

New immigration trends in Tenerife

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The reactivation of immigration in Tenerife in recent years presents some new aspects with respect to previous periods: migration from Venezuela, Cuba and Italy is increasing and traditional migrant flows of German or British origin is dropping. The preponderance of labour motives of migration, as opposed to residential ones, reinforces the settlement of new inhabitants in the southern part of the island, particularly in the Southwest area. It also influences the diversity of the resident population and the formation of settlements with a pronounced multicultural component.

Introduction

After the impasse of the financial crisis, immigration is again on the rise in Tenerife, though with some changes in comparison to the previous stage. The new dynamic is influenced considerably by the general context, and is particularly responsive to the situations in those countries that have contributed the most to the island's population growth in recent years. These countries are experiencing situations that are favourable to emigration, situations of a socioeconomic, institutional and political nature that, in some cases, have persisted for quite some time.

In this regard, it is worth noting that migratory processes tend to manifest themselves differently over time, since they result from the confluence of an important set of factors and motivations that are also subject to change since, ultimately, they depend of the decisions of people, families and groups, who consider multiple aspects before migrating. They also consider their destination and settlement choices, at which point the role played by migratory precedents in areas of emigration, the information and resources available, the possibility of finding some kind of help at the destination, and so on, all become relevant.

In certain cases, the reasons that force people to leave their places of origin outweigh the uncertainty that can be caused by moving to a territory that poses special problems to the settlement and activity of many of the new inhabitants, in particular of those whose situation is more precarious. It is then that the existing communities of immigrants that can receive and guide newly arrived people take on added importance, and can even support them during their initial stage in the areas of immigration.

And in this context of renewed foreign influx, the population of Tenerife has grown again since 2016, exceeding in 2019 the maximum reached in 2011, when the population was in excess of 900 thousand. The influx of the various immigration flows in certain places of the island is resulting in important changes, such as in the distribution of the population, on this occasion boosting the numbers in the south of the island and expanding the population toward metropolitan areas. Also influencing this trend are the motivations, needs and aspirations of the people who move.

In this factsheet we focus on a more detailed study of the two most numerous immigrant communities in recent years, from Venezuela and Italy, which totalled 61,810 inhabitants in 2018, exactly one third of the foreign population settled in Tenerife. The trends and the existing indications point to the continued growth dynamic seen at present, with 72.9 % of Venezuelans and 32.9 % of Italians in the Canary Islands living in Tenerife, where they account for 2.7 % and 1.7 %, respectively, of the island's total population.

The study also considers the next three sources of immigrants by number - which include two European countries, the United Kingdom and Germany, that have traditionally provided immigrants to the island, but that have lost some prominence -, whose numbers have increased in recent years. In all, the five sending countries accounted for around 100 thousand inhabitants in 2018, just over half of the population born abroad and registered in Tenerife.

The text is organised into several sections, starting with the one that provides an overview of the most recent manifestation of immigration in Tenerife, followed by a

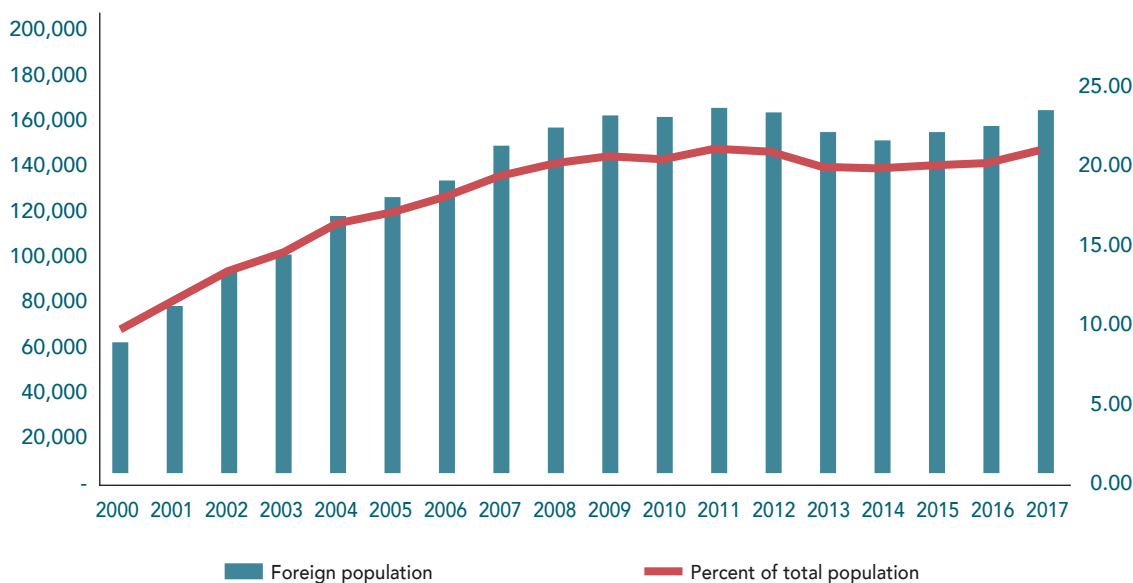
characterisation of its main sociodemographic profiles and settlement patterns, before finally proceeding with a more detailed study of the Venezuelan and Italian immigrant communities. We relied on various sources of statistical information and conducted an online survey intended to provide an insight into the reasons for migrating.

Main immigration trends in Tenerife

Foreign immigration has remained the key factor to the growth of Tenerife's population since the start of the 21st century. It has contributed about three-fourths of the increase experienced since 2001, which stands at 160,637 individuals through 2018, with a cumulative annual growth rate of 1.16 %. This trend has resulted in Tenerife remaining the most populated island in the Canary Islands, with 42.5 % of its total population on the last date cited. Tenerife is also continuing to diversify its society through the arrival of new inhabitants from a large number of countries.

However, this dynamic of sustained population growth was affected by the prolonged duration of the financial crisis, as reflected by the island's demographics from 2011 to 2016, when Tenerife saw its population decrease over almost five years as the result of reduced immigration and even net migratory losses. Even so, the demographics are recovering and population growth has resumed, almost to the point where the total and foreign populations are near all-time highs. Once again surpassing the 900-thousand-inhabitant mark in 2018, Tenerife has 186,354 residents - 20.6 % of its population - who were born abroad, with slightly higher figures for women (51.4 %), indicative of a more prominent female role now than at the beginning of the century.

The population of foreign origin has almost doubled so far this century, exhibiting appreciable growth (5.94 % per year), higher in women than in men, and also different depending on the place of origin. This has caused a new balance in terms of the various continents' contribution to the population, with flows from America leading the way now, as this continent is currently supplying more than half of all the immigrants to the island: 50.7 % in 2018, at an annual rate of 7.44 % since 2011.



Graph 1
Evolution and demographic importance of the population of foreign origin in Tenerife between 2001 and 2018.

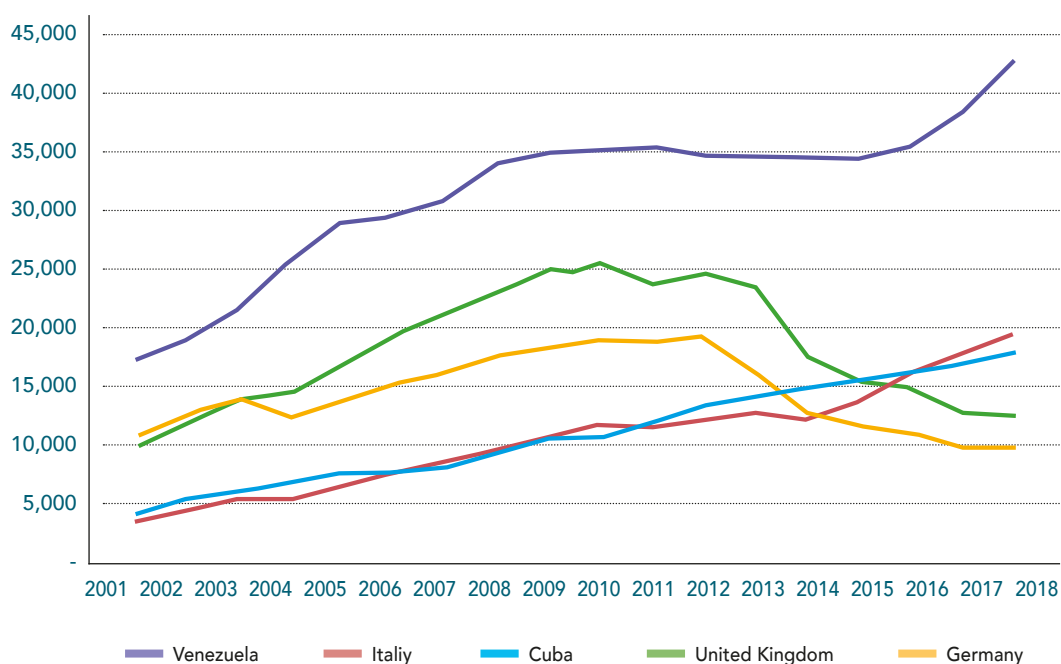
Source
Municipal Register of Inhabitants, ISTAC.
Compiled by authors.

The Venezuelan push has been crucial in recent years, as have the influxes from countries such as Cuba, Colombia, Argentina, Uruguay and Ecuador. Venezuela is by far the most important contributor to Tenerife's population: 42,586 inhabitants in 2018, 22.9% of the population of foreign origin and almost 5% of the island's population. Despite these figures, the Venezuelan community accounts for a smaller percentage of immigrants than in 2001 due to the diversification created by the rise in other sources of immigration.

The prominence of the European community has weakened quite a bit, although the recent rise in immigrants from Italy has slowed the significant decline in the presence of foreign European nationals on the island resulting from the low growth of the British population and the unexpected reduction in the German population, with the former only accounting for 2,611 new residents between 2001 and 2018, while the latter's numbers dropped by 850 in the same period. Different factors can explain this shift in population percentages. They are related, among others, to the natural loss of older EU residents who retired in Tenerife, as well as to the new preferences of individuals who are now retiring, who are perhaps less likely to acquire a home abroad. And this situation could intensify in the future, judging by the demographic structures of these ageing populations, together with the uncertain scenarios involving the ability of Britons to live abroad (*Brexit*) or the evolution of the German economy.

Graph 2
Trend in the five
population groups with
the most immigrants
in Tenerife between
2001 and 2018.

Source
Municipal Register
of Inhabitants, ISTAC.
Compiled by authors.



In this face-off between European and American flows, immigrants from Africa and Asia continue to be minority, despite the significant increases in their numbers and the emergence of new sources of emigration to Tenerife, such as China, on top of the more traditional sources, such as India, Senegal and Morocco. In total, the top five sending countries provided over one hundred thousand immigrants in 2018, 54.4% of the population of foreign origin, and are, in order, Venezuela, Italy, Cuba, the United Kingdom and Germany. The next ten account for only one quarter.

As noted earlier, Venezuela and Italy have provided the majority of immigrants in recent years, particularly since 2016 for the former and 2014 for the latter, as evidenced by changes in residency numbers, the totals of which have grown since those dates. The

two countries account for a third of the foreign population registered in 2018, having tripled their numbers since 2001. They also have the two youngest demographic structures, if the top five sending countries are used as a reference: 0.51 in the case of Venezuela and 1.47 in the case of Italy, considering the difference between the population 65 and older and that under the age of 15.

Countries of origin	2001	%	2018	%	Rate
Venezuela	16,746	23.9	42,586	22.9	5.64
Italy	3,365	4.8	19,224	10.3	10.80
Cuba	3,775	5.4	17,745	9.5	9.53
United Kingdom	9,710	13.9	12,321	6.6	1.41
Germany	10,440	14.9	9,590	5.1	-0.50
Colombia	1,246	1.8	8,188	4.4	11.71
Argentina	2,291	3.3	8,104	4.3	7.71
Morocco	2,265	3.2	5,656	3.0	5.53
Uruguay	580	0.8	4,773	2.6	13.20
China	765	1.1	3,832	2.1	9.94
Romania	170	0.2	3,761	2.0	19.98
France	2,597	3.7	3,490	1.9	1.75
Belgium	1,889	2.7	2,760	1.5	2.26
India	1,610	2.3	2,404	1.3	2.39
Ecuador	274	0.4	2,073	1.1	12.64
Total	57,723	83.1	146,507	79.5	5.63
Tenerife	69,924	100.0	186,354	100.0	5.94

Table 1

Countries of origin with more than two thousand residents in Tenerife in 2018, compared with 2001.

Source

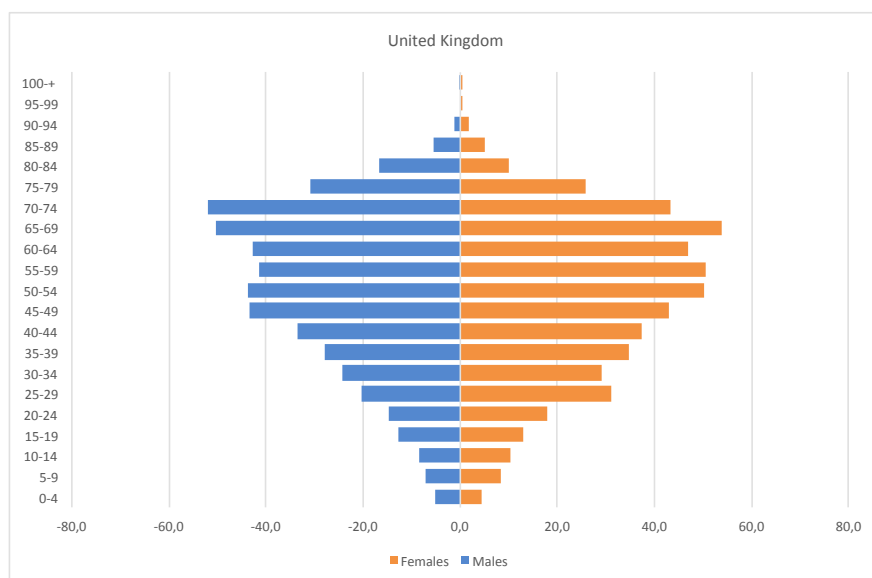
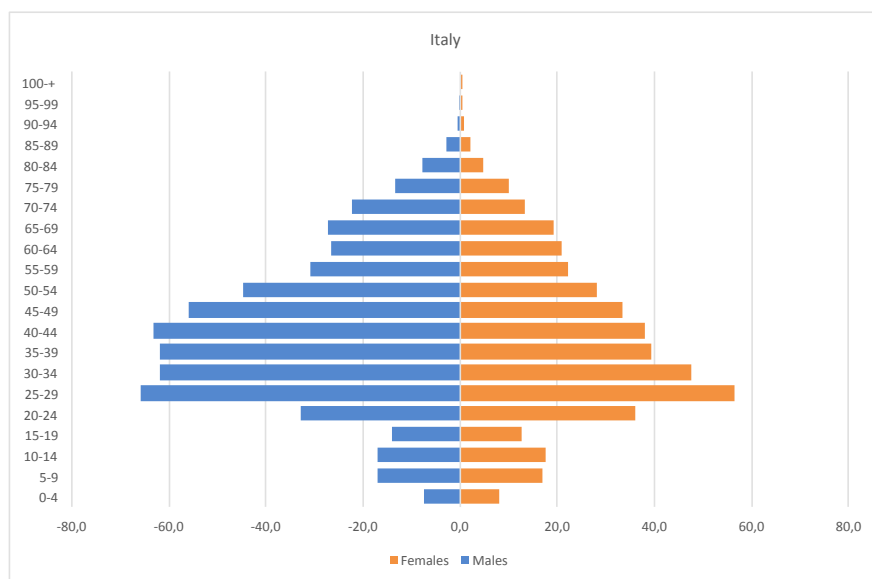
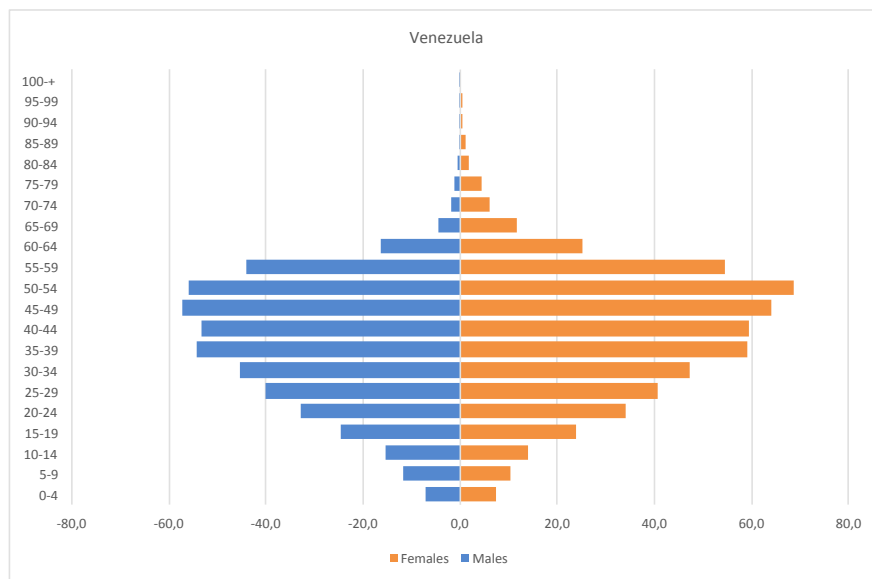
Municipal Register of Inhabitants, ISTAC. Compiled by authors.

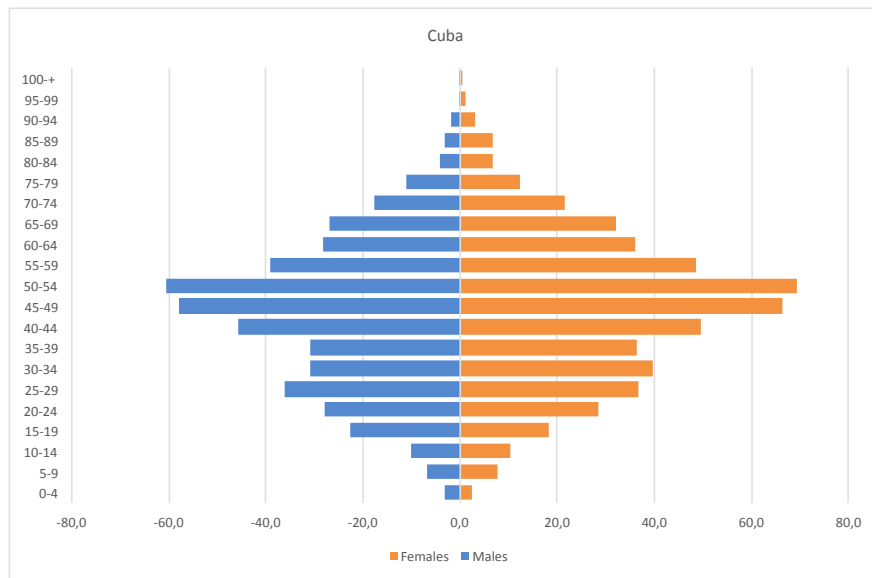
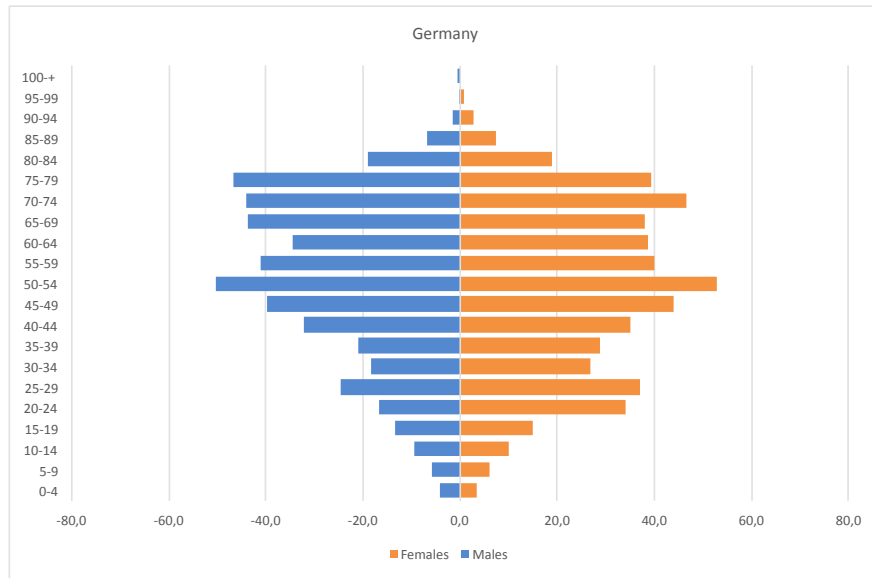
Sociodemographic profile and settlement patterns of the main groups of immigrants

The sociodemographic profiles of the main national groups are quite divergent at present as a result of how the different inflows have trended in recent years, as these have seen evident changes in both their numbers and composition. The shift toward more female immigration in general terms is palpable, and is particularly evident in the American group as a whole, which registered a *sex ratio* of 84.9% in 2018. This was slightly higher in the case of Venezuela (87.5%) and Cuba (87.2%). The demographic structure of the first group has its own profile in that the older population segments are a minority, reflecting more recent currents that are mainly resulting in an influx of middle-aged individuals.

Graph 3
Demographic structure
by sex and age of the
five foreign nationalities
with the most residents
in Tenerife in 2018 (in per
thousands).

Source
Municipal Register
of Inhabitants, ISTAC.
Compiled by authors.





In fact, the current Venezuelan population in Tenerife has a higher percentage of females (53.3%), with 47.2 % of this population being between 35 and 54 years of age in 2018. The group of individuals 65 and older is quite small, being below 1,500, with the number of women in this age group being considerably higher (their ageing rate is three times that of the men). In contrast, the population of Italian origin, mostly male (57.3%), is even more unbalanced in terms of gender than the Venezuelan population, with large numbers of males between 25 and 54 years (35.3% of the registered residents) and ageing rates higher than one, especially amongst men (1.77 versus 1.17, relating the old and young populations). The contrast in their *pyramids* is significant.

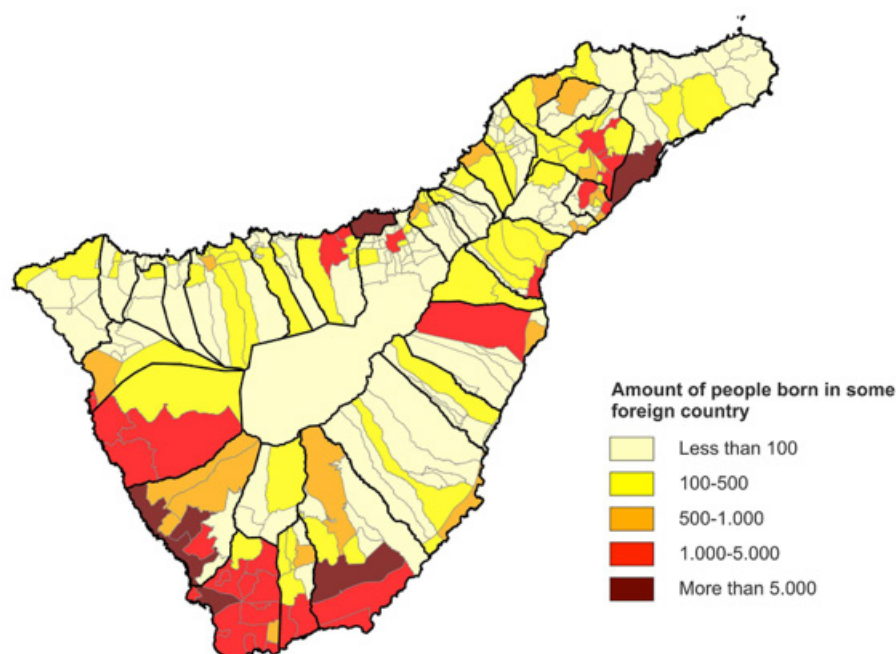
In any case, the oldest structures are those exhibited by British and, above all, German immigrants. This is a result of the rate of residential settlement of elderly people and its impact on the rise in mortality over time. That implies very high rates, such as for men of German origin: 8.43 in 2018. Their demographic profile is practically that of an inverted pyramid. A third of Germans are 65 or older, as are almost 30% of the British.

The Cuban structure seems the most balanced in terms of age, though it also exhibits a high level of ageing (3.69%), greater amongst females (53.4%).

The rise in some trends and the decline in others, along with the emergence of more nationalities of certain relevance, apart from the five mentioned, such as the case of Colombians and Argentines in the American group, and Moroccans, Chinese and Romanians, among others, has caused some variations in the distribution of the population of foreign origin in Tenerife. This reinforces the appeal of the southern part of the island, and particularly of the strip from Santiago del Teide to Granadilla de Abona, where 52.4% of this population already lived in 2018. This part is home to the majority of the Italian residents (77.5% live in the south of Tenerife) and to a very significant fraction of the Cuban population. It is also turning into the main area of residence for Britons and one of the locations where much of the recent influx from Venezuela has settled. All of this highlights the economic-labour nature of a good portion of this trend, which is oriented towards the most thriving labour markets on the island and one of the most appealing residential areas.

Map 1
Distribution of the
immigrant population
in Tenerife by location
in 2017.

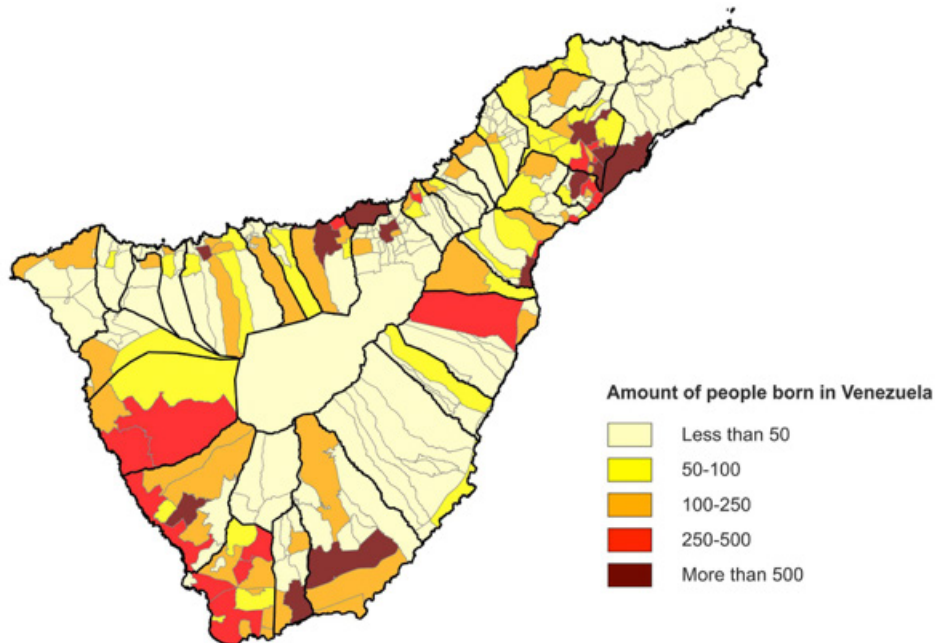
Source
Municipal Register
of Inhabitants, ISTAC.
Compiled by authors.



The metropolitan area maintains its existing role, in contrast to the enormous decline in the immigrant population in the north of Tenerife, where the number of registered immigrants went from 28.6% to 14.5% between 2001 and 2018. The percentage of immigrants from the top five countries mentioned all went down. Even the drop in the number of Britons (-3.12% annually) and Germans (-2.30% annually) between these years is noteworthy, with their total numbers falling by over 2,500. The recent arrival of immigrants from Venezuela is evident of the trend toward settling in the area of the capital, with Santa Cruz de Tenerife and San Cristóbal de La Laguna providing a home to 42.1% of these residents. Numbering at almost 18,000, this is the area where most of these immigrants have settled.

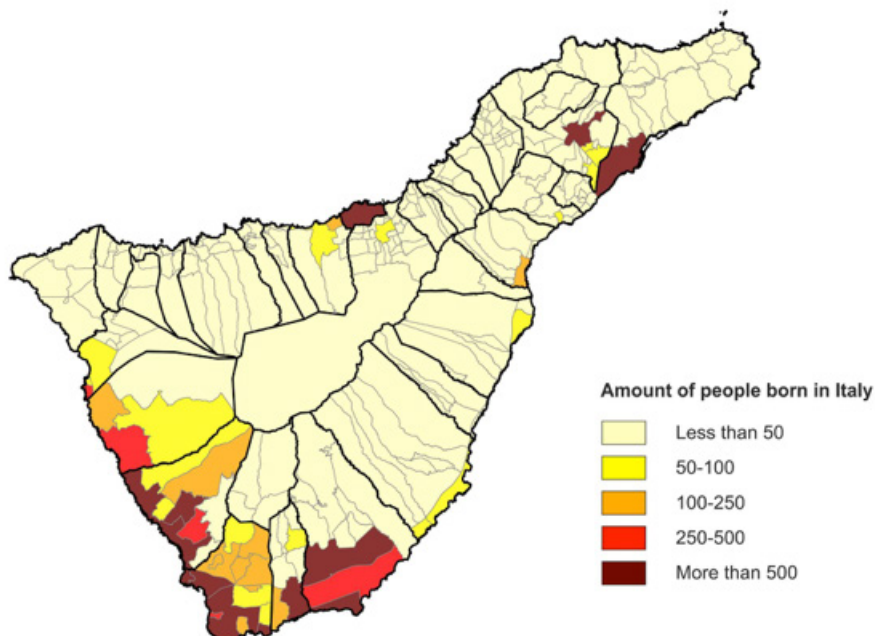
The circumstances noted underpin a geodemographic dynamic that accentuates the increased settlements in the south of the island, between the capital and its western coast. These settlements as a whole account for 75.2% of all registered immigrants, to the detriment of the north coast, which, despite not losing any inhabitants, accounts

for fewer of the island's immigrant population. Along the southern coast, from the capital westward, there now live almost 700 thousand inhabitants, and 85.5% of the immigrant population, most notably in towns like Costa Adeje, San Isidro, Los Cristianos, Adeje, Las Chafiras, El Fraile, Costa del Silencio and Las Galletas, further south, and La Cuesta, the urban area of San Cristóbal de La Laguna, Taco and some neighbourhoods of Santa Cruz de Tenerife, in the metropolitan area.



Map 2
Distribution of
Venezuelan immigrants
in Tenerife by location
in 2017.

Source
Municipal Register
of Inhabitants, ISTAC.
Compiled by authors.



Map 3
Distribution of Italian
immigrants in Tenerife
by location in 2017.

Source
Municipal Register
of Inhabitants, ISTAC.
Compiled by authors.

Recent increase in immigration from Venezuela

As noted in previous paragraphs, immigration from Venezuela, which has had a constant presence on the list of countries that has supplied the most immigrants to Tenerife (Zapata, 2002), exhibits one of the most significant developments due to its notable increase in the last five years. This rise reflects the significant acceleration in emigration from Venezuela, which numerous researchers have linked directly to the social, economic and political crises that the American country is experiencing. According to various international reports, the living conditions of Venezuelan society have worsened significantly in recent years: Venezuela had a recession of 11.9% in 2017, according to figures from the World Bank. The International Monetary Fund has also identified Venezuela as the country with the highest inflation rate in the world (13.864%).

According to the National Survey of Living Conditions (ENCOVI, 2017), the number of poor households increased from 48.4 to 87.0% between 2014 and 2017, and severe poverty went up by 61.2%. The same survey also underscores the serious problems involving medicine shortages, the unreliability of public services and the frequent power and water outages. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) notes that 9.5% of its population was undernourished in 2018. In addition to the economic factors, there are also considerable public safety problems: the Venezuelan Violence Observatory estimates a rate of 81.4 violent deaths per 100,000 inhabitants; the Venezuelan Observatory of Social Conflict registered 9,286 demonstrations in 2017.

All these elements show that, as Koechlin and Eguren (2018) noted, Venezuelan emigration cannot be boiled down to economic dynamics; rather, it is an exodus that has the characteristics of an exile or forced migration. This is a very important aspect to consider, as it significantly affects the migratory plans of migrants. In fact, studies on Venezuelan immigration in Spain highlight the changing profile of the last five years, which has transitioned from economic emigrants with migratory plans characterised by the search to maintain or improve on their social status in their country of origin, to migration driven by reasons of survival that affect all social classes (Páez and Phélan, 2018). Moreover, for the third consecutive year, Venezuela has been the sending country with the highest number of applicants for international protection in Spain, with 19,280 applications submitted in 2018 (35.0% of the total), compared to the 10,350 processed in 2017 (CEAR, 2018). In 2018, 1,438 applications for people of Venezuelan origin were filed in the Canary Islands.

According to the study conducted by Bermúdez *et al.* (2018), 72.3% of respondents indicate that one of the three main reasons for the decision to emigrate is insecurity, with 70.8% also citing the lack of prospects and 63.1% hunger. In this sense, Venezuela has gone from being one of the countries with the most influx of immigrants to taking centre stage in one of the most significant migratory crises worldwide. The United Nations estimates that, since 2014, more than 2.3 million people have left Venezuela, a figure that could well underestimate border crossings, especially with Colombia (Human Rights Watch, 2018). Some researchers on migration in Venezuela note that, in general, Venezuelan society does not have a migratory culture, which translates into a lack of solid support networks in the receiving countries and the absence of migratory projects (Castillo and Reguant, 2017; Bermúdez *et al.*, 2018).

While Venezuela has not historically been a source of emigrants, Venezuelan emigration is not a new phenomenon, but a process that started to take on significance two

decades ago and that has accelerated in the last five years. In fact, a poll on Venezuelan immigration in Colombia notes that 53.5% of the people surveyed have a family member waiting for them in Colombia, and 42.5% have friends who can help them (Bermúdez *et al.*, 2018). A study of Venezuelan undergraduates found that 88.1% of public university students in 2015 planned to emigrate. 80.0% of respondents knew people who had left in the previous five years (De La Vega and Vargas, 2017).

According to data from the International Organization for Migration, the four main destinations of Venezuelan emigration are, in order of importance, Colombia, Peru, the United States and Spain (IOM, 2018). In general terms, the increase in Venezuelan immigration to Spain is explained by the shared language, cultural similarity and by the fact that many Venezuelan migrants have Spanish citizenship (Castillo and Reguant, 2017). An additional key factor in the case of the Canary Islands is the close historical relationship between the Canary Islands and Venezuela, with a continuous flow back and forth.

And in this context, Tenerife is the island with the highest fraction of the population of Venezuelan origin in the Canary Islands, almost three quarters of the total (72.9%) and accounting for nearly a quarter of the island's foreign population. Only this last point, only El Hierro (51.1%) and La Palma (30.5%) surpass it, and La Gomera is close (19.8%), but with much lower absolute figures. Venezuelan residents in El Hierro account for 11.9% of its total population, compared to 4.7% in Tenerife. In the regional framework and on every island, the number of female Venezuelans is higher.

Why have people of Venezuelan origin chosen Tenerife as their destination?

The Tenerife Immigration Observatory carried out an online survey on the main reasons that led Venezuelan immigrants arriving since 2014 to choose the island as their destination. The sample involved 134 respondents residing in Tenerife since 2014. Of these, 65.7% were women, 48.5% had only Venezuelan nationality, 5.2% were nationals of another European country (Italian or Portuguese) and 46.3% had Spanish citizenship. With respect to age, 24.6% were between 18 and 35 years old, 64.2% were 35 to 60 and 11.2% were older than 60.

The first aspect to note is that, as Table III shows, almost 80% of the people surveyed emigrated from Venezuela with a family member, and only 6% did not know anyone in Tenerife. These figures provide evidence for a migratory chain based on family ties and that is rooted in the historical migratory relationship between the Canary Islands and Venezuela.

Who they emigrated with	%
Partner and children	32.8
Partner	26.1
Parents	20.1
Alone	19.4
Friends	1.5
Total	100.0

Table 2
People with whom they arrived in Tenerife.

Source
Online survey of the Venezuelan population in 2019, OBI Ten.
Compiled by authors.

Table 3

People who informed or helped them during their initial settlement phase in Tenerife.

Source

Online survey of the Venezuelan population in 2019, OBITen.
Compiled by authors.

Initial support	%
Relatives	76.9
Friends	17.2
Did not know anybody	6.0
Total	100.0

The importance of family networks is also evident in the decision to choose Tenerife, with 78.4 % stating that one of the main reasons was having family or friends living on the Island. The second reason, chosen by more than 61.9 % of the respondents, was the quiet nature and safety of the island, while the third most frequently cited was the weather (26.1 %).

Table 4

Distribution of the three main reasons why immigrants from Venezuela chose Tenerife as their destination. Multiple answers, maximum of three options.

Source

Online survey of the Venezuelan population in 2019, OBITen.
Compiled by authors.

Reasons	%
Family and/or friends living in Tenerife	78.4
Quiet, safe setting	61.9
Climate	26.1
Cultural similarity	24.6
Tolerance and openness of Canarian society	20.9
Cost of living	17.9
Job search	14.9
Business opportunities	5.2
Experience life abroad	3.0
Lower taxes	2.2

The diversity of immigration profiles of Italian origin

In contrast to the Venezuelan case, emigration has been a constant in Italian history, characterised both by intense internal migratory flows from the South to the North and from rural to urban areas, as well as by sizable migrations to America and Europe (Sanfilippo, 2017). According to 2018 data from AIRE, the civil registry of Italian nationals living abroad, 5,114,469 Italian citizens reside outside Italy: 819,910 in Argentina; 415,887 in Brazil; 411,949 in France; 743,822 in Belgium; 300,629 in the United Kingdom; 265,733 in the United States; 214,900 in Switzerland; and 164,384 in Spain, 3.2 % of the total. However, the Migrantes Foundation (2018) shows that the countries where the number of Italian emigrants has increased the most in recent years are Portugal, Brazil and Spain.

In the last five years, emigration from Italy has risen 14.0 %, but the figure is surely higher since, according to numerous experts, registration in the AIRE is not a common practice among emigrants, especially if they reside in European countries (Pugliese, 2015). Another consideration is that the AIRE data include people born outside of Italy who have Italian citizenship by virtue of being the descendants of Italians. In this document, we focus on analysing immigration from Italy by Italian nationals.

Different studies have shown that the new millennium, and especially with the economic crisis of 2008, has brought about a new cycle of emigration in Italy, characterised by a greater presence of women, who were in the minority in previous cycles. This cycle is also marked by an increase in emigration to new European destinations such as Spain, the urban origin of migrants in contrast to the largely rural origins of previous cycles, as well as by diversified profiles in relation to the predominance of economic emigrants (Pugliese, 2015).

The main drivers of Italian emigration most cited in studies of this phenomenon are unemployment, poverty, increasing social inequality, the cost of living and the lack of prospects. This last aspect is particularly important for young people, who, as Gjergji (2015) notes, migrate not only for economic reasons, but because of a suffocating cultural and political context that does not allow for personal and social growth.

Since 2001, the main Italian newspaper, *La Repubblica*, has compiled more than 25,000 accounts from Italian emigrants abroad. These accounts reveal that the emigration of young people cannot be attributed solely to "brain drain", as is often reflected in Italian media; rather, it stems primarily from the feeling that younger generations have of being excluded from the social contract, from a common social project (Allegrì and Ciccarelli, 2011).

A second profile that is very prominent in emigration to countries where the cost of living is lower is that of families moving with new life and professional goals, normally related to the restaurant business. In this case, the factors that weigh most heavily on the decision to emigrate are the cost of living, tax pressure, and a mistrust of Italian politics and society.

Finally, especially in countries such as Spain, the Czech Republic and Portugal, relatively new migration patterns are emerging in the context of Italian emigration, the so-called *sun migration*, that is, the movement of retirees to regions of Europe with better climate (Pugliese, 2015). This phenomenon can also be explained if the bilateral agreements that significantly reduce tax burdens are taken into account: half of the Italian pensions paid abroad in 2017 are for retirees residing in a European country. One aspect that is certainly interesting is that Spain -and Tenerife in particular- is a territory in which these new trends are particularly evident.

Spain is undoubtedly the emerging destination in Italy's migration landscape. The appealing aspects of certain areas of Spain, in particular Madrid, Barcelona, Andalusia and the Canary Islands, are the cost of living, particularly in the last two, cultural and linguistic similarity, economic opportunities and the general perception of a society that is more open, progressive and dynamic than Italian society (Cucchiariato, 2010). In addition, as Ballatore (2017) notes, in the case of young people, the importance of stay-abroad programmes such as Erasmus must also be considered: Spain is the leading destination for Italian university students, and these experiences abroad usually play a key role in the decision to emigrate.

The Canary Islands, and Tenerife in particular, stand out in the Spanish landscape by having the highest proportion of Italian emigrants from Italy. In the rest of Spain, especially in Catalonia, the number of emigrants with Italian nationality, but of American origin, is usually significantly higher.

At the beginning of 2018, 45,430 people of Italian nationality resided in the Canary Islands, of whom 36,626 had been born in Italy (80.6%). In Tenerife, this proportion

is similar, with 24,220 Italian nationals living there, 19,224 of whom were born in Italy (79.3%). While this proportion has varied over the past twenty years, it has never fallen below 60% (66.2% in 2007). In the rest of Spain, the proportion of Italian nationals from Latin American countries is higher.

The island of Tenerife has the highest number of residents of Italian origin; 10.3% of all its foreign residents were born in Italy. In the rest of the islands, both the absolute numbers and the proportion of the number of foreign-born residents are lower, except in Fuerteventura, where they account for 16.7%: there are 2,935 Italians in Lanzarote (6.7% of the total number of foreigners), 6,447 in Fuerteventura, 7,328 in Gran Canaria (6.9%), 142 in La Gomera (3.5%), 479 in La Palma (3.4%) and 73 in El Hierro (2.9%). However, in the last ten years, the largest relative increase has been recorded in Fuerteventura and Lanzarote, where the presence of Italians has increased by 34% and 27%, respectively, versus the 203% in Tenerife. In all the islands, Italian men are in the majority, accounting for 57.1% of the Italian citizens residing in the region.

Research on recent Italian emigration has shown that this phenomenon cannot be boiled down to economic factors, especially in the Spanish case, and that the reasons vary significantly depending on the personal situations of the emigrants (Lollo and García Pereiro, 2011).

Why have people of Italian origin chosen Tenerife as their destination?

In this case, the Tenerife Immigration Observatory also conducted an online survey, in Italian, with 124 respondents of Italian origin and Italian nationality who have resided in Tenerife since 2014. 45.2% of the respondents were women, 33.9% were between 18 and 35 years old, 50% between 35 and 60 years old, and 16.1% were over 60 years old. In addition, it should be noted that 33.9% emigrated from the north of Italy, 11.3% from the centre and 54.8% from the south.

Contrary to Venezuelan immigration, a large number of these individuals emigrated to Tenerife by themselves (37.9%). But the differences by age group are significant, with half of those under 35 emigrating by themselves, a figure that drops to just 3% in all other age brackets.

Table 5
People with whom they
arrived in Tenerife.

Source
Online survey of the
Italian population in 2019,
OBITen.
Compiled by authors.

Who they emigrated with	%
Alone	37.9
Partner	33.1
Partner and children	25.3
Parents	3.2
Friends	0.5
Total	100.0

Initial support	%
Friends	42.7
Did not know anybody	37.1
Relatives	20.2
Total	100.0

Table 6

People who informed or helped them during the initial settlement phase in the island.

Source

Online survey of the Italian population in 2019, OBITen.

Compiled by authors.

Only one fifth of the immigrants of Italian origin knew relatives, but it is striking that 42.7 % knew friends who were able to inform or help them before their trip or during the initial settlement phase. Also worth noting in this case is the existence of a social support network and a migratory chain, although it is not based on relatives, but rather on friends and acquaintances.

With regard to the general drivers for emigrating, the three main reasons are as follows: the climate (64.5 %), the cost of living (56.5 %) and the tolerance and openness of Canarian society (46 %). Although these three reasons were the most cited in the three age groups, their frequency varies depending on sociodemographic profile. Those under 35 years of age more frequently noted the tolerance and openness of Canarian society, while those over 60 years of age were almost unanimous in citing the weather as one of the three main reasons.

Main reasons for choosing Tenerife	18 to 35	36 to 60	Over 60	Total
Climate	38.1	56.5	95.0	64.5
Cost of living	52.4	58.1	60.0	56.5
Tolerance and openness of Canarian society	71.9	53.2	40.0	46.0
Quiet, safe setting	23.8	35.5	65.0	36.3
Business opportunities	19.0	43.5	20.0	31.5
Lower taxes	14.3	14.5	10.0	13.7
Experience life abroad	28.6	6.5	0.0	12.9
Job search	21.4	8.1	0.0	11.3
Cultural similarity	16.7	8.1	5.0	10.5
Family and/or friends living in Tenerife	11.9	8.1	5.0	8.9

Table 7

Distribution by age group of the three main reasons why Italian immigrants chose Tenerife as their destination (%). Multiple answers, maximum of three options.

Source

Online survey of the Italian population in 2019, OBITen.

Compiled by authors.

These results are consistent with those obtained in the studies cited in the previous pages. The immigrants of Italian origin who have arrived in Tenerife in the last five years do not comprise a homogeneous group. At least three groups with different motivations can be identified: young people, entrepreneurial families and retirees. These reasons show that Italian immigration in Tenerife is not explained solely by reasons related to the climate or the economy, but also by the tolerance and openness of Canarian society, which is especially appealing to young people.

Conclusions

Tenerife is continuing to see population growth after the short decline in these numbers due primarily to the financial crisis and its effect to reduce immigration. This phenomenon has been recovering in recent years, in large part due to the increased influx from American countries, such as Venezuela and Cuba, and to the shifting prominence of European countries, with Italy gaining ground to the detriment of the traditional sending countries, the United Kingdom and Germany. In fact, there are slightly fewer German residents registered now than at the start of the century. The importance of American countries is more prominent now, and is also affecting the increased role of women in immigration.

The greater impact of labour factors, as opposed to residential ones, for example, is driving new inhabitants to settle in the southern part of the island, particularly in the southwestern area. This is also serving to diversify immigration and to create more localities with a greater multicultural component, which is turning the act of living together into a veritable social challenge in more and more places. Influential in this regard is the relevant role played in the rise of the most populous immigrant communities in Tenerife by individuals from that same country of origin, whether relatives or friends, who had settled previously on the island. Also relevant are the internal circumstances in countries, such as Venezuela or Italy, where conditions are favourable to emigration.

Through direct contact with immigrants from both backgrounds, provided by online questionnaires, we were able to determine many of the motivations that have had the greatest effect on immigration to the island in recent years, with a more diversified profile in the case of people of Italian origin, since their interests in immigrating range from business and occupational concerns to purely residential aspects. The serious situation in Venezuela and its historical relationship with the Canary Islands have increased this flow to the archipelago, one that is often undesired and that is also encountering serious difficulties regarding the socio-labour inclusion of its protagonists in Tenerife, as it is coinciding with a stage during which a very significant part of the island's inhabitants are experiencing financial hardships.

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The Tenerife Immigration Observatory is a joint initiative of the Tenerife Council and the University of La Laguna that is intended to provide a permanent and dynamic structure to advance our scientific knowledge of migratory movements. The OBITen carries out its activity by gathering, producing and disseminating knowledge to facilitate qualified opinions and promote the making of decisions that help to better manage migratory phenomena and their implications.

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