

# MIGRATORY FLOWS ACROSS SPANISH PROVINCES: 1960-2010

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*Internal migration is a controversial topic among researchers because of both its determinants and consequences on the market economy. Different empirical studies have offered different answers to how migration is influenced and influences economic disparities within a country.*

*As an introduction to a more comprehensive study about the determinants of this phenomenon, this paper carried out a quantitative statistical analysis of the main evolutions of domestic migration across and within Spanish provinces. The period of analysis is 1960-2010 during which migration patterns changed considerably from intense to moderate flows and from moderate to constant flows.*

*Over the entire period, only seven provinces registered exclusively net inflows and only two provinces remained inflexible as regards their favourite internal destinations, inter-provincial migration dominated intra-migration only during the first decade, the provinces on the Mediterranean axis formed the main attraction pool due to their climatic conditions and tourism expansion, negative balances dominated positive balances except for 1981-1991, Madrid turned negative in the decade of the 90's while Barcelona did it in the 80's.*

*Keywords: internal migration, provinces, destinations, Spain*

*JEL Code: R23*

## **I. Introduction**

Internal migration in Spain has witnessed geographical and compositional changes over time. Population redistribution through internal migration in the past four decades must be analyzed considering economic, social and political transformations. In general, the transition from an industrial-based economy to a service-based one, in which tourism is the key issue, has been accompanied by the transition to a more liberal, open and international economy as consequence of the entrance in the European Community in 1986. Besides the socio-economic changes, there has been a political shift from dictatorship (following Franco's death in 1975) to democracy and from centralism to regionalism (García Coll and Stillwell 1999: 98).

The Spanish National Institute of Statistics (INE) defined internal migration as those *residence changes from one municipality to another inside the same national territory*, i.e. entries and exits. The remainder of the article comprises five sections: section II is dedicated to a short literature review on Spanish internal migration, section III displays the main trends in migration patterns, section IV puts together inter- and intra-provincial migration, section V offers some information on the favourite internal destinations, and section VI offers some insights on future work.

## **II. Literature Review**

Over the last decades domestic migration patterns in Spain changed dramatically (Bover and Velilla 1999; Antolín and Bover, 1997). Thus, *during 1960-1975*, Spain was subjected to intense migratory movements amid: reducing regional inequalities in income and unemployment; rapid and very polarized industrial growth, causing severe rural out-migration with massive transfers of employment from agriculture to industry, constructions and services; mainly young adults left the rural areas and moved to the big industrial cities in search of jobs; flows were mainly unidirectional from the rural underdeveloped southern regions to the urban industrialized northeastern, plus Madrid. Later, *during 1975-1985*, new patterns of internal migration emerged: decreasing flows in spite of great differences in (non-)economic factors between provinces;

declining long-distance (inter-provincial) migration and increasing short-distance (intra-provincial) migration; following the expansion of the welfare system, traditional industrial provinces with net in-migration have become areas of net loss (Barcelona, Biscay, etc.) or of only marginal gain (Madrid, Valencia, etc.), while some of the traditional rural provinces have experienced positive net migration, due in part to the return of former out-migrants. And finally, *until 1995*, gross inter-regional migration started again to rise, although high aggregate unemployment rates continued to persist.

Hence, “*the factors that have shaped inter-provincial population redistribution in the 1980’s are technological change and innovation, sectoral and occupational restructuring, globalization and feminization of the labour force, as well as demographic structure*” (García Coll and Stillwell 1999: 102). They also point to the creation of the autonomous communities in 1978, the return to rural areas and migration patterns among the elderly as exerting a great influence on migration.

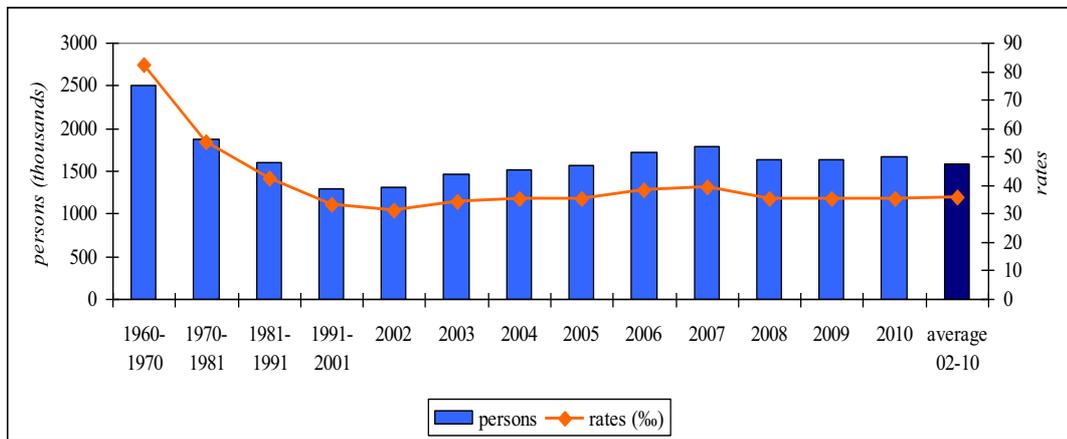
In a recent review, Hierro and Maza (2010: 620) points out the main features of internal migration in Spain since the early 1980s: steady increase of internal migration; high rates of intra-provincial movements mainly explained by a drift of people from large cities towards smaller towns and rural areas, as well as from metropolitan areas towards suburbs; increasing return migration; major role of location-specific amenities in migration decision; dramatic drop in overall net migration rates and important reversals from strong net in-migration to net out-migration (and vice versa); and an increasingly high role played by the foreign-born population.

Samuel Bentolila (2001) distinguishes between demographic and economic factors. The **demographic factors** are: population aging due to lower natality and higher mortality (negative impact); changes in family structure due to increasing divorce rate (positive impact) and higher participation of the women in the labour force (ambiguous impact); high level of family self-help, i.e. children leave parental house at elder age, or use their parents’ networks to find employment, also a supporting legislation for household heads to keep their job (negative impact); and an increasing educational level. The **economic factors** comprise institutional changes and economic differentials. The *institutional changes*, all with positive effects in reducing differences between regions, are: political decentralization (creation of the autonomous communities), higher proportion of social aid in national GDP, lower unemployment benefits since 1993, increasing help for the least developed regions as a consequence of both national and EU funds, favourable fiscal system for house acquisition, and an overwhelming trade union coverage.

### III. Main Evolutions of Migration across Spanish Provinces

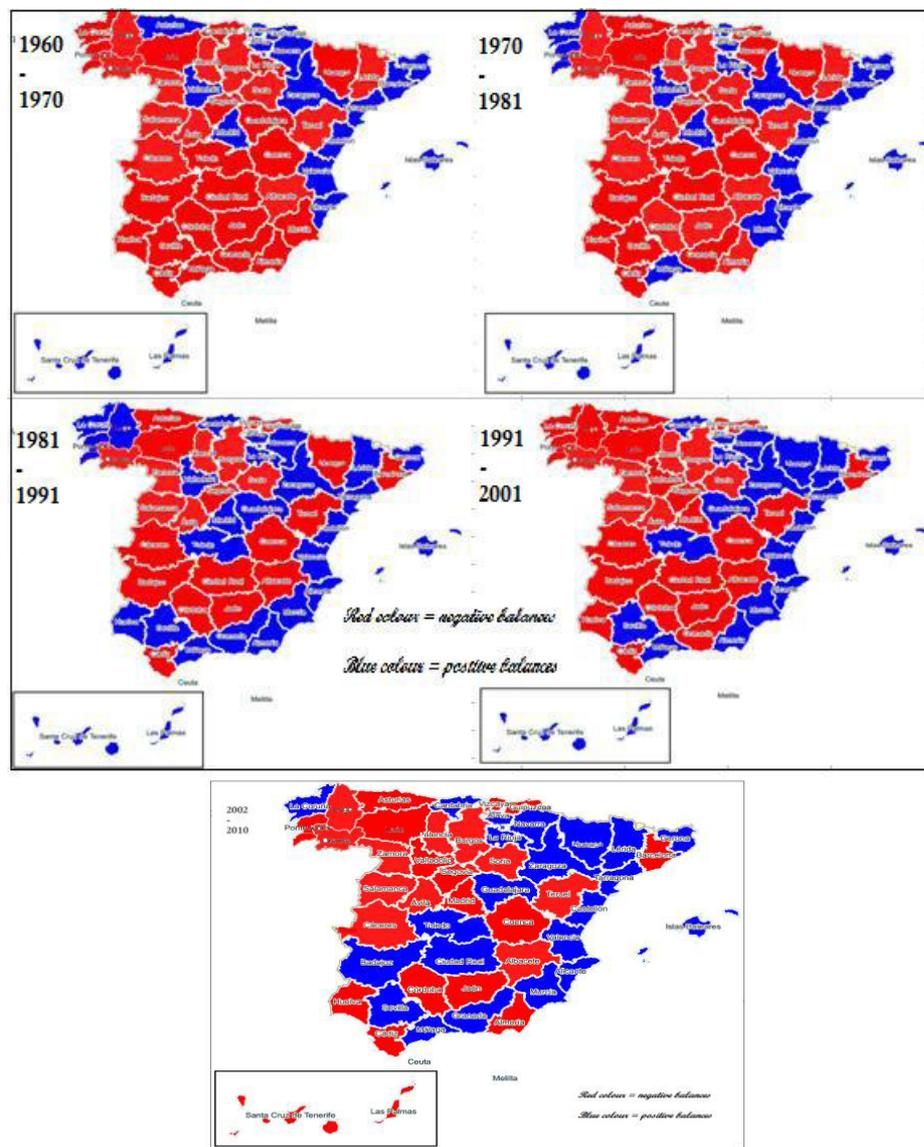
According to census data (1960-1970, 1971-1981, 1981-1991, 1991-2001), Spain witnessed constant falls in internal migration from one decade to another; if in 1960-1970 the migration rate reached 82.5‰ in 1991-2001 fell at 33.02‰. Instead, according to the year-by-year data, there was a constant upward trend from 2003 to 2007, after which migratory flows decrease slightly and remained quite steady. On average, 2002-2010, Spain registered an annual average number of migrants of 1,589,463 persons, i.e. an annual average rate of 35.57‰. See fig. 1.

During the inter-census period 1960-1970, 33 provinces had negative balances and 17 positive balances (Madrid +19, Soria -20.8); during 1970-1981, 31 provinces turned negative while 19 positive (Alava +9.4, Cuenca -10.4); during 1981-1991, 23 balances were negative and 27 positive (Balearic Islands +4.1, Guipuzcoa -4.5); while during 1991-2001, 29 provinces turned negative and 21 positive (Guadalajara +12.1, Biscay -2.8). Instead, for the year-by-year period 2002-2010, Spain had 28 provinces with net outflows and 22 with net inflows (Guadalajara +20.9, Cuenca -3.5). Fig. 2 illustrates the balance map by each decade. And after, I will analyze in more detail the patterns in domestic migration.



Source: Own elaboration based on INE data

Figure 1. Numbers and rates of internal migrants in Spain 1960-2010



Source: Own elaboration based on INE data

Figure 2. Provincial maps of net migration, 1960-2010

1960-1970 - migration reached very high levels:

- the highest positive net migration rates belonged to Madrid (19‰), Barcelona (18.3‰) and Alava (16.3‰); at the opposite pole there were Soria (-20.8‰), Cuenca (-19.1‰), Guadalajara and Teruel (both with -17.9‰);
  - positive balances were also registered along the Mediterranean axis (along the east coast from the French border to Alicante, including Balearic Islands) and the Ebro axis (the diagonal joining Catalonia with Basque Country, along the Ebro river valley) due to the tourism economy.
- 1970-1981** - the volume of balances decreased both for those with positive figures and with negative figures:
- the highest balance rates belonged to Alava (9.4‰), Tarragona (7‰) and Madrid (5.8‰); Cuenca (-10.4‰), Ciudad Real (-9.5‰) and Segovia (-9.4‰);
  - the Mediterranean axis continued to have positive net streams and both Murcia and Malaga joined this axis as tourism strengthened;
  - on the west coast, the balances of Corunna and Pontevedra turned positive, whereas the balances of Navarre, Guipuzcoa and Asturias became negative because of the industrial and mining crisis (Ródenas Calatayud 1994: 172);
  - compared with the previous decade, the balances of Barcelona, Guadalajara, Madrid, Biscay and Soria recorded the largest variations;
  - the direction of migratory streams was from the southern and central areas to Madrid (from the Centre) and Barcelona (from Andalusia).
- 1981-1991** - the volume of balances decreased very much:
- the highest net rates belonged to Balearic Islands (4.2‰), Gerona (3.9‰) and Malaga (3.7‰); Guipuzcoa (-4.5‰), Biscay (-4.3‰) and Teruel (-3.1‰);
  - Almeria and Granada joined the Mediterranean axis, whilst Navarre and Cantabria consolidated the Ebro axis;
  - Lugo, Seville and Huelva became positive; Barcelona and Biscay turned from positive to negative; Madrid and Valencia decreased significantly their positive balances;
  - the changes occurred in migration trends were due to the industrial crisis during the early 1980s which provoked the closure of many companies, an increase in job losses and a reduction of labour demand; Madrid and Barcelona were affected by the entry in the labour force of the baby-boom generation in the 1960s and by previous in-migration, both altering labour supply and demand (García Coll and Stillwell 1999: 102); the descending trend was somewhat slowed down by the admission into the European Community (1985);
  - the Mediterranean axis became the main attraction pool;
  - compared with the previous decade, the provinces of Badajoz, Alava, Cuenca, Cáceres and Ciudad Real recorded the largest changes.
- 1991-2001** - internal flows continued to fall:
- the highest net migration rates were those of Guadalajara (12.1‰), Tarragona (5.3‰) and Toledo (4.3‰); Biscay (-2.8‰), Teruel (-2.1‰) and Guipuzcoa (-1.9‰);
  - Madrid turned negative for the first time, together with Corunna, Granada, Huelva, Lugo, Pontevedra and Valladolid; Huesca was the only province to turn positive;
  - compared with the previous decade, Guadalajara, Tarragona and Toledo registered the strongest variations;
  - similarly to the last two decades, the provinces forming the Mediterranean axis continued to attract more and more migrants.
- 2002-2010:**
- Madrid and Barcelona continued to remain negative but accelerated their out-migration;
  - Almeria turned negative after two decades of being a net receiver of migrants;
  - Las Palmas and Santa Cruz de Tenerife turned negative for the first time;
  - Badajoz, Cadiz, Corunna and Granada turned again positive;
  - the greatest changes belonged to Guadalajara, Toledo and Almeria.

Overall, 1960-2010, only seven provinces recorded permanent positive balances of migration, six of them situated on the Eastern Spain: Alava, Alicante, Balearic Islands, Castellon, Gerona, Tarragona and Valencia. Instead, 16 provinces recorded only negative balances: Albacete, Avila, Burgos, Caceres, Cordoba, Cuenca, Jaen, Leon, Orense, Palencia, Salamanca, Segovia, Soria, Teruel and Zamora.

#### IV. Intra-Migration versus Inter-Migration

During the period 1960-2001, the annual rate of migrants dropped from 16.1‰ (1960-1970) to 13.7‰ (1970-1981) and 12.1‰ (1981-1991), and increased to 13.4‰ in 1991-2001. As regards the inter-provincial rate, this fell continuously from 9.2‰ in the first decade to 3.7‰ in the last, while the intra-provincial rate rose from 6.2‰ to 7‰. This means a shift from long-distance movements to short-distance ones. Also, the internal migration rate for those leaving abroad at the beginning of the census periods expanded rapidly from 0.8‰ to 2.7‰. See table 1.

This shift from inter- to intra-migration is attributed to the development of the service sector (and its properties). As evidence, the employment percentage in services rose from 38% in 1977 (27%-Orense, 60%-Madrid), to 57% in 1995 (40%-Orense, 75%-Las Palmas & Balearic Islands), 60% in 2004 (45%-Teruel, 75%-Las Palmas & Madrid), and finally, to 68% in 2010 (55%-Cuenca, 80%-Palmas).

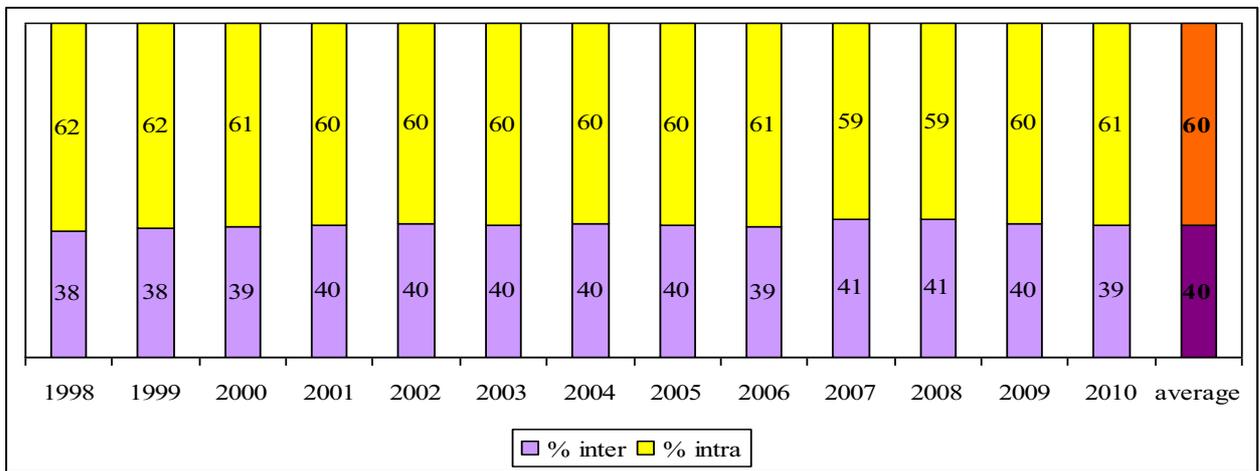
*Table 1. Evolution of provincial migration in Spain 1960-2001*

<i>Spatial scale</i>	<i>1960-1970</i>		<i>1970-1981</i>		<i>1981-1991</i>		<i>1991-2001</i>	
	<i>No. (1000s)</i>	<i>Annual rate (‰)</i>	<i>No. (1000s)</i>	<i>Annual rate</i>	<i>No. (1000s)</i>	<i>Annual rate</i>	<i>No. (1000s)</i>	<i>Annual rate (‰)</i>
Intra-provincial	1,703	6.2	1,913	6.3	2,086	6.1	2,483	7.0
Inter-provincial	2,510	9.2	1,867	6.1	1,595	4.7	1,297	3.7
Foreign migration	209	0.8	399	1.3	408	1.2	975	2.7
Total	<i>4,423</i>	<i>16.1</i>	<i>4,181</i>	<i>13.7</i>	<i>4,090</i>	<i>12.1</i>	<i>4,756</i>	<i>13.4</i>

Source: Own elaboration based on INE data

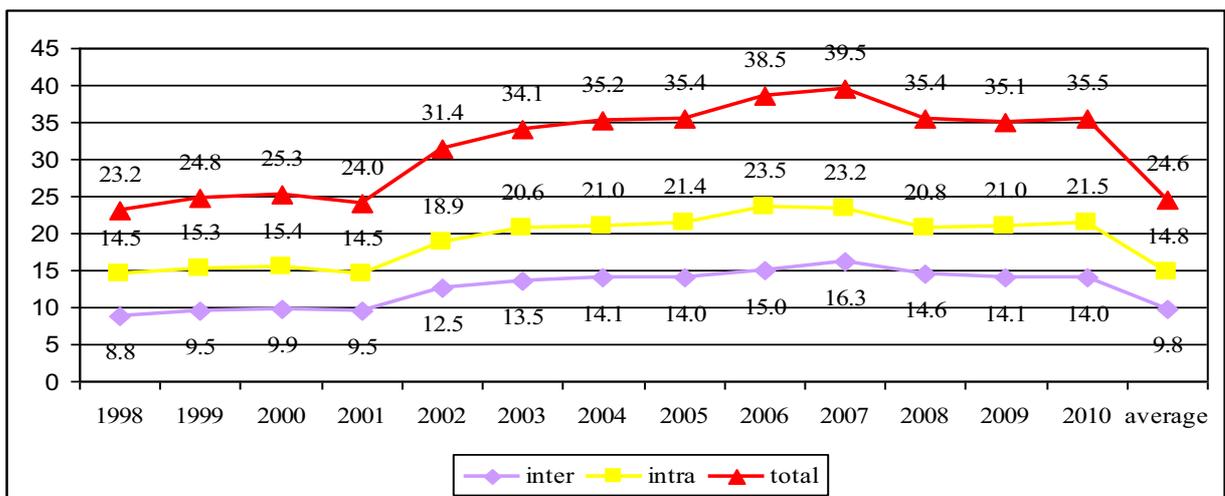
N.B.: Data exclude the autonomous cities of Ceuta and Melilla, and rates are computed by dividing the number of migrants (annual average) by the initial population of each censual period.

Additionally, for the year-by-year period 1998-2010, figs. 3 and 4 show that intra-migration was, on average, 20 p.p. higher than the inter one and both types follow the national trend, with peaks in 2007 and bottoms in 1998.



Source: Own elaboration based on INE data

Figure 3. Distribution of inter and intra-provincial migration in Spain



Source: Own elaboration based on INE data

Figure 4. Inter and intra-provincial rates of migration in Spain

## V. Favorite Destinations for Migration: Province to Province

Cadiz and Huesca were the only provinces that did not change their three favorite destinations, meaning that Spanish migrants were very flexible as regards their choices. People from Madrid chose the adjacent Toledo and Guadalajara, Badajoz, Ciudad Real, Alicante, Malaga and Barcelona. Instead, people from Barcelona preferred in the first two decades ('60 and '70) long-distance destinations such as Cordoba, Granada and Seville, whereas in the last decades ('80-'00) the neighbors Gerona, Tarragona and the capital Madrid.

The most popular destinations were: Madrid, Barcelona, Valencia, Seville and Zaragoza, followed by Biscay, Granada and Valladolid.

## VI. Future Research

In a future article, I will carry out a comprehensive analysis of the main determinants of Spanish migration using an extended gravity model which accounts for both push and pull motivations.

## Acknowledgement

This article is a result of the project POSDRU/88/1.5./S/55287 "Doctoral Programme in Economics at European Knowledge Standards (DOESEC)". This project is co-funded by the European Social Fund through The Sectorial Operational Programme for Human

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