

Labor force participation of Latin-American mothers in Spain: the role of multigenerational living arrangements in times of economic crisis

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ABSTRACT

Women of Latin-American descent in Spain are reported to have high levels of labor force participation. At the same time little is known about the relationship between work and multigenerational living arrangements of these women in particular in times of economic crisis. In this paper we question how living arrangements are relevant for participation in the labor market among Latin American women of diverse origin with minor children. We are particularly interested in the role of multigenerational or extended households and aim to identify how labor force participation and living arrangements are related. We use pooled data from the Spanish Labor Force Survey 2005-2012 and apply descriptive and multivariate analysis including detailed information on the individual and all household members. Paying attention to different dimensions of participation (having a job, number of hours worked etc.) allows us to identify different labor market strategies and their relation with living arrangements during a period of economic crisis.

INTRODUCTION

Multigenerational households are reported to be more frequent among certain ethnic groups in the US and on the increase in recent periods (e.g. Taylor et.al., 2010). Recent work has confirmed the same for some Latin American origin groups in Spain (Bueno & De Valk in press). At the same time it is reported that in particular women from various Latin American origins have high levels of participation in the Spanish labor market. The extent to which living in a multigenerational household supports women to participate on the labor market more than is the case for those in two-generational households is, however, unexplored so far. On the one hand living in a multigenerational household may be a source of support for these women (for example by supplying child care) and result in higher levels of participation. On the other hand having other (elderly) household members to care for may result in lower levels of participation.

Beside the fact that Latin American migrants are a numerically large group it is also the fact that women play an important pioneer role in Latin American migration that makes them an interesting case for study. Compared to other immigrant groups this specific gendered feature (about 55% of the migrants from Latin America in 2011 are female) make that a more specific family migration strategy is potentially relevant in which intergenerational ties and family network support become even more important when facing an economic crisis. Intergenerational relations are often reported to be important for lives of both parents and children. Parents often provide assistance to their children not only during youth but also later in life (for example by helping out with grandchildren) (Rossi & Rossi, 1990). In particular mothers are known to be involved in providing help and support to their adult children and their grandchildren. Women in this sense are often perceived the kin keepers in which case also daughters often take care of ageing parents (Hank & Buber, 2009).

Also migration literature has often emphasized the relevance of the (family) networks in providing e.g. housing for newly arrived immigrants (Haug, 2008; Palloni et al., 2001). Assisting newly arrived migrants would reduce the cost of migration and sharing households would be

economically advantageous for the household members. Studies in the US and northern Europe have shown that living arrangements of migrants differ by origin (Burr & Mutchler 2003; Giuliano 2006, Zorlu & Mulder 2011). It has been reported that migrants of diverse origin are more likely to share households. On a same note earlier studies have found that living arrangements of migrants differ compared to non-migrants in which the economy of scale has been suggested as one of the explanatory factors (Glick & Van Hook, 2002; Goldscheider & Goldscheider 1989). Establishing a separate household would involve higher costs which is also one of the reasons why young adults of migrant origin would remain in the parental home longer than their majority group compatriots (De Valk & Billari 2007; Zorlu & Mulder 2011). Changing economic conditions with more job insecurity and higher unemployment was, in line with this, shown to be resulting in remaining in the parental home longer (Gauthier 2007).

Some earlier studies exploring the relationship between extended living arrangements and female labor market participation in the US, indicated that single mother households are more likely to contain one or more adult non-nuclear members than those in which both spouses are present (Tienda & Angel, 1982; Tienda & Salazar, 1982). A subsequent study suggested that the presence of nonnuclear household members directly facilitated the labor force participation of these women with children (Tienda & Glass, 1985). Although there is broad literature on multi-generational households and how grandparents are raising grandchildren in-and-out households (especially in terms of well-being of the children), less known is how this family structure interferes with the mothers' labor-market participation. Even fewer studies have addressed this question for immigrant women.

At the same time it has just as well been suggested that living arrangements differ because of cultural preferences. It has been brought up that this could explain the variation across Europe as well as for the differences between migrant and natives in different European countries and the US (Giuliano 2006; Reher 1998). Stronger intergenerational family ties and cultural norms of support have been brought up as the motor behind larger households and shared living arrangements of parents and children. This latter point is supposedly also relevant for Latin-American migrants.

Latin American migration to Spain has a long history and Latin Americans represent 37% of the total foreign-born population in 2011 according to official Population Registers. The main purpose of this paper is to determine how labor force participation and living arrangements are related among women of this group of migrants. We focus in particular on women with minor children who are given the age of their children in need of childcare and at the same time also often have ageing parents.

Based on the existing literature we test two contrasting hypotheses. On the one hand one can expect that in a context in which strong (intergenerational) relations prevail and in which economic possibilities are important for living arrangements women in multigenerational households will participate more than those in other living arrangements. On the other hand we might expect that women in multigenerational households have more care obligations towards ageing family members and would thus participate less on the labour market.

Furthermore we expect that living in a multigenerational household will be more relevant for the hours worked and sector of employment than for having a job as such.

Using data from the Spanish Labor Force Survey (LFS) between 2005 and 2012, allows us to get a dynamic perspective on the relation between labor market participation and living arrangements. We will be able to cover the starting point of the economic crisis, its development and potential impact. Multivariate analysis will be applied to answer our research question including detailed information on the individual and all household members. We focus on both multigenerational and complex household structures. Multi-generational households for the Latin Americans in our case include both those who have become grandparents while being in Spain and also those who were reunited with their children, (even though family reunification flows have been reduced substantially since the start of the economic crisis. Nevertheless the increase of the number of multi-generational households of Latin-Americans did not stop during the last years, and the role of support within the household can be provided not only by grandparents but also other members (i.e. uncles and aunts, nephews and nieces, cousins, or close friends). For this reason, we pay also special attention in our analysis to those complex households that do not have a multigenerational structure as these complex households with diverse members of different generations could, still support in domestic and care tasks which may facilitate women's labor force participation. In all this study will provide a more advanced knowledge on the role of intergenerational support received and given within the household among Latin American women in times of crisis.

DATA AND METHODS

Data come from the Spanish Labor Force Survey (LFS) between 2005 and 2012. The design of the survey implies that a sixth part of its sample is renewed every 6 trimesters. In order not to have the same individuals in the sample repeatedly we have selected one trimester out of every six, starting on the 1st trimester from 2005 until 3rd trimester from 2012. In the interim where the 2011 Census data is not yet available, the LFS is the unique Spanish data source which allows the study of living arrangements and labor force activity during inter-census years. Since we have yearly observations the additional advantage is that it also allows us to identify changes over time especially in the context of the recent economic recession in Spain.

We have selected only those households where among its members there is at least 1 child less than 16 years of age. Four types of household with minor children have been distinguished: 1) **single mother**, where a mother lives with her children; 2) **couple with children** with no other relatives; 3) **multigenerational households**, composed by extended and multiple households where three generations from the same family are cohabiting together; and 4) **complex households**, which includes other extended and multiple households in which members don't belong to the same family, as well as those households without nucleus where a minor child is residing.

For our analysis we also have identify only the households where at least one adult member was born in a Latin-American country. We have distributed households in three different types: 1) Latin-American households (**LAT**) where all its adult members were born in a Latin-American country; 2) Mixed households between Latin-American adults and Spanish adults

(**MIXspn**); and 3) Mixed households between Latin-American adults and other immigrant origin adults (**MIXimm**). This distinction was made based on the country of birth of the household members older than 16 years old.

In our analyses we focus on immigrants only since a comparison with native Spanish households is not useful given the very different living conditions and family and social networks of support among those of the majority group and those with a migrant origin. We do however; decompose those of Latin American origin as much as the sample size allows us to explore specific country-level characteristics.

Descriptive and multivariable analysis will be applied. The descriptive analysis includes results on both units of measurement: households and individuals. The multivariable analysis only includes the individual woman and her labor market position and living arrangement. At the descriptive level we will show, first, characteristics of households in terms of type of living arrangements and origin composition, as well as its evolution over time; and second, we will explore the characteristics of labor-market incorporation of Latin-American women from the different household types in terms of their activity, occupational sector and working hours. In the logistic regression models, we explore the link between labor market incorporation of Latin-American women and her socio-demographic, family and household characteristics in order to approach how these women balance work and family.

Our sample (after applying the below outlined selections) covers 6,703 households: where 1) at least one household member is under 16 years of age and 2) where at least one adult was born in a Latin-American country. A total of 44,785 individuals live in these selected households, from which 17,308 are adult women (older than 16) and 15,151 are adult men; being minor children the remaining sample.

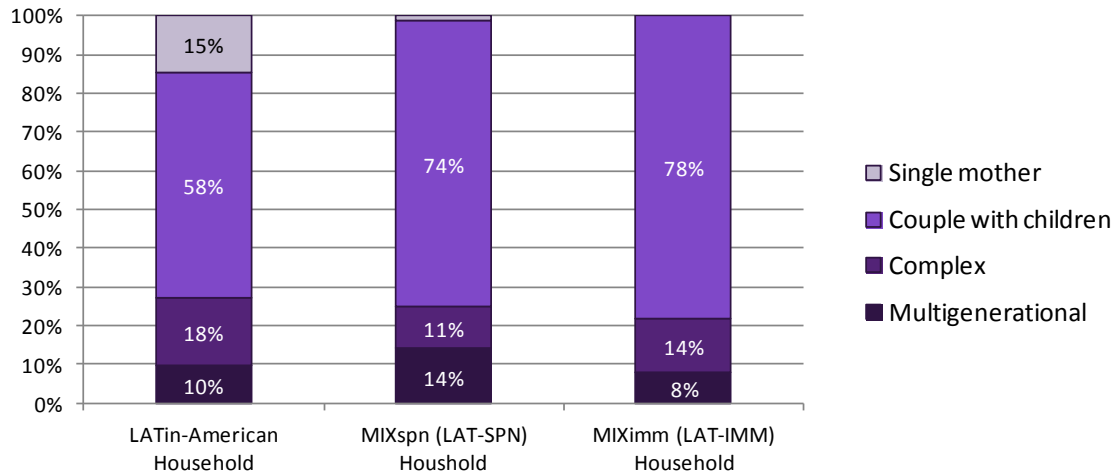
EXPLORING LATIN-AMERICAN HOUSEHOLDS WITH CHILDREN IN SPAIN

We start by giving an overview of Latin-American households with children in Spain by sketching their living arrangements according to the type of household and the origin of its adult members. Households where all its adult members were born in Latin-America represent 58% of the total, followed by a 39% of them where one or more Latin-American members are living with one or more Spanish household member. Only 3% of households are mixed households in which Latin-Americans and other immigrant origins live together.

Figure 1 shows this distribution by household composition. The majority of households are composed by a couple living with their children. This is especially the case for households of mixed origins where this type represents three quarters of the total. Extended and multiple households represent between a fifth and a third part of the total sample. Complex households are more common among immigrant populations, while multigenerational homes are more often found if there is a Spanish member in the household compared to the situation in which all adults are immigrants (14% versus 8-10%). Single mother households by definition can only include Latin-American households (15%) since the great majority of them include only 1 adult member. However, in 5% of the cases, besides the minor child members, the

mother lives with an adult child born already in Spain. For this reason these households show up in the figure as single mother mixed households with Spanish (MIXspn). However this is only a minority of cases (30 households out of 600).

Figure 1: Type of Latin-American households with children by origin of its adult members.

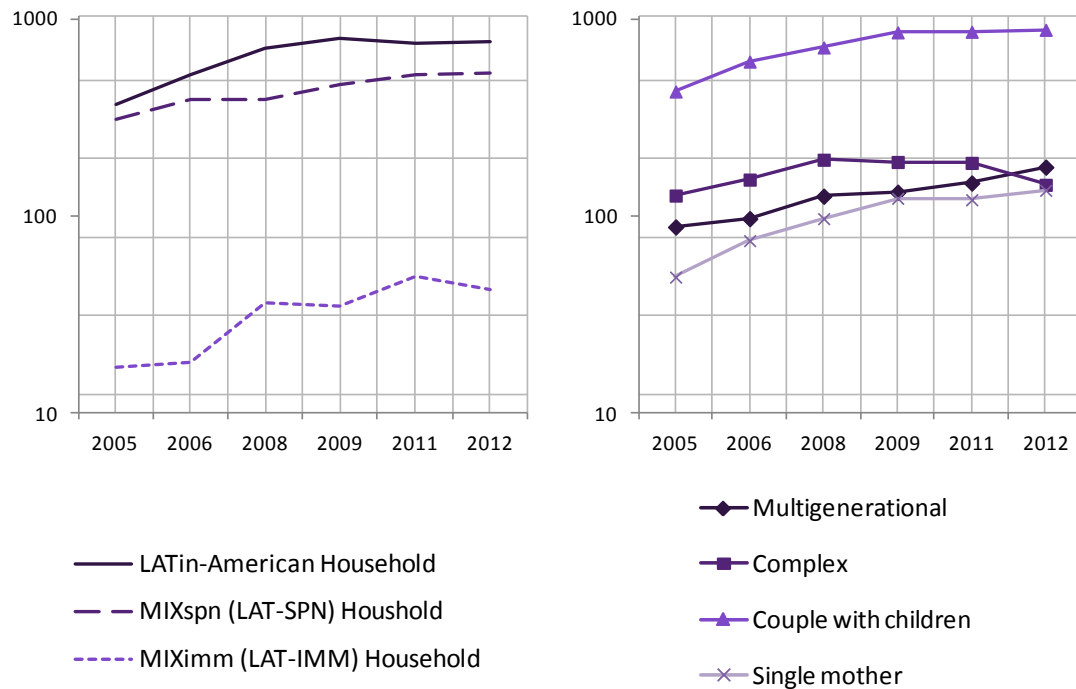


Source: Spanish Labor Force Survey (LFS), 2005-2012.

During the observed period, 2005-2012, there was an overall increase in the number of households which include a Latin-American member (Figure 2a). This is an obvious outcome of the conversion of Spain into an immigration country since the beginning of 2000's, but we already can identify in this evolution, the effect of the economic crisis which started in 2008. Households where all adult members are Latin-Americans remain at the same level since 2009, while mixed households stopped to increase only in 2011.

Looking at the evolution of these households by its composition (Figure 2b), it is remarkable that the share of couples with children increased until 2008 and have remained stable ever since. Secondly, it is worthy to highlight how complex and multigenerational households showed a parallel increase until 2008. After that moment –the starting point of the economic crisis- complex households decreased progressively while multigenerational households continue to increase and even becoming at the last observation (2012) the second most common living arrangement after couples with children. Finally, the share of single parent households among Latin-American households grew since 2005 although a slow-down process is observed after 2008 as well.

Figure 2: Evolution of Latin-American households with children by type and origin of its adult members.



Source: Spanish Labor Force Survey (LFS), 2005-2012.

In three out of four households (4,950 out of the in total 6,703 selected households), the reference person¹ was born in a Latin-American country. This broad origin category however may capture large country of origin variance. When distinguishing living arrangements at a country level (Figure 3), some clear patterns are found. The percentage of multigenerational households where the reference person was born in Cuba (19%) or Uruguay (18%), is almost double of that found for the other countries of origin (overall 10%). Other complex household's structures are especially represented among Bolivians, 1 out of 4 of them lives in this type of households, followed by Ecuadorians (22%) and Dominicans (21%) while for Argentines, Uruguayans and Venezuelans this is less common (5% or less). As mentioned before, couples with children are the most represented household composition for all origin countries, but its share can vary from more than 7 out of 10 cases for, again, Argentines, Uruguayans and Venezuelans; to only 4 out of 10 in the case of Dominicans. Finally, it is worth to remark how especially Dominicans (25%) but also Brazilians (20%) include (almost) double the proportion of single parent households that are found for the other countries of origin (12% on average).

¹ In the Spanish LFS there is not a fixed criterion to select the reference person who will answer the questionnaire. As a result any adult member of the household can be reference person.

Figure 3: Type of households with children by its reference person's Latin-American country of birth.

	<i>N</i>	Multi- generational	Complex	Couple with children	Single mother	
Ecuador	1409	9%	22%	59%	10%	100%
Colombia	828	12%	15%	57%	16%	100%
Argentina	587	10%	5%	76%	10%	100%
Venezuela	378	8%	4%	75%	12%	100%
Bolivia	367	10%	26%	55%	9%	100%
Peru	272	9%	18%	62%	11%	100%
Dominican Republic	217	12%	21%	41%	25%	100%
Uruguay	201	18%	5%	72%	5%	100%
Brasil	198	8%	14%	59%	20%	100%
Cuba	149	19%	8%	64%	9%	100%
Other LA countries	344	10%	18%	61%	12%	100%
Total	4950	10%	16%	62%	12%	100%

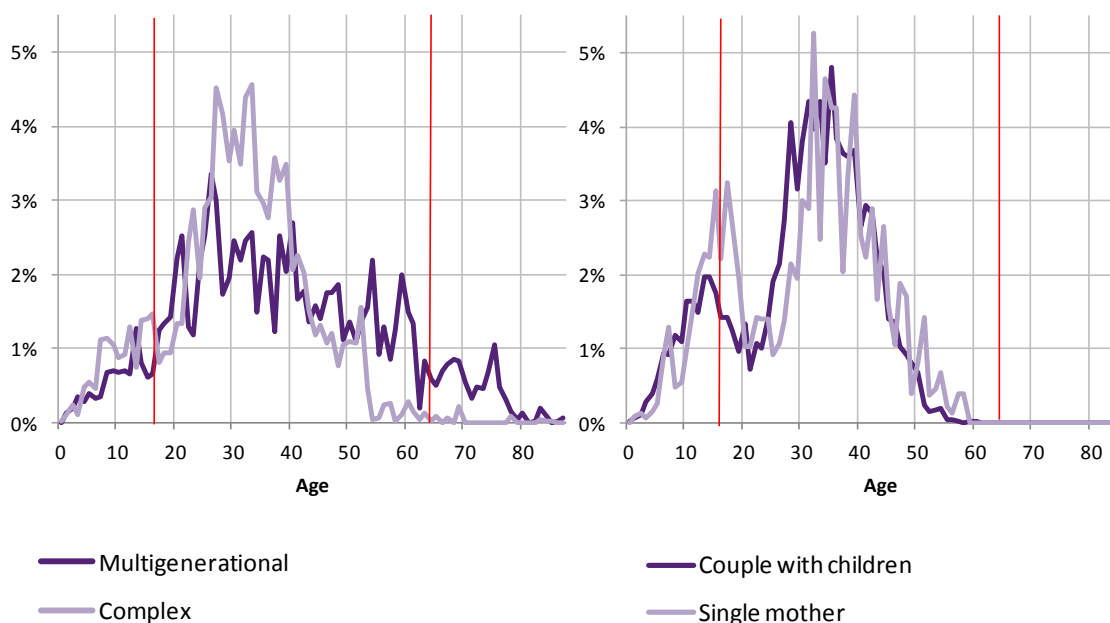
Source: Spanish Labor Force Survey (LFS), 2005-2012.

Characteristics of Latin American women

As mentioned before one of the main characteristics of the Latin-American immigration to Spain is the large share of women in this flow. We find this reflected in our data where 56% of the adult members in Latin-American households with children are women, while the remaining 44% are men. This is true for all Latin-American countries in the sample, but its distribution fluctuates from 67% and 66% among women from Brazil and Paraguay respectively, to an almost balanced 50.1% among Argentinean women (considering only countries with more than 500 cases in our sample). In line with our research objective, the sex distribution reaches a 69% of women when we consider only Latin-American migrants older than 64 years old, thus, inactive on the labor market.

If we look at the age structure of adult Latin-American women living in households with children by type of household (Figure 4) we find on the one hand, as expected, that complex households have a younger age profile than multigenerational ones. Adult women in complex households are mainly between 27 and 39 years old. An important difference between them is that during the years previous to retirement age -54 to 64- and afterwards complex households with children do not have more women. In the other hand, when comparing the age profile of single mothers and mothers from couples, we noticed a slightly older structure for the first ones, that it might be, in part, explained by separations and divorces.

Figure 4: Age of Latin-American women living in households with children by type of household.



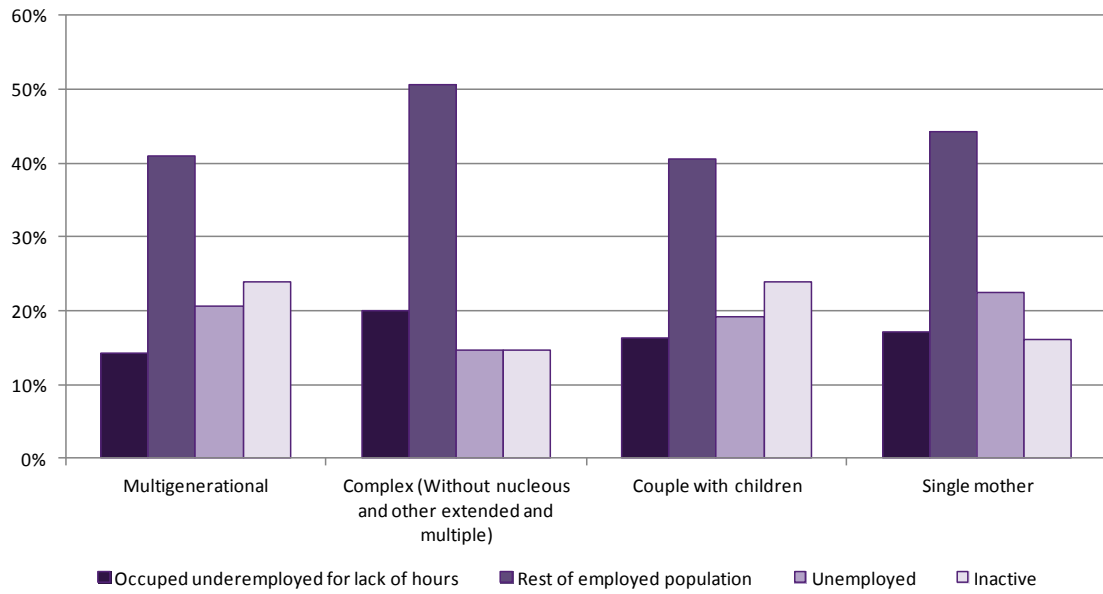
*Red lines indicate legal age to work (16 years old) and retirement age (64 years old).

Source: Spanish Labor Force Survey (LFS), 2005-2012.

In a second step we present the descriptive findings on our labour force measures of Latin American women living in different types of households (Figure 5-7). Overall labour force participation of women of different Latin American origins are found to be high. The descriptive findings do however not reveal large difference in labor force status by household type. Neither the likelihood of being employed nor the number of hours worked (latter not in figure) seems to differ by type of household the women lives in. Only for the sector in which the women work, we seem to find some differences between those in multigenerational households and those living in complex households and with partner and children.

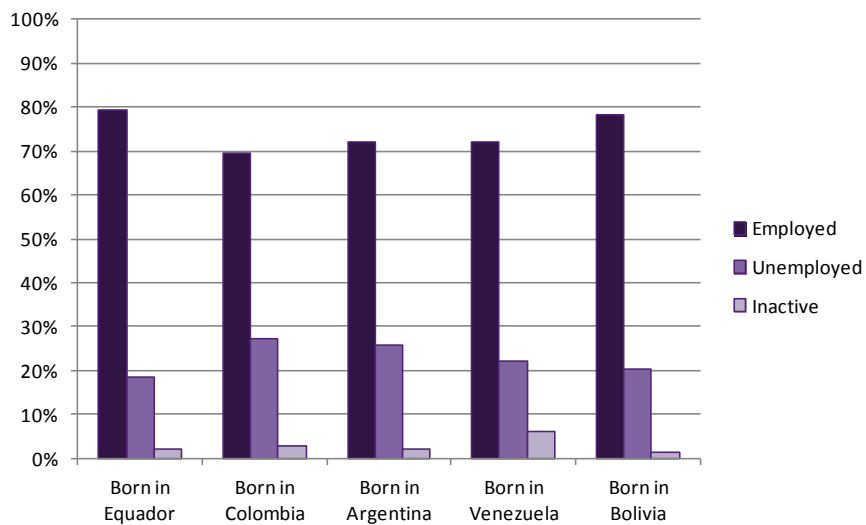
The multivariate analyses should shed further light on these first descriptive findings and will include a range of individual and household characteristics. Furthermore those analyses will pay attention to potential shifts over time. This will be an important further step to unravel the importance of multigenerational living arrangements and labour market participation of women from Latin America in Spain.

Figure 5: Labor force status of Latin-American women (16-64) living in households with children by type of household.



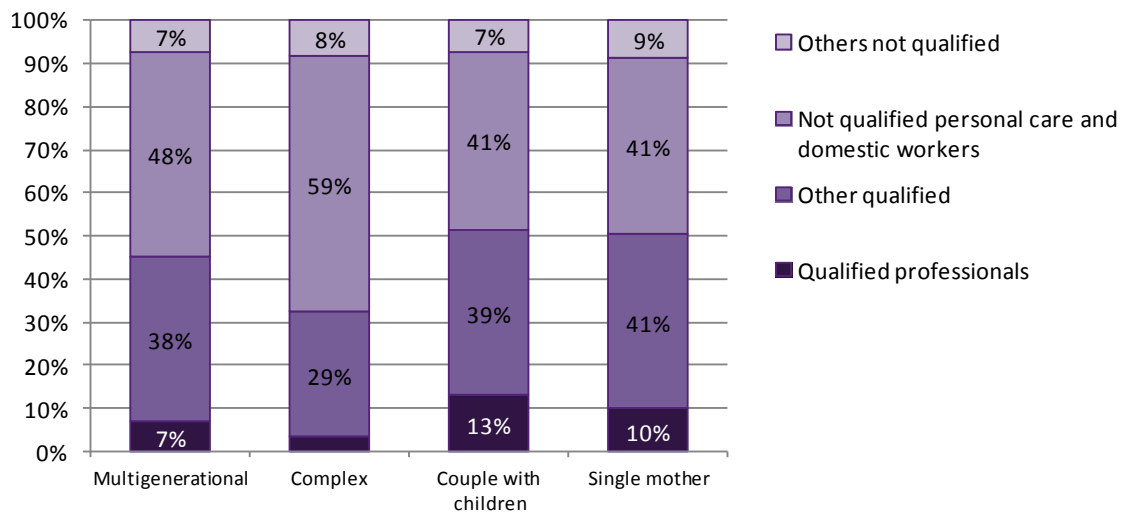
Source: Spanish Labor Force Survey (LFS), 2005-2012.

Figure 6: Labor force status of Latin-American women (16-64) living in households with children by top five countries of birth.



Source: Spanish Labor Force Survey (LFS), 2005-2012.

Figure 7: Employment by occupational sector of Latin-American women (16-64) living in households with children by type of household.



Source: Spanish Labor Force Survey (LFS), 2005-2012.

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