

Understanding the rationales for migrating in Spain: A long-term perspective.

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Abstract

This working paper explores how the rationales for migration have changed over time in Spain since 1880s. For this, the paper draws on a preliminary literature review of the social and migration history of Spain and its provinces; national and regional statistics; 124 correspondence letters between Spanish migrants and non-migrants about life conditions in Spain, migration aspirations and migration trajectories; and 89 tweets, describing the socio-economic situation in Spain and emigration trends since the 2008 economic crisis. The article differentiates four periods of intense social transformation in Spain, in which the geographical orientation of migration and the volume of migration changed, and the composition of the migrant flow diversified. More importantly, it shows that the meaning of migration has shifted across time, from being understood as a strategy to secure a living in the first half of the 20th century, to being increasingly associated with higher quality of life, leisure opportunities, better working conditions and the provision of social guarantees. This working paper contributes to the migration-development debate in two manners. On the one hand, it offers a long-term, non-economic perspective on the multiple drivers that shape the configurations of migration. On the other, it explores how shifts in personal values and orientations shape life strategies, including migration. Indeed, the working paper aims to illustrate that the underlying factors driving migration aspirations can shift across time following social transformation and cyclical changes.

1. Introduction

This working paper is part of ongoing research, and it engages with some of my initial reflections about the relationship between development and the rationales for migrating. Indeed, since the 1970s, one predominant focus of studies on the migration-development nexus has been the hypothesized relation between socioeconomic development and migration. Mobility transition theories, pioneered by Zelinsky (1971), have argued that this relation is non-linear. In fact, processes of 'modernization' initially trigger higher levels of emigration and mobility overall (Skeldon, 2014; Zelinsky, 1971). The expansion of the welfare state and capitalist structures, and the consequent transition from agrarian to industrial societies jeopardize traditional, rural livelihoods. Concurrently, circular and seasonal mobilities tied to local economic systems decrease, while stimulating urban employment, the rural exodus and, at a later stage, commuting patterns (Mabogunje, 1970; Zelinsky, 1971). Recent quantitative research has greatly enriched and nuanced the debate, sustaining that, at the aggregate level, development implies rising rates of emigration, particularly in lower-middle income societies (Clemens, 2014; de Haas, 2007; de Haas & Fransen, 2018).

Meanwhile scholars have adopted more comprehensive definitions of development (Sen, 2001), departing from deterministic analyses focused on economic and demographic predictor variables. The advancement of the social transformation framework reconceptualizes migration as an intrinsic part of wider political, economic, demographic, technological and cultural transformations, on the one hand, and uncovers patterned complexities and ramifications of migration over time, on the other (Castles, 2010; de Haas, Fransen, Natter, Schewel & Vezzoli, 2020). Studies focusing on the relation between social transformation processes and mobility dynamics show that fundamental change is intrinsically linked to significant shifts in how people move (de Haas, Schewel and Vezzoli forthcoming). For instance, there is a diversification in the composition of migration flows, and in the geographical orientation of mobility, which transitions from seasonal and circular mobility to new forms of rural-urban and international movements (see the *Migration as Development (MADE)* project; Osburg 2020; Rodriguez-Pena 2020; Vezzoli, 2020a). Similarly, changing notions of what the 'good life' means trigger increasing aspirations to move, especially when local opportunities are not sufficient to accomplish life ambitions (Schewel, 2020a). In this manner, researchers have explored how processes of social transformation impact the orientation, volume, timing and composition of mobility patterns. Yet, less is known about the changing rationales for migrating, and how these are related to processes of transformation. The reasons for migrating are multiple and complex, and despite the structured nature of migration, movement is not uniformly articulated across social groups, as different contexts and socio-cultural systems shape migration differently (Tyldum, 2015). Moreover, the interpretation of movement is complex and changing (McKenzie & Menjivar, 2011). This is because the social imaginary constructs a shared conception of the ideal society and raises prospects regarding life and migration aspirations (Schewel 2020b; Taylor 2002). The social imaginary is, nevertheless, not a fixed narrative, but rather it shifts over time (Nordbakke & Schwanen, 2014: 108; Varvarousis, 2019; Vertovec, 2012). In this vein, Jolivet (2020) shows that fundamental political and cultural transformation in Morocco has led to changing rationales for migration in the Todgha Valley, where aspirations to move are becoming more individualistic among younger cohorts and increasingly associated with aspirations to greater standard of

living, more open societies and increased sociopolitical freedoms (Jolivet, 2020). Despite this incipient research, we know little about how the rationales of migration change over time. How do social transformations change people's ideas about migration expectations? How do fundamental processes of change shift the rationales for (im)mobility?

This working paper, drawing on 124 correspondence letters between migrants and non-migrants and 89 tweets, analyzes whether periods of fundamental social transformation have triggered a change in the rationales for mobility in Spain since the 1880s. By doing this, the paper aims to begin to explore the transition of (im)mobility aspirations over more than a century, mapping how rationales for internal, international and non-migration mobilities have transitioned due to political, economic, demographic, technological and cultural processes of transformation. To do this, the article interweaves migration studies with cultural sociology to examine whether the gradual shift in people's beliefs, orientations and values, from materialistic to post-materialistic (Inglehart, 1977), triggers changes in the rationales for migrating. After providing a short overview of the theoretical framework and methods adopted in this paper, I first present briefly how the timing, orientation and volume of internal and international migration in Spain has changed over time; then, I explore how the rationales for this movement have transitioned.

2. Theoretical framework

The study draws on three theoretical frameworks: the social transformation framework, the aspirations-capability framework, and the hierarchy of needs and the transition of societal values.

First, the article adopts the social transformation framework as a methodological lens. This framework analyses changes in social phenomena in deep association with fundamental shifts in the *social realm*, composed of five interrelated dimensions: the economic, the political, the technological, the demographic and the cultural (De Haas et al., 2020: 18). In the field of migration studies, apart from reconceptualizing migration as an intrinsic part of the wider societal transformations, this framework proves useful to investigate how the timing, orientation, volume and composition of flows change over long periods of time (Berriane, de Haas & Natter, 2021; Osburg, 2020; Rodriguez-Pena, 2020; Schewel & Legass Bahir, 2019; Vezzoli 2020a, 2020b; Wielstra, 2020). For instance, following developmental processes, migration systems diversify as rural-urban flows and international destinations gain momentum, whereas seasonal and circular mobility tied to local, subsistence-based economic systems decrease. The composition of migration flows also transforms to include distinct educational, class, and skill profiles (MADE Research Team, 2021).

While the social transformation approach offers the possibility to investigate how migration flows change over time, we still know little about how the rationales for migration transition. To explore this, I find it useful to include the aspirations-capability framework, which is a two-step approach to understand migration as composed of, on the one hand, the aspirations to migrate or remain in place, and on the other, the capabilities to achieve well-being and a valuable life (Carling, 2002; de Haas, 2010; Schewel, 2020). Following this line of research, de Haas (2021) has recently distinguished between the intrinsic and the instrumental dimensions of migration aspirations: while the former refers to the subjective value provided to (im)mobility and

emphasizes that people also move out of curiosity or wanderlust¹, the instrumental dimension of (im)mobility engages with a functional or utilitarian understanding of migration as a strategy to obtain an end, such as better working conditions, greater educational opportunities or a higher salary (de Haas, 2021). Even if we still do not know how these (im)mobility dimensions gain or lose importance as societies develop², this framework sets the scene to investigate how, over time, life aspirations change and the rationales for migration shift.

This is related to the third theoretical component that this article employs: the framework of the hierarchical needs and the transition of societal values. Maslow (1943) developed a five-tier approach to human needs to explain increases on human motivation. As more basic needs, such as physiological and safety needs, are fulfilled³, individuals attempt to satisfy more sophisticated necessities, including esteem and self-actualization needs (Tay & Diener, 2011). Individuals are, therefore, in constant movement to achieve their potential, and the values and norms governing individual behaviour change over time, as societies reach higher material and physical security levels. In fact, according to social culture theories, major structural changes, such as the development of the welfare state and the expansion of the economy, are presumed to change mindsets and beliefs over time from materialistic values, related to survival and safety feelings, to post-materialistic values, associated with life quality (Inglehart, 1977). This shift in cultural values shapes societies (Inglehart & Baker, 2000) and generations differently (Inglehart, 2007). These approaches open the discussion to explore how the life strategies, including migration, transition as basic and materialistic needs are achieved (Jolivet, 2020). Is economic distress or a pervasiveness of materialistic values associated with instrumental rationales for migrating? Do intrinsic rationales for (im)mobility gain momentum as societies develop, and values related to life quality increase in importance?

3. Methodology

This chapter draws on (1) the collection of statistical data on Spanish migration and societal indicators; (2) the examination of 124 correspondence letters between Spanish migrants and non-migrants and families and friends in Argentina or of Argentinian origin, describing life conditions in Spain and their migration projects and experience between 1887 and 2009 (Sobrecartas, 2019); and (3) 89 tweets describing the socio-economic situation in Spain and the emigration patterns after the 2008 economic crisis.

The first component consisted of the collection of longitudinal datasets on internal and international migration and return patterns, population estimates, vital statistics, unemployment rates, governmental expenditure, components of the GDP, occupation by sector and GDP *per capita*, cultural and individual orientations and data on political structures, among

¹ Studies on the intrinsic dimension of (im)mobility have gained importance thanks to lifestyle migration research (O'Reilly & Benson 2015; Benson & O'Reilly, 2016) and empirical studies show that a variety of social groups, such as undocumented migrants, retirees, or transit migrants migrate for intrinsic rationales (see de Haas 2021).

² Intrinsic and instrumental dimensions of (im)mobility are difficult to separate, as migration can fulfill various needs and objectives (de Haas, 2021).

³ The achievement of human needs is not measured in a yes/no category, but rather in a continuum of degrees (Tay & Diener, 2011).

others. Most of the data was collected through INE – the Spanish Statistical Institute –, although data was also extracted from Mitchell (2013), DEMIG (2015), Guindo, Guindo and Fernández (2007), the World Bank, and from Prados de la Escosura (2017). Minor sets of data on historical migration were collected from Palazón Ferrando (1992) and from Rodríguez (2002).

A second component of the data collection was based on the review of 124 correspondence letters between migrants, non-migrants and returnees. These letters were accessed online at *Sobrecartas*, a digital, open-access archive that compiles correspondence letters between family members across Spain and between Spain, Argentina and the current EU. The commonality of this digital archive is that the migrants, non-migrants and returnees had a connection to Argentina, either because of the migration of a relative or a friend or because they were of Argentinian origin. This is a clear limitation but offers an opportunity to analyse the life conditions described in Spain between 1887-2009, as well as an overview of the migration projects and experiences of individuals and their families. The selection of the letters was done on the following grounds: (1) they were describing the life conditions, the (economic, political, demographic, cultural or technological) structure of Spain or they were referring to their migration project or to the migratory experience of a close member of the group, and (2) the date was stated in the letter or there was information to locate the approximate time of writing (e.g. no exact date, but reference to the political system). This chapter relies on the correspondence letters, which are identified as follows: for instance, L2 for letter number 2 and L13 for letter 13.

Finally, I reviewed 89 tweets. To select the tweets, three filters were set. First, the tweets needed to include one of the following words: *migración*, *emigración*, *emigrados* or *retornados*⁴. Second, tweets containing the following hashtags – *#Spanishrevolución*, *#nonosvamos*, *#nosechan*, *#15 M* – and some references to migration or exile were included⁵. Third, the tweets were published between 2007 and 2017. These tweets have facilitated the analysis on how perceptions of the socio-economic situation in Spain are related to the emigration patterns after the 2007 economic crisis. This chapter relies on the tweets, identified as T1 for tweet number 1 and T10 for tweet number 10, for example.

4. An historical overview of Spanish migration patterns

Before analysing how the rationales for migrating have changed in Spain over time, I briefly describe four periods of social transformation with distinct migration dynamics. To do this, I adopt the social transformation framework. As previously mentioned, the approach explores processes of fundamental social change through five interrelated dimensions – the political, the economic, the technological, the demographic, and the cultural (de Haas *et al.* 2020: 18). Transformation occurs in each dimension, albeit at different speeds and times, as part of the same process of fundamental social change. The spread of transformations is also unequal across societies and regions, and consequently, internal and international migrations are shaped differently at the global and regional scale (Skeldon, 2014), as well as within countries (Vezzoli,

⁴ Migration, emigration, emigrated and returnees, respectively.

⁵ These hashtags have been used to refer to the deterioration of living conditions and the downturn of the economic structure in Spain.

2020b). Since the late 19th century, I present four periods of social transformation in Spain with distinct migration dynamics:

First, *from the early 1880s to the mid-1930s*, a period associated with an incipient process of industrialization and urbanization, and emerging social security nets, when internal migrations became more permanent and there was a change in the geographical orientation of internal in-migration flows. Starting in the early 1880s, the productive structure of the country started experiencing reverberations due to an emerging industrialization process (Figure 1). Consequently, the traditional agricultural destinations and urban nuclei in Southern Spain lost importance, while in-migration rates (per total population) doubled in the North-Eastern and Eastern regions (Paluzie, Pons, Silvestre & Tirado, 2009; Rodríguez, 2002; Silvestre, 2005, 2007).

Figure 1. Number of economically active population by economic sector, 1860-1920

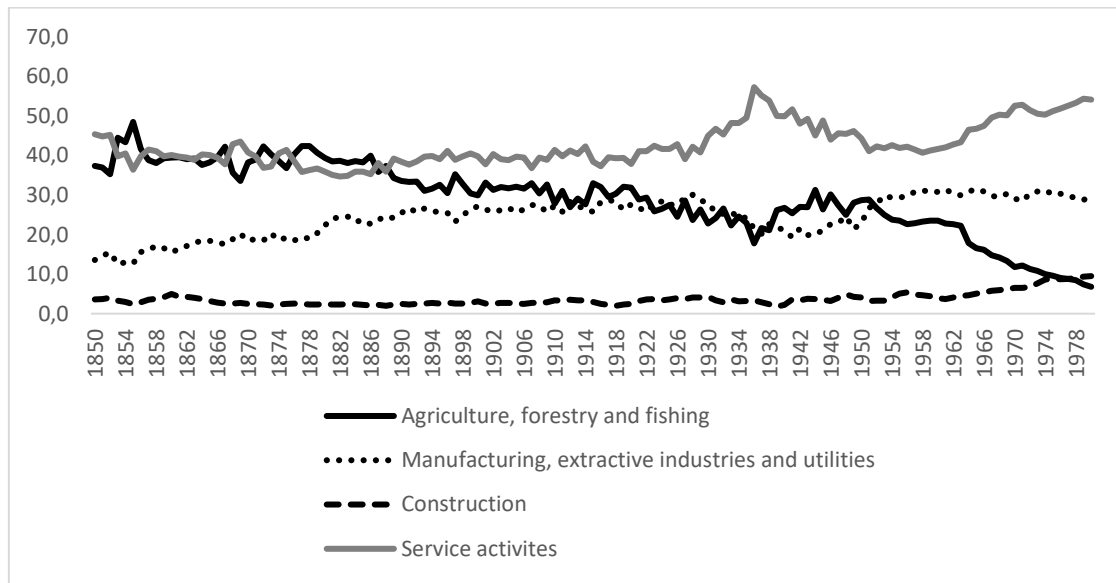


Source: Mitchell (2013)

Second, *from the mid-1930s to the late-1950s*, which were characterized by the Civil War, the immediate post-war period and the initial years of Franco's regime, the industrialization and urbanization processes, and the role of the state as provider of guarantees stopped and, apart from the worsening of living conditions of the population, migration patterns also experienced a halt. In fact, throughout the 1940s and the 1950s, the capabilities of the population, including the capabilities to move, decreased heavily. Apart from the impasse of the economic structure and the decrease in the purchase power (Benito del Pozo, 1990; Guillén, 1997; Prados de la Escosura, 2017), the Francoist regime aimed to control both internal and international migration. To achieve this, emigration was de facto prohibited immediately after the Civil War and decrees regulating the repatriation of emigrants were established. In the mid-1940s, this prohibition was lifted; however, restrictive provisions, including the limitation of the issuance of passports and increasing military controls in the borders, were imposed (Kreienbrink, 2009). In addition, efforts to control internal migration were also made by establishing internal travel documents or extensive visa applications to move into and work in the main cities (Corbera, 2015; Díaz Sánchez, 2016; Teijeiro, 2012).

Third, *from the 1960s to the mid-1970s*, when new socio-economic and cultural models emerged, and migration diversified and increased in volume. Starting in the late 1950s, agriculture underwent a sustained contraction and industrial sectors continued their sharp increase and reached a plateau at around 30% of the GDP, peaking in the mid-1960s (Figure 2) (Prados de la Escosura, 2017). The service sector, after decreasing during the Civil War, also experienced a continuous expansion. The technological mechanization of agriculture (Clar, 2008; González Molina *et al.* 2020), together with growing non-agricultural employment, triggered a massive rural exodus (Collantes, 2007a), which led to the emergence of a working class that had low salaries and poor working conditions (Casanova and Gil Andres 2012: 182). Nevertheless and despite these economic reverberations, most urban growth and in-migration patterns were still concentrated in a small number of industrialized destinations along the Northeast, Madrid and the Mediterranean coastline (García Barbancho, 1967; Hoggart & Paniagua, 2001; Le Gallo & Chasco, 2008). Furthermore, the migratory policy also experienced an important transition, especially after the establishment of the Spanish Emigration Institute (IEE) in 1956, when the state strengthened its tutelary character regarding international movement by offering legal and employment assistance to emigrants (Kreienbrink, 2009). The role of the IEE, together with the economic instability of Latin American countries, triggered a change in the geographic orientation of international migration flows toward continental Europe.

Figure 2. Shares of output components in GDP (%) (current prices), 1850-1980



Source: Prados de la Escosura (2017, 296-300)

Finally, *from the mid-1970s to the present*, Spain transitioned towards democracy, the welfare state consolidated⁶, and international and inter-regional migration patterns slowed down until the 2007 crisis, after which they rapidly increased. In fact, starting in the mid-1990s, when the Spanish economy experienced a spectacular growth (Royo, 2009), inter-regional development

⁶ The expansion of the welfare state in the late 1980s was, however, not accompanied by an equal distribution of resources and social guarantees across regions (Guillén, 1997).

differences reduced⁷ (Hierro, Maza & Villaverde, 2019; Ródenas, 1994). The 2007 economic crisis marked, however, a turning point. Household indebtedness increased significantly (Domínguez-Mujica, Guerra-Talavera, & Parreño-Castellano, 2014) and unemployment rates grew 13.16% between 2007 and 2011. The economic deceleration was accompanied by growing international out-migrations (DEMIG 2015), being the majority highly educated, young people migrating to the UK, France and Germany (Izquierdo, Jimeno, & Lacuesta, 2015) from Madrid, Galicia and the Canary Islands (Ortega-Rivera, i Valls, & i Coll, 2016). In comparison, the volume of internal gross migration declined since 2007, probably due to increasing precarity and high unemployment rates (Hierro, Maza & Villaverde, 2019). Still, the main metropolitan, industrial cities, including Madrid and Barcelona, have received a higher share of migrants, whereas the Canary and Balearic Islands and provinces along the Mediterranean coastline lost attractiveness as destinations (Hierro, Maza & Villaverde, 2019).

5. The changing meaning of migration aspirations across time: From necessity to quality of life

The previous section has revised how the orientation, volume and timing of migration have shifted over time as the Spanish society developed. How are these changes related to the rationales for migrating? Do we observe shifts in the factors influencing migration? To answer these questions, I now rely on the 124 correspondence letters and 89 tweets and analyze how migration rationales have transitioned over time. I differentiate between three transitions: first, when migration, especially until the late-1950s, was predominantly associated with instrumental factors and materialistic orientations; second, starting in the late 1950s, when intrinsic rationales for migration, related to leisure activities, gained momentum; and finally, and particularly after the 2008 economic crisis, when the increasing precarity and instability led to a spike in instrumental migration.

5.1. *Surviving through migration*

The incipient industrialization and urbanization process, together with the fragmentation of state expansion, triggered important regional and class differences during the first decades of the 20th century, leading to important increases in inequality. Net disposable income and per capita private consumption rates remained low from the early 1880s to the 1920s (Prados de la Escosura, 2017: 49), which impacted negatively on the living conditions of the population. The lack of cash among agricultural workers, especially in North-Western regions (L5; L16; L18), and the overall low productivity of land fields made it difficult for agricultural workers to gain a living (L5; L7 L13; L16). Indeed, employment in agriculture was highly seasonal, particularly in Southern regions (L10), and the rates of hidden unemployment were high (Pérez Moreda, 1999: 57). The conditions of workers in urban nuclei were also poor due to the low salaries but expensive prices (L3; L7; L8).

⁷ Despite the reduction on inter-regional inequalities, there is an important spatial division in Spain: while the metropolitan areas of Madrid, Barcelona or Bilbao and key tourist enclaves in the East and South are key social and economic locations concentrating service and industries and the main destinations for migrants, towns in the Northwest, Centre and inland South are characterized by the predominance of agricultural workers (Sera, Vera, Tulla & Salvati, 2014) and present high out-migration patterns.

These conditions, together with international remittances fostered feelings of relative deprivation and increasing aspirations to move: non-migrant relatives, apart from money, also received magazines and newsletters about the situation in Argentina (L4) and Uruguay (L12), as well as positive feedback⁸ from already settled families and friends about the socio-economic conditions, the availability of goods and better quality clothing overseas (L2; L3; L5; L7; L13; L16; L19). Young people, then, aspired to escape from scarcity and improve their overall conditions by emigrating to Latin America with the help of their migrant networks (L3; L5; L7; L13; L16). However, the aspirations to move were not always fulfilled, considering that the lack of economic capital and the need to rely on the migratory network often led to periods of immobility (L5). Internal mobility was often an alternative to international migration (L9; L15; L17) and a mechanism to diversify the income of the family (Stark and Bloom, 1985), particularly during poor harvests (L15). Yet, migration aspirations were not only linked to increasing material wellbeing, but some also aspired to explore, live exciting adventures (L20), and obtain higher education (L19).

During the mid-1930s, the Civil War and the autarchic Francoist regime were accompanied by income contractions, a lack of civil liberties and deterioration of living and work conditions. Political instability, warfare and the food scarcity during the civil war triggered non-migratory mobility to mountainous zones (L22), as well as exile to Latin America (L28; L41; L46; L54; L55) and France (L32), where some families were divided and located in internment camps. Correspondence letters between exiled individuals in France, non-migrants and migratory kin in Latin America show the willingness to remigrate from France to Argentina (L32; L39) and Mexico (L37) for economic and political reasons, as well as to be closer to family members. The high prices and bad living conditions in France also stimulated aspirations to return to Spain once economic conditions and political instability improved (L32; L37; L38).

In addition, the Civil War and the immediate post-war period encouraged urban-rural migrations (L26; L27; L29; L33; L35; L40). The 'neo-ruralization' of Spain (Le Gallo and Chasco, 2008; Sabio Alcuten, 2006), however, was not accompanied by the end of scarcity and deprivation, or a slight increase in living conditions. Instead, the lack of cash and goods in rural areas (L22; L31; L46; L47; L52) and the expropriation of land due to political motives and/or economic interests (L23; L52) fostered rural-urban migrations since the end of the war. These migrations occurred despite the establishment of policies that aimed to halt internal migrations (Corbera, 2015; Díaz Sánchez, 2016; Teijeiro, 2012). Migrants aimed to secure an employment and get certain economic security, as the wages, employment opportunities and possibilities to save were practically non-existent in rural areas (L26; L27; L31; L40; L44; L46; L49; L52; L53) and the likelihood to support a family was low (L30; L53; L56). The limited access to education and other social services also encouraged migration to larger municipalities (L49; L51). Indeed, the greater services and role of the state in urban nuclei fostered aspirations to migrate and obtain a secure employment in the public administration (L57). Overall, living and working conditions remained low and opportunities were limited both in rural areas and urban nuclei (L35; L42; L48). Those with migratory kin asked for money, clothing and basic goods (L24; L30; L40; L41; L43; L50; L56), as well as for loans to migrate to Latin America (L36; L45; L54), as aspirations to move internationally and join family members in Latin America were common (L25; L28; L30; L37; L45; L54).

⁸ This, of course, does not mean that the experiences of the migratory kin were always positive, but rather, correspondence letters between migrants and non-migrants show that positive feedbacks were more common and tended to raise the curiosity of non-migrants.

5.2. Migrating to increase life quality

The high inflation rates, contractions in international trade and the development of a black economy drove the unsustainability of the regime, which stimulated a policy shift during the 1950s (Prados de la Escosura, Róses and Sanz Villaroya, 2010). The 1959 Stabilization and Liberalization Plan encouraged the opening of the economy and a free-market allocation of resources, as well as significant increases in labor productivity and GDP per capita. Between 1958 and 1974, private consumption per capita and GDP per capital grew at 5.1% and 5.5% annually, respectively (Prados de la Escosura, 2017: 49), and the industrialization process intensified. The occupation structure transformed, as agriculture's share on GDP experienced a sustained contraction since the mid-1950s, while the industrial and service sectors gained importance. The expansion of industrial employment, together with the slow liberalization process, changes in migration policy and the incipient bottom-up cultural and political change, slowly shifted the rationales for migrating from a strategy to secure a livelihood to a project to improve life quality and obtain better working conditions, and access leisure activities.

First, international and internal rural-urban migrations intensified. Employment opportunities in rural areas continued to be scarce, the working conditions were harder than in urban nuclei and benefits were limited (L68; L81; L122; L119; L120). In contrast, the opening of new factories, the greater share of industries and service in urban areas and the provision of social benefits for industrial workers attracted migrants looking for more stable jobs (L58; L67; L72; L74; L98; L100; L104; L109; L121), health insurance (L75), retirement benefits (L89) and for promotion opportunities (L96; L100; L109; L124). Despite the greater access to consumer goods and better working conditions, wages in industry and services remained low (L64; L83), following the wage freeze decrees of previous decades (Lieberman, 1995), while the costs of living were on the rise (L64; L78; L94; L116). International emigration became a mechanism, not only to secure greater working conditions, but also to save money (L60; L71; L80; L97; L111) and achieve high-quality education (L110).

Second, apart from the increasing employment opportunities, migration to urban cities became increasingly associated with better housing and greater access to leisure activities (L63; L65; L75; L79; L85). The changing consumption patterns (Brändle Señán, 2008) and flourishing culture of leisure (Rueda Lafond 2005) were accompanied by rising aspirations to go to the cinema, trying different restaurants or enjoying the weekends (L75; L79; L85). Similarly, correspondence letters show the emerging relevance of lifestyle migration, as temporary intra-urban and urban-rural migrations were also linked to improving living standards and to a quiet life, especially among retirees. On the one hand, the widespread of motor vehicles allowed commuting between rural and urban areas (L97; L115), subsequently allowing migrants to get "the best out of both worlds" (L97). On the other, the number of holiday homes increased 86.06% during the 1961-1970 period (INE YEAR), which facilitated seasonal mobility, primarily to the Mediterranean region, as a quest for sunny weather (L99; L105; L107; L123), life-long vacations (L102; L103; L105; L123) and to improve health and wellbeing (L107; L115).

Finally, by the mid-1970s, the economy had slowed down, unemployment rates were on the rise and employment was heavily informal (L86; L87; L90; L92; L94). For some, the difficulties to access a job were coped with rural-urban and intra-urban non-migratory mobilities during inter-harvest periods and during high seasons, respectively (L76; L93; L99). Obtaining an employment in the public administration was also a strategy to secure an income during inter-harvest periods, achieve greater working and life conditions and set the stage to permanently settle in bigger municipalities, where the presence of the state was more prominent (L99; L117; L119; L122).

5.3. Looking for 'good work' and a 'good society' as the rationales for migrating

The transition from a net emigration to a net immigration country was called into question during the 2008 economic crisis, when immigration flows started gradually decreasing and emigration patterns increased rapidly. In 2013 immigration flows reached their lowest point with 280.772 arrivals, while total emigration flows peaked that same year with 532.303 departures⁹ (INE, 2020). Disaggregating emigration patterns by nationality indicates that emigration flows of non-Spanish citizens have been more voluminous in absolute terms, yet, the percentage increase of Spanish emigrants has been greater: Spanish emigration has grown 118.86% between 2008 and 2013, whereas emigration of non-Spaniards has done so by 80.04%. The emigration of nationalized individuals has contributed to the increase in numbers, as certain emigration flows, such as migration to Ecuador, are primarily composed of nationalized and second-generation migrants (González-Ferrer, 2013).

Apart from rising rates of actual migration, aspirations to move have also grown, especially among younger cohorts. In fact, emigration of Spanish nationals remains segregated by age, and primarily composed by young individuals – in 2015, 25-34 age cohorts composed 28.06% of total Spanish emigrants (INE, 2020). Similarly, Van Mol (2016) employs the Flash Eurobarometer 395 data and shows that 59.8% of the youth population aged 16-30 years aspired to move internationally in 2014, just outnumbered by Bulgaria, Romania, Estonia, Slovenia and Croatia. This resurgence of emigration has been primarily associated with the economic crisis, the lack of employment opportunities and increasing discontent with the social, political and economic structure (González-Ferrer, 2013). The analysis of 89 tweets related to emigration since the beginning of the economic crisis complements these views and suggests that aspirations to move are driven by three main factors, associated with instrumental rationales: (1) job insecurity, (2) ideas about the 'good society', and (3) professional fulfillment.

First, the economic crisis has eroded job security and temporality remains a characteristic of the labor market. Temporary contracts have maintained above 23% of the total employment contracts in every quarter of the year (EUROSTAT, 2020) and the youth unemployment rate continues to be one of the highest in the EU. Indeed, the unemployment rate of those aged between 15 and 24 peaked in 2013 with a 55.50% rate and has remained around 30% since then (World Bank, 2020). The unemployment rates for 25-29 age cohorts have also stayed around 20% since 2009 (INE, 2020) and the exclusion from the labor market has meaningfully impacted university graduates – in 2014, the unemployment rate of college graduates reached 39.5% and 24.2% in 2014 for those aged 20-24 and 25-29 years, respectively (INE, 2020). The exclusion and the precarious working conditions of the labor market fostered emigration. Low salaries, high unemployment and the temporality of the contracts confronted aspirations for a 'good job' fitting the educational background of university graduates (T9; T20; T26; T28; T33; T40; T48; T57; T59; T62; T64; T65; T66; T67; T69; T70; T77; T88). The increasing discontent has been reflected on the development of several hashtags, of which *#nonosvamos* and *#nosechan*¹⁰ attracted most attention; these illustrate the general perception among the youth, who equate this new flow of emigration to professional exile (T9; T20; T28).

⁹ Official figures, however, underestimate the volume of emigration and González-Ferrer (2013) has suggested that around 700.000 individuals might have left between 2008 and 2012.

¹⁰ These hashtags have been used together, meaning 'we are not leaving, they kick us out'

Second, the economic crisis and the subsequent austerity programs have negatively affected the welfare state. Important shifts in political economy since 2010, including welfare cutbacks and fiscal tightening (Muñoz de Bustillo, 2013), together with job destruction, have triggered increasing inequality rates (World Bank, 2020) and growing disparities in rent distribution (Muñoz de Bustillo, 2013). Discontent with the Spanish socio-political structure and high corruption rates also encouraged emigration. Corruption and favoritism (T5; T6; T8; T15; T17; T35; T41; T43; T44; T54), as well as cutbacks in the main programs of social spending (T6; T7; T8; T11; T15; T33; T84) appeared as main factors hindering finding a job and thence, encouraging emigration (T9; T15; T55; T63; T72). The spread of the 15M movement¹¹ both in Spain and among Spanish emigrants and calls for more comprehensive political economic and social policies illustrate that the Spanish welfare state has departed from the 'good society', which is associated with social guarantees. Indeed, the dismantlement of the welfare state and the reduction of collective rights emerged as a reason preventing return (T25; T21; T30; T36; T39; T79; T80).

Finally, job vulnerability and temporality impede professional fulfillment. Emigration has also been a strategy to obtain better working conditions, get promoted and balance personal and professional life (T46; T50; T53; T54). Despite the unstable Spanish economic situation, there are aspirations to return once employment conditions improve and opportunities for business entrepreneurship are put in place (T48; T49; T50; T54).

6. Discussion and conclusion

Recent operationalizations of the social transformation approach (de Haas et al., 2020) have triggered investigations on the changes that migration patterns experience over time, particularly in regard to the timing, orientation, volume and composition of flows (Berriane, de Haas and Natter 2021; Osburg, 2020; Rodriguez-Pena, 2020; Schewel and Legass Bahir, 2019; Vezzoli 2020a, 2020b; Wielstra, 2020). Drawing on this same approach, emerging research has shown that the rationales for international migration also change over time, as communities develop, and as access to social and political rights gains momentum (Jolivet, 2020). However, we know little about how the two dimensions of migration aspirations, this is, the intrinsic and instrumental dimensions of human (im)mobility (de Haas, 2021), intersect and transition. The fact that intrinsic and instrumental migration aspirations are not clear-cut, and both are, instead, conflated challenges research on how the rationales for migrating shift over time. This article, as part of ongoing research within the MOVES project, initially shows that, apart from changes in migration configurations, the rationales for mobility also change over time, as material wellbeing increases, and societies transform. Indeed, as the Spanish society developed, intrinsic rationales for migrating, especially linked to leisure activities and to the willingness to explore, gained momentum. Nevertheless, instead of observing a smooth transition from materialistic to post-materialistic orientations, or from intrinsic to instrumental rationales, the precarity of the current capitalist structure (Azmanova, 2020) has been accompanied by instrumental (or materialistic) rationales for migration, including getting better working conditions and greater access to a 'good society'. The fact that intrinsic and instrumental aspirations for migration might shift over time implies the need to research further how material and post-material orientation in societies can impact the factors contributing to mobility. Continuing work on this project will delve deeper into these topics.

¹¹ The 15M movement, also known as the *indignados* movement, is an anti-austerity movement that started taking place in 2011.

7. References

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