

# Family and Individual Determinants of the Internal Migration of the Foreign-Born Population in Italy and Spain, 2001-2011<sup>1</sup>

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**THIS IS A PRELIMINARY VERSION PREPARED FOR THE EUROPEAN  
POPULATION CONFERENCE 2014**

## **Abstract**

The main objective of this paper is to describe the different socio-demographical and individual factors that explain the internal migration patterns of the foreign-born population in Italy and Spain, countries with a common history of past emigration and which have become dynamic destinations in the European context of immigration since the middle of the nineties of the XX<sup>th</sup> century. The analysis is based on census micro-data files of 2001 and 2011 which provide information on individuals that have changed their place of residence by basic demographic characteristics (age, sex and country of birth, origin and destination of internal migration, housing tenure, employment and level of education). We intend to answer the following questions: Are the demographic patterns of internal migration of foreign-born similar to those of natives by age and sex? Do these migration patterns differ by immigrant origin? Are the observed demographic patterns by specific national groups always the same or do they differ according to the country of destination? And lastly, what changes are observed from 2001 to 2011? Following a descriptive analysis of demographic patterns of internal migration of foreign-born and native-born we will apply some multinomial models to explore some of the individual and aggregated characteristics that may influence in explaining the differences in mobility among groups in these two Southern European countries. Our main findings are: the internal migration intensity of the foreign born population is considerably higher than that of native population (this is proved for Africans, Asians and Latin-Americans); the first two groups also show important gender differences (males are more mobile), but patterns are more balanced for Latin-Americans; and finally, individual factors have similar influences in both countries, even if the odds-ratios show higher differences for medium and long distance migration.

*Keywords: international migration, internal migration, foreign-born population, Census data, cross-country comparison.*

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<sup>1</sup> This paper has been carried out in the framework of the research project: *Inflexión del ciclo económico y transformaciones de las migraciones en España (CSO2010-19177)*, funded by the Ministry of Education and Science, National R+D+I Plan 2004-2007 and 2007-2010.

## Introduction

The massive arrival of foreign immigrants since the nineties of the XXth century constitutes a transcendental geo-demographic and social phenomenon in Italy and Spain. These countries, with a common emigration experience in past, have lived a fast transition from the eighties of the last century that has turned them into some of the most important immigration destinations in the European Union. In this intense process, Italy and Spain share a series of common characteristics: intensification and acceleration of the flows, diversification in the demographic structure by age, sex and geographical origin and a rising quantitative importance of the irregular flows (Domingo and Gil-Alonso 2007; Recaño-Valverde and Domingo 2006).

In this paper we are going to present some results of our research, for which we have focused our efforts on answering the following questions: Are the demographic patterns of internal migration of foreigners similar to those of natives by age and sex? Do these migration patterns differ by country of origin? Are the observed demographic patterns by specific national groups always the same or do they vary according to the country of destination? And lastly, what changes are observed from 2001 to 2011?

In brief, the objective is to study which family and individual factors take part in explaining the internal mobility when we consider the behaviour of the native-born population as the comparative element and whether the economic crisis has affected these mobility patterns.

Up to now, the studies carried out in Canada, the United States, Germany, Belgium and Great Britain have arrived to the following conclusions: immigrants<sup>2</sup> tend to be more mobile than natives because of their demographic and social characteristics, like their age and their life cycle stage when they entry the destination country, the duration of residence, the situation of the labour market and their academic attainment (Bartel 1989; Bartel and Koch 1991; Nogle 1994). On the other hand, several authors have pointed out that foreign-born people show lower elasticity than native-born population to adapt to the factors of the regional market<sup>3</sup> that have a stronger incidence on the medium and long distance changes of residence, such as the unemployment levels, the salary differentials and the areas with higher employment growth (Liaw and Frey 1998; Kritz and Nogle 1994; Nogle 1994). A highlighted result defends that social networks have a relevant influence on the mobility of these collectives: the presence and territorial location of already existing communities of the same immigrant origin lessen the costs associated with the migration process. These communities represent the immigrants' main source of information about the potential internal destinations (Frey 1995; Gurak and Kritz 2000). The concentration of the natives of a particular community in a specific region also constitutes an element of attraction for those of the same geographical origin. By integrating the effect of the contextual economic factors and the action of the social networks Gurak and Kritz (1998) show that immigrants move less frequently from regions with high economic growth rates, with high proportions of workers in the manufacture sector and with high concentrations of immigrants from the

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<sup>2</sup> We define immigrant for this paper as a person born in another country (foreign-born). The reasons underlying this decision are based on the fact that some countries do not provide information by both country of birth and country of citizenship. Furthermore, this is a characteristic that remains unchanged over time.

<sup>3</sup> These results, however, have been obtained in countries with high mobility, where native-born population shows an intense migration response to the economic incentives, both at the individual and regional levels. We advance that the situation in the Mediterranean countries (Spain and Italy) is not the same.

same national origin. Attending to these arguments, the concentration of nationals from a same country in a region acts, thus, as a break of the internal migration of these collectives. Newbold (1996) has stressed, in his work about Canada, the capacity of some regions to attract and keep foreign immigrants from other Canadian regions, result which is confirmed by Krahn and Derwing research (2005).

Why do we study these countries? There are several considerations to be regarded in this respect. First of all, we find the absence of comparative studies about the foreign population or foreign born population mobility in the academic literature: the existent works at present are mainly focused on national contexts. The second reason is the structural comparability of the two countries that constitute our object of analysis in different aspects. They have a common international migration dynamic, with an intense emigratory past that has turned at present to a situation of intense immigration. They receive flows which are very divers in terms of origin composition, and they are also countries with a moderated or low internal mobility (Rees and Kupiszewski 1999; Módenes 2002), in which the incorporation of the foreign population has meant the increase of this internal migration mobility (Recaño-Valverde and Roig 2006; Mocetti and Porello, 2010). Finally, they have very similar demographic and labour structures. These facts make these Southern European countries interesting laboratories to assess the effects of the foreign born population internal migration in geographical contexts of low mobility.

In Spain and Italy, the developed researches show some similarities with the results highlighted by previous international literature about other destinations (Recaño-Valverde 2003; Recaño-Valverde and Roig 2006; Mocetti and Porello 2010). However, these are countries with low internal migration intensity, where the differences in mobility between foreign-born and native-born populations are more noticeable than in countries with higher internal mobility, such as the United States and Canada. Altogether, international researchers have collected a series of socio-demographic and economic variables that have a decisive impact on the foreign or foreign-born population mobility. For this work, we will tackle some of these aspects from a more comparative perspective. To achieve this objective, we will assess the demographic structure, the migratory intensity and the individual factors that have an influence on the mobility of the different foreign-born groups in some Southern European countries.

## Data and Methods

At present, the available data for the study of the internal migration of the foreign population or non-native born population differ considerably for the two countries included in this work. In this regard, Spain and Italy count on population registers, the *Padrón Continuo* for Spain and the *Anagrafe dei Comuni italiani* for Italy<sup>4</sup>, which provide data on migratory flows up to a municipality level. In the Spanish case, the information about migration is derived from the flows that the Statistics on Residential Variations (*Estadísticas de Variaciones Residenciales – EVR*) establish according to the data received from the population register (*Padrón Continuo*). One registration in a municipality implies an automatic dropped out of the same person in the register of the

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<sup>4</sup> A detailed description of the characteristics of the Italian data on internal migration can be found at: <http://demo.istat.it/bil2006/index03.html>; with regards to the Spanish data, the migratory information is elaborated in the Statistics of Residential Variations (EVR) that comes from the population register (Padrón Continuo) (see <http://www.ine.es/daco/daco42/migracion/notaevr.htm>). The Italian data about mobility provide information about the academic attainment, the marital status or occupation, which cannot be found at the Spanish EVR.

previous municipality of residence. In the Italian case, the information about origin and destination of the migration movement is obtained through the *iscrizioni* (registration) and *cancellazioni* (cancellation) because of the *trasferimento di residenza* (change of residence), in a very similar way to that described for Spain. However, there exist some essential differences between both sources despite being population registers. The Italian data are just referred to the population with a certain legal status of residence, who are the only ones allowed to be registered. On the other hand, the Spanish Continuous Register (*Padrón Continuo*) includes both immigrants with legal status of residence and immigrants in an irregular situation (with no residence or work permits). The scope of the Spanish population register is, thus, higher than the Italian, as we refer to foreign born population, allowing gathering information by country of birth and country of citizenship, which is restricted to the latter in the Italian register. As we have already pointed out, the variations in the characteristics of the Spanish and the Italian information drive us to reject data on flows and just consider some homogeneous information that is available for the two countries. This is the reason why we have decided to use the 2001 and 2011 Census information.

Nonetheless, it is difficult to compare Census data for different countries (Courgeau, 1973a and 1973b; Long and Boertlein, 1990; Bell, Blake et al, 2002; Bell and Rees, 2006; Bell and Muhidin, 2009). Realities of each context, geographical divisions, priorities of the specific administrations and years of collection change, thus research questions and hypothesis to be tested have to be adapted to these disparities<sup>5</sup>. However, our effort to homogenize the data sets has been facilitated to a great extent by the *Integrated Public Use of International Microdata Series* (IPUMS) (Minnesota Population Centre 2009), which has provided us with the harmonized data files for the countries we have included in the analysis for this paper (Table 1).

**Table 1 Characteristics of the data files (2001)**

Country	Sample fraction (%)	Sample size	Foreign-born population subsample	Foreign population subsample	census date (d-m-yr)	Major administrative unit	Minor administrative unit
Italy	5	2,990,739	117,890 (3.9%)	70,462 (2.4%)	21/10/2001	Region (20)	Municipality(8101)
Spain	5	2,039,274	107,394 (5.3%)	77,631 (3.8%)	01/11/2001	Province (52)	Municipality(8111)

*Source: Own elaboration based on the Integrated Public Use of International Microdata Series: version 5.0. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 2009*

The microdata of the census data base of IPUMS allows us to obtain two samples: one with data about the population born abroad and one with the population by citizenship. We have chosen to analyse the sample by country/place of birth. Two are the motivations that explain this option. First of them, the characteristic of place of birth remains stable over time in contrast to the numerous acquisitions of citizenship by the population of Latin-American origin that are registered in the considered countries. The second, which is indirectly linked to the previous one, is determined by the higher volume of the sample (Table 1). The major inconvenience of this decision is the fact that a great deal of the foreign born population, especially in other European countries, corresponds to the children of Spanish or Italian parents born abroad during the intense

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<sup>5</sup> Apart from the differences in the socioeconomical and demographical contexts, definitions on migration are much affected by the particularities of the spatial administrative division and the time intervals used in the census to obtain the category of migrants.

emigration processes of these countries in the sixties and seventies. We argue that this factor does not alter the sense of the results.

Regarding our specific research objectives, we also have to mention the approaches followed in the different countries with regards to the questions on mobility. In Italy the census inquired about the place of residence one year ago. For Spain, we have information about the last place of residence and the year of change of residence so, even if conceptually it is not exactly the same, we can still build up a proxy for the dependent variable that can be understood as the situation one year ago, as in Italy.

On the other hand, we have had to adjust our explanatory variables to the degree of detail supplied by each census, while maintaining the possibilities of cross-national comparisons. This has led us to a greater simplicity in the categorization of the covariates that we would have used for country specific models. Since educational attainment was not coded in the same way, we have re-coded it in such a way that it allows comparison (for the re-codification we have previously studied the intra-variation with regards to our dependent variables). The most difficult explanatory variable to harmonize has been that referred to the place of birth. First of all, not both countries include detailed information on this<sup>6</sup>. Secondly, each of them provides the detail about the geographical origin that emphasizes the places of birth of their own interests, which are not necessary coincident in both countries. So, even if our main research question focuses on the similarity or dissimilarity of the internal migration patterns by region of birth, we have to limit the number and types of categories to those available for the countries of study.

The problem with some of the items is not related to the selected categories for the responses in each country but to the specific population that has been asked about them. For instance, employment status and academic attainment have been treated differently in the various censuses, depending on the age of the interviewee and his/her situation as an active/non-active citizen. In order to avoid the biased missing data derived from it, we have constricted our initial database to people aged 25 and over.

Finally, we centre our attention on the individual characteristics that have an effect on the probability of having changed residence with regards to that stated for the previous year (Italy and Spain). In this case we are not measuring migration intensity, but focusing on the personal circumstances that may act as push effects for migrating. In particular, we are especially interested in grasping the differences of behaviour according to the geographical origin (place of birth) of the migrants and whether their patterns are similar (or not) across countries.

For this purpose, we apply two multinomial models with three categories for the dependent variable (no migration, short distance migration, long distance migration). We compare the categories *no migration* versus *short distance migration* (table 2) and *no migration* versus *medium-long distance migration* (table 3). In the first column for each country we have excluded information about the year of arrival of the immigrant. In the second column, we include this variable. Since we do not have data about the year of arrival of those who were already naturalised at the time of the Census for Italy and, consequently, there exists important correlation between place of birth and year of arrival, we have also kept the results of the first simpler models, in which geographical origin provides a more detailed insight on its influence. We are aware that these minor

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<sup>6</sup> For instance, the 2001 Italian Census microdata only distinguish 15 places/regions of birth, compared to or the 120 of Spain, which has forced the aggregation of information according to the limitations of the Italian information in order to make it fully comparable.

and major administrative units differ, even if not significantly, with regards to their extension and population density, but since in this step we are studying individual propensities to move, instead of migration intensities, the territorial differences should not disturb our results too much.

We will replicate the results for Spain as soon as 2011 Census microdata are available (expectedly at the end of 2013) and, if possible, also for Italy. These further analyses will be added to the presentation for the conference and will provide with a fresh insight of the question. Furthermore, it will allow as checking for the effect of the economic crisis on the internal migration processes in both countries.

## Preliminary results

Table 2. Multinomial model for migration status: no migration versus different minor administrative unit

		<i>Spain</i>		<i>Italy</i>	
sex	male				
	female	<b>-0.064</b>	<b>-0.062</b>	<b>-0.036</b>	<b>-0.036</b>
age-group	25-34				
	35-44	<b>-0.430</b>	<b>-0.420</b>	<b>-0.542</b>	<b>-0.539</b>
	45-54	<b>-0.812</b>	<b>-0.801</b>	<b>-1.046</b>	<b>-1.042</b>
	55+	<b>-1.552</b>	<b>-1.540</b>	<b>-1.598</b>	<b>-1.591</b>
place of birth	native-born				
	European Union 15	<b>0.233</b>	<b>0.131</b>	0.077	0.003
	Central-eastern Europe	<b>0.513</b>	<i>0.199</i>	<b>0.361</b>	<b>0.155</b>
	Northern Africa	<b>0.454</b>	<b>0.271</b>	<b>0.510</b>	<b>0.324</b>
	Rest of Africa	<b>0.348</b>	0.162	<b>0.243</b>	0.058
	Western Asia	-0.284	-0.437	-0.253	<i>-0.413</i>
	South-Central Asia	-0.074	-0.277	<b>0.624</b>	<b>0.397</b>
	Eastern Asia	-0.189	-0.356	0.119	-0.086
	Latin-America	<b>0.303</b>	0.060	<b>0.380</b>	<b>0.242</b>
	other developed countries	-0.157	-0.235	0.003	-0.022
	housing tenure	owned			
not owned		<b>0.187</b>	<b>0.164</b>	<b>0.129</b>	<b>0.126</b>
household type	one person hh				
	married/cohab couple, no children	<b>0.440</b>	<b>0.437</b>	<b>-0.156</b>	<b>-0.155</b>
	married/cohab couple, children	<b>-1.187</b>	<b>-1.188</b>	<b>-1.293</b>	<b>-1.291</b>
	single-parent family	<b>-1.054</b>	<b>-1.052</b>	<b>-0.871</b>	<b>-0.868</b>
	extended family, relatives only	<b>-0.630</b>	<b>-0.633</b>	<b>-0.599</b>	<b>-0.599</b>
region of residence	other	<b>-0.238</b>	<b>-0.264</b>	<b>-0.159</b>	<b>-0.170</b>
	children <5 in hh	<b>0.506</b>	<b>0.510</b>	<b>0.318</b>	<b>0.318</b>
	North-West				
	North-East	<b>-0.210</b>	<b>-0.220</b>	<b>-0.132</b>	<b>-0.131</b>
	Madrid	<b>0.376</b>	<b>0.369</b>		
	Centre	<b>-0.325</b>	<b>-0.333</b>	<b>-0.373</b>	<b>-0.372</b>
	East	<b>0.212</b>	<b>0.203</b>		
	South (Canary) Islands	<b>-0.286</b>	<b>-0.294</b>	<b>-0.626</b>	<b>-0.624</b>
occupational status	employed				
	unemployed	0.043	0.043	<b>-0.186</b>	<b>-0.186</b>
	housework	<b>-0.110</b>	<b>-0.113</b>	<b>-0.345</b>	<b>-0.347</b>
	in school	<b>-0.108</b>	<b>-0.106</b>	<b>0.443</b>	<b>0.444</b>
	retiree	<b>-0.353</b>	<b>-0.358</b>	<b>-0.358</b>	<b>-0.359</b>
	other	<b>-0.097</b>	<b>-0.098</b>	<b>0.205</b>	<b>0.205</b>
academic level	less than primary				
	primary	<b>0.265</b>	<b>0.267</b>	<b>0.122</b>	<b>0.126</b>
	secondary	<b>0.564</b>	<b>0.571</b>	<b>0.267</b>	<b>0.273</b>
citizen*period of arrival	university	<b>0.590</b>	<b>0.595</b>	<b>0.432</b>	<b>0.436</b>
	citizen				
	non citizen, arrived before 1996		-0.085		<b>0.162</b>
	non citizen, arrived in 1996-2001		<b>0.522</b>		<b>0.323</b>
	native born-non citizen		0.418		-0.431
	constant	<b>-3.950</b>	<b>-3.948</b>	<b>-2.602</b>	<b>-2.610</b>

**bold:** significant for  $\alpha=0,05$ , *italics:* significant for  $\alpha=0,1$

Source: own elaboration. IPUMS Census Data 2001. Base:  $n_{\text{spain}}=1,443,401/1,443,393$ ;  $n_{\text{italy}}=2,203,279/2,203,252$

**Table 3. Multinomial model for migration status: no migration versus different major administrative unit**

		<i>Spain</i>		<i>Italy</i>	
sex	male				
	female	<b>-0.120</b>	<b>-0.118</b>	<b>-0.327</b>	<b>-0.327</b>
age-group	25-34				
	35-44	<b>-0.358</b>	<b>-0.343</b>	<b>-0.919</b>	<b>-0.918</b>
	45-54	<b>-0.687</b>	<b>-0.669</b>	<b>-1.539</b>	<b>-1.537</b>
	55+	<b>-1.099</b>	<b>-1.084</b>	<b>-1.661</b>	<b>-1.659</b>
place of birth	native-born				
	European Union 15	-0.131	-0.166	<b>0.283</b>	<b>0.273</b>
	Central-eastern europe	0.101	-0.128	<b>0.494</b>	<b>0.443</b>
	Northern Africa	<b>0.415</b>	<b>0.311</b>	<b>0.286</b>	<b>0.251</b>
	Rest of Africa	<b>0.293</b>	0.177	<b>0.224</b>	0.192
	Western Asia	0.095	0.001	-0.021	-0.041
	South-Central Asia	<b>0.481</b>	0.370	<b>0.677</b>	<b>0.623</b>
	Eastern Asia	-0.002	-0.059	<b>0.832</b>	<b>0.793</b>
	Latin-America	<b>0.253</b>	0.071	<b>0.288</b>	<b>0.265</b>
	other developed countries	-0.164	-0.192	<b>0.272</b>	<b>0.270</b>
housing tenure	owned				
	not owned	<b>1.086</b>	<b>1.073</b>	<b>0.366</b>	<b>0.366</b>
household type	one person hh				
	married/cohab couple, no children	<i>0.074</i>	<i>0.071</i>	<b>-0.495</b>	<b>-0.495</b>
	married couple, with children	<b>-1.298</b>	<b>-1.300</b>	<b>-0.587</b>	<b>-0.586</b>
	single-parent family	<b>-1.100</b>	<b>-1.099</b>	<b>-0.359</b>	<b>-0.358</b>
	extended family, relatives only	<b>-0.446</b>	<b>-0.449</b>	<b>-0.251</b>	<b>-0.251</b>
	other	<b>0.195</b>	<b>0.182</b>	<b>0.308</b>	<b>0.304</b>
region of residence	children <5 in hh	<b>0.486</b>	<b>0.490</b>	<b>-0.471</b>	<b>-0.471</b>
	North-West				
	North-East	<i>0.110</i>	<i>0.102</i>	<b>0.115</b>	<b>0.116</b>
	Madrid	-0.023	-0.027		
	Centre	<b>0.664</b>	<b>0.658</b>	<b>0.145</b>	<b>0.145</b>
	East	<b>0.243</b>	<b>0.238</b>		
	South	<b>0.245</b>	<b>0.239</b>	<b>0.725</b>	<b>0.725</b>
(Canary) Islands	<b>0.422</b>	<b>0.426</b>	<b>0.474</b>	<b>0.475</b>	
occupational status	employed				
	unemployed	<b>0.525</b>	<b>0.528</b>	<b>-0.200</b>	<b>-0.200</b>
	housework	<b>0.249</b>	<b>0.249</b>	<b>-0.224</b>	<b>-0.225</b>
	in school	<i>0.083</i>	<i>0.085</i>	<b>0.862</b>	<b>0.863</b>
	retiree	-0.063	-0.064	<b>-0.199</b>	<b>-0.200</b>
	other	0.039	0.040	-0.060	-0.060
academic level	less than primary				
	primary	<b>0.281</b>	<b>0.283</b>	<b>0.236</b>	<b>0.237</b>
	secondary	<b>0.679</b>	<b>0.686</b>	<b>0.745</b>	<b>0.746</b>
	university	<b>1.079</b>	<b>1.084</b>	<b>1.477</b>	<b>1.478</b>
citizen*period of arrival	citizen				
	non citizen, arrived before 1996		<b>-0.277</b>		-0.010
	non citizen, arrived in 1996-2001		<b>0.418</b>		0.125
	native born-non citizen		0.370		-0.215
	constant	<b>-5.248</b>	<b>-5.253</b>	<b>-4.026</b>	<b>-4.029</b>

**bold:** significant for  $\alpha=0,05$ , *italics:* significant for  $\alpha=0,1$

Source: own elaboration. IPUMS Census Data 2001. Base:  $n_{spain}=1,443,401/1,443,393$ ;  $n_{italy}=2,203,279/2,203,252$



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