

Assimilation of Immigrants in Spain: a Longitudinal Analysis

Paper by: Mario Izquierdo, Aitor Lacuesta and Raquel Vegas
Discussion by Julián Messina (Univ. de Girona, FEDEA and IZA)

December 11, 2008

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- ▶ ...and it is likely to become a crucial topic in the years to come:
 - ▶ OECD forecast an unemployment rate of 14.2% by the end of 2009.
- ▶ Authors use a nice dataset, probably the only one to properly study wages in Spain. However, it suffers from important limitations

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 - ▶ **Please, keep on working on it!**

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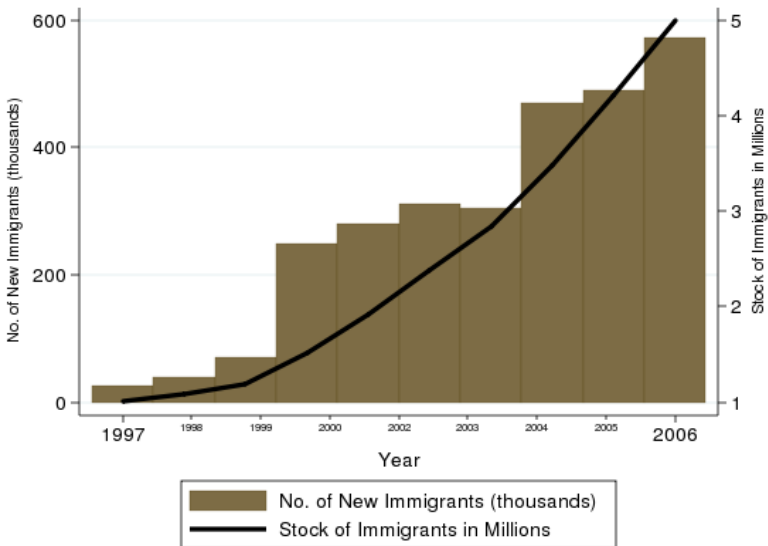
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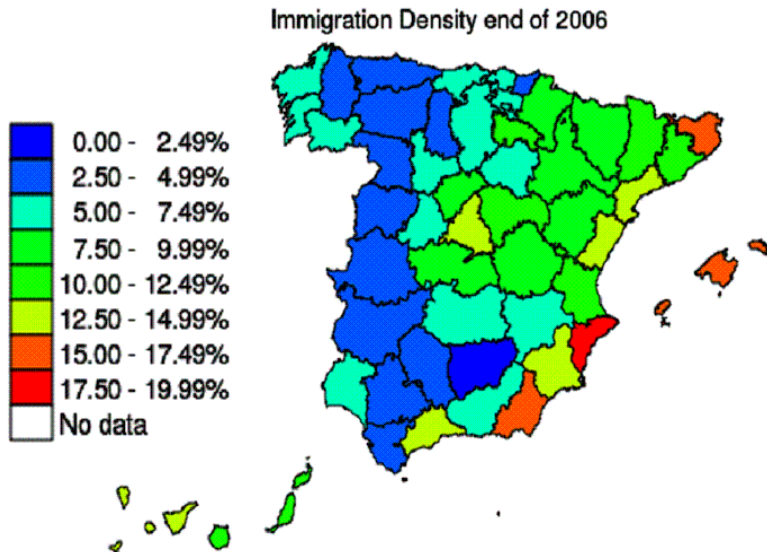
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The surge of immigration

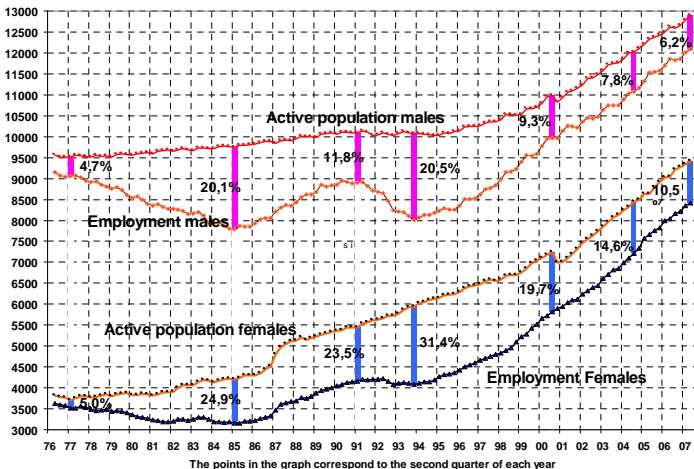


The Regional Distribution of Immigrants



The Evolution of the Spanish Labour Market

Activity, employment and unemployment in Spain, 1976-2007 (LFS-05), by gender



A Peculiar Distribution of Employment

Sectoral Structure of Employment

	Allemagne	France	Italie	Suède	Royaume Uni	Espagne	UE-15	UE-25
Agriculture	2,3	3,8	4,1	2,3	1,4	5,2	3,7	4,9
Industrie	23,2	17,4	22,1	16,1	14,3	17,2	18,6	19,6
Construction	6,7	6,6	8,6	5,9	7,9	12,4	8,0	7,9
Commerce	14,5	13,6	15,1	12,4	15,3	15,0	14,7	14,6
Hôtels et restaurants	3,6	3,2	4,9	2,7	4,3	7,1	4,4	4,2
Transports et communications	5,3	6,6	5,5	6,3	6,9	5,8	6,1	6,1
Activités financières	3,5	2,9	2,8	1,8	4,2	2,5	3,2	3,0
Immobilier, location et services aux entreprises	9,9	10,2	10,3	13,9	11,5	8,9	10,1	9,4
Administration publique	7,8	9,6	6,5	5,6	7,1	6,3	7,5	7,4
Education	5,7	7,1	6,9	11,0	9,1	5,9	7,1	7,2
Santé et action sociale	10,9	12,2	6,7	16,4	12,3	5,9	10,4	9,8
Autres services collectifs	6,0	4,3	5,1	5,5	5,5	4,1	5,0	4,8
Ménages employeurs de personnel domestique	0,5	2,6	1,4	0,0	0,4	3,6	1,3	1,2
TOTAL	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0

Source: Toharia (2008)

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- ▶ Among the highest levels of EPL among the OECD countries (OECD, 2004)
- ▶ Lots of flexibility at the margin: from 1997, more than 30% of Spanish workers hold a temporary contract featuring enormous rotation
- ▶ Similar levels of job reallocation to those in the UK (Gomez-Salvador et al. 2004)

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- ▶ Immigrants are more mobile: across-regions, within and between firms and across contracts

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 - ▶ **Question: Who arrived in 1980 and has not obtained the nationality by 2005?**

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 - ▶ but probably an even higher proportion of workers in the black market)
- ▶ The exclusion of self-employed also deserves some discussion: in 2005, 1 out of 4 new self-employed was an immigrant (ATA)

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 - ▶ Suggestion: regional unemployment rates (possibly by skill and age groups) is probably better

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- ▶ The paper needs more background information: what's going on in the Spanish labour market, how are nationality laws put into work, etc.