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**THE HARMONISATION OF TOURISM AND MIGRATION STATISTICS: THE CASE OF SPAIN**

Submitted by the ministry of Economy, Spain

**I. Presentation**

This document tries to show the usefulness for tourism-analysis purposes of the information available to a lesser or greater extent all the world over on border migration flows, providing this information is subjected to a prior process of analysis and is brought into line with the internationally accepted definitions and concepts in the field of tourism statistics.

This information is obviously important as one of the main tourism indicators of a country but this document aims to go beyond that and suggest ways of using it for wider purposes; it also identifies some of the shortfalls that countries most frequently come up against when processing and using information of a purely administrative character over which the tourism administration itself, as mere receptor thereof, has very little control in terms of the variables recorded, the use thereof and the time lag in making the information available.

Lastly, it gives a detailed description of the coverage in terms of variables used for characterisation and the way of processing the information gleaned from the border controls in Spain. One of the greatest impediments for these purposes is the fact that Spain belongs to the Schengen area of free movement of people, so an account is also given of how this impediment is offset by a periodical cross check against the information of the Border Tourism Movements Survey (Encuesta de Movimientos Turísticos en Fronteras: Frontur).

**II. Comparability between tourism flows and migration flows**

The information source most frequently used by countries all the world over for measuring the arrivals of visitors from abroad, and sometimes also the number of residents travelling abroad, is border controls based on a systematic recording of outflows and inflows, carried out by the security

forces or the customs authorities of each country.

This information is in general insufficient for any analysis that goes beyond a simple quantification of the number of incoming visitors to a country, broken down by nationalities. It has traditionally been used and published by the Tourism Administration of the various countries with little thought given beforehand to how far it fits in with the international definitions of tourism statistics that have existed since the early nineties<sup>1</sup>.

It is not only a question of reflecting on the best way of improving the characterisation of traveller flows provided by the authority responsible for cross-border traffic, whether by the inclusion of additional questions on the inbound/outbound border cards or by topping up this information with other sample-based surveys; thought must also be given to how far the information received chimes in with the internationally accepted definition of traveller or tourism trip.

The second stage, after making sure we have improved our knowledge of the physical indicator par excellence in the field of tourism statistics, its degree of reliability in relation to the set of inflows from abroad, coverage and limitations, will be to investigate the possible uses thereof, either as a mere cross check with alternative measuring methods, a top-up source or a prime source of information.

Of all the possible uses of this information, pride of place goes to the possibility it offers of serving as the countries' reference population for the elevation of results from demand-side tourism surveys conducted at borders or in destination points and ensuring their reliability, whether the final use thereof will be to measure expenditure, behaviour, satisfaction, etc.

#### A) Conceptual divergences between tourism and migration concepts

On the basis of Spain's experience, with a post-Schengen mix of border controls for some countries and free movement of people for others, we have drawn up the following table, showing the main differences between the classifications of groups for customs-control purposes and for tourism purposes.

<i><b>Groupings identified from the tourism perspective</b></i>	<i><b>Groupings identified from the migration control perspective</b></i>
<p>1. <b>Visitors</b> (not resident in the country visited + a visit of less than twelve months + no remunerated activity within the country visited)</p> <p>1.1. <b>Tourists</b> (visitors + overnight stay)</p> <p>1.1.1. <b>Non national tourists</b> (with a nationality other than that of the country visited)</p> <p>1.1.2. <b>National tourists resident abroad</b> (with the same nationality as the country visited)</p> <p>1.1.3. <b>Crew members</b> (of ships or aircraft)</p>	<p>1. <b>Arrivals and departures of non nationals</b> (non nationals of the particular country they enter or leave)</p> <p>2. <b>Arrivals and departures of nationals</b> (nationals of the particular country they enter or leave, heading for or coming from a non-Schengen country)</p> <p>3. <b>Arrivals and departures of persons with work permits</b> (people making journeys for work purposes, normally seasonal work or even day work in the case of cross border workers)</p> <p>4. <b>Crew members</b> (sailors with passes limited to a distance of 10 km from the berthing place.)</p>

<sup>1</sup> See the document *Recommendations on Tourism Statistics of the WTO/UN*, 1994.

1.2. <b>Same-day visitors</b> (visitors + without overnight stay) 1.2.1. <b>Cruise passengers</b> (staying overnight on the ship) 1.2.2. <b>Crew members</b> (of ships or aircraft) 1.2.3. <b>Other same-day visitors</b>	5. <b><u>Arrivals and departures of persons with study permits</u></b> (people making study journeys with student permits normally for seasons or years)
<b>EXCLUSIONS</b>	
2. <b><u>Not visitors</u></b> (exceptions laid down in the field of tourism statistics) 2.1. <b>Cross border workers</b> (living in one country and working in another) 2.2. <b>Emigrants (temporary or permanent)</b> 2.3. <b>Diplomatic and consular representatives and members of the armed forces travelling to their posts</b> 2.4. <b>Refugees or nomads</b> 2.5. <b>Persons in transit</b> (not formally entering the country through the passport control)	6. <b><u>Arrivals and departures of nationals and non nationals between countries of the Schengen area</u></b> (travelling without the need for a passport) 7. <b><u>Arrivals and departures of nationals living abroad</u></b> (residents abroad with Spanish passports)

As can be seen the main discrepancies between the categorisation criteria are the following: movements of people within the Schengen area and the distortion this provokes in police border registers, the criterion of residence as against nationality, travellers with a work permit receiving remuneration in the destination country, nationals resident abroad who arrive in the country and are not counted as foreigners and, finally, the basic tourist-definition information such as duration of stay (enabling visitors to be broken down into tourists and same-day visitors), the reason for the trip, the ultimate destination thereof, etc.

Within these groupings the following two types of travellers are worthy a comment in their own right due to the problems they usually cause when trying to harmonise tourism and migration statistics:

- **National visitors living abroad:** this is a set of travellers that, while living abroad and ipso facto foreign visitors for tourism purposes, forming part of inbound tourism figures, conserve the nationality of the country in question. In many cases they are immigrants staying abroad for periods of over one year but for border control purposes they are considered the same as residents, leading to a consequent underestimation of the number of inbound-tourism travellers.

A precise identification of this group calls for mechanisms other than mere border control, which often does not quantify or quality them as it does those non residents who are not in possession of the passport of the country in question. In many countries the border card includes both the country of residence and the nationality but in most cases this information is either not processed or is not included in the cards of nationals living abroad. The latter often have different kinds of inbound and outbound cards, or it might be the case that nationals are not obliged to fill them in.

Many countries are particularly interested in analysing these travellers from the tourism viewpoint due to their singularity and very uniform travelling and behaviour patterns. They

may also bear heavily on the trend of the country's main physical and monetary indicators in tourism terms: number of arrivals and the tourism revenue figure.

- **Transit travellers:** in the case of these visitors consideration should be given to the fact that they are a subset within a large group also made up by those travellers who arrive in a country and wait in the departure lounges for a connection to another country but never actually cross the border control. It is a group of visitors that use the infrastructure of the transit country and also consume goods and services during stays that are usually brief.

## **B) Shortfalls of migration registers for tourism analysis purposes**

The information used by the tourism administrations of many countries of the world suffers from severe shortfalls for tourism analysis purposes. There is no question of casting doubts on the quality of the information collected by the border authority but rather of asking what is the final purpose thereof and the degree of compatibility between this function and the additional tourism use traditionally grafted onto it.

For the state security forces the information collected and processed by the authority responsible for border traffic responds to the need of controlling legal and illegal migration flows arriving in a given country, in light of the particular legislation obtaining therein. This criteria of legality, brought to bear on the characterisation and counting of migration flows from abroad, influences the way in which the information is collected and the breakdown level thereof.

From the tourism point of view the criterion used has nothing to do with the particular legislation in force in a given country or geographical area but rather with the trip made by a person "to a place other than that of his/her usual environment for a period of time of less than twelve months and the main purpose of the visit should be other than the exercise of an activity remunerated from within" (WTO/UN 1994 ¶20). This approach guarantees international comparability of said flows between countries, regardless of how tough a country's border restrictions are at any given time, the legislation in force and the other circumstances obtaining.

Despite the abovementioned differences in the migration conception of border inflows and outflows and the conception thereof for the purposes of tourism statistics – despite also the huge shortfalls of information and resources that countries and their tourism administrations usually have to deal with – most countries still use this information source.

The shortfalls that countries most often have to deal with when using migration information for tourism analysis can be broken down into three main groups: firstly, the limited nature of the information on the country's border cards in terms of the questions asked and the states thereof (many of the basic variables for characterising inflows and outflows from the tourism point of view are not included); secondly the varying degrees of thoroughness with which the card variables and states are recorded, processed and finally passed on to the tourism administration (the reason for the journey and the person's country of residence are recorded but this information is not processed); and lastly the lack of coordination between said authority and the country's tourism or statistics administration.

The main shortfalls of migration information, without in any way trying to give an exhaustive list, are the following:

1. Migration information allows the number of persons crossing the border to be calculated, the migration phenomenon as a whole to be quantified and its trend over time but it does not guarantee the characterisation thereof; it is not possible to break down the travellers according to the most important characteristics from a tourism perspective, for example the traveller's residence, a key factor determining the tourism behaviour thereof, nor the type (tourist, same-day visitor, transit visitor), etc...
2. The aforementioned problem of quantifying the inflows of national travellers living abroad and visiting the country in question.
3. On many occasions, although the entry and departure date to and from the country is recorded it is not then processed, or it is processed but not then sent on to the tourism administration: this information is needed by the latter to make an initial breakdown of the travellers by type.
4. The inconsistent treatment in terms of the information collected and the type of border control exercised, depending, for example, on the country the travellers are coming from (and the agreements established therewith) or the inconsistent treatment of inbound and outbound information (the entry and exit cards are sometimes different).
5. Questions on the reason for the trip or the type of accommodation used are not normally asked in the same way in the various countries, or even within the same country in the case of nationals and non nationals. Even when included on the border card, the level of detail is often insufficient.
6. Delay in making the information available. This information needs to be on hand quickly as it is a crucial indicator for planning tourism policy and keeping track of tourism trends in a sector that in some destinations is extremely sensitive and volatile to any change in political, economic and even climatic changes in the destination itself, while also being affected by the macroeconomic situation of the country of origin, the price ratio between origin- and destination-country and the marketing strategies of the competing destinations, etc.
7. The special status that some groups might have, such as diplomats, cross-border workers, sailors, aircraft crews, journalists, street hawkers, persons with work or study permits, etc.

In general these shortfalls often prevent us from getting the most out of the border information collected by the police. The border information, for example, should ideally provide a sufficiently stratified reference population for reliable elevation of the sample results of demand-side surveys, such as an eventual survey on tourism expenditure.

In the more traditional demographic surveys there is a known universe and a clear reference population formed by the individuals and households of the country; in the case of surveys of this type, however, directed at non resident visitors, this universe is not known. This is so, among other reasons, because it is a question not only of ascertaining the number of travellers of this type entering the country but also a minimum set of their basic behavioural characteristics, such as the reason for the trip, the length of stay, the type of accommodation used or the way the trip was organised; without such variables we would be unlikely to obtain any reliable results.

Information on migration flows can also be used to improve one of the most important survey preparation processes, i.e., the design and selection of the sample. This is without doubt a statistical

process that, although it does not always receive the attention it deserves, is crucial because it impinges on the whole subsequent surveying process.

The aim of the sample selection is none other than to determine the number of sample cases that are going to be surveyed and the basic characteristics thereof – age, sex, nationality, etc – so that the sample finally selected and the responses arising therefrom give as faithful an image as possible of the real universe of the cases represented.

How far the sample is stratified will be predetermined by the structure of the visitor flows themselves and how much is known about them; indeed, the more that is known about these cross border flows the better will be the final calculations.

### **III. The use of the information furnished by the border controls of the National Police: the case of Spain**

In Spain the state security force responsible for border controls is the National Police; the information collected at the various border crossings is sent on to the Main Headquarters in Madrid (Comisaría Central de Extranjería), which, under a collaboration agreement with the Tourism Administration, in turn sends on the information regularly to the Instituto de Estudios Turísticos (IET).

The information obtained from the border controls of the National Police refers to the number of residents and non residents that have crossed Spanish borders, entering or leaving the Schengen space<sup>2</sup>. As in the case of the administrative registers of flights and passengers, which the body responsible for air traffic in Spain (Aena) also sends regularly to IET, the National Police information is not designed for statistical use, so it is subjected to a validation and correction process before it is modelled and used for statistical purposes.

The registers give information collected at the border posts of airports, ports and roads, although in the latter case the actual border check cabins have been dismantled in compliance with European treaties, except for the two border crossings with the non Schengen area countries at Andorra and Algeciras.

The traveller flow information furnished by the National Police in Spain is used as a secondary information source, mainly as an additional cross check of available information, but never as a population reference; for the last five years running the latter information has been provided by the Encuesta de Movimientos Turísticos en Fronteras (Frontur).

In Spain's case the Frontur information is used jointly with administrative information from the traffic authorities responsible for the various means of accessing Spain, plus information of a sample character, to make up for the shortfalls of the border control information, especially the following:

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<sup>2</sup> To date (July 2002) fourteen countries have signed the Schengen treaty: Germany, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Greece, Holland, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, Norway, Portugal and Sweden. The EU countries not forming part of Schengen and hence maintaining border controls with the rest of the member states are Great Britain and Ireland.

- The lack of information on inflows from countries of the Schengen area using all the means of access considered, especially road and air, which jointly account for 95% of total tourism inflows into Spain;
- The consideration of nationality instead of residence as selection criteria for counting cross border movements;
- The fact that the police records give little information on inflows and outflows other than the quantification thereof by border crossings and breakdown by nationality;
- The delay in processing this information by the National Police and sending it on to IET.

A periodical crosscheck is made between the Police information on passenger flows at the various border crossings, passengers on international flights also sent monthly by Aena and the travellers recorded in the Frontur survey, bearing in mind at all times that the three sources measure with different criteria different aspects of the same phenomenon – one traveller crossing the national border. Obviously not all passengers arriving on an international flight at a national airport are eligible for being counted by the Police or being considered as an international tourist (some will be non residents coming to Spain but others will be residents in Spain returning from their trips abroad).

It should also be borne in mind that certain nationalities heading for countries other than Spain use Spain as a staging post towards their final destination, while, conversely, other nationalities enter Spain from different countries, with Spain as their final destination, on an intra-Schengen flight. This intricate state of affairs greatly complicates the analysis and limits the possible uses of an information source that is the main source for measuring tourism inflows for some countries.

For the purposes of the periodical analysis thereof, all the police information on the border movements of persons is ordered month by month on the basis of the following characteristics:

- **Country of origin.** It should be borne in mind here that the police collects its information on international travellers in terms of their nationality, while the criterion that should be used for tourism purposes, as laid down in the international recommendations of the WTO, is the country of residence. In the interests of improving the analysis possibilities of the police information and facilitating its crosschecking against other information sources, five different country groupings have been established in accordance with different criteria and purposes:
  - To make it more easily crosscheckable against the Frontur information, which details the main source countries of tourism to Spain, a first breakdown of 22 countries is made, grouping the rest by continents.
  - To make it more easily comparable with Aena data, also processed monthly, European countries are broken down into EU members and non-EU members, non-European countries being broken down by continents.
  - A grouping is also made of European countries according to whether or not they belong to the Schengen area, the rest by continents.
  - List of countries that, in the context of the Working Group on Tourism Expenditure, are deemed by the INE (Spanish Statistics Institute) to be

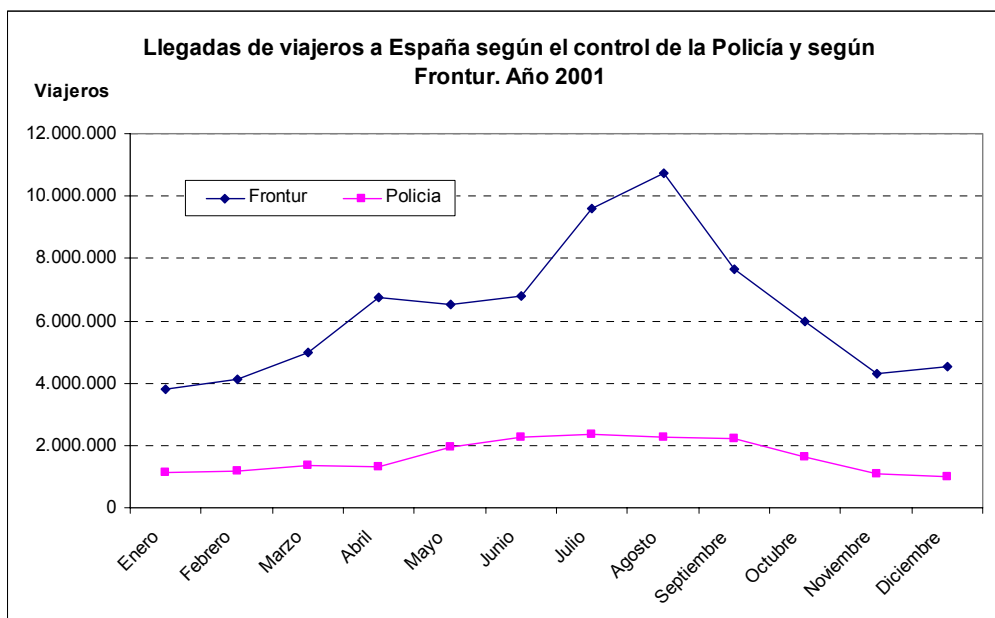
essential for the representativeness of the results of the Tourism Expenditure Survey (Encuesta de Gasto Turístico: Egatur).

- Ranking of the top 35 source countries sending travellers to Spain, according to the police information.
- **Border crossing.** The border crossings at which the police collect this information are grouped by the Autonomous Communities they belong to and the means of access they represent (airport, port or road)<sup>3</sup>.
- **Type of traveller.** Information is furnished on both nationals and non-nationals coming from countries outside the Schengen area.
- **Travellers with passes.** These are sailors who arrive without passports or other types of permit and are given this pass to remain in Spain and leave to travel within a 10km diameter of the place where their ships are berthed.

### Some crosschecks made between the information furnished by the National Police and the Frontur Survey

The graphs below show how the border-control information provided by the National Police in Spain is cross checked with the Frontur information on the inflows of visitors to Spain from abroad.

**Graph 1. Arrivals of travellers in Spain according to the police border controls and Frontur. Year 2001.**

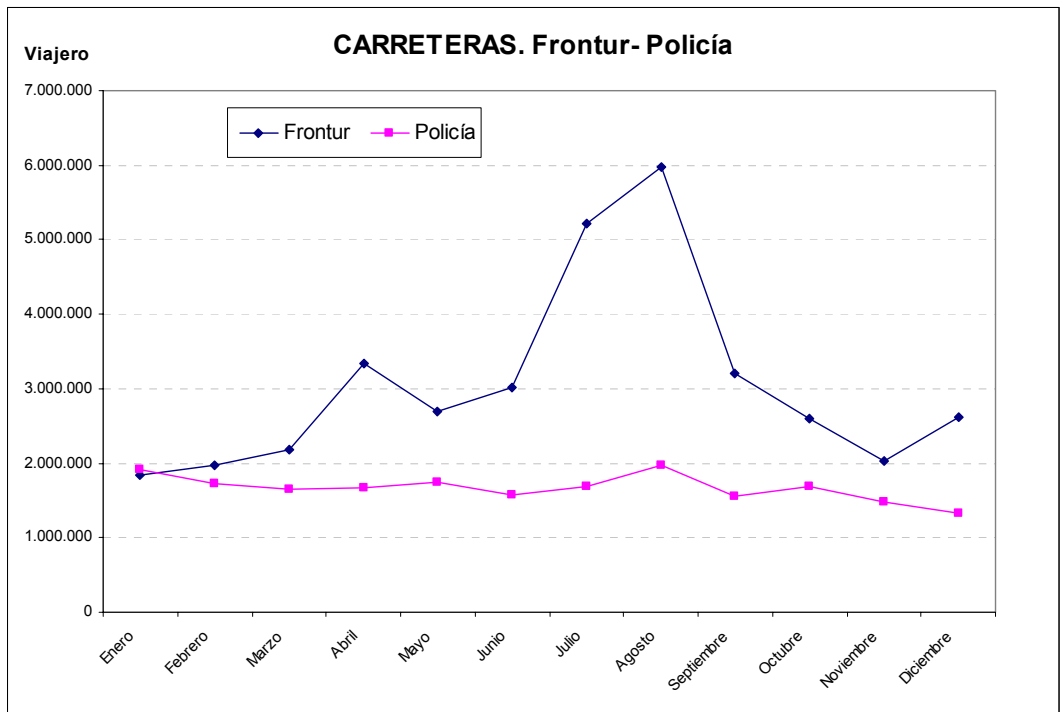


Graph 1 clearly shows the marked differences both in number and seasonal profile of the arrivals of travellers in Spain by the various means of access, according to the National Police border controls and the Frontur survey. In a country like Spain, within the Schengen area, the use solely of border

<sup>3</sup> See Annex.

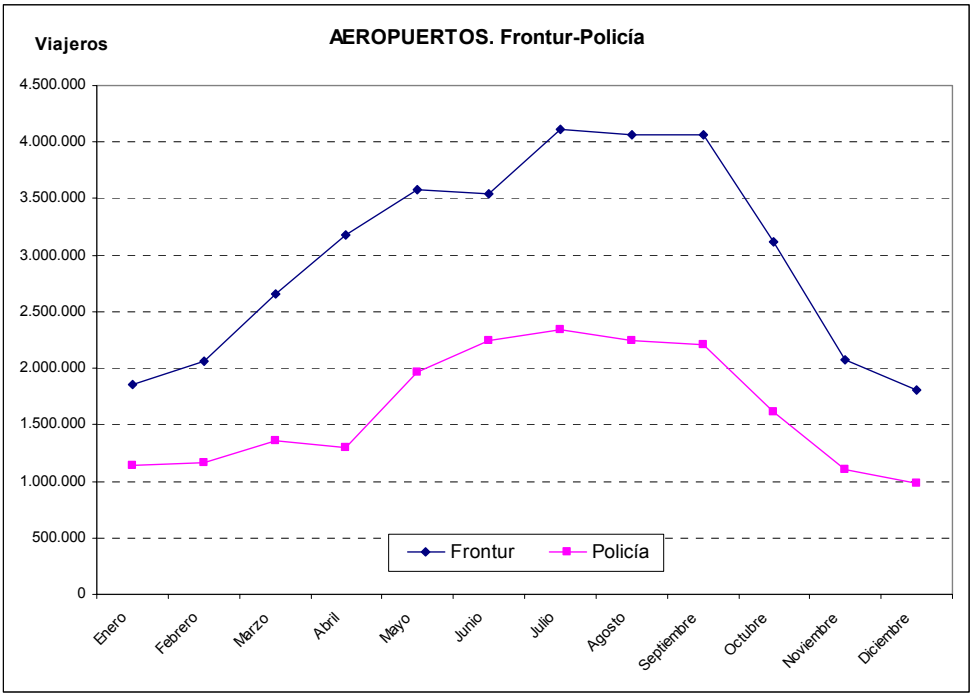
control information on migration flows would lead to a great underestimation of tourism inflows, for two main reasons: firstly, the practical absence of police information on road movements, due to the dismantling of all controls with France and Portugal and, secondly, the enormous weight of Schengen countries within the total of arrivals in Spain (approximately 67% of all travellers), and the weight of the United Kingdom in non-Schengen countries, accounting for 60%.

**Graph 2. Arrivals of travellers in Spain by road according to the police border register and Frontur. Year 2001.**



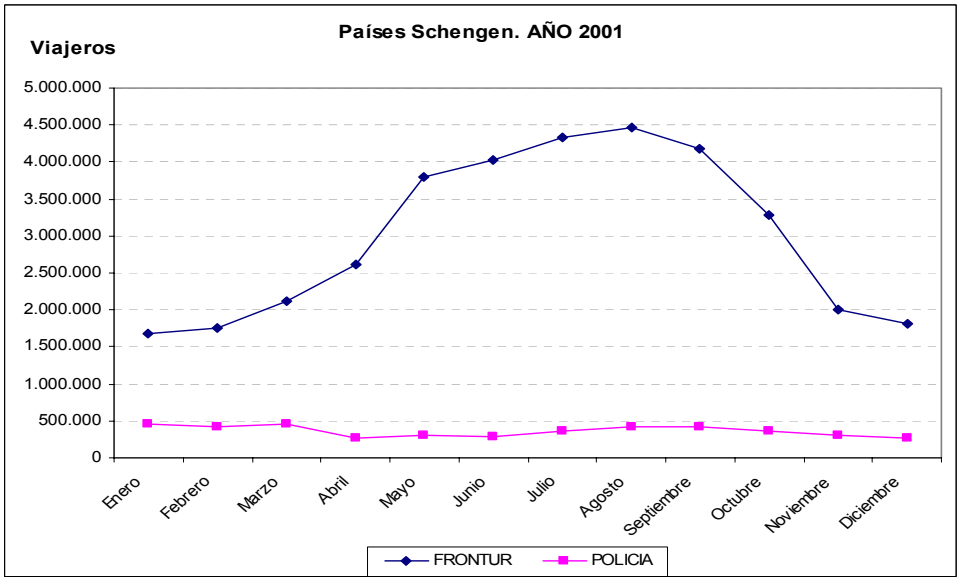
Graph 2 shows the enormous differences in the arrivals of visitors by road according to the two sources. The police information comes from the two road border crossings of La Línea and Seo de Urgel with Andorra, with a high proportion of same-day visitors. Police information on Ceuta and Melilla, clocking up between them 17 million travellers a year, has been excluded from the analysis, as most of them are same-day visitors who come to Spain to sell their merchandise.

**Graph 3. Arrivals of travellers in Spain by airport according to the police border register and Frontur. Year 2001.**



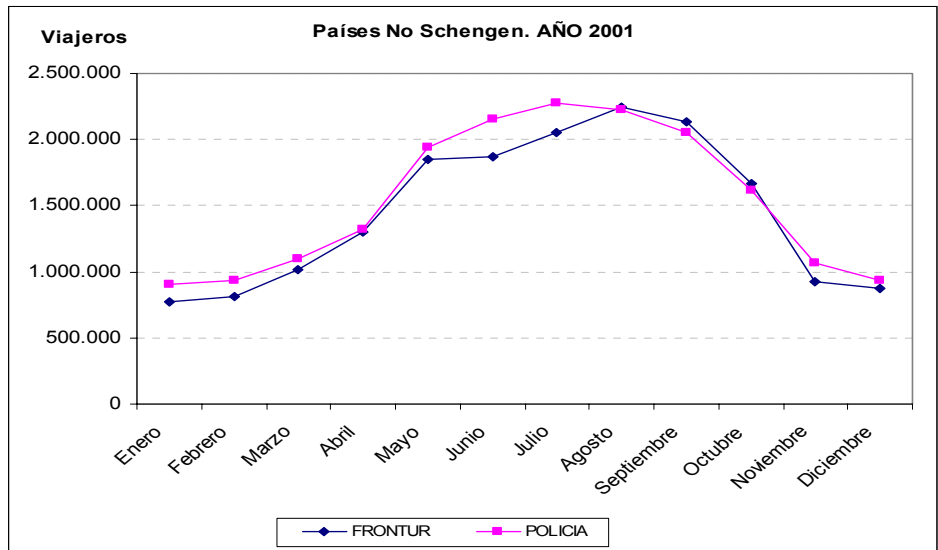
Graph 3 shows greater congruity between the two sources in terms of profile but marked differences in numbers, due to the fact that the National Police do not count travellers coming from Schengen countries.

**Graph 4. Arrivals of travellers in Spain by air from Schengen countries according to the police border register and Frontur. Year 2001.**



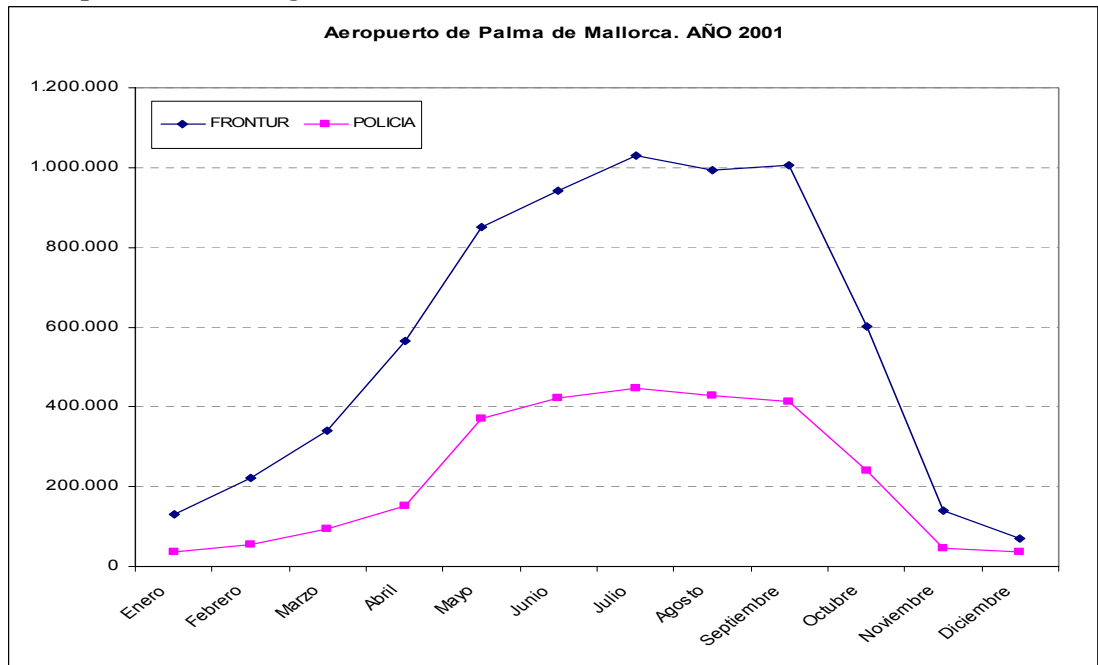
Graph 4 shows the huge differences between the two sources in the arrivals of visitors by airport from countries of the Schengen area, due to the complete freedom of movement of nationals of the Schengen countries.

**Graph 5. Arrivals of travellers in Spain from non-Schengen countries according to the police border register and Frontur. Year 2001.**

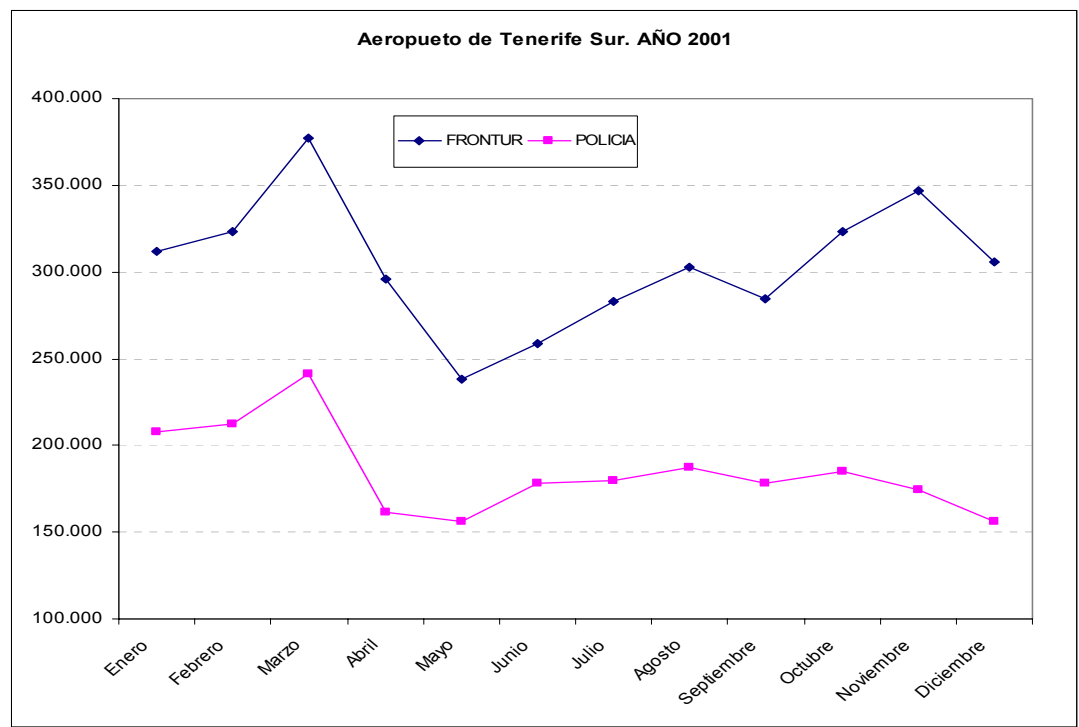


As in the previous case, graph 5 shows arrivals by air of the two sources but this time considering only the nationals of countries not belonging to the Schengen area. The resulting differences for the year as a whole are about 5% (approximately one million travellers over the twelve months of the year).

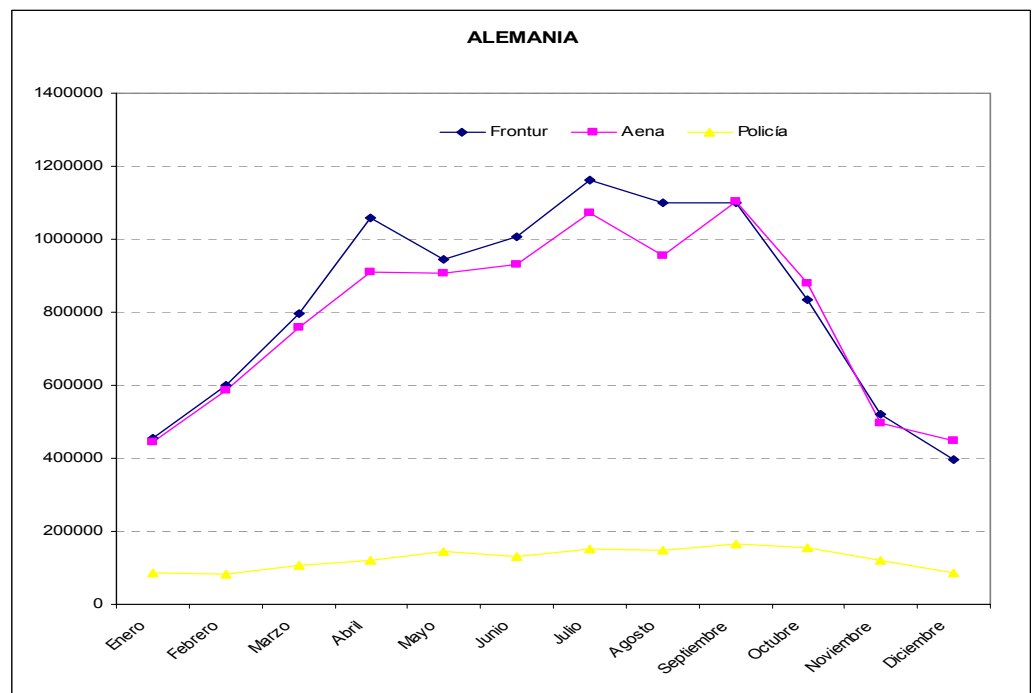
**Graph 6. Arrivals of travellers in Spain through the airport of Palma de Mallorca according to the police border register and Frontur. Year 2001.**



**Graph 7. Arrivals of travellers in Spain through the airport of Tenerife Sur according to the police border register and Frontur. Year 2001.**

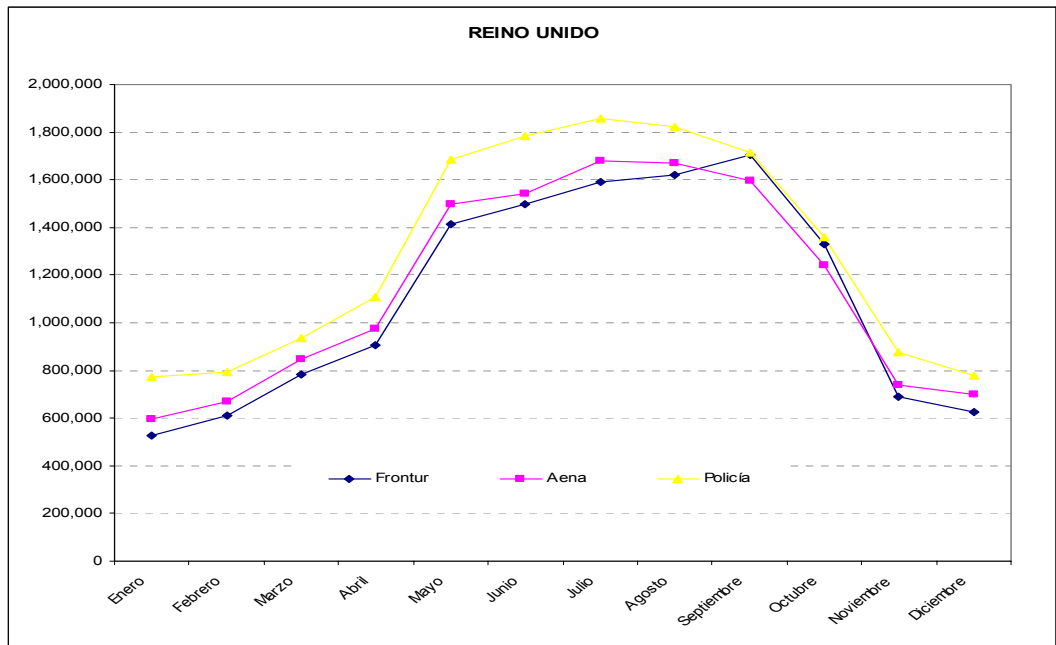


**Graph 8. Arrivals of travellers in Spain from Germany according to the police border register and Frontur. Year 2001.**



Graph 8 incorporates a third source, passenger arrivals in flights from Germany, as furnished by Aena. In this case there is an almost perfect match between the Aena information and the Frontur information, while the border control of residents in Germany is practically non-existent.

**Graph 9. Arrivals of travellers in Spain from the United Kingdom according to the border register and Frontur. Year 2001.**



Graph 9 shows a very close match between the three sources in the case of arrivals from the United Kingdom, with slight quantitative differences over the year between the information furnished by

Frontur and Aena and the migration register of the National Police. The difference between the police register of travellers with British nationality and passports and the information furnished by Frontur on travellers in terms of their residence country is almost always on the side of the police figures, with an average surfeit over the year of about 15-16%.

In the case of the Aena information on passenger arrivals in international flights broken down by country of origin and the information published by Frontur on traveller arrivals by air, the Frontur figures are slightly below the Aena figures in most months, with an average 5% reduction over the whole year. This difference is explained by the habitual presence of a certain number of residents in countries other than the United Kingdom who arrive in Spain on flights from the United Kingdom (for example Spanish citizens returning from abroad or foreigners from countries with which Spain has no direct flights).

## Annex.

### Border posts at which information is broken down by Autonomous Communities and provinces. 2000 and 2001

	Aeropuerto	Puerto	Carretera
<b>Andalucía</b>	x	x	x
Almería	x	x	
Cádiz	x	x	x
Granada	x	x	
Huelva		x	
Málaga	x	x	
Sevilla	x	x	
<b>Aragón</b>	Zaragoza	x	
<b>Asturias</b>	x	x	
Aeropuerto de Asturias	x		
Puerto de Avilés		x	
Puerto de Gijón		x	
<b>Baleares</b>	x	x	
Aeropuerto de Ibiza	x		
Aeropuerto de Mallorca	x		
Aeropuerto de Menorca	x		
Puerto de Ibiza		x	
Puerto de Mahón		x	
Puerto de Mallorca		x	
<b>Canarias</b>	x	x	
Las Palmas	x	x	
Santa Cruz de Tenerife	x	x	
<b>Cantabria</b>	x	x	
Aeropuerto de Santander	x		
Puerto de Santander		x	
<b>Cataluña</b>	x	x	x
Barcelona	x	x	
Girona	x		
Lleida			x
Tarragona	x	x	
<b>Ceuta y Melilla</b>		x	x
Ceuta		x	x
Melilla		x	x
<b>C. Valenciana</b>	x	x	
Alicante	x	x	
Castellón		x	
Valencia	x	x	
<b>Galicia</b>	x	x	
La Coruña	x	x	
Pontevedra	x	x	
<b>Madrid</b>	x		
<b>Murcia</b>	x		
<b>País Vasco</b>	x	x	
Álava	x		
Vizcaya	x	x	

Source: Border crossing register of the National Police