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Domestic Service and the Labour Market in Spain: A Gender Perspective on Migration

SUMMARY

Many Spanish women manage to cope with the demands of both job and family by hiring immigrant women to do some housework and look after dependant relatives. In the last few years there has been an important increase in the demand for extra-communitarian workers to carry out this kind of task. These workers have been segregated by sex regarding occupation. In the procedure of regularisation of foreign workers that took place in Spain during 2005, 83.4 percent of the applications for jobs in the area of domestic service were submitted by women (around 220,000), with an absolute predominance of immigrants from Latin America. Among the factors that explain this specialization we may find cultural affinity and the flexibility that characterizes this kind of job. This phenomenon reveals an occupational ethno-stratification on the grounds of gender and origin.

KEY WORDS: domestic service labour market, immigration, gender, occupational segregation, conciliation, proximity services, house workers, ethno-stratification

1. International migrations from a gender perspective

Whereas human migrations have been a constant phenomenon throughout History, they have nowadays undergone several changes concerning the countries where emigrants come from and they have also reached a special intensity in terms of the number of people involved. Over the last few decades, millions of people, mostly coming from the poorest countries in the world, have settled in industrialized countries, attracted by economic development and social welfare (Sabaté Martínez, Rodríguez Moya and Díaz Muñoz, 1995: 137).

Another pattern that has been modified with regard to the traditional migratory flows is the increasing feminisation of the new migratory process. However, both in political and academic terms, the role of women within the migratory process has not been much studied yet (Sabaté Martínez, Rodríguez Moya and Díaz Muñoz, 1995: 137).

Authors like Pessar or Morokvasic have pointed out that, until the middle of the 1970's, most research work excluded women from their reflections on the migrant po-

pulation (De Villota, 1999: 259). Three historical reasons might explain this void: the supposed masculinisation of the migratory phenomenon, the poor dissemination of a gender-based analytic perspective, and female discrimination in the receiving societies (Malgesini, quoted by Sabaté Martínez, Rodríguez Moya and Díaz Muñoz, 1995: 137–138).

During the 1980's, a theoretical body emerged, formulating a new interpretation that is known as the gender perspective. This approach focused on household and family strategies as its main subject of analysis, and stressed the causes and consequences in the household of female migration (Sabaté Martínez, Rodríguez Moya and Díaz Muñoz, 1995: 138). These works amounted to a step forward *vis-à-vis* generic migration researches, for which women had remained invisible or had at best been treated as mere companions. Nevertheless, the role of women is still being interpreted in relation to the private sphere, whereas men are considered as financial and public beings. Their link with the family from the country of origin means, in practice, economic aid (Gregorio Gil, 1998: 23).

Several meaningful issues have thus been left out, such as the fact that, when survival reasons lead to a decision to emigrate and the receiving country shows promising prospects, any obstacle to migration is inevitably surmounted, independently of the person's gender. Moreover, the incorporation of women as protagonists of the migratory process becomes essential when male emigrants find it particularly difficult to enter the labour market. Besides, women send money to their relatives who remain in their countries of origin in higher proportions of their earnings and more regularly than men, even though in most cases their income is inferior to that of men (Solé, 1994: 88).

In Spain, as in many other neighbouring countries of its European surroundings, the increase in female migration must not be analyzed without regard to the gender stratification system in Spanish society itself. Changes derived from women's higher participation in the labour market have caused a considerable increase in the demand for domestic workers, and women, rather than men, have been called upon to occupy this sector, due to the persistence of the idea that they are better qualified by nature for domestic work (Gregorio Gil, 1998: 50–51).

Consequently, immigrant women have found an employment niche that has been stigmatized by the native population, where they have been able to find work easily. Nonetheless, this reality subjects them to a degree of absolute invisibility (domestic service, cleaning personnel, caregivers, etc.), working in a sub-sector regarded as marginal in the occupational structure (Solé, 1994: 13).

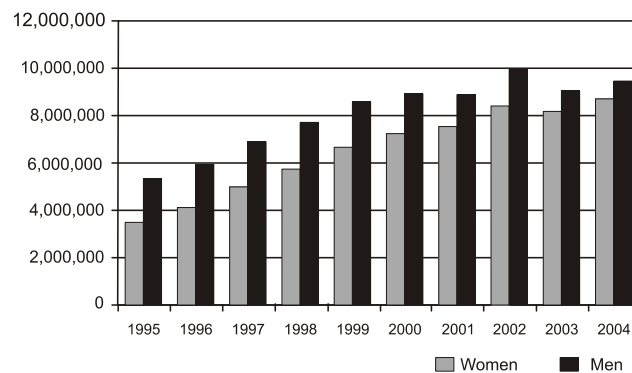
2. Women and the labour market in Spain

The concept of work includes all those human activities that involve an effort or an expenditure of energy to satisfy human needs by means of the production of goods or services (Colectivo IOE, 2001: 26). Employment, or paid work, bestows on the individual reference coordinates within society; it makes interaction with others possible; it grants a status and self-esteem and a social identity; furthermore, it structures and brings sense to the life of the individual who occupies the job (Larrañaga Sarriegui and Echebarría Miguel, 2004: 66).

During the last century, especially in the second half, a cultural and value change has occurred, and it has impelled women to enter the job market, forming the basis of what is known as women's "silent revolution" (Camps, quoted by Larrañaga and Echebarría, 2004: 66). In Spain, since the 1980's, when a major employment crisis took place, women have continued to access the non-domestic labour market (Maruani, quoted by Díaz y Delgado, 2004: 667). This situation has resulted in a significant increase in women's activity and occupation rates. Data collected during the Working Population Survey that was carried out in the second quarter of 2005 showed an employment rate of 57.35 percent for the population older than 16. This employment-population ratio is 68.7 percent for men and 46.49 percent for women.

Spanish workers' Social Security affiliation data by gender reflects the evolution of female participation in the labour market. Figure 1 shows that women's increasing rates of affiliation have reduced the differences between both genders since the middle of the 1990's.

Figure 1: Evolution of Social Security affiliation by gender (Spain)



Source: Personal compilation based on data from the Work and Social Matters Ministry, Social Security Junior Ministry

On the other hand, it is important to recall that the domestic space, where many varied goods and services are produced or reproduced, has, until fairly recently, been almost the exclusive responsibility of women. As more and more women have been entering the extra-domestic job market, they have been spending less time on housework. This imbalance or contradiction has given rise to a need to conciliate family and labour life.

The conciliation between professional and family life has become one of the great challenges facing western societies in the 21st Century. This idea of a need for reconciliation between holding a paid job and having enough time to fulfil the duties derived from the current family-life model emerged with the directives and recommendations generated since the European Union was created (Malgesini, 2004: 25).

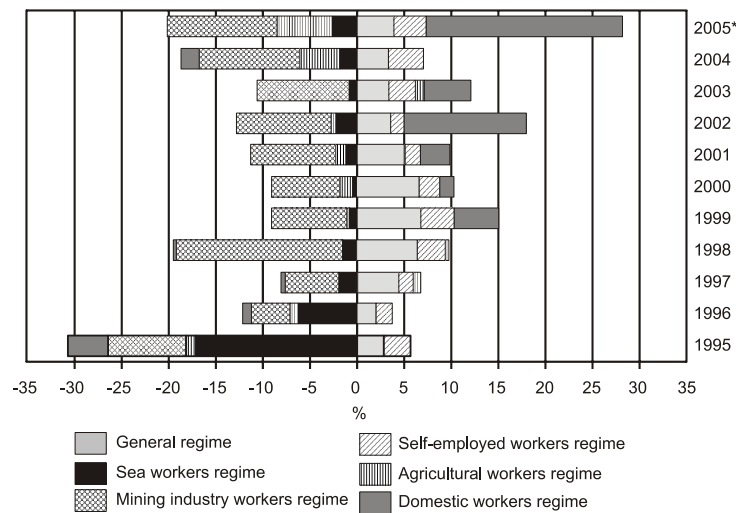
There is a certain agreement regarding the actions that must be undertaken to achieve this conciliation: sharing out family responsibilities among all family members, independently of their gender; changing the labour-related legislation to guarantee equal

access to employment for women; developing community services to support dependant relatives and generating greater appreciation for housework.

Nevertheless, as long as these objectives are not accomplished, there is a patent imbalance in a series of tasks, among which care for dependants and certain areas of housework, have acquired considerable importance.

The European Commission (1995) highlighted the fast expansion experienced by services of this kind in Europe, which has become one of the most active areas of employment creation among those known as “new sources of employment” due to their annual growth rate. These new sources of jobs satisfy new needs and give an answer to social changes (Torns, quoted by Parella Rubio, 2000: 276). Figure 2 shows percentages of Social Security affiliation numbers according to the different employment sectors (general, self-employed workers, sea workers, agricultural workers, mining industry workers and domestic workers). The variation in the percentages highlights the fact that the conciliation between domestic and extra-domestic work generates a continuous demand for domestic staff.

Figure 2: Social Security affiliation variation percentages by regime



*Data from January to June 2005

Source: Personal compilation based on data from the Work and Social Matters Ministry, Social Security Junior Ministry

Regarding dependant care, different households follow different strategies depending on their welfare models. While in Spain, like in other Mediterranean countries, family or paid assistance are chosen first, in other European countries, such as the United Kingdom, several private services are used. Therefore, for many Spanish women, the conciliation between job and family is achieved partially by means of the externalization of some domestic tasks and the care of dependants, in keeping with the socio-

demographic and economic changes that have occurred in western societies during the last decades, such as population ageing, increasing female participation in the labour market, new time management within the family group and, finally, the fiscal crisis of the welfare state in the face of the prevailing neoliberalism (Parella Rubio, 2000: 276). This means that migration and population ageing are factors or indicators that may actuate as explanatory variables for the changes in the labour market (Precedo Ledo, 2001: 154).

The question of caring for the elderly emerges as the most decisive challenge for the future. In Spain, according to available evidence, 775,000 out of an elderly population of six and a half million live on their own, and 170,000 of them admit to suffering from some form of disability. Furthermore, compared to other European countries, Spain has less public provision of home care services (only 4 percent of the care offer) as well as of institutional residences (where only 40 percent are financed by public organisms) (Casado Marín and López i Casanovas, 2001: 22). In Spain and other similar welfare states, where care jobs have not been taken on by the state social services, and women's activity rates have been rapidly increasing among the youngest generations, there will be a shortage within a short time in the number of available women to care for the aged.

Even though families have to a large extent never stopped being the direct providers of social services – an outstanding feature of the “Catholic” or “southern model”, characteristic of southern European countries (Abrahamson, quoted by Parella Rubio, 2000: 285) – the speed of the social and economic changes previously mentioned have deeply transformed women's role and the family structure in Spanish society.

Urban middle class families, where both spouses work, need more and more frequently to hire domestic female workers to care for elderly relatives, thereby giving rise to an increasing mercantilization of care tasks (Parella Rubio, 2000: 284). Moreover, informal support networks are being weakened at a growing pace, so the need for care workers unrelated to the family is increasing and a higher number of immigrants are taking up this work (Salaberri and Aragón, 2000: 343).

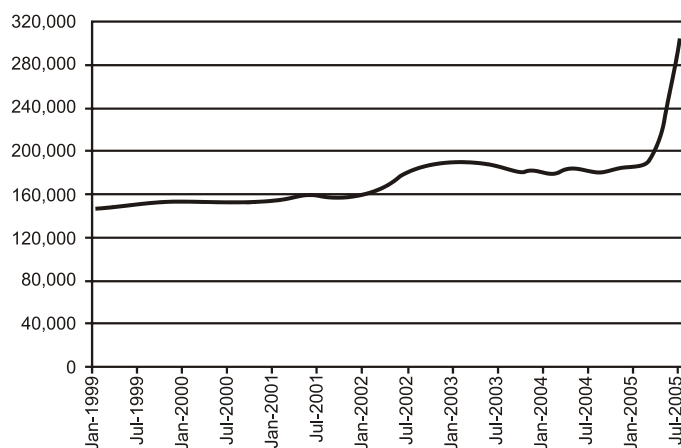
On the other hand, the assignation of resources for the engagement of domestic service is not always related to women's level of revenue, but to their project of individual autonomy. The recruitment of a female employee is the means to gain more personal time, to dedicate not only to paid work but also to leisure.

Consequently, the demand has grown for extra-communitarian workers to carry out tasks of this kind, regarded as lowly qualified and rejected by the native population (Domínguez Mujica, Díaz Hernandez and Parreño Castellano, 2001: 144). These tasks, socially perceived as dirty, like mopping the floor, changing nappies, bathing ill people..., are becoming increasingly professionalized, leading to the creation of paid jobs for social reproduction tasks. This trend towards the mercantilization of domestic or family work favours a strong segmentation, which has given rise to an increasing demand for extra-communitarian women to carry them out. These women make up a social group that is relegated to perform certain services traditionally carried out within the domestic unit (Catarino and Oso, 2000: 186).

This is a peculiar sector, also known as proximity services, strongly conditioned by gender status, and comprising no enterprises, as it is a home-based job. The job process is characterized by the indefiniteness of the tasks, flexibility, precariousness and, generally, poor working conditions and low salaries. This situation is aggravated where irregular immigrants are concerned, due to the fact that they cannot defend their rights nor be represented by trade unions. All these factors contribute to the risk of turning proximity services, closely associated with lack of job security, invisibility, social discredit and servitude, into a job niche for immigrant women, leading to a transfer of class and ethnic inequalities among women (Torns, quoted by Parella Rubio, 2000: 277).

Spanish Social Security affiliation data for domestic workers underlines the close relationship between immigration and this job segment. Figure 3 shows the strong repercussion on these workers of the normalization process that took place in the year 2005.

Figure 3: Social Security affiliation data for domestic workers' special regime



Source: Personal compilation based on data from the Work and Social Matters Ministry, Social Security Junior Ministry

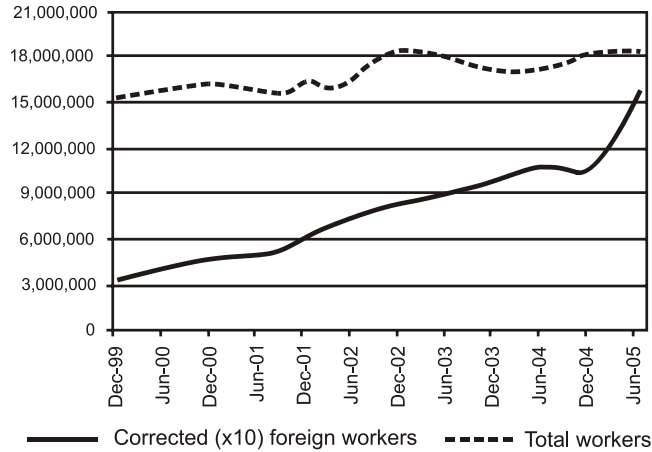
The heterogeneous job segment of house-workers is made up of three sub-sectors: at-home workers, permanent external workers (having a daily and prolonged link with the employer, but tempered by the independence of their private spaces of personal relations) and those workers who have been hired by the hour by one or more employers (reducing the relation with the employer to a minimum). The first case is closer to the essence of domestic service, while the other two are closer to the working situation in other sectors.

3. Immigrant women and domestic service in Spain

The activity rate for immigrant workers has reached very high figures in the last four years (Figure 4), even when their rate of unemployment is higher than that of Spa-

nish citizens. National Statistics Institute (INE) data states that the activity rate for the foreign population in the second term of 2005 (76.51%) was almost 21 points higher than the Spanish population's (55.62%), although this figure may not be absolutely accurate given the different age structure of the native and foreign populations. The fact that the foreign population in Spain is mostly made up of age groups with a stronger economic activity may explain this difference. Over the same period, the unemployment rate for Spanish citizens was 9.05 percent while it was 11.61 percent for foreigners.

Figure 4: Social Security affiliation



Source: Personal compilation based on data from the Work and Social Matters Ministry, Social Security Junior Ministry

Table 1: Social Security affiliation data, 31st July 2005

	Total	Foreigners	%
Social Security affiliates	18,251,514	1,590,187	8.71
Domestic workers' regime affiliates	305,308	208,802	68.39

Source: Personal compilation based on data from the Work and Social Matters Ministry, Social Security Junior Ministry.

Nevertheless, the analysis that best reveals the great differences that separate the job markets of the native population and immigrants respectively concerns the main areas of activity in which immigrants with work permits are employed (Table 1). This information allows us to detect a strong segregation by sex regarding occupation. That means that, to the reduced range of activities to which immigrant men and women are relegated, we must add occupational segregation by reasons of gender, which situates women on the bottom rung of the activity structure: domestic service (Parella Rubio, 2000: 278).

Table 2: Foreign job seekers by occupation

<i>Occupations</i>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Occupation total</i>
Manufacturer industries unskilled labourer	20,758	10,168	30,926
Cleaner	4,130	20,227	24,357
Bricklayer's mate	19,044	417	19,461
Waiter	6,157	8,127	14,284
Shop assistant	2,022	9,892	2,022
Administrative assistant	2,067	7,076	9,143
Cook	3,462	5,123	8,585
Handler	7,451	586	8,037
Bricklayer	7,220	99	7,319
Agricultural unskilled labourer	5,384	1,023	6,407
Kitchen assistant	1,856	4,414	6,270
Floor waitress	174	5,441	5,615
Agricultural worker	3,933	902	4,835
Hotel receptionist	1,297	2,755	4,052
Hypermarket replenisher	1,788	2,068	3,856
In-home carer	230	3,612	3,842
Gardener	2,671	675	3,346
Store cashier	190	2,902	3,092
Food industry unskilled labourer	1,497	1,341	2,838
Building painter	2,464	86	2,550
Domestic worker	126	2,334	2,460
Metal industry unskilled labourer	1,957	401	2,358
Packer	469	1,851	2,320
Receptionist/Telephonist	253	2,056	2,309
Van driver	2,176	98	2,274
Translator	648	1,206	1,854
Nursery employee	27	1,599	1,626
Cleaning lady	89	1,514	1,603
Interpreter	595	964	1,559
Guard	1,373	133	1,506
Babysitter	33	1,377	1,410
Telephonist	137	1,199	1,336
Carpenter	1,255	49	1,304
Office worker/Receptionist	222	1,070	1,292
Public Works unskilled labourer	1,089	183	1,272
Unskilled kitchen labourer	629	635	1,264
English teacher	500	640	1,140
Welder	1,075	18	1,093
Electricity technician	1,039	21	1,060
Nursery/Geriatrics assistant	85	968	1,053
Plumber	1,029	20	1,049
Translator/Interpreter	342	676	1,018
<i>Total</i>	<i>108,943</i>	<i>96,054</i>	<i>204,997</i>

Source: Personal compilation based on data from the National Employment Institute (INEM)

Nowadays, a significant percentage of women employed in Spain as cleaners, carers for the aged, babysitters or cooks are immigrants. The female population group devoted to these domestic jobs is heterogeneous, but there is a majority of women who have emigrated on their own, leaving their husbands and children behind in their native

countries due to a lack of job opportunities. These women now try to earn some money and improve the lives of their families in their countries of origin (Barreto Vargas, 2004: 694). These women, who live far away from their countries and look after someone else's children while their own are being brought up by other women, and who expect to move back to their countries in better conditions, themselves to give their children a good education, are real transnational workers (Beck-Gernsheim, quoted by Barreto Vargas, 2004: 697).

This context of precariousness and segmentation in the labour market is the framework within which job discrimination against immigrants and their placement on the bottom rung of the occupational structure (ethno-stratification of the labour market) take place. In the first place, immigrant workers are bound to accept those activities rejected by an increasingly demanding Spanish workforce, which, in spite of the strong incidence of unemployment, is more and more reluctant to perform manual, unskilled, dirty, badly paid jobs. In the second place, the immigrant workforce has gained access to some occupations also performed by native workers, but immigrants are the object of reverse discrimination due to their willingness to accept worse job conditions – often under informal economy forms – which makes it possible to reduce costs, facilitating higher flexibility and slowing down inflation. INEM Occupational Observatory data concerning immigrants who asked for a job during the period leading up to 31st December 2002 demonstrated this fact (Table 2).

Table 2 shows that the jobs immigrant women most frequently applied for, related to cleaning or proximity services (as babysitters, geriatric nursing assistants, domestic workers, etc.), amount to approximately half of the total job demand (48.52 percent), while this percentage falls to 9.37 percent in the case of immigrant men.

Therefore, unlike in the rest of western countries, domestic service in Spain is one of the sectors that facilitates the entrance and regularization of immigrants. In the United Kingdom, immigrant working women may only be legally brought into the country by their employers. In 1998, after a reivindicative campaign, they won the right to change employers and many illegal foreign workers benefited from an extraordinary regularization process. In Germany and Austria, Au Pair programmes, transit contracts and tourist visas make entrance easier, though they involve situations that expose the women to the risk of deportation (Malgesini, 2004: 19). Restrictions applied to foreigners make the regularization more difficult and force women to take up domestic jobs in an unstable way, less regulated and worse paid (€5 as opposed to €7–10 per hour).

4. Repercussions of the legislative framework and evolution of the employment of foreigners in domestic service

According to Portes and Böröcz (1992) the receptor governments' attitudes towards immigration and the legal measures adopted by them heavily condition the context of reception, inasmuch as they organize the opportunities open to immigrant people. These are the reasons for which the immigration policy followed in Spain since 1985 has shaped the flows and the immigrant population that has settled in our country (Izquierdo Escribano, 2000: 237).

The passing of the Public General Act 7/1985 was the first step in a legislation that favoured a wide regulatory process under the protection of the Bill created in 1991. In April 1996 a new regulatory process for foreigners took place, after the approval of the Order in Council 155/1996 on Foreigners' Rights and Freedoms in Spain. This decree had a decisive impact on the policies regulating work permits for foreigners, as it established the practice of contingents or quotas.

The practice of establishing contingents or quotas involves a process of individual work permits granted to non-communitarian foreigners collectively (Table 3), that the Government approves at the proposal of the Ministry of Work, subject to consultation with the most representative social and economic associations and to the report of the Inter-Ministerial Commission on Aliens. The aim is to guarantee the coverage of those job offers that are not met by Spanish citizens, in accordance with article 70 of the Rules of Execution of the Public General Act Governing Foreigners approved by the previously mentioned Order in Council.

Table 3 - Job authorizations for foreign workers (contingents)

Year	Job offers	B.O.E. date
1998	28,000	14 th March 1998
1999	30,000	14 th March 1998
2002	10,884 stable; 21,195 temporary	12 th January 2002
2004	10,908 stable; 20,070 temporary	31 st December 2003
2005	1,594 stable (vacant from 2004, extended)	5 th February 2005

Source: Personal compilation based on data from *National Official Bulletin* (B.O.E.)

On the other hand, by determining the quotas, the Government also establishes the job sectors in which the hirings may take place, the quotas for the agricultural sector, the building industry, hotel trade and domestic service being especially numerous, other activities being excluded or conditioned by the supply of available native workers. Therefore, the place where an individual may expect to be in the labour market is pre-determined by the mere fact of being foreign (non-communitarian). That is to say, the “institutional framework” channels the circulation of the immigrant workforce because the State ratifies what the market has already defined as an area of job opportunities for non-communitarian foreign workers. The migratory policy favours the confinement of those workers in certain activity sectors, characterized by the worst working conditions, contributing to the flexibility and ethno-stratification of the labour market (Parella Rubio, 2000: 285).

Regarding the hirings in the sector of domestic service (domestic workers, home cleaners and domestic care-givers) established by contingents in the years 2002, 2004 and 2005, we have variable figures. In 2002, the offered quota consisted of 3,114 vacancies, which represented 28.6 percent of the stable job offers; in 2004, it consisted of 1,013 vacancies (9.3 percent) and in 2005, of 589 (8.9 percent, vacancies from the previous quota).

In addition to the job permits derived from the contingents system, some of the hirings of non-communitarian workers in Spain since 2002 have been possible thanks

to a new procedure approved by the Spanish government on 21st December 2001 that set a new type of employment procedure for foreigners outside Spain. This procedure confers provisional authorization status to the signed contract and the visa, which are documents processed in origin.

Finally, it is worth pointing out that, in relation to the incorporation of immigrants in the Spanish labour market, the regularization processes for foreigners have been more important than the contingents policy in itself and than the modality of hiring in the country of origin, given the fact that Spain breaks the European record of massive regularizations, as they have taken place in 1985, 1991, 1996, 2000, 2001 and 2005.

The Public General Act 4/2000, reformed by the Public General Act 8/2000, on Foreigners' Rights and Freedoms in Spain and their social integration, established a new status for non-E.U. foreigners. The normative development of this Law gave rise to two regularization processes, in application of the Orders in Council of 18th February 2000 and 16th February 2001. The latter, under the Regulations of 1st August 2001 established the preferential status of visa application on the grounds of family regrouping or deep-rooted humanitarian reasons.

In the year 2005, a process of legalisation of foreign workers took place in Spain, following the Order in Council 2393/2004 and the ensuing Rules of the Law Governing Foreigners (B.O.E. 7 Jan. 2005). These Rules established a "normalization" period of three months for illegal workers. During the months set for the reception of applications for normalization (7 Feb. to 7 May 2005), 690,670 application forms were submitted in Spain. By 26th July 2005 77.3 percent of the applications having been processed, 88.75 percent of them had been accepted, while 11.25 percent had been rejected, refused and filed. This procedure has thus had far-reaching repercussions from a labour point of view. In Sami Nair's words, the course chosen by the Spanish authorities was completely original and it went far beyond the simple question of the regularization of immigrants. The objective was clearly to normalize the lives of 800,000 people approximately and, at the same time, to fight against the informal sector of the economy, so it has no doubt been the most democratic and progressive process experienced in Europe in the last few years (Nair, 2005: 15).

Regarding domestic service, the repercussions of this procedure have been very important, since 33.98 percent of the permits granted have been for the sector of domestic employment. This sector's registrations came to a total of 119,787, 34 percent of the registrations that had taken place by 26th July 2005 in the general affiliation records (352,522). By comparing this information with that related to the quotas set by the contingents procedure for this activity, we may infer that this kind of work had been carried out on the outer fringes of legality. The facilities that the normalization process gave for the acknowledgement of domestic service (when the applicant for a permit works for several employers, he takes on the cost of Social Security payments) encouraged the submission of a large number of applications.

In the future, assuming that no more extraordinary regularisation processes will take place, the settlement of non-communitarian workers will follow any of the three permanent procedures established to hire foreign employees in Spain: in origin, through the contin-

gents procedure or on the grounds of social or professional ties with the native population, known as “roots”. Forecasts state that the first of the engagement formulae will have a reduced impact on domestic service. So, the evolution of supply in this sub-sector will be determined by the quota-establishing procedure or on account of family regrouping.

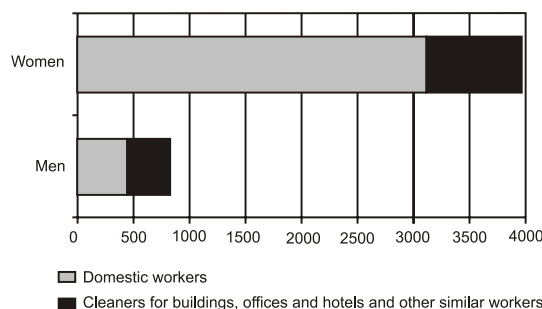
5. Causes of expulsion. Ethnization of domestic employment in the Canary Islands and the geographical areas of origin

Female immigration in South Europe is defined nowadays by a series of key characteristics, including the previously mentioned concentration of immigrants in the proximity services and a fragmented labour structure, in which different ethnic and gender groups find “niche opportunities”. In addition to this aspect, it is also convenient to consider the heterogeneity of the countries of origin (especially in the Spanish and Italian cases), as well as the dynamic role of the informal economy (King and Zontini, 2000: 35).

The Canary Islands, which have historically served as an international crossroads, have experimented a radical change in terms of migrational conduct. This change has led to this Ultraperipheral Region having the highest rate of resident foreigners in Spain.

During the normalization process for foreign workers of 2005, 83.4 percent of the applications for jobs in the domestic service sector were submitted by women (around 220,000). In the Canary Islands, 3,959 out of the 4,788 applications (22.3 percent of the total in Spain) submitted for regularization in this sub-sector were submitted by women, representing 82.7 percent of the total applications for jobs in domestic service and 48 percent of the total applications submitted by women. This data reveals the importance of this job niche for immigrant women.

Figure 5: Distribution by sex of the categories of foreign workers employed as domestic service



Source: Personal compilation based on data from the Normalization Procedure of 2005, National Government Regional Office

Besides the differences in the distribution of employees by reasons of gender, there are some other differences within this job sub-sector. Figure 5 shows that men work in almost the same proportion as domestic workers (careers for elderly men) as cleaners for buildings, offices and other premises (hired by companies or residents’ associations).

On the other hand, women are mostly employed in proximity tasks, as domestic workers: cleaning (by the hour or in-home) and looking after children, ill or elderly people. Over 78 percent of the applications submitted for regularization in the Canary Islands were related to jobs of this kind.

Regarding the geographic origin of foreign domestic workers, it is substantially different from that of foreign immigrants as a whole. Figure 6, which contains data concerning a group of immigrants that made use of the regularization procedure in the Canary Islands, shows an absolute predominance of immigrants from Latin America (65.52 percent). Those who came from the African continent amount to 21.28 percent of total immigrants, and those who arrived from non-communitarian Europe and Asia amount to barely 7.53 percent and 4.69 percent respectively.

Figure 6: Origin of the workflows in the Canary Islands



Source: Personal compilation based on data from the Normalization Procedure of 2005, National Government Regional Office

If we analyse the figures for the immigrants employed in domestic service on their own (Figure 7), we may observe an even greater imbalance. Citizens from South America represent more than 80 percent, while the hirings of Maghribian, Sub-Saharan and Asiatic immigrants are insignificant.

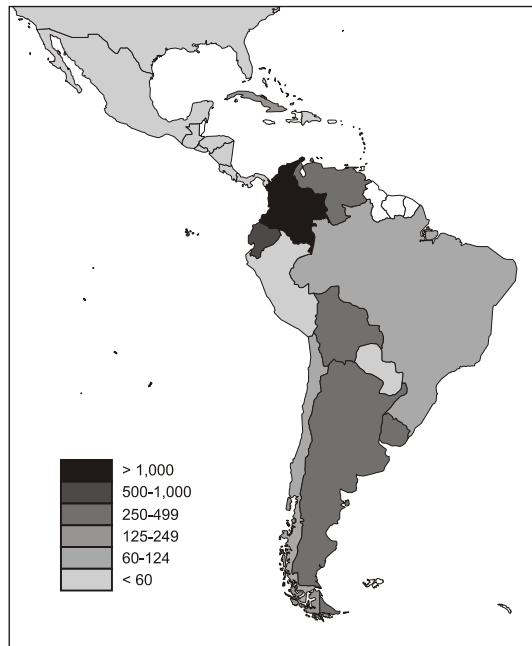
Most of the immigrants coming from Latin America are women, especially when they come from the Latin American countries with higher internal instability, such as Colombia or Venezuela, or from impoverished nations like Ecuador or Bolivia. In these countries they have to face a labour market from which women are practically excluded, representing only a percentage that varies from 16 to 25 percent of the whole of paid workers (Seager, 2001: 66). These women, together with Uruguayan and Argentinean immigrant women, take up most of the domestic jobs in the Canary Islands (Figure 8).

Figure 7: Origin of the migration flows of domestic workers in the Canary Islands



Source: Personal compilation based on data from the Normalization Procedure of 2005, National Government Regional Office

Figure 8: American immigrant women working in the domestic service in the Canary Islands



Source: Personal compilation based on data from the Normalization Procedure of 2005, National Government Regional Office

The reason for which Spanish employers tend to hire immigrants from this group does not only depend on factors related to the available supply of labour and the international juncture that conditions the present migratory flows, but also on other fundamental reasons.

The first of them regards the affinity between the employer and the employee, or between the employee and the person to be cared for. Sharing the same language, customs, or even religion, is often decisive in hiring, as these elements make it easier to harmonize habits regarding meals, organization, timetables, etc.

In the second place, employers take into account the experience accumulated by Latin American female workers. Some of these workers have held similar jobs in their countries of origin, working for the established elites in urban centres and large cities. Some of them have already had children or have taken care of elderly relatives, so they are no strangers to personal services. This gives rise to a climate of trust since it is indispensable for employers to feel they may rely on a stranger to work in their home while they are away.

This last factor refers to the attitude and the commitment of these women towards work. In many cases, they are home managers themselves who leave their children in the charge of relatives and emigrate on their own, multiplying work shifts (cleaning during the day and caring for elderly people during the night or at weekends, for example) with the aim of sending the largest possible amount of remittances to their countries. As they do not usually have family burdens at the beginning of their settlement, they can take advantage of their flexible hours and adapt to the demands of one or more employer. A higher cultural and formative level (Domínguez Mujica and Guerra Talavera, 2005: 253–254) also predisposes employers in their favour.

In short, in Spain and particularly in the Canary Islands, there is an occupational ethno-stratification for reasons of gender and origin. For immigrant Latin American women, domestic jobs have become a means of accessing the labour market traditionally reserved for Spanish women. This solution makes up for the State's social security deficiencies as regards the dependant population and amounts to a first step on the long path towards professional promotion for immigrant women. This is the career that many Latin American women seek in order to escape from financial difficulties and the social subordination that affects them in their countries of origin, by reasons of gender, and that opens for them the doors to a certain degree of independence.

6. Conclusions: employment in domestic service as gender strategy for migration

The increase of female immigration in Spain must not be analyzed without taking into account its gender stratification system. Many women manage to cope with both family and paid work by outsourcing part of the housework and the care of dependants.

There is an occupational segregation by reasons of gender within the reduced range of jobs to which immigrants are relegated, placing women on the bottom rung of this structure. The jobs sought by immigrant women, related to cleaning tasks or proximity services, represent half the job applications of this group. Therefore, the employment of im-

migrant women in domestic service has been favoured by the Government's policy of job permit quotas and regularization processes.

During the normalization process in 2005, 22.3 percent of the applications sent were related to domestic service, and 82.7 percent of them were submitted by women. There is a notable predominance of immigrants from Latin America: Colombia, Ecuador, Bolivia, Argentina, Venezuela and Uruguay.

Among the factors that explain this specialization we can find cultural affinity, having done domestic work and cared for children and elderly people in their countries of origin, and the flexibility that characterizes jobs of this kind.

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DJELATNOSTI U KUĆANSTVIMA I TRŽIŠTE RADA U ŠPANJOLSKOJ: IZ PERSPEKTIVE RODA O MIGRACIJI

SAŽETAK

Mnoge Španjolke izlaze na kraj sa zahtjevima posla i obitelji unajmljivanjem imigrantica za obavljanje nekih kućanskih poslova i skrb o ovisnim obiteljskim članovima. Posljednjih je nekoliko godina za obavljanje takve vrste poslova značajno porasla potražnja za radnicima iz zemalja koje nisu članice Europske unije. Ti su radnici segregirani prema spolu s obzirom na posao koji obavljaju. U postupku reguliranja stranih radnika u Španjolskoj tijekom 2005. godine, 83,4% onih koji su se prijavili za obavljanje kućanskih poslova bile su žene (oko 220.000), među kojima su potpuno prevladavale imigrantice iz Latinske Amerike. Kulturni afinitet i prilagodljivost koja je karakteristična za tu vrstu posla činio su koji objašnjavaju tu specijalizaciju, odnosno profesionalnu etnostratifikaciju na temelju roda i podrijetla.

KLJUČNE RIJEČI: tržište rada djelatnosti u kućanstvima, imigracija, rod, profesionalna segregacija, pomirenje, srodne djelatnosti, kućna posluga, etnostratifikacija

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LES SERVICES DOMESTIQUES ET LE MARCHÉ DU TRAVAIL EN ESPAGNE : LA MIGRATION SOUS LA PERSPECTIVE DU SEXE

RÉSUMÉ

Un grand nombre d'Espagnoles réussissent à satisfaire les exigences de leur vie professionnelle et familiale en recourant à des immigrantes pour accomplir certains travaux ménagers et prodiguer des soins aux membres dépendants des familles. Ces dernières années, on assiste à un accroissement de la demande en travailleurs issus de pays hors de l'UE pour de tels travaux. Ces travailleurs subissent une ségrégation par sexe en fonction de leur travail. Dans le cadre de la régularisation des travailleurs étrangers en Espagne en 2005, 83,4% des candidatures à des emplois d'auxiliaire familiale étaient déposées par des femmes (environ 220.000), dont une grande majorité d'immigrantes d'Amérique latine. Parmi les facteurs qui expliquent cette spécialisation, nous pouvons trouver l'affinité culturelle et la flexibilité caractéristique pour ce type de travail. Ce phénomène révèle une stratification ethnique professionnelle reposant sur le sexe et l'origine.

MOTS CLÉS: marché du travail des services domestiques, immigration, sexe, ségrégation professionnelle, conciliation, services de proximité, domestiques, stratification ethnique