessment studies in the EU, particularly on the coverage of arrivals of foreign immigrants in each country. As outlined later, the coverage in other countries is less than that of the *Padrón*-based register in Spain.

<sup>17</sup> As suggested by some of the graphs in this paper, and as can be seen in further detail on the web page on statistical exploitation of the municipal register at <http://www.ine.es/inebase/cgi/um?M=%2Ft20%2Fe245&O=inebase&N=&L=>.

<sup>18</sup> Law 14/2003.

applied from December 2005 onwards to all non-EU<sup>19</sup> foreign nationals with no permanent residency permit who spend two years in Spain without taking any steps to have their residence put on record. The work done is enormously important to improve the system (2.75 million register entries have been involved so far) and to gain an understanding of migratory dynamics, but has the limitations typical of administrative procedures.<sup>20</sup> The procedure does not include Spanish<sup>21</sup> or European Union<sup>22</sup> nationals.

The Spanish *Padrón* register is open to foreign residents without their having to show that they hold a current residency permit.<sup>23</sup> This is a key feature of our legal system and our history, in which local government played a major role: population registers have been a regular practice uninterrupted since the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. This is an exception in Europe. Most international migration records, being based on residency permits, provide lesser coverage than the *Padrón*-based Spanish records. The production of European statistics under the new Regulation should take account of this fact, and there is a need to (a) document the features of each system and specify the concepts used, and (b) standardise data so as to construct and update a synthesising statistic that produces a complete matrix of migratory flows, including all exchanges (not only those involving foreign nationals or those involving residency permits).

The legal/illegal and regular/irregular dichotomies are over-simple ways of compartmentalising a reality that is hard to anatomise and capture. There are large groups whose legal status may be in the process of changing, or be unclear, or who carry on complex forms of residence and migration. In addition, fully fledged and entitled citizenship is a complex set of relations with various institutions (and registers) in each state (the tax authority, social security, healthcare, education, police, justice system), which sometimes function according to different

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<sup>19</sup> Plus Norway and Sweden.

<sup>20</sup> One difficulty is how to locate, on the basis of a postal address, those persons who may have changed their abode without leaving details of their new whereabouts, but stayed within Spain.

<sup>21</sup> As further background to the information shown in graph 6, we highlight that as at 1 January 2007 there were on record in the population register 935,000 Spanish nationals born outside Spain, many of whom were recent immigrants whose likelihood of returning to their countries of origin is of course significant (in which case the outbound migration would not be reflected by the population register).

<sup>22</sup> The government's legal advisors took the view that it would be illegal to impose on an EU citizen an administrative requirement from which Spanish nationals were exempt.

<sup>23</sup> Some local studies on healthcare show that there exist small groups of foreigners who are not registered even with the *Padrón*, for various reasons.

rules.<sup>24</sup> Spain is in any case at an advantage in the search for a higher-quality measurement of its resident population, because it is easier empirically to assess the various situations of a registered group than to evaluate migrants who are actually resident but not on record with the residency permit systems.

There are ambitious plans to enhance the effectiveness<sup>25</sup> of the continuous *Padrón* as an integrated register with greater online functionalities for documenting residency, making quality and non-duplication checks easier, incorporating a repertory of territorial units and dwellings linked to GIS systems and other government bodies, and other improvements. This set of projects comes under the name *Avanza Local Padrón*.

### 3.2 . *Now Cast (Estimaciones de la Población Actual)*.

Despite the powerful support of the *Padrón*, the measurement of the present (and future) population that serves as the reference-point for statistical operations (household surveys, national accounts, etc) is still reliant on classical procedures of estimation and projection.<sup>26</sup> From 2004 it became obvious that it was no longer viable to rely solely on long-term population projections. A methodology was developed to estimate the present population (Now Cast) which carries on the legacy of the classical procedures but also uses the rich monthly information now available, especially the data on foreign migrations provided by the *Padrón* population register.

Systematic diffusion of the data is still recent,<sup>27</sup> but these are the figures produced and released by INE in all its statistical work and supplied regularly to Eurostat and international bodies; such publication therefore entails no change to the results of statistics already produced.

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<sup>24</sup> The Spanish situation is not in this regard the exception, but a case of wider dissonance among other less noticeable instances. Many countries record irregular residents in exceptional events (for the purposes of healthcare, tax payments, etc), and this is in fact the basis of statistical approaches to irregular residents, using a variety of sources (Tapinos and Delaunay, 1998 [17]).

<sup>25</sup> The effort involves a wide-ranging institutional partnership, given the highly decentralised nature of Spanish government.

<sup>26</sup> The reason is the time available. At present, the *Padrón* system of information supply, discussions across government bodies and final checking and approval take about twelve months. But statistical operations require population figures in far shorter timeframes.

<sup>27</sup> From July 2007 onward, half-yearly (populations at 1 January and 1 July every year).  
<http://www.ine.es/inebase/cgi/um?M=%2Ft20%2Fp259&O=inebase&N=&L=>

### 3.3 *The 2007 National Immigrants Survey*

Despite the wealth of demographic information in the Spanish statistical system, the large volume of migratory flows gave rise to the development of various statistical operations to meet the large demand for information from the public, researchers and Spanish government bodies, while ensuring that the basic measurements remained accurate. There had been some interesting and significant work being done for some time on various groups and geographic areas, but there was a need for an investigation effort that provided an overall in-depth picture of the phenomenon.

In partnership with the Ministry of Labour and with the close involvement of a team of academics of the Universidad de Madrid, INE carried out a project aimed at providing an in-depth vision that would supplement the regular information of the statistical system. The target population was foreign-born residents<sup>28</sup> in Spain. A broad-ranging questionnaire was designed on respondents' demographic characteristics, family members and educational background and their conditions in their countries of origin, their migratory pathways (overseas and within Spain), the means, reasons and features of their travel, their work history overseas and in Spain, their relations with their country of origin and their integration with the civil society of their immediate surroundings. Special attention was paid to identifying the social and personal networks of each respondent and his or her family members, and their role in the migration process.

The project was a first major statistical effort. A more segment-specific project may be appropriate later on, or a similar overall project in a future context of European cooperation and planned international comparability of results.

### 3.4 *Other projects in progress*

INE is involved in a novel and significant project to integrate demographic and labour-related data which will strongly reinforce the statistical monitoring of immigrants and foreign nationals: the *Muestra Continua de Vidas Laborales* ("continuous sample of working lives"), which brings

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<sup>28</sup> The fieldwork was done from November 2006 to February 2007. 15,465 interviews were conducted with foreign-born persons aged above 16 (with basic details being collected for all persons in such households). Results will be released in December 2007.

together job history data from social security records, income data from the tax authorities and residence data from the *Padrón* population register.<sup>29</sup>

Two large statistical operations now being prepared will be of key importance in the future tracking of migrations: The *Estudio Demográfico Longitudinal* (“longitudinal demographic study”) and the future 2011 censuses. The “longitudinal demographic study” is a highly interesting and strategically crucial statistical operation<sup>30</sup>, which will in the medium term attempt to integrate all demographic data: censuses, the continuous population register or *Padrón*, lifetime statistics, surveys and administrative records (cadastre, social security and others).

Given the importance of the migrations data sourced from the *Padrón* population register (*Estadística de Variaciones Residenciales* [the residential variations statistic]) and their effect on Spain’s population figures, a survey is being developed to cross-check the population register data used as cross-border migratory movements. A pilot will be conducted in the third quarter of 2007; the survey is called *Encuesta de Población Residente en España* (“Spanish-resident population survey”).<sup>31</sup> There is also a different methodological project to track contact information in the INE household surveys based on the population register to obtain an indicator of change as regards the coverage and reliability of the register.

A project is underway to develop an *Encuesta Coyuntural de Migraciones Exteriores* (“short-term cross-border migrations survey”) to capture the key social, economic and family-related features of cross-border migrants to supplement the data in the population register (sex, age, place of birth and nationality).

Last, but by no means least, one of the most significant steps forward in improving our systems of migration data will be the newly approved Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on Community statistics on migration and international protection. The Regulation will of course guide Spanish efforts, the central goal of which will be to make the best use of the

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<sup>29</sup> The survey may be conducted for all foreign nationals. For further information:  
[http://www.seg-social.es/inicio/?MIval=cw\\_lanzadera&LANG=1&URL=82](http://www.seg-social.es/inicio/?MIval=cw_lanzadera&LANG=1&URL=82)

<sup>30</sup> Outline available in the inventory of statistical operations:  
<http://www.ine.es/ioe/ioeFicha.jsp?cod=30265&codtema=&textema=&codorg=&textorg=&sig=null&L=0>

<sup>31</sup> Outline available in the inventory of statistical operations:  
<http://www.ine.es/ioe/ioeFicha.jsp?cod=30267&codtema=&textema=&codorg=&textorg=&sig=null&L=0>

available administrative sources and coordinate the production of information in the Spanish statistical system. The statistics on immigrants, emigrants and stocks of residents (article 3) will be compiled on the basis of *Padrón* population register data. Compliance with the definitions under the Regulation is unproblematic, given the registral and longitudinal nature of the Spanish population register. The greatest efforts will be devoted to producing statistics on residency permits, which must combine flows of new permit grants and stocks of existing permits, a classification of reasons for granting permits and other characteristics: all this information is available but is not presently exploited on the terms required by the Regulation.

#### **4. Anticipating an explosion of demand for statistics relevant to the debates on international migrations and their economic, social and political effects: reflections and proposals for discussion**

European statistical offices face a crucial challenge in connection with migration statistics, because the debate on migration flows and on the processes of integrating migrants and their descendants has become a fixture of the agenda of policymaking in Europe and in many individual states. The debate goes through cycles, but is nevertheless set to be intense, with much discussion of national identities, European identity and the social and cultural points of reference by which people recognise themselves and behave in society. The volume of present migratory flows, and the likelihood that they will continue to be strong (with wide differences from country to country and at different times) at the European level, will pose a great challenge at a time when we also face an aging population and natural increase rates that are already or will soon be negative.

Reliable statistics that properly meet requirements are crucial to democratic debate and decision-making. They are key to understanding the process and following all its facets (demographic, economic, educational, labour-related, social, etc). Statistics should enable citizens to understand what is going on and distinguish reality from clichés and platitudes. They should enable government (including regional and city governments, where the largest flows and stocks of immigrants are clustered) to take steps on the basis of the importance of the phenomenon and its effects. The availability of good statistics is also key to assessing needs for services and infrastructure, to deciding how best to apportion expenditures and to evaluate policy on managing flows, market intervention and the outcome of investment in education, healthcare and fixed capital.

It is important to anticipate demand, because once demand grows strong there is no longer time to develop appropriate information systems. If statistical offices fail to give priority to these demographic issues, they will lose their key role in the information system and compromise measurements of economic magnitudes.

International migration is clearly a matter that requires joint effort at the European level and with Eurostat. In my opinion, there are several discussions and proposals we should consider:

# *Improve the updating and coverage of New Cronos information on migratory flows.* This complex issue involves all of us. If we do not improve the quantity of information, speed of upload and user options of the Eurostat website, it will be hard to make the system move forward. The present situation needs improvement.

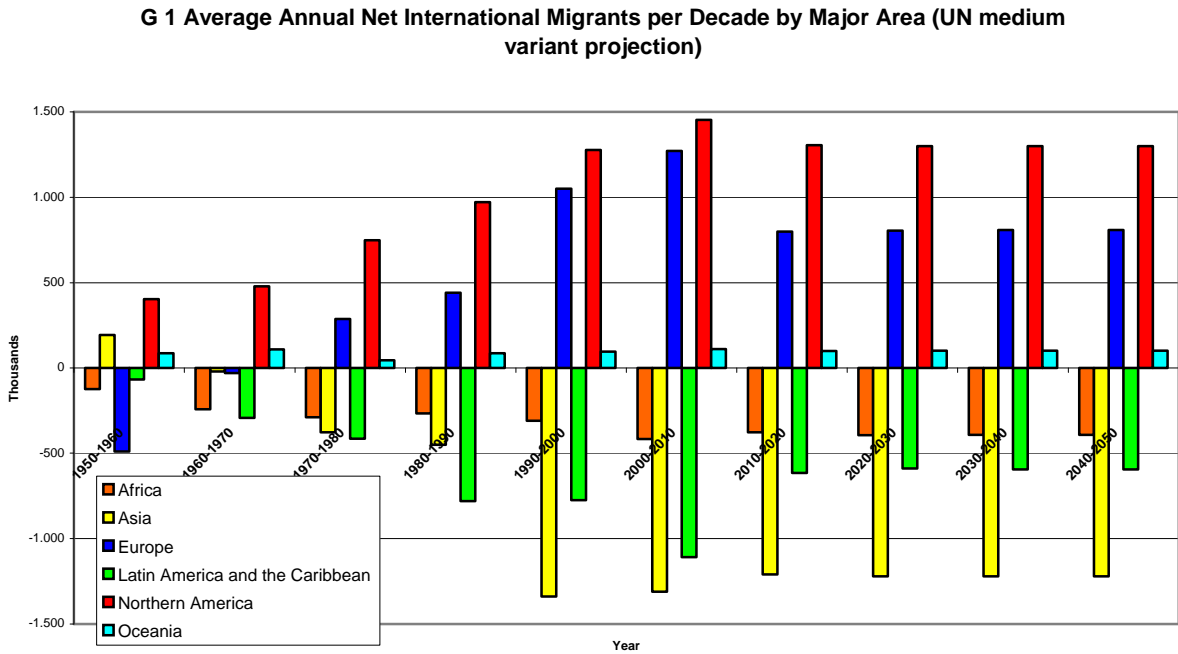
# *Coherent matrix of European migratory flows based on countries' data.* Work should be done to develop a regular system of comparison and integration of data so as to derive a matrix of intra-European migrations using not entirely consistent or complete data. It is important for this work to be updated and maintained over time.

# *Pilot project to evaluate flows and stocks of migrants among countries with population registers.* This only involves some countries, but its enormous potential makes it essential as a symbolic project within the EU. The project would involve the exchange of individual information (under all confidentiality safeguards) and would initially only entail statistical use and evaluation of international migration statistics (and their reverse: the resident population), focusing on comparing international migrations and, possibly, the stocks of foreign residents. Spain is very interested in starting work and pilot projects. The kind of work involved would not, all else being equal, involve high costs or special forms of financing. From the point of view of groups of their nationals in Spain, INE would be especially interested in exchanges with Romania, Germany, Bulgaria (Ukraine among countries outside the European Economic Area), Poland, the Netherlands, Belgium, Sweden and Norway. The key point is that the project should start; where exactly it starts is less important.

# *European Immigrants Survey.* This project could perhaps be developed using a pilot project in the countries with the most interest. INE would contribute its commitment and experience.

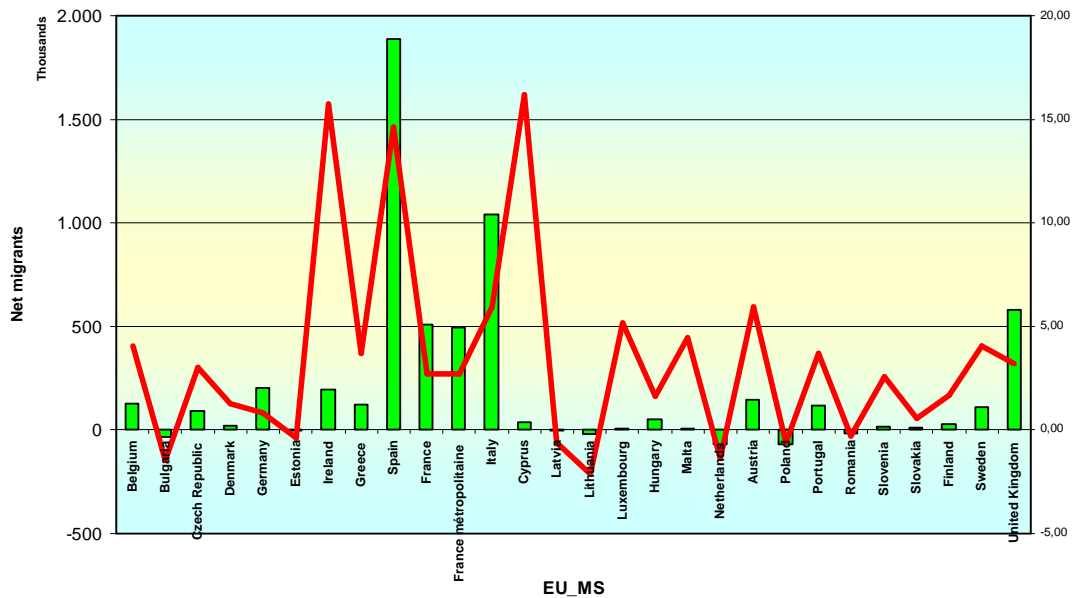
**ANNEX I: GRAPHICS AND TABLES**

**G 1 Average Annual Net International Migrants per Decade by Major Area (UN medium variant projection)**



**GRAPH 2. EU international net migration 2004-2006 (absolute figures and rates)**

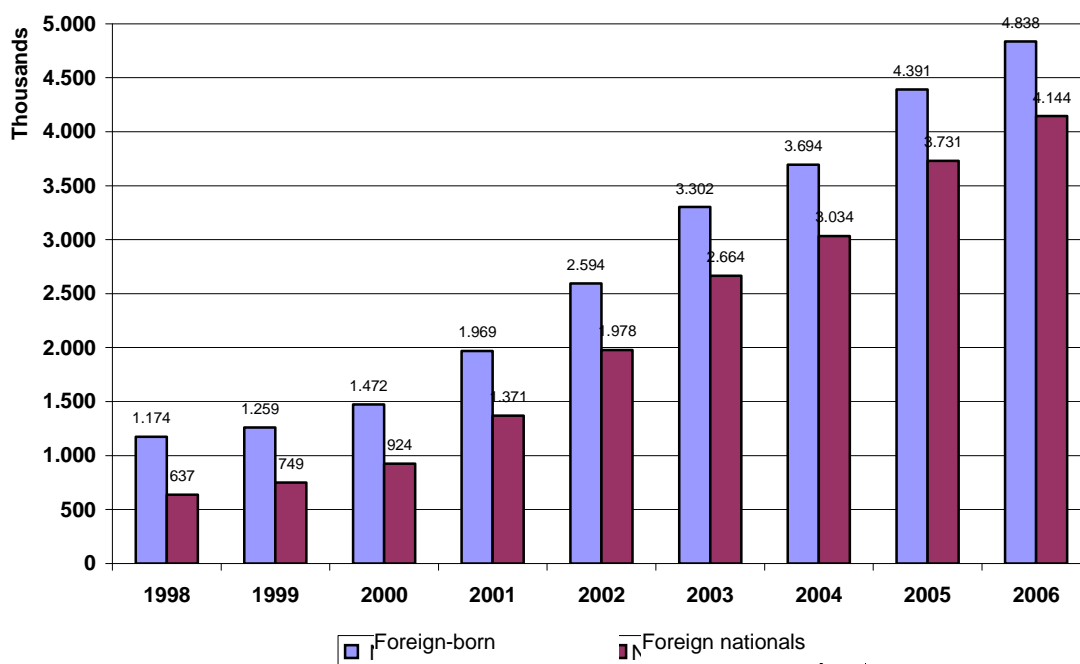
G1 International net migration: absolute figures and rates 2004-2006



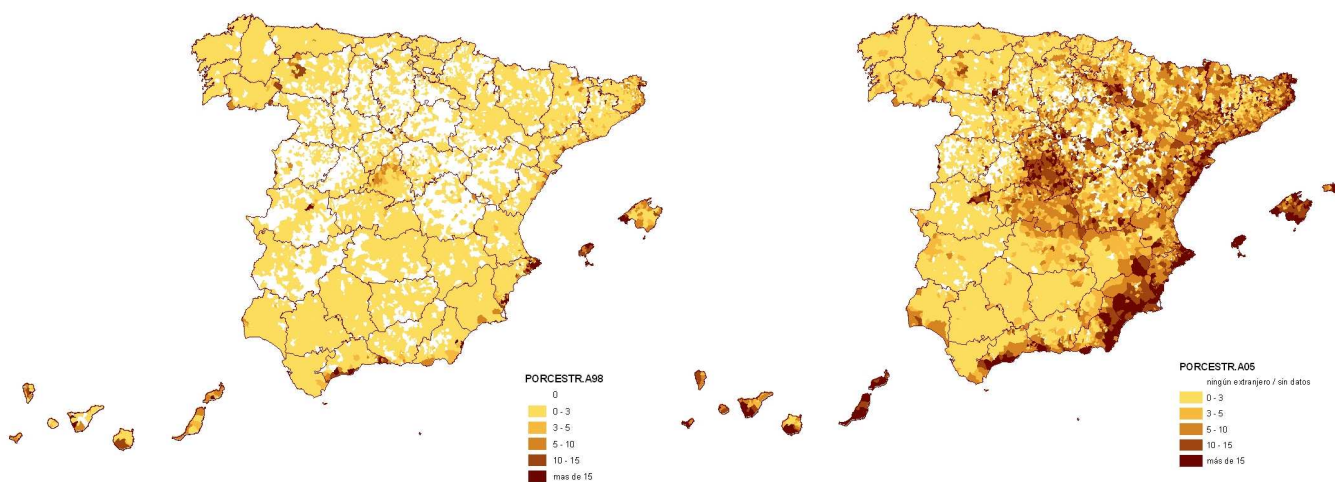


**GRAPH 3. Foreign-born and foreign-national residents registered with the *Padrón***

Foreign-born and foreign-national residents registered with the *Padrón*

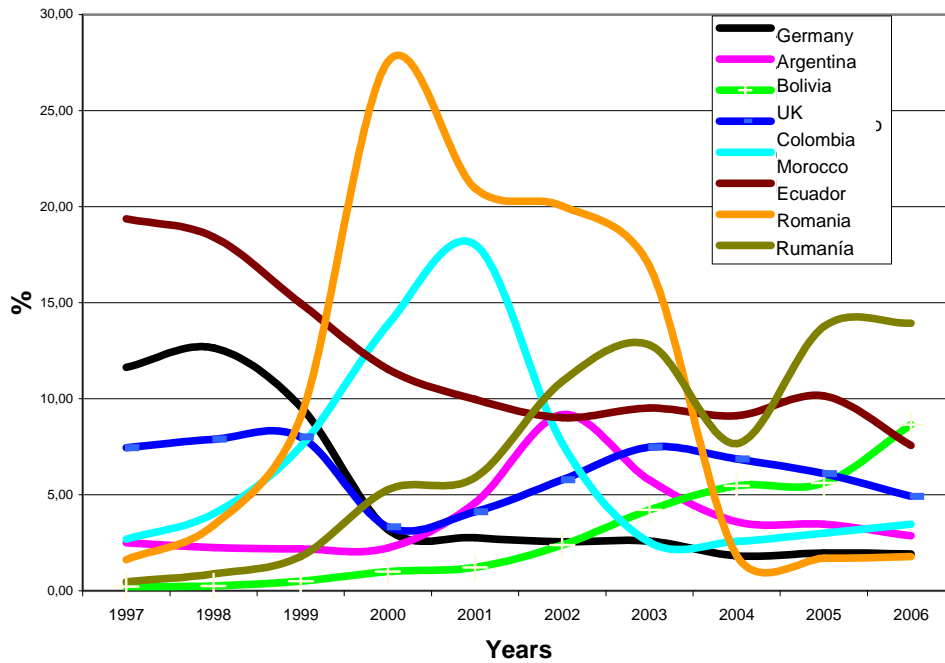


**GRAPH 4. Foreign-national residents registered with the *Padrón*, by municipality, in 1998 and 2005**

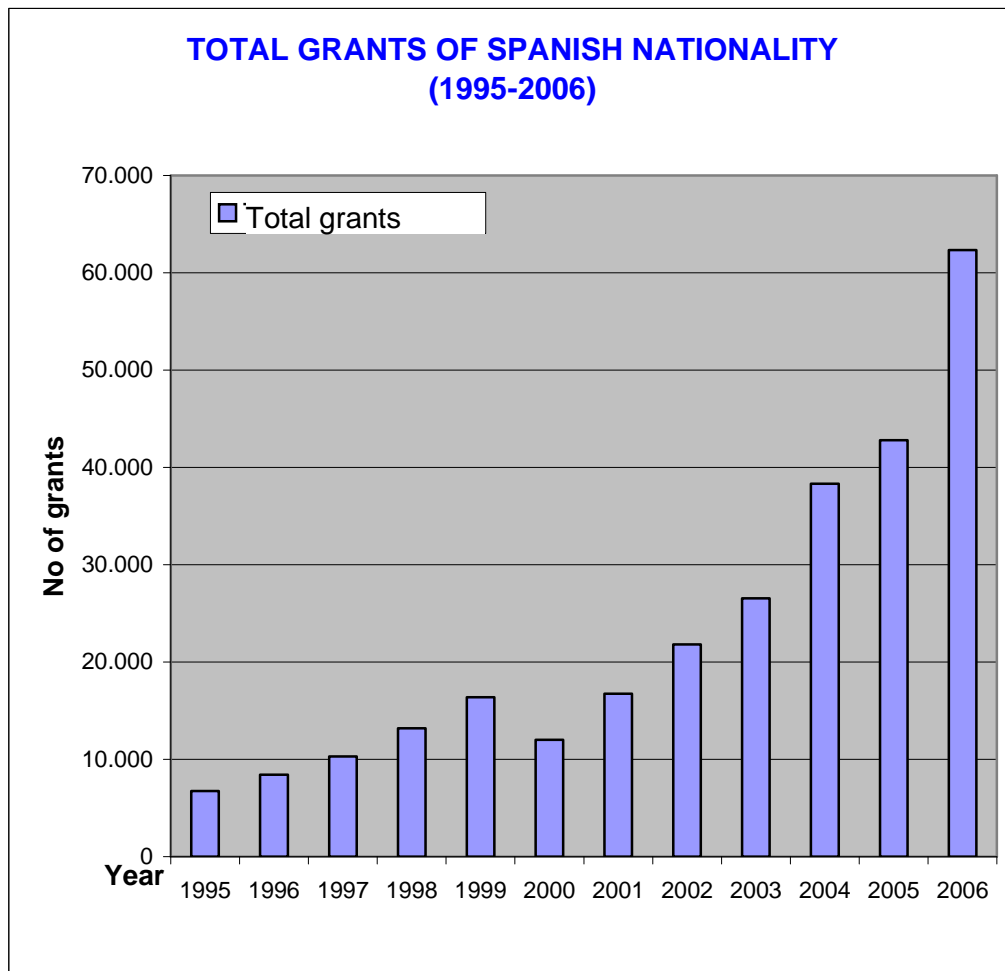


**GRAPH 5. Share of foreign immigrant flows by country of origin**

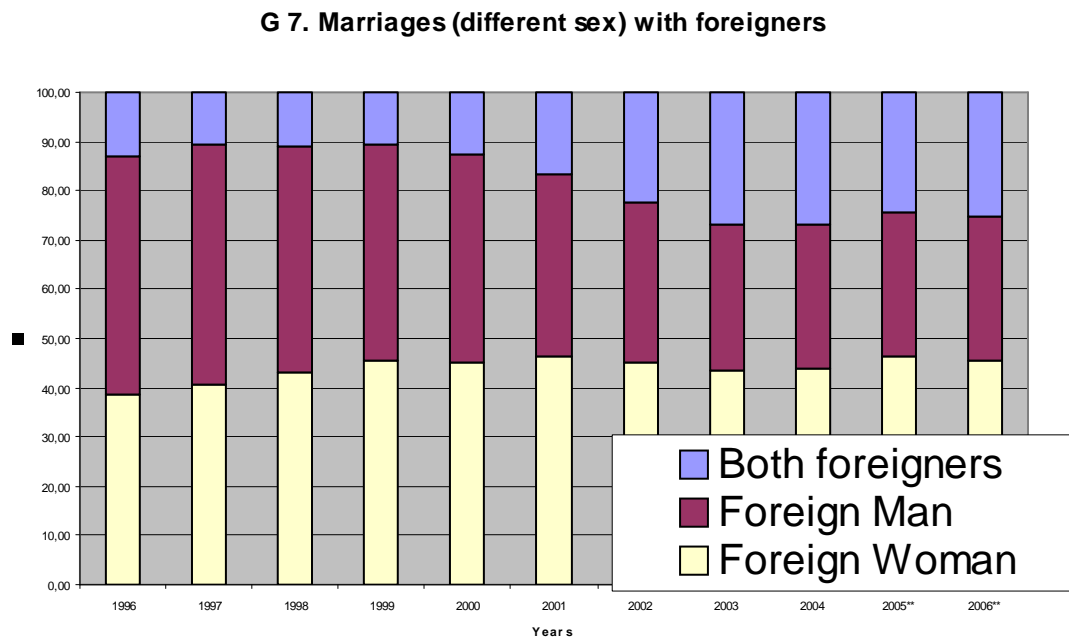
G5 Share of foreign immigrant flows by country of origin



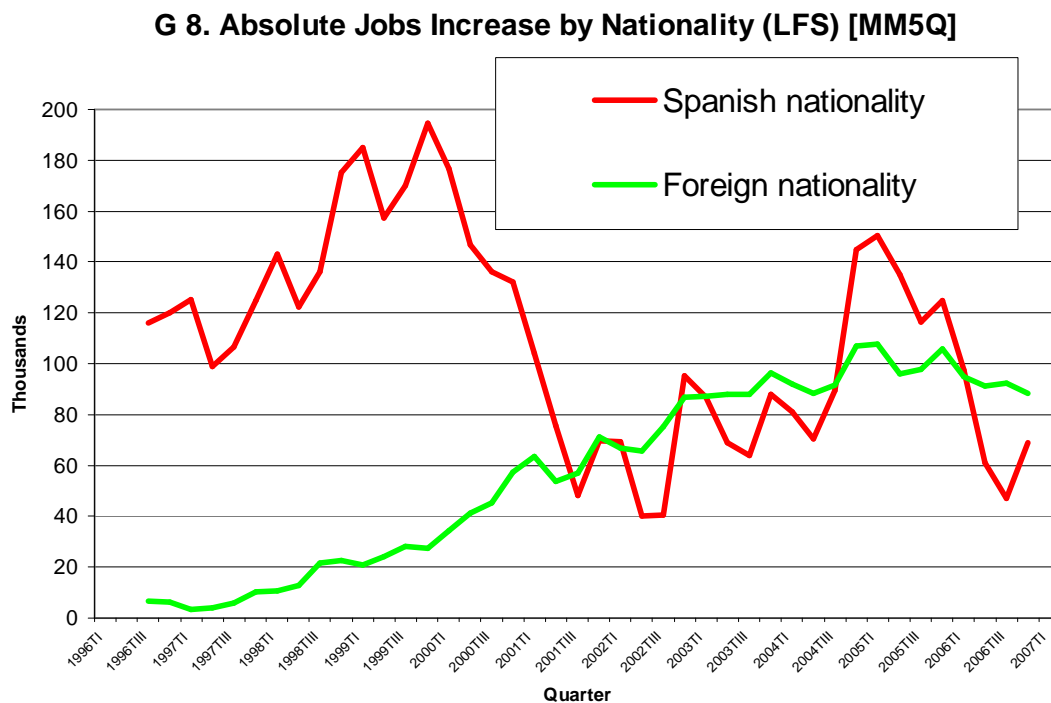
**GRAPH 6. Acquisitions of Spanish nationality 1995-2006**



**GRAPH 7. Marriages (different sex) with foreigners.**



**GRAPH 8. Quarterly job increase by nationality 1996-2007 (LFS)**



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