Unveiling covectors. Correlating migration and EC enlargement in the case of Spain

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Abstract

The aim of this article lies in shedding light on the evolving priorities and perceptions of relevant Spanish players at different stages of the country’s engagement in the European integration process, especially with regard to changing migration patterns. These include the views of political exiles, economic migrants and key Spanish decision-makers with a responsibility in migration affairs from the country’s three subsequent integration phases into the EU: when Spain was not a European Community (EC) member, when it was a candidate country for EC accession and since it became an EC member state.

Furthermore, this contribution focuses on unveiling a deeply intertwined correlation between migration and EC enlargement, of which Spain constitutes one of the most significant and illustrative case studies. Indeed, from the relation between an active political presence in exile and the Europeanisation of émigré political and intellectual Spanish communities, to the diffusion of democratic political culture by return migrants during the transition to democracy, this case is rife with insightful instances of linkages between the widening and mobility dimensions of the multifaceted European integration dynamics across the continent.

Introduction

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intellectual Spanish communities, to the diffusion of democratic political culture by return migrants during the transition to democracy, this case is rife with insightful instances of linkages between the widening and mobility dimensions of the multi-faceted European integration dynamics across the continent.

The main sources selected to elucidate this migration-EC enlargement correlation come from the Archives of the Spanish Foreign Ministry and the Spanish Secretariat of State for European Union Issues in Madrid, the Archives of the DG Enlargement of the European Commission in Brussels, the Historical Archives of the European Union (HAEU) in Florence, the Historical Archives of the European Parliament in Luxembourg, the Personal Archives of Salvador de Madariaga in La Coruña, etc. These sources also include a series of Oral History interviews conducted with Spanish key decision-makers integrating the lessons of the Spanish exile and economic migration experiences during Franco’s regime into the discussion of their repercussions for Spain’s ‘return to Europe’. These relevant Oral History interview excerpts are reproduced respecting the fidelity to particular utterances and language use so as to enrich the interpretational features of the given players and of the institution that each person represents.

Subsequently paying special attention to the influence of the institutional and reconversion challenges posed by Spain’s EC accession in 1986, this contribution also reviews the evolving agenda-setting priorities of Spanish actors endowed with a prominent role at the Community level. In a similar vein, it also explores the successively incorporated feedback from the Spanish outbound migrants’ experiences and on the incoming migration from third countries starting from the 1990s onwards.

In short, this contribution emphasises the need to address such historical *acquis* in view of the current reverse trend in Spain, which would mean confronting the brain drain of young generations as a consequence of the economic crisis and of its inter-related austerity measures. Indeed, this question touches upon the disastrous effects of neglecting the foundational principles of the European integration process: the solidarity principle and its connection with expectations and compromises regarding socioeconomic cohesion.

**The principle-based ‘exile factor’ during Franco’s regime and its influence in the future migration-EC enlargement correlation in the Spanish case**

The experience of exile lived by prominent Spanish intellectuals and political figures during Franco’s authoritarian dictatorship served to significantly reinforce existing European integration trajectories in the external opposition to the regime, but it also strongly influenced the European integration priority of the domestic clandestine opposition and advanced the equalisation of democratisation and Europeanisation. Such synonymy would, indeed, last till the current turning point towards Euroscepticism...
as a reaction to the conception of the EU as a socioeconomic model increasingly detached from its ‘human factor’.

It is also important to note, in this regard, the lasting impact which Spanish economic migrants moving to Western European democracies since the beginning of the dictatorship had on the members of the Spanish democratic pro-European opposition, who would also have an important external role later on. As is the case with Carlos María Bru Purón, former President of the Spanish Federal Council of the European Movement, who recalls that:

As a notary in Fontiveros, I experienced the deepest rural Spain, with its hunger, its difficulties, its vicious class divide, etc. And a little later I came to this notary office in Alcobendas, near Madrid, where I was able to witness another phenomenon that made me even more pro-European: Spanish emigrants. Spanish emigrants who left in order to eat — so that they could eat — or send some money home; first to eat and work elsewhere and then to send some money back to their families; they were my clients, but, above all, they were my friends. In this village of Alcobendas I dealt with a lot of people, people who’ve been caricatured, who’ve been portrayed in films with their cardboard suitcases… those Spaniards who went all over Europe…it must be remembered: to Luxembourg for example, where they were welcomed, but also to Switzerland and France, and to Germany, which was growing at the time, and so on. They went to earn a living and send money back to their families, and then they started saving a little to buy a flat or something. I started to deal with them and I saw how much those Spaniards had to put up with, and why? Because the ‘Europe’ that was being built had something very important: the European social model — the welfare state — in other words, male emigrants who were arriving and female emigrants (there were a lot of them too, many women worked in domestic service and in factories as well), since while they were there they had social protection, even though they were foreigners. They were Spanish, but they still had their social protection, and that made me realise how Europe was being built and what the European social model was. All this naturally meant that those of us who wanted democracy in Spain realised that the only way was through European integration. There was an about-turn, just as the system of autocracy was brought to a close, and in order to ensure trade with what was then the European Economic Community.¹

Very remarkably, what these Spanish economic emigrants point out as a valuable defining feature is precisely the socio-economic model of the welfare state, which is later adopted by the democratic opposition to Franco as connatural to a democratic system and as its most humane expression in contrast to the fierce class inequalities reinforced by the regime elites for their own benefit. This association is also the basis for a sustained pro-Europeanism in Spain in the truest sense of the word: rooted in a paradigm of social cohesion according to which Spain could never really be trusted to provide due to the exploitative system of its rigid elites, ‘Europe’ seemed more reliable to the people and capable of delivering. Indeed, the rupture of such equivalence nowadays in the context of the post-austerity prolonged crisis since 2011 is

¹ Cristina Blanco Sío-López, Interview with Carlos María Bru Purón, former President of the Spanish Federal Council of the European Movement – Project ‘Spain and the European Integration Process’, held on the 13th January 2010.
resulting on a growing social reaction against a version of European integration interpreted as ‘treacherously’ sanctioning an ever increasing social inequality.

When asked about how the harsh experience of exile led to the democratic opposition elites prioritising European integration, most involved actors refer to the crucial role played by those who they called ‘our four men in The Hague’, including: “Salvador de Madariaga, a liberal; Indalecio Prieto, a socialist; Doctor Trueta, apolitical but 100 % democrat, and Doctor Xirau, a Valencian and a regionalist”. These four figures’ participation at The Hague Congress in 1948 was significant. More particularly, Salvador de Madariaga, had been Ambassador to the League of Nations, and when the Civil War began he was said by contemporaries to have stayed out of it: “He didn’t want to know about what was happening in Spain, he got on with his studies and his novels, he was a great writer, a great liberal, he chaired the Culture Committee of the Hague Congress.” There were three committees then the political committee with Daladier, the economic committee with Van Zeeland, and the culture committee, which Madariaga was in charge of. The domestic clandestine democratic opposition started communicating with them. A short while later, as a result of these interactions, there was a fundamental move towards the organisation of a meeting which, by bringing together the domestic clandestine opposition and the democrats in exile, aspired to launch Spain’s democratisation via European integration. Carlos Bru explains the genesis of such initially promising turning point with these words:

I think there were 23 of them — pro-European associations which joined the European Movement. The European Movement — by means of the Hague Congress — produced the dossier of what had been, or the memorandum of what could be, the basis of the Council of Europe, which the Treaty of London subsequently gave rise to, because once those 23 organisations had united and joined the European Movement, some European Movement emissaries produced that dossier and went to the Foreign Offices saying that a treaty had to be drawn up. And the model the European Movement produced was the one that subsequently gave rise to the literal text of the treaty. Well, the four Spaniards who had been at the Hague Congress thought that they should form a Spanish Federal Council of the European Movement, just as there was a German, French, Italian Council, etc. So at number 9, avenue Marceau, in Paris, in a historic building that was owned by Basque exiles — the Basque Government in exile — they invited the political forces in exile to set up the Council and, precisely because Spain has always had a problem of identity communities (Catalonia, the Basque Country, Galicia, etc.), the invitations were sent out, but they said that it was going to be along federal lines. So the important and wonderful thing about all this — something I’m proud of — is that the statutes of the European Movement International include this Spanish federal project, yet it’s not called federal, while the Spanish branch,

of the 42 branches of the European Movement International, the only one whose name includes the word ‘federal’ is ours — which I think is marvelous. It’s been federal from the outset because there was an understanding between Catalans and Basques, with both governments in exile, but also with the republican government in exile and with the socialists and liberals in particular, so that’s how this movement was built: the Spanish Federal Council of the European Movement, which people obviously couldn’t talk about in Spain, it was top secret, but we were in on the secret, we made some personal visits, we went to see them and we dealt with them.5

These founding moments in community spaces open to experimentation beyond the limits of the Cold War also allow us to unveil the full pluralist network of Spanish politicians and intellectuals pushing for a common ‘European’ ideal in a parallel transnational dimension. From a migration perspective, it is also interesting to observe that despite having been inspired by the pressing case of Spanish economic migrants, the actions of these intellectual elites in exile in this particular area rarely venture beyond the sphere of theoretical considerations.

Coming back to the change in motion, after having set up the basis for the expected democratization on the horizons, one very influential figure, the socialist and longtime Secretary General of the Spanish Federal Council of the European Movement Enric Adroher i Pascual, or Gironella, as he was generally called, got in touch with the Secretary General of the European Movement International, Robert Van Schendel. Right afterwards, there was a meeting between the Chairman of the Asociación Española de Cooperación Europea (AECE),6 José María Gil-Robles y Quiñones, its Secretary, Fernando Álvarez de Miranda Torres and Carlos María Bru Purón, who acted as Vice-Secretary. They then established relations with the representatives of the European Movement in exile, while concealing the activities of the AECE by branding them as merely ‘cultural’. Through the European Movement International they tried to set up a meeting around 1961-62 in the Balearic Islands to talk about the conditions — the economic, cultural but also the political conditions — that would allow Spain to join the European Economic Community, but the regime prohibited the Balearic Islands meeting. In that moment, they realised that they had to hold such a meeting in exile, outside of Spain, and they conjointly decided to meet in Munich. Edgar Faure personally invited all Spanish representatives from Spain and abroad: there were 128 participants from Spain and around 80 from other countries that attended the Fourth International Congress of the European Movement, also notably called ‘the Munich meeting’. This was a vitally important meeting whose impact on Europe has not been considered properly: the European Movement International

Congress in Munich in 1962\(^7\) established for the first time the need for direct elections to the Assembly, the Assembly of the European Communities, now the European Parliament (EP).

Indeed, that was the meeting that called for the direct universal suffrage for EP elections that prevails today and that has been a long time in the making, from 1962 to 1979. It was the European Movement that declared it, while raising the ‘Spanish issue’. Moreover, a small committee was going to address Spain’s conditions, since the coming together of Spaniards from within and outside of Spain was seen as so significant, and it developed into the major phenomenon of the Munich meeting in June 1962.\(^8\)

As Carlos María Bru Purón recalls:

Out of curiosity and in order to fraternise, I immediately joined the exiles committee, while some of the exiles joined the internal committee, and so on, and we ended up by merging, we ended up making what Madariaga\(^9\) had said that day come true: ‘The two halves of the orange have joined together.’ We were the same, we all had our European calling, Spaniards from within Spain and Spaniards in exile. And I remember an important unscheduled meeting, at night, at which the Spaniards in exile asked why some of us supported the monarchy for the future. And it was a notable liberal monarchist and anti-Francoist, Joaquín Satrústegui — who is remembered very fondly in Spain and who was subsequently a democratic senator, now sadly deceased — who explained how the advantages of the monarchist path of Juan de Borbón or his successor, now our King Juan Carlos de Borbón, could facilitate mutual understanding among Spaniards to ensure a peaceful and pro-European transition. And I remember that the socialists, led by Mr Llopis, said: ‘We will continue to declare ourselves republicans, but if ever a future Spanish democratic chamber debates the form of state, we will not vote against the monarchy.’ That was in 1962 in Munich. It was an emotional moment for us. And it was the solution, we were on the way. Then we were suppressed, some went into exile, others were deported to the islands, it was nothing short of a miracle that I escaped, I spent two years without a passport and with a huge fine, and months and months without being able to work in my profession as a notary, suffering major economic hardship, etc.; in short, we had a really hard time, but it was an example for Europe. And Europe said more than ever: ‘Either the Franco regime changes, or you will never join.’ So then even the regime realised that what the ambiguous expression ‘making provision for the likely outcome of succession’ actually meant was that we would be able to join Europe when Franco died. We couldn’t picture a military solution or a rebellion, and a revolution or military coup was not on the agenda. And what’s more, in light of what was being said, we Spanish democrats — whether

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socialists, liberals or Christian democrats — were against any violence, so we were totally against ETA, which doesn’t mean that we were in favour of repression, because we were against the violent repression meted out in that respect, we were against the violence of rebellion and we were against the violence of repression. But we saw and worked towards that European integration, it was in the offing as the years went by…

Also Marcelino Oreja, the former Secretary General of the Council, of Europe largely condemned the brutal repression of the participants in the Munich meeting, while underlining the principle of reconciliation as a constitutive part of any possible democratic future for Spain within Europe:

There is this idea of reconciliation. It was something that was a great concern for me. And so at that time, when I worked in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, I saw the idea of reconciliation sought by those who attended the Munich Congress — some 70, 80 or 90 people inside and 70 or 80 people outside, excluding those who were intolerant as there was no place for them in that spirit of reconciliation — as a very noble objective. I knew many people who were there, not necessarily friends, because we were very young, but people I knew; and in particular there were some people with whom I have had very close relationships in my life. They include Fernando Álvarez de Miranda, who was President of the Congress of Deputies and a member of the UCD; Satrústegui, another leading figure in the liberal world and a very likeable person, who passed away recently; and a very close friend of mine who had a house in France where he lived for many years, José Vidal Beneyto, who was one of the great promoters of the Spanish group that was there and who, as a result of his presence in Munich, was then unable to return for a long time and lived in France, where he died just a few weeks ago. For me, the Munich Congress was a huge failure for General Franco’s government and it was something that had a far-reaching impact on the development of Minister Castiella’s European policy. In February Minister Castiella had presented a request for negotiations to be opened with the European Communities, and in June the Congress of the European Movement took place in Munich. Obviously, the reaction of the Spanish government, General Franco’s Government, was to prohibit those who had attended from re-entering Spain, send them into exile or order them to stay in certain towns in southern Spain or in the Canaries. It was completely ridiculous. In my opinion, the Munich meeting represented the spirit needed for reconciliation, and one form of reconciliation was recovering the European spirit.

In a similar vein, Carlo Bru also addresses the interconnection between the rising of the Spanish political activity in exile, that of the domestic clandestine opposition and the precarious socio-economic situation of the country in the 1960s, with a particular reference to rural Spain, which explains the massive resort to economic migration:


So why did this Munich ‘conspiracy’ come about? Well, in 1955–56, when the Franco regime couldn’t go on as a dictatorship for economic reasons, there was a policy known as autocracy, which maintained that Spanish production was self-sufficient; it was totally disastrous, with all manner of untruths, all manner of ridiculous claims ... because our economic situation was terrible. In Tangier they handled more money than the Bank of Spain, it’s as simple as that. In Tangier it was to be depreciated progressively every day: it was an unsustainable situation. Well anyway, then they decided to tone the policy of autocracy down and open up trade with the European countries and with North America, etc. But the truth is that that solution wasn’t sufficient because there were no political avenues. So they allowed some cultural associations to talk about Europeanism. Anyway, if you want me to tell you what the official position was, you already know: at the time of the Schuman Declaration and when the Treaty for the European Economic Community was signed the following year, Franco said that it was an indication of the decline of the European democracies. And I remember that in the controlled press as a whole: ABC, YA, etc., it was suggested that they were vague utopian democracies that were doomed to perish, that was the Franco regime’s official position. It had pinned its hopes and its illusions on the United States, Eisenhower’s visit, US bases, etc., but the United States did nothing for democratisation and particularly nothing economically. Another path they sought was the ‘Latin American solution’, but I remember in the offices of the Asociación Española de Cooperación Europea [AECE — Spanish Association for European Cooperation], the Latin Americans themselves who were here, grant holders, academics and teachers, came to Spain and told us that in economic terms the relationship had to be Spain with Europe, because that was where imports and exports were crucial. The production that helped us a great deal was wheat from Perón’s Argentina, but it was only for eating, it wasn’t for trade; so for trade, the Latin Americans themselves and all the fairly well informed economists that were in Spain made us realise that we had to establish relations with the European Community, which was our direct import-export link. So that’s why the regime allowed some ‘cultural’ associations to be formed to study the European phenomenon, and an association known as the Asociación Española de Cooperación Europea came into being, with offices in the Gran Vía and now based in the offices of the Spanish European Movement, and they were to take a cultural approach to the study of European unification rather than a political approach, they didn’t allow us to make political statements. They also allowed a number of research centres in universities — in Zaragoza, Salamanca (overseen by Professor Tierno), Seville (under Carrillo Salcedo), etc. — to carry out a little research into what the political phenomenon of European unification was, but I have to stress that it was only from a scientific and cultural perspective rather than a political perspective. But in the AECE, which I was Vice-Secretary of, political turmoil soon developed. We met in a small room in its offices that has now been preserved even down to the same furniture because it interests us, it’s a historic centre: liberals, Christian democrats, socialists, etc. began to gather there. I was a Christian democrat at the time so I coincided with Mr Gil Robles senior, a conservative but liberal and democratic person who had come back to Spain and was Chairman of the AECE. There were liberals and socialists but no communists yet, because — as you know — they weren’t interested at that time, because Comecon members weren’t in favour of European integration, or at least that was the party line. I say it was the party line, because afterwards in Munich I personally witnessed the interest Spanish communists had in the incipient Eurocommunism and the phenomenon of Spanish integration. And subsequently my European vocation flourished because of a very significant phenomenon: I visited several little villages in deepest rural
Spain, in Andalusia and Castilla y León, which is real deepest rural Spain and saw emigration as the natural reaction to a mere survival question.

**International migration debates and EEC migration frameworks in the 1970s. Impact and traces on Spain’s economic and return migration**

Since the beginning of the 1970s, new political and scholarly considerations regarding the social and economic effects of migration enter the public discourse, causing a lasting influence on the framing of EEC policies and measures geared towards migrants, including economic emigrants from Spain. One important example are the Conclusions of the Committee for International Coordination of National Research on Demography, with a special focus on the *CICRED Seminar on Demographic Research in Relation to Economic Development* published in 1974,\(^\text{12}\) in which it is stated that “all economic growth, indeed, involves some form of mobility (internal or international). There is, accordingly, a clear relation between international migration and economic development”.

Despite this larger international mindset, Western European countries did not promote freer mobility in the 1970s, thus restraining the liberalisation of the Scandinavian labour market and that of the European Community member states. Concomitantly, migration was not perceived then as advantageous to all parties involved, as it was an instrument designed to serve the short-term needs of the receiving labour markets. Indeed, another aspect of migration which was greatly overlooked was the promotion of development within a larger region, a view which particularly stood in contradiction to the proclaimed cohesion aspirations of Western European democracies in the overall process of European integration.

The preference for short-term considerations in EEC migration policy at that time was also evident in the restrictions that some countries (for instance, West Germany) imposed in response to the effects of the oil crisis during that period, but, most importantly, due to social and political factors.\(^\text{13}\) As a matter of fact, in this particular context, many nationals of industrialised countries who had considered leaving the continent under more stringent economic conditions decided to stay, and many Southern Europeans, including Spaniards, then preferred to move and work temporarily in nearby relevant industrial nodes. Despite these trends, an upsurge of overseas migration, comparable in scale and structure to the rapidly evolving intra-Euro-


pean migration back then, would have been rather unlikely. Against this backdrop, the receiving countries in Western Europe competed mainly for skilled rather than for unskilled labour, which made up the bulk of intra-European migrants.

It is important to specify that, overall, foreign workers in most West European countries did not face very advantageous conditions in the period between the 1960s and the 1970s: they were often forced to accept unskilled, low-paying jobs; they usually could not bring their families with them and their sojourn was strictly limited by contract; they were not supposed to stay in the receiving country to fully integrate; they were regularly discriminated against by the nationals of the given host country and sometimes even by national trade unions. If they would take on all these impending difficulties, it meant the economic advantage of emigration had to be really high. And that seemed to be the case: the possibility of securing employment at wages three and four times higher than in Spain was a strong incentive for migration for Spanish workers who did not adjust their private consumption or personal lifestyles to such high wages on a permanent basis, but saw emigration as a way to fund their families’ well-being in their home country. If such was the motivation in Spain and other sending countries, their development rate was surely below the level required to adequately use their labour potential. In other words, if development was to be accelerated, emigration was expected to decrease. The same should have generally been the case for Southern European countries, but where Spain is concerned, the repression of any organised labour movement kept wages artificially low in contrast with most West European industrialised countries. In such conditions, emigration went on longer, despite progressive domestic development. Especially suggestive of the rapidly increasing labour surplus in the least-developed sending areas in Spain was the incidence of clandestine migration, not only towards key industrial nodes, but also toward Spain, which incipiently became short of certain kinds of low-paid agricultural labourers as a result of excessive outward migration from the 1960s to the 1970s.

In this context, EEC industrialised countries were, hence, faced with a choice of three possible options to enhance GNP growth: “(a) To substitute capital for labour, as annual production generated a constant share of savings to be invested (assuming a constant propensity to save); (b) to invest abroad; or (c) to invest in the domestic economy but to import foreign labour to man the factories”. Since the end of the Second World War, Western European industrialised countries were more in favour

15. Tapinos, note 1.
of the last option. Indeed, it was for this reason that migrant workers posed a challenge once full employment had been attained and the industry was unable to guarantee further reserves from the agricultural sector.

From a more global perspective and on a contextualising note, it is important to bear in mind that both inward and outward migration flows were institutionalised during this period within the framework of Multilateral Treaties, including those consolidated by various international organisations such as the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the United Nations (UN) and the Council of Europe, which were engaged in the coordination and unification of treaties in this field. The aim of these agreements was to avoid conflict between different systems and to ensure some basic common standards. For example, the ILO Agreement 97 from this period promoted a convenient free service designed to assist migrant workers and, in particular, to provide them with accurate information. Moreover, the Council of Europe adopted a European Social Security code and incorporated in the European Social Charter a section on the right of migrant workers and their families to protection and assistance. These bodies also made recommendations to their member states aimed at unifying and coordinating action taken by the various national authorities. Some examples include ILO recommendations on the housing of workers and the EEC recommendation on Social Services for migrants.

Furthermore, also the influence of the judiciary at the EEC level left a lasting impact on the implementation of EC-wide measures regarding intra-European migration. One significant example could be that of the 1975 Rutili Judgment, in which the European Court of Justice provides a ruling on restrictive public policies that curtail the free movement of workers in the EEC Member States. As an exception to a fundamental principle of European Community law, its application must comply with all EC rules. Accordingly, any measures taken by a Member State against a person must be based exclusively on the personal conduct of the individual and whether he poses a genuine and sufficiently serious threat, and this must apply indiscriminately to nationals of the host country and to all other EC nationals. How-

17. This code comprised facilities for departure, travel and reception of migrants, regulations on equal treatment and special provisions for the maintenance of established rights. See European Social Charter. Council of Europe “Research 1966” - Recommendations of the Committee of Ministers – Reports from the Social Committee of the special representative for refugees and surplus population, Strasbourg, 1966.


http://www.cvce.eu/content/publication/1999/1/1/fba5ff56-a872-4ae4-a8f2-a505ed57cb54/publishable_en.pdf (last accessed on 27 October 2016).
ever, it is important to note that a new and more open course was defined in contrast to this judgment when Eduardo García de Enterría was elected: in April 1978, he was the first Spanish judge at the European Court of Human Rights, a position he held until 1986. Indeed, he upheld that Spain became party to the various conventions and treaties adopted by the Council of Europe, such as the European Convention on the Legal Status of Migrant Workers, thus introducing leverage as well as a tempering measure with respect to previous and more restrictive rules in Community migration issues. This is a paradigmatic example of how migration and enlargement correlate with facilitating a democratic, freer space for acclimatising and truly experiencing belonging to the ‘Community’.

**Political transitions and socioeconomic dimensions of Spanish migration from the negotiations to EC accession to full-membership**

The context of change of the mid-1970s in Spain was also defined by an important new trend, namely, return migration, which coincided with a major parallel process of transition to democracy and political negotiations for EEC accession. This trend was explained by the economic impact and, most importantly, by the socio-political effects of the oil crisis especially in West Germany and in France, who temporarily closed their borders to immigration, leaving them open only for migrants coming from EEC Member States and for nationals of countries with special cooperation agreements. More specifically, it is important to note that these borders temporarily closed to labour immigration were left open only for relatives of already established immigrants and EEC migrants. Within this context, the number of Spaniards regarded as emigrants in 1970 has been estimated to be about three and a half million. The majority – especially as far as emigration to EEC member states is concerned – reflected a rural mindset in relation to the attained level of occupation, attitude, outlook on employment and career plans, etc. Emigration records of other states in the Mediterranean area, like Italy, Greece, Turkey and the former Yugoslavia, evidenced similar features. Regarding the notion of return migration, Spanish migrants seemed to prioritise the accumulation of foreign currency over occupational promotion and career concerns. At the same time, the paradigmatic Mediterranean migrant of this period seemed to prefer “the multiplication of hours of overtime to the sacrifice of some time and money to various training courses. He does not appear to be as much


interested in social mobility in the host society, in relation to which he feels himself in a fringe situation, as in economic and social improvement in his society of origin”. Against this backdrop, “his frequent aims are generally related to the purchase of an apartment and of agricultural machinery, to generating bank savings and self-employment, etc. This explains that only 6% of foreign workers employed in the Federal Republic of Germany in the mid-1970s were in the specialist grade”. However, Spanish migrants, and the Mediterranean migrant in general, are usually considered merely as labourers in this context, both as a result of a lack of technical know-how and due to the fact that they were more useful and profitable in practical and low-skilled tasks.

As the flow of Spanish emigration to other EC countries picked up, it underwent a period of crisis as the possibility of accumulating savings gradually decreased. That was the case of Spanish migration to France, where migration policies encouraged longer stays. Spanish citizens adapted to this new context through associative activities, which gathered together a good number of Spaniards living and working in France. Such associations, also promoted integration tools within a variety of EC initiatives, provided a space for socialisation and a means of recreating the culture of origin. Some of them, furthermore, even acquired a critical awareness of the emigrant condition. These activities also played a fundamental role in offering a radically different socialisation with transnational civic values and a politicisation experience to migrant workers coming from countries with dictatorships – as was the case with Spain – since it allowed them to contact and participate in labour organisations, in democratic political parties and in political organisations addressing the particular conditions of economic and political exile, which also had a remarkable influence on activism patterns during transition periods in return migrants’ communities.

This specific Spanish migration wave to the EEC, from 1973 to 1986, also coincided with the first oil crisis and with a general lack of contracts for Southern European migrants in the most developed EEC member states. In the next phase, from 1986 to 1992, Spanish migrants ceased to be considered as such to become EEC workers, holding equal rights to those of EEC member states, even if free circulation was dependent on transition periods.

23. Ibid.
Coming back to the crucial period of Spain’s negotiations for EC accession, Manuel Marín, the former Vice-President of the European Commission and one of the first Spanish Members of the Commission right after accession, reminds us of the importance of the particular national reluctances to Spain’s accession as regards to migration patterns:

Each and every EC member state was then having doubts, on two of the accession negotiation packages: the agricultural package and the fisheries package, basically, because they thought that those were Spain’s strong suits. Then, we had the immigration problem with Germany, because with the Germans, whenever there is an accession, they pull out the old ‘Polish plumber’ syndrome. During the most recent elections in France then, people also said that there was going to be an influx of Spaniards to the country … But as you know, the effect in Spain was just the reverse.28 There was no need for a seven-year transitional period. As Spain entered a period of rapid expansion, many people who were part of the immigration phenomenon returned to Spain. This brought us professional experience, qualified workers, people interested in setting up small and medium-sized businesses, etc. The return of those immigrants who had spent 20 years living and working in Europe was very useful for us too. The reverse effect occurred.

Taking also into account the concomitant configuration of a ‘People’s Europe’ and of the progressive Schengen Area with its interrelated fundamental notion of ‘free movement of persons’ since the mid-1980s, it is significant to refer to a less known development involving Spanish workers in the continent. In 1986, and in the midst of key turning points in the history of European integration, such as the signature of the Single European Act29 modifying the Treaty of Rome and the accession of Spain and Portugal to the Community, there was a lively debate—especially kept going by the EP—on the key question of the virtual cost of a non-united Europe in relation to Schengen area debates.

Against this backdrop, the EP urged the Commission to make public the actual total cost — including the social costs — of a potentially non-united Europe and to provide the European Parliament with the information necessary to undertake political action to stimulate the Council to arouse public interest in the European Community on this matter.30

28. See also Cristina Blanco Sío-López, Interview with Director of the Directorate B in charge of Candidate Countries, Directorate General for Enlargement (DG ELARG), European Commission, held in Brussels on 1st December 2005. The interviewee corroborated the lack of fundament of the fear towards a massive Spanish migration towards the EC in the wake of accession, since this migration had already taken place in the period from the 1960s to the 1970s.


In 1988 this question took a new turn, since the issue of the free movement of persons was analysed and put forward by the EP in the form of a consolidated concept of a ‘People's Europe’, placing again the human factor of European integration at the centre of the political discussion. Hence, the free movement of persons auspicated and launched by the Schengen Agreements was then carefully examined as the seed for a European Community based on the democratic expression and impact of citizens' voices, in line with the EP's guiding principles.

It is then that the notion of a People's Europe also came to encompass —as shown by the evolution of EP debates at the time— the overarching principle of solidarity, implying not only alleviation of poverty, but also the redistribution of social welfare provisions and securing their sustainability. In a similar vein, Spanish MEP Juan de Dios Ramírez Heredia (S-ES) emphasised the need to conciliate the creation of a 'European consciousness' through the press and communications media with the socio-economic development of the European Community, but also touched upon the interrelated factor of tenable welfare procurement for a 'People's Europe':

I also agree that is fundamentally competitiveness in economic relations that will make our Community even stronger. But I believe in a People's Europe which cares about the poor, the deprived, the unemployed, those who suffer from the lack of collective solidarity in this Peoples' Europe that so many love to evoke, the one that firmly turns its back on the tragedy of everyday subsistence that many families experience. Madam President, I believe in a People's Europe where our Parliament shows solidarity to those who suffer most or with those who have most to bear.31

Indeed, if there is a freedom associated with the Schengen Agreements which evidences the dynamic interplay between the solidarity principle and the constructive potential of facilitated upward social mobility, it is precisely the freedom of movement of persons guaranteed by the Schengen Agreements in 1985, enshrined in the Single European Act of 1986, and further deepened in the 1990 Convention that came into force in 1995.

One interesting discussion in this context covered the special case of East Germany's EC integration and how it links with the demand of the right of free movement of persons for Spanish and Portuguese citizens. Indeed, as a result of German unification, the citizens of the former German Democratic Republic acquired the full rights laid down in the Treaties and in EC secondary legislation with regard to the free movement of workers without transition period. This aroused criticism from Portuguese and Spanish EP representatives, who considered it inadmissible that any discrimination or comparative disadvantage, albeit transitional, should persist in this area between citizens of the Member States. Hence, they called for freedom of movement for Portuguese and Spanish workers in the other Member States and for the transition period to be brought to an end.32

The active role of Spanish MEPs in the EP Schengen area debates was also very remarkable, especially taking into account their principle-based normative approach. This is the case with MEP Mohamed Ali (GUE-NGL-ES) who also warned about the progressive emergence of significant new forms of discrimination linked to the free movement of persons: “As regards the functioning of the Schengen Agreements, we regret the emergence of new forms of discrimination: on the one hand between citizens of the Union on grounds of nationality, and on the other with regard to the citizens of third countries legally residing in the Union".33 He also criticised a Schengen Information System (SIS) as a database of undesirable aliens, which could list even those who had no criminal records: "I should like to voice my concern about the fact that the Schengen Information System is used chiefly as a databank for undesirable aliens, including foreigners with no previous criminal record or who are without means."34 Furthermore, this Spanish representative also condemned the advancement of a 'Fortress Europe' via Schengen by asserting the need to avoid "any kind of discrimination against citizens of non-member countries legally residing in the Union and turning Europe into a veritable fortress".35

This involvement also evidenced the incipient analysis of new positions in Spain towards an increasing immigration from third countries which took into account both the previous experience of Spaniards as primarily economic emigrants to the EEC and also the fundamental identifying principles ascribed to the European integration process itself by new Spanish representatives in the European Institutions.36

Spain’s full membership and the modalities of incorporation of outbound migration feedback to tackle inbound migration since the 1990s

From the 1990s onwards, Spanish workers started moving to different EEC Member states as highly qualified professionals,37 and also benefited from high educational capital to develop transnational careers, seeking particular working environments,

37. PIONEUR Project, Pioneers of Europe’s Integration ‘from Below’: Mobility and the Emergence of European Identity among National and Foreign Citizens in the EU, European Commission, Fifth Framework Programme, Key Action ‘Improving the Socio-economic Knowledge Base’, 2006.
innovative lifestyles and diverse consumption patterns. This trend was consolidated remarkably via EEC/EU diploma recognition schemes, which gradually implemented a harmonised standard of professional qualifications in old and new EU member States, constituting a key socioeconomic factor for the deepening of European integration.

In this respect, it is also fundamental to address the political and socioeconomic impact of the Schengen Agreement and of the Amsterdam Treaty (1997), as well as the special attention paid to the EU Social Policy Agreement, and to the subsequent EU-wide provisions on the free movement of persons with regard to visas, asylum and immigration.

As already mentioned, the Spanish economy had experienced a very significant development in the mid-1970s. In this context, migrants’ remittances became an actual trigger of economic growth. By contrast, the overall economic growth which followed EEC accession drew a wave of extra-European migration during the late 1980s, especially focused on agricultural labour in the Mediterranean basin, which came to be socially acknowledged only at the end of the 1990s. In this regard, Spain started following the same pattern of Greece and Italy, notably characterised by lower fertility rates and an aging population as well as by higher education levels in Southern Europe. This resulted in a refusal of younger generations to concentrate on the primary sector, instead prioritising a search for more qualified jobs. Hence, the internal demand coming from sectors such as agriculture, household jobs, construction work and catering increased accordingly. This new extra-European migration provided manpower mainly to SMEs, but fell, in many occasions, into the realm of informal economy. From this viewpoint, it is important to bear in mind that “in highly segmented labour markets, immigrants occupied and still occupy the worst positions, not only regarding salaries and work conditions, but also in terms of instability and lack of Social Security protection”.

In the period that extends from the 1990s to the beginning of the 21st century, Southern Europe, but Spain in particular, became the main destination of a new wave of extra-European migration to the EU. Indeed, according to Eurostat, “Italy and Spain received 56% of total EU immigration that arrived during the period...
1997-2008, while Spain alone received 50% of the total during the past decade, 2000-2009”.  

The fact that Spain was at the forefront of a new wave of extra-European migration deeply transformed its role and attitude in relation to the measures taken by the EU in this field. For instance, Spain gradually acquired a more proactive role in the design of an evolving EU migration policy and promoted the establishment of FRONTEX in 2004. At the same time, the country maintained demands that the Northern EU member states get involved in addressing the challenges of migration in the EU. Moreover, “the establishment in 2007 of a European financial fund for the return of irregular migrants or the launching of European repatriation joint flights were also results of this Spanish demand for bigger implication of Northern countries in the financial cost of immigration management”. It was also remarkable that social integration initiatives and associated activities regarding extra-European migration in Spain were mainly encouraged and maintained within the sphere of Spanish civil society.

In 2008, Spain was also actively involved in the elaboration of the European Pact on Immigration and Asylum, resulting from a French proposal, which included the restrictive notion of creating an “immigration contract”. However, such an initiative was later refused by the Spanish government at that time, despite the concession to incorporate an institutional option to block mass regularisations of immigrants’ status within the Pact. In this respect, “the European Union has played a double role in the Spanish immigration process: Spain has obtained EU support in the financial and political effort to reduce irregular migration, especially coming from Africa, and has used EU decisions as external legitimization for the introduction of domestic policies that could arouse opposition”.  

43. In comparative terms, the effect of this migration wave is bigger in Spain than in Italy, as the size of the native population is much smaller. All in all, Spain received more than 5 million new migrants (i.e. net migration) during the 2000s, over a population of 40 million at the beginning of the period in a process of unknown intensity in Europe. From being 0.5% of the population in 1985, the number of immigrants amounted to 14% in 2010. Refer to Carmen González Enríquez, Spain: The Making of Immigration Policies in the Southern Frontier of the EU, 1985-2010, in: Joaquín Roy, María Lorca-Susino (eds.), Note 21, p. 118.

44. Ibid.

Spanish EU decision-makers from the 1990s onwards tended to incorporate the values and norms of the European integration in their approaches to tackle the rising external migration coming both from the Mediterranean and from the East. In this regard, their views served to further illustrate the aforementioned deeply intertwined correlation between enlargement and migration, which was, rather paradoxically, characterised by giving priority to new democratic elite actors which became progressively less and less concerned about upward mobility. As a result, the weight of solidarity and cohesion in community building as an intrinsic element of European integration re-emerged, by contrast, within popular opposition in the wake of the current economic crisis.

Manuel Marín, for instance, refers to the fact that in terms of identity, European values are what they are. It should be much easier to control the excesses of racism and xenophobia, to reach a basic agreement on the immigration issue in order to provide some equilibrium in the matter, to consolidate the systems for protecting European citizens; this can also be achieved and we will then be able to guarantee the applicability of these systems to all Europeans and then to the rest of the world, because we are a peaceful continent and one which above all wants to export its values and to help and cooperate, but if you mix all this up with politics which is often, as they say in French, minable, pathetic, in order to win your constituency and so on, the system breaks down, really breaks down.46

From a different perspective, Marcelino Oreja relates the immigration phenomenon to the European Union’s (EU) need to clearly define the guiding principles of its relations with third countries:

I believe that Europe must play a leading role in European issues, which are also universal issues. It has to find solutions to the major problems facing humanity, including climate change, which is a hugely important topic, and our position in Copenhagen was completely inadequate. I am also thinking of immigration issues, and in this regard we should lay down guidelines within a global legal framework that guarantees respect for human dignity. We also need to find solutions to the problems of the continents that are deprived of a decent standard of living, such as Africa; we need to ensure that the focus is on those who are in need and those who are neglected. We can’t forget that there is a continent that is completely on the margins when it comes to human welfare, and that is a responsibility. Europe has to be aware of the idea of universality. In other words, Europe is differentiation, because it has specific characteristics of its own, Europe is humanity, it is respect for individual rights and it is universality: that means that we have to be open to the rest of the world and be a continent that welcomes people rather than excluding them. (…) I believe Europe is unfinished because Europe is constantly being created. However, in my view, what we have to do is ensure that we do not forget about European values: there are economic ideas, technological ideas and so on, but European values — freedom, solidarity — are the most important values, and we must help to develop them, promote them and improve them. We must never rest if someone else is cut off from the civilised world, not just within

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46. Cristina Blanco Sío-López, Interview with Manuel Marín González, former State Secretary for Relations with the European Communities and Head of the Negotiating Team for Spain’s Accession to the European Communities (1982–1985) – Project ‘Spain and the European Integration Process’, held on the 13th of April 2010.
Europe, but outside it, too. That is Europe’s duty and its primary goal; it must put an end to the global apartheid of peoples, races and civilisations who at this moment in time do not have a decent life, a life that encompasses respect for the individual. That is our primary goal and until we achieve it Europe will always remain unfinished.47

In a mindset which interrelates the various stages of enlargement with the shifting attention of European integration from the Mediterranean to Eastern Europe, Jordi Pujol, former President of the Assembly of European Regions, indicates that “the European centre of gravity used to be in France and Germany. Then there was a period when the Mediterranean gained weight (before entering the current somewhat turbulent period, which has so far lasted 20 years) because Italy had gained weight. Spain, Portugal and Greece joined. They too developed well, and, indeed, North Africa began to be thought of as important. I always used to say as I travelled through Europe that the Mediterranean was Europe’s most delicate frontier, especially since the fall of the Berlin Wall. The Mediterranean frontier is the frontier with underdevelopment, demographic explosion, major migration and ideological risk from Islamists and so on, but Europe finds this very difficult to understand; Northern Europe won’t hear anything of it. I have given conferences in Hamburg and Stockholm on the subject or in England and noticed that they weren’t interested. Anyway, the centre of gravity moved south, but now it has moved back north, of course, because Poland has joined, the whole of Eastern Europe has joined […] powerful Central Europe, Eastern Europe. In short, Italy, France and Spain have not done things well, but it’s difficult because there are many problems in the Mediterranean.”48

Pujol elaborates on this view by problematising immigration rather than exploring the economic and social development potentials that were contemplated in earlier periods:

Immigration is a major challenge. One of the problems in Europe, incredible though it is, is that European politicians have never attached importance to demography. I’m one of those who think that there are many elements in politics but that three are more necessary than others: a knowledge of history, a knowledge of geography and a knowledge of demography. How many of us are there? Who are we? How many of us will there be? — that’s an easy one to calculate — how many of us will there be in 20 years? We know that now. How many young people will we have in 20 years’ time? We know that now. How many elderly people will we have in 20 years’ time? We know that now, more or less. And that is the basis for constructing policy. Not in Europe … There are only three countries, four at the most, which have had a birth-rate policy: France and the Scandinavian countries; Ireland has not implemented a birth-rate policy, but has had a birth-rate policy; Spain has experienced complete resignation and complete disinterest in this matter. So that’s the situation on the one hand, and on the other we have ageing. Then there is immigration because there are major imbalances between our world and the African world, the South

American world, the Asian world, Filipinos and Pakistanis come here, etc. Immigration is really very high, it’s a major challenge in Catalonia because, so I believe, Catalonia is the European country where immigration is highest, we have little political power and we’re a small country and it is therefore a problem from many points of view, including in terms of identity. Leaving Catalonia to one side for a moment, it is an issue that has been very difficult for Europe and much more so for Spain to understand that it is a matter — let’s not call it a problem, because it’s true that it’s also a challenge, a chance or an opportunity, but it is something that we have to manage well, conduct well, because although it could be an opportunity it could also become a huge drawback. I believe it would be good for Europe to have the most uniform immigration policy possible; one hundred per cent uniformity will clearly not be possible because the countries are different. But this question must be examined seriously.

José María Gil-Robles, former President of the European Parliament and son of the aforementioned exiled Spanish representative of the same name, also considers the challenges of immigration from the viewpoint of the EU’s Euro-Mediterranean policy:

Well, I think that the European Union has more or less reached its limit in terms of the new members it can incorporate, but it should establish very special relations with its neighbours: on the one hand, the neighbourhood policy is specifically directed towards the East and, on the other, one aspect of neighbourhood policy is the Euro-Mediterranean policy. These are the regions from which we were invaded throughout our history, so it is in our interests that they are well developed and prosperous and enjoy good relations with the European Union. The Mediterranean, like the East, is now an area of peaceful immigration — the peaceful invasion of the present time. As such, it is the subject of a Community policy. I think we have managed to avoid the Union for the Mediterranean becoming a process solely for the European countries on the Mediterranean. It is a process with implications for the entire Community and in which all the countries of the Community should participate. Secondly, it’s a process that will take a great deal of time, because we have a situation where the Union is an integrated whole, with a highly evolved civil society, whereas neither of these conditions are in place for the countries south of the Mediterranean: they do not form an integrated whole, have no interest in integration and have only a fledgling civil society, which means that relations are unstable. They can be improved with this or that Mediterranean country, but it’s difficult to build on them with these countries as a whole.49

Gil-Robles’ initiative to create the so-called ‘migrant card’ was developed during his Presidency of the EP. Indeed, such an initiative very much summarises his take on immigration from the Southern Mediterranean to the EU:

Immigration policy is a sensitive one, because it’s caught between two needs. Firstly, Europe needs immigration — we will still need at least 20 million immigrants over the next decade, which is easily said. Yet on the other hand, these immigrants need to be integrated, otherwise they will return to their countries of origin — though the majority do not — so they must be integrated. And this is a tricky process, in which it is still too

49. Cristina Blanco Sío-López, Interview with José María Gil-Robles Gil-Delgado, former President of the European Parliament – Project ‘Spain and the European Integration, held on the 9th of March 2010.
early to speak of any great success. Instead, the avalanche of immigrants is provoking very strong grass-roots opposition, with the risk of xenophobia or outbreaks of xenophobia and racism in European countries — today nobody is in a position to preach, because we have all suffered or are all suffering from this situation to a greater or lesser extent. We therefore need to act while maintaining this difficult balance: integrating immigrants while attempting to regulate the flow to prevent an overload. We’re tackling it using trial and error. We must wait and see whether we have any success, but it will be difficult. You asked me about the migrant card: it would be of crucial value for integration, but it’s also crucial that it is not conceived as an empty gesture; the card must be given to people who have been in the European Union for some time and who are acquainted with it, to those with a real desire to integrate, and various systems are being trialed in different countries to verify the existence of this desire to integrate. If both conditions are met — a sufficiently lengthy period of residence and the desire to integrate — the card should grant immigrants the same opportunities for travel, work and association that Europeans enjoy.

Ignacio Samper, former Director of the EP Office in Spain, also considers that “third country nationals’ migration has a direct positive potential impact on the future development of their own countries upon return via the qualifications they obtain in the EU.” Nonetheless, he interprets the EU’s need for migrants’ manpower as a development retardant for their home countries of equally negative effects. This would perpetuate poverty in the global South, but, in the eyes of this practitioner, the solution to this challenge is not to be found in mere bilateral cooperation agreements, but in the coordinated engagement of the EU as a whole.

Nowadays, many of these concerns have been tied to different key political issues, including the increasing disposability of the workforce and the question of the waning advocacy and lobbying on behalf of EU workers. Whereas in previous periods their requests had to be acknowledged due to the fact that workers’ leverage was their labour itself — which the economic model was dependent on — such negotiation power has subsequently indeed been weakened. For when labour becomes overabundant, dispensable and increasingly ubiquitous, these negotiations enter an era of challenging redefinitions. Hopefully, these redefinitions will be at the level of the issues at stake and will possibly include considerations based on past experiences and good practices derived from foundational principles of European integration (solidarity, socioeconomic cohesion…) in order to avert any involution of community-building towards the largely condemned ‘Fortress Europe’.

Conclusion

The Spanish case does not only constitute a most significant instance of the correlation between migration and enlargement, but its complexity also brings about a number

of insightful questions which may be key for the future of Europe. The first question refers to the potential positive impact of migration on the economic growth of host countries. This would be in direct relation with an inquiry into the effects of migration in home countries: Could such vectors lead to an underuse of human capital in host states? Furthermore, in the current context of a multilevel crisis and of attacks to the European social model, it would be relevant to ask about the effects of a dismantlement of the welfare state and of austerity measures on those already willing to move without being forced, once again, by economic hardships. In a similar vein, it would also be advisable to take into account the problematic of European innovation and technology centers and peripheries, which, very interestingly, corresponds with the economic crisis’ re-emerging geographical cleavages in the continent. This ties in, once again, with the possibility of a long-term loss in the socioeconomic, cultural and human capital in countries of origin.

Another important question in this realm would be how to enhance cohesion as a result of mobility within the EU and to ponder the interrelated effects for EU foreign relations. From a social perspective, the increasing number of Spaniards who leave because of the crisis but who would not have left otherwise, tend to experience such situations as a personal and intimate tragedy and as a generational failure since they observe that their living conditions are worse than those of their parents.

Very importantly, the Spanish case appears to evidence how a common ‘space’ can become a ‘vehicle’ in the sense that European integration, the European economic area and the Schengen area were used as a ‘vehicle of opportunity’ and potentiality for life and work prospects and as guarantors of an integrated supranational area mobility. However, the creation of a functional structure, which has neither become an organic sustainable ecosystem nor an entity enhanced by a consciously promoted common sense of civic value and of community-building, currently feels that it has reached its own potential development limits. We might wonder whether there has been an excessive influence and competence of EU Member States in mobility and migration and not enough Community-based actions. In fact, has this actually hindered the evolution of the principles of solidarity and socio-economic cohesion and their application to migration policies?

It is very relevant to observe now, in this sense, the evolving networks of Spanish intra-European migrants, which are made up of, on the one hand, qualified ‘forced/no choice’ labor migrants who experience migration as a personal and family tragedy and who focus on associations. The other group is constituted by (economically enabled) Spanish citizens who willingly move and, in turn, focus on networks devoted to practical issues and cultural activities. Very remarkably, Spanish networks abroad focusing on career advancement and professional development are international, multicultural and sector/discipline oriented, not nationality-based. The pressing question from this perspective would be: Do they favor the establishment of an integrating and globally comprehensible public space? Is there possibly a dialogue between these two types of Spanish intra-European migrants beyond past commonalities and abstract categories such as ‘intellectuals in exile’ and ‘economic migrants’?
The incongruity between merits, qualifications and experience on the one hand, and job opportunities on the other hand, along with a degradation of a stable upward social mobility and career development, is a trend that spreads like fire from South to North in the EU. However, the EU could potentially reignite a space of solidarity and opportunity. Lastly, we should also wonder about which are the multilevel long-term effects of this growing inequality resulting from the economic crisis?

Scholarly analysis in this field, also placing the Spanish case in a broader context, debates the facts that “(a) EU enlargement had a significant impact on migration flows from new to old Member States, (b) restrictions applied in some of the countries did not stop migrants from coming, but changed the composition of the immigrant groups, (c) any negative effects in the labour market on wages or employment are hard to detect, (d) post-enlargement migration contributes to growth prospects of the EU, (e) these immigrants are strongly attached to the labour market, and (f) they are quite unlikely to be among welfare recipients. These conclusions point out the difficulties that restrictions on the free movement of workers bring about”.

As a response, and in a context characterised by the socioeconomic challenges of a multilevel crisis and the depreciation of the social dimension of the European community, it would be advisable to openly address the issue of how regional imbalances could be resolved more easily through coordinated action towards free circulation of workers within the EU. In sum, a more pan-European perspective, beyond national interests, would help in finding comprehensive migration strategies in line with the evolution and potentialities of the European integration process. From the start, these processes have been triggered by economic measures while pursuing an essentially political objective. This meant the progressive transformation of a common market and legal framework into a contested yet consensual entity more and more willing to deal with the challenges of a deeper political union.

In conclusion, it is precisely now that the free movement of persons within a EU framework is decidedly at stake, that it is important to bear in mind that the EU is more than a market, politics more than a business model and to reaffirm the idea of the EU as a political player ethically committed to upholding the human rights, solidarity and social cohesion dimensions of the European integration process. This could be approached, for instance, by revisiting the debated principles of a ‘People’s Europe’ at the inception of the Schengen area, which saw no distinction between citizens, legal or illegal residents, etc. Especially many Spanish players at the European level, either coming from a political or from a civil society background, have largely upheld that particular ‘we the people' emphasis, so clearly mirroring the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It is probably our turn now to link the notion of

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an essential quality of democracy at the EU level to the potential and transformative power of participatory democracy involving free mobile citizens.

Such daunting questions are especially important in times characterised by the reversal of fundamental rights concerning migration and asylum, by the degradation of the quality of democracy and by the forced pre-eminence of a view\textsuperscript{52} on migration that focuses on security rather than on conciliating migration and a much-needed sustainable development principle. Therefore, it is fundamental to learn from the historical experience of the most socially engaging and suitable elements of any relevant migration-development retroaction cycle, even if the case of Spain is rife with much tense complexity and neglect. This view might then also enhance the re-emergence of essential principles in hindsight, like the aforementioned solidarity and socio-economic cohesion, as renewed motors capable of reviving the compelling force and ethical imperatives of the European integration process.
