

28

Barcelona Societat

Journal on social knowledge and analysis

Take stand

The Mediterranean: border necropolitics

In depth

Foreign **migration** in Barcelona: from the financial crisis of 2008 to the pandemic of 2020

The situation of domestic workers of migrant origin in times of Covid-19: analysis and perspectives

Reception policy in Barcelona. Thirty years of experiences and lessons learned

Living in the *barzaj*: the tensions of the ghosts of glocalization. The *atrezzo* that accompanies lone young migrants on the stage of Fortress Europe

Fewer rights, greater suffering. Perspectives on the Migrant Detention Centre (CIE) in Barcelona's Zona Franca

Inter-epistemic dialogue for a broad neighbourhood participation model

Experiences

Paper Dreams. Employment schemes as a regularisation opportunity

The Barcelona Discrimination Observatory: figures, problems and challenges for the city

Anti-rumour strategy: taking stock of a 10-year-old policy conceived in Barcelona

The key can be in a name. Detection of evidence of ethnic discrimination in access to the rental housing market in Barcelona



September 2021

Presentation**Foreword**[Bru Laín and Albert Sales](#)**Take stand**

The Mediterranean: border necropolitics

[Blanca Garcés Mascareñas](#)**In depth**

Foreign migration in Barcelona: from the financial crisis of 2008 to the pandemic of 2020

[Andreu Domingo, Juan Galeano and Jordi Bayona](#)

The situation of domestic workers of migrant origin in times of Covid-19: analysis and perspectives

[Sònia Parella Rubio](#)

Reception policy in Barcelona. Thirty years of experiences and lessons learned

[Ramón Sanahuja Vélez](#)Living in the *barzaj*: the tensions of the ghosts of glocalization. The atrezzo that accompanies lone young migrants on the stage of Fortress Europe[Neus Arnal Dimas](#)

Fewer rights, greater suffering. Perspectives on the Migrant Detention Centre (CIE) in Barcelona's Zona Franca

[José Javier Ordóñez Echeverría](#)

Inter-epistemic dialogue for a broad neighbourhood participation model

[Omaira Beltrán](#)**Experiences**

Paper Dreams. Employment schemes as a regularisation opportunity

[Marta Edo, Loles Martínez, Daniela Martínez, Albert Paredes, Juana Prados, Carme Turull, Nerea Couselo, Omayma El Ouahhabi and Sergio Hidalgo](#)

The Barcelona Discrimination Observatory: figures, problems and challenges for the city

[Iris Aviñoa Ordóñez](#)

Anti-rumour strategy: taking stock of a 10-year-old policy conceived in Barcelona

Joint authorship by the [Department of Interculturality and Religious Pluralism for the Area for Culture, Education, Science and Community](#)

The key can be in a name. Detection of evidence of ethnic discrimination in access to the rental housing market in Barcelona

[Ariadna Fitó](#)

Barcelona Societat

Journal on social knowledge and analysis

Issue 28 - September 2021

Editorial Advisory Board

Laura Pérez, Fourth Deputy Mayor for the Area of Social Rights, Global Justice, Feminism and LGBTI

Joan Ramon Riera Alemany, Councillor for Childhood, Youth and the Elderly

Lucía Martín, Councillor for Housing and Renovation

Marc Serra, Councillor for Citizen Rights and Immigration

Gemma Tarafa, Councillor for Health, Ageing and Care

Sonia Fuertes, Commissioner for Social Action

María Truñó, Commissioner for Education

Research advisor

Bru Laín and Albert Sales

Drafting and coordination

Pep Gómez and Txus Molar, Knowledge and Research Department

Editorial Board

Eva Alfama, Department of Feminism and LGBTI Affairs

Jaume Blasco, Municipal Institute of Education

Pablo Castaño, Fourth Deputy Mayor for the Area of Social Rights, Global Justice, Feminism and LGBTI

Dolors Cortina, Municipal Data Office

Marta Fabà, Municipal Institute of Social Services

Pep Gómez, Knowledge and Research Department

Bru Laín, University of Barcelona

Davide Malmusi, Directorate for Health Services

Sergi Morera, Municipal Institute of People with Disabilities

Laia Pineda, Institute of Children and Teenagers

Maika Rodríguez, Public Health Agency

Homera Rosetti, Communication Department

Albert Sales, Barcelona Institute of Regional and Metropolitan Studies

Júlia Trias, Councillor for Citizen Rights and Immigration

Vanessa Valiño, Councillor for Housing

Language consulting

Linguaserve IS, SA

Original design

Croma Studio

Design

Jordi Salvany

Photography

Istockphoto and Barcelona City Council

Some images have been ceded by the authors of the articles and others have been downloaded from free databases identifying authorship

Print

Dilograf, S.L.

Edition



Social Observatory of Barcelona
Research and knowledge Department
Area of Social Rights, Global Justice, Feminism and LGBTI
Barcelona City Council
València, 344 – Barcelona- Phone: 934132669

ISSN: 1133-635

Legal license: B-21.686-1993

©Ajuntament de Barcelona

Barcelona Societat is issued biannually

Data and information are allowed to be reproduced if sources are mentioned

The articles included in this publication are of exclusive responsibility of their authors



Presentation

Marc Serra

Councillor for Citizen Rights and Participation at Barcelona City Council

There is nothing new about foreign nationals arriving in Barcelona to develop their life plans. In the 20th century, the people arriving in the city mostly came from other parts of Spain. But from the 1980s onwards, a significant number of people from Latin America and Northern Africa started to arrive. It was in this context that the Care Service for Immigrants, Emigrants and Refugees (SAIER) was created in Barcelona, with the aim of welcoming and providing support for migrants, asylum seekers and refugees arriving in the city.

Over thirty years have passed since then, during which time profound, structural changes in this area have occurred in the city. In 2000, there were about 46,000 foreign nationals registered as residents in the city, or 3.5% of Barcelona's population. By 2020, there were 360,000 registered foreign nations, which represents 21% of all city residents.

Therefore, in regard to migration and refuge, the challenges facing municipal services and policies have changed. Although local administrations do not have formal jurisdiction over immigration and refuge, municipalities are responsible for providing support and accompanying all city residents, whatever their origins. For this reason, beyond state legislation, public policies and services aimed at managing the arrival of foreign nationals can only be properly conceived and implemented if this is done at a local, urban level.

The City of Barcelona has a long history of promoting public policies and services aimed at sheltering migrants and refugees. In recent years, we have experienced situations that are unprecedented in recent history, such as the so-called "refugee crisis", which started in 2015. It was then that SAIER's care work started to increase, rising from just over 2,000 asylum seekers in that year to over 9,500 by 2019. This change has been a challenge for Barcelona. In response, the city created Nausica, a pioneering programme to support asylum seekers who, on leaving the Spanish Asylum Programme, had not achieved a sufficient level of personal and economic autonomy. The programme provided support in the areas of housing, vocational integration, legal advice, psycho-social support, language training and schooling. Furthermore, the Refuge City Network was created, which is currently formed by around twenty cities all over Spain. It aims to share good practices and begin politically effective processes in order to jointly tackle these challenges.

In addition to the challenge posed by the growth in the number of asylum seekers in Barcelona since 2016, over 90% of asylum applications are rejected, which means that tens of thousands of city residents end up being in an irregular administrative situation. Administrative irregularities are a serious impediment to their chances of developing any kind of life project. For this reason, Barcelona City Council has promoted active resident-registration policies, especially in the last five

years, with the aim of ensuring that all city residents have access to basic rights such as health and education, whatever their current administrative situation may be. Meanwhile, the City Council continues to promote actions that focus on closing the Foreign Nationals Internment Centre (CIE) in Barcelona, a paradigmatic centre for the European migration policy, which is opaque and offers internees no rights, while we work hand in hand with organisations that defend human rights in the city, providing legal and psycho-social support for the internees. In parallel with the actions carried out at a state level, aimed at attaining the necessary changes and relaxation of legislation concerning foreigners, Barcelona City Council has promoted various programmes, such as employment plans or funding to stimulate recruitment, focusing on the regularisation of these people's administrative situation, thereby combating the social, economic and administrative exclusion they are subjected to.

The irruption of Covid-19 in 2020 caused a social and economic crisis of as yet unknown scope, which has hit people in vulnerable situations particularly hard, including migrants and refugees. Home and care workers and young migrants who are alone or have left care are two of the groups that have been most affected by the current context. This problem is being addressed by a series of more intensive support policies, run by the other responsible administrations.

It is often these groups that suffer serious stigmatisation, which incites hate speech and social and institutional racism. For this reason, Barcelona City Council has reinforced municipal resources such as the Office for Non-Discrimination (OND) and has intensified collaboration with social organisations within the framework of the Discrimination Observatory –which currently has twenty-two member organisations that work towards non-discrimination–, the Human Rights Resource Centre (CRDH) and the Anti-Rumour Network, formed by three hundred and ninety organisations and over six hundred individuals. Similarly, in 2020, the City Council produced the study *La clau pot ser un nom* (*The Key Could Be a Name*), concerning racial discrimination in access to housing. The study revealed that people with names of Arab origin had 20% fewer opportunities for gaining access to housing than people with Spanish or Catalan names. The objective of these services and tools is to support the victims of discrimination and to discover the extent of discrimination in our city, in order to co-produce, with the affected groups and organisations specialising in this area, a series of transformative public policies aimed at eradicating the scourge of discrimination and hate speech. In addition to providing support, in discrimination situations where sufficient evidence can be obtained, Barcelona City Council also initiates sanctioning procedures, as in the case of fines imposed for discrimination in access to housing due to racial reasons.

When designing public policies addressing migrants and refugees and the fight against discrimination, Barcelona City Council has always had the support of Barcelona's Municipal Immigration Council (CMIB), made up of nearly sixty migrant organisations and associations, which accompany asylum seekers and refugees, as well as local-resident associations, civic and cultural associations and trade unions, which together constitute a forum of joint governance and joint production of public policies. Through the CMIB, Barcelona City Council has ceaselessly called for greater support and funding from the Spanish Government and the European Union, in order to develop more decent, comprehensive refugee policies.

In this issue of the *Barcelona Societat* magazine, we analyse these and other questions relating to migration. The current challenges concerning migration and refugees are far from minor, but rather those of an open, complex and diverse city such as Barcelona. Ultimately, they are the challenges of a city that is growing thanks to its diversity and wishes to be a place of freedom and rights for each and every resident, whatever their origins.

Foreword

Bru Laín and Albert Sales

Migration – population movement whereby one or more people move geographically more or less permanently – is not a new phenomenon. For thousands and thousands of years, people have moved from one country to another or changed city, region or even continent for various reasons: forced to do so by climate change, for reasons to do with the search for food, to flee wars, civil strife or persecution, to find a safer place to live or work, and so on. These days, we tend to think there are more migratory processes than before and that, as a result of globalisation, there are now many more displaced persons. History shows us, however, that there has always been migration (both of ‘who goes’ and ‘who comes’) and that, if anything, what is changing is the our conception of them. For example, during the first two decades of the 20th century, migratory movements were perceived very differently and in a more ‘natural’ or ‘justified’ way than now, given that, among other reasons, the passport – the formal and administrative requirement that accredits us as a migrant – is a post-1918 invention motivated by the enormous population movements caused by the First World War.

The conception we have of this phenomenon today, however, is substantially different and, unfortunately, much more negative. We associate migration, above all, immigration (people ‘who come’) with people trying to gain access to ‘our country’ for economic needs. Accordingly, administrative constraints, such as the passport, and legal regulations, such as the European reception regulations, seem more ‘normal’ to us, because the prevailing logic dictates that ‘there isn’t enough room for us all here’. But we forget that there are currently over 2.5 million Spanish people living abroad (more than half of whom are aged between 20 and 34) and that in 2017 alone, nearly 80,000 had to emigrate in search of a (better) future. The situation is the same but viewed from a double and contradictory standard.

In short, both public opinion and legal, national and international directives increasingly tend to blame migrants for their (bad) luck and consequently demand they demonstrate their vulnerability to assess whether they are worthy of our respect for their rights, such as freedom of movement, for example. However, satisfying this procedure is not usually enough for regularising the situation of newcomers who, in the vast majority of cases, and living badly ‘from procedure to procedure’, end up expanding the list of the most vulnerable and excluded groups in our societies. To put an end to this situation, in May 2020, various citizen initiatives were made public around Europe calling for the extraordinary regularisation of all those people in European territory who were in an irregular situation from an administrative point of view.

In the case of the Spanish State, the campaign ‘Regularisation now’ rallied up to 900 organisations and other entities of all kinds around the demand for giving work and residence permits to the nearly 600,000 people who it is estimated are living in a situation of administrative irregularity in our country. Among other arguments, this campaign denounced the fact that, during the pandemic,

a large part of the essential and necessary tasks for sustaining our society were being done by people of various origins who, paradoxically and unfairly, found themselves in a situation of extreme exclusion and vulnerability because of their administrative situation.

Despite the repeated use of slogans such as 'Let no one be left behind', the inequalities and injustices caused by the migratory control system were there to be seen from the first days of lockdown at the start of March 2020. Official registered unemployment is the problem everybody talks about but the real drama does not even appear in daily newspapers. The halt to the informal economy, the abuses to which a large part of the migrant workers working in it are subjected to and their consequent lack of legal, economic and labour rights was the first, and most dramatic symptom of the unequal impact that the new crisis has had on thousands and thousands of people. The Covid-19 pandemic and the drastic social and economic measures adopted to contain it have helped to make it more obvious than ever that there are people walking the streets who are afraid of being stopped by the police simply because of their physical appearance, who lack full health cover, who cannot benefit from a temporary lay-off or who have no right to continue receiving part of their wages in 'black' (undeclared) money, who cannot aspire to any social protection because administratively they do not exist, who cannot vote, who have not access to decent housing, and so on.

These and other problems associated with migration are clear above all in the urban environment, i.e. where the system's contradictions and their consequences materialise and take a more explicit and experiential shape. Thus, migration, and the social, economic and political context in which it takes place, have a decisive influence on the social reality of cities. In fact, they help to give shape to them and make them as they are. That is why we felt it was more than necessary to devote this issue of *Barcelona Societat* to the question of migration and to the many expressions it takes in the city framework. In other words, to think of migration and migratory processes from the city and in the city. In that regard, and given that it is a very topical and important question, we felt it was necessary first of all to approach it from a broad perspective, the so-called *refugee crisis* and the framework that the various European and Spanish regulations impose on cities when it comes to managing the arrival of refugees and migrants. The Mediterranean has become a graveyard to which European law and geostrategic balances do nothing but send more and more corpses. We also wanted to analyse how both the financial crisis and the current crisis caused by Covid-19 impact on migratory movements and residential patterns in our city which attracts many people but at the same time expels people to other places. Likewise, and looking beyond the present crisis, we also wanted to focus especially on the situation of migrant women who work in the domestic sphere, both their living conditions and the reality of their social and work situation, given that this is one of the most vulnerable groups in the city and, consequently, a good indicator for understanding the reality of immigration and how the public authorities respond to it. We also believe that it is important to ask ourselves about the situation of unaccompanied foreign minors as they are becoming the target of hate speech and one of the topics that most attracts the attention of the press and of populist forces. For that reason, it is important we analyse the phenomenon of minors in our city calmly, serenely and thoroughly. In the same vein, we did not want to forget the question of the foreign national internment centres (CIE in Spanish and Catalan) which unfortunately deprive a good number of Barcelona's inhabitants of their liberty and violate their most basic rights. We also believed it was interesting to analyse how local associations and residents in general view the phenomenon of immigration and how, through everyday use of the word and the construction of discourse, very specific collective images of immigrants and the groups they comprise are created.

In addition, we felt it relevant to study some specific cases of public policies or more concrete and specific social projects which, in one way or another, are concerned with more focused but now less important questions. First of all, we asked ourselves what legal or labour mechanisms Barcelona has at its disposal for ensuring that people in an irregular administrative situation can gain access to the world of work, the real door to full citizenship and achieving the most basic rights. Some years ago, the city launched a number of programmes in that regard, so we need to ask ourselves how far they have got, what they have achieved and what remains to be done from

now on. Given that the kinds of discrimination that lots of people suffer because of the colour of their skin or where they come from are many and complex, we want to contribute some data and information on what this phenomenon is like in Barcelona and we also wanted to analyse the work and objectives of the city's Discrimination Observatory. Very closely linked to this last point, we believed it was important to analyse the so-called 'Anti-rumours Strategy', a successful city strategy with a ten-year history that has become a national and international benchmark for combating stereotypes of migrants and their descendants. Rumours, calculated or not, are the prelude to racist discourse and attitudes, and spread easily. They are therefore a source of concern not only for the public authorities but also for all the citizens organised in this network. Lastly, we have crossed one of the city's biggest problems, housing, with the phenomenon of immigration and asked ourselves to what extent newcomers, for the mere fact of having a foreign name or surname, suffer exclusion from the city's housing market.

Due to a lack of space, it is impossible to deal with all the problems, all the phenomena and all the questions related to migration in a single issue of *Barcelona Societat*. Nevertheless, this limitation has now prevented us from tackling those we considered the most important when analysing this phenomenon: migratory policy and refugees, young people, women workers, legal-police repression, housing and many others. This issue of *Barcelona Societat* provides some important information and well-considered reflections on these issues. However, its aim is not to resolve all these problems in one go but rather to help us to understand their urban dimension and, from that starting point, contribute to finding solutions. We hope you benefit from it and enjoy reading it.

Take stand



September 2021

Key words: necropolitics, border,
maritime rescue, Mediterranean

The Mediterranean: border necropolitics

Blanca Garcés Mascareñas. Senior CIDOB researcher
bgarces@cidob.org, [@blancagarcesmas](https://twitter.com/blancagarcesmas)

This article takes a historical look at how the Mediterranean has become a border based on the normalisation of death: since the shipwreck off the coast of Lampedusa in 2013 to the deafening silence concerning the deaths (by omission) in the latest disaster in April 2021. During the early years, the central question was how to save lives, although the way this response was framed has changed year by year. In recent years, in a process that may have been accelerated by the pandemic, saving lives is no longer the question. The state has started to act (or not act) openly and without subterfuge, even when its actions violate their own legislation. In this context, the article ends by asking what the role of cities has been (including the city of Barcelona) and what qualities all refuge cities should have in order to be considered as such, both in the area of international politics and on a more local and practical scale.

Introduction

'The sea is full of dead bodies (...). There is no more room, neither for the living nor the dead'.

These were the words of the Mayor of Lampedusa, Giusi Nicolini, when 366 people died off the island's coast, on 3 October 2013. The image of hundreds of coffins lined up in an airport hanger are from that day. So are the cries of 'Murderer! Murderer!' shouted at Angelino Alfano, the then vice-president of the Italian government and Minister of Home Affairs.

Over two years later, on 18 April 2015, a fishing boat with more than 800 people on board capsized in the Strait of Sicily. 28 people survived and the rescue teams recovered 24 bodies. The others disappeared without trace. Matteo Renzi, then prime minister of Italy, called for an immediate response: 'Twenty years ago, we and Europe closed our eyes to Srebrenica. Today, we cannot close our eyes again, only to remember it later on'.

Since then, thousands of people have died in the Mediterranean. Not counting the missing, there were 4,054 registered deaths in 2015, 5,143 in 2016, 3,139 in 2017, 2,299 in 2018, 1,885 in 2019 and 1,417 in 2020. Nearly 18,000 deaths in 6 years. The latest major disaster occurred on 22 April 2021, when nearly 130 people died at some point along the route between Libya and Italy. This time, their deaths barely made the news. Neither did the fact that no official maritime rescue service was launched to help them (not from Libya, Malta or Italy), in spite of repeated calls for help.

As De Genova states (Garelli i Tazzioli, 2017: 5), in a certain way, the normalisation of death in the Mediterranean has led to its naturalisation as a border. But this is not only the naturalisation of

death. It is the indifference to these deaths and the acceptance that, effectively, the right of states to 'defend' their borders, avoiding or containing illegal arrivals, comes before the duty (of both states and individuals) to help people in danger. This latest disaster has shown, now shamelessly and without subterfuge, that those people were left to die. This is precisely what is meant by 'border necropolitics': when these deaths form part, or are considered as collateral damage, of non-arrival policies.

This article takes a historical look at how we have reached this point: since the 2013 shipwreck off the coast of Lampedusa to the deafening silence concerning the deaths (by omission) caused by the latest disaster in April 2021. During the early years, the central question was how to save lives, although the way this response was framed has changed year by year. In recent years, in a process that may have been accelerated by the pandemic, saving lives is no longer the question. The state has started to act (or not act) openly and without subterfuge, even when their actions violate their own legislation. In this context, the article ends by asking what the role of cities has been (including the city of Barcelona) and what qualities all refuge cities should have in order to be considered as such, both in the area of international politics and on a more local and practical scale.

1. Maritime rescue (2014)

The first people to save lives in the Mediterranean were fishermen and the captains of merchant vessels. Vessels of the Italian coastguard arrived soon afterwards. Although their aim was border security and control, they could not elude their duty to save lives on the high seas. For example, in 1997, the Italian coastguard alleged the impossibility of returning people to Tunisia, because their duty, established in international maritime law, was to help migrants in difficulties and take them to the Italian coast. From then on, the coastguard's resources increased. Although the coastguard's purpose continued to be border control, saving lives was also one of their priorities. It was not part of the official discourse, but it was established in its regulations, and they put that into practice.

However, the shipwreck on 3 October 2013 changed politics (also in its discursive aspect) and policies. Since that day, the need to save lives became one of the main priorities. Cecilia Malmström, the then European Commissioner for Home Affairs, stated that this was not the Europe they wanted. Beyond its declarations, the Italian government responded by launching Operation Mare Nostrum, which represented a considerable increase in resources for patrolling the international waters of the Strait of Sicily.

Furthermore, Operation Mare Nostrum also involved the Italian state's return to maritime rescue operations, as it assumed a monopoly on the rescues, i.e. for coordinating operations and distributing arrivals among the various ports. It is interesting to note that this leading role for the state permitted and even encouraged the entrance of non-state players. In fact, NGOs returned to the Mediterranean under the umbrella of Operation Mare Nostrum. Under state coordination, they were able to take part in rescue operations without fear of being accused of human trafficking.

Operation Mare Nostrum lasted just over a year, from 18 October 2013 to 31 December 2014, with a final balance of over 170,000 rescued people. In spite of attempts to Europeanise it at both a political and financial level, the European Union only accepted half-heartedly. The British government was one of the main opponents, alleging that an Operation Mare Nostrum at a European level would have a pull effect and encourage migrants to risk their lives. Here the argument was turned upside-down: while saving lives was still the main theme, now it was used to justify the opposite policy. In other words, the end of rescue operations, even more controls and deporting people to countries like Libya and Turkey.

Knowing that they would not be rescued or that they would be deported immediately, who would put their lives at risk? A journalist summarised this as 'Drown an immigrant to save an immigrant',

in the British newspaper *The Telegraph*¹. The argument is that more control and more deportations mean fewer embarkations and, therefore, fewer deaths. This was how the humanitarian discourse and border security ended up joining forces. The result was the European Operation Triton, with far fewer resources, which basically focused on border control.

2. The fight against traffickers (2015)

The second major tragedy, on 18 April 2015, once again changed politics and policies. The *mea culpa* pronounced by Jean-Claude Juncker, who was then President of the European Commission, was absolute. In a parliamentary debate, Juncker admitted that bringing Operation Mare Nostrum to an end had been a mistake, with a high cost in human lives. Consequently, he announced that he would triple the budget, to reach the level of Operation Mare Nostrum. According to him, this would re-establish 'what had been lost along the way', returning to 'normality'². Not only in terms of the budget, but also intention. Frontex focused the operations on rescue and went beyond the territorial area of the member states, including international and even Libyan waters.

But the most direct result of the events of 18 April was the launching of Operation Sophia, which also aimed to 'save lives', but this time not in a 'search and rescue' mode, but rather in a 'fight and combat trafficking' mode. In the image and likeness of Operation Atalanta, which aimed to bring an end to piracy in the Horn of Africa and the Indian Ocean, Operation Sophia's main objective was to identify, capture and destroy the boats used by traffickers.

Therefore, in a little under two years, there was a triple course change. First, protection was no longer guaranteed through rescue and disembarkation on the Italian coast, but rather by preventing migrants from leaving the North African coast. Rescue therefore began to be 'preventative', by leaving them on dry land. Second, the objective was no longer the migrants, but rather the boats that were transporting them. Third, in terms of discourse, the blame was placed on the traffickers. The argument was that destroying their vessels would save the migrants from falling into slavery. The more inhumane and savage the other side (the traffickers) were presented, the more humane and free from responsibility the European border was seen. Once again, the disjunctive between humanitarianism and border security was overcome: controlling the border and fighting against traffickers was the best way to 'save lives'.

This same focus was reinforced with the action plan against illegal migrant trafficking, which came into force in May 2015. The plan justified the fight against traffickers, not only as facilitators for illegally crossing the border, but also as exploiters and abusers of migrants. But the argument goes even further: above all, the traffickers' lack of scruples would explain the border deaths. According to the document: 'in order to maximise profit, the traffickers often load hundreds of migrants onto boats that are not seaworthy (...). Many migrants drown at sea, suffocate in containers or die in the desert'³. In this way, the European Union seemed to stop feeling responsible.

Things therefore went from Juncker's *mea culpa* to denouncement: from rescue to the fight against traffickers, from saving lives at sea to saving lives preventively by leaving them on dry land.

3. Outsourcing control and protection (2016)

While in April 2015 attention was focused on the route between Libya and Italy, most of the million people who entered Europe illegally during that year did so through the Greek-Turkish border. This meant that the political focus turned from the central to the eastern route. In this context, it is necessary to understand the agreement between the European Union and Turkey, signed on 18 March 2016.

1. Read more at <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/politics/11192208/Drown-an-immigrant-to-save-an-immigrant-why-is-the-Government-borrowing-policy-from-the-BNP.html>

2. Juncker's speech can be viewed at https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/SPEECH_15_4896

3. The plan can be viewed at: [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2014_2019/documents/libe/dv/com_com\(2015\)0285_/com_com\(2015\)0285_es.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2014_2019/documents/libe/dv/com_com(2015)0285_/com_com(2015)0285_es.pdf).

Legal experts insist that it was more of a press release than an agreement. The Luxembourg Court of Justice defined it as an informal agreement between Turkey and the member states, rather than with the European Council, so that in February 2017 it declared that it lacked the jurisdiction to evaluate it. These two factors turned the EU-Turkey agreement into an oxymoron: as implacable for asylum seekers it was imposed on, as insubstantial (as in almost non-existent) for courts of justice.

With this agreement, Turkey promised to readmit all the people arriving illegally at the Greek coast. In exchange, the member states accepted to resettle one Syrian citizen for every Syrian returned to Turkey. Furthermore, the European Union promised to accelerate the process for liberalising visas for Turkish citizens and increase financial aid for receiving refugees in Turkey (from €3,000 million to €6,000 million). The message was clear: those interested in reaching Greece illegally would be immediately returned, while those who waited patiently in Turkey would have the chance to enter in their stead.

The agreement failed on two of its main cornerstones: one year later, there had not been any massive deportations from Greece to Turkey (fewer than 1,000 Syrians returned), nor had legal, safe means been initiated for entering the EU from Turkey (fewer than 3,000 resettled people). The number of illegal arrivals to Greece had been reduced drastically: from 1,740 a day, a few weeks before the agreement, to 47 one month after it. In this sense, the agreement served to seal the European Union's eastern border. If leaping into the sea was still the only option for requesting asylum in Europe, how do you explain this reduction in the number of arrivals?

Because the agreement between the EU and Turkey represented one step further in the EU's policy of outsourcing migratory control. In exchange for money and the (unfulfilled) promise to reopen the visa liberalisation process, Turkey promised to control the European Union's external borders and to house the refugees that the member states were unwilling to accept. The long history of agreements between Spain and African countries, but especially with Morocco, demonstrates that outsourcing migratory control is indeed effective, basically because it is easier to prevent arrival than to return migrants once they are inside. And because these states act with greater impunity and, therefore, with greater efficiency.

But beyond outsourcing migratory control, the reduction in the number of arrivals cannot be understood without taking into account what happened within the European borders. In the months prior to the agreement with Turkey, the internal Balkan borders were progressively closed, following the example of countries such as Austria, Hungary and Germany. These border closures, together with military controls and highly-aggressive immediate, or hot, deportation, turned the corridor to Central and Northern Europe into an almost insurmountable wall.

With the Balkan route closed, Greece (until then a place of transit) became a final destination. This was especially true for people arriving after the agreement between the EU and Turkey, who witnessed how, from one day to the next, they became trapped on the islands. According to the European Commission, this geographical restriction was necessary in order to ensure their immediate return to Turkey or their countries of origin. Faced with return (which is always difficult in practice), the only alternative was to request asylum in Greece, with everything that implied in terms of long and uncertain procedures, often within a reception system that was clearly inadequate.

4. Outsourcing rescue and criminalising the NGOs (2018)

With the closure of the Greek-Turkish border, the focus (political and media) turned towards the central route, which recorded the highest number of illegal arrivals to Europe in 2016 (181,436) and in 2017 (119,369). In 2018, migratory pressure moved to the southern Spanish border, with 55,206 illegal arrivals recorded that year, compared with 23,122 arrivals in Italy and 30,706 in Greece. It is this context, especially from 2018 onwards, that we witness a double process: the

outsourcing of rescue to the coastguards of southern countries and the criminalisation of the NGOs that save lives in the Mediterranean.

The outsourcing of rescue was all about reducing maritime rescue teams in Italy and Spain. For example, throughout 2018 and 2019, maritime rescue on the southern Spanish border suffered major budgetary cutbacks, a prolonged breakdown of its search radars and structural deficiencies involving rescue personnel and vessels. The lower the rescue capacity of northern countries, the more responsibilities and resources for those in the south. Therefore, in 2018, Libya regained its SAR (Search and Rescue Region) while its coastguard received training and funding from the European Union and its member states.

The logic behind reinforcing southern coastguards and reducing the capacity and responsibilities of those in the north is clear: if migrants are rescued from the south, they can be returned to the south. This is exactly what outsourcing rescue is seeking; to facilitate what a European vessel cannot do because of the 'non-refoulement' principle, i.e. return people to unsafe third countries. We could ask whether handing migrants over to southern coastguards is not an indirect way of doing the same thing. On this point, at a political and even a legal level, it is often concluded that whatever happens 'over there' is none of our business.

Along with reinforcing southern coastguards, in recent years we have witnessed the progressive criminalisation of rescue NGOs. They have been accused of 'favouring clandestine immigration' and 'collaborating with traffickers'. In the case of the central route, the NGOs have also been pursued for not collaborating with the Libyan coastguard. From this perspective, it doesn't matter who is behind the coastguard or under what conditions the rescues are carried out. It is a question of jurisdiction and now – the authorities argue – the jurisdiction is theirs.

Two examples of these accusations are the cases of the *Luventa*, a rescue vessel belonging to a group of German activists, and the *Open Arms*, belonging to the Badalona NGO. In the former, the Italian authorities confiscated the vessel in July 2017, accusing them of working with the traffickers, having supposedly received the immigrants with the aim of taking them to Europe. In the latter, the vessel *Open Arms* was retained in Sicily in March 2018, also for promoting illegal immigration, but this time accusing them of not collaborating with the Libyan coastguard.

This criminalisation of the NGOs is not unique or exclusive to the central route or the Italian government, at that time dominated by the then Minister for Home Affairs, Matteo Salvini. In 2019, the *Open Arms* was retained in the Port of Barcelona, allegedly for technical reasons. With public opinion especially favourable to 'saving lives in the Mediterranean', the Spanish government (the same one that had welcomed the *Aquarius* a few months earlier, after it was excluded from Italian ports) retained the vessel, although without Salvini's political posturing and alleging technical reasons, with the aim of stifling the matter through administrative channels.

We stated that the NGOs returned to the Mediterranean under the umbrella of Operation Mare Nostrum to help or work under the coordination of Italian authorities. The subsequent progressive withdrawal of the Italian government and the European Union led to the NGOs gradually taking their place. While in 2015, they carried out around 14% of the rescues in the Mediterranean's central route, by 2017, that figure had risen to above 40%⁴. Since 2019, as a result of this criminalisation and with various legal processes ongoing, there are hardly any NGOs left in the Mediterranean. The sea has become a desert. All that are left are merchant vessels and the southern coastguards.

5. Island prisons on the border (2016-2021)

With the agreement between the EU and Turkey, the refugee camps on the Greek islands became black holes for basic rights. The media and the main local and international organisations have

4. 'The war of attrition that Italy is waging against the NGOs in the Mediterranean', *El País* (15 May 2018). https://elpais.com/internacional/2018/05/13/actualidad/1526242362_443394.html

systematically denounced this: from overcrowding and winter temperatures without hot water or heating (who doesn't remember the tents in the snow), to the lack of hygiene, limited nutrition, inadequate medical assistance and high levels of insecurity in the camps. In recent years, these conditions have deteriorated (even more) given the increase in the number of arrivals and the increasingly restrictive criteria used for transferring the most vulnerable people to the continent.

This is not due to a lack of capacity or resources. According to some experts, in 2015 and 2016, Greece was the main source of the humanitarian response in this story, if we measure it in cost per beneficiary. In reality, the conditions in Turkish refugee camps are better. During these years, the Greek authorities have argued that they don't want to become the backyard of Europe, which is why they refuse to deploy a more long-lasting infrastructure. More or less explicitly, the European authorities blame it on the inefficiency of the Greek authorities. But neither of them seem very worried about it, which leads to the conclusion that they don't feel they are doing wrong: the situation in Greece has a clearly dissuasive effect on those who could arrive in the future.

Two policies are behind these border island prisons: the policy of return, where being able to apply it means retaining recent arrivals in geographically enclosed spaces, and the poverty policies, which are based on the assumption that the worse the welcoming conditions, the fewer arrivals there will be. These same policies, which are European policies, have also been applied in the Canary Islands since 2020. It is precisely these policies, and not the increase in the number of arrivals, that are causing the reception crisis in those border locations.

We said above that the agreement between the EU and Turkey failed in its return policy. Most of the people who arrived in the Canary Islands in 2020 and 2021 have not been returned either. Among other things, these low percentages are due to the fact that the countries of origin and transit don't always cooperate (even when there is an agreement). Furthermore, there are currently two more reasons for not doing so: first, the restrictions on mobility, imposed because of the pandemic – we are thinking about Morocco, for example. And secondly, an increasingly indignant population that is starting to blame the authorities for their silence and their responsibility for the deaths. The most recent and obvious example is Senegal.

The other feature that characterises these island prisons are the policies of poverty which tend to turn the reception systems into authentic black holes for basic rights. Legal assistance and the right to the protection of refugees and minors often fail. The reception conditions also fail. This is not a minor issue. The 'Directive on the revised standards of reception' (Directive 2013/33/EU)⁵ obliges member states to guarantee standards that 'provide applicants with a suitable standard of living that ensures subsistence and the protection of their basic physical and psychological health (Article 17.2).

Lastly, these containment policies not only affect the immigrants, but also the population as a whole. The misery of those who live (poorly) in the camps also ends up affecting the lives of those who are living outside them. With the feeling that the EU government has abandoned them, the latter tend to blame all of their problems on the immigrants. It is a war between the poor and the forgotten. It is a conflict without end, given that the solution is not in either of their hands. Even though this happens in geographical margins, there are no contention policies that work here, given that, sooner or later, their effects (in the form of votes for the extreme right wing) reach the geographical centre.

In this regard, Lesbos, Samos, Ceuta and Melilla – and now the Canary Islands, too – all have in common that they are contention areas on the external borders of the European Union. Beyond retaining immigrants, these 'island cages' – as Ana Oramas, the Coalició Canària MP at the Spanish Parliament, called them – contain many of the crises that are currently affecting Europe: the demographic crisis of an empty or emptied Europe that expels its young people; the economic crisis of those areas affected by deindustrialisation or globalisation processes, which are often

5. Accessible at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/ES/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32013L0033&from=ES>

excessively dependent on the monoculture of tourism; the political crisis of a general public who feel neglected by their political representatives; and lastly, the migratory crisis, which may be the least serious, but at the same time it is the most visible, and consequently migrants tend to become scapegoats for all the others. Undoubtedly, these are too many crises for such a small space.

6. The brazen border (2020)

Since 2020, coinciding with the Covid-19 pandemic, the Greek government has stopped looking for subterfuges. They definitively took off their mask and started operating with a bare face. In February of that year, the Greek government decided on a brutal response to those people who were trying to cross the border in the River Evros area. At the beginning of March, Athens decided to suspend the right to asylum. These unprecedented measures were justified in two ways. Firstly, they employed the old argument that illegal entry justifies illegal return, i.e. without having to guarantee such basic rights as access to international protection. Secondly, these measures were also justified using the logic of war. Brussels accused Erdogan of using refugees as a weapon of war, but did not hesitate to legitimise the Greek government's brutal response in the same way: 'I thank Greece for acting as the shield of Europe', said Von der Leyen, the President of the European Commission at the end of her visit to the area. Without the chance of requesting asylum, the migrants became targets that were easily 'arrestable' and 'deportable'. Fear of the pandemic also made it possible to justify what had previously been unjustifiable: from the closure of refugee camps to the withdrawal of the NGOs providing humanitarian aid.

In August of the same year, various media outlets reported the news (with strong proof) that the Greek government had abandoned dozens of refugees at sea in floating tents, expecting the Turkish coastguard to return them to Turkey. In breach of international law, as they had not been given access to asylum procedures. They had been embarked and abandoned at sea, under the cover of night and at the hands of people wearing masks. These are illegal practices of a Greek state that has definitively lost all shame. Behind the Greek government, we once again find the European Union. Based on graphic material and emails from various sources, the German magazine *Der Spiegel* denounced the involvement of Frontex in various of these immediate, or hot, deportations.

In 2020, along with these hot, illegal and brutally conducted deportations, there was also news about deaths in the central Mediterranean due to the omission by the coastguards of the nearest countries. As we said above, the shipwreck of 21 April, with 130 deaths, is the most flagrant example. Neither Rome, nor La Valletta nor Tripoli responded to their pleas for help. A Frontex aircraft is said to have approached, but it did not send any warning message. The *Ocean Viking*, a humanitarian vessel belonging to the French organisation SOS Méditerranée, and three merchant vessels went to their rescue. However, by the time they arrived, it was too late. They were only able to recover 13 bodies.

In short, five years after the badly named 'refugee crisis', the violation of basic rights doesn't seem to give anyone pause for thought. Faced with the disjunctive of which comes first, the right to life (and a decent life) or the right of states to defend their own borders, the balance seems to have tipped towards the latter. It doesn't matter how many reports denounce something which is not only morally reprehensible, but also absolutely illegal. It seems that the states do not care, such is their feeling of impunity. It is no longer necessary to pretend. The illiberality of the so-called *liberal democracies* is now undeniably evident.

7. And where are the cities in all of this?

In 2015, with the arrival of over a million asylum applicants, during the refugee-reception crisis in Europe, many cities assumed a predominant role. Although asylum is entirely a matter of national jurisdiction, the saturation of reception systems led many local administrations to launch alternative services. Many Italian cities, for example, developed local policies to respond to the presence of asylum seekers on their streets, either because they were in transit to other countries or waiting to

formalise their applications or, having done so, hadn't met the necessary criteria for entering the state reception systems.

In other cases, solidarity actions carried out by the general public preceded the policies. For example, in Berlin, over 150 initiatives for receiving recently-arrived refugees were created. In these cases, local administrations tended to assume coordination roles among the various citizen initiatives. The relationship was not always easy: over time, the citizen initiatives were displaced by public services and recognised social organisations, with a definition of who could be assisted and to what degree, which was often much more restrictive.

But since 2015, cities – those that proclaimed themselves to be *refuge cities*, and evidently not all of them are; they may even be a minority – took an important step: while up until that moment municipalities had dedicated themselves to managing their cities, developing policies that were more or less within their jurisdiction and more or less aligned with national policies, in the context of the 2015 reception crisis, some cities started to confront their national governments, also in the area of border politics and policies. For example, in August 2015, the Mayor of Barcelona, Ada Colau, denounced the European Union and its member states for their 'shameful policies' and called insistently for cities to have a more important role in the policies for receiving refugees.

With regard to the deaths in the Mediterranean, some cities denounced their own governments and offered their ports (symbolically, as it was not within their jurisdiction) to humanitarian rescue vessels that did not have permission to disembark. For example, throughout the spring and summer of 2018, Italian cities like Palermo and Naples denounced the policy of the Italian Minister of Home Affairs, Matteo Salvini, against the maritime-rescue NGOs, and other cities such as Barcelona and Valencia called for the Spanish socialist (PSOE) government to open their ports. These are examples of how, in recent years, some European cities have become political subjects, this time also in matters of border control and migratory policies.

Barcelona has been especially active in denouncing deaths in the Mediterranean and supporting Open Arms, the maritime-rescue NGO. For example, in 2019, the City Council signed an agreement with Open Arms to finance their rescue operations in the central Mediterranean (with nearly €500,000). At the beginning of 2021, Barcelona City Council joined the Open Arms case against Matteo Salvini, who ordered the blockade of the rescue vessel during the summer of 2019, when it had 130 shipwreck survivors on board. Together with Open Arms, the City Council claimed economic and moral damages.

8. And would cities do any better?

In this context, to what extent do or could cities represent an alternative? To what extent, as Benjamin Barber says (2013), would cities do things better? Due to their nature, cities are different.

Firstly, the nation state governs a territory while cities govern their people. While the national community coincides with the national territory, making the defence of borders a defence of 'us', cities are, by definition, places with a high level of mobility. Cities don't have borders. A city is a group of people that live together at a certain moment in time.

Precisely because of that, and this is the second difference, the urban general public is, by definition, more inclusive. They are people who live in a city, regardless of their origins, their belongings and, often, also their roles. Although the concept of *citizen* is, by definition, exclusive — it includes those inside and excludes those that remain outside—, urban citizens blur the limits. Lastly, cities are also different when we speak about security. While migratory policies are justified by fear of the 'other' and the defence of one's own security above the security of others, cities know through their own experience that long-term security can only be constructed by the inclusion of everyone. Inclusion is the flip side of security, as exclusion ends up being the flip side of conflict.

But how can these differences form the basis of a new paradigm for the global governance of migrations? Externally, it is necessary to build a real alliance of cities that goes beyond political

posturing and the branding of each city on the international stage. Internally, it involves a real social policy that attenuates inequalities and combats exclusion. Only then can we stop cities from becoming the breeding ground for xenophobic discourses. We should not forget some exclusive tendencies shown by some local authorities: in France and Italy many cities have started to exclude foreigners and European citizens from certain social services; in Spain, some city councils make it difficult for illegal immigrants to officially register as city residents.

It is only through a real social policy that cities can become a refuge, not only for those that are to come, but also for those that are already here. Cities that expel, cities that forget about part of their citizenry, cities that abandon, can never be refuge cities. They can declare it, they can make it a political question with their states.

But without '*social policies*', there are no '*politics*' worthy of the name.

Bibliography

BARBER, B. R. *If mayors ruled the world: Dysfunctional nations, rising cities*. Yale University Press, 2013.

GARELLI, G., TAZZIOLI, M. 'Choucha beyond the Camp: Challenging the Border of Migration Studies'. N. De Genova (ed.). *The Borders of 'Europe'*. Duke University Press (2017), p. 165-184.



In Depth



September 2021

Key words: migrant population,
migratory flows, population growth,
spatial distribution, Barcelona

Foreign migration in Barcelona: from the financial crisis of 2008 to the pandemic of 2020

Andreu Domingo. Centre for Demographic Studies, adomingo@ced.uab.es

Juan Galeano. University of Geneva, Juan.Galeano@unige.ch and

Jordi Bayona. University of Barcelona, jordibayona@ub.edu

Just before the collapse of migration as a result of Covid-19, Barcelona was witnessing a new international migratory boom, one that began in 2014. This recent dramatic growth was linked to the current economic cycle, but was substantially different to what had taken place during the first decade of the 21st century. It is not only a question of an increase in the foreign-born population, but also a change in terms of the origin, sex and age of the new arrivals, and also their level of education. In this paper we look at the main demographic changes that have taken place in the city from the onset of the financial crisis in 2008 to when the pandemic hit in 2020. Particular attention will be paid to the residential distribution of the recently arrived migrant population which is linked to the housing market and the effects of the economic crisis, and also the demographic composition of neighbourhoods and the challenges that the city will have to face in the coming years in order to guarantee social cohesion.

1. Introduction: growth in fits and starts

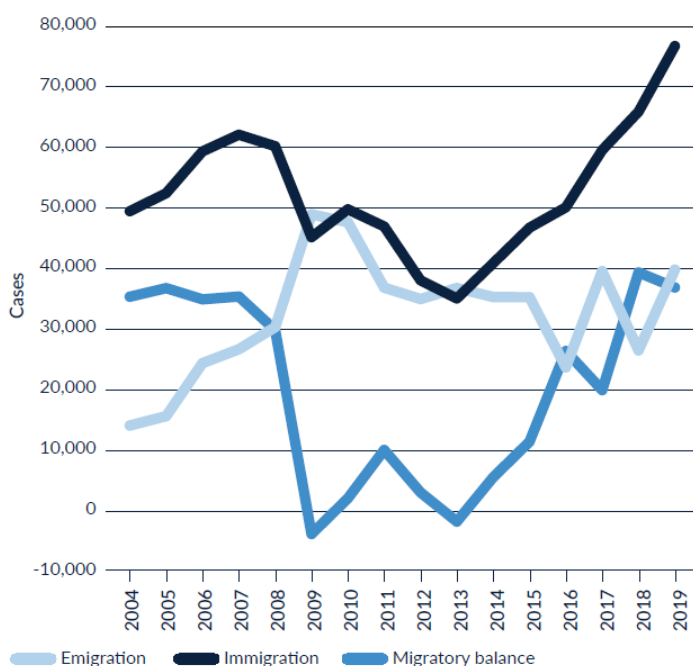
Just before the collapse of migration as a result of Covid-19, Barcelona was witnessing a new international migratory boom which had begun in 2014, with rates even higher than those at the beginning of the millennium, which had broken all historical records. This recent dramatic growth was linked to the current economic cycle, but was substantially different to the increase during the first decade of the century which reached its peak in 2007, before falling sharply due to the deep recession of 2008.

It is not only the increase in the number of our fellow citizens who are foreign born to a total of 461,000 people, but also a change in terms of the origin, sex and age of the new arrivals, as well as their level of education, details which can sometimes be passed over. This progression has been eclipsed by the forced unemployment imposed by the pandemic, which appears to have effectively frozen the image that we have in our minds of migration and population diversity, with the certainties and prejudices corresponding to the beginning of the 21st century being carried forward intact. But apart from taking into account variation in migration flows, attention must also be paid to what the distribution of the recently arrived migrant population by neighbourhood has meant for the population of Barcelona. These are residential patterns that need to be related to the housing market and the effects of the economic crisis, and also to the demographic composition of the different neighbourhoods. In other words, we must take into account the generational succession as a result of birth and mortality rates, as well as migratory movements between neighbourhoods, both within and outside the municipality.

2. International migration and the economic cycle: before the pandemic⁶

In 2018 and 2019, just before Covid-19 appeared on the scene, the number of new registrations in the municipal register of residents of migrants from other countries reached a record high, with more than 61,000 in 2007, 65,134 in 2018 and 75,869 in 2019 (graph 1). The observed growth has been steady and sustained since 2013, when a low of 34,953 arrivals was recorded. 2013 and 2009 are the only two years when there has been a negative net migration rate, because of an increase in emigration, particularly in 2009, as well as a decrease in immigration, the lowest figure here being registered in 2013, due to the initial impact of the 2008 financial crisis. As a result, net migration, the difference between the number of immigrants (people coming into an area) and the number of emigrants (people leaving an area) throughout the year, reached the highest positive level since the beginning of the 21st century, a time when the recording of emigration was still extremely problematic.

Graph 1. International migratory flows. Evolution 2004-2019



Source: Original. Residential Variation Statistics, with data from the National Statistics Institute (INE).

In terms of immigration from abroad, this has mostly involved people born outside Spain, the number of people born in Spain returning to the country being quantitatively insignificant. Thus, the extreme values in percentage terms of the emigration of people born in Spain was only 5.1% in 2015, 3.4% in 2019, and 2,581 people. In contrast, the proportion of those entering with Spanish nationality is considerably higher, both in absolute terms (a maximum of 6,128 in 2019) and relative terms (10.3% of entries in 2019).

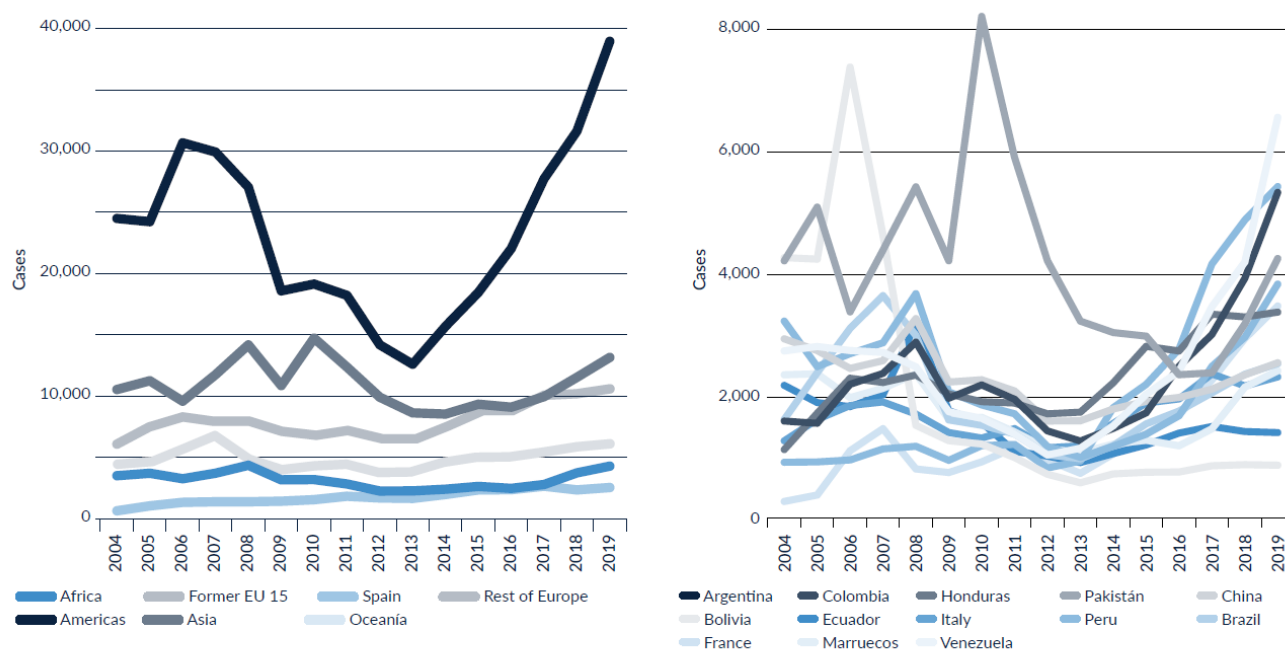
With regard to country of origin, by grouping people according to continent of birth - a distinction has been made between the EU-15 area countries (before the enlargement to include Eastern

6. In this paper, migration flows between the city of Barcelona and other countries are analysed on the basis of data from the Residential Variation Statistics (EVR). These are compiled by the National Statistics Institute (INE), and inform of changes in migration both within Spain and at the international level, as recorded in the municipal register of residents for a particular year. Given the difficulties associated with recording migration, the EVRs are not exhaustive; some migratory movements are recorded incorrectly (or not at all) in the municipal register, and therefore are not reflected in the EVR statistics. For similar reasons, data prior to 2004 is not presented in this paper, as migratory movements from abroad were recorded as registrations by default, as they originated outside the statistical system. These issues may affect the total volume of registrations, but not necessarily their basic characteristics.

European countries) and the rest of Europe - it can be seen that both now and since 2000 the greatest migration flow into the city is from the Americas (graph 2). The evolution follows the same pattern as that discussed above, with the migratory peak coming just before the crisis, with a total of 30,688 arrivals in 2006, which has been overtaken in the last two years, especially in 2019, when there were 38,993 arrivals. Its weight in terms of total international migration varies in the same way, from 52% in 2006 to a low of 36% in 2013, before rising to above 50% in 2019 (51.4%). Therefore, in addition to the preponderance observed, this is the flow that is most sensitive to economic fluctuations, and the one that ultimately determines the overall evolution. Over the 16-year period analysed, 375,000 new arrivals were registered in the city. Eight of the fifteen most common countries of origin are in Latin America. In this case, the periodisation of entries is very different, often responding to a dramatic economic, political and social situation in the place of origin. Among these countries, migrants from Argentina are the most numerous, with a total of 40,932 registrations being recorded. Over the years growth was strong and sustained, until in 2019 Argentina became the main country of origin of foreign migrants arriving in the city. In terms of recent arrivals, the number of Venezuelans and Colombians has also increased substantially, as has the influx of Peruvians and Hondurans.

In contrast, the number of people arriving from Ecuador and Bolivia is below the figures recorded a decade ago, when these countries were the main source of incoming migration.

Graph 2. International migratory flows. Evolution 2004-2019



Source: Original. Residential Variation Statistics, with data from the National Statistics Institute (INE).

The influx of migrants from Europe and Asia has also been considerable over the period studied, reaching a total of 198,000 (60% from EU-15 countries) and 175,000 respectively. The trend for Europeans is similar to that for people from the Americas; in the case of the EU15, the peak is from 2015 onwards, with inflows 25% higher than in the first boom. In contrast, the pattern for Asians shows a certain delay when examined in relation to the patterns previously described. Arrivals peaked in 2010, steadily falling until 2016 when numbers once again increased, although without reaching the level of the previous high.

Among the Europeans, the Italians and French stand out, evolving steadily over time, and also peaking in 2019. In terms of people originating from other countries, a fall in the number of arrivals from Romania should be noted. During the migratory boom at the beginning of the millennium the number of Romanians arriving in Spain and Catalonia was considerable, whereas today it is insignificant. In recent years there has been a clear increase in the number of British and Irish

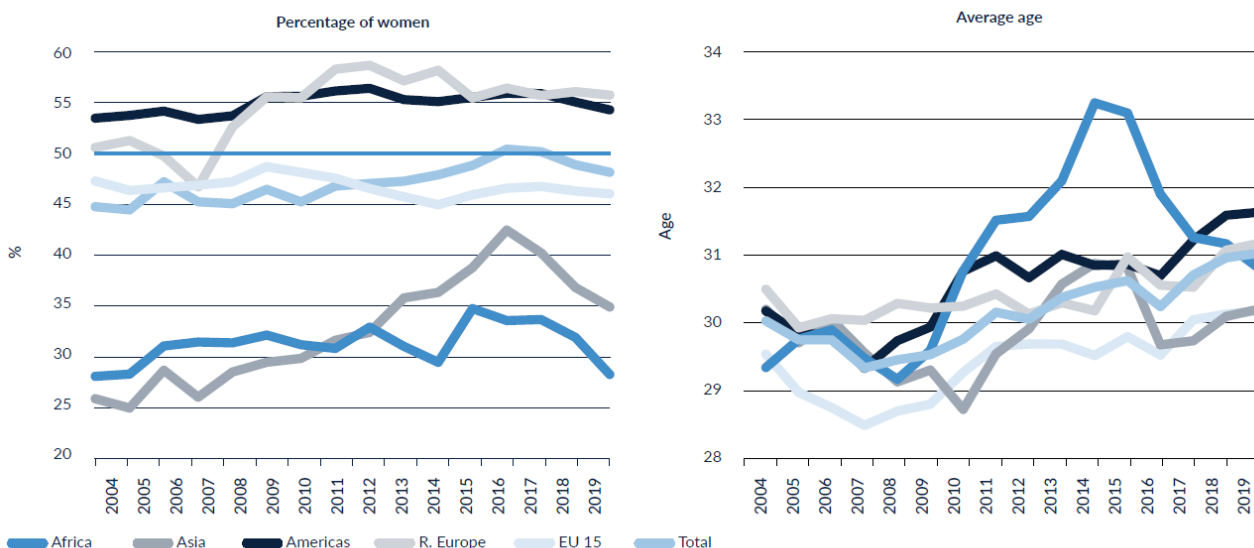
migrants arriving in Barcelona. With regard to people of Asian origin, arrivals of people from Pakistan, China and India rose once again in 2019, although in the case of the first two countries, numbers were still much lower than those recorded in previous years. Lastly, arrivals from Africa follow a similar trend and were at the same level in 2019 as in 2008, although they are of considerably less significance from a quantitative point of view. These flows are primarily of people arriving from Morocco (55%) and other countries bordering the southern Mediterranean (70%: Algerians, Egyptians and Tunisians).

As well as having led to an increase in migration outflows and a decrease in inflows, the crisis has brought other changes, impacting on profile in terms of age and sex, above all in the case of incoming migrants who took the decision to stay in the country and embark on the process of family reunification. In populations where men had traditionally been extremely dominant, the crisis has led to a rise in the number of women. The same thing occurs when we look at age: in some cases the number of minors has risen, and in others the number of adults.

Migration from Latin America as a whole has been the least affected when it comes to composition in terms of sex, with women unquestionably in the majority. On the other hand, in the case of Africans and Asians where men predominate, there has been an increase in the number of women within these populations, particularly among Asians up until 2016, when the trend was reversed.

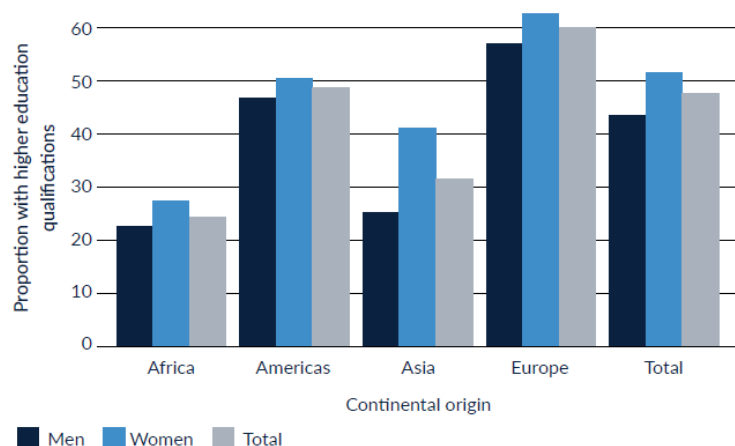
If we take a look at average age, in the first decade of the century it was under thirty; there were hardly any differences based on origin, and it was the migrants from the former EU15 who were the youngest on average. Evolution here is characterised by diversification and an increase in average age, which during this period stands at 31, and by profound disparities between different countries of origin (graph 3). The fall in immigration during the crisis has been accompanied by an increase in the average age of Africans and Asians, as fewer young people have arrived.

Graph 3. Migratory flows by age and sex. Evolution 2004-2019



Lastly, data from the municipal register of residents provides us with information on the level of education of those registered as migrants from abroad in the city of Barcelona. Data on this variable has only become available recently, so it has not been possible to reflect evolution over time. Data from 2018 shows that 47.7% of the migrants who arrived had completed some form of tertiary education, a significant statistic if we take into account the fact that in Spain only 46.4% of 25-29 year olds and just 29.2% of those over 16 have reached this level of attainment. These percentages are higher among women (51.7%) than men (43.7%), with sharp differences depending on continent of origin (graph 4).

Graph 4. Proportion of international migrants having studies at tertiary level, grouped by continent. 2018



Source: Original. Registration in the municipal register of residents in Catalonia, with data from the Statistical Institute of Catalonia (IDESCAT).

The highest values can be observed among European migrants (60.1%) and those from Latin America (48.9%), whereas for Africans and Asians the percentage is below the average (24.2% and 31.5% respectively). Women have a higher level of education than men, regardless of country of origin, and it is among Asians that this disparity is most pronounced (41.2% of women and 25.2% of men). The disparity between people from different countries of origin is very high. Among the most prominent groups, the percentage of Pakistanis and Hondurans with tertiary educational qualifications is very low, 9.2% and 12.6% respectively. At the other extreme are the Mexicans, 77.5% of whom have tertiary level studies, many of them coming to the city to continue their education, and the French (71%).

3. Residential patterns among the foreign-born population in Barcelona

Increased migration has led to an increase in the foreign-born population. In 2020 the figure was 461,960, which represents 27.76% of all the city's inhabitants. If we added the descendants of these migrants to this, the percentage would rise to a third of the population. Despite the fact that, due to the inertia in population growth, it may seem that the distribution by major continental origin of the immigrant population resident in Barcelona (Figure 1) has not undergone any substantial change over the last decade, it must also be noted that there have been significant migration flows from certain countries, particularly those most prominent in the second wave during the new millennium. This means that their proportional presence within the population of each neighbourhood will indeed have changed, as will the age and sex profiles of the inhabitants, and the precise impact will depend on migratory strategies and the demographic metabolism of the neighbourhood in question. Together with the proportional increase in the number of immigrants, diversity is key, as there are nationals from 15 different countries spread over Barcelona's 72 neighbourhoods. These people are from countries as diverse as Argentina (in Gràcia and in 16 more neighbourhoods), Pakistan (in El Raval and 3 more neighbourhoods), Morocco (in Torre Baró and 2 more neighbourhoods), France (in Pedralbes and 2 more neighbourhoods), the United States (in Tres Torres) and Russia (in Diagonal Mar and Frente Marítimo del Besòs), as can be seen in Figure 2.

Overall, the distribution of people of Latin American origin (227,338), who represented the largest migrant population in Barcelona in 2010 and also in 2020, may seem to be much the same, with Argentinians both then and now at the top of the list in general terms (with just over 30,000 residents throughout the city in 2020), and also in 17 of Barcelona's 72 neighbourhoods, with Gràcia in the lead. Peru is second on the list in absolute terms; there are around 28,000 Peruvians living in the city, and they are the majority nationality in 15 neighbourhoods (headed by La Sagrera and Camp de l'Arpa del Clot). In third place are those of Colombian origin (26,500), resident primarily in two neighbourhoods, El Guinardó and Vall d'Hebron. However, in 2020 the numbers of migrants from countries that had previously been more or less absent from these lists rose

significantly. For example, there are now almost 25,000 Venezuelans living in the city, and they now form the largest migrant population in 7 Barcelona neighbourhoods (Sagrada Família being first on the list), and 15,000 Hondurans. Although this is a substantially lower number of people, as they are concentrated in certain areas, they are the majority migrant nationality in 4 of the city's neighbourhoods - Horta, Porta, Les Roquetes and Verdun. But even among Argentinians who, as we know, are one of the 'oldest' migrant groups in Barcelona and for this reason are spread out over a wide range of neighbourhoods, we see that migration has been strongly influenced by factors in the country of origin (refugees fleeing the dictatorships of 1970s were the pioneers, and in the 21st century the *corralito* of 2001 are cases in point). A look at the varied composition of this group in terms of age gives an indication of what is changing. The number of people within this population over the age of 64 has risen, reaching 8.9% last year, indicating the existence of both older migratory flows and more recent migration driven by the neoliberal policies of former Argentinian president Mauricio Macri.

The rest of the migrant population is extremely diverse. The 111,956 Europeans who live in the city are in second place; 64.7% are from Western Europe, (72,422) from countries that have long-standing ties with the city. Currently the largest subgroups are Italians (21,490) French (17,505), followed by British (8,288) and German (7,423), many being grouped in the city centre - La Barceloneta, the old quarter, the Dreta de l'Eixample, Vila de Gràcia, and to the north of the city, with substantial numbers in the Pedralbes neighbourhood and the Sarrià - Sant Gervasi district. The composition of the Eastern European population (39,534) is mixed. Top of the list here are the 9,000 Russians who are concentrated in the wealthier neighbourhoods such as Pedralbes, Sarrià, Tres Torres and Bonanova, as well as Diagonal Mar where they are the majority nationality, followed by Romanians, Ukrainians and Georgians, primarily in neighbourhoods such as Besòs i el Maresme and Sant Martí de Provençals, reflecting their lower socio-economic status.

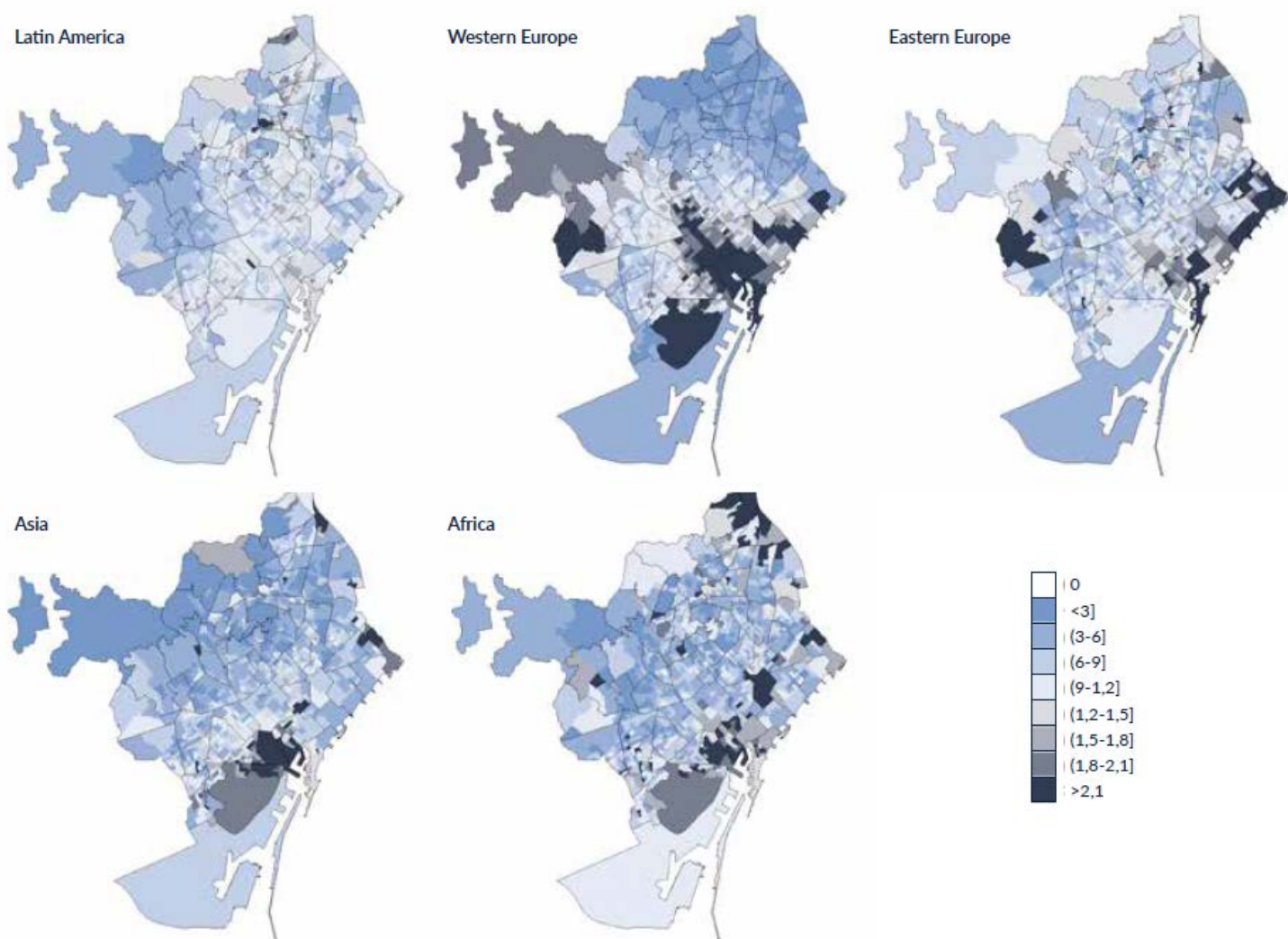
Among the 83,210 residents of Asian origin, there are almost 24,000 Pakistanis and around 20,000 Chinese, together with 13,400 Filipinos and 8,000 Indians. This variety explains why they are spread so widely across the city. Although a significant number of Pakistanis, Filipinos, Bangladeshis and Indians live in the El Raval, El Gòtic and El Poble Sec neighbourhoods, the greatest number are resident in Besòs i Maresme (in the Sant Martí district), where Pakistanis account for three in every four people of Asian origin, followed by those born in China.

Lastly, there are 30,372 Africans. At the top of this list are the 19,000 Moroccans, who are grouped in the City's poorer neighbourhoods, in Ciutat Vella, Ciutat Meridiana, Torre Baró and Vallbona in the Nou Barris district as well as in Trinitat Vella, Baró de Viver and the upper part of the Sant Andreu neighbourhood in the district of the same name.

The neighbourhoods with the highest percentages of migrants in Barcelona are located in the central area, which has historically been the zone receiving and filtering the foreign-born population. The figures are as follows: El Gòtic has 67.2% (14,498) foreign born residents, El Raval has 60.9% (29,266), Sant Pere, Santa Caterina i la Ribera has 53.2% (7,023). These are the neighbourhoods where migrants make up more than half of the resident population. (Figure 1). At the opposite end of the scale are neighbourhoods such as Canyelles, with only 10.3%, Font d'en Fargues with 12%, and Sant Andreu i les Tres Torres with just over 14%.

The foreign-born population has grown proportionally in all city neighbourhoods over the last decade, but in some it has tripled, as is the case of Torre Baró, or doubled, as in Can Peguera, Baró de Viver, Porta and Marina del Prat Vermell. Other neighbourhoods have experienced growth rates of around 10%, the lowest in the city. This is either because they are already crowded, or because the age structure of the local population was not conducive to population renewal, as is the case of Turó de la Peira, el Putxet i el Farró or Bon Pastor.

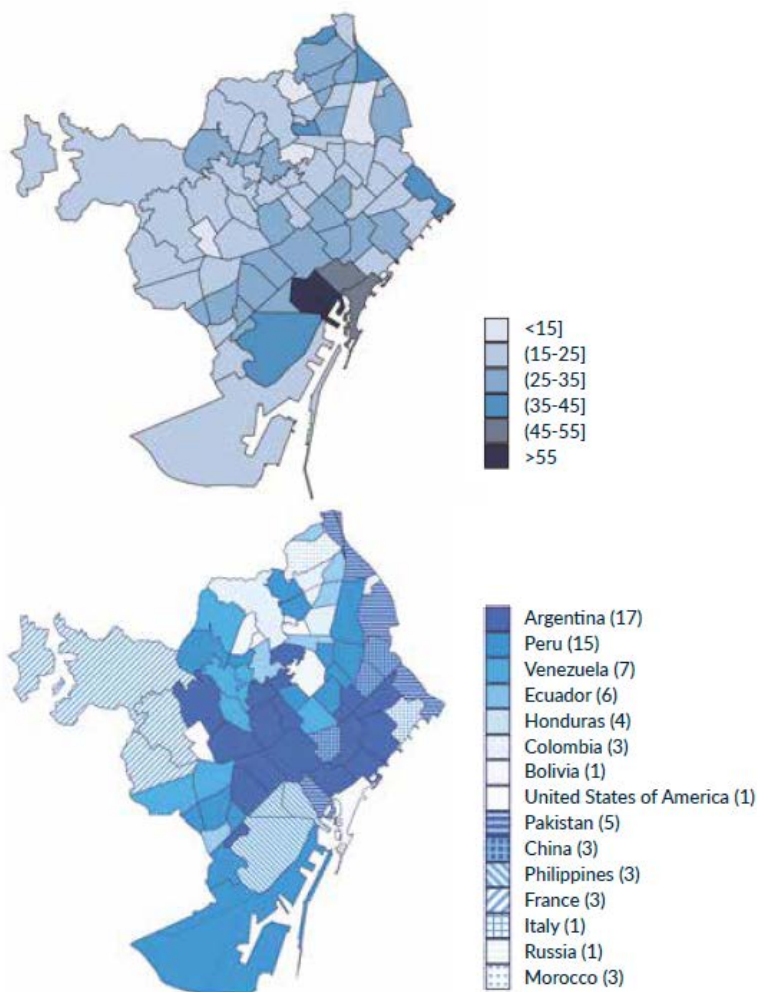
Figure 1. Distribution of the foreign-born population by major continental group. Census Barcelona, 2020



Source: Original. Municipal register of residents, 2020 (INE).

The volume of the migrant population expressed as an overall percentage can no longer capture the territorial impact produced as it once did, when migration began. Similar percentages can hide big differences; polarisation, weighted diversity, very different socio-professional profiles and uses of the territory, and family structures that correspond to disparate migratory phases, even when we are talking about the same place of origin. Thus, the growth of migration in the Besòs area, for example, has been slow compared to that of the historic centre, fuelled both by direct migration from abroad and new flows, such as those from other districts of the city. However, it stands out by virtue of its more family-oriented profile, with a higher proportion of women and children from groups (such as Pakistanis) that have largely been made up of pioneering young men in other districts (such as Ciutat Vella). The centre draws together a mix of working people including substantial numbers of certain nationalities, for example Filipinos and Pakistanis, 60% of the former being women, but only 23.3% of the latter. There are also people from other countries such as France and the UK, students and professionals whose presence is linked to the gentrification of the neighbourhood.

Figure 2. Barcelona neighbourhoods by percentage of foreign-born population, country of origin, and place of birth. 2020



Source: Original. Municipal register of residents, 2020 (INE).

4. From place to people

The foreign-born population has spread throughout the different neighbourhoods of Barcelona, following the dictates of the property market - homes for sale, although renting predominates - and the demographic evolution of the native population. Especially due to mortality, which frees up residential space, and mobility driven by the formation of new nuclear families. As we have seen, the 21st century migrant population, despite being broadly distributed, has become progressively more concentrated in the most vulnerable neighbourhoods where incomes are lower - where the 20th century migrant population from the rest of Spain often used to live - and coincides with the ageing and replacement of the population in these neighbourhoods. This is a process that is constantly evolving; some of the lower-income neighbourhoods built in the 1970s are still among those with the lowest percentage of migrants (Canyelles and La Guineueta, for example), while those located in the Besòs area are among those that have seen the highest growth in immigration in recent times. If at the beginning of the century El Raval and Ciutat Vella in general were held up as examples of diversity in Barcelona, to a greater or a lesser extent 'folklorised' and exotic, in 2020 diversity has become a part of everyday reality for all the city's inhabitants, and has become a fundamental characteristic of the younger generations.

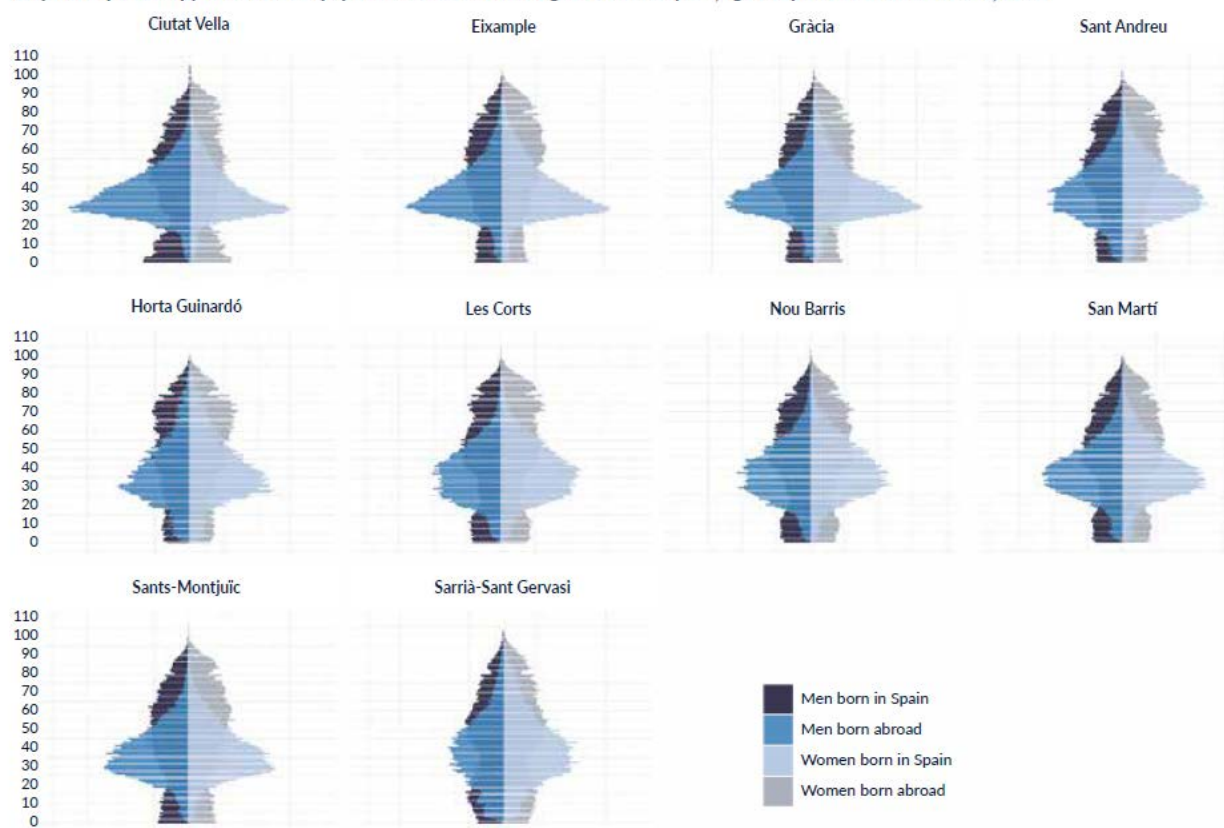
The structure of the population in terms of age and sex in the different districts of Barcelona will, if we take level of education into account, help us to grasp diversity generated by extremely heterogeneous populations sharing the same neighbourhood space, and to this additional perspectives can be added, those of generation, gender and educational level. It will come as a

surprise to no-one if we say that the Spanish born population is characterised by ageing - 27% of the population is over 64 years of age - and that the average age is 46, whereas the migrant population has a younger profile, with more people of working age; only 6% are over 64, and the average age is 38.

The highest proportion of older Spanish-born residents is no longer concentrated in the neighbourhoods that are a part of Ciutat Vella, especially in El Raval as it was only a decade ago, although this is the image we still carry in our minds: today it is focused in neighbourhoods where, until recently, those who arrived in the 60s and 70s were concentrated, such as the Nou Barris and Horta i Guinardó districts where more than a third of the Spanish born population is over 64 years of age, or others such as Eixample and the old Vila de Gràcia where the figure is 30%. As women tend to live longer than men, the districts with ageing populations are also characterised by having a higher proportion of women residents.

If we look closely at the pattern in the first two districts, apart from the higher proportion of older Spanish-born people, we can see that the age profile of international immigrants is not clearly concentrated in the younger group (25 - 34 year olds), although this is the case in other districts such as Ciutat Vella, where the group aged 35 to 40 (in the case of men, and slightly younger in the case of women) shares the leading role with the aforementioned lower age group, even exceeding it at times.

Graph 5. Population pyramids for the population of Barcelona neighbourhoods by sex, age and place of birth. Barcelona, 2020



Source: Original. Municipal register of residents, 2020 (INE).

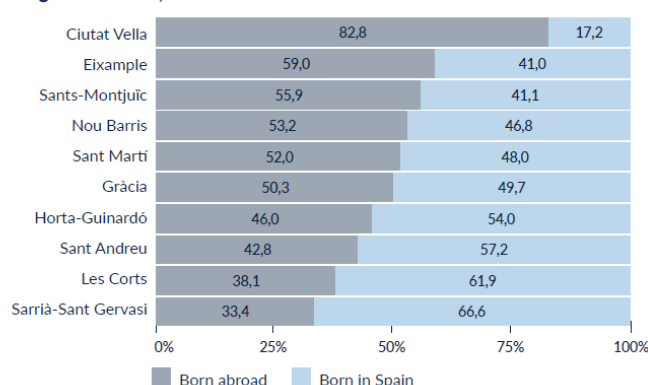
This is something that we see repeated in Sant Martí, Sant Andreu, and to a lesser extent in Les Corts: it suggests that foreign born nuclear families contribute to population growth - both those arriving directly from abroad and those that have moved from other districts within the city.

The distribution by sex of the migrant population is the second significant factor in some districts; there is a clear tendency towards masculinisation within the population of foreign-born residents in Ciutat Vella - with the exception of the Filipinos - which can be contrasted with feminisation in other

districts - especially those where people of Latin American origin predominate, such as Gràcia, Eixample, and also Sarrià - Sant Gervasi.

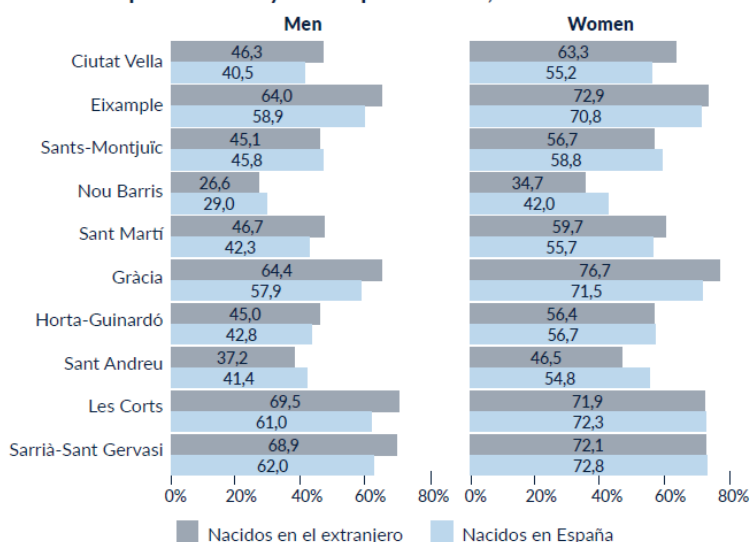
Finally, if we look at age structure, and specifically at the young population, those between 25 and 34 years of age, in terms of place of birth and level of education in different districts, we can overturn some of the prevalent stereotypes regarding the immigrant population and, above all, we can see the importance of the younger generations. Foreign-born people aged between 25 and 34 in 2020, who were born between 1986 and 1995 (the so-called millennials), already represent more than half of this group (graph 6a) in 6 of the city's 10 districts. The most extreme case is that of Ciutat Vella, where they represent 82,2% of the population. Intergenerational relations inevitably become intercultural relations, in this case with a clear split between digital (migrant) and analogue (Spanish-born) natives.

Graph 6a. Percentage of migrants in the 25-34 age group, and proportion of young people with tertiary education qualifications, by sex and country of origin. Barcelona, 2020



Source: Original. Municipal register of residents, 2020 (INE).

Graph 6b. Percentage of young people (25-34 years old) with tertiary education qualifications by sex and place of birth, 2020



Source: Original. Registration in the municipal register of residents in Catalonia, with data from the Statistical Institute of Catalonia (IDESCAT).

If we look at the weight of tertiary education (graph 6b), we can dispel many misconceptions. Although the majority of international migrants arriving in Barcelona will be employed in a highly segmented labour market in the unskilled jobs sector, the foreign-born young people of these generations, particularly women, account for more than half of the total, even outnumbering the native-born young people. It is in the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods that the percentages of

young migrants with university degrees decreases, falling below the levels - also relatively low - of Spanish-born young people with degrees of the same generation. Examples are Nou Barris, where only 26.6% of the male migrant population has had the benefit of tertiary education, compared to 29% of the native population, and Sant Andreu, where the figures are 37.2% and 41.4% respectively. If we look at the neighbourhoods in detail in terms of differences in country of origin, these disparities become extreme, and not only because of the inclusion of Europeans selected for their high level of education. This is another reason why we must look again at the migrant population in Barcelona, particularly with an eye to the future.

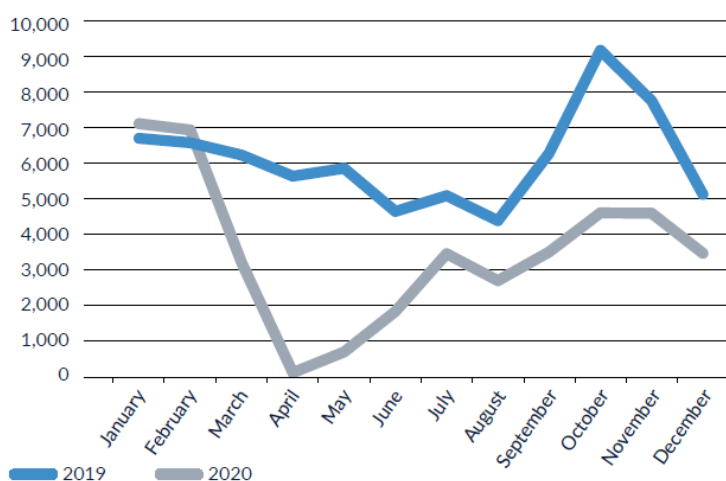
5. Early impacts of Covid-19 on migrations to Barcelona: *Post-scriptum*

5.1. International migrations: conjunctural drop

The dissemination on June 15, 2021 of the data corresponding to the Statistics of Residential Variations of 2020, has allowed us at the last moment to incorporate this brief section on the first impact of the Covid-19 both, international migrations and internal mobility.

As for international migration, the first expected effect has been the sharp drop in entries from abroad since it was decided on March 16 to close the Spanish borders as a preventive measure for the advance of the pandemic (Graph 7). Thus, the total loss in 2020 compared to the previous year was 42.3%, going from just over 73 thousand new arrivals to 42 thousand. The gradual recovery since May 2020, has followed the seasonality of these flows (with highs in October, but always maintaining levels below). In both relative and absolute terms, the continental origin that has been most affected by the decline has been the protagonist of the boom, Latin America with a decrease of 46.5% and 18,134 less new entries, which should not surprise us considering the cancellation Transatlantic flights. For the same reason, but with less volume, flows from Asia fell by 46.5% (mostly Chinese, Indians and Pakistanis). By contrast, the relatively low drop in Europeans by 28.9% hides an increase in British flows -1,679 high in 2020 compared to 1,529 the previous year, which plausible corresponds to registrations of people who already resided in the city.

Graph 7. Evolution of international migrations arriving in Barcelona monthly for the years 2019 and 2020.



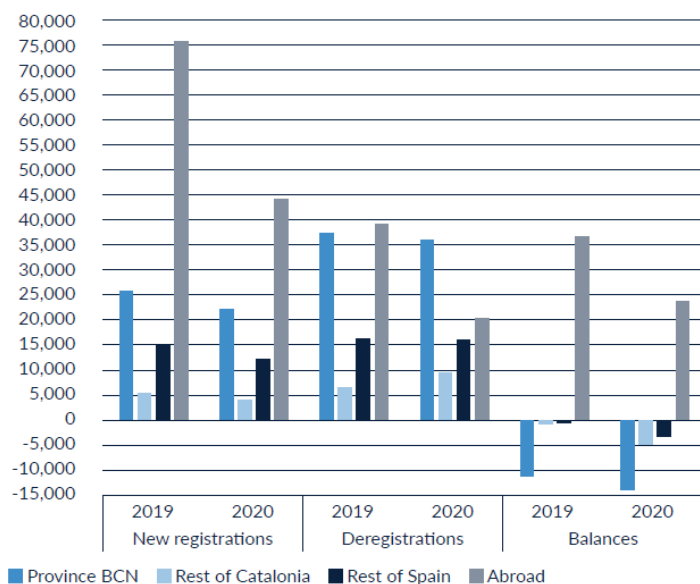
Source: Original. Municipal register of residents, 2019 and 2020 (INE).

5.2 Internal migration: the spectrum of the exodus to rural areas

One of the most successful narratives has been to consider that the Covid-19 would have marked a change in trend in internal migration, with the new phenomenon of the mass departure of Barcelona to smaller municipalities, especially those we call of rural environment. Escaping the harshness of confinement and enjoying more friendly environments, measured in both home space and landscape, as well as the extent of teleworking have been the main causes for this interpretation.

Indeed, during the year 2020, there were more departures from Barcelona city to the rest of Catalonia and Spain than arrivals, with a negative balance of 23,387 departures (Graph 8). Among these departures, the largest weight has corresponded to those that have occurred in the province of Barcelona itself with (14,294 departures), followed by municipalities in the rest of Catalonia, with a negative balance of 5,242 people, also highlighting the flows aimed at municipalities with less than 10,000 inhabitants: 9,941 departures, for only 3,447 arrivals, with a negative balance of 6,494 people with the smaller municipalities within Catalonia.

Graph 8. Recent evolution of the migratory movement in Barcelona. Evolution 2019-2020



Source: Own elaboration, Statistics of Residential Variations, 2019 and 2020 (INE)

However, we want to make two considerations: First, part of these losses may correspond to the decision to register the second residence as the first one. Secondly, even if a real home purchase has been made, staying in it once we are back to normal is a matter that will depend a lot on the life cycle and the adoption of telework (still to see the the degree of real implementation). That's why we lean towards lowering expectations about big trend changes that seem to have excited more than one.

6. Final note: impact of Covid-19, looking ahead

Basic categorisations classifying the population by place of birth or by nationality, age and sex at different geographical levels within the city are useful for providing us with a snapshot - albeit one that is a little blurred, given that categorisation necessarily implies a simplification of complexity - but they are inadequate for understanding the fluidity and the transformation at different speeds of individuals, generations, communities and the use made of local neighbourhoods by their residents, let alone for understanding the interactions between them, which are the very essence of neighbourhood life. The danger is that all of us, including those who manage the city's affairs, continue to look at the phenomenon of migration as if it were an old photo, fixed and unchanging, one that reflects a set of stereotypes - both positive and negative - and are unable to understand what is really happening, or the demands of a population that is equally fluid in its mutability.

Precisely the social interactions that take place between the foreign-born and Spanish-born populations - or the absence of such interactions - can be an indicator of social cohesion, one that goes beyond the process of intercultural integration, and in which both are transformed by their exposure to diversity. The imposition of social distancing and lockdown, which were the first measures taken to prevent the spread of Covid-19, and above all the economic impact of the pandemic have meant taking a step backwards, often limiting relationships to those between people living in the same dwelling, who are generally members of the same community. Reliance on family and social networks in one's own community has led to a shutting off, and an involuntary

turning away from others. The concentration of the migrant population in high-risk occupations, either because they were deemed essential workers - from care work to deliveries - or because they lost their jobs, together with increased use of public transport and more precarious housing conditions, has increased the likelihood of catching Covid-19 within this population, although the age profile means that these people were, in general, less at risk of suffering serious illness. The pandemic has also led to an increase in inequality between the Spanish-born and migrant populations, above all in the case of those of Asian or African origin. Conversely, while international migration decreased drastically, to the point of coming to a screeching halt during the first waves of the pandemic, mortality in older age groups has accelerated the demographic metabolism of neighbourhoods, and further decreased the proportion of the native population, leading to an increase in the migrant population in percentage terms, without there having been any new influx of migrants.

September 2021

Key words: women migrants, domestic and care work, care crisis, Covid-19

The situation of domestic workers of migrant origin in times of Covid-19: analysis and perspectives⁷

Sònia Parella Rubio. Department of Sociology. CER-Migracions, Autonomous University of Barcelona (UAB)

sonia.parella@uab.cat

Paid domestic and care work has been, and continues to be, largely unregulated, with much lower levels of protection in terms of social and employment rights than other sectors, and is characterised by discriminatory pay and working conditions and high levels of informal employment. It is an extremely segmented sector, and is marked by gender, class and ethnic/racial inequalities. There is no doubt that the pandemic caused by the coronavirus (Covid-19) has sharply highlighted the importance of care for sustaining life, and at the same time the lack of visibility, appreciation and recognition suffered by the sector within our society. This article focuses on migrant domestic workers, many of them in an irregular situation, and who as a result are working in the informal economy. It analyses the impact of the type of regulation in force with regard to this kind of work on living conditions and access to employment rights for women workers of migrant origin. The text concludes with a section containing recommendations for dignifying this work, and ensuring that it is recognised, with a particular emphasis on the role of local government.

1. Introduction: Care in times of multiple crises

Paid domestic and care work has been, and continues to be, largely unregulated, with much lower levels of protection in terms of social and employment rights than other sectors; it is characterised by discriminatory pay and working conditions, and high levels of informal employment. It is an extremely segmented sector, and is marked by gender, class and ethnic/racial inequalities. There is no doubt that the pandemic caused by the coronavirus (Covid-19) has sharply highlighted the importance of care for sustaining life, and at the same time the lack of visibility, appreciation and recognition suffered by the sector within our society.

Sociologist Alain Touraine (2020) stated in an interview that “this crisis is going to raise the profile of care workers”. In reality the effect of the health crisis has been to stretch the care sector to the very limit; it has deepened to an even greater extent what is known as the “*care crisis*”. Therefore, in order to assess the current domestic and care work situation and move towards a new, fairer and more egalitarian model of care, it is necessary, for the purposes of analysis, to separate the

7. This article is a shortened version of the following text: PARELLA RUBIO, S. “*El sector del trabajo del hogar y de cuidados en España en tiempos de COVID-19*”. [The domestic and care work sector in Spain in times of Covid-19]. *Anuario CIDOB de la Inmigración 2020* (2021), pp. 102-114.

two “crises” and reflect on their respective scope, both from the perspective of the caregiver and from that of the recipient of that care.

This article focuses on the migrant domestic workers who provide care, some of whom are in an irregular situation, and who as a result are working in the informal economy. They are workers who face violations of their employment rights, and also in many cases of other fundamental rights (discrimination, sexual harassment, human trafficking, etc.) as well. Women of migrant origin are especially (but not solely) concentrated in the least visible and most precarious sectors, which means that they are caught between the lack of employment rights inherent in these sectors, and the impact of immigration legislation. These pages examine the paid domestic and care work undertaken by those who fall into the category of “domestic workers”, whether in the formal or informal economy, which excludes workers in home care services, care homes and other services linked to the care sector, who are registered in the General Social Security System and who enjoy a collective agreement that guarantees their rights.

1.1. On the health crisis

There is no doubt that the current dangers that we face, such as the impact of climate change and Covid-19, which has spread all over the planet at uncontrollable speed, and that open up a panorama characterised by global, universal risks almost impossible to predict. This situation, far from being new, is one that fits with sociologist Ulrich Beck’s theory of the risk society (1986). According to the central thesis of Beck’s work originating in the mid-1980s, with the advent of advanced or reflexive modernity, risk becomes “democratised” in the sense that it unexpectedly affects people and groups who had until now enjoyed life conditions perceived as stable, and more or less “safe”.

However, from a feminist angle Joan Tronto (2020) reminds us that the majority of such analyses that focus on global crises have a strong bias: they concentrate on the effects on the societies that have for many years been considered the centre of the world: Europe and the USA. According to Tronto this means that the new forms of risk conceptualised by Beck could be considered to be limited in the sense that they reflect a point of view that is at the same time both ethnocentric and androcentric. And in that sense, she sees risk and loss of trust not so much as side-effects of modernity, but rather suggests that it is precisely the absence of trust that provokes the feeling of greater risk. Such an assertion undoubtedly implies a radical change in the way of thinking about risk itself. Therefore, as the author points out, “forming part of a society within which all individuals take care of each other in order to identify and analyse collective problems, create the conditions necessary for the recognition of these dangers, and deal with them with greater honesty” (Tronto, 2020: 34), in such a way that “risk would look different in a society that was organised around the principle of care” (*Ibíd*, 2020: 33).

For the moment, contrary to the predictions of Tronto (2020), the current global health crisis has not yet been translated into an opportunity to advocate care as an essential human value, as an integral part of human life. The pandemic has contributed to increased pressure on care sector workers (domestic workers, care home workers, cleaners and home carers), which has led to the reinforcement of patterns of injustice and inequality. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) has identified the domestic and care work sector in particular as one of those most affected, due to the significant risk of job loss that threatens domestic workers around the world, as well as the drop in income due to lockdown and the lack of effective social security coverage that characterises the sector (ILO, 2020).

1.2. On the “care crisis”

According to Dowling (2021), the “care crisis” is structured around two key issues: i) the fact that more and more people, due to age and/or dependency, have limited autonomy when it comes to performing basic daily activities and are unable to manage their physical, material, emotional and social well-being independently. Many of these people receive insufficient help and assistance (resources or support) in order to be able to do so, and ii) the fact that those who provide care for others are unable to do so in a satisfactory manner, and under dignified conditions that are

comparable with those working in other occupations. In short, there is a growing gap between the need for care, and the resources available to provide it. This shortfall in provision depends on how the roles of families, communities, the market (corporations and agencies, domestic service) and the state are articulated.

We must bear in mind, as with any true crisis, that in the case in point:

- We should not only be concerned about its effects, but also recognise the need to look at the catalysing impact it has on issues that had not previously been taken into account, and that had not been resolved in a satisfactory way. Bringing this crisis to an end requires transforming the conditions under which care is provided, and rethinking how that care is valued. The undervaluing of care work is even greater when it comes to caring for the elderly, according to Federici (2013), as it is an activity that is stigmatised, not regarded as a task that impacts on the reproduction of the labour force and, as a consequence, no added value is ascribed to it.
- Since we live in an unequal world, it does not affect everybody in the same way. As Tronto (2020) points out, throughout most of human history care work has been assigned to women, and to the most marginalised and excluded groups.

In the present context, from the perspective of the privatisation and commodification of care, our care system is based on social divisions structured around inequalities of gender, social class, ethnicity/ race (Lutz, 2018), without forgetting migratory background (nationality, migratory status) which is a key factor (Pérez-Orozco and López-Gil, 2011; Dowling, 2021). The active recruitment of migrant women under the pressure of market forces has been shaping global care chains (Hochschild, 2020) over recent decades, from the countries of the Global South and Eastern Europe to the Global North, without any revision of the sexual division of labour and at the cost of an intensification of the inequalities between women within the context of globalisation. Global care chains are chains that cross borders and that are formed for the purpose of sustaining life on a daily basis; care work is transferred by individuals and households along lines that reflect differences in power within society, including gender, class, race/ethnicity and place of origin (Pérez-Orozco, 2007: 4).

The outsourcing of care with no modification of the pillars of a society within which care is not based on a principle of **a co-responsibility between different social actors constitutes an** escape strategy that Emma Dowling (2021) calls a “care fix”. She uses this expression in the same sense as the term “fix” is used by authors such as sociologist Beverly Silver (2003). For Silver, “fix” denotes the way in which capital has historically managed to circumvent (not resolve) successive crises by installing itself in new spaces and through technological or financial reorganisation, with the aim of safeguarding the profits of the capitalist system without shaking its foundations. In short, according to Pérez-Orozco (2010), our care system is characterised by a series of characteristics that reinforce the systemic care-inequality-precariousness nexus:

- Insufficient social responsibility is taken for care (in terms of both welfare benefits and public services), and the way in which such tasks are allocated to women within the home (unpaid work), or in the form of paid work within the framework of a global market that guarantees low labour costs. According to Ezquerro (2018), the care system in Catalonia and in Spain is characterised by a historical lack of development of public policies in relation to care, which has led to a depoliticisation of caregiving and consequently the “naturalisation” of families (a euphemism for women) as the main care providers.
- To the extent that care is commodified, access to care depends on people's economic status, which means that the way in which care is organised in society exacerbates social inequalities.

- To the extent that the recipients of care are the ones who hire those who provide it, labour relations become more precarious and informal, which affects the most vulnerable members of the workforce, and those with the least social bargaining power.

2. The impact on living conditions and access to rights among domestic workers with migrant backgrounds

When the EAP closed for the fourth quarter of 2020, there were 563,100 people employed as domestic workers in Spain, 88% of them women. If we compare these figures with the number of people registered with the Social Security System, at the end of January 2021 we see that there were 382,509 people registered with the Special System for Domestic Workers within the General System, 95% of them women. This means that approximately one third were therefore employed in the underground economy.

For Catalonia and the province of Barcelona, Table 1 shows the general data on registration with the Special System for Domestic Workers as of 29 January 2021. A total of 57,469 people were registered, 82% of them in the province of Barcelona. Registration in the province of Barcelona shows the same pattern of feminisation as in Spain as a whole: almost 95% are women.

Table 1. Registration with the Special System for Domestic Workers in Catalonia, by sex and province (29 January 2021)

| General Social Security System - Special System for Domestic Workers | | | | |
|--|--------|---------|-------------|---------|
| | Men | Women | No response | Total |
| Barcelona | 2,657 | 44,627 | 0 | 47,284 |
| Girona | 516 | 4,065 | 0 | 4,581 |
| Lleida | 76 | 1,994 | 0 | 2,070 |
| Tarragona | 193 | 3,340 | 1 | 3,534 |
| Catalonia | 3,442 | 54,026 | 1 | 57,469 |
| Total Spain | 17,049 | 364,094 | 8 | 381,151 |

Source: Social Security Statistics, Ministry of Inclusion, Social Security and Migration.

Focusing specifically on new registrations of foreign nationals on the Special System for Domestic Workers for the whole of Catalonia, there were a total of 28,935, which represents just 6% of all registrations. When broken down by sex, these registrations represent 13% of the overall number of foreign women workers registered. By nationality, Honduras accounts for 17% of the total number of registrations with the Special System for Domestic Workers in Catalonia, followed by Bolivia (7.5%), Romania (7%), Morocco (7%) and Ecuador (3.5%). The province of Barcelona accounts for 82% of the total number of registrations of foreign workers. Of the total number of registrations in the province of Barcelona, 93% are women.

Table 2. Registration with the Special System for Domestic Workers in Catalonia, by sex and province (29 January 2021)

| General Social Security System - Special System for Domestic Workers | | | | Total Registrations | | |
|--|-------|---------|---------|---------------------|---------|-----------|
| | Men | Women | Total | Men | Women | Total |
| Barcelona | 1,734 | 22,001 | 23,735 | 203,393 | 157,387 | 360,780 |
| Girona | 330 | 2,014 | 2,344 | 32,636 | 19,666 | 52,302 |
| Lleida | 48 | 937 | 985 | 22,523 | 11,236 | 33,759 |
| Tarragona | 137 | 1,734 | 1,871 | 25,741 | 16,144 | 41,886 |
| Catalonia | 2,249 | 26,686 | 28,935 | 284,293 | 204,433 | 488,727 |
| Total Spain | 9,741 | 153,828 | 163,568 | 1,172,497 | 873,134 | 2,045,639 |

Source: Social Security Statistics, Ministry of Inclusion, Social Security and Migration.

Comparison of tables 1 and 2 shows that 50% of all registrations with the Special System for Domestic Workers in Catalonia correspond to foreign nationals. In the case of the province of Barcelona, the proportion is the same.

In order to address the impact of the pandemic on foreign women employed in the sector, we will use information taken from the manifestos and statements made both by trade unions (CCOO and UGT) and by various associations that defend the rights of domestic workers throughout Spain, via their websites, Facebook pages and media declarations⁸. We will now look at the most salient impacts identified, depending on whether care work is carried out in the formal or informal economy.

2.1. Lack of equality in terms of rights is inherent in the regulation of paid domestic work in Spain

A lack of equal rights is inherent in the regulation of paid domestic work in Spain. There was clear discrimination against women workers who were paying Social Security contributions at the beginning of the pandemic: neither their rights nor the level of protection they received were comparable with those of other workers. Royal Decree 1620/2011 (together with some positive amendments introduced by Royal Decree-Law 29/2012) regulates the current level of domestic workers' social security contributions, levels of state protection, types of contract, minimum wages, work breaks, and the obligations of employer households.

Based on this legislation, as of 1 January 2012, the former Special Social Security Scheme for Domestic Workers was established as a special system within the general scheme. Continuing to be a Special Scheme means that workers' rights the degree of protection in this sector differ from those that other employees have. Basically, domestic workers are not entitled to unemployment benefit, the right of the employer to withdraw the contract remains, which means that workers can be dismissed at any time without there being any obligation for them to state the reason for dismissal. The legislation itself provided a grace period until 2019, when equality with other employees in the General System was to be established. However, just as the deadline was approaching, an amendment in the 2018 General State Budget (6777), postponed the integration of the two systems until 2024.

Under Royal Decree 1620 / 2011, full-time domestic workers must be paid at least the national minimum wage (NMW, or SMI in Spanish). A full-time position is based on a 40-hour week, and if the employee should work fewer hours, s/he will receive the amount proportional to the number of hours worked. Following the 22.3% increase in the NMW in 2019, and the subsequent 5.5% increase in 2020, the NMW now stands at €950 per month/ 14 payments (which is equivalent to a total of €1,108.33 per month, and an hourly rate of €7.43). The Labour and Social Security Inspectorate (ITSS in Spanish) launched an action plan and awareness-raising campaign, the first phase of which was completed on 31 March 2021. This campaign consisted of sending letters to employers alerting them to the current irregularities in terms of salaries and social security contributions, offering technical assistance and information to enable them to proceed with the regularisation of salaries that are below the NMW. The Ministry of Labour and Social Economy reported that by the end of this first phase (31 March 2021) the employment situation of almost 30,000 domestic workers had been regularised, a figure that represents around 60% of the cases reported. The data shows that regularisation has only resulted in a reduction of the declared working hours in 15% of cases, which means that for the vast majority it has resulted in an increase in wages.

Surprisingly, among the measures adopted by the Spanish government in Royal Decree 8/2020 of 17 March in response to the state of emergency, which included urgent measures regulating new

8. These are the associations, listed in alphabetical order, whose activities have been included: Asociación de Mujeres Migrantes Malen Etxea; Asociación Intercultural de Profesionales del Hogar y de los Cuidados (ALPHYC); Grupo Turín: Servicio Doméstico Activo (SEDOAC); Mujeres Migrantes Diversas; Mujeres Pa'lante; Senda de Cuidados; Sindillar/Sindihogar: Territorio Doméstico, y Trabajadoras no Domesticadas.

procedures for the suspension of employment contracts, unemployment benefits, cessation of activity in the case of the self-employed, etc., there is no mention of this special employment relationship, despite the fact that paid care work has been defined as an essential activity. However, thanks to constant demands and pressure from associations dedicated to fighting for the rights of these workers, the government issued Royal Decree 11/2020 of 1 April under the slogan *No vamos a dejar nadie atrás* [We're not going to leave anyone behind]. This makes it possible for domestic workers who were registered with the social security system and who have lost their employment contracts to receive state benefit. This subsidy allows them to claim up to 70% of their salary, up to a maximum of €950, which corresponds to the minimum wage for 2020. It is aimed at workers who have been **made redundant as a result of Covid-19, or who** have had their workload reduced. They must have been registered with the social security system before 14 March, and be able to prove the losses caused by the crisis.

Faced with the fact that thousands of registered workers had not actually received the benefit, various campaigns and mobilisations conducted by the Domestic Workers Political Action Group (which comprises 10 different associations and domestic workers' unions) led to an announcement by the government in early July 2020 to the effect that the Public State Employment Service (SEPE) was committed to speeding up payments⁹. However, according to data published by *elDiario.es*, of the 32,000 applications submitted since the application period opened on 5 May, only 17,200 had been approved by the end of August, which indicates that almost half were still pending¹⁰. According to Otxoa (2020), this inefficiency was not so much due to technical difficulties associated with managing the subsidy (for example, many applicants did not appear in the SEPE registers, as their contracts had not been registered with the Social Security), but rather to a lack of political will and as a way of saving on social spending. On the other hand, the associations consider that the subsidy, which constitutes 70% of salary, is insufficient for a sector that is characterised by its precarious nature, and in which the basis for social security contributions frequently does not correspond to the actual salary¹¹.

Table 3 shows that, between January 2020 and January 2021, the number of foreign nationals registering with the Special System for Domestic Workers in Spain fell by almost 1,500 within the country as a whole. However, the impact of the health crisis has not been as pronounced as the abrupt downward trend observed in the previous period (2015-2020), which will be discussed in the next section. From the perspective of foreign nationals, the loss of registration with the Social Security System not only means an immediate lack of income; dismissal also puts a person of migrant origin (a foreign national) at risk of falling into an irregular situation in cases where stable employment is a requirement for the renewal of work and residence permits.

In order to address a decrease or total loss of income among women workers in this position, which impacts on their own quality of life and that of their families (both in Spain and in their countries of origin, where there may be family members dependent on their remittances), women's associations and organisations have issued reports on women who have been active in getting organised. They have provided *cajas solidarias* (solidarity funds), as well as virtual spaces or WhatsApp groups in order to provide advice, and to be able to respond to demands and needs¹².

9. See: "Victoria de las trabajadoras de hogar: el SEPE abonará sus subsidios", *El Salto* (2 July, 2020). www.elsaltodiario.com/laboral/victoria-de-las-trabajadoras-de-hogar-el-sepe-abonara-sus-subsidios

10. See: "Miles de empleadas del hogar siguen sin cobrar el subsidio de paro: se ha reconocido a 17.200 y otras 14.800 aún están a la espera", *elDiario.es* (9 September, 2020). www.eldiario.es/economia/miles-empleadas-hogar-siguen-cobrar-subsidio-paro-reconocido-17-200-14-800-espera_1_6209854.html

11. Furthermore, the process for applying for the subsidy is excessively complex and not very accessible for some groups of people, for example due to the technological gap – a digital signature is required to apply for the subsidy.

12. For example, www.interdependientes.org

Table 3. Evolution of registration with the Special System for Domestic Workers in Catalonia, by sex and nationality, 2015-2021 (31 January 2021)

| | Foreign persons | | | Total registrations | | |
|------|-----------------|---------|---------|---------------------|---------|---------|
| | Men | Women | Total | Men | Women | Total |
| 2015 | 15,202 | 190,952 | 206,158 | 21,827 | 405,197 | 427,030 |
| 2016 | 14,348 | 185,545 | 199,899 | 21,503 | 406,291 | 427,801 |
| 2017 | 12,738 | 173,281 | 186,026 | 20,580 | 402,917 | 423,505 |
| 2018 | 11,453 | 167,045 | 178,508 | 19,330 | 396,526 | 415,868 |
| 2019 | 10,494 | 160,889 | 171,395 | 18,238 | 386,639 | 404,890 |
| 2020 | 9,680 | 155,407 | 165,088 | 17,205 | 374,250 | 391,456 |
| 2021 | 9,741 | 153,828 | 163,568 | 17,049 | 364,094 | 381,151 |

Source: Social Security Statistics, Ministry of Inclusion, Social Security and Migration.

2.2. Paid domestic work in the informal economy

The subsidy for domestic workers who are registered with the Social Security System has been of no benefit to those working on an informal basis who have been left with no income. Around a third of domestic workers have no employment contract, many of them foreign women in an irregular situation who have little in the way of a support network.

Domestic worker associations note that there have been many more job losses among domestic workers than among care workers, due to the nature of their work. There is also evidence of employers taking advantage of the pandemic situation to offer poorer pay and working conditions to workers who find themselves “trapped” in the informal economy, not only in terms of working conditions, but also in terms of pay. For example, live-in workers paid just €500 a month with only two hours per week of free time, or live-out workers receiving €3 an hour. Some live-in care workers have seen their working hours increased, and their right to days off restricted. This has often meant that they have become isolated in the homes where they work, which poses a risk to their own health as well as being a cause of anxiety and anguish, and making it impossible for them to balance their own work and family lives. In the case of live-in workers, it should be borne in mind that when they lose their jobs, they also lose their homes. In any event, the kind of acute job insecurity faced by these workers will always have a negative impact on health, possibly leading to the development of serious physical and psychosocial conditions that are frequently not even recognised as being occupational illnesses (CMIB, 2017).

When we speak of the informal economy in domestic service, it should be noted that the consequences are particularly alarming for foreign women who find themselves in an irregular situation, and who are even more vulnerable to violations of their rights. On the other hand, it must be acknowledged that it is one of the few ways of earning an income without an employment contract, as so much of this work is carried out within the underground economy. It is also one of the few points of entry to the labour market for women seeking asylum whose applications have been rejected, and who are left without any form of protection¹³. Moreover, regularising residence in Spain as a domestic worker is the route most frequently chosen by many foreign women, mainly due to the difficulty of finding a job with a company that is willing to go through the necessary procedures. When applying for legal residence on the basis of “**social roots**”¹⁴, the applicant needs to be able to show that they have lived in Spain continuously for a period of three years immediately prior to their application, and that they have a “pre-contract”, the offer of a full-time (40 hours per week) job. This is an offer that will only become valid if the application is finally approved with a work and residence permit being granted for one year. Women working in the care sector who have several different employers find it difficult to fulfil these conditions.

13. See: “Domésticas y sin papeles: entre la espera, el temor y la esperanza”, *El Salto* (11 February, 2021). www.elsaltodiario.com/precariedad/trabajadoras-hogar-esenciales-sin-papeles-espera-esperanza

14. Article 31 of LO 8/2000, of 22 December, an amendment to Organic Law 4/2000, of 11 January, establishes the possibility of granting a temporary residence permit to foreigners who can prove that they have established roots in Spain.

One of the problems for those applying for residence on the basis of social roots is that permits are valid for 12 months, are limited to a specific geographical area, and to the type of work specified in the employment contract (in this case domestic service), which means that during the first year it is not possible to move to another sector. The risk of falling back into an irregular situation after that first year is high, and it is precisely then that the worker must apply for a change in the type of residence and work permit; to do so they must fulfil the standard requirements for the renewal of all work and residence permits for employed persons. If a migrant woman is unable to renew her domestic service contract or present another job offer, it will be difficult for her to gain a work and residence permit.

3. Recommendations for moving towards improved working conditions in the care sector

As a first step, there is an urgent need to put the Special System on a par with the General Social Security System (contrary to the stipulations of Amendment 6777 of the General Budget), in terms of rights and benefits, particularly with regard to the possibility of claiming unemployment benefit. Unemployment benefit is one of the main stumbling blocks that explains why the Spanish government has yet to ratify the International Labour Organisation's Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189) and Recommendation 201 on decent work for domestic workers. Convention No. 189 was signed at the 100th ILO¹⁵ Conference in Geneva in June 2011, and it recognises paid domestic work as an activity that is undervalued and invisible, and one that is mainly carried out by women and girls, many of whom are migrants or members of disadvantaged communities, and who are particularly vulnerable to discrimination in terms of contractual and working conditions, as well as other abuses of human rights. Its ratification, long called for by trade unions and associations within the sector, would ensure a commitment to the highest international standards with regard to employment rights for these workers. In order to ensure equal rights, an amendment to national legislation would be necessary.

Any progress in terms of social and employment rights for this group has implications that go beyond the purely legal, as in this case it is families rather than companies who have to register workers. Without state funding, it is not possible to make most of these rights a reality. Some of the economic measures implemented by the Spanish government in this respect have proved to be insufficient, such as the 20% reduction in Social Security contributions (which ceased to be applied as no express extension was included in the 2017 budget) or the 45% bonus for large families. The sharp 3.41% fall in the number of people registered in the Special System for Domestic Workers between 2018 and 2019 cannot be attributed solely to the 22% rise in the NMW and the consequent increase in social security contributions from January 2019. It is a situation that has multiple causes, and the decline began in mid-2016 (see Table 3). However, although the increase in the NMW cannot in itself explain the downward trend in the number of registrations, it could certainly explain why this has been so acute¹⁶.

To that end, it is worth highlighting a pioneering initiative in Spain, promoted by the Government of Catalonia Secretariat for Equality, Migration and Citizenship, inspired by the Universal Employment Cheque Service (CESU in French) which has been in place in France since 2006. This is a programme of grants for the creation of new jobs in the field of care work in the home¹⁷. It consists of a financial subsidy that covers the cost of social security contributions for a period of 12 months (around €2,685 if the contract is full-time), aimed at employers or non-profit organisations. The adoption of this measure makes it possible to:

- Promote the creation of jobs with contracts in a sector where the underground economy plays a major role.

15. See: www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/es/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:C189

16. See: "El Gobierno asegura que la caída del empleo agrario y doméstico no se debe solo al SMI", *NIUS Diario* (22 de enero, 2020). www.niusdiario.es/economia/empleo/Gobierno-asegura-agrario-domestico-SMI_18_2887245375.html

17. See: https://canalempresa.gencat.cat/es/01_que_voleu_fer/mesuresempresesiautonomes/mesures-economiques-i-socials-per-a-empreses-i-autonomes/ajuts-i-prestacions-per-empreses-i-autonomes/subvencio-treball-domiciliari-cures/.

- Guarantee payment of the national minimum wage.
- Facilitate the regularisation of those foreign nationals who meet all the requirements for “social roots”.

This type of initiative undoubtedly contributes to the recognition and dignification of care work, especially in a context such as the present, marked by a health crisis that has meant an increase in vulnerability and precariousness for a significant number of people working in this sector. However, there are a number of obstacles here, including the fact that it is impossible for many potential claimants (mostly retired people) to prove that they have sufficient financial resources to be able to pay the national minimum wage.

There is no doubt that the pandemic and its effects have helped to strengthen the whole of the activist network that has been developing in recent years and is focused on the struggle of domestic and care workers to gain both rights and visibility. An extensive network of organisations and associations has progressively gained prominence in the media, while at the same time intensifying protest activities and political advocacy campaigns aimed at protecting rights and taking the struggle forward (Almena Cooperativa Feminista, 2019). Multiple groups, organisations and social movements have concentrated their efforts on vindicating the rights of domestic and care workers, and have been developing their own agenda when it comes to making their demands known to public institutions in order to improve conditions in the sector, in terms of both employment and citizenship rights (Carrillo, 2018). Despite these undeniable advances, many female employees are still unaware of their employment rights, have little time to obtain the necessary information, and find themselves alone or with a limited support network, especially when those in question are foreign nationals in an irregular situation. And there continue to be employers who either avoid their responsibilities and obligations, or are unaware of them.

Here, associations and trade unions have a very important and commendable role to play. For example, the Information Centre for Foreign Workers (CITE) of the CCOO trade union in Catalonia launched an **information campaign on social and employment rights for domestic and care workers**, with the collaboration of various associations and the Barcelona City Council (Reyes y Bertrán, 2020). This initiative stems from the union's observation of a steady increase in the percentage of women from Central American countries who are all too frequently in an irregular situation, and are employed as domestic workers in the domestic and care sector.

Another interesting civil society initiative supported by Barcelona City Council and the trade union organisations CCOO and UGT, was the constitution of the “Committee for the defence of the rights of domestic, cleaning and care workers in the city of Barcelona”, created in 2018 by four organisations, Libélulas, Mujeres Pa'lante, La Asociación de Mujeres Migrantes y Diversas and Sindillar/Sindihogar (the first independent trade union of female domestic and care workers in Spain). The main task of this committee was to press for the Spanish government to ratify ILO Convention 189, and to denounce the fact that the labour reforms passed in 2011 and 2012 have not only failed to bring rights into line with other employment sectors, but also continue to exclude many women working in the informal economy, most of whom are of migrant origin.

The need to recognise and dignify this type of work and to assume political responsibility is also becoming increasingly evident in local government. It is within this context that various policies, both municipal and supra-municipal, have proliferated at local level in recent years (Carrillo, 2018).

With regard to Barcelona City Council, it is worth noting that the Barcelona Municipal Immigration Council (CMIB) chose “dignifying and raising awareness of the field of domestic and personal care work” as its main focus for 2017, following a proposal by various organisations aware of the unfairness of the situation of those working in the sector in terms of the lack of social and employment rights, most of whom are women, with many being female migrants. This is a participatory and consultative entity created in 1997 comprising associations of migrant groups, organisations working in the areas of reception, refuge and asylum, neighbourhood, local civic,

cultural and trade union bodies, experts, as well as the municipal political groups. A diverse range of initiatives were developed, and a “Manifesto for the dignification of domestic and care work” was collaboratively produced and subsequently approved by the CMIB as a whole on 26 September 2017. It includes the following proposals (CMIB, 2017: 49-51):

1. Ratification of ILO Convention 189 by the Spanish State.
2. Elimination of the Special Social Security System for Domestic Workers and their immediate incorporation into the General Social Security System.
3. To grant workers in the sector the same rights to Social Security cover as all other workers within the General System.
4. To include maternity cover under the same conditions as in the General System.
5. The right to receive benefits in the event of temporary incapacity for work, under the same conditions as in the General System.
6. Introduction of remedial measures in terms of Social Security contributions in order to guarantee the right to a decent retirement.
7. Elimination of the right of the employer to terminate the contract at will without the need to give a reason – which is equivalent to “free dismissal” – and to guarantee the protection of workers’ fundamental rights in this area, especially the right to effective legal protection.
8. Compliance with the obligation for all contracts to be in writing.
9. That greater control to be exercised by the Labour Inspectorate or other government bodies to ensure compliance with regulations, particularly in the case of employment agencies and private entities (parishes or associations that act as intermediaries).
10. To develop incentives for hiring domestic and care workers on contracts, and reinstate and improve aid to families through taxation policy. This had previously been done in a policy that provided a 20% reduction in Social Security contributions that was in place until July 2017.
11. Adoption of measures to prevent, report and punish gender violence against women in domestic work, with an emphasis on sexual abuse, trafficking and exploitation in the workplace.
12. Promotion and creation of a specialised service offering comprehensive support to domestic workers, including making it possible to report all types of abuse, using simple resources that are available to all (a hotline).
13. More flexible requirements and procedures to be established within the framework of the Alien Status Act for obtaining and renewing residence and work permits.
14. Ensuring compliance with the regulations governing live-in work, in terms of working hours, salaries, and other rights, taking into account the fact that this can effectively involve a 24-hour work period that includes overnight stays.
15. Organisation of training courses on occupational risks.
16. Analysis of the situation within the sector, and the working conditions of domestic and care workers.
17. To work with doctors’ surgeries and the emergency services in order to ensure that illnesses or accidents suffered by domestic, cleaning, and care workers are correctly identified as resulting from working conditions where this is the case.
18. Recognition of domestic work as part of the care economy.
19. Incorporation of an intercultural and gender perspective in recruitment policies, with the aim of eliminating rumour, discrimination, segregation and prejudice based on origin, ethnicity, age or gender.
20. Promotion of initiatives aimed at giving domestic and care work greater visibility and enhancing its perceived value, empowering workers, raising awareness in society in general, and in each of the sectors involved.

Finally, it is clear that although from the beginning of this text we have excluded an analysis of the employment situation of people working in at-home care, in care homes, and in other care-related services who are registered in the General Social Security System, there is no doubt that any reflection on how to tackle the roots of the “care crisis” and to move towards a re-evaluation of the care sector in order to create decent working conditions will require the implementation of measures that reach beyond the boundaries of domestic service. According to Labour Force Survey data provided by UGT (2019: 3), Spain is the second country in the European Union in

terms of volume of this type of work (considering households as employers of domestic staff), both in absolute terms, and as a percentage of the total number of jobs in each member state. However, when it comes to care in residential establishments and the provision of social services where no accommodation is provided, the data places Spain at the bottom of list of European Union countries. There is still a long way to go in this sense, and the public funding of these services is essential.

Within Barcelona City Council's commitment to promoting public procurement measures as a means of defending rights and working conditions in the sector, it is worth highlighting the Home Care Service (SAD) pilot project, which has taken the Buurtzorg model (Buurtzorg is a Dutch organisation providing health services in the home) as a reference point¹⁸: the social superblocks. The starting point is the recognition of the fact that the current model of SAD provision shows signs of severe strain both in terms of service quality (due to overload) and the working conditions of the professionals employed. The Buurtzorg model is being applied in four of the city's neighbourhoods (Marina, Sant Antoni, Vilapicina and El Poblenou), with two SAD superblocks being set up in each. This is a new form of service provision, based on the creation of teams of professionals who provide a service to a group of users living in a superblock, and who have a high degree of autonomy in terms of how work is organised, decision-making, etc. In this way, continuity, proximity, and the personalisation of care can be improved. The Buurtzorg model was created in 2006 by a group of community nurses in the Netherlands who decided to set up a community care group of their own in order to address the centralisation and depersonalisation towards which the Dutch system was drifting (Word Economic Forum, 2017). It has now been extended throughout the country, and is being replicated in many European and Asian countries. The results show that in this way it is possible to improve both working conditions and the degree of personal satisfaction experienced by caregivers, as well as the quality of life of those who use these services.

To this end, in April 2019, Barcelona City Council created the "Barcelona Cares"¹⁹ space, with the aim of highlighting existing care resources in the city, and establishing a point of reference for citizens (**professional carers and those caring for family members, people receiving care, and the public in general**) where where information on all the available services and resources can be found. An additional goal here is to promote networking and exchange. The centre aims to become the following:

- A place to find information and comprehensive guidance on existing resources within the city.
- A meeting point for all those involved in care in the city.
- A space for coordination and networking between people, professionals and organisations.
- A centre for raising awareness of issues around care, and the dissemination of information on the subject.

4. In conclusion

Contrary to the predictions of Tronto (2020), the assessment of the situation presented in this article does not suggest, for the moment at least, that the current global health crisis has translated into an opportunity to advocate care as an essential human value, as an integral part of human life. Furthermore, all the recommendations outlined here are just a sample of how much remains to be done to successfully address the situations of exploitation, precariousness, vulnerability and defencelessness experienced by some of these women workers. These situations are the result of a series of shortcomings linked both to the still discriminatory (mis)regulation of domestic work in our legal system (despite progress made in recent years) and to the voracity of a market that in the absence of any other care system operates on a global scale by recruiting women workers from certain backgrounds, and is based on job models that facilitate employment relationships that are all too often rooted in labour exploitation and informality.

18. See: <https://ajuntament.barcelona.cat/dretssocials/es/innovacion-social/supermanzanas-sociales>

19. See: www.barcelona.cat/ciutatcuidadora/es/espacio-barcelona-cuida/que-es.

There is only one way to resolve the “care crisis”. This involves a combination of two strategies: granting people time so that they can take on unpaid care tasks as part of their daily lives if they so wish, and the creation of an infrastructure by the public administration that supports well-paid jobs in care, and that is accessible to all. If this does not happen, according to Dowling (2021) our system will continue to move towards the discourse of personal responsibility for care, which translates into the expansion of opportunities for commodification and funding by market forces. Managing care needs based on the principle of personal responsibility means fostering job insecurity, the invisibility of the workforce and the deterioration of care standards, as well as turning access to care into a “luxury” accessible only to the wealthiest sectors of society. Solving the “care crisis” by expanding the care economy within the logic of market forces comes involves all these risks, as this is the only way that capitalism can extract added economic value from a sector that is, by definition, labour-intensive. Such a structure is also extremely vulnerable to health crises such as the one we are currently experiencing, as has all too clearly been seen.

The ILO has placed care work at the centre of its initiatives in recent years (ILO, 2018). To this end, it argues that if decent jobs in care are to be created, the process needs to be supported by transformative policies in five areas of public policy: care policy, macroeconomics, social protection, employment and migration policy. These policies will have a transformative impact to the extent that they build on what the ILO calls the “triple Rs” - recognising, reducing and redistributing care work. The ILO recommends a number of measures, including the specific circumstances of workers with a migrant background: (i) regulating and enforcing decent working conditions, and guaranteeing equal pay for work of equal value for all care workers; (ii) ensuring a safe, attractive and stimulating work environment for all care workers; (iii) enacting legislation and adopting measures to protect migrant care workers (ILO, 2018).

There is no other way that the words of sociologist Alain Touraine (2020) with which we began this chapter (“this crisis is going to raise the profile of care workers”) can become a reality that will allow us to enjoy both a present and a future where there are *decent* jobs in care. And to conclude, a final thought as so clearly expressed by Karina Fulladosa-Leal *et al.* (2020: 8), “no hi podrà haver un projecte just que no tingui en compte tenir cura d’aquelles que cuiden” (there can be no project based on the principles of fairness that does not take into account the need to care for the carers).

Bibliography

ALMENA COOPERATIVA FEMINISTA. *Tras la puerta. Cómo informan los medios sobre el trabajo del hogar y los cuidados*. Barcelona: Almena Cooperativa Feminista/Oxfam Intermón, 2019.

BECK, U. *La sociedad del riesgo global*. Madrid: Siglo XXI, 1986.

CARRILLO, S. (coord.) *Abordant la crisi de les cures: polítiques, treballs i experiències locals*, Barcelona: The Institute of Social and Political Science, 2018.

BARCELONA MUNICIPAL IMMIGRATION COUNCIL. *Propuestas para la dignificación y sensibilización en el ámbito del trabajo del hogar y el cuidado de las personas*. Barcelona: Citizen Rights and Diversity Department, Barcelona City Council, 2017. https://ajuntament.barcelona.cat/consell-municipal-immigracio/sites/default/files/documents/doc.qt_llar_00.es.pdf.

DOWLING, E. *The Care Crisis*. London: Verso, 2021.

EZQUERRA, S. “Cartografiant la crisi de les cures en l'àmbit català: polítiques públiques, famílies i mercat”. S. CARRILLO (coord.). *Abordant la crisi de les cures: polítiques, treballs i experiències locals*, 2019, pp. 10-45.

FEDERICI, S. *Revolución en punto cero. Trabajo doméstico, reproducción y luchas feministas*. Madrid: Traficante de Sueños, 2013.

FULLADOSA-LEAL, K., ET AL. "Sobre drets, reivindicacions i polítiques amoroses entorn de les feines de la llar i les cures". *Revista Eure*, Vol. 47, 2020.

HOCHSCHILD, A. R. "Global Care Chains and Emotional Surplus Value", in. W. HUTTON, W.; A. GIDDENS (eds.), *On The Edge: Living with Global Capitalism*. London: Jonathan Cape, 2000, pp. 130-146.

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION (ILO). *Care work and care jobs. For the future of decent work*. Geneva: 2018. https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---gender/documents/publication/wcms_737394.pdf.

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION (ILO). "Livelihoods of more than 55 million domestic workers at risk due to Covid-19". *ILO News*, 16 June 2020. www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/news/WCMS_748117/lang-es/index.htm

LUTZ, H. "Care migration: The connectivity between care chains, care circulation and transnational social inequality". *Current Sociology*, Vol. 66:4, 2018, pp. 577-589.

MARTÍNEZ BUJÁN, R. "¡El trabajo doméstico cuenta! Características y transformaciones del servicio doméstico en España". *Migraciones*, Vol. 36, 2014, pp. 275-305.

OTXOA, I. "El subsidio que no llega: una promesa incumplida". *El Salto*, (July 2020). <https://www.elsaltodiario.com/opinion/subsidio-trabajadoras-hogar-no-llega-promesa-incumplida-devaluacion-condiciones>.

PÉREZ-OROZCO, A. *Cadenas globales de cuidados*. Santo Domingo: UN-INSTRAW, 2007.

PÉREZ-OROZCO, A. *Cadenas globales de cuidados. ¿Qué derechos para un régimen global de cuidados justo?* Santo Domingo: UN-INSTRAW, 2010.

PÉREZ-OROZCO, A.; LÓPEZ-GIL, S. *Desigualdades a flor de piel. Cadenas globales de cuidados. Concreciones en el empleo de hogar y articulaciones políticas*. Santo Domingo: ONU Mujeres, 2016.

REYES, L., BERTRÁN, C. *Condicions de vida de les treballadores de la llar i les cures centreamericanes a Barcelona*. Barcelona: Information Centre for Foreign Workers (CITE), 2020.

SILVER, B. *Forces of labor*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

TOURAINÉ, A. "Alain Touraine, sociologist: "Esta crisis va a empujar hacia arriba a los cuidadores". *El País*. 2020. <https://elpais.com/ideas/2020-03-28/alain-touraine-esta-crisis-va-a-empujar-hacia-arriba-a-los-cuidadores.html>.

TRONTO, J. *Riesgo o cuidado*. Buenos Aires: Fundación Medifé, 2020.

UNIÓN GENERAL DE TRABAJADORES (UGT). *Trabajo doméstico y de cuidados para empleadores particulares*. 2019. <https://www.ugt.es/informe-trabajo-domestico-y-de-cuidados-para-empleadores-particulares>.

WORD ECONOMIC FORUM (WEF). 'Buurtzorg'. *The Dutch word that could revolutionize healthcare*, 2017. <https://www.weforum.org>.

September 2021

Key words: reception, immigration,
refuge, irregularity

Reception policy in Barcelona. Thirty years of experiences and lessons learned

Ramón Sanahuja Vélez. Expert in the field of local immigration policy and head of the Immigration Directorate at Barcelona City Council between 2006 and 2020.

ramonsanahuja@yahoo.es

Over the last thirty years, Barcelona has undergone one of the most profound and rapid demographic transformations in its history due to the arrival of a steady influx of migrants from both non-EU and EU countries since the early 2000s. According to the municipal register of residents on 1 January 2020, 27.8% of the people living in the city were born in a foreign country. In 2000, the percentage of foreign residents in Barcelona was just 4.8% of a total population of 1,512,971. Many of these people arriving from other countries over the last twenty years have ended up settling permanently in the city, forming families and acquiring full citizenship. This steady flow of migrants has enabled Barcelona to maintain its demographic weight, with the city's population increasing to 1,666,530 in 2020, the highest figure since the end of the 1980s.

Over the years, Barcelona City Council's reception policies have helped to facilitate the arrival of a significant number of these people, also helping them to settle permanently in different districts, and they have now become a fundamental part of the city's identity. In this article we will talk about the historical background and the characteristics of municipal reception policy, from its inception up to the present day, without addressing matters linked to policies of coexistence, diversity, non-discrimination, and interculturality.

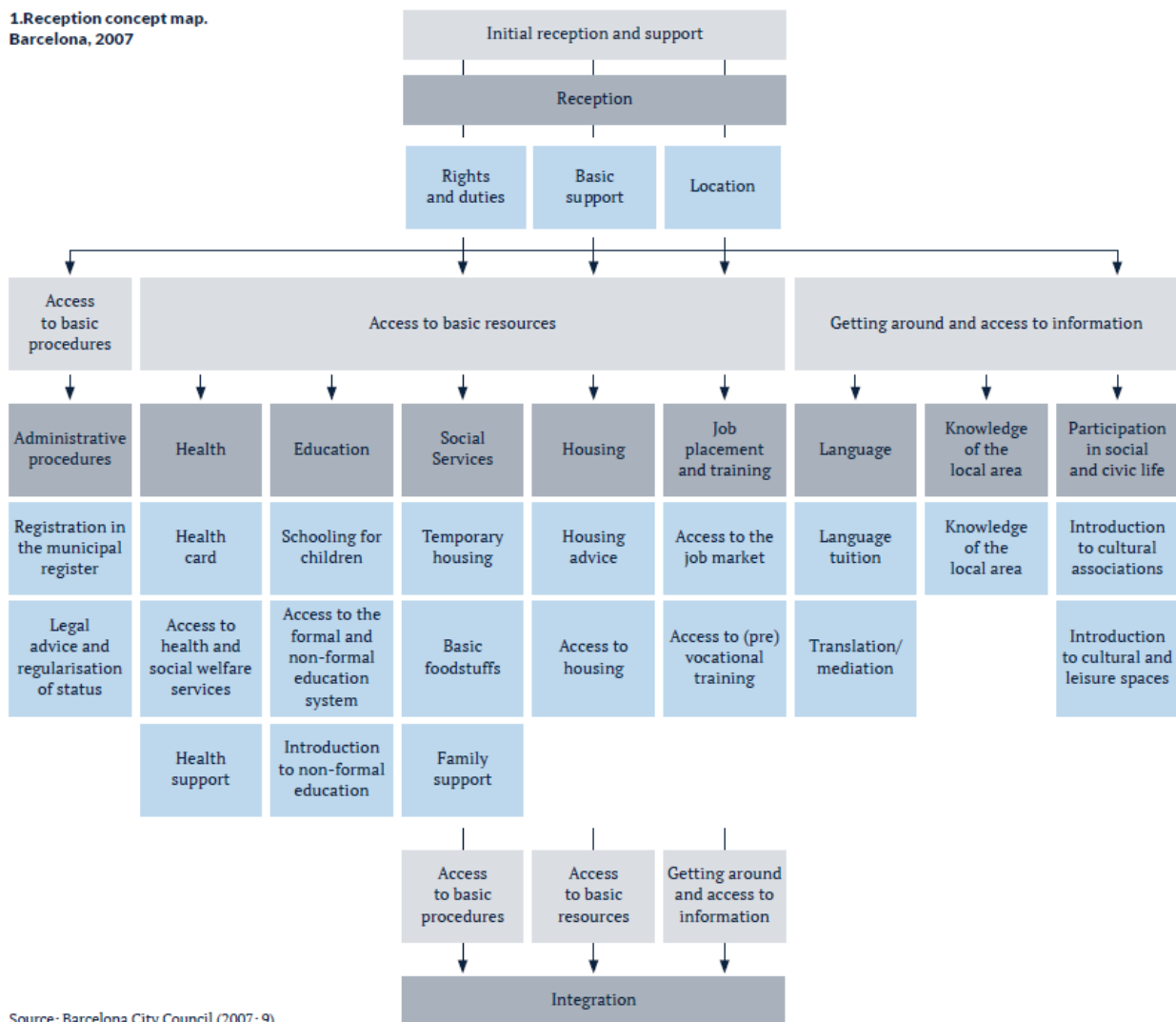
1. Definition

Even though reception policies in Barcelona were first introduced in the 1980s, with the launch in 1989 of the Service for the Care of Immigrants, Emigrants and Refugees (SAIER), we will take as our starting point some of the definitions described in Barcelona City Council's Reception Framework drawn up in 2007, as these are the concepts underpinning municipal policy that have shaped the way in which immigrants and refugees have been received over the last twenty years.

Within the Reception Framework, "reception" is defined as follows: We take **reception** to refer to the set of actions that make it possible for new arrivals to access the information and basic resources that will favour their integration into the host society. We speak of **new arrivals**, at whom reception initiatives are primarily targeted, when referring to immigrants who have recently arrived in the city and are at the initial adjustment stage, and who are therefore unaware of the social integration mechanisms available to them. This means that reception measures are directed at immigrants during a period of transition which will be different depending on the specific circumstances in each case. (Barcelona City Council, 2007: 3).

It is important to bear in mind the fact that the 2007 plan - which remains largely valid today - is structured around three distinct areas. These were the forerunners of what was subsequently to become the Reception Law in Catalonia: firstly, access to basic procedures such as registration in the municipal register of residents and legal advice on regularisation of status; secondly, access to basic resources (health, education, employment, social services, culture, etc.), and thirdly, help with getting around and getting to know the local areas (language support, social and civic participation). The concept map drawn up was the following:

1.Reception concept map.
Barcelona, 2007



Source: Barcelona City Council (2007: 9).

In defining “reception”, the concepts of *accommodation* and *integration* are used²⁰.

However, in the reception concept map, the goal of the process is stated to be “to facilitate the integration” of the person from another country who has just arrived. Today we certainly would not use the word “integration” due to its assimilationist connotations, instead we would choose other terms such as *inclusion* (Sanahuja, 2019). It should be remembered that the Barcelona Interculturality Plan was drawn up later, in 2010. The Barcelona Interculturality Plan defined an intercultural model that informed all municipal policies - including reception policies - and it highlights three elements and key principles: equality of access, recognition of diversity, and

20. The term “*accommodation*” was first used by the academic Ricard Zapata Barrero (2001), who uses it to refer not only to the sociological process of “integration”, but also to the relationship of immigrants with institutional structures and the way that these structures and public authorities view immigrants.

interaction between new arrivals and other city residents. The base document lays the foundation for the subsequent application of reception policies.

2. Key aspects of reception policy

Migration cycles are closely related to periods of expansion and contraction in the economic cycle, both in Spain and within the city itself, and also to the political crises and wars that drive people from certain countries towards Europe. A current example is the political and economic crisis in countries like Venezuela and Colombia. Other factors affecting the flow of migrants into the city are demographic evolution and immigration legislation²¹.

The Base Reception Plan document indicates a series of principles such as temporality, mainstreaming, social cohesion, diversity, participation, and equality. Below we will highlight the most significant aspects which reach beyond the Plan itself, and that have shaped reception strategies over the last twenty years.

2.1. Inclusion of persons in irregular situations

In contrast to what happens in many European countries, in Barcelona, right from the beginning, people in irregular situations have been included in reception policies.

In Barcelona's 2007 Base Reception Plan, the following is clearly stated: [...] Reception is aimed at all newly arrived immigrants, regardless of their legal residency status, with the most socially vulnerable receiving the most support. [...] The vast majority of newly arrived migrants in Barcelona aim to regularise their legal status in order to be able to settle and work in the city and enjoy the best possible living conditions. (Barcelona City Council, 2007: 4).

One of the most significant historical characteristics of migratory flows in the whole of Spain and more specifically in Barcelona, is irregularity. On arrival in Barcelona, most people are in an irregular situation, as the annual reports of the Care Service for Immigrants, Emigrants and Refugees [SAIER] testify.

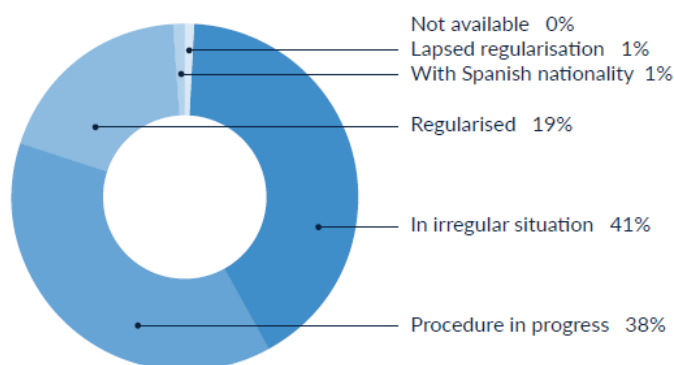
Often more than 50% of those using their services are in an irregular situation. However, in the last report presented by SAIER, corresponding to the year 2020, the percentage of people in an irregular situation was as high as 80%, including all those receiving support with the process of obtaining their residence permit.

If the aim is to create inclusive policies for all those who arrive in the city, and more than 50% of those people are in an irregular situation when they arrive, it makes no sense to exclude them from reception policies.

The various municipal governments, led by different mayors, have all shared a human rights-based approach to policies, considering people first and foremost as human beings, regardless of their legal status.

21. The entry into force of the Aliens Act in 2005 led to the regularisation of over 700,000 people throughout Spain, which presented a challenge to local councils. Barcelona City Council set up an *ad hoc* mechanism to process requests for “retroactive” registration in the municipal register in order to provide proof of arrival in the country, and so make it easier for migrants to process their request for a residence permit. Over a four-week period, the facility set up at the Casa del Mig in the Parc de L'Espanya Industrial dealt with tens of thousands of people, many of whom were able to regularise their status.

Graph 1. Legal status of SAIER users. 2020



NB: In 2020, a total of 19,001 people used their services.
Source: Barcelona City Council. SAIER report 2020.

The experiences of the majority of Barcelona residents who are of immigrant origin, many of whom now have Spanish nationality, reveals that they spent a minimum of three years in an irregular situation before receiving their first temporary residence permit. They later renewed that temporary permit, finally obtaining a permanent residence permit. Depending on their nationality or country of origin, they then applied for, and eventually obtained, Spanish citizenship.

In 2017, the City Council approved the “government measure to facilitate access to regularisation, and prevent lapsed regularisation” (Barcelona City Council, 2017). This was a landmark achievement: for the first time, the local government of a major European city had established a public policy aimed specifically at migrants in an irregular situation explained *in an open, straightforward way*. It consolidated the policies regarding migrants in an irregular situation that the City Council had implemented in previous years, bringing them together for the first time in a single document and elevating them to the level of municipal policy.

2.2. Specialisation versus normalisation

Reception policies and services have always been understood as specific and temporary, related to migration and the legal status of “Foreign Person”. Legal status as a Foreign Person involves certain obligations that are specified in Organic Law 4/2000, of 11 January, on the rights and freedoms of foreign nationals in Spain and their social integration. The idea underpinning this law is that people progressively gain autonomy, achieve legal stability, learn Barcelona’s official languages (Catalan and Spanish), find work, get a stable job, and build their lives in the city of Barcelona like any other local resident. The historical approach of municipal policies is the principle of normalisation, which is clearly defined in the 2003 Municipal Immigration Plan:

“The Plan’s fundamental aim is to provide support for people within the framework of existing services, without creating parallel structures. However, it is necessary to be aware of the differing needs and diverse situations of each of the people who want to integrate into Barcelona society. Normalisation policies imply guaranteeing access to municipal services for all city residents. Normalisation [...] entails guaranteeing access to and use of the city’s basic services, [...] rethinking existing services in order to respond to new social phenomena, and restructuring the range of available services in line with new needs and demands. (Barcelona City Council, 2003).

This is one of the ground rules that all municipal services and departments have adhered to for years: not to create parallel systems for people of foreign origin, but to integrate them into the services aimed at the population in general. This has meant that municipal services, facilities, and programmes have had to adapt, both quantitatively and qualitatively, to the changing structure of Barcelona’s increasingly diverse population. Although the response has generally been a positive

one, not all services and facilities have adapted to the socio-demographic changes stemming from immigration from outside the EU over the years.

2.3. Participation

Another distinctive feature of the reception policies implemented in the city of Barcelona is the participation of wider society in developing them, including immigrant associations themselves. The city's main reception service, SAIER, was set up in 1989 as a result of a recommendation by the organisations within the Municipal Social Welfare Council, specifically the Refugee Working Group.

It was launched in collaboration with the Red Cross and the ACSAR Foundation, with the Information Centre for Foreign Workers (CITE), the Barcelona Bar Association (ICAB), the Association of Information and Communication Media (AMIC), and the Centre for Linguistic Normalisation (CNL) joining them in subsequent years. The first Municipal Reception Plan and the Barcelona City Reception Guidelines (2007) were drawn up in a very participatory way, with input from a network of 160 organisations working on reception in the city. There are many organisations in Barcelona that began to work on the reception of immigrants before the City Council itself did. Among these pioneers were the Bayt al-Thaqafa Foundation, led by Teresa Losada, the CITE, and the Ibn Batuta Sociocultural Association.

Barcelona City Council has implemented and financed countless reception initiatives, providing funding for associations in all of the city's neighbourhoods which has made it possible to create a far-reaching territorial network. The creation of the Language Co-ordination Platform, the Network of Social Entities for Legal Advice (XESAJE), and more recently the entities that work in the Nausica shelter programme, are examples of participating organisations.

The Municipal Immigration Council, established in 1997, has also played an important role in monitoring municipal action with regard to reception. One example that stands out is the document prepared by the organisations within the Municipal Council of Social Welfare, entitled "The 67 proposals of the Barcelona Municipal Immigration Council" (Barcelona City Council, 2014), which was drafted to support the inclusion of migrants within the framework of the 2014 Aliens Law, and which proposed a series of changes in the interpretation of the existing regulatory framework to that end.

2.4. A Local responsibility

Reception, although very much determined by the legal framework of the state, specifically by the Aliens Law and the Asylum Law, is fundamentally a local responsibility. People entering the European Union or Spain end up heading for a specific place where they hope to find housing and work, and eventually to settle. The first point of contact with the local government is through the application for inclusion on the municipal register of residents. People gradually establish themselves in a neighbourhood, they find work, send their children to school, join associations, and so on - it is essentially a local process.

Finally, it should also be noted that the Aliens Law led local governments to become more deeply involved in the management of migratory flows by creating "housing availability reports" for people who wanted to begin the family reunification process, and "social roots reports" for people in irregular situations who have lived in the city for three years and who wanted to access an extraordinary work permit. These two reports became compulsory in 2006, and this led to the creation of the Technical Office for Immigration, later to become the Directorate of Services for the Care and Reception of Immigrants which ended up taking over existing services such as SAIER and the translation and intercultural mediation service that had historically come under the umbrella of the Social Services.

2.5. Registration in the municipal register is key

The initial contact that municipalities have with foreign-born people - immigrants or refugees - who arrive in our towns and cities is generally through the citizen services offices when they request registration in the municipal register. The municipal register of residents, regulated by the basic law

on local government, is defined as a *de facto* register of the people resident in the municipality. This law considers registration in the municipal register of residents a requirement for everyone who lives in a particular municipality, regardless of their legal status. Therefore, the City Council has the obligation to register everyone who is actually living in the city.

The same law grants registered residents the status of “member of the local community” and as such, also grants right of access to municipal services and facilities. Additionally, there are a whole series of state and autonomous community laws that generally refer to the municipal register of residents to determine right of access to important services, such as the health and education systems. So being on the municipal register guarantees equal right of access to a multitude of services, facilities and programmes that are available for all residents, including people in an irregular situation. Furthermore, due to its public nature, the municipal register also provides a way of demonstrating how long a person has effectively been resident in the country, something that is extremely important under immigration law when it comes to obtaining an extraordinary residence permit on the basis of “social roots”.

For this reason, the city of Barcelona has always been at the forefront in terms of active registration policies, policies that have interpreted the basic law on local government in a way that allows all those living in the city, including people in an irregular situation, access to registration in the municipal register. A paradigmatic example of this is the registration of those who have no fixed abode, which makes it possible for people who have difficulty in proving their place of residence to register via the “report of knowledge of residence”, making inclusion in the municipal register and therefore access to services possible.

3. Legal advice

One of the key elements of reception policies is legal advice. A major concern for migrants is how to access information on regularising their situation and getting a residence permit. The main objective of legal advice in reception policies is to provide guidance for people in an irregular situation, to enable them to navigate the labyrinth of legislation on foreign nationals and the complexities of dealing with public administrative bodies and their first residence permit.

Another aim is to help people to renew their residence permits and avoid lapsed regularisation. People who find themselves in irregular situations are in a very precarious position, often being forced to work illegally and frequently under exploitative conditions. Their irregular administrative situation shapes their lives, making a normal life impossible for them as they are afraid of being detained or deported from the country under immigration legislation. For this reason, most of the effort in terms of legal advice has been aimed at helping thousands of people to escape from this limbo.

Legal advice also addresses other more complex matters that often affect Foreign Persons, for example disputes related to the custody of minors when mixed couples separate, support regarding the process of applying for citizenship, and for those seeking family reunification. From the very beginning, this has been a key aspect of Barcelona’s reception strategy, and it has been supported by the CITE, one of the organisations with the most extensive experience in providing advice to foreign workers in Catalonia - and the ICAB, as well as by other entities.

4. The Barcelona strategy

What follows is a brief description of the programmes, services, and facilities that comprise the city’s reception strategy, and that are the responsibility of the Directorate for the Care of Migrants and Refugees. The strategy relies on an extensive centralised service, such as SAIER, in order to create a city-wide network (SOAPI, the Support and Guidance Service for Migrants), and on the reception entities located in all the city's neighbourhoods that provide complementary services and that receive municipal financial support thanks to certain agreements (Xarxa 9 Barris Acull, Apropem-nos del Poble Nou, and the Coordinadora d’Entitats del Poble-sec) and a call for applications for subsidies.

Additionally, there are other reception services, such as the New Families programme, for people starting the family reunification procedure, the Language Learning Strategy via the CNL (for Catalan) and the network of organisations that comprise the Language Co-ordination Platform (for Spanish, literacy, and Catalan).

Other public services such as the health and education systems have their own reception strategies, including services such as reception classes. The range of services provided has varied over the years.

4.1. SAIER (central service)

Since 1989, the deep public commitment to reception policies has been evidenced by the creation of the single centre providing multiple services in response to the specific needs of foreign migrants in the city of Barcelona. Today, SAIER is defined as a service that supports all forms of human mobility, both in terms of arrivals (immigration, refuge), and departures (assisted voluntary return and emigration).

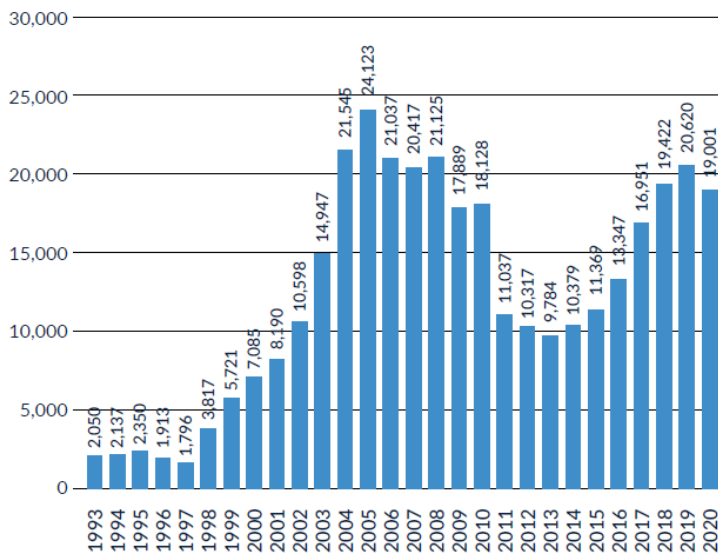
It started out as a small centre located on the ACSAR association premises on Avinguda del Paral·lel, working alongside the Red Cross. Over time it has joined forces with other entities specialising in the management of diverse aspects of migration, and has grown considerably. Today it occupies four spaces: two more on Carrer de la Font Honrada, and the new space that houses the front office on Carrer de Tarragona, opened in 2019).

SAIER has a large front office that assesses the needs of the people who come seeking support, referring them to the specific specialised services that will be able to help with the issues identified. For example, simple legal consultations are referred to the CITE, which deals with renewals of residence permits, matters concerning social roots, etc. More complex queries are dealt with by the ICAB. Requests for Catalan courses go to the CNL, located at SAIER, where the person can be signed up for a course. Applications for asylum are referred to ACCEM, the Spanish Catholic Migration Commission Association, which replaced the ACSAR Foundation, (the Catalan Association for Solidarity and Assistance for Refugees) in 2016. Requests for employment advice, together with matters of validation or recognition of qualifications are handled by AMIC. Requests for assisted voluntary return are dealt with by a dedicated desk at the SAIER front office itself, which also offers a translation and interpretation service and psychological support. The social care function of the Red Cross within the SAIER framework should also be noted.

SAIER was created within the domain of the Social Services, and in this sense has provided complementary services for certain groups of people. For example, it is SAIER that grants access to the state's refugee care programme. All those making a formal application for asylum in Barcelona and who want to enter the State care programme have to do so through the Red Cross at SAIER. SAIER also offers support to homeless people from non-European countries who have been in Barcelona for less than two years and have no local roots.

Between 1993 and 2020, a total of 347,105 people received support. The evolution in the numbers over time reveals a pattern that links to the number of arrivals in the city, and to economic cycles.

Graph 2. Number of people using SAIER. Evolution 1993-2020



Source: Barcelona City Council, 2021.

4.2. Support and Guidance Service for Migrants (SOAPI)

The Support and Guidance Service for Migrants (SOAPI) is a reception service that operates within the framework of the technical services of the ten districts within the city.

The origins of this service can be traced back to the group information sessions that were organised at the Besòs Social Services Centre. Located in a neighbourhood with a high percentage of immigrants, at the beginning of the 2000s the centre decided to hold group information sessions addressing issues such as employment rights, immigration law, registration in the municipal register of residents, etc. In 2007, the Immigration Directorate decided to conduct a pilot scheme in the Poble Sec neighbourhood, organising two-hour group sessions where more detailed information was provided. The inspiration for this initiative was the experience in the Besòs neighbourhood, but the information provided focused not only on immigration issues but also on matters related to the city, access to basic resources, etc. This pilot programme was conducted in collaboration with the Coordinadora de Entitats del Poble Sec, which was responsible for identifying people who would benefit from such services. The experience was deemed a positive one, and the decision was taken to set up a programme for all districts of the city, which would be directly managed by the Immigration Directorate.

Today, SOAPI's main function is to provide information, guidance, support, and advice on general and specific matters related with territorial organisation, basic resources, rights and duties, learning the official languages and immigration law, as well as other topics considered useful, for the immigrant population in the districts. This aim is being approached in three ways: Firstly, through regular information sessions that are always held at the same place and at the same time, mainly at district level; secondly, through information sessions held at the request of specific services, entities, facilities or groups and which take place on their own premises, and finally, through individualised consultations offered to people needing information on a particular procedure, or who need to go into some other aspect in greater depth.

In each district of the city there is a reception service agent working side by side with the rest of the district's professionals who is in charge of the regular information sessions, group sessions and individual consultations. The facilitators in each district have highly detailed knowledge of the local resources that people are generally referred to.

SOAPI has also been responsible for ensuring compliance with Catalonia's reception law, fulfilling local government obligations since 2015. This means that it is the body that teaches the module

focusing on knowledge of the local environment: the C modules of “Knowledge of Catalan Society”. This is a fifteen-hour training programme on the content prescribed by Law 10/2010 on the reception of immigrants and returnees to Catalonia (historical and geographical environment, rights and duties, main immigration procedures, etc.).

4.3. Family reunification

Taking advantage of the powers conferred by the LOE Regulation of 2004, and given the obligation to issue a “housing report” for family reunification purposes, Barcelona City Council decided to create the New Families programme, which offers support throughout the family reunification process to all residents who want to bring their children, husbands, or wives over from their countries of origin.

All those wanting to initiate the family reunification procedure need to request a report on the availability of suitable housing from the City Council in order to be able to proceed. This mandatory administrative procedure presented a unique opportunity to make contact with all who were seeking family reunification in Barcelona. The scheme first started out in the Horta district, supported by the technical structure within the district. From 2008 onwards, the scheme was gradually extended to other districts, eventually covering all areas of the city.

The New Families programme provides support and guidance to all families who have begun the family reunification process in Barcelona. The programme works with the whole family, both the adults who are in Barcelona who have applied for reunification and the rest of the family who want to join them who are currently in their country of origin, whether they are spouses or children. The programme offers a meeting space where they can find out more about city services, schools, and local associations. In addition, the programme also works to make the reunification of the family members who arrive and those who are already in the city an enriching and positive experience.

The programme also addresses aspects such as the gender perspective, for women either joining, or being joined by, their husbands. One of the programme’s highest priorities is to incorporate children and young people reunified with their families into the education system. A great deal of effort is made to work with both families and schools to achieve this end. One of this programme’s most successful initiatives was the launch of the “*A l’estiu, Barcelona t’acull*” project that each summer takes around 150 girls and boys who have arrived in the city under the family reunification scheme and helps them to prepare for their new lives, helping them to get to know the city better and to settle into the local community before starting school in September.

4.4. Translation and mediation services

The Translation and Intercultural Mediation Service was launched in 2002, and aims to support all municipal service professionals who work with the immigrant population. This service is divided into three parts: the Translation Service, the Interpersonal Mediation Service, and the Community Mediation Service.

5. Language integration and the Linguistic Normalisation Consortium

Helping people to learn the local languages is one of the classic features of reception policies that generates most consensus at European level. Knowledge of the language(s) of the host society enables migrants to communicate with the rest of the population, gain more autonomy, and access work opportunities. Therefore linguistic knowledge is considered an essential basic skill for employment. By inviting people who arrive in our city to learn Catalan and Spanish, and providing the facilities for them to do so, we help them to become more autonomous and to avoid social segregation, as well as providing migrants and refugees with more opportunities.

With regard to the Catalan language in Barcelona, in the early 2000s there was a sudden change in the number of people enrolling on Catalan courses. The Linguistic Normalisation Consortium of Catalonia was established in the 1980s with a very specific goal in mind, to give Catalan people the chance to study Catalan, an opportunity that had been denied to them under the Francoist dictatorship. This objective was superseded in 2000 by the new needs of foreign migrants. The

language learning strategies involved are quite different, and it must be said that the Consortium has been hugely successful in adapting to these changing needs, offering many newly arrived migrants the chance to gain language skills immediately, and free of charge.

The Centre for Linguistic Normalisation (CNL), which is part of the Consortium, set up a registration point for Catalan courses where the need was greatest, and where a large number of potential participants were to be found: SAIER. Collaboration between SAIER and the CNL began in 2004. People turning to SAIER for support could enrol on a language course directly through SAIER itself.

The problem lay in the enrolment procedure, which was extremely rigid at that time, with set enrolment periods that generated huge queues. This was the point at which the Barcelona CNL, together with the City Council, agreed on a substantial increase in funding to create a far more flexible system, one which allows enrolment throughout the year, and a considerable increase in the provision of beginner and elementary level Catalan courses. This was the beginning of the linguistic integration strategy, which made it possible to satisfy much of the increase in demand.

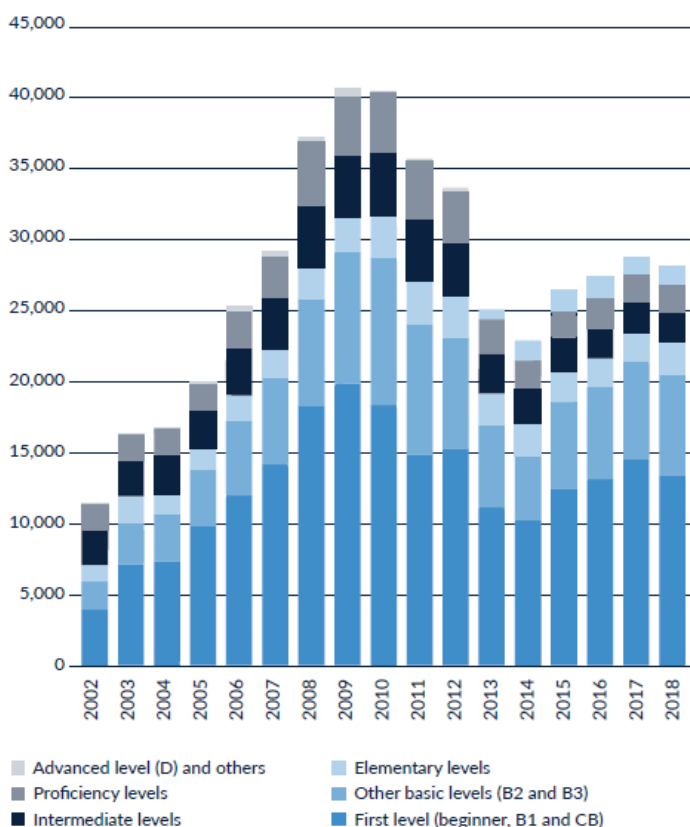
At the same time great effort was made to adapt educational materials to the very different realities of the new pupils. Thus, the CNL developed specific materials that while teaching the language also provided knowledge of the local environment.

With regard to the teaching of Spanish, within the framework of the Reception Plan the City Council set up the Language Co-ordination Platform, which comprises different entities within the city dedicated to teaching language and literacy to migrants.

The many organisations involved in facilitating knowledge of the official languages in Catalonia, promoting the social use of Catalan through practice (going beyond language exchange), and that help people to build social relationships and gain knowledge of the local area should also be mentioned.

Some of these programmes are: the Plataforma per la Llengua language pairings, the programmes run by the Linguistic Normalisation Consortium itself, and those offered by the Language Co-ordination Platform of Barcelona's Reception and Support Network, among others.

Graph 3. Evolution of students on CNL Catalan courses.
Barcelona, 2002-2018



Source: Linguistic Normalisation Consortium, 2018.

6. Reception and refuge: the growing importance of refuge and the increase in complexity

Historically, most of the new arrivals in the city of Barcelona have been economic migrants. Although since the 1980s there had been a constant flow of refugees and asylum seekers - at that time primarily from Latin American countries with totalitarian regimes such as Chile under the Pinochet dictatorship - in percentage terms, numbers were very low. For example, in 2012, the number of asylum seekers among the users of SAIER's services was 304 out of a total of 10,317 people. This means that asylum seekers represented just 3% of all those seeking support from the city's most important reception service.

Another fact that resulted in lower levels of municipal involvement in dealing with refugees was the city's own lack of legislative authority in this area. The Spanish state also has jurisdiction over legal matters concerning refugees, and also over the establishment of a comprehensive support programme for asylum seekers in Spain. The Geneva Convention, together with various European norms, makes it mandatory for Spain to provide a refugee support programme which covers housing, subsistence, and a pathway to autonomy while awaiting a decision on an asylum application. This programme was managed by the Spanish state through the Ministry of Employment, in collaboration with various third sector organisations such as the Red Cross.

All this changed radically in 2015, when the refugee crisis in Europe as a whole helped to put into perspective the realities of refuge in Spain and in Barcelona. In 2020, the number of people applying for asylum supported by SAIER was 44% of the total of 19,001 people who used their services. Most were from Colombia, Venezuela and Honduras.

In 2015, in the midst of the refugee crisis triggered by the war in Syria, and in the face of the failure of European countries to take action, Barcelona approved the "Barcelona, Refuge City" plan. The

aim of the plan was to prepare the city to receive refugees, to provide them with the assistance and all the services required in order to guarantee their rights, and also to demand that states should respect humanitarian law at the most basic level.

The "Barcelona, Refuge City" plan was conceived as a city-wide policy that aimed to involve the range of different municipal departments and services, and also the wider society - local associations and the citizens themselves. Part of the plan was directly concerned with welcoming refugees and asylum seekers. One of the main initiatives to grow out of this was the Nausica comprehensive support programme. This is a programme that complements State controlled programmes; it guarantees housing, job placement, legal advice, psychological support, etc., and currently has the capacity to accommodate around 150 people.

7. Conclusions

The breadth of experience gained over the last thirty years has given a perspective on how important reception policies are, and on the needs and requirements of people who are newly arrived in Barcelona. Many of the policies introduced in Barcelona have served as a model for other municipalities in Spain and in Europe. For example, when the city of Milan established a large centre to provide multiple services for new arrivals, the inspiration for the project came from SAIER.

From the technical point of view, knowledge has been gained with regard to what works, and what does not, particularly in terms of key aspects such as facilitating access to the municipal register of residents and legal advice. Irregularity has also been identified as a fundamental aspect of vulnerability, one that needs to be combated and placed at the centre of policy interventions. However, a more systematic evaluation is needed, as the results of the policies implemented need to be studied. For example, do we know if we have managed to avoid the creation of a society that is more segregated along the lines of differences in ethnic origin? There is also a need to understand what the population of migrant origin thinks about the reception process, from both an institutional and a civic point of view.

In practical terms much has been achieved, for example thanks to the legal advice provided by municipal services and by the organisations within the reception network, thousands of people have managed to regularise their situation and embark on the path towards normality, and thousands have gained access to knowledge of the Catalan and Spanish languages free of charge. Moreover, the perception of immigration as a problem in the city of Barcelona has remained at very low levels for years²², although recently openly xenophobic political stances have emerged with a high profile in the media.

In contrast, there are still some groups suffering extreme residential exclusion, such as people living in makeshift settlements across the city, the vast majority of whom are foreign-born and in an irregular situation. The number of young people aged between 18 and 25 who are on the streets has risen in recent years, and they now make up 22.3 % of the people who use the preliminary reception centres for the homeless in Barcelona (Sales, 2019). We therefore need to ask ourselves whether or not we have achieved a society where there is less discrimination. Do people of migrant origin, a significant proportion of whom have been living in Barcelona since 2000, have the same opportunities as the population as a whole? Do they have representation in the city's public domain? Have all citizens taken on board this socio-demographic change and what it means for the city?

These are questions that need to be answered in the coming years, and that will no doubt be the subject of future articles.

22. In the most recent municipal barometer published in December 2020, only 2.2% of citizens identified immigration as one of the city's "problems", placing it in twelfth position.

Bibliography

BARCELONA CITY COUNCIL. *Municipal Immigration Plan. Personal Services Sector. Barcelona: Barcelona City Council, 2003.*

http://www.bcn.cat/conselldeciutat/pdf/immigracio_doc_pla_immigracio.pdf.

BARCELONA CITY COUNCIL. *Barcelona City Council's Reception Framework. Technical Office for Immigration. Barcelona: Barcelona City Council, 2007.*

https://ajuntament.barcelona.cat/consell-municipal-immigracio/sites/default/files/documents/bases_acollida_bcn_ciutat_ca.pdf.

BARCELONA CITY COUNCIL. *Government measure to facilitate access to regularisation, and prevent lapsed regularisation. Barcelona: Barcelona City Council,*

2017. https://ajuntament.barcelona.cat/novaciudadania/sites/default/files/documents/4_mesura_pr_evenir_irregularitat_sobrevinguda.pdf.

BARCELONA CITY COUNCIL. *Barcelona Six-Monthly Barometer. December 2020. Barcelona: Barcelona City Council,*

2020. https://bcnroc.ajuntament.barcelona.cat/jspui/bitstream/11703/120904/1/r20008_Barometre_Semestral_Desembre_Prensa_v1_0.pdf.

BARCELONA CITY COUNCIL. *The foreign population in Barcelona. The foreign-born population in Barcelona. January 2020. Statistical Reports, no. 84. Barcelona: Barcelona City Council,*

2021. <https://www.bcn.cat/estadistica/catala/dades/inf/pobest/pobest20/pdf/pobest20.pdf>.

MUNICIPAL IMMIGRATION COUNCIL. *The Barcelona Municipal Immigration Council's 67 proposals. Proposals for fostering the inclusion of migrants within the framework of Spain's immigration law. Barcelona: Barcelona City Council,*

2014. <http://www.novaciudadania.cat/67propostes/pdf/67propostes.maiq2016.pdf>.

LINGUISTIC NORMALISATION CONSORTIUM,. *2018 Report. CNL de Barcelona. Barcelona: Barcelona Language Normalisation Centre,*

2018. https://www.cpln.cat/media/upload/pdf/Mem%C3%B2ria%202018_1579003311.pdf.

SALES, A. *Qui dorm al carrer a Barcelona? Characteristics of the homeless populations in the city according to data from municipal public-space social intervention teams. Barcelona: Area of Social Rights, Barcelona City Council,*

2019. <https://ajuntament.barcelona.cat/drets-socials/sites/default/files/arxiu-documents/qui-dorm-al-carrer-a-barcelona.pdf>.

SANAHUJA VÉLEZ, R. "Polítiques d'acollida, nova ciutadania i interculturalitat", a R. Gomà i J. Subirats (coord.), *Canvi d'època i de polítiques públiques a Catalunya*, p. 80-88. Barcelona: Galaxia Gutenberg, 2019.

ZAPATA BARRERO, R. "¿De qué modo las Instituciones públicas deberían acomodar a los inmigrantes? Un marco analítico para el análisis". *Gestión de Análisis de Políticas Públicas. Nueva época*, 20, 2001, p. 23-36.

September 2021

Key words: lone young migrants, failure to protect, media coverage, politicisation, attacks on migrant reception centres

Living in the *barzaj*: the tensions of the ghosts of glocalization. The *atrezzo* that accompanies lone young migrants on the stage of Fortress Europe

Neus Arnal Dimas. Social educator and researcher
n.arnaldimas@gmail.com, [@neusarnal](https://twitter.com/neusarnal)

If this text were a play, the protagonists would be the young people who have migrated to Catalonia alone in recent years. The setting would be a context defined by the limits of a Fortress Europe at odds with the protagonists who quietly appear, both in the border areas and in the municipalities. The supporting cast and *atrezzo* would be the society in the country of origin and the host society, the media, governments and political parties, who would at the same time effectively be co-creators of this production. These pages will take the reader-observer below the surface of this performance in which it is not clear whether the protagonists are free agents or simply puppets in a constant struggle to shake off the invisible strings that bind them.

1. Build or burn: the perverse threshold of youth

The passion for “burning up life or the passion for building it” are, according to Alain Badiou (2016), quoting Aristotle, two passions that are at the same time intrinsic to, and enemies of, youth. The first is a state marked by immediacy, ephemeral but intense, influenced by longing and play, experimentation, pleasure, adventure and constant danger. The passion to burn life is characterised by an ongoing instability that makes it impossible to build a viable future. It is a life devoid of meaning, a drive for death that inhabits, secretly but entirely, the drive for life (Badiou, 2016). The passion to build life, on the other hand, lies in the desire to acquire success and wealth within established frameworks. It is a clearly defined path where one succumbs to the established social order. In the words of the author, it is a “conservative cult of existing powers” (Badiou, 2016). However, neither the passion to burn life nor to build it can endure, both must be experienced by the young.

These are passions that run through the lives of all young people, but in this text we will look at their impact on lone young migrants. Through success stories, the media has shown life paths that make it possible to “build” a life within established frameworks despite circumstances that may not always be favourable. Other stories, however, have shown the other side of the coin: young people who live a life that “burns”. The latter, far from being the majority, have also made headline news and formed part of political discourse. The building-burning dichotomy has often been constructed as if there were only two paths to choose from. This polarity has helped to reduce the complexity of the migration and integration processes for lone young migrants.

This text is an initial approach to the context that comes along with it, to the structure underpinning it, and the tensions that these young people face. The following pages present an analysis of the current situation. It is a situation marked by a crisis in the (de)institutionalisation of the young people and by attacks directed at the apartments supposedly turned into squats by young people identified as *Menors No Acompanyats* (*Menas*) [unaccompanied minors], *exmenas* [former unaccompanied minors] and *extutelats* [young people who have spent a certain part of their childhood in a centre for young migrants].

Therefore, this text is a sample of the *atrezzo* that every lone young migrant finds when stepping onto a stage that pushes the boundaries of this Fortress Europe that aspires to be both universal and selective at the same time. For over twenty years, children and young people have been emigrating alone, flouting these limits, appearing on the border as shadows or mirages, and in the municipalities as foreigners. Thus they become ghosts of glocalization, reminding us that although the world is hyper-connected and distance is constantly shrinking, inequality keeps on growing.

2. The context: policies and measures aimed at lone migrant children²³ and young people. Governmentality and the lack of control over security.

For over 20 years, migrant children and young people have undertaken journeys to Europe, travelling alone. In Spain, the first were recorded in 1993, two years after the Schengen treaty was signed, which for the first time obliged Moroccan citizens to get a visa in order to enter Spain. According to Jimenez (2014), Spain's entry into the group of Schengen countries led to an increase in the number of makeshift boats that washed up illegally on the Spanish coastline. In order to put a stop to this, in that same year steps were taken to roll out the SIVE system (Integrated External Surveillance System), managed by the Civil Guard.

The first minors to arrive in Spain were, on the whole, children and young people with few or no family links who hid under trucks in Tangier with the aim of making their way to Spain. In the mid-90s, reports of the harsh living conditions for these minors began to appear in the press, with headlines drawing attention to the situation in Spain, Catalonia and Morocco (Jiménez 2014). According to Monteros (2019), this media attention and the impact within the public sphere led to an increase in police pressure at Moroccan ports. From then on, new groups of minors tried to get to Spain via the enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla. Hoping for the chance to enter by land, for the first time groups of children and young people gathered in the neighbouring cities of Nador and Castillejos.

In 1996, two legislative changes in Spain affected the migration of these children and young people, as they were both foreigners and minors. On the one hand, legislation was brought in regarding the rights and freedoms of foreigners (Organic Law 7/1985, of 1 July, on the Rights and Freedoms of Foreigners). In Section 19 of the legislation the term *menor en situació de desemparament* [minors without the support of a parent or guardian] used to refer to a foreign minor appeared for the first time. And on the other, the Spanish state introduced relevant child protection legislation as a result of Spain's ratification of the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1991. Thus, Organic Law 1//1996, of 15 January on the Legal Protection of Minors recognised the right to protection of any person under the age of 18 across Spain, regardless of their nationality (Jimenez, 2014; Monteros, 2019).

According to various researchers (Giménez y Suárez, 2000; Adroher, 1998 cited by Monteros, 2019), the convergence of these legal, economic, social and political factors led to the emergence of a group of people that would come to be known as "unaccompanied foreign minors" (or "*menas*"). However, this legal term has been widely criticised, and has been subject to modification over the years, both within third sector organisations and academic circles.

23. Without attempting to make the female migration of girls and young people invisible, this text focuses on the migration of boys and young men of the male gender. For this reason, the generic "child" will be used throughout the text.

In the 2000s, Spain and Morocco entered into diplomatic conflict over fishing rights in the Kingdom's waters (Remiro, 2012). During trade talks, there were also negotiations regarding the relative status of migration controls. It was from then on that migration became more a question of exchange, of dispute and negotiation between the two countries (De Lucas, 2002, Hernando de Larramendi, 2004, Naïr, 1998; cited by Monteros, 2019). Since the signing of the Bilateral Agreements between Spain and Morocco, police pressure has grown, and a security-based view adopted with regard to migration management. Police presence was increased at ports and in the enclaves and, for the first time, minors setting out on their migratory journey by sea began to be observed.

With migratory flows a feature on the negotiating table and the increase in the visibility of the harsh living conditions of children and young people who emigrated alone, in 2003 the forced deportation of minors to Morocco began (Jiménez, 2014). According to SOS Racisme (2004), there were 111 repatriations of unaccompanied minors in 2003, that were, according to complaints made, in contravention of the Law on the Protection of Minors and the Aliens Act. A series of agreements and laws were drafted to strengthen this legislation, and at the same time international cooperation was used as a means to dissuade minors from migrating. Then the term "potential child migrant" in development programmes was coined (UNICEF, 2005; Jiménez, 2014). That same year, the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (FRONTEX) was created, and the Integrated External Surveillance System (SIVE) was improved. It was from then on, according to Monteros (2019), that migrant children and young people began to be used as a bargaining chip at a negotiating table where migration was already on the agenda.

The deterrent effect of the policies was exacerbated by obstacles to the procedures for document regularisation for children and young people in care, as well as those under guardianship. In regions with the greatest numbers of young migrants, violations of the terms of the Aliens Act began to take place (Monteros, 2007). All these measures favoured the migration of young people beyond Spanish borders. Between 2000 and 2005, children and young people, the majority of whom were Moroccans, began to be observed in Italy and France. From 2005 onwards in Belgium, the United Kingdom, Germany, Greece and Austria. 2010 saw the first applications for asylum in Sweden, Denmark and Norway. One of the effects of all this was an extension of the migratory routes of children and young people and therefore, greater exposure to the associated risks.

Neither forced repatriations, nor international cooperation, nor the lengthening of regularisation processes were able to prevent what was called the "Cayuco crisis" of 2007; in 2008 there was a record number of 8,080 arrivals. In order to mitigate the crisis, the Africa Plan was launched, which involved the signing of cooperation pacts and agreements on repatriations with Senegal and Mauritania. It was from this plan that the first FRONTEX maritime operation was born. Arrivals in Spain decreased until 2013 (2,632), and then kept increasing until 2018, when a total of 7,026 were counted (Attorney General's Office, 2019). That same year, the Policía Nacional and FRONTEX worked together to launch the "Minerva" operation at the ports of Algeciras, Ceuta and Tarifa to stop irregular migration and for the first time, the "terrorist threat".

This timeline shows how politicians, programmes and actions undertaken in relation to the migration of lone children and young people have always been torn between two seemingly contradictory approaches. As minors, lone young migrants are protected, and as foreigners they are subject to control. Living on this borderline affects, and often determines, the trajectories, decisions and destinations of children and young people, and allows us to glimpse a way that they might be managed, within the Foucauldian perspective of "governmentality", Foucault (1999). This "governmentality" is exercised by directing destinies and individuals by hindering or facilitating, limiting or expanding, whether or not to use violence either explicitly or implicitly, ultimately making migration, regularisation and the integration of these young migrants in European countries less or more likely (Foucault, 1999).

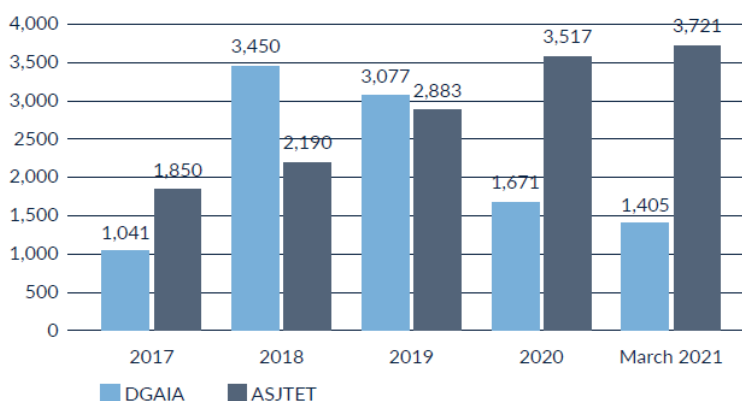
From the outset, the twists and turns in this governmentality of young people were to a large extent preceded by a media focus that showed both alarming living conditions and the impact on the

public sphere. Thus, in order to bring about certain changes in policy, the media coverage of the phenomenon became a *sine qua non*. As shown, some policies have tended to be more restrictive, in the belief that more control in itself brings more collective security. But this has not always been the case. Greater control, whether through border security, development programmes or repatriation, has had a deterrent effect in the short term, but not in the longer term. This is evidenced by the “Cayuco crisis” in 2007, and the increase in arrivals in 2018. The increase in migratory control in these cases studied has ended up driving the migration of the most vulnerable and/ or dependent (children and young people), and the use of forms of transport (makeshift boats) and routes that are less secure, as well as lengthening the migratory journey, and time spent on the streets with all its consequent risks. This has also had an impact on public space. Therefore these circumstances have not achieved the aim of increasing security - either for young migrants themselves, or for the rest of the population living with the consequences. In fact quite the opposite. To put it another way, an increase in security has tended towards a loss of control in the long term, as far as juvenile migratory processes and their impact on the public sphere are concerned.

3. The data on lone migrant children and young people to Spain and Catalonia and the wormhole effect of reception centres

The official count of lone children and young people who emigrated to Spain, the RMENA (Register of Unaccompanied Foreign Minors) of the Attorney General's Office, quadrupled in three years. It was 3,997 in 2016, 6,414 in 2017, 13,012 in 2018 and 12,417 in 2019.

Graph 1. Number of lone migrant children and young people supported by the DGAIA, and young people (both Spanish nationals and foreign born) linked to ASJTET



ASJTET data in absolute terms, including lone young migrants and Spanish nationals

Source: Original research based on the monthly reports of the DGAIA and the statistical report.

The majority of these children and young people were registered in Andalusia (4,617), Catalonia (1,977), Melilla (1,398) and the Basque Country (777). Simultaneously, according to the General Directorate of Care for Children and Adolescents of Catalonia (DGAIA), there were 1,489 new admissions in 2017, 3,742 in 2018, 2,202 in 2019, 810 in 2020, and 162 up to the end of March 2021. Thus, between January 2016 and March 2021, almost 9,000 children and young people accessed the protection systems of the DGAIA. As most of those who arrive are between 16 and 18 years old, this has meant an almost immediate increase in the number of young migrants who, at the time of coming of age, either leave the child protection programmes, or are referred to other resources for adults, such as ASJTET, the organisation that provides support for young people who are or were on guardianship programmes created by the Generalitat de Catalunya. Numbers here have doubled in three years. ASJTET dealt with 1,850 cases in 2017, 2,194 in 2018, 2,883 in 2019 and 3,517 up to December 2020. Despite the increase in young people supported by the ASJTET, in March 2021 there were still 1,405 lone young migrants over the age of 18 (58.1% of the total number of children and young people admitted) in extended care, i.e. still being dealt with as minors awaiting emancipation resources. 26% of children in care will turn 18 in 2021. Only 3.1%

are female. 71.1% come from Morocco, 19.8% from sub-Saharan Africa and 5.5% from North Africa (DGAIA, 2021).

Although they are often grouped under the “*mena*” label, and are supported by the same reception policies, there are many differences between them. In Catalonia, it is estimated that 59.9% have emigrated due to lack of opportunities in their countries of origin, followed by 54.7% fleeing poverty, and 51% doing so for work reasons (DGAIA, 2019). Family consent when agreeing on a migration project is as diverse as the socio-economic situation of the household or the geographical origin of the family (if any). However, expectations at destination are not so diverse: 89.5% expect to find work, 52.6% to receive training, especially with a view to entering the labour market, and 42.9% to regularise their situation. All these circumstances reveal the heterogeneity and diversity within the group itself.

Table 1. Reasons for migration and expectations at destination

| Why do they migrate? | | What are their expectations? | |
|--|--------|-------------------------------|--------|
| Lack of opportunities in countries of origin | 59.90% | Find work | 89.50% |
| Escape poverty | 54.70% | Education | 52.60% |
| Work expectations | 51% | To regularise their situation | 42.90% |

Source: Original data from DGAIA (2019). The young people were allowed to select more than one option.

The first waves of migration of children and young people studied in the 1990s revealed severe exclusion and neglect of young migrants in Spain. Today, as the main reason for migration is the lack of opportunities in the country of origin, a qualitative shift can be observed. Although lack of opportunity is not so distant from a desire to escape poverty, it suggests that at present the primary motivation driving migration is not solely the lack of material resources. Migration is also a response to a feeling of hopelessness experienced in the country of origin and a desire to move and to seek out opportunities - the ambition to follow dreams of a better future.

Hence, reception centres would not be a merely places of refuge. They would also be a way, often the only way, to fulfil their expectations: work, education, regularisation. An analogy could easily be drawn with the worm that, in order to get from one side to the other of an apple, enters at one side and exits from another, shortening the distance between the two. The same happens with a wormhole that links two universes. Institutionalisation, in this case reception centres, would be a window of opportunity to shorten the time required to achieve regularisation in a similar way, entering as a child or young person in an irregular situation with the hope of leaving at 18 with a work and residence permit. But as will become apparent, neither arrival nor departure has necessarily turned out as expected.

4. Structure: The shortcomings of (de)institutionalisation

There was a clear increase in arrivals in 2018, and this was reflected on newspaper front pages showing children and young people sleeping at government offices and police stations. During that same year, images appeared of overcrowded reception centres across the country, especially in the enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla. This increase in migration by young people travelling to Spain alone brought with it a twofold problem that is still evident today. On the one hand, there was a crisis in the reception of migrants that created a social arena marked by a sense of emergency. On the other, as will be seen at the end of this article, there were various attacks on reception centres and later on apartments thought to house lone young migrants (who may or may not have passed through the support system). This shows that there was an increase in hate speech and racist attacks against this social group (Arnal and Garcés, 2021).

In Catalonia, the increase in the numbers of children and young people arriving alone led to the rapid and urgent opening of additional reception centres. This often took place without coordination

with municipalities, in spaces that had not been adapted for educational needs, and with a lack of the necessary psychosocial counselling. According to the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) (2019), limited reception capacity brings with it difficulties in protecting fundamental rights. These include: overcrowding, lack of privacy, inadequate hygiene, risk of criminal victimisation, sexual and gender violence, lack of consideration of vulnerabilities, and social isolation. These challenges with regard to the protection of fundamental rights, often experienced in emergency centres despite administrative efforts, meant that some young people were exposed to shortcomings within the system throughout the time they spent in institutions.

If in 2018 the lack of resources was evident within the support system, it is now to be found at the end. Thus, in March 2021, 58.1% of all the young people received by the DGAIA were still being housed in accommodation intended for minors, despite being of legal age. And, although status as a minor implies that the person cannot be deported, confers the right to have a legal guardian, to housing (a priori and if possible, with a family), the recognition of social rights (to education, health care, etc.) and procedural guarantees for asylum claims and other administrative procedures, all this changes on turning 18. Once young migrants come of age, depending on their legal status, they may be at risk of refoulement, deportation, and loss of unconditional access to housing, as well as all the rights and guarantees to which they are entitled as minors.

Thus, the shortcomings of institutionalisation resulting from the emergency of 2018 have continued into 2020 and 2021, and in some cases, there have also been ongoing issues with the process of de-institutionalisation. Gimeno (2013) provides an illustration of this using the metaphor of a revolving door. He argues that minors who enter protection-control centres through the juvenile door are increasingly being pushed out through the same revolving door as newly arrived undocumented adults. This lack of support during the de-institutionalisation process also leads young people to seek out networks of compatriots who can help them when the support system does not cover their needs. This is the resource that they look to in the case that the centre or system fails them (López, 2018). In Catalonia, the lack of support experienced by young people leaving the system is compounded by additional migratory flows, such as young people who have arrived as minors, young people who have moved through the reception system outside Catalonia, and young asylum seekers, etc. (Arnal and Garcés, 2021). However, this multiplicity of migratory flows has not prevented the start of demonstrations or attempts by local residents to evict people from flats being used as squats where the occupants have been explicitly identified as “*menas*” or “*ex-menas*”.

Given the context and structure, what follows are some of the tensions that lone young migrants experience.

5. Subjected to tensions: living in the *barzaj*

“I was in limbo, I lived in the Strait; I was no longer from here and I wasn’t yet from there, forever on the starting line in the *barzaj* between life and death”.

Mathias Enard, *La calle de los ladrones*, 2013.

For Muslims, the *barzaj*, according to Mohammed, is the moment in which the body and the soul separate before the final judgement. The *barzaj* is a state of uncertainty, doubt, tension and change. It is an invisible, uncoordinated space between two, intrinsically distanced and differentiated points, which never come together and never meet. It is a threshold, a liminal space. On a daily basis lone migrant children and young people experience and embody a range of tensions; some of these are specific, and others are common to their stage of life. These are generated and influenced by multiple factors. As we will see, the majority of these are linked to ideals that are never achieved, or to spaces and moments in time that fall between something that has been left behind, and something else that appears always to be out of reach. These tensions between two seemingly irreconcilable points sometimes become entrenched, and one of them can take on an overly central role. Although they are often born and reproduced in a transnational field, i.e. simultaneously here, there, and in cyberspace, the consequences of living with these tensions

often erupt within the local sphere. It is then that, as the Hellenistic philosopher said, it would seem that these “ghosts of glocalization” have only two paths to choose between: one, to build a life by succumbing to the established order, the other, to burn life as a form of protest.

5.1. First point of tension: between the *haraga* and the *mena*

“There’s no way out, no hope, please, tell me,
How can I escape this? When will I get out?
I’ll leave as a *haraga*, whatever happens”.

Mourad Guerbas and Samir Saadaoui, *Haraga*, 2018.

When you work with young lone migrants, the word *haraga* soon becomes familiar. It is in the songs they listen to, they use the word amongst themselves, sometimes with pride, sometimes as an insult. It also appears on social networks. The word *haraga* has as its root the term HRQ in classical Arabic, which means to burn or to catch fire. Cortés’s dictionary of modern colloquial Arabic defines it as a person who lights up (Quiroga 2003). In a metaphorical sense, it refers to someone who risks or burns their life in order to be able to migrate, and is used to refer to those who travel illegally and without papers. It refers also to those who burn their documentation prior to starting their journey so as not to be identified and thus avoid the risk of being deported. The term generally is used in the pejorative sense, and although it can sometimes be used as a synonym for brave, it is a word that young people prefer to avoid using. The *haraga* speaks to us of the illegality of the migratory process and a passion for life, like Aristotle’s, that *burns*. It is a life that transgresses, that takes place on the *outside*, and one that even defies the control and the institutions of the state.

Once arrived in Spain and taken to a reception centre, the *haraga* enters into direct contradiction with the “*mena*”. If the *haraga* seeks to circumvent the regulations and the boundaries, the “*mena*” knows that he has to accept them. If the *haraga* travels illegally, anonymously, so as not to be recognised and to elude the control of the state, the “*mena*” needs to be visible, to hold documentation that proves that he exists, and subject himself to state control in order to be able to *build*, to work towards achieving his goal. The only way to leave the *haraga* behind is by entering the wormhole, i.e. the reception centres from which he hopes to emerge with a work and residency permit, and not to fall back into an irregular situation. The fine line between the *haraga* and the “*mena*” is the one that separates illegality from legality, and lone young migrants constantly shift between the two sides of the border.

5.2. Second point of tension: between children and adults

“I steal. No begging, I’m 16 years old.
My mate Sebtawi was right: begging is for kids and old people.
It’s shameful for a kid to beg when they can steal”.

Mohamed Chukri, *El pan a secas*, 2012.

Lone young migrants, in terms of their life process, live in a constant state of ageist schizophrenia. In their home countries they are considered adults capable of fulfilling certain responsibilities, a fact that is reaffirmed when they cross the Straits of Gibraltar. This crossing is interpreted as a “right of passage” where the “child” leaves home to become an adult who is expected to build their own life. They are also expected to contribute to the family economy (since in many cases the family has invested money in them), and they are now the ones who should, from a distance, take care of the family (and the sooner the better).

At destination however, this assumption of responsibility clashes directly with the fact that in the host country they are seen as children who are justifiably - in need of protection. There is a clash for several reasons, but two in particular stand out: firstly, the fact that centres and apartments tend to have clear schedules and rules that, although very necessary, can be difficult to live with after being considered an adult in the country of origin, and/ or after days, or even months, of survival

during the migratory process. Secondly, because in most cases centres and apartments cannot provide what young people are looking for in order to feel empowered, responsible and able to “take care” of the family: paid work.

Mohamed Chukri (2012), based on his own experience, equates living in a state of dependence to childhood. The author relates how, after months of misery, receiving beatings and abuse while trying to make a living, turning to crime was for him a form of empowerment. In fact it was like crossing a line into adulthood, leaving behind the dependence of the child or adult who begs.

Origin and destination intertwine with the ideas held on opposite sides of the Strait regarding age and the responsibilities that come with it, which often clash. At destination, they are seen as children in need of protection from an adulthood pressed upon them at too young an age in their countries of origin. In their countries of origin, it is often the other way round: young migrants are only adults who become children again when they arrive at their destination.

5.3. Third point of tension: between offline and online

“Bleti, Bleti [wait, wait], don’t start eating.
Photo for your aunt..., photo for your grandma...
So they see that we eat in Spain too!”.

@Hamzazaidi97, *Cuando comes fuera con tus padres
España vs Marruecos*, 2018.

The role of social media runs through the lives of young people, with greater or lesser intensity, for several reasons. Firstly, because social media influences the decision to migrate as it generates imaginaries of the host country and what life might be like there. Within this imaginary, the destination is often presented as the place that will make it possible to make their aspirations as global young people a reality. (Gimeno, 2014). Secondly, once they have emigrated images of the success of the migratory journey are common, and materialise in various ways: in emblematic spaces around the city, with branded clothing, with girls, with money, with cars or luxury motorcycles, showing off muscles etc. In short, with everything that fits with the imaginaries of hegemonic masculinity. This shows how that place where consumption in accordance with the dictates of global consumer society was not possible has been left behind.

For Gimeno (2014), the images of sports icons, leisure, and consumer goods position young people within the sexual market, reflect an apparent social status, and are at the same time indicators of integration within Western teenage society. Thus, the ascription of identity to certain symbols evokes the success of the migration project, at least in accordance with capitalist consumer standards or, as Belguendouz (2009) puts it, in accordance with access to the “European supermarket”.

However, this apparent success hides contradictions. On the one hand, because the products worn are frequently imitations that may well have been produced in the place of origin - that place from which they have fled. On the other hand, because the visibility of such content at the destination conditions its existence online, but not offline (Gimeno, 2014). Thus, the images are a projection that often has little to do with the real world.

Yet cyberspace, within a context of transnational relations, provides the opportunity to create and display an *alter ego* rooted in the virtual. As an a-territorial space, it is also a place that makes belonging possible for young migrants who live between here, there, everywhere, and nowhere.

5.4. Fourth point of tension: between two different vulnerabilities: to becoming the victims of crime, or the perpetrators of crime

“But, why didn’t you want to be at the reception centre?”

Because they treat you like a kid, and at the same time they look at you like a criminal, that’s the problem”.

Morad, *Centre Educatiu de Justícia Juvenil*.

Morad expressed the tension experienced by some lone young migrants on becoming institutionalised at reception centres: being treated like children while being viewed as criminals. He says that reception centres do not provide what he was looking for, a safe space, and a place that would enable him to regularise his situation. He felt they were turning him back into the child he had left behind when he crossed the Strait. For these reasons, like other children and young people, he preferred to “go it alone”. Years later, with hindsight he recognised that this was an idea that was impossible without involving some sort of abuse of his freedom or his vulnerability, or of both at the same time.

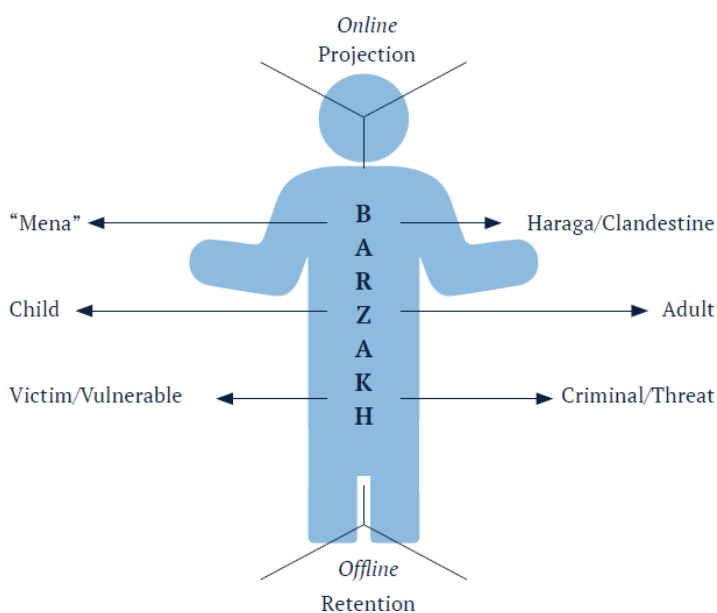
Exposure to life on the street or in an emergency reception centre can stretch over a long time, and it can involve exposure to certain risks, both victimological and criminological. Researchers from the PREMECE project (OCSPI, 2020), working in Ceuta with the aim of reducing situations of vulnerability amongst young people living on the street and their impact on public space, have studied this. The project managed to significantly reduce the judicial measures imposed on minors. The results confirm that despite a much-heightened feeling of insecurity among city residents stemming from young people living on the street, few actually resort to committing crimes in the city, and if they do, most of their offences are minor ones. According to the researchers the problem lies in the fact that young offenders living on the street end up not complying with their probation orders, which leads to their internment in closed centres for minor offences. The same researchers affirm that minors do not usually go to the police when they are victims of theft, physical aggression or abuse, and, therefore incidents in which they are the victims are generally not recorded. Furthermore, although they have the right to receive medical attention, they do not access it when they need it.

In the face of this situation, public opinion often swings between compassion and rejection and fear. This is something that is also (re)created through political discourse. Such as the case, for example, of the video by Teresa Rodríguez, general coordinator for Podemos Andalucía, in which she declared “they are children - they’re called *menas* because they want us to forget this”. She made this statement in response to the visit of the president of VOX Madrid, Rocio Monasterio, to the La Macarena district of Seville to denounce supposed “packs of *menas*”. “Vulnerable children” or “young criminals”: it would seem that there are only two ways to interpret this migration within the perspective of political discourse. These two very different imaginaries (re)produce polarisation because they minimise nuance, and therefore also the complexity of the phenomenon.

The following illustrates what has been said so far. While it is understood that there are three points of tension that affect children and young migrants only horizontally (because they tend to be specific to, or are amplified in this particular group), one of them is vertical (because it tends to be common in young people of the same age).

The distribution is an open-ended illustration of the above explanation, it is not finite and is constantly changing in accordance with the same cited governmentality. Lone young migrants are suspended in this constantly shifting *barzaj* or limbo, being seen and treated as lone, vulnerable children who are victims and/ or as clandestine adults against whom protection is needed.

Iconography 1. The tensions experienced by lone young migrants



Source: Own elaboration.

6. The current situation: demonstrations and attacks on reception centres and flats used as squats, a self-fulfilling prophecy?

As stated, the increase in arrivals of young migrants has generated two issues: the first, already mentioned in the previous pages, has been the crisis at the reception phase; the second, an increase in xenophobic and racist discourse against them as a group. For Arnal and Garcés (2021), the two issues have brought local administrations into the picture. These, despite not having responsibilities in terms of child protection, are the first authorities to be held responsible (or to experience the consequences first-hand) when their municipalities are home to groups in a situation of extreme social exclusion.

Through SOS Racisme (2020) and different media sources, a series of events and situations that occurred between 2019 and 2021 have been drawn together for analysis. Among these, the following stand out:

- 5 violent attacks on youth centres in Castelldefels, Masnou, Canet de Mar (2019), Badalona (2020) and Torredembarra (2021).
- 4 attacks on flats allegedly used as squats by young people of North African origin in Barcelona-Trinitat Vella, Premià de Mar, Llançà (2020) and Torredembarra (2021).
- 2 demonstrations and the creation of 2 citizens' platforms opposing the opening of reception centres in Rubí and Barcelona-Besòs (2019).
- 8 demonstrations to protest against public insecurity, 5 of which ended in, or were related to, violent attacks on reception centres or squats.

The first violent attacks on reception centres and demonstrations against these occurred over the course of 2019, a year after the increase in arrivals. Many of them were focused on emergency centres (already in existence or planned) with a high number of places. These were: Canet de Mar (50 places), Castelldefels (60), Rubí (70 planned), Masnou (50) and Barcelona-Besòs (50 planned). All of those already established are managed by the same cooperative.

With regard to the demonstrations, the first one was in Canet de Mar (2019) where a group of local residents demonstrated against insecurity within the municipality. Several young people were passing by the place where the demonstration was taking place, and some local residents verbally abused them, while others recorded the events. A few days later, a man entered the town's reception centre armed with a machete, and threatened to kill the centre director and residents. In Barcelona-Poble Sec (2019) a demonstration (also against insecurity) was organised by the district's Neighbourhood Association. The flyer states that there is a direct link between heightened insecurity and a group *menas* who live in Montjuïc, outside protection systems. Also, in Barcelona-Trinitat Vella (2020) there was an attempt to set fire to a house being used as a squat the day before a demonstration organised by local residents. Squatters were identified as the main source of insecurity in the neighbourhood. The demonstration ended with an attempt by the demonstrators to evict them from the building. In Mataró (2020), demonstrations took place outside various flats being used as squats in the municipality. There was no attempt to clear the building, but the creation of neighbourhood patrols was reported for the first time. Days later, in Premià de Mar (2020) there was a demonstration outside a flat occupied by squatters, and an attempted attack by local residents aimed at evicting them. Two weeks later, in Llançà (2020), the same thing happened. After a demonstration, local residents tried to evict those living in a flat being used as a squat. During a protest against insecurity in Pineda de Mar (2020), direct links were made between *menas* as a group and squatting and delinquency. Finally, in Torredembarra (2020) an attempt to evict people from a house that was being used as a squat (unsuccessful, because the young people were not there) was for the first (and only) time combined with a subsequent attack on a reception centre.

These demonstrations, while mostly legitimate, were often accompanied by lies circulated on social networks. In Canet de Mar, a video was passed around of a brutal attack on a woman in a public space. In it the attacker was identified as a *mena*. It was later revealed that the events filmed had taken place in China. In the Besós neighbourhood of Barcelona, WhatsApp messages claimed that in 48 hours 50 temporary shelters would be set up on a plot of land to act as an emergency centre for minors. Although a centre had indeed been planned for the site, it was not going to be built in the next 48 hours. The messages called for local residents to mobilise to defend "your children's safety". In Badalona, via Twitter, the mayor took pride in having managed to stop the establishment of a reception centre in the city. Shortly afterwards, it became known that the decision not to do so was taken by the DGAIA, and not by the mayor. The assault on a flat used as a squat in Premià de Mar was justified by the alleged rape of a local girl by one of the young people. The police (Mossos d'Esquadra), some days later, said that this was not true. In Torredembarra, before the attack, videos circulated showing young migrants, some of them threatening. Shortly afterwards, it was shown that none of the young people in the videos were resident at the reception centre that had been attacked. A number of incidents have, however, been proven and brought to trial. For example there was an accusation of attempted rape in Masnou, which effectively ended with the internment of a young man (who had been in a reception centre) in a closed centre. There was also the case of the young man who had been in a reception centre, and who was guilty of committing six rapes in Barcelona, some in the area of Montjuïc. This was used by local residents to back up their claims of feeling increasingly insecure.

Other events included a demonstration by minors at a hotel in Sant Just Desvern to denounce coercion, and to demand more resources and the resignation of the director of the centre. Also, two fights broke out between young people in Castelldefels (2019) (prior to the attack on the reception centre) and in Barcelona-Zona Franca (2019).

All these situations have resulted, according to the sources cited, in a total of 25 people being injured: 15 migrant minors or young people, 4 educators, 1 security guard and 5 police officers (Mossos d'Esquadra).

These events have also been accompanied by political discourse. For example, during a demonstration in Rubí in 2019 to protest against the opening of an emergency centre for minors, the mayor of the PSC (Socialist Party of Catalonia), Ana Maria Martinez, spoke out publicly for the

first time, in the middle of an election campaign. A party colleague, former mayor of Badalona Àlex Pastor, followed her lead, and four months later he posted the aforementioned tweet.

Although neither of the mayors directly accused the minors of criminal acts, their statements certainly had at least two consequences. On the one hand, the normalisation of the use of the crisis in the reception of migrants to dispute political space, and on the other, the legitimisation of the xenophobic discourses - already often based on falsehood - promoted by the far right. The extreme right wing VOX party led by Santiago Abascal has used the legal and much criticised term *mena* to generate a political campaign against lone young migrants in recent years. Deficiencies in emergency reception have been used to present an image of a lack of institutional control, wasted resources, and ultimately of political mismanagement (Cheddadi, 2020). At the same time, the party has sought to establish a causal link between Spain's socio-economic problems (such as youth unemployment, the precariousness of pensions, and insecurity in local neighbourhoods) and this crisis and the “upheavals” “caused” by lone young migrants. Through social media and campaigns seeking to achieve maximum media impact (regardless of whether or not the arguments presented are valid), VOX has sought to set itself up as the only alternative capable of alleviating the institutional neglect of Spanish citizens by the other parties. The aim of all this being to open up the possibility of questioning who should legitimately be able to access certain citizenship rights, and who should be excluded.

Multiple groups have claimed that in the demonstrations against reception centres and squats in places such as Masnou, Premià de Mar or Torredembarra, people from outside the municipality appeared and encouraged xenophobic and racist chants. As has been seen, the attack in Torredembarra in 2021 was, for the first time, an attack where a legitimate demonstration over fears of insecurity among local residents turned into an assault on a squat. When there was no-one to be found there, the protesters went on to attack a reception centre for people who had nothing to do with the squatters. The events in Torredembarra reveal the xenophobic imaginary with regard to the problem to be “eradicated”, and it can be seen that the issue is not the squats. The “root” of the problem, and therefore what needs to be questioned, is the right of vulnerable migrant children and young people to be taken in.

7. The right to dream outside ready-made scenarios

Throughout these pages, it has been possible to perceive how young migrants' power to act is seriously affected by the tensions they experience, by the context in which they find themselves, and by the structure that supports them. A structure that has often tended to be intermittent and exclusionary. Limited in their own ability to act, it seems as if lone young migrants, rather than being subject to the law, are held up by invisible strings that at the same time both support and control them.

Tired of living in a world of constant tensions and contradictions - child/ adult, regularity/ illegality, victim/ threat, in short on the eternal threshold of the *barzaj*, they have often wanted (or have been pushed) to break free, to leave the stage and live in the wings of the theatre. This “exit from the stage” has been reported by the media and used by governments and political parties who have sought to prevent it through control-care mechanisms. But, as has been revealed, in some cases this desired security that has been gained by exercising greater control has often brought with it a decline in respect for the fundamental rights of young people as individuals and as minors. This decline, in addition to the situation of constant uncertainty experienced by many of them from the outset, has contributed to the increase in disenchantment or disengagement of some young people with the system/ theatre. This has once again increased the risk of becoming either a victim or a perpetrator of crime, and the consequences have impacted on the public sphere. Tense situations have, once again, been reported by the media and exploited politically. Lone young migrants, society, politicians and the media all seem to be actors in a play that goes on and on, and has no happy ending. A situation of constant flux, one that far from being a wormhole, resembles a revolving door; the more media coverage it receives, the more it becomes politicised, the more vulnerability it creates, and then back to the beginning again.

In a world where mobility constitutes a sought-after part of success, young migrants, like this global generation of hyper-connected young people, long only for the right to dream and to imagine their own future beyond ready-made scenarios.

The struggle for the possibility to build a life and not to burn does not rest solely in the hands of young people. It also depends on civic commitment, political will, and journalism ethics. Because it is not only the observance of fundamental rights and obligations of minors and individuals that is at stake here. It is also a question of whether the dripping tap of social issues is turned on or off, that tap that slowly but surely waters the seeds of hatred and fear of the other, which, if not pulled up from the root, will once again flourish.

Bibliography

ARNAL, N., GARCÉS, B. *Joves emigrats sols fora dels sistemes d'acollida: diagnosi del cas de Barcelona*. Barcelona: Briefings CIDOB, 2021.

BADIOU, A. *La verdadera vida. Un mensaje para los jóvenes*. Barcelona: Malpaso Ediciones, 2016.

BELGUENDOUZ, A. *Le Maroc et l'Im(é) migration, Quelles politiques, Quelles institutions, Quelle citoyenneté*. Rabat: Imprimerie Beni Snassen, 2009.

CADENA SER. "Teresa Rodriguez: 'Les llaman menas porque quieren que nos olvidemos que son niños y niñas solos'". <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ibgSkO64m2E>

CASTELLANO, C. "En el punto de mira de las patrullas vecinales de Mataró". *El Salto* (9 July 2020). <https://www.elsaltodiario.com/cataluna/patrullas-vecinales-mataro-racismo-convivencia-oportunismo-extrema-derecha>

CHEDDADI, Z. "Discurso político de Vox sobre los Menores Extranjeros No Acompañados". *Inguruak*, vol. 69 (2020), pp. 57-77.

CHUKRI, M. *El pan a secas*. Spain: Cabaret Voltaire, 2012.

COLLEL, E. "Tercera agresión a menores extranjeros, esta vez en la Zona Franca de Barcelona". *El Periódico* (12 March 2019). https://www.elperiodico.com/es/sociedad/20190312/tercera-agresion-a-menores-extranjeros-en-el-barrio-de-la-zona-franca-7348266?_ga=2.10402805.1914779523.1619066134-1695179057.1612541800.

COLLEL, E. "El Besòs clama contra la posible apertura de un centro para menas en su barrio". *El Periódico* (5 September 2019). <https://www.elperiodico.com/es/barcelona/20190905/barracones-para-menas-en-el-forum-besos-7621034>

GONZÁLEZ, S. "Los datos oficiales niegan la delincuencia de menores extranjeros no acompañados en Andalucía". *Newtral* (6 November 2019). <https://www.newtral.es/los-datos-oficiales-niegan-la-delincuencia-de-menores-extranjeros-no-acompanados-en-andalucia/20191106/>.

DGAIA (Directorate General of Child and Adolescent Care). *Infants i joves acollits per la DGAIA i noves arribades. Informe estadístic*. Barcelona: Department of Labour and Social Affairs, 2021. https://treballiaferssocials.gencat.cat/ca/ambits_tematicos/infancia_i_adolescencia/estrategiac_atalanaacollida/dades.

- DGAIA (Directorate General of Child and Adolescent Care). *Informes estadístics mensual*. Barcelona: Department of Labour and Social Affairs, 2020-2021. https://treballiaferssocials.gencat.cat/ca/ambits_tematicos/infancia_i_adolescencia/dades-del-sistema-de-proteccio-a-la-infancia-de-catalunya/?_ga=2.163050108.1150898576.1504245238-1876684697.1504073124.
- DGAIA (Directorate General of Child and Adolescent Care). *Els infants i joves emigrats sols acollits a Catalunya*. Barcelona: Department of Labour and Social Affairs, 2019. https://treballiaferssocials.gencat.cat/web/.content/03ambits_tematicos/07infanciaiadolescencia/Estrategia_acollida/avancament_estudi.pdf.
- ENARD, M. *La calle de los ladrones*. Spain: Literatura Random House, 2013.
- EUROPEAN UNION AGENCY FOR FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS. *Children in migration 2019*. European Union Agency For Fundamental Rights. Annual Review, 2019. https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/fra-2020-children-in-migration_en.pdf.
- FEDERACIÓN SOS RACISMO, COLECTIVO AL JAIMA, CONSEJO GENERAL DE LA ABOGACÍA ESPAÑOLA. *Menores en la frontera: de los retornos efectuados sin garantías a menores marroquíes y de los malos tratos sufridos*. SOS RACISMO, 2004. www.sosracisme.org/reflexions/pdfs/menores_retornados.pdf.
- ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE. *Memoria de la Fiscalía General del Estado* Madrid: Fiscalía General del Estado, 2016-2020. <https://www.fiscal.es/documentaci%C3%B3n>.
- FOUCAULT, M. "Gubernamentalidad", a GABILONDO, A. (ed.). *Estética, ética y hermenéutica*. Barcelona: Paidós, 1999.
- GIMENO, C. "Harraga, kharba o banlieu: imaginarios juveniles transnacionales". *Revista Interdisciplinaria sobre Imaginarios Sociales*, vol. 4 (2014), pp. 33-58.
- GIMENO, C. "Trabajo Social y control Migratorio. Tensiones en los sistemas de protección de menores". *Portularia*, vol. 13 (2) (2013), pp. 15-24.
- GUERBAS, M., SAADAoui, S. "Haraga". <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nWPfKPJb4cw>. 2018
- HAMZAZAIDI97. "Cuando comes fuera con tus padres, España vs Marruecos". <https://www.instagram.com/reel/CLUNbIDqURL/?igshid=1ozp572bebpxm>.
- JIMÉNEZ, M. "'Como si fuera invisible': niños, niñas y adolescentes que migran de forma autónoma en la trama fronteriza", EMPEZ, N. (Coord.). *Dejadnos crecer: Menores migrantes bajo tutela institucional*. Barcelona: Icaria Editorial, 2014.
- LLIMÓS, A. "Són els que fa anys em feien canviar de vorera amb la seva bomber" . *ARA* (5 July 2019). https://www.ara.cat/societat/vox-ultres-segadors-masnou-menes_1_2661196.html.
- LÓPEZ, G. "La construcción de la identidad. Menores extranjeros no acompañados, en protección". *RES, Revista de Educación Social*, vol. 27 (2018), pp. 71-92.
- MONTEROS, S. "El sujeto de la agencia en las trayectorias vitales de niños marroquíes migrantes: tejiendo historias de alienación y separación con las estructuras de reproducción social". *Revista THEOMAI. Estudios críticos sobre Sociedad y Desarrollo*, vol. 40 (2019), pp. 34-50.
- MONTEROS, S. *La construcción social de un nuevo sujeto migratorio: los menores migrantes marroquíes no acompañados. Condiciones de posibilidad para la agencia*. (Doctoral thesis). Madrid: Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, 2007.

OCSPI (Observatorio del Sistema Penal ante la Inmigración). *PREMECE: Menores marroquíes en las calles de Ceuta: una cuestión de políticas públicas*. Malaga: Universitat de Girona, 2020. <https://ocspi.files.wordpress.com/2020/04/informe-menores-marroquies-en-las-calles-de-ceuta-premece.pdf>.

ORTEGA, M. "Una protesta que assenyala als menes divideix Poble-sec". ARA (13 March 2019). https://www.ara.cat/societat/protesta-menes-divideix-poble-sec_1_2687345.html.

QUIROGA, V. *Els petits Harraga. Menors immigrants irregulars no acompanyats d'origen marroquí a Catalunya*. (Doctoral thesis). Barcelona: Universitat Rovira i Virgili, 2003.

REMIRO, A. *Unión Europea-Marruecos ¿Una vecindad privilegiada?* Madrid: European Academy of Arts and Sciences 2012.

UNICEF. *Nouveau visage de la migration. Les mineurs non accompagnés*. Tangier: UNICEF, 2005. https://www.unicef.org/Etude_Migrations_Mineurs.pdf.

SOS RACISME. "Les patrulles veïnals son conseqüència del sistema opressor contra la infància migrant". <http://www.sosracisme.org/les-patrulles-veinals-son-consequencia-del-sistema-opressor-contra-la-infancia-migrant>.

VILA, N. "Doble atac d'encaputxats a un centre de menes de Castelldefels". ARA (11 March 2019). https://www.ara.cat/societat/doble-atac-encaputxats-centre-menes-castelldefels_1_2594027.html.

VILA, N., GARRIDO, G. "Un home entra amb un matxet a un centre de menes de Canet de Mar". ARA (6 March 2019). https://www.ara.cat/societat/intenta-agredir-cinquantena-canet-mar_1_2594081.html

September 2021

Key words: CIE, deportation, detention, rights, pandemic, Migra Studium

Fewer rights, greater suffering

José Javier Ordóñez Echeverría. Lawyer at the Migra Studium Foundation. Doctor of Law, University of Barcelona. Associate Professor of Private International Law at Pompeu Fabra University (UPF)

josexoordonez@migrastudium.org, [@Animus_Defendi](https://twitter.com/Animus_Defendi)

Every week for the past nine years a group of volunteers from the Migra Studium Foundation have visited the people being held at the Zona Franca CIE. The aim of these visits is to listen to them, support them, provide them with information about their situation, and facilitate their defence and access to justice system. They are also a springboard for advocacy, denunciation and awareness-raising work, particularly in relation to the violation of rights, as part of a network with other civil society platforms and organisations. Achieving improvements in the conditions under which people are held in the CIE and advocating for changes in immigration policy that would transform a currently hostile system are just two of the key elements. The ultimate goal is to close down the CIEs and foster a more welcoming, hospitable society. The impediments to making these visits - or even outright prohibition by the authorities - are also a way of raising awareness and continuing to denounce the existence of rights violations in the CIE. This is also what has been happening during the coronavirus pandemic.

Introduction

Migra Studium Foundation's team of visitors to the Zona Franca CIE have been keeping a close eye on the facility, as it has every year since 2012. The team bears witness to the enormous complexity and diversity of day to day life in the facility and offers support to detainees. 2020 has been a very different year in every sense. The challenges presented by the Covid-19 pandemic suddenly penetrated every aspect of daily life in our countries. The detention system, the deportation policy, and life within the centres have been no exception to being affected by the pandemic. Just as life outside the CIEs has been upturned by coronavirus, so the virus has entered the walls of the CIE, turning life inside it on its head.

The following pages describe the extent to which the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic has shaken the assumptions underpinning migration policy since the central government declared a state of emergency and imposed lockdown on 14 March 2020. One of the most notable effects of the pandemic was the deportation or release of the last few remaining detainees and the evacuation of the facility on 19 March. For a period of 200 days, there were no detainees at the CIE in Barcelona's Zona Franca. Since deportation was no longer an option, Spain's detention centres remained empty until the central government announced the reopening of the CIEs on 23 September.

What follows is a reflection on the events that took place in 2020 in relation to the detainment of migrants at the Zona Franca CIE. First, there was the task of visiting and supporting detainees during most of the first quarter of the year. This was no easy task in February and the beginning of March, long before the state of emergency was declared, but already aware of the alarming news of the extent of the pandemic in Italy and in the rest of Europe, and the number of countries closing borders with Spain continuing to grow. The detainees interned at that time knew this and the tension inside.

The CIE during those weeks was palpable, making it even more difficult for the Migra Studium team to provide effective support. Later, on 5 October, detention activities recommenced, and deportations or refoulements were also resumed. At that moment, however, the management of the CIE, with the complicity of judicial authorities, impeded the resumption of visits and support from Migra Studium, any other NGO, the Religious Care Service, and even the friends and families themselves of the detainees.

Within the framework of Law 4/2000 on the Rights and Freedoms of Foreign Nationals in Spain and their Social Integration, internment in the CIE has become even harder. Hence the title of this document: "Fewer rights, greater suffering". Since the limitations on rights has further restricted the freedoms of detainees, detention has caused even greater suffering. The volunteers who visit the CIEs and offer their support have borne witness to this suffering. The aim of this document is to raise the profile of two directly opposing realities, both of which were nonetheless possible in 2020. The first of these is that for a period of 200 days there were no arrests, no detentions, and no refoulements. For 200 days the Catalan capital was free from the most repressive face of migration policy. The second is that in the last quarter of the year - and this remains so to this day - detainees are living in a state of "aggravated detention", within the framework of detention as stipulated in the legislation. And, after several months, neither the Ministry of the Interior nor the judicial authorities have taken effective measures to alleviate this situation; on the contrary, there appears to have been a desire to normalise and perpetuate detainees' social isolation.

1. A look at the CIE from the perspective of providing support

Between January and March 2020, Migra Studium received 57 visit requests, and provided personal support to 56 people deprived of their freedom at the Zona Franca CIE, making a total of 118 visits in all. Twenty-two of these people needed specialised support. All the visits were made to men, because although renovation work on the women's block was completed in 2019, during the months when the facility was in operation, all the detainees were male. Notably, the 57 people requesting visits from Migra Studium represents only around 26% of the total number of people who were detained in the Zona Franca CIE up to 19 March. Therefore, there remains some way to go if the right to visits is to be fully guaranteed²⁴.

Although it is true that National Police officers do generally facilitate the visits, twelve incidents have been recorded by volunteers. Most are connected with unjustified delays (of between 20 minutes and an hour) at the beginning of the visits, or exceptionally long waiting times in the visits room (where visitors are locked in until the duty officer opens the door and brings the detainee in). Despite the visiting hours for NGOs being less restrictive than for families, and volunteers always identifying themselves as members of the foundation, on a good few occasions the police officers on duty have interpreted visiting hours in a restrictive way, effectively reducing visiting hours. The most frequently given reason for delays by the police was that there were not enough staff on duty to facilitate the movement required for the visits. The high turnover of officers clearly seems to be one of the factors hindering the work of the volunteers, given that the rules and regulations were sometimes applied

24. At the time of writing (end of April 2021), the Ministry of the Interior has still to publish the official data on internment in 2020, and furthermore the data requested by Migra Studium via the transparency portal has not been provided. Since the centre assigns detainees a number, the total number of people who have been deprived of their freedom (219) has been inferred from the last number assigned. Since the resumption of detention in October 2020, Migra Studium has only been able to contact detainees in the CIE by telephone, and this itself has only been possible since January 2021. Migra Studium's own estimate of the number of detainees over the whole of 2020 is 366, 219 from January to March, and 147 from October to December.

arbitrarily depending on who was on duty, or the volunteer themselves had to inform the officer about what the authorised visiting hours were. Last, the marked increase in tension inside the CIE at the end of February and during early March may also explain the reiteration and number of such incidents, heightening the support team's sense of the rules being applied arbitrarily.

The volunteer team reduced the average number of visits per detainee to 2.1, a figure very similar to that of 2018 (2.5 visits per detainee), and contrasting sharply with the 3.3 visits per detainee in 2019. In the absence of official data, this reduction in the number of visits per detainee can be explained by detentions of less than the legal maximum of 60 days, and the celerity with which the authorities responsible for the CIE reduced the number of detentions in the final weeks prior to the closure of the facility, either deporting detainees (primarily Algerians) or releasing them (other nationalities).

Regarding requests for support requiring more specialised monitoring, the pandemic has generated its own sophistry. Overall, 14 out of 22 cases involved the need for enhanced support during the days just prior to and immediately after the closure of the CIE. In fact, Migra Studium had embarked on what was effectively a campaign to advise detainees and accompany lawyers to the facility to request their release as the steady closure of borders was confirmed, and European Union, Council of Europe, and the Ombudsman's resolutions were announced stating that detention was pointless if deportation was not possible. Following the closure of the facility, a significant number of detainees were released, but were effectively left out on the streets at a time when a state of emergency had been declared and lockdown imposed. The visitor team continued to offer these people support, sourcing emergency housing, beds in shelters, or other solutions.

Unfortunately, the special cases of presumed minors and people suffering from mental or physical illnesses represented a proportionally high number of the total (8 out of 22). This is a reminder that internment, in the midst of a pandemic, is most cruel to the most vulnerable populations.

Over the ten weeks during which Migra Studium could spend time in the facility, the people visited were of eight declared nationalities, and almost nine out of every ten were from the Maghreb (51): nineteen Algerians and eighteen Moroccans. Other nationalities represented a tiny percentage of the detainees. As has been the case since 2018, there is a tendency on the part of the government to detain Maghrebi nationals in the Barcelona CIE. There may be several reasons for this very high proportion of people from the Maghreb.

First, there is the Ministry of the Interior's efforts to increase the number of deportations by focusing on detaining people from two countries that have bilateral agreements on the readmission of nationals in an irregular situation²⁵. And second, since geographical proximity reduces the structural and logistics costs of deportation, and given that the aforementioned countries have consulates in the city of Barcelona and are collaborators in the policies of externalisation of border control (through the admission of third-country nationals in transit), Moroccan and Algerian nationals have become prime targets for detention in the Zona Franca CIE.

2. A look at the human drama of the CIE

In 2020, there was no change in the fact that the CIE is underpinned by hostility towards migrants. Despite having been closed for 200 days, the CIE once again revealed the visible, physical, and structural face of the blind determination not to welcome, not to recognise, and not to assist the other, those who are different, those who come from other lands. In a world in the throes of a pandemic, society continues to support policies that refuse to welcome, protect, recognise, or assist.

The detainees are people with migration projects and the desire for a better life which are about to crumble into dust. Dreams of integration, of regularising their residence status, of working, of studying, of receiving international protection, and of living as citizens in our country are torn apart

25. Morocco, with an agreement in force since 3 February 1992 www.boe.es/boe/dias/1992/04/25/pdfs/A13969-13970.pdf, and Algeria, with an agreement in force since 18 February 2004 www.boe.es/boe/dias/2004/02/12/pdfs/A06350-06352.pdf.

in the CIE: very few success stories emerge from within its walls, very few are released and manage to rebuild their lives. Migra Studium volunteers know that they will often have to deal with failure and suffering. But it is also here that humanity, which is as fragile as is the human condition itself, is discernible. A few visits and conversations make human and humanising support a reality.

The year 2020 was of course marked by the pandemic, but it must also be remembered that at the beginning of the year the country suffered the effects of extreme weather conditions, epitomised in the storm Gloria. The low temperatures, strong winds and incessant rain and damp were felt strongly at the CIE, making living conditions even harder. Moreover, as alarm surrounding Covid-19 grew, tensions among detainees and between detainees and the police also ran high, making their vulnerability and the violations of their rights even more evident. Some of the detainees visited spoke to volunteers of their first-hand experiences of this²⁶.

“My journey has been very long,” Ibrahim (24 years old, Gambian, 56 days at the CIE, released).

“In 2015, I set off for Libya. I had to cross Senegal, Mali, and Burkina Faso, a very long journey, and without saying anything my family: I wanted to spare them the hardship of saying goodbye, and above all I didn’t want them to worry. I love them so much, I couldn’t bear to see them suffer because of me. My clear goal was to take a boat to Italy when I arrived in Libya, which is what I did. But I didn’t expect the crossing to be so hard; when I think back on it what I remember is fear, the horror of dying in those black waters. Because...you know? Two of my companions died and they were thrown overboard, in the middle of the sea...

In Italy, I found temporary work doing gardening and cooking, and then after I’d been out of work for a time, in 2019 some people I knew from Almeria encouraged me to come to Spain. I worked in the greenhouses for a few days; the conditions were terrible, inhuman, and I decided to go back to Italy. But just when I got to the border they asked me for my papers and took me to the CIE. I’ve been shut up in here for 49 days; my family don’t know where I am; the truth is I don’t want to speak to my mother, she’d suffer if I told her I was in the CIE, and I don’t want that. And I’m so alone here. I don’t have anyone; I don’t know anyone. I just dream of a better future, one where I can work and help my family.”

“I don’t feel well, I’m tired”, Hocim (25 years of age, Moroccan, deported after being detained for 42 days).

“I’ve been living in San Sebastián for two years, working and studying. I don’t know why they brought me here.” [Hocim said the same thing, not twice but three, four, maybe even five times. I let him talk, but he kept getting sleepy.] “I’m sorry, I’m tired, they give me pills with my meals...” [He showed me packs of Diazepam and Dormidina, and told me that he took 6 or 7 tablets of Diazepam a day, as well as about 4 tablets of Dormidina just to sleep. He also told me that he wasn’t used to taking medicine, but that the doctor at the CIE told him that he’d feel calmer if he did.

It was difficult to converse, but then I realised it was because of all the pills he’d taken. He was there for just ten more days, during which time we met again, and he was still tired, absent, and talking round in circles.]

“I don’t want problems, I just want to live,” El Fekri (25 years old, Algerian, deported after being detained for 53 days).

“Look, I don’t feel like talking,” [this is what he said, but he didn’t move from his chair. I didn’t move either, I decided to give him some space. After less than two minutes, a torrent of words suddenly came out]. “I earn my living, you know? I don’t depend on anyone, I make money from scrap metal, I don’t steal from anyone, I stay out of trouble... all I want to do is to live. Here at the CIE it’s really cold, and there’s no heating. We only have one blanket each; well, now they’ve given us another

26. The names of these witnesses (and in some cases their countries of origin) have been changed to maintain their anonymity.

one. Anyway, I don't want any trouble. There are policemen who beat up the detainees here, you know? I saw it on Tuesday, but I don't want any trouble." [He fell silent again. We looked into each other's eyes and, without meaning to, I looked down at his right hand. It was half hidden and I could see blood.] "Yes, my hand. It's the worst thing that's happened since I've been here. It was yesterday afternoon: I was praying in my cell, and five policemen came in to make fun of me; I carried on praying and in the end they left. But when they'd gone I just couldn't control my rage and I punched the wall. I'm a fool, I know that, but I couldn't stand the mockery and the insults."

"I'm 16 and I'm really scared," Wanis (16 years old, Algerian, deported).

"I'm a minor. I've told them so many times, but they don't take any notice. I don't know what I can do. I'm really frightened, I don't know why I'm here. I got here five days ago, and I can't sleep or eat. I'm scared when I'm in my cell, in the yard, in the dining room. I just need them to do the test, and then they'll let me out of here. I can't go back to Algeria, I lived on the streets there: my parents are dead, and I haven't heard from my brother for years. I'm really scared."

Wanis arrived in a small boat. He started to talk to the Migra Studium volunteer because it was patently obvious that he was a minor, and in fact the head of the CIE himself asked us to visit him. But they never did do the tests that would provide proof of the fact that he was a minor. During the first week of the state of emergency due to Covid-19 he was deported back to Algeria, one of the last countries to close borders with Spain.

"When I got here I was 14, and I can't go back to my country," Ahmed (19 years of age, Algerian, released when the state of emergency was declared).

"I arrived in Barcelona five years ago, when I was 14. I came by road, I hid between the wheels of a lorry. I think it's the most dangerous thing I've ever done. I think I was really lucky, because they didn't catch me, and I lived in a supervised flat for five years. When I was 18, everything got more complicated: I had to leave the flat, and I went to live with a friend. From then on everything got much more complicated, and one day we were walking down the street and we started a fight. We were arrested and I was taken to the CIE three days later, after being held at the police station."

On 19 March, Ahmed was released when the CIE was evacuated due to the pandemic. Ahmed has a considerable degree of disability (58%) as recognised by the Catalan Health System, which means that he needs to be in contact with a supervisor, even though he is over age. In the days after his release, he was taken in at a shared house for young people in the Maresme area. The whole situation caused a huge amount of stress that he simply did not know how to deal with, and he began to self-harm, deliberately cutting his leg. The wound needed 60 stitches.

"I don't have anywhere to go," Amin (29 years of age, Moroccan, released after 44 days in the CIE).

"My journey from Morocco was really long. But the worst thing was that my relatives in Valencia didn't want to help me, so I stayed in Murcia for a time. There I heard about Lleida, and the opportunities for finding work there. I did find work; I didn't have a contract and was paid very little, but at least it was a job. I decided to go to France, thinking things would be easier there, but my decision led me into a trap: when I was crossing the border at La Jonquera they stopped the bus I was on and asked me for my papers."

He had already been in the CIE for 44 days, and as is all too often the case, had no idea of his legal position, no-one to visit him and he didn't even have a telephone number for the lawyer he had spoken to. Nothing came of his application for asylum, or the appeal that a companion had advised him to make. Over the following days, the pandemic started to unfold, and if the situation in general was confusing, then in the CIE it was completely chaotic: visits, legal counselling, and social services were all forbidden. On 14 March, he called saying that there was general unrest. There were several attempts to go on hunger strike and the detainees did not want to go to their rooms because they were afraid about the health situation. The police responded by unjustifiably isolating detainees and there were various assaults. While in other CIEs detainees were being released, in Barcelona 15 Algerians were deported just a few hours before the borders were

closed. A day after the closure of the CIE, we spoke again. What should have been a call to express relief was another harsh reminder of the reality, their cruel reality. In the midst of the collective hysteria generated by the pandemic, Ali and some others found themselves without a roof over their heads, with nowhere to go and nothing to eat. He said that he would try to contact the City Council and some hostels to see what could be done. In the meantime, that day he was going to sleep in Plaça d'Espanya. And the next day who knew where...

“The cold is unbearable,” Jaime Airreztieta (38 years old, Chilean, 58 days in the CIE, possibly released).

“I arrived at Barcelona airport just like any other tourist, from my beloved Chile. Yes, I really love my country, but life there isn't good: I lost a kidney when a stray bullet hit me during the street riots. I could have died, but instead it made me more determined to come and look for work as a painter. But my tourist visa expired, and one afternoon they asked me for my papers on the underground (maybe it was just a matter of time), and the die was cast.”

Cold is without a doubt the word most often heard during the visits. The food was cold, prepared an hour and a half before it was served, the day rooms were cold, the bedrooms were freezing, and so on. He suffered with lower back pain as the operation to remove his kidney had left him with health issues in that area. He told as many people as possible in the CIE about this, and asked for help. A few heat wraps each week were all he managed to get. He was there for 58 days and 58 nights. The nights were the hardest, finding it very difficult to sleep because the cold affected his back. 1,392 hours of suffering - pushed to the legal limit. He was probably released, taking with him the rage of someone who has been deprived of their freedom under terrible conditions for what is an administrative irregularity.

3. A look at rights in a CIE during a pandemic. The roadmap from temporary closure to resuming detentions

In 2020, three events impacted on the guarantee and exercise of the rights of those detained in the facility: the gradual suspension of its activity in March, the re-starting of detentions in October in the midst of Covid-19 infections, quarantines and lockdowns, and last more detentions, but this time with no visits from either families or NGOs. For the purpose of spotlighting the detainees and their fundamental rights, what follows is a chronicle of the events of 2020. The aim is to provide a clear picture of the situation concerning fundamental rights at the Zona Franca CIE during this period.

3.1. The roadmap to the temporary closure of the CIE

During the first two weeks of March, standard visiting hours were changed, until in the end the management of the CIE decided not to allow visits at all. Tensions were steadily rising within the CIE, and there was an alleged serious police assault on the afternoon of Sunday 15 March, which was reported to the Duty Magistrate's Court on 18 March, attracting media attention. Migra Studium contacted the lawyers who had handled the detainment cases and they provided legal support. The provocation appeared to be minor: a detainee had insulted a group of policemen, who had responded by assaulting him.

3.2. Suspension of visits since the reopening of the CIE

The detainment of foreign nationals in Spanish CIEs resumed on 23 September 2020, and on 5 October 81 Algerian detainees from Majorca were admitted to Zona Franca CIE. The Migra Studium team, however, was unable to resume its schedule of visits to detainees due to a combination of factors: the decision taken by the interim director of the CIE to suspend the visits as a precautionary measure pending a judicial decision on the issue; the delay of the two supervisory immigration judges in reaching a decision, and the contradictory criteria issued, which led to a call from the Public Prosecutor for Immigration for a joint decision to be made based on reasonable criteria to allow visits by lawyers from NGOs and other organisations defending migrants.

Analysis of the interactions between the interim director of the CIE, the presiding judges of Barcelona Courts of Instruction numbers 1 and 30, the Barcelona Public Prosecutor for Immigration, Migra Studium and Irídia legal experts, and even Barcelona City Council, shows that

the rights at play during the exceptional health situation were affected by the differing views of the judicial operators in terms of finding a satisfactory solution to the guarantee and exercise of these rights.

The sustained ban on visits to detainees at the CIE in Barcelona from October 2020 raises certain questions. The first is the suspension of visits by members of NGOs to a CIE, which has been a notoriously conflictive issue over the years. The constant presence five days a week of Migra Studium volunteers at Zona Franca CIE meant that the role assigned to NGOs by the Coordinating Prosecutor for Alien Affairs²⁷ could be fulfilled. When Migra Studium exercises its right to visit, it becomes a contributory of the administration in the defence of fundamental rights: “as contributories in safeguarding the rights of detainees, as recognised by article 62 bis 3 LOEX”. Furthermore, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees²⁸ stresses that the number and quality of the visits received by migrants in detention is very important:

Visits by family and others are a right, not a privilege. They are an important resource, not only to help immigration detainees cope with their situation and the insecurity of their circumstances, but also to help them prepare for life after detention, whether in the country of destination or asylum, or in their country of origin. However, the reality in immigration detention is that visits [...] are difficult. Nevertheless, the guiding principle must be the fostering of contact with the outside world, subject only to security constraints, and then only if there is compelling evidence.

The second issue raised by the ban is that the prohibition on visits reveals the structural inadequacy of CIEs when it comes to safeguarding rights that should not be subject to restriction or impediment when a foreign national is deprived of their freedom of movement as a precautionary measure in a refoulement or deportation procedure.

Last, the third issue is the question of the infringement of rights resulting from the delay and the contradictory nature of the decisions of Governmental Judicial Agencies.

3.3. Chronicle of the resumption of activity at the CIE

- 5 October 2020. The interim director of the Zona Franca CIE informs the presiding judges of Barcelona Courts of Instruction numbers 1 and 30 and the Office of the Barcelona Public Prosecutor for Immigration of the admission of 81 Algerian detainees from Palma de Majorca between 8pm and 9pm. He orders the precautionary suspension of visits until a judicial resolution to the contrary is received.
- 9 October 2020. First notification sent by Migra Studium to the Presiding Judge of Barcelona Examining Magistrates' Court No.1. Migra Studium informs that the CIE's head of security has decided to suspend visits as a precautionary measure until a judicial resolution to the contrary is issued, that the judicial authority must approve a contingency plan for the CIE for the prevention and management of Covid-19 infections, and consequently urging the supervisory court to issue the aforementioned resolution. In addition, Migra Studium provides documentation relating to the measures adopted in other CIEs in Spain: the interlocutory judgement of Murcia Examining Magistrates' Court No.9 of 20 April; the report of the Madrid Regional Police Headquarters of 5 October; and the interlocutory judgement of Las Palmas Regulatory Court 8 dated 8 October. All this complementary documentation shows that measures have been taken to control the spread of infection, to establish visit protocols within the context of Covid-19, to impose capacity limitations in the CIE, and to introduce procedures to be adopted following a positive diagnosis. Since Murcia, Las Palmas and Madrid had previously set out measures, there should have been no impediment to doing the same in Barcelona.

27. Internal note 1/2015, within the “Protocolo y Actas de Visitas a CIE”, available at: <http://blogextranjeriaprogestion.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/protocolo-visitas-cie-2015-mf.pdf>.

28. “Monitorear la Detención Migratoria: Manual Práctico”, 2014, available at: www.refworld.org/es/docid/5548c6244.html

To this end, just four days after detentions were resumed in Barcelona, Migra Studium requested that the regulatory court regulate the maximum number of people who could be detained in the CIE; visiting rules for family members and NGOs; prevention and hygiene measures required for the proper functioning of the CIE; and provision for ex officio action in the event of the infection of detainees or staff, including, if necessary, the closure of the establishment.

- 9 October 2020. Procedural order from the Presiding judge of Barcelona Examining Magistrates' Court No.1, responsible for the running of CIEs, acknowledging receipt of the aforementioned documentation, and ordering the CIE to initiate proceedings since the necessary documentation is considered to have been provided, and that this be transferred to the Public Prosecutor's Office so that a report can be issued.

- 14 October 2020. Order proceeding from the Clerk of Court of the Judicial Administration of Examining Magistrates' Court No.1, which refers to a letter from the Public Prosecutor's Office and orders the complaint and documentation sent by Migra Studium to be added to the proceedings.

- 16 October 2020. Second complaint filed by Migra Studium and Irídia at Barcelona Examining Magistrates' Court No.1. This second complaint substantiates the report that a detainee had tested positive for Covid-19 (one of the group of 81 admitted on 5 October) that appeared in the newspaper *El País* on 15 October²⁹. In the context of the second wave of infections, and in view of the steps taken by the Catalan Regional Government to strengthen preventive measures, Migra Studium and Irídia insist that the CIEs do not meet the conditions needed to be able to implement the stipulated safety measures. Citing as an example the resolutions adopted by the Regulatory Courts of Murcia and Las Palmas, they call for the closure of the CIE and for alternative arrangements to be made for the care of the person who tested positive for Covid-19, and the safe quarantining of those who had been in close contact with him.

- 16 October 2020. Complaint filed by Barcelona City Council at Barcelona Examining Magistrates' Court No.1. Once it was confirmed that a detainee at the CIE had tested positive for Covid-19 on 14 October, the Barcelona Public Health Agency carried out an inspection visit on 15 October, drawing the following conclusions: that the CIE has an action plan in case of infection by Covid-19, but not a full contingency plan that includes the functional and structural measures to be implemented to prevent the spread of SARS-CoV-2 in the facility; that the 39 detainees in Module B should be considered close contacts given the living arrangements in place in the module; that although all close contacts need to be quarantined for 10 days as of 9 October, only 3 have single rooms, and that the 36 people who cannot be quarantined within the CIE should be transferred to another facility.

In view of the provisions set out by the Regulatory Court of Las Palmas, the City Council requests Examining Magistrates' Court No.1 to order the closure of the CIE until it is able to guarantee the right to physical integrity and health of the detainees, the security staff and other workers.

- 17 October 2020. Order from the Presiding Judge of Barcelona Examining Magistrates' Court No.1. Order stating that the documentation provided by Migra Studium and Irídia, and that provided by the Barcelona City Council, should be added to the proceedings, and forwarded to the Public Prosecution Service.

- 19 October 2020. Report by the Barcelona Public Prosecutor for Immigration, which is a copy of a report that was actually dated 28 May 2020, in which the Prosecutor gives her opinion on the protection and prevention measures proposed by the Zona Franca CIE's medical service on

29. <https://elpais.com/espana/catalunya/2020-10-15/el-cie-de-zona-franca-registra-su-primer-positivo-por-covid-una-semana-despues-de-su-reapertura.html>

11 May 2020. She considers them to be proportionate and appropriate to the health situation, even though their application implies limiting detainees' right to receive visits. The first measure consists of refusing entry to people with symptoms consistent with Covid-19, or with a body temperature above 37.5 °C, and displaying this limiting criteria on the notice boards. The second measure is the introduction of plastic social distancing screens in the visiting areas. The third measure is to maintain social distancing in common areas.

- 28 October 2020. Second complaint submitted by Barcelona City Council to Barcelona Courts of Instruction numbers 1 and 30. It reiterates the complaint filed on 16 October, which recommended the transfer to other facilities of the 36 people who could not be quarantined under sufficiently safe conditions in the CIE, as well as the closure of the facility until there is a full contingency plan in place to address the threat of Covid-19.

It refers to the epidemiological report drawn up by the Barcelona Public Health Agency on 23 October. This new report states that while there is an action plan in place outlining what needs to be done in the case of an infection, it still lacks the scope of a full contingency plan. Reference is made to the 3 people infected, and the 68 who were in close contact with them, 37 in block A and 31 in block B. The recommendation is for a 10-day quarantine period from 23 October. It clearly states that only 6 people can be safely quarantined within the CIE, and so recommends that the remaining 62 detainees should be transferred to another facility. Last, there is another call for the closure of the CIE until it is able to ensure the right of detainees, members of the security forces and other workers to physical integrity and health.

- 28 October 2020. The Ombudsman acknowledges receipt of the complaint Migra Studium submitted that same day. The complaint raised by Migra Studium highlights two problematic situations.

First, the continued lack of a Covid-19 contingency plan, despite repeated requests from Barcelona Examining Magistrates' Court No.1 for such a plan to be developed, a need that had been clearly demonstrated when the first infection occurred in the report issued by Barcelona Public Health Agency on the lack of a contingency plan, the information regarding three cases of infection made public on 22 October (which led to the isolation of six people, one of whom was a policeman), and the presentation of a second letter from Barcelona City Council expressing its concern about the epidemiological situation. It cites the Government Delegation in Catalonia, the Government Sub-delegation in Barcelona, the Regional Police Headquarters in Barcelona, the Management of the Zona Franca CIE, and Barcelona Courts of Instruction numbers 1 and 30 as being responsible for not having issued instructions or resolutions or putting the required measures in place when the CIE was reopened with regard to the rules on visits, the prevention of or reaction to a positive case of coronavirus, and the way in which medical care is provided and the isolation, lockdown and quarantine measures implemented in the facility.

Second, there is the complaint regarding the fact that from 5 October neither NGOs such as Migra Studium, nor detainees' families or the Religious Care Service had been allowed to access the facility or meet with detainees, and that access by the Spanish Red Cross had been restricted to the office area, leaving the yard and common areas off limits.

- 13 November 2020. Third complaint filed by Migra Studium and Irídia concerning the lack of visits and, above all, the isolation and quarantine conditions within the CIE for detainees testing positive for Covid-19. With no response to the complaints from Courts of Instruction numbers 1 and 30 a month after they are submitted, a further complaint is filed with the Regulatory Court, which includes the criminal complaints presented by Irídia in the name of two detainees under coronavirus lockdown for events that took place on 31 October, and informs them of the situations that have arisen within the context of the isolation measures for Covid-19 in the facility. A request is made to Examining Magistrates' Court No.30 asking that the people who are required to comply with quarantine measures be transferred to suitable accommodation,

and that an investigation be carried out into compliance with Covid-19 isolation measures since the reopening of the facility.

- 11 January 2021. Interlocutory judgement of Barcelona Examining Magistrates' Court No.1. The documentation referred to above is collected as evidence. It makes reference to the interlocutory judgement of 7 June 2020, which led to six preventive measures proposed by the CIE's own medical service being put into place to ensure that visits are made in accordance with current legislation. As no new circumstances are considered to have arisen that would require a different decision to be taken, it therefore refers the director to those six measures.

The court shares the Prosecutor's view of the risks to individual and public health posed by the rapid spread of the virus and Covid-19 infections, and therefore advocates the adoption of short- and medium-term preventive measures, with a view to the future. They include the following: rapid detection, diagnosis and isolation of asymptomatic cases; follow up of contacts and study of the quarantine rules that may be considered appropriate. It is considered appropriate to adopt measures to complement those already put in place by the interim director of the CIE, such as:

- Screening. Admission of new detainees between the hours of 6 am and 10 pm so that healthcare staff can immediately identify anybody with symptoms consistent with Covid-19 and refer them to the appropriate care services.
- Access to the Barcelona CIE. Temperature check using non-contact methods for anybody entering the facility, and no allowing access to those presenting a temperature above 37.5°C. Hand sanitiser must be provided for use. Face masks must be worn.
- Daily implementation and the pertinent update of all the measures for the early detection, monitoring and control of Covid-19 established by the Ministry of Health, and communication of these measures to the judicial authority and the Public Prosecutor's Office.

- 15 January 2021. Ruling of the Presiding Judge of Barcelona Examining Magistrates' Court No.30. On 14 January, the interim director of the Zona Franca CIE again requests a ruling. On 15 January, the Court's Presiding Judge visits the CIE. At the end of the visit, the ruling is issued. It reaffirms the ruling issued on 6 November 2020, which confirmed the interim director's policy of restricting outsiders' access to the facility as far as possible to prevent the spread of infection, and which established the conditions under which entry might be permitted to safeguard the detainees' right to defence as recognised within the constitution. It is based on the CIE's medical report of 14 January 2021, which recommended keeping the restriction on visits in place to protect the health of both detainees and CIE staff, and is underpinned by the preventive measures introduced in Catalonia by the Generalitat in response to the pandemic. It upholds the status of the people who habitually live together in each of the two modules of the CIE as "bubble groups". Taking into account the average of ten visitors per day and the size of the visiting rooms, it considers that maintaining the visits system would undermine the status of the modules as bubble groups, and could undermine the hygiene and preventive measures in place. The suspension of visits is confirmed.

- 20 January 2021. Court order from the Public Prosecutor for Immigration. It focuses on the six measures approved in the interlocutory judgement of Examining Magistrates' Court No.1 of 11 January. Specifically, the two measures affecting the right to receive visits are the prohibition of access to people presenting symptoms consistent with Covid-19, or with a body temperature above 37.5 °C (a prohibition that must be posted on the notice boards), and the introduction of plastic social distancing screens in the visiting areas. To these must be added the imposition of separation and the safe physical distance in waiting rooms, and the sanitisation of spaces.

With the document presented, the Public Prosecutor seeks to obtain a unanimous and joint ruling from the two Regulatory Courts on two issues that affect the rights of detainees: the right

to receive visits (Article 16.2.i. RD 162/14), which can only be subject to restriction by means of a court ruling, and the right of detainees to enter into contact with NGOs and international organisations working for the protection of migrants (Article 16.2.i., RD 162/14, and Article 62 bis 1.j, LO 4/2000).

Furthermore, she points out that the two regulatory courts jointly established the extent and scope of the right of NGOs to visit and interview detainees within the established legal limits, rules which had been in operation until the current restriction of visits due to the pandemic.

She reiterates and expands on her request: a joint judicial decision setting out the specifics regarding the restriction of visits by families, third parties and NGOs and, if possible, including health guarantees in line with authorised medical criteria to enable visits, albeit in a limited way. She explains that her insistence on this request is motivated by the need to protect two conflicting rights - the right to health, and the right to receive visits - and that she is seeking maximum legal certainty in such a sensitive matter as that of the precautionary detention of foreign nationals.

She stresses that there can be no court rulings supporting apparently disparate criteria in the name of legal certainty concerning the correct functioning of the centre, monitoring detainee stays in a coordinated way and, of paramount importance, safeguarding the fundamental rights of the detainees.

3.4. Monitoring Covid-19 infections and measures put in place at the CIE

Migra Studium has carefully monitored the situation resulting from the infection of various detainees and how the isolation of those who have tested positive for the disease and those who have been in close contact with them has been managed. The CIE itself acknowledges to the Ombudsman that positive cases and close contacts are managed within the facility without referral to external health centres. Indeed, on 8 February 2021, in the complaint submitted by Migra Studium to the Ombudsman, the management of the CIE stated that, "in compliance with the requirements of this Centre's Medical Service and to protect their own health and that of the rest of the CIE detainees and staff, once the isolation rooms are prepared and the police officers equipped with the mandatory PPE [...], preventive separation measures are adopted, with each person being placed in a single room with video surveillance, prohibited from leaving the room at any time, and with no plans to transfer them to other facilities outside the CIE".

In the course of the preliminary investigation proceedings 1238/2020-M being conducted by Barcelona Examining Magistrates' Court No.21 in relation to the complaint filed by two detainees and brought to the attention of Courts of Instruction numbers 1 and 30 by Migra Studium and Iridia on 13 November 2020, video surveillance images recorded by the CIE of detainees infected with Covid-19 held in isolation were presented. Specifically, on 31 October 2020, the poor mental and physical state of health of one of the detainees who had been in isolation for a week could be observed, together with the conditions in the cell in which he had spent ten days without being allowed to leave. The space was very small, with no furniture, and no washbasin - nothing but a mattress. The images show how at 2 pm on 31 October, the detainee, after self-harming by banging his head against the walls and windows of the room, was restrained by seven uniformed officers of the National Police Force, who tied his hands together and put a helmet with a visor on his head. Minutes later, they are also seen tying his feet together. He remained on the floor for over 3 hours, hands and feet tied, until 5.14 pm. It also shows how during that time the detainee was still agitated, continuing to bang his head on the floor and at times managing to remove the helmet.

The express demands of Migra Studium and Iridia submitted to the Courts of Instruction numbers 1 and 30 include taking action in the light of the video evidence presented, in the sense of ensuring that CIE detainees who need to be in isolation due to Covid-19 are transferred to a suitable facility, such as a health centre, a medicalised hotel, or other appropriate premises. As a secondary demand, they ask the Regulatory Courts to establish in which spaces and under what conditions isolation within the CIE should be supervised, always ensuring that the fundamental rights of detainees are respected, and establishing clear protocols for action. To this effect, under no

circumstances should the CIE management agree to restraining someone by tying their hands and feet together, using a helmet, and leaving them on the floor of the cell, especially not after having been locked up for days in total isolation and while suffering from Covid-19.

With regard to the events of 31 October 2020, the Presiding Judge of Barcelona Examining Magistrates' Court No.31 issued a declaration on 18 March 2021 refusing to grant the request made by Migra Studium and Irídia, stating that the isolation and quarantine conditions reported "have no relevance to the issue of supervision of the CIE".

4. Conclusions

The first issue to be addressed is why the interim director of the Zona Franca CIE did not apply the preventive measures approved by the Presiding Judge of Barcelona Examining Magistrates' Court No.1, which had been proposed by the facility's own medical centre, from the moment the first detainees were admitted. He merely communicated the precautionary suspension of visits while the judicial authorities were considering their decision, without providing any evidence of a change of circumstances. Contrary to what is stated in subsequent declarations by the regulatory judges and the Public Prosecutor for Immigration, no concern is being shown for the conflict between legal rights (on the one hand, the right to individual and public health and, on the other, the right of detainees to receive visits), and no alternative ways of managing the situation that might serve as mitigation have been offered. It would not be appropriate here to speculate on their intentions. Their deep concern about the risks of contagion within an enclosed environment where contact levels are unavoidably high is beyond doubt. However, from the perspective of an NGO that supports detainees in the CIE while also observing adherence to human rights, this prolonged lack of access makes it difficult to monitor the situation in a CIE where there has been a significant level of conflict over the years.

The second issue that needs to be raised is the inadequacy of the very building that houses the CIE in terms of safeguarding rights that must be guaranteed for foreign nationals who are deprived of their freedom as a precautionary measure in refoulement or expulsion procedures. There is not a new issue. It is a problem that has been reported by the supervisory immigration judges, the Ombudsman, civil society, and local authorities such as Barcelona City Council. When the designated visiting areas are small rooms with insufficient ventilation, this makes it impossible for visits to take place in the usual way in times of epidemic or pandemic.

The third issue concerns how the justice system functions: slowly and contradictorily. The fact that three full months passed before the publication of the first decisions on the merits of the issues raised has obviously had a detrimental impact on the right of detainees to receive visits, a right which has been suspended. The contradictions between the decisions of the regulatory judges adds to the legal uncertainty, as pointed out by the Public Prosecutor for Immigration.

The fourth issue concerns the sensitivity of the alternative solutions to the conflict between the rights to health and to access. The extreme solution would be to not allow detainees to receive any visits at all, with the exception of those from lawyers from the CIE's Legal Advice Service. The most conservative intermediate solution would mean that lawyers from NGOs and other organisations could visit detainees. Another, broader intermediate solution is feasible: permitting visits by members of NGOs who provide forms of support other than in legal matters, such as psycho-social support. On this continuum, the least restrictive solution would perhaps be to also allow visits from close family members (spouses or common-law partners, parents, children and siblings).

The fifth issue is the lack of transparency and foresight on the part of the management of the CIE regarding managing the cases of Covid-19 that would likely occur within its walls once detentions were resumed. The treatment of detainees with Covid-19 borders on the characteristics of torture and offences against moral integrity, and is still the subject of criminal proceedings. However, it appears that it does not merit special attention from the judicial bodies that monitor and control detention stays in the CIE. At the very least, it is surprising that the legal requirement stipulated by

article 62.6 of Framework Act 4/2000, on the Rights and Freedoms of Foreign Nationals in Spain and their Social Integration, a requirement whose implementation is entrusted to these courts, does not affect judicial sensitivity towards the protection of fundamental rights.

Bibliography

UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES (UNHCR). "Monitoring Migration Detention. Practical Manual", Geneva: UNHCR-ACNUR, 2014.

<https://www.refworld.org/es/docid/5548c6244.html>.

SÁNCHEZ-COVISA VILLA, J. (Chief Prosecutor of the Spanish Supreme Court, Coordinator of Immigration). "Protocolo y Actas de Visitas a CIE (April 2015). Internal Note n.º 1/2015", 2015.

<https://blogextranjeriaprogestion.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/protocolo-visitas-cie-2015-mf.pdf>.

September 2021

Key words: inter-epistemic dialogue,
neighbourhood, place of speech,
decoloniality, interculturality

Inter-epistemic dialogue for a broad neighbourhood participation model

Omaira Beltrán. Journalist with the Intercultural Communication Agency ITACAT. She is a researcher at the University of Barcelona and the Catalonia Latin America Centre for Inter-Epistemic Studies (CEICAL)

obeltran@llatins.org, [@omairabeltran](https://twitter.com/omairabeltran)

The article examines some epistemic practices of the south and how they can provide a frame of reference for re-evaluating the field of social participation as a space where the new communities of residents of Barcelona are included in the various power relations. This reflection is made in the context of applying a set of intercultural policies with an inter-epistemic approach that develop equality, recognition and interaction. We will also think about the use of language as a place for construction and legitimation, and we will conclude by discussing the challenges faced by CONFAVC in fostering the intercultural model in Catalonia's neighbourhoods.

1. The management of diverse participation as an exercise in legitimation

One of the first practices arriving from the south to include in our society and ensure a vision of broad participation is 'place of speech' (originally, in Portuguese, *lugar de fala*), a theory proposed by Brazilian philosopher Djamila Ribeiro (2017). According to Ribeiro herself:

'It is worth noting that, when we talk about *place of speech*, we are referring to the *social locus*; i.e. the social place from which groups are formed. Therefore, according to our point of view, arguments aimed at silencing certain debates or claiming that white people are not allowed to theorise about racism or that men may not theorise about male chauvinism are wrong.' (Ribeiro, 2018: 17, emphasis in the original).

The place of speech thus removes the limitations that have in many cases caused spaces for reflection – which are so necessary for sharing and putting in common opposing views – to be divided. This place of speech also enables us to highlight privileges that have led to spaces of power, as explained by the author herself.

'We need white cisgender men, for example, to increasingly analyse whiteness (or *whiteness*), *cisgenderism* or masculinity; to understand from a critical point of view the social place they come from in order to think and exist in the world, to the point of ensuring multiple voices and perspectives from other groups that have been ignored. Furthermore, it is an ethical position as, in our opinion, the burden of responsibility cannot be removed from *subjects with power*. Throughout history, various black intellectuals have mentioned the need to break with the discursive authorisation system under which different knowledge is silenced and/or suppressed to fight against structurally imposed violence against oppressed groups. The 'place of speech' therefore tells us about the need to perceive the hierarchy of knowledge

as a product of the racial classification of people. Those who have social privilege have epistemic privilege' (Ribeiro, 2018: 17, emphasis in the original).

This theory, when looked at in the context of our own reality, is very applicable, as white people can take part in the anti-racist initiatives that have taken place in recent years and those that continue to take place from their place of speech, acknowledging and using their privileges. These fights arise in response to discrimination, which is itself the result of institutional racism fuelled directly by dehumanised laws, such as the Spanish Immigration Law.

But the well-known fact that new organisations and platforms joining the ranks of social movements and fighting racism are constantly emerging is no longer enough. Puerto Rican sociologist Ramón Grosfoguel (2021), for his part, talks about the need to decolonise knowledge and power, although not without first decolonising being. To explain this, he quotes the philosopher Frantz Fanon, whose book *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961) establishes a 'zone of being' to draw attention to what is formally referred to as *racism*. The 'zone of being' is a place containing both hyperhumanised people and completely dehumanised people. The latter account for 90% of the population, as the former are those who set the standards of normality on political, social, economic, aesthetic, spiritual and other levels. And, when we talk about racism, as well as talking about discrimination in labour, social, economic and other rights, we are also talking about a phenomenon that runs even deeper, one that has been established by these hyperhumanised people who define the 'official normality' of a society's cultural practices and that in turn build a discourse of superiority above the people that they consider to be dehumanised.

This is therefore the epistemic exercise that we must work on, at both individual and collective levels, if we want to get to the source of the concepts that feed stereotypes, i.e. the place where spaces of knowledge and power are built. And this epistemic exercise would be very appropriate in Barcelona's neighbourhoods. Similarly, if we engage in an inter-epistemic exercise, i.e. if we put the epistemic contributions arriving from various parts of the planet on the same level, we may be able to build a new way of managing neighbourhood conflicts that is more appropriate and effective while encouraging a truly diverse participation. Furthermore, it will enable us to use our place of speech or '*lugar de fala*' to reflect critically from a reality which, in spite of possibly not affecting each of us individually, does affect us as a community.

At present, most of us assume that a lot of what we refer to as *social conflict* is caused by new groups coming to live in our neighbourhoods, groups that we initially don't know and therefore don't yet understand. And, once we get to this point, if we don't make the effort to interact with them – and this is one of the main principles of interculturality – we are unlikely to ever understand this new reality that is changing community dynamics. This is where we must leave behind and question all previous stereotypes, both negative or positive, about a given group of people. We must honestly review all the prejudices on which the stereotyped view of the group of people we are now living with are based and prioritise our direct, first-hand experience of them.

Most of these considerations are dogmas that have been fuelled by literary, informational, historical and political discourse, as explained by Palestinian literary theorist and critic Edward Said in his book *Orientalism* (1978). And these are very hard to change, because they are the main factors that give rise to stereotypes and prejudice. These preconceived ideas eventually result in epistemological discrimination that skews and divides participation settings, preventing us from talking about 'we' or 'us', i.e. from forming a true community formed by everyone together. Said explains how, a century before colonising Egypt, English rulers used their historians and narrators to create a discourse about the East that led to an image of Arabs as a terrorist, totalitarian and sexist people, although not without first asserting that, although they had formerly made great advances in sciences such as mathematics, they were now people with whom 'it was difficult to reason'.

But let us now leave the theoretical arena aside and look at present-day Barcelona to examine a specific case: that of schools, where a participatory culture and neighbourhood community are not

optional, in spaces such as, for example, the AFA (Students' Families Association) – until recently known as 'AMPA' (Parent-Teacher Associations). This specific arena contains clearly defined spaces of power, where access to participation is often dependent on language and, therefore, on the ability to express one's thoughts in a clear way that is easy to understand. In addition, even if a basic language for communication that can be understood by most parents can be agreed upon, there can be other cultural barriers that hinder fluid communication while giving rise to chronic power dynamics that will eventually affect how we perceive others.

A mother, for example, who is not yet familiar with the local language and who needs her daughter to translate communications for her will often end up not fully understanding the cultural reality under discussion. Furthermore, this mother may not know about the existence of associations where she can express her difficulties and receive advice to improve her children's school learning. And, even if this mother is lucky enough to know about the spaces for participation that are available to her, it is also possible that her participation is limited to the festive events that are held during the year, where she is asked to dance her country's traditional dances or bring in some of its typical food. In other words, these social spaces are often only really open to these people when diversity is appreciated as an expression of folklore and, in spite of people's good intentions, a deep and effective relationship with the other person's reality is never established. Basically, efforts end at superficial initiatives at which the wish to be 'intercultural' and respectful of diversity is expressed but no useful and effective interactions with these people and communities take place.

Let us now look at this example in the context of neighbourhood life. How could the Bolivian community, for example, in a neighbourhood with many people of this nationality participate in neighbourhood matters? In most cases, their participation is likely to be limited to showcasing their traditional dances at neighbourhood festivals and carnival groups. In view of what was said above, the question we should be asking is: 'Are we only interested in their folklore?' Popular culture is a great, valuable and very interesting excuse to make initial contact and get closer to the community. It is an essential exchange of ancestral traditions and knowledge. However, what other forms of participation can we promote from our organisations, be they neighbourhood or educational ones, in order to interact with these people? To what extent are we willing to share our organisations' decision-making power with new communities? Are we willing to open up and learn other knowledge that will enable us to interact with each other?

It is well known that there is always a certain resistance to change, but it is only with a new approach that we will be able to resolve dynamics with the potential to lead to the intergenerational renewal of our organisations. And this is a recurring theme in the internal meetings of neighbourhood associations and federations. Inevitably, there is concern about the generational handover of Catalonia's organisations, and the solution to the problem is often to put interculturality into practice with an inter-epistemic approach.

On the other hand, we have observed repeated patterns in the various practices in which we have had the opportunity to revitalise communities that interact with Barcelona City Council. Let us look at another example: there are organisations that have been making festive clothing for 20 or 30 years but are unable to continue because there has been no generational handover, so they leave their premises, full of sewing machines, which could easily be used by new organisations with people of diverse backgrounds who have more than enough people to work but no premises or machinery. This is where we must make these synergies come together: by sharing resources, sharing knowledge, sharing effort. Full participation always requires us to share.

In conclusion to this first part, we can assert that, although we are making progress towards interculturality, the three key pillars that make it possible still need to be consolidated. We must thus go beyond equality, recognition and interaction and carry out an additional exercise, which could be inter-epistemic dialogue. Interculturality needs to be more than simply a requirement in the list of politically correct actions that have to be carried out by social organisations. In order to achieve this, we need to understand the Eurocentric dynamics on which a power that is currently preventing us from exercising interculturality has been established.

2. Language as a tool for awareness and legitimization of intercultural management

It is important to reflect on the words we use and change them if we notice that they entail inherent prejudice. Behind each signifier there is a signified, which lies in our collective unconscious. We often unconsciously use words with derogatory connotations towards groups of gender, race, culture or social position.

We tend to think that, as a society, we no longer need to re-analyse language as we did in the early 20th century and realise the explicit content hidden in commonly used words, but this is unfortunately not the case. We are all familiar with Swiss linguist and father of structuralism Ferdinand de Saussure's (1916) views on linguistic signs, and we must point out that they are fully applicable now. Linguistic signs are composed of a 'signified' ('*signifié*') and a 'signifier' ('*signifiant*'), which are two sides of the same coin: the signified is what characterises the object or idea in question, the qualities that make it unique and distinguishable from others; while the signifier is the 'sound-image', which leaves a psychological imprint on the brain (Saussure, 1945: 91-93). One might say that the signifier refers to the word itself which, whenever we hear or read it, evokes the object or idea in question. Saussure's structuralist idea of signs is key to understanding linguistic and signification systems. However, American semiologist Charles Sanders Peirce's theory on the operation of signs through the *sign-object-interpretant* triad is also important. Peirce takes into account the relevance of the 'interpretant'; i.e. the sign as interpreted in the recipient's mind as part of the process of signification, as it is ultimately the recipient who keeps the act of signification in their mind, the act of turning reality into signs: the recipient is the mediator between the sign and the object.

Let us look at the definition given by Peirce himself, for whom a 'sign' or representation is: 'something that stands for something to someone in some form or capacity. It is addressed to someone; in other words, it creates an equivalent or possibly more developed sign in that person's mind. (...) The sign stands for something, its object' (Peirce, 1991: 239-240).

If 'a sign is something that means something to someone', we can assume that the people who construct language and who structure reality are the users of a language. Our configuration of the world and the way we relate to it therefore affects the production and communication of signifieds. In other words, in addition to structuring realities, language also structures the way we communicate with others.

All this means that discourse is subject to the intrinsic ideologies of the signifieds it contains. The construction of the signified is thus determined by the person with power in acts of communication; in other words, by the minds that order the discourse. And these minds can construct arbitrary meanings in the social sphere and give rise to communication problems that will find expression in the various social players.

But what happens when the people who construct this meaning are also the people in charge of deciding what the 'normality' of knowledge is? Or when it is this standardised knowledge that lays down the laws discriminating against some people based on origin, race or religion? The film *Malcolm X* contains a scene in which two black men in prison are looking up words in a dictionary and read the definitions of 'black' and 'white'. On seeing that 'black' is defined as 'dirty,' 'devoid of virtue,' 'possessed by the devil,' etc. and 'white' means the opposite, one of the characters wonders who wrote the dictionary. And they eventually find out that it was written by a white man who had reproduced meanings and definitions of the word 'black' in a semiotic framework that also included discriminatory practices and slavery. This is the case to such an extent that you can still find the word 'black' laden with racism, male chauvinism, classism and much more in the main official dictionaries. All this provides a modern-day example of what was so precisely defined by Saussure. These are words and meanings that are therefore still being used to build a hate

discourse in political campaigns, such as the one carried out in Madrid only a few weeks ago by the far-right party VOX³⁰.

Educating people about change in these signifieds is the best way to change narratives. Perhaps this way, instead of reacting to hate discourses, we can be proactive and create new narratives against such hate discourses. And we can indeed say that Barcelona is already working on these paradigms. Social movements carry out an analytical and critical task and are the focus of the construction of a Barcelona that can one day consider itself fully intercultural. An example of this can be found in the work being carried out by the local government to make changes to administrative language.

In 2019, Barcelona City Council created the *Guia del llenguatge inclusiu* [Guide to Inclusive Language], which explains terms such as *racialised*. What is a *racialised* person? Although from a biological point of view³¹ race does not exist, we are forced to keep talking about it when addressing oppression as a social category. As to the use of the term *racialisation*, for example, historian Antumi Toasijé (2018) explains that:

'In the late 1800s and early 1900s A.D., a use – which I believe to be correct – of the term *racialise* started to emerge in social science. People started talking about social phenomena such as the *racialisation of poverty* or the *racialisation of illiteracy*, and so on. In this case, they were saying that these disempowerment phenomena focused on specific groups, which they referred to as *racial* groups, but this did not mean that other groups were not racialised but simply that, statistically, the phenomenon did not affect them to the same extent. The term *racialisation* was taken superficially from these analyses by decolonialism and then distorted in its use'.

Toasijé concludes in the same article that, 'In short,

every human being is racialised: some positively and others negatively. It therefore makes no sense to say 'I, as a racialised person' or 'We, as a racialised group', unless you are referring to the whole of humanity. In fact, this verb has become a vague and reductionist expression like so many others based on phenotype, and I therefore discourage its use for the purpose of denouncing *white* supremacism or that of any other human group based on the idea of *race*'.

This is just one of many examples where a particular meaning has been used for a term that was designed to explain a different reality and has then been interpreted by another group to express itself, causing it to take on a different connotation. Although some guides recommend its use and some articles discourage it, the word has simply already acquired a new meaning and a new life and can be used in the right context. Its use is appropriate, for example, to describe a reality of oppression, but it must not be used in a general context unless it has connotations of exoticism or folklore, as it can distort its meaning. This guide also advises that people should not be referred to as 'black'. It is thus better to ask a black person how they would like to be referred to: as black, Afro-descendant, African American, Afro-Catalan or something else. And this is when the difficulty in writing a regulatory guide such as this from a place of power becomes clear, as we can fall into the trap explained in the first part of this article: the trap of using power to 'normalise' an interpretation that we have not built together. In any case, and despite the difficulties, we must

30. On 21 April 2021, in the context of the political campaign for the Madrid local elections, the far-right party VOX put up an election campaign poster at Puerta del Sol underground station stating that a '*mena*' (an unaccompanied foreign minor) received €4,700 a month, while a grandmother received a monthly pension of only €470.

31. Science journalist Angela Saini (2021) explained that race must be studied as a social phenomenon rather than a biological one, as the biological concept of race doesn't work and never provides reliable data: The idea of splitting humans into different groups is a political one: it is not something that happens in biology. Biology does not place humans in different groups; in fact, it shows that we are all very similar. In fact, according to her, we are one of the least varied species on the planet.

acknowledge the courage of the project, and any – always constructive – criticism we may make in relation to the work carried out to produce the guide must relate to its excessively institutional discourse, which could have been better agreed and has lacked the point of view of social movements in certain matters.

On the other hand, an appropriate idea that is also highly advisable for the neighbourhood and/or community world is to simply refer to people from diverse backgrounds as ‘neighbours’ or ‘residents’. Nothing could be easier or more natural. As for the word ‘newcomers’, however, we recommend that this should only be used in school settings or when talking about someone who has really only just arrived. It is not advisable to use this term for people from diverse backgrounds, as they have often been living in Catalonia for many years. In the more administrative and political sphere, we usually use the word ‘citizens’, but this term is just an ideal, for example when discussing interculturality, because many people that we refer to in this way are in fact prevented from exercising that citizenship.

A good idea for finding more words whose use has been reflected upon is to consult the *AfroDiccionario*. This has been created by African political scientist and activist Ngoy Ngoma Ramadhani, together with other people, as an educational tool to fulfil the ‘Afro’ community’s need to generate material content that highlights the constant racism suffered by this group. Ngoy explained in an interview that his project:

‘is the launch of a political strategy whose aim is to provide an alternative to the dictionary of the Real Academia Española (RAE) [the official Spanish dictionary] aimed at anyone wishing to know society from a different and more real point of view. Members of the ‘Afro’ community experience many realities for which there are no specific words in Spanish. The definition of language by a few has systematically and with premeditation omitted the reality of many’ (Ramadhani, 2019).

This is one of the various examples of exercising identity through language that is being carried out by some communities, in this case the ‘Afro’ people living in Spain.

In short, a society can be perceived to be changing when it reacts to changes in words, but not without first challenging itself and feeling uncomfortable in the process. As explained at the beginning of this article, language enables us to interpret reality; and, by changing the words we use, we reinterpret this reality. In summary, the exercise to be promoted involves leaving automation behind and invites us to reconsider the current dynamics to make proposals for change and question our relationship with other cultures, which are often as close to us as they are unknown, and which have always been, and always will be, subject to new interpretations that will almost certainly require essential linguistic improvements.

3. Intercultural action by CONFAVC

Neighbourhoods are the first place of contact for anyone arriving in a town or city. This is the ecosystem that establishes the nature of a community that can sometimes seem asleep but wakes up to create projects in response to neighbourhood needs. Or a community that comes together to claim often-infringed rights or to recognise the efforts of hundreds of anonymous volunteers who work hard to preserve the memory of the neighbourhood, the place where a people’s history is written.

The Confederation of Neighbourhood Associations of Catalonia (CONFAVC) was created in 1988. It is a neighbourhood movement organisation that coordinates 452 neighbourhood associations and 22 federations and that aims to improve the quality of life of the residents of Catalonia’s neighbourhoods by means of projects, campaigns and services.

CONFAVC has been working on the management of people from diverse backgrounds with a transformative approach for almost 10 years. Its Board has included people from diverse backgrounds without interruption for six years, enabling it to launch and continue with projects that

work on interculturality as a cross-cutting line at the organisation. In other words, this vision that is to enable all projects to respond to the needs of the demographic reality of neighbourhoods is being imposed from the various areas worked on by the organisation.

Projects have been carried out through Cultural Interaction Groups (GIM) over the years, based on the various approaches applied to the management of diversity. These initiatives became known under the motto 'Building Intercultural Neighbourhoods, Neighbourhoods for Everyone', where the neighbourhood movement, with the collaboration of local administrations, promoted what at the time was called 'intercultural coexistence in neighbourhoods'. The project, which ran from 2004 to 2013, thus had the following aims: to ascertain the intercultural realities of each neighbourhood, to learn more about the various migration policies and models, to transform the 'fear of the unknown' into potential for local residents, to create actions to foster intercultural knowledge of local residents, and to boost ties of solidarity and good neighbourly behaviour.

'Building Intercultural Neighbourhoods, Neighbourhoods for Everyone' consisted of two phases. A social diagnosis of the neighbourhood was initially carried out, including the various public policies that have addressed this new reality, in coordination with other organisations and government bodies. Groups of voluntary workers were then created to promote community actions with the aim of fostering intercultural coexistence.

The second phase was characterised by the creation of interaction groups, which were formed by the people taking part in the course and other voluntary workers who decided to join in, and who carried out actions based on the needs identified by residents themselves with the purpose of achieving intercultural coexistence.

Over nine years, the project was launched in 19 neighbourhoods in Catalonia: in Hospitalet de Llobregat, Santa Coloma de Gramenet, Reus, Rubí, Manresa, Viladecans, Igualada and, more recently in February, in the AV de Badalona Federation and the Sant Just Desvern and Sagrada Família, Badia del Vallès and Terrassa associations. The project benefited over 7,500 people indirectly, and around 500 directly.

Other projects carried out by the neighbourhood associations linked to the CONFAVC are those of the Neighbours' Associations of the neighbourhoods of Rocafonda, l'Esperança, Ciutat Jardí and Valldeix, in the city of Mataró, which has been a great example of working for the community with a full intercultural and inter-epistemic approach. This was explained by a member of the association, retired teacher Maria Major, in an interview conducted by the Intercultural Communication Agency Itacat on 20 November 2020. According to Maria, now a retired teacher and an activist for the rights of women from all over the world who now form part of these neighbourhoods, these women and their families are now the future of this neighbourhood community that has carried out projects over the past 20 years. One of these is the 'Espai matern' ['Mothers' Space'] project, an alternative to nurseries from which many children mostly from families of diverse backgrounds without a care network are excluded, which looks after these women's children so they can go to work. Maria and other retired teachers launched this project, which has also helped women improve their literacy skills, sharing spaces of knowledge because, as she explained in the interview, knowledge is not exclusively academic: 'I've learned a lot from these women, more than I've been able to teach them' (Majó, 2020). They have also carried out other projects along the same lines that have been awarded prestigious awards in this field, such as the Carulla Foundation's Francesc Candel Award 2011 for La Vocalia de Dones' project 'Totes plegades' ['All Women Together'], the 2019 neighbourhood recognition granted by the CONFAVC, and most recently the Fem Mataró Award 2022.

The same organisation has also driven the creation of three female *capgrosses* [big-headed papier-mâché carnival figures] for the neighbourhood: a North African one, a sub-Saharan one and a local one. In other words, a set of *capgrosses* representing the vast majority of female residents in these neighbourhoods. When Maria Majó was asked what the key to participation was, she told us that word of mouth was very important, because posters were often in languages that these

groups couldn't understand. She also highlighted the importance of trust and of treating people as equals. She also explained that this neighbourhood association took all these approaches and that, in addition to carrying out the projects, she hired women who understood the language of the children being looked after in the crèche and the specific cultural needs of the local residents taking part in the project. Maria Majó also highlighted the importance of respecting one's own language and guaranteeing the teaching of Catalan to give these women more opportunities both socially and in terms of employment (Majó, 2020).

In addition to projects such as those mentioned above, CONFACV has been carrying out the initiative 'A-porta' since 2016. This is a social neighbourhood empowerment experience in which local residents, who are referred to as 'door knockers' and who are familiar with the cultures and languages spoken in neighbourhoods, visit residents and inform them about practical issues. These are neighbourhoods with significant social needs, such as Ciutat Meridiana, Torre Baró and Vallbona, Montserratina de Viladecans, Can Puiggener in Sabadell, and Rocafonda in Mataró. 'Door knockers' are hired, trained and coordinated to visit all local residents and provide support, advice and resources to improve their quality of life in important aspects such as, among others, access to social rights, energy vulnerability, looking for work, the resources available in the neighbourhood, waste management, coexistence and civic behaviour, and supporting the elderly.

The initiative has recently received the Civic Behaviour Award in the Innovation category awarded by the General Office of Civic and Community Action of the Generalitat de Catalunya's Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Families. The awards in this category recognise actions and productions that have stood out for their innovative nature in the field of civic behaviour and human values. This is the third award received by the 'A-porta' project, as in 2018 it received the La Caixa award for Social Transformation and Innovation as the best social project in Spain, and in 2019 it received the 'Desafío RECI 2018-19 Diversity Advantage' award granted by the European Intercultural Cities Network (RECI) promoted by the Council of Europe.

CONFACV president Jordi Giró explained that the success of this project lies in the 'door knockers' who are at the heart of it. What they do is as important as visiting every resident in the neighbourhood, exchanging information with them, and helping them with matters such as energy vulnerability and loneliness. Other collaborators in the 'A-porta' project include lesMed, SCEL (Innovació i Economia Social en la Mediterrània, Societat Cooperativa Europea Limitada), which has provided advice on the viability of the project in Catalonia since 2016. The Board of CONFACV is currently carrying out participatory strategies that work on interculturality in a cross-cutting way and promote good practices, such as ensuring that the boards of organisations represent the diversity of neighbourhoods, that communication is inclusive and that participation involves strategies making it possible to invite and involve as many people as possible from those living together in our neighbourhoods.

4. Conclusions

By way of conclusion, we would like to make the observation that the change of approach to new neighbourhood life needs to be a constant and thoughtful exercise carried out in all meeting and participation spaces, from AFAs to neighbourhood organisations and in the parallel social movements that are gradually being created in response to the needs of each community. We must also be careful not to resort to folklore when we want to hold community interaction activities.

Furthermore, we can use the 'place of speech' (*lugar de fala*) as a tool for recognition and legitimation to talk about conflicts that we believe to be distant issues but actually affect us as a community. In addition, we can change how we use language and be open to new interpretations that will in turn make us consider making profound changes to our relationship with our neighbours.

In short, a change of approach that entails a clear awareness of the privileges that some of us have compared to others based on the oppressions affecting each community. This way, we will be able to recognise the established order that has ended up shaping the hierarchy of powers in the community. And, from here, to deploy a deeper intercultural communication in which the exchange

of knowledge with equal rights takes the inter-epistemic task beyond a mere category of science and places it at the centre of diverse societies if the aim is to create spaces with a sense of belonging.

Bibliography

BARCELONA City Council. *Guia de comunicació inclusiva per construir un món més igualitari*. Barcelona, 2019. <https://ajuntament.barcelona.cat/guia-comunicacio-inclusiva>.

CONFAVC. 'El projecte d'apoderament veïnal A-porta guanya el Premi Civisme a la Innovació de la Generalitat'. Confavc.cat (22 December 2020). <https://confavc.cat/el-projecte-dapoderament-veinal-a-porta-guanya-el-premi-civisme-a-la-innovacio-de-la-generalitat>.

FANON, F. *The Wretched of the Earth*. Translation by Maria Llopis Freixas, Manresa: Tigre de Paper, 2020 [1961].

GROSFOGUEL, R. 'Identidad, alteridad e interseccionalidad en perspectiva descolonial'. (15 April 2021). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LAO1N1pcjNE>.

MAJÓ, M. 'Maria Majó, un exemple d'amor i dedicació a construir convivència a Rocafonda'. (20 November 2020). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KOugubuSMX8>.

PEIRCE, CH. 'Peirce on Signs: Writings on Semiotic by Charles Sanders Peirce', JAMES HOOPES (ed). Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991.

RAMADHANI, N. 'Nado entre diferentes identidades sin intentar encerrarme en una sola, pero tengo clara mi identidad negra allí donde esté', *El Salto* (7 October 2019). <https://www.elsaltodiario.com/en-el-margen/ngoy-ramadhani-antirracismo-fundador-kwanzaa-congoleno-espanol>.

RIBEIRO, D. *O que é lugar de fala?* Belo Horizonte: Letramento, 2017.

RIBEIRO, D. 'Breves reflexiones sobre Lugar de Enunciación'. *Relaciones Internacionales. Revista del Grupo de Estudios de Relaciones Internacionales - UAM*, vol. 39 (2018), pp. 13-18.

SAID, E. *Orientalism*. Translation by M. Luisa Fuentes. Barcelona: Editorial DeBolsillo, 2009 [1978].

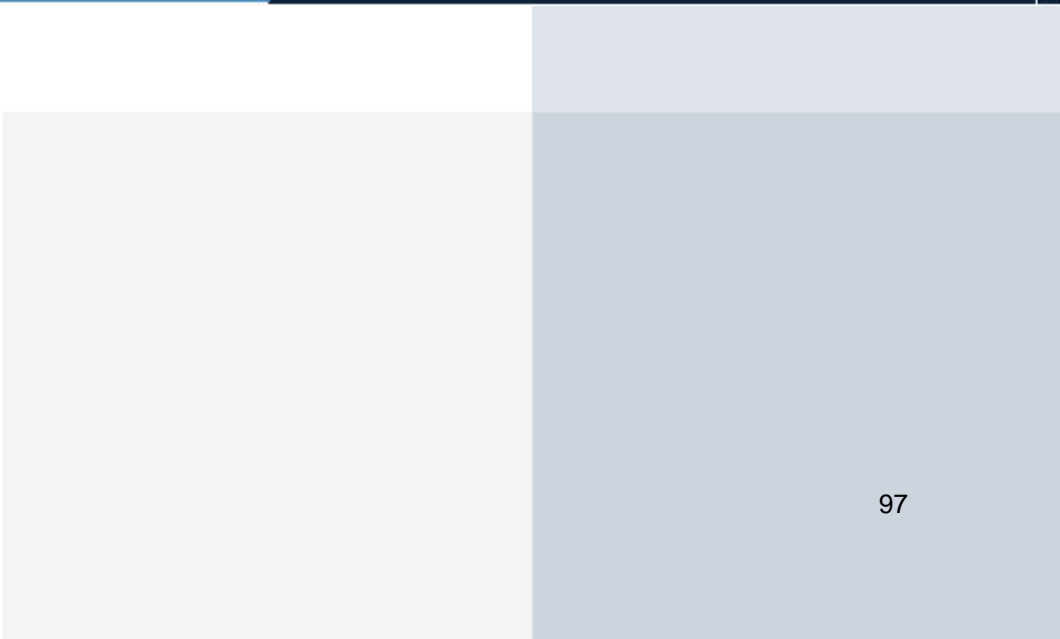
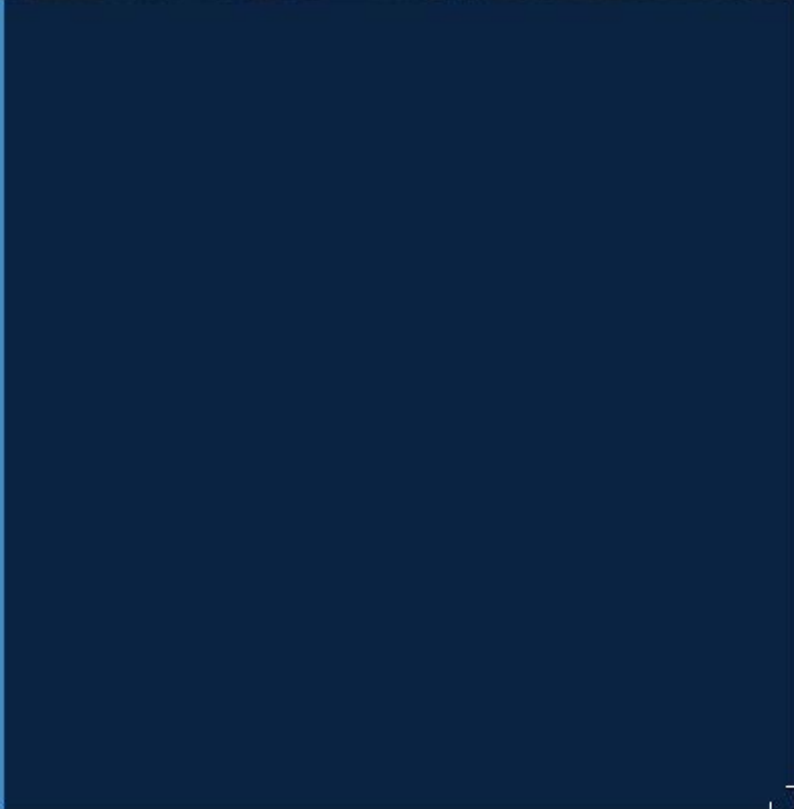
SAINI, A. 'Hay que estudiar la raza como un fenómeno social, no como uno biológico'. *Viento Sur* (31 March 2021). https://vientosur.info/hay-que-estudiar-la-raza-como-un-fenomeno-social-no-como-uno-biologico/?fbclid=IwAR3_50Lzlm5d1GOi8SNcgXID-u_4DTdUgUr4IW0uJPvTWxKqLSzkY3OFKHA.

SAUSSURE, F. *Course in General Linguistics*. Translation by A. Alonso. Buenos Aires: Editorial Losada, 1945.

TOASIJE, A. 'Por qué ya no digo 'racializada', 'racializado'. *Africanidad* (6 December 2018). <https://www.africanidad.com/2018/12/porque-nunca-digo-racializada.html>.



Experiences



September 2021

Key words: employment, immigration,
regularisation, opportunities

Paper Dreams. Employment schemes as a regularisation opportunity

Marta Edo^a Loles Martínez^a, Daniela Martínez^a, Albert Paredes^a, Juana Prados^a, Carme Turull Basomba^b Nerea Couselo^b, Omayma El Ouahhabi^c and Sergio Hidalgo^c

The fight against unemployment and job insecurity in the city's most troubled neighbourhoods is one of Barcelona City Council's top priorities. One of the actions with the highest priority is the reception and inclusion of people in an irregular situation and the creation of employment opportunities for them. This is why Barcelona Activa has launched a specific programme under the Municipal Employment Schemes that provides people with the opportunity to find a job, which in turns enables them to apply for a work and residence permit. Since 2016, a total of 152 people have successfully processed their work and residence permits thanks to this occupational programme with a concrete 12-month employment contract. This provides access to quality employment, which in turn contributes to these immigrants' social integration. Participation in the employment scheme also improves the employability of participants, who gain work experience and improve their professional skills, facilitating their future entry into the general job market. It is an opportunity that goes beyond the working environment and brings the most vulnerable people closer to becoming citizens with rights and a democratic ability to participate. As expressed by one of the participants, the Municipal Employment Schemes programme is "much more than just a job".

1. Introduction. Regularisation and employment actions.

The fight against unemployment and job insecurity is one of Barcelona City Council's top priorities. This is why it wants to promote quality employment for everyone. In order to do this, it has designed and implemented new projects in the neighbourhoods and for those people that face the most difficulties in the city. The aim is to help participants by identifying needs, providing training and guidance and creating job opportunities to provide a comprehensive response to the needs identified in each person. One of the most necessary actions identified is the improvement of the reception and inclusion of people in an irregular situation in the city of Barcelona. Barcelona City Council is working on increasing these people's employment through the active employment policies deployed by Barcelona Activa.

Before the pandemic, Barcelona's unemployment figures had been gradually falling, but this decrease was not the same in every neighbourhood and nor did it affect everyone equally. While some groups were coming out of unemployment, others were seriously struggling to find work.

a. Barcelona Activa Integrated Employment Contracts Specialist Team.

b. Barcelona Activa Pròxim Programme Specialist Team.

c. Dual vocational training students specialising in Social Integration participating in the Integrated Employment Contracts programme.

And, in this situation, it was people in an irregular situation who encountered the most obstacles. This is why Barcelona City Council has set aside a few positions in programmes involving employment for people in an irregular situation, so they can start their regularisation process. The City Council is committed to the implementation of a variety of programmes that can lead to regularisation opportunities. These are the “Municipal Employment Schemes”, a number of employment actions linked to the “Neighbourhood Plan” and the call for applications for the “Impulsem el que fas” [We Boost What You Do] grant.

The first experience of helping people in an irregular situation through the Municipal Employment Schemes programme took place in 2016. At the time, unauthorised street peddling was a social problem in the city, and the City Council, under the Taula de Ciutat [City Table] agreement against illegal peddling, committed to the creation of jobs through the Municipal Employment Schemes programme to provide an alternative life for the people living outside the rules. Under this employment scheme, these people in an irregular situation are promised a 12-month employment contract, which makes the administrative regularisation process to obtain work and residence permits available to them. These actions were based on a medium-term strategy to reduce the conflict and social tension climate and improve social inclusion for this group linked to illegal peddling by offering employment alternatives so they could stop peddling.

This initial experience led to the start of 43 regularisation procedures. After a processing period that varied between 5 and 18 months, 41 of these had a positive outcome, with the people concerned gaining a 12-month employment contract. Subsequent rounds of the Municipal Employment Schemes have retained their aim of including people in an irregular administrative situation to achieve the goal of obtaining a work and residence permit by participating in the programme.

Since 2016, a total of 205 applications from people in an irregular situation have been processed in connection with the Municipal Employment Schemes’ occupational initiative after assessing the candidates’ employability. In other words, out of all these people’s conditions for adjusting to a job, 175 regularisation procedures were finally carried out. Of these, 152 had a positive outcome, with the people concerned obtaining work and residence permits and finally signing an employment contract under this scheme. During this time, other types of people in an irregular situation have also been included following referrals from various municipal services and programmes that cater for these groups, diversifying the types of people in an irregular situation who are offered the chance to participate in the Municipal Employment Schemes as much as possible.

2. Development and assessment of the Municipal Employment Schemes programme as a resource in regularisation processes

The 152 people who have signed an employment contract as a result of participating in the Municipal Employment Schemes programme with the aim of achieving regularisation have been referred from various programmes and services that help people in an irregular administrative situation:

- Irregular Settlements Plan Office (OPAI): This observes settlements in order to design intervention projects. It carries out community work in the environment to facilitate community life and social cohesion.
- Assistance Service for Immigrants, Emigrants and Refugees (SAIER): This service reports and advises on immigration, shelter, emigration and voluntary return for any citizen living in Barcelona.
- Neighbourhood Plan: This is a programme for reversing inequalities between the city’s neighbourhoods.
- Socio-Economic Initiatives (ISE) aimed at achieving social transformation.

- **B-MINCOME project:** This is a pilot project against poverty and inequality in Barcelona's deprived areas.
- **Càritas:** This organisation provides comprehensive care for people and groups, particularly the poorest and most excluded.
- **Agency for a Comprehensive Approach to Sex Work (ABITS):** This agency assists Cis and trans women engaged in prostitution in the city of Barcelona, particularly the most vulnerable ones.
- **Dispositiu Pròxim:** This is a vocational integration programme for immigrants who meet the requirements for regularisation.
- **Làbora-Itinerari G5 programme:** The aim of this programme is to improve employment in people in an irregular situation through care, support and regularisation.

In order to carry out this part of the Municipal Employment Schemes programme for people in an irregular administrative situation, an internal coordination process with the municipal services and programmes that cater for this group has been launched so as to efficiently manage the referral of the applications received. Barcelona Activa's specialist teams assess the employability of candidates referred by the various services, identifying those with the greatest potential to successfully regulate their situation and better adjust to the jobs in the programme, by following the following steps:

- **Referral of applications:** The municipal services that look after people in an irregular administrative situation identify those in the best position and put them forward as candidates by drawing up a technical referral report covering a variety of employment aspects.
- **Selection interviews:** Barcelona Activa's specialist team conducts employment interviews with all the proposed candidates in order to get to know each person and their socio-economic context and situation, professional and language skills, aptitudes and relevant physical factors. This interview enables them to assess the person's employability and helps establish whether they are currently "employable" and, therefore, if their administrative regularisation process has a positive outcome, whether they will be able to perform the tasks involved in the job assigned to them or if, on the contrary, they are currently "unemployable" for the reasons identified (the most common being health reasons and a lack of minimum language skills to communicate).
- **Preliminary contract proposal:** This involves identifying the employment profile and category of each "employable" person using the information obtained in the interview in order to process the preliminary contract, and subsequently formalising the employment commitment between Barcelona Activa and the person if there is a positive outcome with the regularisation procedure.
- **Identification of the work experience project:** Once each person's professional profile and skills have been ascertained, Barcelona Activa's specialist team contacts the municipal collaborators to identify the most suitable projects for the profiles identified.
- **Drawing up of the timetable for the regularisation procedure:** This timetable has to be open and flexible because the pre-established time for these procedures can vary.

People who can regularise their administrative situation through social integration must comply (and prove such compliance) with a number of absolutely essential requirements: having lived in Spain continuously for the last three years; not having a criminal or police record (either in their country of origin or in Spain); having a valid passport; having a full-time job offer with a minimum length of one year under which they are paid the minimum wage; and being familiar with Catalan culture and the official languages (Catalan and Spanish). This is an initial filter to be applied to

candidates put forward by the Municipal Employment Schemes, as it establishes the likelihood of the regularisation process being successful.

The municipal services that assist people in an irregular situation provide them with legal support in the management of all these documents and the processing of the administrative procedure. Once all the necessary documentation has been put together, with a valid passport, the appropriate application form and payment of the fee, it is all submitted to the Immigration Office. The regional government office should then issue a positive or negative decision within a maximum of three months.

Based on our experience with such regularisation processes, we have identified some of the main difficulties faced by the people concerned, which often hinder the processing of their regularisation procedures:

- Difficulties obtaining criminal record certificates from the country of origin. These documents from other countries are subject to certain requirements in order to be considered valid: where applicable, they must be translated into Spanish or the other official language of the territory in which the application is being submitted. In order for the document to be valid for official purposes, the translation must be carried out by a sworn translator. In addition, it must be duly authenticated. The cost of this procedure varies greatly depending on the country of origin: from €6 for a certificate issued in Colombia to €500 for one issued in Cameroon. These tasks have recently been affected by the international state of alert (with the closure of embassies, consulates and diplomatic missions), which has further delayed the regularisation process.
- Payment of fees. The payment of processing fees has posed a major challenge for the programme: participants often lack the financial resources for this expense, which has led to the need to coordinate with their social contacts so they could help with this disbursement.
- Processing time. The social integration-based regularisation procedure suffers from another problem: the time required to obtain the work and residence permit, which takes at least two months and often much longer due to the public administrations' workload. This is a determining factor in the regularisation process, as the companies concerned in these procedures need an accurate forecast of how long the process is likely to take.

Once this procedure has been carried out, and after the necessary time for the relevant administrative procedures to be carried out has passed, the big moment arrives: if the outcome is positive, the person concerned obtains an identity number for foreign nationals (NIE) and the company has one month from the date of the decision to register them with the social security system and inform the Immigration Office. It is from this moment that the person concerned can request an appointment to obtain an identity card for foreign nationals (TIE). Once we have received confirmation of the positive outcome for each candidate, the Municipal Employment Schemes programme specialist team identifies the employment project in which the person concerned will have the best opportunity to develop their professional potential. The day of signing of the contract is very emotional, as the person being employed has achieved the aim of securing a job with an employment contract that will open up many possibilities helping confer dignity on their life.

As mentioned at the start of the article, a total of 152 people have been hired since 2016 in connection with regularisation projects under the Municipal Employment Schemes. The 152 people who have obtained a work and residence permit and secured employment have the following characteristics:

- 65% are men.
- 45% are between 30 and 39 years old.
- 31% completed primary school.
- Over 50% are from African countries.

The following table contains a summary of the data characterising the people who have successfully regularised their administrative situation as a result of the Municipal Employment Schemes' regularisation project.

Table 1. People who have successfully regularised their administrative situation as a result of the Municipal Employment Schemes. 2016

| | Participants | % |
|---|--------------|----|
| Gender | | |
| Men | 99 | 65 |
| Women | 53 | 35 |
| Age | | |
| Under 30 years old | 31 | 20 |
| 30 to 39 years old | 68 | 45 |
| 40 to 55 years old | 50 | 33 |
| > 55 years old | 5 | 2 |
| Level of education | | |
| No education | 22 | 14 |
| Primary education | 47 | 31 |
| Compulsory secondary education | 45 | 3 |
| Post-compulsory secondary education | 25 | 16 |
| University | 13 | 9 |
| People with functional diversity | | |
| With functional diversity | 1 | 1 |
| Without functional diversity | 151 | 99 |
| Nationality | | |
| Spain | 0 | 0 |
| Other EU countries | 1 | 1 |
| Outside the EU | 151 | 99 |

What Barcelona Activa offers are contracts linked to various employment projects that in this case facilitate the administrative regularisation procedures. This is quality employment with a 12-month full-time employment contract for a specific task or service, whose professional category corresponds to the specific contracting table for active employment policies. As of 2021, this salary table provides for a gross salary of between €1,230 and €1,530 depending on the employment category. The table sets out three different employment categories based on the project assigned and the work plan envisaged:

- Assistant category: This group includes jobs requiring basic, but not specialist, knowledge of the project and the tasks to be carried out. The employee receives direct and specific instructions on the tasks to be carried out and has limited initiative and autonomy. Basic skills in the use of tools and machinery are required. Examples include: cleaning assistant, maintenance assistant, forestry assistant or digital documentary assistant.

Table 2. Distribution in relation to the country of origin people who have successfully regularised their administrative situation as a result of the Municipal Employment Schemes. 2016

| Country of origin | Participants | % |
|-----------------------|--------------|------------|
| Senegal | 61 | 40 |
| Morocco | 15 | 10 |
| Nigeria | 13 | 9 |
| Honduras | 9 | 6 |
| Ghana | 7 | 5 |
| Mali | 5 | 3 |
| Gambia | 4 | 3 |
| Cameroon | 3 | 2 |
| Russia | 3 | 2 |
| Ukraine | 3 | 2 |
| Venezuela | 3 | 2 |
| Bolivia | 2 | 1 |
| Brazil | 2 | 1 |
| Colombia | 2 | 1 |
| Ivory Coast | 2 | 1 |
| Ecuador | 2 | 1 |
| Equatorial Guinea | 2 | 1 |
| Pakistan | 2 | 1 |
| El Salvador | 2 | 1 |
| Albania | 1 | 1 |
| Dominican Republic | 1 | 1 |
| Georgia | 1 | 1 |
| Guinea | 1 | 1 |
| Mauritania | 1 | 1 |
| Mexico | 1 | 1 |
| Nepal | 1 | 1 |
| Romania | 1 | 1 |
| Serbia and Montenegro | 1 | 1 |
| Chile | 1 | 1 |
| Total | 152 | 100 |

Source: Own data.

- **Officer category:** This group includes jobs requiring specific skills or professional experience. The employee must have a certain degree of initiative and autonomy. They are also required to be skilled in the use of tools, equipment or machinery based on the project assigned. The tasks assigned may require the employee to be responsible for the work of others. Examples include: maintenance officer, environmental agent officer or forestry officer.
- **Assistant specialist:** This group includes jobs requiring responsibility, a certain degree of autonomy and specialist technical knowledge. The employee receives orders and guidance from a hierarchical superior to perform the tasks. The employee may also have management and supervision responsibilities for staff under their responsibility. Examples include: community service specialist, installation specialist, environmental agent specialist, environmental outreach specialist, tourism and commercial revitalisation specialist, computer application design specialist, IT specialist and digital outreach specialist, and community service agent specialist, etc.

The Municipal Employment Schemes programme aims to improve the employability of the people who take part in it, alternating work experience with skill enhancement activities such as training. In the case of the regularisation project of this programme, this occupational enhancement takes on a

special relevance given that with this recruitment the people affected, in a difficult journey that aims to maintain this regularisation situation in force. For this reason, a number of skill enhancement activities are carried out during the employment contract in the form of training in various areas such as occupational risk prevention, vocational training linked to the employment plan to be deployed in the programme, training in key skills and, finally, training to improve job search tools and strategies.

Throughout the Municipal Employment Schemes programme linked to regularisation processes, the programme's specialist team seriously reinforced the support provided to participants in relation to adjusting to different jobs and work dynamics, with particular focus on knowing their labour rights and duties. They did this after it was identified during follow-up that some people, for example, were going to work when they were ill or had a temperature because they were worried about the consequences of sick leave for their employment, such as dismissal or a reduction in salary. In such cases, the programme's specialist team worked to raise awareness and knowledge of employees' labour rights and duties, as they often did not want to avail themselves of some of their basic labour rights, such as maternity leave, sick leave or the right to annual leave, because most of them did not see annual leave as a mandatory remunerated rest period and were in some cases reluctant to plan holiday periods linked to their employment. Once the meaning of holidays had been internalised as a basic vested labour right, participants told us about their holiday plans, which mostly involved visiting their families in their countries of origin. Most of them had not been back to their own countries since they had first left, as they would have been unable to enter Spain again, and in many cases had not been back for over six years.

People who had participated in the regularisation programme had experienced few labour-related issues and were strongly committed to the programme and their workplace. The assessments made by the people in charge of the municipal projects regarding the attitude, effort and quality of work of the people recruited have been very positive. Participant satisfaction data is available for all the programmes in the Municipal Employment Schemes.

The regularisation projects are extremely highly rated. The aspects most highly rated by the people concerned are: the possibility of regularising their administrative situation; the support provided in the employment scheme; the learning acquired through training; the improvement in the work experience and learning of new trades; a feeling of dignity in relation to the employment contract; and social and labour integration as a result of the programme.

3. Impact: employment programmes as an opportunity for a decent life

In addition to the first impact of taking part in the Municipal Employment Schemes programme for people who successfully regularise their administrative situation through the programme, obtaining a job ensures access to income, which in turn gives them access, for example, to decent housing, health benefits, the ability to bring their families to Barcelona and be reunited with them or the ability to send money to their countries of origin. The medium-term aim of the programme is to enable these people to maintain their regularised situation. In order to achieve this, it is essential that they can secure employment after taking part in the occupation initiative.

With the aim of ascertaining the situation of the people who had taken part in the Municipal Employment Schemes' regularisation programme, we undertook some field work involving contacting these people by telephone to find out their situation after the end of the programme. The aim was to contact the 152 people linked to the regularisation programme since 2016; 107 of these were successfully contacted.

The overall rating of these 107 people regarding their participation in the programme was very positive, as the occupation initiative has opened up new opportunities for them and improved their relationship with the public administration. The financial resources achieved have enabled them to meet their basic needs, and they are pleased with the recognition and positive reinforcement provided by the programme and work experience from the outset. Having a work and residence

permit also gives them greater freedom of movement, including the ability to travel to their countries of origin and visit their families.

Most of the people contacted (over 70%) are working or have found a job after the end of the Municipal Employment Schemes programme. At present, 27 of those contacted are participating in the current occupation programme. They feel optimistic, stating that they are experiencing a significant change in their lives that they believe will have a very positive impact in the future.

Another significant aspect is the impact of the pandemic on their employment prospects, as 11 people have told us that they lost their jobs due to the impact of Covid-19. The pandemic has also affected people who were looking for work, as the digitalisation of services and the remote assistance provided by most organisations have made it difficult for them to use the job search channels available.

Some of the people contacted, however, reported a complex situation after the end of the employment programme. They suddenly found it difficult to find work in the general market, or could only find contracts that were less than a year long, had unstable working conditions, or both. This results in a stressful situation because, in order to renew the initial work permit, they must provide evidence of subsequent employment and social security contribution periods, and they often feel forced to take whatever job they can find. In general, based on the data and comments shared by the participants contacted, we have identified some of the barriers encountered at the end of the programme:

- difficulties using standard job search channels
- difficulties accessing procedures with the Immigration Office and the public administration
- delays and complexity in the procedure for accessing social benefits or other bureaucratic processes.

In many cases, this is compounded by illiteracy, insufficient language skills, limited IT proficiency and high financial hardship. In view of the difficulties and procedural changes in the job market due to the pandemic, we have observed that the people contacted are encountering many difficulties in finding a job that will enable them to renew their work and residence permit as necessary. In fact, a large majority of them stated that they do not know how to find work on the Internet and are open to advice regarding how to find work and the use of new technologies, as they are aware of their need and importance.

Virtually every person we were able to contact has a valid work and residence permit, and only one of them has been unable to successfully renew it due to an insufficient number of days of social security contributions, leading their status to change to one of sudden irregularity. It is worth noting that half the people contacted have encountered some problems renewing their documents, as they are no longer receiving legal support from the services and/or programmes that were previously supporting them, and one of the reasons for these problems is not knowing how to make an appointment for the necessary procedures. Their legal situation is the first obstacle to be resolved, but the complex immigration laws and regulations result in very lengthy bureaucratic procedures and in some migrants living in an irregular situation for years. Although the vast majority of the people interviewed have not been in a situation of administrative irregularity, this is a constant threat that affects every work decision they make.

People who are not working manage to meet their basic needs through public benefits or occasional help from friends or family. In spite of this, almost half the people contacted reported not having a stable home. Most of them live in rented accommodation or share a flat, but very few of them are the named person on the lease. Half the people contacted encounter problems when it comes to signing a lease. One third of the people interviewed asserted that their housing conditions have room for improvement, and the rest were satisfied with their housing situation.

In conclusion, the deployment of the Municipal Employment Schemes programme linked to regularisation processes has had very positive ratings. In the short term, taking part in the programme has enabled participants to regularise their administrative situation, which is a very valuable result in itself. In addition to the regularisation process, taking part in the programme has given participants the possibility of true integration, sharing work experience with different people, increasing their personal autonomy, and acquiring and adjusting to working habits on the one hand; and access to stable income that has helped them cover basic needs such as food, healthcare and housing on the other. Furthermore, the ratings of both participants and the municipal collaborators involved in handling the employment actions have clearly shown a very positive result in which the goals set were achieved.

Despite the complexity of the process and the long way there is still to go to provide more support in these kinds of situations, the programme's medium-term impact on participants is undeniable, as it creates opportunities beyond the strict working environment, because the ability to obtain a work and residence permit also provides access to citizenship, with rights and democratic participation. For most of the people interviewed, work is the main focus of integration. It is an essential part of their lives and the employment situation therefore affects the feeling of integration. We also assess very positively the fact that almost all the participants in the regularisation programme have been able to renew their work and residence permit after taking part in the programme, which further consolidates the initial opportunities it provides.

As expressed by one of the participants, the Municipal Employment Schemes programme is “much more than just a job”.

Useful resources

BARCELONA ACTIVA. *Barcelona Employment Strategy (EOB) 2016-2020*. Barcelona: Barcelona Activa. 2016.

BARCELONA CITY COUNCIL. *City of Barcelona Citizenship and Immigration Plan 2018-2021*. Department of Citizen Rights, Culture, Participation and Transparency Commissioner for Immigration, Interculturality and Diversity. Barcelona: Barcelona City Council, 2018. https://ajuntament.barcelona.cat/novaciutadania/sites/default/files/documents/1_pla_immigracio_i_ciutadania.pdf.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL. (CES). *Informe la inmigración en España: Efectos y oportunidades*. Vol. 2 (2019). <https://www.edisofer.com/inmigracion-en-espa-a-efectos-coleccion-informes-2-2019.html>.

FUNDACIÓN FOESSA. *VIII Informe sobre exclusión y desarrollo social a Cataluña*, 2019. <https://caritas-web.s3.amazonaws.com/main-files/uploads/sites/16/2019/07/Catalu%C3%B1a-VIII-Informe-FOESSA.pdf>.

TAULA DEL TERCER SECTOR SOCIAL DE CATALUNYA. *Debats Catalunya Social. Propostes des del Tercer Sector: Fronteres de paper: la irregularitat administrativa i la invisibilització de les persones*. No. 61 (April 2021). http://www.tercersector.cat/sites/default/files/2021-04/dossier_catalunya_social_fronteres_de_paper_taula_3r_sector_abril_2021.pdf

September 2021

Key words: human rights, equality,
discrimination, racism, xenophobia

The Barcelona Discrimination Observatory: figures, problems and challenges for the city

Iris Aviñoa Ordóñez. Specialist at Barcelona City Council's Human Rights Resource Centre, crdh@bcn.cat, [@BCN_CiutatDrets](https://twitter.com/BCN_CiutatDrets)

For over twenty years, the Office for Non-Discrimination (OND) has been assisting people affected by discriminatory situations, and it spearheads Barcelona City Council's fight against this scourge, which manifests itself in many different ways and for multiple reasons. Since 2017, the City Council and social organisations specialising in this area have joined forces with the Discrimination Victims Assistance Service (SAVD in Catalan) in the Board of Organisations, which has grown every year, with the current participation of 22 city social organisations and the OND. The Barcelona Discrimination Observatory is the result of this joint work. It aims to compile data on discriminatory situations in the city, showcasing and denouncing the problems that are concealed behind each situation, which, far from being isolated cases, respond to structural causes, where discrimination is only the tip of the iceberg. This article analyses some of the main data compiled in the 2020 Barcelona Discrimination Observatory report, and focuses specifically on instances of racist and xenophobic discrimination, which are the main motives for discrimination in the cases compiled by the OND and the social organisations.

1. Combating discrimination in Barcelona

Discrimination is expressed in numerous ways. It can range from a look or a decision not to sit next to someone in public transport to a physical assault, and may also take the form of insults, threats, denying someone a job, not letting someone enter an establishment or putting a person or group at a disadvantage owing to one or more personal characteristic, such as skin colour, ethnic or national origin, gender, sexual orientation or gender expression, health, age, spoken language, ideas or beliefs, disability or socio-economic position, without any type of legitimate justification.

The concept of equality appears as one of the key elements in the preamble to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, proclaimed in 1948 by the newly created United Nations. In this context, the concept of equality is therefore closely linked to the universality of human rights, i.e. that everyone has the same rights, simply because they are human beings. Equality must therefore be interpreted as a cross-cutting principle that has to pervade the enjoyment of all human rights, thereby constituting not a right in itself but a behavioural obligation. Directly linked to the principle of equality is the right to non-discrimination. This is a strengthened guarantee of the principle of equality which, above all, is aimed at protecting individuals and groups that have historically been excluded from the protection of their rights and freedoms.

Barcelona has had an Office for Non-Discrimination (OND) for more than twenty years, as well as a wide variety of social organisations working to provide support for the most vulnerable groups. Since 2017, the City Council and many of those social organisations have joined forces with the Discrimination Victims Assistance Service (SAVD in Catalan) in the Board of Organisations, which has grown every year, with the current participation of 22 city social organisations and the OND (Table 1). This is a working space where methodologies and knowledge are shared and where collaboration is encouraged, with the ultimate objective of offering the best possible assistance to people affected by discrimination.

Table 1. Assistance and response from the SAVD Board of Organisations concerning situations of discrimination

| Entidades | Support and assistance | | | | | | | | | Report | |
|--|------------------------|--------------|-------------------|----------------|----------|----------------|----------------|-----------|---------------------------------------|----------------|----------|
| | Psychological | Psychosocial | Socio-educational | Legal guidance | Advocacy | Intermediation | Reconciliation | Mediation | Referral to a specialist organisation | Administrative | Criminal |
| OND (Office for Non-Discrimination) | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | |
| ACATHI | * | * | * | | * | | | | * | | |
| ACDDH | | | | * | * | | | | * | * | * |
| BAYT-AL-THAQFA | * | * | | * | * | * | | * | * | | |
| CEPAIM | | | * | * | * | | | * | * | * | |
| BARCELONA YOUTH COUNCIL | | | | | * | | | | | | |
| CREACIÓ POSITIVA | | | | | * | | | | | | |
| DINCAT | | * | * | * | * | | | | | | |
| ECOM FEDERATION | | * | | * | * | * | | | * | * | |
| EXIL | * | * | * | | | | | | * | | |
| VEUS FEDERATION | | * | | | * | | | | | | |
| CATALAN MENTAL HEALTH FEDERATION | | * | | * | * | | | | * | | |
| FIL A L'AGULLA | * | | * | | * | | | | * | | |
| SECRETARIAT GITANO FOUNDATION | | * | * | * | * | | * | | * | | |
| GAIS POSITIUS | * | * | | * | | | | | * | * | |
| IRÍDIA | | * | | * | * | | | | * | | * |
| CATALAN ISLAMOPHOBIA OBSERVATORY – ODIC - SAFI | | | * | * | * | | | | * | * | |
| OBSERVATORY AGAINST HOMOPHOBIA | * | * | | * | * | * | | | * | * | * |
| PLATFORM FOR THE LANGUAGE | * | * | | * | * | * | | * | * | * | * |
| UNION OF TENANTS | | * | * | * | * | | | | * | | |
| SOS RACISME | | * | | * | * | * | | | | * | * |
| UNIÓN ROMANÍ | | * | | * | * | | | | | | |
| XAPSL | * | * | * | * | * | | | * | * | * | * |

Source: 2020 Barcelona Discrimination Observatory Report.

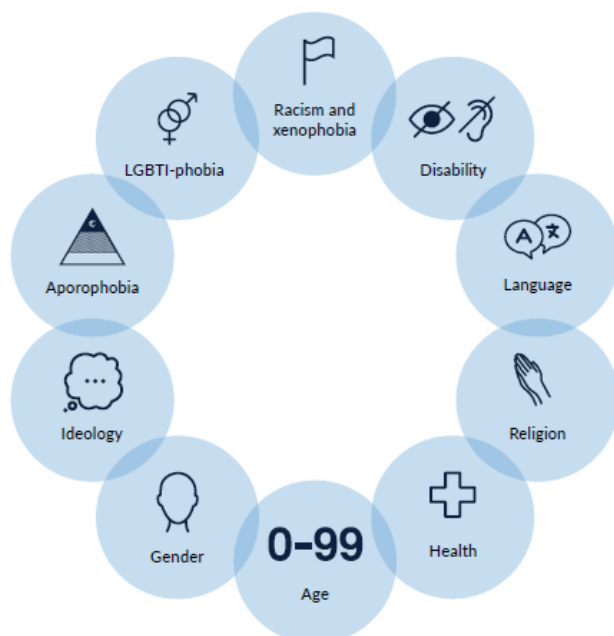
Another essential goal is to raise awareness about the types of discrimination that occur in the city and to improve data gathering, in order to design strategies that go to the root of the problem. This is why the Barcelona Discrimination Observatory was created. It has been publishing an annual report since 2018, containing the work, data and reflections of the OND and the Board of Organisations³².

The report combines qualitative and quantitative analysis, organised around seven *questions*: 1) *Who is discriminated against?* 2) *Who does this?* 3) *Where does this discrimination occur?* 4) For

32. You can view the Barcelona Discrimination Observatory's reports at the following link:
<https://ajuntament.barcelona.cat/oficina-no-discriminacio/ca/observatori-discriminacions>

what reason? 5) What rights are violated? 6) How is this discrimination expressed? 7) What is the response of the OND and the specialist organisations to discrimination, and what results are obtained through these actions. The answers that we obtain to these questions allow us to showcase and analyse the causes that are concealed behind cases of discrimination in the city, which are only the tip of the iceberg. In most cases, discrimination is linked to profound, structural problems, such as racism and xenophobia, LGBTI-phobia and gender discrimination.

Diagram 1. Areas of discrimination



Source: 2020 Barcelona Discrimination Observatory Report.

With regard to the question “What are the reasons for discrimination in Barcelona?”, the Observatory works around ten main discrimination types, which are based on categories that are especially protected in terms of discrimination, established in various international, regional, national and local legal instruments, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the European Human Rights Convention, the European Charter for the Safeguarding of Human Rights in the City, the Spanish Constitution and Barcelona's Municipal Charter, among others (Diagram 1).

2. Discrimination in figures

Sixteen per cent of Barcelona residents have experienced a discriminatory situation in their neighbourhood. That is the conclusion of the 2020 Barcelona Metropolitan Area Coexistence and Neighbourhood Relations Survey (ECAMB)³³, which shows the perceptions and experiences of discrimination in the city's neighbourhoods, as a result of interviews with 5,437 people in the Barcelona Metropolitan Area, 4,043 of them in the city of Barcelona, carried out from 29 October to 23 December 2020.

However, if we look at the discrimination cases reported to the OND or to a member organisation of the SAVD Board, the figures are much lower: in 2020, there were 436 reported discriminatory situations, which is higher than the figure for 2019, when 411 cases were recorded, and much higher than in 2018, when 265 discriminatory situations were registered. This increase is largely due to the Board's progressive expansion (formed by 13 organisations in 2018, 18 in 2019 and currently 22) and consequently to its expanded radius of action for recording discriminatory situations. In spite of the gradual increase in recorded situations, and as is made clear by the

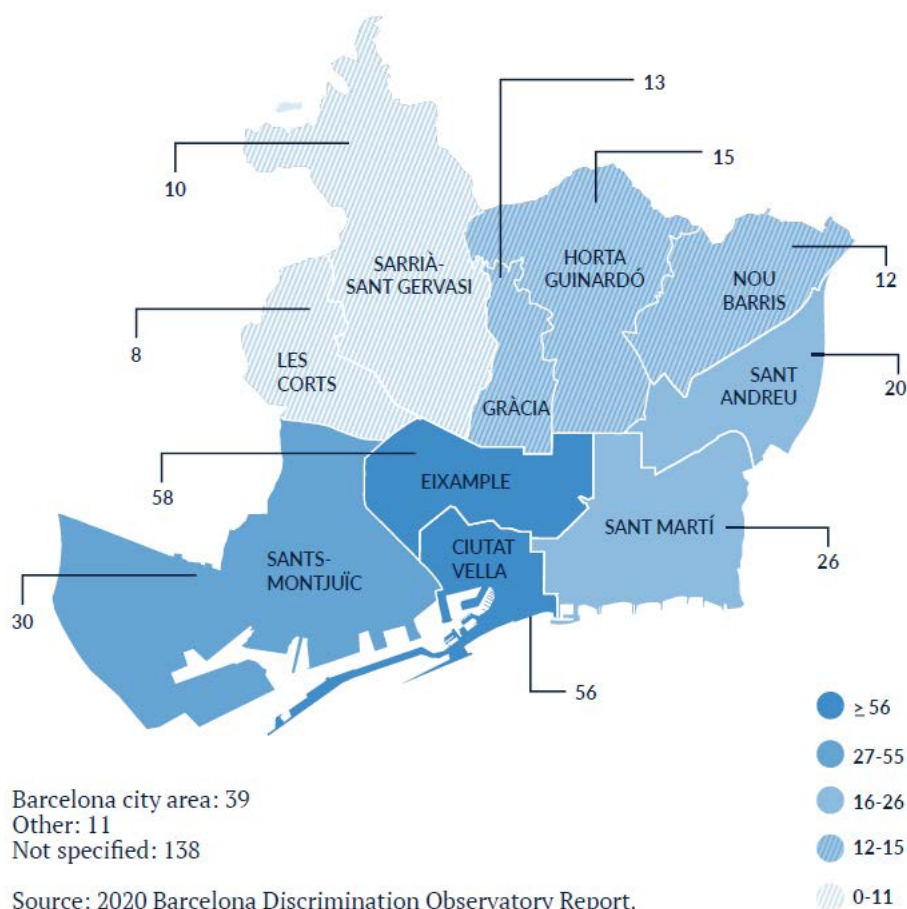
33. You can see the survey results at the following link:

https://iermb.uab.cat/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/ECAMB-2020_Primeres-dades-AMB.pdf.

comparison with the indicator constructed from the survey data, we are clearly dealing with a phenomenon of under-reporting.

The situations compiled in 2020 by the Board of Organisations make it possible to extract some conclusions and analyse some trends. If we look at the location of the discrimination cases (Figure 1), we see that most discrimination was detected in the Eixample, with 58 cases, closely followed by Ciutat Vella, with 56, and then Sants-Montjuïc (30) and Sant Martí (26). These data not only show us where most discrimination cases may be occurring, but also in which districts we need to improve the detection and recording of cases.

Figure 1. Discrimination by district



If we analyse the area where most discrimination cases take place in more detail (Table 2), we see that in public areas they are predominantly in the city's streets, parks, squares or on the beaches, with 109 cases, followed by public transport, with 31.

In private areas, the spaces with most discrimination cases are flats and communities of neighbours, rising from 42 cases in 2019 to 70 in 2020, closely linked to the context of the pandemic and the mobility restrictions experienced throughout 2020; the opposite trend is observed in bars and restaurants, dropping from 34 to 13 cases last year.

Table 2. Where discrimination occurs

| | Nº. |
|--|------------|
| Public areas | 197 |
| Streets, parks, beaches, squares | 109 |
| Public facilities | 84 |
| Transport stations or means of transport | 31 |
| Hospitals | 13 |
| Citizen help and information offices and courts | 12 |
| Schools | 9 |
| Police premises | 4 |
| Hostels or shelters | 3 |
| Sport, cultural and social centres | 1 |
| Libraries, museums and exhibition venues | 1 |
| Other | 10 |
| Online and telephone services | 3 |
| Not specified | 1 |
| Private Spaces | 211 |
| Private facilities with public access | 65 |
| Shops | 21 |
| Restaurants and bars | 13 |
| Market | 7 |
| Assistance and service offices | 6 |
| Hotels, hostels and shelters | 2 |
| Transport stations | 2 |
| Other | 14 |
| Private facilities where access is subject to prerequisites | 129 |
| Houses, flats and other dwellings | 70 |
| Companies and organisations | 29 |
| Schools, hospitals and sports centres | 12 |
| The media | 5 |
| Other | 3 |
| Not specified | 10 |
| Online and telephone services | 14 |
| Not specified | 3 |
| Other | 17 |
| Not specified | 11 |

Source: 2020 Barcelona Discrimination Observatory Report.

The data also provides information about who is discriminating in Barcelona (Table 3).

In most cases these are private individuals, with 185 cases in 2020, closely followed by discrimination committed in private organisations or companies, with a total of 130.

A specially relevant datum in this area is the one referring to discrimination exercised by public stakeholders, with a total of 128 cases, including those committed by staff from the various public administrations (77) and police forces (51) present in Barcelona.

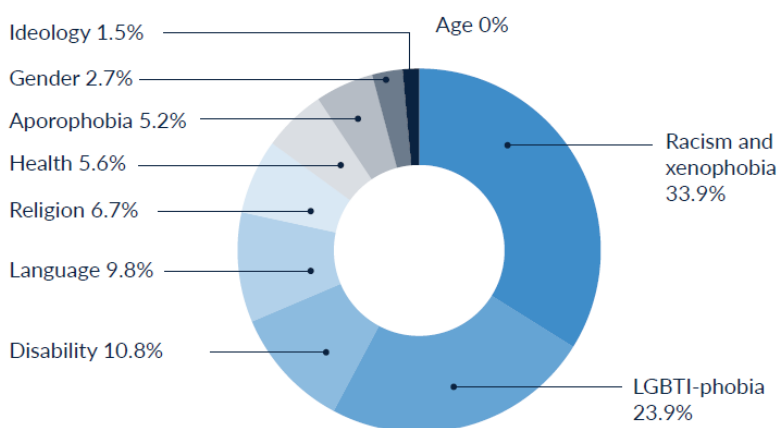
Table 3. Discriminators

| Discriminators | Nº. | % |
|--|------------------------|--------------|
| Individuals | 185 | 41.6 |
| Private organisations/companies | 130 | 29.2 |
| Employee | 49 | 37.7 |
| Private security | 19 | 14.6 |
| Organisations/associations | 16 | 12.3 |
| Management staff | 13 | 10 |
| Organised group | 5 | 3.9 |
| Not specified | 28 | 21.5 |
| Public administration | 77 | 17.3 |
| Local | 38 | 49.4 |
| Regional | 21 | 27.3 |
| National | 9 | 11.7 |
| Not specified | 9 | 11.7 |
| Police forces | 51 | 11.5 |
| Local | 25 | 49 |
| Regional | 21 | 41.2 |
| National | 3 | 5.9 |
| Not specified | 2 | 3.9 |
| Not specified | 2 | 0.5 |
| Total | 445¹ | 100.0 |

Source: 2020 Barcelona Discrimination Observatory Report.

1. In this case, the total number of discriminators does not coincide with the total number of discriminatory situations reported in 2020 (436), because in some cases there could be more than one discriminator.

One of the main objectives for the Observatory's data collection is to analyse the structural causes behind the cases of discrimination, and in this regard, it is vital to understand the motives for this discrimination (Graph 1).

Graph 1. Motives for discrimination

Source: 2020 Barcelona Discrimination Observatory Report.

The data collected in 2020 show that racism and xenophobia continue to be the main causes of discrimination among the cases recorded by the OND and the SAVD Board of Organisations, with 34%; as in 2018 and 2019, the second cause is LGBTI-phobia, which accounts for 24% of the total, followed by discrimination motivated by disabilities, which represents 11% of the cases, and linguistic causes, at 10%.

Last year, the number of cases of discrimination for religious motives accounted for nearly 7%, followed by discrimination for motives of health, which once again accounted for 6% of all cases, as in 2019. In 2020, there were fewer recorded cases of aporophobia (5%), but as with other groups, the reason has more to do with under-reporting and the impacts associated with the pandemic than with a decrease in discrimination.

In most situations, discrimination was expressed through differential treatment, accounting for 52.3% of all the cases recorded in 2020 (Table 4). Some type of assault occurred in 38.7% (160 cases), of which 24.9% were verbal and 13.8% physical. Despite being lower in percentage, there were also discriminatory situations involving hate speech, in 5.6% of cases, and acts of vandalism, in 1.2% of cases.

The 160 situations where discrimination was expressed through verbal assault or physical violence are especially worrying. As in 2019, the group most affected by physical assaults was the LGBTI group, with 27 reported assaults, followed by assaults motivated by racism and xenophobia, with 19. If we crosscheck the data from the cases of violations of physical integrity with that of the discriminator (Graph 2), we can see that most assaults were perpetrated by individuals, accounting for 79% of the cases (compared to 60% in the situations recorded in 2019).

Table 4. Types of direct discrimination

| Discriminatory action | Nº. | % |
|--------------------------------|------------|--------------|
| Differential treatment | 216 | 52.3 |
| Verbal assaults | 103 | 24.9 |
| Physical assaults | 57 | 13.8 |
| Discriminatory and hate speech | 23 | 5.6 |
| Vandalism | 5 | 1.2 |
| Not specified | 9 | 2.2 |
| Total | 413 | 100.0 |

Source: 2020 Barcelona Discrimination Observatory Report.

3. Racism and xenophobia, the main motive for discrimination in Barcelona

By racism-motivated discrimination, we mean any discrimination based on a belief or attitude that one group is naturally superior to another, either individually or institutionally. In this case, the group is identified by skin colour or a fictitious attribution to a supposed race. In regard to discrimination expressed through the phenomenon of xenophobia, we would describe it as discrimination that occurs due to an irrational fear or rejection of people from other countries or ethnicities. Racism and xenophobia are usually closely connected to socio-economic factors, as those who are rejected are usually people with a low level of financial resources.

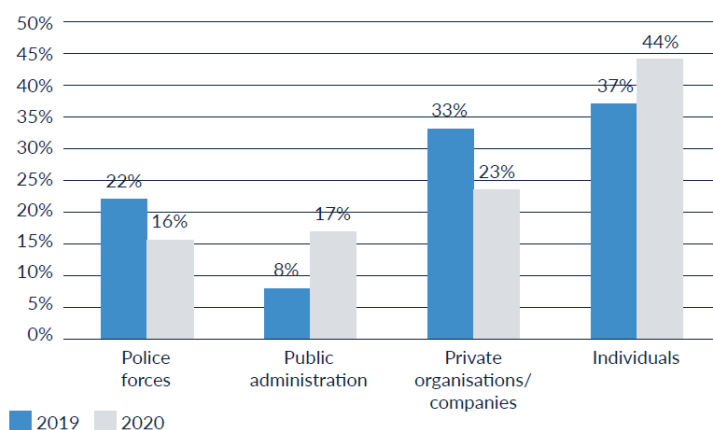
In this regard, the Observatory analyses discrimination caused by racism and xenophobia in a broad sense, which affects people of diverse national origins, but also people who were born in Barcelona, who are discriminated against due to being racialised, or belonging to, or being associated with, a certain ethnicity or religion. For example, this includes the phenomena of anti-Roma and anti-Islamic racism.

Despite the state of emergency, the mobility restrictions and the lockdown periods imposed in 2020, along with the associated difficulties for reporting discrimination, the number of racism and xenophobia cases recorded by the OND and organisations working in this area rose in 2020 (163), compared to numbers registered in the previous year (148).

If we look at the comparison between who discriminated because of racist or xenophobic motives in 2019 and 2020, as shown in Graph 2, we see a 7% rise in the number of individual cases and a 10% drop in the number of private organisations and companies, the same as for the overall

figures for discriminators. Even so, we find the most pronounced trend in cases committed by public administrations, which accounted for 18% in 2018, dropped to 8% in 2019 and went back up to 17% in 2020. These cases of discrimination were predominantly committed by public-transport employees. With regard to the places where these situations occur, the figures show a drop in the number of discrimination cases in public places, from 26% to 20%, although the city's streets, parks, squares and beaches are still one of the key areas for this type of discrimination, with 32 cases. There is a slight increase in the situations occurring in flats and communities of neighbours, rising from 20 in 2019 to 27 in 2020.

Graph 2. Who discriminated due to racist or xenophobic motives.
Evolution 2019-2020



Source: 2020 Barcelona Discrimination Observatory Report.

4. The key factor could be a name: discrimination in access to housing

Year after year, housing is one of the main focal points for discrimination, affecting most of the discrimination areas. In 2020, in the context of the pandemic, mobility restrictions and lockdowns, this area acquired special relevance. In addition to the cases of discrimination occurring in flats and communities of neighbours, there were also discriminatory situations relating to the process of renting or purchasing a dwelling. Aware of the lack of visibility associated with these situations, in 2020 Barcelona City Council carried out an experiment on discrimination in access to housing, with the aim of determining the scope of discrimination due to racist or xenophobic motives.

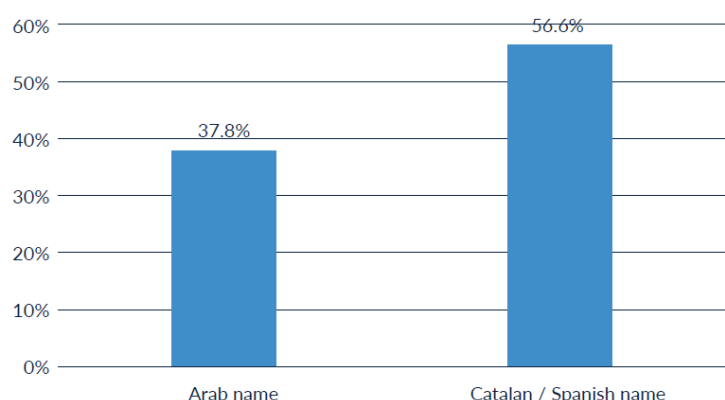
“The key factor could be a name. Detecting proof of discrimination in access to the rental-housing market in Barcelona”³⁴ contains the results of the study, which were obtained from 1,000 adverts in Barcelona's real estate portals, 500 to check if there was discrimination due to origin and 500 concerning the sexual orientation of the people applying to rent a flat. The adverts contained two practically identical messages, where the main difference was the names of the people (in some cases combining names identified with foreigners and local people, and in others with heterosexual and homosexual couples).

While the results obtained in the discrimination cases towards homosexual couples are not significant, the data do confirm the existence of discrimination towards people who are perceived as foreigners and who are trying to gain access to a rental flat in Barcelona. The report confirms that out of every 10 applications, those sent by couples with typical Catalan or Spanish names received 6 responses, whereas those with Arab names received 4, which is 18.8% fewer. Couples with Arab names were also offered fewer visits to properties and, in such cases, discrimination was at 7.6%, given that 17.4% of couples with local names received an immediate invitation to view a property, whereas only 9.8% of couples with Arab names were invited.

34. You can view the complete study at the following link:

https://ajuntament.barcelona.cat/dretsdiversitat/sites/default/files/LA_CLAU_POT_SER_UN_NOM.pdf.

Graph 3. Response rate according to origins



Source: Consultoria Social Broll.

Another key factor shown in the study is the difference in rental prices which people with names perceived as foreign have access to. The average monthly rental price quoted in responses obtained by local couples was €1,276, compared to €1,348 for couples with Arab names, a monthly difference of €108.30. In other words, the more expensive the rental price, the more possibilities couples perceived as foreigners have in obtaining an initial response.

5. Evaluation and future challenges

Despite the efforts being made by the Observatory to improve the collection of data on discriminatory situations in the city, it is clear that under-reporting is still a cross-cutting problem that makes the phenomenon of discrimination in Barcelona less visible. There are various causes: the normalisation of certain discriminatory behaviour towards certain people or groups, people not knowing what to do when they suffer discrimination, the difficulty in proving discrimination when it is one person's word against another's, or fear of the consequences that reporting some discriminatory situations may bring, such as those that are expressed with higher levels of violence.

In the context of the current pandemic, there are also other causes. Some cases of discrimination were experienced as normal within the prevailing situation of uncertainty and widespread fear, being accepted as normal and necessary measures. In some cases, restrictions to mobility, the provision of services and difficulties in accessing digital tools, in the context of the global virtualisation of many assistance services, have made it difficult for victims to contact municipal or social services to report a discriminatory situation they experienced, while also undermining their confidence and making it difficult to offer victims a safe space where they can explain the situation they experienced.

However, 2020 also brought some major advances in the fight against discrimination. A key factor was the approval of Act 19/2020, of 30 December, on equal treatment and non-discrimination, which includes a series of improvements in key areas, such as the rights of victims in disciplinary procedures, the disciplinary jurisdiction of local bodies and the inclusion of aporophobia as a motive for discrimination. It also creates various instruments for protecting and promoting equal treatment and non-discrimination. In that regard, one key challenge for 2021 will be the implementation and regulation of the above-mentioned Act and its application in Barcelona, maintaining the joint work among administrations and social organisations, which have been fighting against discrimination in the city for over two decades.

Bibliography

BARCELONA CITY COUNCIL, DIRECTORATE FOR CITIZEN RIGHTS SERVICES. *2020 Barcelona Discrimination Observatory Report*. Barcelona: Barcelona City Council, 2021.

BARCELONA CITY COUNCIL, DIRECTORATE FOR CITIZEN RIGHTS SERVICES. “La clau pot ser un nom. Detecció d’evidències de discriminació en l’accés al mercat de lloguer d’habitatge a Barcelona”. [The key can be a name. Detecting evidence of discrimination in access to the rental housing market in Barcelona]. Barcelona: Barcelona City Council. https://ajuntament.barcelona.cat/dretsidiversitat/sites/default/files/LA_CLAU_POT_SER_UN_NOM.pdf [Consulted: 4 June 2021]

BARCELONA INSTITUTE OF REGIONAL AND METROPOLITAN Studies. “Enquesta de relacions veïnals i convivència (ECAMB), 2020. Primers resultats”. [Survey on resident relations and community life (ECAMB), 2020. First results]. Bellaterra: IERMB, 2021. https://iermb.uab.cat/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/ECAMB-2020_Primeres-dades-AMB.pdf [Consulta: 1 June 2021]

September 2021

Key words: Rumour, prejudice, discrimination, diversity, interculturality, policy

Anti-rumour strategy: Taking stock of a 10-year-old policy conceived in Barcelona

Joint authorship by the Department of Interculturality and Religious Pluralism for the Area for Culture, Education, Science and Community

ipr@bcn.cat

The anti-rumour policy was born out of the combination of two factors. The need to respond to ongoing demands, resulting from associationism, to refute rumours involving immigrant communities, and the identification during the drafting of the Interculturality Plan (2009-10) that rumours and prejudices were one of the main factors that hindered coexistence in diversity and could generate situations of discrimination or racism. The anti-rumour policy was drafted in 2010 as a city strategy with an emphasis placed on training, awareness and communication that has evolved over its ten years in operation. This new policy was very well received by city residents, organisations and other administrations which have approached the City Council to learn about the experience. Many cities have adapted it to stop rumours, understanding that these are a good gateway to address deeper and more complex issues. Finally, the emergence of a mainstream xenophobic and racist discourse, pervasive in the media, social networks and neighbourhoods, made us rethink the way we work on the policy, going far beyond rumours.

1. The creation of the anti-rumour policy

Around 2008, at the beginning of the economic crisis, which led to a surge in the unemployment rate, cuts in public services and an increase in evictions in the city, a rise in the number of queries was observed by people working for organisations to those in charge of immigration at the municipal level about rumours regarding alleged benefits being enjoyed by migrants. Most of the queries raised always concerned groups of migrants and were baseless. They referred to alleged tax benefits, affirmative action in social assistance, food subsidies, trade, benefits in access to social housing, and so on.

These queries tended to come from members of residents' associations from different neighbourhoods of Barcelona who expressed serious concerns about the comments that even the members of their own associations expressed in public and were completely convinced that what they were saying was true. The insistence of the associations, the repetition of the queries and, at the same time, the lack of available information to be able to remove any doubt about the rumours led municipal officials to identify this issue as a problem that needed to be addressed. As a result of this, objective statistical data began to be collected and explanatory materials were developed to refute the information that was being disseminated as true.

The City Council tried to find out if there were any European experiences in combating rumours against the immigrant population, but none could be found. Exchanges with other European cities within the Eurocities network identified rumours as a serious problem in many European cities, but said there were no initiatives or policies to reverse the problem. The only experiences detected at the international level had to do with large and expensive communication campaigns in the mainstream media to give a positive image of immigration which had often had counter-productive results.

Under the political leadership of the Immigration Commissioner, Daniel de Torres, in 2009 it was decided to begin the participatory process that ended with the drafting of the 'Barcelona Interculturality Plan' (2010)³⁵. For the drafting of the Plan, it was considered convenient to carry out an intense participatory process. This included the participants being asked about the factors that hinder coexistence between the residents of Barcelona from diverse cultural origins. The answers obtained effectively pointed to two major issues: On the one hand, they highlighted the inequalities of immigrants in Barcelona and, in particular, the situation of people in an irregular situation. On the other hand, the other factor that was mostly highlighted was that a huge number of people were prejudiced, which meant that the relationship between people from different backgrounds was negatively conditioned. The conclusion was that prejudice against migrants acted as a mental barrier that hindered relationships and coexistence and could lead to situations of discrimination and/or racism when trying to access work, education and so on. In fact, the aim of working on rumours regarding migrants and/or racialised people had a specific, preventive slant: to prevent situations of discrimination and/or racism.

Seeing the lack of similar municipal policies in Europe and determining the clear need for them, municipal officials decided to include a specific section on this issue in the Interculturality Plan and initiate specific actions to address the problem and its complexity; over time, these actions became the anti-rumour policy.

Another factor that influenced the formulation of the policy were the high levels of media interest generated. During the public presentation of the Interculturality Plan in 2010 by Mayor Jordi Hereu, the measure regarding the creation of anti-rumour officer raised a lot of interest amongst those present from the press, even though the policy had not yet begun to be developed and it was only a potential initiative for the future. For this reason, work was begun at pace on the policy, and always under the umbrella of the Interculturality Plan, in the form of a pilot training scheme for people who wanted to fight rumours, stereotypes and discrimination.

Amongst the first trainers was the anthropologist Lola López, director of the Centre for African Studies, who later became the Commissioner for Immigration, Interculturality and Diversity in 2015. Initially, there was a collaboration with the Xixa Teatre, a social theatre organisation, which organised a role play practical module to train anti-rumour officers. The success seen was immediate and the Immigration Directorate was overwhelmed by the avalanche of requests for training and the media attention generated.

In 2011, with the change of municipal government, the new Commissioner for Immigration and Interculturality, Miquel Esteve, took the decision to create the Barcelona Interculturality Programme (PROGBI) and facilitated the creation of a permanent team including specific professionals dedicated to managing the Anti-rumour Strategy and Training. This helped to consolidate the policy and extension of the framework: a more region-wide vision, the improvement of training content and the creation of a catalogue of anti-rumour activities available to organisations and facilities around the city. Likewise, there was also a clear commitment to consolidating the Barcelona Anti-Rumour Network as a model of participation and joint leadership with the Administration.

35. Accessible at: <https://bcnroc.ajuntament.barcelona.cat/jspui/bitstream/11703/85038/1/4052.pdf>.

2. What is hidden beneath rumours, stereotypes and prejudices?

According to the American constitutionalist, Cass R. Sunstein, cited in the 'Practical Guide for Anti-Rumour Officers', rumours are 'statements about people, groups and events that are passed from one person to another without any veracity being demonstrated, that have credibility not because there is direct evidence to back them up but because many people believe them' (Barcelona City Council, 2011: 31).

Another major concept highlighted in the same guide is 'information cascades', i.e. when people believe a rumour from the moment that a certain amount of people appear to believe the rumour. Staying with the same guide, Gordon Allport defines as prejudice 'the hostile and suspicious attitude towards someone belonging to a group, simply because they belong to that group' (Barcelona City Council, 2011: 17). Finally, according to David Mayers, stereotypes would be 'the widespread attribution of certain characteristics of some members of a group as a whole. Qualities are attributed to a person as a member of a group and they are not judged as an individual' (ibíd.).

It is important, however, to distinguish between people who help to propagate rumours through a lack of knowledge and who repeat them subject to information cascades, and those people who intentionally propagate rumours being quite aware that they are false. In this second situation, we would be speaking, in the most current language, about fake news, i.e. the fabrication of false information.

Choosing the figure of the rumour as an excuse, and also as a catalyst for a communication and awareness-raising strategy, such as the BCN Anti-Rumour Strategy, was initially a success at that time for two main reasons:

- Ease of conceptual explanation: from a very simple theoretical diagram explaining the relationship between rumours, stereotypes, prejudices and discrimination.
- A simple communication strategy: it made it easier to reach diverse audiences from face-to-face interactions, from dialogue, and served as a gateway mainly to work more regionally, where people's reality and real concerns were seen. This made it possible to speak openly about racism through the generation of spaces of trust and security, and to promote actions from an intercultural perspective taking into account the particularities of each territory.

With these years of internal work and in partnership with different actors, and especially with the BCN Anti-Rumour Network, it was concluded that the anti-rumour recipe 'ignorance + stereotype + prejudice = discrimination' does not give an explanation of all the complexity that there is or that hides rumours. Rumours are the tip of the iceberg of a whole web that generates and perpetuates discrimination and on which many dimensions intervene and intersect: individual, collective and structural. In this sense, the question arises of how we can explain the complexity of the machinery that generates discriminatory rumours or comments about certain groups and/or communities from diverse cultural origins. These types of rumours are not innocent, have a very deep and complex background and, at the same time, are based on the discrimination that has its roots in the construction of the ideas created in relation 'to the other' that it is not part of 'us'.

The strength of anti-rumour policy is precisely its ability to transform, adapt to the current contingency, build together with others and, therefore, be self-analytical over its actions. All this has meant that today it remains an active policy which is well-enforced and necessary. For a number of years, the strategy of the far right and European and US populism have pointed clearly to intentionally spreading rumours, particularly in an attempt to link immigration with insecurity. This strategy was not so present 10 years ago in the mainstream press; however, it has been increasingly gaining traction, and has become more present to the extent where some extreme right parties have gained institutional representation.

Additionally, the increase in xenophobic content based on prejudice and with clear partisan intentions has mainly seen an increase on social networks, where, unfortunately, on a mass scale, people form their opinion on the world around them.

Due to the shifting reality, local and international political contexts, anti-rumour political strategy has gone beyond what was initially planned for it. This can be seen in the following changes and transformations:

1. From the outset, the Anti-Rumour Training has been reformulating in order to collect requests from participants and respond to the social context at any time.
2. Anti-rumour initiatives are not only based on migration, but also seek to deal with diversity from a broad perspective, such as speaking about anti-Gypsyism, Islamophobia and generating actions and content regarding these topics.
3. The increased production of a diverse range of educational and through-provoking materials.
4. The creation of a catalogue of anti-rumour activities with a range of educational and awareness-raising proposals.

3. The target audience of anti-rumour policies

At the social, political and economic point in time in which this anti-rumour policy emerged, the population as a whole could be divided, greatly simplified, into three main groups according to their attitude towards immigration and cultural and religious diversity: a small group of favourable people who saw immigration as an asset and therefore did not consider it problematic; A second group, also a minority, which was very opposed to diversity and immigration and which acted in a discriminatory way, which we could say was made up of consciously racist people, and, finally, a third group, formed by a large proportion of citizens who had an ambiguous position on diversity and immigration.

These were people who did not have a position that was either favourable or contrary to diversity and who certainly did not have much information about it. This is the group of people to whom the strategy was addressed and which was called the 'ambivalent majority'. Their perception of immigration and diversity was key, as they could be easily influenced by rumours and cause a majority of the population to lean towards hostile attitudes, which would have really complicated intercultural coexistence in Barcelona.

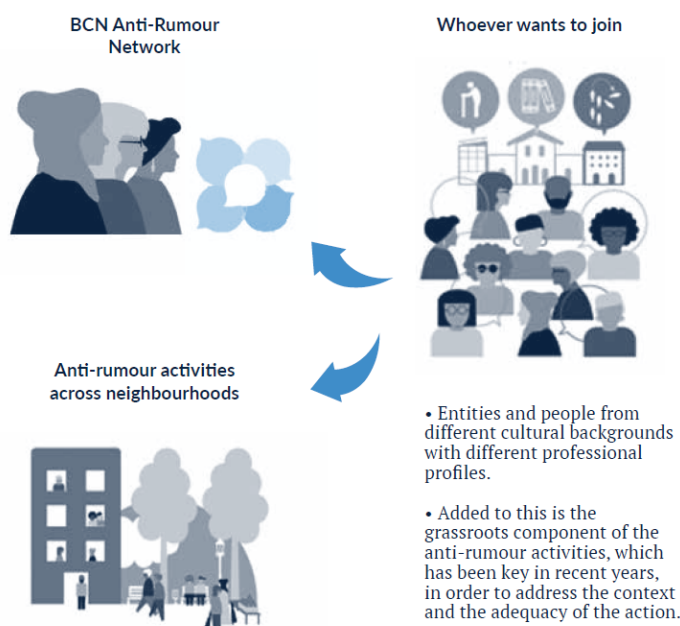
Diagram 1. Initial target audience for the anti-rumour strategy.



Source: Original.

Therefore, the initial target audience for the policy was neither the activists who saw diversity as an asset, nor those consciously racist people. For the latter minority of the population, anti-discrimination legislation and the firmness of anti-racist laws and policies had to be asserted by denouncing their attitudes.

Diagram 2. Current target audience of the anti-rumour strategy:



Source: BCN Interculturality Plan. Barcelona City Council, 2010.

3.1. First phase of the BCN Anti-Rumour Strategy

Based on the collaborative work carried out with different city actors, including organisations from various fields, facilities and municipal services, it was considered that this policy did not take into account the opinions of the people who suffered or to whom these discriminatory rumours were targeted. Therefore, the strategy aimed to expand this target audience, seeking to incorporate these opinions and begin to create new tools, fostering spaces for participation where this cultural diversity, which goes far beyond migration, could be represented and heard. This is one of the main lessons from this journey towards a fairer and more egalitarian society.

On the other hand, anti-rumour policy does rely on the mobilised and aware group that considers immigration and cultural diversity a learning opportunity to help carry out the strategy, as it appeals to this group to seek complicities, for example, by training volunteers from this group as anti-rumour officers who are also the main group of people who are part of the associative network that belongs to the Network of Anti-Rumour Organisations.

Infographic 1. 'Stopping rumours'. Barcelona, 2018



Source: Anti-Rumour Strategy. City of Barcelona, 2018.

As a result of this work and collaboration and seeing that a revision and historical explanation of this phenomenon is also needed, 'Stopping rumours' was created – an infographic that explains why and where the rumours come from, and what their consequences on the material, social and relational life of people are.

4. Who implements the anti-rumour policy?

The Anti-Rumour Policy is endowed with a technical body to be implemented and is carried out under the umbrella of the Anti-Rumour Strategy, which brings together the four main areas of work: Participation, Training, Awareness and Communication.

The first area is Participation, which is carried out through a network of dedicated bodies that are part of the Barcelona Anti-Rumour Network. The Anti-Rumour Network also facilitates the possibility of participating in individually. The idea is the membership of all types of local associations, but also of generalist associations of all kinds (not only in the field of reception of immigrants, but educational, trade, health, etc.). There are currently 443 members and 611 individuals. The member bodies of the network can be consulted on the Network's interactive map³⁶.

From the outset, and taking advantage of the motivation of the associations, this association network was set up. The associations were the first to ask the City Council for information materials and training. But it was also possible for individuals to take part. Rumours are spread by word of mouth. To attack them you have to act the same way, individually, with person-to-person actions, rather than with media campaigns. The associations were also the ones that began to devise activities of all kinds to combat rumours, framed within the first Action Plan of the BCN Anti-Rumour Network.

The Network already has two action plans that mark its progression taking into account the constantly-changing context. Throughout 2021, the assessment of the current plan and the creation of the new Action Plan will begin. The Network is currently organised into topic-based working groups (regional revitalisation, training and communication) and has the Strategy Committee, which pilots the major actions that need to be undertaken in common agreement with the City Council and the organisations that make up the working groups.

The second key area of the strategy is Anti-Rumour Training to become an 'Anti-Rumour Officer'. Initially, it was a training programme of 12 hours where it went into greater depth into the nature of rumours and in different forms to be able to disassemble and to contrast or, at least, to break the 'information cascades' previously mentioned. It was about creating a shared discourse between volunteers. The aim of the course was to be able to develop individual skills in order to be able to contrast rumours based on theoretical and practical knowledge. These sessions offered, from a multidisciplinary perspective, information, relational guidelines and communication tools designed to deactivate rumours. The idea was to form the 'Anti-Rumour Officer' as a key factor and active actor in the execution and reinforcement of the strategy. We are working to promote the future work of the anti-rumour officers in four major areas:

1. First, awareness through interpersonal dialogue. That is, the work that the anti-rumour officers can do with face-to-face dialogue, in informal, everyday contexts, and often in improvised contexts. We also work on how to counter and dispute categorical statements without necessarily confronting the interlocutor.
2. Second, the awareness that can be raised within their own organisation. The idea is internal membership work that can be developed through promoting debates within the organisation on cultural diversity, challenges, opportunities, coexistence, rumours, promoting the training of

36. Accessible at: <https://ajuntament.barcelona.cat/bcnacciointercultural/ca/estrategia-bcn-antirumors/xarxabcnantirumors/mapa-entitats-antirumors>

organisation members around these issues, carrying out internal distribution of available materials and information, and so on.

3. Third, networking. As if it were an oil slick, the Anti-Rumour Officers will promote the joining of new organisations to the Network, informing them and raising their awareness about the importance of combating stereotypes, prejudices and rumours, as a way to improve coexistence in the city. The idea is to create a 'snowball effect' in the world of associations towards the values of diversity and coexistence and against rumours.

4. Four. Seek to work with the media and social networks as disseminating actors. Anti-Rumour officers must work on the involvement of the media and social networks, both internal (web, Facebook, Twitter, etc.) and external (radio, press and television, etc.). It is important to incorporate everything related to local media and social media, as Anti-Rumour Officers can have a proactive effect in the area of local communication.

The third area of work of the strategy is Awareness and Educational activities carried out mainly through the Anti-Rumour Catalogue. These are a series of activities of all kinds that the City Council makes available to the city to carry out in the territory and that different organisations and municipal facilities and services use in their field of action. These types of activities are very diverse, and can be a talk, a hip hop workshop, a social play or street action. The activities can be requested free of charge and are funded by the City Council. The activity organiser must justify the idea behind the activity and must give an assessment of it once it has been carried out.

At present, and in order to advance the generation of alternative narratives that do not discriminate against cultural diversity and that these are truly transformative, it is necessary to take into account the context, economic, socio-demographic and cultural characteristics, etc. for the activity to take place. It is for this reason that the catalogue increasingly prioritises its action framed in medium- and long-term processes, where the context is taken into account. Awareness-raising is also carried out through the distribution of anti-rumour materials that have been produced over the years, communication materials such as videos, manuals, or infographics, etc³⁷.

Infographic 2. The islamophobic route. Barcelona, 2018



Source: Anti-Rumour Strategy. City of Barcelona, 2018.

And finally, the fourth area of work of the Anti-Rumour Strategy is Communication The Network decided to launch certain themed campaigns and calls for the maximum participation of the

37. These materials are accessible at: <https://ajuntament.barcelona.cat/bcnacciointercultural/ca/estrategia-bcn-antirumors/materials-antirumors>

organisations, disseminating the actions, materials and messages that are proposed through social networks, through the organisations, through the interpersonal communication and in contact with the media.

According to the four points above, the same experience led to going beyond the rumour and, therefore, not to mention specific rumours about certain groups or communities to prevent their dissemination and spread. The attacks on La Rambla in 2017 were a turning point for the recommendations provided to organisations and the general public thanks to the ideas coming from the framework of the communication group of the BCN Anti-Rumour Network at that time.

Along these lines, this specific episode highlights the need to delve deeper into the strategy at the communicative and training levels, pointing to the structural causes that generate inequality, discrimination and/or racism. As shown in the infographic, the strategy takes a turn, understanding the rumours as the consequence and the most visible, but at the same time most superficial, part of some problems that due to their approach must put people at the centre and suffer multiple forms of discrimination.

This conceptual and methodological change translates into communicative strategies such as the #NoComparteixoRumors (2017) campaign, which, through the creation of an infographic, recommended specific action methodologies:

- do not dismantle rumours
- develop critical thinking that questions the discriminatory intentionality of the messages that reach us and what their consequences are as well as the structure that underpins them.

With the ongoing aim being that society is able to generate alternative narratives that counteract the discriminatory narratives that bring us rumours, or fake news, work began to avoid actions aimed at dismantling rumours and, instead, to direct the efforts and energies towards education and explaining what the social and discriminatory function of these is, on which they are based and the different levels of action: relational, communicative and also work within the same structure which also generates these situations.

5. Barcelona's policy as a model for other municipalities in Spain, Europe and the world

Since the beginning of the presentation of the Barcelona Anti-Rumour Initiative, the Council of Europe, through the Intercultural Cities Network, promoted by the Council itself, has shown great interest in the strategy developed by Barcelona. The former commissioner, Daniel de Torres, actively collaborated in promoting politics among the different cities in the Intercultural Cities Network, developing a series of materials that have served as a guide for many municipalities in Europe. Among the materials prepared by the Council of Europe, the Anti-Rumour Manual (De Torres Barderi, 2018) published in eight different languages is of note.

As an example, in 2013, the Council of Europe promoted the undertaking of a European Project called Communication for Integration, with the aim of 'combating prejudice, stereotypes and racist attitudes' inspired by the Barcelona experience. Ten European cities have started creating anti-rumour networks for diversity: Amadora (Portugal), Bilbao, Botkyrka (Sweden), Erlangen (Germany), Limerick (Ireland), Loures (Portugal), Lublin (Poland), Nuremberg (Germany), Patres (Greece) and Sabadell. Barcelona also took part in helping to transfer knowledge based on the experience of the BCN Anti-Rumour Strategy, in particular through the regional project developed in Ciutat Meridiana.

At the Spanish level and within the scope of the city association *Red Española de Ciudades Interculturales* (RECI), the establishment of anti-rumour networks has been promoted in cities and regions such as Tenerife, Bilbao, Fuenlabrada and Getxo.

From Canada, Morocco, Japan and Mexico, there has also been interest in the anti-rumour policy, which goes to show that the issue of rumours towards immigrants, people from diverse origins or belonging to minorities is a global issue.

However, it is very important to note that these cities have evolved anti-rumour policies in various ways depending on their capabilities, objectives, and contextual elements. They have thus adapted the idea in a different way and have innovated in instruments and working methodologies that have improved the anti-rumour policies.

6. Strategy results

Over the last 11 years, 1,810 people have been trained as anti-rumour officers and on a daily basis have helped to break down negative and stereotyped perceptions of immigrants and cultural diversity in a broad sense.

Table 1. Anti-rumour actions indicators. Evolution 2010-2020

| | Certified anti-rumour officers | Attendees at anti-rumour activities |
|--------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 2010 | 171 | - |
| 2011 | 265 | - |
| 2012 | 229 | 2,440 |
| 2013 | 210 | 3,929 |
| 2014 | 253 | 5,146 |
| 2015 | 178 | 4,671 |
| 2016 | 113 | 6,032 |
| 2017 | 114 | 4,794 |
| 2018 | 110 | 4,734 |
| 2019 | 110 | 4,352 |
| 2020 | 57 | 3,598 |
| Total | 1,810 | 39,696 |

Source: Barcelona City Council. Department of Interculturality and Religious Pluralism.

The consolidation of a network of organisations, the Anti-Rumour Network, has been key to consolidating the policy, adjusting it and modulating it according to the changes that were taking place in the region.

Another fundamental aspect has been the possibility of developing cultural actions, projects and activities through the 'Anti-Rumour Activities Catalogue' that are carried out in the region and help to fight against discriminatory rumours, stereotypes and prejudice. Through the actions of the Anti-Rumour Catalogue, hundreds of activities have been carried out throughout the city, in all the districts and neighbourhoods of Barcelona, to the extent that 39,696 people have attended some of the activities in recent years.

Under the mandate of Commissioner Lola López, from 2015, the Anti-Rumour Strategy incorporated and addressed topics that had not been dealt with until that point and that are part of a broad concept of culture and interculturality: Aspects related to religion and religions and also aspects related to the prejudices suffered by the Gypsies, the main historical ethnic minority in Barcelona and Catalonia.

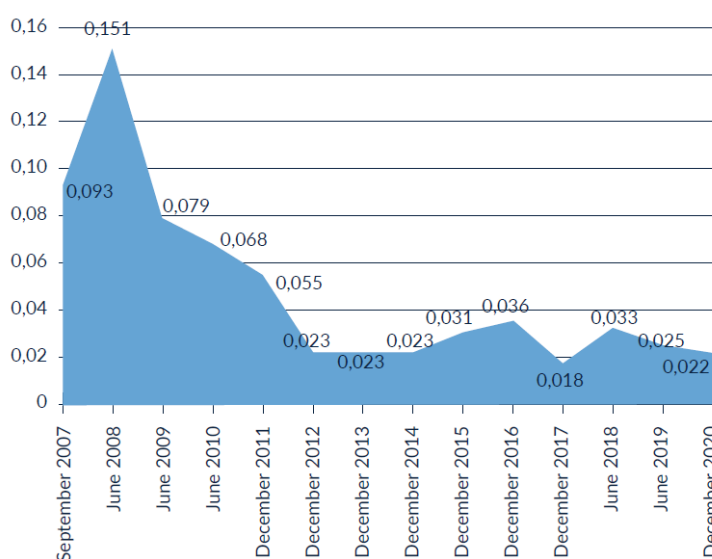
Beyond the quantitative results of the actions, the question must be asked about the effectiveness of the actions carried out: have they acted to prevent discrimination and to achieve a society that is more receptive and open to cultural and ethnic diversity?

A first assessment carried out in 2014 (Hernández Carr, 2014) concluded that the strategy had been a success in stopping rumours within social and neighbourhood organisations in Barcelona. This fact may seem anecdotal, but it is key given that the social fabric is the first level of closeness in the fight against rumours. It was necessary to convince the members of the local organisations; without their complicity, the task of fighting the rumours would have been impossible.

On the other hand, the city has a perception indicator developed over more than twenty years by the City Council's Data Office using surveys on what are the main problems perceived by citizens.

In these half-yearly surveys, the indicator of the perception of immigration as the main problem in Barcelona remains at low levels, and certainly much lower than in 2007 and 2008. In 2020, only 2.2% of respondents said that immigration was the main problem in the city, far behind issues such as traffic, cleaning, security, parking, access to housing or corruption.

Graph 1. Percentage of city residents who view immigration as a problem. Evolution 2007-2020



Source: BCN Interculturality Plan. Barcelona City Council, 2010.

We cannot determine a direct causal effect between anti-rumour policy and these results, but we can assume that anti-rumour policy has contributed, along with other policies and other factors, to achieving them – mainly because of its ability to transform and listen to professionals who work on the street. The strategy, like the rumours themselves, mutates and adapts and, like the roots of a tree, reaches the complex depths that underpin discriminatory and/or racist rumours in the relational and structural spheres.

7. Conclusions

We can say that this new public policy proposal has been very well received by the organisations, the general public and by other administrations that have reproduced the Barcelona experience. It is not uncommon for a new policy to be initiated by the City Council and for demand and acceptance to exceed the most optimistic forecasts. This policy has provided solutions for other cities that shared the issue of rumours and prejudices and have adapted Barcelona's proposal to their own realities.

The beginning and the creation of the anti-rumour policy coincided with a time when the economic crisis was having a very serious effect on Barcelona, and there was a real risk of social breakdown of coexistence, especially in the most vulnerable neighbourhoods. This breakdown that some experts had predicted in 2008 and 2009 did not occur, and even in some neighbourhoods, social cohesion among the working class increased, regardless of people's backgrounds. The anti-rumour policy certainly contributed to that.

In general, we believe that there are no magic or universal solutions to combat rumours, stereotypes and discrimination, but the tools and strategy must be adapted according to the issue and the region where it is required, just like in other cities inspired by the Barcelona idea.

In this regard, to keep this process of adaptation alive to the new realities, Khalid Ghali, the commissioner of Intercultural Dialogue and Religious Pluralism, has promoted a new Barcelona Interculturality Plan for the period 2021-2030 that renews the City Council's commitment to interculturality while adapting to the new reality of the city.

The takeaway from these 11 years is the need to ensure, through the formulation of diagnoses and putting into practice of actions and campaigns, a truly diverse participation to guarantee maximum levels of representation and the creation of common spaces where the diversity of origins is ensured and can speak in their own words. Diverse participation involves sewing together networks at different levels and action areas, i.e. neighbourhood, associations, educational, political, institutional, cultural, labour, trade union and communication.

Additionally, it should be pointed out that on its own the anti-rumour policy would not be effective without all the municipal public policies being coherent and going in the same direction. This policy should be placed into the context of a model of intercultural global coexistence; for that reason, all actions undertaken by the city government should adopt a transversal, intercultural perspective. If not, the strategy would lose coherence and effectiveness. In this regard, it is key that the basic programmes to guarantee equality of opportunities (access to education, health, work, incorporation into the civil service, etc.) work properly for everyone.

Currently (2021), the political and media panorama is very different to 2009. The emergence of new xenophobic parties on the Spanish and European political scene are increasingly gaining traction over public opinion, and little by little, hate speech is being normalised in some mainstream media and on social media. In recent years, top-tier political leaders have emerged on the international scene who have legitimised and adopted a racist, supremacist and xenophobic discourse. These political representatives have enjoyed widespread popular support and have 'popularised' racist messages that have reached the Barcelona city residents through the media. Backed by local leaders, often their message is intentionally fabricated and has clear partisan political goals. It seeks to break the trust between neighbours, to break class solidarity in underprivileged neighbourhoods, to mark a clear discourse of 'them' versus 'us' and to provoke conflict and confrontation on the grounds of origin. These are strategies designed in think tanks that have important support on social media that makes the task of dismantling them much more difficult and complex.

Think tanks are real laboratories of ideas that help to develop the narrative or the political narrative so that it can be hegemonic. The aim is to provide ideas that can influence public opinion and build a hegemonic narrative, hence the continued insistence on the concept of 'cultural wars' of the far right. It is no longer just rumours that are being spread through word of mouth.

That is why we see the strategy of territorialisation in the neighbourhoods and adaptation to the circumstances of proximity as a very proper response to this new trend. However, some of the instruments and actions of the anti-rumour policy should be rethought to adapt them to the new circumstances and also see what other cities that have adapted this policy have contributed.

Bibliography

BARCELONA CITY COUNCIL. 'Practical guide for anti-rumour officers. How to fight against rumours and stereotypes over cultural diversity in Barcelona'. Barcelona, 2011. <http://diadeladiversitat.cat/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/guia-pra%CC%80ctica-agents-antirumors.pdf>

BARCELONA CITY COUNCIL. 'Barcelona Interculturality Plan'. Barcelona, 2010. <https://bcnroc.ajuntament.barcelona.cat/jspui/bitstream/11703/85038/1/4052.pdf>

BARCELONA CITY COUNCIL. 'Record of Barcelona Intercultural Programme'. Barcelona, 2019. <https://ajuntament.barcelona.cat/bcnacciointercultural/ca/documentacio/memories-progbi>

BARCELONA CITY COUNCIL. *'The foreign population in Barcelona. The foreign-born population in Barcelona. January 2020. Informe estadístic 84'*. Barcelona, <https://www.bcn.cat/estadistica/catala/dades/inf/pobest/pobest20/pdf/pobest20.pdf>

BARCELONA CITY COUNCIL. 'Barcelona Six-Monthly Barometer. December 2020'. Barcelona, https://bcnroc.ajuntament.barcelona.cat/jspui/bitstream/11703/120904/1/r20008_Barometre_Semestral_Desembre_Prensa_v1_0.pdf.

DE TORRES BARDERI, D. 'Manual Antirumores', 2018. <https://rm.coe.int/manual-antirumores-daniel-de-torres-barderi/16808ee618>

HERNÁNDEZ CARR, A. 'Avaluació de l'Estratègia BCN Antirumors'. Fundació ACSAR i SÒCOL Tecnologia Social. Barcelona, 2014. https://ajuntament.barcelona.cat/bcnacciointercultural/sites/default/files/documentos/evaluacio_eba-cat1.pdf.

September 2021

Key words: ethnic discrimination, rental housing market, field experiment, Barcelona

The key can be in a name. Detection of evidence of ethnic discrimination in access to the rental housing market in Barcelona

Ariadna Fitó. Consultant and public policy analyst at the Broll cooperative. Associate Professor, Department of Sociology, Autonomous University of Barcelona (UAB)
afito@broll.cat, [@AriadnaFitó](https://twitter.com/AriadnaFitó), [@broll_sccl](https://www.broll.cat/sccl)

A field experiment carried out with the aim of detecting and analysing the presence of ethnic discrimination in the housing rental market. Using the correspondence analysis method, fictitious names were assigned that unequivocally pointed to differences in ethnic origin: Arabic names and Catalan/ Spanish names. Internet real estate platforms were used as a field of analysis. One thousand emails requesting information were sent regarding 500 properties advertised across all the districts of Barcelona, with the aim of analysing the reactions of the estate agents to the named applicants. The results of the experiment show that applicants with an Arabic name received 18% fewer responses than those applying under a Catalan/ Spanish name. A lower percentage of applicants with an Arabic name were also offered viewings. In higher-priced rental segments, the level of discrimination was lower. The results show that people with an Arabic name have access to fewer flats in the rental market, and that those they do have access to are more expensive.

1. Introduction: What is discrimination and how can we measure it?

Discrimination refers to the unequal treatment of individuals or groups on the basis of their personal characteristics. Unequal treatment that favours members of certain groups to the detriment of others, and that reinforces and perpetuates disadvantage in terms of access to resources and opportunities.

Even today, one of the main obstacles to tackling discrimination is how the phenomenon is measured. There are many questions regarding the actual incidence of discrimination, due to the difficulty in detecting cases. Among the efforts to generate data on this phenomenon in Barcelona, the initiatives promoted by the Human Rights Resource Centre and the Office for Non-Discrimination of Barcelona City Council stand out. Together with the 18 organisations³⁸ that make up the Bureau of Organisations providing Services for Victims of Discrimination (SAVD) and which,

38. Catalan Association for Integrating Homosexual, Bisexual and Transsexual Immigrants (Acathi), the Catalan Association for the Defence of Human Rights (ACDDH), Bayt al-Thaqafa, Cepaim, Dincat, the ECOM Federation, the Catalonia Mental Health Federation (FSMC), Federació Veus, Fil a l'Agulla, Fundació Secretariat Gitano (FSG), Gais Positius, Irídia, the Observatory against Homophobia (OCH), Plataforma per la Llengua, the Tenants' Union, SOS Racisme Catalunya, Unión Romani and Care for the Homeless Network. (XAPSLL).

since 2018, have published the Barcelona Discrimination Observatory report³⁹ which has drawn attention to the numerous situations of discrimination detected in the city of Barcelona.

This annual report is a first step towards understanding the problem, but it should be remembered that much of the discrimination that takes place in the city goes unreported. The same thing happens with the statistics based on complaints about cases of discrimination. This data brings us closer to the reality, but reveals only the tip of the iceberg. It is often disregarded because it is considered to refer to isolated cases, cases that have little statistical significance or are not backed by empirical evidence.

There are also opinion studies, such as the Survey of Neighbourhood Relations and Coexistence, carried out by the IMERB (2021) which provides a great deal of information, including a discrimination index. This type of study measures the social perceptions and general attitudes of majority groups towards minorities or situations experienced by minorities. However, perceptions of discrimination may over- or under-estimate the actual incidence of discrimination. Precisely because they are perceptions, they occur within relationships and in situations that can be interpreted in different ways. Existing research on racialized attitudes and stereotyping among the general population (Farley, 1977) indicates that much discrimination tends to go undetected, because of the degree to which it is perceived as 'normal' in the daily lives both of those who have to live with discrimination due to their personal characteristics, and those who engage in certain discriminatory practices.

To resolve these difficulties in detecting discrimination, and the often invisible, and even normalised, nature of that discrimination, the social sciences provide techniques that can help with measurement that are based on evidence and the empirical contrast of real or simulated cases from situations that are recreated, whether fictitiously or with real people who are susceptible to being discriminated against due to their personal characteristics.

Given the need for increased knowledge about discrimination in the city, Barcelona City Council's Directorate of Citizenship Rights and Diversity Services promoted an experiment to detect racial discrimination in access to rented housing.

This research, entitled "The Key Can Be in a Name" and carried out by the Broll cooperative, aimed to conduct an experiment in order to detect and quantify the existence of differential treatment based on ethnic origin in terms of access to the private rental market in Barcelona, based on the submission of applications for housing on internet real estate portals.

2. The Key May Be in A Name: A Social Experiment to Detect Evidence of Ethnic Discrimination in Access to Rental Housing.

The experiment allowed us to measure discrimination directly. The idea was to select and match population profiles (majority group with minority group) and to display the chosen profiles in the situation to be analysed, so that differential treatment might subsequently be analysed. Experiments carried out in other locations in recent decades provide evidence confirming that ethnic groups face discriminatory behaviour in all kinds of market transactions, such as access to employment (Pager and Shepherd, 2008), in the rental or home ownership market (Ying, 1995; Chambers, 1992; Wachter and Megbolugbe, 1992), mortgage lending (Turner and Kidmore, 1999), insurance applications (Wissoker et al. 1998), access to health care (Schulman et al. 1999), and even when purchasing a car (Ayres and Siegelman, 1995) and access to taxis (Ridley et al. 1989).

Experiments aimed at detecting discrimination on the basis of ethnicity show that, compared to the ethnic majority, minority applicants generally receive fewer responses to housing applications and are invited to fewer housing viewings, i.e., they have fewer opportunities to access housing. The experiment, carried out in Barcelona in early 2020, consisted of creating fictitious profiles for housing applicants to whom names were assigned that unequivocally pointed to different ethnic

39. Accessible at: <https://ajuntament.barcelona.cat/oficina-no-discriminacio/ca/observatori-discriminacions>

origins. Catalan/ Spanish names and names of Arabic origin were randomly matched in the application for the same flat offered on an internet rental portal. In this pairing, the identities differed only in one characteristic: the name.

Our names are our calling cards. Names confer identity as well as conveying that identity to others, and are therefore directly related to social experiences and opportunities. Names can be a key factor. The key to gaining access to certain social or cultural relations, goods, or services. Names can open or close doors, including the doors of a home. Behind names lie life stories that are subject to interpretation by others, and often include prejudices and stereotypes that act as constructs of otherness and factors that feed discrimination. A mere name can have a bearing on the allocation of opportunities to access resources.

Using names, we conducted an experiment that consisted of sending 1,000 applications in response to 500 housing advertisements published on real estate portals. Half of the applications were sent with a name of Arabic origin, and the other half with a Catalan/ Spanish name based on the names registered as most common by Idescat.

3. Results of the experiment: does differential treatment exist in that opportunities for access to housing depend on the origin of the name of applicant?

3.1. Responses to applications

In order to detect differences, comparison was made between the response rates to applications submitted by couples with Catalan/ Spanish names, and those presented by couples with names of Arabic origin. The sample was evenly distributed in terms of gender, each female Catalan/ Spanish name being paired with a female Arabic name. The same procedure was followed for the males.

In this experiment, no differences were established between positive and negative responses, since the *modus operandi* of estate agents, as confirmed in this study, is that when faced with giving a negative response, the preferred choice is not to respond - a practice that explains why there was no response at all to over half of the sample. 52.8% of the requests received no response at all, a non-response rate similar to that in other field studies in the rental housing market that also include names of Arabic origin (Ahmed et al., 2008; Bosch et al., 2010). 'Response' in the data presented indicates only the fact that the estate agent responded in some way; there is no analysis of the content of the response message, only whether or not there was in fact a response. The overall response rate to applications was 47.2%. In the case of men, 37.2% of enquiries received a response regardless of origin; for women this figure was 57.2%. The response rate for housing applications made by women was 20% higher than for men, without taking origin into account. These results are not an isolated case: there is evidence of gender-differentiated treatment to the detriment of men in the internet property rental market, regardless of their origin (Ahmed and Hammarstedt, 2008; Andersson et al. 2012). Ahmed and Hammarstedt (2008) reveal that in Sweden men are 13% less likely to receive a response than women, regardless of origin. Bengtsson et al. (2012). However, while it was found that women are 8.7% more likely to receive a response than men, this advantage only occurs for women with a Catalan/ Spanish name, not for those with an Arabic name.

In our study, women got more responses than men regardless of ethnic origin, but when compared with a Catalan/ Spanish person of the same gender, men with Arabic names got 19.2% fewer responses than those with Catalan/ Spanish names, and women 18.4% fewer. A woman with a Catalan/ Spanish name would receive about 40% more responses than a man with an Arabic name.

The rate of discrimination on the basis of origin without taking gender into account is 18.8%⁴⁰

40. Very similar results were obtained in a baseline study using aggregated data from Madrid and Barcelona, with a difference in response rate of 22% (Bosch et al, 2010).

Table 1. Response rates by applicant profile and net discrimination

| Gender | Sample size (Advertisements) | Catalan/ Spanish name | Arabic name | Net discrimination |
|--------|------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------|--------------------|
| M | % | 50 | 46.8 | 27.6 |
| | N | (250) | (117) | (69) |
| W | % | 50 | 66.4 | 48.0 |
| | N | (250) | (166) | (120) |
| T | % | (100) | 56.6 | 37.8 |
| | N | 500 | (283) | (189) |

*** p<0,001

M: Men, W: Women, T: Total

Source: Original.

The breakdown of responses to the advertisements is as follows: 41% did not respond to either of the couples; 35.4% responded to both, 21.2% responded only to the Catalan/ Spanish couple, and 2.4% responded exclusively to the couple with an Arabic name.

The correlation of responses between the two different ethnic origins is high, indicating that estate agents tended to respond to requests submitted for the same advertisements (58%) to couples with Catalan/ Spanish names and couples with names of Arabic origin, and even more so when the request is made by a woman, rising to 61%. Discrimination is concentrated in the number of responses that each profile receives depending on ethnic origin; the existence of two parallel housing markets according to Catalan/ Spanish origin and Arabic origin was not detected. The type of discrimination that was detected consists of a reduced supply of housing available to couples with Arabic names.

Segmentation along the lines of ethnicity in the rental housing market as expressed in differentiated markets was not detected, but a restriction of access to couples with Arabic names was, with fewer access opportunities reflected in the lower number of responses to the same advertisements.

Table 2. Correlation of responses according to applicant profile

| | | Catalan/ Spanish name | | |
|--------------|-------|-----------------------|---------|---------|
| | | Men | Women | Total |
| Nombre árabe | Men | 0.515** | --- | --- |
| | Women | --- | 0.616** | --- |
| | Total | --- | --- | 0.583** |

**p< 0.01

M: Men, W: Women, T: Total

Source: Original.

3.2. Responses to applications that include viewings

Responses to applications contained other information that is of interest when analysing the existence of differential treatment of applications on the basis of ethnic origin. One of the most common practices detected was the attitude of the agent in terms of willingness to follow up on applications received. As we have been able to verify, one of the most common ways of following up on the initial contact is to suggest a telephone conversation to provide more information about the property. Either the estate agent requests the applicants telephone number and calls them, or alternatively suggests that the applicant her/himself should call the agency on a number indicated.

First of all, it should be noted that 68% of the responses received included messages indicating that, in order to obtain more information about the property requested, the applicant would need to call the telephone number included in the email, or requesting a contact number for the applicant to enable the agency to initiate the conversation. This was the response to 34% of the total number of applications sent.

Table 3. Rate of appointments by applicant profile

| Gender | | Sample size | Catalan/ Spanish name | Arabic name | Net discrimination (T-Student) |
|----------|---|-------------|-----------------------|-------------|--------------------------------|
| M | % | 50 | 14.8 | 6.8 | 8.0*** t=3.745 |
| | N | (250) | (37) | (17) | (20) |
| W | % | 50 | 20 | 12.8 | 7.2*** t=3.614 |
| | N | (250) | (50) | (32) | (22) |
| T | % | (100) | 17.4 | 9.8 | 7.6*** t=5.209 |
| | N | 500 | (87) | (49) | (38) |

*** p<0.001

M: Men, W: Women, T: Total

Source: Original.

In this type of message, differences in treatment are also observed, although to a lesser extent than in the response rate. Thus, 29.2% of couples with Catalan/ Spanish names would receive messages inviting a conversation via telephone, compared to 22.8% of couples with Arabic names, a difference of 6.4%.

However, this indicator provides little information and is ambiguous, since it is not possible to effectively monitor the reasons why the estate agent may choose to establish a new contact by telephone. Although in the body of the message they usually state that the reason for the call is to provide more information, the possibility that the motive is that this offers a way to carry out a further screening process with the latent, and sometimes overt, desire to obtain more information about the applicant cannot be underestimated.

In any case, the indicator that best fits the analysis of the content of the message is the number of viewings obtained by each of the profiles analysed by the experiment to study discrimination on the basis of ethnic origin.

With regard to the applications that receive responses offering the possibility of a viewing, the differences would be aligned in terms of differential treatment depending both on gender and ethnic origin. However, discrimination persists. The couple with Arabic names were able to access 7.6% fewer viewings than the couple with Catalan/ Spanish names.

17.4% of Catalan/ Spanish couples received an immediate invitation to view a property. In couples with Arabic names, 9.8% of applications resulted in an invitation to view the property. The difference was therefore 7.6%.

Out of every ten enquiries sent, those with Catalan/ Spanish names received two responses with the possibility of a viewing, and those with Arabic names only one.

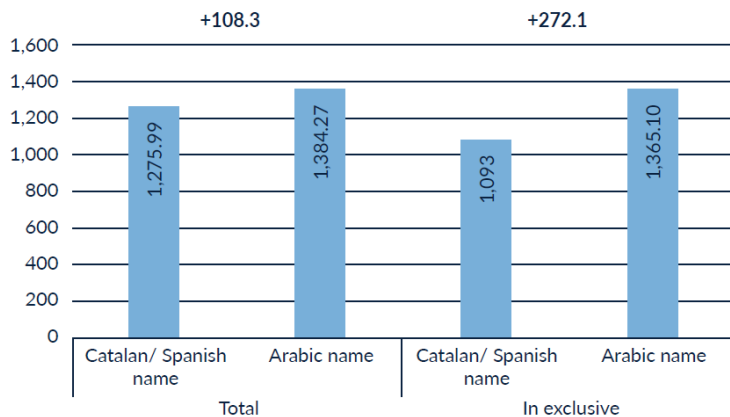
Although in the response rates the gender differences were very marked, in the rate of responses to viewings the results were aligned, both if we compare the results by ethnic origin or by gender; there was a downward adjustment, with an 8% discrimination rate in the case of men with an Arabic name, and one of 7.2% for women with an Arabic name when compared with an application made by a person of the same gender but with a Catalan/ Spanish partner.

Again, women got more responses (+11.2%) offering viewings than men, regardless of their ethnic origin. However, when compared by ethnic origin, women and men with Arabic names were offered almost the same number of viewings, with a difference of 7.2% and 8%, respectively.

Consistent with the results obtained so far is that discrimination on the part of estate agencies means that the rental prices for properties to which migrants have access are higher than the rental prices for properties that Catalan/ Spanish couples have access to.

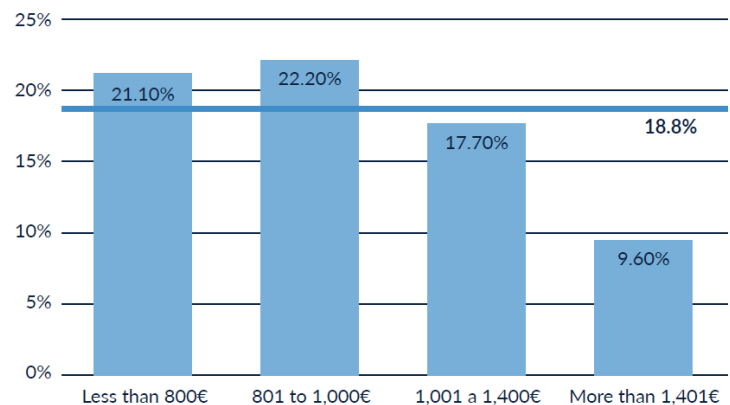
The average monthly rental price of the responses obtained by the Catalan/ Spanish couple was 1,276 euros. For the couple with names of Arabic origin, it was 1,384 euros, a difference of 108.30 euros more per month. If only those applications that received a response in each group are selected, the difference is even more pronounced, with monthly rents 272.10 euros higher for those with Arabic names.

Graph 1. Average access price by response to Catalan/ Spanish name and Arabic name (€)



Source: Original.

Graph 2. Discrimination distribution according to the property asking price (in % and in €)



Source: Original.

Discrimination against those with an Arabic name was concentrated in the 800 to 1,100 euro price range, corresponding to the most sought-after properties in the city when the characteristics of the property and the price were taken into consideration. The correlations between the responses obtained according to the prices of the properties was positive; i.e. the higher the monthly rental price, the more responses there were for those with an Arabic name (0.262 ^{**41}), a higher value than among those with a Catalan/ Spanish name (0.176 ^{**42}).

The non-linear regression model presented below incorporates the available variables that can explain applicant responses. We will look at the value of the estimate for each parameter. The most significant parameter is being part of a couple with Catalan/ Spanish names (0.523), followed by a couple with Arabic names (0.339). In this model, it can be seen that the fact that the woman is the applicant for the property affects the response, but less strongly than the ethnic origin. Therefore, ethnic discrimination would outweigh the gender discrimination that benefits the female

41. $P < 0.01$.

42. $P < 0.01$.

applicant. There are three parameters that explain the model with a negative sign: the districts according to disposable household income, whether a flat has a terrace and whether it has a lift. This model shows a scenario in which the following hypothesis may be put forward: in the case of the most desirable properties, both in terms of location and because they have a terrace or lift and can therefore be rented more quickly, real estate agents make less effort to respond to applications.

If the advertisement publication dates on real estate portals were a reliable source of information, it is very likely that in this explanatory model the parameter "time in days of publication" would have been significant for this hypothesis: the longer a flat has been on the market for, the greater the chance of response across all applications, but especially to applications from couples with Arabic names. It may be that in the face of difficulty in renting a property, discrimination would diminish and the need to secure a tenant for that property would prevail over the profile of the applicant. However, this indicator is manipulated on a daily basis on real estate portals, and advertisements that have been on the portal for months are published as recent additions; for this reason, this factor could not be included in the explanatory model.

4. Conclusions

A field experiment was carried out based on access to rental housing in Barcelona. The experiment aimed to log differences in actions taken by estate agents with regard to response/non-response to applications; and in the case of the existence of a response, in the content, taking into account whether or not it included an invitation to view.

Existence of discrimination on grounds of origin: access to the rental market is restricted for couples with an Arabic name

Differential treatment of applications was detected, both in the number of responses, and in the content of those responses in terms of the opportunity to view the property. There was a response difference of 18.8% excluding applicants with an Arabic name, a slightly higher difference in the case where the applicant was a man with an Arabic name (19.2%).

In rental units, this implies that, for every ten applications sent, a couple with an Arabic name would get two fewer responses than the local couple. In terms of viewings carried out, the differences would be aligned both in terms of gender-differentiated treatment and in terms of ethnic origin. However, discrimination persists. The couple with Arabic names were able to access 7.6% fewer viewings than the couple with Catalan/ Spanish names.

The correlation of responses between couples by ethnic origin is high, and this indicates that in principle there would be no discrimination along ethnic lines in the rental housing market expressed in differentiated markets. It is rather that in the case of couples with Arabic names access to the market is restricted, as shown by the fact that they received fewer responses to the same adverts.

The ethnic origin of the applicant has more explanatory weight in the response rate than gender.

The female response rate (57.2%) is significantly higher than the male response rate (37.2%), regardless of ethnic origin. However, when Arabic names were introduced, the discrimination rates by gender when compared with the Catalan/ Spanish equivalent were virtually the same, for both males (19.2%) and females (18.4%), with a difference of 0.8 percentage points.

The non-linear regression model including the variables that are significant in explaining the response to the applications reveals that the most relevant parameter is being part of an local couple (0.523) rather than being a woman (0.303). Therefore, ethnic discrimination would outweigh the gender discrimination that benefits the female applicant.

Greater discrimination on the basis of ethnic origin in the most affordable rental price brackets

People with names of Arabic origin would have access to fewer and more expensive flats. The differences in the average rental prices for the couple with Catalan/ Spanish names and the couple with Arabic names were 108.30 euros per month and 272 euros per month, if we compare the averages of the responses to only one of the two profiles. The properties applied for with rents below 1,100 euros show a higher discrimination rate than is the case for the average property. These properties are the most sought-after properties in the city when the characteristics of the property and the price are taken into consideration.

The correlation between the volume of responses according to the prices of the properties is positive; that is, there is a link between the highest monthly rental price and the response to the population with names of Arabic origin (0.262 **) with a higher value than in the population with Catalan/ Spanish names (0.176 **).

Other considerations related to the limitations of the study and challenges posed by the results obtained

The study refers only to the initial phase of the rental process, to the request for information; therefore, the results presented as opportunities or restrictions in terms of access for a certain population profile are explanatory only in the period of initial contact. According to the social entities consulted, the barriers in terms of access to housing for the racialized population persists throughout the entire search process, which leads us to believe that if the experiment had continued up to the signing of the contract, the differentiated treatment would in all probability be even greater.

In the course of the experiment we did not identify any explicitly discriminatory advertisements referring to the exclusion of certain sections of the population on racial grounds, as was previously the case. Thus, we can see a tendency to leave open and overt discrimination behind, being replaced with a more subtle form of discrimination, one that operates in the shadows, that restricts access to housing for certain minorities using methods that make it even more difficult to detect the discrimination suffered. By way of example, among the advertisements tested, there was evidence of the existence of differential rental conditions depending on applicant profile, but the profiles to which they refer are not specified on the websites.

The study did not investigate the causes of the discrimination detected, nor did it allow for an analysis of where the discrimination might stem from: the property owners themselves, or the estate agents? Regardless of the answer to this question - which is certainly an important one - the discrimination we have detected indicates that this differential treatment, of at least 18.8%, is possible because certain real estate agents accept and carry out discriminatory practices that have direct consequences leading to unequal access to the right to housing.

This issue generates the need to initiate a work process that is shared between local government and the property marketing companies in the city, with the aim of eradicating the phenomenon of discrimination in access to housing, and which could be oriented towards the creation of spaces for shared reflection and training processes for estate agents. At the same time, it is essential to continue developing programmes and services that are effective in the fight against the racial stereotyping and prejudice that is still present in society today.

Some studies (McLaren, 2003; Schneider, 2008) provide evidence based on the fact that increasing interaction between people of different nationalities, cultures or religions is a valuable tool to mitigate discourses that legitimise certain forms of racism and the practices that perpetuate them.

Bibliography

- ANDERSSON, L.; JAKOBSSON, N.; KOTSADAM, A. "A field Experiment of Discrimination in the Norwegian Housing Market: Gender, Class and Ethnicity". *Land Economics*, vol. 88 (2), (2012), p. 233-240.
- AHMED, A. M.; HAMMARTSTEDT, M. "Discrimination in the rental Housing market: A field experiment on the Internet". *Journal of Urban Economics*, vol. 64 (2), (2008), p. 362-372.
- AYRES, I.; SIEGELMAN, P. "Race and Gender Discrimination in Bargaining for a New Car". *American Economic Review*, vol. 85 (3), (1995), p. 304-321.
- BENGTTSSON, R.; IVERMAN, R.; HINNERICH, B. T. "Gender and ethnical discrimination in the rental housing market of Stockholm: a field experiment". *Applied Economics Letters*, vol. 19 (1), (2012), p. 1-5.
- BOSCH, M.; CARNERO, M. A.; FARRÉ, L. "Information and Discrimination in the Rental Housing Market: Evidence from a Field Experiment", *Regional Science and Urban Economics*, vol. 40, (2010), p. 11-19.
- CHAMBERS, D. N. "The racial housing price differential and racially transitional neighborhoods". *Journal of Urban Economics*, vol. 32, (1992), p. 214-232.
- FARLEY, R. "Residential Segregation in Urbanized Areas of the United States in 1970: An Analysis of Social Class and Race Differences". *Demography*, vol. 14 (4), (1977), p.497-518.
- INSTITUT D'ESTUDIS REGIONALS I METROPOLITANS DE BARCELONA (IERMB). *Enquesta de Relacions Veïnals i Convivència (ECAMB), 2020. Primers resultats*. Bellaterra: IERMB, 2021. https://iermb.uab.cat/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/ECAMB-2020_Primeres-dades-AMB.pdf.
- MCLAREN, L. M. "Anti-immigrant prejudice in Europe: Contact, threat perception, and preferences for the exclusion of migrants". *Social Forces*, vol. 81 (3), (2003), p. 909-936.
- PAGER, D.; SHEPHERD, H. "The Sociology of Discrimination: Racial Discrimination in Employment, Housing, Credit, and Consumer Markets". *Annual Review of Sociology*, vol. 34 (1), (2008), p. 181-209.
- RIDLEY, S.; BAYTON, J. A.; OUTTZ, J. H. *Taxi Service in the District of Columbia: Is It Influenced by Patrons' Race and Destination?* Washington, DC, Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights under the Law, 1989.
- SCHNEIDER, S. L. "Anti-immigrant attitudes in Europe: Outgroup size and perceived ethnic threat". *European Sociological Review*, vol. 24 (1), (2008), p. 53-67.
- SCHULMAN, K. A.; BERLIN, J. A.; HARLESS, W.; KERNER, J. F.; SISTRUNK, S.; GERSH, B. J.; DUBÉ, R.; TALEGHANI, C. K.; BURKE, J. E.; WILLIAMS, S.; EISENBERG, J. M.; ESCARCE, J. J. "The effect of race and sex on physicians' recommendations for cardiac catheterization". *The New England Journal of Medicine*, vol. 340 (8), (1999), p. 618-626.
- TURNER, M. A.; SKIDMORE, F. (eds). *Mortgage Lending Discrimination: A Review of Existing Evidence*, Washington, DC: Urban Institute Press.
- WACHTER, S.; MEGBOLUGBE, I. "Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Homeownership". *Housing Policy Debate*, vol. 3, (1992), p. 333-370.

WISSOKER, D.; ZIMMERMAN, W.; GALSTER, G. *Testing for Discrimination in Home Insurance*. Washington D. C.: Urban Institute Press, 1998.

YINGER J. *Closed Doors, Opportunities Lost: The Continuing Costs of Housing Discrimination*. New York: Russell Sage Found, 1995.

**Knowledge and Research Department
Area of Social Rights, Global Justice, Feminism and LGBTI
Barcelona City Council**

València, 344, 5a. 08009 Barcelona
T. 93 413 26 69
barcelona.cat/revistabarcelonasocietat



**Ajuntament de
Barcelona**