

FOREIGN RESIDENTS AND DEMOGRAPHIC GROWTH IN ANDALUSIA

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The article focuses on Andalusia, a region of emigrants up until 1975, whose accelerated growth in the first decade of the 21st century has been largely driven by foreign immigration. Taking the 2009 municipal census, and the five-year period prior to that, as a reference, the article aims to discover the degree to which the effects of foreign immigration have reached the whole of Andalusia, with its geographical diversity and persistent territorial imbalances. With regard to this territorial approach, the analysis is developed on different scales, from regional to municipal, covering the large geographical areas or the groups of municipalities coming under the «territorial units» of the Andalusian Land Planning Programme.

The first section, under the title «Spatial diffusion and concentration of the foreign population in Andalusia» shows how these two spatial trends overlap within the territorial distribution pattern which emerged following their accelerated growth at the start of the century. It is based on an analysis of the 2009 municipal census, using the aforementioned scales, and considering both the number of foreign residents and the consequent immigration rates in the different towns and villages in the region.

The distribution in absolute values shows a significant concentration of residents both in towns and villages, as well as in specific geographical areas, in line with population contrasts and the region's urban network. The main areas of concentration are clearly the coastal zone and the built-up urban areas around the major cities («regional centres») that account for 84% of foreign residents, in equal proportion. However, in the urban areas, they blend into a much larger contingent of Spanish people (50% of the regional population are congregated in these urban areas), whereas in the coastal «territorial units» the 283,000 foreigners live alongside just over 900,000 Spaniards.

Furthermore, the presence of foreigners in almost all the towns and villages in the region (out of the 770 Andalusian municipalities, only six have no foreign residents whatsoever), clearly shows that they have permeated every corner of the land, making their spatial diffusion a second characteristic feature of foreign distribution in the region. This fact remains hidden if absolute values are applied, as they are generally small colonies as regards

numbers, but it becomes more visible if they are analysed according to rates, given that they coincide with towns and villages with a limited population. This spatial diffusion is very interesting from a geographical point of view, both regarding its possible impact on population dynamics (as will later be revealed in real growth), and regarding its significance of involution in migration flows. To tackle the effect of foreigners on the territory as a whole, two viewpoints (volume and rate) have been combined to classify populations in ranges in line with this significance. This perspective confirms the spatial extent of the municipalities in which foreigners, albeit in small numbers, have a certain local significance.

After showing their distribution, a second section under the title of «The effects on structures and population growth» focuses the analysis on verifying their impact on the different municipalities or sectors in Andalusia. An interest in this point arises from the territorial pattern of foreigner distribution, seeing how their presence coincides with the areas where there is greater growth, and also with areas or municipalities with falling population flows. The aim is to verify both their influence on growth in the urban or coastal areas in which they are most concentrated, and to see whether their faint presence has effectively held back the population decline in many other municipalities in which they are also settled, albeit in smaller numbers.

In the first sub-section, the effects on population structures are analysed. The effects revealed in the sex ratio, with a generally moderate impact, differ between the regional average (a slight improvement in the balance through the foreigners' non-extreme male bias) and their geographical areas, in line with the structure according to the origin of the settled groups and their relationship with job markets. The «regional centres» and tourist areas stand out as being focal points for foreign women heading to the services sector. In contrast, much of the rural area, for example, the olive-growing mountainous regions and particularly the coastal areas of intensive agriculture (with numerous foreigners of African origin) are predominantly male.

The second sub-section deals with the effects on age structure, analysing the average age of both foreigners and Spaniards. In general, a slight rejuvenation is clearly seen, which is reflected in the Andalusian age pyramid in a gentle widening of the younger age groups. Nevertheless, they are not regular at a local or sub-regional level, due to the number of foreigners and the apparent age differences between some municipalities and others. The essence of these age differences lies in the existence of two models of foreign immigrants in the region: the tourist resident and the economic immigrant. They have different social profiles, particularly as regards age, with the first group being significantly older. Furthermore, each of these models has different spatial distribution patterns, although they are locally interwoven in the coastal areas, where the greatest contrasts on a municipality level are observed. So the nature of the foreigners who have settled here and the counterpoint of the Spanish population (in general, greatly associated with the recent growth or decline) offer a significant and highly varied picture of the effects on age. Owing to the fact that it is contrary to the general effect of mild rejuvenation, the effect of aging that is occasionally brought about is particularly underlined. These effects are outlined in the local analysis, although in the case of large geographical zones, the Penibética mountain range and the Coast differ from the rest as the foreigners in these areas are not that young. However, in the Penibética area, they merely contribute to an existing average aging population, whereas along the coast, the foreigners do, indeed, increase the aging average.

The second sub-section deals with the effect on population growth, analysing the contribution of both foreign and Spanish people to the real growth over the five-year period 2004-2009. The irregular distribution of the communities, and their settlement in towns and villages of varying dynamics results in a significant array of different situations, which can broadly come under three main categories: the municipalities lose population despite foreign growth (245 towns and villages in this group); the municipalities gain population despite the fall in Spanish people (133 in this group); and lastly, the populations that grow as a result of both collectives (388 towns and villages), which, for the purposes of the analysis, are divided into sub-types according to the foreigners' contribution.

After deciding which of these models applies to each municipality, an analysis was firstly carried out of their relationship with the towns and villages' demographic size, to observe any possible existing dependence, with a noticeable consistency between size and dynamics. However, this relationship takes on true meaning in the context of territorial distribution. For this reason, the analysis of the municipalities and their types is regrouped according to units and geographical areas.

Once again, this approach shows the identifying features of the major geographical areas. The coast has very high growth, both of Spaniards and foreigners, but much more of the latter, and is contrary to the rest of the interior. In the interior, the situations are different: in the northern, mountainous sector, only the large towns escape the decline, and it is the foreigners who generate growth; the Guadalquivir Valley region is more demographically stable, with a greater contribution to growth from the Spanish population; in contrast, the role of foreigners is crucial in the southern mountainous sector (Intrabaetic Depression and Penibética mountain range, particularly the Dry South-East), offsetting the decline in the Spanish population.

As regards the «regional centres», they all gain in population, although they differ in the intensity and proportion of each nationality. Nevertheless, they each form a complex territorial structure, with internal differences. With regard to the existing differences between the leading cities compared with the rest of the urban area, apart from their different dynamics (much higher in the surrounding area than in the capital), they are vastly different in the role they play in the process due to the increase in foreigners.

It is highly significant that, while growth in the Spanish population is concentrated in the urban areas, in the respective capitals it is seen to fall, becoming progressively older and/or moving towards the suburban areas.

Consequently, in the capitals, it is the increase in foreigners that has generated the essential part of growth or that has cushioned the decline brought about by the diminishing Spanish population. The location of foreigners in urban areas corresponds to another scale of analysis, but it is worth concluding that, in short, their presence in certain city districts and in some mountain areas proves to have a repopulating effect.

