

## **Internal Migration Patterns of Foreign-Born Immigrants in Spain: Evidence from Micro Data**

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The literature on the spatial distribution of international immigrants in countries with dense migratory tradition such as the USA, Canada and Australia is abundant. Researchers have looked at the geographic concentration of international migrants arriving during the second half of the twentieth century, as well as the patterns of concentration of the immigrants arriving during the nineteenth and the first part of the twentieth centuries.

The study of the geographical concentration patterns of foreign-born population, in itself, may not appear to be of great interest for contemporary societies. Yet the greater or lesser propensity of foreign-born migrants to concentrate in given areas has several important consequences for host societies, affecting, for example, the process of language acquisition. It is also well known that the propensity towards geographic concentration and, as a result, the appearance of dense migratory networks can be of help for the insertion of new migrants into the labor market and, more generally, into the fabric of the host societies. On the other hand, it may also be true that once certain thresholds of concentration have been surpassed, high concentrations of immigrants from the same ethnicity or origin might put limits on the possibilities for promotion in the host society. From the standpoint of social policy (health, unemployment, housing, etc.) knowledge of the spatial distribution of the immigrant population is unquestionably very important.

It is impossible to assess the importance of these and other related issues for host societies and economies unless there is abundant prior and detailed analysis of internal migration patterns of foreign-born immigrants. The spatial concentration of population, for example, may be in part the consequence of the point of entry of foreign-born migrants into a host society but it may also be caused by the way these groups move

about within those societies. This is especially so if we keep in mind that the mobility of the foreign-born population may be greater than it is for the native-born population, a fact that would make these groups essential for social and economic redistribution processes. This greater mobility may be related to the ages of immigrants or to the position in the labor market, though the extent to which this is the case may vary by sex, education and origin. Relatively little is known of issues such as these either in Spain or in many other developed societies.

In countries like Spain where mass migration is a recent phenomenon the available data is far weaker. In a relatively short amount of time, Spain has gone from being a sending-country to being the destination for high numbers of immigrants, with one of the highest immigration rates of any country in the developed world. Complicating matters further is the fact that most knowledge of internal migration is based on a data source which affords relatively little pertinent information. The Residential Variations Data (Estadística de Variaciones Residenciales – EVR) offers aggregate data on in-migration and out-migration rates by several different indicators (sex, age, province, region, etc.), and lends itself to mainly descriptive analysis.

In this paper we will undertake a detailed analysis of the internal migration patterns of foreign-born immigrants in Spain. Unlike earlier studies, retrospective micro data will be used. These data are been taken from the recent National Immigrant Survey [Encuesta Nacional de Inmigrantes (ENI–2007)] which contains a battery of questions about movement within Spain across municipal boundaries involving stays lasting at least one month. The ENI also contains a large amount of information on the demographic, economic and social characteristics of foreign-born migrants. These data will enable us to track who, where and how often people moved about within Spain.

Our analysis of internal movement of foreign-born migrants will make use of both descriptive and multivariate analysis. The models specified for this analysis will make use of individual and group variables as well as certain time-variant economic variables. This will enable us to evaluate the weight of the factors that, at least in theory, determine the propensity toward internal movement: the socio-demographic and human capital characteristics of the migrants themselves, the amount and type of accumulated social capital and the economic context.

In this paper we will use this set of analytical tools to assess a wide variety of issues affecting internal migration. The propensity to move and the way this is conditioned by individual characteristics, ethnic background and the destinations chosen will be evaluated. We will also attempt to assess different spatial profiles of internal migration (rural→urban, urban→rural, urban→urban, circular) as well as the regions of Spain that seem most attractive as destinations for this mobility, in order to see the extent to which these migration typologies attract different types of migrants. Finally, non-mobile foreign-born migrants will be compared to mobile ones in terms of their socio-demographic and cultural characteristics, the density of their own migration networks and the time they have been in Spain.

At this stage it is not possible to be more precise about the scope of this paper because the data from the ambitious National Immigrant Survey [ENI – 2007] survey is not yet available. This survey is unique in Europe. The ENI was administered to more than 15,000 people between October 2006 and February 2007 and at present the basic data is in the process of being cleaned and prepared for release. We have assurances that the final data set will be made available by the end of 2007. Since both of the authors of this paper belong to the original ENI research team and one of them (D. Reher) heads up the group that originally designed the survey and is preparing the data, we are confident that the data will arrive in time and that a draft of the paper will be ready some time before the EPC is held.