

Analysis of the National Integration Situation in Schools in SPAIN.

In the past 20 years, Spain has received high migration inflows. In fact, its fast transformation from an emigration to an immigration country is unprecedented. In 1996, the UN Population Report (UNFPA, 1997) did not mention Spain among the main international destinations for immigrants. Yet, in 2006, the same report highlighted Spain as the 10th country by the number of international migrants, hosting some 2.5 per cent of the total world stock (UNFPA, 2007–2008). This research report provides a description of the situation of immigrant students at the national and local level, trying to shine a light on the perception and management of immigrant students within the Spanish educational system.

During the last two decades years, changes in the Spanish educational system have had a broad and very significant impact. Several factors have been critical:

- (1) The progressive decentralization of education by the government, now a responsibility of regional governments;
- (2) The extension of compulsory education to the age of 16; and,
- (3) The increase in the number of immigrant students, which has significantly added to the existing cultural diversity. The enrolment of immigrant students in Spanish schools is a relatively recent phenomenon (starting 20 years ago) when compared with other European countries.

Therefore, the number of immigrant pupils in Spain has grown significantly during recent decades, especially since the beginning of the millenium. During the 2005–2006 academic year, there were more than half a million immigrant students in Spain, whereas twenty years ago there were only approximately 50,000. Spain's educational system can now be considered truly multicultural, albeit this is a relatively new phenomenon.

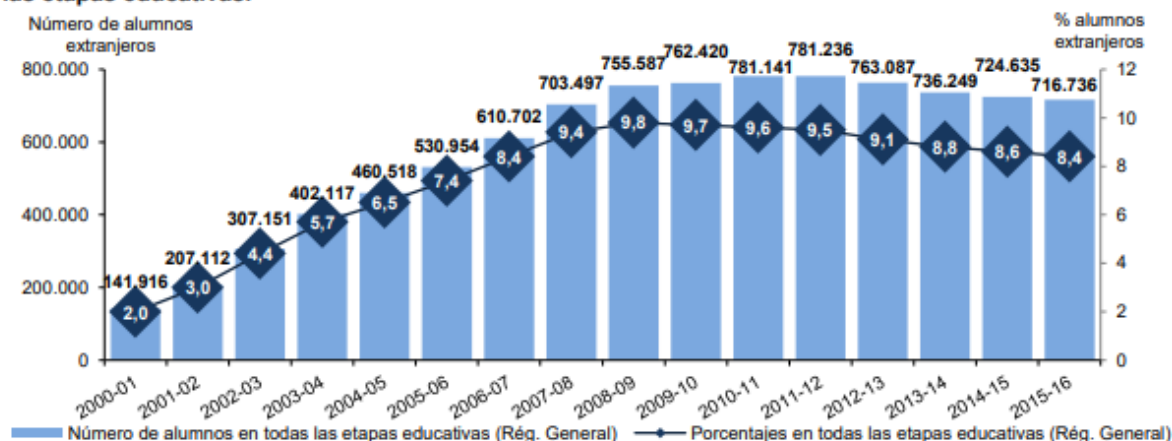
Current Migration/Integration

What are currently relevant migrant groups (at school)? Where do they come from?

Will they stay – or how long?

The Spanish National institute of statistics (INE) documented over 721,000 immigrant students in the school year 2016/2017. The number of students that come from outside Spain has grown a lot since the year 2000. The following graph shows the percentages of foreign students enrolled in Spain from the years 2000 to 2016:

E3. Gráfico 1: Evolución del alumnado extranjero escolarizado en Enseñanzas no universitarias en todas las etapas educativas.



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As we can see in the graph above, the percentage of immigrant students in Spain increased very significantly from the period of 2000-2009 (9,8%), thereafter stabilising at close to 9% of the general student population. In the school year 2015/2016 there were 716.736 immigrant students. Europe is the biggest source of migration for Spain (33,7%), closely followed by Africa (30,8%). Latinamerica, mainly South America, is the next significant source of migration of immigrant students to Spain, (25,7%). Students coming from Asia make up only 9,7% of the number of immigrant students. Some of the families that come to Spain stay for a long period of time, whereas others migrate to other countries in Europe, or return to their respective country. In addition, there are an estimated 600,000 undocumented immigrants in Spain (CIBERESP, 2016), one of the highest rates in the EU, despite favorable processes for regularization, naturalization and family reunification (3). In Spain, economic migrants are the group that has received the most attention from a policy and research perspective.

How are they included into the educational system? Are there specific organizational approaches?

In Spain, the Centre for Educational Investigation and Documentation (CIDE) made global approaches to the process of enrolling foreign students in Spanish schools between 1991 and 2003. One of the core conclusions from a research done by this organisation is that the significant presence of the immigrant student population in Spanish schools is considered permanent. In one of their annual reports by the Economic and Social Council of Spain (Consejo Económico y Social de España, 2003), they draw clear conclusions about the demographic and sociocultural significance of the current situation:

- 1) The number of indigenous Spanish students has decreased while that number of immigrant students has increased;
- 2) There is a significant presence of immigrant students in compulsory education;
- 3) The general number of university students has decreased (both indigenous and immigrant), and that the presence of immigrant students in tertiary education is relatively low; and
- 4) There is a higher concentration of immigrant students in the public-school system.

Several studies by Aparicio and by García Castaño et al. (2005) have been very critical about the dynamics and situation of immigrant students in Spanish schools, concluding that “*the categorization of students under the nationality criteria does not only quantify the differences, but finally turns out to be a discrimination mechanism of included and excluded students from the area called ‘intercultural education in schools’*”. (Aparicio, 2003)

In Spain, immigrants under the age of 16 have a right and a duty to be enrolled in school. This includes free and mandatory education until they reach the age of 16. After that age, immigrant students can still form part of the post-obligatory education in Spain, and it will also be free for them. They can also have access to scholarships as well as any educational programs in Spain.

Research in the area of providing special-assistance classes for new immigrant students remains scarce and incomplete, focused particularly on criticising the special classes to assist and welcome immigrant students to a school. The most well-known programmes offering special classes in Spain are Workshops for Educational Adaptation and Learning Basic Skills (TAE) in Catalonia, and Temporary Classes of Linguistic Adaptation (ATAL) in Andalusia, which is now used throughout Spain.

The educational reality of Moroccan secondary-school students under the TAE, for example, seems to lead to the idea that a multicultural school is still an example of wishful thinking (Peralta, 2000). Ortiz (2005) examined ATAL in the Andalusian province of Almeria, stressing the manner in which the Spanish language and its promotion are converted into a system of discrimination for these students. The measure is often criticized for its segregational nature (Bonaf, 2004). Paludàrias (2001) pointed out the risk of isolating new students, arguing that it aggravates the difficulty of establishing relationships between immigrant students and the indigenous students. Some researchers argue, nevertheless, that these programmes create necessary connections between the world of social exclusion and the educational integration environment (Feria, 2002).

How are language problems dealt with?

In the Spanish organic law 4/2000 established on the 11 of January, where the rights and liberties of immigrants are instituted, it is clearly stated that “schools must promote inclusion and provide the immigrant students with any special needs they require, including the need to overcome their language barrier”. Despite this, schools only sometimes provide them with extra courses and support to catch up academically, learn the school language and learn their mother tongue/culture. A large number of pupils in need are not being reached and might not be participating (e.g. only 1/3 low-literacy foreign-born pupils receive extra out-of-school literacy courses). People may be less likely to learn about diversity in schools and in society

after the elimination of the 'Education for Citizenship and Human Rights' and the ES National Integration Fund (-5 points on MIPEX education scores since 2010). Autonomous Communities generally offer basic support, but few legal entitlements for immigrant pupils, parents and teachers. Schools need more funding to accommodate new pupils/parents with interpreters or written materials and to offer basic transitional language support in either separate or mainstream classrooms.

Continuing (Migration/) Integration

Are there groups of second/third generation migrants groups still facing integrational thresholds?

In 2014, Rosa Aparicio and Alejandro Portes ran a longitudinal study about children of immigrants in Spain with funding from “La Caixa” foundation’s welfare projects. This study uses the methodologies of the CILS, the Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Study, that was done during the 1990s in the USA. An important finding of this study is that only 5% of their study sample experience discrimination “sometimes or many times”. This is very positive for the integration level. However, it is important to note that this study was made only for students in Madrid and Barcelona. Other parts of Spain probably do not have these positive remarks. Integration for migrants is still something that Spain has to improve and dedicate more funding to in order to create full integration of immigrant students.

Why are the ‘still’ different?

In the study mentioned above 81.5% of children born in Spain to foreign parents identify as Spanish, whereas only 40.7% of those born in another country and brought to Spain at a young age identify as Spanish. The people who do not identify as Spanish tend to feel more disconnected from the culture and avoid participating in cultural activities. It is always hard to adapt to a new culture when they feel that they do not belong, which is why it is important to keep teaching through inclusion so that they can feel integrated without needing to identify as Spanish.

Does/how the school system reflect that?

By law, schools are required to provide basic measures for inclusive education in order to favor the integration of the immigrant students. This means the following things are being done:

- Bringing awareness of the personal shock that an immigrant student faces when dealing with a new environment.
- Performance of an initial evaluation of the basic and curricular competences of the new students.
- Preparation of a plan to reinforce the learning of the language or the curricular areas when necessary.
- Development of social skills programs for immigrant students adapted to our environment.

- To favor the integration of the native students with the emigrant through the realization of joint activities
- Constant communication and search for involvement by the family in the education of their children.
- Strengthening the figure of the cultural mediator.
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These measures are taken at different increments in various parts of Spain, depending on the amount of immigration and funding for integration that the Autonomous community, city or town receives.

Other Integrational Thresholds

Are there further groups that are systematically discussed concerning their integration at school (e.g. handicapped or gender divers people)?

Spain still has a lot of work to do in regards to integration, not only when it comes to immigrant children but also with students who have special needs. However, some of the achievements of the Spanish education system in the field of inclusive education are the following:

- All students are schooled in a single system.
- Increase of both personal resources and materials and infrastructure to meet the special needs of students.
- Use of the Special Education Centers only in cases where an ordinary education is not possible or advisable.
- Preparation of plans for attention to diversity.
- Notable improvement of teacher training in inclusion issues.
- Progressive creation of the so-called open classrooms of Special Education in ordinary centers to serve students with severe educational needs.

Teachers

How are teachers supported to deal with migration/integration?

There is material available for teachers to learn more about inclusion and integration in the classroom, plus a few training sessions are available. However, due to lack of funding in some cases, teachers do not receive the training or professional support they need in order to satisfy the needs of immigrant pupils. Students no longer benefit from a slightly favorable approach to intercultural education in Spain's schools as cuts to funding and the citizenship course mean that schools are free to decide whether and how to teach about cultural diversity. 'Education for Citizenship and Human Rights' course was altered in 2012, suppressed in 2012 by LOMCE Law but kept in a few local and autonomous communities. There are no means to promote cultural diversity across ES after the 2012 elimination of the National Integration Fund. Schools have the discretion on how to promote cultural diversity across the curriculum and school day, though little training is available.

Links

https://www.ine.es/prodyser/espa_cifras/2018/files/assets/common/downloads/publication.pdf?uni=4f7e7b429c56ccbc4bf56b3e93ebc47b

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Further Introductory Literature

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