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Back to the South: Social and Political Aspects of Latin American Migration to Southern Europe

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ABSTRACT

When migration from the Latin American and Caribbean countries to Europe is studied, a preferential stream can be noted towards southern Europe. There would also appear to have been a remarkable growth in the volume of flows in this direction in recent years. The flows themselves vary: in the case of Spain, nationals from Ecuador, Colombia, Peru and Argentina predominate; Portugal is the recipient of Brazilians; and Italy mainly plays host to nationals from Peru and Ecuador. These flows reveal the importance of various factors: economic push and pull mechanisms; the former presence in the region of Spain and Portugal as erstwhile colonial powers; the earlier waves of emigrants in that direction from Spain, Portugal and Italy; a relatively more favourable social reception; and political initiatives that favour the new sending countries. In other words, economic gaps, former historical links, cultural and linguistic affinities, family ties and diplomatic channels suggest that a special route exists for migrants from Latin America.

The topics that will be expanded upon in this paper include the factors explaining recent immigration to southern Europe; the economic incorporation of immigrants; the social framework of flows, including reactions from local populations; and the tentative and multiple policy responses to immigration. Conclusions indicate that the potential for movements from Latin America, resulting from both previous and current links, has proved to be a favourable response to the need for immigrant workers in the case of southern European societies. Despite the familiar path (albeit in the reverse direction), the economic incorporation of immigrants has mainly occurred in the low-ranking jobs, as was the case with other inflows. This stemmed from market needs, state failures and the importance of the family. However, given the numerous links between Latin America and southern Europe, the social and policy responses adopted towards these immigrants seem to have been more beneficial than towards other groups.

INTRODUCTION

Any assessment of recent trends in Latin American migration to southern Europe must deal with the heterogeneity and uncertainty of the respective inflows. Such a situation may be explained by the variety to be found among the sending and receiving countries and the novel nature of most inflows. On the one hand, Latin American and southern European

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countries – the latter including, for the purpose of this paper, Spain, Portugal and Italy – are characterized by significant differences between one another, related to their separate economic, social and political situations, as well as their specific historical links. On the other hand, the recent increase in inflows has not, as yet, been the subject of any exhaustive investigation, nor has it attained sufficient stability for this to happen. This has made it difficult to define both types and trends. Finally, the recent nature of the influx of immigrants, together with the overall uncertainties faced by southern European societies, explain why these countries are ill-prepared to deal with this phenomenon. Some other factors also add to the complexity of the issue: until recently, southern European countries were (and, in some cases, still are) emigration countries. Indeed, many of their traditional emigration flows were directed towards Latin America, and thus the social, cultural and political links between the two regions remain close. This accounts for the fact that the integration of immigrants, and particularly Latin American immigrants, is not always viewed by public opinion and governments from the same perspective as it is in other contexts.

In this paper, reference will be made firstly to all Latin American and Caribbean inflows to Europe, the purpose being to draw up a framework for analyzing the inward movements to southern Europe. When the volume of such inflows to each European country is considered, a preferential stream of immigration can be noted to southern European countries. It would also appear that, among all European hosts, the overall volume of flows in that direction from Latin America has registered the highest rate of growth in recent years, which also reflects the current trend towards an acceleration of international migration flows worldwide (Castles and Miller, 2003). The topics to be developed in this paper include the factors that account for recent immigration to southern Europe; the economic incorporation of immigrants; the social framework of flows, including reactions from local populations; and the tentative and multiple policy responses to immigration, always bearing in mind the particular situation of Latin American immigrants.

From a methodological standpoint, this paper is based on the gathering of statistical evidence pertaining to recent migration flows from Latin American and Caribbean countries to Europe, particularly Spain, Portugal and Italy, as well as on the consultation of academic bibliography concerning their economic, social and political framework. This approach undoubtedly has many shortcomings. In statistical terms, all databases on recent migration are seriously limited, no matter whether the data are collected at either a national or an international level. This theme will be studied in depth in the next section. On the theoretical side, changes in migration patterns are so recent and intense that the academic literature (given the characteristics of its output) has not yet had time to fully come to grips with them. Additional problems arise from the fact that, at a comparative international level, research is always complex, in view of the difficulties in gathering the most relevant and up-to-date material. One particular limitation resulted from the fact that the bibliography is split between different countries. This accounts for an overrepresentation of English references in this paper (since they are more readily available) – although the fact that a large part of them is written by local southern European and Latin American authors justifies the choice. Moreover, up to now, references to the general Latin America - Latin Europe migration link have been scarce (for some exceptions, see Palmas, 2004; D'Angelo, 2004; Pellegrino, 2004; Padilla, 2006b; Padilla and Peixoto, 2007), even if the study of particular national groups in specific host countries is already vast. Within this framework, the overriding ambition of this paper is to produce a broad (and therefore relatively superficial) approach, which only subsequent in-depth research can improve upon.[1]

The paper is organized as follows. In the first section, data will be examined regarding the stock of foreign nationals and foreign-born population coming to Europe from Latin American and Caribbean countries. Data on southern Europe, namely Spain, Portugal and Italy,

will be examined in greater detail. In the second section, the economic, social and political framework of immigration in southern Europe will be referred to. Attention will be paid to the reasons for the turnaround in the flow of migration and the recent upsurge of foreign inflows in this area. In addressing the particular situation of Latin American immigrants, we will observe the main modes of their incorporation into the labour market, the contexts of their social reception and the policies designed to control inflows and integrate immigrants.

IMMIGRATION TRENDS

Methodological issues

As has been often stated, serious problems arise when endeavouring to draw up a comparison of international migration patterns. The many national variations in concepts and sources make it hard to compare the different countries. Such differences are also to be found in integrated areas, such as the European Union (EU) (see Poulain et al., 2006). Sometimes, when different concepts and sources are used, figures can be very dissimilar, even within the same country. When migration stocks – the main empirical basis of this paper – are considered, data may be derived from population registers, residence permit databases, censuses and surveys, and each of these sources provides different figures. Even when a similar concept is used, everything depends on the population captured in each case, which varies according to legal statuses, target groups and the methodology used in the surveys. Specific categories, such as undocumented and temporary immigrants, may or may not be detected, and the capacity to measure small contingents and immigrants' characteristics depends on administrative requirements and the survey's sampling size. Despite a number of attempts, no solution has yet been found to overcome the problem of international comparability (see Poulain et al., 2006). In the southern European context, these problems are further aggravated by the endemic presence of irregular immigration, adding yet more difficulties to migration comparability (see Cangiano and Strozza, 2004; Cangiano, 2008).

In this paper, two perspectives will be used for analyzing migration stocks: citizenship-based data, detailing information about the foreign population resident in a given country, and data based on the place of birth, displaying statistics about foreign-born citizens. For practical reasons, more evidence will be presented about citizenship (the source of most information available on the subject in southern Europe). Two major databases were used. In the case of citizenship, the data collected within the framework of the Council of Europe was the main source (Council of Europe, 2004 and 2005). The main advantage of this source lies in the availability of recent data on the foreign population existing in each member country and the breakdown that is provided of information on particular foreign nationalities, which is essential to the theme of this paper.[2] As far as the place of birth is concerned, a recent and extremely complete OECD database on this subject will be used (see Dumont and Lemaître, 2005). In the southern European case, a detailed observation will also be made of national statistics. As will be seen, significant variations exist in the assessment of migration stocks within the same national context.

The European framework

Generally speaking, the national origins of the foreign immigrant population vary greatly from country to country. This variation results from the complex causes and effects associated with migration flows. If migration were decided on purely economic grounds, as is

assumed in some theoretical frameworks, one would expect a somewhat random distribution of migrants across the world, according to the strength of economic differentials. Under such a framework, geographical distance would be the main obstacle. The assumption of imperfect markets, in which there are information failures and insufficiencies, provides a better explanation for the unexpected directions that migrations often assume. A range of other theories, including migration systems, world systems and institutional theories, offer a complementary understanding of migration paths (see Massey et al., 1998). If we take the example of the migration systems theory (Kritz et al., 1992), movements between pairs of countries may be expected whenever these are linked by historical, economic, social and cultural ties, including migrations from the earlier colonies to former metropolises. Improved information, easy adaptation and better transportation explain the post-colonial nature of many flows.

In the European case, different types of causes have been in operation. The role of geography has been apparent in movements linking eastern Europe to northern and western Europe since the 1990s, such as migration from Poland to Germany. In the same sense, one could anticipate the flows linking southern and western Europe between the 1950s and the 1970s, transporting emigrants to a contiguous labour market. As for other factors, one frequently witnesses clusters of flows uniting distant world countries, situated in the most disparate locations, to specific European countries. Evidence shows that migrations from Asia, particularly from Commonwealth countries, such as India and Pakistan, are frequent in the United Kingdom; migrations to France are similarly frequent from French-speaking African countries, such as Morocco and Algeria; and migrations from Portuguese-speaking countries, including African countries (Cape Verde, Angola and others, known as PALOPs – Portuguese-speaking African Countries) are common in Portugal (for recent data on the national origins of immigrants in Europe, by country, see Salt, 2005 and Council of Europe, 2005).

As for migrations uniting Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) countries to Europe, links may easily be perceived between former colonies and political centres, reinforced by significant economic imbalances between the sending and host countries and other particular factors, including political ones. Table 1 displays data relating mostly to 2005 on the volume and relative share in several European countries of nationals from South America, Central America and the Caribbean countries. Notwithstanding methodological difficulties, the panorama of the migration links between these regions is very clear. In quantitative terms, Spain displays the highest number of LAC nationals, totaling 1.1 million persons. Italy comes next, with 205,000, followed by the United Kingdom and Germany, with 113,000 and 94,000, respectively. Next in line comes Portugal with some 56,000, and France with 47,000. What is probably more important than these particular figures are those showing the shares of LAC immigrants compared to all other immigrants. In this respect, Spain comes first once again, with an astonishing 35.2 per cent – in other words, more than one-third of all foreigners in Spain come from that area of the world. Next is Portugal, with 15.3 per cent, followed by Italy, with 9.2 per cent. The large quantitative volume of LAC immigrants in countries such as the United Kingdom, Germany and France is spread among other nationalities, and seems to rest more on the sheer demographic size of these countries rather than on any particularly preferred link.

An analysis of data on foreign-born citizens enables us to broaden our characterization of LAC immigrants in Europe. Table 2 displays data relating mostly to 2001 on people born in LAC countries and residing in several European countries. In considering the quantitative volume of flows, once again the largest volume proves to be that of Spain, totalling over 840,000 individuals, followed by the United Kingdom and the Netherlands, with between 314,000 and 329,000, and Italy, with 249,000. As for the relative figures (the share of LAC individuals among all foreign-born persons), Spain again has a significantly larger

TABLE 1

POPULATION OF FOREIGN CITIZENSHIP, BY NATIONALITY, IN SELECTED EUROPEAN COUNTRIES - NATIONALS FROM SOUTH AMERICA, CENTRAL AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN, 2005 OR LATEST AVAILABLE YEAR (A)

	Latin America and the Caribbean					
	South America	Central America	Caribbean	Total	Other nationalities	Total
	Number					
Austria	4174	759	1909	*6842*	758461	765303
Belgium (c)	7972	1102	1499	*10573*	837823	848396
Denmark	3095	613	452	*4160*	253192	257352
Finland	971	277	221	*1469*	106877	108346
France (e)	25357	3950	17355	*46662*	3216524	3263186
Germany	66459	10270	17031	*93760*	6107491	6201251
Greece (b)	494	75	217	*786*	585258	586044
Italy (f)	167197	11599	26030	*204826*	2022741	2227567
Luxembourg (d)	601	45	187	*833*	161452	162285
Netherlands	19714	1638	2280	*23632*	675719	699351
Norway	4450	535	721	*5706*	207597	213303
Portugal (g)	55366	386	690	*56442*	312855	369297
Spain (h)	946116	20461	98339	*1064916*	1956892	3021808
Sweden	15778	1815	1388	*18981*	462160	481141
Switzerland	28239	2792	7948	*38979*	1485684	1524663
United Kingdom (b)	42204	5147	65430	*112781*	2628607	2741388
	%					
Austria	*0.5*	*0.1*	*0.2*	*0.9*	*99.1*	*100*
Belgium (c)	*0.9*	*0.1*	*0.2*	*1.2*	*98.8*	*100*
Denmark	*1.2*	*0.2*	*0.2*	*1.6*	*98.4*	*100*
Finland	*0.9*	*0.3*	*0.2*	*1.4*	*98.6*	*100*
France (e)	*0.8*	*0.1*	*0.5*	*1.4*	*98.6*	*100*
Germany	*1.1*	*0.2*	*0.3*	*1.5*	*98.5*	*100*
Greece (b)	*0.1*	*0.0*	*0.0*	*0.1*	*99.9*	*100*
Italy (f)	*7.5*	*0.5*	*1.2*	*9.2*	*90.8*	*100*
Luxembourg (d)	*0.4*	*0.0*	*0.1*	*0.5*	*99.5*	*100*
Netherlands	*2.8*	*0.2*	*0.3*	*3.4*	*96.6*	*100*
Norway	*2.1*	*0.3*	*0.3*	*2.7*	*97.3*	*100*
Portugal (g)	*15.0*	*0.1*	*0.2*	*15.3*	*84.7*	*100*
Spain (h)	*31.3*	*0.7*	*3.3*	*35.2*	*64.8*	*100*
Sweden	*3.3*	*0.4*	*0.3*	*3.9*	*96.1*	*100*
Switzerland	*1.9*	*0.2*	*0.5*	*2.6*	*97.4*	*100*
United Kingdom (b)	*1.5*	*0.2*	*2.4*	*4.1*	*95.9*	*100*

Notes: (a) Most data correspond to 1/1/2005, except when indicated
(b) 1/1/2004
(c) 1/1/2003
(d) 1/1/2001
(e) 8/3/1999
(f) Residence permits (“permessi di soggiorno”) in 1/1/2004
(g) Residence permits (“autorizações de residência”) and permits of stay (“autorizações de permanência”) in 31/12/2005
(h) Residence permits (“tarjeta o autorización de residencia”) in 31/12/2006. The Caribbean includes Cuba, Dominican Republic and “other countries” in Latin America
Source: calculations by the author, based on Council of Europe, 2004 and 2005, except Italy (Istat and Ministero dell’Interno, Italy), Portugal (INE and SEF, Portugal) and Spain (INE and Ministerio de Trabajo y Asuntos Sociales, Spain).

proportion, with almost 39 per cent, followed by the Netherlands (19.5%), Portugal (11.6%) and Italy (11.1%).

The differences between data based on citizenship and country of birth are explained by the divergent concepts on which they are based. As compared to the number of foreign citizens, the foreign-born population has several particularities: it is unaffected by different natu-

TABLE 2

FOREIGN-BORN POPULATION, BY REGION OF ORIGIN, IN SELECTED EUROPEAN COUNTRIES - INDIVIDUALS BORN IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN, 2001 OR LATEST AVAILABLE YEAR (A)

	Latin America and the Caribbean			Other countries of origin	Total
	Latin America	Caribbean	Total		
	Number				
Austria	6054	...	*6054*	996478	1002532
Belgium	20387	3976	*24363*	1074832	1099195
Denmark (b)	9208	785	*9993*	351060	361053
Finland (b)	1817	261	*2078*	129370	131448
France (c)	79987	24836	*104823*	5763419	5868242
Germany (b)	47578	...	*47578*	10208506	10256084
Greece	5486	1128	*6614*	1116026	1122640
Ireland (d)	2793	688	*3481*	396535	400016
Italy	223994	25187	*249181*	1990864	2240045
Luxembourg	1562	274	*1836*	140816	142652
Netherlands (e)	221626	93326	*314952*	1300425	1615377
Norway (f)	15133	1268	*16401*	317368	333769
Portugal	74949	914	*75863*	575609	651472
Spain	744221	95979	*840200*	1332001	2172201
Sweden (b)	59965	2840	*62805*	1014791	1077596
United Kingdom	95357	232940	*328297*	4537266	4865563
			%		
Austria	*0.6*	...	*0.6*	*99.4*	*100*
Belgium	*1.9*	*0.4*	*2.2*	*97.8*	*100*
Denmark (b)	*2.6*	*0.2*	*2.8*	*97.2*	*100*
Finland (b)	*1.4*	*0.2*	*1.6*	*98.4*	*100*
France (c)	*1.4*	*0.4*	*1.8*	*98.2*	*100*
Germany (b)	*0.5*	...	*0.5*	*99.5*	*100*
Greece	*0.5*	*0.1*	*0.6*	*99.4*	*100*
Ireland (d)	*0.7*	*0.2*	*0.9*	*99.1*	*100*
Italy	*10.0*	*1.1*	*11.1*	*88.9*	*100*
Luxembourg	*1.1*	*0.2*	*1.3*	*98.7*	*100*
Netherlands (e)	*13.7*	*5.8*	*19.5*	*80.5*	*100*
Norway (f)	*4.5*	*0.4*	*4.9*	*95.1*	*100*
Portugal	*11.5*	*0.1*	*11.6*	*88.4*	*100*
Spain	*34.3*	*4.4*	*38.7*	*61.3*	*100*
Sweden (b)	*5.6*	*0.3*	*5.8*	*94.2*	*100*
United Kingdom	*2.0*	*4.8*	*6.7*	*93.3*	*100*

Notes: (a) Most data are based on the 2001 Census, except when indicated.
(b) 2003 (countries with yearly registration systems).
(c) 1999.
(d) 2002.
(e) 1995-2000.
(f) Variable.
Source: calculations by the author, based on Dumont and Lemaître, 2005, except Italy, based on OECD, database on national Censuses of Population, 2001.

ralization rates, therefore capturing both naturalized foreigners and holders of dual citizenship (whose volume is larger in long-established immigrant communities); it includes the impact of different colonial and post-colonial histories (for example, Portugal stands out as having a large share of African-born nationals, resulting from de-colonization in the

mid-1970s); and it measures the arrival of the emigrants' offspring (namely individuals born abroad). Regardless of these divergences and the different moments of observation (the above mentioned data relating to the foreign-born population are significantly out of date in comparison with the data relating to foreign citizens), the most important point to stress in this paper is that both series of data confirm the privileged role played by southern Europe in LAC migration. A partial exception respects to other European countries that had or still have a political presence in LAC, as is the case with the United Kingdom, France and Netherlands, what also explains the significant number of these immigrants.

While still focusing on the figures relating to the foreign-born population, it is also worth recalling the case of non-European destinations. A further point to stress is that the United States is, by far, the most important destination for LAC immigrants. Among the 15.6 million people born in Latin America and now residing in a developed country (the figures only refer to the OECD countries), around 13.5 million (86.2%) live in the United States. As for the Caribbean countries, among the 5.3 million immigrants living in a foreign country, 4.5 million reside in the USA (84.6%) (Dumont and Lemaître, 2005: 7, 31) (for a comprehensive view of LAC emigration in the world, see Castles and Miller, 2003: 144-152).

In short, LAC immigrants are to be found throughout Europe. The time period of these migrations differs considerably, as do migrant motivations, strategies, socio-economic characteristics, legal status and, of course, quantitative volumes. Some of the movements were typically economic-oriented flows. These may have occurred earlier, in the period of mass legal migrations to Europe during the "30 glorious years" of Fordism, or later, particularly in the case of recent inflows to southern Europe. Flows of Caribbean immigrants to the United Kingdom, France and the Netherlands resulted from the former or current possessions of these countries in the region, and they were often related to economic motives. Much of the recent Latin American immigration to Spain and other southern European countries, in much higher numbers, may also be regarded as a typical labour flow, irrespective of any previous social acquaintances and political ties. Although both waves relate largely to colonial and post-colonial flows, the context of their reception differed sharply: as will be seen below, immigrants arriving in southern Europe in the post-Fordist era have different impacts compared to former ones.

Other movements displayed the features of a political flow. A significant fraction of LAC immigration included waves of refugees and exiles, fleeing from civil turmoil, military conflicts and political dictatorships in the region. For instance, significant emigration linked Chile to Norway and Sweden after the 1970s: the flow began with political exiles and continued afterwards (Massey et al., 1998: 114-115). Political immigrants from Latin America also headed for Spain and Portugal in the 1970s (Arango, 2000). These migrants may, today, possess the status of refugees, may have acquired local or dual citizenship, or may remain regular foreign immigrants, whilst others may have returned to their home countries.

Southern Europe

Recent foreign immigration in southern European countries has already been the subject of considerable scrutiny (for a general overview, see King et al., 2000; Venturini, 2004; Ribas-Mateos, 2004 and 2005; Cangiano, 2008). It is known that, after a migration turnaround recorded between the mid-1970s and the mid-1980s, there followed sharp increases in foreign immigration to the region. Such increments were visible in the 1980s and in the late 1990s, and were followed by an even greater upsurge. Many of the inflows were dominated by irregular immigrants, which gave rise to the launch of several regularization programmes. In fact, these southern European countries are famous for their repeated amnesties, which first began

in the mid-1980s, the latest of which occurred in Portugal in 2001, in Italy in 2002 and in Spain in 2005.[3]

The situation of Spain is shown in Table 3. In methodological terms, important divergences exist regarding available sources. Besides the endemic presence of irregular immigration (also common to Portugal and Italy), there are conflicting figures resulting from the number of residence permits (*tarjeta* or *autorización de residencia*) and population registers at the municipal level (*padrón municipal*). The first source fails to capture undocumented immigrants, as well as some EU nationals (residence permits are not obligatory for them) and students. The second source includes all residents in the municipalities, including undocumented immigrants (registration gives all immigrants access to some welfare benefits, including health and education), but it sometimes overestimates them, due to the mobility of recent immigrants and administrative shortcomings (see Cangiano and Strozza, 2004; Cangiano, 2008). Both series are shown in Table 3, which refers to December 2006 and January 2005, respectively. The figures for residence permits already include circa 691,000 immigrants who applied for the most recent amnesty in 2005 (Arango and Jachimowicz, 2005). Looking at both series, the primacy of Latin American immigrants, including people from Caribbean countries, is clear. They represent between 35 per cent and 39 per cent of all foreigners, according to the residence permits or to the municipal registers. This share is followed by that of immigrants from the EU and Northern Africa. If we consider particular nationalities, Ecuadorians

TABLE 3

POPULATION OF FOREIGN CITIZENSHIP, BY NATIONALITY, IN SPAIN - 2005/2006 (A)

	Residence permits		Municipal registers	
	Number	%	Number	%
Total	3021808	*100*	3730610	*100*
Areas of citizenship				
European Union/25	639580	*21.2*	774953	*20.8*
Other developed countries (b)	41352	*1.4*	59303	*1.6*
Eastern Europe	367674	*12.2*	549015	*14.7*
Northern Africa	586730	*19.4*	561639	*15.1*
Rest of Africa	122444	*4.1*	152335	*4.1*
Asia	197965	*6.6*	186848	*5.0*
Latin America and Caribbean	1064916	*35.2*	1445796	*38.8*
Unknown	1147	*0.0*	721	*0.0*
Main countries of citizenship				
Morocco	543721	*18.0*	511294	*13.7*
Ecuador	376233	*12.5*	497799	*13.3*
Colombia	225504	*7.5*	271239	*7.3*
Romania	211325	*7.0*	317366	*8.5*
United Kingdom	175870	*5.8*	227187	*6.1*
China	99526	*3.3*	87731	*2.4*
Italia	98481	*3.3*	95377	*2.6*
Perú	90906	*3.0*	85029	*2.3*
Argentina	86921	*2.9*	152975	*4.1*
Germany	77390	*2.6*	133588	*3.6*

Notes: (a) Data corresponding to 31/12/2006 (residence permits - "tarjeta o autorización de residencia") and 1/1/2005 (municipal registers - "padrón municipal").
(b) Europe, North America and Oceania.
Source: calculations by the author, based in Instituto Nacional de Estadística (INE) and Ministerio de Trabajo y Asuntos Sociales, Spain.

and Colombians number among the four highest in the country, along with Moroccans and Romanians. These are followed by Peruvians and Argentineans within the group of the ten main nationalities. The weight of some LAC groups, particularly Ecuadorians, has increased recently, as shown by the high proportion attained by them in the last regularization (on recent immigration in Spain, see Arango, 2000; Cornelius, 2004; Arango and Jachimowicz, 2005; Calavita, 2005; Serra, 2005, among others).

The situation in Portugal is shown in Table 4. This table groups together residence permits (*autorizações de residência*) and permits of stay (*autorizações de permanência*, with a duration of one year and renewable) in 2005.[4] These data reflect complementary situations, what explains that they may be added together. They include the vast majority of legal immigrants, leaving out the holders of long-term visas (including family members of the holders of permits of stay and students) and irregular situations (National Statistical Institute –http://www.ine.pt). In the case of Latin America, although it is only the third largest region of foreign immigration in the country, its share has increased in recent years – as suggested by the 20 per cent of permits of stay granted in the course of the 2001 regularization programme. Among LAC countries, the overwhelming predominance goes to Brazil, one of the three main foreign nationalities in the country, together with Cape Verde and the Ukraine (on

TABLE 4

POPULATION OF FOREIGN CITIZENSHIP, BY NATIONALITY, IN PORTUGAL - 2005 (A)

	Residence permits (RP)		Permits of stay (PS)		Total (RP + PS)	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Total	275906	*100*	93391	*100*	369297	*100*
Areas of citizenship						
European Union/25	77653	*28.1*	0	*0.0*	77653	*21.0*
Other developed countries (b)	12863	*4.7*	14	*0.0*	12877	*3.5*
Eastern Europe (c)	8438	*3.1*	52948	*56.7*	61386	*16.6*
Palop (d)	118736	*43.0*	13045	*14.0*	131781	*35.7*
Rest of Africa	7198	*2.6*	2077	*2.2*	9275	*2.5*
Asia	12847	*4.7*	6752	*7.2*	19599	*5.3*
Latin America and Caribbean	37887	*13.7*	18555	*19.9*	56442	*15.3*
Other	284	*0.1*	0	*0.0*	284	*0.1*
Main countries of citizenship						
Cape Verde	56433	*20.5*	5082	*5.4*	61515	*16.7*
Brazil	31546	*11.4*	18132	*19.4*	49678	*13.5*
Ukraine	2070	*0.8*	33434	*35.8*	35504	*9.6*
Angola	27697	*10.0*	3557	*3.8*	31254	*8.5*
Guinea-Bissau	21258	*7.7*	2500	*2.7*	23758	*6.4*
United Kingdom	18966	*6.9*	0	*0.0*	18966	*5.1*
Spain	16383	*5.9*	0	*0.0*	16383	*4.4*
Germany	13571	*4.9*	0	*0.0*	13571	*3.7*
Sao Tome and Principe	8274	*3.0*	1635	*1.8*	9909	*2.7*
Moldova	1374	*0.5*	8325	*8.9*	9699	*2.6*

Notes: (a) Residence permits (“autorizações de residência”) and permits of stay (“autorizações de permanência”) in 31/12/2005.
(b) Europe, North America and Oceania.
(c) Data on permits of stay include new EU member countries after 2004.
(d) Portuguese-speaking African countries.
Source: calculations by the author, based in Instituto Nacional de Estatística (INE) and Serviço de Estrangeiros e Fronteiras (SEF), Portugal.

TABLE 5

POPULATION OF FOREIGN CITIZENSHIP, BY NATIONALITY, IN ITALY - 2004/2006 (A)

	Residence permits		Municipal registers	
	Number	%	Number	%
Total	2227567	*100*	2670514	100
Areas of citizenship				
European Union/25	234780	10.5	223537	8.4
Other developed countries (b)	70876	3.2	31818	1.2
Eastern Europe	806815	36.2	1026549	38.4
Northern Africa	360503	16.2	484900	18.2
Rest of Africa	168660	7.6	210088	7.9
Asia	380490	17.1	454118	17.0
Latin America and Caribbean	204826	9.2	238882	8.9
Unknown	617	0.0	622	0.0
Main countries of citizenship				
Romania	244377	11.0	297570	11.1
Albania	240421	10.8	348813	13.1
Morocco	231044	10.4	319537	12.0
Ukraine	117161	5.3	107118	4.0
China	104952	4.7	127822	4.8
Philippinnes	76099	3.4	89668	3.4
Poland	64912	2.9	60823	2.3
Tunisia	62651	2.8	83564	3.1
Senegal	49720	2.2	57101	2.1
India	49157	2.2	61847	2.3

Notes: (a) Data corresponding to 1/1/2004 (residence permits - "permessi di soggiorno") and 1/1/2006 (municipal registers - "anagrafi").
(b) Europe, North America and Oceania.
Source: calculations by the author, based on Istituto Nazionale di Statistica (Istat) and Ministero dell'Interno, Italy.

recent immigration in Portugal, see Peixoto, 2002; Baganha et al., 2005; Fonseca et al., 2005; among others).

The data for Italy are shown in Table 5, including numbers on residence permits (*permessi di soggiorno*) and municipal registers (*anagrafi*) in January 2004 and 2006, respectively. The advantages and shortcomings of these sources are diverse. Residence permits include both permanent and temporary legal stays; however, they do not include minors (individuals under 18 years of age) and some EU nationals (for whom such permits are not always compulsory). The municipal registers include every age group and nationality; however, they do not count all legal foreigners (since registration within municipalities is not compulsory), they do not take into account irregular immigrants (since the possession of a residence permit is a precondition for registration), and they may overestimate foreigners (due to their higher mobility and the insufficient updating of registers) (Cangiano, 2008). Regardless of the differences, the data show that, compared to the case of Spain and Portugal, the share of Latin American immigrants is lower, amounting to around 9 per cent of all foreigners. No LAC country figures among the ten main nationalities in the country, although Peru and Ecuador are among the fastest-growing sources of immigrants, as indicated by the most recent regularization programme in 2002 (Padilla, 2005b; on recent immigration in Italy, see D'Angelo, 2004; Calavita, 2004 and 2005; Boca and Venturini, 2005, among others).

Individual LAC nationalities, represented in recent foreign immigration in Spain, Portugal and Italy, are shown in Table 6 (which only considers data on residence permits and permits

TABLE 6

POPULATION OF FOREIGN CITIZENSHIP, BY NATIONALITY, IN SPAIN, PORTUGAL AND ITALY - NATIONALS FROM SOUTH AMERICA, CENTRAL AMERICA AND CARIBBEAN COUNTRIES, 2006 OR LATEST AVAILABLE YEAR

	Spain (a)	Portugal (b)	Italy (c)	Total
		Number		
South America	946116	55366	167197	1168679
Argentina	86921	618	14360	*101899*
Bolivia	52587	77	3432	*56096*
Brazil	30242	49678	26975	*106895*
Chile	20397	259	3346	*24002*
Colombia	225504	574	15430	*241508*
Ecuador	376233	330	48302	*424865*
Peru	90906	277	48827	*140010*
Uruguay	26581	116	1383	*28080*
Venezuela	28188	3368	4445	*36001*
Other	8557	69	697	*9323*
Central America	20461	386	11599	32446
Mexico	10700	278	4852	*15830*
Other	9761	108	6747	*16616*
The Caribbean	98339	690	26030	125059
Cuba	39755	575	11323	*51653*
Dominican Rep.	58126	71	13475	*71672*
Other and unknown	458	44	1232	*1734*
Total	1064916	56442	204826	1326184

Notes: (a) Residence permits in 31/12/2006.
(b) Residence permits and permits of stay in 31/12/2005.
(c) Residence permits in 1/1/2004.
Source: calculations by the author, based on INE/Ministero de Trabajo y Asuntos Sociales (Spain), INE/SEF (Portugal) and Istat/Ministero dell'Interno (Italy).

of stay). When considering the relative share of individual LAC nationalities per southern European country, the main groups in Spain are Ecuadorians (376,000 or 35% of all LAC immigrants) and Colombians (226,000 or 21%), but a very significant volume also comes from Peru, Argentina, the Dominican Republic, Bolivia, Cuba, Brazil and other countries. In Portugal, the predominant nationality is Brazilian, comprising 50,000 or 88 per cent of all LAC immigrants. In Italy, Peru (49,000), Ecuador (48,000) and Brazil (27,000) predominate.

Finally, Table 7 shows some data relating to the population born in selected LAC countries and residing in southern Europe, by foreign and national citizenship. As argued in the previous section, the picture of immigration can be enlarged when inflows of national citizens and naturalization processes are included. In this respect, the most impressive numbers pertain to some countries from the southern cone of South America, particularly Argentina, but also from Brazil and Venezuela, whose native populations possess, in large proportions, both a foreign and a national citizenship in southern Europe. These data thus significantly expand the numbers of foreign citizens dealt with in previous paragraphs. In Spain, people born in Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay and Cuba show similar proportions of foreign and Spanish citizenship, while for Venezuela the latter plainly exceeds the former. In Portugal, taking into account only sizeable communities, a similar situation occurs with Venezuela and an important fraction of the Brazilian-born has Portuguese citizenship. In Italy, high volumes of Italian nationals are found in the case of Argentina, Brazil and Venezuela. These non-foreign immigrants (Spanish, Portuguese and Italian nationals born in LAC) may be naturalized individuals, holders of dual citizenship or the emigrants' offspring born abroad.

TABLE 7

POPULATION BORN IN SELECTED SOUTH AMERICA AND CARIBBEAN COUNTRIES, BY CITIZENSHIP, IN SPAIN, PORTUGAL AND ITALY, 2001

	Country of residence and citizenship					
	Spain		Portugal		Italy	
Country of birth	Foreign citizens	Nationals	Foreign citizens	Nationals	Foreign citizens	Nationals
South America						
Argentina	54597	49254	481	558	12353	39324
Bolivia	11042	2145	41	11	1162	1249
Brazil	18563	14644	32025	17483	17882	24917
Chile	13621	4462	138	52	3184	5829
Colombia	158815	15603	280	85	9231	7167
Ecuador	212928	5439	196	28	12752	1805
Peru	38659	14971	145	59	26831	6044
Uruguay	10906	13725	76	59	1602	3397
Venezuela	17934	49230	5220	17128	5253	30733
The Caribbean						
Cuba	26252	24513	266	132	7353	1934
Dominican Rep.	31295	12805	22	15	10705	4211

Source: calculations by the author, based on OECD, database on national Censuses of Population, 2001.

As regards the time frame of immigration, it is known that the LAC inflows into southern Europe came in successive waves. In Spain, a first wave of LAC immigrants came to the country in the 1970s and 1980s, mainly originating from the southern cone of the continent, and comprising a significant fraction of politically induced movements. Their integration into Spanish society was not too problematic, in view of their low volume and their specific social nature (many of these immigrants were highly-skilled). The most recent and larger wave comes from the Andean region and the Caribbean. As opposed to the former, this new inflow of immigrants is faced with several integration issues, due to their greater volume and lower social condition (Arango, 2000). In Portugal also, Brazilian immigration came in two waves. The first wave entered the country in the 1970s and 1980s, mainly following Portugal's entry to the EU; it was mainly composed of highly-skilled people who adapted smoothly. The second, much larger wave of immigrants began to move to Portugal in the late 1990s; they again face greater problems of integration, due to their greater volume and lower social condition (Padilla, 2005a; Malheiros, 2007). In Italy, women coming from LAC countries, such as Peru, were an important part of the first immigrant flows since the 1960s, supported by the local missions of the Catholic Church and targeting the domestic sector (Andall, 1998, 2000; Sciortino, 2004). They were followed by larger and more diversified inflows coming from the LAC region.

These figures indicate that the Latin American connections to southern European countries play a strong role in migration. The movements linking former colonies with their European centres are visible in the Spanish and Portuguese cases. These flows reflect direct linguistic similarities: Spanish-speaking immigrants go to Spain, whilst Portuguese-speaking ones go to Portugal. The importance of former southern European emigration (Spanish, Portuguese and Italian) to the LAC region, mostly to the southern cone of the continent and Brazil, is also noticeable. Previous family links in Europe attracted several immigrants, either following paths in which more information and social support were available, or using ancestral links

as a strategic means of more easily obtaining EU access or citizenship. It has already been stated that the number of Argentineans claiming citizenship or dual citizenship has been considerable in Spain and Italy (Massey et al., 1998: 117-118). Often, Brazilians of Portuguese descent prefer to go to Portugal, where integration is considered more straightforward, and access to citizenship easier, whilst Brazilians of Italian descent target Italy. Wider research is needed into the role of former family roots and the migration strategies and paths of these immigrants, which may use their ancestral countries merely as a means of gaining access to other EU countries or the United States. Finally, the role of religion has been strong, bringing in immigrants from Catholic LAC countries, supported by the local missions, to Italy.

ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND POLITICAL FRAMEWORK

Economic incorporation of immigrants

As mentioned earlier, between the mid-1970s and the mid-1980s, the countries of southern Europe, particularly Spain, Portugal and Italy, underwent a profound migration turnaround, mainly expressed in the decrease of emigration and the strong growth of immigration. There were several causes for immigration: the economic growth since the 1970s, which, in the case of Spain and Portugal, was reinforced with entry to the EU in 1986; the nature of this economic development, based largely on services and construction, many traditional and low-technology activities, a large informal economy and a growing demand for flexible labour; the characteristics of the welfare state and the role of the family in welfare delivery, revealing weak state intervention and strong family action; the growing aspirations and education levels of local populations, which drove them away from the less desirable jobs in the labour market; the dwindling supply of workers, due mainly to demographic reasons; and the use of these countries as ''waiting rooms'' by immigrants, before setting off to their more developed European partners (King, 2000; Ribas-Mateos, 2004).

The fact is that, from the 1970s and principally from the late 1980s onwards, foreign immigration was always on the increase. Nationalities of immigrants varied from the outset, and they continued to spread within these southern European countries. In the beginning, migrants came mostly from Africa, Latin America and Asia and, from the early 1990s, from Eastern Europe as well. The international connections of the southern European countries helped to define the origin of their immigrants. The most exemplary case was that of Portugal. Until the late 1990s, its immigration was largely based on Portuguese-speaking populations, from Africa and Brazil. Spain also anchored itself on its Latin American connections, although the presence from Morocco was the strongest in the beginning. Italy's national composition of flows was more heterogeneous (for a review of the size and origin of immigrant flows, see Venturini, 2004: 23-31).

The type of economic demand largely determined the volume of immigrants and their modes of incorporation into the labour market. In all these countries, foreigners are inserted in a polarized occupational structure, although the lower segment has gradually become predominant. Indeed, the professional and technological needs of expanding and modernizing economies were partially met by foreigners. A small but significant segment of highly-skilled and high social status occupations has been mostly occupied by EU professionals. However, some non-European immigrants have also been inserted in this sector. As far as LAC countries are concerned, this was mainly the case with the first wave of South American citizens – Argentineans, Chileans and Uruguayans – who have made for Spain since the 1970s (Arango, 2000) and the first wave of Brazilians that settled in Portugal during the 1980s and the

early 1990s (Peixoto, 2002; Baganha et al., 2005). In Italy, references also exist to Brazilians performing highly-skilled jobs (Calavita, 2004: 357).

However, the large majority of immigrants was incorporated into the low-skilled and low status segments of the labour market, and this mode of incorporation was always expanding. Many of the jobs filled by immigrants were part of the informal economy. It is known that the informal sector, particularly in the case of jobs performed outside legal, regulatory and contractual obligations, besides recourse to tax evasion, was already a structural feature of the economies of the southern European countries. But the constraints imposed by the new global order were largely satisfied through the use of immigrants in the informal framework, as a low-paid and flexible labour force, thus reinforcing the structural role of this sector (Mingione and Quassoli, 2000). The volume of the informal economy also explained the high proportion of irregular immigrants among the inflows to these countries.

As argued by other authors, such as Ribas-Mateos (2004) and Sciortino (2004), the high labour demand in the informal sector must be linked to other characteristics of southern European societies in order to explain immigration and the spread of irregular situations. The weak nature of the welfare state enables one to understand not only the low level of enforcement of immigration rules (and the consequent sizeable presence of irregular immigrants), but also the structural existence of informal activities and the growing trend towards the privatization of welfare. However, despite the weakness of the welfare system, some state benefits (such as unemployment allowances) encouraged national citizens to shy away from the less desirable segments of the labour market.

Another characteristic of these societies is the role of the family, which explains why both social reproduction and several production activities are encompassed within its framework. Social reproduction activities include general domestic work and care for children and the elderly. Some of the main segments targeted by immigrants – in this case female immigrants – were precisely the domestic service and caring occupations. In the case of production activities, these national economies are largely based on small and medium-sized, family-owned firms, often based in traditional technologies and sometimes immersed in types of informal activity. Furthermore, the role of families as ''safety nets'' also helped to keep nationals out of the job market, one such example being the late departure of young adults from their parents' households.

Taking all factors into consideration, most of the immigrants occupied segments of the labour market that were shunned by native citizens. These constituted the lowest paid, most precarious and lowest socially ranked jobs. Some of the main economic sectors that employed immigrants were agriculture, construction, personal services (shop and market sales work, catering and tourism), domestic service, caring occupations and the sex industry (on domestic service and the sex industry, see Campani, 2000 and Ribas-Mateos, 2002). Most of the Latin American immigrants were incorporated into those segments. This was mainly the case with the second wave of emigrants from this region to Spain, who began to arrive from the 1990s onwards (Arango, 2000), the second wave of Brazilians to Portugal, who came from the end of the same decade onwards (Padilla, 2005a; Malheiros, 2007), and most of the immigrants from the LAC region to Italy (Campani, 2000; Mingione and Quassoli, 2000). In some cases, their presence is clearly visible in particular ethnic and gender segments of the labour market. For example, many of the Dominicans in Spain and Peruvians in Italy are women working in the domestic sector (Arango, 2000 and Calavita, 2004). Very often, they perform these activities in an irregular situation, as confirmed by the overrepresentation of LAC immigrants in recent regularization processes.

As for the immigrants' characteristics, wider research must be undertaken to examine the demographic and socio-economic attributes of different national groups in different contexts. In the case of Latin American immigrants, demographic data suggest that female

immigrants have played an increasingly active role in migratory paths, and are often the first to move, whether they be single or married (Anthias and Lazaridis, 2000). A higher proportion of female immigrants in the LAC inflow is mainly to be found in Spain and Italy (Padilla, 2005b), a situation that has led to the growth of transnational families (Zontini, 2004). The fact that specific labour market niches, particularly domestic service and caring occupations, exerted a strong pull effect increased the opportunity for independent female immigration.

As far as socio-economic data are concerned, the low-skilled jobs that these immigrants mostly occupy do not necessarily correspond to their situation in the home countries. Evidence on the most recent Latin American inflows suggests that their educational level is considerable (Padilla, 2005b), a situation confirmed by research carried out on Brazilians in Portugal (Malheiros, 2007) and Peruvians in Italy (Reyneri, 2004). It is well-known that immigrants are rarely selected from among the poorest of the poor, since they lack the resources (information and capital) required to migrate – and this is mainly true in the case of inter-continental migration. Available data suggest that many of the migrants come from the lower-middle or middle classes and, sometimes, from youth elites, although a trend can be noted towards growing recruitment from amongst less-favoured groups (Reyneri, 2004, and Padilla, 2005a, 2006a).

Social reception and policy responses

Besides the insertion in the labour market, the modes of incorporation of immigrants and the related types of integration into specific societies depend, among other factors, on the forms of social reception that they are given, that is, the way in which civil society and public opinion react to immigration, and the policy measures enacted towards them (Portes, 1995). As far as the forms of social reception are concerned, certain features of southern European societies explain why the new immigration flows were not problematic in the early years and are still not considered to be very problematic today. This has to do with immigrants in general, though the incidence is different in the case of Latin American people. Firstly, the fact that these southern European countries regarded themselves as longstanding emigration countries may have contributed to the notion that some reciprocity should exist in this field, leading to a tolerance and acceptance of immigration. Secondly, many of the inflows displayed cultural and linguistic affinities with the host nation, which may have facilitated some of the first and subsequent contacts. Thirdly, most of the immigrants' jobs were considered to be undesirable by native residents. At least in the first phase, this fact led societies to regard immigrants as being a non-competitive factor in the labour market. Fourthly, the recently acquired democratic nature of some of these societies, such as Spain and Portugal, may have led to a greater acceptance of inclusion and the concession of rights to foreign nationals (on the latter point, see Arango, 2000: 267).

Furthermore, several groups in these societies have adopted a pro-immigrant stance. As Cornelius and Tsuda (2004: 7) suggest, "… the public itself is not monolithic but consists of many disparate groups with varying interests and concerns". In southern European countries, important sectors of civil society, including trade unions, the Catholic Church and several NGOs, have been active in defending immigrants' rights. In some cases, particularly the Catholic Church, they even played a part in immigrants' recruitment (Andall, 1998 and 2000). Moreover, employers have often lobbied in favour of increased immigration. All these facts explain why many public opinion surveys have displayed, until recently, a considerable degree of tolerance towards immigrants or, at worst, a polarized view on the theme, and why extreme right-wing anti-immigrant political parties have been absent in these countries – with

the partial exception of Italy (on most of these aspects, see King et al., 2000; Calavita, 2004; Cornelius, 2004).

Certain positive aspects of the social reception of immigrants must not blind us to the fact that objective discrimination frequently occurs, and that the level of public acceptance has been falling since the late 1990s (Calavita, 2004; Cornelius, 2004). The confinement of immigrants to the less desirable, low-paid, low-status and unprotected segments of the labour market is the first indicator of their objective exclusion from many national social rights. Evidence also exists concerning lines of ethnic and racial discrimination towards immigrants, mainly resulting from the alleged deviation from national identity and culture (King et al., 2000; Calavita, 2005). Claims are sometimes expressed that immigrants are depriving the native residents of their jobs, although research does not support this view. Fears of insecurity and links with criminality are rising, though these are sometimes overemphasized by the media and may result from a biased police approach (Baldwin-Edwards, 2002: 218-9; Quassoli, 2004). The recent upsurge in the number of immigrants and their access to state benefits in a context of limited welfare provision also helps to explain why public opinion is becoming more critical and why governments find it so hard to deal with this issue.

In the light of these new constraints, it is significant that in a public opinion survey about the contribution of immigrants to host societies carried out in 2006 in all EU/25 countries, Spain and Italy find themselves in a position far removed from that of many other member states. When asked whether they thought immigrants ''contributed a lot'' to the destination countries, only the Portuguese were overtly positive among the southern European hosts, with 66 per cent of positive answers, thus being ranked second in the EU. Italy and Spain did not appear among the top ten countries, being situated close to the EU average, with 41 per cent and 40 per cent, respectively (Standard Eurobarometer 66, European Commission, 2006) (on public opinion, see also Cornelius et al., 2004; Cornelius, 2004; Calavita, 2004).

As for Latin American countries, some particular features of their relationship with southern Europe have already brought advantages to their immigrants and may herald better conditions in the future. Still regarding the forms of social reception, common historical roots, similar national cultures, common religion, similar languages and sometimes family links, may have eased, or may continue to ease, some of the immigrants' paths and integration. As Cornelius (2004: 410) admits, ''Latin Americans are hardly perceived by Spaniards as 'foreigners', given their shared linguistic and cultural attributes''. In this country, public opinion expresses a higher degree of acceptance of immigrants from this region. Recent surveys have shown, for instance, that a mastery of the Spanish language (*Castellano* and others) is regarded as one of the most important factors for allowing immigrants into the country (surpassed only by a high level of education and placed ahead of family links) (CIS, Barómetro Noviembre 2005). When asked about the similarities between Spain and other countries, a high proportion (30.3%) of respondents referred to Latin America, although the majority (55.4%) mentioned the EU (see Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas, Cooperación y America Latina, 2006).

In Portugal, a widespread rhetoric of ''brotherhood'' has existed for many years in its dealings with Brazil, leading to frequent relationships and, often, mutual support between citizens of the two countries – although the use of this rhetoric is frequently strategic (Feldman-Bianco, 2001). Recent research into the attitudes of the Portuguese towards immigrants showed that Brazilians have one of the highest levels of acceptance amongst immigrant groups and are also one of the groups in which the cultural differences are perceived to be smallest, in comparison with Africans and Eastern Europeans (Lajes et al., 2006). Further evidence on actual behaviour shows, for example, that the level of mixed marriages (involving nationals and foreigners) is also one of the highest among Portuguese and Brazilian citizens (National Statistical Institute –http://www.ine.pt).

However, the type of integration of immigrants varies considerably according to their nationality, time of arrival and country of reception. The first waves of Latin American immigrants that arrived in the 1970s to Spain enjoyed high levels of acceptance, sometimes comparable to that of EU citizens, and in some cases have already acquired local citizenship (Arango, 2000). The more recent waves of LAC immigrants experience a very different situation: they often remain as undocumented immigrants for long periods and are confronted by a number of problems, including housing and employment (low wages, poor working conditions, instability and unemployment). Moreover, these privileged ties do not obscure the possibility of discrimination. For instance, studies on Brazilians living in Portugal confirm that some forms of both daily and workplace discrimination exist (Padilla, 2005a; Malheiros, 2007). Surveys on the attitudes of the Portuguese also show that the level of negative stereotypes about Brazilians is significantly high, sometimes being comparable to those formed about African immigrants (Lajes et al., 2006). The problems faced by Brazilian women are among the most serious, given the prevailing attitudes existing towards them (Padilla, 2005a; Malheiros, 2007).

Further research into the extent of the problems faced by Latin American immigrants in southern Europe must be undertaken. Research must consider both the different national origins involved and the different contexts of reception. For example, immigrants from the southern cone of the continent and Brazil often show higher cultural continuities and closer family ties with host populations than the Andeans. Also, the type of links existing between different southern European and LAC countries is diverse, resulting from particular historical and current relationships.

As far as the policy framework is concerned, immigration policy in southern European countries has pursued a devious path over time (Baldwin-Edwards, 2002). In the case of immigration control, many of the national legal provisions result directly from EU obligations. In this field, the main concern is the surveillance of EU external borders, designed to overcome the vulnerable nature of the Schengen space. The argument most commonly expressed is that Spanish and Italian borders (more than the Portuguese) are amongst the most porous in the EU, in view of their contiguity with some of the most important emigrant-sending regions of the world. In fact, until recently, the main focus of southern European immigration policies has been on control, not integration. In the words of Solé (2004: 1214), these countries have, until now, mostly produced ''laws which dealt with control of entry, stay and productive activities rather than long-term residence and socio-cultural integration''. Among other instruments, initiatives designed to control the entry of immigrants have involved the implementation of a more rigorous visa policy, the definition of quotas and the establishment of bilateral agreements. However, the volume of irregular immigration in these countries, leading to successive amnesties, shows how difficult the conditions are for effective control.

Since the mid-1990s, initiatives have gradually been taken on integration. These have included access to basic rights, such as housing, employment, health and education; the right to family reunion; measures against discrimination (on a gender, ethnic, religious or racial basis); increased cooperation between the national government, regional and local authorities, NGOs and immigrants; the setting up of special councils or departments dealing with immigration issues; and some tentative inroads made by immigrants into the sphere of political rights (on integration policies, see Solé, 2004). Immigrants' rights were previously often attributed according to legal status: only legally resident or working immigrants were entitled to a broad range of rights. However, constitutional or legislative provisions have also guaranteed access to basic health care and education for irregular immigrants and their children, in Spain, Portugal and Italy.

It is true that successive amnesties have been introduced to legalize irregular foreigners. Spain introduced six regularization operations between 1985 and 2005; Portugal three,

between 1992 and 2001 (besides two other less extensive legalizations, that came into force afterwards); and Italy five, between 1986 and 2002. However, the effectiveness of these amnesties is questionable, since many only granted temporary status, and many immigrants relapsed into illegality (for the Spanish case, see Arango, 2000: 261). Furthermore, irregular immigration is still endemic. Regardless of this problem, it should be stressed that the gradual provision of rights to immigrants has allowed, at least implicitly, for the possibility of a long-term stay and settlement for immigrants and their families.

Seen from another standpoint, the immigration policy of these countries has been moving forward in the face of largely contradictory signals and demands. Demographic and economic trends all suggest that immigration is a structural need for southern European societies. The fact that their demographic profiles are among the most rapidly declining and ageing in the world accounts for this need (see Koslowski, 2002; Cornelius et al., 2004; Council of Europe, 2005). Pressure from employers and civil society organizations that actively defend immigration also accounts for a relatively open policy in this area. Lessons learnt from western and northern European societies, warning that immigrant settlement requires sound integration policies in order to avoid social tensions and outright conflicts, have led the powers that be to launch integration initiatives.

On the other hand, increasing reservations expressed by public opinion with regard to immigration, and the fact that governments are directly accountable to their electorates, suggest that a harsh rhetoric of control should, at least, be used (Cornelius and Tsuda, 2004). But efforts to control the situation must not be symbolic only. There is a real concern that an oversized immigrant population will undermine any efforts towards integration and exacerbate tensions and conflicts. Furthermore, the fact that national identities and cultures are based on a myth of ethnic homogeneity (in these countries, large-scale foreign immigration is a very recent feature of contemporary history) explains why immigration will be accepted only reluctantly over the next few years. Today, an anti-immigration stance (although not a radical one) is to be found amongst all southern European right-wing political parties, with the partial exception of Portugal, and a restrictive position on immigration is now part of mainstream politics (Calavita, 2004; Cornelius, 2004). Reluctance to accept immigration will probably last for some time.

However, at the policy level, southern European countries face increasing challenges arising from multiple and, sometimes, conflicting loyalties. In the international arena, their loyalties and identities are immersed in the European Union context to which they belong, their national diasporas in the world, and the international bonds resulting from their historical ties. When considering the Latin American context, the political commitment that Spain and, in a lesser degree, Portugal have for some time demonstrated towards the building of an Iberian-American community of nations must be stressed. A total of 22 Spanish and Portuguese-speaking LAC countries are partners in this venture, which has existed since 1991.[5] A recent meeting of Iberian-American political leaders, activists and social scientists, invited to discuss the theme of migration and development – the documentary result of which is entitled ''united by migrations'' – may be regarded as a step towards the building of privileged ties in this field (Secretaría General Iberoamericana, 2006). Portugal still has a complementary commitment to all Portuguese-speaking areas of the world, including Brazil. Since 1996, these countries have together formed the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries (CPLP).[6] Further intertwined loyalties result from the presence of descendants of southern European emigrants in Latin American countries.

In view of the above arguments, one may easily understand the implementation by southern European countries of specific policies towards Latin America in the area of migration (see also Joppke, 2005). As far as visa policy is concerned, citizens of some LAC countries are exempt from the need to acquire a visa in order to be admitted as tourists to the EU. To

a large extent, this situation derives from the special relationship that these countries share with Spain and Portugal. However, beginning in the 1990s, visa restrictions were imposed by Spain on Andean and Caribbean countries, such as Peru, Colombia, Ecuador, the Dominican Republic and Cuba (Cornelius, 2004: 410). As Cornelius (2004: 410) says, ''restricting entries from Latin America was a much more politically and diplomatically sensitive step than restricting them from the Maghreb countries''. Today, it is mainly the countries from the southern cone of South America, as well as Brazil, that enjoy this privilege.

Special bilateral agreements have also been signed between these countries. In the field of immigration policy and labour recruitment, Spain has negotiated bilateral agreements for the regulation of immigration flows (establishment of quotas) with LAC countries, namely Colombia, Ecuador and the Dominican Republic (other countries were Morocco, Romania, Poland and Bulgaria). According to Serra, these agreements are linked to a policy of ''cultural proximity'', according to which preference is given to labour immigrants originating from LAC and Eastern Europe, whose nationals are considered easier to assimilate (Serra, 2005: 11). Portugal and Brazil have engaged in an intense, sometimes conflicting, diplomatic exchange on migration issues (Feldman-Bianco, 2001). One of the latest illustrations of this relationship was the granting of a special amnesty for undocumented Brazilian immigrants in 2003. Finally, citizenship regulations have always granted rights to the descendants of former emigrants in the LAC countries.

CONCLUSIONS

Despite its reluctance to admit this situation, Europe has become a continent of immigration. All foreseeable trends indicate that this pattern will last for some time, turning the old continent into an increased multicultural and multiethnic society. The notion of a crisis in adapting to a new social condition is a possible way of explaining the negative attitudes expressed by public opinion and the rhetoric on immigration control voiced by governments. The argument is that, contrary to what has been the case in longstanding immigration countries (including the Americas), immigration is not a founding myth of these societies. In historical terms, foreign immigration to Europe started very recently, mainly after the World War II – although, all too often, European states have hidden the fact that they already had a multiethnic character before the setting up of modern nation-states (Koslowski, 2002: 171-2). In this sense, it may well be that the presence of immigrants will, in the medium term, be regarded as a new structural feature of the continent.

If difficulties in receiving foreign immigrants are visible in the case of western and northern Europe, it is more than likely that these will be further aggravated in the case of southern Europe. In this context, significant immigration only began in the last two decades of the previous century, rapidly transforming the profile of these countries' populations. The context of arrival was characterized by an overall process of economic restructuring – the post-Fordist context – affecting the modes of immigrant incorporation. Countries such as Spain, Portugal and Italy, which until recently were areas of emigration, have begun to regard themselves as immigrant-receiving societies, facing challenges sometimes harder than those of their European partners, given the different contexts of reception.

The main form of economic incorporation for immigrants throughout Europe, including southern Europe, in recent decades has been into the lowest segments of the labour markets: low-paid and precarious jobs with a low ranking in social terms. The fragility of immigrants has been aggravated in recent years given the need for a cheap, flexible labour force. The overall growth of irregular immigration may be explained by these economic

conditions. As Calavita (2004: 369) argues, "…those characteristics that make so-called Third World immigrants attractive to certain sectors – their invisibility, marginality, and vulnerability – are the same qualities that make it difficult to control their employment (through employer sanctions) or legalize them (through regularization programmes)". It can be argued that the structural weakness of immigrants has been particularly intense in southern Europe, given its long-term economic fabric, economic restructuring and the rapid surge in immigration: the longstanding informal economy and the current need for economic adaptation have created conditions conducive to the widespread presence of powerless immigrants.

In the case of LAC immigrants, their presence is clearly visible in many European contexts. Foreigners and foreign-born citizens from LAC countries are to be found throughout the continent. However, the timing, conditions, strategies, legal statuses and volume of movements have varied considerably. If we disregard the colonial and postcolonial movements involving western countries, namely the United Kingdom, France and the Netherlands (which mainly occurred in the "30 glorious years" of economic expansion), most recent economic migration links Latin American immigrants to southern Europe, namely Spain (by far the largest recipient), Portugal and Italy. These flows have greatly increased in recent years, and seem to be fully in line with the contemporary aspects of migration in a globalized world (Castles and Miller, 2003: 7-9). Even though some immigrants come from the middle classes and have had a considerable education, the vast majority are channelled into the most undesirable segments of the labour markets, performing low-skilled jobs in construction, personal services, domestic service, caring occupations and the sex industry, among other sectors. Moreover, their situation points to increased gender segmentation and displays frequent irregularity.

Latin American immigrants have followed some of the international paths that could be anticipated by migration theories, and have also benefited from initiatives taken in the new host countries. Spanish-speaking LAC immigrants have headed mainly for Spain. Today, in this country, the presence of nationals from Ecuador, Colombia, Peru and Argentina is high, along with many other Latin American nationalities. In the case of Portugal, it is mainly the Brazilian presence that is felt. In Italy, the most numerous are nationals from Peru, Ecuador and, to a lesser extent, Brazil.

There have been several reasons for migration. Economic push and pull mechanisms have come into force and have been intensified in recent years. Politically-induced inflows have existed for a long time. Spain and Portugal's former presence as colonial powers in the Latin American region has incited many movements. Improved information, cultural, religious and linguistic similarities smooth the migration path. In the same vein, the presence in the region of emigrants from Spain, Portugal and Italy has created the potential for flows. Some of the immigrants may settle by using direct family ties or may employ them as a strategic means for obtaining easy EU access and citizenship. A common Catholic tradition has also exerted an active role in recruitment, at least in the case of Italy. Given many of those factors, the forms of social reception have been often more favourable towards LAC immigrants. Finally, policy initiatives have favoured immigration from Latin America. The multiple loyalties and related diplomatic links, displayed by southern Europe, particularly Spain and Portugal, such as their commitment to an Iberian-American community of nations and the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries, have led to some policy measures benefiting such immigrants.

In short, there are multiple reasons to explain why Latin Americans migrate to Latin Europe. Economic gaps, former historical links, cultural, religious and linguistic affinities, family links and diplomatic channels – all suggest that a special route exists for current and future migrants from the LAC region. The role of each of these factors in this process is difficult to

disentangle, given the vast heterogeneity of movements. In any case, it seems clear that it is this accumulation of factors that explains the strong inflows in this direction, as compared to other European host countries. These privileged links also explain why the context of social reception will remain potentially more favourable for immigrants coming from this region, and why some policy initiatives may continue to positively select immigrants of this origin, thus reinforcing the flows. It must be remembered that an easier way into a country and a more favourable reception do not mean that a rapid acquisition of rights occurs. Moreover, as is clearly suggested by a wider observation of the globe, these privileged routes may not be used when the choice of destination is made. The overwhelming presence of LAC immigrants in the United States reveals that historical ties are not in themselves enough to forecast migrations. Despite these qualifications, it is easy to recognize a case for a Latin system of international migrations: flows in this direction will probably last, at least for as long as the reasons to migrate exist.

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NOTES

1. As far as the host countries' perspective is concerned, more advanced research must look into the abundant literature already available on immigration in Spain, Portugal and Italy, written in the national languages and published locally. Regarding the sending countries' perspective, a similar investigation must be made of local references, given the increasing relevance of transnational views of migration.
2. To achieve the same objectives, other sources could have been used, including the OECD (2006). However, in this case, a detailed breakdown of information was not so readily available. It may also be argued that the two sources do not reveal major differences as to national trends. The problem related to these databases is that they are mainly compiled through national practices of data collection. In both cases, the main suppliers of information are the national statistical institutes, what leads to similar figures. The main exceptions occur when different choices about sources are made by the national representatives in each international institution, or when some tentative comparative exercises are carried out (as is the case with some recent OECD reports).

3. Spain had regularization programmes in 1985 (44,000 applications), 1991 (110,000), 1996 (21,000), 2000 (248,000), 2001 (351,000) and 2005 (691,000). Portugal had its major regularization operations in 1992/1993 (40,000 applications), 1996 (35,000) and 2001 (184,000), besides two more specific ones in 2003 and 2004. Finally, Italy had regularization programmes in 1986/1987 (118,000 applications), 1990/1991 (235,000), 1995 (259,000), 1998 (251,000) and 2002 (705,000) (Cangiano and Strozza, 2004; Boca and Venturini, 2005; Arango, 2000; Arango and Jachimowicz, 2005).
4. The permits of stay were issued following a special regularization programme that took place in 2001. Between this year and 2004, a total of 183,833 permits of stay were issued. Of these, only 93,391 were still valid in 2005. The remaining cases correspond to immigrants who either left the country or relapsed into an irregular status.
5. The Iberian-American community of nations arose as a result of an original idea formed by the Spanish and Mexican governments. Its members include all the countries belonging to Latin America and the Iberian Peninsula. The community is organized around the Secretaría General Ibero-Americana (SEGIb), a small structure that coordinates and promotes regular meetings of government officials dealing with several areas of international cooperation (trade, education, development, migration and others). The main expression of the community is an annual summit of heads of state and government.
6. The CPLP includes Portugal, Brazil, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, São Tomé and Príncipe, Angola, Mozambique and East Timor. Its main areas of activity are political and diplomatic coordination, cooperation in several sectors and promotion of the Portuguese language. The community is based in a small Executive Secretariat and holds regular meetings of heads of state and government.

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