

# The Romanian Migrants in Spain. An Exceptional Migratory Flow

Rafael Viruela MARTÍNEZ

*University of Valencia*

**Abstract:** The Romanian population is the most important foreign population in Spain. Romanian migrants are characterized by their large number (about 800.000 residents and 268.000 contract workers) and their rapid growth. The economic and labour motivation for migration determines their geographical distribution, with high numbers of Romanian migrants in cities and in areas of agricultural, industrial and tourist industries. However, a high proportion of Romanian migrants also live in small towns and rural areas. Most of them were already illegal migrants when Romania entered the EU and they became EU citizens. From January 1<sup>st</sup> 2009, these once illegal migrants now have full freedom of employment in Spain. They adapt to circumstances of each period of time, in order to enter or to remain in the Spanish labour market. Most work in construction and agriculture as well as domestic services, trade, tourism and industries. The current economic crisis and the resulting unemployment have raised the issue of return migration to Romania.

**Keywords:** *Spain, Romanian immigration, geographical distribution, insertion on the labor market, fields of activity*

## Introduction

Of all the European Union countries, Spain has received most immigrants, and Romania is the most important country of origin. These two facts indicate a diversification both on the countries of origin from the Spanish side, and also on the destination

countries on the Romanian side. Lately migration between these two countries has become the most important in Europe. The majority of Romanian workers remain in Spain only for brief amounts of time. This migration is equally characterized by a significant number of contract workers, and by its territorial expansion in Spain. In order

\*email: Rafael.Viruela-Martinez@uv.es.

to analyze these issues, it was necessary to resort to statistical data from The National Institute of Statistics (*Instituto Nacional de Estadística*, INE) and from The Spanish Ministry of Work and Immigration (*Ministerio de Trabajo e Inmigración*, MTIN). These data were supplemented by the results of several empirical studies, using qualitative methods, based on surveys and in depth interviews, which aimed to analyze the processes of migration and mobility of labor among Romanians. Besides the prior work of Swanie Potot (2000) and Serban and Grigoras (2000), I rely on another series of researches, conducted in other places and regions, such as Castellón (Viruela, 2002; Bucur, 2006), Catalonia (Pajares, 2007) or Teruel (García, 2007) and more recently in four communes in the metropolitan area of Madrid (Sandu, 2009a).

*Padrón de Habitantes* (INE) is the communal administrative record; it is considered the most reliable statistical source when it comes to estimating the number of immigrants in Spain, because it counts undocumented residents, making it 'an unique source in the world' (Arango, 2005, p.144). The 'undocumented' immigrants actually have reasons to be interested in being taken into account by censuses (as the law provides it since the year 2000) in order to gain rights: access to health and education services, certificate of residence, requisite to the regularization procedures, etc. *Padrón's* accuracy could be questionable, since it contains double accounts and persons who are no longer in Spain (Arango, 2004; Recolons, 2005), but the data collection methods have been improved and *Padrón* set itself apart as an instrumental source

in providing knowledge concerning the population, distribution by gender, by age, or by nationality<sup>1</sup>, as well as geographic distribution<sup>2</sup>. The register of professional affiliation to the Social Security (*Afiliaciones en alta laboral*, MTIN) provides detailed information on the insertion of foreigners on the Spanish labor market, but only for those who have a proper contract<sup>3</sup>. The Social Security database accounts for contributions, not persons, which explains the case of pluri-activity as well as the cases of fraud (i.e. people who pay without working or who contribute to another category than the one they actually correspond to). However, I consider this source to be reliable; it is frequently used for analyzing the foreigners' participation in the Spanish labor market (Carvajal, 2003; Pumares, Arlinda and Asensio, 2006; Pajares, 2008). The most current figures are published in *Afiliación de Extranjeros a la Seguridad Social*, a monthly journal on the EU and non-EU workers' registration at Social Security.

The statistics used to provide information at the municipal scale (*Padrón*), provincial (INE) and regional (MTIN). Figure 1 illustrates Spain's administrative organization: fifty provinces (equivalent to districts in France or in Romania), incorporated into 17 autonomous communities or regions, plus two North African towns, Ceuta and Melilla.

This article consists of three parts. The first analyses the factors which contributed to the sudden increase of Romanian population in Spain. The second analyses the geographic distribution and the Romanians' rapid spatial diffusion across Spain, relating

to the sustained growth of the residents number. The third part assesses the Romanians' insertion on the Spanish

labor market according to different systems of Social Security.



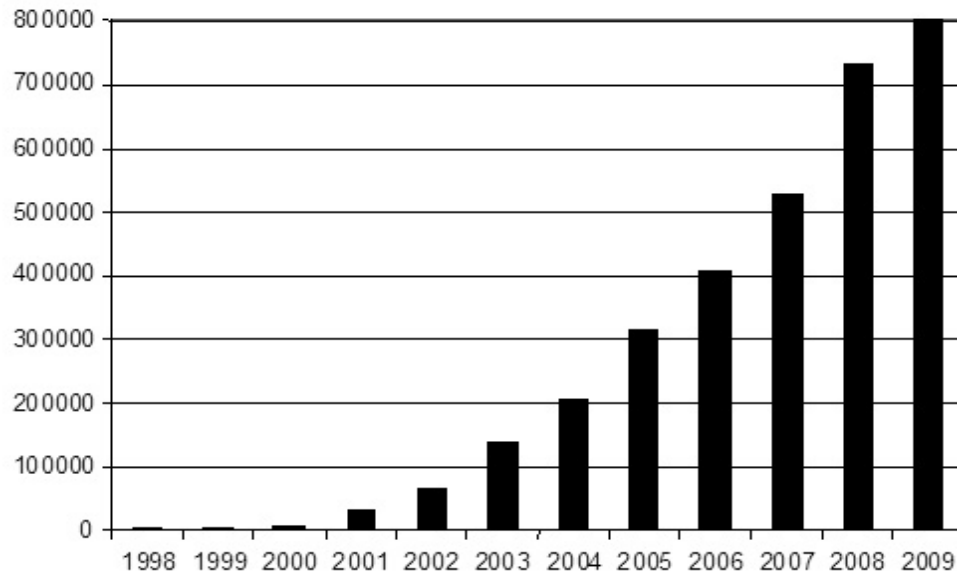
**Figure 1.** *Autonomous Communities and Provinces.* Graphic design : C. Andrés Langa.

### **Spain: one of the main countries of destination for the Romanian migration**

The analysis of Spain's Romanian residents numerical evolution shows that beyond the volume reached, what must be inquired is the reasons or the factors that led to Spain becoming one of the main destination countries for the Romanian migrants.

Immigration in Spain follows a very dynamic trend and varies in its composition. The number of foreigners has increased sixfold since the year 2000, reaching 5.648.671 persons in January 1st 2009, with the addition of citizens of Western Europe – many of whom are retired British, German, French, etc. – and North African

workers, plus migrants coming from Sub-Saharan Africa and the Latin Americans (Ecuadorians, Colombians, Bolivians, etc.) and, most recently, the Eastern Europeans, encompassing a majority of Romanians. Since 2005, most significant migratory flow originates from Romania (INE) and statistics from various international organizations (Sopemi, 2007; EUROSTAT<sup>4</sup>) indicate that Spain is the main destination for the Romanian migrants. It has hosted more than 50 percent of the Romanians who have recently emigrated within the EU, while Italy, which hosted approximately 25 percent of them, comes in second<sup>5</sup>. However, there is probably a more significant number of Romanians (stock) living in Italy<sup>6</sup>.



**Figure 2.** *Evolution of the Romanian Population in Spain (1998-2009).* Source : INE, Padron de Habitantes [www.ine.es]. Data provided on January 1<sup>st</sup> each year.

Romanian immigration is a very recent phenomenon and it encountered a dramatic growth. The figures (Figure 2) show a sustained and continual growth since the beginning of the twenty first century. The stock of residents increased by 100.000 persons per year since 2002, and exceeded 200.000 in 2007 alone. With a total of 798.892 persons on January 1<sup>st</sup> 2009, the Romanian community is the most significant foreign group in Spain (14 percent of the total), while in 2000 it consisted of only 6.410 persons (0,7 percent of the foreigners). Like in any case of economic migration, it is the working-age population group that prevails: young adults, with ages ranging from 20 to 39, encompass 59 percent of the Romanian population in Spain. The Romanians describe a fairly balanced structure by gender, and followed a feminizing trend over the years: in 2001 the percent of women amounted to 39 percent and

in 2009 it was nearly 47 percent of the total, suggesting that migration gained a family component (Domingo, 2008), and also the feminization of employment and the family reunification.

#### ***Several explanatory factors for choosing a new migration pole***

Among the explanatory factors concerning the sudden growth of Romanian immigration in Spain, the role of the profound and persistent economic and social crisis experienced by Romania during the 90s must be emphasized, along with the overflow of jobs offers in Spain, both on the formal and informal labor market. Many migrants have shifted to Spain after encountering serious struggle in settling in their countries of choice. The restrictive migration policies adopted by countries such as Germany,

Austria or France, far from stopping migration, have contributed to a geographic change of direction of the migration flow and to the expansion of the Romanian migration space, with its center of gravity shifting towards the Mediterranean space, especially Italy and Spain. Like other authors have observed, entering, living and working without proper papers is easier in countries from Southern Europe than in the North (Baganha and Reyneri, 2001; Arango, 2005); this can be explained through the account of the underground economy, deficient labor inspections or the practices of ruthless entrepreneurs who hire workers under irregular conditions. But in several occasions during the recent years, thousands of Romanian and foreign workers without papers had the opportunity to regularize their situation in Spain<sup>7</sup>.

Romanians are well regarded by the Spanish entrepreneurs and by society in general, which contributed to the rapid growth of this population. The employers from various regions and fields of activity display a distinct preference for them. A footwear producer in Castellón, says: *'Romanians have a great capacity to learn, the workers from Magreb are lazy. I had two South Americans, very skillful, but slow. I have nothing to say against Romanians'* (quoted in Viruela, 2002). Andalusian employers say that Romanians *'don't cut work'* (Gualda, 2005) and others from Teruel, that *'they have a proper attitude and they adapt very easily'* (Garcia, 2007). According to Swanie Potot (2007), the trust invested in Romanians is related to the fact that they are European, white and Christian. However, the increased level of immigration and the

diversification of places of origin have sharpened the entrepreneurs' power of selection who have the opportunity to recruit recently arrived workers, who are more submissive and disciplined, in order to subdue the labor market and to reduce the workforce costs. This has triggered processes of substitution or replacement of certain nationalities with others (Viruela, 2006). The management of workforce from the part of the entrepreneurs has been determined by the decisions of the Spanish government at the beginning of the twenty first century, aiming to 'rebalance' the weight of the Moroccan workforce (Izquierdo and Martínez, 2003), which put up with further migration experiences and critical work conditions. In 2000, the Moroccans constituted 19 percent of the foreign population living in Spain and 40 percent of foreigners with a work permit. On their side, Romanians endeavor to accomplish promptly the tasks given by their employers in order to be able to keep their jobs among other immigrants against whom they compete.

Social networks play the essential part. The first Romanians who arrived in Spain have cleared the way for their followers by providing them with information and offering them the necessary assistance: receiving, housing, connections for finding work, etc. Nearly 60 of about 100 Romanians interviewed by Aparicio and Tornos between the end of 2003 and the beginning of 2004 in Madrid and Valencia had relatives in Spain (Aparicio and Tornos, 2005). In another research, 800 Romanians were inquired in September 2008 in four municipalities in the metropolitan area

of Madrid; 31 percent of them reported having close relatives in Spain and 39 percent, distant relatives (Sandu, 2009b). Migration chains and networks are constituted around family ties and/or geographic or social proximity (neighborhood, ethnicity, religion). The Adventist community had a special role concerning the development and consolidation of support networks for Romanian immigrants in Coslada (Șerban and Grigoraș, 2000) or in Castellón (Viruela, 2002), but, like Sandu (2000) emphasizes, the support network is, in this case, rather social and familial than religious.

Romanian immigration and the presence of Romanians in the Spanish cities increased once it became easier for the Romanians to travel in Western Europe, first through the elimination of visas on January 1<sup>st</sup> 2002, then after Romania's integration in UE on January 1<sup>st</sup> 2007. Nearly 90 percent of the Romanians who went to Spain between 2002 and 2007 checked the 'tourist' option. As a result, the repelling of visas allowed them to travel as tourists for a timeframe smaller than three months, but many of them decided to stay work and became illegal immigrants. Afterwards, they tried to regularize their situation as soon as possible. Soon before Romania's integration in EU there were many Romanians without legal papers in Spain. They were also the largest population without legal forms. Starting from January 2007, the Romanians became citizens of the European community and they were allowed to enter and live in Spain. But the moratorium of free circulation of workers for two years has prevented access to legal labor market<sup>8</sup>, which had a significant

impact: it has prevented thousands of migrants working in Spain to leave the underground economy and it also led to a great amount of newcomers.

### ***The economic crisis and the returning***

Romanians were attracted to Spain because of the access they had to the labor market, especially in the underground, and that is the foundation of the strong economic growth in Spain between 2001 and 2008. However, the situation has changed dramatically over the past two years. The global economic crisis had a particularly high impact on Spain and the unemployment rate increased dramatically (more than four million unemployed in early 2009), a phenomenon that firstly affected foreign workers. Among Romanians there were more than 100.000 unemployed in Spain and the unemployment rate was of 20 percent (Pajares, 2009)<sup>9</sup>. Until the beginning of 2008, the Romanian economy has shown great signs of recovery and companies from various fields of activity have resorted to immigration to offset the deficit of labor. In 2008, the Romanian GDP encountered a growth of eight percent and the unemployment rate was of 3,5 percent, the equivalent of full employment<sup>10</sup>.

These circumstances raised the issue regarding the future of the Romanian immigration in Spain and there were predictions regarding the emergence of an important return migration flow. In April 2008, the Romanian government carried out a campaign in several cities in Spain (and Italy), aiming to convince their compatriots to return to Romania, promising them employment



and support for entrepreneurship<sup>11</sup>. A year later, the two governments signed agreements to promote the return of Romanians in Romania<sup>12</sup>.

Romanian associations, the Embassy and the consulates dealt with a great number of citizens looking for information, and several authors referred to 'a silent return' (Pajares, 2009) but they did not provide figures that could illustrate the phenomenon's amplitude. The only available data are the ones provided by the Spanish government, through 'assisted voluntary return'<sup>13</sup>. Between 2003 and December 3<sup>rd</sup> 2009, 363 Romanians accessed this program, 60 in 2008 and 48 during the first eleven months of 2009. It is possible to be a causative relation between the return and the crisis, but the official figures do not point to such a correlation.

According to the study conducted by Sandu in September 2008 in the district of Madrid, 47 percent of the Romanians interviewed were willing to return to Romania over the next five years (Sandu 2009b). However, others refuse to do so because Romania has been severely affected by the crisis<sup>14</sup>. Currently, the available statistics (*Padrón de Habitantes*) only link to one conclusion: despite the economic crisis, the job cuts and the raise of unemployment rate, the Romanian immigration in Spain increased, even if on a slower pace.

### **The geographic distribution of the Romanian population in Spain**

The job offers and the presence of their compatriots in Spain are the main explanatory factors for the Romanians'

geographic distribution in Spain, which is defined by their concentration on a few districts and towns and by their rapid spatial dispersion. The permanent growth of Romanian population leads to a constant search for better and better opportunities, reflected by the geographic mobility.

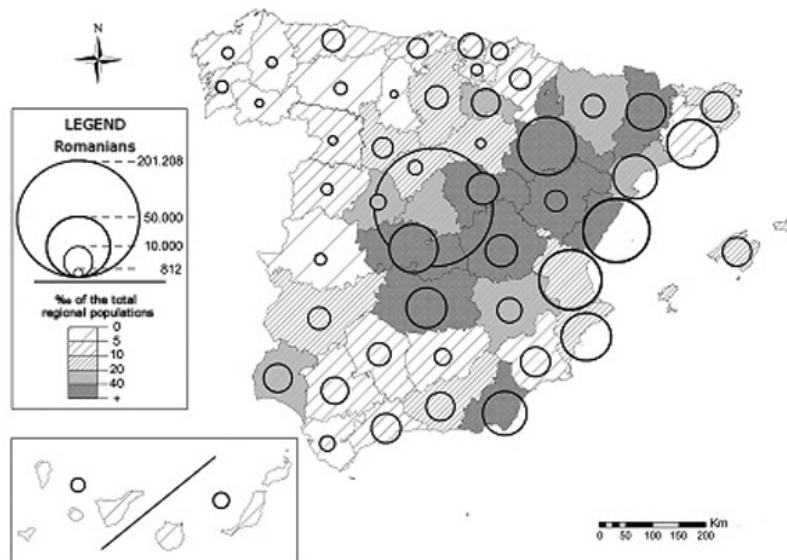
### ***Concentration and dispersion***

In Spain, the Romanian population lives in Madrid (25 % of all Romanians). Aragón province and its capital Saragosse, the autonomous province of Lerida have 20% of Romanian population. Romanians representation among the regional population is the most elevated in the center of the country, in Castellón and Almena on the Mediteranian coast (more than 40 people per 1000 inhabitants). The absolute and relative values decrease considerably in the western most provinces (except for Huelva) in the northen coastal provinces and Canary Islands.

This geographic distribution is similar to that of the Spanish population and that of the economic dynamism of the urban areas and Mediterranean coast, where employment opportunities are better and more diverse than in the other regions in Spain (construction work, domestic services, manufacturing, intensive agriculture, tourism industry, etc.). Romanians went to Spain seeking jobs and they turn towards places which offer better job opportunities. The presence of their already settled compatriots plays a significant role. Parents and friends provide a certain degree of security for the newcomers, and support

them in their socio-professional insertion. Social networks have a great contribution to the consolidation of the already existing concentrations in the course of the accumulative process (Arango, 2006); these networks are a key element in constructing and conducting the flows, in the selection of the towns of departure and of destination, which explains why some municipalities and districts concentrate

a high number of Romanians coming from the same hometown or region: this is, for instance, the case of migrants from Târgoviște in Castellón (Viruela, 2002), Beiuș to Senia (in Tarragona) (Pajares, 2007), Alba Iulia in Alcala de Henares (Sandu, 2000), Unirea to Aguaviva and Teruel (García, 2007), etc.



**Figure 3.** The geographic distribution of the Romanian population in Spain (January 1<sup>st</sup> 2009). Source : INE, *Padrón de Habitantes* [www.ine.es]. The North African cities of Ceuta and Melilla (16 respectively, seven Romanian residents) are not represented. Graphic design: C.Andrés Langa.

The distribution by district encountered several changes since the late 90s (Table 1). The early years pertained to a clear trend towards concentration: in 2000, Madrid encompassed 46 percent of the total number of Romanians living in Spain. Madrid continues to be the main pole of concentration for Romanians, but it relatively lost its importance (25 percent in 2009). However, their presence increased in the districts near Madrid

and on the Mediterranean coast. Their number is significantly increasing in other districts as well, particularly in those where concentrations are at the lowest rates. It is obvious that the increasing number of Romanian residents is a cause for their dispersion, without, however, influencing the main features of their global distribution. In fact, the districts with the highest number of Romanians are the same as ten years ago.



**Table 1.** *Distribution of Romanians by districts of settlement in Spain (1998-2009) (in % of Romanians effective)*

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Madrid	40,1	44,4	46,2	44,1	38,0	34,5	32,5	30,4	28,1	28,3	25,9	25,2
Castellón	7,0	7,8	8,8	10,9	12,5	11,3	10,4	9,1	8,6	7,9	7,1	6,8
Valence	8,1	6,0	5,4	4,9	5,4	5,7	6,1	6,1	6,2	6,1	6,3	6,4
Saragosse	1,4	1,6	3,1	7,4	7,2	6,6	6,3	6,0	5,5	6,0	6,0	6,1
Barcelone	8,9	7,8	5,9	3,3	4,8	5,3	5,2	5,0	5,0	4,4	4,3	4,3
Tolède	2,2	2,1	2,2	4,4	4,3	4,5	4,4	4,2	4,1	4,3	4,2	4,2
Alicante	2,1	2,1	1,6	2,1	3,0	3,3	3,8	3,8	3,9	4,1	4,1	4,0
Tarragone	1,4	1,0	1,2	2,5	2,7	3,2	3,4	3,6	3,5	3,6	3,6	3,5
Almeria	1,3	1,3	2,5	3,5	3,2	2,9	2,9	3,4	3,9	3,5	3,4	3,5
Ciudad Real	0,2	0,0	0,1	1,0	1,6	2,1	2,4	2,6	2,9	2,7	2,9	2,9
Lérida	0,4	0,5	0,8	0,8	1,2	1,5	1,8	2,2	2,4	2,4	2,4	2,6
Other districts	27,0	25,3	22,4	15,0	16,3	18,8	20,8	23,5	25,9	26,7	29,7	30,5
Effectives of Romanians	2.258	3.147	6.410	31.641	67.279	137.347	207.960	317.366	407.159	527.019	731.806	798.892

Source: INE, *Padrón de Habitantes* [www.ine.es]. The table includes the districts in which resided more than two percent of the Romanian population in Spain, in 2009.

**Table 2.** *Repartition of four foreign nationalities in Spanish communes<sup>15</sup>*

	2001		2005		2009	
	Number of Communes	% of communes	Number of Communes	% of communes	Number of Communes	% of communes
Moroccans	3.018	37,2	3.781	46,6	4.387	54,1
Ecuadorians	2.394	29,5	3.262	40,2	3.092	38,1
Romanians	1.690	20,8	3.831	47,2	5.221	64,4
Bulgarians	1.229	15,2	2.435	26,3	3.139	38,7
Small towns in Spain	8.108		8.109		8.112	

Source: INE, *Censo de Población* 2001 (November) and *Padrón de Habitantes* (January) [www.ine.es].

The importance of this migratory flow spread the presence of Romanian citizens across much of Spain. In 2009, forty eight out of fifty districts hosted more than a thousand residents of Romanian nationality (except for Palencia and Orense), whereas in 2001 there were only seven. In 2002, the Romanians were the most numerous among the foreign populations in the district of Castellón (Viruela, 2006) and today it is the largest foreign group in twenty-two districts, and the second in twelve other districts.

The dispersion is even wider at a municipal scale (Table 2). In November 2001, *Censo de Población* registered the presence of Romanians among 1.690 communes. Eight years later, on January 1<sup>st</sup> 2009, *l'Instituto Nacional de Estadística* showed that Romanians were present in 5.221 communes, 64,4 percent out of the 8.112 Spanish communes. In 2005 they were the most widespread foreign group among the communes, outnumbering the Moroccans, a group with longer roots in Spain.

The intense and rapid spatial dispersion of Romanians in Spain reflected, at least to some extent, the

problems that the newcomers faced in order to be able to settle in traditional homes and that determined them to constantly search for work and housing opportunities and the geographic mobility. For many foreigners, the first situation is not final and, after a while, they move, in order to improve their living conditions (Garcia 2005). Labor markets and housing are considered to be the most important factors of internal mobility. Romanians move away for various reasons: to occupy more private space and more comfortable housing, enjoy working conditions improved, to reunite with their family etc. (Grigoraş, 2009). The disparities between supply and demand concerning employment in the most important host regions, as in Castellón several years ago (Viruela, 2002), is determinant for mobility. Similarly, before Romanians became citizens of the EU, the opportunities to become legit more rapidly, in certain regions, stimulated mobility, explaining for instance, the intense growth of Romanians' immigration in Castille - La Mancha (Viruela, 2008). Overall, the internal mobility of Romanians is much higher than in

the case of other groups of foreigners, because it pertains to a very recent and rapid growth of immigration (Recaño, 2002).

Despite their rapid geographical dispersion, the spatial distribution of Romanians is characterized by their concentration, since more than half of them live in eighty-four locations: in the first place Madrid and the towns of the metropolitan area, then, Henares Corridor (Coslada, San Fernando, Torrejón and Alcalá), which extends to the limitroph district of Guadalajara, as well as the municipalities south of Madrid (Getafe, Móstoles, Leganes or Aranjuez), extending towards the Castile-La Mancha (Talavera de la Reina, Tomelloso, etc). Romanians are also concentrated within municipalities on the Mediterranean coast (Castellón, Valencia, Barcelona, etc) and the Ebro Valley (Zaragoza, Calatayud, Logroño, etc).

### ***A remarkable presence of Romanians in rural areas***

Cities represent the most attractive places for immigrants of different origins. However, linking the distribution of the foreign population and the demographics of the municipality of residence highlights significant differences between Romanians and other foreign groups (Table 3). Indeed, most Ecuadorians live in the residential towns (46,4 percent); 22 percent of them live in Madrid itself. 21 percent of Moroccans live in municipalities of 20,000 to 50,000 inhabitants, and also in residential towns. However, in what concerns the Romanians, a quarter of them live in localities with

less than 10,000 inhabitants. A similar proportion of Romanians lives in the residential towns. Thus, the presence of Romanian citizens is notable, particularly in small municipalities; in rural communities (population less than 2,000 inhabitants) they constitute at least a quarter of the foreign population, that is to say double in comparison to Moroccans.

The Spanish rural areas offer employment and housing opportunities for immigrants, particularly in the districts of Aragon, Castile and León and Castile-La Mancha, who suffered for decades an intense rural exodus and severe problems of an aging population. The presence of Romanians is sometimes due to the problems encountered by migrants in settling in the towns and cities of their choice: among those who reside in municipalities within the district of Castellón are those who could not find work in the capital city of Castellón (Viruela, 2002). Sometimes Romanians immigrated directly in these municipalities, as the first wave of migrants in Valladolid, Segovia (Ibáñez, 2006) and Teruel (García, 2007); they are very often migrants from rural areas in Romania. Generally, neighbors and the local authorities are friendly with the foreigners, including the cases when they are illegal (very common before 2007). Newcomers feel welcomed and secure, as two Romanian citizens residents Aguaviva<sup>16</sup> stated: *‘people trusted us, they offered us furniture for our homes and helped us renovate it, as if we were relatives’*; in these small villages *‘everybody knows everyone and the relationship between neighbors is based on trust’*.

**Table 3.** *Distribution of the foreign population function to the dimension of the district of residence, in 2009*

	Spaniards	Foreigners	Bulgarians *	Romanians*	Moroccans*	Ecuadorians *
Total	00,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0
Less than 1.000 inhabitants	3,4	1,7	5,4	27,4	1,8	0,6
From 1.000 to 1.999	3,0	1,8	3,9	25,9	2,0	0,7
From 2.000 to 4.999	7,1	5,1	8,4	24,8	6,3	2,8
From 5.000 to 9.999	8,5	6,5	9,6	20,0	8,7	4,1
From 10.000 to 19.999	10,8	10,1	10,1	15,1	12,3	7,1
From 20.000 to 49.999	15,2	17,3	12,0	13,0	20,9	14,2
From 50.000 to 99.999	9,7	12,8	11,7	14,0	13,0	9,4
From 100.000 and more	10,2	12,0	8,8	12,0	14,2	14,7
District capital cities	32,0	32,6	30,1	11,1	20,7	46,4
Effectives	41.097.136	5.648.671	164.717	798.892	718.055	421.426

Source : INE, *Padrón de Habitantes* [www.ine.es].

\* For the represented groups of foreigners, the column on the right indicates their percentage out of the total foreign population for each category of district. The column on the left indicates their percentage function to type of district.

Several projects have been implemented, in order to try to attract immigrants to rural areas in Spain, notably that of *Provincia abierta* (Open Province) since 2002, which aims to develop the district of Valladolid, or that of *l'Asociación de Pueblos contra la Despoblación* ('Association of the Communes against Depopulation'), which includes a number of fifty communes in the district of Teruel, and whose activity began in 2000. It encompasses programs which aim to inform and supports immigrants with respect to housing, employment, legal consultancy etc<sup>17</sup>. However, the results of such initiatives are poor, since after a while the immigrants leave the rural communities. At first, most of them need help, and they accept hard and precarious living conditions; but job dissatisfaction and the isolation of villages, farms or homes far from the main towns, push them towards the internal mobility. After a few years, when migrants are able to regularize their situation and speak Spanish, they move to residential towns to a different district, searching for opportunities more consistent with their aspirations. In this respect, the remarks of another Romanian from Aguaviva is worth mentioning, '*we would stay, but we do not rule out the idea of moving to Valencia where we could, perhaps, have access to better jobs.*'

### **Romanians on the Spanish labor market**

The participation of Romanians on the labor market is analyzed firstly on the basis of the statistics from Social Security, which gathers information

on contract workers. But it must not be forgotten that many workers were illegal and were forced to work in the underground economy. This is the reason why it is crucial to have the support provided by the social networks. The waves of regularization, especially that of 2005, the change of status of the Romanian population after Romania's integration into the EU, and the ability to sign contracts of employment from the country of origin, strongly influenced the integration of Romanians in the formal labor market in Spain.

The economic growth in Spain, supported by the dynamic construction and tourism industries, generated a strong and sudden demand for foreign workers over the past decade (Table 4).

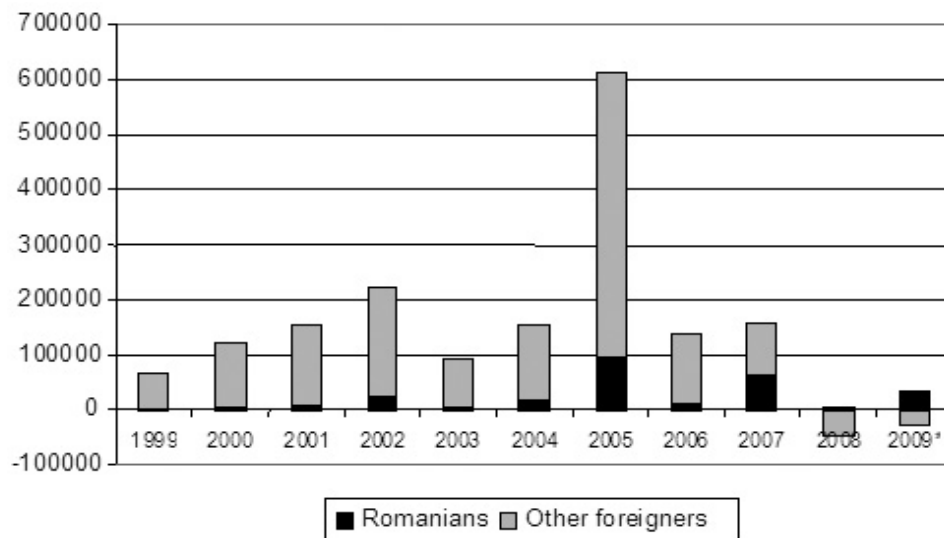
In 1999, the number of foreigners registered by the Spanish Social Security was slightly over 330.000. In 2001, the number reached 600.000 foreigners and nearly 2.000.000 in 2008. The rate decreased due to the crisis, reaching 1.934.877 workers in July 2009. Despite the fact that Romanians have only recently begun to migrate to Spain, they are now the most important segment of foreign workforce: in 2009, a number of 268,374 persons registered with the Social Security, encompassing 14 percent of foreigners who work legally in Spain, although they only constituted one percent no earlier than a decade ago.

The most massive growth was recorded in 2005 (Figure 4) when, along with the wave of 'normalization of foreign workers' (a special regularization program), the number of Romanians registered with Social Security has almost tripled. At the

**Table 4.** Evolution of the number of foreigners with Social Security (1998-2009)

Year	Foreigners	Romanians	% of Romanians among foreigners
1998	262.771	2.414	0,9
1999	332.407	3.215	1,0
2000	452.097	8.267	1,8
2001	604.900	18.205	3,0
2002	829.395	38.248	4,6
2003	923.218	43.796	4,7
2004	1.074.794	60.845	5,7
2005	1.688.598	155.993	9,2
2006	1.823.974	168.858	9,3
2007	1.981.106	230.572	11,6
2008	1.938.632	235.676	12,2
2009	1.934.877	268.374	13,9

Source: Ministerio de Trabajo e Inmigración, *Anuario de Estadísticas Laborales y de Asuntos Sociales et Afiliación de Extranjeros a la Seguridad Social*. Data provided on December 31, every year, excepting 2008 (mid December) and 2009 (mid July).



**Figure 4.** Annual variation of the number of foreign workers with Social Security (1999-2009) Source : Ministerio de Trabajo e Inmigración, *Anuario de Estadísticas Laborales y de Asuntos Sociales et Afiliación de Extranjeros a la Seguridad Social*. Data provided every December 31, excepting 2008 (mean of December) and 2009 (mean of July).

\* Variation between the mean of December 2008 and the mean of July 2009.

end of 2004, Romanians were less than 61.000, and a year later they were almost 156,000 (Table 4).

At the end of the process, 100.128

Romanians held a legal status, which represents 17,3 percent of regularizations granted during this wave<sup>19</sup>. Previously, the integration of



Romanians to Social Security System had increased significantly in 2002, thanks to the agreement signed between Spain and Romania to hire temporary workers. The number of Romanians with work contracts continued to grow massively in the recent years, especially in 2007 and 2009, when the presence of other nationalities in the formal labor market declined<sup>19</sup>. When Romania joined the EU, thousands of Romanians entered the Social Security system, despite the limitations imposed by the Spanish government concerning the free circulation of workers. The cancellation of restrictions on January 1<sup>st</sup> 2009 has enabled many workers in the underground economy to register with Social Security and to regularize their employment status.

### ***Romanians' main ways of access on the Spanish labor market***

The career paths described by Romanians in Spain usually have as the start point in the underground economy, with the support of their social networks. Empirical research conducted in different regions show that at the beginning of their stay in Spain, family members and friends are the main source of information for vacant jobs; they act as intermediaries and transmit recommendations, and sometimes act as guarantee for the candidates to the prospective employer (Aparicio and Tornos, 2005; Pajares, 2007; Mihai, 2009, among others).

The Adventist and Orthodox churches have played an important role in the professional integration of Romanians in the community of Valencia (Viruela, 2002), Catalonia

(Pajares, 2007) and Madrid (Sandu, 2009a). The faithful go to church for religious worship, but also to meet their compatriots and exchange information on employment opportunities and obtain recommendations. The role of the church explains why many immigrants have converted to one or the other doctrine in order to find housing and work (Bojincă, 2009). The associations, whose number has increased exponentially in recent years, also provide a space favorable for social relationships: real – at church, and virtual - on the Web. The Romanian associations contribute to the professional integration of immigrants. They represent reference points for the newcomers and they operate, in a way, as points of reception. They provide information on administrative formalities, housing, training, labor market, etc. Some disseminate this information through websites<sup>20</sup>. Information can also be collected at certain streets, on certain – village squares (e. g. María Agustina de Castellón), in parks (Coslada) and other places attended by immigrants of the same nationality (e.g. shops).

Those who migrate without the support of a social network and who attempt to find work by themselves face more difficulties. Immigrants who have been living in Spain for several years, are acquainted with the social and economic climate, handle the language and have obtained a legal status, rely less on their family network, while the proportion of persons who resort to organizations and public services increases: town halls, public service of employment, temporary employment companies, etc. They can also seek employment themselves by

simply showing up at to the potential workplace. According to Aparicio and Tornos, this is the case of 25 percent of the Romanians interviewed in Madrid and Valencia between 2003 and 2004. This proportion is higher than that of Ecuadorians and Moroccans (Aparicio and Tornos, 2005).

The insertion on the labor market depends on the social and administrative context of the destination place and, in this sense, it seems to be easier in small communities. We have already explained the attraction of many rural areas of Spain on Romanian migrants for seeking employment and housing opportunities.

Thousands of immigrants arrived with official labor contracts in the country of origin; this procedure

allows entrepreneurs to recruit workforce from abroad, when jobs are being vacated by both Spaniards and foreigner residents in Spain. According to the *Ley de Extranjería* (Organic Law 4 / 2000 of January 11, 2000, article 42.4), temporary jobs should preferably be directed towards countries with which Spain has signed agreements for managing migratory flows<sup>21</sup>. The hiring of seasonal workers from the country of origin has become more important at the beginning of the twenty-first century (Table 5). Initially, Morocco and Poland sent most workers; from 2003 to 2008 Romania occupies the first position, despite recent reduction in the number of contracts.

**Table 5.** *Evolution of seasonal foreign workers' recruitment, by to the country of origin (1999-2008)*

Year	Morocco	Poland	Bulgaria	Romania	Other	Total
1999	—	—	—	—	34	34
2000	137	—	—	70	301	508
2001	717	992	70	43	1.769	3.591
2002	516	5.833	231	2.333	1.661	10.574
2003	433	8.282	204	9.583	1.606	20.108
2004	967	11.704	1.059	19.911	1.276	34.917
2005	887	7.594	1.096	21.797	1.923	33.297
2006	3.292	10.509	6.379	55.860	1.446	77.486
2007	13.670	—	5.782	39.645	5.619	64.716
2008*	4.292	—	2.367	14.089	4.639	25.387

Source: Gordo, 2008.

\* For 2008, just one part of the year.

Entrepreneurs prefer Romanian workers, since Poland's integration to the EU made the Polish workers less 'interesting' for them<sup>22</sup> and because the employers' perceptions of the Moroccans which depicted them as a group more prone to conflict and

repining. Similarly, it is cheaper to hire workforce from Romania rather than from any Latin American country with which Spain has signed agreements, because the Spanish government requires that the entrepreneur supports a part of the travelling cost for the worker

to the country of origin. In addition, the management agreement regarding migration has been signed with Bulgaria one year after the agreement with Romania, thus narrowing the Bulgarians' accession (Gordo, 2008). Spain is the second country, at a certain distance from Germany, regarding the recruitment of seasonal contract Romanian employees, primarily in the agricultural sector in the district of Huelva (Sopemi, 2007)<sup>23</sup>. This method of hiring also benefits entrepreneurs from other districts and various sectors of activity: various industries (food processing, metallurgy, etc.), forestry, construction industry, international transportation, hotel business, etc. The recent reduction of Romanian workforce is due to administrative difficulties in Romania and a lesser willingness of its citizens to carry out agricultural activities since the country's integration into the EU.

Finally, since January 1<sup>st</sup> 2009, Romanians and Bulgarians may be hired under the same conditions as any Spanish or EU countries citizen. Following the recommendations of the European Commission which, after enlargement, has not seen serious disruption on the labor market, Spain is the first EU countries to lift all restrictions on employment for citizens of Romania and Bulgaria.

### ***Taxation regimes and main sectors of activity of Romanians in Spain***

In Spain, most workers (either Spanish or foreign; Romanian, Moroccan or Ecuadorian) are integrated in the mainstream labor regime, meaning that they are employed in the field of

constructions, industry or services. Currently, this category comprises approximately 60-61 percent of the Romanian citizens working under contract, a percentage lower than that registered in the beginning of the 2000s' (table 6). This is explained by the increase of special regimes<sup>24</sup> with varying rhythms: in 2005, domestic workers have registered the most visible increase, followed, in 2007, by the special regimes of autonomous workers, and then by the special regime in the field of agriculture registering a strong increase.

In Spain, as in other countries, Romanians work primarily in the field of construction and agriculture (IOM, 2008). On December 31<sup>st</sup> 2008, there were 59.460 registrations of Romanian citizens working in constructions (salaried or independent) and 37.750 in agriculture, figures that represent 25 and 16 percent of persons registered for Social Security (Pajares, 2009). These figures are followed, at a certain distance, by the hotel business sector, the manufacturing industry and commerce, with more than 20.000 persons each. This represents 30 percent of registered Romanian workers. These sectors, similarly to those of construction and domestic work, propose numerous jobs in Madrid and on the Mediterranean coast, especially in cities (table 7). About 41 percent of Romanians that contribute to household employment work in Madrid, a city that also gathers the highest number of independent workers (30 percent); the number is followed by the Valencia Community and Catalonia (26 percent). One has to take into consideration that most business created by Romanians usually hire compatriots.

**Table 6.** *The Distribution of Romanians in different taxation regimes for the Spanish Social Security (2000-2009)*

Year	TOTAL (A+B)	General(regular) Regime (A)		Special regime (B)					
		Number of inscriptions in general regime	% of total inscriptions	Independent workers	Agriculture	Domestic work	Sea	Number of inscriptions in special regimes	% of total inscriptions
2000	8.267	5.903	71,4	284	810	1.267	3	2.364	28,6
2001	18.205	13.100	72,0	560	2.866	1.663	16	5.105	28,0
2002	38.248	28.138	73,6	834	4.818	4.426	32	10.110	26,4
2003	43.796	31.535	72,0	1.323	7.418	3.495	25	12.261	28,0
2004	60.845	44.134	72,5	2.197	9.990	4.487	37	16.711	27,5
2005	155.993	101.763	65,2	3.307	18.912	31.946	65	54.230	34,8
2006	168.858	123.353	73,1	4.900	16.386	24.156	63	45.505	26,9
2007	230.572	149.857	65,0	41.880	21.766	16.992	77	80.715	35,0
2008	235.676	142.474	60,5	41.640	37.700	13.766	96	93.202	39,5
2009	268.374	165.369	61,6	27.396	60.566	14.902	141	103.005	38,4

Source: Ministerio de Trabajo e Inmigración: *Anuario de Estadísticas Laborales y de Asuntos Sociales et Afiliación de Extranjeros a la Seguridad Social*. Data provided each year on the 31<sup>st</sup> December, except 2008 (mid-December) and 2009 (mid-July). The general regime includes the special regime of the coal mining industry (with very few affiliates.)

**Table 7.** *Repartition/ Distribution of Romanians, by the autonomous communities and taxation regimes to the Spanish social security (second trimester 2009).*

Autonomous communities	Total	General regime*		Special regimes					
				Independent workers*		Agriculture*		Domestic work*	
Spain	100,0	<b>59,7</b>	100,0	<b>11,2</b>	100,0	<b>23,4</b>	100,0	<b>5,7</b>	100,0
Andalusia	17,2	<b>25,6</b>	7,4	<b>3,4</b>	5,2	<b>68,9</b>	50,7	<b>2,1</b>	6,2
Aragón	8,2	<b>66,4</b>	9,1	<b>12,3</b>	9,0	<b>15,4</b>	5,4	<b>5,9</b>	8,5
Asturias	0,8	<b>63,5</b>	0,9	<b>18,5</b>	1,3	<b>4,8</b>	0,2	<b>12,7</b>	1,8
Balears	1,3	<b>72,3</b>	1,6	<b>20,5</b>	2,4	<b>1,5</b>	0,1	<b>5,6</b>	1,3
Canaries	0,8	<b>53,8</b>	0,7	<b>10,3</b>	0,7	<b>33,9</b>	1,1	<b>2,0</b>	0,3
Cantabria	0,7	<b>67,0</b>	0,7	<b>20,3</b>	1,2	<b>3,8</b>	0,1	<b>8,6</b>	1,0
Castilla and León	3,9	<b>62,0</b>	4,0	<b>12,0</b>	4,2	<b>20,4</b>	3,4	<b>5,5</b>	3,7
Castille-La Manche	11,3	<b>55,9</b>	10,6	<b>8,5</b>	8,6	<b>32,6</b>	15,8	<b>3,0</b>	6,0
Catalonia	12,5	<b>76,8</b>	16,1	<b>11,0</b>	12,2	<b>8,2</b>	4,4	<b>3,8</b>	8,4
Valencia Com-munity	13,3	<b>64,3</b>	14,4	<b>12,1</b>	14,4	<b>17,8</b>	10,2	<b>5,7</b>	13,3
Extremadura	1,2	<b>27,4</b>	0,5	<b>5,8</b>	0,6	<b>63,7</b>	3,2	<b>3,2</b>	0,7
Galicia	0,8	<b>67,6</b>	0,9	<b>10,5</b>	0,8	<b>16,8</b>	0,6	<b>4,4</b>	0,7
Madrid	22,0	<b>73,2</b>	27,0	<b>15,1</b>	29,6	<b>1,1</b>	1,0	<b>10,6</b>	41,2
Murcia	1,5	<b>58,7</b>	1,4	<b>8,2</b>	1,1	<b>29,1</b>	1,8	<b>4,0</b>	1,0
Navarre	0,9	<b>57,9</b>	0,9	<b>23,1</b>	1,9	<b>12,5</b>	0,5	<b>6,5</b>	1,0
Basque Country	2,0	<b>61,1</b>	2,1	<b>27,0</b>	4,9	<b>4,8</b>	0,4	<b>6,9</b>	2,5
La Rioja	1,6	<b>61,3</b>	1,6	<b>13,5</b>	1,9	<b>16,8</b>	1,1	<b>8,4</b>	2,4
Total	263.260	157.078		29.475		61.611		14.952	

Source : Ministerio de Trabajo e Inmigración, *Afiliación media de extranjeros a la Seguridad Social*. We leave out Ceuta and Melilla (6 entries each), as well as the sea and coal mining industry (124 and 20 affiliates).

\* For each taxation regime, the column on the right indicates the percentage out of the total of Romanian affiliates in Spain having the same regime, while the one on the left (in bolded characters) the percentage of Romanian affiliates in the region.

Half of the Romanians who work in agriculture are in Andalusia. Agriculture is also important in Castille-La Manche and in the Valencia Community. It is the most important activity in rural communities where the native population has largely emigrated or has turned to better paid activities<sup>25</sup>. Meanwhile, in small cities, Romanians also find employment in industry sectors (meat, wood, ceramics), hotel business or construction.

Construction industry has been, since the beginning, one of the main paths of social and professional insertion for Romanians: in 2001, 39 percent of men worked in this sector (according to *Censo de Población*) and in 2007 the figure was 61 percent (according to *Encuesta Nacional de Inmigrantes*); many of them benefitted from previously acquired experience in Romania (Tufiş, 2009). Contracted workers predominate in

less qualified positions, but Romanians also register as specialists and as a great number of managers that generally turn to the economically viable and mobile workforce of the same nationality (Șerban and Grigoraș, 2000; Viruela, 2002). Romanians work in the building of housing (they have notably participated in building entire neighborhoods in the great metropolitan and in the touristic areas) and in public work: roads, railway stations, airports, etc. On the other hand, three out of four women work in the services sector (*Encuesta Nacional de Inmigrantes*), mainly in domestic work, including caring for the disabled. However, just like men, they are also present in industry and agriculture, but also in prostitution<sup>26</sup>.

Agriculture has recently acquired importance (Table 6). The 60.000 Romanian affiliates to the special regime of agriculture represent 26 percent of foreigners, a figure close to that of Moroccans, the most numerous foreigners' group (approximately 73.000 affiliates, or 33 percent of the total of foreigners). They are, first and foremost, implicated in harvest related tasks: picking different fruits in the valley of Ebre, cherries in the valley of Jerte (Cáceres district), grapes in the two Castille districts, citrus fruit in Valencia, etc. In opposition to North Africans, a large proportion of women is found in this category. The managers prefer the female workforce because they consider them more responsible and less prone to conflict than men. (Gualda and Ruiz, 2004; Gordo, 2008). These stereotypes are related to the chauvinist discourse that considers women more docile are more inclined to return home after the harvest season,

explaining, in turn, the preference for women that have children in Romania. The contracts' duration is usually of a couple of months, depending on the harvest duration, but the agreements signed between the farmers' associations of various regions allow thousands of immigrants to work continuously for a longer period, moving from one district to another, following the 'harvest trail'<sup>27</sup>.

### ***Professional mobility and social security inscription-registration***

After their arrival in Spain, many Romanians and other foreigners have faced professional de-skilling and were employed in positions inferior to those previously occupied in Romania. The loss of status affects 54 percent of the Romanians interviewed by the INE in Spain (for a total of 1.334 persons questioned between September 2006 and February 2007) and 35 percent of 830 persons interviewed by a team of sociologists in four cities of Madrid district in September 2008 (Tufiș, 2009). Although dissatisfied, they accept this trajectory due to an imperious seeking income and because there is no alternative, especially for those without proper papers<sup>28</sup>. The absence of papers and the lack of knowledge in the judicial field allow them only to work in underground economy in precarious conditions, with long work hours and low salaries. (Viruela, 2002; Pajares, 2007). We must also take into consideration the fact that competition among foreign workers is fierce, including that on the market of informal employment; under these circumstances, the attitude



and the availability to perform tasks, regardless of the terms and conditions, are essential in obtaining and keeping that position. (Viruela, 2006).

The professional situation ameliorates over time: the regularization that many Romanians have gained allows those working in the underground economy to enter the formal employment market and to access positions that are more in accordance with their formation and qualifications. They try to abandon the market of informal employment, the precarious contracts and difficult positions and to find employment that is better paid and offers better working conditions. The research conducted in Madrid reveals that 39 percent of the individuals questioned have experienced an ascendant trend of professional mobility (Tufiş, 2009). However, the research conducted throughout Spain by the INE reveals a more decreased proportion, of only 15 percent (Tufiş, 2009). This difference may be explained by the territorial level (Madrid, respectively Spain), the used samples (1.334 Romanians in the INE and 830 in Dumitru Sandu's research), the time lapsed between the studies (the end of 2006/ beginning of 2007, the other in September 2008) or, maybe, the more numerous and diverse opportunities offered by the professional structure of Madrid.

The prototype of an ascendant career is that of the immigrant starting with a temporary employment and ending up a general manager or independent worker. In opposition to other foreign populations (English, German, Chinese or Polish), there are few Romanian managers or independent workers in Spain, a fact that can be

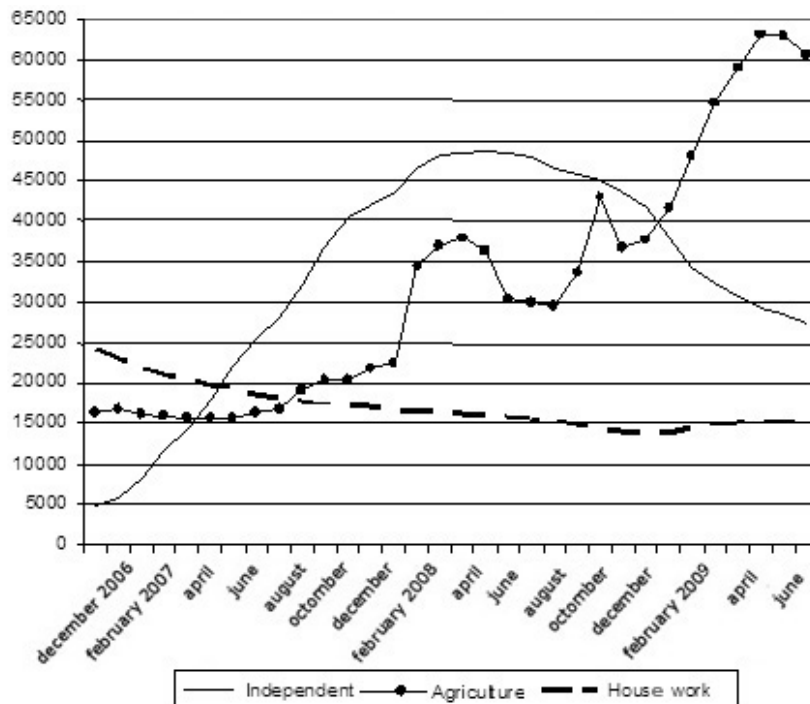
explained by the lack of information, administrative difficulties or by the recent characteristic of the migration flux: it is only after a few years that the immigrants manage to own their business (Solé *et al.*, 2007). However, according to available statistics, the panorama has radically changed within a small time period. By December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2006, there were 4.900 independent Romanian workers in Spain. Since then, as figure 5 show, the number of affiliations to this special regime of Social Security has increased remarkably, reaching in May 2008, a maximum of 48.709 (meaning 20 percent of the total foreign workers, whereas a year and a half earlier, the Romanians represented only three percent).

During the last years, thousands of Romanians were able to experience an ascendant trend in professional mobility (Pumares, García and Asensio, 2006) and the increase in the number of affiliations to the special regime on independent workers acknowledges this aspect. In reality, the sudden increase registered in 2007 is related to the workers' particular situation after Romania's entrance in the EU: they could not work under contract (unless they had already been contracted before 2007 or if they had arrived in Spain with an existing contract beforehand), but they did not need any authorization to work for themselves. Many took advantage of this situation and registered for Social Security, paying the taxes as independents while working for a company without being registered. The rapid reduction of affiliations in this regime during the past year (in July 2009 there were only 27.396) is the consequence of

the economic crisis which forced numerous small companies managed by Romanians where these workers were employed to close. During the last trimester of 2008 and the first half of 2009, agriculture became a refuge for Romanians and foreigners, but also for many Spaniards, that lost their employment in other fields of activity.

The commercial initiatives are largely located in villages with a high number of Romanian residents, in which independent workers find clients and workforce. In Coslada (Şerban,

2009), in Castellón (Bucur, 2006) and in other localities, Romanian immigrants have created companies in various sectors of activity: translators-interpreters, restaurants, bakeries, various commerce, merchandise transportation, real estate offices, construction and refurbishment, etc. In most cases, these are small business with only one owner and a few family members. There are also companies of larger scale, especially in the field of construction.



**Figure 5.** Romanian workers part of the special regime of Social Security (from December 2006 to July 2009). Data collected on the last day of the month; starting April 2008, monthly average; Source: Ministerio de Trabajo e Inmigración: *Afiliación de Extranjeros a la Seguridad Social*

## Conclusion

In Spain there are approximately 800.000 Romanians, only a little less than the population of some Romanian districts, such as Iasi or Prahova that

have, for instance, 824.000 inhabitants each. The figure is impressive, especially if one takes into account that many of these individuals have been living in Spain for a short period of time. Romanians constitute

the group of foreigners with the highest number of residents and workers, and also the highest dispersion across the Spanish territory. Like other economic immigrants, Romanians move where they can find jobs. Apart from regrouping in urban centers of small or greater size (e.g. Madrid, Castellón, Saragossa, Coslada, etc.), Romanian citizens have the particularity of being a vast and diffuse presence in rural spaces and small towns that, up to now, were less attractive to immigrants.

This migratory flow is the result of different factors, but it is likely that the opening of the Spanish labor market, especially in the field of constructions, played an important part. The real estate boom was decisive because it provided work and housing for newcomers. Romanians have proven a great capacity to adapt to changing circumstances. Spain's administrative irregularities during the first years have not stopped their rapid insertion on the labor market, due to the expansion of underground economy and contracts obtained through their own social networks.

After the EU enlargement in 2007, thousands of Romanian citizens have overcome the obstacles raised by the Spanish government, registering as independent workers. In 2009, those who lost their jobs in industry or constructions switched to agriculture and sought not to leave the labor market. While the main registration hubs indicate signs of saturation, Romanians' tendency is to find new loopholes; this favors the dispersion of the group and the modification of its geographic distribution (Viruela, 2008).

Most Romanians occupied and still

occupy poorly qualified positions; nonetheless, there are many who were able to obtain better jobs, with better working conditions or who are employed as specialists or own their own business. The position of Romanians on the labor market is, on a global level, better than that of other immigrants. Their 'trademark' has eased their professional insertion and ascendant careers (Ioé, 2004). Their new status, EU citizens, places them in an even more favorable position.

Professional insertion is different, varying by region and gender. In general, men have more opportunities in construction and women in domestic services: this is particularly salient in large cities and in the country's most economically dynamic regions from. Employment in agriculture is largely related to irrigation agriculture, especially in Andalusia. These day laborers, usually women, are called in Romania 'căpșunari' (strawberry pickers), a pejorative expression that refers to the tough working conditions that they face in the agriculture exploits of the Huelva district (Gordo, 2004). On the contrary, in the Valencia Community, the professional structure is diverse, even if constructions and domestic sectors are in strong positions. Romanian businesses appear, first and foremost, in the regions where immigrants concentrate (Madrid, Valencia Community and Catalogne).

A recent OCDE report on international migrations states that policies aiming to promote the return of migrants to their countries have little success. (Sopemi, 2008). Spain and Romania cannot significantly intervene in the causes and orientation of migration. These aspects do not

respond to negotiations between the two countries because individuals, with their own strategies and interests, decide. In the coming years, Romanian migration will be influenced by three factors: mobility and temporary travels between EU countries, EU authorizing Romanian citizens to travel between Romania and Spain; Spain's extremely complicated economic situation; the evolution of Romania's labor market, which could stimulate the return migration. However, Romania's economic difficulties are not appropriate likely to produce a massive return, at least not on a short or medium term. The country is not yet prepared to receive its emigrants. It is even probable that the number of Romanian residents in Spain will continue to increase, due to family reunification.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> I hereby mean Romanian citizens, some of whom have not migrated because they were born in Spain, and have the same nationality as their parents, while others do not appear as such in the statistics because they became Spanish citizens (1.262 between 2001 and 2008, according to *Ministerio de Trabajo e Inmigración*). Nationalized immigrants are counted as Spanish.

<sup>2</sup> The official data, calculated every January 1<sup>st</sup>, are published with a delay of more than a year. The figures for 2009 were published in early February 2010. The administration and updating provided by the Population Census are regulated by the law (Law 7 / 1985 of April 2, 1985, *Reguladora de las Bases*

*del Régimen Local*). Each of the 8.112 municipal councils are responsible for it, under the supervision of the *Instituto Nacional de Estadística* (in order to avoid duplications).

<sup>3</sup> The statistics from the Social Security are limited to foreigners with a work contract. The real presence of foreigners in the Spanish labor market is greater than that expressed by statistics, since many work in the underground economy, especially the Romanians (Pajares, 2009).

<sup>4</sup> EUROSTAT, <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/population/data/database> (consulted June 15, 2010).

<sup>5</sup> See: Commission of the European Communities, COM 2008, 765 final, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2008:0765:FIN:FR:PDF> (consulted June 15, 2010).

<sup>6</sup> It is estimated that in Italy there are more than a million Romanians. In this regard, see '3 milioane de români la muncă în străinătate' <http://www.jurnalul.ro/stire-special/3-milioane-de-romani-la-munca-in-strainatate-528860.html>. (consulted June 15, 2010).

<sup>7</sup> Since the Ley de Extranjería de 1985, five major waves of regulation took place in Spain. Romanians were among the main beneficiaries of the 2000-2001 and 2005 waves of regulation (see Kostova, 2006).

<sup>8</sup> In 2007, the Spanish government has applied the moratorium enclosed in the Accession Treaty of Romania and Bulgaria, that did not allow their citizens to work as employees, unless they had worked there before 2007 or if they arrived in Spain with a labor contract (as a device identical to that

needed to recruit workers in Morocco, Bulgaria and Senegal). However they did not need permission to work as independents. See: Commission of the European Communities, COM 2008, 765 final, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2008:0765:FIN:FR:PDF> (consulted June 15, 2010).

<sup>9</sup> Among the foreign populations, the most affected by unemployment are the Moroccans: 151.000 unemployed (35%).

<sup>10</sup> *Ministerio de Trabajo e Inmigración*: 'Rumania: posibilidad de retorno de emigrantes rumanos', *Actualidad Internacional sociolaboral*, nº 121 (February 2009). <http://www.mtin.es/es/mundo/Revista/Revista121/Indice121.htm>. (consulted June 15, 2010).

<sup>11</sup> 'Rumania ofrece empleo para que sus ciudadanos vuelvan a casa', *El País*, April 8, 2008.

<sup>12</sup> See <http://www.tt.mtas.es/periodico/ministro/200905/Declaracion%20comun.pdf>. The agreements signed in Bucharest in May 2009 provided that The National Public Employment Service disseminates job offers in Spain, for the Romanian workers, while Romanians who would return and pledge to actively search for employment could benefit from unemployment support in Romania. The news was published all around media. See for instance 'El gobierno estudia dar ayudas económicas para el retorno de los rumanos' et 'Los rumanos podrán cobrar la prestación de paro en su país', *El País* (May 4 and 5, 2009).

<sup>13</sup> Gobierno de España (2009), *Programas y estrategias referentes al retorno asistido y reintegración*

*de los emigrantes en terceros países. España*, Red Europea de Migraciones. Available on <http://extranjeros.mtin.es> and <http://emn.sarenet.es> (consulted June 15, 2010). Voluntary assisted return is defined as support (logistic, financial or material) provided by the state for the migrants' return to the country of origin. (consulted June 15, 2010).

<sup>14</sup> 'La crisis en Rumania desalienta el regreso de los inmigrantes', *La Vanguardia*, May 2009.

<sup>15</sup> In Table 2 I compare the Romanians to Moroccans and Ecuadorians, the other two most represented nationalities in Spain, with respectively 718.055 and 421.426 people, and Bulgarians, following a path similar to the migration of Romanians, although on a smaller scale (164.717 people).

<sup>16</sup> Small town of Teruel province, whose population has increased as an effect of foreign immigration. On January 1<sup>st</sup> 2004 it had 670 inhabitants, including 130 foreigners and 47 Romanian citizens. In 2009, there were 713 people, including 172 foreigners and 109 Romanian citizens. See : [www.novarevista.com/reportajes/Un\\_Pueblo\\_De\\_Teruel\\_Salvado\\_Por\\_La\\_Inmigracion\\_1.html](http://www.novarevista.com/reportajes/Un_Pueblo_De_Teruel_Salvado_Por_La_Inmigracion_1.html) And [www.novarevista.com/reportajes/Un\\_Pueblo\\_De\\_Teruel\\_Salvado\\_Por\\_La\\_Inmigracion\\_3.html](http://www.novarevista.com/reportajes/Un_Pueblo_De_Teruel_Salvado_Por_La_Inmigracion_3.html) (consulted June 15, 2010).

<sup>17</sup> The information concerning these projects can be accessed on [www.diputaciondevalladolid.es/accion\\_social/provincia\\_abierta/](http://www.diputaciondevalladolid.es/accion_social/provincia_abierta/) and [www.campoyvida.com](http://www.campoyvida.com) (consulted June 15, 2010). L'Asociación de Pueblos contra la Despoblación signed an agreement with a Romanian town and selected a series of families.

<sup>18</sup> MTIN, Anuario Estadístico de Inmigración, 2005, p. 802), <http://extranjeros.mtin.es/es/InformacionEstadistica/> (consulted June 15, 2010). The government decided to initiate this wave of regulations in order to try to stop the irregularities and improve the immigrants' living standards. The applications were to be submitted between February 7 and May 7 2005 and, among other requirements they needed to be employed and to prove that they have been present in Spain before August 7, 2004. <sup>19</sup> The decrease of registration at Social Security occurred mainly among Moroccans and Ecuadorians, two migrant groups most affected by the economic crises (18.771, respectively 52.609 fewer workers in late 2007 and 2009).

<sup>20</sup> See, for instance, the *Federación de Asociaciones de Inmigrantes Rumanos* (FEDROM), <http://fedrom.org/> (consulted June 15, 2010).

<sup>21</sup> In 2001, Spain has signed agreements on migration management with Morocco and three Latin American countries: Colombia, Ecuador and the Dominican Republic, in January and May 2002 with Romania and Poland, in 2003 with Bulgaria and with Senegal (2006) and with Ukraine (2009).

<sup>22</sup> The freedom of mobility, available to Poles since May 2007 explains the decreasing trend of this group, which prefers to work in countries closer to Poland, especially Germany.

<sup>23</sup> See also Ministerul Muncii, Familiei și Protecției Sociale, Buletin statistic trimestrial în domeniul muncii și protecției sociale, <http://www.mmuncii.ro/> (consulted June 15, 2010).

<sup>24</sup> In general, special regimes present worse working conditions than general

regimes. This is particularly frequent among house attendants, workers at sea and in agricultures. As for the special regime of the independent worker, this covers an area of diverse- and sometimes extremely precarious- situations. The independence of this regime explains, however, why it is preferred by workers against other types of special regimes.

<sup>25</sup> For instance, in Villarrubia de los Ojos (province of Ciudad Real, in Castille-La Manche) Romanians and other Eastern Europeans represent more than 90% of workers in agriculture, while each day 1.300 individuals from neighboring localities commute to Madrid to work in constructions *El Mundo Magazine*, 27 mars 2005, [www.elmundo.es/magazine/2005/287/1111603294.html](http://www.elmundo.es/magazine/2005/287/1111603294.html) (consulted June 15, 2010).

<sup>26</sup> There is no data available on sex workers, but several reports suggest that prostitution affects a large number of Romanian women, (Guardia Civil, *Tráfico de seres humanos con fines de explotación sexual*), who are often victims of criminal organizations that make a profitable business out of human trafficking.

<sup>27</sup> Ruano Rebeca (2007), '1.200 rumanos llegarán de Cataluña a la Ribera del Duero para la vendimia', *El Norte de Castilla*, 20 septembre 2007, [www.nortecastilla.es/20070920/valladolid/rumanos-llegaran-cataluna-ribera-20070920.html](http://www.nortecastilla.es/20070920/valladolid/rumanos-llegaran-cataluna-ribera-20070920.html) (consulted June 15, 2010).

<sup>28</sup> Prior to Romania's inclusion into the EU, about 60% of Romanian resident lacked official papers.



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