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PRODUCING MIGRATION DATA THROUGH HOUSEHOLD SAMPLE SURVEYS

**THE 2007 NATIONAL IMMIGRANT SURVEY (SPAIN): EXTENDING THE KNOWLEDGE
ON IMMIGRANTS BEYOND REGISTERS***

Submitted by Spain

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* This paper has been prepared by Ignacio Duque and Orlando Montoso, National Statistical Institute, at the invitation of the secretariat.

I. WORK AND RESIDENCE IN A GLOBAL WORLD: INFORMATION ON FLOWS AND IDENTITY BUILDING

1. In today's world international migrations are an essential aspect of the demand for information in the majority of European societies. The affairs relating to international migration, the immigrants and foreigners have been included in the political agenda and are among the key types of information that are required from the statistical system. This is logical, as without statistics a well-informed, democratic debate becomes difficult and the size of the flows and the nature of the people involved are an essential part of the discussion on these phenomena in our societies.

2. However, the demands are not always precise nor are they stable over time. Each country designates its flows of recent arrivals in different ways and keep them in this category in accordance with different timetables and criteria: immigrants, foreigners, those born abroad, etc. and neither does each statistics system provide the same answers. However, it is usual that the demands are quite selective. There are immigrant groups on which virtually no information is requested¹ and it is not infrequent that there are requests for information on immigrants who were never such².

3. Obviously, international migration and residence in the different States are different sides of the same coin, even though this is an aspect that is not always appreciated. For this reason the standardisation of the international statistics should not be envisaged as being independent of the standardisation of the criteria for determining the resident population³.

4. It is usual to point out that migration-residence and citizenship are different concepts. Migration and residence belong to the sphere of empirical and practical behaviours and to the geographic movements between territories, whereas the citizenship belongs to the legal

¹ Either it is considered that they are citizens who are exercising a right which can in no event be the object of any limitation (nationals of a country who decide to live abroad) or the corresponding flows are not deemed as problem flows, basically because it involves people who it is initially assumed have sufficient financial resources (university students, retired people who have a pension, executives of large companies, etc.).

² The demand on immigrants and foreigners is occasionally extended to the so-called second generations or people with an immigrant background. This is the case of the projected module of the European Labour Force Survey (LFS) on immigration, which includes information on the immigrants and the descendants of immigrants. In these cases (and others which could be added) it is worth noting that international migration (which is an event that can be repeated many times over a lifetime in different senses) not only passes on to characterise the people during the rest of their lives, but also end up being *inherited* as an essential characteristic by their descendants.

³ This has been a well-known aspect, but which has recently been emphasized by the *Task Force on EU Methodology for Population Projections* (December 2006 - October 2007, comprised of Eurostat, Sweden, Italy, Portugal, Austria, Belgium, Hungary and Spain). The difficulties in obtaining standard and consistent series on international migration (as a prior exercise to the projection) not only affect the size of the projected migration, but also involved the initial ordinary population of each country and of how these were calculated by the different national statistics offices.

framework, to the full set of rights within each society and each state. However, in practice these are not such disjointed aspects⁴.

5. Similarly, the development of the modern world and the accumulation of wealth from industrial development has placed work at the centre of the State building after the Great Depression of 1929 and above all after the Second World War. In this sense the processes of wealth accumulation in the world system and mass migrations are at the starting point of the European and American transformations, which illuminated the manner in which countries and societies recognise each other: the freedom of movement and the foundation of citizenship in work.

6. In today's world, in the developed countries economic migration (subject to the market) and population migration (subject to the State) are usually understood to be disassociated, as if they belonged to different universes and as if same people were not those who featured in both phenomena simultaneously in most cases. However, the large present economic transformations (encompassed under the evanescent term of globalisation), the greater interchanges of people and goods and the implicit economic interdependence and the armed conflicts imply, today as yesterday, a challenge for the management of these in the midst of significant flows of people. In this sense international immigration is a key element in the management of the identities which the social groups give to themselves.

7. It is the task of the statistical offices to provide material for reflection, for decision-making and for a debate that is very much within the realm of matters of identity. The statistical information has a key role in reminding us of the complexities of the phenomena of which the international migrations are a consequence and a cause at the same time. Phenomena in which people are featured, but which go beyond them. Relationships woven with family networks, with neighbours, which can just as easily become invisible, as be branded by the social stigma. Lived as a perpetual novelty and being as old as history, the history that is the perpetual migration and the sedentary routine at the same time.

II. INTERNATIONAL MIGRATIONS AND THE SPANISH STATISTICAL SYSTEM

A. GENERAL

8. The 'international migratory flows' is well-known as a field replete with paradoxes. It is not merely a matter of the more technical issues of the statistical definition of migratory flows and its systems of data capture. The demographic and statistical definition of migratory flows is based on abstracting some of the relations between people and the space where they live.

9. The statistics of international migratory flows hinge on the concept of a person's permanent residence as the sole locus from which lifetime events and movements are measured.

⁴ Moreover, the national states are constructions which were superimposed on population habits that were legally consecrated. In addition, the usual holding of residence is at the basis of processes (extraordinary or regulated) for the recognition of the nationality in all the countries.

Permanent residence and migration are plainly two sides of the same coin, with significant implications, as we shall see presently.

10. The space in which people live, for one thing, is no longer confined to the immediate environs of their permanent residence, and many users of statistics often find such further information highly important. The phenomenon is evident in many times and countries: ease of transport and communication makes living spaces and residential arrangements increasingly complex, as seen in two respects now widely exemplified in Spain.

11. The non-economic migrations to Spain, at retirement age, for the sake of the climate and lifestyle, do not sit easily with the conventions of statistical definitions. And, among the more classical economic migrants, there is now a very diverse spectrum of backgrounds, pathways, frequencies of return to country of origin, and so forth. We now have recurring, cyclical, seasonal and itinerant international migrations. These flexible forms of migration give rise to new spaces of life and relationships: such is the case of so-called 'transnational families', centred on emigrants (particularly women) who leave behind children, parents and dependants. In many of these cases it is hard to apply the definitions of 'permanent residence', and, moreover, there is an increasing demand for measuring and anatomising the new phenomena.

12. International migration involves a geographical 'mesh' of borders able to detect movements, which are captured theoretically only when a line is crossed. The mesh distinguishes international migrations from migrations internal to states. The statistical tally of international migrations thus overestimates relative mobility wherever the mesh-size is small (states with a small surface area) and underestimates relative mobility in large countries and quasi-continental states. In addition, any change in the mesh of international borders poses difficulties for time series, as occurred recently in Europe.

B. THE "OLD" STATISTICS

13. In comparison with the present difficulties with information, the extraordinarily well regulated Spanish emigration and colonisation of America appear as an ideal model from the point of view of the availability of information⁵.

14. At the time of creation of the national statistical systems during the 19th century there is knowledge of the difficulties experienced by all the countries in properly recording the emigration of their nationals, and therefore most of the scholars have resorted to comparing the sources of the countries of origin and those of the destination countries, in order to obtain an approximate panorama of the migration. In the history of Spanish statistics the Pasajeros⁶ (Passengers) series is the only evidence that allows one to get close (between 1882 and 1936) to the extraordinary information on the mass Spanish transatlantic emigrations.

⁵ As is proved by the fact that five centuries later we can still find the basic listings and information on these first emigrants / colonisers in accordance with the classic works of BOYD-BOWMAN (1976 and 1985). For a recent assessment of the available information, refer to MARTÍNEZ SHAW (1994).

⁶ The painstaking compilation work was carried out by Roser NICOLAU (2005). For a systematic reconstruction of the flow of the years 1910-1920, refer to Blanca SÁNCHEZ (1995).

15. During the years 1960-1983 there was huge growth in Spanish international migrations (leaving Spain), together with extremely heavy internal migration, associated with the process of urbanisation, industrialisation and departure from agriculture and the rural world. At that time the statistical system developed a modest instrument to track these outside migrations as from 1961: the statistics of assisted Spanish emigration, taking advantage of the fact that the flows to Germany, France and Switzerland were derived from intergovernmental agreements and were completed with trans-ocean assisted migration⁷. At the same time, as from 1960, statistics on inside migration started to be published, which were subsequently referred to as Variaciones Residenciales (Residential Changes), which were derived from the Population Register and taken off the municipal registries. Paradoxically, this instrument would be embryo of what would constitute the best tool for measure the attracting international migration (incoming).

C. RECENT SITUATION

16. During the second half of the 1980s the outside immigration process began to develop and the first analyses had been published⁸. When in 1992 the first National Statistical Plan was passed, its layout was still quite similar to that of the previous decade. This scene showed no manner of novelty with regards to the effective production during the first four statistical plans (until that of 2005-2008), if we exclude the Sociodemographic Survey of 2001.

17. Luckily, before the immigration shock came about the Spanish statistical system had already built and set in motion a fundamental improvement of its municipal population registers, by reinforcing the centralising and coordinating role of INE and introducing more robust mechanisms for communication and detection of inconsistencies. This major improvement, implemented from 1996 onward, is called the Padrón Continuo, or 'continuous'⁹ population register'. The continuous population register was a fundamental step towards raising the quality and consistency of information and make more intensive use of administrative data. Given the size of Spain's territory and population, and the fact that social practices with regard to administrative matters still have some way to mature, even better results are expected in future. There are ambitious plans to enhance the effectiveness¹⁰ of the continuous Padrón as an integrated register with greater online functionalities for documenting residency, making quality and non-duplication checks easier, incorporating a repertory of territorial units and dwellings linked to GIS systems and other government bodies, and other improvements.

⁷ There are many works that have tried to assess to what extent the sources undervalued the effective flow, as an example BABIANO and FARRÉ (2002).

⁸ Colectivo IOÉ (1986), MUÑOZ / IZQUIERDO (1989).

⁹ As against the old system, whereby entries made after each new census were dropped if they did not appear in the forms collected by field agents. The key advances are nonetheless probably comprehensive computerisation, creation of a standardised system of exchange and higher central coordination and oversight.

¹⁰ The effort involves a wide-ranging institutional partnership, given the highly decentralised nature of Spanish government.

D. INFORMATION FROM OUTSIDE THE STATISTICAL SYSTEM

18. Since 1886 the information on the recent outside immigration flow has been very great and for the past five years the research and work are virtually impossible to cover. Probably no aspect of this migration process has not been studied, nor has any characteristic or geographical territory or country of origin gone without study. Already in 2002 the bibliography was huge¹¹ and it is now surely virtually impossible to cover. Initially it was journalistic research which set the guidelines. Next, it was the anthropological field studies which added a lot of new knowledge on the migratory processes and their family structures, places of residence and origin backgrounds. Later, there was a flood of sampling research studies, the extensive use of administrative records and a great number of combinations of statistical sources and administration-hoc explorations.

III. THE ROLE OF THE NATIONAL IMMIGRANT SURVEY IN THE OVERALL INFORMATION NEEDS ON INTERNATIONAL MIGRATIONS IN SPAIN

A. THE TARGET POPULATION (WHO)

19. Precisely, a first National Immigrant Survey had as its main objective the outlining of the general picture. Sufficiently broad so as to cover all the phenomena. Sufficiently extensive so as to encompass the entire national territory. Sufficiently inclusive so as to preclude leaving out any social group on which information was requested.

20. In this sense the definition of the target group was the key: foreigners from all countries? immigrants as from what date? those born abroad? also the descendants of immigrants?. It is clear that no definition covers all the objectives for all the users, and neither is it without limitations. In addition to being operational from a practical point of view, allowing for an efficient selection of people within a field study from within the framework of the available samples.

21. In spite of its novelty within the Spanish statistical system, it seemed from the first instance that the population born outside Spain was the relevant group. In the current context of international migrations in Spain this definition of the research universe had quite a few advantages: 1) It is rooted in the demographic approach to migration and not only to nationality. 2) It is based on a clear, well-known variable, which does not change over people's lives and is available in the basic population repertoires that are required for a practical research. 3) It is consolidated in the international standards and allows for comparisons between many countries. 4) It does not preclude significant flows of recent immigrants who have acquired Spanish nationality (or who arrived with it) from the study. Logically it does not lack shortcomings¹² but it seemed to be the most appropriate at the present time of maturity of the flows in our migratory system.

¹¹ Colectivo IOÉ (2002), including almost four hundred studies and ten bibliographic repertoires.

¹² Among the most relevant: 6) It does not include the foreigners born in Spain, 7) It includes the Spaniards born abroad pursuant to occasional or irrelevant travels or stays (to this effect a mechanism was established in the Survey to make some of these cases available from the questionnaire).

22. Considering those reasons, the target population was defined as the people born abroad, over 15 years old and resident in Spain during a year, or resident less than a year but with intention to do it.

B. THE RESEARCH ON THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE MIGRANTS, THEIR FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS AND THEIR SOCIAL NETWORKS (WHAT)

23. Without any doubt, for the Spanish statistical system, as for any country, the ascertaining of the outside migratory flows is a basic priority of the demographic information. In this sense, the statistical exploitation of the Municipal Registries of Inhabitants and their associated migratory flows (statistics on residential changes) is essential. As is obvious the National Immigrant Survey (Spanish acronym ENI) is not located at this first and essential level, it is not its role to research the basic magnitudes of the flows.

24. The National Immigrant Survey is in a second phase of its statistical research on immigration in Spain. It is a stage in which an attempt is made to complement the basic information (see Diagram 1) and design information types which will allow for the biographical monitoring of the events and to propose research hypotheses on the interrelationship of the phenomena.

25. The ENI-2007 tries to study the part of reality to which the use of administrative records (Municipal Registry of Inhabitants, Residence Permits, Civil Registry, Social Security) cannot approach or only reach with great difficulty:

a) Investigating the socioeconomic characteristics of the immigrants which determine their experience and insertion into the labour market: education, occupation (in their country of origin and in their itinerary through Spain), economic activity sector, etc.

b) Investigating the complete migratory paths as from their starting point: their migratory experience in other countries and within Spain.

c) Combining all the information and trying to obtain a panoramic and complex image of their conditions in the country they set out from.

d) Granting great importance to the housing situation: physical characteristics, possession systems, relationship with those they live together with, etc.

e) Gathering some essential information on their present relationship with their country of origin and their relationships with the host country in different civil, social and cultural aspects.

26. The ENI-2007 also reaches a second level due to its ambition to surpass the single individual as the object of research. There is no doubt that in the case of vital decisions that are as relevant as the starting up of an international migration, the characteristics of the people are a key aspect to understanding the phenomenon. Nevertheless, most research accredits that migration is a project in which families, groups and even entire societies and regions have an essential role. For this reason the ENI-2007 is intended to:

a) Collect the basic characteristics of all the residents in the home of the selected person.

b) Provide details of the family relationships that each person is involved in: parents, brothers and sisters, spouse, children.

c) To do this even if these family members and spouses are not living under the same roof and regardless of where they are located.

27. In spite of its panoramic nature, which in some instances is sometimes almost encyclopaedic, the ENI-2007 has consciously left out of the scope of the research certain relevant aspects. On one hand it has not proposed an accurate measurement of the costs and prices of each one of the aspects linked to the migratory process, as this would have required a different strategy and is a very specific aspect of the research on migrations. Nor has an attempt been made to assess the budget and expenditure of the families or the households with immigrants, as made no sense to set up a parallel line of work to that of the Family Budgets Survey¹³. Nor has it been proposed as an objective of the ENI-2007 to assess the impact of the new immigrants on the different public services (education, health care and transport are key ones, but not the only ones). There are regular systems for using these aspects of reality and if at present it is not important to identify those involved in accordance with standardised characteristics, it is more pertinent to amend the information on the people, who try to generate a specific operation of a sampling type. Even with these exclusions the scope of the survey is enormous.

C) UNIVERSE, SAMPLE AND QUESTIONNAIRE (HOW)

28. The ENI-2007 as it has been developed is only possible within the rich demographic context of the Spanish statistical system. Without having a Population Register that was updated on a monthly basis in which to be able to select the operation it would be difficult for it to be feasible from the point of view of its financial cost point and the tremendous technical effort that would be required (or it would be subject to heavy biases).

29. The universe of households in Spain with people registered was divided into two independent groups or samples: households in which there was at least one immigrant (born abroad), which was the sampling universe of the ENI, and the rest of households¹⁴. The sample had three phases: census, household and persons sections, with stratification of the first stage sections in accordance with size strata of the municipalities in which each census section was located¹⁵. On arrival at each household the interviewer list the resident people (included or not in the Padrón register)¹⁶. Next, the computer selected, in a random manner and without any possibility of involvement by the interviewer, one person from among the residents who met the characteristics of the population to be surveyed. The sample effectively gathered was of 15,500 questionnaires.

¹³ In accordance with the present questionnaires one cannot identify those who were born abroad, but it has been considered more suited to introduce this aspect at the time it is deemed to be feasible that (given that the size of the group is already deemed relevant) than to generate a parallel effort in one of the most complex and delicate statistical operations of the system.

¹⁴ On this collective a control sample was taken of the operation, within a series of operations which it is not possible to explain in detail here.

¹⁵ 1770 sections were fixed for the first stage and a title sample and a replacement one of 10 households per section.

¹⁶ This is an important point, in order to avoid the bias due to not correctly register people in the households in the sample.

30. The entire questionnaire was administered by means of an electronic device (a Tablet-PC), which included all the consistency controls which could efficiently be applied during the interview phase. In addition, the interviewers had paper questionnaires available in different languages and a telephone support service in English, in French and in Arabic. It is noteworthy that the level of incidents or negative responses were no greater than those recorded for this type of operations of the National Statistical Institute (INE) surveys. The questionnaires in Spanish, English, French, Arabic and Rumanian are attached as files to this paper. There were available questionnaires in Catalan, Basque, Galician and Valencian language. The field work was carried out between November 2006 and February 2007.

31. The survey universe required the preparation of an estimate of the reference population group. For this purpose an estimation exercise was prepared derived from the current Now Cast Estimates (ePOBa)¹⁷ and which would allow for the population 16 or more years old that live in family households by territory, to be available.

D) SOME DETAILS ON THE HISTORY OF THE PROJECT

32. The ENI project has its origin in a group of researchers and academics from Spanish universities¹⁸ who in mid-2004 proposed the undertaking of this great project to the INE and the Ministry of Labour¹⁹ and did an excellent job in preparing the questionnaire and project. All phases (sampling, elevation, field work and data filtering) were at the expense of the INE, which applied the same working systems, tools and quality standards as for any of its statistical operations. The participation of this academic team in some tasks and phases of the information production (mainly the questionnaire and the basic report for presenting the results, but also define the edits and checks of the questionnaire) is considered highly positive as it brings together the guarantees of the regular operations with the contribution of the knowledge of experts, which allow the production of the information to be more suited to the analysis requirements. In any event, special care was taken to ensure that the academic goals would be also general interests of all types of users.

33. In a mature phase, the project was submitted to consultation with numerous institutions and researchers who contributed proposals and interesting reviews. In addition, three Regional Statistical Institutes²⁰ requested sample extensions, which were included in the programmed tasks.

34. The complexity of the survey led to an experimental phase to be deemed necessary in the bureau (cognitive comprehension test of the most critical parts of the questionnaire) as well as for two experimental phases in the field. The first pilot survey of 500 interviews was carried out

¹⁷ The explanation of the difficulties in the undertaking and the methodology used are beyond the scope of this document. For a general overview of the determination of the reference statistical figures for the population in Spain, refer to: <http://www.ine.es/jaxi/menu.do?type=pcaxis&path=%2Ft20%2Fp259&file=inebase&L=>

¹⁸ Grouped into the so-called "Population and Society" Study Group (GEPS) based in the Complutense University in Madrid, under the coordination of David Reher, in collaboration with Luís Cortés Alcalá, Fernando González Quiñones, Miguel Requena Díez de Revenga, Alberto Sanz Gimeno and Mikolaj Stanek.

¹⁹ The details of the tasks, commitments and obligations were materialised in an Agreement between the INE, the Ministry of Labour and the Complutense University of Madrid, dated October 16, 2006.

²⁰ Navarre, Balearic Islands and Murcia.

in October 2005 and it advised the undertaking of a second pilot study of the same size partly remodelling the research strategy in April 2006.

IV. INFORMATION DISSEMINATION AND FUTURE HORIZONS

35. The complexity of the survey, have made it seem unsuited for a classic dissemination system, as it is understood that the ENI-2007 is basically a research and analysis instrument of a certain complexity. Within an advanced strategy of the INE for making large quantities of statistical information available, the dissemination will be focused on making the anonymised data file available to users, providing all the methodology and explanatory documentation. Together with this essential aspect the INE will disseminate a minimum selection of tables, which will allow to convey to some extent the informative wealth of the operation and a so-called Basic Report, which will allow for a first approach to the information being published, prepared by the academic team promoting the initiative²¹. The dissemination of data is forecast for the end of April 2008.

36. Insofar as the opinions of the users of this new source of information are awaited, this first experience is considered to be deeply positive.

37. It is not easy to answer the question on its continuity over time and its possible connection with similar operations in other countries or with Eurostat initiatives. The new round of census gathering or other initiatives should also be taken into account when delimiting the gaps that are not covered by the administrative records (which also require a great deal of effort for their improvement). In any event the National Statistical Institute of Spain is most interested in participating in all the European initiatives that may occur, in order to obtain comparative information on the immigrants in the different countries of the European Union, as we are aware of the difficulties and complexities that these undertakings entail.

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²¹ Conceived as a report of its authors, whose opinions are independent and do not necessarily coincide with those of the National Statistical Institute.

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