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“La Generación Ni Ni” and the Exodus of Spanish Youth

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ABSTRACT

More than 300,000 Spaniards have left Spain since 2008, the majority being the well-educated youth. The exodus of youth represents an unusual and concerning phenomenon for Spain. This paper explores the factors contributing to the emigration of Spanish well-educated youth and uses the case study to extrapolate on implications for an integrated market in the European Union. It concludes that push-pull economic factors and an affiliation with the European Union internal market encourage intra-European migration. The Spanish case demonstrates that within a community as integrated as the European Union, tensions between international markets and national sovereignty are bound to permeate the community. This tension is demonstrated by the validity of both terms "national crisis" and "functioning European Union market" to describe the emigration.

KEYWORDS

migration, Spain, financial crisis, Schengen Agreement, internal market, European Union

INTRODUCTION: SPAIN'S ECONOMIC SITUATION

The early 2000s were a time of economic boom for Spain. Historically a poor country, Spain reached a level of income and economic structure similar to the top-tier European countries in the early 21st century. Spain implemented new liberalization techniques, furthered openness to international markets, and large corporations, such as Telefonica and Banco Santander, grew to a global scale. In addition, during this time the construction sector expanded rapidly. Immigrants flooded in from Latin America, Northern Africa, and Eastern Europe, to fill the demand for jobs. After more than 4 million immigrants arrived, the unemployment rate was still the lowest it had ever been, 12.2% in 2004. In 2007, Spain surpassed Italy in terms of GDP per capita, a major indication of success. It was clear that Spain had become a global economic powerhouse (Hooper, 2008).

Then the 2008 global financial crash occurred and hit Spain hard. The construction and tourism industries, Spain's primary sources of income, were the first to be affected in the economic recession because taking a vacation or buying a new home became luxuries many could no longer afford. Spain's construction sector completely collapsed when the Spanish banks stopped lending; citizens could not take out loans to purchase the homes that had sprung up in droves in the past years. Real estate companies owed the Spanish banks millions of dollars that they could not repay because their newly constructed homes remained unsold. Additionally, the collapse of the construction sector eliminated 2 million jobs (Rainsford, 2011). In short, Spain quickly turned from a wealthy country to a country burdened by debt and economic recession. Four years later, Spain continues to struggle with the economic recession as seen by its high unemployment, weak banking sector, tight credit, and heavy private sector debt. This has led major credit rating companies, such as Moody's, to downgrade Spain's sovereign debt rating to near junk status in June of 2012 (Associated Press, 2012). What is clear is that in 2012 Spain continues to suffer the consequences of the financial crash in 2008.

The Spanish youth have been particularly affected by the crisis. Currently, the Spanish unemployment rate for those under the age of 25 is an astonishing 51% (Govan, 2012). One in five of Spaniards under 30 years old are still looking for their first job (Younge, 2011). Newspapers are calling the Spanish youth the "Lost Generation" or "Generación Ni Ni" because of the desolate outlook for their future. "La Generación Ni Ni" identifies the young adult generation that is not in school or work; they have finished school but cannot find a job despite having a university degree. Spanish papers lament that this generation represents the first generation in Spain that will be worse off than their parents.

As job prospects in Spain are bleak, the Spanish youth are looking abroad for employment. In 2011, "some 68 percent of young Spaniards are considering emigrating, an European Union (EU) survey showed" (Sills, 2012). Statistics from Censo Españoles Residentes Ausentes show that since 2008 the number of Spaniards living abroad has increased 21.9%. The UK, Switzerland, and Germany are common destinations. The same CERA survey demonstrates an increase of Spaniards in these locations; the UK has seen a rise of 16.4% of Spaniards, Switzerland 6.8% and Germany 5.9% (Sills, 2012). Also, the Latin American countries with strong economies, such as Brazil, are seeing a massive increase in migration from Spain. These statistics demonstrate a striking boost in emigration since the beginning of the economic recession.

Mass migration is not a foreign concept for Spaniards. In the 1960s, Spain was going through a period of industrial development and many people were moving to the cities.

Agriculture could no longer provide a good means of living for many Spaniards; however, the new industrial jobs did not have the capacity to absorb the excess in labor. The Instituto Español de Inmigración [Spanish Institute of Immigration] began to sponsor out-migration as an unemployment escape valve for Spain. At the same time, West Germany was undergoing many rebuilding projects after the World Wars and was in great need of un-skilled or semi-skilled workers. An agreement was made between Germany and Spain to relieve both countries' employment needs. In the decade that ensued, hundreds of thousands of Spaniards left Spain, many of them going to Germany to find work.

Although Spain has experienced emigration in the past, the demographic that this exodus represents, the well-educated youth, is new. More than 300,000 Spaniards have left Spain since 2008 and “en su mayoría, jóvenes altamente cualificados: ingenieros, arquitectos e informáticos, especialmente” [the majority are young and highly qualified, engineers, architects and computer scientists, especially] (Más de 300.000, 2012). This phenomenon is unprecedented in that “unlike the Spanish emigration patterns of the 1960s and 70s, when low-skilled workers left [Spain] in search of work, most of those leaving this time are well-educated” (Younge, 2011). The distinction between the emigrating demographics is a troubling phenomenon.

Spanish newspapers frequently make note of the emigration trend and the articles demonstrate the concern of the community. Recent headlines include: “Los jóvenes ya no sacan su currículum para trabajar, sino su pasaporte” [the youth no longer take out their resumes to work, only their passports], “La crisis dispara un 22% la emigración española, en su mayoría jóvenes” [the crisis triggered a 22% Spanish emigration, the majority being youth] or “Más de 300.000 jóvenes españoles han emigrado buscando trabajo” [more than 300,000 youth have emigrated looking for work]. Clearly, the emigration of the well-educated Spanish youth is a concerning phenomenon to the Spanish community. By discerning the contributing factors of the exodus, changes could be made to quell the phenomenon.

Research Question: Why is this mass emigration of well-educated Spanish youth taking place and what factors contribute to this particular demographic leaving Spain?

Hypothesis: Spain's affiliation with the EU brings about unique economic and legal structures; hence the exodus of well-educated youth from Spain is taking place because of a domestic economic downturn within the context of the EU's internal market.

THE ROLE OF THE EU IN THE EXODUS

It may be said that the EU is the most ambitious transnational project of our time. Originally created as an economic community to bind the European states to one another and keep them from warring against each other, it has evolved into a supranational governing system with legal and political power. Within the EU, an individual nation no longer has absolute authority over its domestic policies. The member nations participate in decision making procedures for many transnational issues and sometimes, if member nations are using qualitative majority voting, a nation can be overruled and obligated to comply with a policy it does not approve of. This degree of sovereignty for an international organization is unique to the EU.

Spain, as a full acting member of the EU, both influences and is affected by the economic and legal environment within the EU. Spain's close affiliation with the EU brings up

the question of whether the EU environment incites the Spanish youth emigration. The goal of the EU is to create a liberal economic market within Europe. As such, EU lawmakers have sought to promote open borders and free labor mobility in the hopes that these policies will facilitate a strong European economy. Therefore, Spain's position within the EU contributes to the exodus of educated Spanish youth because the closely integrated European market increases intra-EU labor mobility.

ECONOMIC PUSH-PULL FACTORS

Migration literature often cites the economy as a major contributing factor to international migration. The literature speaks in terms of factors that may push a migrant to migrate out of a country or may pull a migrant to a different country. As currently Spain's economy is struggling, it is likely that the economy is influential in the current exodus of Spanish youth. The negative economic situation within Spain may push people out of the country, and better economic situations elsewhere may pull people from Spain. Spain's economic situation is linked to the EU due to the shared currency and the closely intertwined economies. Consequently, the EU is a catalyst for push-pull economic factors that influence migration.

The poor economy effectively pushes the well-educated Spanish youth from Spain to look for careers elsewhere. The youth are particularly affected by the poor economy because they are well-educated and have high expectations for jobs. The current generation of young Spaniards are the best educated in Spanish history; 38% have graduated from university (Más de 300.000, 2012). As the youth have spent many years preparing for professional careers, the inability to work in a position that represents their qualifications is a source of extreme frustration.

Se trata de la generación más formada de nuestra historia contemporánea a la que ahora no podemos corresponder con un empleo. Resulta que se han formado, como les dijimos, han acudido a la universidad, como les indicamos, pero en el momento de incorporarse al mercado de trabajo no tenemos oportunidades que ofrecerles, como sí les prometimos. [This is the most educated generation in our contemporary history which now does not correspond with employment. What has resulted is that they have formed, like we told them, gone to college, as we indicated, but in the moment of incorporation into the labor market we do not have opportunities to offer them, as we promised] (Más de 300.000, 2012).

Spanish young people went to school because they were instructed that this would help them get jobs, but at the time of completion of their schooling there are few job opportunities. Thus, the Spanish youth feel deprived of opportunities to which they were promised and this has resulted in a push to look abroad for work.

Interviews with Spanish University students support the theory that the economy is a contributing factor to the exodus of educated youth. A BBC correspondent recently asked students in Spain's biggest university, La Universidad Complutense, whether they thought they would be able to find a job in Spain next year. A couple of students raised their hand in response to this question. However, when asked if they thought they would find a good job, nobody answered in the affirmative (Rainsford, 2011). This response speaks to the level of confidence Spanish youth have in the economy of their country. They believe that they won't be able to find key entry-level experience they need to start a career so newly educated Spaniards are searching abroad.

In addition to the economic push factors, other economic factors function to pull Spaniards abroad. A BBC article states, “according to the recruitment agency Adecco, 110,000 people left [Spain] in the two years from April 2008. Most were skilled males under 35” (Rainsford, 2011). Germany, a country with a growing economy and a need to fill skilled labor positions, is a primary receiver of the Spanish youth. Germany’s Federal Employment Agency has predicted that there will be a shortage of 5 million workers in Germany by 2030. Half of that shortage will be for skilled, university educated, workers (Peters, 2011). Germany’s Federal Employment Agency is working with Eures, the EU commission’s Internet job exchange, to recruit laborers from countries hit by the economic crisis. In addition, during a press conference in Spain Angela Merkel personally invited Spanish students to work in Germany. Germany’s economy grew by 3.2% in 2010 and it needs skilled workers to fuel the growing economy (Peters, 2011). For many Spanish youth Germany is the answer to their search for employment, implying that strong economic prospects there pull the youth away from Spain.

Economic theories of international labor migration additionally validate the anecdotal evidence in suggesting that economic incentives may push migrants from a country or pull them to another country. Migrants will take into account the utility that can be gained by investing in a move internationally. The utility gained usually comes in the form of better pay, more stable work, or work that better fits the degree of education. “According to neo-classical economic theory, international labor flows exist as a consequence of wage differences between countries” (Jennissen, 2003, p.173). Thus, “based on the assumption that GDP per capita is directly correlated with international wage differentials...GDP per capita has a positive effect on net international migration” (Jennissen, 2002, p.173). In addition, Keynesian and dual labor market theories explain that because international migration is mainly driven by pull factors “unemployment has a negative effect on net international migration” (Jennissen, 2003, p.174). Therefore, Spanish youth will be drawn to countries that have higher GDP per capita and lower unemployment rates.

Table 1. Comparison of Spanish and German GDP’s Per Capita and Unemployment Rates

		2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Spain	GDP per capita (\$)	27,988.83	32,129.57	34,988.19	31,891.39	30,541.61
	Unemployment rate	8.3%	8.8%	14.9%	19.1%	20.4%
Germany	GDP per capita (\$)	35,429.48	40,467.87	44,264.06	40,658.58	40,508.87
	Unemployment rate	9.6%	8.2%	7.3%	7.6%	6.6%

Source: Data taken from Google Public Data

Table 2. Percent Difference of German and Spanish GDP Per Capita and Unemployment Rate

	GDP per capita	Unemployment rate
2006	21.00%	13.54%
2007	20.60%	6.81%
2008	20.95%	51.01%
2009	21.56%	60.21%
2010	24.61%	67.65%

Source: Self-made calculations using the formula $((X-Y)/X) \times 100$

Analysis of the GDP per capita and unemployment rate in the sending country, Spain, and a major receiving country, Germany, support the theory that economic factors likely play a role in the observed negative net immigration rate. In this case study, the wage differentials between the two countries did not significantly change after the 2008 financial crisis; both before and after 2008 the difference between the two GDP's per capita was approximately 21%. This is a significant percentage difference between Spain and Germany's GDP per capita. However, because the percent difference has remained relatively constant since 2008 it is clear that the wage differential is not the main driver of Spanish youth emigration.

On the other hand, the unemployment rate is likely an influential factor for this phenomenon of emigration from Spain. Before 2008, the unemployment rate in Spain was lower than in Germany. However, the unemployment rates have diverged drastically since the 2008 financial crisis. In 2010, Spain's overall unemployment rate was 20.4% as compared to 6.6% in Germany, meaning there was a 67.65% difference between the unemployment rates in the sending and receiving countries. The significant difference between the two unemployment rates supports the theory that opportunities in the receiving country, by way of employment options, are influential in pulling migrants to the receiving country. The current phenomenon of youth Spanish emigration falls in line with the neo-classical economic theory that suggests that unemployment rate will be an important factor in influencing international migration. The well-educated youth are choosing to migrate to Germany because Germany has a low unemployment rate and a need for skilled workers, giving better opportunities for them to start a career in a job with good prospects.

The European Reality of Multilingualism Facilitates Intra-European Migration

Spain lies within the context of the EU framework and, as such, is affected by certain European realities. One particular reality, the tendency towards multilingualism, facilitates the youth emigration from Spain. Language ability is an important aspect when applying for a job abroad; "in Spain, schools teaching German have seen the number of students rocket" (Ageing Germany, n.d.). Spaniards are taking classes to learn German in the hopes that this will help them get a job in Germany; therefore multilingualism is an important aspect of working abroad.

The Spanish well-educated youth likely know a language other than Spanish and can more easily move to a country where a language other than Spanish is spoken. During the historical emigration to Germany, the Spanish emigrants working in Germany were burdened with their inability to speak German. "Given the major barrier or obstacle of an unknown language, social relationships with Germans were strictly functional, whether at

work, in daily shopping etc.” (Gualda Caballera, n.d.). At this point in time, Spain was an isolated country in which foreign cultures and languages were not well known and distrusted (A Correspondent in Spain, 1962). After its entrance into the EU, the average Spanish citizen’s ability to speak foreign languages has improved. In this day and age, over half of Spaniards can speak another language. Yet, at 46.6% of the Spanish population that can only speak one language, Spain ranks poorly compared to other European countries, leaving only Portugal, Romania and Hungary with less multilingual populations (Martínez Prasca, n.d.). Although it may not be the leader in multilingualism in Europe, “about one in four Americans can hold a conversation in another language”, hence Europeans are more lingual than other world citizens (McComb, 2001). Particularly the educated Spaniards are more likely to be multilingual because in Europe “a large majority, 65%, named language lessons in school as a way they have used to learn foreign languages” (European Commission, 2006). As such, the EU reality of multilingualism contributes to the likelihood that a Spaniard in the current age will speak multiple languages. As such, current Spanish emigrants are more prepared for a move away from Spain than emigrants in the past.

Language ability makes international migration easier for current Spanish migrants. Other realities of the EU also facilitate the youth emigration. These include the popular intra-European study abroad program Erasmus, and the Bologna Agreement that standardizes EU education requirements. Erasmus and the Bologna Agreement additionally favor the university-educated youth because of their affiliation with university education. This paper will not discuss these programs in greater detail because they substantiate the same point as multilingualism. As fundamental realities of a EU lifestyle make intra-European migration easier, so also do fundamental rights upon which the Union was based.

The Right for Free Movement of People and the Schengen Agreement

An original aspect of the common market within the EU is the right for free movement of people. The EU started as the European Coal and Steel Community with the objective of intertwining the economies of Europe so that they could never go to war against one another again. The ECSC evolved into the EU operating a Single European Market. The benefit to a single market is the increased movement of goods, leading to an increase in trade between member states. With strong trade ties among the EU members the EU can become more powerful economically. The SEM has four pillars holding up the market. The first pillar is the free movement of goods, persons, services and capital between member states. The right for free movement of people, intrinsic to the first pillar, was first articulated in the Treaty of Rome in 1957. This right allows “citizens of one member state to seek and take up work in any other member state” (Hix, 2005, p.347). As a fundamental right of European citizenship, one can look for work in other European countries. Historically this right necessitated work permits and travel visas, however the right for free movement has evolved since its implementation and is currently manifested in the Schengen Agreement. The Schengen Agreement provides for the Schengen area of freedom, security and justice and it eliminates internal European border controls. Incorporated into EU law with the signing of the Amsterdam Treaty in 1997, the Schengen Agreement has been an evolving process since its creation in 1985.

A European Commission white paper from 1985, *Completing the Internal Market*, made recommendations to complete the internal market in the European Community. It recommended further removal of border controls because the bureaucratic obligations, such as

requiring residence permits, could discourage movement throughout the European community (European Commission, 1985). Most member states were reluctant to accept the recommendations because they believed a better policy dealing with crossing the EU external borders was needed. Because the European Council required unanimity at this time to make transnational decisions, a policy could not be decided upon (Hix, 2005, p.348). Finally, as an agreement among all members could not be made, France, Germany, Luxembourg, Belgium and the Netherlands agreed among themselves to eliminate internal borders and allow for the free movement of all persons (“The Schengen Area”, 2009). This agreement allowing for “an area of freedom, security and justice” was called the Schengen Agreement and was signed in 1985. At this time, the Schengen Agreement was an intergovernmental agreement and not affiliated with an EU treaty. Shortly after, Spain, Portugal, Greece, Denmark, Sweden, Finland and Norway joined the intergovernmental agreement. It wasn’t until the Amsterdam Treaty in 1997 that the Schengen Agreement became EU law.

The Schengen Agreement intends to provide a borderless zone that contributes to the mutually beneficial exchange between those seeking work and those seeking workers, thus furthering the internal market. The job of a “...market is to promote voluntary exchange, [consequently] society relies on the free movement of workers among employers to allocate labor in a way that achieves maximum satisfaction for both workers and consumers” (Ehrenberg & Smith, 2003 p.310). The right to work in another European state “offer[s] better opportunities for job seekers and allows for a better matching of skills and qualifications in the internal market” (Hix, 2005, p.347). If one country needs a high volume of labor to produce its product and another country needs skilled labor, labor migration is the most efficient method to meet these needs. EU Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, Laszlo Andor, highlights the EU support of this reasoning. He says, “moving between countries offers real opportunities and economic benefits for both the host countries and the EU as a whole. We see that geographical mobility very much depends on the trends of the economy and where the jobs are” (“Report Shows Overall”, 2011). The Schengen Agreement eases economic integration to further the internal market.

Spain’s decision to participate in the Schengen Agreement forfeits some of Spain’s sovereign control over its borders and flow of goods and labor. As such, it is possible that Spain’s affiliation with the borderless zone makes it more vulnerable to the emigration of its citizens.

Comparing Emigration from Spain Before and After the Schengen Agreement

To determine whether Spain’s EU membership and the associated right for free movement of people has been a contributing factor in the exodus of Spanish youth, a comparison of emigration from before and after the Schengen Agreement will be made. If the nature of the emigration from Spain during the historic guest worker phase is different than the nature of the current emigration, then Spain’s entrance into the EU and the Spanish’s access to EU citizenship rights affects intra-European migration.

When the guest workers were emigrating from Spain to Germany in the 1960s and 70s the Schengen Agreement did not yet exist, yet Spanish citizens still migrated. Although the right for free movement, with applicable visas and permits, did exist in the European Economic Community, Spain was not a member of the Community and Spanish guest workers did not have access to those citizenship rights. Spanish laws did allow for emigration but exit could be obstructed: “the police [obstructed] skilled workers who appl[ied] for exit permits by insisting on formalities, papers, sponsors, guarantors and so on” (A Correspondent in

Spain, 1962). Officially, “any worker intending to emigrate [had] only to show that he has a firm contract” but sometimes there were often more hurdles to overcome (A Correspondent in Spain, 1962). However, the Spaniard’s “limited permits for work and residency depended on the whims of the labor market” (Gualda Caballera, n.d.). These bureaucratic difficulties sometimes led Spaniards to make clandestine trips abroad. The secret trips potentially had worse results for the Spanish if caught in the receiving country without the legal permission to be there. Although there were bureaucratic hurdles, this didn’t stop “the pull of much higher European wage-rates [from] being felt” and in 1962 more than 74,000 Spanish citizens were working in West Germany (A Correspondent in Spain, 1962). The number of people emigrating continued to escalate, approximately 600,000 people moved to Germany in the period of 1964 to 1971 (Turmo, 2011). These figures make clear that the absence of the Schengen Agreement and the necessity of work permits did not stop the Spanish from migrating. The feature most intimidating about leaving Spain was “the Spanish...distrust of foreign-speaking countries” but the social barriers were more intimidating than the legal ones.

The impressive statistics reveal that the lack of the Schengen Agreement and EU free movement citizenship rights in the 60s and 70s did not stop the Spanish from moving for economic reasons. Approximately 600,000 citizens moved to Germany in the span of 10 years, proving that people always move towards better economic opportunities. In the past, economic pulls were bigger emigration drivers than social or legal hurdles were impediments; the benefits of higher wages outweighed the costs of visa attainment or illegal migration.

That being said, the current emigration from Spain exists in the context of the EU so the Spanish concept of a European citizenship has evolved. In 2010 there were 111,000 Spaniards working in Germany, and this number is rising rapidly (Sedghi, 2012). Currently, the Spanish emigrants are moving to Germany for economic reasons, as the emigrants did in the past, but their EU citizenship endows them with the right for free movement which eliminates the legal barriers that the historical migrants had to overcome. Furthermore, the greatest fear of the historical migrants was their distrust of foreign nations and foreign citizens. Spain’s location within the EU bestows Spanish youth with realities of EU citizenship; it gives them a European, cosmopolitan awareness and linguistic ability which previous Spanish emigrants did not have. Therefore, the comparison of two phases of Spanish emigration implies that Spain’s EU membership facilitates intra-European migration when economic incentives exist.

CONCLUSION: FUNCTIONING EUROPEAN UNION MARKET OR SPANISH NATIONAL CRISIS?

The economic crisis of the late 2000’s, which has resulted in a high unemployment rate of educated youth in Spain, is a chief contributing factor to the exodus of Spanish youth. Poor career prospects within Spain for the well qualified and educated youth push these Spaniards to look elsewhere for work. In addition, the need for skilled workers in the primary receiving country, Germany, function to pull the educated young Spaniards there. However, Spain’s location in the European Union plays an important role in the exodus. The closely integrated European market increases labor mobility, which supports the emigration of Spanish youth during an economic downturn. Other aspects of the integrated market, such as the emphasis on multilingualism and the Schengen Agreement further facilitate the emigration. These conclusions reveal that Spain’s location within the world’s most integrated

market exposes Spain to the ebb and flow of its citizens. As such, Spain has lost a degree of control over its borders and ceded that control to the supranational European power. One can see that within a community as integrated as the EU, tensions between international markets and national sovereignty are bound to permeate the community.

One such tension is manifested in the word choice to describe the emigration. For Spain, the emigration of its well-educated youth is a “national crisis”. The Vice President of the Spanish Labor Commission stated, “estamos experimentando una peligrosa huida de conocimiento que obstaculizará nuestro desarrollo hacia una economía de valor añadido” [we are experiencing a dangerous knowledge escape that will hinder our development of a value-added economy] (Más de 300.000, 2012). In terms of the Spanish economy the phenomenon is disastrous and constitutes a national crisis. Additionally, Spain’s residence within the EU, and the integrated market strategies of the EU, has left Spain with little control over its domestic economic situation. Not only is the EU influencing the emigration from Spain, it has also tied Spain’s hands in terms of dealing with the emigration. Spain is handicapped as a nation by its lack of sovereign power, “the ability to control population movement and borders is one of the key factors defining the nation state and competencies over rights of entry and residence are traditionally one of the primordial powers of government” (Hatt & Garnder, 2002, p.116). The unexpected exodus of Spanish youth represents a national crisis for the Spanish government because it is losing influential citizens and it does not have the full capacity to address the emigration of its people.

At the same time, the exodus of the Spanish youth can be seen as a natural extension of increasing labor mobility in the context of greater market integration. Looking at the emigration of Spanish youth through the lens of supply and demand within the international labor market demonstrates the EU internal market functioning successfully; there is an excess of qualified workers in Spain and a dearth of qualified workers in Germany hence the laborers are moving to Germany to fill the demand. One EU commissioner “expressed his strong desire to see all labor market restrictions lifted adding: ‘Restricting the free movement of workers in Europe is not the answer to high unemployment. What we need to do is really to focus our efforts on creating new job opportunities’” (“Report Shows Overall”, 2011). From the EU perspective, the free movement of Spaniards is an accomplishment of the internal market; it exemplifies the EU market functioning effectively. This free movement of human capital is a success in terms of market economics, yet it is a “dangerous” crisis in the eyes of the Spanish government. The contradiction between the internal market functioning successfully and the Spanish emigration highlights the tension between markets and nations in the EU.

The EU sits at the intersection of the neoliberal and nationalist tensions and for that reason it may be in the position to mediate those tensions. The EU’s potential to mediate can be seen in the Schengen Agreement; the policy furthers European integration and allows individual nations to be more competitive internationally, while at the same time permits nations to opt out or decide on a sovereign national basis whether they will implement transition periods. The EU can function to mitigate the tension between international markets and national sovereignty by creating policies that force European cooperation but still allow for nations to have individual national identities. However, as the emigration from Spain continues to be defined as a crisis it is clear that the EU must investigate further how to reduce the tension within its borders.

That being said, for Spain to remain a relevant institution it must also be responsible to

its citizenry and take action to quell the crisis. Spain must work to mitigate the exodus of its well-educated youth so that it does not lose an important facet of its population. Spain cannot change the economic pull of other job opportunities, that exist in part because of the internal EU market, but by creating jobs within Spain that reflect the caliber of education of its youth Spain can stop the push of its citizens. As the EU does play a role in the youth emigration, but Spain is not likely to change its affiliation with the EU, improving economic prospects and career opportunities within Spain is the best method to quell the exodus of its well-educated Spanish youth.

AUTHOR'S NOTES

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