

MOVING TO SPAIN AT AN ADVANCED AGEⁱ

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Around the turn of the XXth century research and media began to emphasize the varied range of age groups that have emerged in international migration: within Europe, from outside Europe to the “old continent”, and from Europe to the wider world. However, the assumptions that flows are, “as they have always been”, composed mainly of young males, have been criticized as much by historical reviews (Sharpe 2001) as by contemporary accounts (Salt 2005). The established young-male-migrant focus found support in the European post-war period. Between the 1950s and 1970s, the guest-worker system enabled the immigration of mainly young and middle-aged men who only were reunited with their spouses and children after the closure of borders when the international economic climate changed (in France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, Switzerland and Great Britain). In contrast, migration to Southern Europe (Portugal, Spain, Italy and Greece) from the late 1980s onwards reflects a change in the dominant demographic trends displayed during the so-called “guest worker” period (King and Black 1997, Anthias and Lazaridis 2000, Ribas 2000). It is now more common for women and other age groups to migrate first, while young and middle-aged men come later. In summary, the dominant pattern of young men crossing borders to settle abroad has been challenged by several trends:

- a) women are engaging in international migration in increasing numbers, in some cases outnumbering men;
- b) children and teenagers are also increasingly participating in international movements;
- c) men and women in their late forties, fifties, sixties, seventies and even eighties are also joining the flows.

It could be argued that women and children have been taking part in international migration for decades as dependent members for the purpose of family reunion. However, much of their current engagement is not linked to family reunification, or at least is not regulated as such. Instead, significant numbers of women and the underaged leave their countries of origin on their own, often crossing borders illegally. They do so with the aim of finding a better means of living, being reunited with relatives, helping family members back home economically or even supporting them to migrate at a later point in time. It is therefore evident that individuals’ motivation to migrate is not only a result of their own choices and circumstances, but also their desire to positively influence

the living conditions of those around them, as family strategy theory suggests (Hugo 1998). Likewise, family members and their circumstances may have an implicit or explicit role in influencing people to migrate, whether children, younger or older women. From this perspective, whether women and children leave their country independently or through a formal family reunion process, migrate legally or without papers, may be the result of their access to legal and social resources as much as their own motivation or initiative. In all cases the reasons behind the migration may be the same: either to be closer to family members or to reunify them at a later date.

As well as the rise in female migration, a parallel process of increasing migration of late middle-aged and old-aged populations can also be observedⁱⁱ. Yet the literature on international migration and older people has not yet focused on this sub-field; with its main attention on three other sub-themes: a) the ageing process of migrants in the new countries of settlementⁱⁱⁱ; b) the experiences of return to their places of origin after retirement (f.i.: Rodriguez et al. 2002, Blakemore 1999, Dustmann 1996); and, c) the conditions of aged relatives left behind in the places of origin (Instraw 2000, Baldock 2000). More often than not, attention devoted to international migration at a later stage in life has been based on the experiences of retirement migration from North to South Europe, or what is known as the “sunbird migration” of pensioners (King et al. 2000, Casado et al. 2004). However, changes in global demographics and economics are increasingly affecting the lives and expectations of older people everywhere, making them more vulnerable to the migration of others and at also more prone to migration themselves. Consequently, older people from less affluent societies have become new subjects of migration, either seeking family reunion or migrating independently.

This article aims to draw attention to the significant proportion of people aged 45 and older who now migrate to Spain. Moreover, there is evidence to suggest that this older segment of contemporary flows may constitute an expansive and rising trend in international migration in Europe in future years. This could have a major impact on European and OECD predictions of the impact that international migration has on the age structure of host societies. Contrary to the overly-optimistic supporters of replacement migration policy, who argue that international migration is a panacea to population ageing in the developed world (an idea sometimes exploited by the media and politicians), reviewed estimations may have to acknowledge the contribution of migration to ageing processes. In addition to the fact that young migrants will grow older in the receiving countries in coming decades, not all migrants arriving from developing countries are necessarily young (contrary to the assumptions of the 2000 United Nations report).

Secondly, the article highlights the diversity in the economic condition and composition of migrants aged 45 and older. Existing research shows that the reasons for migrating at an advanced age are quite different for people from less affluent societies to those from the wealthier world. Those from beyond the EU often choose to migrate for economic purposes, regardless of any personal cost or discrimination this may incur, in contrast to the more advantageous position enjoyed by EU migrants both in the labour market and in society. Another reason these less affluent groups may migrate to Europe is to offer

support to their migrant working children, both with their offspring and work. Carework is indeed one of the main activities performed internationally by those at an advanced age, particularly women. This explains the different sex composition of older migrant populations in Spain by nationality: women clearly outnumber men in all non EU groups, not only because of their higher life expectancy but also, more importantly, because of their active role in paid and unpaid, formal and informal, carework for their own family and for others.

In what follows we aim to shed light on the nature of contemporary migration in late-middle and old age, considering those who migrate from the age of 45 and upwards (a period that is five years above mid-life expectancy in Europe). As one of the major receiving countries in Europe, the article draws on the case of recent inflows of foreign-born migrants to Spain. The increasing numbers of newly arrived populations come from different continents and age groups: these include on the one hand equal numbers of middle and old age Europeans, and on the other a majority of young-middle aged non-Europeans and significant minorities of children and older people.

Data and Research Methods

This article draws on both quantitative and qualitative data on migration in Spain. While the quantitative data is all from secondary sources and publicly available databases, the qualitative information draws on primary data from research carried out with Peruvian migrants in Spain.

The main statistical data for this article is provided by the Padron, a register kept by every Spanish municipality and provided annually to the National Statistics Office. The Padron provides information on new migrants' age, sex, nationality and country of birth. The article also draws on census data which, in contrast to the Padron, offers details on all individuals, such as civil status, educational level, activity, household composition etc. The Census is only conducted every ten years, however, and is therefore insufficient to capture the rapid demographic changes that have been happening in Spain since the last Census of 2001. For this reason a combination of both data sets is used for this article, with tables drawing on results from the Census of 2001 and the Padron from 2005 both obtainable from the Spanish National Statistics Office.

The article uses data on the most significant groups of foreign residents in Spain. EU nationals are only considered briefly at the beginning, in order to highlight the differences in their composition by age group compared to non EU nationals. The rest of the article focuses on the seven major non-EU groups in Spain, including Peruvians for which more qualitative information is also used. The exclusion of EU nationals from more detailed analysis is due to the article's specific focus on international migration of people aged 45 and older from less favoured regions, an understudied field of research. For these groups data on naturalization and feminization as well as on their ageing process along a 15 year period are offered, all drawn from the 2001 Census and 2005 Padron.

In addition to the quantitative data provided, the article also draws on complementary qualitative research carried out with Peruvians in Spain for more than a decade (Escriva 1999, 2000, 2003, 2004, 2005).^{iv} This research started in the early 1990s at a time when Peruvians were just becoming one of the most significant migrant groups in Spain. The research consisted of informal interviews with over a hundred Peruvians living in Barcelona, followed by 42 in-depth interviews and life-histories.^v Where possible, interviews with the key informants (female domestic workers) were followed up by complementary interviews with their employers and family members, both in Spain and in Peru.

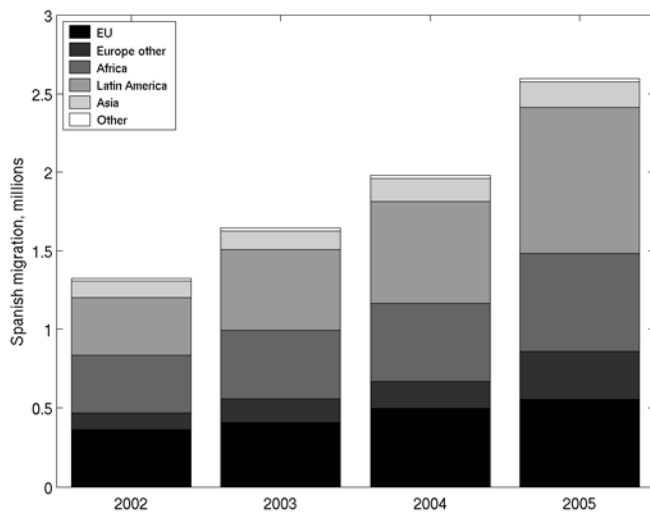
At this time migratory flows were mainly composed of women who, regardless of their educational level, were employed as domestic workers, often as live-in maids during the first few years. Surprisingly, at the time, a small number of newly arrived domestic employees from Peru were aged 45 and older, both male and female. Furthermore, year after year, as female migrants have been able to regularise their legal situation, obtain better jobs and bring their families to join them, it has become apparent that additional older family members (parents and other relatives) have also migrated. Similar experiences of international migration at an advanced age for paid and unpaid work have been reported in research on different groups: Bulgarian women in Madrid (Soultanova 2005), and Eastern Europeans and Latin Americans in Spain (Colectivo Ioe 2001, 2005). This new research reinforces observations drawn from Peruvian case studies and illustrates how migration in later life is becoming a more general and global phenomenon.

Social characteristics of new migrants in Spain: the weight of the aged

In the last few years, the number of foreigners registered in Spain has risen from 637,000 in 1998 to 2.664 million in 2003 and 3.691 million in 2005 (INE on-line data base). Foreign immigration to Spain is still a fairly novel phenomenon that can be traced back, depending on the groups, to 10, 15 or 20 years ago. However, it was not until the mid-nineties that the total number of foreigners amounted to more than 1% of the population. Since then, the proportion of foreigners in the population has risen steadily from 1.6% in 1998 to 6.2% in 2003 to 8.4% in 2005.

The fastest growing groups are Latin Americans, mainly from Ecuador, Colombia and Argentina; Africans, especially Moroccans; Eastern Europeans, mainly Romanians; and Chinese. Numerically important too, are the British, Germans and French living in Spain, and the longer-standing Latin American communities of Peruvians and Dominicans which emerged as the strongest inflows in the first half of the 1990s.

Figure 1: Foreign population in Spain by country of origin 2002-2005



Source: Dirección General de Inmigración (www.mtas.es)

An in-depth look at the age distribution of these nationalities reveals different compositions and dynamics (Table 1). Europeans are the oldest groups: Germans and British living in Spain are divided equally between professionals in their late working life (between 45-59) and older people (60+) who retire to Spain to take advantage of its climate, low cost of living and relaxed way of life^{vi}.

Table 1. Foreign residents in Spain by age group (in percentages)
Numerically most important nationalities

Nationalities	Total population	Age groups (as a % of total population)			
		45 or +	45-59	60-74	75 and +
Germans	131,887	57.4	22.3	29.0	6.1
British	224,841	59.6	27.0	26.3	6.3
Romanians	314,349	10.3	9.5	0.7	0.1
Moroccans	505,373	10.5	8.4	1.8	0.3
Dominicans	56,421	14.0	10.6	2.8	0.6
Argentineans	151,878	21.7	14.6	5.1	2.0
Colombians	268,931	14.0	11.7	2.0	0.3
Ecuadorians	491,797	10.0	8.6	1.2	0.2
Peruvians	84,427	19.5	14.0	4.3	1.2

Source: Padrón, 1 January 2005 (provisional data)^{vii}

As regards non-EU citizens, Peruvians and Argentines are the other numerically most significant groups of late middle age and early old age migrants (around 14% and 5% of the total from both countries respectively). Although their numbers are comparatively smaller than those of EU immigrants, they are significant in relative and absolute terms (32,976 Argentines and 16,513 Peruvians aged 45 or more). Colombians are third on the list of Latin American residents aged 45 or more, followed by Dominicans, Romanians and Ecuadorians who, in comparative terms, tend to migrate to Spain at a younger age. In the late eighties and early nineties, Dominicans began arriving in Spain. Although they migrated at a similar time to Peruvians, they came earlier and in larger numbers than the Romanians and Ecuadorians. Hence, the higher number of old-age migrants and naturalized citizens in this group (Tables 2 and 4), especially Dominican women. Dominicans tended to migrate at an earlier stage of their life-course than Peruvians, partly due to their predominantly rural backgrounds. Finally, the Moroccan population in Spain includes a large proportion of underage, young and middle-age migrants that far exceeds the number of older Moroccans, although in absolute terms this group is still significant with 53,198 Moroccans aged 45 and above residing in Spain.

All these groups are partially composed of people who had migrated at an earlier stage in life and have grown older in Spain, but also, more interestingly, by people who migrated at an advanced age. There are many reasons to suspect that groups of older Peruvians, Argentines and others are, to a large extent, comprised of people who only migrated recently. First, the existence of qualitative research, as well as statistical data, shows the incidence of migration in later life (Escrivá 1999, Table 3)^{viii}. Second, if they had migrated at a younger age they would probably not be included in the data on foreign residents, since most Latin Americans tend to acquire Spanish nationality after a relatively short period of time in the country (usually within the first ten years of residence)^{ix} (see Table 2).

Table 2 Residents in Spain holding Spanish nationality according to country of origin

Country of origin	Total residents	Holding Spanish nationality**		
		Total*		% Women
		N	%	
Romania	314,349	3,074	1.0	48.6
Morocco	505,373	87,876	17.4	49.6
Dominican Republic	56,421	22,026	39.0	72.0
Argentina	151,878	74,389	49.0	48.7
Colombia	268,931	19,680	7.3	59.5
Ecuador	491,797	7,005	1.4	59.0
Peru	84,427	22,905	27.0	59.7

Source: Padrón, 1 January 2005 (provisional data)

* A cumulative total

** These figures include both naturalized and Spanish-born citizens.

Table 3 illustrates the differences in age composition according to the year of migration. It shows how as inflows rise between 1991 and 2001, both the proportion and the number of older people increases in all nationalities, except for Argentines who in any case comprise the most aged group. Even in cases where the proportion of older people remains low, however, this is often due to the arrival of large numbers of younger migrants and to the naturalization of the older, obscuring the ageing processes of many of the longer-established migrant groups (whether Dominicans, Argentines, Peruvians).

Table 3. Percentage of people aged 45 or older at arrival to Spain in 1991-1995, 2001 and 2005

Countries of origin	1991-1995* (in 6 years)		2001* (in 1 year)		2005 **	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
		45 +		45 +		45 +
Romania	130	6.5	889	8.5	32,375	10.3
Morocco	1,296	6.5	1,405	7.0	53,198	10.5
Dominican Republic	429	7.9	356	11.7	7,906	14.0
Argentina	1,797	30.0	3,101	21.4	32,976	21.7
Colombia	554	8.7	4,141	10.9	37,861	14.0
Ecuador	332	5.7	2,793	7.4	48,826	10.0
Peru	959	12.9	780	16.7	16,513	19.5

* 2001 Census

** Padrón: cumulative percentage of all migrants aged 45 or older in 2005

It is also interesting to consider the sex distribution across different age groups in order to observe the increasing feminisation of older age cohorts (Table 4). The percentage of women increases from one age group to the next, until women finally outnumber men in all the nationalities studied. Dominicans, Colombians and Peruvians are the most feminized in the 45-64 age range (between 60% and 70%), while Moroccans, Romanians and Argentines are the least (less than half are women). In the 65+ age range, the proportion of Latin American women increases to between 65 and 75 per cent depending on the group, while significant increases in the female proportion among Moroccans and Romanians are noticeable too. In conclusion, the oldest groups are also the most feminized, with the exception of Argentines. The acute sex differential can be attributed to the greater longevity of females but also to gender selectivity in migration. Were this not the case, the proportions of older migrant women (65+) would not differ from those of their country of origin^x.

Table 4. Percentage of females among all foreigners in Spain by age range and nationality

Nationalities	Age groups			
	45-64		65 and +	
	N	%	N	%
Romanians	13,607	43.6	759	65.5
Moroccans	16,215	34.8	3,464	52.3
Dominicans	4,710	71.0	951	75.1
Argentineans	12,896	50.0	4,798	64.4
Colombians	21,443	62.6	2,565	70.7
Ecuadorians	25,229	55.8	2,476	68.3
Peruvians	7,740	63.1	2,063	63.5

Source: Padrón, 1 January 2005

Aside from their numbers and gender, the available statistics on foreign residents in Spain offer no disaggregated information on the other socio-demographic aspects such as level of education, professional experience, civil status, number of children or previous experiences of migration, by age group. Consequently, there is a need for more research, quantitative and qualitative, to explain the other factors determining these late movements.

The not so young: purposes, means and effects of international migration in later life

The numbers above and fieldwork research conducted on specific immigrant groups in Spain and other European countries support the fact that international migration in later life is an increasingly significant reality (Escriva 1999, Diminescu 2003). Just as inflows from non-European Union countries have been frequently overlooked by the literature on migration studies, the motives and circumstances that surround these flows have not been given the attention they deserve (Escrivá 2005, Thomas 2003). Migration in later life may be a personal choice or encouraged by other family members, but is generally influenced by structural factors (differentials in salary, the quality of public services, and security, etc.). In summary, a combination of causes and determinants are necessary to explain why people migrate and what objectives they pursue in doing so. Table 5 shows a scheme illustrating the main purposes for migrating in later life, drawing on different research throughout Europe (Escriva 1999 and 2005, Attias-Donfut 2004, Warnes et al 2004, etc.).

Table 5. Purposes of international migration, by age groups and origin/destination

Age groups	Destinations		
	Within EU A	To EU B	From EU C
46-60 (late middle age)	- migration for work purposes, especially qualified jobs	- migration for work, in qualified but especially in	- migration for work purposes, especially qualified jobs

1	- migration for personal reasons, not related to labour	non-qualified jobs - for personal and other reasons (social, political)	- migration for personal reasons, not related to labour
61-75 (early old age) 2	- retirement migration (vacation sites)	- migration for paid and unpaid work (family business, care work) - family reunion	- retirement (vacation sites) - return migration
76 + (very old) 3	- retirement migration (vacation sites)	- family reunion - for health care	- retirement migration

* EU stands for European Union.

Note: In bold the specific reasons for non EU citizens to migrate at any age.

There appears to be a large gap between the 45-60 and the 61-75 age groups. Whereas the first group is mainly composed of people who are actively engaged in the labour market, the second group theoretically characterizes those who have retired. Yet this assumption includes both a gender and regional bias, since it depends on a stable working career in the formal sector, which many older people and particularly women, may not have had access to. Dichotomising “active” and “non-active”, “retired” and “non-retired”, assumes that housework, a task mainly carried out by women, or informal labour activities are not real, valued jobs and therefore deserve no retirement or recognition. This is especially important when considering the higher proportion of women migrants at old age. It is also essential to acknowledge that the term “retirement” is irrelevant and inappropriate for many older people from less developed countries, whose labour activities in earlier life do not entitle them to retirement benefits or who may have been unable to save for old age and who must therefore be obliged to continue working in income-generating activities well beyond their early sixties. Consequently, the main division in age groups could be explained by the nature of movements by (wealthy) Europeans and those driven by (poorer) non-EU populations.

With regard to the 61-75 age group the “early old”, generally speaking, those who migrate within or from the EU and those who migrate to the EU at this stage in their lives have different reasons for doing so. Whereas those in groups A and C mainly migrate from or within Europe as a “reward” in old age after years of paid work to realise a dream of retiring in a suitable place^{xi} (A2/A3 and C2/C3), group B migrates to the EU mainly to continue or intensify their working activities and to be reunited with family members already there (B2 and B3). Research on Peruvian migrants shows that those arriving in Europe in their sixties and seventies do not always have their children in the country of destination (Escrivá 2004, 2005). If they do, however, their migration commonly benefits the migrant family in that the newly-arrived older migrant can provide help (usually unpaid) in the family business and/or in caring for dependants and doing household work (especially B2). The fact that a larger percentage of older women than older men migrate, as observed in Table 4, highlights this trend. However, especially the very old (75 and

above, B3) and the fragile, have a third motive for joining their family in Europe, that is, to seek health and social care in their family and in private, but most often, public institutions.

Until recently, Spanish legislation on non-EU foreigners was lax enough for significant numbers of immigrants to bring over their older parents to join them after a relatively short period of time. Established immigrants had to show proof that their parents were economically dependent on them (either because they lacked a pension or because their benefits were too low to cover their basic needs). The process was even simpler for immigrants who had acquired Spanish nationality, entitling them to bring close relatives to live with them. Early last year, however, certain measures were implemented to prevent chain family reunions, that is, to prevent reunited parents or spouses from bringing over the rest of their first degree relatives to join them. Yet in spite of these restrictions, family chain migration continues to operate, albeit not always along the legal path of a reunification process. Instead, relatives enter Spain through alternative channels: tourist or student visas, work contracts, or even by crossing borders illegally.

The composition of migrants in the 45-60 age group is more diverse. This group includes both the economically active and inactive (many of whom are women). It also includes early retirees and pensioners who managed to save enough resources to finance their trips. The reasons for migrating at this age also differ between EU and non-EU citizens. Members of European countries seem to migrate at this age mainly for better employment (qualified, well-paid) or for personal motives such as marriage, proximity to family or friends, or others (A1 and C1)^{xii}, while members of less developed countries are mainly motivated by external factors such as the political or economic context of their home country (B1). In developing countries, neo-liberal policies, inflation, political and social unrest have had a strong impact on all sectors of the population, but especially on the “middle classes”, prompting their decision to migrate (Escrivá 1999, 2000). Civil servants or private sector workers who have lost their jobs, as well as other workers whose living standards have deteriorated, are prime candidates for overseas migration. The resources needed to finance the expense of moving to another country (travel costs, occasionally traffickers’ fees, the initial period before getting a job and settling down, etc.) may come from personal and family savings, including money from one-installment pensions or the sale of belongings. Since the pressure exerted by context is the prevailing reason for migrants to leave their country, these late middle-aged migrants are more likely to accept unqualified work (worse paid, less recognized), even if this means downgrading their previous professional scale (B1).

Yet in order to understand the larger female presence in this age group (see Table 4) and the specific circumstances surrounding their decision to migrate, especially from non-EU countries, it is also necessary to consider additional factors not usually exposed in existing accounts of migration. While it is accepted that women outlive men globally, their lower status, greater vulnerability, weaker position in the labour market and lower access to social security coverage also needs to be taken into account. Thus, mature women who choose to migrate may, in addition to economic benefits, be seeking to escape domestic violence and unsatisfactory marriages^{xiii}, or to avoid the consequences of

spousal abandonment and widowhood, regardless of whether or not they have children (or even grandchildren) to support. Consequently, a new life abroad may entail a new partner, a new or first-time job (which although not highly recognized in social terms, at least pays enough) and the means to provide for a secure old age. Indeed, research shows that more older women than men (who tend to think more about return migration after retirement) envisage remaining in the new country of settlement (Attias-Donfut 2004).

Clearly, the risk of economic insecurity in old age is an additional element affecting the decision of people over 45 to leave their country. The inadequacy of public pension and social security systems in less-developed countries, and the uncertainty of family support in a context in which adult children cannot always provide for their parents, leads many to consider migrating, even in later life. On the one hand, older people feel obliged to continue supporting themselves and their dependants while still in good health, while on the other hand, they recognise the necessity of accumulating capital for the near future when poor health may prevent them from working and public services may not meet their economic and personal needs. This explains why healthy (quasi)pensioners may choose to migrate and why these issues are crucial for migrant populations when discussing return programmes or bilateral treaties.

The family survival strategy theory examines the factors that determine the selection process of potential migrants by sex, age, or their position in the life-cycle (Hugo 1998). It considers why older rather than younger members of a family sometimes migrate. As women age, fertility declines and thereby individuals aged 45 and older may have fewer dependent children to care for. This does not mean that they are freed from obligations towards younger generations, but that their duty towards family members may be of a more economic nature that does not require constant, daily attention and makes it possible for them to go abroad without renegeing on their obligations. On the other hand, rising life expectancy increases the chances of middle-aged people (those between 45 and 60) having older parents to support, often economically. Hence, migration enables late middle-aged people from less wealthy societies to contribute economically to the well-being (education, health care, housing etc.) of both younger and older generations.

The proportion of foreigners aged 45-60 who do not take a paid job after migrating to Spain is notably low, even when they have had no previous experience in paid employment in their place of origin, as shown in research on Peruvians in Spain (Escriva 1999). In fact, many women who had been almost exclusively dedicated to family and the household all their lives may take up some kind of economic activity abroad. Almost all of those who were housewives, as well as those with experience in paid employment whether formal or informal (street vendors, subsistence agriculture, and so on), seek jobs as domestic workers in private households in Spain. Previous research shows how age plays an important role in explaining the labour trajectories of women from different national and socio-economic backgrounds (Escriva 2000, 2003).

In addition to the individual incentives for older migrants to move abroad, the receiving context also influences this rising trend in migration at an advanced age. The Spanish service sector and especially the so-called “proximity services” (Laville 1992) welcome

older workers. Late middle and early old-age migrant women, and to a lesser extent men, are often preferred as domestic workers and carers. This is due to their experience and maturity, their tendency to remain in the job, the fact that they may have grown-up children or that they provide good company to the elderly. Their experience and maturity in terms of performing household duties is confirmed by their own backgrounds as mothers, grandmothers and housewives. These migrants are often considered to be more reliable workers because of the assumption that older workers are less likely to change jobs, or to seek more qualified and highly paid work. This is despite the fact that a significant proportion of older migrant women who work as domestics in Spain have high educational and professional backgrounds, including teaching, nursing and clerical work. In the case of older Dominican women, however, a higher than average proportion have a low level of education (Colectivo Ioé 2001).

Finally, it is important to consider the experiences of return and “come-and-go” practices of a proportion of older migrants.^{xiv} Among those who migrated at an older age and those who have aged in the country of immigration, the number physically involved in a transnational living situation is diverse and largely depends on factors such as economic success, family network building, and so forth (Gustafson 2001). In a recent study on migrants in France (aged 45 to 70), Attias-Donfut (2004) found that decisions to return to the country of origin, while alive or just to be buried there, seem to be marked by cultural and religious beliefs, in addition to gender. In contrast, “come-and-go” practices are, firstly, dependent on migrants’ ability to afford the costs of frequently travelling the long distances that often separate the two physical spaces and, secondly, dependent on the migrant’s stage in the family life-cycle and reunion process.

Generally speaking, a larger proportion of men show a preference for returning to their place of origin after retirement, while women are more open to the idea of “coming-and-going” and maintaining a transnational lifestyle in old age. This may be because older women are less willing to be separated from their children or grandchildren than men, with research showing that older Peruvian women were more likely to reunify with their children in Spain than Peruvian men, but if both did so, women were more likely to stay or “come-and-go” between the two countries, whereas men were more likely to return to Peru after a short while.

Conclusion:

Demography, economy and future prospects of international migration

Demographic forecasts for the coming decades indicate that the world’s population is ageing rapidly and that the economic disparities between countries and regions will not only persist, but rise, thus posing new challenges at the local and global level (HelpAge 1999). International migration is merely the tip of an iceberg that reflects the needs and desires of wide segments of the population living under situations of pressure and uncertainty. While middle age is ideally expected to be a time of stability and old age one of rest, in many places in the world today middle-aged populations experience great

instability, impelling them to move abroad to secure their present and future well-being. Likewise older people today, especially early old-aged women and men, face many responsibilities and a long life expectancy that constitute an incentive for migrating internationally if one is healthy enough to do so. Pensioners of the richer regions of the world comprise another significant group of advanced age “travellers”. Yet, the motives and channels for moving internationally vary greatly between the migrant aged of the North and those of the South.

As this article suggests, although international migration of older age groups is unlikely to overtake that of younger ones in the medium term, it will certainly continue or even increase in many groups that hope to approach the wealthier regions of Europe. This reality will question the assumptions which, until now, have been taken for granted in both sending and receiving societies. Indeed, under the argument that an aged Europe needs “young blood”, many OECD States have accepted, albeit reluctantly, to open their doors to restricted numbers and types of immigrants (Straubhaar and Zimmerman 1993). However, age has already become a limiting factor to qualify for international recruitment programmes in countries like Australia, Canada or the United States, although illegal immigration as well as family reunion could both become means of incorporating older migrants to the whole. In other cases, such as those we have shown regarding the domestic and caretaking work sector in Spain, being older may actually be a positive asset.

An in-depth understanding of these issues should prompt us to rethink Europe’s socio-economic and demographic prospects. Whether we like it or not, Europe’s future is tightly linked to that of other regions, and therefore both national and EU immigration policies ought to take account of their consequences for other nations and people in our shared world. Based on the case of migration in Spain, this article aims to contribute to both the debate on “replacement migration” unleashed in the 1990s (United Nations 2000, *Population and Environment* 2001, vol.22, issue 4), and to bettering our knowledge of the global trends and challenges that migration entails.

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Notes

ⁱ A first version of this article was written during the authors' stay as visiting research fellows at the Oxford Institute of Ageing. Angeles Escriva also enjoyed a postdoctoral research fellowship from the Spanish Ministry of Education during that period.

ⁱⁱ For the purpose of our analysis we distinguish the following age groups: 0-14: infants; 15-29: youngsters; 30-44: middle age; 45-59: late middle age; 60-74: early old age; 75-89: old age; 90 plus: the very old. This paper focuses on the 45-59 and 60-74 age groups, although some observations on those above 75 are also given.

ⁱⁱⁱ There is a range of literature on this topic, mainly focusing on their physical and mental health (Schopf and Naegele 2005, Bolzman et al. 2004 and others).

^{iv} A first research project on Peruvian domestic workers in Spain was carried out from 1995-1999, concluding with a doctoral dissertation. A second project on Peruvian transnational families was begun in 2002 and finished recently. The project data is currently being processed and analysed and will be published shortly.

^v Initial contacts with Peruvians were made through religious institutions (particularly convents), associations of migrants and through lawyers working with Peruvians in Barcelona.

^{vi} Lately, and as a consequence of terrorist attacks and ethno-religious disturbances occurring in the United Kingdom, some British couples interviewed recently in Costa del Sol, Malaga, argue that they have moved to other countries such as Spain in order to escape from what they perceive as a "country that is becoming a Muslim majority".

^{vii} Numbers in bold indicate the most significant groups in terms of size.

^{viii} Survey research in the city of Lima conducted by Durand and Massey also reveals the significant proportion of Peruvians who have migrated internationally at an advanced age (Durand 2005).

^{ix} Latin Americans are only required to certify 2 years of continuous legal residence in Spain in order to apply for Spanish nationality.

^x For example, older women in the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, and Peru, constitute only 53 per cent of all those aged 65 plus (US Census Bureau, Population Division, International Data Base) in spite of their overrepresentation in Table 4.

^{xi} It can be home for return emigrants, for example Moroccans in France returning to Morocco (C2); it can be a foreign and comfortable land for wealthy pensioners, for example British nationals who settle along the Spanish coast (A2).

^{xii} Recall footnote 6, for instance.

^{xiii} Qualitative information from interviews in Escriva (1999) showed that these are common factors influencing women's decision to migrate.

^{xiv} "Come-and-go" practices refer to migrants who regularly travel between their country of origin and destination, neither settling in one nor the other.