4.8. Spain

Spain has experienced an exponential increase of foreign population during the economic boom 1998-2008 and received more than 5 million foreigners in less than a decade, who now account for 12.3% of the Spanish population (2011 figures). Moreover, it is worth noting that among the foreign population, 56.6% come from developing countries. This, together with the lessons learnt from its own experience as a country of emigration in the previous decades, has led Spain to adopt an important role in the design of M&D activities. Spain has moved from a the co-development approach, initially carried by local and regional authorities and focused on the contribution of migrants’ associations in their countries of origin, to a broader approach of the M&D nexus. M&D is defined by the State as an integral part of the Spanish external cooperation policies as well as its domestic integration policies. M&D programmes are mainly implemented by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. However, the constitutional Law 4/2000 of 11 January on Rights and Freedoms of Foreigners in Spain and on their Social Integration defines the M&D nexus as one of the principles to be followed by all public administrations in charge of migration issues. Informal inter-ministerial meetings for the coordination of migration policy take place fortnightly. In Spain local and regional authorities and the private sector, such as banking institutions and workers’ associations, are actively involved in the implementation of M&D activities. Priority regions in terms of M&D activities are Northern and sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America. Since its accession to the EU, Spain has had a pioneering and very active role in the promotion of the M&D nexus. It is the initiator of the EU Global Approach to Migration (GAM) together with France and has actively contributed to its promotion and implementation. Spain has so far been an important participant and contributor to all the editions of the Global Fund for Migration and Development (GFMD) and is involved in the UN High-level Dialogue on Migration and Development (UN HLD).

4.8.1. The Migration and Development concept

In Spain, the M&D nexus is mainly linked to the notion of co-development (i.e. code-desarrollo), which was first mentioned in the Constitutional Law 4/2000 of 11 January on Rights and Freedoms of Foreigners in Spain and on their Social Integration, however without offering a clear definition. This focuses on “the promotion of dialogue and cooperation with countries of origin and transit of immigration, through framework agreements aimed

263 The foreign population in Spain has been estimated to 5,711,040 for 2012 (Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Avance de la Explotación estadística del Padrón a 1 de enero de 2012 (Datos provisionales), Notas de Prensa, 19 de abril de 2012, viewed at 10 August 2012, http://www.ine.es/prensa/nph710.pdf.)


at effectively ordering migration flows and promoting and coordinating efforts of development cooperation and co-development”. 264

The first definition of co-development was given by the so-called GRECO Plan (2001-2004)265 of the Ministry of Interior which paved the way to introduce the term co-development in the political agenda.266 In line with the EU Tampere policies, the GRECO Plan focused on the management of migration flows through voluntary return and migrant’s reintegration in their countries of origin.

Subsequently, the 2005-2008 Master Plan for Spanish Cooperation267 included for the first time the term co-development referring to “a multilateral model based on migratory flows as a source of wealth for the countries of origin and destination, and co-development as an area of multicultural and transnational activity”. In 2005, Spain established a task group on migration and development issues, which gathered different Secretariats of State (i.e. International Cooperation, Immigration and Emigration, and Economy), workers unions and civil society representatives. In December 2005, the task group established the Consensus Document on Co-development (Documento de Consenso sobre Codesarrollo)268 where the latter was considered as an alternative way of development cooperation. Its objective was “to foster human development and integration in a welfare context” (author’s translation). Concurrently, the European Council of December 2005 adopted the Global Approach to Migration (GAM), which Spain partly initiated and which includes development among other fields linked to migration.

Another essential instrument for Spain’s M&D policies was the “Strategic plan on Citizenship and Integration, 2007-2010”269, which integrated co-development as a guideline. Integration in the broader sense was thus included in the M&D nexus via activities such as: “training migrants who can be development agents when they return to their country of origin; supporting migrants’ reintegration in their countries of origin; orienting savings towards productive investment in the countries of origin; promoting the fund for microcredits for projects of basic social development in the countries of origin; and giving technical assistance in the countries of origin of the migrants”.270

Finally, in 2008, the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation (MFAC) published a series of guidelines on M&D policies, which mainly covered the following fields: i) addressing development strategies which influence the root causes of migration, ii) designing and implementing appropriate and coordinated public policies in countries of origin, transit and destination; iii) deploying humanitarian actions under circumstances of necessity; iv) supporting and implement-

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264 Möhl, S., The Same But Different? Codevelopment policies in France, Germany, Spain and the institutions of the European Union from a comparative perspective, Documentos CIDOB, No.20, Barcelona, 2010, p.56.


270 Author’s translation
Migration and development and co-development, and therefore involving diasporas in Spain. These tools have helped to introduce M&D as a fully-fledged sector priority of the Spanish development policy, aiming at “encouraging mutual benefits between migration and development by promoting co-development, empowering diasporas and supporting the design and the implementation of appropriate and coherent public policies on migration in the countries of origin, transit and destination, while protecting migrants’ rights in all the phases of the process”.271

Spain’s M&D concept has evolved substantially since the country approached it for the first time in 2000. Spain has moved from a traditional approach to co-development initially promoted by local and regional administrations, which mainly supported projects carried by migrants’ associations in their countries of origin, to a wider policy of M&D defined by the state, which gives priority to the following activities: i) establishing migration management and information mechanisms (in particular related to legal migration channels, circular migration and temporary mobility, and voluntary return); ii) promoting vocational training oriented towards skills creation and improvement (including the recognition of diplomas and qualifications, and alternatives to brain-drain); iii) mechanisms to foster migration’s economic impact on development (in particular through mechanisms to improve the impact of remittances and to encourage entrepreneurship capacities of migrants and their families); and iv) stimulating diasporas and migrants associations’ links with and contribution to the development of their countries of origin through co-development.

4.8.2. Institutional framework and policy coherence for Migration and Development

The already mentioned Constitutional Law 4/2000 of 11 January on Rights and Freedoms of Foreigners in Spain and on their Social Integration attributes migration policy-making to the central government.272 Two ministries are directly involved in the process: the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation. Their competencies related to M&D are not clearly defined and the former does not appear as a direct beneficiary of the ODA for M&D activities. However, the above-mentioned legislation defines the M&D nexus as one of the principles to be followed by all public administrations in charge of migration issues. Despite the fact there is still no clear strategy defined, “the co-development policy [is to be] implemented in line with the policies defined by the Ministry of [Employment and Social Security] and, specifically, by the State Secretariat for Immigration and Emigration, in coordination with other administrations and cooperation agents”. To that end, informal inter-ministerial meetings for the coordination of migration policy take place fortnightly. They are convened by the Ministry of Employment and Social Security and involve the ministries and agencies concerned by the issues at stake.

At state level, M&D programmes are mainly implemented by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs through the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID), in particular...

271 Author’s translation, Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores y de Cooperación (MAEC), Principales Líneas de Actuación en Migración y Desarrollo, Madrid: Dirección General de Planificación y Evaluación de Políticas para el Desarrollo, Febrero 2008.


as regards to co-development activities. However, whereas governmental authorities benefit from 46.7% of the funds for M&D programmes, local authorities play an important role in the implementation. Their competency in the field has been reinforced as municipalities and autonomous communities share competencies with the government in the specific fields of migrants’ reception and integration policies. The important role they have played in the promotion of co-development since the early stages has thus been reinforced by the inclusion of integration in the M&D nexus. Their contributions mainly consist of organising or financing conferences and training courses on co-development, publishing studies and reports, promoting social integration of the migrants and strengthening their links with their countries of origin, co-financing co-development projects together with migrant associations and development NGOs, supporting migrants’ return, and encouraging remittances oriented towards entrepreneurship and productive activities.

Even though public administrations at national, autonomous and municipal level, as well as migrant associations and development NGOs have the most important role in the implementation of M&D activities, it is worth to mention the importance of the private sector, such as banking institutions and workers’ associations. For instance, through its development foundation (Fundación Pagesos Solidaris), the Catalan union of agricultural workers (Unió de Pagesos), which had been strongly involved in the coordination of the direct recruitment of Moroccan workers, is now involved in the promotion of co-development activities such as the reception and integration of temporary workers and the raising of awareness about their role as development agents in their communities of origin (e.g. Sidi Yamani project in Northern Morocco). Banking institutions such as “La Caixa” have included co-development in their social work, through activities such as conferences and training courses for migrants’ associations, support to co-development projects, studies and publications on co-development as well as micro-credit programmes and remittance facilitation.

In Spain, co-development appeared closely linked in the political agenda to policy coherence for development. For instance, the Master Plan for Spanish Cooperation 2005-2008 included the co-development component in the section on Policy Coherence. It explicitly emphasised the need for coordination between the administrations and cooperation agents in the implementation of the co-development policy. Besides, it called for the creation of “a system for the coordination, monitoring and evaluation of projects and policies, where all players are represented, and linking with international experiences”. Within this framework, the 2007 Annual Plan for Spanish Cooperation called for “broad, comprehensive and coherent” development strategies aimed at poverty reduction, education and health improvement, productivity support, economic growth, job creation, good governance, democracy, and human rights, which would at the same time have an impact of the causes of migration (root and structural).

Besides the need for coherence between the different policy fields and actors at national, regional and local level, Spanish activities and priorities are aligned with other cooperation and development agencies at bilateral and multilateral level, mainly EU and UN bodies. Since its accession to the EU, Spain has supported the creation of a Common Policy on Asylum and

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274 AECID, 2005, op. cit., p. 120.

Migration and has contributed to the inclusion of migration in the EU political agenda, in particular by its pioneering and very active role in the promotion of the M&D nexus. It is, together with France, the initiator of the *EU Global Approach to Migration* (GAM) and has actively contributed to its promotion and implementation.

Even though political coordination seems to have improved, in particular regarding the Spanish position in international arenas, the main obstacle to coherence and coordination in terms of development aid are the different approaches to the M&D nexus applied by the different actors at all levels: some consider M&D exclusively under the angle of development, while others consider it mainly as an instrument for managing migration flows through voluntary return and circular migration programmes as well as migrants’ integration.

### 4.8.3. Operationalising the Migration and Development policy

Spanish aid directly oriented towards M&D programmes accounted for 31 million Euro in 2009 but was drastically reduced to 8 million Euro in 2010.²⁷⁶ That is to say, it went from 0.62% of the total ODA to nearly 0.18%. This can be explained by a stricter selection of M&D labelled activities as well as a decrease in the number of activities involving migrants by both the government and the autonomous communities.

In terms of co-development programmes, few countries are given a higher priority: Morocco, Ecuador and Senegal, and more recently Colombia and Bolivia. More broadly, the priority regions in terms of M&D activities are *Northern and sub-Saharan Africa* (mainly Western Africa and in particular Nigeria, Gambia, Mali), and *Latin America*. In fact, due to its colonial ties, Latin America has always been a priority region for Spanish cooperation. As regards M&D policies, it has remained a priority as 6 out of the 15 main countries of origin of migration flows into Spain are Latin American: Ecuador, Colombia, Peru, Bolivia, Argentina and Dominican Republic.²⁷⁷ On the other hand, sub-Saharan Africa has gained priority as it is comprehensively considered a priority region for Spanish cooperation since the Ministry of Foreign Affairs established the Africa Plan in 2006²⁷⁸, which contributed to defining cooperation in migration management as one of the main objectives of Spain’s foreign policy.²⁷⁹ Most recently, *Romania* has been included as a high-priority country. Indeed, the number of Romanian migrants in Spain has quadrupled since 2006 to become the first nationality of origin before Moroccans, British and Ecuadorians, accounting for nearly 16% of the foreign population in Spain.

Within the countries of origin, the priority partners are public administrations, social organisations, development NGOs, academic and research institutions, as well as the financial sector. Among the numerous initiatives involving these partners, the below mentioned are of particular interest.

In terms of bilateral cooperation, in March 2005, Spain signed a *Debt Swap Programme*...
Agreement with Ecuador aimed at converting 50 million dollars of external debt into investment for development in the regions which are most affected by poverty and with the highest emigration rates. Priority was given to projects in the fields of education and social development, which involved Spanish NGOs and private enterprises. As part of the results, the first evaluations estimate that the 22 educational projects implemented between 2005 and 2011 had directly and indirectly generated employment (for more than 4000 people) and that they have contributed to reactivate the local economy.

In addition, within the framework of its new foreign policy towards Africa and in line with the Global Approach to Migration, Spain has signed bilateral framework agreements on M&D (the so-called Second Generation Agreements), with The Gambia, Guinea-Conakry, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Niger, Nigeria and Senegal. These new agreements include measures on regular migration such as the facilitation of labour migration according to the labour market needs; the fight against irregular migration and trafficking in human beings; and the synergies between development and migration as well as mutual assistance regarding migrants’ integration. At EU level, Spain is, together with France, Luxembourg and Portugal, a member of the Mobility Partnership (MP) signed in 2007 between the EU and Cape Verde, which follows the same pattern and was partly inspired by the Spanish experience.

At the multilateral level, one of the most relevant projects is the Spain-ECOWAS Fund on Migration and Development, adopted within the framework of the second EU-Africa Summit on 9 December 2007. The general objective is “the eradication of poverty in the ECOWAS region, through effective and sustainable regional integration and institutional capacity building”; and more specifically, in line with the Global Approach to Migration, “to foster the positive effects between migration and development through the promotion of adequate and coherent public policies in the sphere of migration and development and the protection of the rights of migrants”.

This multi-stakeholder partnership led by the ECOWAS Commission and the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation has a budget of EUR 10 million, equally distributed to finance projects from civil society organisations as well as ministries and public institutions of the ECOWAS member states, at regional, national and local level. Regarding institutional capacity building support, the priorities of the programme are the free movement of people and the fight against irregular migration and trafficking of human beings (in particular women and children).

4.8.4. Involvement in international fora on Migration and Development

As initiator of the EU Global Approach to Migration (GAM) Spain has actively contributed to its promotion and implementation through regional dialogues. Together with Morocco and the support of France, it launched the first Euro-African Ministerial Conference on Migration and Development held in Rabat on 10-11 July 2006, which was presented in the Spanish Africa Plan as the

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283 Rubio, B., Presentation by Begonia Rubio, Coordinator of the ECOWAS Program, Embassy of Spain / AECID, at the GFMD 2011 thematic meeting on Facilitating South-South Labour Migration, Abuja, 17-18 October 2011.
tool for “boosting the Europeanization of migration policy with Africa”. Spain also had an active role in the subsequent Inter-Ministerial Euro-African Conferences (Paris, 25 November 2008 and Dakar, 23 November 2011) and recently hosted and co-chaired with Morocco the high-level representatives’ follow-up meeting to the latter. Spain has also been very active in implementing the GAM in other geographical areas such as Latin America and the Caribbean (Ibero-American Meeting on Migration and Development held in Madrid 18-19 July 2006, and EU-LAC Structured and comprehensive Dialogue initiated in June 2009) and Eastern Europe (Prague Process initiated in April 2009).

Finally, Spain has been so far an important participant and contributor to the Global Forum for Migration and Development (GFMD) and was even considered as a potential host for 2011. The government was actively involved having chaired two round tables and participated in country teams. The government also provided financial resources for the organisation of the GFMD. However, its financial difficulties at the time of writing as well as the ministerial changes will certainly have an impact on its involvement, in which case Spain is considering compensating for those difficulties by adopting a more active approach regarding its intellectual contributions. Its position will continue to be coordinated within the framework of the EU. Concerning the GFMD structure, Spain is in favour of maintaining its current arrangement: intergovernmental, informal, independent and voluntary. It fiercely defends the independency of the GFMD, in particular concerning the UN HLD, and emphasizes that any conclusions or recommendations resulting from the UN referring to the GFMD activities should remain non-binding.
4.8.5. Sources


Ley Orgánica 8/2000, de 22 de diciembre, de reforma de la Ley Orgánica 4/2000, de 11 de enero, sobre derechos y libertades de los extranjeros en España y su integración social.

Ley Orgánica 2/2009, de 11 de diciembre, de reforma de la Ley Orgánica 4/2000, de 11 de enero, sobre derechos y libertades de los extranjeros en España y su integración social.


Rubio, B., *Presentation by Begonia Rubio, Coordinator of the ECOWAS Program, Embassy of Spain / AECID, at the GFMD 2011 thematic meeting on Facilitating South-South Labour Migration, Abuja, 17-18 October 2011*.