

MOROCCAN MIGRATION TO SPAIN

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Abstract

In recent decades, a growing number of Moroccans have sought a better life in Spain as both skilled and unskilled workers. These migrants are vital to Spain's continued success and Morocco's economic prosperity. The growing problem of sub-Saharan Africans migrating via Morocco to Spain is a serious issue that both countries are working together on. Joint efforts on issues like migrants' rights, immigration policies and the role of migrants in society have tested the long-standing friendly relationship between them.

In the twenty-first century, migration is extensively shaping many regions of the world, and dramatically impacting both the country of origin and destination of migrants. Few countries have been as affected by migration as Morocco. One of the major destinations for Moroccans seeking a better life in Europe is Spain. A mere eight miles across the Straits of Gibraltar, the journey may be brief, but the two countries are worlds away from one another in terms of economic status. One is an emerging democracy in North Africa, one of the few moderate Muslim countries in the world and a major American ally in the region. Spain is a member of the European Union and a major part of the European community with a high standard of living and a rapidly growing economy. Though these countries differ greatly today in terms of culture, language and religion, there is a fourteen-century long history of interaction between them. Migration, economic interconnectedness and political disagreement are not new factors in their relationship, but the issue of migration has both strained and strengthened their ties. The journey many Moroccans undertake has altered relationship between these countries and caused both societies to change at the cultural, political and economic level.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Though in the present day, these countries are very different, one fully modern and industrialized and the other a developing nation, this was not always the case. In 711 C. E., 10,000 men, mostly Berbers from Morocco, crossed the straits on an exploratory mission. They defeated the Gothic tribes that had ruled the Iberian Peninsula since the fall of the Roman Empire after a seven-year struggle and established Muslim rule. The cultures of Spain and North Africa blended as they increasingly shared the same religion, culture and population when many other north Africans migrated from what is now Morocco to Spain. This area, encompassing the Iberian Peninsula and parts of Northern Africa, was known as Al-Andalus and was controlled by

the Umayyad Caliphate until 750. After the end of the Umayyad Caliphate's control in the region, several regions in Spain shared a common Muslim leadership until the eleventh century, when various Arab families broke away and small regional alliances became their own independent feudal states. These individual states, called *taifas*, were generally weak and each had their own rulers who asked for protection from the largest power on the Iberian Peninsula, the remains of the Cordoba caliphate. No single faction held power for more than a few decades. The Almoravids, Almohads and later the Marinids were the largest ruling groups from the 11th to 14th centuries. In the mid 13th century, Muslim influence and power in Iberian Peninsula was significantly diminished as Christian kingdoms overtook many of the Muslim states in Spain. Only Granada remained as a Muslim state from the 13th century until the end of the Reconquista.

Al-Andalus, lasted until 1491 when the last Muslim ruler, Muhammad abu Abdullah, surrendered to the Christians, lead by King Ferdinand of Aragon and Queen Isabella of Castile. From the time of Muslim surrender in Granada until 1610 when all Muslims were formally expelled from the peninsula, Muslims were given a choice—convert to Christianity or leave Spain. Those who chose to leave, known as *Moriscos*, or “Moor-like” in Spanish, largely moved to Muslim territories within the Ottoman Empire, which had been extended in the 15th and 16th centuries to include present-day Algeria and Morocco, an area ruled by Zidan Abu Maali of the Saadi dynasty. Descendents of the Moriscos, those whose ancestors originally resided in Spanish Al-Andalus, number an estimated five million out of Morocco's current population of about 33 million.

Shortly after Muslim control formally ended in Spain, the newly whole and completely Christian country gained control of part of Morocco. In 1497 Pedro de Estopinan, envoy of the Duke of Medina Sidone, seized Melilla. It was established as a fortress to prevent any future

invasions of the Spanish peninsula by Muslims.¹ Later Spain took control of Ceuta, another enclave in Morocco held by the Portuguese. It was first captured in 1415 by the Portuguese and transferred in 1668 to the Spanish as part of the Treaty of Lisbon ending the unification of Spain and Portugal in 1640. Both of these territories were, and still are, considered part of Spain, with Spanish citizenship and elected representatives to the national Parliament in Madrid. Spain also has a presence in the Canary Islands just off Morocco's Atlantic coast since 1479² and in what is now called Western Sahara. The Spanish have had varying degrees of control in Western Sahara since the Spanish-Moroccan Treaty of 1767 in order to protect the Canary Islands. The Canary Islands were given to Spain from Portugal in 1479 as a result of the Treaty of Alcacovas. There was great tension in the region as a result of the conflict between the Spanish Hapsburgs and Ottoman Empire in the 16th and 17th centuries. At this time, Spain was at its peak as a global empire, holding colonies in North and South America, Europe, as well as several islands in Asia. It was challenged by the Ottoman Empire, centered in present-day Turkey, for control of the Mediterranean. These treaties helped to establish Spain's influence and control in North Africa and established a firm boundary between the Spanish and Ottoman Empires in Morocco.

The next major development in Spanish-Moroccan relations was the establishment of the Spanish protectorate in Morocco. The Treaty of Fez signed in March of 1912 in which Sultan Abdelhafid gave up direct control of Morocco and divided the country into two protectorates controlled by Spain and France. Spain controlled the northern Rif Mountain region, Tangier, and the southwest Atlantic coast, known commonly as Western Sahara, while France controlled the rest of the country. This treaty had to do more with the greater colonial ambitions of France, Germany and their struggle for control of Africa. Germany agreed to give up all claims or

¹ Peter Gold. *Europe or Africa?: A Contemporary Study of the Spanish North African Enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla* (Liverpool, England: Liverpool University Press, 2000), 1.

² Gold, xi.

territorial interests in Morocco in exchange for some French territories further south in Africa. This treaty did not sit well with most Moroccans. The Spanish Foreign Legion along with French forces succeeded in pacifying resistance forces in the Rif and gained total control of Spanish Morocco in 1927 after a prolonged conflict known as the War of the Rif, lasting from 1919 to 1926. Incidentally, many Moroccans served in the Spanish Nationalist Army, commanded by Francisco Franco, during the Spanish Civil War from 1936 to 1939. For many years, both France and Spain were aware that Morocco would become independent and both countries decided to cut their losses rather than use additional resources to hold on to a colony that was not profitable. On November 18, 1956, Morocco formally declared its independence from both France and Spain with limited but violent, short-term resistance from the former colonizers. Independence parties had started to form in Morocco as early as 1944 and King Muhammad V was allowed to return from exile in 1955 to begin negotiations for independence. In the years after World War II, Spain had limited international power and was dealing with its own problems at home and France was also still occupied with Algeria; so neither country was in a position to hold on to Morocco. Spain returned all of its territory in Morocco to Moroccan home rule, except for the enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla on the Mediterranean coast, through a series of agreements set forth between 1956 and 1958. Though there was a brief military effort to retake Ceuta and Melilla by the Moroccan government, to this day they remain Spanish territory. Though there have been political problems between the two countries in the past, especially over territorial claims, today Spain and Morocco have a close relationship and continue to work together on a number of issues, most notably migration.

MIGRATION IN MODERN TIMES

The concept of migration is nothing new in Morocco. For centuries, nomadic pastoralism has been a way of life for many living in rural areas, often called rural-to-rural migration. Agricultural laborers historically left their homes in western Morocco for the fields of the interior during agricultural peak seasons. It was also common for skilled craftsmen and specialists, like well-diggers, to migrate from rural to urban areas to work.³ Migration up until the modern era, however, for Moroccans was very limited before the colonial era. Only a few merchants traveled to areas further south in West Africa or further east, to Egypt, to trade. At the time when France took control of Algeria, Morocco's neighbor to the east, in 1830, there was an increasing demand for labor in France, starting a limited trend of North African migration to Europe. The "migration boom" did not occur, however, until the 1960s and 1970s, when all of Europe was in the middle of a significant economic resurgence after the devastation of Second World War. Morocco signed a number of guest worker agreements with countries like France, Belgium and the Netherlands during the 1960s. At this point, Spain was one of the countries that the rest of Europe recruited labor from, not a destination for migration. Spain's economy was severely depressed since it was isolated under the Franco regime, both politically and economically, from the rest of Europe and the world at large. There were limited exports and opportunities for workers to earn a living wage. It took a massive reform policy and years of work to bring the Spanish economy up to par with the rest of Europe. During the 1960s and early 1970s, the Spanish economy grew dramatically as a result of International Monetary Fund development policies put in place by Francisco Franco. This dramatic growth is often called the "Spanish Miracle." Prior to this time, the economy was closed due to both the Spanish Civil War and

³ Hein de Hass. *Morocco's migration transition: trends, determinants and future scenarios*. Global Migration Perspectives No. 28, April 2005. Global Commission on International Migration.

World War II. The overall standard of living began to increase with development loans and a middle class emerged for the first time. This economic upturn led to the creation of industrial jobs in Spain on a scale never before seen. Workers from rural areas that would have previously sought work outside Spain now had opportunities to work in their home country,

Given the geographic proximity of Morocco to Spain and its history of economic struggle, why would Moroccans migrate to Spain? Morocco is a country of about 33.7 million people with approximately 20% of the population living below the poverty line, defined as 60% of the median income, and 7.7% of the population is unemployed.⁴ *Quite similarly*, Spain is a country of roughly 40 million people, where approximately 20% of the population also live under the poverty line, defined again as with an income less the 60% of the national average, and where again similarly 8.1% are unemployed.⁵ With such similar statistics, what could be the driving force to make Moroccans leave their country? The answer is earning potential. In 2006, the average annual income in Morocco was US\$ 1,900.⁶ In Spain during the same year it was an estimated thirteen times higher. The opportunity to eventually earn a good living and send money home is strikingly higher in Spain than in Morocco. Being able to send home a substantial amount of money is one of the great draws for attempting to make a living overseas. The UN estimates that remittances sent by migrants to their families in Morocco make up 66% of the total financial inflow to the country and close to 10% of the Gross Domestic Product.⁷ The

⁴ CIA, "CIA-The World Factbook—Morocco" <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/mo.html> (accessed September 10, 2007).

⁵ CIA, "CIA-The World Factbook—Spain" <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/sp.html> (accessed September 10, 2007).

⁶ World Bank, "Morocco Data Profile", <http://devdata.worldbank.org/external/CPProfile.asp?PTYPE=CP&CCODE=MAR> (accessed September 15, 2007)

⁷ UNESCO, "Information Kit on the UN Convention on Migrants Rights", <http://www.unesco.org/most/migration/convention/#Facts> (accessed August 10, 2007)

World Bank estimates that nearly \$3.3 billion are sent to Morocco annually by Moroccans living overseas.⁸

If the main cause for migration to Spain is to make a living and enhance long-term job opportunities, why do migrants choose Spain above other countries. Since France has the largest population of Moroccan migrants, because most Moroccans speak French and there are strong historical ties between the two countries, what is the attraction to Spain? The answer is simple yet surprising; Spain's population is shrinking and the number of job opportunities is increasing. The birth rate in Spain has halved in the past half century and is currently the lowest in the world, with the average Spanish woman giving birth to 1.07 children where 2.1 children per woman is necessary to maintain population stability.⁹ The current influx of immigrants is the only factor preventing the population of Spain from dropping. Workers from other countries have contributed to the workforce during a time when the number of native Spaniards has not been increasing. Many Moroccan migrants in Spain work in rapidly growing economic sectors like agriculture,¹⁰ construction, and service industries. With a large influx of migrants in the 1990s, Spain has achieved an economic growth rate of over 3% for the past 5 years and has more than halved unemployment.¹¹

Though Spain is emerging as a popular destination for Moroccan migrants, France has been home to a far larger number of Moroccan and North African migrants for a much more extended period of time. Moroccans started moving en masse to France during the First and Second World Wars to work in factories, mines and serve in the French Army. This is often

⁸ World Bank, Global Development Finance, 2003.

⁹ "Birth Rates Fall Dramatically". *UN Wire*. March 1, 2000.

http://www.unwire.org/unwire/20000301/7459_story.asp

¹⁰ Daniela Gerson, "Moroccan Immigrants, Spanish Strawberries and Europe's Future" *Der Spiegel*, May 11, 2007.

<http://www.spiegel.de/international/europe/0,1518,482468,00.html>

¹¹ Carol Matlack, "How Spain Thrives on Immigration", *Der Spiegel*, May 10 2007,

<http://www.spiegel.de/international/business/0,1518,482109,00.html>

considered the first mass migration of Moroccans in modern times. Migration to Spain started out later, and in smaller numbers. It has been estimated that 40,000 Moroccan men, mainly from the Rif region, joined Franco's army in Spanish Morocco during the Spanish Civil War. However, migration overall to Spain remained nominal since Spain itself at that time was poor and a chief labor exporter to the rest of Europe. During the reign of dictator Francisco Franco from 1939 until 1975, Spain's economy was stagnate due to the political and economic isolation of the regime. The economy was controlled by the state and tens of thousands of Spaniards went to countries like France and Germany for economic opportunities. A country that was overall a net labor exporter was not a lucrative migration destination. The number of Moroccans in Spain remained under 10,000 until the mid-1970, at a time when there were 260,000 Moroccans in France.¹²

It wasn't until the mid-1980s that true changes took places in the migration patterns to Spain. Former labor exporting countries like Spain, Portugal and Italy began to receive larger numbers of Moroccan migrants. Aside from Spain's economic growth and opportunities, its lax visa requirements were also a draw. Up until 1991, Moroccans did not need a special visa to enter Spain. Many would-be migrants entered on a temporary tourist visa and stayed over their allotted time. In March 1991, after the signing of an accord between the two countries in December of 1990,¹³ it became mandatory for Moroccans coming to Spain to have an entry visa.¹⁴ There was a growing problem with illegal migrants from Morocco entering Spain in the years previous to this decision. This requirement was also made so Spain would comply with the

¹² Hein de Hass, "Morocco: From Emigration Country to Africa's Migration Passage to Europe", Migration Information Source, <http://www.migrationinformation.org/Profiles/display.cfm?ID=339> (accessed September 19, 2007).

¹³ Laurie A. Brand. *Citizens Abroad: Emigration and the State in the Middle East and North Africa* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 54.

¹⁴ Alfred Tovias, "Spain's Input in Shaping the EU's Mediterranean Policies, 1986-96" in *Spain and the Mediterranean since 1898*, ed. Raanan Rein, 222 (Portland, Oregon: Frank Cass, 1999).

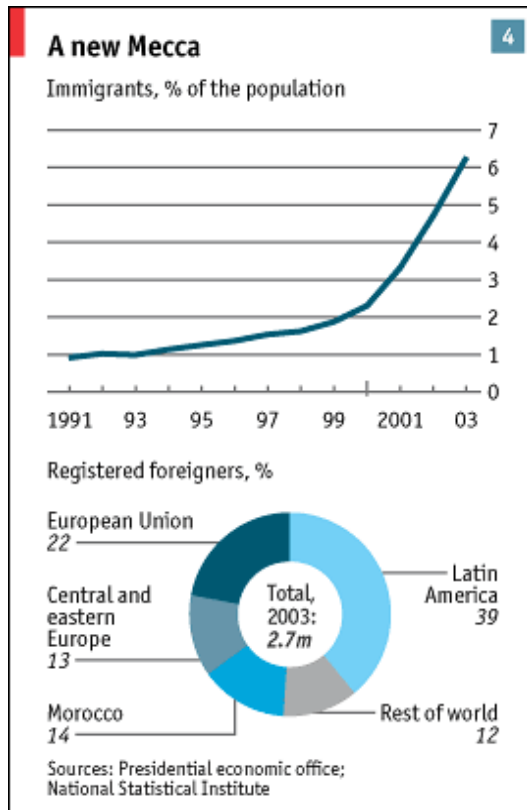
Schengen agreement, enacted a short time after to eliminate the need for visas when traveling inside the European Community. Illegal immigration by boat was first documented in 1989. In that year there were an estimated 200,000 illegal immigrants in Spain, 46% of which were from Africa, and especially Morocco. In 1991, Spain also held an amnesty program, giving 130,000 illegal immigrants legitimate status in the country.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

The number of immigrants entering Spain in 2005 jumped dramatically to almost 400,000.¹⁵ Overall the number of legally documented Moroccans in Europe has jumped sevenfold from 1972 to at least 2.3 million. This figure does not cover the total number of immigrant Moroccans because there are estimated to be several hundred thousand undocumented workers. On several occasions, however, there have been periods of general amnesty, allowing those in Spain illegally to obtain work permits. One of the most recent amnesty periods lasted six months in 2005 during which 600,000 immigrants from all over the world were granted legal status.¹⁶ Even after this amnesty period, it is still impossible to know for certain the exact number of Moroccans in Spain due to the large number of migrants who entered the country illegally and are not properly documented.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ben Sills, "Immigrant-Rich Spain Creates Half of Euro Countries' Jobs", *Bloomberg*. February, 28 2007, <http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601109&refer=home&sid=aeZTDmNQTRnI>.



Growth Rate of Migration to Spain as of 2003¹⁷

CATEGORIES OF MIGRANTS

Migrants can be grouped into three general categories based on level of education.

Skilled workers are defined as those having at least 16 years of education and include accountants, engineers, teachers and scientists. Those considered semi-skilled have an average education of between 12-16 years. Examples of semi-skilled workers include technicians and administrative assistants. The majority of Moroccans in Spain fall into the category of unskilled workers. Construction workers, laborers, and waiters are all considered unskilled jobs.¹⁸

As the Spanish economy has thrived, many unskilled jobs have gone to migrants. Many jobs in construction, agriculture, caring for children and the elderly as well as other minimum

¹⁷ Europe's Magnetic South", *The Economist*, June 24, 2004, http://www.economist.com/surveys/displaystory.cfm?story_id=2764884.

¹⁸ Caglar Ozden, "Brain Drain in Middle East and North Africa-The Patterns Under The Surface", *United Nations Expert Group Meeting On International Migration and Development in the Arab Region, Beirut, Lebanon*, May 15-17 2006.

wage fields are being filled by Moroccans. Employers are charged a tax for employing immigrants and employees pay into social security. These contributions are twenty percent higher than the cost of social services that immigrants use as part of normal life in Spain.¹⁹ Migration to Spain has especially been a boon for some Moroccan women. One of the biggest groups of migrants from Morocco consists of women coming to Spain for a single season on guest visas to pick produce, especially labor intensive strawberries and then return to Morocco. The town of Cartaya is a prime example of this policy in action. This city of 18,000 is in a strawberry-growing area, received 1.2 million euros to work to develop a circular migration guest worker program with Morocco. However, fewer than half of the guest workers returned to Morocco as required. This prompted a change in the program's regulations resulting in only mothers with children being eligible. This new policy was based on the belief that women with children would want to return to Morocco to reunite with their families, versus women without children who do not necessarily have the same personal need to return to Morocco. Out of the 26,000 who applied for the 2007 strawberry growing season, which lasted from March to June, only 5,500 were selected. Another part of this agreement is the condition that if the women depart when required, they have the right to return again in 2008 to carry out the same kind of work.²⁰ Women can make ten times more in Spain working in agriculture than they can make in Morocco.²¹ The low cost of transportation from Morocco to Spain, in part due to the close proximity of the two countries, makes it possible to stay for only a few months at a time and return year after year to work in the same area or at the same farm.

¹⁹ Carol Matlack, "How Spain Thrives on Immigration", *Der Spiegel*, May 10, 2007, <http://www.spiegel.de/international/business/0,1518,482109,00.html>.

²⁰ "Spain: Migrants, Canaries, Economy," *Migration News*, 14 No. 2, April 2007. http://migration.ucdavis.edu/MN/more.php?id=3281_0_4_0.

²¹ Daniela Gerson, "Moroccan Immigrants, Spanish Strawberries and Europe's Future" *Der Spiegel*, May 11, 2007. <http://www.spiegel.de/international/europe/0,1518,482468,00.html>

Perhaps the most problematic type of migration for Morocco's future is that of those with tertiary level, or college, educations. Though it is hard to separate this group out by final location of migration destination, it has been estimated that between 10%²² and 15%²³ of Moroccans with a college education reside outside the country. This phenomenon, commonly known as "brain-drain" is present throughout North Africa and the Middle East. Students often complete their education abroad and choose not to return to Morocco. More often young Moroccans leave after completing either their secondary or tertiary education in Morocco. The largest contributing factor to this phenomenon is the fact that there are not nearly enough jobs for high school and college graduates in Morocco. In 2002, there were 400,000 Moroccan high school and college graduates who were unemployed. Overall, job prospects for the 15 to 24 age bracket, a category including most recent graduate, are bleak.²⁴ An estimated 37.6% of those in this category were unemployed versus about 20% of the general population. Unemployed college graduates have begun to organize and become politically active, holding demonstrations in hopes of pressuring the government to do more about this growing problem. In recent years the government has made a concerted effort to create jobs and opportunities in Morocco for those with college educations and perhaps as a result the number of educated Moroccans migrating has dropped a bit. With few opportunities at home and a university education, it is realistically possible for some Moroccans to find work, either for the short or long term, abroad.

²² Dilip Ratha and Zhimei Xu, "Migration and Remittances in Morocco," *Migration and Remittances Factbook*, Development Prospects Group, World Bank, <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTPROSPECTS/Resources/334934-1181678518183/Morocco.pdf>.

²³ Caglar Ozden, "Brain Drain in Middle East and North Africa-The Patterns Under The Surface," *United Nations Expert Group Meeting On International Migration and Development in the Arab Region, Beirut, Lebanon*, May 15-17 2006.

²⁴ Marvine Howe, *Morocco: The Islamist Awakening and Other Challenges* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 269.

Skilled migrants or university-educated migrants, however, make up only a small percentage of Moroccans abroad.²⁵ The general level of education for the population overall is less than that in Europe. Only 52.3% of the population overall, 65.7% of males and 39.6% of females, over the age of 15 are even literate.²⁶ A significant percentage of children, up to 1 in 5 do not attend school, and there is a great disparity between educational opportunities for boys and girls. Visitors to major Moroccan cities, such as Casablanca or Marrakesh, can easily see the large number of school-age children who work in shops, peddle items on street corners or are simply idle during the day rather than attending school. Overall the level of education for the general population is lower than that of other countries in the region and the world at large.²⁷ There is a lack of new jobs for recent graduates, causing many to seek work in Europe and as far away as North America and Australia.

MIGRANTS AND THE MOROCCAN ECONOMY

Since between 8.6% of all Moroccans work overseas supporting their families, the total value of monies sent home, known as *remittances*, makes up a substantial portion of the Moroccan economy. The UN estimates that remittances sent by migrants to their families in Morocco make up 66% of the total financial inflow to the country and close to 10% of the GDP.²⁸ The World Bank estimates that nearly \$3.3 billion are sent to Morocco annually by migrants.²⁹ In 2001, remittance revenue was equivalent to 29.2% of Morocco's foreign trade.³⁰

²⁵ Ibid

²⁶ CIA, "CIA-The World Factbook—Morocco" <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/mo.html> (accessed October 8, 2007).

²⁷ Caglar Ozden, "Brain Drain in Middle East and North Africa-The Patterns Under The Surface," *United Nations Expert Group Meeting On International Migration and Development in the Arab Region, Beirut, Lebanon*, May 15-17 2006.

²⁸ UNESCO, "Information Kit on the UN Convention on Migrants Rights," <http://www.unesco.org/most/migration/convention/#Facts> (accessed August 11, 2007).

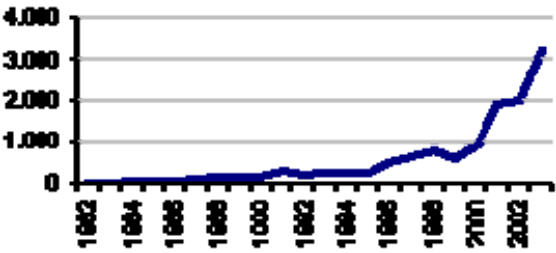
²⁹ World Bank, *Global Development Finance*, 2003.

³⁰ Inigo More. "Emigrant's Remittances in Spain: An Opportunity for Action Abroad." *Real Instituto Elcano de Estudios Internacionales y Estrategias*, January 25, 2005 <http://www.realinstitutoelcano.org/documentos/175.asp>

Morocco has also consistently ranked in the top four in the world among developing countries receiving remittances, along with India, Mexico and the Philippines. As the number of Moroccans in Spain has grown, so too has the amount of remittances. In 1992, Moroccans in Spain sent home 92 million dirhams, while in 2003 they sent home over 3.2 billion dirhams. The percentage of total remittances sent to Morocco from Spain has also increased. In 1998 remittances from Spain were 4.07% of the total amount received while that figure had increased to 5.36% in 2003. These figures are only rough estimates since only transactions via wire or postal transfer can be tracked. It can be assumed that a substantial amount of money also enters Morocco when migrants return to visit their families. Based on the 2001 figure cited above, and illustrated in the chart below, and assuming that there were between two and three million Moroccans overseas, each migrant would have on average sent home between 12 and 18 thousand dirhams or US\$ 1,500 to \$2,250 given the current exchange rate of about 8 dirhams to 1 dollar.

**Remittances from Spain
to Morocco**

Figures in millions of dirhams for 1992-2003



Source: Office des Changes

³¹ Ibid.

RECENT TRENDS IN MIGRATION

One of the most recent trends in migration from Morocco to Spain does not involve Moroccans. Since the 1990s, sub-Saharan Africans, from countries like Senegal, Liberia and Nigeria, have used Morocco as a conduit to reach Spain via the Canary Islands or crossing the Straits of Gibraltar. It is estimated that between 65,000 and 120,000 Africans enter Morocco each year. In previous years, most migrants were fleeing civil war or unrest in their own countries. However, recently, the majority of migrants could be classified as “economic refugees,” a status that is—in fact—recognized as a legitimate reason for granting asylum by the Moroccan government. However, the European Union does not recognize economic status as a legitimate cause for granting asylum. In addition, in 2002, Spain granted the lowest number of applicants asylum out of any European country at 3%.³² Spain is a particularly popular destination because it has repatriation agreements with few African countries. Since there is a lack of bilateral agreements, there is no formal process for sending confirmed citizens of some African countries back to their native country. In the past two years, Spain has signed co-operation and repatriation agreements with Algeria, Senegal, Mauritania, Gambia, Guinea, Mali, and Ghana, as well as Morocco.³³ In addition, many migrants destroy their national identification documents, such as a passport or ID card, before making the journey. The thought behind this action is that if authorities cannot positively identify where a person is from originally, they cannot be returned there and will be allowed to stay in Spain. Often, a migrant’s nationality is deduced during interviews. Morocco has been urged by the European Union to sign an agreement allowing for the return of any person who transits through Morocco to be

³² Sara B. Miller, “Migration Station”, *The Christian Science Monitor*, June 26, 2003, <http://www.csmonitor.com/2003/0626/p11s02-wome.html?worldNav>.

³³ “Spain Begins Anti-Migration Ads”, *BBC News*, September 27, 2007, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/7004139.stm>.

returned there, regardless of national origin. Those who stay in Morocco before attempting the journey, living in *bidenvilles* outside major cities and the Spanish enclaves are susceptible to being caught by the Moroccan authorities. Spanish law dictates that those who manage to enter Ceuta or Melilla are to be transported to the mainland where they are interviewed to determine if they get asylum or should be repatriated. However, many migrants are simply turned over to the Moroccan authorities if they enter either of the enclaves illegally.

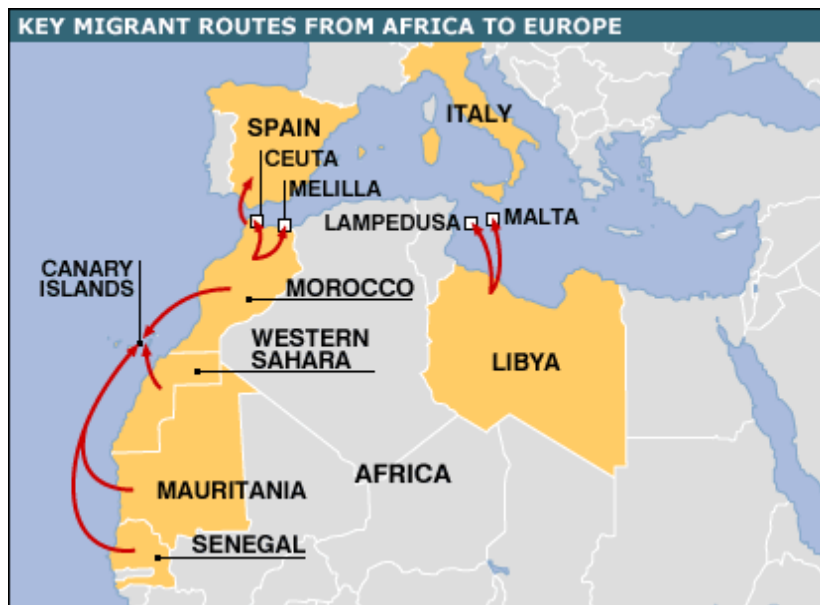
The most recent event involving Moroccan migrants that has drawn the attention of both the international community and human rights groups occurred in October 2005. Two thousand migrants tried over the course of two weeks to scale the security walls outside Ceuta and Melilla. There had been growing discontent for weeks, which boiled over into violence. It was reported that at least eleven people died as a result of gunfire and the stampede of people, as both Spanish and Moroccan troops blocked the movement of the migrants into the enclaves. Weeks earlier in September of that year, 6 migrants were killed as a result of gunfire at the Ceuta border and both Moroccan and Spanish security forces were accused of using excessive force.³⁴ During this time Spain sought to reactivate a bilateral agreement first enacted in 1992 allowing Spain to return any migrant, regardless of national origin, to Morocco. On October 6, citing this agreement, Spain deported 70 migrants to Morocco.

Human rights groups were also concerned about Morocco's policy of dropping foreign nationals caught trying to migrate to Europe via Morocco at the Moroccan-Algerian border with inadequate food and water. More than 500 migrants were bused to the border by Morocco authorities in October 2005 following the tensions in Ceuta and Melilla, reportedly handcuffed together, and simply dropped off.

³⁴ Amnesty International, "Spain/Morocco: Migrant Rights Between Two Fires" October 3, 2005. <http://web.amnesty.org/library/index/ENGEUR410112005>.

Those who are caught trying to enter Ceuta or Melilla are often sent to the desert, especially in Western Sahara³⁵ and the city of Oujda,³⁶ close to the Atlantic and Melilla. These locations are reserved for nationals of countries that Morocco does not have repatriation agreements with. Migrants from countries like Mali and Senegal, which Morocco does have agreements with, are sent to the city of Bouarfa in the south, near the Algerian border. From here, thwarted migrants are flown back to their countries of origin.³⁷ This also occurred in 2003 when 1,000 Nigerians were repatriated. However, more often than not, human rights groups say that groups of migrants, often numbering several hundred are simply left near the Algerian border with no food or water. The aim of this practice is to have migrants wander into Algeria, in search of food and water, and out of Morocco. This type of treatment of migrants has also drawn the criticism of the international community and the United Nations.

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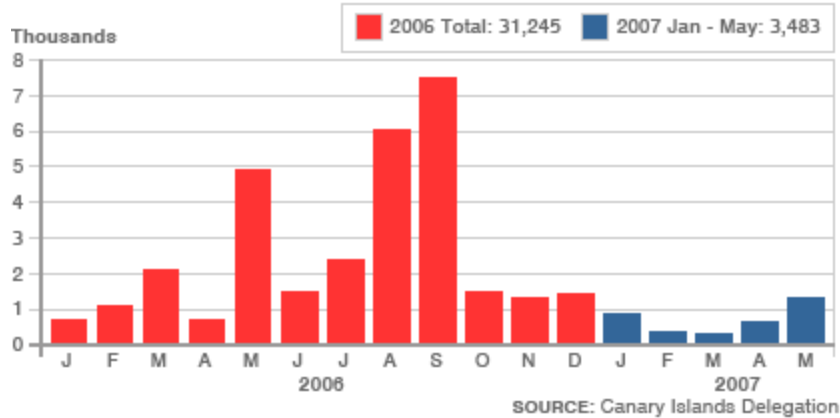
³⁵ Agence-France Presse, "Morocco Said to Abandon Hundreds of Migrants in Desert", *New York Times*, October 14, 2005, <http://www.nytimes.com/2005/10/14/international/africa/14wire-morocco.html>.

³⁶ Craig S. Smith, "Morocco Again Expels Africans Trying Risky Path to Europe", *New York Times*, October 17, 2005, <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9500E0DD153FF934A25753C1A9639C8B63>.

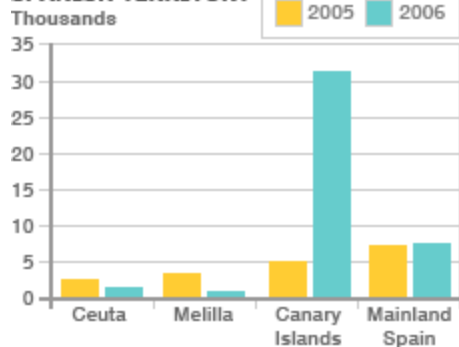
³⁷ Isambard Wilkinson. "Morocco Rounds Up Immigrants," *Telegraph*, October 10, 2005, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml?xml=/news/2005/10/10/wmoroc10.xml>.

³⁸ "Spain Begins Anti-Migration Ads," *BBC News*, September 27, 2007, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/7004139.stm>.

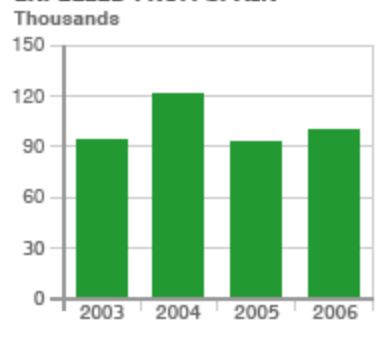
MIGRANTS ARRIVING IN CANARY ISLANDS 2006-2007



ARRIVALS BY SEA TO SPANISH TERRITORY



TOTAL ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS EXPELLED FROM SPAIN



39

Another issue with non-Moroccan Africans using Morocco as a gateway to Spain occurs at sea. Thousands of Africans die each year as a result of drowning trying to get to Spain or the Canary Islands in *pateras*, or small fishing boats, that are often overloaded with migrants. According to Spain, 1,035 migrants died between 1999 and 2003 during the thousand mile trip from the Moroccan coast to the Canaries, but that number has been disputed by immigrants' rights groups as too low.⁴⁰ The number of migrants attempting this trip has dramatically increased in the past few years and so has the death toll. The Andalusian Association for Human

³⁹ "Key Facts: Africa to Europe Migration," *BBC News*, July 2, 2007, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/6228236.stm#spain>.

⁴⁰ Hein de Hass, "Morocco: From Emigration Country to Africa's Migration Passage to Europe", Migration Information Source, <http://www.migrationinformation.org/Profiles/display.cfm?ID=339> (accessed September 19, 2007).

Rights estimated that 1,167 migrants died at sea in 2006 alone.⁴¹ Estimates on those who attempt to leave on small boats and die at sea are not exact, but some believe as many as 6,000 died in 2006 at sea.⁴² The vast majority of migrants try to reach the Canary Islands, since the number of patrols across the Straits of Gibraltar and the northern Moroccan coast has increased in recent years. Many do not even reach Spain as 68% of those trying to reach the Iberian coast by boat are intercepted and forced to turn around.⁴³

In order to combat this ongoing problem, Spain and Morocco agreed to institute a four-year plan in July of 2006 to tackle illegal immigration in Europe. A major feature of this plan was a repatriation agreement allowing for the return of apprehended foreigners. These strict measures, along with Spain's move to double the height of the barbed wire fences around Ceuta and Melilla, were some of the steps Spain took to deter migrants from illegally entering, especially following the problems in October 2005.

During that year there was a 40% drop in the number of migrants reaching Spain as a result of the deployment of 11,000 Moroccan security personnel to monitor the coastline.⁴⁴ Also, joint patrols with Spanish, Moroccan and Senegalese law enforcement have worked to confiscate boats before they sail and stop those already en route.⁴⁵ A new European Union agency, Frontex, created in 2006, which is in charge of border security for the entire bloc, started to patrol the Mediterranean with boats and planes. Spain is also taking another approach, targeting potential migrants directly. In August 2007, Spain began showing ads in Senegal discouraging migrants

⁴¹ Ben Sills, "Immigrant-Rich Spain Creates Half of Euro Countries' Jobs," *Bloomberg*. February, 28 2007, <http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601109&refer=home&sid=aeZTDmNQTRnI>.

⁴² "Spain: Migrants, Canaries, Economy," *Migration News*, 14 No. 2, April 2007. http://migration.ucdavis.edu/MN/more.php?id=3281_0_4_0.

⁴³ Ibid

⁴⁴ Ibid

⁴⁵ Ian Fisher, "For African Migrants, Europe Gets Further Away," *New York Times*, August 27, 2007, <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/08/26/world/europe/26mediterranean.html?hp>.

from attempting the journey to the Canary Islands.⁴⁶ They showed the realities of the journey including dehydration and drowning.

This type of cooperation with Spain is a demonstration of the willingness of the Moroccan government to work with European countries on issues of mutual importance. It is also aimed at creating a good reputation within the EU, which Morocco has applied to join, in various capacities, in the past.

SPAIN'S SECURITY CONCERNS

With such a great influx of migrants in recent years, Spain is reevaluating its domestic security and taking measures to ensure its safety. In 2006 alone, Spain deported 99,445 migrants, mostly from Morocco, Senegal and Romania.⁴⁷ Previously, in 2003, 24,146 Moroccans were repatriated. Though legal status has a great deal to do with deportation, an increasing number of charges against migrants, especially those from Morocco relate to terrorism. As statistically Spain's largest immigrant community, and according to polls, the immigrant group least liked by Spaniards, there has been growing concern about how this community may impact Spain as a whole.⁴⁸

One of the most deadly and visible examples of the conflict between Spain and a small group of radicals, mostly North Africans, occurred on March 11, 2004. On that date, radicals placed bombs that later exploded on four commuter trains during rush hour in Madrid, killing 191 people and wounding more than 2,000. Fourteen of the eighteen later charged in connection with the bombings were Moroccan. This sparked debate in Spain about the role of Moroccans and the Muslim community at large in Spanish society. Most of the bombers were in Spain

⁴⁶ "Spain Begins Anti-Migration Ads," *BBC News*, September 27, 2007, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/7004139.stm>.

⁴⁷ *Ibid*

⁴⁸ Dominic Bailey. "Prayers and Fears of Madrid's Muslims," *BBC News*, March 16, 2004, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/3514590.stm>.

legally, had jobs and several were married with children. They were recruited into extremist organizations after they had lived in Spain for a prolonged period of time. In many ways, they were like many Moroccans living in Spain. Their recruitment into terrorist organizations and subsequent actions were not a result of socio-cultural factors, but rather recruitment and propaganda. However many analysts have inferred that in the immigrant community at large this is not always the case.⁴⁹ Radicalization of immigrants is believed to be an isolated phenomenon only affecting a very small percentage of all immigrants. The vast majority of immigrants, regardless of outside factors like cultural background and socio-economic status, remain peaceful. There is concern that language and cultural barriers and the disparity between migrants and those native born in Spain might draw some to become Islamic radicals. Spanish intelligence and law enforcement have stepped up efforts to break up terrorist cells and identify those who may be potentially dangerous to the society at large.

Spain and Morocco are working together to fight the growing problem of terrorism as well as drug trafficking and illegal migration. The growth of terrorism is not only a concern in Spain but also Morocco, especially following terrorist attacks in Casablanca in May of 2003, March 11, 2007, on the third anniversary of the Madrid attacks, and two attacks on April 10 and 14 of 2007. In May of 2004 the countries signed an agreement to increase judicial cooperation to expedite legal proceedings. According to this deal, a Moroccan judge would be based in Madrid and a Spanish judge would be based in Rabat.⁵⁰ A commission was also established to increase joint efforts against terrorism and organized crime. Though these are steps in the right direction toward cooperation, it isn't clear how, if at all, they will impact the growth of terrorism in Spain.

⁴⁹ Javier Jordan and Robert Wesley, "The Madrid Attacks: Results of Investigations Two Years Later," *Terrorism Monitor*, 4, Issue 5, March 6, 2006, <http://jamestown.org/terrorism/news/article.php?articleid=2369921>.

⁵⁰ Kathryn Haahr, "Spain's 9/11: The Moroccan Connection," *Terrorism Monitor*, 2, Issue 13, July 1, 2004, <http://www.jamestown.org/terrorism/news/article.php?articleid=2368185>.

Other factors have likely contributed to the fact that there have not been any major Islamic terrorist attacks in Spain since 2004 including the withdrawal of Spanish troops from Iraq and increased domestic security and surveillance.

RIGHTS OF MIGRANTS

The best estimate available is that approximately 8.6% of all Moroccans live outside Morocco and send home billions of dirhams a year. With so much riding on the success of Morocco's migrant population overseas, the Moroccan government has been especially concerned with the treatment and rights of its citizens working overseas. Morocco was one of the first countries to sign on to International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, which took effect in July of 2003.⁵¹ Its key points include the ability of migrants, mostly those seeking greater economic opportunities, to participate politically in their home countries, send money home and allow migrants to keep cultural links and return home occasionally. However, this is a non-binding agreement, to date only signed by about 30 countries, many of which are small countries that have large populations of migrants overseas. Though it is a step in the right direction, this agreement in no way guarantees any concrete actions or policy changes will happen.

The complex issue of migration between Morocco and Spain has its roots in the eighth century expansion of Islam into the Iberian Peninsula and North Africa and continues to dramatically impact both countries in the present day. Spain's decreasing population and

⁵¹ UNESCO, "Information Kit on the UN Convention on Migrants Rights", <http://www.unesco.org/most/migration/convention/#Facts>.

increasing economic prosperity, combined with high poverty and unemployment rates in Morocco, have created an influx of Moroccans looking for greater opportunity across the Straits of Gibraltar. Though this increase in migration has helped fuel the economies of both countries—through increased inexpensive labor in Spain and through remittances sent home to Morocco—there have been significant challenges associated with this trend. Sub-Saharan Africans illegally using Morocco as a conduit to Spain via Ceuta or Melilla, the Canary Islands or the Straits, often results in drowning deaths or immediate deportation back to their countries of origin, producing in either case tragic headlines. Also, the increase of radical Islam and terrorist attacks in Spain have caused some Spaniards, and the government, to angrily question the role of North African migrants in their country and their role in Spanish society. There are no signs that migration is stopping, in fact the opposite is true. It seems that for the immediate future, migration of Moroccans to Spain will only increase, resulting in new problems that both countries will have to work together to solve