

# Latin Americans and Caribbeans in Europe: A Cross-Country Analysis

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## ABSTRACT

With the beginning of the 21st century, there has been an acceleration of migratory flows from Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) to Europe. As a result, and despite the negative impact of the economic crisis, 4.6 million Latin American and Caribbean immigrants reside in Europe, half of them in Spain. This article analyses the recent evolution of these migratory flows, their territorial distribution, and their demographic profiles according to the 2011 European census data disseminated by a new tool —the Census Hub— implemented by the European Statistical System. The analysis shows the existence of a high LAC immigrant concentration in Spain and in certain European cities, a marked young and feminized demographic profile, a great variety of educational levels and a different insertion in each European labour market, although many LAC immigrants work in low-skill occupations, being overqualified and underemployed in most of the countries.

## INTRODUCTION

New mobility and migration dynamics in Europe are characterized by high levels of cross-border mobility and diversification of migration flows. The number of international migrants in Europe — those born in a country other than the country of current residence — is estimated at 76 million people, including 4.64 million (6.1%) born on the other side of the Atlantic, in the Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) region.<sup>1</sup> In particular, inflows to Europe accelerated sharply at the beginning of the new century but were attenuated during the economic crisis that began in 2008, in the course of which some European countries, such as Spain and Greece, even experienced declines in the stock of international migrants and some emigration growth (Domingo and Blanes, 2015; Labrianidis and Pratsinakis, 2016). Despite this, the total number of immigrants living in Europe has not stopped growing, partly as a result of the rapid increase of refugee flows in recent years.

This Europe's new dynamics embrace a large LAC immigration, which is attracting particular attention not only because it has undergone a rapid growth since the end of the 1990s — turning Europe into the second receptor of LAC migrants outside the region — but also because of their demographic composition, which shows a high concentration of immigrants in productive ages and a large presence of women, revealing the rising feminization of the international flows toward Europe and becoming a paradigmatic example of the links between migration and gender roles and the place of women in the labour markets (Giorguli and Angoa, 2016).

The concentration of this recent migratory growth in the countries of southern Europe, especially Spain, Portugal and Italy, means that most of the studies have been undertaken in these countries.

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Despite the new relevant knowledge, difficulties related to data collecting and cross-country comparability had left some research areas unexplored. In order to fill this research gap in the existing literature, this article examines the socio-demographic characteristics and spatial distribution of LAC immigrants in Europe by conducting a broad empirical analysis drawing on new microdata collected and provided by Eurostat on recent migration flows and the Census Hub data referred to the year 2011. The aim is to present a depiction of immigrant LAC population in Europe which can contribute to the understanding of its diaspora, one of the largest population movements worldwide. The authors will first introduce the contextual background of LAC immigration to Europe. Secondly, they will offer a statistical examination of the LAC-born population (immigrants) in Europe by focusing on their socio-demographic attributes and their territorial distribution on the continent.

## CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND

Immigration from LAC countries to Europe began to increase with different and successive waves as of the second half of the twentieth century, when the previous historical migratory trend — characterized by large-scale emigration flows from Europe to the Americas — started to revert. Firstly, the Afro-Caribbean flow of migrants from the Caribbean ex-colonies to the UK, the Netherlands and France took place to fill post-war labour shortages in the former Western colonial powers (Brock, 1986; Peach, 1991; Castles and Miller, 1998; Cervantes-Rodríguez et al., 2009). Those flows were generated and encouraged by generous laws about immigration and citizenship — later restricted in the British case — and also by state institutional mechanisms to foster colonial labour migration in response to the metropolitan labour markets' needs for cheap workers (Brock, 1986; Condon and Ogden, 1991; Cervantes-Rodríguez et al., 2009:6). However, their shape and continuity are different due to the different immigration context in which they occurred because of specific decolonization policies and different rationales for integrating peoples into the nation (Byron and Condon, 2008:11, 16).

The second wave of migration, from the 1960s to the 1980s, involved politically motivated migration from some Central and South American countries, such as Cuba, Argentine, Chile, Uruguay, etc., suffering from political instability and oppressive dictatorships (Yépez del Castillo, 2007; Durand and Massey, 2010; López-Ramírez and Sánchez-Soto, 2016). Many of the migrants were highly-educated professionals and technicians. Also, during this period and following the announcement of Surinamese independence, a mass migration flow from Suriname to the Netherlands occurred in 1974-1975, as well as the continuity of the Antillean flows to France and the Netherlands. Between the late 1990s and the late 2000s, this second wave was followed by sudden, massive movements, involving labour migration from many South American countries like Ecuador, Colombia, Bolivia and Peru to Southern Europe, primarily Spain. The third of these migratory waves has slowed down considerably since the onset of worldwide recession. However, since 2014, a new migration process is being noticed as a response to the European economic recovery and the worsening of LAC countries' economic performance and political situation in the last years. The prospect of a better life on the other side of the Atlantic — higher salary but also the possibility to secure more stable jobs, medical insurance and financial support for business activities — has triggered recent economic emigration from LAC countries to Europe.

It is worth noting that, while affecting the number of new arrivals in Europe, the economic crisis has not led to the return of a considerable number of LAC citizens to their native regions and Europe's economic recovery has again increased the inflows. During the crisis period and unlike the USA (Canales, 2014), the stocks of immigrant LAC population in Europe was reduced, although not significantly. Rather, the crisis brought an increase of intra-European LAC movements, particularly outflows from Spain (Recaño et al., 2015; Pardo, 2018), one of the countries most affected by

the crisis, in what some authors have called onward migration (Newbold and Liaw, 1995). With the economic recovery, and the existence of an already large LAC diaspora in Europe — which may itself be a driving force for further migration (Pellegrino, 2004:5) — future increases of LAC immigration to Europe are expected, as recent data seem to confirm.

### **The scope of the European research**

Despite its quantitative importance, our knowledge of the inflows, settlement and disparity of LAC migrants in Europe is still incomplete, particularly when we refer to the socio-demographic characteristics of these migrants and their differences across countries (Bayona-i-Carrasco et al., 2018). Initial approaches to the study of LAC inflows and settlement in Europe are found in the British academia, according to Brock, probably because of “the almost obsessive researching of the ethnic minorities, especially the West Indians, in Britain” (1986: 9). Thus, as of the 1970s, some relevant studies on Afro-Caribbean migration to the UK (Foner, 1978; Peach, 1986, 1991) and other Western Europe countries — particularly France and Netherlands — were conducted (Cross and Entzinger, 1988; Condon and Ogden, 1991; Grosfoguel, 1997; Van Amersfoort and van Niekerk, 2006; Byron and Condon, 2008; Cervantes-Rodríguez et al., 2009).

Those works were followed by many others focusing on the rising Latin American inflows in Europe (Anthias and Lazaridis, 2000; Pellegrino, 2004; Peixoto, 2007, 2012; Poulen, 2007; Yépez del Castillo, 2007; McIlwaine, 2011, 2012; Pardo, 2018), particularly more concerned with recent migration to Spain, the European country that has received the largest number of LAC immigrants (McIlwaine, 2011:3) likely to result in long-term settlement (Escrivá, 1997; Martínez Pizarro, 2011; Pellegrino, 2004; Pérez-Caramés, 2004; Domingo et al., 2015) and, to a lesser extent, to Italy (Bonifazi and Ferruzza, 2006; D’Angelo, 2004; Riniolo, 2012) and Portugal (Fonseca et al., 2002; Malheiros, 2007). However, migration into many European countries is still poorly studied, so an overall picture of the current migration situation in Europe is lacking.

This academic gap is mainly due to the recency of Latin-American arrivals in Europe, the relatively low significance of LAC immigrants in some European countries and the inadequacy and lack of homogeneity of statistical data at the European level (Pellegrino, 2004:7) hitherto. In this respect, and despite the undeniable improvements in the production and dissemination of official statistics on international immigration in European countries, the retrospective analysis of the quantitative evolution of the LAC population in the continent continues to be a challenge. Similarly, the causes and consequences of LAC migration to Europe and the policy actions implemented by the different countries of destination have not been sufficiently studied.

## **EUROPE AS A MAGNET FOR LAC MIGRANTS**

The vast majority of the recent LAC migration flows was directed to southern Europe (Spain, Italy and Portugal), whose intense growth prior to the recession would be justified by the strong labour demand in some sectors of production, with the highest offers of low-skilled jobs, such as agriculture, tourism, construction, etc., as well as jobs in the domestic sphere, and by the growing ethnic businesses and entrepreneurship (King, 1993; King et al., 1997; Anthias and Lazaridis, 2000). Increasing female labour participation in recent decades gave rise to a strong demand for domestic and care-workers’ labour (Ribas-Mateos, 2004), in a situation of socio-demographic complementarity (Domingo, 2005). So there is a strong labour demand from the country of reception, associated with the formative improvement of younger generations and the entry of women in the labour market with greater intensity and expectations, generating high demand in the personal services sector (domestic work and care of children and elders), a demand frequently satisfied by Latin American

women. Hence, the flows received in some European countries, such as Spain or Italy, were highly feminized at their beginning, but more balanced later due to family reunification, revealing the pioneering role of Latin American women in the flows (Riniolo, 2012).

In the particular case of Spain — the major recipient of these transatlantic migratory flows — the ease of entry as a tourist and subsequent regularization processes to promote the legalization of immigrants are also seen as incentives to immigration (Ruiz Sandoval, 2006), as well as the stricter U.S. visa requirements and border controls since September 11, 2001 in the United States, which had been the traditional destination of those flows (Izquierdo, 2004; Domingo, 2005; Vono, 2010).<sup>2</sup> Thus, the LAC population in Spain has experienced an intense and continuous growth in absolute numbers (Vono, 2010; Vono and Bayona-i-Carrasco, 2011; Hierro, 2016) until 2009 and a mild slow-down and subsequent decline for most of these origins during the crisis (Torres Pérez, 2014; Bayona-i-Carrasco et al., 2017). Despite this, growth in some nationalities continued to be observed, especially in some cases where the conditions of the countries of origin continue to deteriorate (Venezuela or Honduras, for example). The latest Spanish data, however, show a new general growth of LAC population in Spain, coinciding with the country's economic recovery.

Moreover, LAC high emigration to Europe also reflects colonial and historical patterns and preferential treatments in legislation in the receiving countries. As for Spain, numerous studies on the main driving forces behind this transatlantic flow place emphasis on the role of the economic (Padilla and Peixoto, 2007), emotional and political factors (Avila-Tàpies and Domínguez-Mujica, 2015). Spain is the main destination, due to post-colonial and diasporic ties, language, and cultural and religious affinities with most of the LAC countries; and to the fact that Spanish legislation has conferred upon them preferential immigration rights and a rapid access to citizenship (Escrivá, 1997; Izquierdo et al., 2002; Pérez-Caramés, 2004; Vono, 2010; Avila-Tàpies and Domínguez-Mujica, 2015; Hierro, 2016), promoting the trans-generational return to the ancestral homeland or former colonial metropolis. The same thing occurred in Italy, with a legislation that was very favourable to the acquisition of Italian citizenship by *ius sanguinis* (right of blood) for even third-, fourth- or fifth-generation descendants of Italian emigrants (Tintori, 2011), who often end up migrating to other European countries, such as Spain or the United Kingdom. This is also the case of the Brazilians in Portugal, which granted them an advantage in the acquisition of Portuguese citizenship (Fonseca et al., 2002).

Despite the importance of the labour market in drawing flows, other factors also play a decisive role in LAC movements to Europe. One of them is the offer of higher education —increasingly internationalized to attract more foreign students. This is the case of Brazilian students seeking degrees in Portugal (Fonseca et al., 2016) or of Spanish-speaking LAC student flows to Spain. But this is also observed in students moving to London, Berlin or Paris, with all these cities hosting a large number of LAC students, mainly attracted by their high-quality educational systems. Unlike labour flows, these LAC flows have remained at constant levels despite the economic crisis in Europe.

Lastly, the dimensions of onward migration should be considered, because it has increased over the past few years as a result of the recession, meaning a growing mobility of LAC migrants from southern European countries to other European countries, particularly the UK (McIlwaine, 2012). In many cases, it is an education-related migration, but there were also labour flows to obtain low-skill jobs in precarious situations (Mas, 2017).

## STATISTICAL DATA AND METHODOLOGY

For the analysis of LAC immigrant stocks, the census data available through the online application of the European Statistics Office (Eurostat) called Census Hub — an Open Data Project that makes

available to users the socio-demographic information derived from the stock data of population and housing censuses of up to 32 European countries for the year 2011— was used.<sup>3</sup> One particularly interesting and important characteristic of the application is that it provides harmonized statistical data, which guarantee comparability between countries. This helps to overcome one of the main difficulties in the study of migration, such as an international comparison, and allows us to deal with a specific immigrant community—in our case the LAC population—at the European level.

However, as in any other database, it presents some disadvantages. For example, one of the most important flaws is the lack of breakdown of these data at a country (and nationality) level for the Netherlands, where the national origin of its 340 thousand immigrants are unknown, a situation that especially affects the calculation for those born in its former colonies (Table 2). Furthermore, there are other small contradictions, like the case of Switzerland, where the reported population refers only to those over the age of 15 who were legally resident in the country. In other cases, cells with values below 5 are not shown, which can generate small disparities in the final data.<sup>4</sup>

Additionally, statistical data on migration flow published by Eurostat were also used in order to charter the recent evolution of the number of entries and exits to and from Europe up to the year 2015 (the last year for which actual data were available). Lastly, estimates published by the Population Division of the United Nations on the number of migrants and their attributes have been also considered. These data are available from the years 1990 to 2015 in 5-year periods, enabling us to grasp the evolution of the migrant stocks in the world. This source presents the volume of stocks, with an Origin-Destination matrix based on the country of birth and country of current residence data, as of 1 July 2015. They are the most up to date worldwide data available and they enable us to understand recent migration dynamics of the LAC countries and, in particular, the transatlantic migration relationship.

These estimates are based on the statistical information on the foreign-born population of each country (except for Surinam and the Cayman Islands, where the estimates are based on data on foreign population). To these populations is added an estimate of the refugees of the UNHCR, with results that differ from previous approaches.<sup>5</sup>

We have considered as LAC immigrant population those who were born in a LAC nation (data also include those born in non-independent Caribbean regions, like Sint Maarten, Guadeloupe, Martinique, Aruba, Curaçao or Puerto Rico, among others). Thus, the object of study is the individuals who have moved internationally at least once in their lives, and who were born in a country of the LAC region, even if they gave up their LAC nations' citizenship. This methodological decision is reinforced by the different legal access to citizenship in the European countries, which can make the immigrant population disappear from observation if the criterion used was that of nationality. This is the case of Spain, Italy or Portugal with the Latin Americans, but also of the treatment of the countries of Western Europe with their former colonies. The ease of access to Italian nationality, for example, for the descendants of Italians in LAC countries or the Spanish Historical Memory Law (Law 52/2007 of 26 December), which facilitates the transmission of nationality outside of Europe and, with it, the entry into the continent with the passport of a European country.

Finally, the territorial scale at which the data have been presented is the national scale, although in the analysis of the territorial distribution, the European Union disaggregation is used at the level of NUTS (Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics).<sup>6</sup> On this occasion, we opted for the NUTS-3 scale—local province or district—which amounts to a total of 1,342 units.

## LAC IMMIGRANTS IN EUROPE

According to UN estimates, there are 35.7 million foreign-born migrants from LAC countries worldwide in 2015. The majority of them (23.7 million; 66.2 per cent) were living in the US

which, historically, has been the preferred destination due to its proximity and large-scale employment opportunities. An important part (5.9 million; 16.5 per cent) are living in countries of the same region because of mobility within the LAC region. Europe concentrates 4.6 million LAC immigrants (13.0 per cent), of whom 2.2 million live in Spain — the second most important destination of LAC migrants after the USA, meaning that almost half of the LAC migrants in Europe live in Spain (47.4 per cent). The importance of Europe as a destination of LAC flows has increased. Thus, in the year 1990, Europe hosted 1,140,154 LAC immigrants (i.e., 7.4 per cent of worldwide LAC migrant population); by 2015, their number had increased to 4,645,947 (13 per cent). However, this increase has not been gradual and linear; the attraction of Europe as a destination fell during the 1990s due to new preferences of LAC migrants, whereas it grew strongly in the first years of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Thus, in 2010, a maximum was reached, with 4,716,236 LAC immigrants (14 per cent), subsequently to descend as a result of the negative effects of the economic crisis that began in 2008 in southern European countries,<sup>7</sup> which were the main recipients of LAC flows. According to Ruiz Sandoval (2006), the increasing difficulties of entry of immigrants to the US after 9/11 can partially explain this upward trend, coinciding also with the intense economic growth of some countries of southern Europe, like Spain, in the first years of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In this context, recent political changes in the US and the economic recovery of southern Europe, plus the persistence of economic difficulties in the sending countries, may stimulate new flows in the near future.

Similarly, the increase in the number of immigrants from LAC countries has contributed to the growth of their visibility within the total immigrants in Europe. Thus, from being 2.3 per cent of the total 49 million immigrants registered in Europe in 1990, they became 6.5 per cent of the 72 million in 2010, at their highest level ever recorded, declining slightly to 6.1 per cent in 2015, when Europe reached 76 million immigrants.

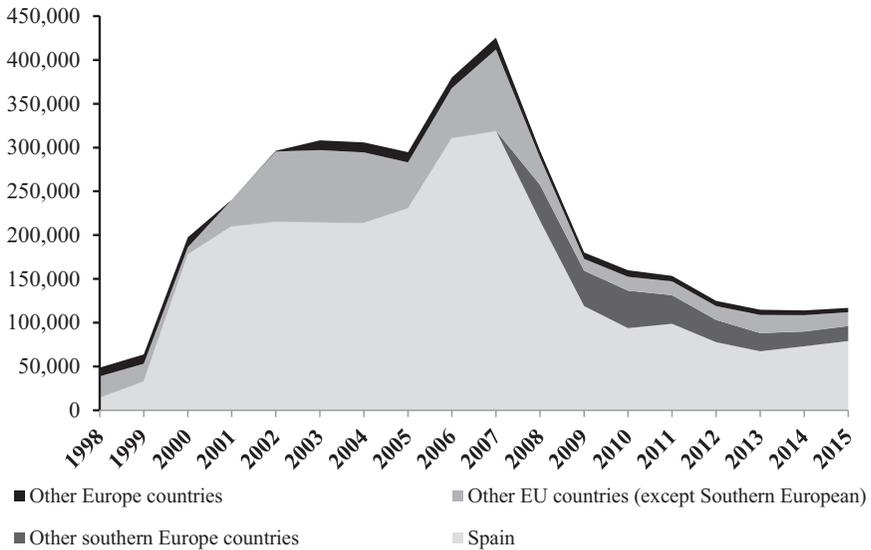
After Spain, the European countries with a large volume of LAC immigrants are the southern European countries, such as Italy (615 thousand immigrants) and Portugal (158 thousand) — both with strong historical, cultural, economic and migratory ties with LAC countries — and also former Western European colonial powers in the Caribbean basin, such as the UK (457 thousand), the Netherlands (349 thousand) and France (284 thousand), followed by the most competitive economies on the continent, such as Germany (228 thousand) and Switzerland (130 thousand).

## LAC IMMIGRANT FLOWS TO EUROPE, 1998-2015

The data collected by Eurostat allow the annual tracking of immigrants to Europe. This information is of great interest, precisely during these last years of intense migratory growth. This perspective allows us to observe the recent evolution of immigration registrations and to identify the impact of the economic crisis on the evolution of flows and on the change in trends observed in the previous section. However, the Eurostat data present some important gaps, which make it impossible to know the trend before 1998 and that of some countries in particular. Due to multiple problems with the data, in this analysis, the variable “nationality” is used instead of the “country of birth” due to the greater availability of data.<sup>8</sup>

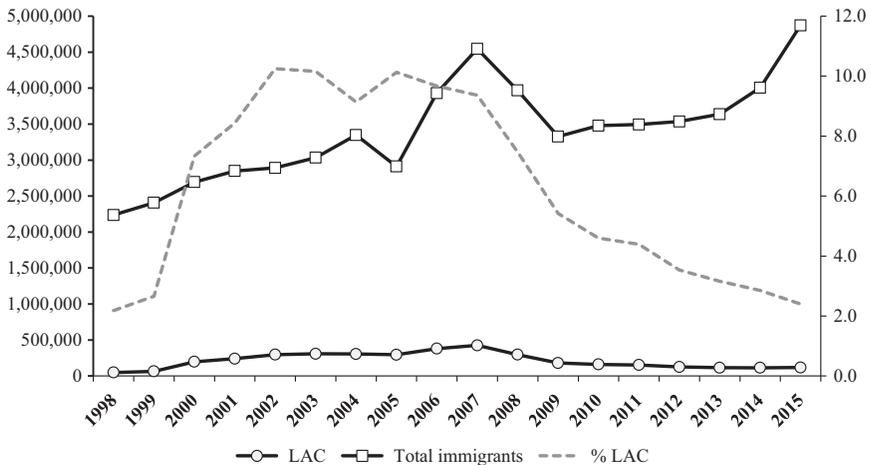
According to these data, the registrations by immigration of people with nationality of a LAC country reached 3.82 million between 1998 and 2015, accounting for 6.2 per cent of the total flows registered in Europe during the same period. This number itself is very important and is close to the stock of LAC population that currently resides in Europe. Unfortunately, the existence of multiple gaps in the data does not permit us to chart precisely the evolution of LAC inflows. What is clear, however, is that such data reveals the preference for Spain as a destination of LAC migrants (Figure 1). Thus, according to these data, Spain registered 2.76 million entries (72.4 per cent of all

FIGURE 1  
LAC IMMIGRATION FLOWS TO EUROPE, 1998-2015



Note: Included in “southern Europe countries” are: France, Greece, Italy, Malta and Portugal.  
Source: Eurostat Data

FIGURE 2  
NEW REGISTRATIONS OF FOREIGN IMMIGRANTS AND OF LAC IMMIGRANTS, AND THE WEIGHT OF LAC IMMIGRANTS IN THE TOTAL IMMIGRANTS IN EUROPE, 1998-2015



Source: Eurostat Data

entries to Europe for the period of 1998-2015), hitting a peak in 2007, when 319 thousand arrivals were recorded.

Between the years 2002 and 2007, LAC immigrants came to represent around 10 per cent of all the registrations by immigration in Europe (Figure 2). As of 2008, and coinciding with the beginning of the economic crisis, the decline was more than evident and affected Spain in particular. There was no sign of any recovery in the year 2015, although it can be assumed that the situation is temporary, as the most recent statistical data regarding LAC inflows released in Spain indicate a recovery of immigration.

## DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF IMMIGRANT LAC POPULATION

### Immigrant population and regional distribution in Europe

The data available through the Census Hub application indicate the presence of 4,511,676 immigrants born in a LAC country and living in European countries in 2011, accounting for 8.5 per cent of the more than 53 million immigrants registered in this statistical source, but only for 0.87 per cent of the 514.7 million total European Population. Although their presence is relatively low at the continental level, in certain countries, they represent a large share of the total foreign-born population. Thus, if this ratio is considered, in four countries, the percentage of LAC immigrants is well above the average, such as in Spain (40.1 per cent), Portugal (19.7 per cent), Netherlands (18.2 per cent) or Italy (10.7 per cent), with 8.5 per cent being the European average. On the contrary, in some countries with a significantly high number of LAC residents, they make up a lower percentage. This is the case of Britain, France and Germany, which are international immigration lands. With the exception for the Netherlands, the LAC immigrants only represent an important share of the total immigrants in recent countries of immigration (Table 1).

TABLE 1  
LAC MIGRANTS IN EUROPE, BY COUNTRY OF RESIDENCE, 2011

	Total Population	Immigrants	LAC	% immigrants	% Total Population
Spain	46,815,910	5,648,995	2,265,685	40.11	4.84
Italy	59,433,744	4,803,567	515,377	10.73	0.87
United Kingdom	63,182,180	7,985,585	436,710	5.47	0.69
Netherlands	16,655,799	1,868,655	340,199	18.21	2.04
France	64,933,400	7,321,237	279,529	3.82	0.43
Germany	80,219,695	11,373,438	187,314	1.65	0.23
Portugal	10,562,178	871,813	171,351	19.65	1.62
Switzerland	6,587,556	1,830,536	91,067	4.97	1.38
Sweden	9,482,855	1,338,010	76,355	5.71	0.81
Belgium	11,000,638	1,517,608	45,650	3.01	0.41
Norway	4,979,956	611,433	24,551	4.02	0.49
Austria	8,401,940	1,312,688	18,674	1.42	0.22
Ireland	4,574,888	766,640	14,532	1.90	0.32
Denmark	5,560,628	501,911	14,389	2.87	0.26
Greece	10,816,286	1,286,067	7,597	0.59	0.07
<i>Others</i>	<i>111,544,803</i>	<i>4,255,863</i>	<i>22,696</i>	<i>0.53</i>	<i>0.02</i>
Total	514,752,456	53,294,046	4,511,676	8.47	0.88

Source: 2011 Census Hub

LAC immigrants do not reach one per cent of Europe's population, a threshold that is exceeded in Switzerland, Portugal, the Netherlands and Spain; in the last country, the maximum percentage is recorded (almost 5 per cent of the country's population). Previously, higher percentages were reached, such as the Caribbean population, accounting for eight per cent of the UK's population in 1991 (Thomas-Hope, 2002).

From a territorial perspective and in absolute values, at a European level, the concentration of LAC immigrants stands out in Spain, especially in the provinces of Madrid (507 thousand) and Barcelona (391 thousand), but also in Valencia and Alicante (more than 100 thousand each). Outside Spain, there are concentrations in large European metropolitan areas, such as Rome (46 thousand) and Milan (76 thousand) in Italy; London (more than 100 thousand) in Britain; Amsterdam and Rotterdam (68 thousand each) and The Hague (52 thousand) in the Netherlands or Lisbon (59 thousand) in Portugal (Figure 3). Regarding their share of the area's population, in some Spanish islands, they represent more than 10 per cent of the resident population, but values above 5 per cent are also found in some areas of the Netherlands. Also, in some metropolitan areas such as London (4.8 per cent), Geneva (4.1 per cent), Genoa (3.1 per cent) or Lisbon (2.9 per cent), they show significant percentages above the total population. This over-representation in the large cities — which is visible all over Europe — indicates the preference of LAC migrants for specific areas (in our case, more urbanized areas over more rural areas) due to their socio-demographic profiles. Figure 4 shows a clear example of this, with higher concentrations of LAC migrants in Europe's largest population centres. Thus, if four out of ten Europeans live in municipalities of less than 10 thousand inhabitants, only 15 per cent of the LAC immigrants were residing there. Their stronger presence in large cities is an important common trait shared by all the European countries. In the more studied case of Spain, scholars have identified the greater proportion of women in the inflows and the specific labour demand linked to the personal services sector (Prieto and López-Gay, 2015), as the main explicative factor.

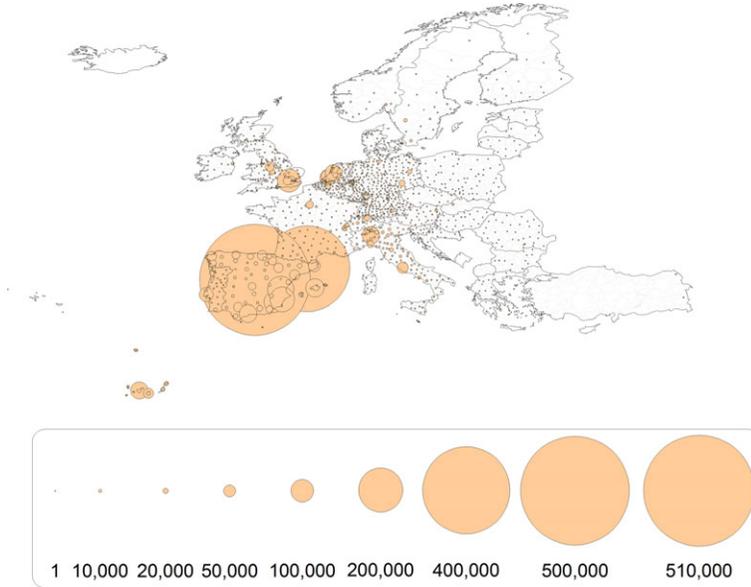
Despite their quantitative importance, LAC countries are not among the top 30 countries which have sent migrants to Europe. This fact is due to the political fragmentation of the sending region, sharing many linguistic and cultural characteristics and a common European heritage. Brazil, with 621,650 immigrants, is the first sending country, followed by thirteen LAC countries contributing more than one hundred thousand migrants living in Europe (Table 2), among which Ecuador and Colombia stand out with more than half a million immigrants. Europe's attraction for the LAC countries is diverse. Thus, some LAC countries have a very low level of migrants in Europe, as compared to other destinations of their large diaspora, as is the case of Mexico. Meanwhile, other countries, such as Ecuador and Surinam, are strongly attracted to Europe, particularly because of their former colonial metropolises, probably due to their shorter and more recent emigration history and less consolidated worldwide networks.

### **The demographic profile: gender, age, and origin**

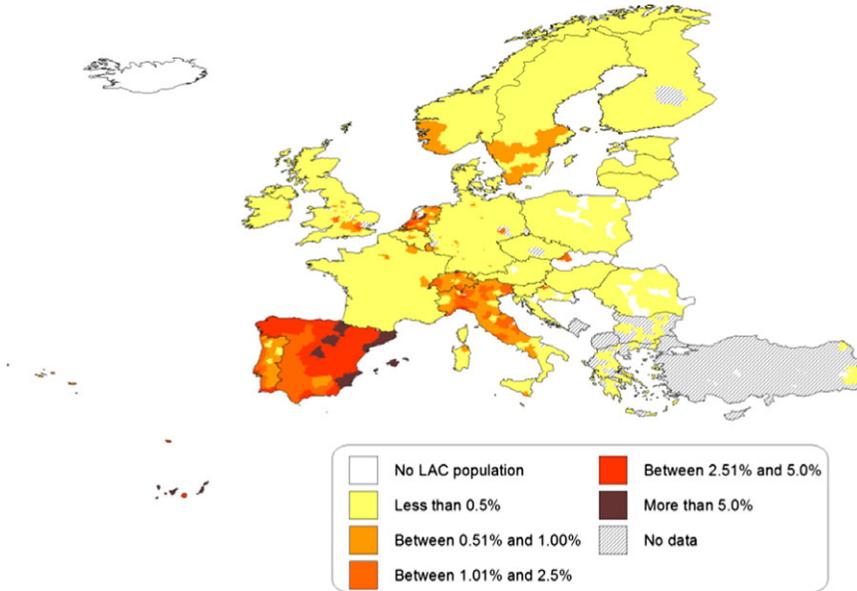
The immigrant LAC population in Europe is characterized by the immigrants' marked degree of age and gender asymmetry and by particular features. They reveal a younger age profile than the average immigrants living on the continent, which can be explained by the more recent nature of their flows. For instance, the average age for LAC immigrants in Europe is 37.6 years, while the corresponding figure for the other immigrants is 44.4 years. And at the same time, their proportion of those aged 65 and over is 5.9 per cent, which is very low compared to the average of 17.6 per cent for foreign-born populations, which is very similar to the continental average (17.7 per cent). In addition, there is a marked degree of gender asymmetry; 55.3 per cent of the LAC immigrants in Europe are females, showing a larger feminization of flows than other foreign-born populations (51 per cent), which means the presence of about half a million more women than men. These demographic profiles can be seen in Figure 5, which shows that the greatest feminization of migration flow occurs among immigrants in

FIGURE 3  
LAC TERRITORIAL DISTRIBUTION IN EUROPE, BY NUTS-3

*Absolute values*

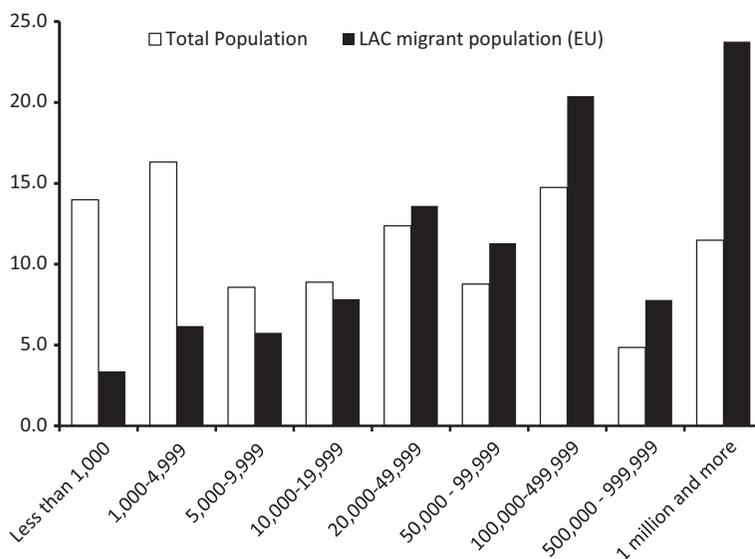


*In relation to the entire population*



Source: 2011 Census Hub, Eurostat.

FIGURE 4  
LAC POPULATION DISTRIBUTION BY MUNICIPALITY SIZE, 2011



Source: 2011 Census Hub

their thirties, that is, where the largest number of LAC immigrants is concentrated and coinciding with the initial stages of the migration process. The LAC immigrants also stand out for their significant proportion of children (8.6 per cent), particularly important in the 10-14-year age bracket, which implies an ongoing process of family reunification. In comparison, the rest of the foreign-born populations show a lower percentage of children (5.9 per cent), although the percentages are quite low for both groups when compared to the continental average (16.8 per cent).

The demographic profiles of LAC immigrants in some European countries are depicted in Figure 6. Only countries with the highest numbers of LAC citizens and members of the EU in the year 2011 have been considered. All the countries show a higher proportion of females than males, although the level of gender asymmetry fluctuates from a minimum difference in Sweden — with 51.1 per cent females and many ages with more males than females — to a maximum of 63.2 per cent of females in Italy, which is not, however, the highest in Europe, as Switzerland reaches 64.1 per cent of females. Spain, with the largest LAC population in the continent, has 53.1 per cent females, just behind Sweden and below the European average. Among the most feminized receiving countries are Germany (61.5 per cent), Belgium (58.7 per cent) and Portugal (57.1 per cent). In terms of age, the percentage of LAC population over 65 is minimal in Portugal (2.6 per cent), but also in Spain (3.25 per cent), whereas Sweden (7.2 per cent) and the Netherlands (8.3 per cent) show higher values, although at a distance from the UK, where 23.6 per cent of the immigrant LAC population is over 65. Portugal, Belgium and Spain present very young average ages (around 35 years), while Sweden (40.4), the Netherlands (43) and the UK (48.5) are above the average. In most of the countries, the largest age groups reflect recent migration processes, with arrivals in recent years. The exception is the British case, where three different immigration waves are seen of LAC immigrants in their seventies, fifties and thirties.

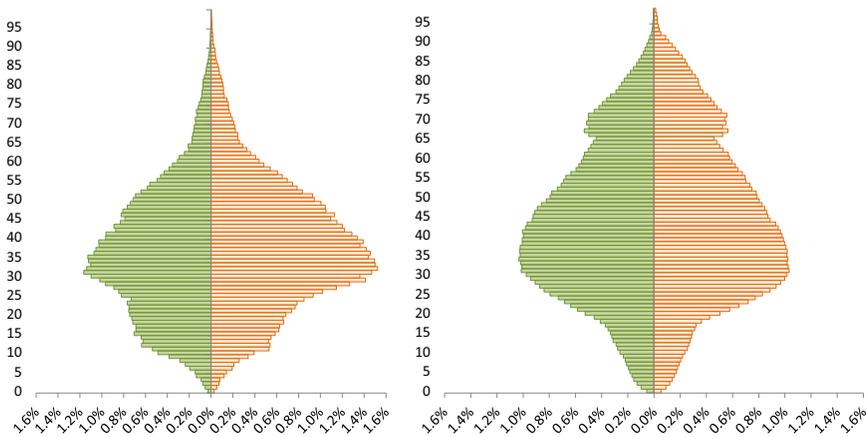
Finally, from the perspective of the major sending countries (Argentina, Brazil, Colombia and Ecuador), we present LAC migrants' demographic profiles at their main destinations. Thus, Argentines, for example, are mostly males in Spain (52.4 per cent) and mostly females in Italy and

TABLE 2  
MAIN COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN OF LAC IMMIGRANTS IN EUROPE, 2015 AND 2011

	United Nation Data (2015)			2011 Census HUB Data
	Europe's Immigrants	Total Immigrants	% Europe	
Brazil	621,650	1,544,024	40.3	555,271
Ecuador	549,176	1,101,923	49.8	522,534
Colombia	517,847	2,638,852	19.6	520,334
Argentina	392,092	940,273	41.7	405,112
Peru	366,993	1,409,676	26.0	339,334
Venezuela	263,711	606,344	43.5	245,271
(Bolivarian Republic of)				
Dominican Republic	236,133	1,304,493	18.1	181,789
Suriname	213,036	267,800	79.6	27,100
Cuba	197,762	1,426,380	13.9	167,355
Bolivia	194,426	799,605	24.3	221,414
(Plurinational State of)				
Jamaica	179,327	1,067,455	16.8	166,834
Chile	157,943	612,409	25.8	161,418
Mexico	118,767	12,339,062	1.0	102,554
Uruguay	95,039	346,976	27.4	110,415
Haiti	81,740	1,195,240	6.8	80,830

Source: United Nations (2015) and 2011 Census Hub.

FIGURE 5  
AGE PYRAMIDS OF LAC IMMIGRANTS AND OF THE REST OF IMMIGRANTS IN EUROPE. 2011



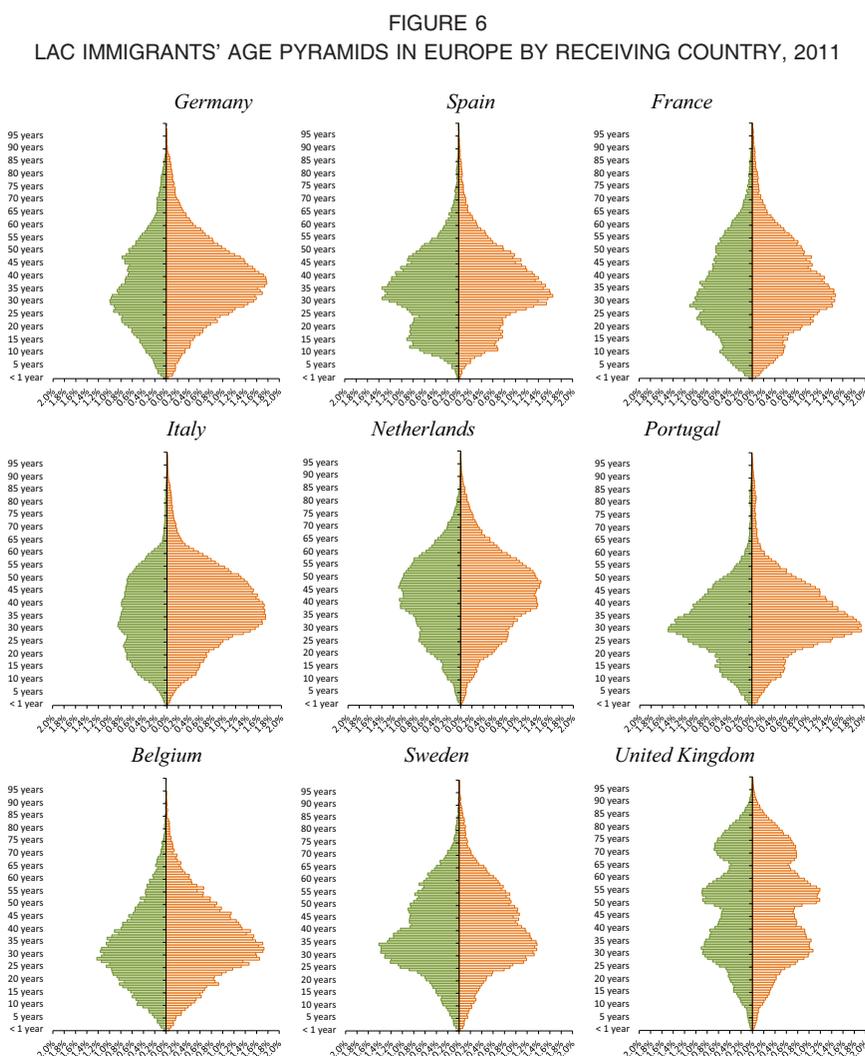
Source: 2011 Census Hub, Eurostat

France (Figure 7). Among Brazilians, feminization of migration is outstanding in all destinations, particularly in Italy (66 per cent), being the lowest in Portugal (57 per cent). Similarly, Colombians and Ecuadorians show higher feminization in Italy. With this analysis, different gender and age

profiles can be detected for the same country of origin, meaning that the demands of labour in receiving countries are gender- and age-specific.

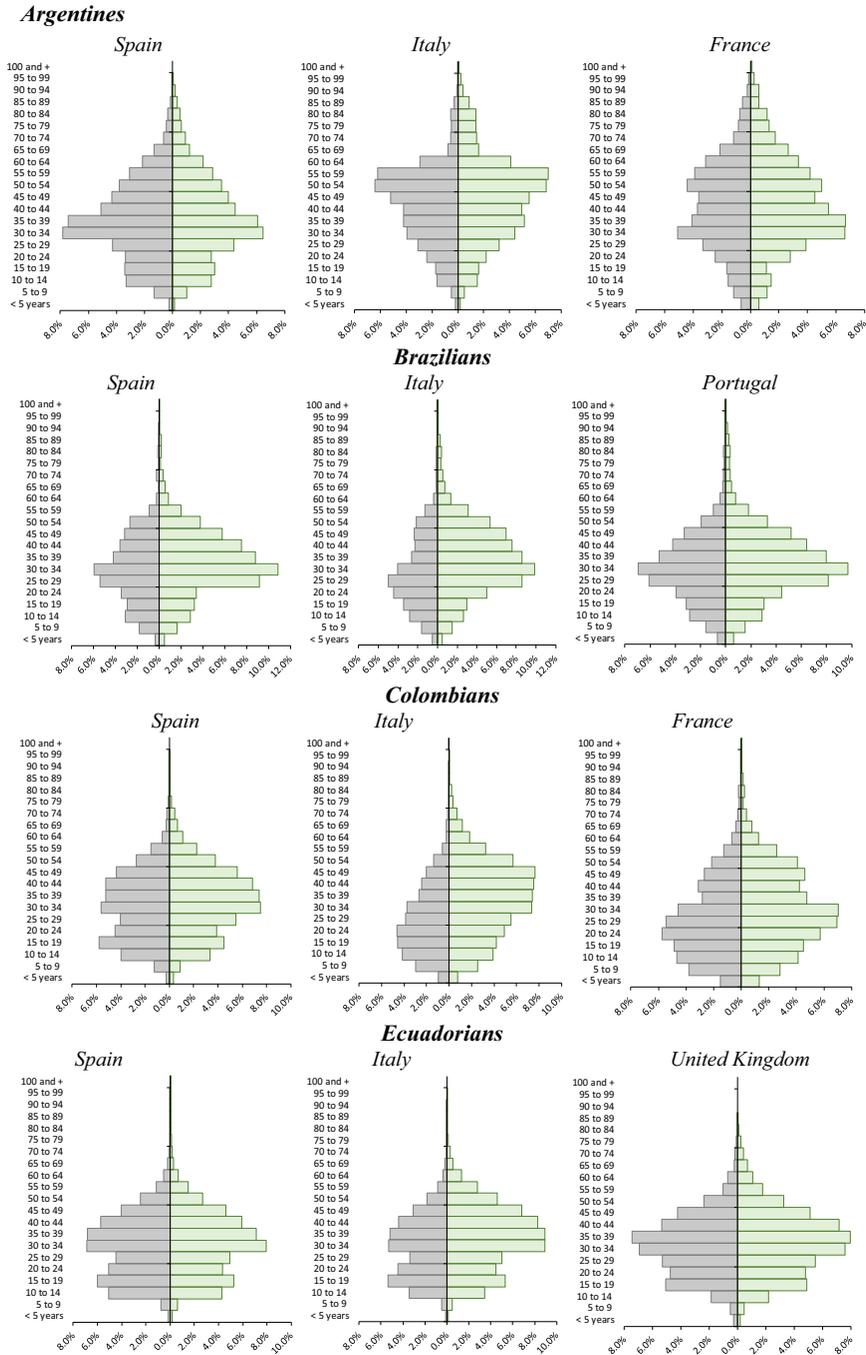
### The demographic profile: educational attainment and occupation

In addition to the examination of LAC population's demographic profiles according to gender, age, and origin, the analysis of educational attainment and insertion in European labour markets is also a topic of our research. Firstly, Figure 8 shows the educational levels of immigrant LAC population in selected European countries. The figure shows that many LAC immigrants come to Europe with high qualification levels, and that no significant disparities between males and females can be seen. In general, there is a greater proportion of females in the category



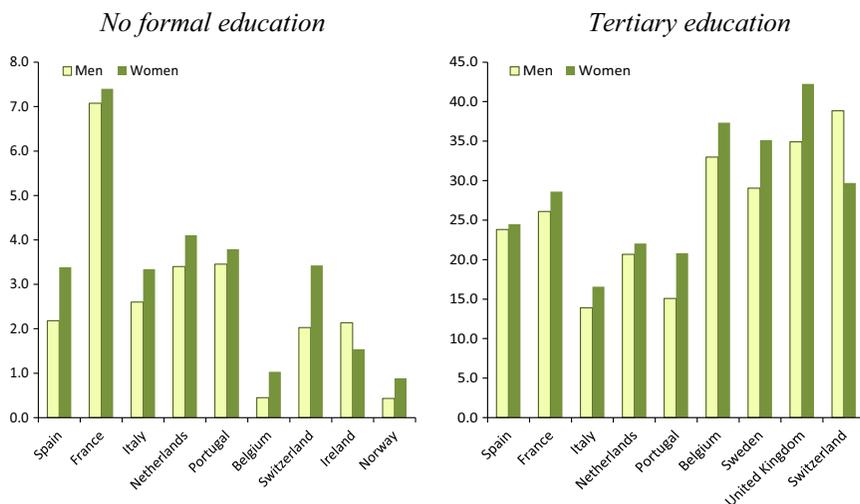
Source: 2011 Census Hub, Eurostat.

FIGURE 7  
 MAIN IMMIGRANT GROUPS' POPULATION PYRAMIDS IN EUROPE, BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN AND RESIDENCE



Source: 2011 Census Hub, Eurostat.

FIGURE 8  
LAC IMMIGRANTS' LEVEL OF COMPLETED EDUCATION, BY SEX AND COUNTRY OF RESIDENCE,  
2011



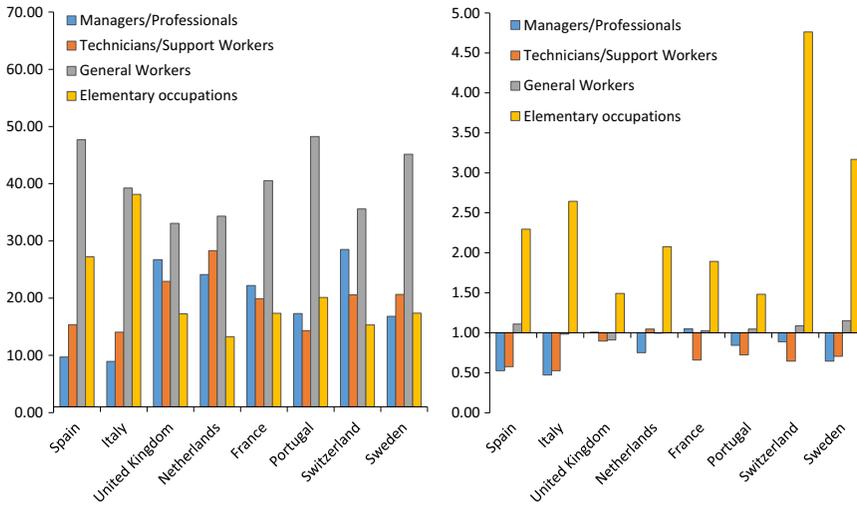
Source: 2011 Census Hub, Eurostat

“Without Studies” (this category represents a very small proportion of the immigrants), although females also present a higher proportion of “University Studies”. Between countries, the differences are remarkable, with the higher levels of immigrant LAC population “Without Studies” in France, as a result of the continued inflows of lower socio-economic groups from the Caribbean basin. The opposite occurs in the UK, where more than 40 per cent of females have higher levels of educational achievement. In comparison with other immigrant groups with similar age profiles, and for most of the countries, their level of education is higher than that of Africans and Asians.

In terms of occupation, in Italy, the immigrant LAC population has a profile with a greater presence of “Elementary Occupations”, well above the rest of the countries (Figure 9, left). It is followed by Spain and Portugal, which means that southern European countries stand out because of the LAC immigrants’ low-skill occupations. In their segmented labour markets, employment in construction (men) and in domestic service and care for the elderly (women) is very common in countries characterized by a weak welfare state (Esping-Andersen, 1990).

In a cross-country comparison of the occupational structure in each country,<sup>9</sup> Switzerland and Sweden show the greatest distance between the occupations of the LAC immigrants and those of the autochthonous people (Figure 9, right). The former over-representation in low-skill occupations is very high (around 4.5- and 3-fold of the autochthonous people, respectively), often related to difficulties with the language of the destination country, but also with the problem of recognition of professional qualifications obtained in the sending countries, cultural prejudices or gender specificities with regard to employment, such as women being relegated to the role of domestic help (Riaño, 2003). Only in France and the UK is there a greater presence of LAC population in high occupational categories, as a result of a wider variety of LAC inflows they receive, including student inflows, attracted by the prospect of achieving high quality jobs in a more stable, rich and technologically advanced environment or, in the case of students, by their prestigious educational institutions and the prospect for LAC students of finding work there after graduation. At this point,

FIGURE 9  
LAC IMMIGRANTS' OCCUPATIONAL STRUCTURE (LEFT) AND AS COMPARED TO AUTOCHTHONOUS POPULATION'S (RIGHT), IN SELECTED COUNTRIES, 2011



Source: 2011 Census Hub, Eurostat.

Pellegrino’s statement is worth mentioning: “Europe has always exercised a strong political and cultural influence over the Latin American countries (...) For example, there are the students who completed their education in Europe” (2004: 12)

In contrast, in Spain and Italy, their under-representation in those high categories is more noticeable. In these countries, women are highly likely to be trapped in unskilled jobs (Ballarino and Panichella, 2018). In the case of Spain and according to Gil Araujo (2010), the National priority clause (*Cláusula de prioridad nacional*) and the quota policy (employment quotas) have granted initial residence and work permits to certain labour sectors. This has placed immigrant workers in a limited number of activities, such as domestic service, agriculture, construction, hotels and restaurants, which have been the most affected by the process of deregulation (cited by Yufra, 2018).

### CONCLUSIONS

During the past two decades, more than 4.5 million LAC immigrants have entered Europe and settled in it, contributing to European economic growth and boosting the working-age population on the continent. Despite the negative impact of the last global recession on the transatlantic inflows, LAC population in Europe remains important in those countries with strong diasporic, colonial or economic ties with the sending areas. Among them, Spain concentrates half of the LAC population in Europe (particularly, the most recently arrived) due to preferential immigration rights and a rapid access to citizenship, which are premised on the notion of a shared cultural legacy or ancestry with the citizens of former colonies and diasporic communities. The difficulty of entering the US, which will probably continue to grow under the Trump administration, besides the existence of strong migratory chains forged in recent years, suggests a consolidation and increase of LAC immigration in the coming years. The ease of access to nationality and the EU free movement policy can, however, facilitate future dissemination in the continent.

This article has highlighted the importance of new statistical tools, such as the online application Census Hub, which allows a groundbreaking cross-country analysis of LAC immigration in Europe. The study results revealed that LAC immigrants in Europe are very diverse in origin, with generally young and feminized demographic profiles and a strong tendency to concentrate in urban areas. Furthermore, LAC immigrants in Europe show higher levels of educational attainment than other immigrant populations, although this is not associated with highly qualified occupations in the receiving societies. Rather, many LAC immigrants work in low skill occupations, being over-qualified and underemployed in most of the countries, particularly in those countries of recent immigration. Major cross-country differences are seen in age and sex structures, highly conditioned by historical emigration processes in the sending countries. As already stated, LAC immigrants in general were much younger than other immigrants from non-European countries due to the recency of their labour inflows.

Finally, the data compiled and provided by Census Hub permit the identification of the social and labour behaviour of the immigrant LAC population according to the receiving country, and the detection of new models of labour immigration. Among the major instances considered, southern Europe's migratory model of recent arrivals and strong intensity presents an insertion model of low-skill occupations and low wages. This is mostly due to the rapid proliferation of those jobs in the so-called secondary sector (largely construction industry) and service sector (including in-home personal services) of their labour markets, where the offer of high-skill jobs is scarce. In comparison to the UK or France, LAC workers in southern Europe show a greater tendency to remain in these unskilled occupational sectors (Ballarino and Panichella, 2018), especially according to 2011 data, which show the initial negative impact of the recession on LAC immigrant patterns of employment (Gil and Vidal, 2015). At the other extreme are the cases of Sweden and Switzerland, where fewer low-skill jobs in their labour market coincide with a high over-representation of LAC workers in them relative to their portion of the countries' employment, revealing the existence of labour market niches for LAC immigrants in Europe. Relying on LAC immigrant networks to attain jobs can maintain these specific occupational niches in the future.

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## NOTES

1. According to the United Nations' population data: <http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/data/estimates2/estimates15.shtml>
2. This recent trend is due to the increased difficulty to enter the US as a result of migration restrictions since the terrorist attacks of September 11th, 2001 (Ruiz Sandoval, 2006), and more recent bars on entry focusing on protecting US jobs.
3. The Census dates between countries do not coincide. In some of them, the data refer to the beginning of the year (Belgium), to February 1 (Luxembourg), to November 1 (Spain) or to year ending December 31 (Iceland).
4. The extraction of the complete data from the application was done through several attempts because of the temporary unavailability of some countries' data.
5. The method used in producing the estimates of population stocks is explained in: [http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/data/estimates2/docs/MigrationStockDocumentation\\_2015.pdf](http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/data/estimates2/docs/MigrationStockDocumentation_2015.pdf)

6. Detailed information on NUTS in: <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/nuts>
7. In countries like Spain (the main destination), the economic crisis impacts first on the registrations due to immigration (a decrease of new registrations), while immigrant stocks stabilize and continue to grow slightly until 2010.
8. Unlike the analysis of the immigrant population stock (where, due to naturalizations, the figures referring to place of birth and to country of nationality differ ostensibly), in the analysis of the inflows, the difference among them is lower.
9. To facilitate the comparison of countries with very different occupational structures, the percentage of LAC immigrants in each occupation and country has been related to those of the autochthonous population. Values higher than 1 indicate an over-representation of LAC workers, values below 1 indicate an under-representation.

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