Spanish Workers in Norway

Trajectories of Labour Market Incorporation

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IV
Summary

Spanish Workers in Norway: Trajectories of Labour Market Incorporation

The international financial crisis of 2008 triggered new intra-European migration flows, not only from the east to the west, but also from the south to the north. This master’s thesis is a qualitative study on the Spanish migration to Norway in the aftermath of the financial crisis of 2008, and explores both the labour migrants’ migration process and their incorporation into the Norwegian labour market over time. The main research questions are:

1) Why did Spanish migrant workers leave Spain, and why among many nations, did they decide to move to Norway?

2) How are Spanish migrant workers incorporated into the Norwegian labour market, and have they improved their work situation over time?

The research is based on qualitative interviews with Spanish workers, who were interviewed twice, at two different points of time. This study reveals that Spanish workers primarily left Spain as a consequence of a sudden and severe crisis in their home country. ‘Push’ factors in Spain, such as a high level of unemployment and insecurity about having a job in the future, were the main reasons why they moved abroad, and were of greater importance than potential ‘pull’ factors in Norway. While many Spaniards moved to UK, France or Germany, ‘pull’ factors such as employment offers, a good welfare system, and cheap flight tickets made them come to Norway.

Even if the informants had similar reasons to leave Spain, they had different labour market incorporation processes in Norway. Additionally, although they moved abroad as ‘Euro-refugees’ in the sense that they primarily migrated because they had to, and not because they wanted to, most of them are not in a vulnerable situation today. The fact that many of them had a higher education, has been an asset to either finding a relevant job or improving their work situation over time. It seems however that the outcome of their incorporation in the labour market was in many ways not only connected to their human capital, but as well to the gateways used to access employment and the structures of the Norwegian labour market.

Those who had a job offer before moving to Norway (demand-driven migration) had very different types and levels of education. Generally, among all the informants, they had a better incorporation into the labour market – in the early phase of their migration, as well as in the course of time.
Those who came to Norway without already having a job to go to (supply-driven migration) had two different starting points and diverse outcomes. There were two groups among those who came to Norway without having a job offer in advance: those who were highly educated and found relevant jobs and those with different levels of education who found low-skilled and low-paid jobs. The highly educated Spanish workers who obtained employment relevant to their education and competence as their very first job in Norway, experienced that it took a while for them to find a job. The lack of social contacts and networks connected to the Norwegian labour market can explain why it was challenging for them to access employment. However, as time went by, they obtained - like those who got recruited in advance - an increase of wages and upward social mobility.

The other informants, who found employment which did not match their education and work experience, had by contrast what has been called a ‘bad’ job in typical immigrant employment sectors (cleaning and other unqualified service work). Among them were highly educated Spaniards and a few entrepreneurs without any education. Even though they had quicker access to employment, compared to the others who like them had a supply-driven migration, they were in the most vulnerable situation in the Norwegian labour market in the early phase of their migration. They were paid low wages and had insecure employment, which led to a significant decrease in social mobility. As time went by, a few Spanish workers managed to find relevant employment in the primary labour market, where jobs tend to be well-paid, stable and mainly occupied by natives. However, the path to improve their work situation was paved with difficulties. Changing jobs, temporary work contracts and even unemployment were a part of their process. The others who had ‘bad’ jobs, as their gateway into the Norwegian labour market, either became unemployed – in spite of a higher education and language skills in Norwegian - or did not manage to improve their work situation over time. They were therefore in the most vulnerable situation, not only in the early phase of their migration, but also over time.

By looking at trajectories of short-term incorporation, there seems to be different mechanisms in place in the primary labour market, making the migrants’ incorporation process and upward social mobility easier than in the secondary market. In fact, having immigrant employment sectors as gateways into the labour market tends to reduce migrants’ work opportunities and slow down their upward social mobility in the host country, even for those who have a higher education.
Preface

Working on this thesis has been an exciting and instructive journey. I would like to use this opportunity to thank some of the people who have helped me through this process.

First and foremost, I want to thank all my informants. This thesis would not have been possible without you. Thank you for sharing your stories with me, your ups and downs in your migration process, and for your willingness to answer my spontaneous questions. I wish you all the best for the future.

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1 Introduction

In this chapter, I will present the purpose of this study and the research questions, and give some background information. I will also mention relevant studies done on the South-North migration in Europe, and describe the structure of this assignment.

1.1 Aim of the study and research questions

From the mid-1990s to mid-2000s, immigration to Norway was largely humanitarian and family-based. Since the enlargement of the European Union (EU) in 2004, by contrast, Norway has become a major labour immigration country, with an influx of labour migrant workers coming mostly from the Eastern part of the European Economic Area (EEA) (OECD Norway 2014). The massive labour migration to Norway since 2004, and the recent refugee crisis in Europe, has made integration a top-level priority on the Norwegian political agenda. Migration – caused by economic, family, educational or security reasons - is in many ways shaping the Norwegian labour market and society.

While the massive migration flows from the east to the west of Europe were triggered by the 2004 EU enlargement, new intra-European migratory movements from the south to the north of Europe emerged as a result of the international financial crisis of 2008. While there has been a vast study of the migration flows from Eastern Europe, very little research has been done about the new migration movements from Southern Europe. This thesis therefore intends to explore these new internal migration flows in Europe, and especially look at the Spanish labour migration to Norway. This study focuses on two aspects: on the migration process of the Spanish workers coming to Norway in the aftermath of the financial crisis of 2008; and secondly, on their incorporation over time in the Norwegian labour market.

Since the workers’ migration process is interconnected with their adaptation into the host country and their ability to access employment, this thesis will focus on the following research questions:

1) Why did Spanish migrant workers leave Spain, and why among many nations, did they decide to move to Norway?

2) How are Spanish migrant workers incorporated into the Norwegian labour market and have they improved their work situation over time?
How did they step into the Norwegian labour market and what kind of employment did they have after migration?

What kind of changes and/or improvements did the informants experience in their work situation over time?

In order to answer to these research questions, I interviewed 17 Spanish workers living in Oslo. I also interviewed 13 of them a second time, which gave me the possibility to follow their incorporation process into the Norwegian labour market over time.

1.2 Contextual backdrop of the dissertation

Between 1996 and 2007, Spain experienced what is considered to be one of its longest periods of economic growth since the second World War (González-Martín 2013: 9). However, the financial crisis of 2008 would make an end to this phase of expansion. The bursting of a US housing bubble resulted in a distressed financial sector which did not only impact the United States, but had worldwide consequences (Hanewinkel 2013: 2). This crisis, probably considered as the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression in the 1930s, severely hit European countries, especially southern states such as: Spain, Portugal, Italy and Greece (Ibid: 3). Due to a private debt crisis, Spain was strongly impacted by the financial crisis. Summarising the condition of the country, Lester (2012) mentions that “Spain quickly turned from a wealthy country to a country burdened by debt and economic recession” (Lester 2012: 138). In order to improve Spain’s economic situation, several reforms and austerity measures were put in motion. Unfortunately, these measures did not bring forth the economic growth that was hoped for. As a result, in a very short period of time, Spain together with Greece reached the highest level of unemployment in the Eurozone: 26 % in 2013 and up to 56 % youth unemployment. According to Izquierdo, Jimeno and Lacuesta (2013), the economic downturn and the high level of unemployment impacted this time all regions and population groups in Spain, including those with high education (2013: 2). The high level of unemployment had severe social consequences on the Spanish population, resulting in having many Spaniards living in a precarious financial situation. The organisation Caritas states in a report that: “over three million Spaniards were themselves in a situation of severe poverty, living on less than € 307 a month” (Caritas in Hansen 2013: 5). In addition to social issues, the crisis had as well demographic consequences. From the early 1990s, and most noticeably between 1997 and 2007, Spain became an attractive destination for immigrants from Morocco, Romania and South America (Lester 2012: 138). The foreign
population in Spain, which constituted 1.3 % of the total population in 1996, reached 11 % in 2007\(^1\). However, due to the crisis of 2008, Spain went from being a nation of immigration to a nation of emigration. Many foreigners left Spain – especially people from Morocco, Romania, Colombia and Ecuador (INE 2014\(^2\)). Additionally, a vast emigration of native Spaniards occurred which, since the middle of the 1980s, represented a relatively new phenomenon (Ibid; González-Martín 2013: 10). They moved mainly to Germany, the UK, France and the US (Hanewinkel 2013: 4; González-Martín 2013: 10-11). While Norwegian people have been travelling to Spain for holidays or retirement, some Spaniards have made their way to Norway. Compared to the mass migration of the Polish and the Swedish migrant workers, the Spanish migration, as summarised below in Figure 1.1, is of small scale and represents in some ways a pioneer migration phenomenon, since relatively few Spaniards were already living in Norway before the financial crisis (Statistics Norway 2015).

Figure 1.1 - Spanish migration to and from Norway (2007-2014)

Source: Statistics Norway

1.3 Relevant studies on the South-North migration in Europe

The phenomenon I am studying is relatively new and there is therefore little literature on the field. Among migrant workers coming from the south of Europe in the aftermath of the financial crisis of 2008, Spaniards constitute the major migrant group moving to Norway. As mentioned before, little research has been undertaken about the migration flows from the south to the north of Europe. While a few studies have focused on reasons why Southern

\(^1\) http://www.gees.org/contents/uploads/docs/21122011110350_Analisis-9087.pdf
European workers left their home country, even less research has been done on the Spanish migration to Norway, and on their incorporation process into the host country labour market. In this part, I give an overview of relevant studies done about the migration of Spanish workers.

Recent studies indicate that young Southern European adults with low education have moved abroad due to unemployment, and looked therefore at migration as an alternative to getting out of the crisis. Others by contrast, argue that both the economic crisis in Spain and the ability to have free movement inside the EU have contributed to the emigration of well-educated Spaniards. While low educated workers migrated due to economic factors, highly educated Spaniards have used migration as a way to protest against the social and political system in Spain and “voted with their feet” to underline their discontentment (Lester 2012; Triandafyllidou & Gropas 2014; Bygnes 2015; Hansen 2013; Camacho-Sastre & Marquez Gonzalez, 2013). According to King (2002), economic motives cannot fully explain why internal European migration flows are taking place. He therefore brings new perspectives when it comes to describing reasons why young European adults move abroad. Beside economic and political factors, an increasing individualization, self-realisation, love and wellness are as well other motives that can affect the desire for migration.

The Fafo report “Innvandrere som skulle klare seg selv” refers to EEA migrants in contact with the Norwegian social welfare system (NAV). Doing a comparative study between Polish and Spanish migrant workers in Norway, Friberg, Elgvin and Djuve (2013) describe the migration of the labour migrants from the south of Europe as being a supply-driven migration, while the migration flows from Eastern Europe are more demand-driven (2013: 7-8). They point out some reasons why Spanish workers, compared to Polish workers, were in a more vulnerable situation after moving to Norway. These researchers mention that having no network connected to the labour market from before was one of the reasons why some of the Spanish migrant workers had challenges accessing (stable) employment in Norway and fell into a vulnerable situation. Additionally, they indicate that there is “a significant need for both cheap unskilled labour and for more specialised employees in Norway. The Southern workers seem however to fall between two stools in the Norwegian labour market” (Friberg, Elgvin and Djuve 2013: 44). While these researchers interviewed Spaniards who had fallen outside the labour market, this study focuses primarily on those who managed to access employment in Norway.
1.4 Structure of the thesis

Chapter 2 highlights some historical perspectives on the EU enlargement, the relationship and migration between Norway and Spain, as well as a short description on EEA migrant workers’ rights in Norway.

Chapter 3 presents theoretical concepts and perspectives, laying the foundation for the analysis and discussion later on in this thesis.

Chapter 4 describes the methodology as well as ethical and practical choices made along the way; how the informants were recruited and interviewed, and my role as a researcher.

Chapter 5 describes the migration process of the research participants, why they decided to leave their home country, why they chose to migrate to Norway, and how their early phase in the host country was after migration.

Chapter 6 presents how the Spanish migrant workers stepped into the Norwegian labour market, which channels they used to access employment, and which type of jobs they obtained in comparison to their human, social and cultural capital.

Chapter 7 describes the potential changes the informants have experienced in their work situation as time went by. It presents as well some elements which, according to the research participants, could influence the migrants’ incorporation process into the Norwegian labour market.

Chapter 8 is a concluding chapter, summarising the situation of the Spanish migrant workers interviewed in this thesis, in the light of the research questions. It also opens up for potential further research.
2 Norway and the European Union

In this chapter, I will describe the different EU enlargements, and in which way they have impacted the EU states and Norway. I will also mention the relationship and migration between Norway and Spain, and give a short description on EEA migrant workers’ rights in Norway.

2.1 Historical enlargements of the EU

Illustrated by Figure 2.1, the expansion of the European Union started in 1958 with the so-called founding countries, the Inner Six (Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands). Since then, the EU’s membership has grown to twenty-eight countries.

The first EU enlargement started with Denmark, Ireland and the United Kingdom in January 1973, and was followed by Mediterranean enlargements – Greece (1981), Spain and Portugal (1986). Austria, Finland and Sweden entered the EU in January 1995.

In May 2004, eight Central and Eastern European countries (the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia), plus two Mediterranean
countries (Malta and Cyprus) joined the EU. The 2004 EU enlargement marked the largest expansion regarding the number of countries and population (Hanewinkel 2013: 2). It opened up for large migratory movements from the new to the old member states and can be in part explained by significant differences in employment and wages between these nations (Brücker et al. 2009 in Friberg 2013: 21). According to Brücker (2009), even though it is challenging to determine how many people migrated to Western European countries, these population movements are estimated to probably be the largest in Europe since the Second World War (Ibid: 24).

In January 2007, Romania and Bulgaria became EU members, leading as well to massive population movements in an even shorter time window. While the majority of the Eastern European migrants moved to Ireland, Great Britain and Scandinavia, Bulgarian and Romanian migrants headed mainly to Italy, Spain and Portugal (Hanewinkel 2013: 2, 4; Beatriz González-Martín 2013: 9; Engebersen 2010 in Friberg 2013: 24).

In July 2013, Croatia became the most recent country to join the EU.

2.2 Norway: a part of the European Economic Area

Through the EU internal market, the European member states have free movement of goods, capital, services, and people. Even though Norway is not a member of the European Union, Norway and the EU have close relations. Norway is a part of the European Economic Area (EEA), established in 1994. Together with Iceland and Liechtenstein, Norway takes part of the EU internal market, giving among other things, all the EEA citizens free movement in the EEA zone. The different EU enlargements mentioned above have not only impacted the EU states, but also the other members of the EEA, including Norway. The EU enlargement of 2004 has particularly impacted Norway. Like Friberg (2013) points out, compared to the other Nordic nations, Norway has without a doubt been the major destination country for migrants coming from the Eastern European countries (2013: 25).

2.3 Norway and Spain: relationship and migration

Norwegians in Spain

Outside Scandinavia, Spain is the most popular destination for Norwegian tourists and for those who reside permanently abroad. This has contributed to maintaining the expanding
relationship and business between Norway and Spain. According to the Norwegian embassy in Madrid, “more than 1.5 million trips from Norway to Spain were registered” in 2013, and “approximately 50 000 Norwegians reside in Spain during the whole year or a part of the year”\(^3\). Many of the Norwegians are in retirement, but there is as well a significant proportion of Norwegians who live and work in Spain. Most of them reside in the “Norwegian colonies” located along the coast between Valencia and Malaga, as well as in Gran Canaria and Tenerife. The significant presence of Norwegians in these places can also be noticed by Norwegian schools, churches and clubs, as well as newspapers in Norwegian\(^4\). Outside tourism, half of the export from Norway to Spain is in the industries of oil, gas and fish.

**Spaniards in Norway**

Figure 2.2 - Spanish population in Norway in 2015

![Graph showing Spanish population in Norway from 2007 to 2015](source: Statistics Norway)

Compared to the Poles, who represent the largest migrant group in Norway, with nearly 100 000 inhabitants in 2015, the Spaniards do represent as shown in Figure 2.2 a small number of people. Although the Spaniards constitute a small group of migrants, with 6 856 inhabitants in 2015, this group has experienced a huge relative expansion, since there were only 1 456 registered Spaniards before the financial crisis, in 2007. If Norway hadn’t experienced since 2004 such a mass-migration from other nations such as Poland, Sweden,

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\(^4\) [http://www.noruega.es/News_and_events/asociaciones/](http://www.noruega.es/News_and_events/asociaciones/)
and Lithuania, it might be that this small-scale pioneer Spanish migration would have been more noticeable. It might have been considered as a real massive migration wave from the south to the north. Since the majority of the Spaniards in Norway are located in Oslo and Akershus, I narrowed the scope of my research to this region (Statistics Norway 2015\(^5\)).

Figure 2.3 - Age and gender distribution of the Spaniards in Norway in 2015

As Figure 2.3 indicates, the majority of the Spaniards who moved to Norway in order to find a job are between 20 to 49 years old. When it comes to gender, 58 percent of the Spanish migrants in Norway are men and 42 percent are women. According to Statistics Norway, this percentage has been unchanged at least since the beginning of the 2000s.

Figure 2.4 – Education level of the Spanish migrants in 2015 (over 16 years old)

Source: Statistics Norway

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\(^5\) [www.ssb.no/tabell/09204](http://www.ssb.no/tabell/09204)
Illustrated by Figure 2.4, the Spanish migrant workers often have diverse educational backgrounds, and many of them are highly educated (at least three years’ education at the university level), which can make it easier to step into the labour market. These statistics support the fact that many highly educated Spaniards left their home country, and like Lester and other researchers point out, Spain has had a significant brain drain after the crisis of 2008 (Lester 2012).

2.4 EEA labour migrants’ rights in Norway

Figure 2.5 - Grounds of migration (1996–2014)

![Diagram](source: Statistics Norway)

In the recent years and especially after the EU enlargement in 2004, there have been many debates around immigration and integration in Norway. Statistics Norway classifies immigrants in different categories: Labour, family, refugee and education. According to Statistics Norway, labour migration has been the largest group since 2006 (Figure 2.5), and most of the migrant workers are from the European Economic Area. In this part, I will mention some of the rights of the EEA migrant workers in Norway.

**Stay and residence permit**

Due to the free movement of goods, capital, services, and people in the European Economic Area, EEA citizens have the right to work, study and live in Norway (Hanewinkel 2013: 2). However, all the EEA nationals who stay in Norway for more than three months must register (NOU 2011:7, 2011: 79). To register, they must prove that they are an employee, a self-employed person, a student, a service provider or someone who is able to provide for
himself/herself. EEA workers can come to Norway without a job, but they can only stay for a maximum of six months as job seekers (UDI\(^6\)). After five years in Norway, EEA citizens can apply for permanent residence, which entitles them to reside in Norway for an indefinite period of time (UDI\(^7\)).

**Norwegian language courses**

As mentioned earlier, migrants are classified in different categories. There are thus different rights and duties attached to these categories. The ‘Introduction Act’ was introduced in 2003 to help refugees and their family members’ involvement in the Norwegian labour market and society. This law regulates their training in the Norwegian language and programs for qualification for employment or education (NOU 2011:7, 2011: 95). It ensures them the right and duty to 600 hours of Norwegian language and society introductory courses. However, EEA citizens who move to Norway on the ground of labour migration, do not have the right to receive free Norwegian courses\(^8\). Taking Norwegian courses is therefore a responsibility that lies on the migrant workers themselves and/or their employers. Even though the lack of language skills in Norwegian has a smaller effect on labour migrants than those coming to Norway on humanitarian grounds, it represents both a barrier for EU labour migrants in finding new (and better) jobs and a hindrance to their integration (NOU 2011:7, 2011: 39).

**Work**

Once the migrant workers find a job, they can apply for a work permit. There are clear guidelines when it comes to work contracts and work conditions. Salaries which are agreed between employer and employee, are a part of the written work contract. Although there is no general minimum wage in Norway, it is applied in practice in certain employment sectors.

According to Djuve and Skevik Grødem (2014), the unemployment rate among immigrants has remained relatively stable over the last 20 years, but it is still three times higher among immigrants than it is among the native-born. This gap between Norwegians and immigrants exists in spite of the many measurements put in motion, trying to incorporate immigrants in the Norwegian labour market (2014: 89). Although Norway has not managed to decrease the

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\(^6\) [https://www.udi.no/skal-soke/registreringsordningen-for-eueos-borgere/?c=fra](https://www.udi.no/skal-soke/registreringsordningen-for-eueos-borgere/?c=fra)

\(^7\) [https://www.udi.no/skal-soke/permanent-opphold/varig-oppholdsrett1/](https://www.udi.no/skal-soke/permanent-opphold/varig-oppholdsrett1/)

\(^8\) [http://www.samfunnskunnskap.no/?page_id=245](http://www.samfunnskunnskap.no/?page_id=245)
unemployment rate among immigrants, it is in Norway much lower than the rest of Europe (Ibid). The lack of (relevant) education and language skills in Norwegian are some of the factors why labour migrants can face challenges in getting (new) jobs in Norway. In order to remedy this situation, vocational training for labour migrants who fall outside the Norwegian labour market has been put into place. By participating in vocational training, unemployed migrant workers increase their chance of getting relevant knowledge and competence that make them more attractive in the labour market (NOU 2011: 7, 2011: 100).

Welfare support

The Norwegian system is on one side made in such a way that it is more beneficial to work than to receive social benefits. On the other side, a key characteristic of the Norwegian welfare model is that it aims at ensuring an acceptable income to workers, who for reasons such as unemployment or illness, cannot participate in the labour market (NOU 2011: 7, 2011: 56-57; UDI9). These benefits are in some ways based on an earning principle, where mainly those who have participated in the Norwegian labour market and have paid into the insurance funds receive social support (NOU 2011: 7, 2011: 52). However, in practice, there are coordination rules in place giving access to these benefits to those who have earned rights for social support in another country (NOU 2011: 7, 2011: 113).

The Norwegian labour and welfare system constitute a “social wage” that is often appealing to migrant workers and therefore makes Norway an attractive destination for migration.

After looking into some parameters like the EU enlargements, the relationship between Norway and Spain, as well as the EEA migrants’ rights in Norway, I will in the next chapter focus on describing some theoretical notions useful for this study.

9 https://www.udi.no/skal-soke/registreringsordningen-for-eueos-borgere/
3 Theoretical framework

In this chapter, I will present the theoretical concepts and perspectives which will lay the foundation for the analysis and the discussion later on in this thesis. Since the research questions are twofold, different but connected theoretical concepts will be used to understand the two social phenomena. Due to the fact that the Spanish labour migrants, who moved to Norway in the aftermath of the crisis of 2008, have only been living a short period of time in the receiving country, I choose not to distinguish their migration process and their integration into the host country. Friberg (2012) states that migrants’ opportunities to think and plan ahead are primarily connected to their work situation and economic condition (2012a: 1599). Therefore, the theoretical approaches chosen in this study refer to both labour migration and labour markets. To begin with, I will focus on the migration process of Spanish workers, including why they left Spain, why they moved to Norway and how they experienced the early phase of their migration in the host country. For that matter, theories that attempt to explain causes of international labour migration are appropriated. I will later on describe their incorporation over time into the Norwegian labour market. I will look into the different channels used to access the Norwegian labour market, and determine if these gateways, together with migrants’ capitals (human social, economic, cultural), may influence their work situation over time.

3.1 Different perspectives on the origins of migration

Economic motives for migration

Considered as the earliest migration theorist and known for his “Laws of Migration” (1885), Ernest Ravenstein assumed that migration was closely connected with ‘pull-push’ processes (Glorius 2013: 219). Ravenstein’s laws of migration had a major contribution to explain human migration, and were reformulated in 1966 by Everett Lee. According to these authors, migration results from a combination of ‘push-pull’ factors. On one side, ‘push’ factors, such as demographic growth, low wages, high unemployment rates and political repression, tend to compel people to leave their home countries. On the other side, ‘pull’ factors, which include a high demand of labour force, high wages, political freedom etc., attract people to move to certain countries. (Castles & Miller 2009: 22). According to these models, the primary cause for migration is to access better economic opportunities. Even if the ‘push-pull’ theories are useful to understand the origins of migration, they have been criticised for
being too simplistic.

Derived from the ‘push-pull’ models, the neoclassical economic theory is probably the best-known approach tending to explain international labour migration. On the macro-level, labour migration can be explained by geographic differences in labour demand and supply, resulting in wage differences between sending and receiving countries. People from low-wage countries migrate to high-wage countries, affecting thus the labour demand and supply dynamics in respective places. The theory implies that migration would eventually stop when wage differences disappear (Massey et al. 1993: 433). On the micro-level, the neoclassical economic theory takes into consideration that people are rational beings, and decide to invest their human capital in places where they can maximise their gains. If the benefits of moving away would be higher that the psychological, social and material costs caused by migrating, people dare to migrate (Borjas 1989: 457, 460-461; Massey et al. 1993: 434; Chiswick 2000: 2).

Like the neoclassical economic theory, the new economics of labour migration argues that migration results from a rational evaluation of costs and benefits (Stark & Bloom 1985: 173-174). The new economics labour migration recognises, not isolated individuals, but families or households as decision makers, and sees migration as an attempt to remedy to local market failures. The household decides to temporary send one or some of its members abroad in attempt to find employment elsewhere, and therefore assure a certain financial security for the family back home (Ibid). Rather than aiming at wage maximisation, this approach considers income diversification and risk reduction as an important motive for migration (Ibid:175; King 2013: 23).

**Non-economic motives for migration**

As a result of a severe economic downturn in Europe, new migration flows have occurred. Recent studies indicate that people choose to migrate for other reasons than just purely economic factors, such as unemployment and debts. Protesting against the social and political system in migrants’ home country has been a significant factor leading people and especially highly educated workers to move abroad. They do not migrate due to unemployment, but “vote with their feet” as a sign of discontentment over the kind of society they see developing in their country of origin (Triandafyllidou & Gropas 2014; Bygnes 2015a, Hanewinkel 2013;
Traditionally, migration was studied within the framework of dichotomies such as international/internal, forced/voluntary, temporary/permanent, legal/illegal migration (King 2002: 89-94). However, according to King (2002), the boundaries between the distinctions mentioned above have become blurred. The right of free movement within Europe for example has made migration flows both internal and international, and underlines the fact that migration is a complex phenomenon. Additionally, out of “free will” people can voluntarily migrate but experience at the same time that their migration was forced due to circumstances that were out of their control. Economic migrants such as the ‘Euro-refugees’ can be one example among others. King mentions that the traditional analysis framework is then no longer suitable to fully explain current migration flows (ibid). While he still recognizes that economic and political ‘push-pull’ factors impact migratory movements, he identifies three new motives that can better describe reasons behind current migration flows: the desire for self-realisation, love and wellness (ibid: 94-100). Firstly, due to an increasing individualisation and a desire of shaping their own life in a whole new way, individuals migrate to experience excitement, acquire new experiences and discover the world. As King states, migration has become an end in itself, and is not anymore perceived as just a mean to obtain a better economic situation (ibid: 95). Secondly, the expansion of linguistic skills and of cross-national movements result to an intensification of personal contact between people of different nationalities. Love relationships can thus emerge and generate new migration flows (ibid: 99). Finally, more than purely economic reasons, individuals can be motivated to migrate in order to obtain wellness and a better quality of life (ibid: 100).

### 3.2 Supply- and demand-driven migration flows

Labour supply refers to the available workforce in the labour market, while the labour demand describes the amount of manpower that an economy or a company needs in order to produce goods and services at a given point of time. It refers therefore to the employments available. In migration studies, terms such as ‘supply- and demand-driven migration’ have been used on a macro-level to categorise and analyse two different types of labour migration flows. Having a demand-driven migration refers to labour migrants who move abroad because employers in the host country have a need for these workers. By contrast, a supply-driven migration refers to labour migration flows where workers move abroad, not first of all...
because the host country requires their manpower, but because they are themselves in a need of employment. Friberg, Elgvin and Djuve (2013) who made a comparative study on the internal European labour migration flows from the east to the west and from the south to the north, mentioned that while Eastern Europe has had a demand-driven migration, Southern Europe, by contrast has had a supply-driven migration (2013: 47). Even if Spanish migrant workers have had on the macro-level a supply-driven migration, compared to migrant workers from Eastern Europe, I will in this study use these terms ‘supply- and demand-driven migration’ on the micro level, to describe the migration and labour market incorporation process of the Spanish migrant workers. I will then refer on one hand to the Spaniards who were recruited and therefore moved to Norway with a job contract in their hands as labour migrants who had a demand-driven migration. On the other hand, I will refer to those who came to Norway as job seekers (those who came to Norway without having a job to go to), as migrants who had supply-driven migration.

3.3 Human, social and cultural capital

Gary Becker (1930-2014), who was an American economist, developed (together with Larry Sjaastad and other economists) what would be called the Human capital theory. Human capital is according to Becker, connected to “activities that influence future monetary and psychic income by increasing resources in people” (Becker in Teixeira 2014: 8). Obtained through education, job training and work experience, it refers to skills an individual has that increases his economic productivity (Ibid: 5-8). According to many studies on migrants’ human capital, there is a positive link between education and migration, in the sense that highly skilled workers tend to have better chances to access labour markets in host countries (Chiswick 2000: 7).

Pierre Bourdieu (1930-2002), who was a French sociologist and anthropologist, distinguishes between two types of symbolic capitals – social and cultural capitals, which together with the notion of human capital, can be useful in this study. Social capital refers to the social network a person has in terms of family members, friends, colleagues, and other types of contacts linking people to each other (Bourdieu 1986: 9). Bourdieu used this concept to study how people used their social contacts to access economic and cultural goods. By that, he could observe how people’ social capital could influence their place in society (Ibid). The notion of social capital has been also used in migration studies and is seen as a significant factor
explaining migration flows, as well as migrants’ labour market incorporation (Castles & Miller 2009: 27). A cultural capital refers to manners, traditions, linguistic abilities and cultural objects such as art, books, instruments etc. individuals have (Bourdieu 1986: 3-5). Like social contacts, cultural capital, in terms of language skills and knowledge about foreign countries, is also perceived by writers as an element that could influence migration movements (Castles & Miller 2009: 27). Skills in foreign languages, which are often acquired through education, play an important part in migrant’s journey into the host country’s labour market and society. I will in this study refer to them as a purely cultural capital, and therefore limit the notion of human capital to education (level and type of education) and work experience.

3.4 ‘Good’ jobs vs ‘bad’ jobs

Defining what characterises a ‘good’ or a ‘bad’ job isn’t an easy task since it both involves objective criteria, but also subjective criteria. Andrew Clark (1998), who made a comparable survey data in nine OECD countries, describes six components that makes a certain occupation a ‘good’ job: wage, working hours, future career opportunities (promotion, job security), how hard and difficult the job is, job content (interest, status, autonomy), and interpersonal relationships (1998: 4). In this study, I will use Clark’s criteria to see what kind of jobs the Spanish migrant workers accessed in the Norwegian labour market, but I will add as well one characteristic which will be of importance in this thesis: Did the migrant workers access jobs related to their education and/or work experience?

When one studies what determines a ‘good’ occupation, one must consider what the characteristics of ‘bad jobs’ are and consequently who deserves to get the ‘good’ jobs? ‘Bad’ jobs can be defined by the following criteria: no job security and risk of unemployment, inexistent or limited autonomy, no career advancement, low wages, work repetitiveness, as well as low status since these occupations are located at the bottom of the employment ladder (Waldinger, Lim & Cort 2007: 6). Piore (1979) states that the international migration is primarily a result of ‘pull’ factors in receiving countries – a structural demand for a cheap and flexible labour force, rather than ‘push’ factors in sending countries (Piore 1979: 4, 26-49; King 2012: 16; Massey et al. 1993: 440). This is linked to the existence of a dual labour market within advanced economies, a primary labour market, where native workers have stable and well-paid jobs, and a secondary labour market, where
the insecure, low-paid and unpleasant jobs are mainly occupied by migrant workers (Piore 1979: 17-18). As King (2012) mentions, these occupations are mainly occupied by foreigners and tend to be jobs in hotels and restaurants, in the cleaning sector, and in the care sector such as taking care of children and elderly people (2012: 17). Native workers tend to decline taking these unpleasant jobs, and leave them to immigrants who have no bargaining power in the receiving country (Piore 1979: 27; King 2012: 16). Preoccupied with economical survival, at least in the early stages of migration, migrants tend thus to accept jobs with less than favourable working conditions, rather than facing unemployment in the host country or in their home country (Massey et al. 1993: 442; Friberg 2013: 44).

3.5 Social mobility

According to Papademetriou, Somerville & Sumption (2009), the migrants’ social mobility is in many ways connected to their economic condition in the early stage of migration (2009: 9). Social mobility refers to people moving over time from one class to another. It can be upward or downward, and can be either inter-generational (children’s position compared to their parents’ class) or intra-generational (individuals changing class throughout their life) (NOU 2012:15, 2012: 77). In this study, the emphasis will only be on the intra-generational dimension, observing if the Spanish migrant workers experienced or not a loss of social status after moving to Norway, and see if they managed to get better work opportunities over time.

Even if the earnings of the foreign born workers tend to be lower than the natives’ ones in the early phase of migration, the neoclassical economic theory argues that with time, the migrants’ work situation and wages tend to converge with those of the native workers. This is especially the case when migrants learn the language of the receiving country, obtain more knowledge about the host country labour market, and are more in contact with natives (Borjas 1989: 472; Papademetriou, Somerville & Sumption 2009: 5; Friberg 2013: 41). The dual market theory by contrast, does give a “darker” picture of the migrants’ future opportunities in the host country. Going from the secondary to the primary labour market may not go without saying, due to structural changes in the labour market and a demand for a cheap and flexible labour force. Except through education, upward social mobility may take a much longer time or only become a reality for the migrants’ descendants (Papademetriou, Somerville & Sumption 2009: 5; Friberg 2013: 43).
After looking into the theoretical concepts which will be useful for the analytical part of this thesis, in the next chapter I will describe the method used in this study.
4 Method

In this chapter, I want to describe the methodological approach used to gather information and reflect upon the decisions made during the whole process of this research. Since the migration of Spanish workers is a relatively new phenomenon, I chose to have an explorative approach and had in depth-interviews with 17 Spanish migrant workers.

4.1 Informants

Informant criteria

In order to narrow the scope of the research, I chose to focus on Spanish people who:

- moved to Norway due to the financial crisis of 2008
- worked or were searching for a job in Oslo (including the suburbs)
- are Spanish by birth and grew up in Spain

In this study of intra-European migration, I chose the criteria: ‘Spaniards who were born and grew up in Spain’ and ‘who moved abroad due to the financial crisis of 2008’ for several reasons. Migrants from Latin America, North Africa and Romania who lived in Spain, represented the majority of those who left Spain due to the crisis and tried to make a living in other countries (Hanewinkel 2013: 3; INE). Some of them received Spanish citizenship. People who have already left their native country normally have more facilities to move and settle down elsewhere if necessary. However, as a result of the financial crisis, the emigration of native Spaniards has been a relatively new phenomenon that drew my curiosity (Izquierdo, Jimeno & Lacuesta 2013: 9). The migrant workers who came from Spain to Norway and who are originally from Latin America, North Africa and Romania are often those who are in the most vulnerable situation, because they generally have a lower education and limited language skills in English (Hanewinkel 2013: 2; Caritas\(^\text{10}\)). The native Spaniards, by contrast, represent a more diverse group, often with a high level of education and some language competence in English – at least the youngest generation – which make them more attractive on the labour market (Ibid).

\(^{10}\) Caritas’ Information Centre for migrant workers in Oslo
Recruitment of the informants

The informants in this study were recruited based on a strategic selection. I used social media as the main tool to recruit informants, as I perceived it as one of the most effective ways to get in contact with Spanish people who had different migration processes and work situations. I partly found people who fit my targeted group on the Facebook group ‘Españoles en Oslo.’ I briefly wrote on the wall the first time in English, about the theme of my research, and mentioned that I wanted to interview people who fit the criteria of the targeted group. I quickly got in contact with several people who were willing to be interviewed, and who also put me in contact with other potential informants. This method is characterised as a ‘snowball method’ which describes picking someone with the right criteria and through his/her recommendation, finding other informants that fit the characteristics of your research (Gobo 2004). The main challenge and one of the limitations of the snowball sampling approach is that one risks that the informants know each other, which could in this case generate similar opinions and answers. At one point, I interviewed two informants at the same time, a couple who shared their migration process with me. They moved to Norway at different points in time and had both different work situations and migration processes. Interviewing them at the same time proved to be fruitful since they could discuss topics among themselves. However, it is difficult to determine to which extent their answers would have been different if I had interviewed them separately.

I had interviewed seven people when I met my supervisor. She advised me to find a couple of other informants, in case I couldn’t interview all of the seven people nine months later. I wrote then a second time to the group ‘Españoles en Oslo,’ in Spanish this time, which led me to find 10 more informants.

Interviewing Spanish people who moved to Norway in order to find a job here was the main tool for gathering the information needed. In addition to that, I wanted to observe whether the informants had experienced a development in their incorporation into the labour market and their work situation. That is why I chose to interview them twice, once in May 2015 and the second time in January 2016. A period of only nine months between the two interviews did not appear too short, since most of the informants experienced changes in some degree during that time window. I adopted an abductive and explorative approach, moving back and forth between theory and empirical data. To gather information, I used mainly semi-structured
interviews and have had altogether 33 interviews: 30 semi-structured interviews with the informants, and three unstructured interviews with different agencies – one with Caritas, one with ARENA\textsuperscript{11} and one with IMDi.\textsuperscript{12} The first interviews lasted between 35–60 minutes and the follow-up interviews lasted between 20–40 minutes.

**Research participants**

I interviewed 17 informants during the first round of interviews – nine women and eight men from 26 to 47 years old. Their marital statuses were: single, in a relationship and married. Six of the informants had children and among them, three had their family with them in Norway. Nine of the people that I interviewed had at least four years’ education at the university level: seven women and two men. This underlines the statistics showing that female labour migrant workers tend to have a higher level of education than men. Four informants had a short university or college degree (up to 3 years’ education), two had a certificate of completed apprenticeship and two did not have any education, due to the fact that they started their own company at a young age. There are several definitions of what it means to have a ‘higher education.’ In this study, I will refer as a ‘high education’ or ‘being highly educated’ to individuals who have at least a three years’ education at the university level.

I give a more detailed description of the informants in chapter six *Step into the Labour market.* Even if the chapter five *Migration process* refers to the informants, their detailed information is more useful in chapter six and is directly connected to their incorporation process and the type of jobs they had, in comparison to their human, social and cultural capital.

I interviewed 13 of the 17 informants a second time nine months later: eight women and five men. The fact that four informants were not interviewed a second time didn’t represent a tangible challenge for the analysis since it wasn’t a systematic drop-out. Those who dropped out were not only those who managed well, or those who were in a vulnerable situation. The four informants were in different situations, like the rest of my selected group.

\textsuperscript{11} Centre for European Studies who studied migration of the Euro-refugees.

\textsuperscript{12} The Directorate of Integration and Diversity.
4.2 Interviews

As mentioned above, I had two rounds of interviews with the Spanish migrant workers. In both cases, I chose to have semi-structured interviews since the theme of this research is mainly based on the experiences of the Spanish migrants who came to Norway to find a job. Flexibility is the strength of the semi-structured interview, in a sense that it gives the informants the opportunity to describe in depth experiences and to share things which the researcher hadn’t necessarily thought of beforehand (Grønmo 2016: 145). In both cases, I prepared in advance an interview guide based on my research questions. I made sure that the interview guides both had a certain degree of structure, keeping the interviews in line with the theme of the study, and had open questions in order to facilitate reflection and not lead the research participants in a particular direction.

The first round of interviews focused on getting an overall picture of the informants’ migration process and their incorporation into the Norwegian labour market. Why did they leave Spain? Why among many nations did they choose Norway? How was their arrival in Norway? How did they get a job, and what kind of job do they have compared to the one they used to have in Spain? What hindrances did they face and what help did they receive, in order to get into the Norwegian labour market? The last part of the first round of interviews referred to their social integration both at work and outside work. In order to narrow the scope of this thesis, I chose after the first interview to mainly focus on their incorporation and development into the labour market and exclude their social integration in general, even though it is an important aspect when it comes to integration as a whole.

Getting an overview of the findings of the first round of interviews was useful to plan the second one and determine what I wanted to focus on. While the first interview touched many different aspects in order to get an overall picture of the Spanish migrant workers’ migration process and their incorporation into the Norwegian labour market, the second interview focused more on what had changed in their work situation since the previous time I had interviewed them. How was it going at work? If they had experienced some changes, what kind of changes did they experience?

Twelve of the interviews were done face-to-face and 21 over Skype. I didn’t experience any additional challenges by having the interviews over Skype rather than face-to-face. In both cases, I was able to get additional and valuable information through non-verbal
communication. The face-to-face interviews with the informants were conducted either at the University of Oslo or in a café, and on one occasion at the informant’s home.

4.3 Choice of languages

The interviews were conducted either in Norwegian or in English. Since the informants and I do not have these languages as our mother tongue, it is important to keep in mind that linguistic connotations vary from culture to culture, and that words and sentences can lose some of their meaning in translation (Berkaak & Frønes 2005: 23, 30). I do not have problem understanding these languages but I am aware of the challenges that could come up, of not having them as my mother tongue. At some point, some informants briefly spoke in Spanish when it became hard to really express what they wanted to say. We had agreed in advance which language we would speak during the interviews (either Norwegian or English), but it was important for me to have a good and detailed information rather than a simplified picture of the migrants’ experience due to a potential language barrier. That is why at some point and on a very few occasions, they could express themselves in Spanish.

4.4 Ethics

Because of the collection, storage and electronic handling of personal data, the project was reported to the Norwegian Social Science Data Services (NSD) and approved. Before the beginning of the interviews, I presented myself and the theme of my master’s thesis. I thanked the informants for being willing to participate in this research project and I mentioned at the same time that all the information that they were willing to share would be kept confidential, anonymised and deleted at the end of the project. In order to preserve the anonymity of the research participants, I have purposely used fictive names in this thesis.

I received the permission to record every interview, which I transcribed shortly afterward, in order to keep the impression I had during the interviews. Recording them made it easier for me to fully be present during the interviews. Recording and transcribing them made it as well possible to go back to what had been said when it was needed and use accurately some of the statements in this study.

In this project, I have had the role of the researcher and at the same time, I am myself a migrant worker, from France. I had to be aware and careful through the whole process, not to
allow my interpretations to influence the research. It can be useful to note that I moved abroad and worked for the same company, but in another country. This is very different than having to move to a new place due to the financial crisis which severely hit the south of Europe. This contributed to having a certain distance to my research questions and to the informants’ experiences.

4.5 Reliability, validity and generalisation

According to Kvale, reliability, validity and generalisation in social sciences represent what he calls the ‘trinity’, three pillars giving credibility to a study (1997: 158). In qualitative research, reliability refers to the study’s trustworthiness, and has to do with whether the same study made by other researchers can produce similar results (ibid: 161). Reflection around the choices made throughout the whole process, such as methods used, documentation of data and the final result, are both necessary and important, in order to secure a high level of credibility (Ryen 2002: 180). That is why I have been, through the whole process of this research, careful not to be subjective, and reflected upon the choices made along the way. The fact that I have transcribed every interview has also strengthened the study’s reliability since it enabled me to check what was actually said, which made my interpretations more accurate.

Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) point out that validity refers to the appropriateness of the tools used to gather data and answer the research questions. It serves as a quality check throughout the whole process of the research (2009: 253, 254). The interview’s validity was checked through follow-up questions. By asking follow-up questions, I was making sure that I correctly understood what was being said and it also served as a mirror for the informants. It gave them the possibility to hear their statements articulated in a different way, which might also have given them a better understanding of their own experience. Validity refers as well to whether the research participants can identify themselves or not with the results of the study. The informants were given the opportunity to read through the statements used in this thesis, in order to make sure that they were in accord with the informants’ experience. According to Grønmo, another aspect of the study’s validity refers to the researcher’s ability to gather qualitative data on a chosen theme (2016: 254). My background can in that sense strengthen the validity of this research. I have been working several years in an international organisation, and through that was in contact with people from many nations with different
cultures and backgrounds. The theoretical knowledge that I obtained through my studies and my experiences at work have allowed me to avoid or at least reduce wrong interpretations due to cultural and linguistic misunderstandings.

According to Kvale (1997), analytical generalisation has to do with whether the results of a research can be applied to other situations (1997: 161). In this case, can the findings of this study be applied to other Spanish migrant workers or migrant workers in general? I am aware of the fact that the number of informants is small and that the findings are not representative for the situation of all the Spanish migrant workers or even less the experience of all the migrant workers in Norway. The aim of the thesis is to study their migration process, and look into mechanisms that can explain the informants’ incorporation into the labour market (and the preconditions for their incorporation), rather than generalising the results to all migrant workers. These findings might nevertheless raise some reflections on the Norwegian labour market and the career paths of migrant workers.

After describing the methodology used and the practical choices made along the way in this thesis, I will in the following chapter look into the migration process of the Spanish migrant workers.
5 Migration process

In order to give an overall perspective over the migrants’ journey into a new country, I will describe the reasons why the research participants moved from their home country, and why they chose Norway as the destination of their migration. I will also present how they experienced their early phase in Norway after their migration.

5.1 Reasons for leaving Spain

Due to the crisis of 2008, Spain went from having a massive immigration to a vast emigration, and experienced a significant brain drain, where hundreds of thousands of highly educated Spaniards fled the country to work abroad (Lester 2012). The high level of unemployment and the insecurity in the Spanish labour market made the headlines in the media and had severe consequences for the population and the country in general. Many became unemployed long-term. Among those who did have a job, many had ‘bad’ jobs – unrelated to their education, where workers were overqualified, paid low wages and had short-term work contracts. Some even chose to work for free in their field, in order to not lose their competence, while others moved away. For many who became unemployed and in debt, migration was perceived as the only alternative to get out of the crisis. For others, especially for the highly educated workers, moving abroad became one of the ways to protest against the system (Bygnes 2015a: 8; Triandafyllidou & Gropas 2014, Lester 2012).

Most of the Spanish workers in this study had the sense that they had to move in order to find a solution to their situation. They therefore saw migration as a way out of the crisis, rather than a protest against the system. As King (2002) mentions, the boundaries between traditional dichotomies in migration studies, such as international/internal, forced/voluntary have been more and more blurred (2002: 89-94). Even if their labour migration isn’t classified as a “forced” migration, it wasn’t fully voluntarily since they moved abroad due to circumstances that were out of their control. In this study, when I mention that the informants moved abroad because they “had” to, and not because they “chose” to, it indicates the fact that they wouldn’t have migrated if their lives hadn’t been deeply affected by the 2008 financial crisis. Their migration was in some ways like other Spanish migrant workers interviewed by Friberg, Elgvin and Djuve (2013), “a desperate reaction to an acute crisis in their home country” (2013: 46).
Unemployment and insecurity about not having a job in the future were definitively the two significant main reasons why the Spanish workers in this study left their home country.

Eight informants mentioned that they moved from Spain because they were unemployed and did not manage to find a (good) job in their home country:

**Pablo (early 40s):** I started my own business when I was 18 years old. In my late thirties, I had three bars and one restaurant. But in 2008, the crisis hit hard and I lost everything in one year […]. With 42 percent unemployment in my home place, it was impossible to find a job for someone like me, someone without education. Leaving was my only option.

**Isabel (mid-20s):** The reason why I left Spain was that I couldn’t find a job in my home country. Our employment sector – architecture, is in crisis and it is hard to find a job, especially for young people like me who do not have work experience. So I just had to move and try somewhere else.

**Sebastián (mid-30s):** I was a philosophy teacher in a high school in the south of Spain. I worked six years as a teacher but lost my job like many others in 2012. There were 50 000 teachers who lost their job due to the financial crisis, and 2 000 just in my area. My wife had her own company but it went bankrupt. We found ourselves without income and in debt. We got some help from our parents, but at the end, we just had to do something, start elsewhere.
Six research participants decided to move abroad due to insecurity about not having a job in the future in Spain. Javier was one of them:

**Javier (early 30s):** My wife lost her job during the financial crisis and found it difficult to find a new one. I have been working 12 years making 3D animation movies, but I did not have job security. When my temporary contracts ended, it was hard to get new ones at the same companies. I then had to get new contracts elsewhere. It wasn’t unusual for me to be one and half years without new major projects. I decided then to apply for some jobs in other countries.

Bygnes is one of the few who have done some research on Spanish workers who moved to Norway. Her findings indicate that unemployment wasn’t the main reason why highly educated Spaniards left Spain, and states that this:

...migration flow cannot be reduced to a desperate flight from unemployment and economic problems in Spain. Rather in addition to labour market possibilities in Norway, disillusion with Spanish politics and society are cited as core motivations to migrate (Bygnes 2015a: 1).

Many of the highly educated Spaniards, who she interviewed, underlined that they didn’t move because of economic motives, but left because “they disliked the kind of society they saw developing in Spain” (Bygnes 2015a: 1). By contrast to the majority of my informants, they moved from Spain because they chose to and not because they had to. As Bygnes mentions, these workers were relatively well paid and had secure employment. Rather than being ‘Euro-refugees’ they were ‘migrants of disillusion’ (ibid). Comparing migrants’ education level and work situation before moving, Bygnes points out in her study that while the highly educated migrants left Spain to protest against the system, migrants with lower education by contrast moved abroad due to unemployment and lack of financial resources to provide for their families (2015b: 183). In my study, both low- and highly educated people were affected by the financial crisis, and they mentioned that unemployment and job insecurity were the main reasons why they left Spain. Some lost their jobs, or their companies, while others either had slower activity in their own company or did not have any job opportunity in their field of expertise. Although economic factors were the main reason why, in my study, many Spaniards moved abroad, several shared the same feeling as the Spanish workers in Bygnes’ research. They also had a sense that Spain had become “a place with no future” (2015a: 8).
Two of the informants did not leave Spain first of all because of economic reasons. However, the financial crisis induced them to make some changes in their lives. For one of the informants, Alicia (early 30s), the bad economic situation in Spain slowed the activity at her workplace. Instead of having little to do at work, she used this opportunity to move abroad and learn English. Improving her language skills, getting international work experience but also discovering new things lead her to Ireland, and then Malta. Another informant, Sofia (early 30s), mentioned as well that experiencing new things together with the difficult situation in Spain lead her to migrate. Their situations support Kings’ new motives for migration: an increasing individualisation, self-realisation and the desire to discover the world (King 2002: 94-95). If the financial crisis in Spain wasn’t the main reason why these informants left their home country, it was at least the reason why they did not return to Spain.

In migration studies, ‘push’ and ‘pull’ factors often interact, and therefore influence people’s decisions to move abroad. In this study, the migration of the Spanish workers was in many ways a reaction to a sudden crisis hitting the country, caused primarily by ‘push’ factors in their home country, and not first of all by ‘pull’ factors in the host country. This means that Piore’s (1979) argument that international migration is caused, not first and foremost by ‘push’ factors such as low wages or unemployment, but by ‘pull’ factors in receiving countries, doesn’t really reflect this small-scale Spanish migration.

If ‘push’ factors were the main reasons why Spanish labour workers left Spain, what could be the ‘pull’ factors that made them move to Norway and not to another country? This will be the focus of the next part.

5.2 Why did they move to Norway?

Lack of Spanish informal social network in Norway

In many cases, social contacts across borders influence migration processes. According to Boyd (1989), these informal networks, which involve friends, family, household members etc., “bind migrants, ex-migrants and non-migrants together in a complex web of social roles and interpersonal relationships” (Boyd 1989: 639 in Castles & Miller 2009: 27). These networks in the host country, which can be linked to Bourdieu’s “social capital”, tend to make it easier for people to migrate to a foreign country (Ibid: 28). As Friberg, Elgvin & Djuve (2013) point out, Spanish migrants do not have a strong social network established in
Norway (2013: 46). This could be one of the reasons why relatively few Spanish migrants came to Norway in the aftermath of the crisis of 2008, compared to the UK, France or Germany. Since very few informants had social contacts from before, informal social networks cannot be a determinant factor explaining why most of the research participants chose Norway as the destination of their migration. This means that other ‘pull’ factors made them come to Norway.

Reasons for moving to Norway

Since the EU enlargement in 2004, Norway has become an important destination country, especially for migrant workers from the east of Europe. Compared to most of the European countries which have been severely hit by the financial crisis of 2008, the Scandinavian countries, and particularly Norway, have relatively been unaffected by the crisis (Dølvik, Fløtt, Hippe & Jordfald 2014: 4). Those who left the south of Europe (Spain, Greece, Italy and Portugal), the ‘Euro-refugees’ as they have been called, hoped for a better future elsewhere. While the majority moved to other European nations like Germany, the UK and France, some made their way to Norway and decided to give it a chance.

Figure 5.2 – Reasons for moving to Norway

Summarised in Figure 5.2, there are several reasons why the people I interviewed chose Norway. They moved to Norway although the climate, language and culture are very different from Spain. Almost half of the informants moved to Norway because they had either received a job offer (demand-driven migration) or had a job interview in Norway. In search for employment but also of wellness (which supports King’s argument (2002: 100)), a few respondents did some research online, read reports about the Nordic Model, the mentalities and values, and got to know that it was a great place to raise a family:
Juan (mid-40s): I was an entrepreneur who had two companies which went bankrupt during the crisis. I wanted to have a better quality of life for my family and I read a report about the Nordic Model, about the way of thinking, etc. I was tired of the mentality in Spain. When things go well, it is only those on the top who benefit from the economic growth, and when things go badly, it is the rest of the population which pays the price. I read that it was different in Norway, and I therefore came here. Two Spanish workers searched on flight websites the destination from where it was the cheapest to fly back to Spain. Like Pablo (early 40's) mentions, “I chose Norway because the flight tickets from Oslo to the south of Spain were cheap, and several departures a day made it possible for me to go back home often but also quickly in case of emergency.” Three informants had already been in Norway previously as students. One had come back to Spain after her studies and worked several years in Spain, while the other two finished their studies in Norway and stayed to find a job. Two of the informants either came or decided to stay because their partners already had moved to Norway. In their case, finding employment and love (which supports as well King’s argument for migration 2002: 99) were the reasons why they either moved to Norway or stayed here. In total, just a few of the people I interviewed either received recommendations for Norway or already had a social contact with Norwegians, who were living in Spain or in Norway.

5.3 Their early phase in Norway

Studying the labour migration of Polish workers to Norway, J. Friberg and L. Eldring (2011) mention that the risk and the uncertainties attached to moving to a foreign country to find other employment increase when the migrant workers do not have any social contacts who can support them in the early phase of migration (2011: 23). Since the Spanish migrants represent a new population group in Norway, it is not surprising that most of the informants in this research came without any previous contact or network to help and support them. While most of the research participants in this thesis had a lot of human capital, they had little social capital in Norway. They had therefore to manage on their own in the early stages in their host country. Those who came without having a job to go to (supply-driven migration) especially described that it was pretty difficult at the beginning, being on your own, finding a job, a place to stay in a foreign and expensive country: “When you are searching for a job, no one is
taking care of you. You don’t have enough money to find a good place to live, etc. No network. No one” (Isabel, mid-20s). The insecure situation in the Spanish labour market and society did not make their situation lighter. As another informant stated, the fact that there was “nothing to come back to” (Carmen, late 20s), lead also to increasing the pressure that the Spanish migrants had about finding a job in Norway.

Among the 17 informants, three got some help from a social contact who provided valuable information and guidance about the required administrative procedures, the culture, what type of clothes would be needed, etc. Three respondents (who all had a job offer before moving to Norway) got some help from their Norwegian workplace with finding housing after their arrival. One company in particular found a place to stay for their employees, paid the deposit in advance, provided Norwegian courses, social arrangements and a guided tour in the city so that the foreign workers could quickly find their place in their new host country. Having employers who actively play a role in including and supporting their employees during the phase of migration, which is often characterised as demanding, seems to be an important aspect for migrant workers, who often feel lost in an unknown environment.

Having in mind that they left Spain first of all because they had to, and not because they wanted to, it was significant through the interviews that the informants’ early phase of migration was more challenging for those who came without a job offer. The uncertainty of not knowing if one will manage to get a job and the lack of social contacts did not make this phase any easier.

5.4 Summary

Figure 5.3 – Reasons for migration
As Figure 5.3 summarises, the migration of the Spanish workers in this study was primarily caused by ‘push’ factors, such as unemployment and insecurity about not having a job in the future. Most of them migrated first of all not because they wanted to, but because they had to, in the sense that they wouldn’t have moved abroad if the financial crisis hadn’t deeply affected their work situation. If ‘push’ factors in Spain were the main reasons why they left their home country, ‘pull’ factors such as job offers, a good welfare system, and cheap flight tickets made them come to Norway. A few who had studied before in Norway and had some social contacts either decided to stay in their host country or come back in order to find a job.

While most of the Spanish workers in this study had a lot of human capital in terms of education and work experience, they had little social capital in Norway. They therefore had to manage on their own in the early stages in their host country. This may explain in part why relatively few Spanish migrants came to Norway, compared to the UK, France or Germany, and why the informants’ early phase of migration was more challenging for those who came without a job offer (supply-driven migration). The lack of future perspectives in Spain and the lack of social contacts and support in Norway - added to the uncertainty of not knowing if one would manage to get a job in a new and foreign country - made this phase demanding for many.

After looking at the migration process of the Spanish workers interviewed in this study, I will now look at their incorporation process into the Norwegian labour market.
6 Step into the Norwegian labour market

In this chapter, I will look at the journey of the research participants into the Norwegian labour market. For that matter, I will focus on the channels used to access employment in Norway and the type of job they obtained in comparison to their human capital, but also to their social and cultural capital.

Among my research participants, almost all of them did access employment after their migration to Norway. Among the 17 research participants, 16 got a job, while one informant did not manage to step into the labour market and was then unemployed. Among those who had a job, eight of them obtained a relevant one as their very first job in Norway, while eight got a job which did not match their education and/or work experience.

Figure 6.1 – Informants’ employment sectors after moving to Norway

Beside finding themselves in a wide range of employment sectors, ten out of the 16 informants who got a job, worked in the primary labour market.

6.1 Demand-driven migration: Welcome to Norway!

Introducing the informants

The six Spanish workers who were recruited before coming to Norway were between 26 to 37 years of age (at the time of the first interview); two women and four men who all had been living in Norway between five months to three years.
- Jose (early 30s) has a master’s degree in civil engineering and has worked six years as an engineer. He has been living three years in Norway and his wife moved to Norway a few months ago.
- Javier (early 30s) is educated as a 3D animation film maker (short education), with 12 years of work experience. He has been living in Norway for one year. His wife is moving back and forth between Norway and Spain.
- Carmen (late 20s) has a master’s degree in biotechnology and genetics. She has been living in Norway for 5 months.
- Sofia (early 30s) has a master’s degree in media and communication and has worked five years in different employment sectors. She has been living in Norway for two years.
- Sebastián (mid-30s) has studied seven years (master’s degree + two years) and has worked six years as a teacher of Philosophy. He has been living in Norway for two years. His wife and children are living together with him in Norway.
- Martín (mid-30s) has a certificate of completed apprenticeship in plumbing and has worked 13 years as a plumber. He has been living in Norway for six months. His wife and children are living in Spain.

**Step into the Norwegian labour market**

Figure 6.2 – Work situation of Spanish workers who came with a job contract in their hands

As illustrated in Figure 6.2, almost all of those who obtained a job offer before moving to Norway got full-time employment right away, and a permanent work contract. One migrant worker who obtained a relevant but a temporary contract was Carmen, a Spaniard who wanted to invest in her human capital. Instead of working for free or getting a small job which wouldn’t be related to her education in biotechnology and genetics, she took a chance abroad and got a one-year contract in her field of expertise: “I applied for some jobs and PhDs in different countries, and had an interview at one of the hospitals in Oslo. I came to Oslo for
the interview and got to know one week later that I obtained the job, and could start in two weeks” (Carmen, late 20s). I met her just a few months after she had moved to Norway. After asking her to describe her workplace, Carmen mentioned, “we have a very good work environment. It is actually not possible to find better.” Although everything happened very fast and it took a little while to find her way in a new environment, she was really enthusiastic about her job and Norway in general. Even though she wasn’t (yet) able to do her PhD in Norway, the job that she obtained has given her the possibility to put into practice her competence, learn new things and receive an income that is much higher than the one she would have had if she would have stayed in Spain.

Even though Sofía and Sebastián didn’t get a relevant job in Norway, the majority of the informants who got recruited had ‘good’ jobs and worked outside employment sectors often occupied by foreigners. There are reasons to believe that Sofía and Sebastián, who worked as salesmen in a big company, were hired not only because they had skills and were in search of a job, but also because they were foreigners. They were hired by a company that was deliberately employing migrant workers. During the interviews, one of them mentioned that “the bosses in my company like to hire foreigners because migrant workers are willing to work hard. As I heard, it seems that for them, they are less lazy than domestic workers” (Sofía, early 30s). The other informant also commented that “my bosses want to have employees from other countries, as well as Norwegians, because they were tired of people who were too often on sick-leave” (Sebastián, mid-30s). These two informants, who received permanent contracts right away, nevertheless felt that their Norwegian employers were treating them the same way as their Norwegian colleagues, and that it wasn’t expected that they would work harder than the other employees because they were foreigners. From listening to these two informants, it seems that their company was good at integrating people, giving them the possibility to quickly learn Norwegian, but also get new skills in a good work environment.

Only one out of the six informants who were recruited had changed employment since his arrival to Norway. After several years of “unemployment,” working in the black market without any security net, Martín decided together with his wife that he would search for a job abroad in order to better provide for his family, for his wife and their four children. His migration supports and describes arguments given by the new economics of labour migration (Stark & Bloom 1985: 173-175). Having 13 years of work experience as a plumber, he
obtained a job interview with a Norwegian company in the south of Spain and came to Norway to work as extra help. After several assignments and shifts here and there, and having the feeling that he had to work harder than others due to the fact that he was a foreigner, Martín applied to other companies, in the hope of getting a full-time job in the future. After just a few months in Norway, he had found another job in the same sector but it was a full-time position this time.

Among those who got recruited, only one informant, Sebastián, had some basic knowledge in Norwegian at the time of migration. Being unemployed for six months in his home country, he used this time to learn some Norwegian and apply online for jobs in Norway. Even if being able to speak a bit Norwegian was an asset, he did not first of all get a job offer because of his cultural and human capital, his language skills in Norwegian or education, but because his company, as mentioned above, was on purpose hiring Spanish workers who potentially were “good” workers.

6.2 Supply-driven migration: A riskier path?

Introducing the informants

The eleven research participants who had a supply-driven migration were from 26 to 47 years of age (at the time of the first interview); seven women (one of them was without employment) and four men. They had been living in Norway for between eight months and four years.

• Juan (mid-40s) didn’t finish his three years’ education due to the fact that he started his own company in an early age. He had several companies and had almost 20 years of work experience before moving abroad. He has been living in Norway for three years. His wife and children moved to Norway one year later.
• Maria (late 20s) is educated as a teacher (4 years of education). She has been living in Norway for two years. She first came to Norway as a student and stayed to find a job.
• Tomás (mid-40s) has a bachelor degree in electro-engineering and has worked 16 years as an IT teacher. He has been living in Norway for three years. His wife and children are living in Spain.
• Alicia (early 30s) is educated as a beauty therapist and has six years of work experience, including working in two different European countries. She has been living eight months
in Norway.

- Felipe (late 30s) has a certificate of completed apprenticeship in ventilation systems and 12 years of work experience. He has been living in Norway for four years.

- Paula (late 30s) has a five years’ education in architecture and nine years of work experience. After finishing her study in Norway, she went back to Spain and started her own company. After the crisis, she moved to Norway but this time as a labour migrant. She has been living here for four years.

- Pablo (early 40s) has no education due to the fact that he started his own business in an early age. He was leading several companies (restaurants and bars) before moving to Norway. He has been living here for two and half years. His daughter is living in Spain with her mother.

- Isabel (mid-20s) is educated as an architect, and is studying a second master’s degree in mathematics in order to become a teacher and give her more options in the labour market. She has been living in Norway for a year and moved together with her partner.

- Valeria (early 30s) is educated as a nurse. She worked several years in Spain and started her own company. She moved to Norway four months ago in order to work and be together with her husband who has been living here for three years.

- Lucia (early 30s) is a chemical engineer (six years’ education). She was an exchange student at NTNU. Since her partner was living in Norway, she came back after her studies to find a job here. She has been living in Norway for two and half years.

- Laura (late 30s) is an architect (six years’ education and one year of practice), who worked seven years in Spain. She and her husband moved to Norway together. She has been living eight months here.

**Step into the Norwegian labour market**

Figure 6.3 – Work situation of Spanish workers who came without a job offer

As illustrated in Figure 6.3, for many who had a supply-driven migration and therefore came
without a work contract in their hands, the path into the Norwegian labour market was more challenging and took different directions. While one highly educated Spaniard (who could speak some Norwegian) did not manage to access employment, the other ones who found a job had two different starting points in the Norwegian labour market. The four informants who got a relevant job as their first employment only worked in the primary labour market. By contrast, the six Spaniards who obtained jobs which weren’t in accord with their education and/or work experience, had what has been called ‘bad’ jobs in employment sectors often occupied by foreigners, as their very first employment in Norway.

“**I got a relevant employment as my first job in Norway**”

Accessing employment in Norway for those who found a relevant job was described as a very demanding process. After applying in vain from abroad for several months, Alicia decided to move to Norway and search for a job. She received after some time as her first job in Norway, a position related to her education and work experience. Alicia is a beauty therapist who immediately obtained a full-time permanent job. After a month at her workplace, she received the responsibility of a new salon. Although she got a relevant and secure job, Alicia describes the first months after her arrival as challenging: “*It was hard at the beginning, and it took me some time to settle down. It was challenging to find a place to live, pay a three-months deposit etc.*” (Alicia, early 30s). She had already worked in the past in two other European countries and mentioned that finding a job in Norway took more time and was harder than her past experiences. The three other informants who, like Alicia, found a relevant position as their first employment in Norway describe as well that it took a while to find a job, and that the process wasn’t easy. While Alicia did not know a word in Norwegian when she started to work in Norway, the three others had some very basic knowledge in Norwegian. At the time of the first interview, one of them spoke Norwegian.

“**I got a ‘bad’ job as my first job in Norway**”

Six informants did not get a relevant job as their very first job in Norway. It isn’t unusual to find a job that isn’t relevant to migrants’ education and/or work experience, and experience a downward mobility in the early phase of migration (Papademetriou, Somerville & Sumption 2009: 2). What characterises their incorporation process into the Norwegian labour market is that they more quickly accessed employment than those who found right away a relevant job, and that they had ‘bad’ jobs and worked in employment sectors often occupied by foreigners.
(as cleaning and other unqualified service work). Even though those who obtained a job in immigrant employment sectors had a quicker access to employment, they were the ones who had the biggest loss of status after their migration. A significant downward social mobility was definitely the case for Juan who used to be the manager of two companies which he had started through the years in Spain. After the bankruptcy of his firms due to 2008 financial crisis, he decided together with his wife that he would move abroad in order to find a job elsewhere. The idea of having one member of the household who moves abroad in order to find a job elsewhere and secure a certain level of financial income supports the theory given by the new economics of labour migration (Stark & Bloom 1985: 173-174). Juan quickly accessed employment in Norway and found a part-time job in the cleaning sector. He got a permanent work contract, which after one year made it possible for him to bring his family to Norway.

While another informant got a “stable” job like Juan, several of them had jobs which mainly were small assignments here and there. This leads to other characteristics: changing jobs, precarious working conditions and unemployment were also a part of their process. Tomás was one of them. Having a bachelor degree in electro-engineering, he is an IT teacher with 16 years of work experience, who came to Norway because he had a job interview. Even though he did not get the job after the interview, he obtained a place to stay through contacts, and just after a short period of time got a job as a mover. Tomás was mainly working with foreigners and describes his employment as a very demanding job. After working as a mover for one and half year, he finally got a dream job: “Through a personal contact, I got my dream job in Sandvika, the best job I have had in my whole life” (Tomás, mid-40s). For eight months, he worked 50% in a small company related to the oil industry but lost his job due to the oil crisis that hit Norway in 2014. As he became unemployed, his plans of bringing his family to Norway had to be postponed. Since he had worked a couple of years in Norway, he was at least able to get financial support from NAV. Another informant, Pablo, who used to be an entrepreneur back home, started to work as kitchen staff in a hotel-restaurant. In the Norwegian labour market, working as kitchen staff or doing some cleaning work in hotels seem to be common occupations for Spanish workers with no or little education (Bygnes 2015a: 9; Friberg, Elgvin & Djuve 2013: 44). Pablo started as an extra help, and then after several months and some negative experiences at work, he managed to get a full-time job there. But due to the bankruptcy of his workplace, he had to start from scratch once again. After changing his workplace, he had to start again as extra help, which
made it difficult to get enough hours at the end of each month. As he stated, “*now, I have no guarantee, I need to wait for a phone call. I don’t like insecurity, I can’t plan!*” (Pablo, early 40s).

Among the six research participants who accessed the Norwegian labour market by having a ‘bad’ job, only one informant had some basic knowledge in Norwegian at the time of migration. However, when I had the first interview with them, four of them could speak Norwegian. Several of them studied Norwegian on their own and were eager to learn the language, hoping that it would give them better work possibilities in the future.

### 6.3 Different gateways – diverse starting points

By looking at the informants’ early phase in Norway and their labour market incorporation process, it isn’t really surprising that those who had a demand-driven migration were the ones who had the easiest process. However, it doesn’t mean that it was very easy either, since leaving loved ones and a familiar environment is costly. By contrast to those who had a supply-driven migration, those who were recruited in advance mainly accessed good jobs. They either got a relevant job straight away or had a secure job which gave them the opportunity to learn new skills and a new language. They felt that it was easier to have something to offer to their workplace, at the same time that their workplace made it in some ways easier for them to be “new” in an unknown environment. Most of those who had a job offer went from being unemployed in Spain to having a good and better-paid job in Norway, which in some degrees may have compensated for feeling “pushed” to move abroad, leaving loved-ones behind and feeling like a stranger in a new country. Compared to those who had to find a job on their own while being in Norway, the fact that they were recruited and in that sense “chosen” might unconsciously have positively coloured their migration process and their incorporation process into the labour market.

Among the informants, those who did not have any education found themselves having a job in employment sectors often occupied by foreigners. These unskilled and insecure jobs are often characterised as ‘bad’ jobs and located in the secondary labour market (Waldinger, Lim & Cort 2007: 6). They have easy and repetitive tasks, which can be done by a “nobody.” Both research participants who did not have any education, had started their own company in an early age and were in many ways before the crisis of 2008, successful entrepreneurs in
their home country. The fact that they started a business at a young age, which gave them a high status in their home country, ended up being of little value in Norway. Even though they did not have any education, they had a high level of human capital in terms of having a lot of work experience and skills. But by moving to Norway, and by being job seekers in a foreign country, their human capital ended up being reduced to their level of education. They found themselves in a position where their work experience did not matter so much since they did not have a diploma. For them, using typical employment sectors as their gateway into the labour market may have turned out to be their only option into the Norwegian labour market.

Contrary to the entrepreneurs mentioned above, the highly educated informants who had a supply-driven migration did not really differ from those who had a demand-driven migration when it comes to human capital, type of education, education level, and cultural capital such as language skills. This means that the level of their human capital or language skills in Norwegian cannot fully explain why those who had a demand-driven migration were recruited (and others were not). Among all the informants, while a few had specialised skills which made them attractive in the Norwegian labour market, others were educated as a teacher, architect, nurse, plumber etc. A few had English as their working language, which means that not knowing Norwegian wasn’t a hindrance for accessing employment in Norway. However, in most of the cases, Norwegian was the main language at work. The companies who hired the Spanish workers in this study allowed them to speak English while learning Norwegian.

What about the highly educated Spanish workers who in this study accessed the Norwegian labour market by using immigrant employment sectors? These informants had low-skilled and low-paid jobs in spite of their high levels of education. There weren’t tangible differences between these research participants and those who came as job seekers in Norway but found relevant employment as their very first job in Norway. While those who did not have any education had very limited options in the Norwegian labour market, the highly educated migrants who had a ‘bad’ job as their very first job in Norway may have seen this channel as their ‘entry ticket’ into the Norwegian labour market. They had in mind the fact that they left Spain because they first of all had to and not because they wanted to, and they knew that they had little chance to find a job in Spain, due to the difficult situation in the Spanish labour market. Thus taking the first job that came along in Norway was probably perceived as a glimpse of hope. Having a ‘bad’ job is probably better than having no job at all. In addition to
a constant need of a cheap labour force in advanced economies, migration studies underline
the fact that people in the early phase of migration have limited options in the local labour
market, due to some obstacles such as poor language skills, irrelevant education, insufficient
knowledge of the host country labour market, and lack of job opportunities through social
contacts and other recruitment channels (Massey et al. 1993: 442; Papademetriou, Somerville
& Sumption 2009: 2,4; Friberg 2013: 44). Migrants are as well primarily preoccupied with
making ends meet at the beginning of their stay and therefore tend to accept the first jobs that
come along, in fear of being unemployed and having to move back empty handed to their
home country (Ibid).

Although a few research participants weren’t satisfied with their work situation, and several
had experienced downward social mobility in their early stages in Norway, the majority of
the Spanish workers I interviewed were thankful for having a job, and were optimistic about
the future. Although they have experienced that their lives have improved after they started to
work in Norway, half of them mentioned that they wished they hadn’t had to move from their
home country. This shows once again that ‘push’ factors in their country of origin were
determinant factors for them to migrate, and that they moved primarily because they had to,
and not because they wanted to.

6.4 Summary
The Spanish workers in this study found themselves in a wide range of employment sectors.
They had a diverse range of (high) education and work experience, and a limited social
network connected to the Norwegian labour market.

Characterised by a demand-driven migration, those who had a job offer before moving to
Norway as their gateway into the Norwegian labour market had a much better starting point
than the others. Among them, those who had a job related to their education were the ones
who were the most satisfied with their situation, independently of how long they had been
living in Norway. They experienced both financial and job security, and for most of them no
loss of status after moving to Norway. Although two of the Spanish workers did not have a
relevant job and were hired by a company which was recruiting foreign workers, they felt
that they were treated the same way as the other employees and both of them worked in the
primary labour market.
The lack of both social contacts and networks connected to the labour market can explain why it was harder for those who came to Norway without a job already in place (supply-driven migration) to enter the labour market and find stable employment. All those who after some time found a relevant job as their first employment in Norway had a higher education and worked in the primary labour market. Even though their early phase in Norway was challenging, the migrant workers were happy to work in their field of expertise. All those who found a job that did not match their education or/and work experience had ‘bad’ jobs in the secondary labour market as their first job in Norway. The existence of a segmented labour market and employment sectors occupied by foreigners allowed them to quickly enter the Norwegian labour market. A couple of them did not have any education while the others had diverse levels of education. The informants who had a supply-driven migration and ended up having immigrant employment sectors as their gateway into the labour market were the ones who were in the most vulnerable situation. Although they had quicker access to employment, their jobs were characterised by low wages, and bad work conditions. Changing jobs and several periods of unemployment were as well a part of their incorporation process. Among the research participants, these were the ones who experienced the biggest loss of status in the early phase of their migration.

Since the Spanish workers in this study had only lived up to six years in Norway, did they manage to improve their work situation over time? This is the focus of the following chapter.
7 Migrants’ work situation over time

In this chapter, I will focus on the potential changes the research participants experienced in their work situation over the course of time. I will also mention elements that they referred as important for having a good labour market incorporation process in Norway.

7.1 Better work situation and upward social mobility?

As I wanted to see whether there had been a change or a development in their work situation, I interviewed 13 of the 17 informants a second time. After a period of nine months, two informants remained unemployed and two others had low status or/and precarious employment. For the rest, they mainly experienced positive changes in their work situation.

Demand-driven migration

Figure 7.1 – Work situation over time of the Spanish workers who were recruited

As illustrated in Figure 7.1, those who had a demand-driven migration and came to Norway with a job contract in hand experienced either new assignments, upward social mobility or/and an increase of income over time. Among the four informants who were recruited and who I followed over time, Carmen had what I would call a “success story” from the beginning. She was the informant who was working with biotechnology and genetics. Her temporary contract was renewed and she received a wage raise. Her specialised skills made her attractive to the Norwegian labour market and gave her, as wished, the opportunity to invest in her human capital. She was still working in the same workplace, with the same team, but now had different assignments that allowed her to expand her knowledge and the scope of her skills.
Three out of the four informants interviewed twice had employment that matched their education level and work experience. Sofia did not have a job that was relevant to her education. After almost three years in Norway, she had the same job since she arrived. Since she had a permanent work contract and a good workplace, she was currently satisfied with her work situation. However, aware of the difficult times in the Norwegian labour market, she mentioned that:

...if I want to find a job that is relevant to my education, I think that I would need to move abroad. It seems to me that the situation for migrants has become worse over the last years and it is harder to get good jobs with good wages. Due to the oil crisis and the refugee crisis, there are fewer job opportunities and more people are and will be competing in the labour market (Sofía, early 30s).

The two other informants who were recruited had moved away from Norway at the time of the second round of interview – one because he wanted to, the other one because he had to. They both obtained jobs related to their education and a better salary. Sebastián, the philosophy teacher, had the best outcome and managed to “kill two birds with one stone.” In Norway, he had a permanent work contract, but not a relevant job. After almost three years in Norway, where he used to sell wine, Sebastián, frustrated at not being able to work in his field of expertise, moved back to Spain and was now working as a teacher at his old workplace. What differed at the time of the second interview was that in addition to having a better salary, he got a permanent work contract, while he used to have a temporary one before leaving Spain due to the crisis. Before moving back to Spain, Sebastián taught online Spanish courses, in addition to his full-time job in Norway. Today’s technology has made it possible for him to continue to work as a Spanish teacher “in” Norway, while living in Spain. The second informant, Javier who was happy with his work situation in Norway, had to find another job at the end of his one-year work contract. After five months of unemployment in Spain, he found a job in another European country. Although he has a better paid and relevant job abroad, he wished he could still be working in Norway. Having only short-term contracts made it difficult for him to plan ahead. [A couple of months after the second interview, Javier contacted me to mention that he managed to find his way back to Norway and was employed at his previous Norwegian workplace].
Supply-driven migration

Figure 7.2 – Work situation over time of the Spanish workers who searched for a job in Norway

“I had a relevant job (over time)”

Except one informant (who was on maternity leave), all of those who had a supply-driven migration, and had a relevant job in Norway at the time of the second interview were satisfied with their current work situation. They all had experienced positive changes in their work situation. They either got a permanent contract or a better job with a higher salary, better assignments and more responsibilities. The second “success story” from the beginning was Alicia, whose first job in Norway was a full-time permanent job as a beauty therapist. At the time of the second interview, she had a new job, after receiving a recommendation by one of her previous customers. Even though the informant wasn’t searching for new employment and had a job that was linked to her field of expertise, she now has more diverse tasks, which are more relevant to the assignments she used to have before moving to Norway.

Two out of the six informants who used immigrant employment sectors as their gateway into the Norwegian labour market managed to have a better work situation as time went by. After working several months in a hotel (cleaning job), Felipe managed to get small assignments in his field of expertise. After four years in Norway with four different workplaces and two short periods of unemployment, he finally received a permanent work contract in a Norwegian company where most of his co-workers are Norwegians. As he mentioned, “having a permanent contract has allowed me to get financial stability and find rest, knowing that I don’t have to wonder what would happen to me in the future” (Felipe, late 30s). The other research participant was Isabel, who like Felipe, had several small jobs after her arrival in Norway (cleaning in a hotel, gardening and working in the fish industry). Since the financial crisis severely restricted job opportunities for architects, due to a drastic cut of financial investments in the construction sector in Spain, she had little option than to continue
her search for a better job in Norway. After a series of ‘bad’ and physically demanding jobs, as well as several periods without employment, she managed to get a temporary but relevant job as an architect. She was still employed in a company which mostly hires foreigners, but this time she had the possibility of using her skills in her field of expertise and practicing some Norwegian at work. In addition to an increase of income, she did experience increased social mobility over time.

“\textit{I either remained unemployed or got trapped in having a ‘bad’ job}”

The Spanish workers in this study who were in the most vulnerable situation in the Norwegian labour market were those who both had ‘bad’ jobs after their migration to Norway, and who didn’t manage to access better employments over time. They either stayed unemployed in spite of their high levels of education, or did not experience improvements in their work situation.

Tomás, educated as an electro-engineer, who had previously lost his occupation due to the oil crisis in Norway didn’t manage to get another one, even though he had been to many job interviews. His education and good language skills in Norwegian do not seem enough to find a new job in Norway. Papademetriou, Somerville & Sumption (2009) who studied social mobility of immigrants, argue that upward social mobility is easier for younger migrants (2009: 7). Being in his mid-40s, could it be that Tomás’ age may have been a hindrance for him to step once again into the Norwegian labour market?

While Felipe and Isabel managed to find a better occupation since their arrival in Norway, the two other informants who were still working in immigrant employment sectors, did not experience changes in their work situation. One of them is Maria who was still working as an au pair. Educated as a teacher, she has been in search of a more relevant job in her field of expertise. The other one, Juan, felt strongly that he was trapped in an employment sector that didn’t suit him, and therefore saw the creation of his own company as the only way out of the cleaning sector and jobs that are at the bottom of the employment ladder. He used to be an entrepreneur in Spain and was in charge of several firms. Even though he didn’t have any education, he had a lot of work experience and resources. However, in spite of his work experience and great skills in Norwegian, his lack of education was what defined the level of his human capital in the Norwegian labour market and made it harder for him to get better job opportunities. At the time of the first interview, he was hoping to get another job. Although
he was still optimistic during the second interview, Juan was disappointed to still be working at the same place:

Next month it will be four years since I came to Norway. I thought when I arrived here that it would take one or two years to get a job that suits me. I am a very active person, who created my own company in Spain, I was in contact with business people, and I am now working as a cleaning man. My expertise and competence lie in my head but I have a job which only requires my body (Juan, mid-40s).

Wondering why some had better outcomes than others did, I asked the informants which elements they thought could help to have a good incorporation process into the Norwegian labour market. This will be the subject of the following part.

7.2 Subjective assumptions about labour market incorporation

It is not unusual to have a gap between what people experience being assets for their incorporation into the labour market and what actually takes place in reality. There are many factors interacting, on the micro level but also on the meso and macro levels, which affect people’s incorporation into the labour market. In this part, I will mention the six elements that were the most referred to during the interviews, which may positively affect migrants’ labour market incorporation.

Figure 7.3 – Informants’ assumptions on important elements for labour market incorporation

The informants mentioned that learning Norwegian was for them a major element to find a
job or at least later find more opportunities in the Norwegian labour market. Friberg, Elgvin and Djuve (2013) in “Innvandrere som skulle klare seg selv”, interviewed unemployed Spanish workers in contact with NAV. These labour migrants, who mostly had small assignments in the Norwegian labour market, realised that learning Norwegian seemed to be very decisive for finding jobs which could enable them to make a living in Norway (2013: 46). Many informants in my study did speak Norwegian or had a good enough level to express themselves in Norwegian. Among the 13 interviews whom I followed over time, I had six in Norwegian and seven in English. Among those who spoke English with me, three of them could express themselves in Norwegian but felt more comfortable conducting the interview in English; and three others who hadn’t been living very long in Norway were taking Norwegian courses and had some opportunities to hear and use Norwegian at work. Those who had good skills in Norwegian were either those who were recruited by a company which was actively providing Norwegian courses to their employees, or were those who used ‘bad’ jobs as their gateway into the Norwegian labour market (or were unemployed). Those who had ‘bad’ and low-paid jobs worked mainly in typical employment sectors often occupied by foreigners, and/or worked alone. They had therefore less opportunities to finance or/and access Norwegian courses at work. Compared to the other Spanish migrants in this study, they had to learn in a much higher degree the language on their own, in order to have better chances to find better employment in Norway.

Reflecting on the situation of several informants, some of them recommended not moving to Norway before securing a job interview, a job offer, or an internship. Four informants among the 13 whom I interviewed twice were among those who came to Norway with a job offer. Since most of the Spanish migrant workers did not have an informal social network in Norway, having a job to go to made a great difference, especially in the early phase of migration. It gave them the possibility to easily get social contacts at work, and a certain financial security, which made some aspects easier, such as finding a (good) place to live, etc.

Before deciding to move abroad, being recruited before migration was as important as analysing the migrant workers’ situation and the Norwegian labour market. An informant mentioned: “You need to see if your education and work experience are relevant in Norway. If there is no job in your field of expertise, the path into the labour market would be more challenging” (Juan, mid-40s). This may explain why some of the migrant workers have had some challenges having a good incorporation process in the Norwegian labour market. It
looks like the architects and teachers, as well as those who had no education, have found it hardest to have a good incorporation process into the Norwegian labour market. The need for architects, like teachers, may not be very significant in Norway, since many natives study in these fields, have the advantage of mastering the Norwegian language, and understand the social codes of their home country. In a society where education weights more than work experience, the entrepreneurs, with no education, have little chance to compete in the Norwegian labour market. They are being overtaken by those who both have education and work experience, and face hard competition from all those who are in the same situation as them: those with little or no education. The situation of the migrant workers in the marketplace is also determined by the economic situation of the host country. The oil crisis in 2014 – resulting in many unemployed Norwegian workers, and the refugee crisis hitting Europe, haven’t lacked consequences. The recent insecurity in the Norwegian labour market has affected employment, both for domestic workers and migrants.

Another element mentioned by the informants that could facilitate their labour market incorporation is having or creating a social network, or using Bourdieus’ term – increasing their social capital in the host country. While the informants had a high level of social capital in Spain, it appeared to be of little help in Norway. Just a few of them had a social contact in Norway from before, and those who did underlined how it made such a difference in their early phase of migration. Since most of the Spanish workers had very little social capital in Norway and especially no social contacts who were connected to the Norwegian labour market, they mainly had to manage on their own to find a job, a place to stay, etc. In spite of that, most of them accessed employment and many of them experienced positive changes in their work situation as time went by. Since most of them had an education, and many of them were even highly educated, their human capital may have either helped them to access (a relevant) employment or find a better one. Additionally, since they didn’t have an informal social network from before, the contacts they later on acquired consisted of both foreigners and Norwegians. Having less contact with Spaniards on their arrival probably made it easier for some to not create a Spanish bubble, which could have given them a sense of belonging, but could have hindered them in being socially integrated in the long run in Norway. Even though most of the informants had to manage on their own to enter the labour market, a few of them experienced that the social network they later created had given them new and better job opportunities in their host country.
Having the “right attitude” was also mentioned by the informants. Most respondents moved abroad because they had to, and not because they wanted to. Although one cannot control how things are going to be in a new country, one can decide what kind of attitude one is going to have. A couple of informants pointed out that in order to enjoy being in a new place, you cannot be here physically and look back on what you had or left behind. You have to be all in, look at the positive side of your situation and make a decision to like it in Norway, even though the culture, the people, the weather, the food, etc. are different.

The last aspect mentioned by the informants in order to have a good incorporation in Norway is to thoroughly plan the migration process. It is important to think about the consequences of leaving your home, your family and friends in order to make a living in a new place. Since Norway is, compared to Spain, an expensive country, it is also necessary to save a lot of money before moving. The lack of savings made it very hard for many Spanish migrant workers to stay long enough to find a job, in a country with high living costs. Unfortunately, many didn’t manage to quickly enter the Norwegian labour market before running out of money. They had to return home, broke and empty-handed.

7.3 ‘Bad’ jobs: from fast lane to low-skill trap?

By following the incorporation process of Spanish workers, it seems that the differences between those who had a supply- or demand-driven migration tend to disappear with time. This is the case for those who managed to access (relevant) employment in the primary labour market as their very first job in Norway; this means for those who worked outside immigrant employment sectors. The gap by contrast between them and those who had a ‘bad’ job became even more tangible. The Spanish workers who obtained their first job outside the immigrant employment sectors easily experienced positive changes in their work situation. This was partly due to the fact that they were more incorporated in the primary labour market and had more contact with domestic workers. Concerning those who had a ‘bad’ job as their ‘entry ticket’ into the Norwegian labour market, the outcome was not as initially expected. Rather than moving back to Spain empty handed, the informants started at least with a low-skilled job with the underlying plan to improve their work situation after learning Norwegian. This, however, turned out to be anything but easy. By looking at the situation of the informants who first took a step down, hoping that their current situation would just be temporary, moving up was either not as easy as expected, or not even a reality. Short-term
and insecure work contracts, low wages, as well as unemployment were a part of their incorporation process. The education level of the highly educated informants who got a ‘bad’ job as their first employment in Norway, did not differ from those who directly found a relevant job in the primary labour market. It did not seem that their language skills differ either, or that their gender had a role to play in their labour market incorporation process. It seems that their human capital wasn’t taken into consideration to access jobs in immigrant employment sectors. However, there are reasons to believe that it later on helped some of them improving their work situation, after surpassing challenges and disappointments along the way. The other informants who had a ‘bad’ job as their very first employment in Norway either remained unemployed in spite of a higher education, or did not experience improvement in their work situation and experienced feeling trapped into an employment sector which did not suit the informants’ work abilities.

As mentioned above, there is a difference of outcomes between those who managed to get a (relevant) job in the primary labour market and those who got a ‘bad’ job as their very first employment in Norway. Having immigrant employment sectors as gateway into the labour market tends to tangibly reduce migrants’ work opportunities and slow down their upward social mobility in the host country. In fact, there seems to be different mechanisms in place in the primary labour market, compared to the secondary one, that make migrants’ incorporation process and upward social mobility easier - for those who stepped into the Norwegian labour market without using immigrant employment sectors located in the secondary labour market. The Spanish migrants’ opportunities in Norway therefore tend to not only be connected to their human capital, but as well to the different gateways used to access employment and structures in the Norwegian labour market.

7.4 Summary

In this study, many of the new Southern European labour migrants in Norway, who I followed over time, have had a better work situation over the course of time. But this doesn’t reflect the situation of all the research participants. All those who had a demand-driven migration and therefore came to Norway with a job contract in hand had experienced either upward social mobility or/and an increase of income over time. All of those who had a supply-driven migration and had a relevant job in the time of the second interview, also experienced positive changes in their work situation. They either got a permanent contract or
a better job, better assignments and more responsibilities, or an increase of income. The few informants who managed to go from the secondary labour market to the primary one, and accessed a relevant employment as time went by, had a path paved with difficulties, such as changing jobs, temporary work contracts and even periods of unemployment. Finally, those who were in the most vulnerable situation were those who had a ‘bad’ job and who did not improve their work situation over time. As time went by, they either remained unemployed or felt trapped in a low-skilled and low-paid job, which did not give them career advancement opportunities.

After looking at the changes in the work situation of the informants at the time of the second interview, and at subjective assumptions on a good labour market incorporation, I will in the next chapter summarise the migration process and the labour market incorporation process of the Spanish migrant workers, in the light of the research questions.
8. Concluding chapter

Very few studies have been done on the field of migration flows from the south to the north of Europe. This thesis focuses on the labour migration of the Spanish migrants in Norway in the aftermath of the financial crisis of 2008, and tends to contribute to the literature on the new migration flows in Europe. In this last chapter, I will give an overview of the findings and answer the twofold research questions presented in the introduction. At the end, I will mention several suggestions for potential future research.

8.1 Research questions and findings

This thesis main research questions to answer:

1) Why did Spanish migrant workers leave Spain and why, among many nations, did they decide to move to Norway?

2) How are Spanish migrant workers incorporated into the Norwegian labour market, and have they improved their work situation over time?
   
   o How did they step into the Norwegian labour market and what kind of employment did they have after migration?
   
   o What kind of changes and/or improvements did the informants experience in their work situation over time?

The main findings reveal that:

- the Spanish workers in this study primarily left Spain as a consequence of a sudden and severe crisis in their home country, such as a high level of unemployment and insecurity about having a job in the future.
- they mainly chose Norway due to employment offers, a good welfare system, and cheap flight tickets.
- the incorporation of the Spanish workers into the Norwegian labour market was in many ways connected not only to their human capital, but as well to the gateways used to access employment and the structures of the Norwegian labour market.
- those who had a job offer before moving to Norway (demand-driven migration), had a better incorporation into the labour market. Those who came to Norway without already having a job to go to (supply-driven migration) had two different starting points, and had diverse outcomes.
many Spaniards directly worked in the primary labour market after migrating. Only a few of those who first had a low-skilled job (in the secondary labour market) managed with time to find a relevant employment in the primary labour market. The path to improve their work situation was paved with difficulties. The others who accessed the labour market through typical immigrant employment sectors either became unemployed or did not manage to improve their work situation with time.

Spaniards moving to Norway - a small-scale migration

Since relatively few Spaniards lived in Norway before the financial crisis, Spanish workers today represent a small-scale migration. The lack of both social contacts and networks connected to the Norwegian labour market can therefore be some of the reasons why there were quite few Spaniards who came to Norway, compared to the UK, France or Germany. Additionally, it can also explain why the informants’ early phase in the host country was demanding, especially for those who came without having a job offer (supply-driven migration).

Different channels used to access the Norwegian labour market

While many Spaniards who moved to Norway with the hope of finding a job here, had to move back to Spain empty handed, all my informants, except one, managed to access the Norwegian labour market. Having a diverse range of (high) education, they found themselves in a wide range of employment sectors. Most of them worked (after some time) in the primary sector. While the Spanish migrant workers had in common the fact that they left Spain due to unemployment or insecurity about having a job in the future, they had different labour market incorporation processes. It seems in some degrees that the different channels used to access the Norwegian labour market may have influenced both the types of jobs migrant workers got in the early phase of their migration, as well as their future work situation.

Coming to Norway with a job offer in advance

Characterised by a demand-driven migration, those who had a job offer before moving to Norway as their gateway into the Norwegian labour market had a much better starting point than the others did. These migrant workers, who had different types and levels of education, found it easier to obtain a job related to their education. The few who did not access a
relevant employment had anyway a pleasant full-time and permanent job. Additionally, they had fewer chances of both ending up working in immigrant employment sectors in the secondary sector and experiencing a loss of status at the time of their migration. Having a job to go to and a stable income after migration made their early phase in Norway much easier compared to the other Spanish workers interviewed in this study. Upward social mobility and/or an increase of income reflect their incorporation process in the Norwegian labour market over time.

**Coming to Norway without having a job**

Characterised by a supply-driven migration, those who came to Norway without having a job to go to, had two different starting points in the Norwegian labour market and different outcomes:

*“I found a relevant job after migrating”:* Those who found a relevant job in the primary labour market as their very first employment in Norway had a more challenging process after migration than those who got recruited in advance. Although they had a higher education, the lack of both social capital in Norway and networks connected to the labour market can explain why it was harder for them to step into the labour market. Even though they were completely on their own in a foreign and expansive country, and even if it took a while for them to find a job, they were thankful to get a job in their field of expertise. As time went by, they experienced (like those who were recruited), an increase of wages and an upward mobility.

*“I found a low-skilled job after migrating”:* Those who stepped into the Norwegian labour market by having a job which did not match their education level and skills, worked in typical immigrant employment sectors (like cleaning and other unqualified service work), located in the secondary labour market. They had quicker access to employment than those who as well had a supply-driven migration, but experienced a significant loss of status in the early phase of their migration. Their jobs were at the bottom of the employment ladder, often labelled as ‘bad’ jobs, characterised by low wages and job insecurity. The Spanish entrepreneurs without education in this study were among those who accessed the labour market through immigrant employment sectors. As job seekers in a foreign country, it seems like human capital tends to primarily refer to people’s education level, and less to their work experience. Starting with a low-skilled and low-paid employment may therefore have been their only option to step into the Norwegian labour market. For the highly educated
informants, by contrast, who had a ‘bad’ job as their very first employment in Norway, there weren’t tangible factors which could explain why they could not find a relevant job, while others did. The lack of social contacts and language skills in Norwegian, adding that Spain had “become a place with no future,” may have increased the pressure on their shoulders to quickly find employment in Norway. These elements may partly explain why they stepped into the Norwegian market using typical immigrant employment sectors. Having a ‘bad’ job is probably better than having no job at all. There were three different outcomes concerning the incorporation into the Norwegian labour market over time of those had a ‘bad’ job as their very first employment in Norway. They either managed, with difficulties, to find a relevant job in the primary labour market, or they got trapped in an employment sector which did not suit informants’ education level and/or work experience, or became unemployed. Even if the high level of informants’ human capital wasn’t an asset to step into the Norwegian labour market through the employments sectors often occupied by foreigners, it allowed a couple of them to access relevant and better employment over time. However, changing jobs, temporary work contracts or even periods of unemployment were also a part of their labour market incorporation process. Those who were unemployed or still had jobs in immigrant employment sectors as time went by were those who were in the most vulnerable situation, not only in the early phase of their migration but also in the course of time, even for those who had a higher education.

**Incorporation process and social mobility**

Although the Spanish workers in this study left their home country mainly because they had to, and not because they wanted to, most of them are not in a vulnerable situation today. Most of them have had – in just a few years and some more quickly than others, a good migration and incorporation process into the Norwegian labour market. Independent of having a supply- or demand-driven migration, those who did not use typical immigrant employment sectors as their gateway into the Norwegian labour market, easily improved their work situation over time. This can be due to the fact that they were, among other factors, more incorporated in the primary labour market and had more contact with domestic workers. The fact that many of the Spanish workers in this study were highly educated seemed to play a role and be an asset, either to access a relevant job just after their migration to Norway, or to improve their work situation over time. However, the findings in this study challenge the underlying idea that being willing in the first place to take a step down (get small and low-skilled jobs as an
‘entry ticket’ into the labour market) and then find a better and relevant employment after learning Norwegian, turned out to be anything but easy. By looking at the situation of the informants who first took a step down, hoping that their current situation would just be temporary, moving up was either not as easy as expected, or not even a reality.

**Last words**

By studying the journey of the Spanish workers in the Norwegian labour market, there seems to be different mechanisms in place in the primary labour market, making the migrants’ incorporation process and upward social mobility easier than in the secondary labour market. In fact, having immigrant employment sectors as gateway into the labour market tends to reduce migrants’ work opportunities and slow down their upward social mobility in the host country, even for those who have a higher education. By looking at trajectories of short-term incorporation, the outcome of the Spanish migrant workers’ incorporation was then in many ways shaped not only by their human capital, but as well by the gateways used to access employment, and the structures in the Norwegian labour market.

### 8.2 Potential further research

Education, work experience from country of origin, language skills, cause of migration, etc. may be different from one immigration wave to the next, or even from one migrant to another. The Spanish workers who migrated in the aftermath of the financial crisis of 2008 represent a new migrant group and have been in Norway for a very short period of time. Therefore, further research on the labour market incorporation and the social mobility of today’s Spanish labour migrants over a longer period of time could be of importance. Studying the labour market incorporation process of other migrant workers and looking if the gateways and the structures of the labour market may together with their human, social and cultural capital have consequences on their work opportunities, could be as well of interest.

It would also be interesting to look at migration through a comparative study. The majority of the Spanish workers moved after the crisis of 2008 to other European countries, such as Germany, France and the UK. Could it be that those who moved to Norway differ from those who migrated to the other countries mentioned above? It may be as well interesting to see if those who came to Norway have had a better outcome when it comes to employment access and social mobility than those who moved to other European countries.
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Figure 1.1 - Spanish migration to and from Norway (2007-2014)
www.ssb.no/tabell/05476

Figure 2.1 - Successive enlargement of the EU
http://natoassociation.ca/a-guide-to-eu-enlargement/

Figure 2.2 - Spanish population in Norway in 2015
www.ssb.no/tabell/05184

Figure 2.3 - Age and gender distribution of the Spaniards in Norway in 2015
www.ssb.no/tabell/05196
Figure 2.4 – Education level of the Spanish migrants in 2015 (over 16 years old)
www.ssb.no/tabell/09623

Figure 2.5 - Grounds of migration (1996–2014)
www.ssb.no/tabell/07113
Appendix

INTERVIEW GUIDE 1

BACKGROUND INFORMATION
• Who are the Spanish workers in Oslo? Gender, age, where are they from, what education and work experience do they have?

WHY NORWAY?
• Why did you leave Spain?
• When did you come to Norway? How long have you been living in Oslo/Norway?
• Did you come alone? (Do you have your family with you here?)
• Why Norway?
• Did you hear about Norway before you moved here? Did you know people from before?

WORK IN NORWAY (vs in Spain)
• How did you get your job? (Searching for one, through personal contacts…)
• Did you have a job in Norway before you left Spain or did you get one after moving here?
• What are your tasks/responsibilities?
• How do you experience your workplace here?
• Are there any differences between the work you had in Spain and the one you have now?
• (If he/she has a Norwegian employer:) Do you experience any differences between having a Norwegian employer and the one(s) you had in Spain?
• What kind of work contract do you have?
• How does a normal day at work look like?

INTEGRATION AT WORK and IN THE SOCIETY
• Do you work alone or in a group? Who are your colleagues? (Same age as you, Norwegians, people from different countries?)
• Which language do you speak at work?
• Do you speak Norwegian? Did you take Norwegian courses?
• Where did you meet those that you are spending time with outside work? (Colleagues? Norwegians? Mainly Spanish people…?) Do you have Norwegian friends?
• Do you feel a part of the Norwegian society? (Insider/Outsider, feeling of being a foreigner?)
INTERVIEW GUIDE 2

CHANGES IN THEIR WORK SITUATION OVER TIME

- What has happened since the last interview?
- Have you experienced some changes since last time? What kind of changes?

Some potential changes?
- Was unemployed => found a job?
- Had a temporary work contract => got a permanent work contract?
- Changed job and got a better one?
- Worked through a(n) (foreign) employment agency => got a job in a Norwegian company?
- Got more/better tasks at work?
- Got more responsibilities?
- More satisfied now?
- Better salary?
- Mobility: got a better position?
- Do they speak (better) Norwegian now? If this is the case, in which way can this affect their conditions, tasks and social integration at work?
- Etc.

ADVICES

- If you had advice to give to a migrant worker that is new in Norway, or is planning to come to Norway, which advice would you give?
- According to you, what could be determinant elements to make it Norway?

All sources used in this paper are listed.

Word count: 21 618.