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## Spain and Portugal: Legalization

Migration News Vol. 7 No. 4, March 2000

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There were 720,000 legal foreigners in Spain in 1999; 60 percent were EU nationals or relatives of EU nationals and half of the foreigners lived in four cities—Madrid, Barcelona, Alicante and Malaga. There were 176,000 legal foreign workers in Spain in 1997, including legal seasonal workers. Half of the foreign workers were from Africa (Morocco) and 25 percent were from Latin America (Peru and the Dominican Republic). Estimates of the number of unauthorized foreigners in Spain range from 60,000 to 800,000, with the high estimates made by the one-million member General Workers' Union.

Spain, with 39.4 million residents, has the world's lowest birth rate: 1.1 children per woman in 1999, compared to 1.2 in Italy, and 1.3 in France and Germany. The percentage of adult women in the work force increased from 28 percent in 1985 to 40 percent in 1999.

El Ejido. There was anti-immigrant violence that injured 80 people in El Ejido between February 5-8, 2000 and led to the arrests of 55 Spaniards. El Ejido is a farming center of 50,000 people, including 10,000 foreigners, that has become wealthy through winter fruit and vegetable production. It lies 25 miles west of the port city of Almeria and inland from the popular beach resorts of the Costa del Sol.

Spaniards attacked the homes of some of the 100,000 Moroccans in the Almeria region, many of whom are farm workers employed in the 10,000 plastic greenhouses that grow winter fruit and vegetable greenhouses on 24,000 hectares (60,000 acres). In some farming villages, 25 percent of residents are foreigners.

The cause of the attack in El Ejido was the killing of a 26-year-old local woman by a mentally disturbed Moroccan, the third killing in less than a month blamed on Moroccan immigrants in El Ejido. On January 30, 2000 some 10,000 Spaniards demonstrated against the area's Moroccan workers after two farmers were allegedly killed by a Moroccan.

National Police reinforcements were sent to El Ejido on February 5, but it took them several days to restore order. Some immigrants accused the authorities of not doing enough to protect their safety and went on strike. The strike was settled after one week, with authorities promising to rebuild destroyed worker housing and to provide work permits to 5,000 illegal workers. Some Moroccan workers criticized the Moroccan government for not sending a delegation to El Ejido to investigate the treatment of Moroccan workers there.

The fruits and vegetables grown in the area are worth about \$1.8 billion a year. Most of the workers are Moroccans, often called "Moros" in reference to the Moors who ruled southern Spain for 700 years. Legal workers earn about 5,000 pesetas (\$30) a day or 50,000 pesetas (\$312) a month; illegal workers, about half of the total, earn much less. Half of the Moroccans live in housing without running water; a third have no electricity. Andalusia's regional Socialist president, Manuel Chaves, said that "If they [migrants] left, El Ejido's economic activity would collapse." However, one farmer said that the major problem is that there are twice as many farm workers as there are jobs.

The Spanish agriculture and social affairs ministers expressed regret to Morocco about anti-immigrant violence in El Ejido; Foreign Minister Abel Matutes said Spain must "think about how we need to change in a pluralist society where every day we will need more immigrants to take our country forward."

Legalization. Spain had three legalizations—in 1985, 1991 and 1996. In 1991, some 110,113 foreigners were legalized and 18,015 amnesty applications were rejected. A third of the applicants were from Morocco and Algeria and a third from South America. Many of those applying for amnesty were employed in agriculture, construction and services such as hotels and restaurants. An April-August 1996 legalization allowed 20,000 unauthorized foreigners—many of whom had once been legal—to attain legal status.

Spain has a rolling amnesty—unauthorized foreigners with at least two years work and residence in Spain are eligible for a legal residence permit. Spain's Parliament approved a new law in January 2000 that shortens this period to seven months, that is, foreigners in Spain before June 1, 1999 can apply for legal residence permits, which may produce 70,000 more legalized foreigners and allow their dependents to join them in Spain. The minority

center-right government opposed this legalization, even though the bill that was passed provides far fewer rights for foreigners than originally proposed. Anthropology professor Tomas Calvo polled Spanish university students and reported that most want immigration to Spain stopped.

Spain allows some Moroccans to work seasonally in Spain, and links its guest-worker program with an agreement that permits Spanish fishermen to fish under a Morocco-EU fisheries agreement. Morocco announced in December 1999 that it had deported 96 illegal foreigners who had entered from Algeria; they were headed for Spain. Nevertheless, Moroccan Interior Minister Ahmed Midaoui said that preventive measures to fight illegal immigration towards Europe are insufficient.

Spain had 5,000 asylum applications in 1997; 30 percent were filed by Romanians.

Portugal. There are about 10 million Portuguese in Portugal and five million abroad—about 25 percent of the Portuguese abroad are in the EU and another 25 percent are in Brazil. About 38,000 Portuguese emigrated in 1997; two-thirds went to Germany.

Some 175,000 foreigners were in Portugal in 1997, including 81,000 from Africa. About 88,000 were in the work force, including 21,000 in agriculture and 7,000 in construction.

Portugal had a legalization program in 1992 and another in 1996. The June-December 1996 legalization permitted unauthorized foreigners to become legal residents if they were: (1) from Portuguese-speaking countries; and (2) in Portugal before December 31, 1995. Some 35,000 applied and 22,000 were granted legal status; including 6,800 from Angola; 5,000 from Cape Verde; and 4,000 from Guinea Bissau. The October 1992-March 1993 legalization program legalized 39,000 foreigners.

*J.A. Rodriguez and S.F. Fuertes, "Spain: riot town immigrants extend deadline on strike," El Pais, February 26, 2000. Emma Daly, "Riots in Spain's vegetable patch," Christian Science Monitor, February 17, 2000.*

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