

Back to (a different) emigration? Mobility from Spain and Italy during the economic crisis

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Abstract

The economic crisis has had a very severe impact on the economic situation of both Spain and Italy, whose employment figures fell by record levels, affecting all population categories, especially the youngest cohorts. This situation had a profound impact on the dynamics of migration in these two (traditionally emigrant-sending turned emigrant-receiving) countries, with a rising of emigration in the face of decreasing immigration. The main goal of this study is to compare Spanish and Italian emigration mechanisms through secondary sources. We lean toward the hypothesis that both countries, Spain and Italy, could have changed their migration patterns due to the economic crisis. For this purpose, we undertake a cross-national comparative analysis of stock and flow data on emigrations during the economic downturn (2009-2015).

Keywords: emigration, Spain, Italy, Economic Crisis, comparative perspective, Southern Europe.

Resumen

La crisis económica ha tenido un impacto muy severo en la situación económica de España e Italia, cuyas cifras de empleo disminuyeron en niveles récord y afectaron a todas las categorías de población, especialmente a las cohortes más jóvenes. Esta situación tuvo un profundo impacto en la dinámica de la migración en estos dos países (tradicionalmente, emigrantes que se convirtieron en emigrantes receptores), con un aumento de la emigración frente a la disminución de la inmigración. El objetivo principal de este estudio es comparar los mecanismos de emigración española e italiana a través de fuentes secundarias. Nos inclinamos por la hipótesis de que ambos países, España e Italia, podrían haber cambiado sus patrones de migración debido a la crisis económica. Con este fin, llevamos a cabo un análisis comparativo transnacional de los datos de *stock* y flujo sobre las emigraciones durante la recesión económica (2009-2015).

Palabras clave: emigración, España, Italia, crisis económica, perspectiva comparativa, sur de Europa.

1 Introduction

The outbreak of the financial crisis in 2008 has deeply affected the Southern European zone from the economic, the political and the social points of view. Peaks in unemployment rates, shrinking economies and rising levels of public debt immediately generated rising levels of political and social instability in countries as Spain and Italy. From the political point of view, the crisis contributed to the emergence of populist parties in both countries, while from the social point of view it, among other things, renewed some of the traditional European Union (EU) core-vs-periphery migration dynamics in terms of population movement.

During the period 2008-2015, Spain and Italy had been experiencing significant changes in their pre-crisis migratory balance. A comparison of pre- and post-recession migration data indeed shows a radical change in net migration rates in both countries, with a decline in immigration and a contemporaneous increase in emigration. The combination of such changing migratory balance with high unemployment rates in the 25-35 age bracket in the years 2010-2015 —on average 25.7% in Spain (*Active Population Survey 2010-2015*, INE) and 14.7% in Italy (ISTAT)— has led to much speculation about the rise of a «new emigration» era for both.

In this paper, we analyze emigration patterns from two main Southern European countries —Spain and Italy— in the period 2009-2015. The data analyzed here are based on a cross-national longitudinal analysis of Spanish and Italian official statistics, both concerning the stock of individuals living abroad and migratory flows. To the best of our knowledge, no longitudinal studies comparatively analyzing Southern European emigration rates during the period of the economic crisis have been published yet.¹ While some studies analyzing either one or the other country (see «state of the art» section below) already exist, most of them are in either the Spanish or Italian language, focus on one of the two countries as an isolated case. The main objective of this study is to dig deeper into the dynamics of two large Southern European countries whose recent migratory trends have led to speculation about them having turned back into migrant-sending countries (Valero *et al.* 2015, Domingo *et al.* 2013, Zurla 2014, Raffini 2014). Thus, our first hypothesis states that Spanish and Italian movers have changed their emigration patterns due to the economic downturn. The topic is ever more relevant today, at a time in which the recent decision of the UK to leave the EU as a result of the Brexit vote is seriously challenging the fundamental dynamics of inter-EU mobility.

In the next section we present a brief overview of state-of-the-art of research on the phenomenon of the «new migration» from Spain and Italy during the crisis period. Although such changes in

1 Although the study by Raffini (2014) does compare Spanish and Italian emigration trends during the crisis, it does not carry out a comparative longitudinal study. Furthermore, the study has only been published in Italian.

migratory flows have attracted vast media attention and produced much speculation in the public and political debate of the affected countries, the phenomenon of the «new migration» from those two countries is still largely under-researched, both concerning its volume and its characteristics. After introducing the methodology and the main statistical sources used to carry out our quantitative comparative analysis, in section four we then present our main statistical trends and discuss their implications in depth. We finally conclude by summing up the main findings.

2 State of the art: picturing a recent and ongoing phenomenon

In both Spain and Italy, the phenomena of the new emigrations have found large media coverage, rapidly turning into central elements of public debate (Domingo *et al.* 2013, González Enríquez 2013a, Díaz *et al.* 2015, Zurla 2014). The terminology and tone that are often used to describe the phenomena by the media in both Spain and Italy have contributed to producing a quite high degree of alarmism among public opinion, especially concerning a supposed «exodus» of the young and well-educated generation.²

The large mediatization of the phenomena has often tended to obscure the true dimensions of this new reality in both countries (Alba *et al.* 2013, Aparicio 2014, Coccia & Pittau 2016), and scholars have urged for a deeper and more rigorous analysis of the available data. As the phenomena are recent and still ongoing, however, academic literature is far from offering univocal interpretations on its nature and characteristics. Different studies offer different perspectives on how many people are emigrating, who the emigrants are and what pushes them to leave.

The question of the real dimension of the new emigrations phenomena is debated in both Spain and Italy. According to Eurostat (*Migration and Migrant Population Statistics* 2014, p. 2), in 2014 Spain experienced the largest emigration wave in Europe, with a stock of nationals growing since 2009 at an annual rate of around 7% (*International Migration Outlook* 2015). In Italy the migratory balance has been on a constant decreasing trend since the beginning of the crisis; while still being positive, a comparison of years 2007 and 2015 shows the balance between immigration and emigration in 2015 to be one third of that of 2007 (ISTAT 2015).

While there appears to be consensus over the idea that the outbreak of the economic crisis produced a new rise in emigration rates in both Spain and Italy (Caro *et al.* 2016, Domingo *et al.* 2013, Gabrielli 2016), the question of the size of the phenomenon is much more debated. On the one hand, part of the literature points out that

- 2 See, for example, «La emigración de españoles se ha triplicado durante la crisis» «[Spanish emigration has tripled during the crisis]» (*Expansión*, October 28, 2015), <http://www.expansion.com/economia/2015/10/28/563098aca4741cc2f8b4604.html>; «En 2014 emigraron 78 785 españoles, el doble que en 2010» «[In 2014 78,785 Spaniards emigrated, twice as many as in 2010]» (*El País*, June 25, 2015), http://politica.elpais.com/politica/2015/06/25/actualidad/1435221476_389035.html; «Fuga all'estero per lavoro, gli emigrati italiani sono il doppio degli stranieri che arrivano» «[Escaping abroad for work, the number of Italians who emigrate is twice that of foreigners who arrive]» (*La Stampa*, October 7, 2014), <http://www.lastampa.it/2014/10/07/italia/cronache/boom-di-emigranti-italiani-le-partenze-doppiano-gli-arrivi-qb4WVnNcUdobbRmfPxb3HI/pagina.html>; «La grande fuga dei giovani all'estero non si ferma: +34% in due anni» «[The great escape of young people abroad does not stop: +34% in two years]» (*La Repubblica*, January 5, 2016), http://www.repubblica.it/economia/2016/01/05/news/la_grande_fuga_dei_giovani_all_estero_non_si_ferma_34_in_due_anni-130654306/?ref=search.

the structural limitations of national official statistics of both countries produce a constant under-estimation of the actual numbers (González Ferrer 2013, Santos 2013). This is highlighted in particular with reference to the Registers of the countries of destination of emigrants (González Enríquez 2013a, Valero *et al.* 2015), whose figures are often found to differ from those of the countries of origin.

As stated by the International Organization for Migration (IOM 2013, pp. 18-22) following the indications of the United Nations, we can identify three types of statistical sources in the destination countries that collect data on migrations, either from the analysis of the stock of immigrant population or from the point of view of the analysis of the flows. There are population censuses, household surveys and administrative records. The latter include different records of administrative events such as entry and exit of foreigners at border posts, concessions of residence and work permits, population registers, foreigners' registrations, granting of visas, etc. These registries have both an administrative and a statistical function, but often the emphasis on administrative aspects reduces the reliability of the data.³

In general, administrative records provide an estimate of migrants or immigrants, but usually provide partial information on the population to be studied. In addition, they present the added complication of diversity in the unit of analysis, making it difficult to compare different sources.

In the search for and identification of «mirror» sources, we have checked the diversity of those used and the difficulties associated both with the availability of data (in some countries practically non-existent or inaccessible in the level of disaggregation that we need for our research) as to the variety in the units of analysis used (Caro *et al.* 2016). All this makes the coherent comparison between the different countries very difficult.

On the other hand, however, other studies on the Spanish case underline that a closer look at the profiles of the emigrants indicate that the reality of the «new emigration» is not as significant. While not denying the overall increase in emigration rates during the period of the crisis, these studies show that the phenomenon is more complex and heterogeneous than the media in both countries tend to portray. First, the outflow is also importantly made up of foreign populations returning to their countries of origin or re-emigrating to third countries as a result of unemployment (Arango 2012, Bruzzone 2015). Secondly, in the case of Spain, official statistics indicate that the revival of emigration flows of Spanish population seems to concern foreign-born Spanish citizens more than Spanish-born ones (Valero *et al.* 2015, p. 66; Domingo *et al.* 2013; González Enríquez 2013a; Caro *et al.* 2016).⁴

Also, on the question of the possible causes of the rise in emigration rates in Spain and Italy, the literature offers no univocal

3 Some of these registries, for example, the registers of entry and exit of population, constitute the main instrument to measure the migratory flows and one of their main advantages in that they collect information in a continuous way. However, they also have limitations. One of them is the difficulty in discriminating between migrants and simple travellers or tourists. As for the records of the granting of residence and work permits, they only consider the population that legally resides in the country. On the other hand, the residence and work permits do not imply that the entry into the country occurred in the same year in which the concession occurs, so its usefulness to measure the flows in a given period of time is limited. On the other hand, population registers or registers of foreigners allow to analyse the characteristics of certain population groups. Generally, they cover only the legal resident population in the territory.

4 As it is explained in the methodology section below, Italian statistical sources do not allow for the differentiation between foreign-born and Italian-born citizens on this matter. For this reason, besides the mention made here, this paper will not consider this aspect into depth.

perspective. There exist different perspectives on whether new emigrations represent a contingent phenomenon, a structural one, or both. Many studies implicitly or explicitly point to the current economic crisis as a predominant factor in the recent increase in emigration rates in Southern Europe (Tryandafyllidou & Gropas 2014, Vodafone 2014). At the same time, however, other studies underline the importance of deeper structural factors (Díaz *et al.* 2015), such as the precarization of work (Raffini 2014, Santos 2013), the lack of long term production and investment plans (Valero *et al.* 2015) or corruption (King *et al.* 2014, p. 22). The fact that academic literature on Italian high skilled emigration dates back to early 2000 (see Becker *et al.* 2003, Avveduto *et al.* 2004, Di Pietro 2005) also seems to suggest that although the current economic crisis might represent a strong push factor, the roots of the new emigration might need to be examined for deeper and more structural dynamics.

Neither in Spain nor Italy do there exist official statistical sources allowing gathering of more in-depth qualitative information regarding, for example, the factors pushing individuals to leave, the conditions under which such emigration takes place, their life in the destination country, etc. However, a number of surveys that have been carried out have helped shed more light on the characteristics of this new reality.

Much of the literature underlines that current emigrations from both Spain and Italy are different from the ones those countries had experienced in early 20th century (Navarrete 2014, Alba *et al.* 2013, Melchionda 2016, Raffini 2014). Contemporary migrants differ from 20th century ones in terms of age, gender, qualification and regions of provenience. Current migratory waves indeed include a large number of young and qualified individuals (INE 2015, ISTAT 2015), about half of which are women, who instead of departing from the least developed regions of their countries, as it used to be in the early 20th century, leave from the most culturally and economically dynamic ones (Raffini 2014). Given the socio-demographic profile of contemporary migrants, today's emigration appears to be more a question of finding better opportunities (Almalaurea 2014, Censis 2013, Vodafone 2014, Navarrete 2014), than one of survival. It is in this perspective that a recent study on the case of Italy (Perego & Licata 2015) talks about a shift from «needing migrants» to «desiring migrants», while early 20th century emigrants left with very poor cultural and economic capital, in search of new ways of providing subsistence to their families, contemporary migrants leave a country that is believed to be unable to provide them with adequate opportunities to match their skills and ambitions. Moreover, this would allow us proposing the hypothesis that «old» Spanish and Italian Migration (mainly to the Americas) could to a certain extent be assimilated to family migration (Actis & Esteban 2008) while current migratory flows could at present be identified as labour migration.⁵

5 According to IOM (2013), family migration covers family reunification and the migration of a family unit as a whole. Family reunification is the process whereby family members separated through forced or voluntary migration regroup in a country other than the one of their origin. Regarding labor migration, the same source defines it as the movement of persons from one state to another for the purpose of employment.

The idea of lack of adequate opportunities as a significant push factor for today's new emigrants emerges in many survey-based studies. For what concerns the case of Italy, emigrants typically motivate their choice with reference to lack of meritocracy and of investment in youth generation (King *et al.* 2014, Tryandafyllidou & Gropas 2014), as well as an overall lack of opportunities (Eurispes 2012, CENSIS 2013, Diamanti & Ceccarini 2013). According to a recent survey (Istituto Toniolo 2016), many young Italians between 18 and 29 years would be ready to move to another country in order to increase their chances of finding an adequate job (60% of the 9,000 interviewed). The readiness to move abroad has been growing particularly among Italian graduates (Gabrielli 2016). According to Almalaurea (2011), in 2004 33% of graduates were ready to move abroad, but by 2010 that number had grown to 41%. It is apparently the most brilliant students—who completed their studies on time and with better scores—that are most likely to move abroad (Almalaurea 2014).

These trends are reflected in the case of Spain, where the perceived lack of opportunities also seems to play a major role as push factor. According to a recent survey (Centro Reina Sofía 2013), 61% percent of the 1,000 participants between 18 and 24 years thought that they might have to move abroad in order to find a job. In another recent paper (Vodafone 2014), 34% of the 1,000 interviewed Spaniards between 18 and 30 completely agreed with the statement that job opportunities are better in other countries, and 58% of them declared to be planning to move in the future in order to have better job opportunities. As Elgorriaga *et al.* (2014) suggest in their study that compares Spanish emigrants and non-emigrants, having a job seems to be more important than migratory status in determining individual psychological wellbeing. In general terms, emigration seems to be perceived as a strategy for finding not just a job, but a good one, that is, one offering possibilities for upward social mobility (Alba *et al.* 2013, p. 31). Indeed, as shown by another recent survey involving 466 Spanish emigrants (Caro *et al.* 2016), most of them did have a job before leaving Spain, but the latter was in most cases precarious (75% of cases) and often paid less than 1,000 euros per month (p. 230). This might partially explain the findings of another study (Navarrete 2014), which showed that of the 1,020 young Spaniards interviewed, those working abroad had generally a more positive attitude towards their jobs than those working in Spain: they tended to be more confident about the stability and the perspectives of offered by their job (p. 103).

In this context, the relative weight of PhD holders and researchers seems to be particularly accentuated in both Spain and Italy. Keeping in mind that individuals holding a PhD represent a small minority not only of the general population, but also among graduates, there is evidence that the tendency to leave of these individuals is relatively high both in the case on Italy and in that of Spain.

A study carried out by ISTAT (2010) showed that among 18,568 Italians who had obtained a PhD between 2004 and 2006, 1,295 had emigrated, while another 12% was planning to move within a year (Zurla 2014). Similarly, studies on Spain show that PhD holders represent around 10% of the total of graduates who have left Spain since 2007 (González Enríquez 2014b). Now, while some studies point to the fact that mobility is an intrinsic characteristic of the academic career and therefore should not lead to alarmistic considerations (González Enríquez 2014b), others instead seem to suggest that the increasing emigration rates of these individuals emblematically represent the nature of the current emigration waves from Southern Europe (González Ferrer 2013, Almalaurea 2011, 2014), that is, young and highly qualified individuals moving to find opportunities to match their skills.

While it is not clear whether current emigration rate justify preoccupations about the existence of a brain drain phenomenon in two Southern European countries, skepticism about Spain's and Italy's attractiveness for young talents remains. Not only are there doubts that recent emigrants will move back to Spain or Italy in the immediate future (Navarrete 2014, Raffini 2014), but also the ability of the two countries to attract young talents from other countries seems to be quite limited (Franzoni *et al.* 2012, Milio *et al.* 2012, Albani 2016). In this sense, the hypothesis that the two countries might be experiencing «brain circulation» instead of «brain drain» is not very popular in the literature. Notwithstanding this, it is important to underline that not all emigrants from Spain or Italy perceive their experience as a sort of forced exile. On the contrary, some describe it as a proactive and positive form of mobility (Santos 2013, Tryandafyllidou & Gropas 2014). This view has at times been shared at the official level, as in the case Spain, where outward mobility has been identified in some official documents as a key national strategy for employment (see Law 3/2012 of 6 of July as cited in Alba *et al.* 2013, p. 19).

Moreover, further research on this kind of migratory flows should be requested, insofar as some new paradigms that overcome push and pull factors can be intuited. On the one hand, the «new mobilities» paradigm highlights the speed at which social networks as well as images, information, power, money, ideas, and dangers are «on the move» (Sheller & Urry 2006). On the other hand, the rise of North-South migration, often motivated by the increase in unemployment and financial insecurity in developed countries in the Global North (Hayes & Pérez-Gañán 2017), would lead us to focus on environmental or opportunity structure-related factors.

3 Methodology

The research compares stock and flow data on Spanish and Italian emigration during the period of economic crisis, which is the same as saying 2009 through 2015.

For what concerns the individuals living abroad of Spanish and Italian stock, this study compares data from the Register of Spaniards Resident Abroad (RSRA; hereinafter, PERE in Spanish) and the Register of Italians Residing Abroad at consulates (RIRA; hereinafter, AIRE in Italian). The two registers gather data on the individuals who, holding respectively Spanish and Italian citizenship, have the intention of staying abroad for at least 12 months.

The Spanish RSRA was established in 1985 by the Regulation on Population and Territorial Demarcation of Local Entities,⁶ which ruled that each Consular Office or Section of the Diplomatic Missions shall provide the National Statistics Institute (INE) with the information necessary for the compilation and maintenance of a central file on Spaniards Resident Abroad. RSRA has been publishing statistical information since the year 2009, at annual intervals and with reference to 1st January of each year. The Italian RIRA was established in 1988⁷ and contains the data on Italian citizens residing abroad for a period longer than twelve months. As per the Spanish RSRA, the data of the Italian RIRA is based on information gathered by the Consular representations abroad. Unlike RSRA, however, RIRA is managed by the Italian Municipalities together with the Ministry of Interior, whose database is not open to the public. RIRA's data have been available starting from the year 2005. Some of the data from RIRA are available via the Ministry of Interior's website (years 2005-2012),⁸ whereas the rest of the data is available upon request.

RSRA and RIRA present a series of differences and these have been rearranged in this study for comparative purposes. The first concerns the processing of the «age» variable. The Spanish database processes age according to four-year age groups (cohorts 20-24; 25-29; 30-34; etc.), whereas in the Italian RIRA there exist five pre-established and fixed categories (up to 17 years, 18-24 years, 25-49; 50-69; 70+ years). In our study we have rearranged the original categories into three age segments: 0-17 years, 18-69 years and 70+ years in the case of Italy, and 0-16, 16-64 and 65+ years in that of Spain. Although still not identical, these age categories provided a fair base for comparison. Data concerning age is, in the case of Spain, available for the whole period considered, while in the case of Italy we only dispose of data for the years 2013-2015.

A second difference consists in the variables offered by RSRA and RIRA. The Spanish database only provides information on the distribution of registered persons and the distribution of new registrations by a series of variables (country, place of birth, sex,

6 Law 4/1996, of 10 January, modifying Law 7/1985, of 2 April, Regulator of the Local Regimen Bases, in relation to the Municipal Register, establishes that the General Administration of the State will compile a Register of Spaniards resident abroad (RSRA). Regarding the registration of Spaniards in the Registers of the Consular Offices abroad, see Royal Decree 3425/2000, of 15 December.

7 Law 470/1988, of 27 October.

8 The data concerning the age composition of the stock, for example, are not available online.

age group and region of origin) at the reference date but does not allow obtaining any information on the causes of its yearly variations. On the other hand, the Italian database also offers some additional information on the national residents abroad, such as marital status, level of education and the reasons for registering to the RSRA (ex. chance of residence, birth, acquisition of Italian citizenship, etc.). For comparative purposes, in our analysis we only use the information offered by both databases.

Despite the differences, RSRA and RIRA present the same major shortcoming: since not all individuals who emigrate automatically register to the Consular Offices abroad, both datasets tend to under-represent the emigrant population or, in Spanish case, over represent people in cohorts <19 and >65 and do not consider those were born/non-born citizens (Rodríguez-Fariñas *et al.* 2015, Vega *et al.* 2016). It could be considered as differential incentive as far as cross-country comparisons are concerned.

González Enríquez (2014b) also argues that following recent reforms, emigrants are even less likely to register abroad and risk losing their right to health care in Spain. There are no real incentives to register, since failure to comply with the law is not sanctioned and once registered into, the citizens lose a series of benefits in the home country (Lafleur & Stanek 2017). In addition, most people might not know for how long they are going to stay overseas, especially when they move to another EU member state with temporary contracts or as jobseekers.

It is worth pointing out here that the number of non-registered individuals tends to be especially high in the case of emigrants to other EU countries (Lafleur & Stanek 2017). This is mainly because of two factors: first, the lack of incentives for inter-European migrants to register in the host country due to the absence of any specific legal requirement for EU citizens to do so; second, the fact that they might see more disadvantages in registering than not enrolling in it (such as losing the right to vote in local and regional elections back home or having to travel to the city where the Consulate is).

In this study we also integrate information about emigrated citizens with data regarding the flows.

In the case of Spain, the INE also publishes the Migration Statistics (*Estadística de Migraciones, EM*), which carries out a statistical approximation of inwards and outwards migratory flows, as well as of internal movements. The objective of the Migrations Statistic is to provide a quantitative measurement of the migratory flows for Spain, for each autonomous community and for each province with foreign countries, as well as the inter-autonomous community and inter-provincial migrations. The results are broken down by year of occurrence, sex, year of birth, age, country of nationality and country of birth of the migrant, and country or province of origin and

destination of the migration. This statistical operation is integrated within the European legislative framework governed by Regulation No 862/2007 on Community statistics on migration and international protection. The Migrations Statistic is, moreover, one of the basic sources of information from which the Population Figures are prepared, with the results of both sources being totally consistent with the other, and, in addition, to the Vital Statistics, remaining consistent at all breakdown levels considered. In this way, consistency is guaranteed in all demographic statistical sources, and it enables the analysis of demographic change from the perspective of any of its components (births, deaths and migrations). These statistics have been compiled since the year 2013, initially from the residential variations recorded in the Municipal Register database (Padrón municipal). Estadística de Variaciones Residenciales (EVR) also uses data from the Padrón but while this simply reports (de)registrations, EM employs a more sophisticated methodology to try and be more accurate (INE 2016). As a result, the data from both sources do not necessarily match (Lafleur & Stanek 2017).

In the case of Italy, the Italian National Institute of Statistics (ISTAT) provides data about the persons registered in, and cancelled from, the Municipal Population Registers due to changes of residence on an annual basis. The system has been adapted to the framework governed by Regulation No 862/2007 on Community statistics. The Register provides the information base for the analysis of inwards, outwards and internal migration flows, including most importantly their intensity, the direction of flows, as well as the main socio-demographic characteristics of those who transfer their residence. The socio-demographic information available is the persons transferring their residence are: sex, date of birth, place of previous residence (including foreign state), marital status, level of education, employment status, employment sector and the citizenship. The ISTAT data also under-estimates the real-time emigration flows, since they detect only the individuals that officially mover their abode overseas (Lafleur & Stanek 2017).

There are a few important differences between Spanish and Italian data on flows that need to be mentioned here. A first one is that, while the Spanish Migration Statistics provide information about the country of birth of the Spanish citizens moving abroad, the Italian database on transfers of residence (emigration) provides information about the province of previous residence of Italian emigrants, but not on the country of birth. This implies that, whereas Spanish data allows a differentiation between Spanish-born and naturalized Spanish citizens because of their parents or as a result of the Ley de la Memoria Histórica⁹ (which allows descendants of previous emigrants to naturalize and the subsequent re-classification as Spaniards of people who had been living abroad all along), this difference is invisible in the case of Italy (Lafleur & Stanek 2017,

9 The called Law of Historical Memory (into force since 2007) extends the possibility of acquiring Spanish citizenship to those whose mother or father was originally Spanish, even if they were not born in Spain. Moreover, it covers the grandchildren of those who lost or were forced to forfeit their Spanish citizenship due the exile in the last Spanish Civil War. Between 2007 and 2013 around 200,000 Cubans applied for the Spanish nationality.

González Enríquez 2013a). This point could be considered as a limitation in our study.

For this reason, the data analysis and the discussion will consider citizen emigrants as a single group, remaining silent on the differences between birthright and naturalized citizens, although previous research on the case of Spain (Caro *et al.* 2016) shows that such differentiation carries extremely relevant insights.

Another difference between the Spanish and the Italian database consists of the organizational age categories. The Spanish database processes age according to the same four-year groups (cohorts 20-24; 25-29; 30-34; etc.) used in RSRA, while in the Italian case there only exist four pre-established categories, namely: up to 17 years, 18-39 years, 40-64 years and 65+ years. For comparison purposes, in this study we have rearranged the original categories the Spanish database, adapting them as much as possible to the Italian one. The comparison therefore takes into consideration the following categories: up to 17 years, 18-39 years, 40-64 years and 65+ years (case of Italy); up to 19 years, 20-39 years, 40-64 years and 65+ years (case of Spain).

The Spanish and the Italian statistical sources (concerning both the stock and the flows) offer the possibility of categorizing data about countries of destination of emigrants according to different criteria. Rather than focusing the comparison on wide regional areas (ex. EU 27; Extra-EU 27; US and Canada; South America; Africa; Asia; Oceania), we have chosen to concentrate on single countries. The rationale for this is that focusing on wide regional areas hides interesting information about the relative attractiveness of the single countries to different emigrant profiles.

4 Data analysis and discussion

As pointed out in the literature review section, new migration flows seem to have overcome the classical push and pull factors, requiring more complex explanations. The above mentioned «new mobilities» paradigm and the emerging inequalities in the Global North could somehow help solve one of the major limitations of the present paper: the only aid of quantitative data.

4.1. Stock

During the years 2010-2015, the nationals living abroad of Spanish and Italian stock both increased rapidly. In the case of Italy, the numbers show a total increase of 20% in the period considered, from 4,013,735 nationals in 2010 to 4,881,163 in 2015 (Figure 1). In the case of Spain, the increase is of 39%, going from 1,574,123 to 2,183,043 between the two reference dates (Figure 2).

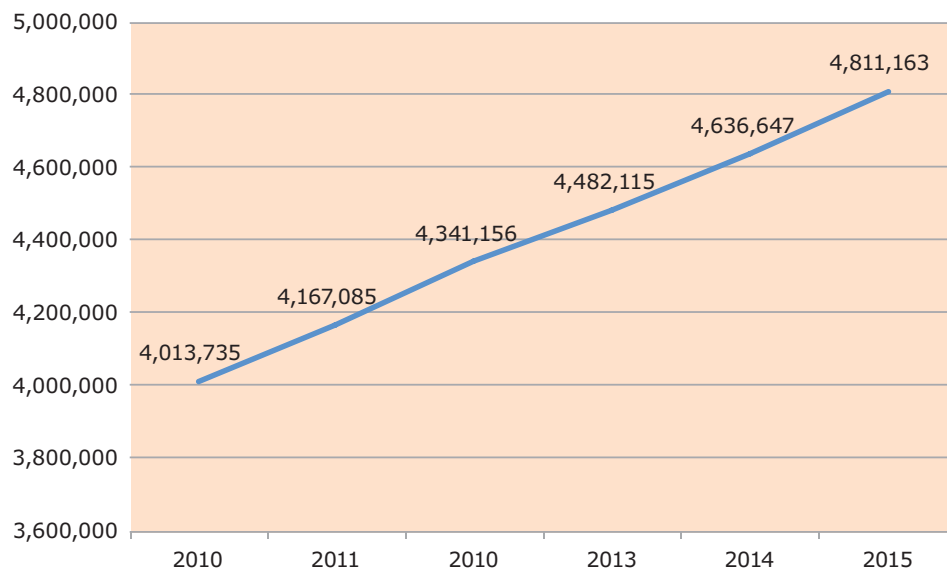


Figure 1

Stock of Italian residents abroad (2010-2015)

Source: authors' elaboration of data from the Register of Italian Residents Abroad (RIRA).

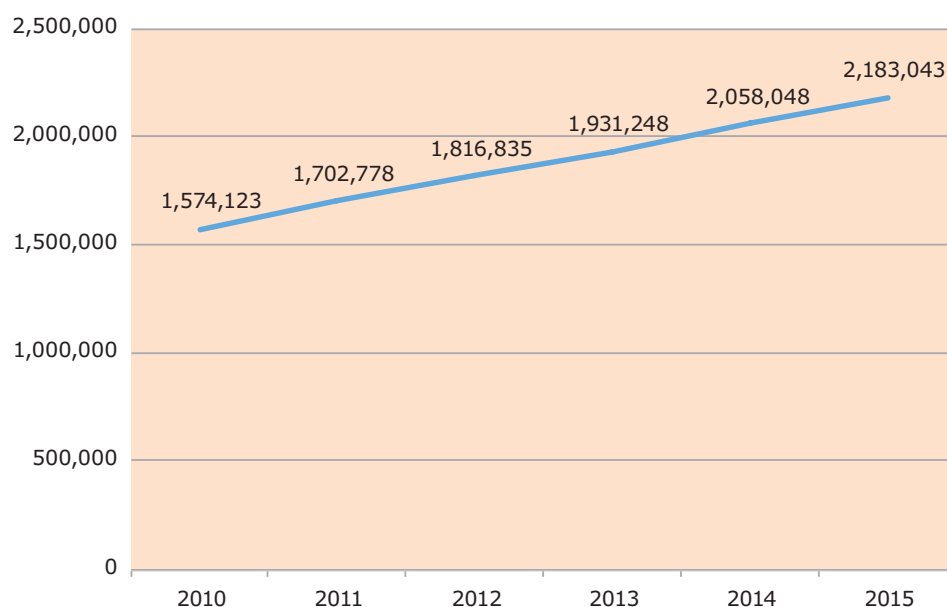


Figure 2

Stock of Spanish residents abroad (2010-2015)

Source: authors' elaboration of data from the Register of Spanish Residents Abroad (RSRA).

Concerning the gender composition of the stock of Italian and Spanish nationals abroad, in the year 2015 the female component appeared to be slightly more significant than the male one. However, while in Spain the female component has consistently represented the largest group for the whole period considered, with 51-52% females and 48-49% males (RIRA 2010-2015), in Italy the percentage of women increased during the period considered, going from 48% in 2010-2012 to 52% in 2013-2015 (RSRA 2010-2015).

With respect to the main countries of residence of the Italians and Spaniards abroad, the data underline that both stocks are characterized by a good degree of geographical concentration.

In the case of Italy, according to Table 1, 12 countries amount to 85-90% of overall registrations, with the most important destination countries being Argentina (a sustained 16% of registrations in the six-year period), Germany (15%) and Switzerland (13%). The geographical concentration of the phenomenon could be due to different factors, including the existence of historical linkages with the country, the setting up of bilateral agreements or facilitated immigration procedures, or the recent opening of economic opportunities. The presence of a substantial group of already established nationals might also represent a strong pull factor, as far as it can facilitate the migratory process of new emigrants, and therefore incentivize their migration to that country.

Total	2010	2011	2010	2013	2014	2015
Argentina	16%	16%	16%	16%	16%	16%
Australia	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%
Belgium	6%	6%	6%	6%	6%	5%
Brazil	7%	7%	7%	7%	8%	8%
Canada	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%
France	9%	9%	9%	8%	8%	8%
Germany	16%	15%	15%	15%	15%	15%
Spain	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%
Switzerland	13%	13%	13%	13%	13%	12%
UK	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%
USA	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%
Venezuela	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%
Rest of the world	10%	12%	13%	13%	13%	13%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 1

Main countries of residence for Italians abroad (male and female, 2010-2015)

Source: authors' elaboration of data from RIRA.

In the case of Spain, the concentration is even higher, as indeed 10 countries amount more than 75% of overall registrations. As shown in Table 2 below, the most important destinations in this case are Argentina (a sustained 20% of registrations in the six-year period), France (11%) and Venezuela (10%). This is due to historical reasons (Nadal 1984).

Regarding gender composition, in the case of Italy there are slight differences: while Argentina appears as the favorite receiving country for women (mainly due to old Italian-origin *mamas* that still remain there), male migrants are more prone to emigrate to Germany. On the other hand, as far as Spain is concerned, there are no observable

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Argentina	20%	20%	20%	20%	20%	19%
Brazil	5%	5%	6%	6%	6%	6%
Cuba	3%	4%	5%	5%	5%	5%
France	12%	11%	11%	11%	10%	10%
Germany	7%	6%	6%	6%	6%	6%
Mexico	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%
Switzerland	6%	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%
UK	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%
USA	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%
Venezuela	11%	10%	10%	9%	9%	9%
Rest of the world	23%	23%	23%	24%	25%	25%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 2

Main countries of residence for Spaniards abroad (male and female, 2010-2015)

Source: authors' elaboration of data from RSRA.

gender differences in destination countries, aside from the somewhat higher number of women moving to Argentina. The reason is presumably the same as we have provided for the Italian case.

As commented in the state of art section, much research states that current emigration (either from Italy or Spain) is different from that of the early 20th century. Contemporary migrants are mostly composed of young and qualified individuals trying to find better opportunities rather than family survival.

This intuition is reinforced when analyzing the age composition of the stock of Italian and Spanish residents abroad.¹⁰ The variable «age» seems to have an impact on likelihood to reside in a certain country. In both cases the data suggest that there could exist differences between family (eldest and part of younger cohorts) and labor migration and their offspring (those of working age and presumably in the 18-69 years cohorts).

Regarding Italy (Table 3), the eldest cohorts are more likely to reside in France or former destination countries such as Argentina (or even the United States and Canada), while most of them working-age population target the closer EU-environment countries such as Germany and Switzerland.

In the case of Spain eldest cohorts are most likely to reside in France, Argentina or Venezuela (53% of over 65 registrations are distributed among these three countries, as illustrated in Table 4),¹¹ while working-age population shows a much higher dispersion (only 36% of 16-64 cohort and 27% of under 16 cohorts are registered in these countries). It is also remarkable the percentage of older Spaniards residing in Cuba —9% of the total cohort—, which is mainly due to its close historical links with Spain and undoubtedly to recent legislative developments.

10 As discussed in the methodology section, for comparison purposes we have here rearranged the original categories into three age segments: 0-17 years, 18-69 years and 70+ years in the case of Italy, and 0-16, 16-64 and 65+ years in that of Spain. Furthermore, while the Spanish data are available for the whole 2010-2015 period, in the case of Italy data on the age composition of the stock are only available for years 2013-2015 (see methodology for more details on this).

11 This fact becomes clearer when splitting the RSRA by country of birth. So, 75%, 47% and 84% of Spanish citizens born in Spain residing in Argentina, France and Venezuela respectively, belong to the eldest cohort (65 or more). By contrast, these percentages decrease to 20% (Argentina), 7% (France) and 4% (Venezuela) in the case of the eldest cohort of Spanish citizens born in those three countries.

	2013			2014			2015		
	<18	18-69	70+	<18	18-69	70+	<18	18-69	70+
Argentina	77,169	494,838	152,998	80,790	513,819	159,762	83,512	531,141	168,537
Australia	11,520	98,394	24,285	11,676	100,728	25,677	12,034	103,625	26,822
Belgium	34,338	188,034	35,172	33,419	189,477	36,511	33,088	192,778	38,056
Brazil	43,222	238,819	50,078	45,749	253,569	53,893	48,225	267,929	57,511
Canada	8,107	85,250	42,639	8,351	85,321	44,308	8,593	86,037	45,853
France	49,321	255,660	73,360	50,640	260,968	74,795	52,942	268,309	76,015
Germany	132,708	490,660	41,850	132,183	505,198	44,800	132,217	521,430	47,720
Spain	28,394	94,848	7,108	29,446	99,394	7,893	30,611	104,104	8,674
Switzerland	106,610	398,831	64,291	106,008	407,435	67,552	106,020	418,951	70,812
UK	35,508	161,238	26,896	37,884	171,824	27,839	41,799	184,893	28,731
USA	25,671	158,755	45,801	26,898	164,227	47,973	27,750	169,931	50,309
Venezuela	19,607	82,515	18,327	19,564	84,922	19,095	18,594	85,421	19,743
Rest of the world	119,047	398,839	61,407	124,075	418,164	64,820	129,512	443,315	69,619
Total	691,222	3,146,681	644,212	706,683	3,255,046	674,918	724,897	3,377,864	708,402
% Cohort	15%	70%	14%	15%	70%	15%	15%	70%	15%

Table 3

Main countries of residence for Italians abroad by age group (2013-2015)

Source: authors' elaboration of data from RIRA.

In fact, the called Law of Historical Memory (enacted in 2007) extends the possibility of acquiring Spanish citizenship to those whose mother or father was originally Spanish, even if they were not born in Spain. In addition, it covers the grandchildren of those who lost or were forced to forfeit their Spanish citizenship due the exile in the last Spanish Civil War. Between 2007 and 2013 around 200,000 Cubans applied for Spanish nationality.

	2013			2014			2015		
	<16	16-64	65+	<16	16-64	65+	<16	16-64	65+
Argentina	28,983	224,541	131,864	31,128	234,753	138,230	32,944	245,998	144,064
Brazil	12,787	69,158	28,477	13,693	74,295	29,535	14,433	77,971	30,862
Cuba	2,944	52,187	42,849	3,588	59,019	46,251	5,468	64,945	49,249
France	24,812	119,623	62,154	26,799	124,829	63,555	29,107	130,081	64,448
Germany	21,229	80,343	14,484	22,370	84,739	15,109	24,097	90,400	15,782
Mexico	13,377	69,334	18,071	14,041	74,805	19,468	14,574	80,093	20,953
Switzerland	18,796	70,981	9,762	19,394	73,479	10,374	19,983	76,088	10,945
UK	14,697	51,763	7,929	16,492	56,576	8,451	18,935	63,544	8,837
USA	17,739	63,414	13,432	19,269	69,361	14,844	20,864	76,476	16,162
Venezuela	27,344	111,908	43,911	27,588	115,588	45,409	27,313	116,503	46,785
Rest of the world	96,103	292,843	73,409	84,449	319,912	76,959	71,093	346,957	79,283
Total	278,811	1,206,095	446,342	278,811	1,206,095	446,342	278,811	1,206,095	446,342
% Cohort	14%	62%	23%	14%	62%	23%	14%	62%	23%

Table 4

Main countries of residence for Spanish abroad by age group (2013-2015)

Source: authors' elaboration of data from RSRA.

4.2. Flows

Italy and Spain have both witnessed a rapidly decreasing migratory balance during the last few years. In Italy (Figure 3), the decrease in the period 2007-2015 was by 72 %, from 476,010 net movements to 133,123 net movements. In Spain (Figure 4) the decrease was of 103 % between 2008 and 2015, going from 310,641 net movements to -8,389.

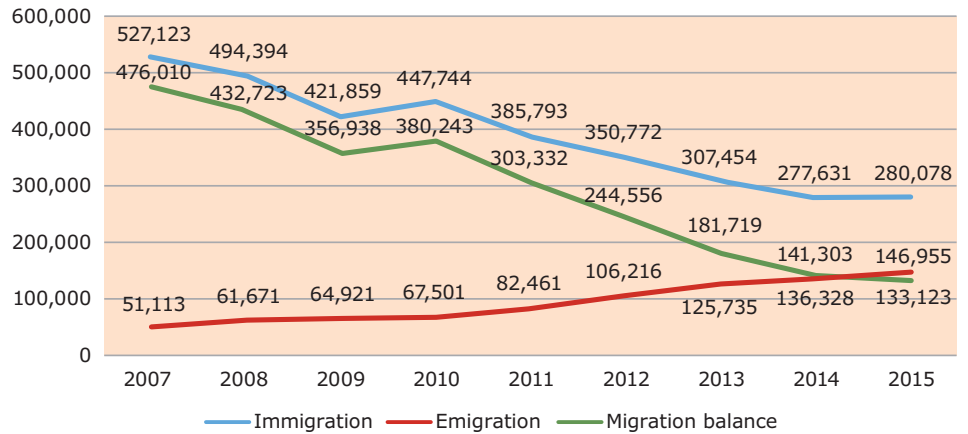


Figure 3

Migratory balance in Italy (2007-2015)

Source: authors' elaboration of data from ISTAT, transfers of residence (emigrations).

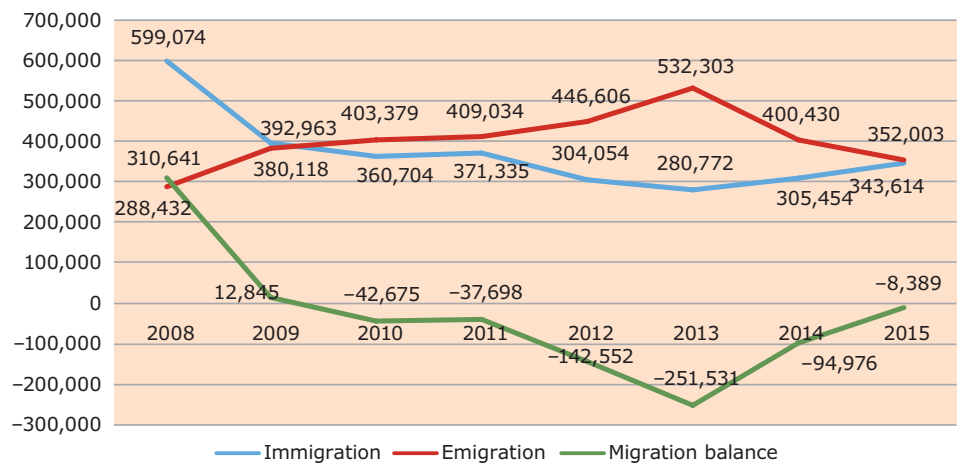


Figure 4

Migratory balance in Spain (2008-2015)

Source: authors' elaboration of data from Migration Statistics (INE).

In Italy, emigration has increased by 188% in the period between 2007 and 2015, going from 51,113 to 146,955 movements. In Spain, the growth in emigration was of 22% between 2008 and 2015, going from 288,432 to 352,003 movements (INE 2015).

In the case of Italy, nine countries account for more than 70% of overall emigration movements (Table 5). The preferred destinations for Italian emigrants are all in Western Europe, with Germany and the United Kingdom together accounting for about 30% of the movements, while France and Switzerland account for 22% of them (Table 6). With respect to gender, male movements average around 55% in all countries, with the only exception being Argentina, in which the percentage is around 50% in the selected period.

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Total movements 2009-2014	Weighted average countries 2009-20015	% males/ country 2009-2015
Argentina	952	886	1,090	1,549	1,742	1,276	993	8,488	2%	50%
Brazil	2,065	1,955	2,178	2,758	3,398	3,462	4,262	20,078	4%	60%
Belgium	1,219	1,024	1,616	2,165	2,429	2,491	2,557	13,501	3%	53%
France	3,248	3,784	4,907	6,639	7,976	8,426	10,872	45,852	10%	53%
Germany	6,281	4,803	6,880	10,352	11,441	14,440	17,299	71,496	15%	57%
Spain	2,890	3,036	3,006	3,636	3,961	4,090	4,328	24,947	5%	57%
Switzerland	4,196	4,619	5,797	8,431	9,872	10,376	11,476	54,767	12%	58%
United Kingdom	5,042	5,251	5,378	7,404	12,962	13,491	17,502	67,030	14%	55%
United States	2,345	2,557	3,633	4,429	4,822	5,181	5,187	28,154	6%	55%
Rest of the world	10,786	11,630	15,572	20,635	23,492	25,626	27,783	135,524	29%	61%
Total	39,024	39,545	50,057	67,998	82,095	88,859	102,259	469,837	100%	58%
% selected countries	72%	71%	69%	70%	71%	71%	73%	71%		

Table 5

Italian emigration, by country of destination (2009-2014)

Source: authors' elaboration of data from ISTAT, transfers of residence (emigrations).

	2013			2014			2015		
	<18	18-69	70+	<18	18-69	70+	<18	18-69	70+
Argentina	77,169	494,838	152,998	80,790	513,819	159,762	83,512	531,141	168,537
Australia	11,520	98,394	24,285	11,676	100,728	25,677	12,034	103,625	26,822
Belgium	34,338	188,034	35,172	33,419	189,477	36,511	33,088	192,778	38,056
Brazil	43,222	238,819	50,078	45,749	253,569	53,893	48,225	267,929	57,511
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France	49,321	255,660	73,360	50,640	260,968	74,795	52,942	268,309	76,015
Germany	132,708	490,660	41,850	132,183	505,198	44,800	132,217	521,430	47,720
Spain	28,394	94,848	7,108	29,446	99,394	7,893	30,611	104,104	8,674
Switzerland	106,610	398,831	64,291	106,008	407,435	67,552	106,020	418,951	70,812
UK	35,508	161,238	26,896	37,884	171,824	27,839	41,799	184,893	28,731
USA	25,671	158,755	45,801	26,898	164,227	47,973	27,750	169,931	50,309
Venezuela	19,607	82,515	18,327	19,564	84,922	19,095	18,594	85,421	19,743
Rest of the world	119,047	398,839	61,407	124,075	418,164	64,820	129,512	443,315	69,619
Total	691,222	3,146,681	644,212	706,683	3,255,046	674,918	724,897	3,377,864	708,402
% Cohort	15%	70%	14%	15%	70%	15%	15%	70%	15%

Table 6

Main countries of residence for Italians abroad by age group (2013-2015)

Source: authors' elaboration of data from RIRA.

In the case of Spain (Table 7), 10 countries and 1 region account for around 70% of overall emigration movements. The preferred destinations for Spanish emigrants are labor market destinations (UK, Germany, USA and other Asian countries —mainly the called Gulf Cooperation Council—)¹² which represent 31% of emigration; circular or return migration (Ecuador) accounts for 9%, while other traditional destination countries¹³ for Spanish emigrants (France and Switzerland) make up 15% emigrations (Table 7).

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Total movements 2009-2014	Weighted average countries 2009-2015	% males/country 2009-2015
Argentina	2,382	2,155	2,529	2,182	2,476	2,111	2,271	16,106	4%	52%
Belgium	1,472	1,656	2,273	2,417	2,501	2,588	2,820	15,727	4%	53%
Ecuador	1,338	2,064	3,718	6,519	9,323	7,914	7,416	38,292	9%	48%
France	3,094	3,903	5,063	5,521	7,217	8,334	9,543	42,675	10%	51%
Germany	2,279	2,726	4,260	4,539	6,533	7,863	9,135	37,335	9%	52%
Italy	1,150	860	1,007	853	966	936	990	6,762	2%	37%
Other Asian Countries	1,256	1,261	1,987	1,777	2,358	2,592	3,524	14,755	3%	63%
Switzerland	1,333	2,068	2,889	3,040	3,476	3,402	4,608	20,816	5%	54%
UK	4,148	4,890	7,148	6,574	7,620	9,806	11,824	52,010	12%	48%
USA	3,560	3,556	4,652	4,068	5,343	6,496	8,837	36,512	8%	50%
Venezuela	1,424	1,770	2,137	2,308	2,952	2,634	2,242	15,467	4%	51%
Rest of the world	12,554	13,250	17,807	17,468	22,564	25,765	31,434	140,842	32%	55%
Total	35,990	40,159	55,470	57,266	73,329	80,441	94,645	437,300	100%	52%
% Main Countries	65%	67%	68%	69%	69%	68%	67%	68%		

Table 7

Spanish emigration, by country of destination (2009-2014)

Source: authors' elaboration of data from Migration Statistics (INE).

Regarding the gender variable, in Spain, the percentage of males among emigrants with Spanish nationality remains on average stable around 52% in all countries. The most important exception in Europe are Italy and UK, where the number of women is much higher, that is, 54% and 63% respectively. In addition, there has been a slight increase in Ecuadorian female emigrants in the period considered; the underlying factors of this phenomenon may be return or circular migration of naturalized citizens of Ecuadorian origin (Moreno *et al.* 2015) or brain circulation promoted by President Correa's higher education talent-attraction policies (Vega *et al.* 2016, Rodríguez-Fariñas *et al.* 2015).

Here again, as in the case of the analysis of the demographics of residents abroad, age¹⁴ seems to affect the likelihood of emigrating to a certain country instead of another both for Italian and for Spanish emigrants. Particularly, the data suggest that the relationship between age and destination country could be linked to «old» (family migration) and «new» (youth labor) migration.

12 Composed of Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates.

13 These two countries, together with Germany, were the former destination countries for Spaniards between the decades of the 50 and the 70. While Germany has arisen again as a destination country, main flows to France and Switzerland are due to family migration.

14 As discussed in the methodology section, for comparison purposes we have here rearranged the original categories into four age segments: under 17 years, 18-39 years, 40-64 years and 65+ years (case of Italy); under 19 years, 20-39 years, 40-64 years and 65+ years (case of Spain).

In the case of Italy (Tables 8 and 9), eldest cohorts are more likely to emigrate to Argentina. The existence of a consolidated migratory system between Spain, Italy and Argentina (Actis & Esteban 2008) could be related to this fact. Working-age emigrants instead seem to prefer Germany and Switzerland as destination countries. Finally, the UK seems to be the preferred country of destination for younger cohorts.

Country	Until 17	18-39	40-64	65 and over	Total movements 2009-2015
Argentina	1,128	2,817	2,232	2,311	8,488
Belgium	3,211	6,446	3,228	616	13,501
Brazil	2,365	9,586	6,868	1,259	20,078
France	11,505	20,771	11,218	2,358	45,852
Germany	13,537	37,468	17,092	3,399	71,496
Spain	3,034	14,327	6,106	1,480	24,947
Switzerland	8,509	27,628	15,372	3,258	54,767
United Kingdom	11,477	42,567	11,676	1,310	67,030
United States	4,619	14,136	7,444	1,955	28,154
Rest of the world	23,876	63,172	38,398	10,078	135,524
World	83,261	238,918	119,634	28,024	469,837
% Cohort	18%	51%	25%	6%	100%

Table 8

Preferred destination for Italian emigrants (total movements 2009-2015 by age)

Source: authors' elaboration of data from ISTAT, transfers of residence (emigrations).

Country	Until 17	18-39	40-64	65 and over	Total movements 2009-2015
Argentina	1%	1%	2%	8%	2%
Belgium	4%	3%	3%	2%	3%
Brazil	3%	4%	6%	4%	4%
France	14%	9%	9%	8%	10%
Germany	16%	16%	14%	12%	15%
Spain	4%	6%	5%	5%	5%
Switzerland	10%	12%	13%	12%	12%
United Kingdom	14%	18%	10%	5%	14%
United States	6%	6%	6%	7%	6%
Rest of the world	29%	26%	32%	36%	29%
World	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 9

Preferred destination for Italian emigrants (% of total movements 2009-2015 by age)

Source: authors' elaboration of data from ISTAT, transfers of residence (emigrations).

Also, in the case of Spanish emigrants, age category seems influence the choice of country of destination (Tables 10 and 11). Eldest cohorts are most likely to move to the countries that represent

the classic destinations of Spanish emigration, this is, Argentina, Venezuela and France. Although our explanation relies on the type of migration, a part of the movements could be identified to return migration of people born and/or raised in those countries who had emigrated to Europe.

	0-19	20-39	40-64	65 and more	Total
Argentina	3,564	5,173	4,162	3,208	16,106
Belgium	5,776	5,288	4,355	309	15,727
Ecuador	16,379	11,872	9,443	598	38,292
France	10,803	18,277	10,807	2,788	42,675
Germany	7,316	20,714	7,845	1,460	37,335
Italy	1,448	3,234	1,775	305	6,761
Other Asian	2,742	7,868	4,003	143	14,756
Switzerland	3,222	10,286	6,389	920	20,816
UK	8,871	32,464	9,762	912	52,010
USA	7,929	17,169	9,899	1,515	36,512
Venezuela	2,617	4,173	5,135	3,544	15,468
Rest of the World	35,128	59,945	37,713	8,055	140,841
Total	105,794	196,463	111,287	23,756	437,300
% Cohort	24 %	45 %	25 %	5 %	100 %

Table 10
Preferred destination for Spanish emigrants (total movements 2009-2015 by age)
Source: authors' elaboration of data from Migration Statistics (INE).

	0-19	20-39	40-64	65 and more	Total
Argentina	3%	3%	4%	14%	4%
Belgium	5%	3%	4%	1%	4%
Ecuador	15%	6%	8%	3%	9%
France	10%	9%	10%	12%	10%
Germany	7%	11%	7%	6%	9%
Italy	1%	2%	2%	1%	2%
Other Asian	3%	4%	4%	1%	3%
Switzerland	3%	5%	6%	4%	5%
UK	8%	17%	9%	4%	12%
USA	7%	9%	9%	6%	8%
Venezuela	2%	2%	5%	15%	4%
Rest of the World	33%	31%	34%	34%	32%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 11
Preferred destination for Spanish emigrants (% of total movements 2009-2015 by age)
Source: authors' elaboration of data from Migration Statistics (INE).

Another emerging trend points to 20-39 years cohorts, whose emigration is primarily directed towards Germany and English-speaking countries (UK and USA). In addition, it is worth highlighting that

Ecuador appears to have become an important destination country for both emigrants under 19 years old and adults between 40 and 64 years old; this fact is clearly related to circular and return migration of Spanish citizens of Ecuadorian origin due to the economic downturn (Moreno *et al* 2015) or to talent-attraction policies developed by President Correa's government (Vega *et al.* 2016, Rodríguez-Fariñas *et al.* 2015).

5 Conclusion

In the period 2009-2015, emigration movements have increased significantly, both for Italy (188%, from 51,113 to 146,955 movements) and Spain (22%, from 288,432 to 352,003 movements). The terminology and tones often used to describe the phenomenon by the media in both countries have contributed to producing a quite high degree of alarmism among public opinion, especially for what concerns a supposed «exodus» of the young and well-educated generation.

For its part, academic literature is far from offering univocal interpretations on its nature and characteristics. Different studies offer different perspectives on how many people are emigrating, who the emigrants are and what pushes them to leave. Nonetheless, a lot of the literature underline that current emigration from Spain and Italy is different from the one those countries had experienced in early 20th century. While early 20th century emigrants left their countries with very poor cultural and economic capital, in search of new ways of providing subsistence to their families, current migratory waves are characterized by a big number of young and qualified individuals who depart from the most economically advanced regions in their countries. Such shift in the profile of the emigrants seems to point to a new trend in emigration, whereby the reasons behind the choice to leave are more linked to a search for better opportunities for investing one's talents and qualifications, than to mere subsistence. Indeed, data show that the economic crisis in Spain and Italy has diminished the countries' capacity to attract and absorb qualified workforce, with a consequent dispersion of human capital. In this context, emigration would represent more of a strategic plan in search of better chances for upward mobility, rather than an actual escape from poverty. New explanatory variables of a complex phenomenon emerge from the «new mobilities» paradigm and the North-South modern migrations, overcoming the old push and pull factors. The research compares stock and flow data on Spanish and Italian emigrations during the period of economic crisis (2009-2015, as commented above). The Spanish and the Italian statistical sources (concerning both the stock and the flows) offer the possibility to categorize data about countries of

destination of emigrants according to different categories. Rather than focusing the comparison on wide regional areas (ex. EU-27; Extra-EU 27; US and Canada; South America; Africa; Asia; Oceania), we have chosen to mainly concentrate on single countries. The rationale for this is that focusing on wide regional areas hides interesting information.

The findings of the research appear to confirm differences between former and new Italian and Spanish emigrations. Taking into account the limitations of the official statistics, the age and the country of destination turn out to be the most relevant variables when trying to analyze the movements (mainly, the oldest cohorts of family migration, the middle-aged return migration and the young labor migration).

Residents abroad are geographically concentrated, with Argentina, Germany and Switzerland being the preferred destinations for Italians, while Spaniards are mainly located in Argentina, France and Venezuela. These locations are somewhat linked to historical reasons (Nadal 1984, Actis & Esteban 2008). No relevant differences come up in terms of gender. However, when splitting the data by age, dissimilarities between older and younger age cohorts emerge: Spanish and Italian old migrants are established principally in Argentina and France, while young migrants are more concentrated in Germany and Switzerland, but also scattered among «the rest of the world» (25% Spaniards, 13% Italians).

The coexistence of two types of migration (labor and family) somehow emerges when analyzing the flows in detail. Age and destination both appear to have some explanatory power. In Italy, those over retirement age are more prone to emigrate to Argentina, though Germany and Italy remain the preferred destinations for the older cohorts (those over 40). Nevertheless, UK turns out to be the most popular destination for those in working-age, especially the youngest cohort (17-39 years old). As far as Spain is concerned three trends arise: firstly, the movement towards France, Argentina and Venezuela of the older Spanish emigrants; secondly, the significant return migration of Ecuadorian families (belonging to the youngest and to the 40-64 cohorts) or circular migration of young Spanish researchers (Hayes & Pérez-Gañán 2017); and finally, the young Spanish emigration, mainly targeting Germany or English-speaking countries, such as UK and USA.

In conclusion, figures may be helpful to show the incipient presence of a new (labor) migration composed of young people that exit Italy and Spain in search of better opportunities towards destination countries that differ from the historical ones. According to recent research the migratory project of these people is explained not only by survival reasons, but also in terms of self-fulfillment and goal achieving. Regrettably, with the available information we have not been able to demonstrate that Italy and Spain can be considered

again emigrant sending countries. Hence, further and longer-term research on this subject is required. In fact, several limitations from available statistical sources stand out, such as Italian data on migration flows not containing information on country of birth, which impede differentiation of native Italians and foreign-born people who acquired Italian citizenship.

6 References

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