CIVIC STRATIFICATION, GENDER, AND FAMILY MIGRATION POLICIES: AN EXPLORATORY INVESTIGATION OF MIGRANTS INVOLVED IN FAMILY MIGRATION IN SPAIN

by Sandra Gil Araujo

January 2009

WP9: Creating differential outcomes: Analysing the impact of family migration policies
About the project

Family related migration has been the dominant legal mode of entry in Europe for the past decades, but has become increasingly contested in recent years. Granting migrants the right to family union traditionally has been considered as promoting the integration of migrants into receiving societies, however, in current debates over ethnic closure of migrant communities and over the alleged “failure” of integration, the “migrant family” is increasingly seen as an obstacle to integration - as a site characterised by patriarchal relationships and illiberal practices and traditions such as arranged and forced marriages. As a result, family related modes of entry have been increasingly subject to restrictions, while the existing conditionality has been tightened up.

The research project analysed family migration policies in nine European countries from two angles. First, the project analysed policies and policy-making in regard to family related migration in a “top-down” perspective through the analysis of legislation, public debates, as well as through expert interviews. Secondly, the project analyses family migration policies from a “bottom-up” perspective, by investigating the impact of conditions and restrictions on migrants and their families and the responses and strategies migrants adopt to cope with these and to organise their family lives.

This project was financed under the programme New Orientations for Democracy in Europe (NODE, www.node-research.at) which is committed to exploring the future democratic development of Europe and its effects on citizens as well as politics. Within the perspective of the NODE-Research, the project on Civic Stratification, Gender and Family Migration Policy in Europe aimed at:

- Providing an empirically grounded analysis and evaluation of family migration policies in a broad range of immigration countries in Europe, including Eastern Europe;
- Investigating how family migration policies create civic stratification;
- Providing empirical evidence for the consequences of stratified rights for migrants immigrating for family related reasons;
- Analysing how migrants challenge and cope with the constraints imposed by family migration policies;
- Analysing the relationship between “civic integration” and social and political integration, and conversely, relationship between civic stratification and social and political exclusion;
- Applying a gender based analysis both to the analysis of family migration policies and the impact of these policies on migrants; and
- Developing basic principles that might help governments to design and implement fairer immigration legislation.
# Table of Contents

1. Introduction ............................................................................................................................................. 3

2. Characteristics of interviewees ............................................................................................................ 4  
   2.1. Characteristics and migration paths of the interviewed migrants .............................................. 5  
   2.2. Interviews to key informants ........................................................................................................... 8

3. Narratives: talking strategies in interviews ............................................................................................ 8

4. Gender, Generation, Legal Status and Employment ............................................................................. 11  
   4.1. Migration of Unaccompanied Minors ......................................................................................... 17

5. Family Life .............................................................................................................................................. 17  
   5.1. Migration networks, remittances and transnational care ............................................................... 18  
   5.2. Family problems linked with migration ....................................................................................... 21  
   5.3. Changing Family Relations .............................................................................................................. 24

6. Discrimination/Privileges ....................................................................................................................... 29

7. Information, Perceptions, and Strategies ............................................................................................... 33
1. **Introduction**

Interviewed women talk always using the first person; their narration is the narration of their own experience, frustrations, conflicts, accomplishments. Men’s narration is an impersonal account, in third person; speaking in the name of others and many times not speaking of their own situation or experience but that of others, or of a “we”, but hardly of an “I”.

One of the most surprising things is the importance of migrations and family reunifications carried out through informal channels. This is a path all interviewees have followed at some point of their own or their relatives’ migration process.

The great majority of our interviewees and their relatives have obtained their documents in some of the numerous regularization processes lead by the Spanish government since 1991.

In some cases, women have been the first migrants precisely because they knew it was easier for them to get a job. Out of 9 interviewed women, 7 work or have worked in domestic and/or care work, by the hour or living in the house where they work.

The different obstacles are overcome through diverse strategies: the most recurrent one is resorting to the informal channels to reunification. These reunifications are usually done in two ways: the entry to Spanish territory as tourists (mainly in the case of those countries that do not need a visa for up to three-month stays) or the channel of recruitment in the countries of origin through the quota system.

One of the constants revealed by all the interviews is the influence of the legislation and the administrative status on the ways that are chosen for family migration. There are also clear signs of the impact that the changes in the regulations have on the ways of arranging family migration.

Although in the report on family migration policies in Spain (Gil Araujo 2009) the legislation or the problem of unaccompanied migrant minors was not analysed, we consider that, in Spain’s case, it is very important to point out some details of this form of migration, which can also be seen as a project of family migration.

There seems to be a connection between the time of stay in the country of destination and the activation of reunification processes (through formal or informal channels) for relatives that have remained in the country of origin. But in this connection we find important differences amongst our interviewees. Without underestimating the role that state policies have on the forms of family organization, we suggest that these differences can be linked to gender and generation relations, the division of productive and reproductive labour and the hegemonic conceptions of family, mother/fatherhood and the upbringing of children in the countries of origin. We think that this could be an interesting field for futures researches.

Migrations and family appear to be strongly intertwined in various ways, but the most common ones are the following three: 1) the members of the family (nuclear or extended) in the migration networks and chains; 2) the well-being of the family as a responsibility of the migrant and the sending of remittances, and 3) the role the family plays in looking after the parents or sons/daughters that stay in the country of origin.

Gender unbalances exist in the responsibility over the family’s well-being and the care of parents and children, both in the country of origin and destination.

Women are usually the first ones to migrate and the initiators of the family reunification process for husbands, sons and daughters. This involves some changes in the traditional distribution of roles between men and women, since husbands are, in this case, the dependent ones. Other transformations in the family dynamics, in the roles assigned to men and women, refer to the context change.
In some interviews, women mention important changes in family relations after migration. They are connected to the distribution of housework, the administration of the money or the decision-taking process. But, based on the stories collected in our interviews, we think that these changes alone do not allow us to talk of a generalized process of migrant women empowerment through migration. This is a matter that would need further and more careful exploring and reflection.

According to the account of two of our interviewed women, migration could be experienced as a liberating process when it operates as a way to escape from a controlling, hostile and violent social environment (family, husband). Marital conflicts existed prior to migration and they were one of the reasons for the trip.

All interviewed women have experienced the separation from their children with great suffering. The feeling does not seem to be the same regarding being remote from their husbands. Many of the conflicts between parents and children are precisely related to them having been absent from their every-day life for a long period. Another problem is the non-acceptance of parent authority due to the long time they spent without living together.

The presence of the children in the country of destination generates other tensions as well due to the lack of family networks, the long working days mothers and fathers have and the precarious housing situation.

The main four types of discrimination we have been able to identify through the interviews with the migrants are the following: denial of the right to family reunification for the facto spouses; discrimination in the access to certain resources, such as housing; lack of recognition for the qualifications and degrees from the country of origin, and different requirements to access citizenship depending on country of origin.

Amongst the interviewees, the most common feeling regarding the processes they have to follow to obtain the residence and work permits or the visas for family reunification is the administrative arbitrariness. Luck or fate seem to define the time it will take to complete a procedure or the type of documentation and rights that are finally obtained.

The different strategies that are displayed to overcome the legal obstacles are perceived as logical responses (and almost natural) to the obstructions posed by the regulations or the officials.

Another limitation mentioned in the access to information is related to the field of rights. Some of the interviewed women feel they have no proper knowledge of what the real rights for immigrant people are.

Explicit reference is made to the disparity between the expectations prior to migration and the reality migrant people are usually confronted with. This distance between what was expected and what is experienced is also reflected on the strong orientation we find in all the accounts towards a better future.

Another point that attracts our attention: the most extended narrative strategy amongst the collected accounts is the construction of the migration experience as something positive. No matter the amount of obstacles our interviewees have had to overcome or the difficult situations they have experienced, in none of the interviews the discourse on the migration experience is a victimising speech. In the great majority of the accounts migrants are presented as active and reflective subjects, who make a positive balance of their bet on what they think is a better life.

2. Characteristics of interviewees

Here we present a summary of the characteristics and living and arrival conditions of the interviewed people. All contacts were made through people of the interviewee’s confidence.
The mediation of an association was only used in the case of the interviewees from Nigeria. The majority of the interviews took place in Madrid and Barcelona. One was made in Almuñecar, a tourist town in the Mediterranean coast of Granada, Andalucía. In general, there were no problems regarding the recording of the interviews, with one exception. Most of the interviews were held in the house of the interviewees or of their close acquaintances, two were held in bars and two in the interviewee’s working place.

2.1. Characteristics and migration paths of the interviewed migrants

**L:** Woman from Ecuador, between 40 and 50 years old, sponsor. At the time of the reunification she had work and a residence permit. In Ecuador she was a teacher. She has a small cleaning company. She regrouped her husband and three sons through informal channels. She first migrated to Brussels, where her sister lived. Her husband travelled three months later. There she worked babysitting the son of an EU officer, who processed her work and residence permits. After a year in Belgium, they moved with her employer to Madrid, where they stayed for three years, and then returned to Ecuador. Her last son was born while they were in Madrid and was sent to Ecuador to be watched by her mother. She had a residence permit, her husband was in an irregular status. Shortly after being back in Ecuador they decide to return to Spain, but this time with the idea of bringing the whole family. She migrated first and this time she headed straight to Barcelona because there she had contacts for a job. She got a job in domestic service, then a house and that is when her husband and her three children travelled as tourists, before the visa requirement for Ecuadorians was imposed in 2003. They have progressively regularized their situation in Spain. Now she has Spanish citizenship while her husband and children are in the process of acquiring it.

**MI:** woman from Bolivia, between 30 and 40 years old, sponsor. Up to this moment, her and her daughters remain undocumented. This migrant had her sister in Spain. She arrived as a tourist in 2006, before the visa requirement was imposed to Bolivians in April 2007. In Bolivia she was a housewife but was separated from her husband. In Barcelona she works in domestic service. She rents a room in the flat of a Bolivian family. Through informal methods she has regrouped her daughters, who have entered as tourists. Both girls go to school.

**M:** man from Pakistan, between 30 and 40 years old, sponsor. He has a work- and residence permit. In 1998, he arrived in Barcelona, where a cousin lived, with a tourist visa. He worked at a restaurant in an irregular status and three years later they got him a work and residence permit. He regrouped his wife and his son by formal methods two years ago. His wife has a residence- but not a work permit. He, his wife and his son live in a rental apartment with his cousin and wife. They have brought two other cousins by getting them labour contracts through the quota system. He is trying to bring one of his brothers through this same channel, but his application for a work permit has been denied four times. A few months ago, he opened a restaurant. The contact was initially to interview his wife but M. did not authorize us to do so and neither did he allow us to record the interview with him so we could only take notes.

**A:** woman from El Salvador, between 50 and 60 years old, sponsored. She has a residence- and work permit. In her country, she had a small business. In 2006 she arrived to Madrid, where one of her daughters, who brought her with a contract
through the quota system, was living. She travelled with her other two daughters, aged 18 and 17. Her husband, from whom she separated after this trip, stayed in El Salvador. One of her sons, who she would like to bring, also stayed there. In Madrid she works looking after an elderly woman. She would like to work with women on violence issues.

**MM**: woman from the Dominican Republic, between 30 and 40 years old, sponsor, Spanish nationality. In her country, she worked in a factory in the free zone. She lived with her parents and her son. She was separated from the father of her child. She arrived in Madrid in 1998 with a contract for domestic service that some relatives who where living in Spain got for her. First she worked as a live-in maid and then she started to work by the hour. After a few years of her living in Madrid, her ex husband arrived and they began to live together, but they have never remarried. He got his papers after marrying a Spanish woman in Dominican Republic. First they lived in a rented room, then they rented an apartment. Two years ago they bought a flat and their son arrived in the end of 2006, regrouped by her as son of a Spanish citizen. A brother, who she brought though the quota system, is also living with them. She has another brother living in Spain but she does not have a good relationship with him. She would also like to bring one of her sisters.

**K**: woman from Bulgaria, between 30 and 40 years old, sponsored. Work- and residence permit. In her country she was working as a cook in restaurants. She and her husband lived with their son and her husband’s parents. The first one to travel was her husband, who had a friend in Barcelona that welcomed him in his house. He was undocumented for a year and a half and finally got his papers in the regularization process of 2001. He works in the construction sector as a buildings worker. She arrived in 2002 as a tourist and managed to regularize her status in the regularization process of 2005, with a family assistance contract. She works by the hour as a domestic worker and has a weekend contract with a restaurant. They rent a house in the outskirts of Barcelona. Her husband regrouped their 14-year-old son three years ago. She has to renew her work and residence permit for the third time, but with Bulgaria’s entry to the EU she will no longer need to go through that process.

**S**: Woman from Morocco, between 40 and 50 years old, sponsored. Long-term permit. In Morocco, she worked on communication and gender issues. She has been living in Madrid since the late 1980s. In 1985, her (ex) husband settled in Madrid with a business. Her and their three children stayed in Tangiers and travelled to Madrid every now and then. In 1988, she decided to move to Madrid with her husband to guarantee their children’s schooling, against her husband’s wishes. In 1991, the visa requirement for Morocco came into force and so they started the process for family reunification. She got the residence-, but not the work permit. During that period, she worked looking after children or elderly people. In 1992, she separated from her husband and decided to go back with her children to live in Tangiers, but she could not stand the social pressure and shortly after moved back to Madrid for good. She now works as a translator, mediator and journalist. She actively participates in migration, Maghreb, gender, violence, communication and association matters.

**C**: man from Argentina, between 20 and 30 years old, sponsored. He arrived at Madrid as a tourist in 2003 and stayed in an irregular status. He has had numerous jobs, mainly in restaurants. The permits he requested on several occasions were denied, including the regularization process of 2005. In February 2007 he married his
Spanish girlfriend, whom he had been living with for two years, in order to get the papers. He made his first trip outside Spain in August this year. He has a marriage visa and is waiting to get his ID (DNI) through the Communitarian Regime of residence.

**Su:** Woman from Colombia, between 40 and 50 years old, sponsored. In her country, she worked as a social worker. She was separated and lived with her two children. She arrived in Barcelona in the early 1990s to live with a Catalan man she had met in Colombia and whom she had fallen in love with. She entered as a tourist but they never got married and she spent the first years in an irregular situation. Her son moved with her and her daughter stayed in Colombia. She also took care of her partner’s son, who was living with them. Finally, she got the papers for her and her children through the 1996 regularization process, as a domestic worker. After separating from her partner in Barcelona, she went through situations of great loneliness and economic precariousness. She is now a Spanish citizen.

**P. y N.:** woman and man from Argentina, between 30 and 40 years old. They have two children, one that came with them and one that was born in Spain. They are not married. In Argentina, she (P.) worked as an artisan and he (N.) was a photographer for an important national newspaper. With the crisis of 2001, his father travelled to a tourist town in the Mediterranean coast, Almuñecar, where a friend was living, and began to work in a restaurant kitchen. Then his wife travelled and later so did one of his daughters. Some years later, our interviewees travelled with their young son. They all entered as tourists and have stayed in an irregular status. With the regularization process of 2005, N. got his work- and residence permit and, with that document, he was able to get the residence permit for his son. P. has just obtained his residence by the way of “social ties” (arraigo social). They are now in the process of requesting Spanish citizenship for their newborn daughter. She works as a housewife and, during the summer season, she makes and sells handcrafts. He works in various things: selling crafts, as a waiter, as a gardener, etc. N.’s sister married a Spanish man, had a son and is now living in Barcelona; his father has obtained his papers very recently and his mother is still undocumented. They live in Almuñecar, but in different rented houses.

**Mx:** man from Nigeria, between 30 and 40 years old, sponsor. He has a work- and residence permit. He first travelled to France, then to Amsterdam - where he spent five years - and then to Madrid, where he has been living since 2004. He has been trying to bring his partner and their 13-year-old son from Nigeria, but it is very difficult because they are not married. They have been apart for eight years. That is why they are planning to get married in their country and then start the process of family reunification. They could hardly get a visa to get married in Spain. He is the director of a newspaper written in English and published in the Netherlands for the African community in Europe.

**H:** woman from Nigeria, between 20 and 30 years old, sponsor. Long-term work- and residence permit. She arrived at Madrid in 1998 as an asylum petitioner, but obtained her papers in the regularization process of 2000. Since then, she worked in domestic service. Three years later, in 2001, she went back to her country to bring her son, who entered with a three-month tourist visa and has so far been here for six years. Her husband stayed in Nigeria finishing his physical education studies and came to Spain through family reunification in August, 2006. Their son was already 10 years old. She now has a permanent contract as a nurse assistant and a five-year work-
and residence permit. Her husband has a residence- but not a work permit. At the moment of our interview, he had just got a job offer.

2.2. Interviews to key informants

- A social mediator of Peruvian origin.

- The president of the African Migrants Association (Asociación de Migrantes Africanos).

- One of the founders of the Dominican Women in Spain Association (Asociación de Mujeres Dominicanas en España).

- A lawyer who specializes on Foreigner Law and works in a pro-migrant NGO.

- A researcher who specializes on unaccompanied migrant minors.

3. Narratives: talking strategies in interviews

We have had more interviews with women than with men, due to which we cannot establish a detailed comparison, but we can nevertheless highlight some suggestive points. First, the
way of accounting: the interviewed women talk always using the first person; their narration is the narration of their own experience, frustrations, conflicts, accomplishments. Men’s narration is an impersonal account, in third person; speaking in the name of others and many times not speaking of their own situation or experience but that of others, or of a “we”, but hardly of an “I”.

**Mx:** ... Because, you know what it is, you are already engaged, you are planning to get married, and then for not fault of yours, you broke up, you look for somebody that would just replace, and then almost everyday you keep wishing, you know “I wish, I wish...” and you keep regretting what may have been. It has a psychological impact on both spouses. **Q:** And I guess also in the relation, because you have been separated for eight years... (...) **Mx:** I can speak for Africans. The emotional bonds of Africans I think is very strong. Because for what we see in the west, in Europe, as love, as affection, what we have back home, is very stronger than that. We define our emotions with other indices, other qualities, not just of because you are beautiful, I see you I like you... No, there are other things, other inherent qualities you see, you value, and those qualities normally don’t change. And then you put them together and so and they make up a component of an ideal person you want, and stays in your head. And you don’t just find somebody else that replaces that (...) so, it’s difficult. ([Mx, man, Nigeria, 30-40 years old]

**Q:** How was it when you saw your child after three years? **H.:** Actually when they first sent me the photo, I was crying. Because the child I love so much. No matter how good the family would look after the child, you can never feel... Even if they are giving everything, you feel always to complain. I was waiting so much, for more that one year for them to... It was during the other political regime, not this one, this one makes things a little bit faster. Three months for one letter, then you have to wait for another three months second letter... It took more than a year, or a year and a half. So it was really hard. And there was no way I could go back, because if I go back, there is no way to come back.” ([H, woman, Nigeria, 20-30 years old]

Interviewing a man and a woman in a couple also allowed us to confirm how the same question gets different, even opposite, answers. What we cannot assure is that the same situation is experienced in such a different way according to the gender, because what is narrated does not always reflect what is lived or how it is lived.

**Q:** And do you think that the whole process of getting the papers has affected your family life, has changed anything in your family life comparing now to what it was like before you came five years ago? **N.:** No, nothing, as for values or as for... no, no. **Q:** Yes, also in the way of relating, regarding who makes the decisions... For example, P. used to work there and now she has been spending more time at home. That could have had an effect on her in some way... ([P. is not in the room]) **N.:** No, we always worked as something that was like an administrative procedure, and the easiest way to complete this procedure is the way we take. We see work as a way to get what you need to do other things.

**Q:** How do you take decisions? Do you talk them over at the moment? **N.:** Yes, each one with a tendency towards their own specialty. I am more the “grafting” type [...] the one to take over organization, right? [...] **Q:** I imagine that the fact that your parents and your sister where here must have helped you to organize your life... **N.:**

---

1 Original: “Yo soy más de currar.”
No. Well, not as something… you know… My first answer is no but my second, finer answer is yes… [laughs] If we polish it a little further, yes, of course. We came because of them […] I started going with him [his father] to see where I could settle and we started to knock on doors. But no, always… there is not a family feeling like that, like a family where everybody is going to fight for the others, just for what is needed and that’s it. Then, each one watches the own thing. [N, man, Argentina, 30-40 years old]

**Q-** Do you think that all this process of getting the papers, as well as the whole change, has had any effect on the relations within the family? (He is not in the room); **P.:** Yes, I think it does have an effect because it affects your mood, right? Then, if it gets to your mood, if you catch a depression… I, during the first year, or for a long time, went also through different maturation processes that are useful in the long run because it is personal experience and you grow… Well! It’s life. But it does, it does have an effect. I spent a long time being almost depressed, really down. With him… we had also drifted apart. Besides, he was working from morning to evening… everything, everything has an effect, of course. And when did we see each other? Never. It was work every day. If he was not working, I was. Yes, yes, of course that has an effect. **Q-** You went from spending many hours outside your house working in Argentina to spending quite a lot of time at home here, because you work seasonally, right? […] Has that affected you in any way? **P.:** If you are at home, it’s like the world is reduced to what happens on this side of the door. You also think more…it is also hard because you eat up your brains pretty much about a lot of things. How it affects you? I don’t know how… **Q-** How do you feel about the change in your life caused by the fact of previously working many hours outside your house…? **P.:** Being outside, moving, and suddenly being… buah! But it’s just that, it is, I don’t know, […] and psychologically you think there are not that many means of transportation, so I feel like I am shutting my self in more and more. Now I am feeling well, however. But I have that feeling. I feel like I am shut in this town and all, like more looking inwards than out, more introverted\(^2\). It affects you in the sense that you can get either really down or really up, right? Because you have moments when you are feeling really bad, really down, because you are locked in there, you feel lonely, far away from everybody. But then you realize that you are not, that you can be well wherever you are, and that it is all in oneself. Instead of thinking and staying still, doing, right? Anything. And even if I am here at home, I have my things to do, a whole lot of things. I have my kids, I can create, a whole lot of things. Then it is more in yourself, it has to do with feeling a certain way, you create everything with your mind. But in the end, it is better to get moving than to stay there thinking, isn’t it? [P. woman, Argentina, 30-40 years old]

All interviewed women make explicit reference to the losses, moments of tension, frustrations, depressions that the migration process and the road to getting the papers for them and their children has implied. In the male narration, everything seems to be a mechanical thing. The challenge is finding the key that makes the machinery move.

**N.:** When you arrive you have no relation with anyone. You don’t know what anything is about. And you look for a job everywhere, and there are no jobs, there are no jobs. And suddenly, a job appears and you realize there are jobs all over the place. It’s not that there weren’t any jobs. You are not there, you are still outside. […] You are still not working inside this, right? Inside a social group, inside whatever… You have to position yourself. You are still not functioning. And that is what you have to

\(^2\) Original: “…más para adentro”.
accomplish: functioning. You get a job and people know you. You are in, now you are there. And in the same place where you knocked and the door wouldn’t open, once you are in this functionality, […] and there is work. (...)You are always with the administrative procedures, right? But that is on a second level, because first you stabilize, and then yes, now...And also in a different way, because now you know better what everything is about, because you are integrated, […] you are more informed and it’s like you stand differently. You are more informed and morally stronger... [N, man, Argentina, 30-40 years old]

Their migration is told like one more trip amongst other trips, with no emotional or affective cost.

We, but it’s very easy, decided it because my father was here. Then my father and my mother came... [...] Here they had a place to stay, and we were always going, we were always leaving from everywhere. We are always leaving. That is why that is the idea, having a place wherever. [...] this, and the new tool of being able to go about here and there without this being banned or conditioned. (...) And leaving, it wasn’t difficult for us to leave anything, friendships or anything, because... well, in this case because of family a little. And knowing that it was a longer trip. But we came from having been abroad another year, you know? Now with the boy, again. But it was always part of the plan, because it was always travelling. And the year we went without travelling was because, well, a son was born. When he is a little stronger we’ll be out again. And so he grew stronger and we went. (...) Because we had nothing to lose either, nor to win. It was another trip, a sponsored trip again, with everything now... knowing where we were going to stay on our arrival, knowing they were waiting for us [...] my relatives. Anyhow, we have a return ticket [...].

The difference between male and female narratives is also pointed out by Claudia Pedone (2006), in her research on Ecuadorian migration chains in Spain. Regarding the testimonies of the interviewed Ecuadorian men, she states: “Personal economic problems appear immersed in an impersonal speech that refers to the Ecuadorian social and economic crisis and to political corruption. The true reasons for which their domestic groups chose migration are made invisible as a way to deal with a possible failure. This way, if the migratory project does not work as it was initially designed, they justify their presence under the pretext of spending a holiday in Spain or as a trial experience”. (Pedone 2006:185).

4. Gender, Generation, Legal Status and Employment

The great majority of our interviewees and their relatives have obtained their documents in some of the numerous regularization processes lead by the Spanish government since 1991. In the case of C., marrying his Spanish girlfriend was his last resource and he admits that he probably would not have got married otherwise. For another one of our interviewees, not being married to the mother of his son has been an obstacle for her moving to Spain. Both cases are good examples of how state policies shape the terms of family relations and force migrant people to follow some traditional standards that are becoming less and less habitual amongst the national population, such as marriage.

Mx.: “There are a lot of requirements, first of all you have to be working and earning a particular amount of money, that they believe should be able to take care of both of you. And then the process of family reunification (“agrupación de familia”) takes like centuries, they ask for all kinds of documentation and proofs, particularly if you are not officially married yet. It is required that you go back home, then go married, then come back and then start processing to bring her. That’s the different situation, if we
were married before I came maybe that would been a little bit easier. But since she was just my fiancée, it comes more difficult because the law does not recognize that status. So you must be legally married” [Mx. Man, Nigeria, sponsor]

Different researches have evidenced the connection that exists between the demands of the Spanish labour market in the service sector and the process of migration feminization. In some cases, women have been the first migrants precisely because they knew it was easier for them to get a job.

L.: Well, I was searching, Murcia, Madrid… searching for contacts to have a job and be able to bring my family because in the second trip I already came with the idea of bringing my family. Because since I knew how everything was here, in Europe, I knew you had to get an apartment, a quite stable job, and well, then, through contacts I came to Barcelona and when I got here I already had a job, I made the contacts for an apartment and…my husband and my three children came. [L, woman, Ecuador, 40-50, sponsor]

Out of 9 interviewed women, 7 work or have worked in domestic and/or care work, by the hour or living in the house where they work. Those who have residence- and work permits have to pay their own contributions to Social Security in order to be able to renew them.

MM.: They worked in a hair salon, and that lady needed one to take care of her grandparents. Then they brought me into the house. And once in the house, they processed my papers.(...) So during the time I was working in that house, I got the second residence. [MM, woman, Dominican Republic, 30-40, sponsor]

S.: It has been very hard. I worked doing whatever back then. I looked after children, I worked as a shop assistant, I took care of elderly people, everything. [S. woman, Morocco, 40-50, sponsored].

K.: ... now, for the past two or three years, I've been working with 5 or 6 people. There are some houses where I clean once a week, some houses where I clean twice a week. On Saturdays and Sundays I have a contract at a restaurant outside Barcelona, (...) and I am working there. They make me a contract. It is not permanent, but I have a contract, and besides that I pay Social Security as a domestic worker, because the contract is not enough to renew the residence. Laws state that I need to have 30 weekly hours of work... [K, woman, Bulgaria, 30-40, sponsored].

One of the constants revealed by all the interviews is the influence of the legislation and the administrative status on the methods that are chosen for family migration. People in an irregular situation, with a short period of residence or with a lack of resources to meet the requirements for formal reunification, have chosen reunification through informal channels. These reunifications are usually done in two ways: the entry to Spanish territory as tourists, mainly in the case of those countries that do not need a visa for up to three-month stays (in our sample: Bulgaria, Argentina, Bolivia until April 1997, Ecuador until 2002, El Salvador) or by the channel of recruitment in the countries of origin through the quota system. This last channel is usually used to bring adult relatives, whose reunification is not permitted by the law, such as brothers or sisters, cousins, sons or daughters above legal age, non-dependent parents and/or in the case of nationalities that need visa to enter the Schengen area (in our sample: Nigeria, Morocco, Pakistan, Dominican Republic).
A.: "... got here by plane... well and of course with an employment contract through the agricultural sector. The thing is that, look, here I had my daughter E., who is 27 years old and has many friends... All of them helped me to get that contract. [A. woman, El Salvador, 50-60 years old, sponsored].

K.: I came here as a tourist, normally, since we are in Europe, you can come here for three months. Then I had an amnesty to process the papers. We do it as family support and with the offer of a nursery where I worked. They made me a job offer and I could get the residence with the work permit. [K. woman, Bulgaria, 30-40, sponsored].

MI.: They [her daughters] have come as tourists, just like me (...) My other sister, who has been here for three years already and has a work permit, wrote them the invitation letter in my sister’s name..."[MI, woman, Bolivia, 20-30, sponsor].

L.: Back then, I saw that at the very least... at that time, we’re talking about a year ago now... At that time the minimum was one to two years. So I said, well nothing, that my children and my husband were coming to visit me as tourists, for a month, but it was just a trick, so to speak, right? So once they were here, I started getting their papers together. It didn’t matter anymore once they were here. That was the important thing, to be all together. [L., woman, Ecuador, 40-50, sponsor]

There are also clear signs of the impact that the changes in the regulations have on the ways of arranging family migration. The most evident ones are the modifications in the procedures for family reunification that now demand that the secondary migrant be in the country of origin and the implementation of visa requirements to enter Spain or the Schengen space, which have made migration in both directions almost impossible and reunification processes much slower.

S.: When he came for the first time, in 1984, there wasn’t a visa requirement between Spain and Morocco and both entry and exit were free. Since the ‘90s yes, we’ve had to wise up³. Yes, it has been very hard. He got it first, but the children and I didn’t, we stayed for a few years, and the truth is that, since we caught a regularization process (...) and he legalized himself quickly because he had a shop and so... [S. woman, Morocco, 40-50, sponsored]

L.: So at that time [eight years ago] they had to be presented for reunification but already being here. But now it is different, because back then we entered with our passport. Now, as of three years ago, people from Ecuador cannot do that, they need a visa. At that time we could still regroup them here directly. While now we can’t. All the following generation of Ecuadorian mothers and fathers go through the process of presenting their second card, they present their papers to the Government Delegation of their community and they are asked for an apartment in good condition... an employment contract, a lease contract, and then a person like from social services goes to check out the apartment, then there is also intervention at an authorities level... Once they see what condition it is in and they give you the go-ahead, the report is submitted and you have to wait for them to send you a letter so that they can present themselves over there... [L. woman, Ecuador, 40-50, sponsor]

³ Original: “espabilar”
In 10 out of the 12 interviews we made there is some reference to family migration through the informal way. The importance of informal family reunification came up in the interviews with experts and key informants and is also pointed out by Paloma Gómez Crespo (1999), in one of the few existing researches in Spain on this process. The interviewees who have carried out reunifications of children and spouses through the formal way have had to wait until they had a more stable legal and economic situation in order to meet the demanded requirements, which implies a separation of several years from their relatives, especially because a great percentage of the migrants living in Spain have been in an irregular situation.

H.: I came here in 1998. My cousin brought me, although she lives in Italy not here. I was living with a family friend for at least a year. I declared an asylum, luckily for me they declared the year 1999 they were deciding to give immigrant documents and it is how I got the documents. It came out all well, and since then I have been working as a domestic worker ("empleada de hogar"), I work in a house. About three years later I travelled back to Africa, I went to bring my child. [H, woman, Nigeria, 20-30, sponsor]

K.: When I had been here two years... It had been two years since I had last been in Bulgaria. As I didn't have the papers I was afraid to leave because then you can't enter again. And after those years, my son came. For him to come, my husband did the reunification, because it was very difficult, there were many papers missing, the family record book was missing, and everything had to have notary certification and all, and also everything had to be translated and certified by the ... I don't know how it is called...of the Spanish government, it had to go through them. The boy has been here for three years. [K. woman, Bulgaria, 30-40, sponsored].

Based on the interviews we can say that the changes in the legal statutes have an important impact on the migrant people's access to rights. Two good examples are: a) the acquisition of the Spanish nationality by some of the Latin-American migrant women we interviewed and b) a national of a country like Bulgaria that now has become a part of the EU.

L.: I have the Spanish nationality because I had all the required years. Now my husband has applied for the nationality, he doesn’t have it. I’ve been told, he will get it in two or three years. I have presented the 16-year-old [son]. The little one is still missing. I have an appointment in May (...). Finally, it seems this year I am going to finish with this process. My husband just presented it last week. Nationality itself is the least important matter. I’ve done it so I don’t have to be running behind the renewal of my residence card all the time [L, woman, Ecuador, 40-50, sponsor].

K.: ... now I’m hoping to get the third residence. But since laws have changed, and we are already in the European Community, they say that... I have to ask some friends... I have to get an application form, complete it and present those papers with the photocopy of my passport and residence, and they say they’ll give me a five-year residence, and that means less expense for us... [K. Woman, Bulgaria, 30-40, sponsored].

Both situations also help to make family migration processes easier.

MM.: The thing is that I’ve been lucky with all my papers and in my job. I’ve been lucky. Because at that time you had to wait a year or two to get the double nationality. So I came in 1998 and in 2002 I already had my double nationality. (...) I’ve been very lucky with my papers. Q- How is the reunification process? Do you need to have a house? MM.: So far they haven’t asked me to. I don’t know if they will do so when they send me the letter. What they asked me for was his valid passport, his birth
certificate and my ID. That is what I gave them. (...) Then he came. [MM, woman, Dominican Republic, 30-40, sponsor]

In the interviewees’ account, the main obstacles to carry out the reunification processes through the formal channel are linked to having an income that is good enough, living in an “appropriate” house and gathering all the required documents. In some cases, they would like to be able to regroup some relatives that are not contemplated in the legislation, such as de facto spouses, siblings or sons/daughters above legal age.

**MM.**: I actually would have liked to bring one of the sisters. That is my other illusion. I have prayed to God so much, that now that I have the brothers, I would like to help the sisters. [MM, woman, Dominican Republic, 30-40, sponsor]

**A.**: I would like to have my children close, I., E., L., D... because they are the only thing I’ve got. I don’t have any brothers or sisters or uncles... I have male and female friends who I feel as part of my family... but I can’t ask them to be close to me all the time because they have their own lives... because, since you ask me who I would like to have close to me... well, I would like to have my children together... [A, woman, El Salvador, 50-60, sponsored]

One of the main problems that the status of secondary migrant who came through the formal channel poses is the limitation in the access to employment. The permit obtained though reunification is a residence but not a work permit. In order to obtain the work permit you need to get a job offer first. Something that is not always easy to get. This dependency affects specially women (even more so if, like S., they intend to separate from their husbands) and young people.

**S.**: “I was depending on him, economically, because I had a permit without work authorization. And I had to get an employment contract to get the residence and work permit. At first, I just had the residence permit... (...) I was limited because, of course, when coming here, he as a man went out to search his personal fulfilment, leading his business, and me, as a woman, could not search my own fulfilment. I couldn’t go out because I had the children, I had paper problems... ” [S. woman, Morocco, 40-50, sponsored]

**L.**: My children came being under 18 years old, and when they turned 18 they got a residence card. When my daughter was 18, she wanted to work and she couldn’t, she needed an offer, because they don’t give you a work and residence permit. They just give you the residence one. This has made it terribly hard for us. (...) She came being 14 and needed a job offer just as if she had been in Ecuador. And that is what is going to happen to my son. My son is studying, the 16-year-old one. He has two years to go. Look, I’m already... considering what happened to the one that is 23 now... I’m already thinking what is going to happen in two years with this kid. If he has been here for so long, he should have a work and residence permit, because there they put “residence card, not allowed to work...” I understand it, while he is 10 years old it is true, but for a person that is over 18 years old, that is unfair... [L. woman, Ecuador, 40-50, sponsor]

In the family reunifications through the informal way, in which they enter as tourists, the greatest concern is getting hold of the “papers” that, in general, are obtained during the regularization processes and/or through a job offer.
P.: There was an amnesty (...) So N. got a contract for a year, and then his residence was passed, but still this was in 2005 more or less. We were here a whole lot of time without papers. [...] N. got his residence, the we applied for I.’s, because she can get it for her father. We are not married. And then I applied for mine, once I met the requirements: being here for three years, because my son has it, because my partner can financially support me… And so, with those requirements met, they gave me the residence. [P. woman, Argentina, 30-40, sponsored].

L.: What was complicated for us was that my husband did not have the papers and he had a very hard time finding a job offer, and if you don’t have an offer you don’t have a job either, so it’s a fish that bites its own tail, isn’t it? Then it has to be a person that trusts you so much that… he would give you an offer, and that was what happened. [L. woman, Ecuador, 40-50, sponsor]

The different obstacles are overcome through diverse strategies: the most recurrent one is resorting to the informal channels to reunification (overstaying allowed time, getting an employment contract through the quota system). As a lawyer who specializes in the matter informed us, in order to fulfil the income and housing requirements, it often happens that incomes are inflated and lease contracts are signed for properties that are owned by friends or relatives. In some cases, these services are offered in exchange for money. The representative of a pro-migrant association also mentioned the forgery of documents and the sale or rental of work permits and IDs. The most common strategy to obtain an independent work permit for spouses, sons or daughters over legal age is to simulate job offers.

K.: ... my husband back then needed a visa to enter. The truth is... they are not fake, but it was a visa to France, and with that visa he came here. These are, well, you pay a person who does it for money. That is how things are. If you cannot do it legally, there are always doors open to doing it illegally. [K, woman, Bulgaria, 30-40, sponsored].

L.: I had to rely on a friend, a personal friend, to state that my daughter worked for her and so my daughter had her first offer and therefore a residence and work permit, so that she was able to access the labour market. [L. woman, Ecuador, 40-50, sponsor]

Marriage also appears as a migration strategy for the father of MM’s son, who lives with her at the moment, and for one of his brothers.

MM.: We were married and we got divorced. So we were, we are and we aren’t. So he took advantage of that offer and he married the lady to come. So once he was here, we got together. (...) Q- And your brother got his papers too? Through you? MM.: Through the same person who brought me. He married her. By her way he came here. [MM, woman, Dominican Republic, 30-40, sponsor]

From the interviews we carried out it cannot be inferred that women are treated differently by the authorities in the reunification processes, but we do find signs that women are thought of, by the public administration, more as secondary than as primary migrants. As an example, the Catalan Government’s announcement for the subsidy of research projects on migrations. Within the thematic areas it includes the insertion of secondary migrants and specifies: women, daughters/sons.
4.1. Migration of Unaccompanied Minors

Although in the first report the legislation or the problem of unaccompanied migrant minors was not analysed (probably because we did not think of it as a field connected to family migration, since our perspective is influenced by a research scheme thought of mainly from the reality of Northern European countries), we consider it is necessary to point out some details on this form of migration.

In our interview with Silvina Monteros – sociologist, researcher for the Red Cross, specialist on minors’ migration – we found out that the processes to regroup minors with their parents in their country of origin are being promoted from Spain, but since in the present conditions this cannot be carried out as it requires a broad, transnational social system that is not yet structured (sending social workers to Morocco, contacting the parents, talking to them, asking them if they want to receive the minors, etc.) and there are no social services in Morocco, Spanish social services (which are dependencies of the Autonomous Communities) are opening welcoming centres for minors in Morocco. The Community of Madrid has two: one in Tangiers and the other in Marrakech.

Legislation establishes that, if the minor does not have a family in Spain, he is unprotected, and it is therefore necessary to contact the family in the country of origin. This contact has to be made by the Spanish government, occasionally the international social services program and otherwise by the Spanish consulate in the country of origin. Spanish authorities have to prepare a report on the family within nine months after locating the minor. What usually happens is that, due to a lack of means, that report is not done and the nine months are simply allowed to pass. If there is no report, the minor is handed to the Moroccan security forces and, in most cases -and this is something that is being denounced by the organizations SOS Racismo and the APDH (Pro Human Rights Association) of Andalucía- what happens is that the security forces leave the children in the streets, so those minors never return to their homes. However, massive repatriations are not carried out (the rate is about 15 per year while there are around 4.000 unaccompanied minors in Spain, mostly from Morocco) but they do work as a threat.

In Montero’s opinion, the legislation that rules the stay of these minors is based on a very western perception of childhood. It is the “all for the children but without the children”. In western societies, minors under 18 are overprotected. They have all the rights without any obligation and they must be with their families. But these youngsters are not children and they do not want to be with their families. Besides, the concept of family is very limited: father, mother, sons, daughters... Actually, many of these minors do have a family in Spain and many of these migrations are informal reunifications: uncles, cousins, elder brothers who bring their younger siblings or cousins... Since the legislation does not allow to regroup siblings, nephews/nieces or cousins, even if they are minors, what happens in some cases is that the migrants under 18 enter in an irregular way and head to the minor welcoming centres because they know that, in that way, they will not be expelled. They know that, in time, they will get the papers and they will be able to study. They are well trained to say they do not have a family but they usually stay in touch with relatives or countrymen residing in Spain at all times. In Almería (a province of Andalucía), there is a program which does allow children to live with their extended family, but this is not permitted in the rest of the communities.

5. Family Life

In the account of our interviewees, migrations and family appear to be strongly intertwined in various ways. In most of the cases, the search for the family’s well-being worked as the promoter for the migratory adventure. The family is usually also involved in the decision-
making process and is what provides the symbolic and economic resources to propel the migration and to later sustain the migration project in the distance and in time.

Both Claudia Pedone (2006) and Paloma Gómez Crespo (1999) have pointed out the connection between the time of stay in the country of destination and the activation of reunification processes (through formal or informal channels) for relatives that have remained in the country of origin. As the myth of the return starts to fade away, when the separation that had been thought as brief and temporary is extended, family reunification processes are initiated, mainly (though not always) of spouses, sons and daughters. Generally, at first the stay is extended because things do not turn out the way they were expected to. The context of destination is not as favourable as it had been thought to be and there are difficulties to find a job, or to save and send money, or to get the documentation. This connection between bringing the family and the prolongation of the stay in the country of destination is something that also appears in some of our interviews.

L.: And when we were in Ecuador, things did not work out the way we had planned them to, and we returned again. I embraced the destiny of being the one to travel again, this time not to Madrid but directly to Barcelona. Well, I was searching, Murcia, Madrid... searching for contacts to have a job and be able to bring my family, because in the second trip I already came with the idea of bringing my family. [L, woman, Ecuador, 40-50, sponsor]

N.: Because at first, the initial idea was to come here, pay the debt, the mortgage, etcetera we had there from here. And my dad here, all sad and worried. And my mom there, alone, with my sister and the house. Alone in that sense, without my father, it was the first time in I don't know how many years, and this whole situation that makes the whole thing very fragile. One can plan it in one’s head, but then... And so, nothing, my mom ended up coming this way... [N, man, Argentina, 30-40, sponsored]

But in this connection between family reunification and time of stay in the country of destination, we find important differences amongst our interviewees: on one extreme, the shortest family separation time in the case of the Argentine couple or the Bolivian woman and her daughters, and on the other, the man from Nigeria, who has been apart from his partner and his son for eight years, and the woman from the Dominican Republic, who, having obtained the Spanish nationality in 2002, regrouped her son in 2006, twelve years after arriving in Spain. Without underestimating the role that state policies have on the forms of family organization, we think that these differences can be linked to gender and generation relations, the division of productive and reproductive labour and the hegemonic conceptions of family, mother/fatherhood and the upbringing of children in the countries of origin. Although these dynamics exceed the aims of this report, we think it is important not to lose sight of them.

5.1 Migration networks, remittances and transnational care

The importance of family in the migration process can adopt many forms, but in the accounts we have collected the most persistent ones are the following three: 1) the members of the family (nuclear or extended) in the migration networks and chains; 2) the well-being of the family as a responsibility of the migrant and the sending of remittances, and 3) the role the family plays in looking after the parents or sons/daughters that stay in the country of origin. In all cases, the family operates as a provider of housing, contacts, social networks, jobs, contracts, etc. All interviewed sponsors were helped in some way by a relative (siblings, cousins, uncles) who welcomed them at the country of destination or got them a contract or a place to live.
L.: In my house, my sister was the first one to leave. She had Belgium, Brussels, as a
destination. Then her husband followed her. I was second, and then my husband
came. From Brussels we migrated here, to Madrid, and from Madrid... we stayed for
three years... one in Brussels, three in Madrid, and we went back to Ecuador, but that
time only my husband and me. [L., woman, Ecuador, 40-50, sponsor]

H.: My cousin brought me, although she lives in Italy not here. I was living with a
family friend for at least a year. [H., woman, Nigeria, 20-30, sponsor].

MM.: The idea came up because I was going to a house, where one of my mother’s
cousins was, so she has some daughters that are here (...) and one day my mother
suggested that I should ask her to tell her daughters to help me. (...) Then I made up
my mind. She told me she would talk to her daughters. At that time they had a
contract, so they said yes right then. [MM., woman, Dominican Republic, 30-40,
sponsor]

As for the remittances, most of the interviewed people feel responsible for the living
conditions of their family in the country of origin and they send money to parents, in-laws and
siblings. If the sons or daughters stay in the country of origin, they are usually the main
recipients of the remittances.

Q- In your case for example, Are you sending money to your parents and to your
girlfriend? Mx.: Yes, I have a son, I have a grown son back home, he is thirteen now.
And him too, so it’s... [Mx, man, Nigeria, 30-40, sponsor]

K.: Yes, we send money because my father-in-law does not collect a pension,
because he was on a sick leave, then they said he can work, but he can’t do that job
and so he doesn’t receive any payment. And my mother-in-law has a pension of 35
euros monthly, plus the electricity, the gas. (...) And with that pension, after paying
the bills and buying milk and bread, you haven’t got a nickel left. So we send 1000
euros once or twice a year, and with that they have enough to eat... [K., woman,
Bulgaria, 30-40, sponsored].

MI.: Well, with that goal, with that dream, with that illusion is that I came, I started to
work, to save and send money over there for their [her daughter’s] school, so that
they could study, finish school there, and for the tickets and all that... [MI., woman,
Bolivia, 30-40, sponsor]

Regarding the responsibility for the sending of money, some important gender-related
differences come up, which, as we will later analyse, we find again regarding the
responsibility for taking care of the sons and daughters that are left in the country of origin.
The well-being of relatives, even sons and daughters, seems to be, in some cases, a rather
time of care. H. sent money to Nigeria for her son, who was living with her sister,
even when her husband -and father of her son- was also living in Nigeria. MM. is the main
financial supporter of her parents, while she has two brothers that are living and working in
Spain. Her husband sends money to his parents if he wants to, because he has a sister in
the USA who takes care of them. But there are some indications that these differences
between men and women regarding the responsibility for the family’s subsistence and care
already organized the family’s division between productive and reproductive labour in the
country of origin.

MI.: They saw [their father] on the weekends, or once a month...He took them out,
brought money, on the weekends, but they were short visits, half an hour, or two
hours long. But the fact of everyday going to bed and getting up, doing the homework, responsibilities, make sure they eat, what they like and what they don’t... All of that came to him as something new. (...) He told me on several occasions when we talked that he was beginning to know his daughters...And, right, before he didn’t understand me. The money he gave me wasn’t enough. Of course, because he gave too little, and my daughters were not going to be deprived of food, I don’t know, butter, marmalade, a bologna, things like that which they like to eat...What he gave me was not enough, so what did I do? I worked on my own and bought my daughters what they asked me for. Milk, yoghurt, which is like a luxury product. I worked, they asked and I bought (...) I’ve always tried to cover the basics at least. Deprive them of food, well no… [MI, woman, Bolivia, 30-40, sponsor]

L.: My husband was a tutor in Ecuador and I was a teacher. I’ve worked all my life. And even if you are a employee/professional or whatever, in our countries you are the housewife. I don’t know how you manage to multiply yourself to be a total housewife, you multiply yourself. In my case, my husband hasn’t forced me to, but it is a little in your idiosyncrasy, you have been educated like that. You have to wash, iron, cook for your family... well, a little help, yes, some help, right? But being here you still have the same things on your shoulders, maybe because you force yourself to it, to feel like a woman, to feel... I don’t know your roots as a South American woman. You’ve seen your mother… [L., woman, Ecuador, 40-50, sponsor]

K.: ...In Bulgaria, very few men help. I don’t know what they are like today, because it’s been almost five years since I’ve been here. House-related things, starting the washing machine, ironing the clothes, cooking... cleaning, cleaning the windows and all that, they never ever do it (...) because in my country, my mother-in-law is very sweet, and since we are living in the same house, with independent accesses but the same house, always if I’m not the one who does those things, she does them. He [her husband] always waits for somebody to do it. [K. Woman, Bulgaria, 40-50, sponsored]

Gender unbalances also generate conflicts and negotiations regarding the remittances, mainly due to the unequal distribution of responsibilities between men and women within a family, but also for the use of the money that is sent.

MI.: I did my part. If he did not give them money, I would talk to my elder daughter, who is 13 years old, “I’ve sent, honey. Remind your dad to buy you milk. Don’t run out of that. Has he bought you anything? Do you have fruit?” Or if she told me “I don’t have trousers”, I’d ask him to buy trousers, “I will tell your dad to buy you a pair of trousers” (...) And well, that was the struggle during one year, looking for the way to find his kind side, saying “please, I’m sending”... I’d always tell him “go to the bank that I’m sending money. I want you to buy clothes for M., or for T., I don’t want her to be lacking anything...please, I’m sending it to you’. And he wouldn’t go to collect it. I was a matter of pride, I guess, or because he already had some other destination for it. [MI, woman, Bolivia, 30-40, sponsored]

MM.: Many times it makes me furious, I tell my mother, and many times I keep many things to my self not to make her feel bad. But it terribly bothers me inside, because I am working, and the one who is supporting his son [her brother’s son] is me. And on top of that he is making fun of me. That is laughing at me. [MM, woman, Dominican Republic, 30-40, sponsor]
Finally, family plays a crucial role in the conformation of transnational care chains, a key dynamic to get the migration process started and to sustain it. All our interviewees who have children under 18 years of age have left them for some time under the care of their families in the country of origin, with the exception of the Argentinean couple, who travelled with their baby, and S., from Morocco, who was regrouped with her three children by her husband. In the case of the two male sponsors (Mx. from Nigeria and M. from Pakistan), children stayed or are staying in the country of origin with their spouses, the mother of their boys and girls. The daughters of MI (Bolivia) stayed with their father for a year (she is an orphan). H., from Nigeria, left her son with her sister for three years, while her husband was also living in the country of origin but with his parents. MM.'s son always lived with his maternal grandmother until he was brought to Spain by the end of 2006, at the age of 16, 12 years after his mother emigrated from Dominican Republic. K. took care of her son until she emigrated to Barcelona to join her husband and left the child in Bulgaria under his paternal grandmother’s care for two years. Su. lived in Barcelona with her son while her daughter chose to stay in Bogota under the care of her father and her maternal grandmother and aunt. L. emigrated with her husband and left her two children with her parents. Her younger son was born in Madrid and when he was three months old they sent him to Ecuador with his brothers. She saw him again when the boy was three years old. The care of children appears once again as a female concern. In most cases, children remain under the responsibility of women: grandmothers, mothers, sisters or aunts...

L.: The first time, my husband came 3 months after I did and we were without the children for three years and eight months. They stayed with my parents. Parents have to take that... right? They have to take that role... If your parents don’t help you... you can never travel that far (…) I had two. One was born in Madrid, but I had to send him to Ecuador being very little because I couldn’t work with him. The youngest one spent three years with my parents. [L. woman, Ecuador, 40-50, sponsor]

MM.: When we separated, I was some months pregnant with the child. And my mother, when I worked in the [free] zone, would take care of him, and when I came here, she kept him under her care. [MM., woman, Ecuador, 30-40, sponsor]

Q- Who was taking care of your child in Nigeria? H.: My sister. My sister also has children, they go to school together. Because I put him in a private school, he was going to another private school different to the one he used to go to. My sister has five kids, and they relate fine. [H. woman, Nigeria, 20-30, sponsor]

5.2. Family problems linked with migration

But this transferring of childcare responsibilities to other members of the family is not free. All interviewed women have experienced the separation from their children with great suffering. The feeling does not seem to be the same regarding taking distance from their husbands.

K.: Two years, uuuuu, when I got depressed I cried all week, every week. Crying, crying, crying. But the boy was very well taken care of, but I missed him. [K., woman, Bulgaria, 30-40, sponsored].

MI.: It was very hard for me and for them, because he [their father] has a very dominant temper. What he says is what is right, and more so if you are under his responsibility, as my daughters were. The first fight they had, he would punish them like in the old days: pulling, hitting, kicking, slapping them... And when I heard of...
those things, being here was torture for me… I couldn’t wait for them to come here or for me to go there, but well… [MI., woman, Bolivia, 30-40, sponsor]

H.: Actually when they first sent me the photo, I was crying. Because the child I love so much. No matter how good the family would look after the child, you can never feel… Even if they are giving everything, you feel always to complain. I was waiting so much (...). So, it was really hard. And there was no way I could on go back, because if I go back, there is no way to come back. [H., women, Nigeria, 20-30, sponsor]

L.: … with my husband it was a very short time, three months, and then six. A period of time I think you can even consider healthy as a couple [laughs]. Man, years I wouldn’t know, but months… no, it was alright. [L., woman, Ecuador, 40-50, sponsor]

Besides this, many of the conflicts between parents and children are precisely related to them having been absent from their every-day life for a long period. Children miss those who looked after them and reproach their parents, especially their mothers, for their absences as if they had been abandoned.

L.: … well, my daughter was very resentful, since she was 14 years old, it’s a difficult age, very angry, very resentful to us. (…) The worst was the little one. Between two months and three years…he did not know us…He suffered a lot…He didn’t want to sleep with us… at all… At night it was impossible. Of course, since you are all so desperate, you want to change things from one day to the other, and that’s not how things are, that you change with…Well, my mother had to sleep with us, in the same bed… when she could, she left very quietly, and when that little boy woke up! It was like he was terrified of us… Of course, you go with your idea that nothing has changed in four years, that things all remain the same…Q- And have you been able to rebuild that? How is it now? L.: A little, a little, it’s alright but… it’s a matter of constancy, and since you have a great sense of guilt… [L., woman, Ecuador, 40-50, sponsor]

Ml.: Yes, a year seems like a short time, but the after-effects that separation has, I see them with my elder daughter who has some troubles (…) If she gets angry, it’s like she has all this rage kept inside. She doesn’t say it to me, but her attitude of disdain towards me… And when I talk to her, she starts crying and remembering all the fights she had with her dad… “You left me, you were the one to leave”… and that hurts me a lot, because neither I left you nor I just left. It was a decision taken thinking of them, but that is not what it is for them (…). How they must have suffered, right? so that they keep all that resentment. “You left”, she says. “You left, mom, you left me. It’s just that you weren’t there…” So it hurts me. I think that none of this would have happened if I hadn’t come here. They’d be free of that pain they are feeling now, but they would also be in Bolivia, in the same situation that we were before … [Ml, woman, Bolivia, 30-40, sponsor]

Another problem is the non-acceptance of parental authority due to the long time they spent without living together.

K.: Not so much with me, but with my husband… If he has to ask something, or ask for permission to do something, he always asks me… with him, as if they were strangers… So many years living without him, since he was 7 until he was 10, more or less. (…) But the boy really missed my mother in law when he came here. “I want Bulgaria. I want my grandmother”. He finally calmed down. He was like “you leave me
alone, what am I doing here, I don’t know anybody”, but the kid is really open... [K., woman, Bulgaria, 40-50, sponsored].

**MM.** No, because he is already 16 years old and they say that, at 16, if he doesn’t want to study, I can’t force him to. No, he told me he doesn’t want to study, that I should sign him up for a course or something...[MM, woman, Dominican Republic, 30-40, sponsor].

**H.** We no longer understand each other like we used to. Maybe before, when I asked him, “sit down here”, he like to do it when he wants. When I say “do this”, he wants to do it when he likes. I am having this problem with him. And the problem is coming not only at home, but it is also affecting him in school, he does it to the teacher. So, sometimes I would not blame too much the teacher only... [H, woman, Nigeria, 20-30, sponsor].

But the presence of the children in the country of destination generates other tensions as well due to the lack of family networks, the long working days mothers and fathers have and the precarious housing situation, especially when in an irregular status. These conditioning factors make children spend long hours alone, without the presence of a relative, and, in some cases, in places that are unsuitable for children to do their homework.

**H.** And I am sure also this affected my child. Loneliness. When he comes back from school, he is always at home, alone. Actually, he does everything at his own. I am trying to make him understand that here is not like Africa, where you have the family around you, that can look after you when mummy is not at home. Here there is not family, you just [have] to adjust to the system. [H., woman, Nigeria, 20-30, sponsor]

**L.** ... They got me a job looking after a boy here, in Barcelona. Then they started to be too many hours, from 9 in the morning to 9 at night, and I couldn’t see my kids, so I left the job and started searching to work by the hour. And so I started working by the hour, more and more hours. I started to meet people and I began to have a lot of work, and I had to get people to help me because I couldn’t cover everything on my own, so I had to start a cleaning company, together with my sister. [L., woman, Ecuador, 40-50, sponsor]

**MI.** Right now I’m renting a room with a man that is also Bolivian, who has his wife and son, and us. But... he is not a relative, he is not someone I know. When I’m working, my daughters stay in the room and (…) I can’t see who is there and who isn’t to be sure that my daughters are in a good place, that they will not have any bad influences (…) And my two daughters are little women. The eldest one is 13 years old. The truth is that it worries me a lot. (…) It’s a small room. They put a double bed for us and the room was complete. We have no space to walk around or a table for my daughters to do their homework on... [MI., woman, Bolivia, 30-40, sponsor]

In the conversations with the two representatives of migrants associations, conflicts between parents and regrouped children also came up. Both interviewees have pointed out school failure and desertion of many sons and daughters of African and Latin American immigrants as a result of the parents’ inability to spend more time with their children due to their long working hours and precarious labour conditions. A mediator from Madrid’s social services has specially aimed at the situation of the non-regularized minors over 16 years of age, whose access to the system of formal education is closed and who are sent to adult education centres. In our informant’s opinion, this is a violation of the minors’ rights (they are under 18) which generates great frustration in the parents and in the youngsters. The sons
and daughters are this way excluded from the formal education system and have no possibilities of pursuing a career at university, regardless of what their performance at school was like in the country of origin. This is a good example of the tensions and contradictions between the speeches on immigrant integration and the regulations that restrain their possibilities for progress.

That is going to be... It already is... kids that are left with nothing being 18, 20. They have social warranty but that will no enable them, if we are talking about integration... that is not going to enable them to integrate better in society. They live in that constant tension with their parents, “why did you bring me here? I’d better go back, I don’t know what I am going to do here”... a great instability and uncertainty... [Mediator, Madrid].

Although attention is brought from some sectors to the disintegrating effect migrations would have on couples, due to the distance that grows between the spouses, what we found in our exploratory study is that marital conflicts existed prior to migration and that they were one of the reasons for the trip.

**Ml.:** Leaving my daughters was very hard. It was the hardest thing I've done in my life... Besides back there I had problems with my husband. It's like it wasn't working anymore. [Ml., woman, Bolivia, 30-40, sponsor]

**A.:**... there are several reasons why I came here... really... One was to improve my economic situation... my standard of living... and... for emotional reasons as well. [A., woman, El Salvador, 50-60, sponsored].

Another interviewed woman separated from her spouse after a while of living all together in Madrid.

**S.:** So when I came here, I had my mind made up (...) And I decided to stay here. He didn’t like that and conflicts started. (...) But I think I also had my share, because I was determined, I was so fed up with always living...doing what other people told me to do... what others decide (...) So well, then we decided...we talked a lot, we had many conversations, and we decided. It was more painful for him that for me, because the idea had been growing in my mind for a while, because I wanted to be myself, that is the truth. I wanted nobody to lead my life. It was also very painful for me. Because of the children and because of many other things. The mourning, the grief was there, it is there. But the crave to be myself has been stronger. Separation was the only way to go. So I faced the separation with great serenity, with great effort, but I was fine being alone, if you want me to tell you the truth. [S., woman, Morocco, 40-50, sponsored].

**5.3. Changing Family Relations**

In Spain, as a result of the high percentage of female labour immigration, women are usually the first ones to migrate and the initiators of the family reunification process for husbands, sons and daughters. This involves some changes in the traditional distribution of roles between men and women, since husbands are, in this case, the dependent ones, and due to the characteristics of the Spanish labour market, they have a harder time finding a job, and

---

4 Original: Garantía social
without a job offer, they have no access to an individual permit. These changes in the traditional gender roles usually bring along personal and family conflicts, which are sometimes negotiated and sometimes lead to situations of domestic violence and to divorces.

**Mediator:** There are many women who regroup their spouses with their children because they are the first ones to have come. Amongst Dominican women, this is perfectly clear. However, this is also starting to happen amongst Moroccan women, though in a smaller proportion, but yes, it also happens that men are the secondary migrants. So they see themselves... That's when the change in gender relations occurs, because maybe, in the country of origin, he was the economic referent, the authority referent, etc. and still they get here and they see that they are no longer that male referent that supports the house. We have indeed found many of these cases. It was very frustrating for men to change their place in the family. I don't know about their role, but their place in the family yes. This first generates personal conflicts, then family conflicts, etc. [Mediator, Madrid].

**S.:** Since the 90s, migration has been greatly feminised. Within this process, there was a role change. Instead of women being regrouped by their husbands, as it was my case and the case of many other women, men are being regrouped by their wives. And so the husbands kept that deeply rooted male chauvinist culture going. Women would regroup them and they would have to suffer a lot. I experienced that suffering because I worked with them. They had to rent a house in order to regroup the husband, they had to have a salary receipt (…) And with all this long and painful process for women, then came the men and played the “macho” in the house. And, of course, it was the same thing with the papers. When the woman starts the reunification, the man gets a residence card without a work permit. She had to support him. Many women had to get up at six o’clock in the morning and leave the husbands warm in bed, and they were out working to support them. And when [the husbands] get residence and work permit, that's when problems start...[S. woman, Morocco, 40-50, sponsored]

Another transformation in the family dynamics, in the roles assigned to men and women, refer to the context change. The migration project is, in the majority of the cases, thought of as an instrument to improve the family’s standard of living, and in Spain, to cover the economic needs of the nuclear family, it is almost always essential for women to work. This female entry to the labour market is attached to certain transformations of family life and personal aspirations which normally generate conflicts and readjustments for men and women.

**S.:** I, working with women in the association (...), followed processes of role conflicts, for example. Conflicts between the man-role and the woman-role. Why? Because a regular marriage would come from Morocco, they came from a patriarchal society...for example, the husband, the son or the brother have all that inside their heads, that patriarchal role, that deeply rooted patriarchal culture, and, of course, maybe women didn’t work back there. They only dominate their domestic space, while the husband dominated the outside space, and so on, and here the economic reality requires both to work because they have to pay rent, they have children, bills, so women go out to work, and then husbands, or what would be the male collective in general... I’m referring to the Moroccan one. Moroccan or foreigner in general...The changing roles conflict has been suffered by many women from many nationalities...Then it requires that. The husband accepts what would be the woman’s material share but does not accept (...) that she also has her rights, and that (...) both
need to have an equality. And that's where women have suffered a whole lot in that process of change. [S. woman, Morocco, 40-50, sponsored]

President of AMA: Because the husband expects you to be there when he comes home at night, to be available and so, and maybe you are not, because you have been working all day and have things on your mind, and it is a conflict. For women who have kids and all there comes a time when choices become very difficult, because then you feel bad, because of your children...but the European society somehow requires that, if you as a woman want to be integrated, you have to do something for yourself. Finding a course, learning a language, and this may be a strange thing for some men: a woman wanting to pursue some more knowledge, some progress for herself. I think the European society is structured in a way that requires that additional education for her to develop herself, to be able to handle herself. So I see a great conflict there between women who start the migration project and then they also have to empower themselves. I see there is a major conflict there. [President of AMA]

In some interviews, women mention important changes in family relations after migration. They are connected to the distribution of housework, the use of the money or the decision-taking process. Specially women who work long hours outside their homes have succeeded one way or the other in getting their spouses, and in some cases their children, to take up some of the housework. Chores and obligations that, in their country of origin, were a female responsibility.

H.: I try to force him [her son] do things, like cleaning the sitting room, he can Hoover the … on weekends, on Sundays. (…) normally on weekends he knows his duty is to clean the room and the house.(…). Then after eating, he does the washing, sometimes he puts the washing clothes in the machine, dry them… I have to keep saying, repeating, shouting at him… because I can shout sometimes. When I shout it is affecting really, he does not like it… If I talk to him normally, the way we are talking now, he sees me… [he does not take you seriously] But when I shout now he knows I am really serious. [laugh], really funny…[H., woman, Nigeria, 20-30, sponsor].

K.: Now it is almost always he [her husband] who cleans the house. Since I am working cleaning houses, I don’t feel like doing it, I really don’t. I clean the kitchen or the bathroom because I like them to be really clean, well done... but all the rest, cleaning the dust, the window glasses, it is almost always he who does it on Sundays, when he doesn't work. And he washes the clothes, and many times irons them. (…) He does it well. He’s different, very different to what he was like before. Because he lived alone (…) He has changed a lot, he is very different. [K., woman, Bulgaria, 30-40, sponsored].

Another change that is pointed out refers to the reduction of the family circle and the absence of extended family networks that cooperate in the upbringing of children and make conflict-solving easier. Those family networks are often the ones that allow people to “conciliate” family life and work, and their absence also has a negative impact on the children’s care, the work overload and the stress on women.

Mx.: But regard to decision-taking, I think it is still about the same. You still consult the wife here. But what has changed is the orientation of the children, within the family unit. Back home you have the extended family system. So it is easier for children to grasp the idea of large family, of sharing things with people, because there anyone could bring the child to visit, and then you learn to share, but in Europe, it is closed it is just you, your mum, your dad.(…) And there it is easier to solve your
problems. If you have a problem in your house, if you have a problem with your wife or with your husband, you can run to one auntie that the husband respects, and you got "look, he is giving me problem..." Then the woman calls, or comes, and then it is resolved. So it eases the stress. But here no, you must deal with the problem yourself. And because of communication problems within most marriages, it is bound of breaking easily, that's still another problem, on that coming to Europe (...) within the family circle. [Mx., man, Nigeria, 30-40, sponsor].

Mediator: Parents are working many hours. There isn’t a follow-up, a very close support of the children in this sense. This is the price that you pay, right? (...) we could say that is the loss, in the organization and development of the family. We now have a group of women, and the biggest difficulty is how to make working hours match school hours (...) because they have to pay somebody else, or have someone close, so the family network is sometimes weakened because each one has to find their own means of living (...). It is a difficulty. The loss of family and social support is there... and it’s just them. “I have to do it myself, there’s nobody else”. The thought always goes to individualism, isn’t that so? When it could be the opposite. Thinking of solidarity spaces. It is hard. [Mediator, Madrid].

And this is also related to whom the interviewees consider to be their families, who they would like to have close to them. Some have been able to bring their siblings, and even their cousins, as M. from Pakistan did. Others would like to find the way to be close to other members of the family, who are not contemplated in the family migration policies.

H.: Actually I would have loved my brother, my elder brother too, here with me. But I don’t see the possibility, because, according to the law, if you have the residence, you only are permitted to bring your father, your mother, your child or your husband. But I would have loved to bring my elder brother here, to work. But I don’t know how possible that could be, or the process you need to pass through. I would have loved to have my family around, not only my husband or my child. If I have a brother, when you have somebody here stay by you... [H., woman, Nigeria, 20-30, sponsor]

The migration of women from southern to northern countries is usually presented as a process of female empowerment and emancipation. This is an expression that is very present in the Spanish political space (Gil Araujo 2007), and it is also something sustained by some research and questioned by the fieldwork done by Claudia Pedone (2006). Based on the stories collected in our interviews, we think that the transformation of family relations and the distribution of housework alone do not allow us to talk of a generalized process of migrant women empowerment through migration. This, as one of our informants accurately points out, is a matter that would need further and more careful exploring and reflection. In migration, women who have dependant children or parents tend to be the main responsible for the family’s subsistence both in the country of origin and destination. Their access to prestigious positions is blocked, no matter what their qualifications are. The labour sectors they have access to are usually under their level of education and are equal to downgrading. They work very long hours, up to 12 or 14, which negatively affects their health\(^5\). Labour,

\(^5\) We constantly see women who, after having worked 5 or 6 years, have become physically disabled to some degree due to an exaggerated physical effort. Women who work 12 hours, 14 hours, look after elderly people in addition to housework, so they get to their forties weakened and with very strong health problems... To me, that is a sign that their quality of living is not really improved as... in their migration project, the quality of living based on their physical, emotional, mental health, etc. [Mediator, Madrid]. I am planning to learn another profession. My job I like it, but I now find it is weakly. Like now, I am on sick leave, I got some contraction on my arm, the last time I had on my waist, for which I went to the mutual, they didn’t give me even sick leave. They had to give me injection for ten
economic and family obligations leave them with a small margin for social activities and participation.

**Mediator:** That is a mistake many women make. They consider only the economic aspect. That is, for them it is a waste of time to go to an association, simply meeting people, get informed on things. They give no value to that... Everything has to be economic, economic... and, of course, years go by, fast, and then they realize they didn’t get to know anything, there is a strong disconnection between what they are and what this society is (...) There is a disconnection because it is my job my house, (...) This is because of their interest on the economic factor and because of the labour sectors, domestic work, isolation, the loss of social networks... [Mediator, Madrid]

Besides this, control over the money and decision-taking on the migration project are not always in their hands⁶. In other words, the modification in the role distribution does not necessarily involve a balance in the power relations between men and women within the family, neither does migration always mean the development of women’s capacities. Many times, the opposite happens.

**Mediator:** On one side, there is the expectation and, on the other, the reality. If it is viable or not to improve my living conditions as a woman... and I think that is the greater difficulty... in immigration. I mean, I think it is very complicated for women to actually improve their living conditions in this process...due to family charges, administrative barriers, labour sectors where they get to work, so looking at it from the concept of development, I think it is difficult... [Mediator, Madrid].

Having straightened this point on the need to think (further and better) about the connection between migration and female empowerment, we think it is important to highlight that in two of our interviews the migration experience is narrated as a liberating process. And what these two women have in common is that migration has allowed them to escape the control enforced by the husband or the context of origin.

**A.:** ...And what is most important is that now I don’t have anyone to give explanations to or to ask for permission to go out...neither am I afraid to come home late because there might be trouble...I mean, it’s a strange...liberty...because I am adapting to it...because when you are...you’ve had a way of life where you are tied to somebody, well, when you break loose from that...you also have to face a whole process of readapting to your new life and in this process... you come across different emotions...sometimes, even if it seems contradictory, you miss...nostalgically...but when you remember the bad times...you fall back into your reality and you feel...Many times I feel like a butterfly because I come, I land on something, and then I spread my wings...and I follow the path I’ve started... you see? But it is all a process...I’m going through it, like trying to erase little by little all the bitterness that my previous life has left me... and enter this new life that I’m continuing... I’m setting goals for myself... which is not easy...it’s giving me a little trouble...but I know I’ll make it...I set goals for myself...between that day and that other day I’ll do this...and I do it... If I’m going to read a book...I’ll take this book, I’ll read it, and I try to read it, which I didn’t use to do before...Before I couldn’t concentrate that much. And

---

⁶ The thing is my husband is thinking of going back, my husband is thinking of staying, my husband I don’t know what... What are you thinking of?... Do you take that decision together, with equality? There you can notice the weight, the gender difference... [Mediator, Madrid]. See Herrera 2005, Sorensen 2005
sometimes I look at myself in the mirror, and when I see my reflection, I see myself different. Sometimes I take pictures from that time and pictures that I’ve taken now that I’m free… and I see myself different…I see marks on my face that I used to have and now I don’t, and it’s nice, the experience is really positive…[A., woman, El Salvador, 50-60, sponsored]

S.: ...So I said, well I’m leaving that place, and may everybody know I’m separated and I do my own life there. That I don’t care about anybody. May everybody know that I am a single, independent woman, with three children but living my own life at the same time, and having my family next to me. And I’ve returned. In 1992 I went back to Morocco to do what I had in mind, and it was difficult…I couldn’t, I couldn’t do it at all. A pressure… within my family, a horrible pressure, which I couldn’t stand. And I’ve returned here. But this time determined to fight alone, and to fulfil myself as a person, without the restraints of society or of the tradition back there, the family, the husband…I wanted to be myself because besides marrying young also limited me. I went to university and my ex was waiting there to take me home. I didn’t have that teenage life, where you can finish classes at university and go get something to drink or go to a friends’ house to work on an assignment. I didn’t have that. So I missed it. I wanted to be myself and have nobody on my back waiting for me, tying me with fixed hours...But well, when that came up, I was also tied and with three children. It is a big load to carry. But still I decided to go for it any possible way. Here I said to be myself or not to be. And I started a different one... And it continues…Fighting, fighting, fighting…Doing everything I thought I had to do. Being a woman, and, above all, being a very free woman… [S., woman, Morocco, 40-50, sponsored].

6. Discrimination/Privileges

Although the people we interviewed have not made any references to racial or ethnic discrimination in the processes of family migration, in some informal conversations we have held with migrants we have confirmed police control practices on marriages between Spanish men or women and nationals from Sub-Saharan Africa or Morocco. Specifically, a student from Ivory Coast told us how the police went to knock on her door very early in the morning on three occasions to make sure her and her Spanish husband lived in the same house, even when they had a son together. They also questioned the neighbours. None of this has happened to the Argentinean-Spanish married couples (5) we informally talked with.

Another one of the practices that can be considered indirect discriminations are the delays in the processing of visas in some of the countries of origin such as Ecuador, Morocco and Sub-Saharan Africa. This is something we pointed out in our Report I, based on the commentary of two lawyers who specialize on Foreigner’s Law, and something that also appears in our interview with the president of the African Migrant Association (AMA). In this interview, our informant also stresses the problems women have to bring their relatives, saying that during the procedures they are left “at the mercy of the officers [civil servants].”

President of AMA: We have the case of a young man who, out of desperation, had arranged a wedding with a Spanish woman. He had paid three thousand euros. But when the time came, when he had to settle all the papers, they told him, look, you have to go back to your country of origin, get this and that certificate... but in the end I think that is a trap there is in the law, because once you are there, they will not let you out, and the boy has been there two months. In the meantime, his papers came out in

7 Original: “a merced de los funcionarios”
Spain, but he couldn’t go back to pick them up... because there’s an officer in the middle who won’t give him the visa... (...) He lost the three thousand euros, he had a small business set up here, the shop is without the owner for two months, and with no perspective as to when he might come back (...) A few ambassadors have said yes, that they had received instructions on that, and so a Spanish man that works here in a welcoming NGO told me. He told us that African countries deliberately block the access to the papers... I’m not saying this is conclusive evidence, but they are hints that suggest they are not trying to make their lives easier... [President of AMA]

The main discriminations we have been able to identify through the interviews with the migrants are the following four types: the denial of the right to family reunification for de facto spouses, which we have previously pointed out; the discrimination in the access to certain resources, such as housing; the lack of recognition for the qualifications and degrees from the country of origin, and the different requirements to access to nationality according to the country of origin.

As we detailed in the Report I, there is a clear difference between the time of stay required to nationals from Latin America, Equatorial Guinea and the Philippines to access the Spanish nationality, and the time required for other nationalities, who require ten years of regular residence. Having the Spanish nationality makes the family reunification for children and spouses processes easier, since there is no need to comply with the economic or housing requirements. The access to housing is usually one of the main difficulties to meet the requirements for the reunification processes. And this difficulty is not only linked to the cost of the rent, but also to many owners’ refusal to rent a house or an apartment to migrants. In these cases, the only option these people are left with is renting a room, generally in apartments where other migrant families live.

MI.: ...the apartment thing, was the saddest thing that happened to me here in Spain. Because they place ads that I’m interested in because of the location, or of the money they ask for, 650, 680, 700 €, which I can get to afford, but they listen to the way we speak, they listen to the tone of your voice and they say it is already taken, and if another person from here calls, a person who is from Spain, they give them an address and tell them how many rooms it has, how much they are asking for and everything... It is a way of rejecting, of saying no. They don’t say it straight to my face but they reject me... I’ve decided on that, on renting a room. I have no need to lie. (...) One whole month, calling almost every day. Ad I saw, ad I responded to with a call. [MI, woman, Bolivia, 30-40, sponsor]

L.: That hasn’t changed. 15 years ago it was the same thing. When I rented my apartment, where I lived with my children, because this one is already our property, my boss, who is Catalan, had to rent it for me, so I could have access to an apartment. [L, woman, Ecuador, 40-50, sponsor]

Regarding the recognition of the professional history of migrant workers, the great majority of our interviewees have entered labour activities that are below their level of qualifications and their working life in the country of origin. For women, no matter what level of instruction they have, it is very hard not to spend at least some time in domestic service. Besides, that is usually the fastest channel to regularization. This also happens in the case of some men.

Su: One day somebody, I don’t know who, an angel or I don’t know who, gave me some information on Paralelo 202, that I should go there and that there they would help me to fix my situation, because I was staying illegally. (...) And I went there and so they told me there was one place left in the quotas for a domestic worker. And the girl from Paralelo 202 told me, [...] “I know you are not one, but you need to legalize
your situation, to take one of these courses and become legal." I said, “whatever you have” [Su, woman, Colombia, 40-50, sponsored].

L.: Because when leaving Belgium, they annulled his residence permit, so [her husband] had to work in houses, where they will employ you and you run less risks. You can’t go to construction, because they need regularized workers. He always worked in domestic service, that is what there is more of. [L., woman, Ecuador, 40-50, sponsor]

N.: So I am a photographer. I can work in this because I am also a gardener and I am also... I don’t know, I hand out flyers. So I don’t miss that. In fact, I have worked in newspapers, and there was a time when I was working as a photographer, I was abroad, I travelled and all... I quit. I worked for the Grupo Clarín (...) in a national newspaper, very much in the business [...] And besides (...) I did the photography editing for a book. I did new things because I worked as an editor, I did the layout, everything, right? I did an important work on the edition of the book, archive work and all, in the sense of what can be fulfilling for me... greater wealth. [N., man, Argentina, 30-40, sponsored]

Another great obstacle for the insertion in the labour market is the long and difficult process of professional qualification recognition for immigrants from Southern countries and degree certificates validation. This even happens with countries that Spain has signed automatic recognition agreements with. Although an international agreement comes before a ministry decision, the Ministry of Education systematically rejects automatic validations and forces immigrants to take equivalence exams; which in many cases means doing a great part of the career again. These obstacles lead some people to decide on starting a process of re-qualification which adapts to the needs of the context of destination. In some cases, language also appears as a barrier for the development of certain professional activities.

MI.: To work as an interior designer, which is what I studied in Bolivia, I’d have to validate my Bolivian degree here, take some levelling courses, and only then I could access the labour market as a designer, but that demands time and money. Time to devote to studies. I have to work to pay for my studies. What do I work in? Cleaning. I think it is something to do afterwards. The first step is to get the work and residence permit in domestic service, in cleaning. Then, after I get the work and residence permit, I have to renew my second card, which is better for studying anything. At least three years have to go by (...) only after that time would I be able to access the possibility of working in the field I studied in Bolivia. It’s like it is a little far away. [MI, woman, Bolivia, 30-40, sponsor]

Su.: I was desperate, I got depressed [...] Román wouldn’t talk to me, I couldn’t integrate in society because I didn’t speak Catalan properly. My working career, which I had studied so... and completed with honours... It was very impressive to look at my grades, they were worthless because [...] you have to speak Catalan [...] I see myself again without a career, so I design a mediation work together with lawyers. We developed Barcelona Mediación, where we are sitting right now, which evolves into The Couching House. And I study another career. In the middle of all this, I sign up at Ramón Lluich. I talk to them because I... I’m not short on resources. I’ve learnt to handle myself. I talk to them and they validate my previous courses and design a personalized program for me to get the psychology degree, and so I study psychology at the Ramón Lluich. [Su, woman, Colombia, 40-50, sponsored]
But according to the experience of a mediator from Madrid’s social services, these cases are not the most common. Most immigrant women have no time or means to invest in validating their degrees or in studying to improve their labour conditions, because they do not have a family network to support them. Being confined in more precarious or unstable sectors, many qualified women suffer a progressive process of de-qualification, which in time can lead to feelings of failure and frustration.

**Mediator:** Working in activities one hasn’t done before, social relations change, social status can change, their standard [of living]. I’ve come across many women who were professors and have now lost that level, that standard, because they are no longer updated, because their social relations have changed, (...) Is there really a development? Because they are not moving forward... in their country, they would probably be at a different level, professionally, and now however they are (...) after many years... the other day a lady came after being here 10 years, “I don’t feel satisfied, I have economic stability, I have this and that, but I’m not satisfied because I’m not in the activity where I’d like to be”. And dissatisfaction generates personal problems. [Mediator, Madrid].

But as our interviewee accurately accounts, the access to the labour market is not only ruled by legal regulations. In many cases, what is involved is the images and stereotypes going around about the (in)capacities of non-communitarian migrant women, who are usually thought of as in-need, dependent and poorly educated women.

**S.** I always wanted to work in the media, because I came with an experience in journalism in Morocco, in radio communication, because I did some work on the radio. But of course, here you can’t even imagine that, because you are a foreigner. They don’t choose you based on your skills, on your whole skills, but... the thing is they don’t either give you (...) then when they get to know you, when they see in you your capacity to give (...) but at first people... How can she be a foreigner and have studies? People have another concept. Now, a little less. So they don’t choose you from your standpoint, or they treat you with cultural paternalism, or from a charity perspective, “poor thing, with three children”. They don’t see in you that you are skilled, that you are knowledgeable... [S. woman, Morocco, 40-50, sponsored].

Some stereotypes are also applied to immigrant’s children in relation to their families’ economic situation and to their limited possibilities for labour and professional instruction.

**President of AMA:** ... there are teachers that, in the class, go around and ask “what do you want to be?” and mine says “well, I would like to be a doctor in the future” and they tell him, “but you are an immigrant, they will never be able to pay for your medical career, you have to adapt to this or that career, which is the maximum they will afford to pay for you”. Where do you report something like that? I don’t know where you can report teachers who treat immigrant children in that way.

We can say that the legislation on foreigners and its quota policy, together with the strongly gendered quality of the labour market (which usually assigns care jobs to women), in articulation with the stereotypes on immigrant population, specially reinforces discrimination towards migrant women. This way, non-communitarian immigrant women workers are perceived (and imaginarily constructed) as if they were only qualified to carry out activities related to social reproduction, since their female condition grants them that kind of implicit and informal qualification, independently from their education level and previous professional experience. These images lead to discriminations, for example, in the access to job positions, even if the candidate has the Spanish nationality, because her accent reveals her condition of impostor, of fake citizen.
Su.: So I went to an interview at El Corte Inglés. And the only thing they wanted to know was, first, how my Catalan was, which I think was the least relevant element when you are applying for a position in human resources. Catalan is alright, but the question was “how is your Catalan?”. And the second one, which is also [...] when a person has a nationality, and besides one has earned it, [...] I have the Spanish nationality, and I say Spanish, so there’s no starting again with the “Spanish, where from?”. No, Spanish. And until I say Colombian they won’t be at ease. And when I say Colombian, they underline with red. And I already know they won’t call me. And that’s how it is. And that is ignorance/not knowing... [Su, woman, Colombia, 40-50, sponsored]

Due to their double condition as immigrant coming from poor countries and, besides, a woman, a similar, deeply underestimated, cultural background is assumed. An image that does not match the accounts collected in our interviews.

A.: I’d like to work with women... and I hope some day I’ll be able to... because it is nice... to help each other... tell each other our experiences... help each other meaning... letting the others know how one managed to progressively overcome a situation where one was feeling lost... where you had no hope... to help other women to also find a way out of that... Now... I’m working at a house... I take care of a lady... I do the housework, and I also work in an office, cleaning... and a job that, although I had never done it, now I’m doing it... and I feel fine. [A., woman, El Salvador, 50-60, sponsored].

S.: My communication profession? Man, I practiced it between Morocco and here... for example, right now I’m doing many chronicles. I did quite a few things with Morocco, but here, no. Here I worked doing whatever in the beginning, and I kept my ambitions. But I always said “someday that will come true”. The truth is also maybe that I have insisted a lot. [...] I started to work in some media being downtown, collaborating with the network Ser, a local radio from Pinto before that, that way... And I continue up to now. [S., woman, Morocco, 40-50, sponsored].

Su.: What I did was that I was, at the same time, doing the validation of my studies, of all my studies. First the validation at the University of Barcelona, then I studied psychology at Ramón Llull. Then I did a whole bunch of masters and postgraduate studies, [...] and with the European Community I was a teacher, I’ve given courses on intercultural mediation. [...] For mediators of different districts, during to years. [...] And I trained them... I was able to do everything, from designing the course, what I wanted to teach, to actually teaching it. And I called it training... [Su., woman, Colombia, 40-50, sponsored].

7. Information, Perceptions, and Strategies

Most of our interviewed people get information on administrative procedures and legal processes through networks of friends, relatives, workmates and employers. In some cases, they resorted to associations (Su) and to the district’s social worker (N and P). Some have processed their residence permits and reunifications through lawyers, and some have done it personally. Personal processing takes a lot of time because of the long lines at the foreigners’ offices, the constant request of documentation and the officers’ lack of clarity.

Q- How did you contact the lawyer? K.: Through friends. You get that asking foreigners. You ask a mate at work, how do you get the papers? And they’ll tell you I did this and that and that. Hey, give me the address, and they’ll give it to you. People
are kind. Lawyers charge you, it's their job, it's evident. I went to a lawyer, she's very good, there's always a lot of people at the office, they are two sisters. [K., woman, Bulgaria, 40-50, sponsored].

L.: I have done all the papers myself, because it is very expensive... the cost of a nationality now is between 500 and 800 euros, with lawyers, and the cost of a residence card is between 300 and 400, just paying the lawyer. And on top of that, you have to consider the time factor, and that forces you to hire a lawyer. I have never done it, I've always done it by myself. I go there, I get informed and I follow all the procedures, but of course, some people can't go and get informed, then return, gather all the papers... it's not possible. [L., woman, Ecuador, 40-50, sponsored].

Amongst the interviewees, the most extended sensation regarding the processes they have to follow to obtain the residence and work permits or the visas for family reunification is the administrative arbitrariness. Luck or fate seem to define the time it will take to complete a procedure or the type of documentation and rights that are finally obtained. The uncertainty also refers to the constant modification in the legislation, the requirements and their implementation.

Mx.: But by and by, you get into the system, before you know it's six months, one year, 2 years, 3 years. Time is flying. And then you look at the time, "oh, I've been here three years!" Often times it is not like the documents just come. Some people spend years and they don't get it. [Mx, man, Nigeria, 30-40, Sponsor]

P.: They told me they would only give me the residence permit, but now I turn the card and on the back it says residence and work, so I don't know why... destiny or what, but I was lucky and they included work too. Because I was a housewife and N was sustaining me so that I'd get the residence. But well, in the end they let me work. [P, woman, Argentina, 30-40, sponsored].

President of AMA: People care to know the law. The problem is the implementation of that law in practice. I mean, it is a law that complicates people’s lives a lot.

The interviewees also talk about the arbitrariness in the processes that have to be followed in their country of origin, but in some cases the procedures can be “advanced” using bribes.

H.: The real delay was over there. They said come today, come tomorrow... I don't know, maybe because of the documents they ask, you need to present your birth certificate, your marriage certificate, etc. So it was a long process, the letter arrived in April and finally he was given the visa in August. So we started the process in December, he finally arrived in August. [H, woman, Nigeria, 20-30, sponsor]

L.: In Ecuador, the truth is that it is easier because of bribery. There you have many opportunities to bribe the authorities, and if you have to stand in a three-day line, you also bribe and you come in first. It's bad to say it, but it's what's there, and not here. [L., woman, Ecuador, 40-50, sponsor]

At this point, it is important to stress that the different strategies that are displayed to overcome the legal obstacles they find in the way are perceived as logical responses (and almost natural) to the obstructions posed by the regulations or the officials.
**K.** ... well, you pay a person who does it for money. That is how things are. If you cannot do it legally, there are always doors open to doing it illegally. [K, woman, Bulgaria, 30-40, sponsored].

**President of AMA:** I mean, it’s not that people like to do things the irregular way, but if authorities in western countries do not make life easy for the citizens, the land doesn’t belong to anyone anymore.

**L.** We have to find the trick somewhere else. In the end, it’s the states that lose, because, since we don’t have a job offer, we can’t contribute. However, we are working. It’s a lie that you don’t work because you don’t have a job offer... [L., woman Ecuador, 40-50, sponsor]

Another mentioned limitation in the access to information is related to the field of rights. Some of the interviewed women feel they do not know too well what the real rights are for immigrant people and they think they have rights that many times they do not use or they claim because of a lack of information, because they do not know, because they do not speak the language well, or because their immigrant condition makes them feel insecure.

**H.** When you are an immigrant, you don’t know very much about the rights we have. Nobody would want to tell you. I know there are some rights we have but as an immigrant they don’t want to let you know. And especially is more difficult for us, non Spanish speaking countries, because people from South America would understand more quickly than we. (...) [they could give us] information, to make us know this is what is going on, this is what you are supposed to have, this is the law... We need proper explanation for us to move on, without it we are living in the air, walking, walking... [H., woman, Nigeria, 20-30, sponsor]

**A.** Though they tell you “look, you have the same rights”, in practice that is not how it is (...) just now I had the experience of a job where I had to take care of a lady, and she suddenly said she didn’t need me anymore... and she paid me, but not what she had promised she would... I felt powerless because if I had been in my country I wouldn’t have let her do that... but here I said there’s no point in... there is nothing to do and I didn’t have the courage to tell her a thing or two. You are afraid that it’s like you are invading a place by being there and that you have no right to defend your rights, simply because you don’t feel you are from here so... because they can kick you out, or they could go and complain, and say I said this... so this led me to put my head down and feel powerless. I felt angry, I felt furious, because she told me a lot of unfair things and didn’t pay me... [A. woman, El Salvador, 50-60, sponsored].

In the opinion of the interviewed mediator from Madrid’s social services, the lack of information of immigrant parents on the way the Spanish school system works is one of the main obstacles for a good social insertion of children over 16 years of age, who are not admitted into the formal system if undocumented.

**Mediator:** What happens is that many mothers and fathers, before regrouping, do not really know the education system, and we always suggest to them to become familiar with the whole education itinerary so they won’t go against their children’s best interest. Because maybe they have been very good students and they are finishing secondary school... of course, the emotional factor weights there and it is very hard, (...) There is no integration there then, because if they will regularize their situation in a year or two years, that means they will not enter secondary school here, and then you can rule out professional instruction, it is really exclusive. [Mediator, Madrid].
This limitation in the access to the formal education system does not apply to minors under 16, even if they are in an irregular situation.

MI.: Here in Spain I don’t have papers and that is what now has me a little... because right now my daughters are already studying... T. started almost three weeks after getting here, and the eldest after a month, exactly the day it was a month since she had arrived it was her first day of school. It went well for me because I got the vacancies, fast I think, because what I want is for them to integrate as soon as possible, to enter this society, to have their time occupied and not to be thinking too much about over there. [MI, woman, Bolivia, 30-40, sponsor]

One thing that is repeatedly criticized about the attention and information provided by government officials at the foreigners’ offices refers to the disdain immigrant people feel treated with. Many times, these officials seem to have difficulties to communicate even with people who speak the same language (Spanish) but in a different way, as it happens with immigrants coming from Latin America. But this complaint on the arrogance they are treated with is something that often appears in the words of Latin Americans about “Spanish people” in general.

A.: We come from a country where we speak Spanish, but there are certain phrases, there are certain things one doesn’t understand right... that maybe one is saying the same thing, but they don’t understand you either... as I told a lady here in the foreigners’ office who I was telling things to... and I was answering to what she had asked me, only I was doing it with my own words... and she answered on very hard terms, and I told her “if you are working here, you have to know how to interpret properly what one tells you” (...) but they want you to answer fast and they don’t understand what you answer them... so they have no patience, they have a very disdainful attitude towards immigrants. The foreigners’ office is dreadful at treating the immigrants. (...) There should be a space where one feels well, where they gave you better orientation, look, we can do this, that, you have to bring this and that. They should be aware that, if immigrants didn’t exist, they wouldn’t be in that job receiving a salary... I told that woman this. [A., woman, El Salvador, 50-60, sponsored].

These confrontations with the administration seem to be the first steps in the path of self-recognition as an immigrant. Something that disturbs and generates a strangeness towards themselves.

A.: If my son who is there in El Salvador was hearing this I’m telling you... I’d tell him son, soon you’ll be another migrant going to the foreigners’ office and you will feel that awkward [she laughs out loud] Really... that I hope everything goes well in this process us migrants have to go through... [A., woman, El Salvador, 50-60, sponsored].

A scenario that probably does not match the idea they had before travelling. In this sense, we find it very suggestive that in more that one interview explicit reference is made to the distance between the expectations prior to migration and the reality migrant people are usually confronted with.

Mediator: I believe that in the beginning of the migration process designing there is not awareness on what the physical, mental, emotional trip means... I’ve confirmed this (...) I think nobody thinks they will spend years without seeing their children again, because I think there is no real information on what they are going to find in this society, the legal barriers, the labour situation there is, the economic situation, (...) and logically a high level of stress for women, this separation from family, being
far from their roots, a mourning situation, and each woman will experience this her own way, but it is a strong stress... [Mediator, Madrid].

Mx.: You believe that OK, the light is brighter somewhere else, I got to go there. That’s the main idea. The idea that OK, let me get out of here. I’ve been sitting around, you probably got a job, so you just wanna leave. And then you get to Europe. Often times, the stories you hear back home, are quite different from the realities on the ground here. They tell you “Man you get to Europe, in one month you start working, you earn some money, and you start living well”. But it is different, because the actual realities here, where you must have your residence permit, and then you must observe all the laws, there are procedures you must follow. But you never are aware of this before you leave home. [Mx, man, Nigeria, 30-40, sponsor]

This distance between what was expected and what is experienced is also reflected in the strong orientation we find in all the accounts towards a better future. The present appears as a moment of transition to a future day in which all the planned goals will be achieved. This better future is what in some way helps to go through a present that is not always pleasant. Everyday sacrifice is the road to the construction of a happy tomorrow.

A.: I think there are opportunities here, that is my illusion... I think there are because that is my hope, because you leave your homeland, your country, to find something better. Otherwise, well, we would just stay there... for me and for my daughters this country offers something better... [A, woman, El Salvador, 50-60, sponsored]

P.: It’s like now I’m devoted to being with my children, taking care of the boys... I hardly ever think of that at all, because I cook everyday, I get up, I organize everything in the house and with the kids, and the day almost goes by and I’m relaxed about work, even if it is this, making crafts and selling them in the summer, like... Anyway, I know it is now, this moment, that I’m living like this. [P., woman, Argentina, 30-40, sponsored].

MI.: If God has wanted me to be here, there must be a reason. Time will heal their wounds and they’ll forgive me at some point having left them. They’ll appreciate what I am now offering them... that’s what I have left/I have that, right? [MI, woman, Bolivia, 30-40, sponsor]

This orientation towards a better future is in some cases shaped as faith in a new amnesty that will come together with another regularization process.

MI: You have to have faith, it will pass, a new amnesty law, with which I don’t have to travel to Bolivia to get the papers. [MI, woman, Bolivia, 30-40, sponsor].

L.: There’s already a lot of people. I think the government will make a law to regularize. [L, woman, Ecuador, 40-50, sponsor]

Something that has surprised us: the most extended narrative strategy amongst the collected accounts is the construction of the migration experience as something positive. No matter the amount of obstacles our interviewees have had to overcome or the difficult situations they have lived, in none of the interviews the discourse on the migration experience is a victimising speech. On the contrary, in the great majority of the accounts migrants are presented as active and reflective subjects, who make a positive balance of their bet on what they think is a better life. There are criticisms and claims, but we find no laments about
rootlessness or de-culturization, but a pragmatic perspective instead, which narrates the migration as an experience of change and learning. The subjects are very well aware that every bet has its risks and its costs.

**N.:** We are all different. We come from different places, it affects us in different ways. Our relation with reality, with the situation, with the environment, is personal. In this sense, I don’t think that my experience with paper was bad. [...] Suddenly a door opened, and the others that were closed opened too. [N., man, Argentina, 30-40, sponsored].

**MI.:** I’m honestly fine. I’ve been lucky with the people that have employed me, the people I have run into, like L., who are always cheering me up, encouraging me, because it’s not all nice and rosy⁸, is it? And now I’m happy because they are with me. I see that they are sleeping, that they have eaten, I see, and I am calm that their father’s severity is no longer hurting them. He is there and nothing reaches us anymore. But it also saddens me a little to have to leave them alone, while I work. I need to work so they have their expenses covered. It saddens me a little not to have more time to share with them and not being here in a more stable situation, in a legal situation, let’s say. Because I’m illegal, they are illegal, what security can I provide them? Not even work, because I have nothing to hold on to. Right now I have nothing to hold on to, but I don’t want to be pessimistic either... [MI., woman, 30-40, Bolivia, sponsor]

**S.:** The truth is that here I was very lucky. I had people around me, wonderful, Spanish people, and specially a great woman, whom I dedicated my 17-years-of-work award to the other day... Because I’m still working at the city hall as a translator, not hired but autonomous. [S, woman, Morocco, 40-50, sponsored].

**K.:** But people here are very kind, yes. If you ask something, they’ll explain really well. They are very, very loving (...) Before we... poverty made us rather closed and wary, but a Bulgarian person is almost like a Spanish person, they are very open, they always get together, the family is always together, many friends if you have a birthday party, you have at least thirty guests, and Spanish people too. Well, Catalans are a little more closed. We also dance a lot. Here in Catalonia people don’t dance as much. In other areas yes, they say they are more cheerful... But you get used to it. I don’t remember my country’s celebration... The first year I did, but now, I hardly remember, but it’s not because I feel less Bulgarian, but life changes you, obligations, other things, and little by little... [K., woman, 40-50, Bulgaria, sponsored].

**P.:** You can’t be in a place where everybody is mistreated, and put up with your children being mistreated. That’s it, you leave. Even if you don’t want to you leave. Out of need you go out to search for a place to live where there is life. That’s the story, isn’t it? It’s always like that. [P., woman, Argentina, 30-40, sponsored].

**A.:** And now, however, everything is different. I am like reorganizing my life, more independently, more freely. I have nobody controlling me, nobody demanding explanations, and so, on my own, I organize myself, I do my budget, and according to what I earn, well, that, I organize myself... [A, woman, El Salvador, 50-60, sponsored]

---

⁸ Original: “No todo es color de rosa”.
References


Pedone, Claudia (2006) Estrategias migratorias y poder. 'Tu siempre jalas a los tuyos', Quito, Bya Yala, PCMD.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Country &amp; interviewee</th>
<th>Sex of migrant</th>
<th>Current occupation of migrant</th>
<th>Previous occupation in home country of migrant</th>
<th>Occupation of sponsor</th>
<th>Age of migrant/sponsor interviewee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Woman was brought in by her daughter through a work permit in agriculture regime, within the quota system.</td>
<td>El Salvador Migrant</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Domestic and Care Work</td>
<td>Upholsterer's</td>
<td></td>
<td>50-60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Man with a work permit bringing in wife and son.</td>
<td>Pakistan Sponsor</td>
<td>F and 1 boy</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>Owner of restaurant</td>
<td>31-40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Man with work permit trying to bring in his partner and their son.</td>
<td>Nigeria Sponsor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Journalist</td>
<td>31-40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Woman with work permit brought in husband and their 3 children as tourist.</td>
<td>Ecuador Sponsor</td>
<td>M and 3 Children</td>
<td>Cleaning sector</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Cleaning enterprise</td>
<td>41-50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Single woman, undocumented, brought her 2 daughters as tourists.</td>
<td>Bolivia Sponsor</td>
<td>2 girls</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Domestic work</td>
<td>31-40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Woman came to Spain to meet her husband as tourist.</td>
<td>Bulgaria Migrant</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Domestic work</td>
<td>Cook in restaurant</td>
<td>Building worker</td>
<td>31-40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Number</td>
<td>Migrant Details</td>
<td>Sponsor Details</td>
<td>Occupation Details</td>
<td>Occupation-Specific Details</td>
<td>Age Range</td>
<td>Work Sector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Migrant woman with Spanish citizenship brought in her son.</td>
<td>Dominican Republic Sponsor</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Domestic work 31-40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Woman and 3 children were reunified by her husband, who was living in Spain.</td>
<td>Morocco Migrant</td>
<td>F and 3 children.</td>
<td>Journalist, translator, mediator</td>
<td>Journalist</td>
<td>Shop owner 41-50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Couple (not married) came together, with one son, as tourist, to meet his father, mother and sister.</td>
<td>Argentina Migrants</td>
<td>F and M</td>
<td>F: housewife, craftwork M: gardener, craftwork, etc.</td>
<td>Craftwork</td>
<td>31-40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Woman brought in by Spanish man, as tourist. She got residence and work permits in the domestic work sector.</td>
<td>Colombia, migrant</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Social Worker</td>
<td>Psicologist-Mediator</td>
<td>Lawyer 41-50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Woman with work permit brought husband and son.</td>
<td>Nigeria sponsor</td>
<td>Boy and M.</td>
<td>Building worker</td>
<td>Studied Physical Education</td>
<td>Nurse assistance 21-30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>