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Moroccan Migration and Policy Response in Spain: Old and New Challenges for the State.

1. Introduction. A Recent Transition of Migratory Patterns.

Spain became a country of immigration during the final decades of the twentieth century. The considerable amount of Spanish emigration at the beginning of the century and during the sixties is described in specialist literature as being the result of a fundamentally agricultural economy unable to provide enough employment opportunities for the large population (Palazón Ferrando, S: 1995; Sánchez Albornoz, N: 1988; Sánchez Alonso, B: 1995).

The 1970s saw the beginning of a change in trend which led to a transition of migratory patterns which today is in its final stages – migrants are no longer returning to their native country, the amount of seasonal migration has become insignificant and there has been a tendency towards the emigration of highly skilled Spaniards to other western countries – seen in the example of the health professionals who move to Great Britain. In terms of flow, immigration into Spain began to increase during the eighties and continued to do so at a steady pace, seeing a somewhat sharper rise at the end of the decade and also in the second half of the nineties. Although in terms of stock, the number of foreigners resident in Spain more or less equals the number of Spaniards living abroad, the tendency in the medium term is to consolidate Spain as a country of immigration and incorporate it into the European migratory system as a country of destination. The most recent figures available suggest that in 2001 there were 1,100,000 foreigners living in Spain, therefore constituting more than 2% of the population¹.

Immigration into Spain has given rise to a great internal diversity. It is important to mention, however, the three main areas of origin: Europe, South America and Morocco. Economic migration has taken place alongside residential immigration of retired Europeans (chiefly Germans and Britons) whose numbers, however, decreased, in relative terms, throughout the nineties. Amongst the European flow were emigrants from some of the countries of the former Soviet Union. At the beginning of the nineties, the majority of Eastern European citizens arriving in Spain came from Poland. Nowadays, with the previous flow depleted, a new Eastern European flow, this time from Romania, has begun.

¹ The final figure has been modified according to the information from the two latest regularisations: 248,000 applications for the regularisation of the year 2000 and a total of 348,000 applications for residential documentation in 2001.

Immigration from South America has been one of the longest standing and also that which has seen the most change with regard to origin. Immigration from the Southern Cone (Argentina, Chile and Uruguay), the most pioneering, was overtaken at the beginning of the nineties by flows from Peru and the Dominican Republic. By the dawn of the 21st century the flow from the Andes area had increased dramatically, especially from Ecuador and Columbia, flows with a reinforced strength due to the situation at the source and, as stated by Antonio Izquierdo, due to the preferable politics at the destination (Izquierdo Escribano, A: 2002). The figures from the two latest supplementary regularisations (2000 and 2001) seem to suggest a trend towards an increase, in relative terms, of the number of South Americans living in Spain. This new-fledged strong South American flow was combined at the beginning of this century with a renewed impulse from the traditional streams coming from Argentina and Venezuela which acquired new prominence as a result of the political and economic crises in both countries.

The 1990s saw immigration from Morocco, the main source of Spanish immigration over the last ten years, step into the foreground. The numbers coming from Morocco became apparent with the second regularisation of immigrants which took place in 1991, a supplementary procedure due to the first official Spanish declaration on immigration policy: The non-legislative Proposal of 1991. This act of amnesty, one more of those which were to take place during the nineties as a result of the need to carry out documentation procedures in the face of a legal framework which had given rise to legal instability in all of the new countries of immigration in Southern Europe (Solanes, A: 2002), revealed that there were over 100,000 illegal foreigners living in Spain (just under half of which were Moroccan) and, above all, confirmed that Spain was a “desired destination” of the migratory flow originating in Morocco, not a place of transit, and that a large proportion of the immigrants had plans to settle in Spain (Aragón Bombín, R y Chozas Pedrero, J: 1993). According to data from 2001, their numbers increased throughout the nineties to reach 20% of the total.

2. Characteristics of Spain's Moroccan Community

Throughout the nineties, the Moroccan community in Spain underwent a series of developments. In fact, in spite of the continuity of the arrivals, Moroccan immigration in Spain does not exactly correspond to the stereotype of the young, unskilled, male immigrant, but rather the community has been subjected to a process of internal social and legal diversification combining several processes:

- In spite of the fact that the majority of this group still fall between the ages of 24 and 44 years, an increase throughout the decade in the numbers of children and adolescents was noted. Family reunification and births in Spain caused a rise in the number of under-18s, just as the beginning of an inflow - small yet of particular concern to the authorities - of unaccompanied children. Not only did this become apparent through details obtained of residents categorised by gender and age, but also by the application of data on foreign children within the education system.
- The relative number of males, in comparison with females, emigrating from Morocco to Spain is far higher than in flows from other countries, especially some South

American countries such as the Dominican Republic or in flows which these days are small, such as those from the Philippines. Nevertheless, there are also a significant number of women among the Moroccan immigrants, stabilising at a figure which reached almost one third of the total during the second half of the nineties. Studies carried out on gender and immigration have shown the invisibility of women in analyses on international population movement and, more recently, the perception of the female as simply being the spouse of a male immigrant and part of a family reunification process (Morokvasic, M: 1984, 1988, Gregorio, C: 1998, Oso, L: 1998; Kofman, E: 1999) .

- Although it is difficult for figures to confirm, qualitative studies point out that over the last few years there has been an increase in the flow of women who have undergone the migration process as pioneers, whether with the family in mind or not. The terms which are offered by the labour market of the recipient country, particularly in the private services sector, allow many women, whether previously employed or unemployed, skilled or unskilled, to quickly find a job and a certain amount of legal security – in contrast, to a large extent, with their male counterparts. The conditions of work in this sector are particularly harsh, but are, according to discourse analysis of these women, compensated for by the security and stability that the job provides them with, elements which are highly valued (Martín Muñoz, G; Castaño, F.J, López Sala, A y Crespo, R: 2003). Likewise, a combination of economic and social factors in their native country has given rise, especially, to an influx of highly qualified, urban, middle class women.
- The presence of Moroccans among students is not a new concept as far as Spain is concerned, although their numbers appeared to increase slightly during the nineties and with a particular concentration in Granada (Colectivo IOE: 1994, Izquierdo Escribano, A: 1997). According to the figures of residence permits granted for reasons of study, after the Americans, the largest community of foreign students in the Spanish university system with this kind of permit are the Moroccans.
- Moroccan immigration shows a norm of high spatial concentration, a norm which remained unchanged throughout the nineties. According to the most recent statistics, Moroccan immigrants are mainly concentrated in three autonomous regions: Catalonia, Andalusia and Madrid, followed a long way behind by Murcia, Valencia and, more recently, the Canary Islands.
- Likewise, insertion into the labour market is highly concentrated in certain sectors where there is a lack of national manpower. The majority of Moroccan immigrants are employed in agriculture, construction and the service industries. Structural conditions of the labour market and the advancement of procedures by the Spanish government explain this norm of high labour concentration allowing us to speak of an ethnic segregation in the labour market of the recipient country (Cachón, L: 2002), which, for the time being, could be hindering the processes of social mobility.

3. Immigration as an Object of Public Policy in the Case of Spain

Spain's immigration policy is just as new a concept as the flows of immigrants arriving. For almost a century, the actions of the Spanish government were directed, as is the case with our southern European neighbours, as much towards controlling the streams of people leaving as towards the protection of Spanish nationals living abroad. Government action, in general, has shadowed changes in society with the first measure of a legislative nature to be taken on foreign immigration into Spain dating back to 1985, when the first law for the rights and liberties of foreign nationals was approved, commonly known as *Ley de Extranjería*.

The figures for immigrants arriving in Spain for that year hardly exceeded 250,000 and were mainly made up of those coming from developed countries. This law, therefore, seems unnecessary if we look at the size and composition of the non-native community who, nevertheless, generated the need for a new set of rules for alien status in our country. Previously, legal provisions allowed nationals from countries with which Spain had maintained strong historical ties to live and work in Spain once they had registered.

Spain's transformation into a country of immigration was a process which ran parallel to its integration into the European Union, with the result that the provisions made with regard to alien status were seen as being heavily influenced by the norms of dynamics developed at the core of the Union and by the process of the free movement of workers. These dynamics created a first and seminal division between those who were E. U. members and those who were not, as far as the terms of alien status were concerned - something which is necessarily reflected in government actions.

Although immigration did not make a definitive entrance into the political agenda until the early nineties, 1991 to be precise, this policy has already undergone extensive reformation as far as its objectives, complexity and structure are concerned.

The first actions taken, considered to be of greatest urgency, focused on the control and regulation of the inflows. The early nineties are typified by the government's obsession with gaining control. Measures were taken towards consolidating strict procedures to regulate entrance into Spain and settlement on Spanish territory. From this followed the development of actions such as border control, particularly along the Straights of Gibraltar, the establishment of the immigration quota policy, the implementation of the visa policy (imposed on natives of several South American countries and Moroccans), the procedures for obtaining papers, the signing of agreements (with Morocco) for the repatriation of immigrants and the reformation of asylum and refuge regulations.

Political loopholes at this time, such as the lack of regulation of family reunification and the development of actions in the sphere of integration were, however, accompanied by an expansion of the network of policies on civilian society and social organisations. This expansion of networks tallied with a certain indifference on behalf of the public and with the consolidation of the first ethnic organisations. Likewise, during these years, immigration gave new rise to the establishment and reformation of institutions.

The objective of the social integration of immigrants was not incorporated into the national agenda until the second half of the nineties, a process which was, in part, promoted

by social organisations and resulting in a flagship document for the aims of integration: The Plan for Social Integration of Immigrants (el *Plan para la Integración Social de los Inmigrantes*). Throughout the second half of the nineties the Permanent Observatory on Immigration was formed, The National Forum for the integration of immigrants into society, and the town halls and autonomous regions began to gain a new level of management and control over immigration. Without the objective of controlling the flows losing strength, integration into society became the new challenge. In the late nineties, *the voice*, in the sense of the word coined by A. Hirschmann, that is to say, the demands made by the associations of immigrants centred on legal stability and insertion into the workplace.

The late nineties latently show the change in conditions within which, up until this point, the formation of the Spanish immigration policy had taken place, as was demonstrated in the heated debate which took place at the time of the reformation of the law. The year 2000 saw an inflection of the previous dynamic. Added to the tragic events at El Ejido was the reformation of law 4/2000 which came about from the understanding that immigration was to be a long-term phenomenon and which gave rise to legal stabilisation by means of establishing a permanent system of regularisation. During this year, the topic of control returned to the political forum with force, although this time it was accompanied by the issue of security. Immigration re-emerged onto the political scene as a topic of national security linked to networks of people-trafficking and more recently, from the last few months of 2001 onwards, to terrorist networks. Over the last three years, the struggle against illegal immigration has taken up the efforts of a large proportion of the Spanish government.

At the beginning of the year 2000, immigration appeared in public-opinion polls as the third greatest concern of the Spanish people, even in areas which had hardly received any immigrants. These opinion polls revealed an “invasion psychosis” and the idea that immigrants pose a threat to jobs of Spanish nationals. Opinion polls also revealed that people identified immigrants with Moroccans, despite the many different nationalities of immigrants within Spain, and that people, including a relatively large number of politicians, associated immigration with crime. Some other slogans which appeared in the political arena were that of the “tolerance threshold”, the view that there were too many immigrants and that they could cause a threat to the “majority culture” (Valles, M; Cea, M.A e Izquierdo Escribano, A: 1999).

In the year 2000, immigration emerged as a popular topic in the election campaign, capable of winning over new supporters and altering the balance between the political parties, especially in those regions where immigration was more prominent. The effects were evident, especially in local politics, but throughout the country public opinion became the protagonist of “control of the control” (Wihtol de Wenden, C: 2001). Besides this, another measure linked to control - the expulsion procedures - began to be seen as “useful” ways of controlling the settlement of immigrants in Spain. As was demonstrated in the case of the Ecuadorian immigrants, this is a measure of high expense which has little effect on the stock.

The border control at the Straits of Gibraltar has had a knock-on effect on other entrance routes and although immigration continues to be carried out legally and through airports, the last few years have seen a marked increase in immigration into the Canary

Islands. The policing of the Straits has been intensified as a measure of control, along with the development of initiatives to impede entrance through the “Canary route”.

Integration acts have multiplied throughout Spain. Different autonomous regions have set up regional forums and special projects, and little by little the migration issue has been transversely incorporated into educational and social policies as well as those of equal opportunities. Nevertheless, policies of integration have adopted the form of indirect policies where the immigrant collective is another of the social sectors to receive services. It is important to emphasise here the insignificance of the action that has been taken with regard to mother tongue, residential distribution and housing.

At the beginning of this decade the cultural issue was also incorporated into the political agenda. For almost two decades immigration had been seen as a social problem having knock-on effects in the sphere of economy and production, at first, and the receiving governments placed the matter of the immigrants’ cultural contribution further down on their list of priorities.

Nowadays though, unlike the last decade, the issue of “culture” plays a leading role. According to public opinion there seem to be two factors which hinder the integration of immigrants into society: religion and culture (Moreras, J: 2002). Political plans directed towards the management and control of internal diversity have given rise to the creation of multicultural policies in some European countries. Yet in Spain, multicultural action has remained limited to the field of education and, more precisely, to the modification of school curricula.

The aspect of immigrants’ culture and religion has focused, in both public and political debate, on the case of the Moroccan community. It is possible to point out that this may be due to two factors: Firstly, the idea that Muslims and, by extension, Moroccans – according to discourse analysis, these people are considered as one and the same – do not easily assimilate and are reluctant to integrate into the Spanish community. The cultural clash in the collective Spanish mind is with the Maghribian and Islam. Secondly, cultural and religious aspects have recently, yet with force, become a topic of discussion among Moroccans and Moroccan organisations themselves. Both factors, in deep opposition, have had an emphatic impact on political actions.

4. The Moroccan Presence and Spanish Immigration Policy

Immigration policies have a profound effect on the size and make up of foreign communities residing in a particular country. In Spain’s case, there is recent evidence to suggest that the Spanish immigration policy - a policy which is selective over to whom it permits entry – has, implicitly and at times in an underhand manner, acquired a certain air of selectivity over the constitution of its immigration. Faced with immigration from Morocco, the chief source of immigration during the nineties, the Spanish government developed means in all fields of migratory policies (control of flow, integration and nationality) by which to favour the immigration and establishment of South American immigrants with some experts subsequently talking of a “preferable” immigration (Izquierdo Escribano, A; López de Lera, D y Martínez Buján, R: 2002).

Thus, the last few processes of the regularisation of foreigners indicate that the rate of granting residents' permits was much higher among immigrants from South American countries. Such regulation of entrance and conditioned settling are legitimised due to the results of public-opinion polls – which indicate the Spanish preference for South American immigrants – and also to the argument of the cultural and linguistic proximity of those from South American countries. The majority of immigrants in Spain being of South American nationality could serve to weaken some of the recent demands from the Moroccan community²: the teaching of their mother tongue, religious education, the application for community prayer centres, the issue of cemeteries, etc.

This preference is even shown amongst those who provide services (Martín Muñoz, G; García Castaño, J, López Sala, A y Crespo, R: 2003) and the entrepreneurial classes, many of whom provide contracts to immigrants while still in their country of origin. The agreements on employment contracts recently signed in Spain, just as in private enterprise, explain the gradual process of replacing Moroccan workers in agriculture with those from Ecuador and Poland, a process which has been the cause of so many problems in Huelva and Murcia recently.

The Spanish norm with regard to nationality has also favoured the naturalisation of South American citizens as opposed to Moroccans. The preferential status established for natives of ancient Spanish colonies or countries which have special links with Spain was already recognised in the Spanish Constitution and developed through different laws of nationality. Political declarations maintained that the end objective of this preferential treatment was to improve relations with ex-colonies and pay the historical debt that Spain owed to countries that for decades had received Spanish emigrants and that still have a large Spanish community at their core today. But these special arrangements can also be viewed in a different way: it favours political integration (a shorter period of residency) of those native to countries closest to Spain in terms of culture, those who, for the large part, speak the Spanish language. The consequence of this policy on nationality, as the figures illustrate, is that a large proportion of foreigners who acquire Spanish citizenship come from South American countries, or in other words, the rate of naturalisation is significantly high in comparative terms amongst South American natives due to the fact that their minimum period of residency is considerably reduced with regard to the requirements of the general regime.

² A type of demand strongly linked to the emergence of second generation immigrants of Moroccan descent.

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Appendices

THE SCENARIO OF IMMIGRATION TO SPAIN. DEMOGRAPHICS OF MIGRATION.

LARGEST GROUPS OF FOREIGN NATIONALS IN SPAIN.

The migration inflow from Morocco.

TABLE 1. Stock of Foreign Population in Spain (1955-2001)

YEAR	Stock
1955	66.043
1960	64.660
1965	99.508
1970	148.400
1975	165.289
1980	182.045
1985	241.971
1990	278.795
1991	360.655
1992	393.100
1993	430.422
1994	461.364
1995	499.773
1996	538.984
1997	609.813
1998	719.647
1999	801.329
2000	895.720
2001	1.109.060

Source: Anuario de Migraciones, 1994-1998, (Ministerio de Trabajo y Asuntos Sociales) and Anuario Estadístico de Extranjería, 1995-2001 (Ministerio del Interior)