POOR HANDS IN FAR LANDS: SENEGALESE SEASONAL WORKERS IN THE STRAWBERRY FIELDS OF THE HUELVA PROVINCE (SOUTH-WESTERN SPAIN) 1

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Abstract: Spanish agriculture has experienced profound changes in the last half century. Some of these changes are directly related to the geographical origin of their temporary workers. The following text first presents how the new agriculture and its production dynamics have led to recruit foreign workers directly in their own countries, and secondly how the choice of territories of origin of these workers responds to concrete reasons of lower economic development level. The paper analyzes the case of recruitment in Senegal as a paradigmatic example of hiring in origin to work in the strawberries plots of the Huelva province (Southern Spain), in which converge different economic, political and social interests.

Key words: Labour Migration, Senegalese Workers, Agricultural Economy, Hiring in Origin.

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THE INCORPORATION OF FOREIGN SEASONAL WORKERS TO THE SPANISH AGRICULTURE

Spanish agriculture has suffered profound structural changes in the last fifty years. These changes have affected a variety of the social, economic and agronomic dimensions of the rural areas, which include from the types of crops to the origin of the seasonal workers. New crops have appeared, agronomic managements have changed, there has been a rise regarding the initial investments necessary for undertaking the agricultural task; the destination markets of the productions have been internationalized, the business strategies for the workforce employment


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http://istgeorelint.uoradea.ro/Reviste/Anale/anale.htm
have increased, and the social and geographical profile of the seasonal farm workers has changed profoundly. Something inconceivable until the end of the eighties is today the general and assumed dynamics of the agricultural labour system: the participation of the immigrant workforce for the harvesting of the non-mechanized crops is simply essential.

The agricultural territories of the sixties were marked by the expulsion of the temporary workers who until then were demanded in great number crop after crop. The need to make the agrarian farm competitive accelerated the process of mechanization which supposed to save concerning the days’ work, especially those related to the fruit crop. The smallest farms and also incapable of assuming the investments for the technification started to be less competitive in comparison with the biggest ones. In an expansive market economy, the agriculture became a business where the on-farm consumption, the autarky or the sustainable production did not have anymore the smallest space of survival. The smallest farms were this way more and more abandoned or out of the commercial circuits because of their low productivity, including the serious problem of the generational change. The most powerful agri-businessmen took advantage of this setting in order to extend their farms buying small and medium-sized plots of lands. In a very general manner, the experienced tendency of the last decades can be summarized by saying that the number of agricultural exploitations has been decreasing and those that are still there have increased their size, have added the irrigation to their agronomic management and have diminished the number of employees for their harvest and administration.

Nevertheless, the general tendency of the evolution of the agricultural exploitations in Spain covers a complex diversity of different agro-labor situations according to the territories of reference. Even though the expulsion of farm workers is a historical reality of the sixties, seventies and great part of the eighties, the technification, the irrigation, the incorporation of plant varieties of the market, the new frames of plantation, the great use of greenhouses and the improvement regarding the management of the agricultural exploitations, that is to say, the shaping of a vanguard agriculture, all these have increased the productivity indicators of the farms. In general terms, each hectare of crop produces more and, consequently, in the moment of the harvest, requires more temporary workers than before. Moreover, the agricultural technification has not always been accompanied by successful experiences of technification for the crop. There remains a large number of crops for those who have not managed to invent machineries that could take man’s place when harvesting. Examples of this are strawberries in Huelva, oranges in Valencia, pears in Lerida or grapes in Castilla – La Mancha region, among others.

The combination of both circumstances, in other words, the increase of the agricultural performance thanks to the technification and the lack of machineries for the fruit harvest have created a juncture that in labour terms is translated as a great demand of temporary workers during the right amount of time for the harvest, being absolutely dispensable after. Depending on the territories, there can be periods of increased demand of workforce, followed by others of null employment.

The socioeconomic improvements of the rural areas during the decade of the nineties, apart from the low salaries received at the countryside, the precariousness and hardness of the agricultural work and the low social consideration of these jobs made great part of the active rural population search for new more profitable and better ranked niches. This empty space caused by the redirecting of part of the local workers to other economic areas such as the construction or the auxiliary agro-industry, accompanied by the productions’ increase, supposed a labor shortage in the fields that started to be occupied quickly by immigrant workforce. The incorporation of foreign workers into the agricultural jobs supposes a gradual, but sure ethnic change in the country, especially in agrarian areas as Huelva province (Gualda and Ruiz, 2004 and 2005). In 1999, the Special Agricultural Social Security Scheme relied on 766.654 national workers and 42.546 foreign workers. In 2010, the national workers were already only 500.000 and the foreign ones 200.000 (Ministry of Labour and Immigration, 2011). From 1999, the number of foreigners in the land has increased 2.5 points (figure 1).
The arrival of foreign citizens in the field of agricultural labor has been realized both by means of employments carried out directly in the agricultural territories themselves of the distinct Spanish provinces and in the same origin countries of the foreign seasonal workers. This last manner, of contracting in origin, has been realized in Spain since at least 1999, when Unió de Pagesos (Agricultural Union that works in Catalonia) hired 34 Colombian workers for the fruit harvest in Lerida during summer.

Nevertheless, the legal beginnings can be found a little more back in time. We have to date back to 1993 when the Council of Ministers gave the green light to the employment of an annual number of non-EU foreign workers in order to cover the unsatisfied demands made by the national workers (Sub-Secretary of State, 1995). A few years later, in 1996, another normative measure, the Royal Decree 155/1996 for the development of the Law on Foreigners No. 7/1985, responded in a better legal manner to the necessities of workforce of the agricultural businessmen allowing the contracting of foreign workers directly in their origin countries for the agricultural campaigns by means of the so-called seasonal work permit type A (Márquez et al., 2007).

This gateway to the contracting abroad and the consequent entrance in the laboural market of temporary workers directly hired in their origin countries was reinforced by the coordination attempt of the interior migratory fluxes thanks to the Cooperation framework Agreement to the Arrangement of the Interior Migrations in the diverse Agricultural Campaigns of temporary Employment, signed in 1997 by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and the sector’s employees 2. This collaboration agreement for the organization of migrations was not only about the organization of the immigrant fluxes, but also about the migratory fluxes caused by the mobility of the national seasonal workers themselves who, as well as the foreign ones, were drawing paths of interior migration on account of the concatenation of jobs in the different agricultural campaigns.

Márquez-Dominguez, Gordo and García (2007) point out that this framework agreement and the modality of hiring foreign workers for annual quotas did not totally respond to the working necessities of the agricultural campaigns. The agricultural productions are barely predictable in time with medium accuracy. There are many uncontrollable factors that decisively interfere in the yield and productivity of the parcels, as, for instance, the meteorological factors. A clear example

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2 ASAJA (Agricultural Association of Young Farmers), COAG (Organization Coordinator of Farmers and Livestock farmers), CCOO (Workers’ Commissions), UGT (General Union of Workers) and FEMP (Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces).
is that of strawberry productivity in Huelva during the 2008/2009 campaign. Heavy rainfalls and low temperatures during December and January slowed down productions causing the first winter months (months when strawberry is mostly valued) lose the national and European market and stopping the arrival of the seasonal female workers already hired in their country of origin.

The relatively unpredictable character of the agricultural campaigns’ progress and, thus, of their need of workforce make the prediction concerning the number of necessary workers for planting, managing and harvesting difficult. Once a year, the Administration required the farmers this exact calculations of the number of the workers they needed in order to prepare the annual quota. That seemed ineffective to most of the farmers. In order to solve this conflict, in 1999 the framework agreement signed two years before by the Ministry of Labour and the agents of the agricultural sector was revised and an Additional Protocol was added, a text where the difficulties of the annual quota for covering the particular necessities of the agricultural work, especially of the seasonal work, were expressed.

The Additional Protocol urges to continue with the foreign workers quota, but to permit flexibilities in the case of agricultural campaigns, for example, that of not calculating the necessities of workforce with a year beforehand, but only with 5 or 6 months before. This is how it would be collected later in the 2393/2004 Royal Decree that the Law on Foreigners No. 4/2000 developed. Article 55 of that Foreignship Regulation finalized the model of recruiting non-EU foreign workers in their countries of origin, instructing for that scope the means of a temporary residence authorization and fixed-term jobs for several cases of exterior contracting, among them that of a seasonal job or agricultural campaign.

This kind of contracting in origin has its main referent in Huelva. Practically, since the beginning of the starting up of this working method, the province of Huelva has been the pioneer concerning the volume of contracting. During 2002/2007, Huelva has administrated the 57.75% of the job offers for contracting in origin in all Spain. This labor strategy has enabled the occupation of an important number of the 22.472 foreign seasonal workers in Huelva. However, a significant decrease regarding the number of offers for foreign seasonal workers directly hired in their countries of origin for working in agriculture in Huelva can be observed. Nevertheless, productivity reductions cannot be blamed for this, as they have not happened, and neither a reorientation of the business strategies for the temporary labor supply. The cause is more socio-political than agro-economical and it is located in Eastern Europe.

The full incorporation of Poland to the European Union (2004) plus that of Bulgaria and Romania (2007) has deeply ruined the horizons of contracting in origin of the businessmen from Huelva and, because of its weight in the national spectrum, of the Spanish model of contracting in origin. Up to the 2002/2003 campaign, Polish seasonal female workers (from now on, we will speak about Huelva’s case) represented the majority group: 62.79% of the mentioned campaign. A year later, in the 2003/2004 campaign, female workers hired in Romania became the most representative group: 52.06%. In the light of the won rights, after joining the European Union, such as the right of freedom of movement, residence and work, many Polish and Romanian people (group highly required by businessmen in the strawberry field) gave priority to markets with the best salary opportunities, such as the German and Austrian one. This was particularly the case of Polish workers. Moreover, Romanian workers, more linked to Mediterranean migrations and working market such as the Italian or the Spanish one, find open doors in other economic

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4 These numbers justify our focusing on the analysis of the Huelva’s case in order to observe the evolution and the bundles of relationships the vanguard agriculture and the field work are establishing with other geographies.

5 It must be pointed out here that if the Romanian and Bulgarian citizens acquired full rights as European citizens after their countries have joined the EU, in the case of Spain, the Government imposed them a moratorium until January 2009 forbidding them, with certain exceptions, to be employed. In order to be employed, unlike any other European citizen, Romanians and Bulgarians had to have recourse to the legal routes for non-EU foreign citizens.
sectors: the building and services sectors. Finally, it must be taken into account the fact that both Polish and Romanian economies are experiencing a great development. They are countries where salaries are still not equal to those of Western Europe, but where, however, unemployment barely exists (although the underemployment remains). This does not mean that the flows towards abroad have finished, but that the opportunity range is bigger and, in front of it, the advantage of the poor agricultural work in the other corner of Europe, to which besides one must arrive after four days spent in a bus, is less attractive.

In this disadvantageous situation, the hidden impediments that the Romanian Government has been imposing to the contracting in origin (mostly because of the high national workforce for the development of the country) and the difficulties of hiring in other non-EU Eastern European countries, such as Ukraine, have imposed the imperious necessity of finding new contracting frontiers over the strawberry pickers from Huelva and their sectorial organizations.

A-LEGAL IMMIGRATION FROM AFRICA AND THE COORDINATION OF MIGRATORY FLOWS

A-legal migrations from Sub-Saharan Africa towards Spain and towards the European context (these being henceforth understood as the population movements apart from the legal and administrative framework that administer them) are not quantitatively the most important and even less those coming from by sea, even though in the media they seem to be (Haas, 2008). About 2,600,000 foreigners with visa enter Europe every year. They represent the largest group of those who afterwards become illegal because of staying after their entry and residence authorization in the country have expired. In comparison with these 2.6 million foreigners, in the European Union there do not enter more than about 35,000 immigrants directly in an illegal way (Haas, 2008). Based on estimates, they do not exceed the 1.4% of the entry of foreigners in the European Union.

It happens that after the strengthening of the migratory politics in Libya, traditional destination of many center-African communities on account of the great demand for workers in the oil fields (Pliez, 2004; Schuster, 2005; Hamood, 2006) and after the increase of the control of the European borders and the big means against illegal immigration of the Western African communities towards Europe (Lahlou, 2005; Lutterbeck, 2006; Goldschmidt, 2006), the trans-Saharan migratory route towards the Mediterranean and from there towards Europe is losing importance in favour of the crossroads by boat from the coasts of Mauritania, Cape Verde or Senegal towards the Canaries (Oumar and Choplin, 2005). This granted again a character of novelty, insecurity and alarm to the socio-media controversial concept of immigratory avalanche.

As it can be observed in the previous map, the trans-Saharan route is no longer leading emigrants towards the South Mediterranean coasts in order to redirect them towards the countries from Western Africa, where a high percentage of immigrant population in comparison with its interior neighbours is gathering. Part of these immigrants represents those who nowadays are trying to reach the Canary costs by open boats.

In the context of the diplomatic task during the last years in order for the regulation of these migratory flows, the bureaucratic relationships with the countries from Sub-Saharan Africa, especially with Senegal, have increased. In December 2006, Rodríguez Zapatero travelled to Senegal after 15 years since the last trip made by the president of the Spanish Government in this area and the first in Senegal. The presidential delegation made the trip with the purpose of consolidating the economic cooperation relationships with the African country and, there is no doubt about this, with the purpose of trying to establish the basis of a bilateral politics for the organization of illegal migrations of a large number of Senegalese towards Spain, especially towards the Canary Islands. Let us remember that in 2006, 30,000 illegal immigrants of various African nationalities arrived to the Canary Archipelago from the Senegalese Coasts (MAEC, 2008).

Practically, a year later, on the 5th of November 2007, Miguel Ángel Moratinos and his Senegalese Foreign Minister counterpart, Cheikh Tidiane Gadio, also met in Dakar to culminate the previous months’ work and sign six new commitments (MAEC, 2007):
1. Memorandum of understanding of general politic character.
2. Basic cooperation development agreement.
3. Agreement to avoid double taxation.
4. Agreement about cooperation within the area of preventing the emigration of unaccompanied minors.
5. Cooperation agreement concerning the fight against delinquency.
6. Letter of intent about cooperation regarding the formation, the selection and the contracting in origin of Senegalese workers.

Four days later, on the 7th of November, Javier Caldera, then Minister of Social and Employment Affairs, and Ousmen Ngom, former Senegalese Minister for Home Affairs, signed in the Senegalese capital a memorandum of understanding between Spain and Senegal in order to support the contracting in origin that Spanish businessmen were already finalizing in the Senegalese country, backing up this way the coordinated management of the migratory flows from Senegal. The memorandum, in the context of the letter of intent signed by the Foreign Ministers days before, collected the initial contracting of 2,700 workers: 2,000 for the fishing and 700 in agriculture, specifically for the picking of strawberry in Huelva. Both ministers coincided in affirming that ‘a credible alternative to illegal immigration is possible’ (El Mundo, 2007).

A month later, during the second European Union and Africa Summit, celebrated in Lisbon during the 8th and 9th of December 2007, the Spanish Government assigned 100 million of Euros to...
the fight against illegal immigration, promoting agriculture and forming young people from Western Africa. The donation and commitment were endorsed by the Spanish Government and the ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States ⁶) (Fernández, 2007). During the very Euro-African Summit, the president of the Government, Rodríguez Zapatero, made a public bet about the need of coordinating illegal migrations that come from Western Africa towards Europe, especially towards Spain, and the importance of establishing new legal migratory paths to make possible both the development of the human capital and the one of the general economic situation of the countries in the area. The president made an especial reference to the fight against illegal immigration, the brain drain, the importance of voluntary return, child schooling, job insecurity of African young people and the danger of the mafias who interfere in the migratory process. During the same meeting, Zapatero emphasized the importance of signing specific bilateral agreements with the Western African countries and gave as an example for this the case of the agreements between Spain and Senegal, finally assuming that until now illegal migrations have been ‘the result of a collective failure’ (Diario de Noticias, 2007).

THE NEW WORKING GEOGRAPHIES FOR VANGUARD AGRICULTURE OF HUELVA (SOUTHERN SPAIN)

This bet about making new channels of legal migration from Africa towards Europe possible and, especially, about putting an end to the pressure, more caused by the media than demographic, of illegal migrations towards the Andalusian and Canarias Coasts, and, without any doubt, along with its tragic consequences, coincides in time with the agricultural businessmen’s need to explore new territories which can provide with temporary female and male workers for picking up strawberry, on account of the fact that the European pool began to diminish and, hereinafter, it would be more difficult to bring seasonal workers from there as it has happened (figure 3). This situation, which points out Africa as the best niche of workers, is moreover reinforced by the distance that separates Spain from Latin American countries, which they also bring temporary workers from, but which, because of the ticket’s costs, makes the model of contracting in origin less profitable. It is a matter of mileage.

![Figure 3. Decrease of Eastern European season workers after the accession of their countries to the European Union](source: Gordo et al., 2008, UGT, 2009. Made by authors)

In this context, the European Union approved the AENEAS project (Programme of Financial and Technical Assistance to Third Countries in Areas of Migration and Asylum) in which Cartaya Town Council (Huelva) has developed means about ‘Ethic Management of

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⁶ The CEDEAO consists of 15 countries: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo.

⁷ Until 2005/2006, the numbers that correspond to campaigns and data refer to the number of hired workers. Hereinafter, the numbers are per natural year and the data correspond to the number of presented offers for the contracting during that year.
Seasonal Immigration’. This subproject is especially addressed to the management and coordination of the contracting in origin of farmers in Morocco and covers, from the technical and organizational point of view, the businessmen and representatives of the agricultural sector who seek hiring in the Allawi country.

However, reducing all the contracting in origin to only one country, as it can be noticed in the tendency that the previous table describes for the case of Morocco, it is little strategic, all the more when diplomatic relationships, at the very least unstable, are held with the North-African neighbour. This weakness has made the need of new contracting geographies beyond Maghreb compelling. The same members of the AENEAS-CARTAYA project have taken this into account by enlarging the contracting geography towards the south, with Senegal as the pilot experience.

Besides the experience with Senegal, there have been other experiments, as the one of contracting workers in Philippines. For the last strawberry season 2007/2008, the Almonte Town Council (Huelva), by means of the twinning that the consistory has with the Philippine city Baler, administrated the arrival of 300 seasonal workers from the former Spanish colony. The historic passage called ‘The last of Philippines’, which identifies one of the last soldiers of the former Spanish colony as from Almonte⁶, served as reason to set off the machinery of contracting in origin in the Asian archipelago. But the success of the contracting in origin does not seem to lie on the historic ties. Hardly anything was shared with Poland and Romania when there began the contracting of workers from those places for the strawberry picking, and the result concerning the valuation of the very businessmen could not be better. Nevertheless, the case of Philippines seems to have been rather a staging or a try of singularisation than a serious bet about the new contracting geographies. Philippines is very far, so travelling there is very expensive. Both seasonal female workers and farmers turn to contracting and being contracted because of economic matters. Neither of them prefers investing too much in round trips.

We bring forward that the Senegal experience has not been a success either, as for the current campaign 2008/2009 there have not been made generic contracting, that is to say that nobody has asked for contracting more seasonal female workers than those who worked during the last season. But it cannot be qualified as a predictable failure either, as in the case of Philippines, because Senegal itself fulfils, as it will be detailed, some of the requirements to be a good candidate country to the contracting in origin. However, the excessively interested collaboration of the Senegalese Administration and some of the country’s socio-demographic characteristics have not allowed that the model could develop successfully.

WORKING MARKET AND AGRICULTURAL ECONOMY IN THE SENEGALESE TERRITORIES

Senegal relies on more than 11,500,000 inhabitants. Its natural growth in the last years has been of 2.4% according to its National Agency of Statistics (ASND, 2005). This population is mainly rural: 62.5%. The population is not equally divided in the territory, but it is concentrated especially in the regions of Dakar, Thies, Kaolack and Diourbel. Of the four regions, the smallest (547 km²) and, consequently, the one that supports the biggest population density is Dakar: more than 4,000 inhabitants per sqkm. In the West part of the country, the region of the national capital and its metropolitan area house the 22% of the whole Senegalese population. This means 58.7% of the total urban population (figure 4).

The urban attraction that the capital brings, the promise of big job opportunities and the hope of a better life quality have turned Dakar into the most populated urban area of the country. However, even with the strong internal immigration (figure 4), this metropolis with expansion problems because of its peninsular situation, collapsed from the demographic point of view, with serious constructive and services lacks (OCD, 2007), presents the lowest natural estimated growth rate: 11.33%, compared to other regions such as Fattick or Diourbel, with estimated growth rates

⁶ Soldier José Jiménez Berro.
of 17.35% and 16.82% for 2012. Life conditions and the emigration of young people are restraining the growth of Dakar as the main city in Senegal, turning it into a passing through city. It must be remembered now that we are talking about a counted population and that, however, as it can be noticed in figure 3, the area of Senegal, Gambia and Guinea Bissau has turned in the last years into an important cozy area for the immigration of the neighbouring countries and those from Center Africa, hoping to find in its coasts the opportunity to jump to the Canary Islands or rather heading towards Cape Verde and from there jump to the Spanish archipelago. This floating population raises even more the population density in the urban area and makes some of the structural problems of the city worse, as public services.

Figure 4. Population density, population distribution and domestic migratory flows destiny in Senegal
(Source: ASND, 2008a. Made by authors)
Of its more than 11.5 million inhabitants, 67.8% of the Senegalese population is of working age. The country’s population is, as the African one as a whole, a very young population: more than 50% of the Senegalese have less than 20 years (ANSD, 2005). According to the population distribution, most of the active people live in the rural areas. However, regional concentrations vary more and although in great numbers, the active population is the rural one, the regions concentrating the most of the active population are the more urban ones, such as Dakar, while the regions concentrating the least active population are the rural ones, such as Matam, bordering Mali. As it can be proved in the following map, when relating the active population with the occupied one, at first sight a route can be seen between the area of influence in Dakar and the region of Kaolack, whose capital, with the same name, is an important connecting point between Dakar and Gambia River, apart from being an important river port where part of the country’s main productions are exported from, such as the peanut. In that corridor, most of the workforce potential from Senegal is located.

Concerning the occupied population, the number is somewhat inferior to that of the active population. In Senegal, 60.2% of the total active population has a job, which raises the prospect of an unemployment that oscillates, according to the official numbers, around 7.6% of the working age population (ANSD, 2005). Anyway, we are talking about official numbers and loss-making statistics systems, which have a trouble in expressing in detail the complete social reality. For instance, in this case, the occupied population is formed by those persons who, having a working age, have worked for at least 3 months during the previous 12 months. The unemployment percentage would be higher, that is to say, closer to reality, if the indicators reflected as unoccupied those people who actually are, not only those who have been unemployed for more than 7 months.

With regard to the gender distribution, this is not equal. The working market is occupied for 54.6% by men in comparison with 45.4% by women. Concerning the profile of the working age, such
as its population, workers are very young. In Senegal, the minimum legal working age is around 10 years. This threshold makes that minors, from a very young age, enter the working market supposing 20.7% of the total of the workers in the country. The others age steps range between 18 and 30 years (36.3%) and between 31 and 65 years (40.4%). Starting from 65 years old, the retirement age, workers who are still occupied are much less: their percentage decreases until 2.7%.

With respect to the employment stability, jobs are mostly temporary. 55.8% of the occupied population has temporary or occasional jobs compared to 44.2% of the population who has stable or permanent jobs. Within the range of the temporary precariousness, the Senegalese official numbers make a distinction of permanent, temporary or seasonal jobs when possible and occasional when advisable. The seasonal jobs are those of great representativeness within the group of unstable ones. They represent 43.8% of the employment in Senegal and coincide with the jobs related to the seasons of years, mainly to the agricultural ones (ANSD, 2005).

Another indicator that helps understanding the working and wage precariousness of employment in Senegal without the need of comparing it with other countries is the distribution of the active population in professional categories. The Senegalese statistics system summarizes in three the professional categories related to the employment groups: wage-earners, employers, and apprentices and assistants. Wage-earners include the group of domestic workers, hired employees and occasional workers. Employers cover the owners of any economic activity and the self-employed ones who only work in their company or do other unpaid activities hired by someone else. Finally, apprentices and assistants cover those workers who have the category of apprentices, apart from those people who work in the main economic family activity, but who do not receive any wage. Even with the ineffectiveness of such categories for a deep analysis of the Senegalese working market, both the categorization and the percentage that represent each one of the groups, are very significant.

On the one hand, employers suppose 44% of the occupied population of the country. This fact points out the deeply-rooted entrepreneurial culture of the Senegalese society apart from, inevitably, the small size of the initiated companies and business. The group of wage-earners is the smallest of all, representing 13.7% of the total. This number reinforces the previous reflection: companies are very small and most of them do not create more jobs than that of the owner. Finally, the group of apprentices and assistants rises up to 42.3%. This percentage is the most revealing of all and indicates the absolute employment precariousness in Senegal. More than 42 of each 100 Senegalese workers have jobs of a very low working category or they keep being related to family activity and do not receive any salary for that. We could assure that the wage of the wage-earners in Senegal is a very difficult purpose to achieve and that it forces people to embark on micro-companies that hire only the owner.

A good example of that can be seen in the distribution per working scale in the Senegalese industry. There it can be noticed both the large volume of workers in the lowest posts of the working category and the last years’ tendency of enlargement of this structural division (table 1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional category</th>
<th>2006 %</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007 %</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior management</td>
<td>4.761</td>
<td>4.97</td>
<td>4.873</td>
<td>4.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Superior technicians and middle management</td>
<td>7.444</td>
<td>7.78</td>
<td>7.705</td>
<td>7.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technicians, employers and skilled workers</td>
<td>26.344</td>
<td>27.52</td>
<td>26.478</td>
<td>26.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed, manufacturers, workers and apprentices</td>
<td>57.191</td>
<td>59.74</td>
<td>62.293</td>
<td>61.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>95.740</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>101.349</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As it can moreover be proved in figure 6, the percentage of occupation in distinct sectors does not correspond to its contribution to the national economy, rather on the contrary. More than
half of the country’s population, and it has decreased during the last years (Table 2), works in the agricultural and fishing sectors, even though we are mainly talking about agriculture. However, this very sector contributes with only 14.4% of its value to the national GDP. Something similar also happens in the commercial sector that occupies 23.8% of the active population while its economic contribution is of 15.6%. This means that the vast majority of the Senegalese society works in sectors that finally do not contribute in a very substantial way to the GDP, at least regarding the employability proportion. In Senegal, is the public sector accompanied by the processing industry and services those which contribute with the largest part of the economic value to the national accounts. All this happens without occupying more than 17.7% of the workers in the country. Nevertheless, in exclusively economic terms, the main sectors are relatively well-balanced.

Table 2. Active population per big sectors in Senegal (thousands)
(Data source: ANSD, 2008. Made by authors)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>% 2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>% 2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>% 2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>1886</td>
<td>56,88</td>
<td>1921,5</td>
<td>56,14</td>
<td>1957,6</td>
<td>55,38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>435,4</td>
<td>13,13</td>
<td>447</td>
<td>13,06</td>
<td>458,9</td>
<td>12,98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tertiary</td>
<td>994,3</td>
<td>29,99</td>
<td>1054,3</td>
<td>30,80</td>
<td>1118,4</td>
<td>31,64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>3315,7</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>3422,8</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>3534,9</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, the economic sectors rely moreover on a dimension of geographic localization that unequally distributes in the territory its economic boost and, consequently, its working opportunities and its salary kindnesses. In Senegal, as in practically all the countries in the world, urban regions concentrate the largest number of activities related to public services, transports and telecommunications, tourism, hotel industry, restoration and financial activities, which are, as we have previously pointed out, the sectors that mostly contribute to the GDP. The economic dynamism of these activities motivates the creation of companies that, besides those related to

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9 Domestic jobs, touristic services (hotels and restaurants), bank and other small private companies are included. Source: OCDE, 2007; ANSD, 2007.
these sectors, are the ones that create the biggest number of stable jobs and, thus, of a better quality, unlike companies in the primary sector, for example.

In table 3, one can observe how companies created in the most urban regions, such as Dakar or Kaolack, cover the highest percentage of permanent jobs created by the private sector in 2007. And, on the contrary, how rural areas stand out because of the weight of temporary jobs. The regions eminently rural of Matam and Louga head the ranking of unstable employment, for being temporary, with 80 and 74.42% of all the created jobs. This data reaffirm the disadvantage of rural territories in comparison with the urban ones concerning opportunities of working stability. In more rural regions, not more than 30% of jobs are stable, which, added to the bad salary conditions of the field and its physical harshness, pushes a great part of the population towards city centers, firstly, and towards international borders, afterwards.

Table 3. Open companies in Senegal and created jobs in those companies per region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Number of companies</th>
<th>Companies of the total (%)</th>
<th>Number of permanent workers</th>
<th>Permanent workers of the total (%)</th>
<th>Permanent workers in the region (%)</th>
<th>Number of temporary workers</th>
<th>Possible workers of the total (%)</th>
<th>Possible workers in the region (%)</th>
<th>Total of workers in the region (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dakar</td>
<td>954</td>
<td>65.4</td>
<td>3,159</td>
<td>63.09</td>
<td>88.19</td>
<td>423</td>
<td>27.54</td>
<td>11.81</td>
<td>3,582</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diourbel</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>2.76</td>
<td>60.79</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>5.79</td>
<td>39.21</td>
<td>227</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaolack</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>261</td>
<td>5.21</td>
<td>92.88</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>7.12</td>
<td>281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thiès</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>628</td>
<td>12.54</td>
<td>72.35</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>15.63</td>
<td>27.65</td>
<td>868</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matam</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>20.00</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>15.10</td>
<td>80.00</td>
<td>290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ziguinchor</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>1.44</td>
<td>45.86</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>5.53</td>
<td>54.14</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kolda</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>3.14</td>
<td>87.22</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>12.78</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louga</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>25.58</td>
<td>291</td>
<td>18.95</td>
<td>74.42</td>
<td>391</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Louis</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>434</td>
<td>8.67</td>
<td>76.54</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>8.66</td>
<td>23.46</td>
<td>567</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>1,360</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>5,007</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1,536</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6,543</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As it can be observed, a good part of the working precariousness in Senegal is tightly related to the main working sector: agriculture. The agricultural sector is characterized by dry land and is centered on the cereal and industrial crops production. The species that sustain the Senegalese agriculture are peanuts, maize, cotton, sweet corn, sorghum, fonio, rice and tapioca (ANSD, 2005). The working precariousness is related to the agricultural sector as agriculture in Senegal is a very unstable sector from the macro-statistic point of view. Both the areas and productions fluctuate in an accentuated way each year, especially those of the most important crops: peanuts and maize, without letting apart others of a crucial nutritious importance such as rice or sweet corn (figures 7 and 8). This creates economic instability and makes predictions related to the demand for agricultural labour difficult and, thus, to the stability of the team in the farms. Moreover, this type of agriculture is mechanized in the farm works which what mostly need is workforce, those of harvesting, among other matters, because it requires a machinery which is not excessively expensive for big owners and because it is a technology that already relies on a large international circulation and many years in the market.

This way, that percentage of more than 50% of the occupied population that in Senegal mainly dedicates to agriculture, does not have domains to ask for them in great number on account of the type of crops which we are talking about. This makes one think that actually, great part of that percentage dedicates to family agriculture, of smaller and less productive exploitations. Generally, cereal business bases its profitability on the extension of the exploitations and, as far as possible, on the mechanization, irrigation and fertilization of the exploitations, which leaves it out of the reach of many farmers incapable of facing the costs of being profitable. Neither can one lose sight here of the fact that Senegal is experiencing in these moments an intense period of land speculation, especially with those lands close to urban
environments. As it has happened with a large number of Spanish agricultural rings, in Senegal, fertile lands of a great agricultural value are being restructured for urban use (Sow, 2000).

This way, the elevated percentage that the active population appears to be included in the apprentices and assistants group makes sense. It is about workers who, without registering themselves in the unemployment offices, work in family exploitations crop after crop. This job does not bring them any salary and the farm is not registered on their name. However, they are considered occupied workers; hence their category of assistants.

![Historical production of main crops, 1990/2005](image1)

**Figures 7.** Historical series of main crops of Senegal
(Source: MA, 2007. Made by authors)

![Historical surface of main crops, 1990/2005](image2)

**Figures 8.** Historical series of main crops of Senegal
(Source: MA, 2007. Made by authors)

From a regional point of view, cereal agriculture and its productions concentrate in the South-East regions of the country: Tambacounda, Kolda and Kaolack, especially in the last one. We have previously said that the city of Kaolack is an important river port for the agricultural production trade. In the following map, one can appreciate that this region is the most important agricultural one in Senegal not only in number of hectares, but also in tones of production. Moreover, without receiving an important contribution of national immigration (figure 4), it owns an important volume of active local population (figure 5) that seems to be stabilized by its significant agricultural numbers, among other reasons.
SEASONAL WORKERS HIRED IN SENEGAL: SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE AND DEPARTMENTS OF ORIGIN

It has been previously pointed out certain numbers that describe the working situation of great part of the Senegalese population: 36.3% of the workers are between 18 and 30 years old and, consequently, a great part of the active people are very young, more than half of the jobs they find (57.5%) are precariously occasional, the jobs they have (42.3%) correspond to inferior categories (jobs for which many times they do not earn money) and, besides this, half of all this population is related to the agricultural sector. Thus, this entails physical harshness, social discredit and high levels of autarky, surrounded by a big cereal agriculture that not only is unstable, but, moreover, because of its costs, is not at the reach of many farmers too.

In this context, of working harshness and emigration towards cities and not towards Maghreb or the Canarias archipelago, it appears in Senegal the regulatory possibility to go and work in the agricultural sector in Huelva during the strawberry picking period. In that sense, the need shows a double direction. On the one hand, there is the Senegalese population eager to improve its living conditions, and on the other hand, there begins to be felt the needs of the businessmen in Huelva of reaching seasonal labour, of round trip, to realize the tasks of strawberry picking that workers from East Europe do not want to do anymore. This is a very significant change within a labour exporting society, such as the Senegalese one. Europe’s closed doors open not only by making possible the search of a job, but also by offering it.

During the 2007/2008 campaign, in which the contracting of Senegalese workers in their country of origin was accomplished, 744 seasonal workers from Senegal arrived to Huelva. Of these workers, only 44 were men (5.91%) and the rest were women: 94.09%. The businessmen in the strawberry field have firmly chosen to hire women and not men. Initially, things were not like that. During the end of the eighties and beginning of the nineties, in the strawberry pickers’ team it was normal to check a gender balance that, however, has disappeared now. Several claiming incidents because of bad working conditions in the mid nineties, led by men, especially by Moroccans, seem to have played a crucial role in this respect. Nevertheless, businessmen do not openly recognize that the
contracting of women is related to their major submissiveness, especially that of the foreigners, concerning working the land and its socio-laboural conditions. More on the contrary, they lay the blame on the women’ predilection praising their effort when cutting and their gentleness when treating the fragile strawberry, as if this were a biological consequence of the gender.

The contracting in Senegal of such a high percentage of women is enshrined in this context of discriminatory enterprise policy with respect to the gender difference. In fact, even though the seasonal female workers percentage is overwhelming compared to that of the seasonal male workers, many of the claims made by businessmen and by sectorial organizations concerning the process of contracting in the African country were related to the excessive number of men that the Government of Senegal called for the selection of workers and pressured so as they were finally hired. Even though the number of hired men is practically anecdotal, the claims exist, which can make one think that businessmen were to hire 100% female workers.

Another one of the registered tendencies with regard to the contracting of seasonal female workers for picking up strawberry in Huelva is reflected in the age of the hired ones and in their marital status. Broadly speaking, businessmen in the strawberry field seek people not too young, not too old (between 25 and 40 years old) who, besides, have domestic burdens. This fact is related to the advantageous conditions of contracting in origin. Obviously, they are advantageous conditions for the receiving country, Spain. Every contract signed in origin for the season or agricultural campaign has a binding document for which the seasonal worker, either a man or a woman, who wants to be part of this group of farm workers, undertakes to return to his/her country immediately after the agricultural jobs for which they were hired have ended. This way, the contracting in origin does not open a gateway to Spain or to Europe via the agricultural work. In fact, the persons contracted in origin have only the right to establish their working situation in Spain and ask for a permanent work permit and residence from the fourth year of participating in the model of contracting in origin. Until that moment, the worker that wants to keep forming part of the group of foreign workers and, besides, that does not want to become an irregular immigrant, has to return to his/her country after his/her contract have finished.

When the contracted workers, especially women, are not too young and have domestic burdens, the cultural memberships that made them responsible for the social reproduction of the family, the taking care and educate their children, the attention given to the elderly people, the responsibility concerning the economic balance of the family, etc., made them more dependent of their familiar enclave and, thus, increase the probability of going back home. In fact, with the contracting of this seasonal cohort, the AENEAS-CARTAYA project estimates the success of return of the Moroccan seasonal female workers over about more than 95% (AENEAS-CARTAYA, 2008).

For this reason, as it can be observed in Table 4, the main age levels represented in the contracting of Senegalese seasonal female workers are those that cover from 25 to 29 years old and from 30 to 34 years old. In this age step, 57% of the Senegalese workers are found.

### Table 4. Ages of Senegalese female workers contracted in origin for strawberry picking in Huelva, 2007 - 2008
(Data source: AENEAS-CARTAYA, 2009. Made by authors)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age levels (years)</th>
<th>Number of contracted women</th>
<th>% of the age levels</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18/19</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0,67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20/24</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>20,43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25/29</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>29,17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30/34</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>27,82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35/39</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>14,38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40/44</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>6,59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45/49</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0,94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>744</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the same line, the percentage of seasonal female workers with domestic burdens is getting close to that which, for spinsterhood reasons, they probably do not have. It must be clarified here that in the handled data, we count only on the marital status of the persons contracted in origin, and not on the number of children or relatives in their care. Either way, the demographic data of women in Senegal, as the medium marriage age (18.3 years old), or of fertility (4.1 children in urban areas and 6.4 children in rural areas) (ANSD, 2005), inform, with a high level of probability, that the seasonal female workers who are married, separated, divorced and widowed, that is to say that 44.35% of the Senegalese female workers who arrived in 2007/2008 to Huelva had domestic burdens in their country. Moreover, even though we do not rely on data relative to the number of single mothers, the low use of modern contraceptive methods (they are used by only 18% of urban women and 5% of rural women) make possible that, within the group of single women, an important number of them get to work in the strawberry field while having domestic burdens in Senegal too.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>41.13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singles</td>
<td>55.65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td>2.02%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separated</td>
<td>0.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widows</td>
<td>0.81%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 10. Marital status of the Senegalese women workers contracted in origin for Huelva
(Source: AENEAS-CARTAYA, 2009. Made by authors)

Moreover, there is a third requirement in the implicit norms of the contracting in origin, this time more related to the territory. The businessmen, in pursuit of optimizing the profitability of their groups, try to hire seasonal female workers who are from rural environments. This way, they make sure in a high level of probability that their seasonal female workers have done farm work. On the contrary, the low weight of agriculture in more urban regions, as we have seen before, makes less probable that the hired women from urban areas have any experience in farm working.

Nevertheless, this requirement, although it seems to be solved in the case of the Moroccans, did not receive so much attention in the case of Senegal. In the process of contracting in origin, it is the Government of the country where people are to be hired, and in its case the Administration or delegated entity for that, the one that is in charge with the selection of the workers. From Spain, by means of the consular services, the necessities of the Spanish businessmen are distributed to the local authorities; a response is given to these necessities by appealing to the unemployed people of the country that they have to comply a priori with the profile required by the businessmen. Only that this is more or less taken into account according to the fluctuating interests of the local Administration.

If the territorial distribution of the contracting of seasonal female workers in Senegal is observed (figure 11), it can be proved that the most represented departments are not precisely the most rural ones. Even though there is a large geographic distribution of the contracting, the origin departments of the Senegalese seasonal female workers are the ones that coincide with the most populated cities of the country: Dakar and Thies. The contracting has been realized in the cities, as
it happens in other countries such as Morocco, or it happened in Poland, Bulgaria or Romania. However, in Senegal the contracted ones are workers from urban areas on account of the low number of rural communities that have those departments. That is to say that the contracting was not realized in cities, but that they hired people from the city.

It can be corroborated, for example, by observing the following map the contrast between the contracting within the department of Dakar and, 20 km further inland, the low contracting in the department of Rufisque. The same happens in the case of the department of Kaolack, where the capital of the department and the region, having the same name, is situated. A few kilometers away, there is practically a lack of contracting in the departments of Gossas and Fatick which has no other explanation than the location of the city with the biggest population in the neighbouring department and not in its delimitation.

Big departments, but more far away from the capital or important cities, such as Podor or Bakel, registered low contracting rates. The same occurred with other more medium, small and outlying, such as Velingara or Ziguinchor. If the following map is compared to that of the figure 5, it can be observed that the contracting was realized in the departments with a large number of active population and, apart from the cases of Tambacounda and Saint Louis, which are explained by the urban population of their cities, the regional geography of the contracting in origin in Senegal coincides with the route of the laboural active people that we previously indicated.

Workers from rural environments have also been hired and not only from small or médium villages precisely, but from small hamlets of hardly twenty houses, badly connected to the communication network, away from urban centers of national weight, in outlying departments, without electrical installation, without telephone line and, probably, without water pipes. One possible example is the case of Dandone (figure 12). This hamlet is part of a rural community of Sedhiou. The department of Sedhiou not only is not the most important one of its environment both demographically and economically speaking, bordering on the unstable Guinea Bissau, but it administratively belongs to Kolda. In turn, Kolda is an outlying region whose best option of communication with the capital is by plane (with the implying costs), as Gambia and the river with
the same name separate, almost isolate from the rest of the country – and, thus, from the decisions and the places of power – this low-lying Senegalese region.

Nevertheless and with example as this one, the great part of the people contracted in origin comes from the main urban areas of the country: Dakar, Thies, Diourbel, Kaolack, Tambacounda and Saint Louis. It must be taken into account the fact that the studied statistics collect the place of birth and not the usual home address. The Sub-Delegation of the Government of Huelva, which administers all the data related to the contracting in origin, among which the home address should be emphasized, does not collaborate very much when providing the new data. The numbers studied for the elaboration of the maps are those handed over by the people responsible of the project AENEAS-CARTAYA, in whose database the home address does not appear, but, as we say, the place of birth does.

Those data must be carefully managed when locating workers geographically. Their origin is known, but not what percentage of the people born in their places of birth have not already initiated a first migration towards the cities, where now they were selected and hired in order to come and work for the strawberry picking in Huelva. Taking this into account, the idea of gathering of the contracting in the urban areas is reinforced, without being necessary that the rural environment contributes with experienced workers in the agriculture field, apart from remittances and acquired experiences in Spain that do not directly go back to the rural environment.

**CONCLUSIONS**

In terms of migration, Spain has signed 15 agreements out of which 9 are with African countries, all of them from Western and Northern Africa: Morocco, Mauritania, Algeria, Cape Verde, Gambia, Guinea, Mali, Niger and Senegal. These are key countries which provide Spain with immigrant population by maintaining good relationships in terms of migration. Moreover,
they are countries from whose borders, especially the coastal ones, arrive to Europe the most of the administrative illegal African citizens. It must be remembered that the strict controls imposed by Spain and the European Union in the last years for patrolling the entry of illegal immigrants by sea, especially by the Mediterranean Sea and the closest Atlantic Coasts to the Cádiz Golf, have made the Trans-Saharan route towards the South Mediterranean Sea lose the importance and the route that leads immigrants to the Western African Coasts begins to gain it, where now countries such as Mauritania, Senegal or Gambia are in the limelight. Anyway, a group of foreign African population that reach 1.076.889 citizens in Spain, what means 18.73% of foreign population at the national level (INE, 2010), justifies any type of effort leading to regulating the migration management between Spain and African countries perfectly well, especially concerning softening and providing the normative apparatus with new ways of labour migration.

Many of the signed agreements with these African countries, specifically those of regulating the seasonal migrations with Morocco and Senegal, have not been motivated by the cooperative and development altruism. On the contrary, they are mirrored in the need of the agricultural market of certain Spanish territories, such as Huelva, of gradually remain without the workers that East Europe provided them with and that now, after Poland, Romania and Bulgaria have joined the European Union, arrive there in the same amount.

The contracting of Spanish workers in their countries of origin is a vociferated need. Spanish agriculture, not even the vanguard productivist one, has been able to or has not been pressured enough to offer socio-working conditions good enough to be an attractive sector for the local worker. The lack of this national workforce has been covered by workers from countries such as Romania, Colombia or Morocco, among others. Practically, they have been searched for wherever they were. However, the rules of the contracting in origin prescribe that the farmer should take care of the costs of at least one of the two journeys, the outward or the return one, that have the model of worker contracted in origin implicit.

Moreover, regarding these traveling expenses, the farmer must pay the costs that on the return journey (usually, the one the worker defrays as he/she has money to face the expense) derive from the trip from the place where they have worked to the Spanish border. When they travel by plane, farmers must pay the movement from the place of work to the city where the airport is, usually to Madrid. Those responsible for the sector inform us that, broadly speaking, the trip expenses are 60% defrayed by the businessman and 40% by the worker. Others state that the businessman use to pay more. However, the realized fieldwork makes us distrust these statements. Either way, the procedures and the expenses of the contracting in origin are being backed by subventions and help, both from the central Government and the Government of Andalusia; thus, the true percentage that the businessman contribute with is much less. The one who finally pays the agreed part is the weaker link, the worker.

These trip expenses are outing Latin American countries as potential grounds of seasonal workforce and they are redirecting the sight towards Africa. Moreover, as we have previously said, not only the businessmen are those not interested in the excessive trip expenses, maybe they are the least interested in the matter on account on their compelling need of workforce and the public help in order to handle it, but the mere workers too. In this sense, a cooperating equilibrium between the needs would be perfect as it is not about interests directly faced, but of mutual dependency. Nevertheless, the own logic of the replacing the national workforce by the foreign one in the lowest ranking of the labour system or in the tougher tasks of the same rest on the inequality principle. The contracting in origin supposes a change regarding the labour search. The businessmen are those who resort to crossing borders to supply the needs, but they do it by reproducing a model of segmented market in Piore’s way (1979). Even though workers are not attracted, but they should go directly and hire them there, economic inequalities keep being indispensable.

The immigration related to the agricultural labour market has a strong economic dimension above, maybe, other motivations (Kostova, 2008). And if the agricultural work can be used as a precursor for the rest of the economic sectors, as if it were about a first phase to leave behind,
those workers, who feel motivated in their countries of origin to be hired and come, work on the field and go back to their homes after ending their contract, should value in a positive way the quick and easy possibility (from the legal point of view) of obtaining a European wage. If not, the contracting in origin could not and would not have had success.

The contracting in origin, devoid so far of strategic plans which should seriously work co-development in the areas which the temporary return workers come from, needs remote geographies, especially in the socio-economic sector. When inequalities between territories decrease and the migration restrictions disappear, the contracting in origin loses effectiveness. This is the case of Poland and Romania. The Spanish agricultural territories are continuously requiring new borders of agricultural experience, with less migration agreements with Spain and very poor economies. New borders not political-administrative, but laboural, in Turner’s terms (1982, commented by Escanilla, 1999), which make possible the expansion of the ecumene of temporary female and male workers for the fieldwork beyond their own national limits. This way, peasants willing to work in our vanguard agriculture are located; we are talking about peasants who in other ways would encounter no end of bureaucratic obstacles for emigrating and who, moreover, would come without many wage demands, as difference clouds and ignorance disorientates.

The Senegalese experience is a very valuable example in order to reflect on the geographies and the territorial supports linked by means of the contracting in origin. As it has been pointed out in previous epigraphs, the contracting in Senegal was not all positive as it was expected to be. Probably, choosing this country was more influenced by the interests of the migratory politics of the Government than by the interests and requirements of the businessmen from the agricultural sector. Anyway, the error concerning Senegal was shared. The Spanish Government and the AENEAS-CARTAYA project, under the supervising of the mayor of the locality of Huelva, targeted a country with infrastructural shortages, both concerning communication means and resorts and structures of the very Administration. That firmly determined that the selected ones would come from urban environments. It is already a complex business the fact of hiring in countries as Morocco, with very good roads and an Administration with many resorts to begin the process of contacting and arranging meetings on a slightly superior number to that demanded by the Spanish businessmen10 and that, moreover, coincides with the required profile. Doing it in Senegal results even more complex. On the other hand, the Senegalese Government, according to technicians who participated in the procedure, insisted to the businessmen, emphasizing the obligation, on contracting women with specific names and surnames, that is to say that he forced to be hired those women who, for politic cronyism or directly related to the administrative apparatus, had interest in being part of the model. Finally, when arriving to Spain, businessmen complained that many of them did not respond to the required profile, that they had no interest in the farm work and that, in a few days, they disappeared from the farm, having used the contracting in origin as a gateway to Spain. This bad experience is the one that caused that in the 2009/2009 strawberry campaign repeating female seasonal workers be hired; that is to say, those women who worked and then went back to Senegal. However, no other new female workers were contracted.

Senegal is a country whose laboural and economical precariousness, especially among young people, and whose distance towards Europe, make the model of contracting in origin especially attractive. Nevertheless, these very characteristics make the fulfillment of the return compromise difficult, as there is so much difference between Spain and Senegal and it is so complicated to go back and leave the European opportunity knowing, on one hand, that the migration restrictions are tougher and tougher and, on the other hand, that the businessman may not want to rely on the worker for the following campaign without the existence of acquired rights, that the temptation of remaining on the first world ground, although irregularly, fancies really intensively.

But this calibration error when choosing Senegal as origin of the seasonal workers does not inhibit the possibilities that experience has offered in order to observe and be critical with the

10 In this way, the businessman is enabled a minimum range in order to choose the workers whom he will finally hire.
inclination of the modern agriculture territories and their productive activities. Agricultural territories are demanding seasonal workers with experience in the domain and who, however, should not remain afterwards; they must only come, work and go back. Maybe the symbolical image of a service lift, which, at the beginning of every campaign, leave the necessary workers in the place of work and then make them disappear, reflects in a certain way the current situation. This does not deny the large co-development possibilities that the model of contracting in origin has for the specific territories. It only exposes that neither are they well managed, nor is there excessive interest in them being well managed. It must be pointed out that when the reserve develops, the model runs out of it.

The demand of an agricultural experience relates, maybe more than the rest of the conditions, the origin rural territories and de destination ones. Senegal is an agricultural country that employs in the field domain more than half of its occupied populations and that, besides, does it within the family agriculture, little mechanized, with all that this implies regarding the fact of getting accustomed to the physic effort. Rich territories, with vanguard agricultures, search for linking to poor territories, with traditional agricultures, where they can find peasants willing to work in one of the toughest tasks in agriculture, harvesting, and to accept the most unfavourable conditions of the Spanish economic system: field conventions. From a more social point of view, rich territories look for workers with family burdens because their own experience dictates them that they are more responsible concerning work. Applying this to the contracting in origin in agriculture, a double advantage is obtained. On the one hand, seasonal workers are more responsible when working and, on the other hand, they go back to their homes to keep with their family tasks, especially in the case of women.

The profitability of the Spanish vanguard agricultures seems to clearer and clearer depend on the contracting of foreigners abroad, enlarging this way the searching borders as the territories develop and find the seasonal job offer in Spain less attractive. And the implemented strategy turns out to look like a pervert mirror which, when the territories with vanguard agriculture look in, the figure of the territories which we should turn to concerning workers is reflected, also agricultural, but vice versa: fairly distant, little productive, unbalanced, with unemployment or underemployment, a generational change with a little promising future and especially poor.

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