

## **INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE AND INTEGRATION**

Migrations represent a complex social phenomenon due to their causes and consequences, their origins and destinations and the challenges they pose. Internal and external migratory movements have taken place with greater or lesser intensity in all societies at given moments in history.

For this reason all contemporary societies are plural and mixed, having been formed by the sedimentation of successive migratory currents over a given territory. In this way migrations contribute to shaping and transforming the societies where their journey ends, as well as leaving profound traces in those where it began.

Spain and other southern European countries have considered themselves zones of emigration until not many years ago. In the case of Andalusia our region has traditionally been a land of emigrants: in the absence of more detailed studies at a provincial and local level, it is estimated that between 1960 and 1973 800,000 Andalusian people emigrated to Catalonia, 250,000 to Madrid, 171,000 to Valencia, 50,000 to the Basque Country, 50,000 to the Balearic Islands, 600,000 to France, 300,000 to Switzerland and 200,000 to Germany.

Around the second half of the 1970s this situation diminished substantially thanks to a lower rate of emigration and the return of Andalusian émigrés.

Those Andalusians who had to leave our Autonomous Community found themselves facing different ways of life, cultures and customs, particularly those who were obliged to go abroad. In many cases these difficulties were compounded by having to live in urban ghettos, which together with the language barrier tended to increase their feelings of isolation.

As a result of the processes of migration experienced in Andalusia over the last century, we still have a significant number of Andalusians living elsewhere. In fact, one in six Andalusians reside outside our Community, which means that over 1,650,000 Andalusian people live outside Andalusia.

Of these, 1,560,000 Andalusians reside in other Autonomous Communities, with Catalonia at the head (700,000), followed by Madrid (270,000) and Valencia (218,000)<sup>1</sup>. The remainder, more than 140,000 people, are currently living abroad: the countries that have traditionally welcomed the largest numbers of Andalusians are France with 31,516, Germany (22,784) and Argentina (20,385).

Consequently, in the light of this situation the Andalusian Government has set out various rights and benefits in favour of Andalusians living abroad, citizens of Andalusian origin and people who have returned to Andalusia. These rights and benefits are contained in Law no. 8/2006, dated 24th October, entitled the Statute of Andalusians across the World,

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<sup>1</sup> Data obtained from the Andalusian Institute of Statistics.

whose purpose is to promote the social inclusion of these people and their return home, so as to prevent them having to live through another process of emigration.

Nevertheless, despite this situation, the socio-economic changes faced by societies today across the globe are giving rise to an inversion of migratory currents: our land of emigrants has now become a receiver of immigrants.

Insofar as Spain is concerned, this has been the case since the mid 1980s in terms of annual flows and from the beginning of the '90s in terms of the percentage of immigrants resident in Spain compared with the number of Spaniards living abroad.

Moreover, due to the acceleration of migratory currents experienced over the last five years, the proportion of foreigners living in Spain is now among the highest in the European Union.

In Europe economic growth and the constant ageing of the population generate a need for well-qualified workers that national markets cannot satisfy. So immigration continues to be the main factor in demographic growth within the EU, and in the majority of Member States positive net immigration is recorded.

However, the type of immigration varies widely according to the country concerned. While family re-grouping is significant in countries such as Austria, France and Sweden, other Member States such as Ireland, Portugal, the United Kingdom and Spain have experienced a high proportion of employment-led immigration.

During the period 2001-2005 the annual growth rate of the Spanish population has been 1.5%. This figure has never been recorded before in our history and is much higher than the European average. This evolution has been due above all to the entry of emigrants: thus, the immigrant population has been multiplied by four, rising from 0.9 million in the year 2000 to 4 million in 2006 and increasing still so as to reach 5,220,000 now. However, in light of the fact that this population of immigrants presents an age structure that is similar to the native one, it cannot be expected to bring permanent relief to the problem of our society's ageing process.

Focussing now on Andalusia, the number of foreigners residing in our Community has risen six-fold over the past decade, although the relative weight of this group is less than in Madrid, the Balearic Isles, Catalonia or Valencia.

The number of foreigners resident in Andalusia represents 11.80% of the total population of foreigners living in Spain. But the percentage of foreigners in Andalusia with respect to the total population is only 7.53%, almost four points less than the national average of 11.33%.

#### Foreigners resident in Andalusia<sup>2</sup>

Rumania	Marruecos	Ecuador	Reino Unido	Colombia	Bolivia	Alemania	Italia	Bulgaria	Argentina	Resto de Países	Total
79.118	92.712	22.854	99.457	20.848	22.079	24.087	17.234	10.253	25.545	201.600	615.787

<sup>2</sup> Drawn up by the Andalusian Permanent Observatory on Migrations (OPAM) Source: INE. Census as at 1st January 2008. Provisional data

Half of the foreign population resident in Andalusia have come from EU countries (49.94%). The percentage at national level for this group is 40.15%.

Therefore, the primary contingent is still European, resident mainly on the coast with a view to enjoying a better life-style.

In Andalusia five out of every ten foreigners are citizens of the European Community, followed by the Americans (23.7%) and those from Africa (20.8%).

The principal group of the foreign population in Andalusia is from the United Kingdom, after which come closely behind those from Morocco and Romania. These figures are different from those for Spain as a whole, where Romanian nationals occupy first place (representing 13.96% of the total foreign population), followed by Moroccans (12.35%) and those from Ecuador (8.05%).

It may be noted that the majority of foreigners are concentrated mainly in coastal areas (at a provincial level Malaga and Almeria harbour 65.3% of the foreign population, whereas the percentage in the other provinces is no greater than 10%). Malaga is a special case, combining its character as a place of repose for retired people from Europe with an economy that attracts many people. Almeria is different. Its economy is based on so-called “agriculture under plastic”, and the need for cheap labour with low-level qualifications has fomented the arrival of population groups from South America, eastern Europe and, above all, the north of Africa. In the other provinces one or other of these two models may be observed, but to a lesser extent.

Thus the composition of the immigration process in Andalusia may be appreciated, representing as it does the key to this Community’s future.

The foreign immigration that comes to Andalusia therefore follows one of two models. One is the search for better qualities of life so as to raise the level of their life-style, which is the criterion followed by the majority of the European citizens who come here. The other sort is the arrival of workers with few qualifications, mostly Africans, Latin Americans and eastern Europeans, who find in the agricultural sector of eastern Andalusia a good reason for settling down. We can, accordingly, affirm that various distinct heterogeneous groups of foreigners exist in Andalusia, characterised by different circumstances, which therefore produce multiple and varied effects on numerous ambits of life in the region.

The corresponding foreign population pyramid shows a net concentration of youth/adults. In fact, 58% of the foreigners resident in Andalusia are between 15 and 50 years old, which points up the work-based nature of this sort of immigration. The percentage is even greater among the foreign population that have come from outside the EU (76%), whereas incomers from other European countries are concentrated in older age sectors.

With regard to the typical profile of non-EU foreigners, the data that has been gathered allows us to say that they do not tend to be people living in extremely precarious social circumstances, but rather, and above all, they are people whose level of education or training has enabled them to perceive just how seriously lacking in opportunities their countries of origin are in structural terms.

It is not necessarily just poverty that impels emigration to Europe - above all, it is the search for better employment possibilities and a greater level of material well-being. Whereas it would be difficult for such people to obtain, for example, a house from their work in their countries of origin, they tend to consider that a few years' working here in Europe will give them the opportunity of achieving one, or of getting a car so as to work as a taxi driver. By sacrificing themselves (in other words, living in infra-human conditions) in Europe, after a year has gone by they could possess such a working tool back home.

Thus, the sectors of population that are most prone to emigrate abroad do not appear to be the most disadvantaged, but rather those who experience a situation of relative poverty in comparison with their past history and/or their expectations for the future.

The fact is that the group of non-EU incomers presents an average level of education that is higher than the average for the native Andalusian population (only 18% of Andalusians have been to university), which shows that it is this lack of opportunity at home that encourages emigration.

In fact, around 30% of these foreigners have been to university (this percentage rises to 36% if we look only at people who have come from eastern Europe and Iberoamerica), although most of them work in unqualified jobs.

According to the Active Population Survey<sup>3</sup>, in the first quarter of 2007 the collective of foreigners represented 13.80% of the active population at national level, while the population of non-EU incomers represented 9.9%, which indicates the importance of their contribution to the Spanish employment market. During 2006 two out of every three new employment posts were taken up by foreigners, principally in commerce, the hotel trade and housework.

We must not forget the influence of immigration in economic activity, which in turn goes on to generate new job opportunities.

Employment becomes not only an essential element but also a determinant factor in the process of social integration of the foreign population, since the nature of the employment in question can affect other aspects that make up the complex integration process (eg. housing, training, education, health, etc.), and in some cases it can even lead, in combination with other factors, to social exclusion.

It therefore represents one of the primary – and principal – ambits in which immigrants enter into contact with the native population.

It is therefore important to assess the treatment these people receive at work in the context of the framework of relationships being shaped between both populations. In many cases the model consists of the hiring of immigrant workers by Andalusian employers, but it must be borne in mind that the employment market is not static or homogeneous nor is the condition of immigrant a temporary status from an employment point of view.

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<sup>3</sup> Data obtained from the National Institute of Statistics (INE)

Whether or not having a job really acts as an element of integration depends on various factors. Accordingly, appropriate policies and measures will have to be adopted, which should not always be focussed solely on immigrant workers but rather on all the workers that share an employment situation, irrespective of their nationality.

Work as an essential means to achieve better living conditions is the initial objective of the migratory flows that Spain receives. This immigration is fundamentally economic. Thus, while other preferential aspects may be identified in the context of the dynamic, bi-directional process of social integration, it is work, and the nature of the work undertaken, that can condition the position and evolution of individuals in each of these areas and that represents one of the keys for social inclusion of the immigrant population. Although this same affirmation may be made in relation to the rest of the population, it has a particular significance in the case of citizens of non-EU origin and/or nationality. But, while it is a determinant factor for social integration, it may also explain certain processes of exclusion.

Consequently, integration is only possible if the immigrant has access to all the ambits of social life, not just the economic aspect. To the extent that incomers participate, they tend to develop collective feelings of reference and belonging, which can assist in the integration process. The matter must be considered from a multi-dimensional perspective, in which the different areas are interrelated and the results obtained in one aspect reinforce the others.

Integration, taken as a whole, advocates the need to incorporate immigrants into all areas of society, including civic, cultural, political and educational ambits. Its ultimate aim should be normalization as a factor of integration affecting not just incomers but the receiving population as well. In other words, the objective is to encourage immigrants to use the same channels of participation as already exist for the native population and to reduce the reasons for the creation of participation networks solely aimed at their own people.

In the area of education, ignorance of the language is the worst and most important problem, insofar as the adaptation of new foreign pupils is concerned. They tend to value extremely highly the figure of the teacher of interculturality.<sup>4</sup>

Thus, integration in education must be a priority for the future. According to the NGO coordinator Red Acoge [Welcome Network] “intercultural education is the principal challenge of immigration that the Government will have to face in the next few years”. Immigrant students show a “desire to integrate” and a “high level of well-being”<sup>5</sup>, but the greatest difference perceived by the immigrants that come to Spain and that which causes

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<sup>4</sup> Source: [www.aulaintercultural.org](http://www.aulaintercultural.org)

<sup>5</sup> Data obtained from a study undertaken by the Faculty of Psychology of the University of the Basque Country (UPV) with over 1,200 first-generation immigrants, who had come from Colombia, Ecuador, Brazil, Ukraine, Russia, Morocco and Sub-saharan Africa (mainly from Senegal and Cameroon)

them the highest level of stress is an increase in the rhythm of life, greater demands at work and social contact that is more distant and organised.

With respect to the role played by the immigrant population in the cultural ambit, we would refer to a survey carried out recently on a sample of the Andalusian population<sup>6</sup>. In response to the statement « immigrants enrich the cultural life of Andalusia », 59% of those taking part declared themselves to be in agreement, while 25% said they disagreed. In regions with an immigrant population of more than three times the average, the proportion of those in disagreement rose to 30%, whereas only 23.8% disagreed in zones with less of an immigrant presence. Likewise, the contrary was observed among those who agreed with the statement.

Another conclusion from this study is that “an overwhelming majority declared themselves to be in favour of immigrants who have stable residence in Andalusia being able to live in equal conditions as the indigenous population with respect to their social and political participation. This consensus was shown particularly strongly in relation to social rights, and with slightly less support as regards political rights.”

From all the foregoing the principal conclusion to be drawn is that immigration should be viewed as an opportunity and a challenge rather than as a problem. The incorporation into our society of a considerable number of foreigners, especially when it has taken place in a very short period of time, poses challenges that have to be faced. The specific dimensions and characteristics of such challenges depend on the particular social, economic and political contexts in which foreigners settle.

The opportunities and challenges set by the immigration we receive are similar to those faced by other European countries with longer experience as receivers of immigrants. In this regard, Spain, and particularly Andalusia, have the advantage of being able to learn from their histories as lands of emigration, from the successes they enjoyed and the mistakes they made in the course of integrating their immigrant population. Nevertheless, apart from the greater speed with which the phenomenon has occurred here, there are also specific characteristics of our immigration that must be taken into account, as we have indicated above.

Challenges of adaptation: Apart from the difficulties that are characteristic of the first phase of insertion, the long-term settlement of incomers in the receiving society tends to give rise to various challenges in the medium term.

While the first stage of immigration tends to involve in many cases a great deal of uncertainty and extremely hard living conditions, as initial problems (such as finding a job and somewhere to live, sorting out administrative permits, etc.) are overcome, with the passage of time the primary objectives of the immigrant population change. After a certain

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<sup>6</sup> See S. Rincken and M. Pérez de Yruea: Opinions and attitudes of the Andalusian population in relation to immigration. Ministry of the Interior, Andalusian Regional Government, 2007.

time, the challenge is not just to survive as best one can but rather to achieve a decent level of life-style.

Cultural adaptation to the receptor society is another significant challenge. The term “adaptation” should not imply abandonment of all traditions and customs rooted in the society of origin, but should instead be understood as referring to the need to redesign their significance in a new context in which general models of conduct are defined by the customs of the native population.

In certain areas the arrival of immigrants has acted as a reagent that has shown up gaps in the service provision of our “welfare state”, as for example in the cases of our education and health systems, housing and social services. Furthermore, the benefits and costs of immigration are unequally distributed among different social groups, for, although immigration represents a positive factor for society as a whole, some social groups reap more benefits from it while others share with the immigrant population problems and shortfalls in the provision of public services.

The presence of a significant number of immigrants has given rise to situations of discrimination on racial or ethnic grounds in various ambits of social life, such as employment, education and housing. This tendency must be fought against as a first step towards guaranteeing equality of opportunities.

The necessity arises to adapt these systems to the new situation that is being formed, involving a population that is more numerous and at the same time more diverse and plural, and to endow them with sufficient resources to meet the needs of these new citizens.

The structure of immigration in the European Union is becoming more and more heterogeneous and its forms and causes vary considerably. A coordinated communication process might contribute to reducing prejudice and misunderstandings between the immigrant and native populations. But when it comes to formulating measures to foster integration, it must be borne in mind that the heterogeneity of immigration demands varied and different programmes in response, with particular attention paid to avoiding discrimination in the workplace and promoting measures in favour of equality of opportunities within companies.

In this respect, within the current framework in which public policies are put into practice new paradigms are appearing that advocate a model of intervention based on integral projects. As an instance of intervention on the part of different public administration authorities in the field of integration, we would refer to the Strategic Citizenship and Integration Plan 2007-2010, put into practice by the Spanish government. The premises making up its philosophy are as follows:

**The concept of integration as a bi-directional process of mutual adaptation.** The conviction that responsibility for the integration process and for managing it should be

shared by the different administrative authorities and social agents involved, including immigrants themselves: in sum, by society as a whole.

A conception of the Plan as a framework for cooperation capable of breathing new life into policies, drawing initiatives together and bringing cohesion to measures adopted by both the public sector and civil society.

The need to adopt an integral or global approach in relation to both immigration policies and policies for integration of the immigrant population.

The premises that integration policies should be directed towards society as a whole, and that measures undertaken by public authorities should be focussed on promoting and guaranteeing the normalisation of access by immigrants to general public and private services.

The idea that stimulation of integration policies has to be implemented through transversal incorporation of questions concerning integration of the immigrant population into all relevant public policies in this respect.

In the ambit of Andalusia our regional government's policies advocate the full integration of foreigners: the intention is that Andalusia should represent an integration "model". With respect to immigration policy, measures are directed towards sensibilising the receiving society, envisaging constant interaction between the indigenous population and that other group that is in the process of settling here. This policy proposes to encourage continuous mutual enrichment in all ambits of our society and promote a more favourable perception of immigration among the Andalusian people of today.

Once all the above factors have been analysed, we at the EAES Foundation are of the view that now is a good time to find out what Andalusian people think about different aspects of intercultural dialogue and integration.

The European Union has been criticised by various sectors of civil society for having prioritised exclusion and control instead of integration, despite the fact that the Commission underlined the dimension of integration in their social integration and protection policies as part of the EU's common objectives. The aim was that Member States should translate this into the context of their own national and regional policies on the basis of national studies of social integration and protection strategies.

Furthermore, a number of important events have taken place in the course of the last few months, such as the following:

Approval in the month of June by the European Parliament of the Directive for the return of illegal immigrants from other countries. This provision lays down that Member States should encourage the "voluntary" return of illegal immigrants, and it will come into force as from 2010. It has not been well received in certain parts of the world, particularly in Latin America. The Directive has been interpreted as evidence that Europe is becoming more and more discriminatory and racist, and that it has forgotten its history, as many countries in South America were, since the mid 19th century, receivers of significant contingents of emigrants from Europe.

The 1st European Roma Summit on Gypsies in September.  
The III Social Forum on Migrations held in Madrid in September.  
Once again debate has been opened on the rights of immigrants from outside the EU in local elections in Spain.

In conclusion, we set out below some questions to be considered by our working group, made up of Andalusian citizens, both men and women, as well as representatives from various different socio-economic sectors in our Community, namely:

- What do you think is the main reason for foreigners to settle in Andalusia, and why?
- What do you understand by “intercultural dialogue and integration”?
- What do you consider to be the fundamental factors in the process of integration of the immigrant population in our society?
- Among these factors, what value would you place on employment in this process?
- What difficulties or advantages do you think the integration of foreigners in our society has?
- Do you consider that the fact that until recent times Andalusia was a “land of emigration” affects the way in which Andalusian people view the immigrant population who live here? In what sense?
- What do you consider to be the real situation of the native and the immigrant populations in Andalusia with respect to integration?
- What do you think of the measures adopted by the public administration authorities in relation to encouraging the integration of the foreign population in Andalusian society? What steps would you take to improve the situation?
- To what extent do you think incomers make an effort to integrate in our society? Why do you think that?
- With respect to Andalusian civil society in general, what do you think our attitudes and behaviour are in relation to the integration of foreigners in our society? Do you consider that the fact that until recent times Andalusia was a society of emigrants affects our attitudes and behaviour?
- How do you value the presence of foreigners in the employment market in Andalusia? What do you think their job situation actually is at the moment?
- What role could the social economy play in the future to promote integration?

Accordingly, what is proposed is to conduct an in-depth study of the opinions of Andalusian civil society with respect to the role played by the foreign population in our Community from an intercultural point of view that favours integration in all its ambits, as we have already indicated.

The conclusions reached as regards these questions will be continuously added to the project’s communal blog.