# A PRECARIOUS POSITION THE LABOR MARKET INTEGRATION OF NEW IMMIGRANTS IN SPAIN

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A Series on The Labor Market Integration of New Arrivals in Europe: Employment Trajectories







# A PRECARIOUS POSITION The Labor Market Integration of New Immigrants in Spain

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## **Executive Summary**

In 2000, Spain entered the new millennium with low unemployment and strong economic growth. The economic boom of the early and mid-2000s, driven in large part by growth in the real estate market, led to a sharp rise in the demand for new workers, particularly in sectors with a high share of low-skilled jobs. Many of these new jobs were created in the so-called secondary sector of the Spanish labor market, where workers tended to be employed through temporary, fixed-term contracts with low wage growth and a high risk of unemployment.

The rising demand for low-skilled workers in Spain prior to the recession was partly filled through immigration. By the end of the decade, Spain's foreign-born population had increased more than fourfold. Most of these new immigrants came from Latin America—particularly Ecuador—and Eastern European countries. Correspondingly, the share of European Union mobile citizens and immigrants from traditional sending countries, such as EU-15 Member States and African countries, decreased.

New immigrants to Spain have had very different experiences entering the labor market depending on when they arrived. An analysis of Spanish Labor Force Survey data from 2000 through 2011 shows that immigrants who arrived before the recession had little trouble finding work immediately. On average, immigrant workers who came to Spain between 2000 and 2003 had employment rates almost 10 percentage points higher than natives within just a year or two of entering the Spanish labor market. Unsurprisingly, those who arrived after 2008 struggled to find work as Spanish unemployment rates skyrocketed.

While immigrants' individual characteristics had a limited effect on their employment trajectories—all groups who arrived before the recession had higher employment rates the longer they stayed in Spain—some groups started out in a better position than others. Immigrants from Latin America had the easiest time finding work within their first year in Spain, while African immigrants had the lowest employment rates on arrival. Men started in a better position than women and maintained their advantage over time.

# New immigrants to Spain have had very different experiences entering the labor market depending on when they arrived.

Newly arrived immigrants tended to enter the labor market through unskilled positions, but most moved out of these jobs over time. After approximately five years in Spain, the share of immigrants employed in middle-skilled work had almost doubled. Although all groups saw their share in middle-skilled positions rise over time, some groups did better than others. The Spanish Labor Force Survey data show that labor market outcomes varied according to several characteristics:

- Country of origin. Individuals from EU-15 countries were the least likely to be employed in lowest-skilled work, and the most likely to be in high-skilled jobs—even as compared to natives. By contrast, all other migrant groups were overrepresented in unskilled work, although this share decreased over time. Workers from Latin America and non-EU-15 European countries were the most likely to move into middle-skilled work, although African immigrants also saw improvement.
- **Education level.** As might be expected, immigrants with a secondary education or below were twice as likely as more educated immigrants to be in the lowest skilled jobs, although more highly educated immigrants were still ten times more likely to have low-skilled employment than their native counterparts (just 1 percent of whom were in low-skilled work) even after ten years in Spain. Regardless of their education level, immigrant workers—even those with only secondary education—were able to move up into middle-skilled jobs after a few years in the labor market.

Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), *International Migration Outlook 2011* (Paris: OECD, 2011), 322-23, <a href="https://www.oecd.org/migration/internationalmigrationoutlook2011.htm">www.oecd.org/migration/internationalmigrationoutlook2011.htm</a>.



Sector of employment. Upon arrival, immigrants were more likely to be employed in sectors with high shares of low-skilled jobs, such as construction and services. Despite having a high share of unskilled jobs for foreign-born workers, the construction sector also offered immigrants the best chance of moving out of low-skilled work before 2008.

Although immigrant workers were able to move out of low-skilled positions prior to the recession, they were still more likely to be employed in poorer quality, secondary sector jobs. These jobs are characterized by a higher prevalence of fixed-term or part-time work. The construction sector, which was the third largest employer of immigrant workers, had one of the lowest shares of permanent contracts, and immigrants in this sector were more likely than natives to have temporary contracts.

## Box I.Situating the Research: A Series on Employment Outcomes among Immigrants and Mobile EU Citizens in Europe

This report is one of six case studies completed during the first phase of a recent Migration Policy Institute project evaluating the ease with which foreign-born workers within the European Union are able to establish themselves in destination-country labor markets during the first ten years after arrival. The project evaluates the conditions under which new immigrants are able not only to find employment, but also to progress out of unskilled work into middle-skilled jobs. The low wages paid for most unskilled work mean that immigrants (or native workers) who are unable to move out of these positions into higher-skill, higher-paid jobs after a few years are at risk of poverty and social and economic marginalization.

The case studies in this phase of the project consider the influence of individual characteristics and broader economic conditions on the employment prospects of foreign-born workers. The second phase of the project will evaluate the effectiveness of integration and workforce development policies in helping foreign-born workers overcome these barriers and move up into middle-skilled positions that pay a family-sustaining wage.

The six case study countries are the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom.

While the flexible nature of the secondary labor market in Spain allowed immigrants to easily find work and move up over time, it also put them at greater risk once the recession hit. Although immigrants who arrived in Spain between 2000 and 2007 were able to find work and eventually move out of the low-skilled positions, they were not protected from the recession, and many became unemployed as the economy shed low- and middle-skilled jobs in sectors dominated by immigrants. Only high-skilled workers appeared able to weather the recession fairly well. For immigrants who arrived after the recession, the decline in flexible, low-skilled work made it more difficult to find employment and restricted their paths into the labor market.

#### I. Introduction

Beginning in 2000, the Spanish economy experienced an economic boom—partly driven by the real-estate market—that generated a significant expansion in low-qualified jobs in the construction, food preparation, and serving sectors, as well as in domestic services. At the same time, Spain received an impressive inflow of immigrants. Approximately 500,000 per year arrived between 2002 and 2007, and they were quick to find jobs in the thriving economy. However, after the international financial crisis of 2007, the economy suffered

Free entrance of foreigners as tourists, together with a lax implementation of immigration laws and several generous amnesties that have granted legal residence to unauthorized immigrants (in 1985, 1991, 1996, 2000, 2001, and 2005), have all made Spain an attractive destination for both legal and illegal immigration flows. See Catalina Amuedo-Dorantes and Sara de la Rica, "Immigrants' Responsiveness to Labor Market Conditions and its Implications on Regional Disparities: Evidence from Spain" (IZA Discussion Paper No. 1557, Bonn, Germany,



a major reverse with the burst of the Spanish real-state bubble. Quickly thereafter, gross domestic product (GDP) growth slowed drastically, then reversed; and the unemployment rate soared to 23 percent in 2011.

In recent decades, Spain has developed a segmented labor market, with a division between highly protected, permanent jobs and more precarious fixed-term contract jobs.<sup>3</sup> In this segmented market, workers with little access to the primary labor market—the permanent jobs—enter the secondary market, accepting fixed-term contracts while waiting for access to permanent positions. Mature workers generally hold the permanent jobs, while young workers primarily enter the labor market with fixed-term contract jobs, with high turnover. In addition to youth, more vulnerable workers such as low-skilled workers, women, and immigrants also tend to be overrepresented in the secondary labor market.<sup>4</sup>

Before 2008, one-third of all wage and salary workers in Spain had a fixed-term contract. These contracts often coexist with permanent contracts within the same firms. For workers, such contracts impose penalties in the form of forgone experience, delayed wage growth, and a higher risk of unemployment.

In parallel, Spain has seen an important shift in immigration trends over recent decades. In 2000, mobile citizens from the EU-15 countries represented over one-third of the foreign-born population in Spain. Eight years later, this share had shrunk drastically to only one-tenth of the total immigrant population. Over this same period, the share of African immigrants has remained relatively stable, decreasing from one-fifth to one-sixth of the foreign born. Moroccans, who have a long history of immigration to Europe and Spain, are by far the largest group of African immigrants, with a share of 11.6 percent between 2000 and 2011.

# Spain has seen an important shift in immigration trends over recent decades.

South Americans and, in particular, Ecuadorians, have only recently changed their country of destination from the United States to Spain. The timing coincides with a period of hyperinflation and large GDP losses in the late 1990s in Ecuador, which led to the dollarization of the domestic currency and made the country extremely vulnerable to external shocks. At the same time, the post-September 11 changes made it more difficult to enter the United States.<sup>5</sup> As a consequence, the size of the Ecuadorian community in Spain soared within five years, going from 76,000 to 457,000 individuals by 2006, and representing 9.2 percent of all migrants in Spain in 2007. Similarly, the share of Latin Americans grew from 20 percent of the total immigrant population in 2000 to over 35 percent in 2004. Thereafter, their inflow slowed down.<sup>6</sup>

April 2005), <a href="www.iza.org/en/webcontent/publications/papers/viewAbstract?dp">www.iza.org/en/webcontent/publications/papers/viewAbstract?dp</a> id=1557; Catalina Amuedo-Dorantes and Sara de la Rica, "Labor Market Assimilation in Spain," <a href="British Journal of Industrial Relations">British Journal of Industrial Relations</a> 45, no. 2 (2007): 257–84; Juan J. Dolado and Pablo Vázquez, eds., <a href="Ensayos sobre Los Efectos Económicos y las Políticas de la Inmigración: Panorámica y Reflexiones">Panorámica y Reflexiones</a> (Madrid: Fundación de Estudios de Economía Aplicada, 2007), <a href="www.icam.es/docs/ficheros/200609050001">www.icam.es/docs/ficheros/200609050001</a> 6 23.pdf; Mario Izquierdo, Aitor Lacuesta, and Raquel Vegas, "Assimilation of Immigrants in Spain: a Longitudinal Analysis," <a href="Labor Economics">Labor Economics</a> 16, no. 6 (2009): 669-78.
In 1984, the Spanish government liberalized the use of temporary contracts and part-time work with the objective

In 1984, the Spanish government liberalized the use of temporary contracts and part-time work with the objective of adding flexibility and promoting employment in a rigid labor market with stringent employment protection legislation and high levels of unemployment.

- 4 See, for example, Catalina Amuedo-Dorantes and Ricardo Serrano-Padial, "Wage Growth Implications of Fixed-Term Employment: An Analysis by Contract Duration and Job Mobility," *Labour Economics* 14, no. 5 (2007): 829-47; Lawrence M. Kahn, "The Impact of Employment Protection Mandates on Demographic Temporary Employment Patterns: International Microeconomic Evidence," *Economic Journal* 117, no. 521 (2007): 333-56; and Angel Estrada, Mario Izquierdo, and Aitor Lacuesta, "Funcionamiento del Mercado de Trabajo y el Aumento del Paro en España" (102 Boletín Económico, Banco de España, July/August 2009), <a href="https://www.bde.es/f/webbde/SES/Secciones/Publicaciones/InformesBoletinesRevistas/BoletinEconomico/09/Jul/Ficheros/art3.pdf">https://www.bde.es/f/webbde/SES/Secciones/Publicaciones/InformesBoletinesRevistas/BoletinEconomico/09/Jul/Ficheros/art3.pdf</a>.
- 5 Simone Bertoli, Jesús Fernández-Huertas Moraga, and Francesc Ortega, "Immigration Policies and the Ecuadorian Exodus," *World Bank Economic Review* 25, no. 1 (2011): 57-76.
- These are statistics from the *Spanish Local Population Registry*. See Instituto Nacional de Estadística, "Municipal Register," accessed January 27, 2014, <a href="https://www.ine.es/jaxi/menu.do?type=pcaxis&path=/t20/e245/&file=inebase">www.ine.es/jaxi/menu.do?type=pcaxis&path=/t20/e245/&file=inebase</a>.



Finally, since the turn of the century, there has also been a steady inflow of Eastern Europeans that peaked after the recession in 2008. By 2011, Eastern Europeans had grown to 20 percent of the total immigrant and mobile EU citizen population in Spain from 7 percent in 2000.<sup>7</sup>

# Finding a route out of the lowest-skilled jobs and into middle-skilled work is often just as important as the initial search for employment.

For newly arrived immigrants, quickly finding employment is a key factor in successful integration. However, past research has shown that immigrant workers often enter the labor market through low-skilled, poor quality jobs. Workers—both native and foreign born—who get stuck in these jobs are at risk of poverty and social exclusion. For immigrants who remain in Spain, finding a route out of the lowest-skilled jobs and into middle-skilled work is often just as important as the initial search for employment.

This study uses Spanish Labor Force Survey (LFS) data to analyze the extent to which mobile EU citizens and immigrants have moved into middle-skilled jobs in Spain, the sectors of the economy that have proven most amenable to this progression, and the barriers to upward occupational mobility immigrants may encounter. The study follows three distinct cohorts—those who arrived from 2000 to 2003 (inclusive), those who arrived from 2004 to 2007, and those who arrived from 2008 to 2011. This latter group is the first post-crisis cohort.<sup>8</sup>

#### Box 2. Data and Definitions

This report uses cross-sectional data from the **Spanish Labor Force Survey (LFS)** covering the years 2000 to 2011. One of the strengths of the LFS is that, as a survey, it includes both legal and unauthorized immigrants, in contrast with alternative datasets that only cover legal residents, such as administrative data from Social Security Records or the Wage Survey Structure. That said, under-reporting of illegal immigrants is likely (as the LFS is voluntary, in contrast with the Census, which is mandatory). Furthermore, it is not possible to identify legal status in the LFS data.

Immigrants are defined as foreign-born individuals who are between 18 and 64 years old.

This report extensively reviews the data on immigrants in the Spanish labor market, and evaluates their labor market outcomes and prospects. The next section considers how newly arrived immigrants assimilate into employment. Section III then evaluates immigrants' pathways from the lowest-skilled jobs into middle-skilled work, with a special emphasis on immigrants who lack high-level education. Next, the report identifies the sectors in which immigrant workers are concentrated, and analyzes the key characteristics of these sectors. The concluding section offers a summary of the key findings and their implications for policymaking.

## II. Immigrants' Employment Rates

How do newly arrived immigrants' employment rates evolve over time? Have successive cohorts of immigrants who arrived in Spain since 2000 fared similarly or have there been differences between them?

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<sup>7</sup> Ihid

This study uses a synthetic cohort approach to group immigrants by their reported year of arrival in the Spanish Labor Force Survey (LFS), and then tracks each group's labor market outcomes over time. While this approach is generally considered to be the best tool available to track integration over time, and is preferable to a strictly cross-sectional analysis, the results are susceptible to bias from return migration.

1)

To study this, Figure 1 plots the average employment rate for the three cohorts of immigrants under analysis from 2000 to 2011. In addition, the figure shows the average employment rate of natives as a point of reference.

90 **Immigrant** Share of Employed Workers by Nativity and Cohort Arriving 2000-03 80 **Immigrant** Cohort Arriving 70 2004-07 Arrival (%) **Immigrant** 60 Cohort Arriving 2008-11 50 **Natives** 40 30 2004 2006 2008 2000 2002 2010 Year

Figure 1. Employment Rates in Spain By Nativity and Recency of Arrival, 2000-11

*Notes*: This figure displays the results from estimating a linear regression where the left-hand side (LHS) variable is a dummy variable indicating whether the individual is working or not and the right-hand side (RHS) variables are year dummies interacted by cohort. The cohort is defined according to the period of arrival: 2000-03, 2004-07, or 2008-11. *Source*: Produced by the authors based on Spanish Labor Force Survey (LFS) microdata.

The average employment rate at arrival of the first cohort of immigrants—those who arrived between 2000 and 2003—was 56 percent in 2000, and rose to 70 percent between 2001 and 2003, or 5 to 10 points higher than employments rates among the native-born population. By 2006, the employment rate of this cohort had increased to almost 80 percent, indicating that newly arrived immigrants fared quite well in terms of employment, both at arrival and for several years afterward. This is somewhat to be expected in Spain, where most immigration was labor-based during this period. Spain was an attractive destination for immigrants because of its booming economy and large demand for low-skilled workers.

After the beginning of the crisis in 2008, the employment rate among immigrants dropped almost 20 percentage points to about 60 percent. Although natives' employment rate was also affected by the economic slowdown, the employment losses among immigrants were considerably larger than those of natives. As a result, after 2009 the native employment rate was once again higher than that of immigrants.

Immigrants who arrived from 2004 to 2007 displayed a similar employment pattern to that of the first cohort. The major difference between the two cohorts is that the employment growth is more modest in the second cohort. The onset of the financial crisis just four years after arrival—likely stalling immigrants'

<sup>9</sup> Cristina Fernandez and Carolina Ortega, "Labor Market Assimilation of Immigrants in Spain: Employment at the Expense of Bad Job-Matches?" *Spanish Economic Review* 10, no. 2 (2008): 83-107.

<sup>10</sup> Núria Rodríguez-Planas, "Determinants of Immigrant's Cash-Welfare Benefit Intake in Spain," *International Journal of Manpower* 43, no. 2 (2013): 167-80.



progress into the labor market—may explain this cohort's poorer performance. Alternatively, it may be that there has been a compositional change in the characteristics of immigrants arriving in Spain between the first and second cohorts that accounts for their divergent rates of employment.

Finally, the post-crisis arrivals were clearly at a disadvantage in terms of employment integration relative to the immigrants who arrived earlier. First, the average employment rate at arrival for the 2008-11 cohort was around 50 percent, considerably lower than both earlier-arriving cohorts. Second, they did not experience the employment growth that was previously observed among immigrants to Spain within their first few years after arrival. Again, two potential explanations may explain the divergent employment outcomes: differences in the characteristics of the migrants or in the economic conditions at the time of arrival.

Figures 2 and 3 explore each of these alternative hypotheses. Figure 2 plots the average employment rates for the three cohorts of immigrants and for natives while controlling for individuals' observable characteristics such as age, gender, education, marital status, continent of origin (in the case of immigrants), and the relative stock of immigrants in Spain at the time of their arrival. Any differences between Figures 1 and 2 will reveal differences in employment rates due to the individuals' characteristics. Figure 3 then explores the other hypothesis, plotting the average employment rates of natives and the three migrant cohorts while controlling for economic conditions.

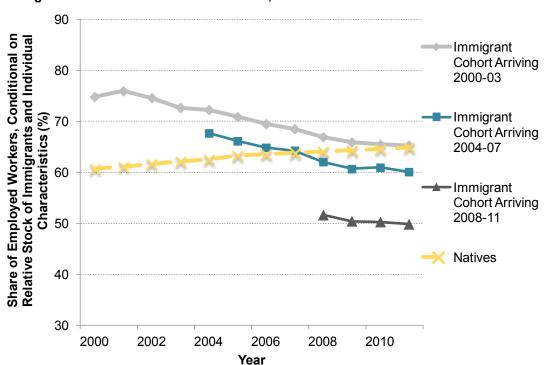


Figure 2. Share of Native and Immigrant Workers Who Are Employed, Conditional on Relative Stock of Immigrants and Individual Characteristics, 2000-11

Notes: This chart displays the results from estimating a regression in two stages. In the first stage, the LHS variable is a dummy variable indicating whether the individual is employed or not and the RHS variables include individual characteristics (age, sex, marital status, education level, and continent of origin) and the relative stock of immigrants (immigrants/ total population). The second stage uses as LHS the predicted probability of employment in the first stage, and the year dummies as RHS. The analysis of each stage was run separately by cohort of immigrants and natives.

Source: Produced by authors based on LFS microdata.

Two interesting results emerge from Figure 2. First, the differential pattern between the 2000-03 cohort and the 2004-07 cohort observed in Figure 1—that employment growth was more modest for migrants arriving between 2004 and 2007, as compared to their predecessors—practically fades away in Figure 2.

<sup>11</sup> The relative stock of immigrants in Spain at the time of the arrival controls for potential networks immigrants may have.

1

This suggests that there has been a change in the composition of migrants across the two cohorts, with those in the latter cohort being at a relative disadvantage. Comparing characteristic differences between the two cohorts (see Table A-1 in the Appendices) reveals that the share of women and of mobile EU citizens and immigrants from Eastern Europe is higher among the 2004-07 cohort than the 2000-03 cohort, and the share of Latin Americans (who are native Spanish speakers) has decreased. Second, we observe that, in contrast to the other two cohorts, the employment rates of immigrants arriving after 2007 did not change from Figure 1 to Figure 2, suggesting that for this cohort, the individual characteristics of migrants are not behind the relatively lower labor market performance.

90 Share of Employed Workers by Nativity and Arrival, Conditional on Economic Conditions (%) **Immigrant** Cohort 80 Arriving 2000-03 **Immigrant** 70 Cohort Arrivina 2004-07 60 **Immigrant** Cohort Arriving 50 2008-11 **Natives** 40 30 2000 2002 2004 2006 2008 2010 Year

Figure 3. Share of Native and Immigrant Workers Who Are Employed, Conditional on Economic Conditions, 2000-11

*Notes:* This chart is estimated using the same method as in Figure 2, but replacing individual characteristics and the relative stock of immigrants by the GDP growth and the unemployment rate. *Source:* Produced by authors using LFS microdata.

Figure 3 plots the average employment rates for the three cohorts of immigrants and for natives while controlling for the unemployment rate and GDP growth. The differences between Figures 1 and 3 reveal the extent to which different cohorts of immigrants were affected by the economic crisis, and reacted differently to the business cycle. While the employment pattern observed in Figure 3 is smoother than that of Figure 1, cohort differences remain. The 2000-03 cohort outperforms the 2004-07 cohort by 10 percentage points before the recession, and thereafter, these two older cohorts outperform the 2008-11 cohort by 10 percentage points. It is interesting to note that immigrants arriving after 2007 are clearly at a disadvantage in terms of labor market performance, despite higher rates of tertiary education (see Figures A-1 and A-2 in the Appendices).

Immigrants arriving after 2007 are clearly at a disadvantage in terms of labor market performance, despite higher rates of tertiary education.



#### Influence of Individual Characteristics on Employment Outcomes

Generally, immigrants appear to have experienced the same basic pattern of employment in the Spanish labor market regardless of education, age at arrival, gender, or other individual characteristics. The first two cohorts of immigrants (arriving in 2000-03 and 2004-07) saw gradual improvement in their employment rates over time, but this improvement then disappeared after 2008. By contrast, employment rates for the third cohort (arriving in 2008-11) remained almost entirely stagnant. Individual characteristics did, however, appear to influence immigrants' starting position in the labor market and their vulnerability to unemployment after the onset of the recession.

The data show that having more than a high school diploma, for example, seems to have insulated immigrants somewhat from falling employment after 2008. But prior to the onset of the recession, employment outcomes for lower-educated immigrants and those with postsecondary education were quite similar.

Generally, immigrants appear to have experienced the same basic pattern of employment . . . regardless of education, age at arrival, gender, or other individual characteristics.

Gender also has an impact. Across cohorts, men entered the labor market with higher employment rates, although women had larger gains over time. Women also appeared to maintain employment better than men during the recession. Despite an almost 20 percentage point advantage over female immigrants in 2007, employment among immigrant men declined to almost equal that of immigrant women in the first two cohorts by 2010.

There are also clearly different employment patterns among immigrants by country of origin. Mobile EU-15 citizens, for example, maintained a very stable employment rate across cohorts and throughout the observed period. Immigrants and mobile EU citizens from other European countries, however, initially showed a strong trend of employment assimilation, but then saw their employment rates fall after the onset of the recession. Latin Americans experienced a similar employment pattern as immigrants from the rest of Europe, while Africans, who consistently had the lowest employment rates, saw a sharper decline in their employment across the first two cohorts.

There are also clearly different employment patterns among immigrants by country of origin.

Year

1)

Cohort Arriving 2000-03 Cohort Arriving 2004-07 Cohort Arriving 2008-11 EU-15 Latin America Share of Latin American Immigrants Share of EU-15 Immigrants Who Are Employed (%) Who Are Employed (%) Year Year Rest of Europe **Africa** Share of Rest of Europe Immigrants Share of African Immigrants Who Are Employed (%) Who Are Employed (%) 

Figure 4. Immigrant Employment Trends in Spain by Country of Origin, 2000-11

Notes: "Rest of Europe" includes both non-European Union and EU countries (excluding the EU-15). Latin America includes South America, Central America, and the Caribbean.

Source: Produced by the authors using LFS microdata.

## III. Immigrants' Upward Mobility

Year

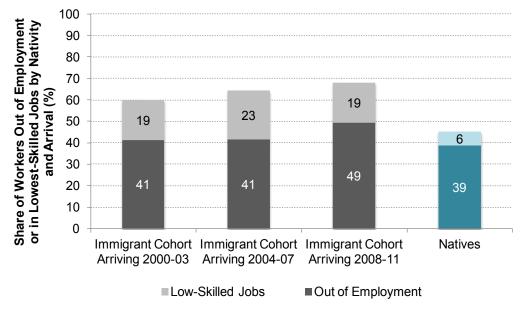
Securing employment is, of course, not the sole measure of successful integration into the labor market. Immigrants who find work but become stuck in low-paid, insecure jobs remain at risk of marginalization and exclusion. It is therefore also important to ask whether immigrants are able to make their way into more secure, higher-skilled jobs after several years in the labor market.

This section first analyzes the proportion of migrants in vulnerable positions, such as those out of employment (the unemployed, as well as those who are out of the labor force) and those in the lowest-skilled jobs. Second, the section studies how the proportion of immigrants who are either not working or are working in jobs requiring different types of skills (low, medium, and high) varies with years since



arrival in Spain. Finally, the section considers the impact of immigrants' individual characteristics on their occupational trajectories, and evaluates the extent to which the pathways out of low-skilled work for immigrants hold up for those who lack high-level educational qualifications.

Figure 5. Share of Working-Age Immigrants and Natives in Spain Out of Employment or in Lowest-Skilled Jobs, 2010-11



Notes: Lowest-skilled jobs are defined as International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO) code 9: Elementary Occupations. "Elementary occupations consist of simple and routine tasks which mainly require the use of hand-held tools and often some physical effort." See International Labour Organization (ILO), "Major Group 9: Elementary Occupations," September 18, 2004, <a href="https://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/stat/isco/isco88/9.htm">www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/stat/isco/isco88/9.htm</a>. Out of employment includes both unemployment and being out of the labor market.

Source: Produced by the authors using LFS microdata.

Figure 5 plots the average proportion of immigrants who are out of employment or in the lowest-skilled jobs over the 2010-11 period. Forty-one percent of immigrants in the first two cohorts were out of employment during this period, and the proportion rose to 49 percent of those in the most recent cohort. In comparison, over the same period, 39 percent of natives were out of employment.

In addition, between 19 percent and 23 percent of immigrants from these three cohorts were employed in low-skilled jobs, highlighting the precarious nature of their economic situation. Concerns about low-skilled jobs in Spain include that they tend to be poorer-quality in terms of contract terms and working conditions. This concentration of immigrants in low-skilled jobs is higher than that observed among natives, among whom only 6 percent are engaged in low-skilled work, even though education levels of immigrants and natives were roughly similar across cohorts (see Appendix Table A-1). Altogether, close to 70 percent of migrants from the 2008-11 cohort were either out of employment or employed in low-skilled jobs during the 2010-11 period. While this share may decrease with time, it will likely remain significant, as between 60 percent and 64 percent of immigrants from the 2000-03 and the 2004-07 cohorts, respectively, were still either out of employment or in low-skilled work during the 2010-11 period. While low-skilled work is an essential part of the economy, a lack of upward mobility from low-skilled work to more stable forms of employment implies an overall precarious situation even for employed migrants, and one that persists over time.

<sup>12</sup> Lowest-skilled jobs are defined as International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO) code 9: Elementary Occupations. "Elementary occupations consist of simple and routine tasks which mainly require the use of handheld tools and often some physical effort." See International Labour Organization (ILO), "Major Group 9: Elementary Occupations," September 18, 2004, <a href="https://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/stat/isco/isco88/9.htm">www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/stat/isco/isco88/9.htm</a>.

<sup>13</sup> Other researchers have also highlighted the predominance of overeducation among immigrants in Spain; see Fernandez and Ortega, "Labor Market Assimilation of Immigrants in Spain;" and Esteban Sanromà, Raúl Ramos, and Hipólito Simó, "Immigrant Wages in the Spanish Labor Market: Does the Origin of Human Capital Matter?" (IZA Discussion Paper No. 4157, Bonn, Germany, April 2009), <a href="https://ftp.iza.org/dp4157.pdf">https://ftp.iza.org/dp4157.pdf</a>.

### J)

#### A. Changes in Employment Among Immigrants

The data presented above provide a cross-sectional look at the labor market position of each cohort, but immigrants' employment and occupational status are likely to change with time spent in Spain.

60 Immigrants in the 2000-03 Cohort (%) **Employment Characteristics for** Out of 50 **Employment** ow-Skilled 40 Jobs Medium-30 Skilled Jobs High-Skilled Jobs 10 0 0 2 3 5 6 8 9 10 11 Years After Arrival

Figure 6. Employment Characteristics of Immigrants in the 2000-03 Cohort, 2000-11

Notes: Lowest-skilled jobs are defined as ISCO code 9. Out of employment includes both unemployment and out of the labor market.

Source: Produced by the authors from LFS microdata.

Figure 6 shows that at arrival, as many as 40 percent of immigrants who came to Spain from 2000 to 2003 were not employed. However, they quickly move into low- and medium-skilled jobs within three to five years after arrival.

Nonetheless, Figure 6 reveals a striking change in this trend in the fifth year after arrival, which is calculated as the year 2008 for the entire 2000 to 2003 cohort. As the recession hit the Spanish economy in 2008, the share of out-of-employment immigrants more than doubled, and the proportion of immigrants working in medium-skilled jobs fell by over 10 percent. Similarly, the proportion of immigrants in low-skilled jobs—which had begun to decline as migrants found higher-skilled jobs that better matched their human-capital endowment—continued to fall, reflecting that, with the worsening of the economy, immigrant workers were losing low-skill jobs. In contrast, the share of migrants in high-skilled jobs remained unaffected by the economic conditions. 15

#### B. Changes in Employment Among Low-Skilled Immigrants

How robust are the pathways out of low-skilled work for immigrants who lack education past the secondary level (i.e. a high school degree or the equivalent)? To explore this, Figure 7 shows the same relationship as Figure 6, but calculating percentages of migrants who are out of employment or in low-skilled work out of *only* those migrants who have at most a secondary degree.

<sup>14</sup> Although the share of immigrants who were out of employment increased substantially, outward migration of unemployed foreign-born workers (whether back to their countries of origin or on to another destination) likely kept this share lower than it may otherwise have been.

<sup>15</sup> Appendix Figures A-1 and A-2 show the results for the other two cohorts. The patterns closely follow those observed for the 2000-03 cohort.



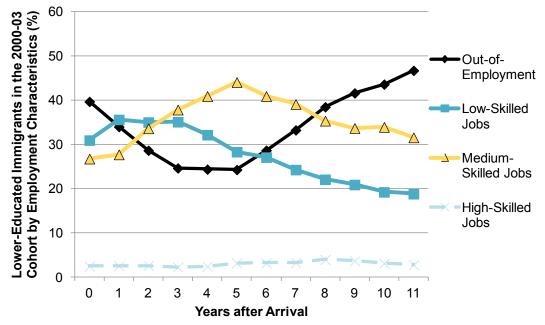


Figure 7. Lower-Educated Immigrants in the 2000-03 Cohort by Employment Characteristics, 2000-11

Notes: Lower education is defined as a secondary diploma or less. Lowest-skilled jobs are defined as ISCO code 9. Out of employment includes both unemployment and out of the labor market.

Source: Produced by the authors based on LFS microdata.

As migrants with education at the level of a secondary degree or lower comprised about 85 percent of all migrants, it is not surprising that the trends for low-skilled immigrants were extremely similar to those for immigrants as a whole. And as with immigrants overall, there was a clear increase in the share of the workforce employed in middle-skilled jobs up until 2008. Thus, we can conclude that assimilation into medium-skilled jobs among low-skilled migrant workers occurred in Spain.<sup>16</sup>

#### C. The Influence of Individual Characteristics on Employment

Individual characteristics, such as education level and country of origin, clearly affect the ability of different immigrant groups to enter employment or exit the lowest-skilled jobs.

The Labor Force Survey data show that immigrants with more than a secondary-level education were less likely to be out of employment and less likely to work in low-skilled jobs than those with lower levels of education. However, these benefits of higher education decreased for later cohorts—likely a result of the recession—and immigrants with more than a high school degree remained more vulnerable than similarly educated natives to being out of employment or in low-skilled work. While having more than a high school diploma nearly eliminated low-skilled employment for natives (reducing their share in low-skilled jobs to just under 2 percent), the share of more educated immigrants in low-skilled work was quite large—between 10 percent and 15 percent—for all three cohorts.

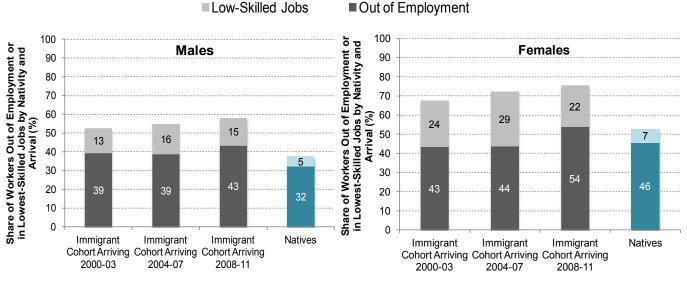
Employment outcomes also varied considerably by gender (see Figure 8). Female immigrants were more likely to be out of employment or in low-skilled work than immigrant men. And relative to natives, immigrant women were at a similar risk of being out of employment, but were much more likely to find themselves in low-skilled work—despite having educational profiles very similar to those of the native workforce. For example, during the 2010-11 period, 24 percent of female immigrants who arrived between

<sup>16</sup> This finding is similar to that of Núria Rodríguez-Planas, "Wage and Occupational Assimilation by Skill Level: Migration Policy Lessons from Spain," *IZA Journal of European Labor Studies* 1, no. 8 (2012), <a href="www.izajoels.com/content/1/1/8">www.izajoels.com/content/1/1/8</a>.



2000 and 2003 were employed in low-skilled jobs, as compared to 13 percent of immigrant men in the same cohort. Among natives, by contrast, the gap between women and men in low-skilled employment was only 2 percentage points.<sup>17</sup>

Figure 8. Share of Workers Out of Employment or in Lowest-Skilled Jobs by Nativity, Recency of Arrival, and Gender, 2010-11



Source: Produced by the authors based on LFS microdata.

The share of immigrants in low-skilled work or out of employment varies most by country of origin (see Figure 9). Workers from EU-15 countries, for example, had particularly small shares in low-skilled jobs, but were overrepresented in the out-of-employment category relative to both natives and immigrants from other countries of origin—with the exception of those from Africa, who had the highest share out of employment.

By contrast, both Latin American and other European workers had much lower rates of being out of employment (with the exception of the last cohort), but were overrepresented in unskilled work. This could indicate a greater willingness among these two groups to escape unemployment by entering the lowest-skilled jobs than is the case for EU-15 workers.

It is worth noting that, regardless of education level, gender, or country of origin, immigrants in the third cohort were more likely to be out of employment than either of the two preceding cohorts—almost certainly a result of entering Spain after the beginning of the recession. Interestingly, EU-15 workers were the only exception to this trend, as they maintained nearly the same levels of representation in low-skilled work across all three cohorts.

The share of immigrants in low-skilled work or out of employment varies most by country of origin.

<sup>17</sup> Based on authors' analysis of Spanish LFS microdata.

Low-Skilled Jobs Out of Employment **Rest of Europe** EU-15 100 100 Share of Workers Out of Employment or in Lowest-Skilled Jobs by Nativity and Arrival (%) loyment or in and Arrival (%) 90 90 **Employment or** 80 80 70 Nativity 25 60 60 25 Share of Workers Out of Lowest-Skilled Jobs by Nat 50 19 6 40 40 30 30 50 47 45 44 20 39 20 10 10 0 0 Natives **Immigrant Immigrant Immigrant** Natives **Immigrant** Immigrant Immigrant Cohort Arriving Cohort Arriving Cohort Arriving ohort Arriving Cohort Arriving Cohort Arriving 2000-03 2004-07 2008-11 2000-03 2004-07 2008-11 Latin America **Africa** 100 100 Out of Employment or in by Nativity and Arrival (%) Share of Workers Out of Employment or in Lowest-Skilled Jobs by Nativity and Arrival (%) 90 90 14 80 80 22 70 70 18 60 60 21 50 50 21 26 6 Share of Workers ( Lowest-Skilled Jobs 6 40 40 64 30 30 58 20 20 39 37 34 10 10 0 **Immigrant** Natives **Immigrant Immigrant Immigrant** Immigrant Immigrant Natives Cohort Arriving Cohort Arriving Cohort Arriving Cohort Arriving Cohort Arriving Cohort Arriving 2000-03 2004-07 2008-11 2000-03 2004-07 2008-11

Figure 9. Share of Workers Out of Employment or in Lowest-Skilled Jobs, by Nativity, Recency of Arrival, and Country of Origin, 2010-11

Source: Produced by the authors based on LFS microdata.

#### D. Employment and Occupational Paths of Low-Skilled Immigrants by Country of Origin

The Spanish LFS data show that the country of origin of immigrants also affects their changes in employment over time. Figure 10 analyzes how the share of the first cohort out of employment or in jobs of different skill levels changed over time by country of origin. Except for mobile EU-15 citizens, new arrivals soon moved from out of employment first into low-skilled jobs, and then into medium-skilled jobs within three to five years after arrival. The length of time it took to complete this move varied by country of origin. While non-EU-15 Europeans quickly transitioned from nonemployment to medium-skilled jobs, Latin Americans and Africans took longer. After 2008, this pattern of upward movement in employment changed considerably, as immigrants in low- and medium-skilled jobs increasingly exited employment. By contrast, EU-15 workers—who had the lowest rates of low-skilled jobs—did not follow any of these patterns.

1)

Out-of-Employment ——Low-Skilled Jobs ——Medium-Skilled Jobs → High-Skilled Jobs **EU-15 Rest of Europe** Immigrants in the 2000-03 Cohort by mmigrants in the 2000-03 Cohort by **Employment Characteristics (%) Employment Characteristics (%)** 10 11 10 11 Years after Arrival Years after Arrival **Latin America Africa** Immigrants in the 2000-03 Cohort by **Employment Characteristics (%)** Immigrants in the 2000-03 Cohort by Employment Characteristics (%) 10 11 Years after Arrival Years after Arrival

Figure 10. Employment Characteristics of Immigrants in the 2000-03 Cohort, by Country of Origin, 2010-11

Notes: Lowest-skilled jobs are defined as ISCO code 9. Out of employment includes both unemployment and being out of the labor market.

Source: Produced by the authors based on LFS microdata.

## IV. Sectors in Which Immigrants Work

While immigrants in Spain may have had little difficulty entering employment prior to the recession, many found work in sectors with a high degree of insecurity or little room for upward progression. Considering the sectors in which immigrant workers were concentrated will help shed light on the types of employment that offer the best chances of movement into more secure, higher-skilled jobs for immigrants.

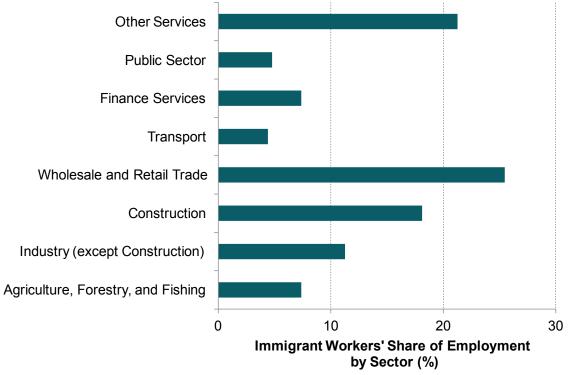


Figure 11. Immigrant Workers' Share of Employment by Sector, 2010-11

Source: Produced by the authors based on LFS microdata.

Figure 11 shows the proportion of jobs in each sector that were filled by immigrant workers on average in 2010-11. While immigrants represented less than 10 percent of workers in most sectors and as little as 2 percent in the public sector, they represented 21 percent in "other services," which include domestic services. Three other sectors worth mentioning are construction; agriculture, forestry, and fishing; and wholesale and retail trade, in which immigrants represented approximately 9 percent of the workforce.

These findings are consistent with previous studies that have found high levels of segregation of immigrant workers in the construction, food preparation and serving, and domestic services sectors. The high proportion of immigrants in these sectors could be explained by the growth of the construction, tourism, and personal service industries in Spain during this period. Poor government regulation of immigration may also account for these numbers, because it enabled free entrance of immigrants as tourists. 19

The LFS data also reveal that immigrant workers were concentrated in wholesale and retail trade (28 percent of immigrants were employed in this sector), other services (22 percent), construction (12 percent), and industry (10 percent). For the native-born workforce, wholesale and retail trade was also a significant sector (22 percent were employed here), but native workers were more represented than immigrants in the public sector (26 percent), industry (excluding construction; 15 percent) and financial services (12 percent).

Many of the sectors in which immigrants were concentrated have particularly high shares of unskilled jobs. The other services sector presented the highest share of unskilled jobs (45 percent), followed by agriculture, foresting, and fishing (32 percent); construction (15 percent); and wholesale and retail (11 percent). In the other services sector, for example, almost 40 percent of natives and over 70 percent of immigrant workers were employed in low-skilled work. In construction, 15 percent of natives and 30 percent of immigrants

<sup>18</sup> See Sanromá, Ramos, and Simó, "Immigrant Wages in the Spanish Labor Market: Does the Origin of Human Capital Matter?" and Libertad González and Francesc Ortega, "How Do Very Open Economies Absorb Large Immigration Flows? Evidence from Spanish Regions," *Labour Economics* 18 (2011): 57-70, <a href="www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0927537110000758">www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0927537110000758</a>.

<sup>19</sup> Rodríguez-Planas, "Wage and Occupational Assimilation by Skill Level: Migration Policy Lessons from Spain."



had low-skilled jobs, while 11 percent of natives and just 3 percent of immigrant workers held high-skilled positions.<sup>20</sup>

Not only did sectors with a high concentration of immigrants have larger shares of lowest-skilled jobs, they also tended to offer more poor-quality terms of employment than other sectors. For example, these sectors had a lower proportion of permanent contracts. The construction sector, where immigrants were particularly overrepresented, had the second-lowest share of permanent contracts of any sector.<sup>21</sup>

The distinction between full-time and part-time work is also particularly salient to the quality of employment conditions in Spain. Traditionally, part-time jobs have been second-best because of the high social security costs associated with this type of work. Previously, part-time work was only legal for certain types of workers considered at risk of unemployment and social exclusion. A 1984 reform sought to make part-time work more acceptable by eliminating hiring restrictions and making it legal (for the first time) for workers to move from full-time to part-time contracts. But these reform efforts were met with little success, as employers still preferred hiring workers under full-time, fixed-term contracts. As a consequence, part-time work remains highly involuntary—according to 2012 EU Labor Force Survey data, as many as one-fourth of part-time workers in Spain would prefer to work full-time if they could find such a job. 23

Part-time work is not only less frequent in Spain than in the neighboring European countries (with only 15 percent versus 20 percent of the workforce working part-time according to the 2012 EU LFS), but it is also less stable. Moreover, just as in the case of fixed-term contracts, there is significant evidence that those employed in part-time jobs in Spain are in secondary employment, as these workers are more likely to be working under a temporary contract than a permanent one.

# The distinction between full-time and part-time work is . . . particularly salient to the quality of employment conditions in Spain.

Part-time workers tend to be concentrated among certain industries; especially services such as retail sales, janitorial, real estate, restaurants, education, and other social and personal services; and in low-skilled occupations, such as nonqualified occupations or nonprofessional white-collar jobs.<sup>25</sup> Part-time work is

See Appendix Table A-2 for a full mapping of job characteristics of immigrants and natives by sector. See also Samuel Bentolila, Juan J. Dolado, Wolfgang Franz, and Christopher Pissarides, "Labor Flexibility and Wages: Lessons from Spain," *Economic Policy* 9, no. 18 (1994): 53-99; Olivier Blanchard and Augustin Landier, "The Perverse Effects of Partial Labor Market Reform: Fixed Duration Contracts in France" (NBER Working Paper 8219, National Bureau of Economic Research, Cambridge, MA, 2002), <a href="https://www.nber.org/papers/w8219.pdf">www.nber.org/papers/w8219.pdf</a>; Juan J. Dolado, Marcel Jansen, and Juan F. Jimeno, "A Positive Analysis of Targeted Employment Protection Legislation," *The B.E. Journal of Macroeconomics* 7, no. 1 (2007): 1-30.

<sup>21</sup> Other researchers have also found evidence that the incidence of temporary contracts is much higher for newly arrived immigrants than for comparable natives. See Fernandez and Ortega, "Labor Market Assimilation of Immigrants in Spain."

<sup>22</sup> As shown by Daniel Fernández-Kranz and Núria Rodríguez-Planas, "The Part-Time Penalty in a Segmented Labor Market," *Labour Economics* 18, no. 5 (2011): 591-606.

<sup>23</sup> This information is published by Eurostat 2013, based on the 2012 results of the European Labor Force Survey. See Eurostat, "Labour Market (including the Labor Force Survey)," updated August 23, 2012, <a href="http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/labour\_market/introduction">http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/labour\_market/introduction</a>.

<sup>24</sup> Hielke Buddelmeyer, Gilles Mourre, and Melanie Ward-Warmedinger, "Part-Time Work in EU Countries. Labor Market Mobility, Entry and Exit" (working paper no. 460, European Central Bank, Frankfurt am Main, Germany, 2005), <a href="https://www.ecb.europa.eu/pub/pdf/scpwps/ecbwp460.pdf">www.ecb.europa.eu/pub/pdf/scpwps/ecbwp460.pdf</a>; Rafael Muñoz de Bustillo Llorente, Enrique Fernández Macías, and José Ignacio Antón Pérez, El Trabajo a Tiempo Parcial en España en el Contexto de la Unión Europea (Madrid: Ministerio de Trabajo e Inmigración, 2008), <a href="https://www.empleo.gob.es/es/publica/pub electronicas/destacadas/revista/numeros/81/196.pdf">www.empleo.gob.es/es/publica/pub electronicas/destacadas/revista/numeros/81/196.pdf</a>; Fernández-Kranz and Rodríguez-Planas, "The Part-Time Penalty in a Segmented Labor Market."

<sup>25</sup> Muñoz de Bustillo Llorente, Fernández Macías, and Antón Pérez, El Trabajo a Tiempo Parcial en España en el Contexto de la Unión Europea; Fernández-Kranz and Rodríguez-Planas, "The Part-Time Penalty in a Segmented Labor Market."



more prevalent in finance services, other services, and trade sectors, of which both other services and trade have an above-average concentration of immigrants.

On average, job tenure is lowest in construction, trade, finance services, and other services, which are also sectors with a high concentration of migrants (with the exception of finance services). In addition, the proportion of immigrants employed in jobs with less-desirable working conditions is higher than that of native workers in each sector. For instance, the share of workers under a fixed-term contract in construction is 9 percentage points higher among immigrants than natives, and the share of workers in part-time work in trade is 7 percentage points higher for immigrants than natives on average over the 2000-11 period. Overall then, the sectors under discussion—including services, construction, and trade—contain the most precarious types of employment for immigrant workers.

# While immigrants were often able to move up into middle-skilled jobs, the jobs they entered were not necessarily secure or high-quality.

To a certain extent, the high share of immigrants in sectors in which there is poor-quality employment negates the positive findings regarding immigrants' movement into middle-skilled jobs. The high share of immigrants who remain employed in temporary or part-time work suggests that upward mobility may have been possible in part because of the existence of a large number of secondary labor market jobs in Spain (which are more flexible than those in the primary labor market). Therefore, while immigrants were often able to move up into middle-skilled jobs, the jobs they entered were not necessarily secure or high-quality, leaving many immigrant workers in vulnerable positions when the recession hit.

#### A. Movement Between Sectors

Figure 12 shows how the share of foreign-born workers (2000-03 cohort) employed in certain sectors with a greater share of immigrants changes with time spent in Spain. In contrast to the construction sector, the share of immigrants in the wholesale and retail trade, industry, and the other services sectors remained relatively flat. In contrast, there was a downward trend in the share of immigrants in the construction sector, suggesting that in this sector immigrants may be more able to progress into more skilled jobs over time. While this trend started well before 2008, it is important to note that after the crisis it may be due to a preference by employers to let immigrants go before laying off natives.

Figure 13 shows how the share of the immigrant workforce from the first cohort participating in each sector has changed over time. It is interesting to note that there is an overall positive trend in transport, public sectors, and wholesale and retail trade. In addition, prior to the recession in 2008, immigrants flowed from agriculture and other sectors to construction. However, this pattern came to a halt in 2008 when it became clear that construction had been hit by the recession. Thereafter, the share of immigrants in agriculture stabilized, suggesting that immigrants fled from construction to agriculture (in addition to the other sectors) or chose to leave Spain altogether.

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Share of 2000-03 Immigrant Cohort in Lowest-Skilled Jobs by Sector (%) 80 70 Wholesale and Retail Trade 60 Construction 50 Other 40 Services Industry 30 (except Construction) 20 10 0 0 2 3 5 7 9 10 11 1 4 6 8 Years after Arrival

Figure 12. Share of 2000-03 Immigrant Cohort in Lowest-Skilled Jobs, by Sectors, 2000-11

Notes: Lowest-skilled jobs are de ined as ISCO code 9. Source: Produced by the authors based on LFS microdata.

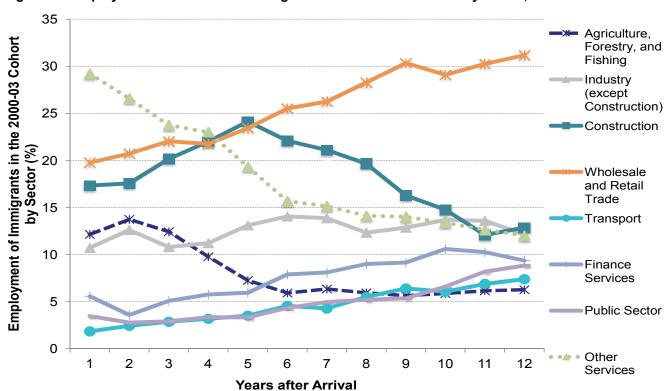


Figure 13. Employment Distribution of Immigrants in the 2000-03 Cohort by Sector, 2010-11

Source: Produced by the authors based on LFS microdata.



#### B. Influence of Individual Characteristics on Sector of Employment

Segregation into sectors with less-desirable characteristics was more intense for some immigrant groups than others. Less-educated immigrant workers tended to be more represented in sectors with poor job characteristics (such as construction and other services) than more- educated immigrants. Interestingly though, even immigrants with higher levels of education remained concentrated in these sectors. This suggests that higher levels of education may have a lower payoff for immigrants in terms of occupational mobility than they do for natives.<sup>26</sup>

Immigrant women were also more likely than men to be employed in poorer sectors. Almost 40 percent of immigrant women were employed in the other services sector, which had a larger share of low-skilled jobs than any other sector.

Men, by contrast, were more likely to be employed in the construction sector. As the construction sector was particularly hard hit by the economic crisis, the high proportion of immigrant men employed in construction explains to some extent why immigrant men saw a larger drop in employment after 2008 than women (see Figure 14).

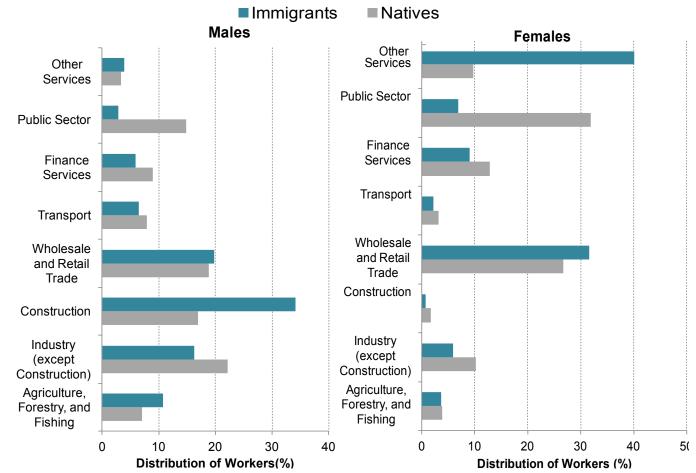


Figure 14. Distribution of Workers by Nativity, Sector, and Gender (%), 2010-11

Source: Produced by the authors based on Spanish Labor Force Survey microdata.

The lower returns on education observed for highly educated immigrants are likely due to a lack of transferability of credentials or degrees earned in immigrants' home countries to the Spanish labor market. However, it is not possible to determine in the data analyzed here whether education was obtained in Spain or in the country of origin.



Finally, immigrants' distribution among the sectors differed according to country of origin. While EU-15 workers were employed in approximately the same sectors as natives—with the exception that they were underrepresented in the public sector—Latin American, other European, and African workers were all highly overrepresented in other services, construction, and agriculture—sectors with some of the highest shares of low-skilled jobs.

#### V. Conclusions

During most of the last decade, newly arrived immigrants in Spain had no trouble finding jobs and quickly moved from low-skilled to medium-skilled work. The booming economy and excess demand for low-skilled workers in the construction, wholesale and retail trade, and other services sectors enabled easy integration into the labor market for most immigrants.

Immigrants who arrived prior to 2008 seemed able to move quickly into employment and then from low-skilled to medium-skilled jobs within the first three to five years after arrival. But for many, their economic situation in Spain has remained precarious. On average, one-quarter of immigrants who arrived prior to the recession worked in low-skilled jobs in 2010-11 (compared to only 8 percent among natives), and the situation was worst for women and for migrants from Africa. Most immigrant workers had tended to be concentrated in construction; wholesale and retail trade; agriculture, farming, and fishing; and other services—all of which had a larger proportion of fixed-term contracts and part-time jobs. In addition, these sectors also had a prevalence of low-skilled work and, on average, shorter job tenures.

# The recession has had a clear, negative impact on immigrant patterns of employment in Spain.

Given their precarious situation in the labor market and overrepresentation in sectors that were particularly hard hit during the economic crisis, the recession has had a clear, negative impact on immigrant patterns of employment in Spain. As the economy shed low- and medium-skilled jobs, many immigrant workers moved back into unemployment or exited the labor market entirely. Only those in high-skilled positions appeared to weather the crisis with some success. The first immigrant cohort to arrive after the beginning of the recession had less luck. This group's greater difficulty in entering the labor market is likely due to both the decreased demand for low-skilled workers caused by the recession and an increase in the share of non-native Spanish speakers and women among the more recent arrivals.

The long-term implications of the recession for immigrant workers in Spain remain to be seen. In the future, Spain will likely need immigrants to cover labor shortages because of its aging population and the emigration of native-born workers to other countries. As Spain works its way towards economic recovery, policymakers should consider the implications of these findings for integrating future immigrant workers. During boom times, the flexibility of certain sectors of the Spanish labor market appears to offer immigrant workers plenty of opportunities to move up into higher-skilled positions. But the findings also suggest that for many workers finding middle-skilled work alone isn't enough; workers must also navigate the transition from the secondary to the primary labor market in order to find their way into more stable employment. Future integration policies should take this into account.



## **Appendices**

Table A-1. Individual Characteristics of Immigrants and Natives

	Immigrant Cohort 2000-03	Immigrant Cohort 2004-07	Immigrant Cohort 2008-11	Natives	
Age	35.006	33.416	32.808	40.108	
	(9.707)	(10.125)	(10.525)	(12.876)	
Female	0.494	0.534	0.562	0.495	
	(0.500)	(0.499)	(0.496)	(0.500)	
Married	0.562	0.506	0.495	0.586	
	(0.496)	(0.500)	(0.500)	(0.492)	
Less than a Secondary Education	0.251	0.238	0.246	0.262	
	(0.434)	(0.426)	(0.431)	(0.440)	
Completed Secondary Education	0.600	0.609	0.543	0.555	
	(0.490)	(0.488)	(0.498)	(0.497)	
Tertiary Educated	0.150	0.152	0.211	0.184	
	(0.357)	(0.359)	(0.408)	(0.387)	
EU-15	0.064	0.074	0.093	n/a	
	(0.244)	(0.262)	(0.290)		
Rest of Europe	0.214	0.277	0.209	n/a	
	(0.410)	(0.448)	(0.407)		
Latin America	0.552	0.471	0.480	n/a	
	(0.497)	(0.499)	(0.500)		
Africa	0.144	0.148	0.169	n/a	
	(0.351)	(0.355)	(0.375)		
Other Continents	0.027	0.030	0.049	n/a	
	(0.162)	(0.171)	(0.216)		

*Note:* Means and Standard Deviations (in parentheses) are for the period 2000-11. *Source:* Produced by the authors using the Spanish Labor Force Survey (LFS) microdata.

1)

60 Immigrants in the 2004-07 Cohort (%) **Employment Characteristics for** 50 Out of **Employment** Low-Skilled 40 Jobs Medium-Skilled 30 Jobs High-Skilled 20 Jobs 10 0 3 0 2 6 9 11 8 10 **Years After Arrival** 

Figure A-1. Employment Characteristics for Immigrants in the 2004-07 Cohort, 2004-11

Notes: Lowest-skilled jobs defined as ISCO code 9. Out of employment includes both unemployment and out of the labor market.

Source: Produced by the authors based on LFS microdata.

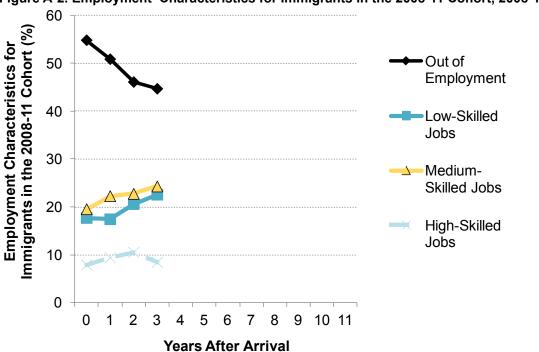


Figure A-2. Employment Characteristics for Immigrants in the 2008-11 Cohort, 2008-11

Notes: Lowest-skilled jobs defined as ISCO code 9. Out of employment includes both unemployment and out of the labor market.

Source: Produced by the authors based on LFS microdata.



Table A-2. Job Characteristics of Immigrants and Natives by Sector (%), 2010-11

		Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishing	Industry (except Constructtion)	Construction	Trade	Transport	Finance Services	Public Sector	Other Services
Share with	Natives	18	69	35	49	61	63	75	53
Permanent Contracts	Immigrants	23	52	26	46	53	50	44	52
Share with	Natives	94	97	99	91	96	89	92	71
Full-Time Jobs	Immigrants	92	96	97	84	92	76	75	63
Tenure	Natives	153.3	128.5	80.5	101.8	126.7	100.8	145.3	89.4
(in Months)	Immigrants	20.3	30.4	22.4	25.4	30.8	29.9	27.2	28
Share in	Natives	24	9	15	10	7	18	7	39
Low-Skilled Jobs	Immigrants	79	17	30	19	13	45	12	74
Share in	Natives	70	70	74	60	73	30	33	39
Medium-Skilled Jobs	Immigrants	20	73	67	72	63	26	37	22
Share in	Natives	5	21	11	30	20	52	59	23
High-Skilled Jobs	Immigrants	1	10	3	9	24	29	51	4

 $\label{eq:Source:Produced} \textit{Source:} \ \textit{Produced by the authors using LFS microdata}.$ 



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