

FOREIGNERS' INTERNAL MIGRATION PATTERNS IN SPAIN: RECENT SPATIAL CHANGES UNDER THE ECONOMIC CRISIS

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Introduction

The profound present Spanish economic crisis ended an intense foreign migration flow phase. Nowadays, international migrations have changed direction and therefore exit flows would currently be larger than entry ones. In the same way, the magnitude of the present crisis obliges us to revise our knowledge on internal flows, especially if we intend to focus on foreign population as it has particularly been hit by the country's extremely high unemployment rates.

One of the effects of internal migrations is population redistribution, and this has a demographic and social impact on both origin and destination municipalities. Within the present low fertility and mortality context, internal migration has gained relevance as a demographic growth or decline generator. In the case of foreigners, internal migrations actually involve a second movement after that in which they entered Spain. Therefore, they need to readapt to the new labour and housing market. When economic crisis and labour instability strike hard, substantial migratory pattern changes should be expected. While new flows to new labour markets –i.e. those regions less touched by recession– can appear, mobility can also be reduced, as labour and housing markets become less dynamic.

This paper aims to give a recent picture of foreigners' internal mobility in Spain. Our main hypothesis is that the economic crisis has changed previous trends, as the number of residential changes should have probably been reduced and, at the same time, foreign migrant sender and receiving provinces should have changed.

State of the art

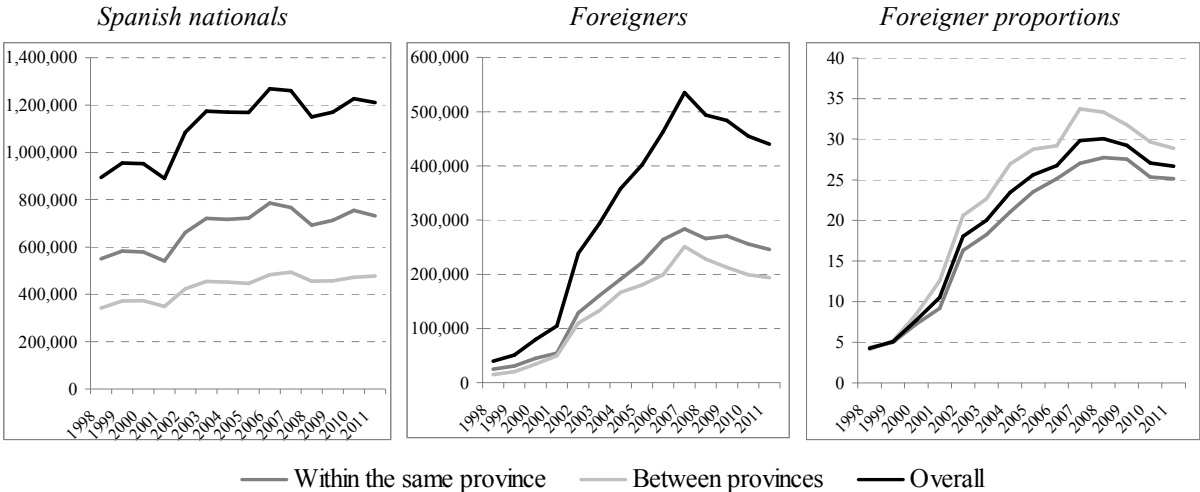
In traditionally migratory countries, there is abundant literature on foreigners' internal migration trends. Most points out that autochthonous populations are less mobile than foreign origin ones. The latter's demographic features, their recent arrival to the country, and the fact that they do not still have a consolidated place of residence would be the main factors behind these differences. From a geographical point of view, they do not either have the same migratory patterns or reasons for moving, as labour reasons tend to be more relevant for foreigners and the distance they travel is higher.

Internal mobility changes: from the pre-2008 boom to the economic crisis' effects

Up to now, 2007 has been the year in which Spain has had the highest internal migratory flows: 1,795,353 registered movements. Out of these, more than a million, 1,050,637 to be

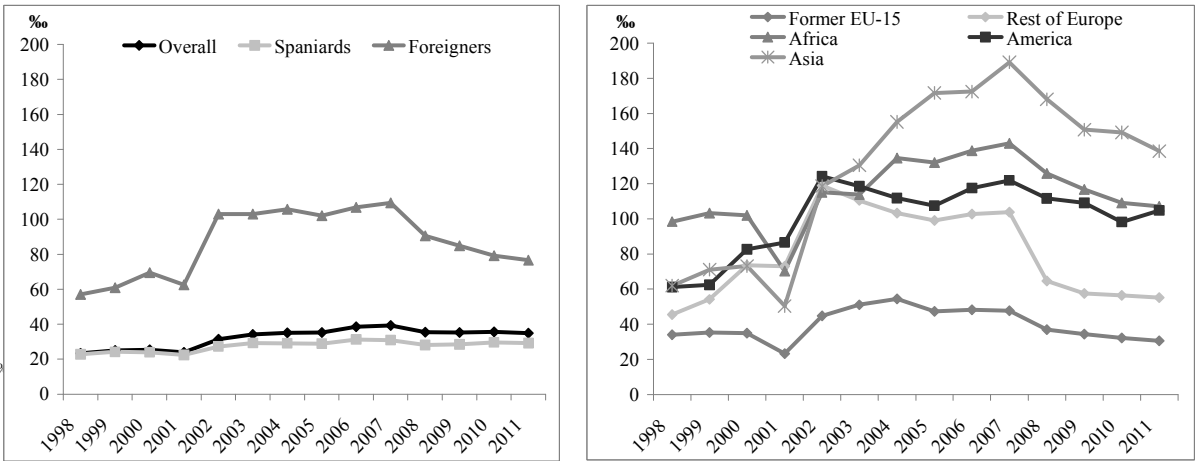
more exact, (58.5%), were within province limits and 744,716 between two provinces. Since then, mobility has slightly fallen. In 2011, there were 1,650,298 changes of residence, 59.3% inside province boundaries. From this point of view, foreigner and Spanish people's behaviour seem to be slightly different. Spanish nationals attained their highest mobility level in 2006 and have only marginally diminished it –less than 5% (figure 1). However, foreigners reached their highest figures in 2007 (535,193 moves) and then decreased to 439,992 in 2011, therefore falling by 17.7%. Movements between provinces are relatively more popular among foreigners, as 45% of their moves are of this type. On the contrary, for Spanish people the percentage is less than 40%, while mobility within the same province attains more than 60%.

Figure 1. Internal migration changes by nationality, 1998-2011



Source: Residence Change Statistics (INE), 1998-2011.

Figure 2. Internal migration rates by continental origin Spain, 1998-2011.



Source: Residence Change Statistics (INE), 1998-2011.

Given foreign population proportion (12.1% of Spain's inhabitants), their residential mobility figures are much higher than what they should be (see figure 1, right). This is due to the fact that aliens' internal mobility rates are much higher than Spanish population ones (figure 2). In 2011, while Spanish nationals have a 29.2‰ rate, foreigners have a 76.6‰ one. As for continental origin, some groups have a higher mobility than others. Asian (138‰ in 2011),

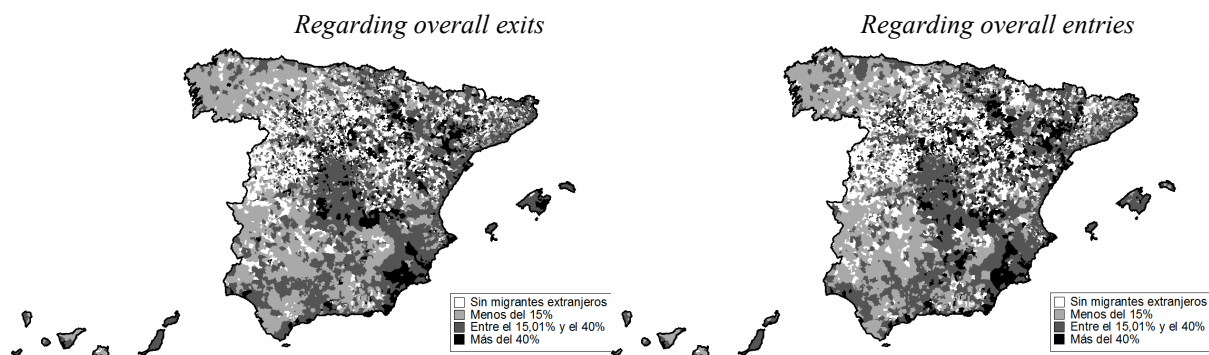
African (107‰) and American (104‰) internal migration rates are much higher than Spanish ones, while those of EU-15 country nationals (32.1‰) and of the rest of Europeans (56,4‰) are much more similar to those of autochthonous people. Both Figure 2 graphs show that all internal migration rates –foreigner ones particularly– have been falling from the highest ever levels attained in 2007.

The effect of the crisis: internal migrations in 2011

In 2011, out of the 1.65 million internal migrations which were made in Spain, 26.7%, that is to say 440 thousand moves, were carried out by foreigners. Migrants were mainly young adults, although children were also significantly present in some nationalities –for instance, among Africans. As for their sex, 67% of the Africans and 65% of the Asians were men. This proportion was even greater among Pakistani migrants (86.1%) and Indian ones (80.5%). On the opposite side, 51.2% of the Europeans and 57.4% of the Americans were women and the highest percentages of females were observed among Brazilians (68.4%), Hondurans (76.1%) and Nicaraguans (81.1%).

Many Spanish municipalities have much higher foreigner participation in internal moves than 26.7% national average. In 545 municipalities, they are at least more than half of the entries and in 391 more than half of the exits. This can be particularly observed in central Spain, especially around Madrid, but also all along the Mediterranean coast, the two archipelagos and some municipalities within the Ebro Valley (figure 3). On the opposite side, 2,467 Spanish municipalities, mainly very small ones, did not receive any foreign internal migrants that year. 2,300 nuclei did not send any non Spanish migrants.

Figure 3. Proportion of foreigners in internal moves at municipality level

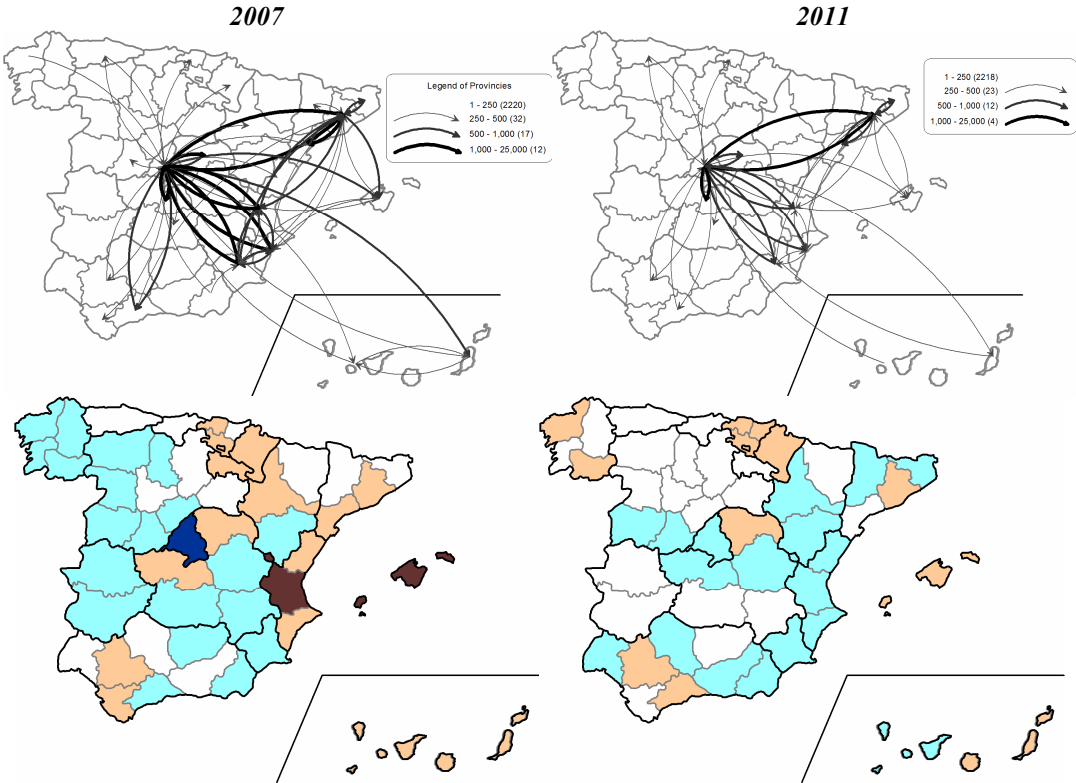


Source: 2011 Residence Change Statistics (INE).

The main flows by Europeans, Americans, Africans and Asian between provinces, and their net migratory growth in 2007 and 2011, have been mapped (figure 4 shows, as an example, Latin-American flows). Results show that, while in 2007 Mediterranean provinces were net migrant receivers, in 2011 they were those which expelled more migrants. This pattern is undoubtedly linked to the housing bubble and how construction sector unemployment later shot up in this geographical area. On the other hand, those provinces which normally act as gateways for international immigration and later as internal migrant distributors, have reduced their traditionally negative internal migration growth. For instance, highly urban provinces – such as Madrid, American’s main gateway– and intensive agriculture ones (like Murcia o Almeria), where many African and Latin-American migrants found their first job, are among this group. This reduction could be due to a strategy in which mobility to other provinces is

diminished when there is a lack of expectations to improve present labour situation. At the other end of the scale, in 2011, the most attractive provinces are those which previously had fewer foreigners, that is to say, Northern Spain ones (such as those of Galicia and the Basque Country, particularly the province of Biscay, which had the highest positive migratory growth in 2011) or interior ones –Jaen, for example, a basically rural province which that same year had the second highest positive migratory growth.

Figure 4. Largest American flows in Spain in 2007 and 2011



Source: Residence Change Statistics microdata (INE), 2007 and 2011.

Note: Colors in bottom maps represent net migration growth in absolute numbers: dark blue (>-1000), light blue (-1000 to -50), white (-50 to +50), light brown (+50 to +1000), dark brown (>+1000)

Preliminary conclusions

The economic crisis has had three main effects on foreigners’ migratory patterns in Spain. Firstly, entries have diminished and exits have augmented. Secondly, their internal mobility has changed, as foreigners are currently moving from those provinces which are most affected by rapid unemployment growth –as the housing bubble burst–, to those which had lower non Spanish population percentages. Finally, aliens’ internal flows have decreased and, as a consequence, there is a certain residential stability in comparison to pre-crisis times. These seem to be the first consequences of the economic crisis on migrations. Further changes can be expected due to the harsh effects which it is having on foreigners. However, even if the expansion phase finished in 2008, we would like to highlight that current foreigners’ entry, exit and internal mobility levels show that, from a migratory point of view, Spain is presently a very different country from what it was until the mid-1990s –before the economic boom. Despite the economic situation, the significant numbers of internal migration flows allows to count this country among those which have a relevant and consolidated foreign resident stock.