IMMIGRATION CONTROL AND BORDER MANAGEMENT POLICY IN SPAIN

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Summary

1. Introduction

Over the last two decades, Spanish policy on controlling migratory flows has broadened in scope and perfected its actions, placed greater emphasis on border control without relaxing internal control, incorporated a growing number of actors from the national, international, state and private sectors and improved its mechanisms of 'remote control'. Externalisation, deterritorialisation, bilateralism and cooperation have characterised Spanish intervention through sometimes difficult joint management with different states and levels of government based on the principle of co-responsibility. Moreover, from 2006 Spain has become an influential actor in European border policy by creating initiatives focused on cooperating with countries of origin and transit, becoming involved in the development of EU initiatives and promoting the idea that border control is a 'joint issue'.

The fights against irregular immigration and human trafficking networks have become priorities for Spain due to its geographic location and also because of the huge increase in migratory flows by sea that occurred in the middle of this decade, both of which are characteristics particular to irregular immigration to Southern European countries, in contrast to the type of immigration that has arrived at traditional receiving countries in other European regions. In response, Spain has improved its border actions by increasing human resources, the use of surveillance technology and the amount of resources dedicated to containing flows at their points of origin. It has also started signing readmission agreements and intercepting migrants in transit territories and on the high seas through bilateral and multilateral actions. Although over the past few years this area of policy has become less reactive and more complex and improved, there has been a certain amount of continuity in its development and objectives ever since the beginning of the 1990s. Recently, controlling migratory flows has also become a much more important issue in Spanish foreign policy and security.

At the same time, border management has given rise to very difficult political, social and ethical dilemmas due to the confluence of interests of different actors, the distribution of competences between different levels of government, the uneven effectiveness of the actions that have been taken and the tension between different understandings, principles and objectives that may affect, above all, its legitimacy.

Intervention in this area is at the root of most of the problems surrounding the governability of migration and the social response that it has provoked, transforming it into a volatile policy area which is constantly being re-evaluated.

2. Becoming an immigration country. The rapid and intense Spanish migratory transition

As has been the case of other Southern European countries, in the 1980s Spain became a destination for immigration for the first time in its history. Spain's migratory transition has been one of the quickest and most intense among the new European receiving countries. In the middle of the 1980s, when it created its first immigration law, the number of foreign residents in Spain barely surpassed a quarter of a million and was mainly composed of pensioners from other European countries. According to the latest official data published by the National Statistics Institute [1] (INE) foreign residents in Spain at the beginning of 2009 was greater than 5.5 million, accounting for 12% of the total population. The largest communities among foreign residents in Spain are[2] Romanian, Moroccan, Ecuadorian, Columbian and British (see Figure 3). Other data illustrate the huge demographic and social effect of this change in migratory dynamics: currently 10% of workers paying into the social security system are foreigners; close to 750,000 foreign students study in Spanish schools; from 2001 to 2008 more than 360,000 foreigners have acquired Spanish nationality; and 20.7% of all babies born in Spain have foreign mothers.

Migration has been particularly intense since 1999. At the end of the 1990s, there were less than 750,000 foreign residents in Spain, representing only 1.86% of the population; much lower than the current 12% (see Figure 1). The rate of growth was particularly strong in 2000 and 2003 and again in 2005 and 2006. In some cases the inter-annual variations were greater than 48.36% (see Figure 2). This is why an article published by Joaquín Arango in the middle of this decade indicated that Europe's growth as a

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[1] According to data from the *Padrón Municipal de Habitantes* ['these are administrative registers in which the inhabitants of each municipality are recorded. The respective town councils are responsible for creating, maintaining, revising and storing it. It is updated from the revision of the municipal register referring to 1 January of each year' (INE)].

[2] According to the most recent data provided by the *Secretaría de Estado de Inmigración y Emigración* (an office of the Spanish Ministry of Work and Immigration) , from September 2009, which uses residence cards as the source, the largest group of foreign residents are from Morocco (758,174), which is slightly higher than the number of Romanians (728,580).

receiving region was due in large part to the intense migratory flows directed at Spain and Italy (Arango 2006). We should not forget that during the last decade a third of the new migratory flows toward Europe were directed toward Spain, which became the OECD country which received the second highest number of immigrants in absolute terms, after the United States, and the highest, in relative terms.

Figure 1. Foreign population in Spain (1999-2009)

	Total	%
1999	748,954	1.86
2000	923,879	2.28
2001	1,370,657	3.33
2002	1,977,946	4.73
2003	2,664,168	6.24
2004	3,034,326	7.02
2005	3,730,610	8.46
2006	4,144,166	9.27
2007	4,519,554	10.00
2008	5,268,762	11.41
2009*	5,598,691	12.00

Source: *Padrón Municipal de Habitantes*. Foreign Population (thousands). The National Statistics Institute (INE)
*Provisional data

Figure 2. Inflow of foreign population in Spain (1999-2008)

	Total	Male	Female	Male (%)	Female (%)
1999	92,122	50,038	49,084	54.31	45.68
2000	330,881	178,006	152,875	53.79	46.20
2001	394,048	210,580	183,468	53.44	46.55
2002	443,085	232,699	210,386	52.51	47.48
2003	429,524	223,036	206,488	51.92	48.07
2004	645,844	354,722	291,122	54.92	45.07
2005	682,711	370,562	312,149	54.27	45.72
2006	802,971	422,997	379,974	52.67	47.32
2007	920,534	502,168	418,366	54.55	45.44
2008	692,228	370,432	321,796	53.51	46.48

Source: Residence Variation Statistic. The National Statistics Institute (INE)

Figure 3 Foreign population in Spain by nationality (2009*)

Nationality	Total	%
Romania	796,576	14.2
Morocco	710,401	12.7
Ecuador	413,715	7.4
United Kingdom	374,600	6.7
Colombia	292,971	5.2
Bolivia	227,145	4.1
Germany	190,584	3.4
Italy	174,912	3.1
Bulgaria	164,353	2.9
China	145,425	2.6
Argentina	140,443	2.5
Portugal	140,424	2.5
Peru	137,154	2.4
Brazil	124,737	2.2
France	120,246	2.1
Dominican Republic	86,888	1.6
Poland	84,823	1.5
Ukraine	81,132	1.4
Paraguay	80,467	1.4
Venezuela	60,751	1.1
Total	5,598,691	100

Source: *Padrón Municipal de Habitantes*. Foreign Population (thousands). The National Statistics Institute (INE)
*Provisional data

Although the factors that explain the activation and persistence of migratory flows are extremely complex, the intensity of this immigration can be partially explained as a result of Spain's economic growth over the last decade –which was the highest among the countries of Europe of the fifteen– and of the demand of its restructured labour market during a period of intense job creation. However, the development of the Spanish economy has largely depended on the services sector, hotels, tourism and construction. Dependence on these sectors has made the economy structurally weak and, over the years, it has created a growing gap in productivity when compared to the rest of the European economy (FEDEA 2009). This economic situation has led directly to an increase in the demand for unskilled workers in those sectors and others, such as agriculture, which offers seasonal employment, and domestic services, the demand for which has grown as a consequence of the increased level of education of Spanish women and their massive incorporation into the labour market, as well as the aging of

the population and the fact that the Spanish Baby Boom generation has arrived at their reproductive cycle.

Some experts have concluded that, in addition to economic growth, the intense migratory flows to Spain throughout the last decade were also caused by the demand of the labour market, its segmentation and low levels of regulation, the attraction of the informal economy and the higher standards of Spanish workers when deciding which jobs were 'acceptable' to them, a tendency related to the growing social and economic prospects of the country (Baldwin-Edwards and Arango, 1999; Cachón, 2002).

The Spanish migratory model can be characterised by other aspects as well. First of all, as is the case with other Southern countries, it is generally composed of immigrants seeking work. The labour model of Southern Europe, as opposed to migratory model of relatives and refugees in the traditional receiving countries, explains in part the current composition of the flows and the heavy presence of immigrant workers in the national labour markets. As the Economically Active Population Survey (EAPS)[3] shows, immigrants represent a large part of the active population. In addition, in contrast to what occurs in the majority of Northern European countries, immigrants have higher activity rates that the native population, a statistic indicative of the early stages of immigration history. In the middle of the 1990s, the non-EU active population in Spain barely passed 100,000 people, 0.7% of the active population. These data contrast with those available in the middle of the current decade: almost 2 million non-EU foreigners are included in the active population, representing 9.3% of the workers in Spain. In 2005, immigrants had a global activity rate of 79% which was almost 24 points higher than that of the Spanish, which was 55%. This disparity in activity was not a random occurrence in the middle of the decade, but rather a persistent tendency, although variable over time. This persistence is clearly seen in the EAPS carried out from 1996 to the present. However, it should be noted that the younger average age of the foreigners largely explains this difference.

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[3] The *Encuesta de Población Activa* (EPA) [Economically Active Population Survey (EAPS)] is a survey that has been carried out every trimester since 1964 by the *Instituto Nacional de Estadística* [National Statistics Institute, a government institution which collects and distributes official statistics about Spain]. Its goal is to obtain information about the working population and its different labor categories, as well as about the inactive population. The advantage that this survey has over other sources is that it collects information about national and foreign workers in the formal economy as well as in the informal economy. It is the best source of information to understand the Spanish labor market and the employment of foreign immigrants

The latest data provided by the EAPS, from September 2009, indicate that the number of foreign workers who are economically active is now greater than 3.5 million (3,658,800). However, the economic crisis has had devastating consequences for the employment rates of immigrant workers. Unemployment for this group has shot up to 28%, almost 12 points higher than that of the native workforce.

The demand of the labour market also explains the strong presence of female immigrants, with women representing just under half of the arriving flows (see Figure 2), as well as the heavy concentration of immigrants in residential areas in the wealthiest regions where there is greatest demand for foreign workers, such as Madrid, Catalonia, the Valencian Community, Murcia, Andalusia, Balearic Islands and the Canary Islands.

However, it should be pointed out that for years migrants have joined the Spanish labour market, particularly in the least skilled jobs in construction, hotel services, agriculture and domestic services, with very little state intervention. Until recently, market forces were the main source of internal regulation of foreign workers in the Spanish economy.

Other well known aspects of Spain's migration experience are the high number of irregular immigrants among foreign residents and the frequency in which most immigrants spend at least some time in an irregular legal and social status during their migratory experience. One of the most common pathways to irregularity is known as 'befallen' irregularity (Izquierdo 2006). As we shall see, the lack of recruiting mechanisms and regulation of flows from abroad, the weakness of the migration control procedures in place in the 1990s and the specific needs of the economic sectors mentioned earlier allowed immigrants to enter Spain 'through the back door', find work in the informal economy and later receive legal status through documentation programs. In this sense, for nearly two decades Spanish policy on the regulation of migratory flows was complex, reactive and ambivalent. The difficulties involved in accessing the Spanish labour market legally, despite demand and the creation of a quota policy, forced many migrants to enter Spain with tourist visas through air and land borders, under the indifferent watch, and at times complicity, of the state. That is why the majority of citizens of the largest immigrant communities in Spain, the Moroccans, Ecuadorians

and Columbians during the 1990s, and more recently the Bolivians, entered Spain as tourists.

Figure 4. Regularisation processes in Spain and number of positive resolutions (1986-2005)

Year	Positive resolutions	% of total foreign population
1986	38,181	0.7
1991-1992	109,135	0.9
1996	21,283	1.3
2000	169,157	2.2
2001 (only for Ecuadorians)	20,352	
2001 (re-examination)	36,013	
2001 (*arraigo**)	232,679	
2005	577,923	7.8

Source: Report prepared by the *Gabinete de Presidencia de La Moncloa* in Izquierdo, A and Fernández , B (2009).

*A special amnesty that was carried out in 2001 in which people in an irregular situation could receive documentation if they could show that they had developed strong ties to Spanish society (such as having a child born in Spain, having a job or a job offer, etc.).

Therefore, the irregular status that has formed part of the migratory experience of the majority of the foreign residents in Spain did not a result from clandestine entry into the territory, but rather from staying in the country after their tourist visas had expired, a situation often referred to as 'overstaying'. Regularisation processes have been used repeatedly by the Spanish government and immigrants to obtain regular status. As is well known, since 1985 Spain has carried out eight regularisations, if we include the review and renewal processes of 2001 which documented more than 1 million foreign workers (see Figure 4). In addition, between 1993 and 2003, the quota system, which contracted foreigner workers in their countries of origin, was basically a concealed annual regularisation that allowed irregular immigrants residing in Spain to be contracted. Along with the regularisations, this system allowed many immigrants to

obtain regular status in Spain and later stabilise their situations. Therefore, for more than a decade the model of immigration which existed in Spain (Izquierdo, 2001) did not see immigrants trapped in an irregular status, but rather passing through it as a first stage of settling, despite the fact that the percentage of irregulars among the total migrant population had reached very high levels (Izquierdo, 2006). The regularisations have provided the majority of migrants what we can call a soft transition to the condition of regular immigrant, a status which according to Spanish legislation provides them with full social and economic rights.

3. Creating Spanish policy on controlling migratory flows: legal and policy aspects

From the beginning of the 1990s, Spanish policy on controlling migratory flows has been marked by a tension between a growing demand for workers in the national labour market and Spain's condition as the southern border of Europe. Paradoxically, the debate surrounding the enactment of the first immigration law in Spain in the middle of the 1980s presented migratory regulation and control of migratory flows as questions of security and public order, despite the small number of immigrants at the time and the absence of social and political concern for this emerging phenomenon. The debates surrounding the law which was enacted in the summer of 1985 with a broad consensus and little participation of social actors, linked immigration with organized crime and terrorism and emphasised the lack of effective mechanisms to expulse irregular immigrants. However, this legislation was not accompanied by other means or the human and technical resources required to effectively control the Spanish borders. Beyond the weaknesses of this first law, it was the lack of means and the weak actions carried out which lead us to conclude that controlling flows was not a priority in the Spanish agenda until the 1990s and also that Spain's borders were permeable during this period.

However, the majority of the proposals included in the 1991 *proposición no de ley*[4] were focused precisely on developing the internal and border control aspects of this policy; among them, modernizing the facilities, streamlining expulsion procedures,

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[4] A motion to open a parliamentary debate meant to raise awareness about an issue or to petition the government to take action on something

developing a visa policy, documenting irregular immigrants and controlling the internal labour market. During the 1990s migratory regulation was fundamentally reactive.

Internally, the needs of the labour market produced mostly ambivalent and at times erratic policies. For years the actual permeability of the border grew further away from the formal permeability (Godenau, 2009) which was included as an objective in political documents. Therefore, despite the explicit discourse on creating a restrictive immigration policy, imbued with agreements on the European level and the mood of public opinion, in practice Spanish policy in this area allowed the labour market's demand for foreign workers to be met (Aparicio and Roig, 2006) through amnesties, the annual hidden regularisation of the quota system and lax border control.

The short-term visa policy also appeared in the public discourse as a key piece of the regulation; a policy that meant that Spain stopped suppressing visas as had been the norm during Franco's dictatorship, especially with Latin American countries. Before this requisite was implemented for citizens of certain countries, according to Spanish legislation entry could only be denied if a traveller did not have sufficient funds, lacked a return ticket or for reasons related to national security or public health. Spanish visa policy, which had also been heavily influenced by decisions adopted by the European Union[5], was implemented at the beginning of the 1990s when this requisite was progressively broadened to include Peruvians, Moroccans and Dominicans (the most numerous flows during the first half of the 1990s) and, more recently, Columbians, Ecuadorians and Bolivians (the largest immigrants groups of this decade, along with the Romanians). However, in practice this policy has been difficult to apply because the network of Spanish consulates lacked the human and material resources needed to meet this enormous administrative burden that this deterritorialization of control entailed, effectively transforming consulates into the primary filters to entry (Moya, 2006). Two mechanisms have been vital to improving effectiveness in this area: consular reform in countries of origin and coordination between embassies, other areas of Spanish administration and the governments of the countries of origin. These difficulties have caused the visa policy to be reactive, allowing the discretional recourse of employing exemptions to meet specific needs (Izquierdo, 1996). Therefore, throughout the majority

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[5] The EU created a list of third countries which must apply for visas in order to enter the European Union. This list has been evolving due to the enactment of several regulations (Regulation (EC) No 539/2001 Regulation (EC) No 453/2003; Regulation (EC) No 1932/2006).

of the 1990s, Spanish immigration policy was characterised by weak border control and weak control in remote countries, along with reactive internal control measures in which regularisations were the most notable actions carried out by the government. In the current decade 'remote control' has been employed reactively; for instance, the visa requisite was applied to Columbians, Ecuadorians and Bolivians when the arrival flows reached high levels, although many tourist visas were simply given, no questions asked.

Both the fact that Spain is Europe's southern border and its proximity to Africa have had a great deal of influence on the evolution of how its controlled migration since the middle of the 1990s. Among the objectives of this political action have been the progressive shielding of Spanish maritime borders, particularly the Strait of Gibraltar, and the perimeters surrounding the cities of Ceuta and Melilla, the territories that are most easily accessed from and closest to Africa. The actions taken in the second half of the 1990s illustrate that controlling irregular immigration by sea had become a greater priority in the political agenda. Although this type of migration is much less numerous, it is also far more visible; and above all, it has a stronger impact on Spanish public opinion and on the leaders of other countries in the European Union. Spanish immigration policy in the second half of the 1990s had already begun to show signs of transforming the borders into selective political mechanisms, or in mechanisms of selective permeability for certain migratory flows, which allowed for differentiated actions in 'hard borders' and 'soft borders'.

At the beginning of the 1990s surveillance began to be improved around the border perimeters of Ceuta and Melilla, the two autonomous Spanish cities located in Africa. The construction of border fences began in Ceuta in 1993 and in Melilla in 1996. From that moment on security around these perimeters has been increasing, not only by constructing very tall fences, but also by installing infra-red cameras, motion detectors and control towers. Finally, in 1998, the *Plan Sur* was implemented, a programme designed to improve surveillance of land, air and ports.

From the middle of the 1990s, problems in managing the flows to these two autonomous cities began to arise which would be repeated a decade later in the Canaries. Not only was there an increase in the number of sub-Saharan Africans living on the outskirts of the cities in settlements under inhuman conditions, but the refusal of

the Moroccan authorities to accept their readmission and the practical impossibility of carrying out repatriations led to repeated cases of severe overcrowding in holding centres. To alleviate these situations, the Spanish authorities repeatedly sent immigrants to other Spanish provinces, although this was always considered to be an exceptional measure. As Pablo Pumares indicated at the end of the 1990s, the success of measures used to control the flows turns against these kinds of enclaves, territories that are already very constrained and with limited resources (Pumares, 1998, 2002).

The flow across the Strait of Gibraltar has not been studied in depth despite the coverage it has received in the media and the impact it has had on public opinion. A mere 14 km separate the Spanish coast from Africa, but the strong currents in the straight and the conditions in which the crossing is carried out in order to evade detection creates an extremely dangerous situation. At the end of the 1980s the first migrants crossing the straight began arriving on the coasts of Cadiz in Andalusia, at a time when immigration was not a priority in Spanish politics. The majority of immigrants launched their vessels from beaches located between Tangiers and Ceuta, and much less often near Melilla. Initially the routes crossed the straight to Cadiz, the province closest to Moroccan soil, where long, sandy beaches made it easy to land. This flow was made up mostly of young male migrants from urban and rural areas of Northern Morocco (El Rif and the Northern provinces that once formed part of the Spanish protectorate) and from Eastern Morocco. However, in the second half of the 1990s this route, known as the Western Mediterranean Route, began to be used by migrants from sub-Saharan countries, such as Senegal or Nigeria.

Externalising actions to third countries soon became a tactic used to achieve policy objectives. A readmission agreement was signed in 1992 with Morocco[6] through bilateral negotiations, although for years the agreement produced little results. The unequal relationship between the governments of the two countries, especially during the administrations of the Partido Popular (1996-2000 and 2000-2004), often led to political tension which undermined the intention of the agreement, which was to convert Morocco in an essential actor involved in controlling the Spanish borders. Between

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[6] Agreement of 13 February, between the Kingdom of Spain and the Kingdom of Morocco regarding the movement of people, transit and the readmission of foreigners who enter illegally (B.O.E nº 100 de 25/4/1992).

1998 and 2003 the tensions ran so high that not a single readmission was carried out by the Moroccan authorities, despite petitions made by Spain.

If we take into consideration the total number of irregular immigrants that were found to be in Spanish territory during the regularisation processes carried out in Spain, in reality only a very small percentage of irregular immigrants were expulsed from the country in the 1990s, although after 1993 an increasing number of Moroccans were denied entry and there were more than 8,000 annual 'returns' in the second half of the 1990s[7].

4. The push toward greater regulation and control of flows and increased border surveillance between 2000 and 2005

At the beginning of this decade, with the Partido Popular (PP) governing Spain, the GRECO Plan became the main instrument employed to analyse the objectives of Spanish policy. Among those objectives were to sign agreements to organise migrations from the countries of origin, to increase border control and fight against irregular immigration.

In 2001, the first agreements to contract workers in their countries of origin were signed, following procedures described in the plan. These agreements tried to put into practice an orderly regulation of migrations which would meet both the needs of the labour market and the objectives of migratory policy. The idea was to create ways of selecting and channelling foreign workers by determining their profiles, their country of origin, where they would be placed in the labour market and also within Spanish territory.

These agreements sought to deepen relations with countries that had already been sources of migration and with which immigration already formed part of bilateral relations (Columbia, Ecuador, Morocco and the Dominican Republic). They also served to establish new relations with other countries which around that time had become some

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[7] There are various figures or modalities listed in the Immigration Law: a) the return of people rejected at authorised border checkpoints, usually airports or ports, b) removal or expulsion (people who are repatriated in accordance with one of the reasons listed in the law, usually administrative procedures derived from an illegal stay in Spain, c) the return of people who try to enter Spain through other border areas and d) readmissions (expulsions from Spain using readmission agreements with third countries).

of the largest sources of migration to Spain (Bulgaria, Poland and Romania) (Ferrero and López-Sala, 2009).

A. Irregular immigration and routes

The move toward contracting workers in their home countries –which had more or less effective results over the following years, but which was a turning point in the way that foreign workers were recruited –was coupled with a decisive move toward controlling Spain's maritime borders, with priority given to the Strait of Gibraltar and the Canary Islands, the two points of entry for irregulars which were most accessible by sea. It should be noted that the maritime borders of the EU are nearly 80,000 km long, and nearly half of this (34,109 km) is the Southern maritime border. Spain, Italy and Greece have the most extensive and accessible maritime borders in Southern Europe and, along with Malta, are the main points of destination of irregular immigration routes in the Mediterranean (see Figure 5).

Figure 5. Irregular Mediterranean and African migration routes

SPAIN: West Mediterranean Route and West African Route   Entry or destination points: Ceuta and Melilla, Strait of Gibraltar (Andalusian provinces, Murcia) and the Canary Islands.   From Morocco and other African countries (Mali, Senegal, Ghana, Gambia, Ivory Coast)   Transit countries: Mauritania and Morocco.
MALTA: East African Route   From Morocco, Nigeria, Somalia, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Sudan and Congo   Transit countries: Tunisia and Libya
ITALY   East African Route   Entry and destination points: Sicily, The Pelagic islands (the southernmost part of Italy)   From Morocco, Nigeria, Somalia, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Sudan and Congo   Transit countries: Tunisia and Libya
GREECE   The East Mediterranean route targets primarily Greece, making use of Turkey and the Middle Eastern countries as transit countries

B. The Integrated External Surveillance System (SIVE)

At the end of the 1990s, irregular immigration arriving in Spain by sea skyrocketed (see Figure 6A and 6B). The continued arrival of small vessels crossing the Straight of Gibraltar made maritime surveillance one of the Spanish government's priorities. In response, the government began to implement an Integrated External Vigilance System (SIVE) in 2001 (see Figure 7). SIVE is a high tech electronic surveillance and interception system that the Spanish Civil Guard uses to monitor the Spanish coast. It was originally implemented in the Strait of Gibraltar and in 2001 along the Andalusian coast, in the province of Cadiz; it has also been gradually implemented in other areas of Andalusia, the Mediterranean coast and the coasts of the Canaries. This system combines three elements: a) radar stations distributed along the coast, b) control centres where specialised agents can control the movement of the cameras and radars scattered along the coast and c) 'interception units' (patrol boats, helicopters and vehicles) that receive orders from the control centre. The budget to put this system in operation on Spanish coasts between 2001 and 2006 was 106 million euros, while in 2005 and 2008 its total cost was 130 million euros.

Figure 6. A. Irregular immigrants arriving in Spain in small boats (*pateras* and *cayucos* (1999-2008)

	Strait of Gibraltar	Canary Islands	Total*
1999	2,694	875	3,569
2000	12,785	2,410	15,195
2001	14,405	4,112	18,517
2002	6,795	9,875	16,670
2003	9,788	9,388	19,176
2004	7,245	8,426	15,675*
2005	7,066	4,715	11,781
2006	7,502	31,678	39,180
2007	5,579	12,478	18,057
2008	4,243	9,181	13,424

Source: Spanish Civil Guard and Ministry of the Interior (the ministry responsible for policing, national security, and immigration)
*The total includes 4 arrivals in the Balearic Islands

Figure 6. B Irregular immigrants arriving in Spain in small boats (*pateras* and *cayucos* (1999-2008). Percentages

	Strait of Gibraltar %	Canary Islands %	Total
1999	75	25	100
2000	84	16	100
2001	78	22	100
2002	41	59	100
2003	51	49	100
2004	46	54	100
2005	60	40	100
2006	19	81	100
2007	31	69	100
2008	32	68	100

Source: Spanish Civil Guard and Ministry of the Interior

Because this surveillance was initially focused on the coasts of Cadiz, the original routes crossing the straight were diverted toward provinces to the east and west on the Andalusian coast (Huelva, Granada and Almeria) and new routes were activated toward the Canary Islands, first to the islands of Fuerteventura and Lanzarote and later to Gran Canaria and Tenerife. In other words, the increased use of the Canarian route during the first few years of this decade was a response to greater surveillance of the Strait of Gibraltar and the difficulty of entering through Ceuta and Melilla where fences had been gradually been erected around both cities and electronic surveillance implemented. SIVE, which currently covers the majority of the coastline of the Canary Islands, the Balearic Islands, Ceuta, Melilla and the Spanish Mediterranean, has not only caused migration routes to change, but also greatly discouraged using them altogether by making it extremely difficult for boats to reach Spanish coasts undetected. This system has made it possible to maintain complete surveillance of Spain's maritime borders.

Figure 7. Extension of the Integrated External Surveillance System (SIVE)

2000-2004

Phase I. Algeciras

Phase II. Cadiz, Malaga and Fuerteventura

Phase III. Granada and Ceuta

2005-2008

Phase IV. Almeria

Phase V. Lanzarote

Phase VI. Gran Canaria, Huelva,

Phase VII. Tenerife, La Gomera

Phase VIII. Murcia

2009

Valencia, Alicante and Baleares

C. Bilateral agreements with African countries

The readmissions programme began working with some regularity after 2004 when the 1992 agreement was revitalised by improved relations between Morocco and Spain. This improvement was largely due to the fact that the Partido Socialista Obrero Español (PSOE) won the elections that year and took over the government. Until then Morocco had not fulfilled its part of that agreement, claiming that it lacked funds and personnel. These problems, along with the difficulty in verifying the countries of origin of the immigrants, who in many cases do not carry passports, contained the repatriations and readmissions to Morocco. At first Morocco's cooperation mostly consisted of admitting its own citizens via a fast return system, but it was later broadened to include immigrants from sub-Saharan countries. The improvement of diplomatic relations between Spain and Morocco after mid 2004 greatly increased their cooperation on controlling irregular immigration in transit to Spain. For example, joint patrols were established to fight against traffic in the Straight of Gibraltar and on the western coast of Morocco, and police cooperation was reinforced on various levels; key to the latter was

the creation of the permanent Hispano-Moroccan work group on immigration. According to reports by the Moroccan government, as of 2004 thousands of agents have been assigned to controlling the coast, thousands of human trafficking networks have been dismantled and thousands of people have been detained when they tried to leave Morocco toward Spain. The Spanish government has presented its successful bilateral relations with Morocco –the police and diplomatic cooperation and the establishment of the permanent work group – as an example of effective joint management of the fight against irregular immigration, particularly in negotiations with other countries, such as Senegal. The increased 'joint' control in Moroccan territory and along its coasts is directly related to the appearance of the new Southern Route and the consolidation of Mauritania as the main transit country for irregular immigration in the West African Route.

In 2002 and 2003 Spain signed three new immigration and movement of persons agreements with Algiers, Guinea Bissau and Mauritania[8]. These agreements included the obligation to readmit citizens of these countries, upon request by the Spanish government, that had been detained for being in Spanish territory irregularly or when they tried to clandestinely enter Spain. Although these agreements have been difficult to apply effectively for many reasons, one of the main administrative obstacles has been identifying undocumented immigrants (see Asín, 2008a). Only two of these agreements, signed with Morocco and Mauritania, include readmission of third country nationals[9] when it can be demonstrated that the migrants arrived in Spain via their territories (Vacas Fernández, 2007). In the case of Morocco, other aspects of the agreement have made it difficult or impractical to execute, including the requirement for petitions made by Spain be presented within 10 days of the illegal entry in its territory. However, in the last few years, greater cooperation between the two countries has transformed how these agreements are carried out, making it a great deal easier to readmit immigrants to

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[8] Protocol between the Government of Spain and the Government of the Democratic and Popular Republic of Algiers on the movement of persons (B.O.E nº 37 de 12/2/2004); Agreement between the Kingdom of Spain and the Islamic Republic of Mauritania on immigration (B.O.E nº 185 de 4/8/2003).

[9] As Asunción Asín pointed out, Fernández Vacas analysed these agreements, distinguishing three very different situations: 1) repatriation agreements, in which citizens of a country who are found to be staying irregularly in another country are returned to their country; 2) strict readmission agreements, in which a country readmits non-citizens that passed through its territory before arriving irregularly in another country; and 3) transit agreements, which allow a foreigner to pass through a country in order to reach another country, usually the country of origin, after being found to be staying irregularly in another country (Asín, 2008a).

Morocco. It should also be noted that the agreement with Morocco is the only one that regulates transit for the expulsion of third country foreigners.

5. The direction of Spanish immigration policy after the '*cayuco* crisis' of 2006: challenges and results

Border control initiatives multiplied in Spain after 2005 due to a combination of internal and international factors. First of all, there was a concerted push by the common and multilateral border policy in the European Union after the Prum Convention (Schengen III), the Hague Programme and the 2006 European Commission communications on external maritime borders and the fight against irregular immigration. This heralded a period of institutional creation and improvement and the channelling of funds which led to the appearance of FRONTEX, the creation of the External Borders Fund and the Schengen Borders Code; the improvement of the Schengen Information System (SIS), the proposal to create the European External Border Surveillance System (EUROSUR), the formation of rapid border intervention teams (RABIT) and the deployment of immigration liaison officers. In order to facilitate expulsions, data production and identification systems at checkpoints (airports, ports, etc.) have been improved through bilateral cooperation between EU countries. These initiatives were completed at the beginning of 2008 with the proposal of the 'border package', whose ultimate goal is to create a European automated and integrated border control system which uses technology and databases.

A. The Africa Plan

Two factors led Spain to change their flow control policies: the escalation of irregular immigration by sea in 2006 and the massive attempts to cross over into Spanish territory through Ceuta and Melilla in 2005. Both of these situations put the 'Spanish case' in the spotlight of the international media for the first time in its brief migratory history. This was understandable considering that in 2006 more than 39,000 irregular immigrants reached Spain using maritime routes, 32,000 to the Canary Archipelago alone, just over 1,000 of which were unaccompanied minors. Around 19,000 people were transferred to other Spanish regions from the Canaries in 2006, following a political agreement between the central government and the autonomous communities to distribute irregular

immigrants throughout the country. For the first time Africa became a priority of foreign policy, a situation that led to the creation of the *Africa Plan*, which marks a before and after in reorientation of Spain's policy on controlling flows with sub-Saharan African countries. It must be emphasised that this plan tries to provide an integrated global response to the migration phenomenon by combining the fight against irregular immigration with measures such as contracting foreign workers in their countries of origin, applying policies which actively integrate newly arrived immigrants into Spanish society and promoting cooperation in development of the countries of origin and transit. This attitude toward migration is manifested through bilateral lines of action; to be more precise, in the content of the 'new approach' immigration cooperation agreements signed with Gambia, Guinea Conakry, Cape Verde, Mali and Niger[10] between 2006 and 2008 (Asín, 2008b; Ferrero and López-Sala, 2009). The plan includes objectives such as reinforcing border control in countries of origin and transit, obtaining information on routes and streamlining immediate repatriation procedures for immigrants from these countries. This last objective partly explains Spain's move toward a repatriation policy after 2006, which requires the support of countries of origin in order to be effective (see Figure 8). The agreements also include technical assistance in the fight against irregular immigration, the organisation of training courses for consular and immigration personnel and campaigns to raise awareness of the risks involved with irregular immigration.

Figure 8. Repatriations carried out by Spain (2000-2008)

	Returns from official checkpoints*	Readmissions	Expulsions	Returns from other border areas	Total
2000	6,181	9,249	1,226	22,716	39,372
2001	8,881	11,311	3,817	22,984	46,993
2002	11,698	38,993	12,159	14,275	77,125
2003	14,750	51,413	14,104	13,684	93,951
2004	11,280	83,431	13,296	13,136	121,143
2005	15,258	52,017	11,002	14,466	92,743
2006	19,332	48,117	11,373	21,652	100,474
2007	24,355	6,248	9,467	15,868	55,938
2008	17,317	6,178	10,616	12,315	46,426

Source. Ministry of the Interior. *See note 6 for an explanation of the different kinds of actions.

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[10] Agreement with Gambia (B.O.E nº 310 de 28 de diciembre de 2006) Guinea (B.O.E nº 26 de 30 de marzo de 2007) Cape Verde (B.O. E nº 39, de 14 de febrero de 2008) Mali (B.O.E nº 35, de 4 de junio de 2008) and Níger (B.O.E nº 160, de 30 de julio de 2008).

Other measures have included increasing Spain's diplomatic presence in the countries of origin and transit, extending the number of *agregados de interior*[11] in West African countries and the creation of immigration offices and employment offices, like the one created in Dakar to contract workers in their country. Although a formal immigration agreement does not yet exist with Senegal, one of the main sources of irregular immigration by sea, a memorandum of understanding was signed in August 2006 which has served to develop actions that have had uneven results, such as contracting workers in Senegal and repatriations (Plan África, 2006; López-Sala: 2009b). Spain has also funded the development and consolidation of a pioneer project in Africa to create the Migration Information and Management Centre (CEGIM), which was launched in October 2008 in Mali, as well as the development of workshop schools for young people. Bilateral cooperation agreements have also been signed with Senegal and Morocco to prevent the irregular immigration of unaccompanied minors.

B. Seahorse Project and Seahorse Network

In addition to the application of the new readmission agreements, the promotion of repatriations, coastal border surveillance through the implementation of SIVE and the increased police presence at the borders (from 10,239 to 15,710 police in 2008), there has also been increased surveillance on the African coast and other areas of the countries of origin and transit that are heavily involved in migrations flows. The work of liaison officers and the *agregados de interior* has been reinforced through bilateral and multilateral collaboration in police matters. The best example of this work can be seen in Project Seahorse and the Seahorse Network that have been developed by Spain within the framework of the AENEAS Project[12].

Bilateral police collaboration between Spain and African countries in order to carry out joint surveillance and control of irregular immigration along the West African maritime route started back in 2004. In July 2004, working within the framework of the Hispano-Moroccan Permanent Task Force and the Cooperation Agreement between the Royal

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[11]*Agregados de interior* are representatives of the Ministry of the Interior (usually police) who work in Spanish embassies.
[12] The objective of the EU AENEAS Project is to promote cooperation with third countries on immigration and asylum.

Moroccan Gendarmerie and the Spanish Civil Guard, joint maritime patrols along Morocco's Atlantic and Mediterranean coasts were initiated with excellent results according to the reports of the Spanish Civil Guard and the Ministry of the Interior[13] (see Gabella, 2005). In 2006 the Atlantis Project was launched; a bilateral joint-surveillance project with the Mauritanian Gendarmerie developed to control irregular immigration in Mauritania's territorial waters. In 2006, Seahorse, the most complex programme, was initiated based on this previous bilateral experience. The objectives of Seahorse are to prevent irregular immigration and fight against human trafficking. The programme was developed by the Spanish Ministry of the Interior and run by the Spanish Civil Guard; with a budget of 2.5 million euros, it includes the participation of police from Morocco, Mauritania, Senegal and Cape Verde. This programme focuses on carrying out joint operations and deploying liaison officers. The most important recent development of this programme has been the creation of the Seahorse Network, a regional secure network coordinated in Spain to exchange information on irregular immigration by sea. The countries that have participated in this network in 2009 are Spain, Portugal, Cape Verde, Mauritania, Morocco, Senegal, Gambia and Guinea Bissau. This pioneer system allows information to be available in real time via satellite in order to locate from where clandestine vessels are launched and to track their trajectory. It is a secure information exchange network between Spain and countries of origin and transit. To create this network, local contact points have been established in African countries which in the future will become coordination centres similar to the Canary Islands Regional Coordination Centre. Land operations have also been carried out in Senegal (Operation Goreé) and Mauritania (Operation Cabo Blanco) to prevent boats from launching from their coasts.

C. The Canary Islands Regional Coordination Centre and FRONTEX

The Canary Islands Regional Coordination Centre (CCRC), created in 2006[14] by the Spanish government, is a groundbreaking experience in Spain and the EU whose purpose is to facilitate the coordination between different national, European and local institutions in the fight against irregular immigration by sea. It has various functions: to

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[13] The Spanish ministry that is responsible for policing, national security, and immigration.
[14] B.O.E nº 243, 11 de octubre de 2006.

control irregular immigration to the Canaries, direct joint maritime patrols with countries of the region, centralise and distribute any intelligence it receives, coordinate naval, police and customs operations and set up marine salvage and rescue operations (Arteaga, 2007). To date it has hosted the joint operations of FRONTEX in the area. CCRC represents a broad array of Spanish government stakeholders, including the army, navy, Ministry of Defence, national intelligence, marine rescue operations, home affairs, national police, Civil Guard, Ministry of Economy, regional government of the Canary Islands and Ministry of Labour and Immigration and Social Affairs (with a hospital vessel deployed in African waters to support Spanish fisherman and assist immigrants if in need). New coordination centres are expected to be implemented in the next few years in other parts of Spain to coordinate via networks all border control tasks. Among these locations will be Algeciras, to monitor the Straight of Gibraltar, and another in Valencia, for the Mediterranean coast.

This joint, multilateral surveillance, along with the operations carried out by FRONTEX on the Spanish maritime borders (operations Hera, Minerva and Indalo), have increased the interceptions in Africa, making it very difficult to use the irregular immigration sea routes to Spain[15]. By the end of 2006, just over 4,200 immigrants (11.87% of the total) were intercepted on African coasts; while in 2007 this number rose to 8,500 people (40.73% of the total) and in 2008 it reached 6,659 (41.84%). The maritime surveillance actions in African water and on the Spanish coasts, along with the expulsion policy and the economic crisis, explain why the number of arrivals via this route has dropped drastically in 2009. In the first half of 2009 only 4,760 people have reached Spain by sea, a far cry from the 39,000 that had arrived in 2006. This fall was particularly sharp in the case of the Atlantic route to the Canary Islands. However, there has been a slight increase, compared to 2008, in arrivals via the Mediterranean.

6. The internal effects of border management: actors and governability

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[15] Before the FRONTEX operations, some surveillance operations had already been carried out on Spanish coasts financed by the Spanish government or the European Union, among them was *Operation Noble Centinela* or the *Guanarteme* operations.

The escalation of this kind of irregular immigration has also affected the relations between the central government and some autonomous communities, which have acquired a leading role in the management of this policy area. It should be noted that in Spain the competences to manage different aspects of immigration are distributed between various ministries and between the central government and the autonomous communities. That is why at the beginning of this decade two organisations were created to coordinate the actions of these different administrations: the *Comisión Interministerial de Extranjería* [Interministerial Commission on Alien Affairs], made up of representatives from the different ministries and the *Consejo Superior de Política de Inmigración* [Superior Council on Immigration Policy], which also includes representatives of the different Spanish regions and local governments.

The new flows have transformed aspects of the political agenda in the Spanish regions that receive them, which have competences in social assistance and integration. The difficulty in arriving at agreements and resolving problems stem from the 'extra load' that the Canary Islands, Ceuta and Melilla and Andalusia have to bear because of their geographic locations. Their first concern was to develop measures that could effectively meet the medical, educational and social needs of newly arrived immigrants. Second, the difficulty in carrying out repatriations and meeting legal guarantees made it absolutely necessary to increase the amount of resources dedicated to providing legal aid and creating new holding centres for adults and minors. To deal with these concerns a 'formal' policy was put into place to distribute irregular immigrants among the different Spanish provinces as a way to share the burden of dealing with these needs. This policy required agreements to be made between different autonomous communities whose regional governments were run by different political parties. At the same time, policy creation was broadened to include the active involvement of *ayuntamientos* [municipal councils], *diputaciones* [central government delegations in the provinces] and *cabildos* [island-based councils in the Canary Islands], as well as some NGOs which have played an essential role in providing assistance to immigrants and in the development of emergency units. The human drama surrounding this kind of irregular immigration has had a strong social impact, with misgivings expressed by part of the populace as the arrivals have increased. This dramatic situation has activated some local

actors to call attention to problems and assist in resolving them, but at the same time it has made it highly complex to arrive at decisions on how to act, as delicate balances and broad consensus must be sought between public and private actors and between different levels of government, each with its own agenda and point of view on how to confront this phenomenon.

The difficult governability of this policy stems from having to count on the cooperation of other countries and the need to spend a tremendous amount of resources to effectively monitor the borders. It is also exacerbated by tensions that arise when trying to include and reconcile the interests and positions of different sectors of public opinion and various state institutions and also by the disagreements that emerge between the different levels of government that have competences in this area and, as a consequence, the need to create new forms of coresponsibility.

7. Conclusions

Spanish immigration policy emerged in the second half of the 1980s in response to the demands of the European Union after it was accepted as a member. At that time there was not a lot of immigration and it had not caught the attention of either the political class or Spanish society; therefore, its initial approach was closely tied to external factors. In other words, originally, the policy was not linked to an orderly regulation of labour migration, but rather shaped by decisions taken by the European Union, which created certain inconsistencies.

In the 1990s, accompanied by legislative and institutional development, Spanish policy broadened its objectives and incorporated various actions that responded to internal factors (mostly economic), although it was still a fragile policy in the early stages of development. The Spanish labour migration model was strongly affected by rapid economic development and the heavy demand for unskilled workers in construction, hotel services, domestic service and intensive agriculture. However, this demand had to be reconciled with objectives derived from Spain's geopolitical transformation into the southern border of the European Union. As a result, the actions taken were reactive and ambivalent, an approach that allowed migrants to enter Spain through the 'back door' and then to be legalised after the fact. Therefore, the border control and remote control

policies of the 1990s can be characterized as weak. This weak border control, along with regularisations and the quota system, was met with a certain amount of reticence in other EU member states. In this sense, Spain's 'irregular immigration model', in which it was habitual for immigrants to hold irregular status at some point during their migration, resulted from the government's political action, or inaction, as the case may be. However, mechanisms were created during this period, such as regularisation, which allowed immigrants to avoid being trapped in a permanent state of irregularity. In addition, being irregular did not lead to severe civic exclusion among the migrants, because basic rights such as education and emergency health care were recognised, and this kept social conflict and xenophobic reactions among the population to a minimum. Furthermore, during this period internal control was very weak, with very few actions carried out to search for irregular immigrants living in Spanish territory. Finally, Spanish immigration policy in the 1990s was also characterised by selective enforcement; that is, maritime borders were strictly controlled, which had a heavier impact on flows coming from Africa, but land and air borders were less tightly maintained, making it relatively easy for immigrants from other parts of the world, particularly Latin America, to enter the territory.

In the current decade Spanish immigration policy has been more concrete due to the fact that immigration has become a priority for foreign policy and national security. Therefore, in recent years it has been improved, becoming somewhat less reactive and more complex, and in general terms more in line with the objective of maintaining an orderly labour immigration. In addition, while throughout the 1990s the European Union set the Spanish agenda on border control, over the past few years Spain has acquired much greater protagonism in the development of European initiatives. Its influence has been felt both in the emphasis placed on cooperating with countries of origin and transit, as well as its defence of border control as a 'joint issue' which requires new approaches based on cooperation and distribution of resources and responsibilities.

However, Spanish immigration and border control policy has also been difficult to manage and these governability problems stem from a combination of factors: first of all, its geographic location and its condition as the southern border of the European Union; second, the institutional balancing act that must be carried out between the

different levels of government due to the structure of the Spanish political system; and third, the high visibility of actions taken both internally and internationally. It is a situation that clearly illustrates the contradictions that arise between a state's sovereign right to decide who enters its territory and maintain national security and the protection of universal human rights. As of 2006 the policy on controlling migratory flows has become more proactive and effective, with growing emphasis placed on controlling the flows in transit and internally. Working the active cooperation of countries of origin and transit has been a huge part of the success of this policy.

8. Key lessons from the Spanish experience and good practices

- *Political and institutional development*

- *Inter-institutional coordination to increase effectiveness and the 'operationalisation' of intervention*

In order to develop Spanish immigration policy new legislation was created, plans were prepared, institutions were created or adapted and this material was incorporated into a great deal of public policy as a transversal issue. The distribution of competences among the central government's eleven ministries, and between the central administration and the regional governments in Spain's decentralised public system, has led to the creation of different organisations to coordinate the different institutions, such as the *Consejo Superior de Política de Inmigración* and the *Comisión Interministerial de Extranjería*. The creation of advisory bodies, such as the *Foro para la Integración Social*, has created a situation where policies can be created by consensus. The promotion of coordination between ministries and between agencies can be considered a necessary experience for the effective development and execution of this policy area. Concentrating the competences in controlling migratory flows in the hands of the Ministry of the Interior and separating actions between the Spanish Civil Guard (external borders and surveillance) and the national police (internal control, identification, repatriations, holding centres, the fight against the facilitated irregular immigration and falsified documents) have also improved effectiveness.

This coordination has been extended to the design and production of information. A good example of this is the recently created CICO (a centre dedicated to gathering

intelligence against organised crime) which will gather information from various agencies in the fight against facilitated irregular immigration. This collaboration in the production and analysis of information has allowed for greater policy innovation and better diagnostics. There are currently various proposals to improve the system which registers information on irregular immigration.

- *Apply appropriate strategies and responses to the specific situations of individual countries.*
- *Create policy which responds to the specific situation of each country*
- *Establish geographical priorities*

Despite the influence of the European Union in the development of Spanish immigration policy, its economic needs and geographic location ended up having a greater impact on how it shaped its response to this phenomenon, as it gave internal factors priority. Spain's approach to regulating migratory flows has attempted to reconcile the specific demands of the Spanish labour market with the country's condition as the southern border of Europe. Spain's recent success in this area is due to the fact that it adapted its policy to deal with its specific situation, including tailoring its actions to control a maritime border (as opposed to a land border). This approach has also led Spain to develop policies that place priority on certain geographic regions, all in Africa, which are not priorities for other EU member states. In this sense, Spain has shown a great ability to create innovative political responses and agreements.

- *Controlling migratory flows must be part of a global immigration policy that also incorporates recruiting workers in their countries of origin and integrating them into society.*
- *Reactive policies must be replaced by proactive policies.*

An effective policy on controlling migratory flows must include both the development of programmes that actively recruit foreign workers in their country of origin and programmes that cooperate in development of their countries. Initiatives to recruit workers in their country of origin were developed by Spain in 2000 and reactivated in 2004. These initiatives have made it possible to create flexible programmes that adapt to

the needs of the economy, while creating legal ways for migrants to enter the country which will put an end to the 'irregular immigration model'. These initiatives represent a new approach which seeks to balance the actions in different areas of immigration policy by designing common goals. In general terms, Spanish policy has migrated from reactive actions to proactive measures.

- *Bilateralism and cooperation with the countries of origin and transit: the keys to successfully controlling migration on the maritime border*

- *Partnership and added value through exchange of information between origin, transit and destination countries*

Bilateral cooperation with the countries of origin and transit of irregular immigration to Spain via the Atlantic and Mediterranean routes has been key to the recent success of the control and fight against irregular immigration. Earlier experience in bilateral collaboration and partnership between the Spanish Civil Guard and the Moroccan and Mauritanian police through joint patrols and the Atlantis Operation, shaped the good practices applied to the new cooperation agreements with Senegal and led to the development of the Seahorse programme and the Seahorse network. The effectiveness of the action has depended on the development of joint operations and the creation of a secure information exchange network. These measures have increased detentions in countries of origin and transit.

The bilateral agreements that Spain signed with African countries between 2006 and 2008 have made it possible to develop an effective repatriation policy. In return for signing these agreements, Spain has begun instituting measures in transit countries such as hiring workers from their countries, as well as offering them technical assistance and special training programmes. In addition, pilot programmes have been initiated in the countries of origin to provide professional training to young people and other programmes to support immigrants who wish to return to their countries to invest in their home economies (for example if they wish to open a business, the Spanish government will not only pay for their ticket home, but also give them some seed money for their project). Repatriations and increased detentions in transit and in

countries of origin through surveillance of the African coast have proven to be two of the most effective mechanisms in the fight against irregular immigration. Finally, it should also be noted that the profound economic and employment crisis in Spain has also contributed to the decrease of migratory flows to its territory.

- *Find innovative ways to control flows and actively participate in the initiatives developed by the European Union*

Increased border surveillance through technological and operational innovation has been particularly effective (achieved by implementing SIVE on the coasts). Another innovation was the creation of centres to coordinate border control, such as the Canary Islands Regional Coordination Centre, which has coordinated the action of all national and international bodies involved in the application and management of policies to control migratory flows and in assisting and protecting irregular immigrants. The success of this centre has encouraged the creation of similar centres in other strategic points in Spain (Madrid, Algeciras, Valencia) as well as in countries of origin.

Bilateral and national action has been coupled with broad Spanish participation in the actions carried out by FONTEX and in the development of EUROSUR.

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