



UNIVERSITY OF AZUAY

FACULTY OF LAW

SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

***"A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS BETWEEN THE WELCOME HOME PLAN
AND THE VOLUNTARY RETURN PLAN AND ITS IMPACT ON THE
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS BETWEEN ECUADOR AND SPAIN"***

***Graduation work prior to obtaining the Bachelor's degree in International
Studies, with a minor in Foreign Trade.***

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DEDICATION

I wish to dedicate this thesis to all those who have believed in me and that have valued my effort during this research, and who thanks to their effort and support I have completed my studies; and to Marc Henning, who with love and patience has been a big support in my life and during the development of this work.

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I am grateful to my family and to Marc for standing by me with their dedication and love during this stage of my life. They made it possible to reach one of my most highly valued goals. I also gratefully acknowledge all the institutions and individuals who provided their collaboration and knowledge during my research.

ABSTRACT

This research, entitled "A comparative analysis between the Welcome Home Plan and the Voluntary Return Plan and their impact on the international relations between Ecuador and Spain", reviews the Ecuadorian migration wave to Spain in 2000 and the reasons for the strengthening of the decision to return to Ecuador taken by Ecuadorian migrants, through a detailed analysis, including the experience of the National Network of Returnees to Ecuador. In addition, many academic documents are reviewed that analyze the Welcome Home Plan created by the Ecuadorian government and the Voluntary Return Plan by the Spanish government, as one of the political efforts to deal with this new reality of migration. Their differences and their similarities will be shown, in the motivations and objectives of each government for the creation of the plans, to facilitate the return of immigrants and ensure a proper social and labour insertion following their resettlement in Ecuador. The analysis examines why the return programs did not have the expected level of acceptance of the immigrants in Spain, even though the Welcome Home Plan motivates some immigrants to come back to Ecuador. An evaluation follows regarding how the international relations between Ecuador and Spain were strengthened as a consequence of the immigration issue. Finally, the analysis describes how the Spanish government has once again the intention to generate development in Ecuador, thanks to the intervention of the National Secretary for Migrants, but now focused on the returning immigrants and their families.

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INTRODUCTION

The international migration of the Ecuadorian population in the late XX century has been one of the most significant social phenomena in the history of Ecuador, due to its social, political and economic consequences. The most significant impacts began in 2000, when the largest number of Ecuadorians emigrated due to the very unstable situation in the country after the economic and financial crisis of 1999. There was a high level of unemployment, while corruption and the level of poverty of the people rose, forcing them to emigrate and look for a better life in other countries.

For the previous 40 years the Ecuadorian population emigrated mostly to the United States. However, at the beginning of 2000 Spain appeared strongly as one of the most popular destination countries, because it had more affinity and openness to immigrants. For this period Spain was experiencing an economic boom, and required foreign labourers in increasing numbers. To this end, visa requirements for visitors were relaxed and few requirements were needed to arrive in the country.

Nevertheless, we find ourselves in a new stage of the migration process, that is, the return of the immigrants to their countries of origin. In the case of the Ecuadorian immigrants in Spain, the idea of returning began after the beginning of the financial crisis in Spain in the year 2008. Since that date, the conditions of life have changed considerably for both Spaniards and the immigrant community, and Spain ceased to be a promising country for many.

Similarly, the immigrants' decision to return has become a very important point in political agendas worldwide. This is the case of the government of Spain, which as a country of destination for immigrants, created the Voluntary Return Plan (Plan de Retorno Voluntario) for immigrants who live in the Spanish territory. For its part, the government of Ecuador, as a country of origin, established the Welcome Home Plan (Plan Bienvenidos a Casa) for the Ecuadorian migrants who lived abroad. Both plans are designed to encourage the return of thousands of Ecuadorian immigrants to their country of origin. In this discussion, however, the focus will be on analyzing the return plans in relation to the Ecuadorian immigrant population in Spain.

Within this framework, this research seeks to analyze the characteristics of the Ecuadorian migration wave to Spain in 2000, its development and the immigrants'

idea of returning to Ecuador. In addition, I will analyze the motivations of the Spanish government for the creation of its Voluntary Return Plan and later those of the Ecuadorian government, because it has been considered relevant to mention what happened in the financial crisis of 2008 in Spain to understand how it has affected the lives of immigrants and as a reason for the implementation of the plans for return of the governments of Spain and Ecuador.

There will be also a detailed analysis of these return plans with the aim of finding similarities and differences in their features and results, and see which plan has had more acceptance by the immigrant population in Spain. Finally, the main objective of this research will be to analyze the impact that the implementation of these plans has had on the international relations between Spain and Ecuador, especially in regards to immigrants.

To carry out this investigation I collected information from bibliographic research and an analysis of secondary sources that provided information about the Ecuadorian migratory wave to Spain, the implementation of the return plans of both Spain and Ecuador, their characteristics and their impact on the international relations between these two countries. In addition, field research was conducted to learn more about the process of the return of Ecuadorian immigrants, including access to statistical information from public institutions responsible for the management of the return plans

This research has been developed in three chapters, which analyze the following information:

In the first chapter, I describe the main features of the Ecuadorian migratory wave toward Spain and the evolution of the Ecuadorian population in this country, the strengthening of the immigrants' decision to return to Ecuador and the experience of the creation of the National Network of Returnees to Ecuador and the opinion of its director Carlos Tutiven.

In the second chapter, I explain the structure of the political opportunities that gave rise to the return plans of the government of Spain and Ecuador. In the Spanish case, the Spanish immigration policy will be briefly discussed, as well as the financial crisis of 2008 and the Return Directive 115/CE/2008 of the European

Union, as incentives for the implementation of the Voluntary Return Plan.

On the Ecuadorian side, I relate the motivations of the Ecuadorian government following the establishment of the government of Rafael Correa in 2007, and his idea of the "Return to the Motherland" described in his speech of the Citizens' Revolution. I also consider the role of the National Secretary for Migrants (Secretaría Nacional del Migrante, SENAMI Spanish acronym) and the Plan of Human Development for Migration (Plan Nacional de Desarrollo Humano para las Migraciones) as the main tools for the creation of the return Welcome Home Plan. Finally, I will detail the different visions of each government, which are looking to achieve the same goal, namely the return of immigrants to their country of origin.

And finally in the third chapter, I will relate in detail the implementation of the Voluntary Return Plan and the Welcome Home Plan. I will describe their characteristics, their objectives, requirements, and results obtained, and aim to find similarities and differences that can justify the influence and the scope that these plans have had in achieving the return of Ecuadorian immigrants. And after describing the return plans, I will examine the impact of their implementation on the international relations between Spain and Ecuador, especially in favor of immigrants.

Chapter 1

The Ecuadorian Migratory wave toward Spain: State of the question

Introduction

One of the most important migratory processes in the Ecuadorian history occurred in 2000 as a result of the serious consequences of the financial crisis of 1999. Due to the resulting instability of the country, thousands of Ecuadorians were forced to search for a better future away from their homeland. Most of them went to Spain and with less intensity toward the United States, one of the traditional destinations for Ecuadorians.

The opportunity to move to Spain is related to the capacity of employment in that country during its economic expansion in the first years of the XXI century, and to its openness to the arrival of new immigrants from Latin America. This process presented many features that differentiate it from other previous migratory processes of Ecuadorians including its root causes, the participation of the population at the national level, and the involvement of women as a player in this migratory phase.

In addition, due to the benefits and ease of access to the labor market that Spain offered, the number of Ecuadorian immigrants that reside in the Spanish territory grew quickly, becoming one of the largest immigrant groups in the country. However, the reality changed after 2008, because the conception of the return to Ecuador by the immigrants in Spain appeared more forcefully. This fact is directly related to the emergence in 2000 of the financial crisis in Spain, which motivated thousands of immigrants to decide to return as a solution to the crisis, something that can be confirmed by the statements of Carlos Tutiven, founder of the National Network of Returnee Migrants to Ecuador.

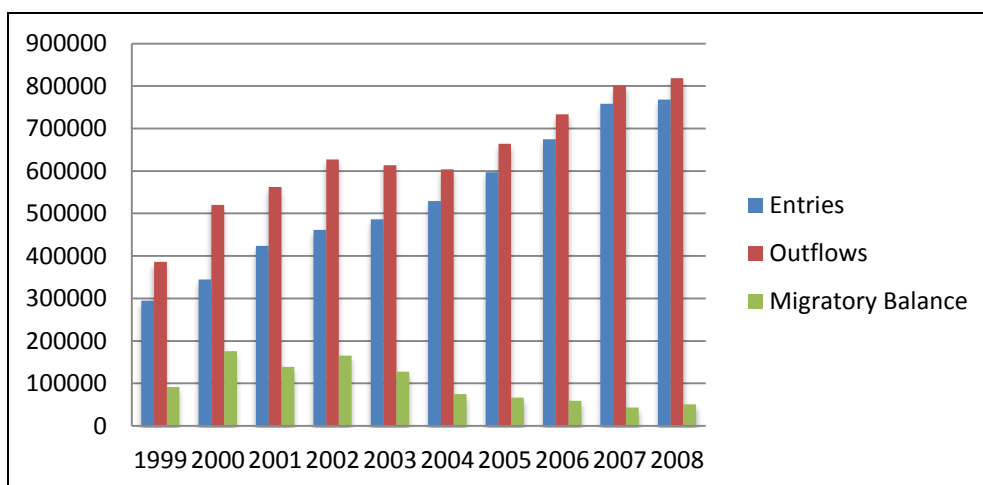
1.1 Features of the Ecuadorian migration toward Spain.

The emergence of the Ecuadorian immigration wave in the year 2000 brought with it several characteristics that make it relevant in Ecuador's history, due to the social, political and economic effects that have been generated in the country since 1999.

As a result of the impoverished situations and vulnerability caused by the political and economic instability in the country, a high number of Ecuadorians had to emigrate alone or with their families to seek better conditions of life abroad, especially in Spain.

As proof, and in spite of the fact that the data on migration are not accurate due to the numerous cases of illegal migration, which leaves no registration, in the following graph the information gathered by the INEC demonstrates that in the year 2000 there is a gap of approximately 175,922 Ecuadorians immigrants, i.e. those that left Ecuador but did not return. This number represents the highest immigration level since 1999 until 2008, where a sharp decrease is apparent, whose reasons are discussed below.

Figure 1
**Entry and Outflow of Ecuadorians, and Ecuadorian migration balance
between 1999-2008**



Source: National Institute of Statistics and Censuses
 Accesible at: <http://www.ecuadorencifras.gob.ec/entrada-y-salidas-interNacionales/>
 Elaboration: Ana Maria Padrón

In addition according to the data of the INEC for the year 2000 of the total of the migration balance, around 111,836 Ecuadorians went and stayed in Spain, compared to the small amount of 20,074 Ecuadorians who traveled to the United States and the rest to other destinations such as Italy, Colombia or France, breaking the tradition of the people to emigrate mostly to the United States as was done before. (INEC, 2000)

The decision of Ecuadorians to move to Spain can be understood because of the ease of the language, the similarity in the culture and most of all by the few restrictions for entry and the openness that Spain had to receive more immigrants. They represented cheap labor, especially in the period of rapid development and growth of the country. That is why it is estimated that during the past fourteen years prior to 2008, Spain offered around eight million jobs; part of them were occupied by immigrants, something that provoked the desire of more migrants to enter into the country. (Barbero, Lahoz 2009)

The main reason that caused the migration of Ecuadorians was the economic and financial crisis that broke out in Ecuador in 1999, originating in the inadequate policies of the Ecuadorian government undertaken by that time, in which the President of the Republic Jamil Mahuad, (1998 - 2000), exercised minimal oversight to financial institutions. These institutions were granted numerous governmental loans without the appropriate controls of liquidity, promoting inflation in the interior of the country, a function of the large amount of money that had been circulating in the economy. (Mino Grijalva, 2008)

Despite the help of the Central Bank of Ecuador, which was responsible for the poor performance of the banks, and after lending money to save the situation, the consequences were dire. Several financial institutions went bankrupt and thousands of Ecuadorians sought to recover their money. That is why, in the same year Jamil Mahuad declared a "Bank Holiday", causing the freeze of the deposits of thousands of people, directly affecting the savings of the Ecuadorians, some of which never came to retrieve their savings. (Mino Grijalva, 2008)

In January 2000, due to the devaluation of the Sucre because of the crisis, Jamil Mahuad decided to implement the dollar as the national currency. However, the money that was frozen in the banks returned to the Ecuadorians converted in dollars but with a lower value to that currency as represented in Sucres. It decreased the purchasing power of many of them who scarcely could access basic services. (Mino Grijalva, 2008)

Besides the consequences of the 1999 crisis, other factors that affected the situation of the country and the quality of life of the people was the decline of the price of oil, and the El Niño phenomenon that occurred in Ecuador between 1997 and 1998,

which caused considerable damage in the infrastructure and agriculture of almost all of the country. As a result of the effects of the oil crisis and the natural disaster, it is estimated that there was an increase of 620,000 people located below the poverty line. They not only belonged to the rural area, but mostly to the middle class in the urban area of the country (Larrea M., 2004).

In addition, around 47% of Ecuadorian households had no access to basic services, and the level of unemployment rose to 15 %. There was high level of economic inequality in the country exacerbated by the corruption of some authorities. This situation caused that Ecuadorians lose their faith in the government and decided to emigrate and search for a job to achieve a better life and to survive the crisis of the time. (Jokisch & Dyke, 2005).

The instability in Ecuador motivated not only the migration of men, as a source of economic livelihood of the Ecuadorian host families, but also of women, who ceased to be the protector of their homes and who became actors in the migratory process. This fact represents another of the most important features of this migratory stage because gender parity appears for the first time in the migratory process in Ecuador. This is because Spain was a country attractive for working women, because there was great deal of work in areas of domestic service or in the care of children and elderly people, a sector which came to be mostly occupied by Latin American women. (Oleas & Philip, 2011)

Consequently, since the female migration started, the migration of children and older people increased. Evidence of this is apparent in the data of the National Directorate of Migration (Dirección Nacional de Migración), which indicates that from 2002 a total of 50,818 underaged children had left Ecuador. This fact can be a result of the processes of family reunification led by immigrants through the facilities of the Spanish government, which rose sharply after 2000 (Camacho Zambrano, 2007).

And finally, due to the large number of Ecuadorians working abroad, the country and the families that remained in Ecuador enjoyed the benefits of an increase in remittances from 2000 onwards. As a result of the high level of remittances, these became a fundamental pillar in the economy of the country and helped to bear the consequences of the financial crisis of 1999, contributing directly to the economy of the Ecuadorian households (Acosta, Lopez Olivares, & Villamar, 2006).

In 2007 the level of remittances was higher than 3 million dollars, and the majority was destined to the consumption of the families, who quickly increased their level of life by accessing to education, health, food, and acquisition of goods. However, only a small amount of this money went to business investment. This motivated the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo) to launch a pilot program between Ecuador and Spain that sought the development of Ecuador through investment and entrepreneurship of remittances (Migratory Profile of Ecuador 2011, 2012)(Cortés Maisonave, 2010).

In spite of the difficult decision to emigrate and the need to resolve complicated situations when searching for a job in the country of destination, the Ecuadorian immigrant community progressively increased in Spain. Eventually, it became one of the biggest immigrant groups until the appearance of the financial crisis in 2008, whose implications provoked a change in the calculation of Ecuadorian immigrants, and in their decisions to return to Ecuador or remain in Spain.

1.2. The evolution and current status of the Ecuadorian immigrant population in Spain.

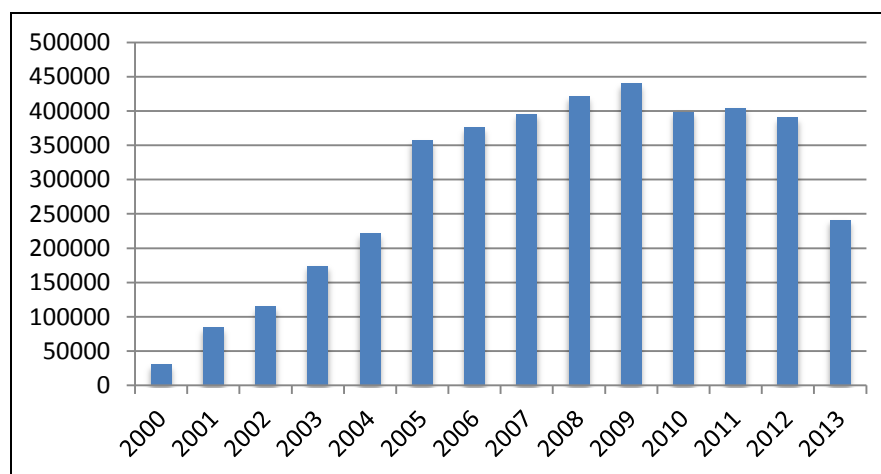
The Ecuadorian immigrant population has become one of the groups with the greatest influence in Spain. It has increased greatly since the year 2000, after having seen some variations due to the facilities or difficulties presented during these years to enter to Spain. Then, as a consequence of the financial crisis in 2008, there has been a decline of the Ecuadorian population living in the country.

In 2000 Spain had a number of advantages in comparison with other countries of destination such as the United States or Italy, which had attracted large numbers of immigrants. For example, the language, the culture, the similarity of some traditions between Ecuador and Spain, and especially the ease of entrance into the country, since 1963 until 2003, because no visa was required for Ecuadorian nationals. The only requirement was that the immigrant had to register in the Town Hall after the entry was enough to access to health rights, regularization and education (Gioconda, Carrillo, & Torres).

This openness of the Spanish government can be easily understood, because immigrants were seen as a source of labor, which would enhance the productivity of the country. Therefore, the Spanish authorities facilitated the access of immigrants to the labor market, especially for those jobs where skilled labor was not needed. For example, in sectors such as construction, agriculture, occupied mostly by men and the services sector by women. This fact caused a rapid labor insertion especially in the cities of Madrid, Barcelona and Murcia (Valiente, 2012).

The following figure displays data of the Spanish Statistical Office (Instituto Nacional de Estadística), and shows the significant growth of the Ecuadorian population in Spain. It can be observed that for the year 2000 there were approximately 30,878 Ecuadorians and for the following year the number reaches a total of 84,699 Ecuadorians who had come to stay legally in the country. This huge increase may be due to the fact that in 2000 the fourth massive immigration reform was undertaken in Spain in order to decrease illegal immigration.

Figure 2
Ecuadorians with valid certificate of registration or residence card in Spain 2000 - 2013



Source: National Institute of Statistics (INE, Spanish acronym)
 Accesible at: www.ine.es/jaxi/table.do?path=/t20/p315/I0/&file=ea10001.px&type=Pcaxis&L=0
 Elaboration: Ana Maria Padrón

In the following years it can be seen that despite the imposition of the Schengen Visa in August 2003 as a requirement to travel to Europe (which had the goal of

balancing the migratory flows toward the European countries), the migratory movements of Ecuadorians to Spain continued in growth. This may be due to the existence of transnational networks between Ecuadorians residing in Spain and their friends and family who remained in Ecuador. These networks represented a link between existing and potential immigrants and among friends and family and it generated interest in emigrating. Also, the signing of the Agreement between Ecuador and Spain in 2001 about the reform and management of migratory flows positively influenced in the decision to emigrate to Spain (Gioconda, Carrillo, & Torres,).

In addition, it is apparent that the large increase of Ecuadorian immigrants who obtained their residency permits from the year 2005 owes itself to the processes of immigration reform carried out by the Spanish government. This reform ended up being criticized because it clearly encouraged the entry to the country of more immigrants interested in the offers of legalization (Kostova Karaboytcheva, 2006) .

Despite the 2008 financial crisis in Spain, the following year there was a total of 440,304 Ecuadorian immigrants, signifying the highest point in this growth. It appears that immigrants were able to face the first consequences of the crisis by having a faster job rotation, which in turn helped them to retain their residence permit by obtaining a labor contract and also because most of them had waited many years to obtain the Spanish nationality, which offers them more benefits.

However, the construction sector was the most affected in the crises and this caused the number of unemployed Ecuadorian immigrants to increase. There were large layoffs of staff as a measure to cut operating costs, based on the labor reform established in the first year of the government of Mariano Rajoy. This reform reduced the payment of severance of employees and allowed the reduction in salary on the part of contractors, making the abuse and exploitation of immigrants more feasible (Gomez V. , 2013).

In this way, we can understand that male Ecuadorians were the most affected, as compared to females, who worked mostly in the service sector, which in the early years was not seriously affected. However, due to the marginal economic situation of the Spanish families, some ceased to hire the service of cleaning personnel, or nurses for the elderly and infirm. It caused that the economic livelihood of immigrants households in Spain to start depending on a single member in many

cases, limiting the standard of living and substantially reducing the level of remittances to Ecuador (Clemente Lopez & Garcia Mainar, 2009).

As a result of this situation of instability in Spain, not only the migratory processes toward this country have stagnated, but also the number of residents has been reduced, something that can be observed again in Figure 2. For Ecuadorians with a valid certificate of registration or residence card in Spain during the period 2000-2013, it can be seen that the number has been reduced by 54.67 %, a little more than half. This fact follows directly from the lack of employment in Spain that caused the majority of immigrants without a contract of employment to lose their opportunity to renew their residence permit. Consequently they lost their right to the Social Security services, forcing them to remain in Spain illegally, to migrate to other countries or finally to return to Ecuador, as the last option to survive this crisis (Napolitano, 2009).

1.3 The decision of Ecuadorian immigrants to return to Ecuador

Since the year 2000 the migratory processes of the Ecuadorian population toward Spain had remained constant. However, we find ourselves in a new phase of the migratory processes, perhaps the final step for many families who were on the outside, the return to Ecuador. The return represents a hard work for the government of Ecuador and for the government of Spain to create policies that facilitate the decision to return of each immigrant.

The return or return migration can be defined, as well as Maria Teresa V. and Luis Miguel Tovar Caves indicate in their article in the magazine migrants Dialogs, as another step, and not necessarily the last one of the migratory process in which the immigrants decide voluntarily to return to their country of origin. This decision can be made either for having achieved their goals, completed studies abroad, acquired properties in Ecuador through the remittances, experienced a failure in their established plans, the need to be close to family or due to changes in the economic situation in the destination country that changed the fate of the immigrants. (Paredes & Tovar Caves, 2009)

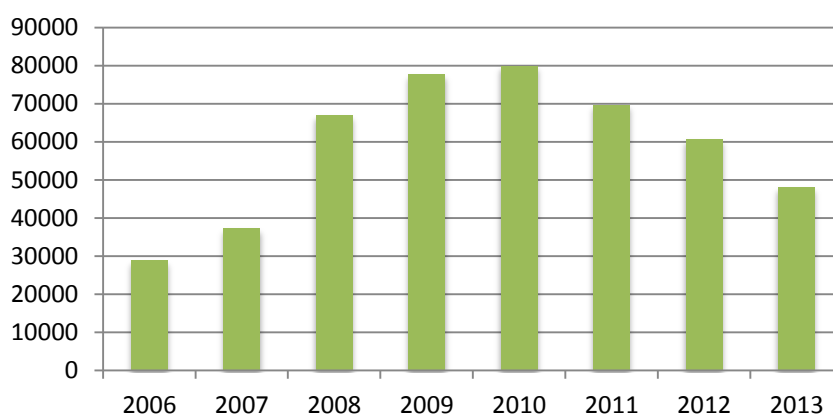
Analyzing the reasons for return, it can be said that it fits in with the current situation of the Ecuadorian immigrants in Spain who want to return to Ecuador. This fact has

remained constant because some immigrants have decided to return not necessarily because of a difficult situation, but as a further step in the migratory process, i.e. immigrants after having achieved their goals decided to finish their stay in Spain. (Paredes & Tovar Caves, 2009)

However, since 2008, the desire to return to Ecuador increased considerably, as described in the thematic report "Ecuadorians in Spain, mortgage crisis and Human Rights" carried out by the Ombudsman of Ecuador and the Andean Survey of International Migration and Remittances (Defensoría del Pueblo del Ecuador y Encuesta Andina de Migraciones), which documents that, one of the main reasons of the return is the emergence of the financial crisis in Spain. This situation had left in a state of vulnerability the Ecuadorian immigrant population, despite the fact that they could adapt well to the initial damage of the crisis. (ENAMIR Ecuador 2013)

However, the mass layoff of staff by Spanish companies especially in the construction sector, left thousands of Ecuadorians unemployed. The following figure, contains the data of the Ministry of Employment and Social Security of Spain (Ministerio de Empleo y Seguridad Social), and shows the total number of unemployed Ecuadorian immigrants.

Figure 3
Ecuadorian immigrant job seekers in Spain 2006-2013



Source: Ministry of Employment and Social Security of Spain
Accessible
at: <http://www.empleo.gob.es/es/estadisticas/contenidos/anuario.htm>
Elabouration: Ana Maria Padrón

As it can be seen, the number of unemployed Ecuadorian immigrants increased significantly from 2008, reaching its highest point in 2010 where 79,871 Ecuadorians

demanding a job. In addition, in 2010 of the total number of job seekers, 23,639 Ecuadorians were collecting a contributory level unemployment benefit, which is accessible to those who have paid Social Security Contributions for a period of at least six months and may be collected for two years. Moreover, a total of 28,443 had access to the unemployment benefit for level of care, which lasts only six months and is geared for those who do not comply with the requirements to collect the contributory benefit or for those who have already exhausted their collection and have family responsibilities. (Ministry of Employment and Social Security)

However, for the year 2012 and 2013 the level of unemployed Ecuadorians decreased, which may be due to the emigration by those who did not find a job in Spain and left the country to search for better opportunities abroad, or returned to Ecuador. After analyzing these data, it shows that the level of unemployment of the Ecuadorian immigrant community is very high and that very few have access to unemployment benefits, since some do not meet the requirements for the collection or have already reached their maximum benefit.

In addition, something that affected even more the situation of the Ecuadorian immigrants was that in 2007 around 27% of them had a mortgage loan, which requires monthly payment. However, the majority of immigrants had lost their jobs and it was impossible to continue making payments and many faced eviction of their mortgaged property, carried out by the banks. (Ombudsman of Ecuador, 2012)

Unfortunately there is no data that demonstrates the total number of Ecuadorians who were evicted from their homes, but it is estimated that it could be between 8,000 and 15,000 persons. These people have not only been on the street after losing their houses, but also have not paid the debt to the bank. Consequently, the banks took their properties as a means of payment according to the new market value, which was extremely devalued and this forced people to be billed inflated rates. (Ombudsman of Ecuador, 2012)

Furthermore, some measures of adjustment were implemented in Spain especially in the immigration policy that led to reforms in the Spanish Aliens Act. These mechanisms are established to manage the migratory flows according to the need of the labour market, creating a more difficult situation for immigrants who were victims of discrimination after being accused of causing the crisis.

There is no doubt that many Ecuadorians want to leave Spain. The National Secretary for Migrants (SENAMI, Spanish acronym) confirmed this in its survey to 400 migrants in Spain in 2012. The results demonstrated that a total of 72.29% of Ecuadorians immigrants have the desire to return to Ecuador, 18.61% prefer to remain in Spain and wait until the effects of the crisis cease and a 6.93% of them would seek the option to emigrate to other countries, but do not think about returning to Ecuador. (Roxana, 2012)

As it can be seen, the idea of returning to Ecuador is the most common decision taken by the immigrants in this situation. The process return presents a number of difficulties for the returnees, because this action force immigrants to leave their goals behind and this can be seen as a failure in their lives. On the other hand, there is also the fear of returning to Ecuador and the uncertainty of stability of the country, especially for those who have emigrated to Spain to escape of the crisis of the 99, making this decision even more difficult to take.

The government of Ecuador and the government of Spain have included this new social phenomenon in their political agendas to motivate immigrants to return to their country of origin and ensure their social and labour insertion after their arrival. Both governments have implemented return programs. On one side, the Ecuadorian government launched the Welcome Home Plan by the National Secretary for Migrants, which considers the migrant as a player and carrier of the development in the country. On the other side the Spanish government launched the Voluntary Return Plan by the General Secretary of Immigration and Emigration of the Ministry of Employment and Social Security, guided by the European Union, to motivate the return of immigrants from several countries, among them from Ecuador.

1.4 The experience of the National Network of Returnee Migrants to Ecuador

The migrant's decision to return to Ecuador after being abroad for several years is not easy. As a result, in Ecuador there are many organizations and groups of Ecuadorian returnee migrants available to provide support and guidance to those who request it. This is the case of the *National Network of Returnee Migrants to Ecuador (Red Nacional de Migrantes Retornados al Ecuador)*, whose president and founder, Carlos Tutiven, has shared his experience as an immigrant in Spain and as

a returnee in Ecuador, and he also explained the ongoing work in the country through this organization.

The National Network of Returnee Migrants to Ecuador was established in August of 2013 in Guayaquil. It was an initiative of a group of returnee migrants who resolved to work in favor of immigrants who wanted to return from abroad, or of those who already had returned. Its main goal is to serve the migrants both in Ecuador and abroad, providing support, advice and working to strengthen their productive initiatives in Ecuador, and to soften the impacts of the return process.

Carlos Tutiven, the cited president of the organization, emigrated to Spain in 2000 because of the unemployment in Ecuador caused by the crisis of the late 1990s, as did thousands of Ecuadorians. He encountered several difficulties when he arrived in Spain but held a stable job from 2002 until 2009, when the economic crisis in Spain appeared.

Mr. Tutiven has said that the onset of the crisis in 2008 was unexpected in the homes of both Spaniards and immigrants. His experience reveals that after having had a permanent job with an income of EUR 2,000 per month, after the crisis he could only obtain employment contracts for very short periods of time, reducing his monthly income to EUR 700. This situation forced him to sell his car and share an apartment with other immigrants as a means to adapt to this new reality, but eventually he was obligated to leave Spain and return to Ecuador in 2013.

The situation Mr. Tutiven left behind remains the current situation for thousands of immigrants in Spain, many of whom encounter even in tougher conditions when they have been reunited with their family and have invested all their money in properties or businesses in Spain. This situation results from many immigrants having the goal of staying in Spain indefinitely. But because of the crisis many immigrants have lost all their savings and have had to come back to Ecuador with "empty hands".

In addition to the economic hardship they leave behind, the decision to return is very difficult because the majority of returning Ecuadorians have spent their productive years working in Spain, and they return when they have reached 40, 50 or 60 years of age. Thus, upon return, they lack the same strength or opportunities to work as they did in Spain. For this reason *The National Network of Returnee Migrants to Ecuador* seeks to encourage, guide and support those who return to search for a

better future in their homeland.

With regards to the work done by the Ecuadorian government in favor of the migrants, Mr. Tutiven remarked that in 2000 Ecuador was not prepared to deal with the migration of large numbers of Ecuadorians. But, it is clear that a change has been made in the immigration policy more recently, which now offers more protection and help for those who are abroad. Mr. Tutiven also said that despite the human and compassionate ideas and intentions of President Correa, in practice these intentions are not fulfilled because there is much inefficiency among middle managers.

He observes that this inefficiency can be seen especially in the performance of the *Welcome Home Plan*, because this is not accessible to all migrants who want to return. Due to many bureaucratic requirements, migrants may be unable to apply for and access the plan's resources. In addition, there is a lack of follow-up about the number and situation of Ecuadorians that return under this plan. This means that migrants are successfully motivated to return home, but when they arrive in the country the government's help is lacking, leaving migrants feeling abandoned.

Similarly, Mr. Tutiven said that he respects the immigration policy of Spain but that the *Voluntary Return Plan* did not generate much confidence by the Ecuadorian immigrants. This is because immigrants felt that this plan is a way to get rid of them due to the economic crisis, attracting participants by offering financial aid and the chance to collect in advance their unemployment benefit. But in practice Mr. Tutiven believes that this plan does not satisfy the needs of the immigrants.

Currently *The National Network of Returnee Migrants to Ecuador* has been interested in participating in Ecuadorian politics, and now tries to educate authorities of the country regarding the concerns and needs of migrants, with the hope of finding better solutions. The *Network* has also contributed with suggestions for the new *Law of Human Mobility of Ecuador (Ley de Movilidad Humana del Ecuador)*, which may take effect in 2015, and that will have several paragraphs that will enhance the situation of migrants. (Tutiven, 2014)

Chapter Summary and Conclusion

The massive migration to Spain beginning in 2000 signifies a very important social phenomenon in the Ecuadorian history, reflecting not only the situation of instability of the country after the crisis of 1999, but also the poverty generated by the crisis in the homes of thousands of Ecuadorians. This matter caused not only men to migrate as actors of the economic livelihood of their households but also women, who subsequently generated the emigration of children and elderly due to the ease of family reunification in Spain.

In addition, the decision to emigrate was a function not only of the poor economic situation in Ecuador but also of the openness that gave Spain to immigrants. The benefits offered by Spain, compared to other possible destinations, were much better, and due to its great demand for employment, immigrants readily found work in the labour market, and they were granted several citizen rights in the country. As a result of this combination of attractants, Ecuadorians became one of the largest immigrant groups in the Spanish territory in just a few years, despite the implementation of the Schengen visa in 2003.

However, since the economic crisis appeared in Spain in 2008, the fate of the Ecuadorian immigrants changed dramatically, because unemployment grew considerably, especially in 2010, affecting the family economy. Moreover, the situation was even worse for those who had debts with Spanish banks: After agreeing to mortgage their purchase of a house, diminished income was inadequate for payments, and many were subject to forced evictions, living on the street with no income for their households.

That is why the idea of returning to Ecuador has been attractive to many immigrants in Spain, despite the fact that this has been a very hard decision to make, because it has meant the end of their migratory process and dream of a better life, and has generated insecurity and uncertainty. As Mr. Tutiven mentioned, the return inevitably involves fear, but that the majority have believed it is the best option after having lost their savings, their homes and the legal residence in the country. This is why the existence of this kind of organizations is important in supporting the migrants before, during and after their return, and to give them fresh opportunities in Ecuador.

Chapter 2.

The structure of political opportunities that have allowed the emergence of Ecuador and Spain's return programs

Introduction

One of the new migration trends that has emerged in the last decade is the return of immigrants to their countries of origin. There were many reasons involved but the most important is the global crisis that appeared in 2008 in several countries. The countries of origin and the countries of destination started including the return of migrants in their political agendas because they needed to implement projects that facilitate their return.

Since 2008 Spain's government has decided to make several changes in the migratory policy in response to the financial crisis with regards to unemployment and poverty. These changes include the tightening of its immigration policy, which has had to adapt to the provisions of the European Union, its limited domestic labour market, and the establishment of measures to encourage the return of immigrants to their countries of origin. To achieve this objective the Spanish government launched the "Voluntary Return Plan" to provide immigrants an alternative to staying in Spain.

Similarly Ecuador, had a great evolution, guided by the ideology of President Rafael Correa's "Citizens' Revolution" initiated in 2007, integrating and safeguarding the rights of migrants and their families. In addition, the Ecuadorian government has considered migrants as one of the most important players in the country due to their return they could contribute to Ecuador's development. For this reason, the Ecuadorian government founded the National Secretary for Migrants, whose Welcome Home Plan encourages the voluntary, dignified and sustainable return of those who are working abroad.

Both Spain and Ecuador have individually implemented return plans seeking the same goal. However, in the background they contain very different motivations and intentions linked to the needs and interests of each country.

2.1 The new Spanish immigration policy and the implementation of the Voluntary Return Plan

Spain has received big waves of migration for many years, and faces the challenges that migration presents in its territory. Since 2000 the entry of immigrants became more apparent, particularly those from Ecuador. In addition, Spain has faced political, demographic and social changes associated with this phenomenon. For example, it has been difficult to offer immigrants the best fair living conditions, especially following the financial crisis of 2008, which has changed the economic opportunities in the country.

However, Spain has not acted individually because the evolution of its immigration policy has been linked to the European Union's principles and regulations about these issues. Since Spain's accession to the European Union in 1986, these principles and regulations have served to create "Organic Law No. 4/2000 about rights and freedoms of foreigners in Spain and its social integration". The European Union has also encouraged members countries to implement the Voluntary Return Plan. (Moya & Aguelo Navarro, 2011)

As it can be briefly seen, the next table shows the evolution of the Spanish immigration policy. It has had several changes beginning in 1985 with the drafting of the first Immigration Law as a prerequisite for the accession to the European Union. Some years later it was followed by several reforms. The policy changed from having very open mechanisms concerning the entry of immigrants, offering them several social and political benefits as it is in the text of the Organic Law No. 4/2000, to having very restrictive provisions as those found in the later Organic Law 2/2009 and in its most recent reform in 2011. (Moya and Aguelo Navarro)

Table. 1
Evolution of the Spanish immigration policy 1985-2011

Year	Instrument
1985	First Immigration Law
1986	Spain's accession to the European Union
2000	Organic Law No. 4/2000
2000	Organic Law 8/2000
2001- 2004	Global regulation and coordination of Emigration and Immigration (GRECO)

2003	Implementation of the Schengen Visa
2003	Organic Law 1/2003
2003	Organic Law 14/2003
2009	Organic Law 2/2009
2011	Last modification to the Organic Law No. 4/2000 by Decree 557/2011

Source: The Spanish policy of immigration in the last two decades by Ana Maria Lopez Room

Accessible at:

<http://digital.csic.es/bitstream/10261/11920/1/Art%C3%ADculo%20Pedro%20Garc%C3%ADa%20Cabrera.pdf>

Elabouration: Ana Maria Padrón

This changing trend relates to the mass arrival of immigrants beginning in 2000. Most came looking for a job and represented a source of cheap labour for Spain. Their arrival benefited Spain because immigrants worked mostly in construction, agriculture or as domestic labourers. (International Organization for Migration, 2011)

Beginning 2001 Spain signed agreements with Ecuador, Colombia and the Dominican Republic to manage migratory flows. The objective of these agreements was to improve the management of the migratory flows into Spain. These bilateral policies included the selection of immigrant workers in their country of origin and the respect of their rights (Agreement between the Kingdom of Spain and the Republic of Ecuador about the regularization and management of migratory flows, 2001)

In addition, Spain developed cooperative programs to generate development in immigrants' countries of origin under the auspices of "codevelopment". These programs facilitate the contribution of immigrants' knowledge and experience gained abroad to promote development in the countries of origin. The programs also assisted immigrants to manage their remittances flows. The main objective of these programs is to improve the situations in the country of origin in the areas of health, education, infrastructure and economics, and encourage immigrants to stay in their country of origin. The hope is that this policy will in turn decrease the migratory flows to Spain and other members of the European Union. (International Organization for Migration, 2011)

Encouraging development was also the purpose of the GRECO plan, launched in Spain from 2001 until 2004. It represents Spain's first intention to carry out a study

of the migratory phenomenon in the country and make a plan to best handle this situation. The GRECO plan facilitated the signing of bilateral agreements between Spain and the immigrant's countries of origin to offer support for the generation of "codevelopment", to ensure the integration of immigrants, and to protect the right of family reunification. This plan was also created to discourage illegal immigration.(BOE-A-2001-8154)

Nevertheless, these Spanish policies improved the situation of some sectors in immigrant's countries of origin, but it did not stop the migratory processes toward Spain. For this reason, the government was forced to establish more immigration controls and restrictions. For example, the government established a new visa requirement, the Schengen Visa with the reforms No. 11/2003 and 14/2003. (International Organization for Migration, 2011)

Despite the strengthening of the immigration policy, immigrants continued to arrive and stay and work in Spain. In 2009 a year after the beginning of one of the toughest financial crises in Spain, the authorities were forced to create a much more restrictive immigration policy with the publication of the Organic Law 2/2009.

The law was modified due to the fact that some of its articles needed some changes because they were declared unconstitutional by the Constitutional Court. Additionally, the European Union's Return Directive 2008/115/EC had to be incorporated. Lastly, the law had to adapt the law had to the new immigration reality present in Spain. (Organic Law 2/2009, 2009)

This new immigration reality referred to the Organic Law 2/2009, addresses unemployment and the poor conditions of thousands of immigrants following the financial crisis of 2008. Consequently, the Spanish authorities sought to deal with this situation by the return of immigrants to their country of origin. For these reasons the incorporation of the Return Directive 115/EC of the European Union in the Spanish legal system was key. (Strategic Plan of Citizenship and Integration 2011-2014)

The implementation of mechanisms to encourage the return of immigrants is not new in Spain. Since 2003 Spain has implemented the Voluntary Return Program of immigrants (FORESEE, Spanish acronym). This program was launched with the

collaboration of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and was directed to immigrants in poor situations or those who wished to return to their country of origin.

However, in 2008 due to the emergence of the financial crisis and to the publication of the Return Directive 2008/115/E of the European Union, the initiative of the government to encourage the return of immigrants to their countries gained momentum. Moreover, Spain created two more return programs: the Aid Program complementing the cumulative and advance payment of the unemployment insurance benefit to non- EU foreign workers who voluntarily return to their countries of origin (APRE, Spanish acronym) and the Productive Voluntary Return. (Royo, 2011)

2.1.2 The financial crisis of 2008 and the Return Directive 115/CE/2008 as incentives for the implementation of the Voluntary Return Plan

The arrival of immigrants in Spanish territory has accelerated Spain's development. However, due to the effects of the global crisis of 2007 and to several internal imbalances such as, the excessive investment in the construction industry, Spain's development slowed. The beginning of a financial crisis in 2008, further affected development and influenced both Spaniards and immigrants.

Spain's financial crisis of 2008 was partially a consequence of the global crisis, unleashed first in the United States in 2007 in the real estate market, and also due to the failure of Spanish banks. Additionally, some years before, adjustments and changes were made internally in the country, which destabilized the financial and economic system. For example, the large investment in the construction industry generated thousands of jobs for immigrants, but also contributed to the large housing bubble. Due to the high demand of unskilled labour beginning in 2000, the Spanish immigration policy did not discourage illegal immigration. On the contrary, there were staff contracts from the countries and immigrants were offered legal status. (Rocha, 2012) (Boldrin, 2009)

Nevertheless, some years later this excessive investment in the construction sector contributed to an oversupply of homes and had unexpected repercussions. For instance, due to the speculation in the sector, the prices of homes and departments

increased, which restricted potential buyers. At the same time, banks responded by loosening the rules to obtain a mortgage, providing low interest rates, and offering documents which misled potential buyers.(Rocha, 2012)

Subsequently, many individuals could not pay their mortgage. At the same time the global crisis forced some companies to lay off staff, triggering unemployment. As evidence of this, according to data from the Spanish Statistical Office in 2013 the unemployment level of Spaniards reached a rate of 26% and of the foreign population a rate of 36.82%, the highest in the European Union. The massive number of unpaid mortgages caused many banks to fail (Ortega & Peñaloza, 2012) (INE, 2013).

In addition to the high level of unemployment, banks started evicting people who stopped paying their mortgage. For those who could pay their mortgage, the value of their homes fell, but they often owe a value greater than the market value of their property. A great amount of the population in Spain lives in poverty and is indebted for years to come. (Arino Ortiz, 2008)

As it can be seen, after a brief discussion of the crisis in Spain, it can be understood that now more than ever, the Spanish government is searching for a more effective mechanism to control the arrival of immigrants in Spanish territory. As a result of the damage to the labour market, Spanish nationals have few employment opportunities and many seek to emigrate.

On the other hand, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) mentioned that the level of discrimination and xenophobia against immigrants in Spain has grown. Immigrants are often defined as an "undesirable surplus" in the country and are criticized for being the cause of the crisis. Nevertheless, they do not recognize that immigrants are the most affected, because after losing their jobs, they also lost their residence permit. They effectively became illegal immigrants in the country and according to the requirements of the European Union, they have to be settled or expelled from Spain. (International Organization for Migration, 2012)

However, the government of Spain has not made all of these decisions on its own as Spain is only one country in the Council of the European Union and there must be a consensus. After analyzing the situation in the region the Council will try to deal with the consequences and come up with the manner of implementation of a

common migration policy for all members of the region. In the same manner, the Council of the European Union encourages the members of the region to sign a commitment to sort the migratory flows according to the needs of its labour market. The Council has initiated the implementation of the General Program of Solidarity and Management of Migratory Flows 2008-2013 and the agreements created in the European Pact on Immigration and Asylum in 2008. (Practical Guide of the European Union, 2008)

Additionally, the Return Directive 115/EC in 2008, was established to encourage all members of the region to create their own return plan for immigrants, through the establishment of rules and procedures to be followed. In addition, to prevent illegal immigration, this directive establishes the standards for the temporary retention of irregular immigrants in the detention centers and the decision of the prohibition to all those migrants who already decided to return to their country of origin to reenter the European territory for a period of time. (Practical Guide to the European Union, 2008)

For this reason, this directive has been described as the "Directive of shame" because it considers immigrants as criminals just because they lost the right to reside in the European Union. Due to the existing unemployment rate in Spain, many immigrants have lost their resident permit and are now susceptible to be arrested or to be deported. (El País newspaper, 2008)

After analyzing the Spanish crisis and the considerations of the European Union, it can be said, that these are the two main reasons found that have led to the strengthening of the scheme for the return of immigrants from Spain to their country of origin. However, Spain established another characteristic unlike the European Union, because its government has put more emphasis on offering the Plan of Voluntary Return for those people that are in a regular situation in the country, giving them an alternative to return instead of staying in Spain.

In addition, some European countries, such as Spain, have been taking advantage of the economic support of the European Fund for Return, which has increased the annual allocation for each member country to a value of EUR 300 000. The purpose of this fund is to "support the efforts of the members to improve the management of the return in all its dimensions through an integrated management of return, with a preference to voluntary return and in order to support a fair and effective

implementation of common standards of return" during the period 2008 – 2013. (Decision No 575/2007/EC)

With this goal in 2008, through the Ministry of Employment and Social Security, by the General Secretariat of Immigration and Emigration, the Voluntary Return Plan APRE has been created. The objective of this plan is to help those immigrants who have lost their jobs but that still have their residence permit and can be able to obtain the total amount of unemployment benefit in advance, only if they do not return to Spain during a period of three years. Later in 2010, the Productive Voluntary Return Program was created, directed to those immigrants who desire to launch a business in their countries of origin by obtaining aid and advice by the Spanish government. (Royo, 2011)

The Spanish government launched a set of return programs to achieve its goal: the Return of Social Care program, the APRE Return program and the Productive Voluntary Return Program. In the same manner the government of Ecuador besides implementing a new immigration policy, it has implemented some mechanisms to assist Ecuadorian migrants to return by offering many options according to their needs.

2.2 The Ecuadorian Government, the Citizens' Revolution of Rafael Correa and the "Return to the Motherland"

Ecuador is one of the Latin American countries with the largest migratory history. It had to face several challenges such as, the disintegration of the Ecuadorian family, the social and labor market integration of migrants in their country of destination, the respect for human rights, the brain drain and finally the migrants' decision to return. This last one represents the responsibility of Ecuador to provide returning migrants social opportunities, employment, and political integration.

However, the migration policy of the country has not been the most adequate, due to the lack of human and financial resources, proper institutions and, of course, the authorities' commitment to implement efficient and effective measures in favor of the rights and benefits of Ecuadorian migrants abroad. For this reason, it is necessary to briefly analyze the evolution of the Ecuadorian migration policy in order to find key points to understand its changing course and the reasons for the creation of the Welcome Home Plan, as it was done with the Spanish government's policy.

Unlike Spain, the Ecuadorian government has only recently created legislative instruments to individually control immigration and emigration issues, something that can be seen in the following table below. As it can be observed, the first effort to control the issue of immigration was limited to handling the entry of immigrants into the country, because at that time the only legislator instrument was the Migration Law and the Aliens Law of 1971. This instrument like those of other countries in the Andean region, addressed issues of border control, but did not consider emigration to be an aspect that should be managed. For this reason, in 2004 a reform was carried out to update the Law according to the new national reality. (Aliens Law No. 1897 of Ecuador 1971)

Table. 2
Evolution of the Ecuadorian migration policy 1971 - 2011

Year	Instrument
Policies for foreigners in Ecuador	
1971	Migration Law - Aliens Law
1999	Constitution: article. 10 and 11: creates the figure of dual nationality
2000	Reform Law to the Criminal Code, N-FIFTH 2000-20: Typifies the crime of illegal migrants traffic
2004	Codification of the Aliens Law 2004 Executive Decree N-FIFTH 1 981 The State declares the fight of the crimes of traffic of persons, illegal traffic, sexual exploitation and forced labour and other modes of exploitation and prostitution of women, children and adolescents
2006	National Plan to Combat the traffic of Persons, adopted and put into effect by the Presidency of the Republic
2008	National Development Plan for Migration 2007-2010
Policies for Ecuadorians abroad	
1998	Constitution Art. 27: Grants the right to vote to the Ecuadorians outside
2000	General Directorate of support to the Ecuadorians outside and the Assistant Secretary for Immigration Issues.
2000	Reform Law to the Criminal Code, N-FIFTH 2000-20: Typifies the crime of illegal migrants traffic.
2001	Agreement between Ecuador and Spain concerning the regulation and management of migratory flows

2002	Organic Law for the exercise of the right of Ecuadorians living abroad, to elect a President and Vice President of the Republic of Ecuador, N. or 2002-81
2004	Codification of the Aliens Law 2004 Executive Decree N-FIFTH 1 981 The State declares the fight of the crimes of traffic of persons, illegal traffic, sexual exploitation and forced labour and other modes of exploitation and prostitution of women, children and adolescents
2006	National Plan to Combat the traffic of Persons, adopted and put into effect by the Presidency of the Republic
2007	Creation of the SENAMI and the National Development Plan for Migration 2007-2010
2008	Constitution, several articles that protect emigrants.
2008	Plan for a decent, voluntary and sustainable return, "Welcome Home Plan", SENAMI
2013	Transformation of the SENAMI into the Vice-ministry of Human Mobility

Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Ministry of Government, Police and cults; SENAMI; National Assembly, Official Registration.
 Accessible at:
<http://repositorio.flacsoandes.edu.ec/bitstream/10469/162/1/BFLACSO-AM3.pdf>
 Elaboration: FLACSO

Despite the fact that Ecuador has not developed a unique legislator instrument to manage the outflow of Ecuadorians, especially in 2000, there were some advances in relation to migrants. For example, the government recognized their right of vote in the Constitution of 1998 and created the General Directorate of Support for Ecuadorians abroad, and the National Plan of Ecuadorian migrants abroad in 2001 to offer migrants and their families guidelines and support during their migratory process. However, many of the proposed plans did not materialize. (Migratory Profile of Ecuador 2011)

Other advances in the Ecuador's migration policy were mostly related to the control of illegal immigration and human trafficking. It does not cease to be important due to the existence of many Ecuadorians who risk their lives to immigrate to the United States by hiring coyotes. Few measures were taken in favor of the Ecuadorian migrants until the year 2006, where the Ecuadorian immigration policy seemed to take a positive turn. (Migratory Profile of Ecuador 2011)

In 2006, the presidential elections in Ecuador were held, and Rafael Correa became

the President of Ecuador. President Rafael Correa, as part of his speech, declared that the outflow of thousands of Ecuadorians was the responsibility of the political mishandling of the previous administrations. He also promised to create the guidelines necessary to build a comprehensive, solid and consistent migration policy in order to protect the rights of migrants and immigrants. (Migratory Profile of Ecuador 2011)

Consequently, the Ecuadorian migration policy was overhauled and took a new stance towards migrants. It now also considers them as protagonists and players of the "Citizens' Revolution". Thanks to their political participation both in the presidential elections in 2006 and through the work of their representatives in the National Assembly for the creation of the Constitution of 2008, they are part of the change of the country, something never seen before in the history of Ecuador. For this reason, one of the purposes of the Correa Administration's plan is to make political, legislative and institutional changes in order to establish an migration policy based on respect for the fundamental rights of the migrants, especially the right to emigrate, to stay in the country of destination and to return to Ecuador with dignity. (National Development Plan for Migration 2007-2010)

In evidence of this, President Correa declared that "The house is getting ready for the returnees", which means that the new government is committed to making changes in the country to offer a better life to people who live in the territory and to those living abroad. In addition, one of the biggest goals for the authorities is to encourage the return of migrants and to facilitate their social and labor reintegration through government aid. (National Development Plan for Migration 2007-2010)

Moreover, one of the biggest progressions of the government, which has marked a significant step forward in the evolution of the migration policy of the country, was the incorporation of migration issues into the constitutional text in 2008. The Constitution of 2008 covers the protection of the rights of the Ecuadorians who are abroad in more detail under Article 392, which establishes that:

"The State shall protect the rights of persons in human mobility and exercise the rectority of the migration policy through the competent body in coordination with the various levels of the government. The State will design, adopt, implement and evaluate policies, plans, programs and projects, and coordinate the activities of their

agencies with those of other States and civil society organizations working in human mobility at both the national and international levels." (Constitution of Ecuador, 2008)

Additionally, the State aims to ensure the labour rights of migrant workers abroad (Art. 329). It prevents the possibility that they could be victims of labor exploitation or discrimination in their countries of destination. It allows migrants to belong to the Ecuadorian Institute of Social Security while they are abroad (Art. 374). It recognizes the right that each person has to emigrate and to not be discriminated against. It also commits to offering assistance to migrants and their families, strengthening their ties with Ecuador, supporting the family reunification and to making the voluntary return possible (Art.40). (Constitution of Ecuador, 2008)

Furthermore, one of the most relevant points in Ecuador's Constitution of 2008 is the promulgation of the universal citizenship at the global level (Art.416). This states that each person has the right to move freely without restrictions of entry to any country,. Consequently, with this idea as a basis the Ecuadorian government has tried to position the migration policy of the country at the global level and continues to try to persuade other countries that the idea of universal citizenship should be supported. (Constitution of Ecuador of 2008)

Because of this, Ecuador has tried to maintain satisfactory bilateral relations with the countries of destination of Ecuadorians, particularly with Spain. The objective of the Ecuadorian government is to establish respect for the fundamental rights of migrants and to search for mechanisms together to provide opportunities to Ecuadorians who are abroad. (Lorena Escudero Duran)

The government of Ecuador has created the National Secretary for Migrants (SENAMI, Spanish acronym) in response to a need to create an institution responsible for the country's migration issues. This institution was responsible for running the migration policy outside and inside Ecuador. The National Secretary for Migrants created the National Human Development Plan for Migration 2007-2010 to lay the groundwork and to establish the basis for the creation of the return plan Welcome Home.

2.2.1 The National Secretary for Migrants and the Plan of Human Development for Migration as the main tools for the creation of the Welcome Home Plan.

One of the institutional developments of Ecuador was the creation in 2007, under the Executive Decree No. 150 of the National Secretary for Migrants. This institution represented the main responsible body to implement and promote the immigration policy in favor of migrants in coordination with all public actors. (Executive Decree No. 150, 2007) In spite of the fact that in 2013 the SENAMI was transformed into the Vice-ministry of Human Mobility, in order to address the migratory issues in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility, in this investigation I will continue citing the same as SENAMI, because this institution created the Welcome Home Plan.

The main objective of the SENAMI has been "the definition and implementation of migration policies, aimed at the human development of all its actors, which will serve as a link in the actions of care, protection and development of the migrant, according to the objectives of the Ecuadorian State" (Executive Decree No. 150, 2007) In order to achieve the proposed goals and to make a plan about projects that this institution wants to execute, the SENAMI created the Plan of Human Development for Migration 2007-2010. To create this plan the SENAMI worked together with the Presidency of the Republic, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the National Secretariat of Planning and Development and the contribution of migrant associations. (Lorena Escudero Duran)

This plan covers the new migration policy of Ecuador and explains why a change in the immigration policy at the global level is needed. This change relates to the opinions of some Ecuadorian authorities, who mentioned that the first world countries have attracted migrants to their labour markets, but have not made any changes in favor of their rights. On the contrary, they have made their migration policies even more strict considering migrants as labour and not as people. (Lorena Escudero Duran)

This plan contains many objectives, such as the following:

1. Develop an immigration policy based on respect of human, economic, social and cultural rights for all persons in Ecuador and in the world.
2. Generate and consolidate ties of migrants with their families and their country.
3. Encourage Ecuadorians to stay in the country and make the voluntary,

dignified and sustainable return of migrants possible.

4. Foster processes of human development for migrants, their families and their environment.
5. Promote inter-cultural processes and construction of universal citizenship. (PNDHM)

The vision of the new Ecuadorian migration policy is based on the protection of the rights of migrants, those who enter the country, and Ecuadorians who emigrate abroad. The SENAMI has launched several programs in order to help migrants to develop and encourage them to return and stay in Ecuador.

Among these there are: the program "We are all Migrants", created to recognize the migrant as a player for the development in Ecuador and in their destination countries; the program "We are all responsible for it," designed to prevent risky migration; the project "Network of homes and offices at the global level" to serve the migrants through the establishment of homes and offices of the SENAMI in places where the most Ecuadorian migrants settle. (National Secretary for Migrants)

One of the most important programs of the SENAMI and one of the objectives of this research is the Welcome Home Plan. It promotes the voluntary, dignified and sustainable return of migrants to Ecuador and facilitates their insertion into society and the labour market. It offers migrants different options depending on their situation, interests and needs. (National Secretary for Migrants)

Consequently, through the establishment of the "Ecuadorian Houses" or "Houses of the Migrant" a physical space of interaction with the migrant people to learn about their needs and desires was created. This is the fundamental base for the creation of both the National Development Plan for Migration as well as for the Welcome Home Plan. It helps the authorities to learn about their needs and desires. This was the fundamental base for both the creation of the National Development Plan for Migration as well as for the Welcome Home Plan. In addition, the use of physical space has attempted to socialize the plan with migrants and their families. (National Secretary for Migrants)

According to Maria Isabel Moncayo's research about "Global Crisis and migratory strategies", the creation of the Welcome Home Plan was created due to internal and external reasons. Internal reasons relate to the new idea of development of the political movement PAIS Alliance and the initiative to return to the homeland. For

this political movement migrants are part of the development of the country because their skills and knowledge that were gained abroad can be applied in Ecuador, especially in areas of science and technology, education, health and culture

External reasons refer to the circumstances that have caused the return of migrants to their countries of origin. For example, the financial crisis in several countries such as The United States, Spain or Italy or the establishment of the Voluntary Return Plan approved by the European Union. Both caused the immigration policy to become tougher against immigrants. (Moncayo, 2011)

The implementation of the Welcome Home Plan by the Ecuadorian government has been an option for thousands of immigrants who have been in Spain and who have to face the financial crisis. Due to their poor economic situation and considering that some have not been able to renew their residence documents, many have lost the hope to progress in Spain.

2.3 Future Prospects for the same Topic; the return of immigrants to their country of origin.

Until now the analysis of the immigration issue has led to proposals having been made between the political agendas of both Spain and Ecuador. This is especially the case when the immigrant decides to return to their country of origin. The process requires proper management by the respective governments and consistent policies to safely return the migrants.

In spite of the fact, that these two countries are seeking to obtain the same result through the implementation of their return plans, each country has a different point of view about the situation and understandably each have different backgrounds, a factor that could influence the level of effectiveness for each plan.

One of the key differences is that the government of Spain is bound by the guidelines of the European Union and has adapted its immigration policy accordingly. The Spanish policy has been focused on the needs of labour market and just considers immigrants as "labour". This is perfectly understandable when you consider the times of growth and economic boom within the E.U. and they were very open to receive immigrants and ease the shortages within their labour market.

A decisive factor has been the recent economic crisis from which Spain hasn't recovered and still has high levels of unemployment. Since the crisis the Spanish government has restricted its immigrant intake and implemented a Voluntary Return Plan to encourage unemployed immigrants to return to their country of origin.

Within the plan are conditions that residency entitlements are renounced and immigrants are not allowed to return for a three year period. These conditions have been criticized because they conflict and generate doubts about the true intentions of the plans of the Spanish Government. (Paredes & Tovar, 2009)

It is for this reason that the Spanish plan is displayed as an opportunity for immigrants and surplus workers to return to their countries of origin to meet, reunite and start a new life with their families. In spite of this fact several immigrants, immigration specialists and researchers consider that it does not cease the invitation to leave Spanish territory. Carlos Tutiven, director of the National Network of Returnees to Ecuador in a recent interview with the author also supported this idea.

On the other hand, the Welcome Home Plan expresses a different and attractive message to the Ecuadorian population abroad. It represents a call from their homeland and welcomes the migrant who decides to return. There have been several visits by the President of Ecuador and of representatives of the SENAMI in Spain, who have reported on the new migration policy of Ecuador and have given prominence to migrants in the reforms introduced by President Rafael Correa 2006. (National Secretary for Migrants)

The Spanish Voluntary Return Plan was created under the model of the Return Directive 115/EC 2008 of the European Union, which of course has its origins in Brussels and is decided by a diverse number of countries and nationalities. The Plan is considered both strict and restrictive. In addition, the ideas or request of immigrants have not been taken into account, i.e. any proposals, interests, desires or needs by those who might qualify under the plan. Because of this, the plan seems to be only an internal decision of the Spanish government, which has seen the return of migrants as a solution to the crisis. (Ombudsman of Ecuador, 2012)

On the other hand, the Welcome Home Plan is the result of a more elaborated process, which over time considered the recommendations and desires of the Ecuadorian migrant population. This was possible thanks to the many staff of the

Immigration Department, who represented the Ecuadorians abroad and helped to secure their rights during the drafting of the Constitution of 2008. (Mosquera & Moncayo, 2012)

Chapter Summary and Conclusion

The history of the migration processes in both Spain as a country of destination and in Ecuador as a country of origin, have presented a great challenge to those who set policies. Their migration policies have changed dramatically in the recent years, due to the fact that they have had to be adapted to the new political, social and economic challenges that resulted from changing economic circumstances.

In the case of Spain in 2000, the year in which the great Ecuadorian migration wave first appeared, the immigration policy was very relax and offered many benefits because immigrants were generators of labour and helped the country to grow. Consequently, thanks to the activities of immigrants several sectors boomed more than would have been possible otherwise, such as the services and construction. However, the fast increase of immigration into the country caused the authorities to establish mechanisms of control, such as the Schengen Visa in 2003 or programs of co-development in the countries of origin to better manage the migratory flows.

Nevertheless, with the emergence of the financial crisis in 2008 and the bursting of the real estate economic bubble, the situation in the country changed drastically. The high investment in the construction sector led to a drastic oversupply of housing. This this was largely finance by debt and when it all went wrong one consequence was a large increase in unemployment, Spain had become an uninviting place to emigrate to.

Due to the unstable situation in Spain and to the implementation of the Return Directive 115/CE/2008 of the European Union, the Plan of Voluntary Return was launched to effectively encourage the immigrants to return to their countries of origin and to regulate the migratory flows according to the need of the labour market.

Similarly, the migration policy of Ecuador has developed, to adapt to the post 2000 economic reality because in this it had many weaknesses and a lack of mechanisms to cope with the massive outflow of its population. This progress is linked to the principles of the government of President Rafael Correa. The President's Correa

government has brought several changes based on his ideology of the Citizens' Revolution, and it has made possible to implement a coherent and comprehensive migration policy. Additionally, several articles have been included in the Constitution of 2008, which protect the fundamental rights of migrants and their families and consider the migrant as one of the main contributors of development to the country.

The Ecuadorian government created the National Secretary for Migrants in 2007, which based on the National Plan Of Human Development for Migration 2007-2010 positioned the return of migrants as one of the State policies. It has also launched the Welcome Home Plan, as a mechanism that makes the voluntary return to homeland of migrants abroad possible.

As the analysis has shown, both Spain and Ecuador have the same goal through the implementation of their return plans. However, in accordance with their promotion, the manner of its creation and its implementation, it lets us to assume that they have different purposes. Spain, seeks to reduce the excess of job seekers to deal with the situation of instability in the country, while Ecuador looks forward the return of migrants who can contribute to the growth of the country through their knowledge and investment gained abroad.

Chapter 3.

The Implementation of the Return Plans led by Spain and Ecuador, their results and their impact on the international relations between the two countries

Introduction

The creation of the return plan managed by Spain and the one by Ecuador represent a big progress of the migration policy of each country. By the implementation of these plans they sought to deal with the new change of the migratory cycle and to ensure the return of migrants.

In spite of the fact that the two plans are intended to provide immigrants options to return and to encourage them to run productive enterprises in their country of origin, they have several differences. The Voluntary Return Plan consists of three individual programs addressed to the immigrant population, who live in vulnerable conditions, for those who wish to undertake a business in their country of origin and for those who voluntarily decided to return and receive in advance the payment of the unemployment benefit.

Ecuador has launched the Welcome Home Plan, in order to provide several options to make their return possible, considering that each migrant lives in a different situation abroad. For example, through the “Links Plan” it tries to strengthen the bond between migrants and Ecuador, through the “Physical Return” plan the government encourages the return offering facilities to bring their household goods or work equipment and through the “Productive Return” plan the migrant can access financial assistance to undertake a business in the country.

Depending on the requirements, services, advantages or disadvantages of each plan, the migrants have decided to qualify to one of them or not. The implementation of the plans has represented a mechanism of assistance for those who decided to return to Ecuador, especially due to the unemployment in Spain. It has also, created some spaces for interaction between the two governments to treat the immigrants' issues, particularly their return.

3.1 Description of the Voluntary Return Plan and the Welcome Home Plan.

The implementation of the plans launched by Spain and Ecuador in order to motivate the return of migrants represents one of their greatest efforts as they allow immigrants to return safely and in favorable conditions. However, as shown below they have similarities and differences that make one plan more or less attractive to migrants.

The Spanish government has launched the voluntary return programs for foreigners by the Ministry of Employment and Social Security and the General Secretariat of Immigration and Emigration, and the General Directorate of Migration on the basis of the Strategic Plan of Citizenship and Integration 2007- 2010 and 2011-2014. It was possible thanks to the financial assistance from the European Fund for the return and the new Fund of Asylum, Migration and Integration. (Borders & Latin America, 2012) This plan means the opportunity for foreigners, whether they are immigrants, refugees, asylum seekers or people with subsidiary protection that have the intention to return to their countries of origin. (General Secretary of Immigration and Emigration)

This Plan differs from other return plans of the European Union because the Spanish return programs are targeted mostly at legal immigrants, who "voluntarily" decide to qualify for one of the plans, but not because they do not have a residence permit to reside in Spain. (Borders & Latin America, 2012) To achieve this goal the government created three return programs that together form the Spanish Voluntary Return Plan:

The Voluntary Return Program of Social Care.

This plan was launched in 2004 and is designed to facilitate the return of non-EU migrants that are living in a situation of great vulnerability, or that are unaccompanied minors, persons with disabilities, elderly, pregnant women or victims of rape or assault. Social Services of the area where immigrants reside or governmental organization will be responsible to verify the situation of the immigrants. (General Secretary of Immigration and Emigration)

Aid Program complementing the cumulative and advance payment of the unemployment insurance benefit to non- EU foreign workers who voluntarily return to their countries of origin (APRE, Spanish acronym)

This program was established under the Royal Decree-Law 4/2008 on September 19th, 2008 by the Ministry of labour and Immigration. It is aimed at immigrants are not obligated to return but due to the situation of unemployment in Spain they may find better opportunities in their countries of origin.

This program is only accessible to immigrants who are from one of the twenty countries that have signed a convention on Social Security with Spain and who could benefit by charging in advance the cumulative amount of the unemployment benefit of contributory level. The accumulated payment is split into two payments, 40% will be paid in Spain and 60% will be given to immigrants in the country of origin upon their return. (Borders & Latin America, 2012)

Productive Voluntary Return Program

This program was created in 2010 and was launched to provide immigrants from non-EU countries, who are not recognized as having the right to charge the accumulated bonus of unemployment, an opportunity to return. Immigrants may have the opportunity to establish a business project in their country of origin and receive economic aid to finance the business idea of EUR 1,500 and up to EUR 5,000 if several people are involved in the the project, such as a cooperative.

In addition, they will have access to a training course and professional advice after the evaluation of their business idea. They will also get information about the socio-economic, socio-occupational and socio-politics reality of their country of origin in order to be able to offer guidelines and monitoring to make the project viable. (Secretary of Immigration and Emigration)

The Spanish Voluntary Return Plan includes several general services for immigrants, such as access to information about the necessary formalities, support and psycho-social guidance. It also includes economic aid through the payment of visa fees and expenses for obtaining the necessary documents, the ticket to return to their country of origin from the place of domicile of the migrant in Spain.

Additionally, pocket money of EUR 50 per person (up to a maximum of EUR 400) for the maintenance during the journey and EUR 400 per person and a maximum of EUR 1,600 per family unit for their settlement in their country of origin (except for the return APRE Program). (Ministry of Employment and Social Security)

It should be emphasized that a peculiarity of the Spanish Voluntary Return Plan, is that immigrants who decide to return to their country of origin must accept the requirement not to try to return to Spain within three years. That means that immigrants must give up their residency permit of the country and request the authorization to work and reside again. However, if immigrants had a temporary residence, they may return and continue residing in Spain during the remaining time until they complete the remaining period of the permit. Moreover, if immigrants had a permanent residence they may recover it through a simple process. (Citapreviainem.es)

On the other hand, the government of Ecuador launched in 2008 the Welcome Home Plan by the National Secretary for Migrants to fulfill the objective number 3 of the Development Plan for the Human Migration 2007-2010:

"Encourage Ecuadorians to remain in their country and create the right conditions that make the voluntary, dignified and sustainable return of migrants possible" (National Plan of Human Development for Migration 2007-2010)

It should be stressed that, this plan is addressed to the Ecuadorian migrant population in any country, provided that they meet the requirements. For the creation of this plan, it has been considered that each migrant lives in a different situation. Therefore, this program focuses on the fact that the return can happen in different ways, and the Ecuadorian authorities have created individual programs that altogether build the return Welcome Home Plan. Among them are the following:

The Links Program

Through the implementation of this plan, the Ecuadorian government tries to develop and expand forms of communication between the migrant community and their families in Ecuador, organizations and institutions that work to maintain their identity as Ecuadorians. This is possible through the establishment of the

"Ecuadorian Houses", which provide a place for migrants and authorities of the SENAMI. Also, through virtual social networks migrants can be informed about the migration policy of Ecuador, and also their families about the situation of the migrants working abroad. (National Secretary for Migrants)

The Return Program of Physical Accompaniment: Back Home.

This plan allows the permanent or temporary "physical return" of migrants to Ecuador, i.e. "it offers many facilities and measures that will contribute to the decrease of economic and legal obstacles of returning, as well as measures to ease their social and labour reintegration" (National Secretary for Migrants) These programs are the following:

- **Importation of household goods, auto and work equipment without paying taxes.** This plan was launched thanks to the agreement between the SENAMI and the former Ecuadorian Customs Corporation (CAE, Spanish acronym). The objective is to give migrants the chance to import their household goods and/or their work equipment (whose value does not exceed \$30,000) without paying taxes receiving counsel about the necessary custom formalities. In addition, migrants may bring an auto or a motorcycle as a part of their household. (National Secretary for Migrants)
- **Housing Bonus for migrants and their families.** This program was created under the agreement between the SENAMI and the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development (MIDUVI, Spanish acronym). The authorities recognize the possession of a house as a right of each person and want to provide migrants or their families economic assistance to buy, build or repair a home either in the rural or urban area of Ecuador.

Migrants have the chance to access a bond, which value depends on the price of the house of purchase, construct or repair as long as the price does not exceed \$30,000 and that the migrant or the family own the ground. The value of the bond cannot exceed \$6,000 to purchase or construct, or \$2,000 to repair a new or used house or apartment (maximum 10 years of age).

In the case that migrants and/or their family in spite of the required savings and the delivered bonus do not have the necessary money to cover all costs

of purchase, construction or repair of the house, they have the chance to get a loan from one of the well-known institutions of the National Corporation for Popular and Solidarity Finance (CONAFIPS, Spanish acronym). (Ministerial Agreement No. 229) (Ministry of Housing and Urban Development)

- **Repatriation of corpses.** This plan looks to speed up the consular procedures for the transfer of corpses or mortal remains of deceased Ecuadorians abroad, whose bereaved are in a condition of economic and social vulnerability, meaning no cost for the relatives.
- **Plan for the reception of persons in a situation of return (vulnerability and deportation).** This plan looks to prove assistance to those Ecuadorian migrants who are in a vulnerable situation because they are the victims of human traffic or very low economic resources and therefore they need to return to Ecuador. The authorities try to help migrants by psycho-social attention, legal advice and aid. (National Secretary for Migrants)

Program of Social and Productive Incentives.

The Ecuadorian government has sought the return of migrants through incentives to encourage migrants to establish businesses in the country and strengthen the areas of national interest such as manufacturing, trade, agriculture, fishing, services, tourism and education. To make this possible, the government created in 2008 the Competitive Fund "El Cucayo" for a period of 36 months.

The Competitive Fund "El Cucayo" allows migrants to take a non-refundable quantity of money as seed capital, in exchange of a counterpart. They can have the access to 25% of the value of individual, family, associative, or cooperative businesses and 50% for a community business. The value of the capital can vary from \$2,500 up to \$50,000, and migrants may receive technical advice from specialists to ensure the operation of the business.

On the other hand, the Ecuadorian government founded the Bank of the Migrant as a mechanism to facilitate the access to migrants to economic support in several Ecuadorian financial entities. (National Secretary for Migrants)

In addition, during the course of the work done by the SENAMI some cooperation

agreements with several government institutions of Ecuador have been signed. Norma Farfán, a former analyst of the SENAMI, mentioned that each Ministry of Ecuador should provide migrants special services to ensure their adequate social and labour insertion in the country. (Farfan, 2014) Thanks to these agreements some programs were launched, as it can be seen in the following table:

Table 3
Complementary programs that support the return of migrants by the government of Ecuador

Program	Ministry	Benefit
Healthy Ecuador, I come back for you	Ministry of Public Health	Return of professionals in the area of health. After a test of knowledge they can get a job in the national public health network.
Land Plan	Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Aquaculture and Fisheries	Delivery of cultivation plots to migrants to make it productive, using the knowledge gained abroad.
Return Plan "Manuela Espejo"	Vice President of the Republic	Assisted return for disabled people or in a vulnerable situation.
Socio-employment Network	Ministry of labour Relations	Creation of a virtual portal where jobs for migrants are advertised and they can qualify for.
Teachers Plan Return	Ministry of Education	Return of migrants, who are professionals in teaching, after a test of knowledge they can get a permanent job.

Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility
 Accessible at: <http://cancilleria.gob.ec/acompanamiento-en-el-retorno-al-pais>
 Elaboration: Ana Maria Padrón

As can be seen, both Spain and Ecuador have the intention to provide migrants opportunities to return. These programs are for those who are in a situation of vulnerability, or for those who voluntarily want to return to their country of origin having the chance to undertake a business. However, it is evident that the Welcome Home Plan offers more opportunities to return.

3.1.1 Objectives

Apparently, the Spanish and the Ecuadorian government have similar purposes with the implementation of their return plans. On one hand, the Spanish government, seeks to provide immigrants or people who are in a situation of vulnerability the opportunity to voluntarily return to their country of origin and to ensure a labour and social reintegration. It also offers accompaniment and psychological and financial support. (Ministry of Employment and Social Security)

On the other hand, the Ecuadorian government intends to establish favorable conditions for migrants living abroad, who wish to return to Ecuador on a voluntarily, in a dignified and sustainable way. It also sought to ensure that the respects of their fundamental rights are respected and to make sure that they experience a suitable and safe return. (National Secretary for Migrants) In addition, it seeks to incorporate migrants into the structure of the Ecuadorian society by supporting their social and labour reintegration and offering them development opportunities in the country. (Barrier G. , 2009)

It is evident, that both governments want to achieve the same goal. They want to offer migrants, who voluntarily decide to return, aid and opportunities to ensure their future and opportunities for employment as well as social reinsertion in the country.

3.1.2 Requirements

The two return plans require migrants to meet several requirements. In the case of the Spanish Voluntary Return Plan, immigrants must comply with several general and specific requirements depending on the type of return plan. Among the general requirements, immigrants shall:

1. Sign two statements, one about their voluntary decision to return to their country of origin and another that includes their commitment of not to return to Spain to perform any gainful activity for a period of three years.
2. Show their boarding pass to the institution, which arranged their return.
3. Return to their country of origin within thirty days after having been qualified to access to the plan.
4. Do not have any prohibition against leaving Spain under the Aliens

Act.(Ministry of Employment and Social Security)

In regard to the specific requirements immigrants who wish to qualify for the **Voluntary Return Program of Social Care Plan**, shall:

1. Be in regular administrative situation in the country, live in vulnerable conditions, be minors, people with disabilities, elderlies, persons living alone with children and people who have suffered torture, rape, or have been psychological, physically or sexually assaulted or victims of trafficking of human beings.
2. Have stayed in Spain for a period of six months before accessing to the return plan.
3. Not have applied for the granting of the Spanish nationality or any other country of the European Union, and similarly do not have community residence cards.

To qualify for the **APRE Return Plan**, immigrants shall:

1. Be born in one of the countries that have signed a bilateral agreement with Spain in matters of Social Security.
2. Have a legal residence in Spain.
3. Be unemployed and registered as a job seeker.
4. Be allowed to receive the unemployment benefit at the contributory level.
5. Not have the Spanish nationality. (Ministry of Employment and Social Security)

In terms of access to the **ProductiveVoluntary Return Plan**, immigrants shall:

1. Be in a regular administrative situation or in a situation of social vulnerability in the country.
2. Not have requested or obtained a Spanish nationality or of any other country of the European Union or the EU residence card.
3. Have resided for six months in Spain prior to the access to the return plan.
4. Have the right to receive the accumulated and advance benefit of unemployment of the contributory level.
5. Have a good business idea to implement in their country of origin.(Ministry of Employment and Social Security)

In the case of the Welcome Home Plan implemented by the SENAMI in Ecuador, migrants shall also meet several general requirements. These are the following:

1. Be Ecuadorian and have lived for more than a year abroad or be an Ecuadorian migrant, who has returned to Ecuador in 2007 or earlier. For the Ecuadorian law a returnee is an Ecuadorian migrant who returned to Ecuador and lives in the country up to maximum of two years.(Farfan, 2014)
1. Not have stayed in Ecuador for more than 60 days, during their stay abroad. If they have lived for a longer period than five years abroad, their stay in Ecuador in the last year will be expanded to 30 days for each additional year, which can accumulate up to a maximum of 180 days.
2. Not have any legal impediments.
3. Verify their stay abroad with the passport and the records of migratory movement, which contains the entries and departures of the traveler to and from Ecuador. Also, by showing certificates or consular records accredited by the National Secretary for Migrants. (Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility)

Similarly, the Welcome Home Plan requires migrants to meet several conditions. Migrants who want to **import their household goods, auto and/or work equipment without paying taxes**, they shall:

1. Have the intention to stay in Ecuador for a period greater than one year.
2. In the case of vehicles imported as part of the household goods, migrants shall have lived abroad for a period minimum of three years.
3. Migrants who are not from Ecuador can apply for exemption of taxes, only when they want to reside in Ecuador for more than a year.
4. Ensure that the household goods and the work equipment will arrive within the time frame of two months before and up to six months after the arrival of the migrant, who wants to definitively settle in Ecuador.
5. Deliver original documents and copies that prove their stay for more than a year abroad
6. Be responsible for recruiting the means of transport action(Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility)

Ecuadorian migrants, who are interested in the **Housing Bond for Migrants and their Families**, shall:

1. Be qualified as migrants by the National Secretary for Migrants, SENAMI.
2. Do not own any home in Ecuador, nor their family. (Ministry of Housing and Urban Development)

Finally, to qualify for the **Program of Social and Productive Incentives, the competitive Fund "El Cucayo"** migrants shall:

1. Own properties in goods or cash.
2. Have a good business idea to be carried out in the country. (Trámites Ecuador)

As the analysis shows, migrants must meet several requirements to qualify for one of the return plans. The return plan led by Spain is easier for migrants to access because the requirements are less than those of the Ecuadorian return plan. However, the requirement that keeps migrants from not returning to Spain for a period of three years has been considered an impediment, which deters migrants from making use of the Spanish return plan.

The Welcome Home Plan has several requirements for anyone who decides to access it, especially the plan that allows importing household goods, autoing and/or work equipment without paying taxes. However, the requirement that obligates migrants to hire transport to import goods to Ecuador does not work well. Due to their lack of experience and a limited advice from the authorities it leads to many problems.

3.1.3 Results

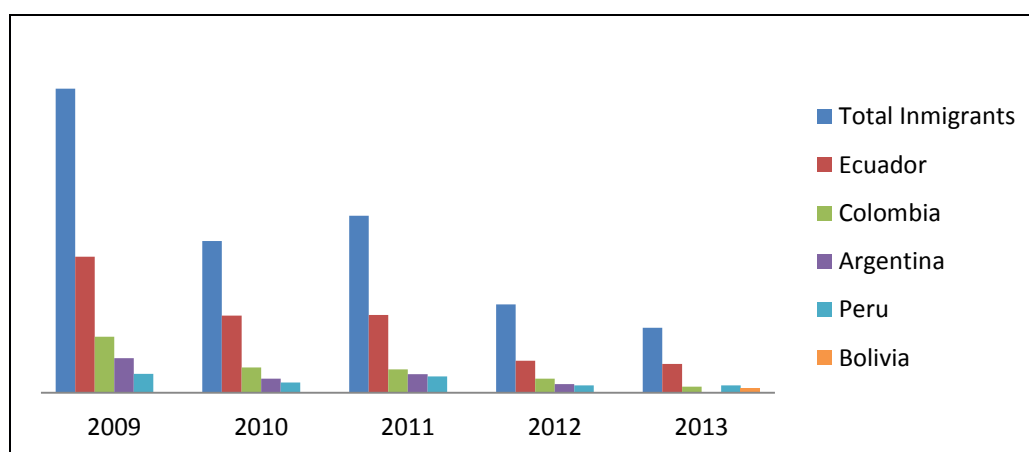
Since the creation of the two return plans, the sponsor governments have had several expectations about them. They believed that they would have a relatively large impact on the migrant population, particularly after the beginning of the crisis in Spain in 2008. However, there are many people who have seen these plans as an opportunity to exit the crisis or simply to finish their migration process abroad. Nevertheless, there are also people, who have criticized and rejected these

programs, because these did not meet the needs of migrants who wanted to return.

To analyze the results obtained in the Spanish Voluntary Return Plan, I resorted to the General Secretariat of Immigration and Emigration data. The following figure shows the high amount of immigrants who have access to the Voluntary Return Program of Social Care. The high level indicates that thousands of immigrants live in poor situations in Spain. Ecuadorian immigrants accessed this plan too, from 2009 to 2013 only 1,359 were qualified, compared to the high number of returns of Bolivians, Argentineans or Brazilians.

Figure 4

Immigrants accessed to the Voluntary Return Program of Social Care according to their countries of origin 2009-2013



Source: Secretary General of Immigration and Emigration

Accessible at:

http://extranjeros.empleo.gob.es/es/Retorno_voluntario/datos/index.html

Elaboration: Ana Maria Padrón

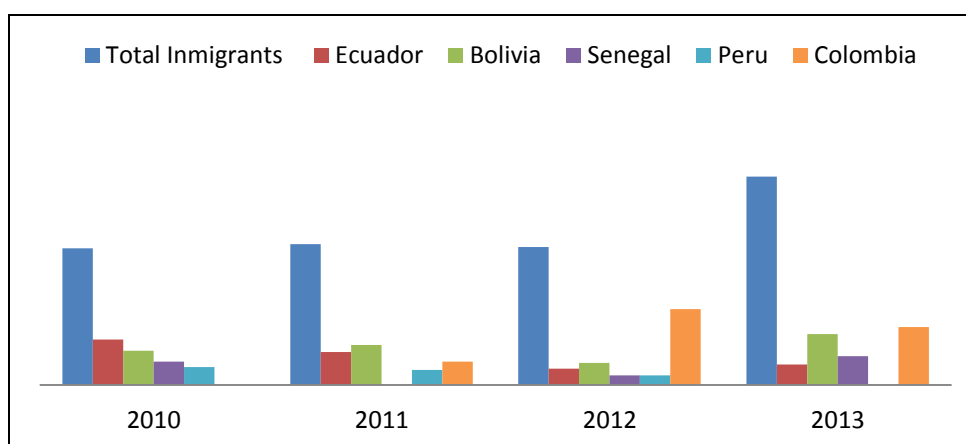
The APRE Return Plan has had a great impact in 2009, as it can be seen in the following figure. From 2009, the number of returnee immigrants thanks to this program has considerably decreased, with an exception of a slight increase for the year 2011. Moreover, it is clear that Ecuadorian immigrants head the list of those who have decided to receive in advance the payment of the unemployment benefit and return to Ecuador. They are followed by the nationals of Argentina, Colombia, Peru and Bolivia.

A reason for this may be that Ecuadorians are one of the biggest and oldest immigrant communities in Spain, which means that most of them have lived for

many years in that country and hence most of them already meet the requirements to return. For example, they have payed all necessary contributions to the Social Security to have access to the unemployment benefit.

Figure 5

Immigrants accessed to the Plan of the APRE Return according to their country of origin 2009-2013



Source: Secretary General of Immigration and Emigration

Accessible

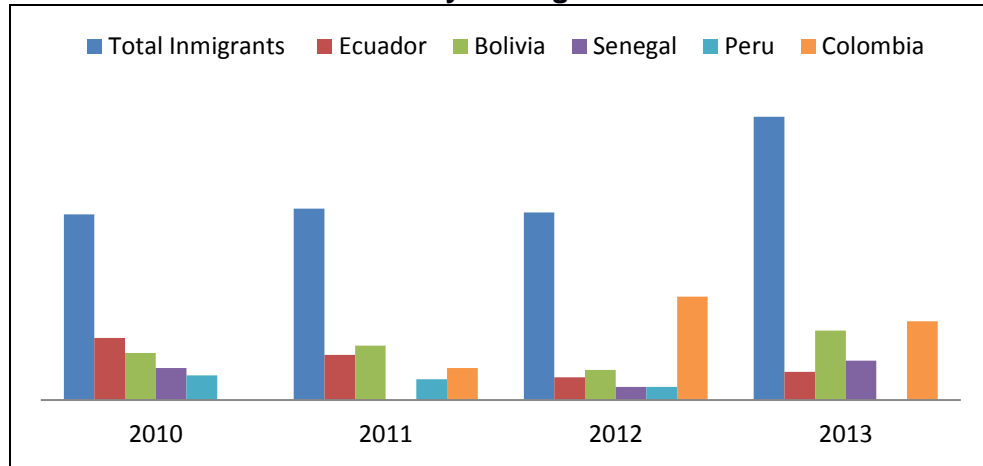
at: http://extranjeros.empleo.gob.es/es/Retorno_voluntario/datos/index.html

Elabouration: Ana Maria Padrón

In terms of the Productive Voluntary Return Program, the data in the following figure indicates that this program has not had a significant impact on the immigrant population in Spain. After three years of implementation, it has allowed only 452 to return. The nationals of Colombia have benefited most followed by immigrants from Bolivia and Ecuador, the last with a total of 84 Ecuadorians returnees up to 2013.

Figure 6

Immigrants accessed to the Productive Voluntary Return Program according to the country of origin 2010-2013



Source: Secretary General of Immigration and Emigration

Accessible

at: http://extranjeros.empleo.gob.es/es/Retorno_voluntario/datos/index.html

Elabouration: Ana Maria Padrón

In regard to the quantitative analysis of the Welcome Home Plan, I experienced many difficulties to collect data about the current number of Ecuadorian returnees depending on the country they return from. Germán Cárdenas, former coordinator of the SENAMI and Norma Farfán, a former legal analyst of the SENAMI explained the reason of this lack of information and mentioned that due to the high level of illegal emigration of Ecuadorians, it is very difficult to have a record of the returnees.

Besides the explanation of the former employees of the SENAMI, many official and academic documents explain that there is no detailed follow up examination of the Welcome Home Plan led by the Ecuadorian government. There is only a collection of general data about the total number of Ecuadorian migrants from many countries, who accessed the plan but not specifically from Spain.

Consequently, I had to resort to estimating data in newspapers or in declarations of the Ecuadorian authorities in order to have an overview about the impact that the Welcome Home Plan has had and compare it with the Voluntary Return Plan. Unlike the information of the Welcome Home Plan, the information of the Voluntary Return Plan is very well analyzed and had an adequate follow-up examination done by the responsible entity in Spain.

However, it is important to include in this research some general information about the Welcome Home Plan exposed in the accountability of the SENAMI, data that can be seen in the following table.

Table 4
Migrants who benefited from the Welcome Home Plan 2008-2011

Type of Program	Total benefited migrants
The Links Program	177 Events "We are all migrants" took place
	115,459 people participated in the workshops of the campaign "We are all migrants"
	10,940 Registered in virtual networks of the SENAMI
The Return Program of Physical Accompaniment: Back Home	15,789 Returnees: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8,372 In condition of vulnerability • 6,987 Have returned with household goods, auto and/or work equipment without paying taxes • 425 Corpses of Ecuadorian migrants returned
Program of social and productive incentives	500 Productive enterprises financed
	727 Profiles of productive projects made with the aid of the SENAMI

Source: SENAMI - REPORT OF ACCOUNTABILITY 2007 - 2010 and Accountability 2011 Sectorial Council on Social Development
 Accessible at: <https://es.scribd.com/doc/132408506/SENAMI-INFORME-DE-RENDICION-DE-CUENTAS-2007-2010>
 Elaboration: Ana Maria Padrón

Although the data presented are general and do not allow analysis of the number of Ecuadorian returnees from Spain, it can be seen that the plan accounted for 15,789 migrants' return up to 2011. About a half of them were living in a situation of vulnerability and received assistance by the SENAMI to return. Others have benefited by the services of the plan of household goods, car and/or work equipment without paying taxes and a few had the opportunity to start a business in Ecuador.

According to the statements of Francisco Hagó, former Secretary of the Migrant, around 9,000 families, who were living in Spain were beneficiaries of the Welcome Home Plan until the year 2012. Although this is not accurate information, it can help interpret the scope of this plan in the Spanish territory. (El Dario, 2012) According to the Program of Social and Productive Incentives, some data were found, which show that in the year 2010 of the total 463 productive undertakings in the areas of agriculture, manufacturing and services in its majority, 381 belonged to Ecuadorian migrants who returned from Spain. (Moncayo, 2011)

The analysis of the obtained results shows that the Voluntary Return Plan launched by Spain has not had the expected impact. The plan aims at almost the total immigrant population who reside in Spain, but it does not seem to have been very attractive to them. However, in comparison to the other Spanish return programs, the APRE program allowed a higher number of migrants to return, in which the Ecuadorian migrants represent the highest number of beneficiaries.

The lack of an adequate management by the SENAMI, which is responsible to implement the Welcome Home Plan, has set a limit on delving deeply into the number of Ecuadorian migrants that have applied to the plan from Spain. Nevertheless, about 9,000 migrants had returned thanks to the Ecuadorian help from 2008 to 2012, exceeding the number of Ecuadorian beneficiaries by the Spanish Voluntary Return Plan.

This is maybe due to the fact that, the plan led by Ecuador creates confidence and rapprochement to Ecuadorian migrants. For example, thanks to the Links Program, the ties between migrants and the country have been strengthened. This influences the decision of migrants to definitely return to Ecuador.

3.2 Differences and similarities between the Voluntary Return Plan and the Welcome Home Plan

Throughout the comparison of the return plans led by Spain and by Ecuador several characteristics have been found, which make them similar or different from each other. The following table provides a more detailed comparison of the two return plans:

Table 4

**Comparison between the Voluntary Return Plan and the Welcome Home Plan.
Differences and similarities**

Feature	Voluntary Return Plan	Welcome Home Plan
Motivation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial Crisis of 2008 • Incentives of the European Pact on Immigration and Asylum, the European Fund for the return and the Return Directive 115/EC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of the new migration policy under the government of Rafael Correa • Tightening of the immigration policy in the destination countries
Objective	Provide immigrants an opportunity to voluntarily return to their country of origin and ensure a social and labour integration in their country of origin.	Establish favorable conditions for migrants abroad to motivate them to return to Ecuador in a voluntary, dignified and sustainable way, and contribute to the society with their knowledge gained abroad.
Types of Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Voluntary Return Program of social care • Plan of APRE Return • Productive Voluntary Return 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Links Program • The Return Physical of accompaniment: Back Home. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Importation of household goods, auto and/or work equipment without paying taxes. + Housing bonus for Migrants and their Families + Repatriation of corpses + Plan for the reception of persons in situation of return (vulnerability and deportation) • Program of social and productive Incentive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> +Competitive Fund "El Cucayo" +Migrant Bank
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information, support and psycho-social guidance • Payment of the airline ticket, pocket money for maintenance during the trip and settlement in their country of origin • Advice, support, follow up and economic aid for a productive project • Advance payment of the accumulated unemployment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advice, information and support for migrants abroad • Economic support for productive projects and for accessing to a house. • Facilities to import household goods, auto and/or work equipment without paying taxes • Care and relief to people in vulnerable situation

	benefit	
Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not go back to Spain for three years after their departure. • Return to their country of origin within thirty days. • Do not have any prohibition to leave Spain. • Do not have the Spanish nationality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be Ecuadorian and have lived for a more than a year abroad or be an Ecuadorian returnee, who has returned to Ecuador in 2007 latest • During their stay abroad do not have remained in Ecuador for more than 60 days. • Do not have legal impediments. • Have documents that certify the migrant as a person in human mobility.
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The plan APRE is not accessible to all migrants, due to its conditions, and the amount of the unemployment benefit is not enough to return. • The requirement of not returning to Spain for 3 years generates rejection. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is fraudulent to import the households goods, autos and/or work equipment. • Several programs require migrants to have money as a counterpart for productive projects. • Lack of follow-up to returnees in Ecuador. • Lack of information management about the plan by the SENAMI.
Results	Until the year 2012: 5,464 Ecuadorians had returned from Spain.	Until the year 2012: estimated number of 9000 Ecuadorians, who had returned from Spain.

Source: National Secretary for Migrants and General Secretariat of Immigration and Emigration

Elaboration: Ana Maria Padrón

There are several common characteristics between the two return plans, such as their goals. Both try to encourage migrants to return to their country of origin, in a safe manner and to ensure their social and labour insertion. The programs are aimed at people in vulnerable situations, who wish to undertake a business, followed by counseling and financial support. However, Ecuador offers migrants a greater variety of return programs in comparison with the Spanish return plan.

Each country has their own reasons for creating the return plans. That is something that was already analyzed in the Chapter Two. Spain provides migrants a better access to its return plans, because migrants do not need to meet many requirements to qualify for it. However, migrants are not allowed to return to Spain for 3 years. This is one of the difficulties found in this plan. Many have lived in Spain for more than 10 years and have ties with the country. It creates a lot of instability and fear with the migrants, because they are not allowed to return to Spain, even if the situation in their country of origin is worse. In addition, many migrants are dual citizens, and it prevents them from qualifying for all Spanish return plans.

Also, some problems have been found in the Welcome Home Plan after analyzing it. Several migrants mentioned that they did not receive any help from the authorities when they arrived in Ecuador. Moreover, the implementation of the program had many irregularities. Especially with the importation of household goods, auto and/or work equipment without paying taxes because there are cases where the containers were open and the belongings of the returnees were stolen. Furthermore, migrants themselves have tried to import goods that are for commercial purposes, by declaring them as household goods, especially cars. (Ecuador Inmediato.com, 2012)

Even though the intentions of the Social and Productive Incentives Program are positive, the program has been criticized for being exclusionary. It focuses only on successful migrants, who return and want to undertake a project in Ecuador, with enough capital to do it. However, the reality is different because several Ecuadorian migrants are returning due to their poor economic situation in their country of destination and do not have the resources to implement a business in Ecuador. (Moncayo)

The General Secretary of Immigration and Emigration of Spain has carried out a better and more detailed follow-up examination about the Voluntary Return Plan than the one carried out by the SENAMI about the Welcome Home Plan. This means a disadvantage for the Ecuadorian government, because the SENAMI in five years of management has not collected enough information about the returnees, which is an important procedure to get to know the real status of the program in each country where it was applied.

In spite of the fact that the Spanish Voluntary Return Plan has been implemented in the best way, this has not caused the expected acceptance by the Ecuadorian migrants. Until 2012, only 5,464 had applied to the program to return to Ecuador, compared with an estimating number of 9,000 Ecuadorians who decided to return thanks to the Welcome Home Plan, according to Francisco Hagó, former secretary of the migrant. However, none of the plans has had a major influence on the return of migrants, because after analyzing the data of the INEC about the entries of Ecuadorians from Spain and the outflows to Spain it can be seen that since 2009 the level of entries of Ecuadorians from Spain is greater than the outflows to this country. The number of Ecuadorians who remain in Ecuador increased. The

migratory balance reached a number of 77,448, which represents the number of Ecuadorians that had arrived from Spain between 2009 and 2012 and who could be considered as returnees.(INEC)

The number of migrants who qualified for the return plans are not high compared to the number of possible 77,448 returnees. This may be due to the fact that in relation to the Voluntary Return Plan, migrants have already received the total amount of the unemployment benefit in Spain. Also, as Naïr Sami mentioned, the money that is expected to receive through the Plan of APRE Return is not enough to cover the needs during the process of return and the promotion of the plan in Spain was not successful.(Nair, 2009)

The Welcome Home Plan has several weaknesses, which caused the low effectiveness of the program. This can be the result of the lack of experience of the government because many migrants complained about the poor support by the staff of the SENAMI, who did not give all necessary information and did not have the capability to assist and inform, causing many delays of the paperwork. As William Murillo, former Secretary of the Migrant mentioned as well, the productive incentives programs required migrants to have a counterpart something that, after analyzing the situation of the crisis in Spain, is very difficult to have, since several migrants have lost their savings and are unemployed. (Murillo, 2014) (Cevallos, 2009)

In spite of the shortcomings found during the comparison of both return plans and after realizing that they did not have the expected results, it is important to mention that these plans have facilitated the return of thousands of migrants. They have also supported their social and labour insertion in Ecuador, something that could not have been possible without the collaboration between the government of Spain and Ecuador who have worked in favor of migrants and their families.

3.3 The Impact of implementing return plans on international relations between Spain and Ecuador. Policy developments and the progress of the Development Cooperation.

As it has been discussed thus far, the issue of the return has taken place in the political agendas of both Spain and Ecuador and has generated spaces for the two countries to join forces and create legislative instruments and encourage

cooperation for the benefit of migrants, and of course to make possible a favorable return back toward Ecuador.

According to the declaration of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Spain, the international relations between Spain and Ecuador have increased in the last decade. This is due to the link generated between the two countries by the great number of Ecuadorians residing in the Spanish territory, and due to the existing commercial intent. (Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, 2014)

This evolution of relations between these two countries can be understood due to several factors, such as is the change in the migration policy that was implemented in Ecuador at the beginning of the new government of the Citizens' Revolution. Related to the idea of protection for the migrants, the government has tried through the SENAMI to strengthen the international relations with Spain and benefit migrants.

In addition the international relations between these two countries is related to the objectives of the immigration policy of Spain and of all the European Union itself. The immigration policy of Spain and of the European Union has the purpose to benefit the country of origin with the generation of development in some areas, and to create a dynamic alternative to decrease the migratory flows toward the countries of the region, especially pertinent in light of the current instability in Spain. (International Organization for Migration, 2011)

The President Rafael Correa and the former Vice President of Spain Maria Teresa Fernandez de la Vega in 2007, after their attendance to the X Conference about Women in Latin America and the Caribbean mentioned that both governments have been working together to launch the return plans for immigrants. Additionally, the Spanish government proposed the creation of a bilateral network to promote support for the voluntary return of Ecuadorian immigrants and to encourage family reunion in their country of origin. (The Country, 2007)

This bilateral network refers to the work between the Ministry of Labour and Employment Matters, the Embassy, Consulates and the Ecuadorian Service of Vocational Training (SECAP, Spanish acronym), the Public State of Employment Service (SEPE, Spanish acronym) and the National Institute of Social Security of

Spain which have supported the work of the SENAMI. They have been responsible for issuing certificates for the skills and competencies of Ecuadorian immigrants, and have facilitated and encouraged the search for jobs in Ecuador to carry out an effective insertion into labour. (The Country, 2007)

However, few efforts have been made to create real legislative instruments that commit the two countries to serve migrants and facilitate their return since the implementation of the return plans in 2008, among them there are only the following:

- **Social Security Agreement between the Kingdom of Spain and the Republic of Ecuador, 2009.**

This convention entered into force in January 2011. Its purpose is that Ecuadorian immigrants as well as their family members and dependents who are residing in Spain or Spaniards located in Ecuador can access several types of medical benefits.

In the case of Ecuador, these benefits refer to those contributory benefits of the General Obligatory Insurance. For example, maternity allowance, sickness, disability, old age and death insurance. It also includes, pensions to widows and orphans, insurance of risks at the job in the case of work-related injuries and occupational disease, and assistance for funerals.

In the Spanish case, the benefits refer to the contributory benefits of the Spanish Social Security System with the exception of the special arrangements of civil servants and military personnel. Among these are: temporary disability in the cases of common disease and non-work-related injuries, maternity, risk during pregnancy, permanent disability, retirement and subsistence, economic benefits for work-related injuries, and occupational disease and death benefit. (BOE-TO-2011-2878)

One of the most interesting points of this convention is that the beneficiaries can accumulate the years of contribution to the Social Security in Spain and add them together with the contributions made to the Ecuadorian Institute of Social Security (IESS, Spanish acronym) or vice versa. In this way, a person who has worked in the two countries and who has contributed with his/her contributions to the two social security institutes may, after complying with the required time, add together his/her contributions, carry out his/her retirement and collect

his/her retirement pension.

In the same way, both Ecuadorians residing in Spain and Spaniards in Ecuador who have the right to medical care in one of the two countries, can keep receiving medical attention in one of the two countries, as well as emergency medical assistance. (BOE-A-2011-2878, 2011) Thanks to this convention, it has been able to benefit several immigrants, who due to the adjustment measures in the area of health implemented by the Spanish government after the crisis of 2008, have lost access to health care for a period of time, and can now access it, if they meet the requirements.

- **Collaboration Agreement between the Embassy of the Republic of Ecuador and the Law Society of Madrid in March of 2009 for the legal assistance of Ecuadorian citizens and the Collaboration Agreement between the Embassy of the Republic of Ecuador and the Law Society of the Balearic Islands.**

These agreements were signed with the purpose of being able to provide legal assistance to Ecuadorian immigrants residing in Spain, those who have lack of resources of access legal protection. Thanks to this convention, several Ecuadorian immigrants who have been victims of forced evictions by defaulting on mortgage repayments and by the erroneous clauses in their contracts with the banks were benefited. (El tiempo.com.ec, 2011)

It was easy to see that the policy development between the two governments has not been outstanding. However, it is evident the improvement in the bilateral cooperation agreements by the SENAMI with public institutions in Spain increased. This bilateral cooperation is based on the intention to provide cooperation to Ecuador and to generate development. Thanks to this intention they have worked to implement programs to meet this end, marking a trend in the international relations between Spain and Ecuador related to the development of the cooperation.

As evidence of this, in the second stage of work of the Bilateral Agreement for the conversion of the foreign debt of Ecuador with the Kingdom of Spain signed in 2005, it has attempted to address the economic means to provide greater social investment and finance programs for migrants and their families. The Spanish

government pledged with 30 thousand dollars compared to 20 thousand dollars counterpart of Ecuador. (Calderon, 2009) Thanks to this commitment of March 19, 2009, the following projects were approved in order to improve the situation of migrants and that have been implemented by the SENAMI, among them are the following:

- **National Network of Houses for Migrants in Ecuador.**

This program is designed to facilitate and strengthen the processes of human development for migrants and their families. It is possible through access to information and advice especially for protection in the Ecuadorian territory and similarly for those migrants who have returned. Through the implementation of the Network of Houses for Migrants in Ecuador, it has been able to provide returnees information about the programs offered by the SENAMI and the government for their benefit. It also benefited returnees with labour skills training. (Program of exchange of debt Ecuador-Spain, 2010)

- **Nearby Schools.**

This is another of the projects intended to motivate the participation of the children of migrants to access education and the use of ICT. It was possible through the improvement of the infrastructure of schools and training for teachers. (Program of exchange of debt Ecuador-Spain, 2010)

- **Network of Offices of Accompaniment to the Entrepreneurship of Migrants (REDIEM, Spanish acronym).**

The implementation of this plan has the purpose to encourage productive initiatives for migrants who wish to return to several provinces of the country. This is achieved through a network of offices for information about business ideas and possible opportunities. This is the same goal as the Fund "El Cucayo" part of the Program of Social and Productive Incentives of the Welcome Home Plan. For this reason the implementation of the plan REDIEM has sought to continue the support for migrants and endeavor to do so after the "Fund, the Cucayo" finishes.

This program seeks to provide its services in the province of Guayas, Manabi, Imbabura, Chimborazo, Loja, Morona Santiago and estimates that 500 business ideas could have support and advice. Furthermore, all the selected projects will be able to have business mentoring services. It is expected that around 800 people could benefit from several processes of technical education and training.

In the same way Ecuador has achieved the collaboration of the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation (AECI, Spanish acronym). This Agency carries out projects to generate development in Ecuador and now more than ever has permitted the generation of projects aimed at migrants, among them is the following:

- **The Window on Youth, Employment and Migration**

This program was created in August of 2008, as part of the collaboration of the government of Spain with the United Nations in order to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. The program is managed by different institutions of the United Nations system and the SENAMI with the coordinated work of the Ministry for the Coordination of Social Development, the Ministry of Labour Relations and the Ministry of Economic and Social Inclusion of Ecuador.

The objective of the program is to provide opportunities for young people in Ecuador through the generation of employment. It also looks to support public programs of Ecuador, such as those led by the SENAMI related to the labour and social inclusion of immigrants in the country and Ecuadorian returnees, especially the young people. (Moncayo, 2011)

Additionally, Ecuador has received cooperation from Spanish universities and specialized centers, which helped in the implementation of the Welcome Home Plan led by the SENAMI. For example, the SENAMI signed a Collaboration Agreement with the Universidad Politécnica of Madrid in 2009. These two institutions signed the Convention "Initiatives of immigrants in return and Development" (EL COMERCIO) with the aim of encouraging returning immigrants to launch a productive project in the agricultural area. It is possible thanks to the technical assistance and training to immigrants by the Higher Technical School of Agricultural Engineers. (Polytechnic University of Madrid)

Similarly, in order to support the return program "Land Plan" led by the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, aquaculture, and Fisheries of Ecuador, the Integrated Center for Agricultural Training and Experiences (CIFEA, Spanish acronym) of Molina de Segura has worked through the training of Ecuadorian immigrants in the area of accounting, cooperatives, and agriculture. Thanks to this initiative immigrants can take advantage of the best opportunity that is provided by the Ecuadorian government to apply their knowledge and launch a business. (Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility)

The bilateral relations between Spain and Ecuador have not only been successful in migration issues or generation of development in the Ecuadorian territory, but in addition, there have been major advances in the commercial area. In evidence of this, in 2013 the exports from Ecuador to Spain grew 17% and the exports of Spain to Ecuador around 20.3 %, in comparison with 2012. This could be due to the fact that Ecuador has become an attractive country for investment for this European country. (Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, 2014)

The international relations between Spain and Ecuador has evolved favorably in favor of immigrants, particularly Spain had led cooperation projects to support the Ecuadorians and returnees. However, what stands out is the lack of true conventions that could involve the commitment of the two countries to act in favor of those who return in order to achieve better results.

Chapter Summary and Conclusion

Spain and Ecuador have worked hard in order to manage both the Voluntary Return Plan and the Welcome Home Plan respectively. These plans facilitate the return of immigrants who voluntarily decide to return to their country of origin and ensure their labour reintegration after their arrival. The Spanish return plan has been set up as a set of programs intended for vulnerable people, for those who decide to undertake a business in their country of origin and for those who voluntarily return and receive their accumulated unemployment benefits.

Meanwhile, Ecuador has launched the Welcome Home Plan, which represents a wide variety of opportunities for migrants who are wishing to return. This plan starts

with the strengthening of the links between the Ecuadorian migrants and Ecuador and ends with their physical return. It offers the chance to access assistance to have a proper social and labour insertion and a productive return through the incentive to undertake a business in the country.

After carrying out a comparative analysis it was concluded that both plans have the same goal. However, the Voluntary Return Plan seems to have facilitated immigrants to qualify for it due to the few requirements needed in comparison with the Welcome Home Plan. Despite the fact that the condition to not to be able to return to Spain for a period of three years has created insecurity in immigrants, especially after having spent several years in the Spanish territory.

In addition, it was observed that the services before, during, and after the process of return of migrants have been carried out in a better way by the Voluntary Return Plan. This demonstrates that the lack of a proper assistance is a weakness of the Welcome Home Plan, because migrants require not only help at the moment of their return, but also before and after their arrival in Ecuador, due to the situation of instability that a return process generates.

Moreover, several problems were found to find updated data that could show the number of Ecuadorians who have returned thanks to the Welcome Home Plan, because there is no follow-up data led by the authorities of the Ecuadorian government. Therefore, I rely on estimated information published in news sources, which leads me to believe that until 2011 the Welcome Home Plan seems to have had much greater acceptance by the Ecuadorian migrants. This may be linked to the strengthening of the ties between migrants and Ecuador, which has promoted the plan with the message of the "Return to the Homeland". Moreover, the return plan led by Ecuador has had a wider range of programs that provide opportunities to return.

However, the two plans have not had a significant influence on the return of migrants. It seems that the majority of migrants have returned on their own. This could be a result of the fact that most of the Ecuadorian migrants did not meet the requirements to qualify for one of the plans or because these plans did not satisfy their needs, especially after the instability of the Spanish crisis.

Finally, evaluating the implementation of the return plans indicates several advances in the bilateral relations between Spain and Ecuador. However, there is a lack of genuine compromises to work in favor of the return of immigrants through the signing of conventions. Nevertheless, the cooperation between Spain and Ecuador helped to generate plans to strengthen those programs already in progress by the SENAMI and to foster social and labour integration of migrants.

FINAL CONCLUSION

The migration of the Ecuadorian population has been a fact that has marked the history of the country, in view of the challenges it brings with it. For instance, the Ecuadorian migratory wave to Spain occurred in 2000. In 2000 a large number of Ecuadorians migrated to Spain and in a short time became one of the largest immigrant groups in the Spanish territory. It represented a high social spending for Spain and the separation of families in Ecuador

However, from 2008 the immigrants' decision to return to Ecuador appeared forcefully and was included in the political agendas of Ecuador and Spain. The decision on return is a consequence of the emergence of the financial crisis in Spain, which caused high level of unemployment and indebtedness. The government of Spain and Ecuador launched two different return plans, the Voluntary Return Plan and the Welcome Home Plan respectively, to provide migrants an adequate return.

Both governments had different motivations for the creation of their return plans. Spain is looking forward to improving the situation of the labour market after the beginning of the crisis of 2008 and applies the Return Directive 115/EC of the European Union. Meanwhile, Ecuador seeks to mark the trend of its new migration policy by advocating for the rights of migrants and providing them the opportunity to return and become a player in the development of the country. To achieve this objective the Ecuadorian government founded the SENAMI, based on the National Plan of Human Development for Migration.

In the comparative analysis of the two plans it has been analyzed that the Welcome Home Plan offers migrants more opportunities to return. Additionally, the Ecuadorian government has sought to strengthen the link between migrants and Ecuador, as one of the most important steps before the return. However, this plan has presented several irregularities. For instance, the lack of compromise and capacity of the staff

at SENAMI to help migrants to return and also the bad intentions of many migrants, who wanted to take advantage of the plans and evade the regulations, which shows a lack of control on the part of the authorities.

On the other hand, the Voluntary Return Plan demands fewer requirements to access the programs and provides a better service before, during and after the return of immigrants. Especially, it provides economic aid, something fundamental in the return process. However, immigrants, who already returned to their country of origin, are not allowed to re-enter into Spain for a period of three years. This requirement, has been considered very restrictive, and provokes fear among the immigrant population, considering that most of the times the situation in their country of return is not the best.

In terms of the results, one of the biggest failures found in the Welcome Home Plan is the lack of a proper follow-up by the SENAMI to collect specific data about the number of migrants who returned thanks to the plan. It is a fundamental procedure to get to know the viability of the program. Because of this, it has had to resort to estimated data of newspaper sources to get to know the number of Ecuadorian migrants who returned from Spain and compare it to the published data of the Voluntary Return Plan.

Through this analysis, it was possible to see that apparently the Plan Welcome Home has allowed a greater number of migrants to return from Spain up to 2012. It estimates that around 9,000 Ecuadorian migrants returned, compared to a number of 5,464 Ecuadorian migrants who accessed to the Spanish Voluntary Return Plan. However, none of the two plans seems to have had a significant outreach in the processes of return of migrants from Spain to Ecuador because the data of the INEC shows that until 2012, around 77,448 Ecuadorians may have returned to the country from Spain. (INEC)

Finally, the objective of this research was studied; the impact that the implementation of these two return plans has had on the international relations between Spain and Ecuador. It was observed that the diplomatic relations between these two countries are closely linked with the migration issue. Additionally, it is clear that collaboration between the two governments exists in order to ensure the return of migrants.

However, there is no real commitment on the part of the authorities of both Spain and Ecuador to create laws to ensure an effective return and a true social and labour integration. Only one the convention on Social Security in 2009 has been signed. However, it represents a step forward because it has benefited many immigrants who have lost the right to health in Spain after the crisis.

Nevertheless, I have seen that the SENAMI has been the one, who has managed to sign agreements with institutions that support the Ecuadorian's return programs. This institution took advantage of the contribution of the Spanish government through the generation of development in the country. Especially, because the debt-exchange agreement and the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation (AECI, Spanish acronym) is now more than ever are working in favor of the migrants and their families.

Because of this, it can be said that there is still work to do because the return processes are still ongoing. In addition, the government of Spain and Ecuador are responsible to work together to facilitate the return of thousands of immigrants. They have to commit to ensure migrants a real social and labour reinsertion in Ecuador.

RECOMMENDATIONS

As has been demonstrated the challenge of the return of migrants for both Spain and Ecuador is big. These countries are responsible to ensure that migrants and their families have their rights and welfare protected. However, several weaknesses were found in the Voluntary Return Plan and the Welcome Home Plan, which can be the cause of the lack of acceptance by migrants.

With respect to the Voluntary Return Plan, the Spanish authorities should liaise with the immigrant population to get to know more about their needs, something that could provide guidelines to the government to create a return plan according to the immigrants' condition. Similarly the Welcome Home Plan has many difficulties to fix, but this can be treated as an example that it is possible to create multiple return mechanisms, intended to meet different needs of immigrants, starting with a project to strengthen the link between the immigrant and their country of origin.

In addition, there should be more follow-up before, during and especially after the return of migrants by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility, an institution that was created after the closure of the SENAMI. It will provide information about the situation of returnees after their arrival. The Ecuadorian authorities should ensure that migrants have enough support in order to meet the challenges and problems that arise upon return to the country that they have been absent from.

On the other hand, the competent Ecuadorian authorities inside and outside of the country should properly collect data about the return of migrants. This will help the government to know in which country the return plans are having greater or lesser effect. It will also help to find some possible errors or points in favor in order to create a better return plan that fits with the needs of migrants.

One of the most important aspects is that there must be more spaces of intervention between the government of Spain and Ecuador. Thanks to these spaces the authorities from Spain and Ecuador can build legislative instruments to reflect the commitment of each government to act both individually and in a coordinated manner to encourage the return of migrants, to build programs together, to unite efforts, and avoid migrants becoming victims of fraud and mismanagement by the public institutions.

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