

## 6.9 Spain

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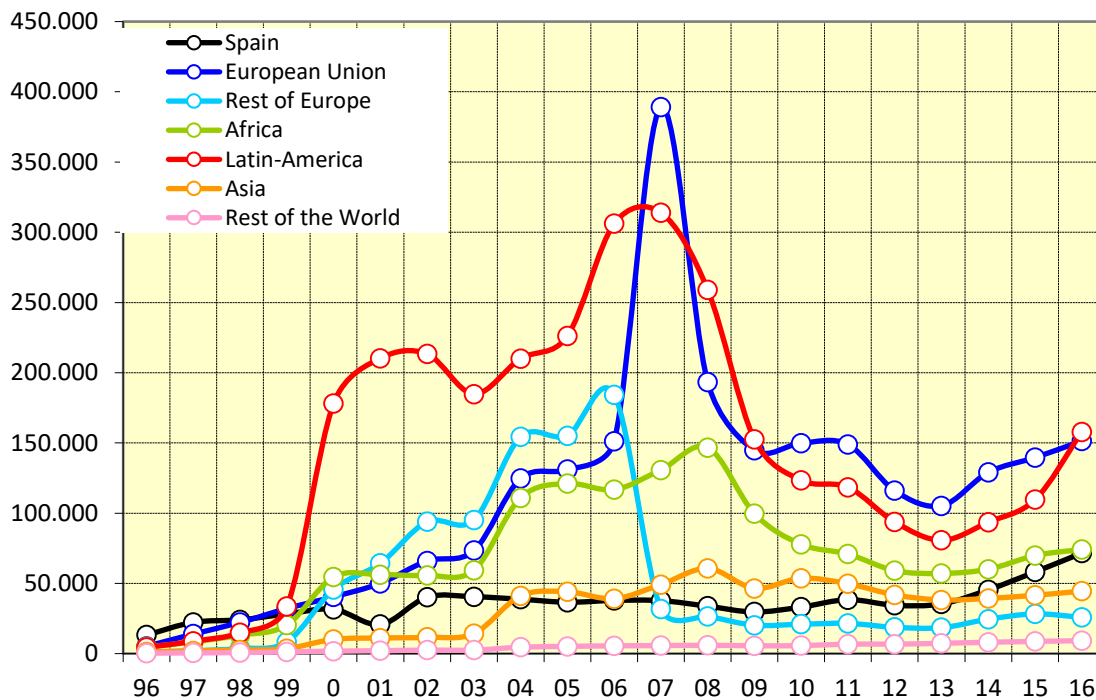
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### 6.9.1 Recent history of migration

International immigration to Spain has only become significantly relevant since the 1990s (Figure 1). Spain, like other Southern European countries, was before mainly an emigrant country (Izquierdo and Muñoz Pérez, 1989). The gradual reversal of this pattern, starting from the mid-1970s onwards, was originally closely linked to the return of Spanish immigrants from north-Western and Northern Europe. During those times, migration control became more important, and after the stop of labour recruitment and the oil crisis, many former labour migrants lost their jobs (Van Mol & de Valk 2016). As a result, Spanish migrants returned to Spain, also because the end of the Franco regime allowed start of a new era. The restrictive legislation that many Northern European countries started towards immigration and migrants had the effect that many non-EU migrants left these countries like France, the Netherlands, or Germany and settled in Spain, where there was still a more welcoming climate.

With the entry of Spain into the European Union in 1986, inflows from other European countries started to grow, at first gradually, but later, in the beginning of new millennium, it reached a historically high level. During the first seven years of the 21st century, until the start of the economic crisis of 2008, Spain received a total of 4.6 million immigrants, thereby being among the states worldwide with the highest inflow of migrants. This international immigration to Spain raised, therefore, new and challenging questions regarding integration, especially at level of the receiving communities. Although Latin American migration to Spain has a long history, also the recent flows in the 21st century were dominated to a large extent by the arrival of Latin American immigrants (39.5 %), who enjoyed positive discrimination in acquiring the Spanish nationality. Latin American migrants are, thus, numerically important in the migrant population in Spain, and contrary to many other migrant flows, dominated also by women, who played a pioneer role in Latin American migration (Prieto Rosas & Lopez Gay 2015; de Valk & Bueno 2015). Also the previous flows of EU immigrants kept on being substantial (13.5 %). Among this latter group, older immigrants from Northern Europe made up a significant share. Finally, immigration also included a considerable share of African immigration, where those from Morocco were the largest and leading flows, to which other sub-Saharan countries were gradually adding.

Figure 8 Immigration to Spain, 1996-2016



Source: ENI authors elaboration

As a result of these flows, the share of the foreign-born population in the total population of Spain increased from 3.6 % in the year 2000 to 13.2 % (6.123.769 individuals) in 2016. Along with the increasing size of the foreign born population, the regional concentration has become more skewed in certain autonomous communities. The highest shares of migrants in the population are found in the autonomous communities of Madrid (1.150.671 and 17.8 % of the population), Catalonia (1.292.774 and 17.2 %), Comunidad Valenciana (805.809 and 16.2 %) and Andalusia (775.941 and 9.3 %). When looking at the relative numbers and importance of migrant populations, the Balearic Islands stand out. Around 240.000 migrants live there, representing 22 % of its population, while there are 373.000 migrants at the Canary Islands, reflecting 17.7 % of the population (Galeano & Sabater 2016). The majority of the immigrants on the Island Communities are of European origin, and many of them migrated to Spain after retirement to enjoy the benefits of good weather and cheap housing, as is also the case for the autonomous community of Valencia.

The economic crisis that hit Europe and Southern Europe including Spain, in particular, had a huge impact on international migration flows. On the one hand, it resulted in a rapid decline in international immigration to Spain. On the other hand, an increase in emigration, of both the foreign and native-born population was observed (Domingo and Blanes, 2015). The net migration as a result became negative after years of being positive (Galeano & Sabater 2016). However, it is crucial to take three points into account in this regard: 1) a large part of the immigrant population decided to remain in the country; 2) during that time, family reunification increased on a regular or irregular basis, a portion of which comprised the descendants of the immigrants; and 3) as from 2014 onwards, flows are increasing again although coming from other regions in the world. Rather than pull factors in Spain, it seems that the push factors in the countries of origin are driving these new immigrations (see also Vega-Macías 2017).

#### 6.9.2 Effects on the population structure

The international migration boom in Spain has had its first effect in the expansion of the middle and older generations of the baby boomers in Spain, against the official discourse of “Replacement Migration” (Domingo and Cabré, 2015). This was due to the late chronology of the Spanish baby boom compared to other European countries (from the 1960s to the mid-1970s). It also coincides with the economic growth of Spain that also attracted the immigrant population at the beginning of the new millennium. Many of those, who arrived in Spain came to work in the booming economy, and substantial numbers were, for example, employed in the construction sector. Other origin groups and, in particular, female migrants, were getting jobs in the informal economy of cleaning jobs, as well as in private households to take care of both children and the elderly (de Valk & Bueno 2015). Due to the fact that migration is rather recent and migrants, in general, are young people, it implies that the elderly population of foreign origin is relatively small compared to other European countries (Galeano & Sabater 2016). On the other hand, however, the growth potential, that coincides with the generations born from the 1960s entering retirement is considerably and important. At the same time, immigration to Spain has, as a singularity, attracted substantial numbers of retired migrants from across Europe and in particular from the UK, Germany and to a lesser extent the Netherlands and Belgium for example.

The official population projections made by the National Institute of Statistics (Instituto Nacional de Estadística, INE) in 2016 do not break down the immigrant population by different age groups. Furthermore, the official statistics and projections do not take into account the population groups, who are not having a legal right to reside. More importantly, however, is the fact that older European migrants, who own a house in Spain are not always registering themselves (to avoid paying taxes), while others, who are not residents do register (in order to get access to health services). This results in either an under- or overestimation of the foreign older population in Spain.

#### 6.9.3 Availability and quality of migration data

Spain, thanks to the immigration process itself, has been refining the immigration registers, so that it is now up to par with other European countries in terms of data availability and quality. It has international migration data of very good coverage and reliability. The main source of registration for international immigration is the Statistics of Residential Variations (EVR), elaborated by INE from the “entries” and “exits” of the immigrant population in all Spanish municipalities. Among other factors, this good coverage is a result of the fact that since 1996 all the immigrants’ rights and services (schooling and access to free public health services, mainly) are linked to the municipal registry, which encourages all immigrants to get registered in the municipality of their residence. For the irregular immigrants, it also provides an access to regularity. It means, unlike other countries, the final calculation of the immigrant population in Spain also includes the population in an irregular situation (although it cannot be discriminated against them) and a detailed description of their place of residence. The available data on flows and stocks of foreign migrants, on the other hand, have very few variables: gender, age, place of birth, nationality, municipality of residence, and self-stated education level.

The quality of the data on immigration contrasts, however, with the accumulated deficiencies in the data corresponding to emigration. Although since 2008, the National Institute of Statistics has also made an effort to improve the data quality, e.g. by producing estimates called “Migration Statistics”.

It thereby seeks to correct the temporal bias and endemic underestimation of the statistical series on emigration. The main reason for this imbalance is that the “exits” from the municipal register, not only have no associated benefits, but also in some cases, complicate the situation of migrants (both Spanish and foreign). Hence, often when people emigrate from Spain they do not inform the municipal office, which leads to the underestimation of emigrants. The “Migration Statistics” also correct for the number of immigrants, and from it, Eurostat extracts the statistical series of entries and exits of immigrants from municipal registers.

The main source for the “migrant stock” is the continuous population register developed since 1996, which starts from the same municipal register, and therefore suffers from the same virtues and defects as the EVR. The other, much more complete, source was the population census, which, as in all censuses, also includes information on marital status, household structure, occupational activities and housing characteristics. The 2001 census was the first to register a significant share of the foreign-born population. The census of 2011 (which has serious representation problems depending on the size of both the foreign population considered and the municipality) is expected to be the last census carried out in Spain. In the future, the absence of census can create an important void about the information collected regarding the foreign-born population.

Along with the effort made to improve coverage, it is also necessary to point out the data accessibility policy carried out by INE through its website. The territorial coverage, in the most basic data collected by the continuous population register, is exhaustive from the census track, to the whole of Spain passing through the different administrative divisions (i.e. municipality, province and CCAA). However, in the last census the information was limited to municipalities with over 20.000 inhabitants.

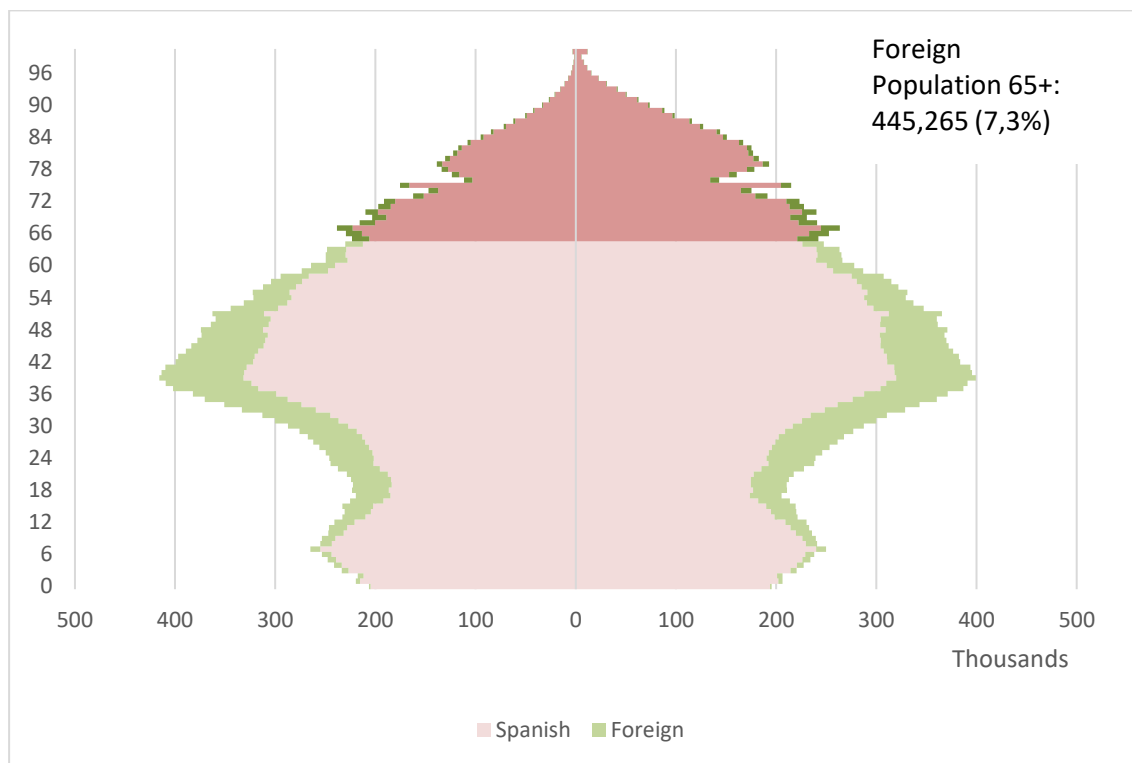
#### 6.9.4 Ageing migrants

The recent international migration of workers goes hand in hand with the ongoing immigration of people around the age to the retirement. In 2016, there were 445.265 people over the age of 64 years of migrant origin, which is 5.1% of the population of more than 64 years in the Spain. British (94.807 and 36 % of Ells), Moroccans (44.348 and 5.6 %), and Germans (34.426 and 19.5%) were the major groups with an aged population. In terms of territorial distribution, Malaga (19.5 %), Alicante (23.3 %), the Balearic Islands (12.7 %) and the Canary Islands (13.5 %) have the highest share of immigrants above 64 years of age (Rodriguez, 2001 and Salvà 2002, Married et al., 1014). Unlike many other European countries, in Spain the unregistered population has access to social services (including health services). The problem with regard to the contribution to the pension system is mainly determined by its main insertion in the irregular labor market (at least for a time, in which the contribution to the system has been nonexistent or significantly lower than it should be). Free access to the health system and to pensions, together with the family situation of migrants of retirement age, will be critical in the decision to remain in the country or to return. The few existing quantitative studies suggest that the migrant population has lower levels of private healthcare coverage, making them potentially a vulnerable population in the event of health issues (Solé-Auró et al. 2010). At the same time, it points to different healthcare use, which may have major implications on the healthcare system in different regions of Spain. Therefore, policies aimed at healthy ageing and projections of healthcare needs of the ageing population should potentially also include the migrant population more than is the case currently (Bermúdez, Guillén, & Solé Auró 2009).

In terms of the origin composition of the current 65+ population in Spain, so far, it is mainly Spanish.

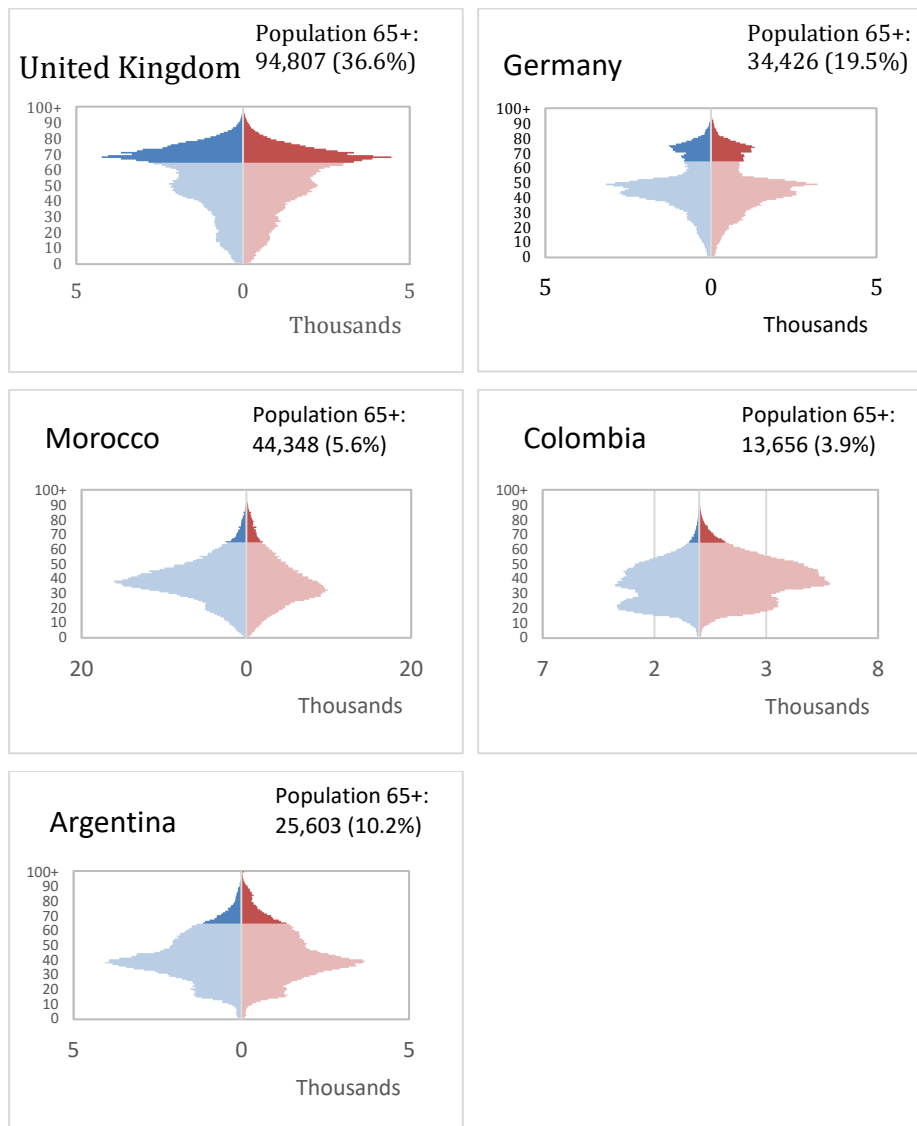
The share of those of foreign background is limited to around 7 % in the total 65+ population (Figure 2). However, clear differences in the share of elderly in different origin groups can be found (Figure 3). On the one hand, there are origins with hardly any elderly in their population like e.g. the Moroccan or Columbian group, where less than 6 % is above 65 years. On the other hand, there are those origins with high levels (more than a fifth) of elderly among them as, for example, is the case for Germans and Brits. In between, there are countries with few elderly yet (around 10 %), but for whom, the elderly population is expected to increase in the near future like e.g. the Argentineans. As mentioned before, so far few elderly migrants have aged in Spain the majority of the current older population with a migrant background migrated at later life stages to Spain.

**Figure 9 Population pyramid of Spain by origin of the population, 2016**



Source: ENI authors elaboration

Figure 10 Population pyramid of different origin groups in Spain, 2016



Source: ENI authors elaboration

### 6.9.5 Knowledge gaps and research opportunities

Corresponding to the fact that international migration itself has been a relatively recent phenomenon, much remains to be done in the study of over 64 years old immigrant population in Spain. However, this sociodemographic reality already calls for the attention of service planning, in the municipalities with the highest tourist concentration (such as those in the province of Alicante or Malaga), but in the next decade, it is expected that this will be extended to other municipalities, diversifying the profile and the needs corresponding to the diversification of origins of immigrants.

Research on ageing migrants in Spain so far has mainly addressed retirement migration from Northern Europe and, in particular, the UK. In the context of Brexit, many questions for this group will arise that need to be addressed in research. At the same time, the growing diversity in elderly of migrant origin will call for further assessment of their ageing process, on the one hand, and their care needs on the other. Issues related to transnational support relations and return/pendel migration need further attention, in particular, in the Spanish case where many migrant elderly do hold the Spanish nationality allowing them to more easily travel back and forth between their origin countries and Spain.

More research is also needed on the impact that the future elderly population may have on healthcare requests and services needed in the different regions of Spain. So far, data on this are rather limited and more extensive data collection efforts seem to be needed in this regard. The growing diversity in the population should be taken into account in this regard, and future studies could shed more light on the health issues faced by elderly migrants and the needs of both the individual, their families and wider society.

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